

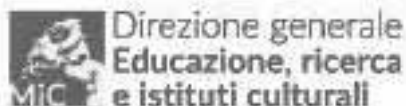
MEMORIE DELLA SOCIETÀ GEOGRAFICA ITALIANA
VOLUME XCVI

ROBERTA RODELLI, GIANLUCA CASAGRANDE

GIANNI ALBERTINI'S LOGBOOK
and the Expedition of the Heimen-SUCAI



Roma - 2026



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Roberta Rodelli, Gianluca Casagrande
Gianni Albertini's Logbook
and the Expedition of the *Heimen-SUCAI*

This book is the result of the joint scientific and editorial effort of both authors. Nevertheless, for evaluation purposes, Part I, the Conclusions and Annex 5 are to be attributed to Gianluca Casagrande, Part II and III to Roberta Rodelli. The foreword is common. Annexes 1 to 4 are translations into English of the 1932 publications of the respective authors and were jointly edited by both Roberta Rodelli and Gianluca Casagrande.

Memorie
collana a cura di Giovanni Sistu e Massimiliano Tabusi

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GIANNI ALBERTINI'S LOGBOOK
and the Expedition of the Heimen-SUCAI

With two accompanying maps

derived from

Gianni Albertini, *La «Heimen-SUCAI» nei Mari Artici*, Firenze, Bemporad, 1932



**SOCIETÀ
GEOGRAFICA
ITALIANA**

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PREFACE

by Claudio Cerreti, President of the Italian Geographical Society

The Italian Geographical Society closely linked its name and prestige to Umberto Nobile's polar expedition aboard the airship *Italia*, which was officially organized and managed by the Society itself. Such was the closeness of this relationship, we might add, that the expedition's tragic conclusion provided the context and pretext for placing the Italian Geographical Society under state control and aligning it, from that point onward and for many years, with the directives of the fascist regime.

The Society also was also somewhat morally involved in the immediate aftermath of the incident, including the many international efforts undertaken to search for and, if possible, rescue the six crew members who had been carried away onboard the airship after it struck the pack ice on May 25, 1928.

These expeditions, which resulted in further casualties among rescuers of various nationalities, including the great polar explorer Roald Amundsen, were effectively halted by the end of 1928, when environmental conditions prevented new attempts.

In May 1929, however, another search expedition set out: it is reconstructed in this volume, based on Commander Gianni Albertini's "log-book" and other sources. The attempt did not achieve the desired outcome, and indeed, the missing crew members were never found, but a wealth of new scientific information about the area was gathered.

The book that we now have the pleasure and pride of presenting to the international public, thanks to the hard work of Roberta Rodelli and Gianluca Casagrande, represents, in my view, an occasion worthy of close attention: not only for the Geographical Society, which in a sense finds in it an important fragment of its long history, but for everyone keen to know more about polar expeditions. It is now, in fact, possible to "recover" a significant episode of this history, appropriately supplemented by additional observations and data – including the most up-to-date information – which constitute an original and extensively documented contribution.

Albertini's expedition with the *Heimen-SUCAI* was not entirely unknown to specialists, as it was the subject of various publications, particularly in its aftermath. However, those publications were in Italian, at a

time when, even among scholars and educated people, knowledge of the Italian language was becoming increasingly rare. Above all, as mentioned, this work – which is aimed specifically at an international audience – offers materials for commentary, support, and interpretation, to better read and understand the logbook's real-time account.

Among the many merits of the work carried out by Rodelli and Casagrande, we feel it is worth noting that the approach taken to publish the logbook – a reproduction of the manuscript accompanied by a verbatim transcription and translation – allows readers to follow the minute details of events and also, in a certain sense, to enter into the emotional world of the expedition's main characters, with their doubts, the problems they faced, and their hopes.

The view that the authors propose enable the reader to achieve a rather comprehensive understanding of a relevant episode in the history of Arctic exploration but, most of all, to grasp a feeling of the experience lived by a Commander and his crew; this latter aspect, indeed, appears unusually rich and nuanced.

FOREWORD

This book presents and discusses elements of the Arctic expedition of the ship *Heimen-SUCAI*, which took place between May 15 and October 5, 1929, under the leadership of Italian explorer Gianni Albertini. The voyage unfolded across a vast region of the Arctic Ocean between mainland Norway, the Svalbard Islands, Franz Josef Land, and Novaya Zemlya, also including a long patrol over land and glaciers in the Nordaustlandet area. The purposes of the journey were, first of all, to attempt a search-and-rescue operation for six missing crew members of airship *Italia*, lost the year before; secondarily, to conduct scientific research.

Overall, the endeavour was a remarkable feat in the history of Arctic exploration and, though unsuccessful in regard to its humanitarian goal, it contributed to a better understanding of the geography and environment of eastern Svalbard, as well as to the development of both scientific and technical knowledge about operations in the area.

In this work, our primary aim was to study and publish a fundamental source on the expedition, namely the «*Libro di Bordo*» (“Logbook”) kept by Albertini, as Commander, and by Piero Zanetti, as Second in Command. During this effort, however, we felt the need to more broadly present the expedition and some of its main outcomes. Although it has been cited several times, in research literature over the past century, the journey of the *Heimen-SUCAI* remains little known outside Italy, partly because most of the produced studies have been written in Italian.

We therefore sought, while conducting an analytical reading of the logbook, to re-examine in its light certain published and unpublished sources, engaging in an integrated reflection upon them. Particular attention was devoted to reading, in parallel and in correlation with the logbook, the memoir that Albertini derived from it and which became the book *La Heimen-SUCAI nei mari Artici*, published by Bemporad in 1932. Despite the obvious proximity of their contents, the two writings present interesting aspects of complementarity.

Our hope is that the reflections developed in these pages may provide the scholarly community of historical geographers and historians of exploration with an initial reconstructive framework of the 1929 journey, nearly one hundred years after it took place.

It would be presumptuous on our part to claim that we have offered

an exhaustive account of the events: there are many other aspects, points of view and details that can be studied and hopefully will be in the future. Our goal, in this case, was to propose a synthesis of the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition by adopting, first and foremost, the perspective of the narrative voice of the document we studied, i.e. the voice of the Commander, which we have tried to understand in depth by considering supplementary information.

As the reconstruction of the journey gradually took shape, we attempted to place it within its geo-historical context. With this in sight, we referred to scientific literature as well as to cartographic sources relating to the described places.

In 1929, many of the visited areas were still considered as a frontier; they were transitioning, however, to fully ecumenical status. This is an element that, in our opinion, makes Gianni Albertini's historical testimony even more valuable. His enterprise was a humanitarian search and a scientific activity. Beyond that, however, Albertini's voyage constitutes a precious source for understanding a world of explorers and inhabitants of remote places; including certain aspects of life in the outposts of a boundary region that has completely changed ever since. It can also tell us something about how that world was conceived and perceived by its contemporaries, a view that was very different from that of today.

There is another element that seemed to us particularly important to highlight. Scholars in the field of exploration history are well aware that every journey is firmly rooted in a human dimension and carries experiential and cultural implications of varying depth. The *Heimen-SUCAI* was no exception. The perspective of this work considers a story of men who, through voluntary acceptance of a high call of solidarity, faced extreme hardships, sacrifices and dangers; this all is read through the eyes and spirit of the Commander. The pages written by Albertini recount a material endeavour and therefore present a succession of events, often conveyed with gripping intensity through the laconic precision of simple factual data. Yet those same pages are also open windows onto a strong and complex soul, capable of living and sharing with great intensity the mission, his duties, his own perceptions and reflections before nature and the events of which he was both actor and witness.

We have sought to engage with these aspects as well; they are dimensions that go far beyond simply reconstructing facts and data. For this

reason, large part of our work is devoted to a reflection on the more evidently humanistic and literary features that powerfully emerge from the pages of the logbook.

This publication is developed by first reconstructing the main reasons and the organizational context of the *Heimen-SUCAI* travel. This is followed by a chapter outlining the geo-historical scenario in which the voyage took place.

A geo-chronological reconstruction is then presented, synoptically outlining the sequence of events and describing the places in which they occurred. It integrates data from the logbook and the memoir with information drawn from other documents, as well as from relevant geographical and historical literature.

In the central section of the volume, the complete series of logbook entries is presented in the original Italian text, translated into English for the benefit of the international reader.

Then comes an extensive analysis focused on the logbook in its value as a literary source, particularly with regard to the conceptual coordinates of travel writing and emotional geography.

In order to take into the proper account some information that we deemed relevant, we also added five Annexes. The first four are translations into English of the reports published by Albertini with his 1932 memoir, summarizing the scientific and technical results of the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition. The fifth one is a commented description of the film «*Il Mistero dell'Artide*» (“The Mystery of the Arctic”), by Umberto Della Valle, released in 1930 for public engagement. It is worth adding that many of the pictures presented in this book are derived from the film.

The type of sources we used, and the need to make the study as complete as possible, have led us to make certain editorial choices, which will be presented in detail in the respective sections. In general, however, the reader will encounter extensive textual quotations, which will be discussed, in each case, in light of the different themes under scrutiny.

Since it was important in our view – for an easier interpretation – to ensure that the original Italian texts could be read alongside the English translations, the two versions of each quoted passage are usually presented together in this work. The version upon which the discussion focuses at any given point appears in the main body of the text; its translation may be found in the footnotes.

Unless specified otherwise, all translations from Italian into English are ours.

At the end of an intense two-year work on this project, we hope to have meaningfully contributed to the public knowledge about an important chapter in the history of Arctic exploration.

If this is actually the case, we wish to offer this book as a tribute to the passionate efforts and sacrifices – some of them everlasting – endured by those who took part in the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition, and by their loved ones.

Roberta Rodelli and Gianluca Casagrande
February 2026

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We wish to sincerely thank Francesca Castiglia for the invaluable help provided in the complex early stages of our work on the logbook, and Pierpaolo Alfei for his contribution to our archival research and for dispelling some doubts we had in regard to historical maps.

Finally, we would like to dedicate a grateful thought to the memory of Enrico Albertini, who had actively participated in the start-up initiatives that inaugurated the project.



Fig. 1. Gianni Albertini (1902-1978)
Source: Albertini family archive

Part I
The Expedition of the *Heimen-SUCAI*

PREPARATIONS AND GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

The reasons for going

The expedition of the *Heimen-SUCAI*, from May to October 1929, was Italy's last attempt to search for the six missing crew members of airship *Italia*, lost off northeastern Svalbard on May 25, 1928. The leader of the expedition, Eng. Gianni Albertini was, at the time, a young mountaineer and a prominent member of the University students' branch of the *Club Alpino Italiano*¹; he had been already part of the support teams to the *Italia* expedition and had actively participated in the search and rescue efforts in the immediate aftermath of the airship's loss. After his return to Italy, in September 1928, he had come into contact with the families of the missing men and was essentially requested by them, in the context of national mourning and a fairly wide support from private sponsors, to try and conduct another attempt in the following season.

Italia's Arctic expedition, officially named «*Spedizione Aerea Italiana nelle Regioni Artiche*» ("Italian Air Expedition in the Arctic Regions"), had taken place in 1928 under the formal aegis of the *Reale Società Geografica Italiana* (Royal Italian Geographical Society) and leadership of engineer Gen. Umberto Nobile (Sicolo, 2017, p. 11)

The endeavour had been envisioned in 1926, just after the first successful crossing of the Arctic cap by airship N1 *Norge*. Nobile had technically implemented and directed *Norge*'s flight under the institutional leadership of Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen. Against Nobile's view to conduct an exploration programme with departure from and return to Svalbard, Amundsen had insisted for a one-shot, record-breaking transpolar flight from Svalbard to Alaska (Nobile, 1928, pp. 30-31, 33-35; 1930, p. 11). The mission had had virtually no scientific objectives beyond the search for previously unknown islands along its route – a search that had proved unsuccessful. Nevertheless, it had demonstrated the capability of contemporary airship technology to sustain long-haul connections across the Arctic and to support large-scale exploration. In 1926, a fairly vast region between the North Pole and North America was still uncharted,

¹ It was the so-called *Stazione Universitaria del Club Alpino Italiano* (SUCAI), founded in 1905 (Revojera, 2008).

and the *Norge* had flown over it, tracing a long corridor. In theory, the observed surface amounted to about 170,000 km² (Nobile, 1930, p. 8; Nobile, 1975, p. 177); it should be noted, however, that since the *Norge* had navigated, for long periods of time, over areas obscured by fog, there was the possibility that some islands might have had remained unnoticed (Nobile, 1930, pp. 8-9).

Just as ambitious as his Norwegian partner, but more in the mindset of a scientist, Nobile was eager to implement the concept into a research programme. In his view, the airship was to be intended as a full-blown exploration platform, a flying lab capable of carrying experiments, acquire aerial images and, potentially, deploy scientists on the pack. For this new journey, Nobile had prepared *Norge*'s sister airship, N4 *Italia*, at the same construction facility, the *Stabilimento Costruzioni Aeronautiche* (SCA) in Rome (Nobile, 1930, pp. 8-15, 25-31).

After the successful flight of the *Norge*, fierce controversies had emerged – for matters of national prestige – as to whom the achievement was to be credited: had the true leader been Amundsen or Nobile? (Aas 2002, pp. 54-59; Alfei, 2025, pp. 1-2). In those final chapters of the race to the North Pole, rivalry was still common, and so were nationalist rhetorics exalting their own leaders; in fact, operations often required international players to collaborate (Capelotti, 1999, pp. 34-35; Drivenes and Jølle, 2006, p. 40). The endeavour, nonetheless, had been unquestionably victorious, *per se*.

For this reason, the Italian government had been neither enthusiastic about taking the chance at a new perilous gamble, nor had considered new exploits in the Arctic as a political priority. Nevertheless, it had reluctantly authorized the attempt (Trojani, 1964, p. 241). The *Regia Aeronautica* (Italy's Royal Air Force), under the leadership of Nobile's opponent Italo Balbo, had agreed to provide technical services for the airship, as these could have been handled by the SCA, personally headed by Nobile. For reasons of practical convenience, general prudence, and political friction between Balbo and Nobile, however, the Air Force had refrained from assuming an active public institutional role and, instead, had formally provided its services in support of other parties. Chief among them were the *Reale Società Geografica Italiana*, which acted as the commissioning institution, and a broad group of private sponsors, including major newspapers in Italy and abroad, which ultimately had financed the expedition. Nobile had also ne-

gotiated and secured a substantial technical and logistical assistance from the Italian *Regia Marina* (Navy), which had agreed to provide an auxiliary ship, equipment and numerous specialists to support and actually participate in the polar surveys. This contribution had been so important that, except for the military and civilian SCA, the institutional role of the Navy had ended up overweighing that of the Air Force (Trojani, 1964, pp. 241, 243-244; Sicolo, 2018, pp. 188-191).

Through international channels developed for the 1926 flight, Nobile had obtained permission from the Norwegian government to re-activate the advanced airfield established for the *Norge* at Ny-Ålesund, Svalbard. He had transferred there the *Italia*, in a difficult voyage through northern Europe, arriving on May 6, 1928. The Italian Navy had deployed the support ship *Città di Milano* which had served as a mobile logistical base, transporting personnel, equipment and supplies, maintaining communications between Italy and the Arctic base, and providing maritime support. The operation of *Italia* had required, obviously, complex technical synergies among several components: services had been provided by Norwegian technical personnel (Ny-Ålesund was primarily, at the time, a mining settlement), sailors and crew-members of the *Città di Milano*, airship technicians from the SCA and a small group of *Alpini* from the *Regio Esercito* (Italian Royal Army). An influent Fascist official, Roberto Maltini, President of the *SUCAI*, had insisted, almost at the last minute, that five members of his association be sent to support the expedition; among them was 25-year old Gianni Albertini (Albertini, 1929, pp. 13-14).

Additional Arctic scientists, experts and guides from different countries had also been involved on several occasions.

After having reached the North Pole in its third Arctic flight on May 24, during the return to Ny-Ålesund, the *Italia* had encountered a vast area of bad weather, with snowstorms, dense clouds, icing conditions, strong and irregular winds. After having been battered by the elements for about thirty hours, the airship had finally suffered a loss in lift and had crashed some 300 kilometres north-east of the homebase. The impact had destroyed the control gondola and two of the three engine cars, while pieces of the structure had been released on the pack, along with payload materials. In the event, ten out of sixteen crewmembers had been scattered on the ice, with the immediate death of one of them. The crippled airship, suddenly unloaded of over two tons, had taken off again and had disap-

peared in the Arctic clouds, dragged away by the wind with six other men trapped in the envelope. The first group had been able to find and repair a radio station, and to broadcast an SOS (Nobile, 1975, pp. 199-211, 215-217). The second group, even if they had survived the eventual landing of the wrecked envelope, would not have had such equipment: hence, it was impossible for them to broadcast their position.

The loss of *Italia* had triggered a wide, international rescue effort in which parties from Italy, Sweden, Soviet Union, Norway, France had attempted to recover from the ice the surviving crew members. Umberto Nobile had been rescued by Swedish aviator Einar Lundborg on June 23. Seven other survivors from the first crash had been recovered on July 12 by Soviet icebreaker Krassin. The ninth, Swedish scientist Finn Malmgren, had died earlier in the attempt of reaching Svalbard on foot with two companions (Imbert, 1996, p. 77).

In the wide series of search and rescue operations during those fateful months, Albertini had been involved in separate attempts to search the northern coasts of Svalbard, where it was presumed that survivors from *Italia* might have tried to find shelter. With the Arctic winter closing in, search operations had been called off. They had involved and worn-down hundreds of people and numerous airplanes, boats, ships. In such gigantic effort, six aviators, including Roald Amundsen, had disappeared forever in the surroundings of Bjørnøya onboard French flying boat *Latham 47*: they had been bound to Svalbard for joining the search². Another three Italians had lost their lives while returning home, when their plane struck a powerline in France³.

Despite all this, no trace had been found of the airship's envelope or of the six men on board. The harsh experience of the Arctic, however, had provided Albertini with specific competence for operating in that remote context, a significant familiarity with the environmental setting and a well-tested ability to perform long transects on land and sea.

Albertini's resolve to command a new expedition in 1929, searching for *Italia*, did not arise from optimism or from an illusion of success. It

² The other crewmembers were René Guilbaud (aircraft commander and pilot), Albert Cavellier de Cuverville (observer and mission officer), Gilbert Brazy (flight mechanic), Émile Valette (radio operator). Another pilot and navigator, Norwegian Leif Dietrichson, was also onboard as a passenger, upon request by Amundsen (Nobile, 1975, p. 235).

³ They were Pier Luigi Penzo (pilot), Tullio Crosio (co-pilot) and Giuseppe Della Gatta (radio operator) onboard a Dornier Wal. Other crew-members survived the crash and were quickly rescued (Nobile, 1975, p. 299-300).

was, rather, born out of a profoundly felt moral obligation, shaped by solidarity, personal relationships with some of the missing and their families, and a general knowledge of how survival in the Arctic could be associated with unpredictable circumstances.

During the return voyage of the *Città di Milano* from Kings Bay to Italy, Albertini and his companions were haunted by the mysterious fate of the so-called “Envelope Group”, (Albertini, 1932, p. 3). This sense of an unfinished duty intensified once back in Italy, when Albertini met Giorgio Pontremoli, brother of the missing physicist Aldo, and soon after his mother, Lucia Pontremoli (Albertini, 1932, pp. 3-4). Her determination was decisive: she expressed an unshakeable conviction that a further attempt must be made, even if undertaken alone or against prevailing opinion.

Albertini himself initially approached the idea with deep pessimism. His recent ordeal had left him with vivid memories of fog, wind, and utter barrenness, and with no illusion about the brutality of an Arctic winter. Yet this feeling did not translate into resignation. Instead, it sharpened his sense of responsibility: if a new expedition were to be undertaken, it had to cover the largest possible area with intellectual honesty, without feeding false hopes, and with a clear awareness of the risks involved.

In principle, without an appropriately conducted attempt, no one could exclude that the *Italia* disaster might have been survivable.

Thinking about the long record of Arctic exploration and rescue attempts, Albertini recalled numerous cases in which explorers had endured extreme conditions for months or even years, often with minimal resources (Albertini, 1932, pp. 4-6).

Of course, Albertini had a clear knowledge of how difficult was to try and actually trek through the pack without appropriate equipment and training, and was also aware that, unlike other crews in the Arctic, the men left onboard *Italia* could count on neither. Nevertheless, abandoning the search without one last, well-structured attempt, would represent a moral failure.

Equally influent on his decision was the public climate he perceived both in Italy and abroad. Scandinavian observers and Arctic specialists conveyed their expectation that Italy would not leave the matter unresolved. For Albertini, this reinforced the idea that a new expedition was not merely a national gesture but part of a broader ethical tradition in

which no final verdict could be accepted without exhausting all reasonable attempts.

Furthermore, it was unlikely that the Italian government would have directly taken charge of a national search effort; Mussolini's nationalist regime had already to face embarrassment for the accident and for having had to rely on foreign support – including from politically distant Soviet Union – to recover its men. Additional unfruitful attempts would have been operationally costly and difficult to justify, while a private initiative would have been much easier to support and defend on the political side.

Ultimately, Albertini decided to act not because he firmly believed in success – in fact, he did not – but because he was convinced that attempting a final search was necessary before giving up the last hopes of finding “living men”.

The expedition of 1929 emerged therefore as an act of conscience: a deliberate acceptance of responsibility toward the missing men and their families, and a refusal to allow uncertainty to harden into abandonment.

Setting up the expedition: the Heimen-SUCAI as an operational model

The expedition of the *Heimen-SUCAI* represents a distinctive case in the history of Italian exploration for the simplicity, effectiveness and coherence of its structure.

First of all, Albertini could not rely on the amplitude of equipment and organization as those provided in 1928 by the large state-funded search and rescue missions. Icebreakers such as the Soviet *Krassin* or *Malygin*, or support for aerial surveys – to be used in cooperation with land-based sledged patrols – were certainly not in the cards. The kind of budget which could reasonably be gathered for the enterprise could only afford implementing an efficient, lightweight expedition. This would have been optimized for land surveys (on-foot, ski, sledge), coastal observation with medium-haul high-sea transfers between islands. This was also, after all, the type of operational profile in which Albertini had proven himself more directly in 1928 and with the most relevant results. Although this type of reconnaissance lacked the wide-area observation capabilities of aerial surveying and the ability of forcing a way through medium-density ice fields, it allowed for a direct, close screening of details which might have been indicative

of the presence of survivors or, should there be none, of their final fate.

Even today, as then, I am convinced that anyone who could command an icebreaker and load aboard it aeroplanes, sledges, and dogs could (...) consider himself the best-equipped Arctic explorer and solve, decisively and in a short time, many problems that still remain unresolved.

In fact, only small aircraft can be loaded onto whaling vessels, and these cannot reach the area of operations because of ice conditions that hinder the progress of the whaler, but at precisely that season when the great and persistent Arctic fogs completely paralyse any possibility of flight.

Long range aircraft, departing in the appropriate season from bases at the edge of the ice, in my view lend themselves little to detailed search operations.

I therefore decided to adopt a whaling vessel, dogs and sledges, as well as large motor launches for coastal exploration in open-water areas.

Undoubtedly antiquated means, yet allowing actions which, though limited, were nevertheless thorough, and offering the great advantage of an absolute capacity for calculating and foreseeing risk – an incalculable advantage given the nature, the characteristics, and the precedents of the enterprise I was about to undertake (Albertini, 1932, pp. 10-11)⁴

Albertini introduced a basic methodological constraint that defined his strategy: the expedition would seek only locations where human survival could reasonably be expected, even after a long period. Assuming that survival, though very unlikely, had somehow been achieved, attention was to be directed at coastlines, islands and regions where some kind of shelter, game and driftwood might have offered minimal subsistence. On the other hand, Albertini's careful analysis of the areas where the missing airship might have come to rest pointed to a vast expanse of possible places the lost crew might have attempted to reach. A crucial variable was the possibility that some of *Italia's* men, if still alive, might have made for land: survival on the melting pack between July and August 1928 would have been impossible. On land, the generally meagre resources available in the

4 «Ancora oggi, come allora, sono convinto che chi potesse disporre di un rompighiaccio, ed a bordo di esso caricare aeroplani, slitte e cani, potrebbe, ben sicuro di dire la verità, considerarsi il più attrezzato esploratore artico e risolvere a colpo sicuro ed in breve tempo, molti problemi ancor sul tappeto. Difatti solo piccoli apparecchi possono essere caricati su baleniera, e questi non possono trovarsi sul luogo d'azione, per le condizioni dei ghiacci ostacolanti l'avanzata della baleniera, che in quella stagione in cui le grandi persistenti nebbie artiche paralizzano totalmente ogni possibilità di volo. Apparecchi di grande autonomia, e quindi partenti in stagione opportuna da base ai limiti dei ghiacci, poco, a mio avviso, si prestano per ricerche minuziose. Risolsi quindi di adottare baleniera, cani e slitte, nonché grossi motoscafi per esplorazioni costiere in zone d'acqua. Mezzi indubbiamente antiquati, ma permettenti azioni, se pur limitate, tuttavia minuziose, e offrenti il grande vantaggio di assoluta possibilità di calcolo di previsione del rischio; vantaggio incalcolabile dato il genere, le caratteristiche, i precedenti della impresa che stavo per iniziare».

Arctic had sometimes been adequate to sustain explorers in the past, often in ways that allowed a safe, though unexpected, return.

The resulting definition of search zones was based on translating environmental analysis into operational planning. For this reason, Albertini considered a very wide region of possibility, including rather far, insular areas which might have been reached, from the presumed landing region, by men drifting with the ice and walking on it.

The areas interesting for me were:

- a) The northern and eastern coasts of Northeast Land [currently Nordaustlandet, ed. n.].
- b) The Wiche Islands group [Kong Karls Land].
- c) The eastern coasts of the Edge and Barents islands.
- d) The north-western coasts of the Franz Josef archipelago.
- e) I also entertained strong hopes regarding the Victoria and White Islands group [Viktoriya and Kvitøya], since I ascertained that on 24 May 1928 that area was dominated by a strong depression; and I assumed that, given the tangential nature of the wind in that zone and the fact that the balloon's hypothetical route also intersected that zone, should the static navigation have continued to penetrate into that depression, the balloon would have hardly escaped from it. Furthermore, the ice drifts, influenced by the great northern currents, circulate in a vortex around those islands.
- f) Lastly, the western coasts of Novaya Zemlya (Albertini, 1932, p. 9-10)⁵

Once the general specifications of the proposed expedition had been defined, Albertini was able to define a quotation for the needed resources.

I drew up a budget estimate of 1,200,000 lire. A Financial Committee was established in Milan, composed of Senators Silvio Crespi, Senatore Borletti, Giuseppe Bevione, and Commander Merli. The members of the Committee, showing great commitment to the cause and finding a deep and widespread response in all circles, were able, within a short period of time, to provide the necessary funds. The Government and the National Fascist Party contributed substantially to the financing. I also believe it my

⁵ «Le zone a me interessanti risultarono: a) Le coste settentrionali ed orientali della Terra di Nord-Est. b) Il gruppo delle isole Wiches. c) Le coste orientali delle isole di Edge e di Barents. d) Le coste Nord-Ovest dell'arcipelago di Francesco Giuseppe. e) Nutrivo inoltre forti speranze sul gruppo delle isole Victoria e White, in quanto accertai che il 24 maggio del 1928 tale zona era dominata da forte depressione, e presumevo, data la tangenzialità del vento a tale zona e dato che la rotta ipotetica del pallone intersecava pure tale zona, che qualora la navigazione statica fosse durata fino ad addentrarsi in detta depressione, ben difficilmente il pallone avrebbe potuto uscirne. Inoltre le derive dei ghiacci, influenzate dalle grandi correnti del Nord, giuocano a vortice intorno a quelle isole. f) Da ultime le coste occidentali della Novaya Zemlya».

duty to recall that those who contributed most significantly and privately to the funding were His Holiness the Pope, His Excellency the Head of the Government, as well as Mrs Pontremoli, Count Contini, and Commander Merli. The total sum raised amounted to 1,192,448 lire. The expedition as a whole cost 1,012,448 lire (Albertini, 1932, pp. 11-12)⁶

It is worth mentioning that Albertini had also obtained a financial contribution from the *Ente Nazionale per la Cinematografia (ENAC)*, which required that a film operator be associated with the expedition as a crew-member. This was Umberto Della Valle, who was to have a peculiar role in the story. At the end of the journey, he would prepare materials to produce a one-and-half-hour silent film of remarkable quality, titled: «*Il Mistero dell'Artide*» (“The Mystery of the Arctic”) which was released and circulated as a sort of *ante litteram* documentary. It was an effective, vivid and meaningful testimony of the expedition – also a crucial historical source – one of the very first examples of a filmed geographic travelogue. A more detailed discussion of the document is presented in Annex 5.

In preparing the expedition, time was obviously a major factor. A return to the search region one year after the *Italia* mishap would have already implied that any survivor would have had to go through the harsh Arctic winter. Yet Albertini insisted that his goal was to search for “living men”, so that the only reasonable hope was therefore to begin the expedition as soon as environmental conditions allowed. Late April and May were traditionally the starting period for Arctic explorations – not for regular logistic services – from Svalbard toward the high North, with April generally devoted to arrival and preparation, and May offering the most favourable mix of weather stability, daylight and ice.

Light conditions in Svalbard would have become acceptable in March already, but temperatures and ice would have made long surveys on foot and seafaring much more difficult, especially for independent expeditions such as the one Albertini was organizing.

For all of the above, it was necessary to make arrangements for de-

⁶ «In base alla sopra specificata scelta di mezzi, compilai un preventivo spesa di lire 1.200.000. Fu costituito a Milano un Comitato finanziario composto dei signori senatori Silvio Crespi, Senatore Borletti, Giuseppe Bevione e del comm. Merli. I signori del Comitato con grande interessamento alla causa, e trovando profonda eco in tutti gli ambienti, poterono in breve spazio di tempo, approntare il fabbisogno. Il Governo ed il Partito Nazionale Fascista contribuirono largamente al finanziamento. Credo inoltre doveroso ricordare che chi maggiormente e privatamente contribuì al finanziamento furono Sua Santità il Pontefice, S. E. il Capo del Governo, oltre alla signora Pontremoli, al conte Contini ed al comm. Merli. La somma complessivamente raccolta risultò di lire 1.192.448. L'intera spedizione costò 1.012.448 lire».

parting continental Norway no later than mid-May 1929. Albertini had developed the general idea of the expedition after his encounter with the Pontremoli family in September 1928 and went to propose it for support to Mussolini in a meeting occurred in early February 1929: this left him with a mere three months to gather the equipment and deploy the search party.

In early March, Albertini left for Scandinavia to strike agreements and begin preparations (Albertini, 1932, pp. 12-14). He had developed, in time, a series of familiar contacts with experts (including figures such as Hjalmar Riiser Larsen and Adolf Hoel), institutions, firms and providers, in Norway and Sweden, and was well acquainted, by now, with maritime and Arctic *milieus*.

The right choice for the ship was paramount. It was necessary to select a relatively small whaling or sealing vessel, fitted with a reinforced hull and governing organs, to stand contact with ice and possible phases of block; it should have had a relatively powerful and reliable engine, adequate endurance to ensure safe long periods of navigation along ice margins and remote coasts. The events of 1928 had sufficiently shown the crucial role of radiotelegraphic communications and Albertini wanted also to make sure that powerful, reliable and redundant radio equipment be fitted on the ship and provided to land patrols. The decision was strategic: the vessel was to be conceived not only as a surveying platform *per se*, but as a versatile mobile base capable of integrating maritime navigation, coastal reconnaissance, and land patrols within a single logistical framework. Sledges, dogs, motorboats were not independent assets but extensions of the ship's reach, ensuring continuity between different modes of movement. Implementing such an operational system in the available short timeframe was quite challenging. The brand-new vessel Albertini had selected by studying the available documentation was called *Heimen*, and at the time was on a hunting tour in the White Sea. Since it had no wireless system, it was necessary to contact another boat in the area and have it relay the order for an immediate return to Norway.

In Albertini's evaluation, the *Heimen* fitted perfectly with his views. She was listed as first-class under Norwegian maritime regulations, had a gross tonnage of 118 tons (Albertini, 1932, p. 13). According to the historical data provided by the *Ishavsmuseet Aarvak*, she had been built in Rognan in 1929 as a sealer, purse seiner and expedition vessel, registered in Tromsø,

under a joint ownership (*Partrederi*) of the Jakobsen Brothers; her marking was T4TD⁷.

...Recently built of *pitch pine*, with frames spaced at two inches and an outer sheathing of *greenheart* designed to offer minimal resistance to ice pressure, she was powered by a 160 HP *Bolinder* semi-diesel engine. Immediately after taking possession of the vessel, I arranged for an iron reinforcement to be fitted along the keel, intended to distribute bow impacts, and for the stem to be extensively strengthened with solid iron bars. The propeller was suitably protected against underwater ice strikes by means of a recess in the afterbody profile; a complete sailing rig, fuel tanks with a capacity of forty tons of oil, and a 5 HP *Delco* auxiliary engine delivering 3 kW for electrical lighting completed the vessel's perfect equipment (Albertini, 1932, p. 13)⁸

The *Heimen* featured the following dimensions: length 26.4 m (86.7 ft), beam 7.0 m (23 ft), depth keel to deck 3.35 m (11 ft)⁹. The near-circular keel profile limited ice-hull interlocking. Under compressive forces from converging ice floes, the rounded geometry converted horizontal pressure into an upward component, tending to lift the vessel out of the ice rather

7 Source: Ishavsmuseet, <https://www.ishavsmuseet.no/skutekatalog/heimen-ii/>.

8 «...Costruita ultimamente in pitchpine con nervature distanti due pollici, e con rivestitura esterna di greenheart atta ad offrire la minima presa dei ghiacci era azionata da un motore Bolinder Semidiesel di 160 HP. Non appena entrai in possesso della nave, cercai che fosse provvista lungo la chiglia di armatura in ferro, atta a ripartire gli urti di punta e che la prua fosse abbondantemente rinforzata con spranghe pure di ferro. L'elica opportunamente difesa da eventuali colpi di ghiacci subacquei, in apposito incavo della sagoma poppiera; una attrezzatura completa per navigazione a vela, tanks per depositi nafta capaci di 40 tonnellate di combustibile, un motore Delco di 5 HP. e 3 kw. per illuminazione, completavano la perfetta attrezzatura della nave».

9 The ship was in fact a substitute of a previous *Heimen* (I), built in 1914, operated as a sail sloop, later engine-powered, under the same registration and wrecked in the White Sea in 1928 (see <https://www.ishavsmuseet.no/skutekatalog/heimen-i/>). After the 1929 Albertini expedition, *Heimen* (II) had a long story in Norway and the Arctic. Up until 1934, she served in British expeditions to Greenland and Baffin Island, including an overwintering in East Greenland. During World War II, she was requisitioned by the German occupying forces, for an intended use in the replacement of signal buoys along the coast. For this purpose, large parts of the row were removed, but the activity did not begin due to mechanical problems that held the ship in Svolvær until the end of the war. The vessel was subject to important works between 1949 and 1950, with major modification of her superstructure and the installation of a new power block. In 1951 it was re-engined with a Bolinder-Munktel, 2-cylinder 250 Hp, and in 1959 she received a new Wichman 400 Hp. After the transformation, the ship had her tonnage increased to 142 tons and her length to 29.6 m. This evolution (including a re-registration from T4TD to T84T) indicated continued commercial utility and modernization well into the post-war period. In 1962 she was used for a private expedition and photographic campaign to Svalbard and Bjørnøya by Finn Rønne, a Norwegian-American explorer and US Navy officer. In 1966 a change in ownership was recorded, from the Jakobsen Brothers to another *Partrederi*, i.e. *Heimen m.fl.* (*Heimen* and others). In 1970, the *Heimen* was declared unseaworthy and sunk in Veggefjorden. Sources: <https://www.ishavsmuseet.no/skutekatalog/heimen-ii/> and http://www.ronneantarcticexplorers.com/Finn_Ronne.htm.

than letting it get restrained or structurally compromised.

According to Bonola, (n.d., p. 6), the *Heimen* was called “in Tromsø with the pompous name of ‘*Krassin* of Norway’”.

The ship and its crew, including skipper Lars Jakobsen¹⁰, were contracted for the expedition to operate the *Heimen* and take care of its vital systems in general activity: these Norwegian components were then the captain, two engineers, four sailors, a cook and an ice pilot, plus a wireless operator that was added later (Albertini, 1932, p. 25). For the specific purposes of the expedition, however, Albertini relied on a group of Italian members, selected for taking care of the specific tasks including on-land operations and patrols, as well as for a secondary activity in scientific research. He hand-picked them from his own *milieu* of Alpine experts and climbers and described them vividly in his 1932 book. As it was not uncommon in the national views and narratives in that historical phase of Polar explorations, these figures are somewhat put in the spotlight, while the Norwegian members are less described. In spite of this, Albertini had the Norwegian crew in high regard: “They were all honest and silent collaborators; with the spirit of men of the North they fully shared in our anxieties, always equal to every circumstance and to the aims and reasons for which we were striving” (Albertini, 1932, p. 26)¹¹.

The Italian components for the expedition are listed in Figure 2.

The Website of the Midt-Troms Museum features a picture reproduced in figure 3, showing *Heimen*’s Norwegian crew, with names listed. According to this source, they are, left to right:

Arne Karlsen, an unknown visitor, the cook Alf (...), Harald Grøttum, Malangen, Magnus Medby who was the 2nd engineer, Ingvar Holmenes, Harry Furskognes, Skipper Lars Jakobsen, Nils Småslett, Einar Jakobsen, Guttorm Jakobsen, Harald Heiskel, Johan Sandvik, Julius Jensen, Alfred Evensen and Journalist Tormod (Tomme) Olsen, who is on board to ask for news¹²

10 In both the expedition logbook and his published memoir, Albertini refers to crew-member Jakobsen (indicated as Jacobsen in the memoir) as the leading member of the Norwegian crew, without indication of his first name. Bonola (n.d.) also refers to him by the name Jacobsen. The man is Lars Martin Kristian Jakobsen (1881-1976). According to the *Norsk Polarhistorie* web portal, he was born in Balsnes and worked as “skipper on the Arctic Ocean in the 1908-1950 period (with the exception of the war years)”. See: <https://polarhistorie.no/personer/lars-jakobsen/> (last access January 26, 2026).

11 «*Furono tutti onesti e silenziosi collaboratori; col loro animo di uomini del Nord parteciparono in pieno alle nostre ansie, sempre all'altezza di ogni circostanza e degli scopi e ragioni per cui noi battagliavamo*».

12 See page at <https://digitaltmuseum.no/0210111807115/mannskap-ombord-pa-fangstskute-heimen>, automatic translation into English.



Fig. 2. The Italian components of the Heimen-SUCAI expedition. From left to right, top to bottom: Gianni Albertini (age 27, Commander), Piero Zanetti (age 30, Second in Command, supply manager), Marco Urbano (age 25, research operator – meteorology, patrol wireless operator), Augusto Bonola (age 23, research operator – zoology, patrol medical attendant), Achille Peroni (age 25, ship's physician, research operator – physiology and Earth science), Franco Pugliese (age 27, wireless operator), Umberto Della Valle (age 40, cinematographer), Giulio Guedoz (age 23, cook, general services operator and patrol guide)

Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»



Fig. 3. Norwegian crewmembers of Heimen in a picture taken in 1929, after “the return from the White Sea”, apparently immediately before departure for the Albertini expedition
Source: Mid-Troms Museum

Unlike their Norwegian companions, Italian members had no professional maritime experience and were coming from composite backgrounds, but most of them shared solid mountaineering and Alpine climbing competence, along with strong personal bonds to the leader, sense of discipline and a remarkable capability to deal with unexpected situations and operational conditions (Albertini, 1932, p. 21; Bonola, n.d., p. 8). Under Albertini’s leadership, Zanetti, Peroni and Bonola ended up serving as *de facto* officers in the expedition hierarchy, taking charge of watches and several other matters, while Pugliese was mostly involved in managing the complex wireless devices and Guedoz and Della Valle were only occasionally diverted from their basic tasks. When possible, all of the Italian crewmembers actively assisted the Norwegian ones in maintenance and housekeeping of the ship.

As previously mentioned, fitting the *Heimen* with appropriately performing radio systems was one among Albertini’s major concerns, from

the very beginning. In comparison to present-day approach to communications in remote environments, the use of wireless transmission – which may appear an obvious, safety-critical service to us – was not to be taken for granted at the time. Additionally, the standard systems would work by radiotelegraphy instead of voice exchange: this required adequately trained and skilled operators.

The fact that ships were not always equipped with radio would become relevant issues in case of emergency, as the events of 1928 had demonstrated.

Albertini was therefore aware of the need for a powerful and versatile set of radio systems, to be optimized for his communication requirements. The *Heimen* needed to have its own station to ensure telegraphic exchange with its surroundings, all of Svalbard and the patrol(s) on land. Furthermore, the expedition would have benefited from a direct link with Italy, to speed up contacts with the higher-level authorities as well as the press and media which were covering the search.

The configuration had therefore to include three types of sets: a medium-wave set for the ship, a short-wave one to ensure communication as far as to Rome (San Paolo station), and two portable devices, each weighing 30-40 kilograms, to be used by surveying sledged-patrol and motorboat. Due to the short available time, Albertini could not find any industrial provider to build and setup the equipment. Instead, he found help from a young engineer, Gnesutta, assisted by Franco Pugliese, who could do the job “aided in this by the generous hospitality of the workshops Allocchio and Bacchini” (Albertini, 1932, p. 18).

It was at the same time necessary to ensure that at least some members of the crew were familiar with this type of device and well acquainted in the use of morse code. Since this was not the case with the existing Norwegian crew, a radio operator – with first-class license – was provided by the *Norsk Marconi Kompany* (Albertini, 1932, p. 18). Two members of the Italian crew would also manage radiotelegraphic communications: Franco Pugliese and Marco Urbano. Both were very dedicated technicians, but Urbano – who was also chosen for the patrols – was initially a complete novice to the technique. He had to teach himself and practice, among the many other preparations he oversaw. His skill, though basic initially, developed into a sufficient level before the departure.

The final tests and fine-tuning works on the radio equipment took

place just before the ship left Bergen. In the end, the expedition could rely on an efficient and professional wireless service: it was assigned the official temporary call-sign “LDIV”, which was used in all radio exchanges (Pugliese, 1932, p. 149).

The ‘Norsk Marconi-Kompany’ of Oslo installed on the ship a station whose transmitter operated on wavelengths of 600-800 metres and whose receiver covered from 250 to 23,000 metres. A 3-kW, 32-V Delco motor supplied sufficient power. (...) I also intended to equip the vessel with a short-wave set capable of communicating with Rome and of maintaining contact with Norwegian short-wave stations, to be used in those areas in which I considered the small medium-wave set insufficient. (...) The short-wave station, which from the beginning of the expedition to its end maintained constant communication with the San Paolo Station in Rome, owing to the limited space on board the ‘Heimen’ and the impossibility of providing a high-power source of motive force, could certainly not be of the output normally adopted on large ships. Thus the problem of maintaining regular communications over distances exceeding four thousand kilometres from regions in which the persistence of solar rays constitutes a major obstacle to wave propagation was solved by ensuring the maximum efficiency of the station and by an appropriate choice of wavelength. After some experiments, a wavelength of 30 metres was fixed as the normal one, as it appears to be the least subject to the influence of solar rays and to the fading so frequent in the use of short waves.

The station, built entirely with Italian materials, had an input power of 600 watts, supplied by a high-voltage generating unit.

By the end of the Expedition, more than 35,500 words had been transmitted and an equal number received, and news reached us that our signals had been heard with great strength in New Zealand and in South America. Lastly, I wished to have at my disposal small portable stations, of great lightness and robustness, with a range of 200 kilometres, thus capable of always maintaining contact between each of our patrols and the ship.

Gnesutta and Pugliese likewise prepared such sets, specially designed for the motor launch used in coastal exploration and for sledges; they represented an excellent solution to the problem of communications within a radius of five hundred kilometres with equipment that was light, robust, and easy to operate. The fruit of experience gained by radio experimenters over long distances and with very small power, these stations – in which the transmitting and receiving sections were contained in a single case – were powered by batteries that ensured eighty hours of operation (Albertini, 1932, pp. 18-19)¹³

13 «La ‘Norsk Marconi-Kompany’ di Oslo mi piazzò sulla nave una Stazione che risultò di 600-800 metri d’onda per la trasmittente, e di 250 a 23.000 per la ricevente. Il Delco Motor 3 kw. 32 v., fornì l’energia sufficiente.

As the deadline for the departure was closing in, Albertini was also heavily busy in selecting and acquiring materials and dogs for the on-land patrols, a type of activity for which he had a well-tested experience. This work had to be integrated into the overall, quite complex logistics of the whole expedition.

Much of the equipment and supplies were gathered from providers that he had already interacted with in 1928, many of whom were based in Scandinavia and had specific expertise in services for Arctic operations.

Albertini chose the equipment with an operational profile in his mind. The patrols were supposed to be able to move both on thin bay ice and also through a thicker, more crevassed one; this convinced him of the opportunity of building stretched sledges, 4 metres long, paying attention to their flexibility in order to prevent structural failures. Considering that the expedition was to take place in the Arctic summer, the surface over which the sledges would have to travel would be of uneven bearing capacity and variable friction, which could have complicated progress over long distances. For this reason, Albertini had the runners sheathed in German silver, in order to obtain better glide.

Skis were prepared with a length of 2.4 metres, 7 centimetres wide, fitted with «first quality icori» and equipped with Asmu bindings. Other ma-

Pure la 'Norske Marconi-Kompany' si interessò di fornirci un radiotelegrafista norvegese con brevetto di prima classe, e le regolari concessioni del Governo norvegese. Avevo inoltre in animo di munire la nave di apparecchio ad onde corte capace di collegare con Roma, e di mantenere collegamenti colle Stazioni norvegesi ad onde corte da usarsi nelle zone in cui ritenevo insufficiente la Stazioncina ad onde medie. Molte Case italiane ed estere, da me interrogate in proposito, declinarono ogni incarico per insufficienza di tempo. Fu un giovane ingegnere milanese, Gnesutta, che, coadiuvato da Franco Pugliese, si assunse in pieno la grande responsabilità di progettare, costruire, collaudare tale complesso radiotelegrafico, in ciò aiutato dalla generosa ospitalità delle officine Allocchio e Bacchini. La Stazione ad onde corte, che dal principio della Spedizione alla fine, mantenne costante collegamento con la Stazione di San Paolo a Roma, a causa della ristrettezza di spazio a bordo dell'«Heimen» e dell'impossibilità di disporre di alta sorgente di forza motrice, non poté certo essere della potenza di solito adottata a bordo delle grandi navi. Così il problema di comunicare regolarmente a distanza superiore ai quattromila chilometri da regioni nelle quali la persistenza dei raggi solari costituisce un grande ostacolo alla propagazione delle onde, fu risolto curando la massima efficienza della stazione e con una scelta opportuna della lunghezza d'onda. Dopo alcuni esperimenti, fu fissata come onda normale quella di 30 metri, che sembra la meno soggetta all'influsso dei raggi solari ed alle evanescenze così frequenti nell'uso delle onde corte. La Stazione costruita con materiale intieramente italiano fu della potenza di 600 watts alimentazione, fornito da un gruppo generatore ad alta tensione. Alla fine della Spedizione oltre 35.500 parole furono trasmesse ed altrettante ricevute e ci giunsero notizie, che i nostri segnali furono uditi con grande intensità nella Nuova Zelanda e nel Sud America. Da ultimo volevo avere a disposizione piccole Stazioni portatili, di grande leggerezza e solidità, con raggi d'azione di 200 chilometri, capaci quindi di collegare sempre colla nave ogni nostra pattuglia. Pure Gnesutta e Pugliese apprestarono tali apparecchi, appositamente studiati per il motoscafo di esplorazioni costiere e per slitte, che rappresentarono un'ottima risoluzione del problema delle comunicazioni nel raggio di cinquecento chilometri con apparecchi leggeri, robusti e di facile manovra. Frutto dell'esperienza portata dai radio sperimentatori a grandi distanze e con piccolissime potenze, queste stazioni in cui la parte trasmittente e ricevente è raccolta in unica cassetta, furono alimentate da pile che assicuravano ottanta ore di funzionamento».

terials included small modular lightweight sledges, kayaks and a collapsible canvas boat.

An obviously necessary equipment for field operations and survival in emergencies were adequate tents. These were provided by an Italian manufacturer, Moretti, whose firm had already worked in 1928 for the *Italia* expedition creating, among others, the tent which was to make history (and propaganda) as the “Red Tent”¹⁴. The tents provided in 1929 were of the Wimper type, c. 76, 2 x 1.60 metres, pretty much the same used by Albertini in 1928, with the difference that the internal lining was in silk instead of flannel. Moretti also provided sleeping bags, each one able to contain 4 persons, made of lambskin, lined internally with flannel and externally with waterproof fabric, and heavy large impermeable covers.

A crucial element for the patrol equipment was, obviously, clothing: this was acquired in Italy.

The footwear, cut and sewn by a trusted craftsman from Milan, partially solved what I believe to be the most difficult problem of Arctic equipment.

They were made of leather subjected to a special tanning process, and internally lined with cat fur.

I did not depart very far from the normal skier's outfit in the style of the clothing. An excellent fabric of the mountain valleys performed admirably (Albertini, 1932, p. 17)¹⁵

14 What was later to be called the “Red Tent” was originally a (4 x 4 metres), 4-person white-canvas tent loaded onboard airship *Italia*, along with other fieldwork equipment. It had been acquired primarily to shelter a few scientist in the case of temporary landings on the pack for data collection. After the crash on May 25, 1928, the tent was among the wreckage scattered on the scene and became the shelter for the 9 survivors who were there. In order to make it more visible, it was then crudely painted with fuchsine, i.e. a reddish substance normally stored in glass bottles for measurement purposes. Fuchsine, however, is chemically sensitive to solar radiation, and quickly fades when exposed to direct sunlight. For this reason, after a short time, the tent turned again to a greyish colour, hard to spot in the white expanses of the Arctic. Nevertheless, it materially stood well the environmental conditions experienced by the crew, for 48 days, on the pack. It therefore proved crucial in their survival and was later recovered, along with other equipment, when the Soviet ice-breaker *Krassin* rescued the remaining survivors. It was shipped back to Italy and, as a spectacular testimony of the survivors' ordeal, it was initially shown in museums and exhibits. During this time, the Moretti company had its logo conspicuously applied onto the fabric, which had not been evidently marked initially. After long public displays, the original “Red Tent” suffered material damage and neglect. After decades of storage, it was carefully restored and is now on exhibit at the *Museo Scienza e Tecnologia “Leonardo da Vinci”* in Milan, Italy (Iezzi and Pietrangeli, 2023). The logo “Moretti” was, not by chance, visibly applied to the tents provided by the firm to the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition in 1929, with obvious marketing effects.

15 «Le scarpe, tagliate e cucite da un fedele milanese risolverono in parte quello che io credo sia il più difficile problema di equipaggiamento artico. Esse erano in cuoio sottoposto a concia speciale, ed internamente rivestite di

Food supplies were carefully prepared by taking into account the fundamental needs of an Arctic expedition, including both onboard crew and patrol groups. For the onboard supplies, a matter of relevant importance was a disciplined consumption of well calculated rations; these were therefore packed in twenty large crates, each one containing items for the 1-week allowance of food for all crewmembers. Onboard food was chosen as much as possible according to the normal everyday life habits. This is an element, along with steady and regular quantities, which may contribute to supporting the morale of members during long expeditions in remote environments and confined contexts, particularly if operation is subjects to remarkable unpredictability.

A different approach was to be followed in the selection and preparation of food supplies for on-land marches. In this case, the small crew of the patrols had to carry their own food on the sledges, taking into account the normal caloric requirements and also the possibility of unpredicted conditions which might have delayed their return to the ship or their recovery. In this case, adequate nutritional characteristics of food were paramount, particularly the energetic values; but on the other hand, it was necessary that the transported food be as concentrated as possible in terms of volume and weight, while keeping the typical character of supplies in expeditions, i.e. durability and simplicity of use.

In Copenhagen I ordered the same pemmican with which the Nobile expedition had provisioned itself the previous year, and whose great qualities I myself had tested; only, I had the percentage of cereals increased at the expense of meat and fats, knowing the hunting possibilities of the area I was to cover. I also stocked up on the same types of patrol rations in view of a possible overwintering, and ordered a quantity sufficient for a year and a half of living. I completed the food outfit with a substantial reserve of high-vitamin lemon extracts (Albertini, 1930, pp. 14-15)

It is relevant to observe the attention put by Albertini as to how to arrange safe and appropriate nourishment for his men in case of a forced or emergency wintering, a possibility well to be considered since it had not been uncommon in the past and was still a likely situation given the many variables to which the endeavour was subject.

An all-important component of the expedition as it was designed was

pelliccia di gatto. Il tipo dei vestiti non lo tenni molto distante dal normale costume di sciatore. Un'ottima stoffa valligiana si comportò egregiamente».

to find and ensure proper training of sledge-dogs. In order to arrange this aspect, Albertini went, in Copenhagen, at the *Grønlands Styrelse* (Greenland Administration). Among the functions of this Danish state agency was also to provide information as well as specialised supplies, including the related authorization and paperwork. Through its services, Albertini could secure the acquisition of 10 Greenland sledge-dogs from Southern Greenland; they were to be shipped to Bergen, Norway, no later than May 5. This group of dogs was not already coming as a team, so it was necessary to rely on other animals who had already some training. For this acquisition, Albertini turned to the *Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulcompani* and obtained that a fully trained team of dogs be provided to him upon arrival in Longyearbyen.

...At Advent Bay as well I ordered a considerable number of harnesses of the type I had already tested the previous year: collar harnesses with two traces. A plentiful number, for I knew how eagerly the dogs like to chew and eat the harnesses. I also stocked up on stockfish and special biscuits for feeding the dogs (Albertini, 1932, p. 16)¹⁶

It is interesting to note that, as a secondary purpose of the expedition, Albertini wanted to include scientific research. He was convinced, indeed, that any long journey in the Arctic, a region whose environment was still among the less known on the Planet at the time, implied the opportunity – and somewhat a moral need – to advance, as much as possible, human knowledge about it. Albertini's view on this point is very well understandable.

On the one hand, the collection of scientific data, though partial and limited, did have a value in contributing to foster knowledge about the Arctic environment. The old days in which vast areas of the region were unexplored and not even the most general features of its environmental phenomena were known were progressively left behind. Technology was making remarkable progress and scientific research was advancing through expeditions and observatories. It was not a simple progress, though. The harsh environment during exploration was typically a problem for precision instrumental measurements by the use of mechanical devices¹⁷; data

16 «Pure ad Advent Bay ordinai un rilevante numero di finimenti sul tipo di quelli già da me sperimentati il precedente anno: a collare e due tirelle. Abbondante numero perchè sapevo con quanto appetito i cani amano mangiare i finimenti. Mi rifornii pure di baccalà e di biscotti speciali per nutrire i cani».

17 During the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition, as it was frequently the case in similar contexts, much time and effort was spent in the system integration of scientific instruments. For instance,

acquisition and collection were often procedurally complicated. Furthermore, both for explorers and research centres, the lack of previous large bodies of information about the Arctic made the work of scientists more tentative in many cases. These two factors increased, on the other hand, the value of appropriate and successful data collection, albeit limited: it was relevant to try and gather at least *some* usable scientific information, even if obtained as a side-effect of a search expedition.

The research programme that was output by the expedition was to be developed in the following thematic areas: geographical exploration, meteorology, physiology and zoology.

In 1929, the Arctic was still poorly charted and relatively unknown in many of its environmental features and characteristics. Although the surroundings of North Pole *per se* had been observed from the surface of the pack and from the air on several occasions, there were uncertainties about the existence of yet unknown islands in the vast expanses of the Arctic cap. *Norge's* exploration in 1926 had observed a corridor through an uncharted area between the North Pole and Alaska, finding no sign of land. Closer to Svalbard, *Italia's* second Arctic flight in 1928 had allowed to observe about 48,000 km² of unexplored areas and to exclude the existence, in the observed area, of the so-called Gillis' land – variously described by previous explorers (Nobile, 1930, p. 147). During the 1928 search and rescue operation, Italian Army officer Gennaro Sora had discovered a small island that he had called «*Isola degli Alpini*», i.e. Alpinijøya, in north Svalbard. Many spots and places in the archipelago had no toponymy yet and were represented on available cartography with approximations and errors. Sea depths, particularly along the coastlines, were known to a very limited extent, making navigation a potentially dangerous task even for small and manoeuvrable vessels. Albertini was familiar with these general aspects and knew that geographical exploration would be a likely outcome of the journey, particularly as a side effect of the thorough observation of remote and solitary coasts, rocks and islets.

As for the other indicated research areas, they were obviously dependent on conditions to be expected during the journey.

It was naturally appropriate to have two crewmembers with medical competence: they were Achille Peroni, a young but fully qualified doctor;

vibration of the ship caused by the engine or her ample motions in high-sea crossings, caused perturbations in the meteorological recording devices and damages to the delicate components of the wireless hardware (Albertini, 1931, p.32).

and Augusto Bonola, a medical student. Given the peculiar environment and the operative character of the foreseeable activities, human safety and performance implied a continuous and thorough monitoring, even on well trained, young, healthy and athletic subjects such as the Italian crew members. It was understandable, therefore, that Peroni's work could develop a secondary scientific function in medical and physiological research. Bonola, on the other hand, could at best provide assistance to his more senior companion in his medical functions, but his general competence on biology and organisms fitted well with naturalistic investigations.

A same dual-value could be considered with regard to meteorological data: an obvious necessity for a safe development of the expedition was to appropriately keep track of weather conditions both locally, in the various places the crew was going to visit, and also, when possible, through other meteorological stations. A most natural scientific output could have been produced by upgrading instrumentation and recording procedures to go beyond the basic needs of the expedition and to add information for later analysis. Obviously, this type of recording would also prove useful in the area of geographical studies and also in the physiological / medical ones.

Finally, the radio operations *per se* could have some scientific relevance: wireless systems were often non industrial at the time, and were supposed to operate at different ranges in different types of deployment: these included high-sea crossings, coastal navigation and stationary permanence in fjords and bays; or on-land transects in rugged and mountainous regions. In a time in which radio exchanges were dependent on the ability of operators to deal with precise wavelength management, direct maintenance of devices, complex geophysical and atmospheric phenomena, proper operation and communication was not a granted result.

Only one year earlier, communications between the "Red Tent" and its rescuers had been hampered by this kind of phenomenon and the new expedition was to suffer snags and issues of similar type, as Albertini and his crew expected. The radio set-ups and use were therefore an important subject of research in their own right.

In foreseeing and preparing equipment and plans for these observations, taking into account both the deadlines and the secondary nature of the activities, there was no pretence of exhaustiveness nor of high-research profile: this is evident throughout the reports of the researchers (see Annexes 1-4). Yet, the work was far from an improvised one; it was

generally based on experiments developed with support of institutional and specialised referents¹⁸; and in the end, it did return significant, innovative output.

While the geographical results of the expedition turned out to be inherent to the expedition itself and are widely discussed in chapter 2, scientific results in the other areas are presented in Annexes 1, 2, 3 and 4, as translation of the official reports published in an appendix to Albertini's 1932 memoir.

The ship, the wireless systems and the crew were ready and the loading of supplies and fuel was completed in Bergen in the few days before the departure, planned for May 15.

A somewhat peculiar moment was the arrival of the sledge dogs, transported in crates delivered to the ship by a pickup truck. The agitated state of the animals struck the attention of both Albertini and Bonola, who annotate, respectively:

The dogs arrived from Greenland turbulent and highly agitated, preceded by a reputation for untamable ferocity after having bitten several policemen during unloading. They were confined in sturdy wooden crates from which we would not be able to release them until we had left territorial waters¹⁹ (Albertini, 1932, p. 28)

Last to arrive, and much anticipated, were ten sledge dogs from Greenland, which an envoy of ours had managed to gather with great difficulty in those regions. Confined in as many wooden crates and agitated by the

18 These were the Institute of Physiology of the University of Milan (Prof. Carlo Foà) for the medical and physiological studies. In addition, specific analytical work on atmospheric composition was conducted by Peroni under the guidance of Prof. Giulio Natta, of the Politechnical University of Milan (Peroni, 1932, pp. 117, 124-125); the Brera Astronomical Observatory (Prof. Emilio Bianchi) for the meteorological observations (Urbano, 1932, pp. 133-134); the University of Bologna, through Prof. Alessandro Ghigi, for the biological and zoological research (Bonola, 1932, p.140). With regard to radio transmission, according to Pugliese's own technical report (Pugliese, 1932, pp. 147-148), the experimental system was conceived and developed by engineers Gnesutta, Pagliari e Sandri in Milan, with Pugliese acting as both collaborator and field experimenter. Construction and trials were carried out with the technical support of the Allocchio e Bacchini workshops, which provided the industrial environment for the development of the apparatus. While a standard ship-board station was supplied by the Norsk Marconi Company of Oslo, the shortwave and portable sets represented an original programme of applied engineering research, aimed at long-distance communication with limited power and under extreme Arctic conditions. Scientific support was also provided by Prof. Björn Helland Hansen, director of the *Norske Meteorologiske Institutt* (Pugliese, 1932, p. 154).

19 «I cani arrivarono turbolenti e irritatissimi dalla Groenlandia, preceduti da fama di ferocia indomabile per avere morsicato diversi poliziotti durante lo scarico, e rinchiusi in robuste casse di legno dalle quali non avremmo potuto toglierli prima di uscire dalle acque territoriali».

long journey, they did not present a very reassuring sight (Bonola, n.d., p. 10)²⁰

Albertini decided to honour his own institution and his main sponsor, Roberto Maltini, by adding the acronym SUCAI to the ship's original name *Heimen*; the new combined name for the ship then became *Heimen-SUCAI*. The hull was repainted in white and the acronym SUCAI was marked on the two sides of the bow, while the name *Heimen* was visible on the front of the superstructure and on the stern. With reference to the latter, rather unclear images from Della Valle's film show a vertical sign next to the final "n" of the name, suggesting that the stern marking might have actually been "Heimen I" or "II". Beneath the name on the stern, as usual, a smaller marking indicated the port of registration, Tromsø.

On May 14, 1929, the *Heimen-SUCAI* left temporarily the loading quay and moved to the refuelling facility closer to the inner end of the fjord, and a full load of over 50 tons of fuel oil, kerosene and gasoline for the different needs was loaded. In the end, the ship looked very heavy and all available spaces, including most of the deck, had been filled with equipment and provisions (Albertini, 1932, p. 28; Bonola, n.d., p. 10).

The Geographical Context

At the time of the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition, the regions it visited were in quite different territorialization statuses and, in moving from one of them to another, Albertini and his men were virtually crossing back and forth various boundaries of the ecumene. Reading the pages of the logbook and the other documents, we see the ship moving from Bergen, a well-developed city of European Norway, to Tromsø, which was then establishing itself as the lively northernmost city of modern Scandinavia, proudly beyond the conventional limit of the Arctic Circle, yet already a sort of *belvedere*, an obvious last preliminary stop-over for all voyages into the vast and solemn expanses of the Great North. Soon after having left Tromsø, seafarers and explorers would have left behind continental Norway and would have commenced an often uncomfortable crossing towards the far "cold coasts". There, settlements would no longer have

²⁰ «Per ultimi e molto attesi, arrivarono dalla Groenlandia 10 cani da traino che un nostro inviato era riuscito a racimolare con grandi fatiche in quelle regioni. Chiusi in altrettante gabbie di legno ed eccitati dal lungo viaggio non avevano un aspetto molto rassicurante».

the appearance and *genius loci* of towns for ordinary civilian life, and rather would have those of purpose-built outposts in harsh regions where permanence was a challenge motivated by specific needs.

Svalbard, however, was paradoxically, in 1929, a more solidly settled region than the other areas that Albertini was planning to visit. Having lived for centuries in the condition of a *terra nullius*, variously used by different continental powers, the former “Spitsbergen” archipelago had seen the establishment of technical settlements and bases, which were generally accustomed, since the beginning of the twentieth century, to maintain a permanent presence and basic services to allow for several forms of local activity and transits.

Unlike Svalbard, the Franz Josef Land and Novaya Zemlya, then part of the Soviet Union, were to be considered spaces of almost absolute wilderness, where no structured settlements in the modern sense could be found. Moreover, the environmental conditions of Franz Josef Land and, to a large extent, also those of Novaya Zemlya, were generally harsher and more inhospitable than those of Svalbard, primarily due to the greater persistence of sea ice and the more limited influence of Atlantic currents.

However, the regions were not uninhabited in general terms. Small, mostly seasonal Pomor and Samoyed presences had been scattered for years and centuries throughout the archipelagos; hunters and trappers, along with fishermen, operated normally in at least some of the areas when weather conditions allowed. These exceptions required high levels of autonomy and independence from any external service, along with cultural and technical skills that qualified, *de facto*, these forms of presence as well-organized, survival-based type of life and business. A scientific base was established in 1929 in Franz Josef Land, under the direction of Otto Yulyevich Schmidt, as part of the expedition conducted by icebreaker *Se-dov* under the *Institute for the Study of the North (Institut po izucheniyu Severa)* (Vize, 1931, p. 3; Filin, 2021, p. 317).

Novaya Zemlya, partially due to its lower latitude that contributed giving it milder conditions in terms of temperature and ice formations, did have minimal and mostly seasonal settlements. During the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition, Albertini would try to reach the area of Malye Karmakuly, on the western coast of Novaya Zemlya’s Yuzhny Island. It was a small Nets and Pomor settlement, with a state-operated meteorological station staffed by technical personnel.

When visited by the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition in 1929, Svalbard had been under full Norwegian sovereignty for four years, under the rights of the Spitsbergen Treaty signed in 1920 (Jensen, 2020, pp. 82, 86). The international agreement had removed the archipelago from its century-long condition of *terra nullius* granting Norway a level of authority that, despite being somewhat limited by the requirement of granting rights to other signatories, could not be disputed. According to the Treaty, all signatory states enjoyed equal rights to engage in economic activities, including mining and fishing, even though these activities were to be subject to Norwegian regulation. The Treaty further provided for the demilitarization of the archipelago, prohibiting the establishment of naval bases and fortifications and restricting its use for warlike purposes. Norway was to apply its laws without discrimination and to levy taxes only to the extent necessary to cover the local administration of the islands.

The long-sought acquisition had been further symbolically sanctioned by Norway's change of the name of the archipelago from Spitsbergen²¹ to Svalbard. The former toponym derived from the 1596 official discovery by Willem Barents and was used internationally even in the phrasing of the Treaty (Société des Nations, 1920; Royal Ministry of Justice, 1988 pp. 3-7). The latter was an identity-marker, used already in the very Act that implemented the Treaty (Royal Ministry of Justice, 1988, pp. 8-11). It directly connected the long-standing claim of the Norwegians for those Arctic islands to their deepest sense of nation (Norum and Proctor, 2018, p. ix; Arlov 2005, p. 17; 2020, pp. 11-12; Grydehøj, 2020, pp. 269-270). As a side effect, the change solved a certain degree of ambiguity in previous use of place names: Svalbard had now become the official Norwegian endonym of the archipelago, while Spitsbergen remained as the designator for the largest island of the group (formerly called West Spitsbergen).

This transition was just the highest-level example of more complex similar processes triggered by the recognition of sovereignty. For centuries, the Spitsbergen islands, now become Svalbard, had been roamed and charted by many different explorers and geographers; these had adopted their own toponymy and developed maps on which names had ended up reflecting complex cultural layering, interactions and systematisation attempts (Rudmose Brown, 1943). When a Norwegian state Committee,

²¹ The name appears in the text of the «Lov om Svalbard» (Svalbard Act) issued on July 17, 1925 and entered in force on August 14, 1925. The Act draws its juridical base from the international agreement signed in Paris on February 9, 1920.

appointed in 1924, started working on the official toponymy for the archipelago, it considered about 360 maps, 500 books and papers. It ended up dealing with *circa* 10,000 names, discarding about 6,500 and fixing about 3,300. Decisions were based on technical, cultural and political reasons:

Apart from the major difficulties associated with localising the older placenames as more accurate maps became available, nearly all of the existing names have been translated into several languages. Kings Bay, to select only one example, has been called by different authorities Koningsbij, Baye du Roi, Konge-Bugten, Kongs-Bugten, Konigs Bay, Zaliv Karolevsky, Kongs Fjord, Koningsbaai, Baia del Re, Kralovc zatoce, Konigsbucht and Kongsfjorden. In addition to those, it has at various times been called by twelve other distinct names not connected with royalty. The increase of Norwegian interest in Spitsbergen, the widespread Norwegian mining activity, and the eventual recognition of Norwegian sovereignty checked the use of English and other foreign names and added new complications to the whole problem. At first many Norwegians used the English names without change; then nationalist trends gradually began to show themselves in translation of place-names. (...) The members of foreign expeditions and foreign cartographers continued to use the old names. The changes were not welcomed by those who had become accustomed to the old names, and many writers have ignored them (Roberts, 1948, p. 175)

This remarkable confusion in the usage of toponymy on maps and documents, including variants in academic or technical and administrative papers, is one of the reasons for which Albertini's writings show many different and sometimes inconsistent variants of the place names, and so do those of other members of the 1929 expedition, including Zanetti in his logbook entries and Della Valle in his film. Just as an example, what was officially named Kongsfjorden in 1929, was still called by the Italian explorers with the purely English name of "King's Bay", while it was also often known locally and internationally as "Kings Bay".

More than just *terra nullius*, for centuries the islands had been by all means a *no-place-for humans* kind of setting. After the first officially recognized discovery by Willem Barents in 1596, the wide archipelago appeared to Europeans as a wild, inhospitable series of huge glaciers, mountains and peaks intermingled with flat barren islets and outcropping rocks. Navigation in fjords and straits was often blocked by forbidding ice formations or made mortally dangerous by frightful blizzards. These aspects added to the already severe marginality of the very Arctic context, with

long and freezing winters to be faced in darkness, while the total absence of vegetation imposed survival unhealthily based almost only on fishing and hunting in prohibitive conditions.

Yet, natural resources in the archipelago were relevant and rose interest in several agents, from tiny and remote communities dwelling in nearby Arctic areas, to main state and private stakeholders in Russia and European countries. Annual whale hunting expeditions were started in 1607 by the British, soon followed by many other nations (Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, France, Germany among others), with occasional clashes but in general with the definition of separate hunting bases scattered throughout the archipelago (Jasinski and Zagórski, 2013, p. 318; Norum and Proctor, 2018, pp. 28-30).

When whale hunting – typically to “Greenland right”, i.e. Bowhead whales – became uneconomical as the large cetaceans disappeared from the internal waters of the archipelago (Umbreit, 1991, pp. 56-59), in late 1600s, hunters and trappers from many countries went on to harvest the area²². «Just as the first recorded period of Svalbard’s history was characterised by ship-based seasonal whaling, the next period was typified by land-based, wintering hunters» (Norum and Proctor, 2018, p. 30).

A matter of cultural experience and awareness of nature more than “civilization” level, overwintering was, in the beginning, an extreme challenge and often a deadly one. The archipelago was scattered, all-over, with old and forgotten graves of hunters who had died of scurvy, starvation or exposure to the cold in those remote lands. The most effective players in this phase were the Pomors, coming from the northern regions of Russia, to establish temporary hunting stations, often under religious or merchant initiatives (Umbreit, 1991, p. 59). These settlements began to appear in the eighteenth century and progressively declined, virtually disappearing around the 1820s. Only much later, towards the end of the nineteenth century, Norwegian hunters more extensively established wintering bases (Norum and Proctor, 2018, p. 30; Ziaja, 2019, p. 52). By that time, Spitsbergen had begun to be associated with great pages in the history of science and exploration. A major effort was put forth by Sweden and, later, Norway in the second half of the nineteenth century, leading to the 1865 publication of a detailed cartography by Dúner and Nordenskiöld (Ziaja,

²² Typical game were Arctic foxes, blue foxes, polar bears, reindeer, seals, walrus (Umbreit, 1991, p. 60).

2019, p. 53). Between 1899 and 1902, Spitsbergen was the context of the *Swedish-Russian Arc-of-Meridian Expedition*, a relevant set of scientific operations in the history of Earth studies.

In 1929, when the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition visited it, the Svalbard archipelago, with its official administrative area of 64,670 km², was still a sparsely inhabited Arctic frontier. Total population, as of December 31, 1923, was 1,282 people (Det Statistiske Centralbyrå, 1930, p. 222), giving a density of merely 0.02 inhabitants/km².

Life conditions were harsh. Annual average temperatures were between -8°C and +2°C, precipitations between 200 mm and 400 mm. In Longyearbyen, the Norwegian administrative centre, «the polar night, meaning the season of complete darkness, lasts from 11 November to 30 January in Longyearbyen. On a clear day, the darkness is often illuminated by the northern lights. The midnight sun shines from 20 April to 22 August» (Statistics Norway, 2016, p. 4)

A significant geographical dimension of the region's specific insularity in the 1920s was its persistent seasonal isolation. The archipelago was accessible by sea only during a short summer navigation period (Coltrinari, 1985, p. 62; Sokolickova *et al.*, 2022, p. 3). Regular shipping to Isfjorden and Kings Bay was generally possible from June or early July, with more difficult and sometimes unpredictable access feasible in May. Freeze-up usually began in late September, making access increasingly hazardous and effectively impossible from October through the winter. No ports were maintained for year-round operation, and all activities were constrained by this narrow timeframe. Maritime access, in practice, dictated the rhythm of life: from roughly June to September, coal shipments, supplies, and personnel could be transported, while from October through late spring the archipelago entered a state of near-complete isolation. Each settlement had to be largely self-sufficient.

Given the lack of road systems, movement from one settlement to the others was generally limited to technical needs. If possible, connection among coastal bases would be achieved by ship; usual land transfers were done on ski and foot across frozen surfaces or tundra and permafrost. Typical vehicles for land transportation were sledges hauled by teams of specifically trained dogs.



Fig. 4. Towns and settlements of Svalbard in 1939; their configuration was still very similar to that of 1929

Source: Orvin, 1939, p. 3

From the 1890s through the 1930s, in most of the Arctic regions, Greenland, “Eskimo” (Sverdrup, 1904, p. 18) or “Esquimaux” (Nordenskiöld, 1872, p. 1) dogs were widely regarded as particularly suitable for draughting (Trolle, 1909, p. 45). This is not to be intended as a formal breed name, rather as a more generic geographical reference. In general, comparative assessments focused on size and physical status at acqui-

tion. In the 1920s, expeditions typically secured dogs through Greenland supply channels and transported them by ship. Procurement was complex and often expensive, so when it was possible other channels were used, including institutional provision from local companies and donations from other expeditions. Local breeding programmes would be established, in time, to overcome these difficulties. In general, though, dog teams, when available, particularly if trained and verified in use, were regarded as a valuable asset and carefully managed.

Overwintering was no longer an immediately life-threatening condition as it had used to be in the previous centuries, but was still a phase to be appropriately managed, particularly for expeditions moving in the wilder areas. In the first decades of the twentieth century, stable villages and stations had begun to be populated all-year-round, by small groups of people who mostly needed to stay for specific activities.

The pattern of settlement was shaped almost entirely by economic activities, above all coal mining.

This had commenced in 1899, upon initiative by the Norwegians, who had opened a mine in Bohemanflya. Potential profits quickly changed, at that point, the international picture and made the *terra nullius* status of Spitsbergen a less desirable scenario.

[The] new interest in the mineral resources of the largely unexplored archipelago – only the coastlines had really been mapped at this point – invited a wide range of pioneers from Germany, Great Britain, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the USA, from individual adventurers to financially better-equipped companies. As in other pioneer countries, claims were marked with signs where any riches were found, often generously encompassing vast areas around them as well, and soon after reported to the appropriate institutions of the home country. Not surprisingly, this activity soon led to quarrels due to competing or overlapping claims to the same areas, and with no central ‘claims’ register to speak of, many optimistic entrepreneurs soon found out that it takes more than just a few claim poles to become rich (Norum and Proctor, 2018, p. 36).

Besides coal, there had been attempts to extract asbestos, copper, gold, gypsum, iron, lead, marble and zinc, but the results had not been impressive (Norum and Proctor, 2018, p. 36).

From 1907 to 1916, coal mining workers were occupied only in summer in small and fluctuating numbers (from 130 to 260 units); beginning

from 1917 employment had become year-round with seasonal variations between summer and winter. The increase in production had been continuous, and a peak had been reached in 1924, with a total of 450,000 tons of coal exported, out of which about 266,000 had been extracted from Norway-controlled mines. After that year the total production began to decline, while international activity appeared to sharply fade from the picture (Det Statistiske Centralbyrå, 1930, p. 222). It was to re-emerge later, as Soviet mining settlements would begin to thrive under control and heavy funding by their national government, but business was just one of the reasons. The volatility of the coal market and the major logistical complications of mining in the Arctic were already creating a situation in which Norwegian and other countries' sites were maintained and even developed for a mixture of economic strategy and political convenience (Norum and Proctor, 2018, p. 36; Vold Hansen, 2024, p. 2) while other countries' companies, less interested or capable in maintaining a presence in Svalbard, were progressively acknowledging the scarce value of the activity and giving away their infrastructures.

Throughout Svalbard there were no towns in the conventional sense, no integrated territorial administration in everyday practice, and no infrastructure designed for permanent civilian life beyond the needs of mining companies, scientific stations, and a limited number of support services. Each settlement was effectively a "company community", geographically isolated, pretty much economically self-contained, and organisationally dependent on the firm or institution that operated it.

Most of the sparse settlements were located in the west coast of Spitsbergen, particularly around Isfjorden and its branches. This region benefited from the climate-moderating influence of the West Spitsbergen Current, which mitigated the persistence of sea-ice and made maritime access comparatively more reliable during the short navigation season. In this area a series of settlements had emerged, each defined by a specific industrial or institutional function.

Longyearbyen (born as Longyear City) was the largest and most established town in 1929 and the principal Norwegian foothold in the archipelago. Founded in 1906 by the US-based *Arctic Coal Company* (ACC) led by American entrepreneur John Munro Longyear (Hartnell, 2009) and acquired in 1916 by Norwegian interests (Orvin, 1939, pp. 8-9; Umbreit, 1991, pp. 72, 74; Norum and Proctor, 2018, p. 36), had become, in the

late 1920s, the operational centre of the *Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani A/S* (SNSK). It controlled the coal mines in Adventdalen and managed the entire settlement as a company town (Grydehøj *et al.*, 2012, p. 104; Pelliccioni, 2016, p. 2). Housing, food supply, medical services, workshops, and transport were all organised under corporate authority. Although the Governor of Svalbard (*Sysselmannen på Svalbard*) was officially based in Longyearbyen, along with the Mining Inspector following the 1925 Act, daily life and infrastructure were mostly in the hands of *Store Norske*. It was in 1929 that Norway's state wireless station in Svalbard was transferred to Longyearbyen (Orvin, 1939, p. 9; Sellari, 2016, p. 472). The town functioned primarily as a logistical base for mining and as the main point of entry for Norwegian administration, expeditions, and scientific parties.

Not far, to the south-west of Longyearbyen, in another branch of Isfjorden named Grønfjorden lay Barentsburg, acquired by the Dutch *Nederlandsche Spitsbergen Compagnie* in 1920, although at the time of the Albertini expedition, the mining activity had been suspended by the owner company; the town would later be transferred to Soviet control in 1932 (Overrein *et al.*, 2015a). Its geographic location gave Barentsburg a reliable access during the summer navigation season.

Half-way between the two settlements there was another mining station, Grumantbyen. It had been started in 1919 by *Anglo-Russian Grumant Co.* and operated until 1931; in that year, it became another fully Soviet-run site managed by *Arktikugol* (Orvin, 1939, p. 11). Further deep in the Isfjorden, north of Longyearbyen, in an inner branch called Billefjorden, a modest seasonal mining site, called Pyramiden, had been established in 1910 by Swedish company *AB Isfjorden-Bellsund*. After transfers to other Swedish players, it ended up with Soviet *Russkij Grumant* in 1927 and was to be transferred, eventually, to *Trust Arktikugol* in 1930 (Orvin, 1939, p. 9; Overrein *et al.*, 2015b; Senger *et al.*, 2019, p. 17). Soviet sites represented developing parallel industrial enclaves under foreign economic management, whose separation was made more perceived internally and abroad by the fact that USSR had not initially signed the Svalbard Treaty; it would have done so only in 1924 (Sellari, 2016, p. 470)²³.

Beyond Isfjorden, the pattern of settlement thinned dramatically. Svea-

²³ It is also relevant to observe that the official exonym used by USSR in referring to Svalbard was Шпицберген, i.e. *Shpitsbergen*. Although this did not constitute a legal challenge to Norwegian authority, it can be interpreted as a symbolic distancing from the Norwegian unilateral "rebranding" of the archipelago, implied by the choice of the historical Norse name Svalbard.

gruva, situated in Van Mijenfjorden, had been established in 1917 by the *AB Spetsbergens Svenska Kolfält* (SSK), and later *Svenska Stenkolsaktiebolaget Spetsbergen*, operating it until 1925. The site ended up with Norwegian *Store Norske* in 1934 (Orvin, 1939, pp. 9-10). Its operation was intermittent, though, due to environmental difficulties and fluctuating market conditions.

Much farther away, at the north-western margin of Spitsbergen, on the southern shore of the Kongsfjorden, there was Ny-Ålesund, a mining settlement operated by the Norwegian *Kings Bay Kull Compani A/S*. Founded during World War I, Ny-Ålesund had become, in the 1920s, both a mining centre and a focal point for Arctic exploration. In 1929 mining activities ceased; they would resume in 1945 and last until a catastrophic accident in 1962 (Reymert, 2016, pp. 9, 17, 23-25). Scientific presence, however, had already begun to develop in the place and would last until today. Its position and well-equipped facilities made Ny-Ålesund strategic for expeditions and aerial ventures, including those by Amundsen (1925), Byrd (1926), Amundsen-Ellsworth-Nobile (1926) and Nobile (1928) (Nobile, 1975, pp. 84, 87, 151-153, 201-202). The settlement remained structurally dependent on the mining company, which controlled housing, supplies, and harbour facilities.

Elsewhere along the western coast of Spitsbergen, several small or semi-abandoned sites, houses and huts persisted, often as remnants of earlier industrial or exploratory phases. Many of these were due to the former operation of the British *Northern Exploration Co. Ltd*, from 1905 to 1926. By 1932, the firm would have sold all of its properties to the Norwegian State (Orvin, 1939, p. 11; Norum and Proctor, 2018, p. 36).

On the eastern side of Spitsbergen and in the remotest islands of the archipelago, permanent habitation was virtually non-existent. In many areas, landscape was dotted with seasonal trapping stations, small hunting cabins, abandoned remnants of temporary outposts (Orvin, 1939). Many of these outposts – continuing a century-long tradition – were usually maintained by individual trappers or small private enterprises rather than by large corporations. They could rely on no municipal services and were often occupied only during the hunting season.

A distinct category of settlement was represented by scientific stations and camps. Although generally minimal in size and often temporary, these installations played – along with the epic endeavours of polar exploration

– an important role in defining the perception of Svalbard as a gateway to the Great North. Norwegian, British, Swedish, German, and other international institutions periodically established observational posts for geology, meteorology, glaciology, and cartography. These stations were often associated with existing harbours or mining settlements for logistical support. They did not constitute independent communities but relied on the infrastructure of company towns or on seasonal maritime supply.

Besides coal mining, other traditional businesses in the archipelago were hunting and fishing. A relatively large number of boats and ships normally operated off the coasts of Svalbard and often provided support to expeditions, thanks to the ruggedness and reliability of their technology and the strong experience of their crews. The brand new *Heimen* was just another entry in a well-established tradition, even though her specific equipment and her usage profile for the 1929 expedition turned out unusually developed and versatile. The search and rescue efforts for *Italia* in 1928 had heavily relied on small vessels such as the *Quest*, the *Braganza* and the *Hobby*. In 1930, two other similar ships, the *Bratvaag* and the *Isbjørn*, were to discover and document the remnants of the 1897 Andrée expedition on Kvitøya (Andrée *et al.*, 1931, pp. 307-317; Broadbent and Olofsson, 2001, p. 2)²⁴.

Specialised services, logistics and practices for Arctic work were relatively well developed in Svalbard in the 1920s, more than elsewhere in the Arctic region. This was partially due to the solid industrial set-up of the mining facilities. Their presence was one of the reasons, along with the favourable geographic siting of the archipelago, for which many exploration and research activities used to place outposts there, particularly for attempts to reach the North Pole. Amundsen had two large Dornier Wal flying boats shipped to and flown from Ny-Ålesund in the spring of 1925. A few months later, the miners and technicians of the town, working in the darkness and cold of the winter, assembled the wind-shielding hangar for the *Norge* expedition. The impressive wood-and-fabric shelter was the largest structure ever built in the Arctic; it was part of a basic but complete temporary airship field which was fully operational by the following May.

²⁴ It was a Swedish Polar Expedition which had attempted – after and along with many ‘flights of fancy’ by other aspiring explorers (Lewis-Jones, 2008) - to reach the North Pole by balloon in 1897, pushed by overconfidence in innovation and by nationalist drive (McCormack, 2008, pp. 415-416). After having lifted off from Danskøya, in north-west Svalbard, a three-men party – August Andrée, Niels Strindberg and Knut Fraenkel – had vanished for thirty-three years.

Even so, in spite of being a relatively strong outpost of the increasingly ecumenic Arctic, Svalbard was, in 1929, a place of isolation and wilderness.

In order to alleviate some problems connected to this challenging situation, a crucial role was played by wireless communications.

The progress in this field had been remarkable during the 1910s and 1920s, enabling more effective communication exchange, in case of emergency as well as in normal, commercial activities. Data on telegram traffic managed by Svalbard Radio in 1929 gives an idea of how this service was used (tab. 1).

Charged telegrams	Sent from Svalbard	7,637
	Received in Svalbard	4,316
Weather telegrams		1,167
Service telegrams		1,937
Transit telegrams		13,659
Total number of telegram transmissions		28,716

Table 1. Telegram traffic recorded by Svalbard Radio in 1929

Source: data from Statistiske Centralbyrå 1930, p. 222 modified by the author

However, as it was previously stated, radio systems were not-at-all a standard. In fact, they were generally available to high level organizations and were only partially accessible to general users, despite often being safety critical. Albertini himself, in 1929, was to have a direct experience of this: not only his *Heimen*, a brand-new ship conceived for operation in extreme environments, had no radio onboard initially; but even after its installation, during the transfer from continental Norway to Svalbard, Albertini was asked to escort a larger merchant vessel, the «*Elisabeth*». The freighter was carrying supplies and personnel to Svalbard, and yet had no wireless station, notwithstanding her commercial role. On that occasion, by the way, both ships encountered adverse weather and then had to stop their cruise due to the dense ice. For several days, contact with the «*Elisabeth*» was lost and re-established. Had she sunk while out of sight of *Heimen*, no distress message could have been sent to Svalbard.

On the other hand it should be noted that the bulky, fragile and challenging wireless systems of the time could routinely be placed in settlements or dedicated buildings, or on sufficiently large ships, able to provide the

needed high energy supply; these features were not available on smaller platforms.

Mobile systems were generally rare, difficult to use and unreliable; this meant that on-land moving groups could not always count on them even when available. It is important to consider another aspect of how radio systems were used in those times.

Arctic explorers were becoming increasingly familiar with the advantages of wireless communication from the boundaries of the ecumene to the “civilized world”. In parallel with radiotelegraphy, radiophony and news associated with radio systems were boosting on a continental or even worldwide scale. By 1925, 1928, and 1929, explorers such as Roald Amundsen, Umberto Nobile, Richard Byrd, Albertini himself and others had come to recognize – if not always fully embrace – the power of wireless communication, both for operational purposes and for securing public visibility. Expeditionary wireless stations were used to transmit technical messages, longer news dispatches, and personal communications from crew members.

The *Heimen-SUCAI* journey was no exception. The voyage’s practically – if not formally – official character required regular reports to the authorities, including SUCAI itself. Its president, Roberto Maltini, even installed a private wireless station in order to remain in direct contact with Albertini, without the need of relays through Roma San Paolo.

The expedition also needed to exchange operational, logistical, and technical messages with stations in Norway, Svalbard and the Soviet Union. Just as important for the crew’s morale was the possibility of occasionally communicating with their families, which alleviated the sense of isolation and remoteness – especially during periods when the ship was ice-bound and drifted unpredictably, with the real prospect of having to overwinter in place.

Finally, Albertini wished to maintain contact with newspapers and news agencies in accordance with the information agreements concluded during the expedition’s preparation. Depending on their purpose, telegrams ranged from brief exchanges to lengthy and discursive reports, making the work of the wireless operators – particularly Franco Pugliese – especially demanding. Messages were transmitted either in clear or in cipher, the latter employed to protect sensitive information from interception while in transit.

GEOCHRONOLOGY

Comments about the Geochronological Reconstruction

The journey of the *Heimen-SUCAI* lasted from May 15 to October 5, 1929. During this time, the ship sailed over 10,000 nautical miles in the Arctic from Tromsø (Norway), calling in many of the Svalbard islands, then crossing over to skirt Franz Joseph Land and Novaya Zemlya (Soviet Union), before heading back to continental Norway. Between June 13 and July 9, a patrol of four men (Albertini, Guedoz, Urbano and Bonola) left the ship and completed an exploration of more than 700 km on sledge, ski and foot in Nordaustlandet. The search for possible survivors of *Italia* was unsuccessful, even though a very wide area and plenty of locations were visited and inspected. Nevertheless, the mission was not a failure; on the contrary, it adequately justified the final calling off of any further search effort, and did return valuable scientific data.

Much of the text in Albertini's 1932 memoir is closely derived from the annotations in the *Heimen*'s logbook; in some cases, the former appears to be, in effect, an edited variant of the latter. The most relevant difference between the two documents is the description of the march in Nordaustlandet. The memoir thoroughly describes the patrol's ordeal in that phase, with minimal comments about what the *Heimen* was doing in the meanwhile. Symmetrically, the logbook kept by Zanetti as Second in Command during the leader's absence, provides important details about the ship's activity and later efforts to reach the *rendez-vous* point on time.

In comparison to the memoir, the logbook – though being generally a rather “controlled” recording of the events – contains some additional data and some revealing elements which are useful towards a more complete reconstruction of the journey.

On the other hand, the memoir gives a more clear and comprehensive account of the premises, rationale and preparations, which could be far more difficult to reconstruct based on the sole, relatively scarce surviving primary documents.

The attempt of reconstructing a geo-chronology of the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition must therefore rely on both of Albertini's writings, with some valuable information that can be drawn from other documents in the archive, including the collection of telegrams. The logbook itself, how-

ever, remains the fundamental source for this work: entries were made on a daily basis and are almost continuous – with very few exceptions – from departure to return.

Times and geographical positions of events are explicitly indicated when deemed necessary, usually in association with specific facts or data; even then, they are generally given only approximately, by noting the hour and, occasionally, the minutes, often rounded to the nearest ten. In many other passages, temporal phases are referred to, more generically, as “at night”, “in the evening”, or similar expressions. Typically, a summary of the day is provided in each entry. In the Arctic area, time was measured and logged as GMT (Greenwich Mean Time) carefully measured by the onboard chronograph, while position was determined according to the traditional ways of the period. Navigation in the 1920s was mostly in continuity with the past. It was commonly divided into three distinct categories: coastal, dead-reckoning, and astronomical. Coastal navigation was conducted within sight of land, where the vessel’s position could be determined by bearings taken on prominent coastal features using dedicated nautical instruments, yielding a so-called “fixed position”.

Dead-reckoning, typically employed on the open sea, or anytime visibility did not allow to use other methods, relied on measuring the distance run, obtained by calculations from the ship average speed, and the vessel’s course as indicated by the compass. The resulting position was therefore an estimated, approximate one. Astronomical, or celestial, navigation was applied primarily offshore under clear skies, when observations of the sun and celestial bodies were possible; in this case, the ship’s position was determined through sextant observations combined with chronometer time and astronomical ephemerides, producing an observed position (Favaro, 1920, p. 2).

In 1929 it was becoming possible to also apply radio-goniometry to obtain positional fixes, but the technique was complex and subject to many problems in coastal navigation, so this method was never used in Albertini’s journey of 1929.

The *Heimen-SUCAI*, as it was very often the case for ships of similar type in that environment, approximately determined her position by astronomical observations when navigating in the open sea if conditions allowed; dead reckoning was often used, particularly in low visibility. Identification of land features was the standard in coastal sailing. In the latter

case, navigation appears not to even be based on precise positioning or bearings: general indications such as “abeam of ” a certain point, or “further deep” a certain fjord were enough, in practice.

Geographic coordinates – when used – were considered and annotated in precisions down to sexagesimal degrees and minutes (Longitudes often to degrees only), knowing that the approximation to seconds or smaller fractions would have been meaningless due to obviously large errors. Beside the normal inaccuracies that were systemic to the instruments and inherent to the measurement techniques, all sailors in Arctic waters had to deal with typical environmental characteristics that further hampered measures in navigation: frequent cloud cover and adverse weather, abundant mist or fog, typical of the short navigation season, made the use of sextant and other auxiliary instruments harder. Moreover, determining an observed position required the use of tables which were not generally available for the higher latitudes. Dead reckoning, already a rough technique *per se*, could be complicated by any temporary condition, such as ice-induced alterations or damage, which might have affected the usual cruising speeds of the ship. Magnetic compasses, additionally, suffered from various errors and disturbances due to the relative proximity to the magnetic North Pole.

In spite of all this, Albertini seems to have used dead reckoning with fairly good results, both when sailing on board *Heimen-SUCAI* and also during his challenging transects in Nordaustlandet – using in that case a gimbal compass installed on his sledge.



Fig. 5. A collection of original equipment from the Heimen-SUCAI expedition, temporarily on display at the Museo Scienza e Tecnologia "Leonardo da Vinci", Milan, on March 18, 2025. Left to right, top to bottom: sextant, marine chronometer, Circolo Amici-Magnaghi, artificial horizon, portable RT station

Source of images: GREAL.. Equipment is property of the Società Storica Lombarda ETS

In the exploration conducted by Albertini and his crew, crucial importance had cartography and available maps. For a region as remote as Svalbard, whose scientific exploration had been extensive in the 1800s and early 1900s, cartography was still a type of documentation in which specialized expertise could make a difference. That is why Albertini sought maps and advice from Adolf Hoel, one of the highest scientific authorities of his time in the field of polar geography. The two had already met in 1928, at a time when Albertini, recently aggregated to the *Italia* expedition, considered himself a rookie about the Arctic. On that occasion, he had highly appreciated Hoel's assistance in granting him access to information and cartography (Albertini, 1929, p. 20). Approaching him in 1929, Albertini was again kindly supported:

Professor Hoel, Director of the *Norges Svalbard og IshavsUndersøkelser*, very kindly took an active interest in arranging the collection of the marine and terrestrial charts relevant to my work from British, German, Scandinavian, and Russian hydrographic institutions; he also supplied me with nautical tables and ephemerides suitable for the calculation of geographical coordinates at Arctic latitudes (Albertini, 1932, p. 16)²⁵

In the preparation of this work, we could not find, among the accessed materials of the Albertini family, any specimens of the maps actually carried along during the expedition. McKee (1979, p. 269) indicates that the expedition probably used – among others – the Admiralty maps, edition 1925²⁶, which could provide a standardized representation of both the Norwegians and Soviet territories.

As it will be further discussed in this section, an evident fact is that since the beginning of the extensive topographic studies conducted in the Arctic during the late 1800s, particularly as far as Svalbard was concerned, evolution in accuracy and completeness of cartographic representations was dramatic. Yet, major uncertainties, inaccuracies and gross errors could still be found; this explains Albertini's eagerness to acquire high-quality maps directly from a scientific source he knew well and trusted, i.e. Adolf Hoel.

²⁵ «Il prof. Hoel, direttore della 'Norges Svalbard Ogishaaus undersøkelser', molto gentilmente si interessò di curare la raccolta delle carte marine e terrestri a me interessanti, presso gli istituti idrografici inglesi, tedeschi, scandinavi e russi, come pure mi rifornì di tabelle nautiche ed effemeridi atte al calcolo delle coordinate geografiche in latitudini artiche».

²⁶ We thank Dr. Pier Paolo Alfei for having pointed out this information to our attention.

The only direct cartographic source left from the expedition is the set of simple maps included in Albertini's memoir. These maps are extremely valuable as they provide an official account with regard to the path actually followed by the parties (i.e. both the ship and the on-land patrol), and also with regard to the geographical view that Albertini intended to advertise. Like similar products of the time – including, obviously, those used as bases for this charting – Albertini's maps contain evident approximations in geometry, particularly in some areas of the archipelago which were less frequented and therefore explored as of 1929. Some of these approximations will be discussed in the geochronology, with reference to present-day official maps.

The crew of *Heimen-SUCAI* was very well aware of how maps of the Arctic in general, and of Svalbard in particular, could often be inaccurate and sometimes astonishingly rough: Albertini had already noted this in 1928 (Albertini, 1929, p. 92) and was to experience the problem again in 1929. Inadequate maps and charts could significantly add to the pressure of undertaking a dangerous ride in the unforgiving wilderness. Particularly critical was, furthermore, the incompleteness and inaccuracy of bathymetric charts: several times, during the journey of *Heimen-SUCAI*, the crew was forced to probe the actual depth of the waters or to scout the safety of passages, either from the ship herself or from her auxiliary boats.

Reconstructing the path of the expedition has been a relatively complex task in this work, for several reasons. The aforementioned unreliability of old cartography and the systemic approximation of plotting methods made it sometimes hard for us to find topographical matches between what is described and what can be actually tracked on present-day maps.

Furthermore, in a region that has gigantic glaciers and wide expanses of ice cover as prominent features, after almost a century one cannot exclude possible transformation in the landscape due to changes in the distribution of frozen masses.

Comparison of present day data with historical maps may sometimes show retreated glaciers, islets formerly interpreted as peninsulas and *vice versa*, along with uncertainly mapped coastlines.

In this scenario, placenames are a problem of their own. The toponymy used by Albertini, Zanetti and Della Valle in their works presents several variants and, frequently, does not match current official Norwegian endonyms. In some cases, e.g. instances that can be found in Della Valle's film

or in the handwritten logbook entries, variants are due to simple mistakes, phonetical or language-related habits (e.g. «*Advembay*» instead of Advent Bay, «*Swalbard*» instead of Svalbard...). In others – sometimes harder to identify – variants are actually placenames that had been in international use before 1925 and were later obliterated by subsequent official toponymy (e.g. «*Wiches Islands*» instead of Kong Karls Land, «*Ice Fjord*» instead of Isfjorden...).

Considering all of the above, in developing the expedition's geochronology we have adopted the following criteria.

Sites mentioned in the logbook and the other sources are topographically identified based on Albertini's 1932 maps, compared and integrated, according to needs, with maps offered in digital form by the OldMaps Online repository²⁷. Many of these date back to the late 1800s and early 1900s, and some may give credible impressions of the kind of maps that were available to the 1929 expedition. Data from these historical sources is then verified, when needed, against currently available maps.

As it will be clearly demonstrated, the voyage of the *Heimen-SUCAI* itself had a non-negligible value in geographical exploration, since it contributed to both identifying landscape features and also to the development of official toponyms.

The following geochronology and logbook analysis are primarily based on sources from the Albertini family's archives, integrated with other information whose references are indicated case by case.

The main sources are, obviously, the «*Libro di Bordo*», i.e. logbook (abbreviated from now on as LB); and the 1932 published memoir (abbreviated as M). As previously said, M is also the source of the scientific reports here included as Annexes 1-4.

Among many other documents, the Albertini family's private archive preserves a 46-page, carbon-copy typewritten text entitled «*Conferenza sulla spedizione universitaria nell'Artide*» ("Conference talk about the university expedition to the Arctic"). The document is unsigned and undated; it presents a first-person report apparently written by Augusto Bonola and covers the entire period of the expedition, with a rather ample discussion of the march in Nordaustlandet. We have no reason to doubt that Bonola was indeed the author of the document, and that – to the best of his knowledge – it presents an accurate, though synthetic, testimony. We

²⁷ www.oldmapsonline.org.

therefore integrate this source in the reference documentation of this section. The conference paper is cited as C, for brevity, in this work. Minor differences between the data as reported in C and the corresponding ones in the other sources are indicated when necessary.

Time and location included in the geochronology are, unless specified otherwise, those provided in LB, M and C.

Toponyms and names recorded in the logbook are reported here with their exact spelling between angle quotes «...». If the name is accompanied by an identifier that must be translated from Italian into English (e.g. “Kristiansundet fjord” for «*fiordo di Kristiansundet*»), then double quotation marks “...” are used. If necessary, the name is followed by the current endonymic version, between parentheses (...).

Finally, some aspects of the events and situations described in this geochronology can be reconstructed or commented by referring to Umberto Della Valle’s film «*Il Mistero dell’Artide*»; these data are added in the text, when appropriate, with simple reference to the time stamp in the film, as it is preserved in digital copy in the Albertini family’s archive.

From Bergen to Kings Bay

On May 4, 1929, the *Heimen-SUCAI* arrived in Bergen and set-ups began for the expedition. The vessel was subject to a careful technical inspection and pre-departure maintenance was thoroughly conducted, while equipment and supplies were loaded.

Described as a “charming Nordic city” by Umberto Della Valle in his film (at 00.02.40), Bergen in 1929 was Norway’s second-largest city and a bustling coastal urban centre in the Bergenshalvøya peninsula, Midhordland district. Much of its surroundings were characterized by fjords, bays, and by the “Seven Mountains” (De syv fjell) that framed its geography and influenced its temperate, rainy climate. The city had evolved from a medieval trading post (founded in 1070), into a prominent member of the Hanseatic League and had maintained such commercial and maritime vocation: in the early twentieth century it was a strong and modern commercial port (Herteig, 1990, p. 149; Tenold, 2019, pp. 13-14, 25).

In 1929, Bergen’s urban landscape showed the post-World War I recovery and expansion. Many of its structures were being rebuilt after the devastating fire of 1916 (Nielsen, 2016), with wider streets and more fire-resistant brick and stone buildings alongside traditional wooden ar-

chitecture. This was in line with Norwegian pragmatic views about city renovation and development, though in an increasing «awareness of built vernacular» (Bye, 2010, p. 439-440).

The city's economy was centred on the large and modern commercial fleet; other important historical activities were fishing, timber exports, shipbuilding, and maritime services; steamship lines and financial institutions drove economic growth, although the interwar years were marked by crisis and non-negligible unemployment (Tenold, 2019, pp. 94, 121). Bergen's population in 1920 stood, according to census data, at 91,081 inhabitants (Det Statistiske Centralbyrå, 1921, p. 3), evolving with a similar trend than other cities in Norway, i.e. toward urbanization and internal migration from rural areas. Residents were mostly concentrated in the central zone and were increasingly present in the expanding suburban areas (Schjenken, 2004, p. 39).



Fig. 6. Bergen and its surroundings, in a section from Hagene G. et al. (1927)
Source: OldMaps Online; GIS reprocessing: GREAL



Fig. 7. A heavy-loaded Heimen-SUCAI moored at her quay in Bergen shortly before departure
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

The *Heimen-SUCAI* departed Bergen precisely at 20h (presumably local time) on May 15, 1929 in exact punctuality with regard to the general planned expedition timeline (LB, f. 8v). She cast off with full crew, 4 passengers and 10 sledge dogs in cages, under “inclement weather, torrential rain” (LB, f. 8v). Fuel onboard at departure was over 50 tons according to Albertini (M, p. 28). According to Bonola, the value was «600 quintali» i.e. 60 tons, assumed to be sufficient for about 8 months endurance (C, p. 7). It was established that Zanetti, Urbano, Peroni and Bonola would rotate on watch in 12-hour shifts. The ship proceeded with coastal navigation along the fjords bound for «*Kristian Sundet*» (Kristiansund), (LB, f. 9r).

The following morning, May 16, the dogs were let out of the cages to familiarize themselves with the ship (LB, f. 9v). In this phase of the journey, the Italian crewmembers set up their equipment and spaces. While the ship was underway, it was observed that vibration from the engine caused

technical problems to both the radio hardware and meteorological recording devices; issues were addressed by Pugliese and Urbano respectively by adding small springs and suspensions to the most delicate components. The crew spent some time in strengthening and improving the stowage for better access and safety of the cargo hold. The supplementary fuel barrels placed on the deck were further secured. Della Valle set up his photographic laboratory in the after locker (LB, f. 10r-v; M, p. 32-33).

During the afternoon, the *Heimen-SUCAI* exited the fjords, navigating in more open waters for about two hours and experiencing moderate motions which put the untrained Italian crew to test. Wireless communications were exchanged normally (LB, f. 10v).

At about 1 (probably local time) on May 17, *Heimen-SUCAI* entered in the «*Fiordo di Kristiansundet*», i.e. “Kristiansundet fjord” and called briefly to send ashore the passengers by motor launch. She departed immediately thereafter, under good meteorological conditions. In this phase the logbook entry reports that mealtimes for the crew were set “at 9.30, 13, 17 and 21 hours”. Wireless communication took place as expected (LB, f. 11r-v). By the end of the day Albertini reported a position abeam of the «*Vigter*» islands. The toponym «*Vigten*» (LB, f. 11v) in the logbook, «*Vigter*» in the memoir (M, p. 36), corresponds to Vikna, an insular municipality now absorbed in Nærøysund²⁸.

On May 17 the *Heimen-SUCAI* reached a latitude at which the sunlight was present throughout the 24 hours; an unfamiliar condition for the Italian newcomers. Albertini, who had already widely experienced the phenomenon, noted this in rather poetical terms. The words he uses in the memoir follow almost verbatim those in the logbook, though with some changes in punctuation that give the new version a more conventional style than the entry in the manuscript.

It is bright still and already a large silver moon tints the waters almost musically, and the union of dawn and sunset surprises us and leaves us speechless (M, p. 36)²⁹

²⁸ According to Rygh (1903), p. 359, available at <https://runeberg.org/ngardnavne/15/0377.html>, variants of the name were Vikten, Vikna and Wigtenn. The name was in use to designate an archipelago of three islands, Indre Vikten, Mellem Vikten and Ytre Vikten.

²⁹ «*Vi è chiaro ancora e già una grande luna d'argento tinge le acque quasi musicalmente, ed il connubio tra alba e tramonto ci sorprende e ci ammutolisce*». The corresponding passage in the logbook (LB, ff. 11v-12r) reads «*Vi è chiaro ancora e già. Una grande luna d'argento ci meraviglia tingendo le acque con tinte quasi musicali*».

Bonola, in a more prosaic tone, would later describe the moment:

This pale, unbroken light gave everything a faint and almost unreal appearance. At first we were unable to sleep. The dogs, too, seemed to suffer from it, and many times we heard them barking frantically at the sun that hardly ever set, as if irritated by the faded disk that stubbornly refused to disappear (C, p. 11)³⁰

Good sea and weather conditions persisted through the night and the following day. On May 18, Pugliese worked on setting up the portable wireless stations, in anticipation of field deployment. Albertini tested the sextant and calibrated it. At 15h Latitude 66°33'N, i.e. the Arctic Circle, was passed. Pugliese's daily attempt to contact Rome San Paolo station was unsuccessful this time. At midnight the *Heimen-SUCAI* was in «Vest Fiord» (Vestfjorden) with the Lofoten islands in sight to the west (LB, ff. 12v-13r.)

Most of May 19 was practically uneventful, with the crew either resting or attending to house-keeping activities. Weather was described by Albertini as “almost spring-like, as some of our February days” (M, p. 37)³¹. Before arrival in Tromsø, the dogs were forced back into the crates and the *Heimen-SUCAI* docked at the quay exactly at 19.25 local time, greeted by numerous onlookers (LB, f. 13v).

In 1929 Tromsø was the northernmost urban centre in Norway, nicknamed the “Paris of the North” (Albertini, 1929, p. 22). It was situated on the island Tromsøya in Troms county, at approximately Lat. 69°36'N, i.e. just north of the Arctic Circle (Egeland and Burke, 2016, p. 54). Surrounded by the Tromsøysundet strait and scenic fjords and mountains, its geography featured a naturally ice-free harbour, owing to the warming influence of the North Atlantic Current, which kept coastal areas free of sea ice.

Historically, Tromsø had been a key hub for Arctic trade and exploration. By the late 1920s, it had developed into a compact urban area combining traditional wooden architecture with modern elements.

The city obviously played a role in polar exploration, being the last town with abundance of infrastructures and services needed by expedi-

³⁰ «Questa luce scialba e continua dava a tutte le cose un aspetto evanescente e quasi irreale. Da principio non riuscivamo a dormire. Anche i cani sembravano soffrirne, e molte volte li sentivamo abbaiare freneticamente al sole che non tramontava quasi irritati contro il disco sbiadito che si ostinava a non scomparire».

³¹ «quasi primaverile come qualcuna del nostro febbraio».

tions before crossing the icy frontiers. It had indeed been variously involved also in the *Italia*'s expedition in 1928: although the airship had not called there on its way to Svalbard – a mooring mast for a brief stop-over had been placed farther north in Vadsø – the support ship *Città di Milano*, among others, did transit through Tromsø (Albertini, 1929, pp. 21-23). Roald Amundsen departed from the city on his final flight on June 18, 1928 (Nobile, 1975, p. 234-237; Imbert, 1996, p. 76; Kristensen, 2019, pp. 236-237).

The city hosted important scientific institutions: Tromsø Museum, for instance, founded in 1872 (UIT, n.d.); the Auroral Northern Lights Observatory, constructed in the 1920s and completed in 1928 near Lake Prestvannet (Egeland and Burke, 2016, pp. 53-54).

Demographically, Tromsø's population was 10,071 in the 1920 census (Det Statistiske Centralbyrå, 1922, p. 15) and increasing (up to 10,336 in the 1930 census, see Det Statistiske Centralbyrå, 1932, p. 16).



Fig. 8. Tromsø harbour between 1930 and 1939
Source: The Municipal Archives of Trondheim



Fig. 9. Section of a topographic map of Tromsø and its surroundings, from *Norges geografiske Opmåling* (1932)

Source: OldMaps Online; GIS reprocessing: GREAL

May 21 was spent in preparations, with Albertini visiting at about 10h the Geophysical Institute to encounter its Director, acquire information and to plan communication exchanges. A daily schedule for radio contact was established. Urbano took the opportunity of requesting calibration for his meteorological instruments (M, p. 38). Meanwhile, provisions were completed: Albertini looked for and acquired a motor launch powered by a hot-bulb engine. Other acquisitions of the day included an outboard motor and an additional life-boat, plus large amounts of technical provisions, replenishment of fuel, oil and food supplies to complete the reserves (LB, ff. 14v-15r; M, p. 38-39).

I loaded a large quantity of timber, suitable not only for repairs to the ship but also for building huts; I made sure to have oakum and pitch on board, explosives for breaking the ice, crowbars, sledgehammers and handspikes; (...) ordered a full supply of coal for our stoves, and had the tank cleaned, disinfected, and filled with fresh water (M, p. 38)³²

³² «caricai molto legname atto oltre che a riparazioni della nave, anche a costruire capanne, volli avere a bordo

Footage in the film (at 00.14.13) shows the motorboat being hoisted by the crew on the starboard (right) side of the ship. The newly acquired vehicle was then tested that same night in the Tromsø fjord by Albertini and Urbano.

On May 22, in the morning, all the purchased materials were loaded onboard. Albertini completed the arrangements with the Geophysical Institute and also paid an institutional visit to the French Consul.

At 12h, after having obtained reassuring forecasts about weather along the route, the *Heimen-SUCAI* departed Tromsø. Cast off took place two hours behind schedule, due to the delayed boarding of skipper Jakobsen, a circumstance that is indicated in the logbook (LB, f. 15r) but omitted in the memoir.

At 18.30 the logbook records the exit from «*Hommer Fiord*»³³ (Hammerfjord), heading for «14°W» into the Barents Sea. Albertini deployed a mechanical log and ascertained the *Heimen-SUCAI*'s cruise speed to be 7.6 knots.

The high-sea crossing began in fairly good weather and sea conditions, yet the heavily loaded ship showed «*un rullio impressionante*», i.e. “an impressive roll” (LB, f. 16r).

As per previous agreement with the authorities of the mining installations in Adventdalen, the *Heimen-SUCAI* was supposed to escort along the route another ship, the much larger «*Elisabeth*», a 3,000-ton steel freighter with no wireless station and over a hundred souls on board.

At 18.30 on May 23, position of the two ships was estimated to be 50 nautical miles South-West of «*Isola degli Orsi*» (Bjørnøya) (LB, f. 16r). Albertini and Zanetti were on watch in 3-hour shifts.

On May 24, at 12.30 (LB, f. 16r; M, p. 41 reports 11.30), first ice formations were encountered at Lat. 75°N. In the afternoon the sea grew increasingly rough and wind became stronger, forcing Albertini to turn due West to mitigate the impact of large ice fragments on the hull sides. Air temperature dropped to «*dodici gradi*», i.e. “twelve degrees”, most likely to be interpreted as -12 °C, causing ice to form on the ship structures (M, pp. 41-42).

stoppa e pece, esplosivo per i ghiacci, leve, mazze e palanchini, (...) ordinai il pieno di carbone per le nostre stufe, feci pulire, disinfettare, e riempire il tank di acqua dolce».

³³ This is probably to be identified with the Hammerfjord indicated on the Etnografisk kart over Tromsø Amt No4, 1890, Jens Andreas Friis, 1:200,000, <https://www.oldmapsonline.org/fr/maps/46c0f220-2872-5ffc-859e-d819874035d4?gid=0d69005d-1ec5-55e8-8659-693dd7bca189#position=9.2846/70.203/19.536/0.63&year=1890> (last access January 2026).



Fig. 10. Freighter «Elisabeth» seen from the Heimen-SUCAI during the Barents Sea crossing towards Svalbard

Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Conditions worsened in the night, with the ship's motions and frequent washing by large waves causing the release of fuel barrels on the deck from their restraints. Crewmembers worked for three hours, in dangerous conditions, to recover the rolling fuel barrels and secure them again (M, p. 41). The sledge dogs were also heavily soaked by the waves; water washing on all surfaces tended to quickly freeze (C, p. 13). In the early morning of May 25, weather conditions settled progressively and the ship sighted «*Capo Sud delle Spitzbergen*» (LB, f. 16v) i.e. "Spitzbergen's South Cape", (Sørkapp). Visual contact with the «*Elisabeth*» had been lost in the storm and Albertini made telegraphic notifications of this circumstance. On-board *Heimen-SUCAI*, the crew was busy repairing damages caused by the bad weather of the night; due to the ship's heavy roll, a certain amount of fuel oil had spilled from the tanks and had contaminated surrounding food packages; for much of the rest of the journey, the crew's meals and equipment were often spoiled, but were used anyway (M, p. 42; C, p. 13).

Albertini would later comment this with some humour: "...The taste of petroleum, from that day on, became a welcome guest at our table, as either *force majeure* or Dr. Peroni convinced us of its hygienic properties" (M, p. 42)³⁴.

Wide pack-ice formations impeded the approach to Adventfjorden and persistent fog forced the crew to slow down the engine and navigate by compass, proceeding back and forth towards the North-West or the South-East. The crew hunted seals, providing food for the dogs. At 17h position was fixed at 30 NM West of the southern extremity of Prins Karls Forland. In the evening, wireless communications with Roma San Paolo station were regular.

On May 26, in the early morning hours, a wind measured at 63 km/h (LB, f. 17v; "about 60" in M, p. 44), i.e. 9 Beaufort, forced the ship to heave to, keeping the engine running at low speed. Towards the evening, the wind decreased and the *Heimen-SUCAI* tried to make her way through heavy drift ice in order to approach the coast. Radio communications of the day took place as expected.

May 27 found the ship making minimal progress through the ice, loitering in channels of open water, "at, presumably, 30 miles from the Ice Fjord" (Isfjorden) (LB, f. 18r). During the night, while the ship was standing still in the fog for more than 6 hours, Albertini tested the weapons in the equipment shooting at seagulls, while Bonola captured one and embalmed it to serve as the first specimen in his research programme (M, p. 45). Radio communications during the day were as expected with Rome San Paolo.

May 28 presented a similar situation. In the early afternoon contact was re-established with the «*Elisabeth*». The two vessels came alongside each other, and the master of the «*Elisabeth*» went aboard the *Heimen-SUCAI*, to exchange news. Later in the day, Albertini was able to move closer to the islands, but then had to stop again.

May 29 was spent in a stationary position, although in fine and sunny weather. Albertini notes that Urbano had commenced his meteorological recordings, giving however up the idea, for the moment, of using the graphic dataloggers as their mechanisms were too heavily influenced by the ship's motions and vibrations. Albertini familiarized himself with the

34 «...Il sapore di petrolio fu fin da quel giorno ben accetto ospite della nostra mensa in quanto o la forza maggiore o il dottor Peroni ci convinsero delle sue caratteristiche igieniche».



Fig. 11. British Admiralty map of "Spitsbergen" (now Svalbard). Contains handwritten annotations
Source: Norsk Polarinstitut

dogs (M, pp. 45-47), taking the opportunity for a brief walk on the ice surrounding the ship. Pugliese continued to thoroughly set-up the radio systems, which regularly allowed communication with Rome San Paolo, daily, at 21h GMT. Routine onboard and loitering in search for passages continued on May 30, 31, June 1 and 2, while repeated and unsuccessful attempts were made to enter Isfjorden. Frustration started to build-up in the Italian crew. In the evening of May 31 there was another encounter with the «*Elisabeth*», and another meeting with her Captain, who went on-board *Heimen-SUCAI*. Albertini and Urbano worked to gain an observed position of the ship, a task made far more difficult than expected due to the ships motions and vibrations, and to the lack of reference tables for latitudes higher than 60°N. Wireless communications were as expected and Albertini notes that “On idle days the only pleasant thing for us is receiving telegrams from our families” (LB, f. 20r)³⁵. On June 1 the *Heimen-SUCAI* began an attempt to enter the «*Is Fiord*» (Isfjorden) by approaching it from the West and forcing her way through the difficult pack ice. The effort was protracted through June 2 and 3, proceeding through ice up to 3 metres thick (LB, f. 21r; M, p. 48). In the evening of that day the ship exited the area of pack ice and crossed an area of open water. Around 21h she moored at the fast-ice in the fjord (described as a “thin floe of bay-ice” in M, p. 48).

At 00h on June 4, Albertini, Urbano, Bonola and «*Jelstein*» (a Norwegian crew-member hired as dog-keeper) went down onto the frozen sea, setting out for «*Advent Bay*» (Adventfjorden), in a 40-Km, 7-hour march to reach «*Longyear City*» (Longyearbyen) in good weather (LB, f. 21r; M, pp. 48-49). The town was reached around 06h and the group rested.

At the time of Albertini's visit, Longyearbyen still corresponded largely to the original settlement of the so-called “Old Longyearbyen”, established in 1906 by the *Arctic Coal Company*. The town was laid out as a compact mining settlement close to the shore of Adventfjorden, near the mouth of Adventdalen, with buildings arranged in a linear pattern between the dock and the lower mountain slopes where the mines were located. Industrial facilities, barracks, storage buildings and power supply installations were concentrated in this southern, fjord-oriented sector.

The northward shift and expansion of the urban area, which characterises present-day Longyearbyen, took place only later (Reymert, 2014, pp. 9-11);

35 «*Nelle giornate di ozio l'unica cosa grata per noi è il ricevere telegrammi dalle nostre famiglie*».



Fig. 12. Longyearbyen, probably in 1920, in a SNSK picture

Source: Reymert, 2014, p. 10, modified by G. Casagrande

there was already, however, a new expansion area, that Albertini and his companions, after having met the administrators of the mines at 9h, reached and spent much of the day in. Albertini calls it “New City”. The description Albertini gave about it from this brief visit is quite vivid:

The village, though I had never been there before, immediately called to mind Northern Canada. A few wooden houses, creaking, blackened structures used for coal transport; the winding, endless fjord, still frozen, impressed upon my thoughts the degree of isolation of the life lived up there. Signs of life and work were everywhere, in the air and on the ground: wreckage, heaps of mining debris, scattered timber, filth. In the air, the creaking of the coal cableways – an incomprehensible music – and the distant barking of dogs broke the oppressive silence, yet did not diminish its power. All around, white mountains laden with snow and ice, and to the north the flat expanse of the frozen Isfjorden stretching away endlessly.

We wandered about for a few hours, drowsy yet full of curiosity, through this strange village of poverty and hard labour, and after asking a passer-by where we might get something to eat, we were directed to a large wooden shed. We went inside: it was the miners' mess hall. A large stove scarcely warmed the vast room, crossed by long, narrow wooden tables. We were served rice cooked in milk with sugar and jam, and hard, fossil-like yellow cheese. Around us dozens of strange men stared fixedly at us.

A motley array of miners: tired faces just awakened from the long Arctic winter, abnormal expressions, eyes dilated by the dust of the mines. We ate, and then cautiously asked to pay. We were not allowed to; we thanked them as best we could and noticed that those miners were happy.

Later, the director of the mines described to us the harsh life of those men during the winter, who, after ten hours underground, amid dust and

cold, have no comfort from the sun. He told us that some are often seized by real attacks of neurasthenia and insomnia, and that only artificial sunlight, ultraviolet rays, can cure them (M, pp. 49-50)³⁶

Unable to find an adequate place to rest better, the group was finally given the expected 7 additional dogs and departed around midnight, on June 5, reaching back the ship 12 hours later, at noon. The march had been difficult, due to the undertrained dog teams and the ice made heavier by a rise in temperature. Soon thereafter, the *Heimen-SUCAI* departed the Isfjorden and, proceeding closely along the western coasts of Spitsbergen in luckily open waters, reached the «King's Bay», i.e. Kongsfjorden in the early hours of June 6. She then proceeded deeper into the fjord later in the morning and stopped 15 km away from Ny-Ålesund. A mooring at the "bay ice" along the southern shores was established. Concerned about the technical preparations for the planned march in Nordaustlandet and, at the same time, about the ice conditions in the northern area of the archipelago, Albertini decided to perform a test-deployment of the patrol while the *Heimen-SUCAI* was ordered a 24-hour reconnoitring to the North.

...I landed the tents, provisions, dogs and sledges, a boat with the outboard motor, and the small portable transmitting and receiving radio station with its corresponding antenna. Urbano, Bonola, Della Valle, Guedoz and I took up our quarters in the camp.

I then immediately sent the ship northward with the task of carrying out a rapid inspection of the ice conditions, a survey to be completed within

36 «Il villaggio, senza ch'io ci fossi mai stato, mi richiamò alla mente il Nord Canada. Poche case di legno, cigolanti strutture annerite per il trasporto del carbone; il fiordo sinuoso ed interminabile ancor gelato segnava ai miei pensieri il grado di isolamento della vita che si svolgeva lassù. Di vita e di lavoro vi erano segni ovunque nell'aria e sulla terra; rottami, cumuli di detriti di miniera, legnami sparsi, sudiciume. Per l'aria il cigolare delle teleferiche del carbone, musica incomprensibile, ed il lontano latrare dei cani rompono il pesantissimo silenzio ma non ne eliminano la potenza. Tutt'intorno le montagne candide cariche di neve e ghiaccio, e verso Nord il piattame dell'Is Fiorden gelato perdersi all'infinito.

Girovagammo per qualche ora sonnolenti, ma pieni di curiosità in questo strano villaggio di miseria e di duro lavoro, ed avendo chiesto ad un passante dove avremmo potuto rifocillarci un po', ci fu indicato un gran capannone di legno. Vi entrammo, era la mensa dei minatori. Una grande stufa riscaldava scarsamente la vasta stanza solcata da lunghi e stretti tavoloni. Ci fu servito del riso cotto nel latte con zucchero e marmellata, del formaggio giallo, duro, fossile. Intorno a noi decine di uomini strani ci guardavano fissamente. Disparate figure di minatori, visi stanchi appena risvegliati dal lungo inverno artico, espressioni anormali, occhi dilatati dal pulviscolo delle miniere. Mangiammo, e poi cautamente chiedemmo di pagare. Non ci fu permesso; ringraziammo come ci fu possibile e osservammo che quei minatori furono felici. In seguito il Direttore delle miniere ci descrisse la vita grama di quegli uomini, durante l'inverno, che dopo dieci ore di galleria, tra il pulviscolo ed il gelo, non hanno il conforto del sole. Ci disse che spesso alcuni sono presi da veri accessi di nevastenia e di insonnia e che solo il sole artificiale, i raggi ultravioletti, li possono guarire».

twenty-four hours.

In any case, the ship was to remain in constant radio communication with us, which would also serve to familiarize Urbano with his duties as patrol wireless operator, as well as to test the small station under practical operating conditions (M, p. 52)³⁷

Apparently, some of these actions are documented in a section of Della Valle's film between 00.28.34 and 00.30.31. The designated patrol members disembarked, assisted by the other crew in putting the dogs and equipment onto the ice.

An interesting anecdote is reported by Bonola:

A patrol was landed, composed of Albertini – Urbano – Della Valle – Guidoz [sic] – 'Gisten [sic] the Dog-handler,' as we called him on board – and myself. During this landing an incident occurred which deserves to be recorded and clearly demonstrates how unsafe the ice conditions in the Arctic can be.

We had been put ashore in the following order: first Della Valle, then myself with some provisions; the other companions had returned to the *Heimen* to fetch the dogs and the rest of the crew. Suddenly, a newly formed channel cut off the ice floe on which we were standing, and my companion and I found ourselves drifting toward Greenland. The stretch of open water grew ever wider, and our floe drifted farther and farther away from the land. Attempting to swim ashore was impossible because of the distance and the cold. Our only hope lay in the motor launch. After two hours of anxious waiting, our companions finally reached us and removed us from that difficult situation (C, p. 17)³⁸

37 «...sbarcai tende, provvigioni, cani e slitte, una barca col fuoribordo, e la stazioncina portatile trasmittente e ricevente con relativa antenna. Urbano, Bonola, Della Valle, Guedoz ed io prendemmo posto nell'accampamento. Inviai quindi la nave immediatamente al Nord col compito di svolgere una rapida ispezione intorno alle condizioni dei ghiacci, ispezione da effettuarsi entro le ventiquattro ore. Comunque la nave avrebbe dovuto restare in costante connessione via Radio con noi, e ciò avrebbe anche servito ad impraticare Urbano delle sue mansioni di radiotelegrafista di pattuglia oltreché a collaudare in sede pratica la piccola stazione».

38 «Fu sbarcata una pattuglia composta di Albertini – Urbano – Della Valle – Guidoz [sic] – 'Gisten [sic] il Cagnaro' come lo chiamavamo a bordo, ed io. Durante questo sbarco mi accadde un incidente che merita di essere riportato e che dimostra chiaramente quanto siano mal sicure le condizioni dei ghiacci nell'Artide. Eravamo stati sbarcati nel seguente ordine prima: Della Valle – io e delle provviste, poi i nostri gli altri compagni erano tornati sull'*Heimen* per prendere i cani ed il resto dell'equipaggio della pattuglia e del materiale. Ad un tratto un canale neo formatosi isolò il ghiaccio su cui ci trovavamo e noi il mio compagno ed io ci vedemmo spinti alla deriva verso la Groenlandia. Il tratto di mare libero si faceva sempre più vasto e la deriva del nostro blocco si allontanava sempre più dalla terra. Tentare di raggiungere a nuoto la costa era impossibile per la distanza e per il freddo. L'unica nostra speranza stava nel motoscafo. Infatti dopo due ore di penosa attesa i nostri compagni ci raggiunsero e ci tolsero dalla imbarazzante difficile situazione».

Della Valle joined the group for documentary purposes. The group set up a camp and spent the rest of the day, and the following night, in finding the proper configuration for the two dog teams and in training them. In the morning of June 7, the teams were formed and Albertini assigned them to the two sledge crews. The rest of the day was spent in hunting and testing the portable radio stations, with Urbano practicing Morse. After a brief 3-hour rest, as a verification run, at around 1h on June 8 the patrol men – with the exception of Della Valle, left behind to guard the camp – reached Ny-Ålesund by sledge and bought some provisions at the local Butikke (M, p. 55).

In 1929 Ny-Ålesund was the northernmost mining base in the world (Perry, n.d.). At the time it was about to end its operation as the two most profitable mines, *Sofie I* and *Ester I* were no longer viable in the increasingly declining coal market. This was in spite of the large production (70,000-90,000 tons per year) the two facilities had yielded between 1921 and 1929 (Reymert, 2016, p. 9). A few months after Albertini's visits, the mining activities would have shut-down for about the next twenty years. The settlement, beyond the coal dock, appeared as linear rows of greyish wooden buildings. The settlement included a new power facility built in 1928, a hospital and a telegraph station, with a few houses for residential purposes (including the so-called "Amundsen's villa", the former directors' residence), officer and workers' barracks.



*Fig. 13. Deploying the sledges for equipment testing in «King's Bay» (Kongsfjorden)
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»*



Fig. 14. Urbano and Pugliese (wearing the headset) operating one of the portable wireless stations during the test deployment on June 6
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»



Fig. 15. Ny-Ålesund in 1920 (Picture Erling Einar Angell Thiis, Norsk Polarinstitut)
Source: Reymert, 2016, p. 7



Fig. 16. Annotated section from an original 1:5,000 scale map (The Northern Exploration Company, 1927), showing the prominent elements of the Ny-Ålesund mining station in 1927
Source: OldMaps Online; GIS reprocessing: GREAL³⁹

³⁹ Map section derived from: Norge 247: Kart over Kingsbay Kulfelt 1927. The Northern Exploration Company Limited, 1:5 000. Source: OldMaps online. GIS editing by GREAL.

Upon returning at the camp, around 13h, the group was soon joined by the *Heimen-SUCAI*. Zanetti and the Norwegian “ice pilot” came ashore and confirmed the good conditions of passage in the area of interest. Bonola specifies that the ship had reached the «*Isola Moss*», probably Moseøya (C, p. 19). Albertini writes in his memoir that the ship had in fact gone even farther:

They give me surprising news: they had reached the «Norway islands» [Norskøyane, ed.'s note] and, after having climbed to their summit, they discovered towards the east a large band of water between the fast-ice along the coast and the pack from the North, extending out of sight. (...) Since we feared that the North wind might, within a few hours, once again heap the drifting ice against the solid coastal ice, thus blocking our route, we decided to depart, and at 18 we indeed set sail after hastily loading all the camp equipment on board. It was a remarkable undertaking that we carried out while, in our hearts, there hammered like a true nightmare the authoritative prediction of the experienced ice experts from the mines: '[It] is quite impossible to reach the Seven Islands [Sjuøyane]'. We sailed almost always through a wide channel six or seven miles off the coast, skirting closely the ice formations still tightly pressed against the shore itself, while to the north there lay enormous accumulations of large drifting floes, kept at a distance by a providential southerly wind. Beyond the Hinlopen Strait [Hinlopenstretet], the solid ice along the coast of North East Land [Nordaustlandet] extended for more than twenty kilometres, enclosing also the group of the Seven Islands. The ice that separated us from the coast appeared extremely rugged and profoundly disrupted by large, chaotic pressure ridges. These formations, wholly unusual in this area, left me somewhat perplexed about the condition of the ice farther east (M, pp. 55-56)⁴⁰

40 «Mi danno una notizia sorprendente: essi raggiunsero le isole Norway e saliti sulla loro sommità, scoprirono verso levante una gran fascia di acqua tra il fast-ice di lungo costa ed il pack del Nord, perdersi a vista d'occhio. (...) Poiché temevamo che il vento del Nord potesse in poche ore assiepare nuovamente il drifting-ice contro il ghiaccio compatto di costa sbarrandoci così la via, decidemmo di partire, ed alle diciotto salpammo infatti dopo aver precipitosamente imbarcato tutto il materiale del campo. Fu un'azione sorprendente che svolgemmo mentre nel cuore ci martellava, incubo vero e proprio, la predizione competente degli autorevoli conoscitori di ghiacci delle miniere: '[it] Is quite impossible to reach the Seven Islands'. Senza alcun intoppo, superando ogni previsione ottimistica, a piene macchine, siamo alle diciassette a ridosso delle Sette Isole a due miglia ad Ovest dalla Walden. Navigammo quasi sempre in un grande canale a sei o sette miglia dalla costa, quasi rasente la formazione di ghiacci ancor serrati alla costa stessa, avendo a settentrione enormi assembramenti di grandi banchi di deriva tenuti a distanza da un provvidenziale vento di Sud. Oltre lo stretto di Hinlopen il ghiaccio compatto lungo la costa della Terra di Nord-Est si estendeva per oltre venti chilometri, racchiudendo anche il gruppo delle Sette Isole. Il ghiaccio che ci separava dalla costa si presentava accidentatissimo e quanto mai sconvolto da grandi e disordinate dighe di pressione. Queste formazioni del tutto insolite in tale zona mi lasciavano un poco perplesso sulle condizioni del ghiaccio verso levante».

In and around Nordaustlandet

The haste in removing the camp at «*King's Bay*» is confirmed by the logbook annotation, according to which the materials were brought back onboard using two boats (LB, f. 24v).

Albertini writes that at 17h on June 8, the *Heimen-SUCAI* was lying close off «*Wagen Island*» (Waldenøya), on the West of the Sjuøyane. The position is indicated to be 2 miles west of the island in the memoir (M, p. 62). Della Valle's film shows at (00.35.35) the ship moored at the ice and Norwegian crewmembers hoisting onboard large blocks of snow to melt into drinking water.

Albertini decided to make an exploration towards the "Beverly Strait" (Beverlysundet) to inspect a hut that his 1928 rescue expedition had established as an emergency depot for possible survivors of the *Italia* or the *Latham 47*.



Fig. 17. The Heimen moored at the ice 2 miles off Waldenøya
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Having taken the decision to inspect the hut at Beverlysundet, at 23h (LB, f. 25r; 00h on May 9, according to M, p. 57) a land-team composed of 6 persons and 2 sledges disembarked. The members are indicated by Albertini as himself, «Jelstein», Bonola, Guedoz, Peroni and Della Valle. «Jelstein» had been designated by the expedition Commander to be part of the Nordaustlandet patrol.

Albertini annotates, in the logbook, that Peroni and Della Valle were “loaded onto the two sledges” (LB, f. 25r), so they appear to have been passengers in this trip. The group left the ship and moved across the expanse of fast-ice proceeding south almost directly towards Nordkapp. There was some discrepancy about the duration of the “interesting” but pretty much uneventful transfer, as recorded in the two writings by Albertini. The logbook reports «circa otto ore» (“about eight hours”), whereas the memoir has – in spite of the sentence being identical in the two sources – «circa dieci ore» (“about ten hours”). The logbook reports that Nordkapp was reached at 5h (LB, f. 25r), which might indicate that the approach to Beverlysundet took further 2-4 hours.

In describing that survey, comparison between the two texts is useful. The logbook adds interesting details about the landscape. The march was “carried out among serac-filled ice and enormous pressure ridges that provided the definitive test for our excellent teams” (LB, f. 25r), while the memoir has a brief but relevant meteorological detail «dopo aver attraversato nella fitta nebbia» (“after having crossed, in the thick fog”) and confirms the description of landscape as «straordinariamente sconvolto» (“extraordinarily disturbed and broken”) (M, p. 57). At Nordkapp the group made an apparently brief stop – this can be inferred by the annotation in the memoir, according to which Albertini was able to notice that two iron barrels left there in 1928 were now missing; an observation that probably required a close-up check, given the bad visibility lamented in the previous passage. Soon thereafter, however, the two sledges continued on to the South-West, reaching Beverlysundet and the timber hut, which they found still closed, with all the provisions left in 1928 in place, but partially ruined due to humidity and ice that had penetrated inside.

The rationale of a depot in that position is well explained in the memoir:

...It had been stocked with provisions, weapons, medicines, and clothing, in anticipation that the castaways, at the onset of the first winter ice,

or driven by the drift, might have reached the coast – an assumption by no means an implausible one. (...) I found the hut even more wretched; closed with rusted nails, bearing its faded inscriptions: 'This depot is put here to help Nobile's and Amundsen's lost parties...' (...) The cross close by the hut, erected in memory of the tragedy of three hunters, had been knocked down by the wind. (...) The area to which I attributed the greatest interest was the northern and eastern coast of North East Land [Nordaustlandet]. Holding fast to my conviction that the fall of the balloon could not have occurred very far from the gondola, and considering moreover the drift phenomena to which the Mariano group⁴¹ itself was subjected, it was logical to deduce that the northern and eastern coasts, together with the islands to the north of Nordaustlandet, must have constituted the most probable setting for the fate of the missing men. Drift and winter ice might have helped the castaways to reach the mainland (M, pp. 57-58)⁴²

Having ascertained that no access had taken place into the hut since 1928, Albertini and his men took some rest using the sleeping-bags available in the hut, lying on large granite slabs next to the cabin around a drift-wood fire. After waiting for the lower temperatures of the night hours, so that ice and snow would be more firm, they then departed to return onboard *Heimen-SUCAI* at 19h on June 9. They apparently followed a more direct route at a possibly faster pace – likely under better weather conditions – so that their march lasted only 4 hours in this case, bringing them back to the ship at 23h. While on his way, Albertini noticed that

I came to the conviction that the ice in the area of interest to us had

41 The so called "Mariano group" was composed of three *Italia's* crewmembers, including Adalberto Mariano, Filippo Zappi and Finn Malmgren, who had departed the "Red Tent" in an attempt to reach Svalbard on foot to search for help. They had left on May 30 but, caught in the erratic drift of the ice in the area, were unable to make progress towards their destination. During the march, Finn Malmgren died, while Mariano and Zappi, worn-out by the ordeal and about to perish on the pack, were rescued *in extremis* by Soviet icebreaker Krassin on July 12 (Nobile, 1975, pp. 229, 280-281, 283-284).

42 «...essa fu riempita di viveri, armi, medicinali, indumenti, nella previsione che i naufraghi alla formazione dei primi ghiacci invernali, o spinti da derive, avessero raggiunto la costa; ipotesi per nulla assurda. (...) Ritrovai la capanna ancor più misera; chiusa da chiodi arrugginiti colle sue iscrizioni sbiadite: 'This depot is put here to help Nobile's and Amundsen's lost parties...' (...) La croce a ridosso della capanna, ed in memoria della tragedia di tre cacciatori, era stata rovesciata dal vento. (...) la zona alla quale io attribuivo massimo interesse era la costa Nord ed Est della Terra di Nord-Est. Ferma restando la mia convinzione che la caduta del pallone non avrebbe dovuto essere avvenuta molto lontano dalla navicella, e considerati inoltre i fenomeni di deriva a cui fu soggetto lo stesso gruppo Mariano, era logico dedurre che la costa Nord ed Est e le isole al Nord della Terra di Nord-Est dovevano essere stato il quadro più probabile delle sorti dei dispersi. La deriva ed i ghiacci invernali avrebbero potuto aiutare i naufraghi a raggiungere la terra ferma».

formed - or rather consolidated - late in the season and during periods of unsettled weather, with strong winds from the North-East. Indeed, where in the previous year the ice had been solid and level over wide expanses, it was now disrupted by enormous pressure ridges and by true serac-like heaps, arched and of recent formation toward the south-west; features of irregularity that I frequently observed intersected by large floes of newly formed ice only a few centimetres thick. It was therefore logical to harbour apprehensions about the condition of the ice farther east (M, p. 58)⁴³

On June 10, 11 and 12, preparations were made for a rapid deployment of the patrol in Nordaustlandet. Albertini decided to use both the available sledges and composed a patrol of 4 well trained men. Each sledge was to be hauled by a specific dog team. The two sledges were to be loaded to full capacity with provisions and equipment. Food supplies amounted to a total of 5 boxes, each one containing packages to feed 4 men for 5 days (i.e. a total of 25 days endurance at full ration). The weight for 1 daily ration for 1 man is reported by Peroni to be 930 grams⁴⁴, for a total caloric value of each full ration at 4,110 kcal (Peroni, 1932, p. 129). Food supplies also included dried onions, salt, pepper and butter to be used in cooking fresh meat obtained by hunting. Arms available to the group

43 «Riportai il convincimento che i ghiacci della zona a noi interessanti si fossero formati o meglio consolidati in avanzata stagione ed in periodi di agitate condizioni atmosferiche coi venti forti dal Nord-Est. Difatti ove lo scorso anno il ghiaccio era compatto e piano in grandi estensioni, ora era sconvolto da enormi dighe di pressioni e da vere seraccate adunche verso il S.-O.; accidentalità che notai frequentemente intersecate da grandi banchi di recente formazione di spessore di pochi centimetri. Era logico nutrire apprensioni intorno alle condizioni dei ghiacci del levante».

44 There is an apparent discrepancy in the list of daily food rations for the patrol. Albertini lists it in the memoir (M., p. 59), and so does Dr. Peroni in his report (Peroni 1932, p. 129 and in this publication, Annex 1). The «biscotti salati» ("savoury biscuits") are listed in the latter's report but not in the former's. Peroni's list amounts to a total of 930 grams individual daily ration, while Albertini's has 810, a value explicitly stated in the memoir. The logbook does not contain any useful information for dispelling the inconsistency. If, on the one hand, it is impossible at this point to ascertain which list is to be considered the accurate one, several remarks are possible. Peroni had probably conducted a thorough examination of data, since his report develops a detailed scientific analysis of nutrition as one of its core topics; Albertini was providing the list in his wider account of the preparations for the Nordaustlandet march. It is impossible to exclude, however, a last-minute change decided by Albertini from an originally planned value of 930 g to a reduced 810 g value: it would have allowed to save 12 kg in total weight. If this had been a decision, it could be noted that the result would have been achieved by removing the food with the second lowest caloric value (3,75 kcal/g), the lowest being only that of Nestlé condensed milk (3,63 kcal/g). Savoury biscuits, in fact, could have been probably felt as redundant in terms of taste against the provision of plasmon biscuits (much higher in energy 4,5 kcal/g and lighter in weight, i.e. 100 g instead of 120 g per ration). However, it would be difficult to understand why such a change could have been decided with no discussion or notification to the expedition's medical officer: but there is no evidence of such an event in Peroni's report. By the way, Peroni can be seen in Della Valle's film between 00.37.24 – 00.37.33, with Albertini and Zanetti, observing the preparation of ration packages.

were a “Manlider [sic] rifle caliber 8” (M, p. 60), i.e. possibly a 8x50 mm R Steyer-Mannlicher M1895 rifle, with 100 rounds, and a Smith & Wesson revolver. Every member in the patrol was to carry a hunting knife.



Fig. 18. Zanetti (in the foreground) and Albertini (in the background) prepare food packages for the patrol

Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Cooking equipment included a Primus stove with several spare parts, along with an aluminium Nansen cooker, comprising a double-walled casing designed for melting snow while recovering heat from the stove itself. Fuel (kerosene) was stored in a fifteen-litre container, divided into several watertight sections, which Albertini had ordered in Italy to exactly fit into the sledges.

Shelter was to be provided by a tent (12 kg) and a four-person sleeping bag (10 kg).

A particularly critical equipment to be carried along by the patrol was

one of the portable wireless stations including the aluminium antenna mount and batteries for 40-hour endurance, for a total weight of 38 kg. Added equipment included an axe for chopping driftwood, minimal changing clothes for the men and a basic medical kit. As dog back-up food, the patrol would carry along salt cod.

Dog harnesses were carefully reviewed and specifically prepared. The leading sledge had a gimbal compass installed to better determine travel headings.

Bonola adds an important detail: “We had with us a tiny cinematographic camera with 200 metres film” (C, p. 22)⁴⁵, a piece of equipment that, along with the much more safety-critical portable radio, was quite a rare element to bring along with sledged patrols. The device, which could approximately record about 10 minutes of footage at the standard 16 fps rate of the period, was to provide documentation about the patrol's activity.

According to the logbook (LB, f. 26r), in the evening of June 11, «Jelstein» approached Albertini to inform him that he would not take part in the patrol. In the memoir (M, p. 61), the episode occurred only “a few hours before departing”, apparently then on June 12. The laconic entry in the logbook might suggest a shade of disappointment: “Jelstein tells me frankly that he does not intend to leave being ill”; however, the elaborated *a posteriori* version in the memoir is benign:

A few hours before our departure, Jelstein (...) confessed to me with frank sincerity that he did not feel able to follow me, given his poor state of health, and since, during the marches already undertaken in our company, he had been able to ascertain that others, better suited than himself, would have been able to accompany me. I considered his honest judgment to be sound, and thus chose as my companions those whom my heart had long since designated (M, p. 61)⁴⁶

Albertini's entry for the rest of June 11 reports the hunt to two walruses.

The two patrol sledges, each weighing about 200 kg (C, p. 23; Della Valle's film at 00.39.05 has 250 kg), would therefore be manned with Albertini and Guedoz on the “N.1”, Urbano and Bonola on “N.2”.

⁴⁵ «Avevamo con noi un minuscolo cinematografo con 200 metri di pellicola».

⁴⁶ «Poche ore prima di partire, Jelstein, un bravo norvegese che io avevo assunto come ‘cagnaro’ e che avevo in animo, soprattutto per varie ragioni di etichetta internazionale, di portare con me nella pattuglia, mi confessò con schietta sincerità che egli non si sentiva di seguirmi, date le sue non buone condizioni di salute, e dato che nelle marce già fatte in nostra compagnia egli aveva avuto modo di accertare che altri migliori di lui avrebbero potuto seguirmi. Considerai esatto il suo onesto giudizio, e scelsi così come compagni quelli che da tempo il mio cuore aveva designato».



Fig. 19. Lowering the patrol's sledges and equipment onto the ice

Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

The leading dogs were “Lys”⁴⁷ and “Muss” respectively, and a total of 16 animals were to pull the sledges. In mentioning the presence of the wireless station in the patrol's equipment, Bonola comments that: “It was the first time, in the history of Arctic expeditions, that an R.T. apparel was following the march of a patrol” (C, p. 22)⁴⁸.

At 22h on June 12 preparations were complete. Albertini had “a long meeting” (LB, f. 26v) with Zanetti and Jakobsen to discuss actions and instruct them about the conduct to be adopted during the patrol's march away from the ship.

To them I explained the various plans which, depending on weather and ice conditions, I intended to carry out; I issued instructions that the ship

⁴⁷ This dog is named as “Lys” in the memoir, “Lis” in the logbook entries and “Liss” in Bonola's conference paper.

⁴⁸ «Era la prima volta, nella storia delle spedizioni artiche, che un apparecchio di R.T. seguiva le marcie della pattuglia».

should remain at our landing place for at least six days in the event of our return, and should then make a rapid visit to the Seven Islands. It was thereafter to approach the southern entrance of the Hinlopen Strait in order to inspect the ice conditions there, so as to be prepared for future plans.

I set three daily radiotelegraphic appointments. From the twentieth day onward, unless otherwise instructed by radiotelegraphy, the ship was to cruise in the vicinity of Beverly, the presumed location of our recovery. In any case, I left Zanetti full freedom of action should we not have returned within fifty days of the landing; I nevertheless warned my friend Zanetti against landing any patrol to come to our aid, knowing well what often happens to rescue parties (M, pp. 60-61)⁴⁹

The sledges and materials were unloaded onto the ice, dogs were harnessed and the patrol was ready for departure at 00.30 on June 13 (M, p. 61). "A bottle of champagne is drunk". Farewells were exchanged.

Della Valle put his cinematographic camera onto the ice, positioning at a certain distance from the ship facing her starboard (right) side, so as to be able to both shoot the unloading and preparations, and the initial motion of the group on the background of the ship; after having been passed, he would have turned his camera and followed the patrol as it was disappearing.

The atmosphere of the moment is well described from the opposite points of view in Zanetti's logbook entry for June 13, and in Albertini's memoir.

The former annotates:

Our companions set out amid the emotion of all present, even though Della Valle's motion-picture camera captured only cold handshakes, and even though we, too, stiffened into an almost military salute as they disappeared into the fog (LB, f. 26v)⁵⁰

49 «Ad essi esposi quali erano i vari programmi che a seconda delle condizioni metereologiche e dei ghiacci avevo in animo di svolgere; impartii disposizioni che la nave stesse nel posto del nostro sbarco per almeno sei giorni in caso di un nostro ritorno, indi effettuasse una rapida intervista alle Sette Isole; avrebbe poi dovuto affacciarsi alla testata meridionale dello stretto di Hinlopen per ispezionarvi le condizioni dei ghiacci onde essere preparati ai programmi futuri. Fissai tre appuntamenti radiotelegrafici giornalieri. Dal ventesimo giorno in avanti salvo contrordini radiotelegrafici la nave avrebbe dovuto incrociare nei dintorni di Beverly, presumibile località del nostro ricupero. In ogni modo lasciai a Zanetti piena facoltà di azione nel caso che dopo cinquanta giorni dallo sbarco non avessimo fatto ritorno; diffidai però l'amico Zanetti dallo sbarcare alcuna pattuglia in nostro aiuto, ben sapendo che cosa spesso accade alle pattuglie di soccorso».

50 «I nostri compagni sono partiti fra la commozione di tutti, anche se l'apparecchio cinematografico di Della Valle non ha sorpreso che delle fredde strette di mano e se noi ci siamo irrigiditi in un saluto quasi militare mentre

The latter's version is in agreement:

The farewell from the companions we were leaving aboard the ship was almost cold, for in the Arctic, by a higher law, gestures and words must always be inversely proportional to the flames of the heart. A single sharp shout to Lys was enough for the entire team to tense like a bow on the trail (M, pp. 61-62)⁵¹

Bonola describes the moment in these terms:

As a sign of farewell, the flag was hoisted on the mast of the *Heimen*. The final recommendations, the last goodbyes – then Albertini curtly gave the order to set off. The dogs sprang forward after the lead dogs and hurled themselves onto the trail. In their rush they knocked over good Della Valle, our cameraman, who was preparing, with his camera, to film our departure. Albertini and Guidoz's [sic] sledge went ahead; Urbano and I followed at a short distance with the second sledge (C, p. 23)⁵²

The patrol left at 2h GMT, apparently in relative fair weather and followed the tracks left in the previous days inbound Beverlysundet. The cabin was reached “in six hours” and the team rested throughout the day outdoors, using the food supplies and the sleeping bags stored in the hut in order to save the sledge provisions. Since the patrol's departure, Zanetti had taken over Albertini's command responsibilities of the expedition for the part conducted by the *Heimen-SUCAI*. He therefore also began writing the entries in the logbook. There is evidence that Albertini also kept a diary or logbook to track the events involving the patrol. Explicit references to this are made in the memoir: reporting events of June 14 he writes: “...while Guedoz takes care of the dinner and Bonola of the dogs and I of the diary...” (M, p. 64); a few pages later, in describing the serious situation during the blizzard at Kapp Mohn, he appears to copy the paragraph in the memoir, verbatim, from the diary: “I wrote this page in the tent, while my companions are asleep half-inside the frigid and wet sleeping bag” (M, p. 78).

essi scomparivano nella nebbia».

51 «Il saluto dei compagni che lasciavamo sulla nave fu quasi freddo, perché nell'Artide per una forza superiore i gesti e le parole vogliono essere sempre inversamente proporzionali alle fiamme del cuore».

52 «In segno di saluto fu issata la bandiera sull'albero della *Heimen*. Le ultime raccomandazioni, gli ultimi saluti poi Albertini dette seccamente il via. I cani scattarono dietro i capi muta e si slanciarono sulla pista. Nella corsa travolsero il buon Della Valle, il nostro cinematografista, che con il suo apparecchio si apprestava a riprodurre la nostra partenza. Procedeva la slitta di Albertini e Guidoz [sic], Urbano ed io seguivamo a breve distanza con la seconda slitta».



Fig. 20. June 13. The patrol departs to begin its reconnaissance of Nordaustlandet
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

It is important to highlight an aspect that characterised the specific journey of the patrol in Nordaustlandet. As an expert musher, Albertini sought to always have the patrol under the best possible conditions of the surface to travel. To this purpose, given the summer context in which the voyage took place, he deemed best to travel at night, when the lower temperatures favoured more solid ice cover and firm snow. Visibility was granted anyway, if the air was sufficiently clear, by the presence of the continuous sunlight, albeit dimmed in some degree. During the warmer hours of the day, the surface would have been less stable and much easier to melt, hampering the smooth run of the dogs, sledges and skiing men. For this reason, since its deployment off Waldenøya, the patrol used to start its travels late at night and to have its rest-periods during the day, generally placing the camp in the morning hours.

In this type of scenario, another phenomenon may take place. A common tendency among explorers and operators that are not profoundly

accustomed with the polar environments – as it was the case with the SUCAI crewmembers – is to react to the unusual daylight conditions with a suppression of normal wake-sleep cycles; a fact which exposes them to sleep deprivation and overfatigue. In polar expeditions, the burdens of responsibility may further increase this trend; Albertini had experienced insomnia and discontinuous rest periods already during his time onboard. During their search in Nordaustlandet, he and his patrol ended up enjoying very little recovery time between marches. They often engaged in additional work during the camping phases, such as hunting, driftwood collection, care of dog teams and, obviously, telegraphic communications. Their young age, outstanding athletic preparation and moral strength enabled them, nevertheless, to perform well even under that extreme strain.

During the first part of the march at least, according to Bonola's conference paper, the daily transects took place mostly on the bay-ice, i.e. on the surface of the frozen sea, while camps were placed on land, whether capes, rocks or coasts. In order to save the provisions, the patrol hunted wildlife when possible and burned driftwood, which was more or less abundant in the area, to get warm and to cook. They were expecting not to find game in the internal areas of Nordaustlandet (C, pp. 22, 24).

As per the instructions given by Albertini, throughout June 13 the *Heimen-SUCAI* remained anchored in position, while the crew adjusted to the new phase and set up the activities to follow. Zanetti, now in command of the ship, included wireless operator Pugliese in the watch shifts and Della Valle in the routine house-keeping activities. Watch shifts were extended to 24 hours (LB, f. 26v).

At the Beverly hut, at 20h the patrol prepared for departure in worsening weather, with wind, snow and fog. Departure was at 22h; the sledges moved towards the east on the frozen Beverlysundet and then proceeded, in the early hours of June 14, towards Scoresbyøya, using the gimbal compass to keep heading.

At 1h, given that the strong wind from the North-West was pushing drift ice towards the ship, Zanetti ordered the *Heimen-SUCAI* to move away from its anchoring position close to Waldenøya and to begin loitering offshore the Sjuøyane to avoid being blocked (LB, f. 27r).

As the patrol was progressing east of Beverlysundet into the Nordenskiöldbukta, the limited visibility on the frozen sea and the "constant uncertainty about the conditions of the ice" (M, p. 62) induced Albertini to

frequently turn southbound, so as to keep closer to the coast, skirting Ekstremhuken. In spite of this measures, a sudden close-call occurred, when the ice suddenly failed beneath the leading dog team, so that it splashed almost entirely into the freezing water. It was quickly rescued by the joint effort of all men and travel resumed “evermore prudent, as these cracks of open water rise in us the doubt that the ice we are on be not solid, but rather formed by drifting floes” (M, p. 63). Bonola’s report depicts quite a clear description of how critical that kind of incident could be.

Urbano and I rushed forward to give help, but the thin ice would not bear our weight and we fell into the water to keep the dogs company. I managed to pull myself out by clinging to the floating ice, and was thus able to help the others and free Urbano and the dogs, who, entangled in their harnesses, were meanwhile in danger of drowning. In the midst of this, Albertini, with great presence of mind, succeeded in overturning the sledge onto the ice and securing it in such a way as to prevent it from slipping into the sea. Our clothes had turned into sheets of ice, and we had to continue our march in that condition, under the falling snow (C, pp. 24-25)⁵³

At 5h (M, p. 63) Scoresbyøya was in sight and the patrol rounded it from the north, in search of an appropriate spot for landing the sledges.

On its eastern side we found a steep descent suitable for bringing the sledge onto solid ground, and to distract me from the fascination – which this seeking of shelter on the icy rocks of the Arctic always exerts – there suddenly appeared a large she-bear only a few metres from us, accompanied by a small cub. Fortunately for her, I did not have my rifle at hand, and within a few minutes my skis and my bullets were already pursuing her in vain, so swiftly did she run northwards, pushing ahead with her muzzle her little, curious offspring, who preferred to keep looking back (M, p. 63)⁵⁴

53 «Urbano ed io accorremmo per prestare aiuto, ma il ghiaccio sottile non ci resse e cademmo in acqua a far compagnia ai cani. Riuscii a tirarmi fuori aggrappandomi ai ghiacci galleggianti, e così potei portare aiuto ai compagni e liberare Urbano e i cani che frattanto impacciati dai finimenti, minacciavano di annegare. In questo frangente Albertini con gran sangue freddo era riuscito a rovesciare la slitta sul ghiaccio ancorandola in modo tale da impedirle di precipitare in mare. I nostri vestiti erano diventati dei pezzi di ghiaccio e dovemmo proseguire così la nostra marcia sotto la neve».

54 «Sul suo versante orientale troviamo uno scoscendimento atto a portare la slitta su terra ferma, ed a distrarmi dal fascino, che sempre esercita questo cercar ricovero sui gelidi scogli dell'Artide, sopraggiunge una grossa orsa a pochi metri da noi con un piccolo orsacchiotto; per sua fortuna non ho il fucile a portata, e in pochi minuti la inseguono già inutilmente i miei sci e le mie pallottole, tanto veloce essa corre verso il Nord, spingendosi avanti col muso il piccolo figlioletto curioso che preferisce guardare indietro».

At 6h the group mounted the tent on a relief. Urbano, Bonola and Guedoz prepared the camp while Albertini trekked to the top of the island and reached the provisions depot he had established there in 1928. Supplies from it were used, so that the group could save its own reserves. During the day hours, as the crew rested, a heavy 30-centimetre snow fall occurred. Wake up call was at 19h; Guedoz prepared the meal, Bonola took care of the dogs, Albertini updated the patrol's journal, Urbano set up the wireless station and communicated with the ship as per the agreed appointment at 20h.

After the radio contact, Zanetti's entry in the logbook reports that the *Heimen-SUCAI* headed for «Lov Island» (Lågøya).

Meanwhile, at 22.45 GMT, the patrol left their position towards the north-east, bound to Kapp Platen.

In the early hours of June 15, the *Heimen-SUCAI* explored Lågøya (LB, f. 27r). At the same time, the patrol was facing a "long, fatiguing and dangerous" march towards its destination.

We crossed newly formed ice floes of a measured thickness of no more than ten centimetres. Sledge 'No. 1' repeatedly broke through the sheet with its rear section and was saved only by its length and by the uninterrupted motion of the dogs. For safety reasons, Marco [Urbano] was obliged to walk along a track different from mine, in order to avoid the ice weakened by my passage; this caused him great exertion, since it was counter to the inclinations of his dogs.

Large pressure ridges across the traverse of Cape Wrede forced me to deviate from our course, skirting close along the cape itself. At seven o'clock we reached Cape Platen, both we and our dogs are tired (M, p. 64)⁵⁵

Unable to find game, the men fed the dogs with salt cod from the sledge supplies.

While the patrol was enduring its struggle, *Heimen-SUCAI* was returning towards the Sjuøyane and spent the day inspecting their coasts, as close as the ice formations allowed to do.

⁵⁵ «Attraversammo banchi di recente formazione dello spessore misurato di non oltre dieci centimetri. La slitta N. 1 più volte colla sua parte posteriore ruppe la lastra e si salvò solo per la sua lunghezza e per la continuità di marcia dei cani. Marco, per sicurezza, fu obbligato a camminare su una pista diversa dalla mia per evitare il ghiaccio indebolito dal mio passaggio e ciò gli procurò grande fatica essendo il fatto contrario alle intenzioni dei suoi cani. Grandi dighe di pressioni sul traverso di Capo Wrede mi obbligarono a scostare dalla rotta rasentando il Capo stesso. Alle sette tocchiamo Capo Platen, stanchi noi e i nostri cani».



Fig. 21. The northern area of Nordaustlandet as represented in the British Admiralty map (1925) (above) and on present-day Norsk Polarinstitutt's TopoSvalbard web portal (below). Major differences are evident; the 1925 map contains hand-drawn modifications, apparently to correct errors and likely to indicate actual distances

Source: Norsk Polarinstitutt

For that day, Albertini decided not to get into radio communication with the ship in order to save batteries (M, p. 65), and the consequent lack of communication was duly reported by Zanetti in the logbook.

At 23h the patrol departed Kapp Platen with the intention of reaching “northern Reps island” (Nordre Repøya). The march from the Kapp proceeded first along the coast; after about two hours, Albertini stopped to hunt a seal. In his memoir, he adds a comment which reveals his insight as an explorer:

In some Arctic areas seals can be killed with ease from a few dozen metres, whereas in others the problem of killing them is of considerable importance; it is these latter areas that are generally frequented by bears, whose presence makes the seals extremely attentive (M, p. 65)⁵⁶

The patrol strived to proceed on treacherous ice along the coast. The surface was composed of large broken floes, separated by cracks covered with recent snow. The leading dog team fell again into the water, and Albertini gave up the idea to cross directly through Duvefjorden towards the Repøyane. At 4h on June 16, Albertini shot and killed a reindeer along the coast and ordered to place the camp there, so as to feed the dogs and the men with the fresh meat.

The position is described as “on the eastern side of the King Oscar peninsula [Prins Oscars Land], opposite to the Northern Cape [Dicksonodden] of the southern Reps island [Søre Repøya]”. It is a large clearing full of [drift]wood and sadness” (M, p. 66)⁵⁷. Guedoz cooked the reindeer, making a big fire with the abundant timber. A large group of reindeer was spotted by Albertini, suddenly woken up by the dogs barking, a few hours later. An interesting detail can be found in this passage of Albertini’s memoir, that suggests, once again, how the circadian cycles of explorers might change in the course of long and extremely challenging operations. As he introduces the moment in which he and his companions sight the twelve reindeer, Albertini specifies that this occurred *«durante la notte»*, “during the night”, i.e. during the resting period in the camp.

⁵⁶ «In alcune zone artiche le foche si uccidono con facilità da poche decine di metri ed in altre il problema della loro uccisione è di notevole interesse; sono queste ultime le zone generalmente battute dagli orsi la cui presenza rende molto vigili le foche».

⁵⁷ «Sul lato orientale della penisola di King Oscar, di fronte al Capo Nord dell'isola meridionale di Reps. È una grande radura piena di legname portato alla deriva e di tristezza».



Fig. 22. A challenging phase of march in bad weather
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

But this was, in fact, during the astronomical morning or afternoon as the explorers would end their “working phase” in the morning and begin it again in the evening or late night. Yet, the rationally decided inversion of the day-night phases, so as to take advantage of the lower temperatures, seems to have produced, in the end, an instinctive inversion of perception of “day” and “night”, that made its way into the memoir.

The unexpected encounter with the reindeer caught the attention and had a charming impact on both Albertini and Bonola. The latter describes the episode in a tone that reveals a moment of suspended enchantment and contemplation, which then gives way to a gently ironic note.

While we were resting, we were called outside by Guido (sic). A curious sight awaited us. Twelve large reindeer were grazing only a few yards from us, nibbling at the sparse clumps of moss. From time to time they raised their heads and looked at us with wide, startled eyes. Perhaps they had never seen a man before. Guido (sic), wrapping himself in the hides of

the reindeer killed shortly before, set off toward the herd with the intention of seizing one of the animals by the antlers and capturing it, in order to harness it to the sledge. He approached almost close enough to touch them, but, intimidated by their gigantic size, he stopped and prudently turned back. We warmly congratulated him. We were already provided with fresh meat and therefore felt some scruple about disturbing those magnificent animals (C, pp. 25-26)⁵⁸

During the day, while the patrol rested in its camp in the Prins Oscars Land, the *Heimen-SUCAI* anchored north of Waldenøya. Taking advantage of good weather, Zanetti went ashore with Peroni and a Norwegian crewmember identified as «Julius» or «Iulius», possibly Julius Jensen, for a “reconnaissance trip of the” Sjuøyane. The Second in Command annotates that wireless communication was regular and informed the ship about the patrol’s progress (LB, f. 27r).

At 22h, Albertini and his men broke camp and began to cross Duvefjorden on a due east course. In the early hours of June 17, the patrol was making excellent progress on “perfect snow, thin but hard and smooth ice” (M, p. 66). The well-fed and energetic dog teams pulled the sledges at 9 km/h. About half-way in the crossing, the encouraging conditions of the ice made Albertini change course to the north-east, heading directly towards Nordre Repøya. Still 5 km from it, however, large crevasses stopped the march and forced the patrol to divert southbound for a tortuous approach to Dicksonodden, which was finally reached at 4h. Urbano, Guedoz and Bonola prepared the camp, while the leader proceeded to round the cape, alone, to explore the eastern coast of the small island. Remnants of dry-stone walls attracted his attention. He then returned to camp; the patrol ate a mix of pemmikan and reindeer meat and then rested.

In the course of the day, the *Heimen-SUCAI* continued loitering abeam of «Beverly Soundet» (Beverlysundet), to fulfil the assignment of waiting five days before departing for an – at this point unlikely – return of the patrol (LB, f. 27r). Weather was fair, sky was overcast but with mild temperatures.

⁵⁸ «Mentre riposavamo fummo chiamati fuori da Guidoz [sic] (...) Uno spettacolo curioso ci attendeva. Dodici grandi renne pascolavano a pochi metri da noi brucando i rari cespi di muschio. Ogni tanto sollevavano il capo e ci osservavano con i grandi occhi sbarrati. Forse non avevano mai visto l'uomo. Guidoz coprendosi colle pelli delle renne uccise poco prima, si avviò verso il branco con l'intenzione di afferrare un animale per le corna e catturarlo per poi attaccarlo alla slitta. Si avvicinò fin quasi a toccare le bestie, ma spaventato dalle loro dimensioni gigantesche si arrestò e tornò prudentemente indietro. Ci rallegrammo molto con lui. Eravamo provvisti di carne fresca e perciò ci facemmo uno scrupolo di disturbare quei magnifici animali».

Albertini, during the rest period, was beginning to suffer from high fever (39°C) and pain to his right arm and armpit glands, accompanied by redness, that he interpreted as a sign of infection (M, p. 67). The group departed regularly at 21.30 GMT, without any wireless communication exchange with the ship. The patrol found unfavourable conditions in the crucial transfer from the island to the nearby coasts of Nordaustlandet, across Gilessundet. Sea-ice had been broken and moved away by the tidal currents, presenting the patrol with unsafe passages.

It was a laborious march over soft, sticky snow. (...) With great caution and delicate manoeuvring we reached solid ground, and along its coast at eight o'clock [on June 18] we touched the rock lying west of Cape Brunn, which had been identified the previous year by the rescue patrols (M, p. 67-68)⁵⁹

This otherwise unidentified “rock lying west of Cape Brunn” is most likely the small Alpinjøya, a 1,5 km² rocky islet discovered in 1929 by Italian Army Alpine Corps officer Gennaro Sora during the rescue operations for *Italia*. The island was named, upon his indication of “Isola degli Alpini”, after his service. In Albertini’s 1932 map, Alpinjøya is approximately positioned in an even more approximate surrounding context. It is clear that the geography of the area was, in general, somewhat undefined and this was possibly due to the rawness of available base cartography, but also to a general lack of established association between used toponyms and topographic features. In writing “rock lying west of Cape Brunn” (M, p. 68), Albertini seems to refer to the immediate proximity between the two land formations now mapped as Alpinjøya and the promontory of Boydfjellet which terminates, in its northern part, with Bergstrommodden. These two places are actually about 1 km distant from one another, and Alpinjøya is actually to the immediate west of the other. It cannot be excluded, therefore, that Albertini considered – based on the crude geographic information available to him – Boydfjellet to effectively be Kapp Bruun, whereas the latter is today’s a less north-protruding formation over 12 kilometers to the south east of Alpinjøya. This ambiguity is dispelled in the 1932 map, which shows «C. Bruun» in the correct position, and the

59 «Fu una marcia faticosa su neve molle ed attaccaticcia. (...) Con grande prudenza e delicata manovra raggiungiamo la terra ferma e lungo la sua costa tocchiamo alle otto lo scoglio che è a ponente di Capo Brunn, e che fu individuato lo scorso anno dalle pattuglie di soccorso».

explicit reference to the «*Isola degli Alpini*», not present in the text, appears in the caption of an image. The uncertainty was later easily explained by Umberto Nobile in his 1975 book “*Ali sul Polo*”, in a passage that described the discovery of Alpinjøya during the 1928 operations:

On 22 June [1928], the two men [Sora and Van Dongen] reached a small islet that was not marked on the map they were using (updated to 1925). The islet was located a few kilometres northwest of the headland that, on that map, was called Cape Bruun, now Bergströmodden. On modern maps, the name Bruun is assigned to the headland situated southeast of Bergströmodden, about 12 km away. Sora gave the small island the name “Island of the Alpini” (Nobile, 1975, p. 246)⁶⁰

This toponymic uncertainty, that remained curiously unresolved in the text of Albertini’s published memoir, was, as just stated, totally defined in the annexed map to the same publication. In the document, the wide bay between Bergströmodden and Kapp Bruun, described in the memoir as “the Large Bay without name that is to the East of Cape Brunn [Bergströmodden in reality]”, eventually did get a name, and from that very 1932 map on: «*Albertini Bay*». The toponym was to make its way, from that initial assignment, into the official Norway’s toponymy as *Albertinibukta*⁶¹.

At the communication appointment of 20h, contact was established but no communication could take place. Zanetti annotates: “We received signals of excellent strength from the patrol, yet we were unable to obtain from Urbano their position” (LB, f. 27v)⁶². Both Zanetti and Albertini, however, did not consider this inconvenience as critical: the Second in Command made the decision, “with the captain” (i.e. Jakobsen), to head for the Hinlopenstretet, so as to perform the ordered observation of the passage. The patrol broke camp at 00h and proceeded with its journey. At a certain, unspecified moment in this phase (June 17-19), Urbano and Bonola’s dog team developed a problem. One of their dogs, Redd⁶³, broke

60 «Il 22 giugno [1928] i due [Sora e Van Dongen] giunsero a un isolotto, non segnato sulla carta da essi adoperata (aggiornata al 1925). Questa isola era posta a qualche chilometro a nord-ovest dal capo che in quella carta era chiamato Capo Bruun, oggi Bergströmodden. Nelle nuove carte il nome Bruun è dato al capo che si trova a sud-est di Bergströmodden, a 12 km di distanza. Alla piccola isola (...) Sora diede il nome di isola degli Alpini».

61 See “Albertini Bay” in the Norsk Polarinstitutt placename database: <https://data.npolar.no/placename/53759bbc-0eaa-5a21-84ad-0d676f127890> last accessed February 20, 2026.

62 «abbiamo ricevuto segnali di ottima intensità dalla pattuglia senza però riuscire a ottenere da Urbano la loro posizione».

63 This dog is named “Red” by Albertini in both the logbook and the memoir. Bonola’s conference paper has “Redd”, meaning “frightened” in Norwegian. The latter fits better with the

free from the harness, refused to rejoin the team and began following the sledges at a certain distance, without letting himself be caught. He would eventually be re-captured, but only about seven days later.

The *Heimen-SUCAI* was enjoying a smooth ride and was moving relatively quickly through the often-difficult passage of the Hinlopenstretet. The weather and visibility were good, so the crew could thoroughly observe the coasts while enroute. In the early hours of June 19, the ship arrived to the “Wahlemberg bay” (Wahlembergfjorden). Meanwhile, approaching Kapp Bruun, the patrol found thick fog and unfavourable ice conditions for a north-rounding. The group was therefore forced to head south and traverse the peninsula by cutting across its southern area (M, pp. 68-69). The passage was made challenging by the marginal visibility and was only partially facilitated by Albertini’s familiarity with the place from 1928. The patrol reached the eastern margin of Albertinibukta, crossed the peninsula to its east (M, p. 68) and stopped on its eastern shore, however, at 4h, for the prohibitive ice conditions and insufficient visibility.

In Wahlembergfjorden, around noon, the crew of *Heimen-SUCAI* killed a polar bear which had, according to Zanetti, “imprudently ventured into the water, approaching the ship” (LB, f. 27v).

The patrol spent the entire day idle in position as the fog did not clear. They hunted seals – killing one to feed the dogs and the men – and collecting driftwood to light a fire (M, p. 68-69).

The evening radio communication took place normally, and the groups exchanged updates. Fog developed meanwhile in Wahlembergfjorden as well, with a strong southerly wind (LB, f. 27v).

Weather conditions remained unfavourable for much of June 20, for both parties that stood still in the respective positions; they remained in regular contacts at the scheduled communication appointments, though Urbano experienced difficulties in receiving. Towards the evening weather improved dramatically in the patrol’s area, with clear sky and sunshine, allowing fair visibility of the “Foyen group”.

On June 21 the patrol moved fast in very clear weather and perfect ice conditions, proceeding to the group of islets now mapped as Øygarden. Albertini’s description of this phase in his memoir is interesting:

We wedge our way east of the bay into that fantastic narrow passage with

psychological description of the animal given by Albertini himself, and we have therefore assumed that this was the correct name, probably given, initially, by the Norwegian crewmembers.

sheer walls which I had already identified the previous year, and which had already struck my imagination.

At its entrance we cross a wide crevasse, and then kill a large reindeer which, within a quarter of an hour, is butchered, cut up, and loaded onto the sledge.

We continue at a steady running pace (Lys, the lead dog, is in excellent spirits) along the front of the Nielsen Glacier [Nielsenbreen], and then enter a tangle of small islets [Øygarden]. Here the ice deteriorates; small ponds become increasingly numerous, and we are not even able to take advantage of the abundance of ducks in them, because Bonola, who is in charge of hunting waterfowl, has not yet managed to become familiar with them.

The increasingly precarious ice conditions now force us to turn along the coast and to proceed by going through suspended ice tongues or ice grounded in shallow waters.

Hard and difficult work, and unruly dogs due to the presence of water. At six o'clock [6h on June 21] we halt. Toward the east, open water precludes any possibility of further advance, and after the meal I therefore send Bonola and Guedoz southward to examine the possibility of reaching the upper plateau of the land with dogs and sledges. I, alone, push northward, first reaching the rise close to which we have pitched camp, and thus ascertain that we are encamped on Rasch Island [Raschøya], whose North Cape is the farthest point we reached last year (M, pp. 69-70)⁶⁴

In the early morning on the same day, *Heimen-SUCAI* moved to the vicinities of the "Forster islands" (Fosterøyane) and several crewmembers went ashore to collect duck eggs from their nests, and also to hunt birds.

Given the ascertained impossibility to proceed eastward as the sea had no ice-cover, Albertini decided to penetrate further inland and reach the Nordaustlandet plateau. The scheduled radio contacts with *Heimen-SUCAI* took place successfully in the evening. The patrol men rested and

64 «Attraversiamo la gran baia senza nome su un ghiaccio liscio ed elastico e poi incuneiamo ad Est. della baia in quello strettoio fantastico dalle pareti a picco che già avevo individuato lo scorso anno, e che già aveva percorso la mia fantasia. Superiamo al suo ingresso una larga crepa, ed uccidiamo poi una grossa renna che in un quarto d'ora è squartata, fatta a pezzi e caricata sulla slitta. Proseguiamo sempre a passo di corsa (Lys il capo muta è di ottimo umore) lungo la fronte del ghiacciaio Nielsen, e quindi entriamo in un groviglio di piccoli isolotti. Qui il ghiaccio peggiora; i piccoli laghi diventano sempre più numerosi e nemmeno riusciamo a sfruttare l'abbondanza in essi di anatre perché Bonola, incaricato della cacciagione di volatili, non ha ancora trovato mezzo di entrare in familiarità con essi. Le condizioni dei ghiacci sempre più precarie, ci obbligano ormai a piegare lungo la costa ed a proseguire sfruttando lingue sospese o ghiacci arenati per bassi fondali. Lavoro duro e difficile e cani indisciplinati per la presenza d'acqua. Alle sei attendiamo. Verso levante, l'acqua libera preclude ogni possibilità di proseguire, e dopo pranzo quindi invio Bonola e Guedoz verso Sud ad esaminare la possibilità di raggiungere con cani e slitte il plateau superiore dalla Terra. Io, solo, mi spingo verso Nord, raggiungendo prima l'altura al cui ridosso abbiamo posto il campo, ed accerto così che siamo attendati sull'isola Rasch il cui Capo Nord è l'estremo punto da noi raggiunto lo scorso anno».

slept until late night. They finally departed at 00h on June 22, moving south along the western coast of Raschøya. In reporting this fact, Albertini writes: “having reached the inner end of the bay behind Rasch Island, we channel our way into steep slopes of hard-packed snow that put the dogs to a severe test” (M, p. 71)⁶⁵. His intention was to start climbing Sexe-breen, but, by generically saying that the back of the bay had been reached, the memoir does not specify whether the patrol passed through Bjørnvika, through the much narrower Fjelletstrandvika, or elsewhere. The slopes appear to be similar, although channels appear to be more evident on the former, and the latter would be slightly closer to reach from Raschøya by a direct route. The climb on the slope of the glacier proved extremely challenging but brought the patrol to the plateau on top. Weather was good and the surface of solid snow and ice allowed the sledges to run fast towards the east quickly reaching, at 4h, the vicinities of Kapp Leigh Smith. The patrol stopped the sledges and carefully proceeded on foot arriving at a 100 metres distance from the cape. Given the overall good situation, the patrol started again and proceeded southbound along the eastern margin of Nordaustlandet, suddenly finding strong wind (up to 70 km/h according to Albertini) circa at 6h.

... Twelve kilometres from Cape Smith, to our great surprise, we discover a vast outcrop of land sloping down to the sea in broad terraces. After establishing camp here, I push on as far as the coast and observe that to the north the great ice cliff of the glacier comes to an abrupt end, giving way to the escarpments of the land.

My companions, kind and generous, wish to bestow upon this land - whose existence had hitherto been unknown - the name of Laura Land, after my mother (M, pp. 72-73)⁶⁶

Bonola described the «*Terra di Laura*» as a «*scogliera non segnata sulle carte rudimentali, l'unica terra che emergesse sulla costa orientale dell'isola*» (“a cliff not marked on the rudimentary charts, the only land rising along the island's eastern coast”, C, p. 28).

⁶⁵ «Raggiunto il fondo della baia alle spalle dell'isola Rasch ci incanaliamo in forti pendii di neve dura che mettono i cani a tutta prova».

⁶⁶ «...a dodici chilometri da Capo Smith, con nostra grande sorpresa scopriamo un vasto affioramento di terra degradante in mare a grandi terrazze. Dopo aver posto qui il campo mi spingo fin sulle coste e noto che verso Nord il grande strapiombo del ghiacciaio si interrompe netto per dar seguito agli scoscendimenti della terra. I miei compagni buoni e generosi vogliono battezzare questa terra di cui non si conosceva l'esistenza, col nome di Terra di Laura: mia madre».

This brief account of the geographic discovery of what is now called Kapp Laura is revealing, on the one hand, of the rudimentary knowledge that cartographic sources of the time could provide about the topography of the north-east margin of Nordaustlandet. Albertini, in his expert opinion, had previously commented that the nearby Kapp Leigh Smith was “a place never trodden by human foot” (M, p. 72), which is a relevant statement. It gives a measure of how partial the geographic information about those remote environments was, and contributed to explaining the vagueness and unreliability of available maps.

Cartography of the region published just before the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition⁶⁷ shows clearly that the area of Kapp Leigh Smith was so inaccurately mapped that the discovery of Kapp Laura led to an objective progress in the geographical knowledge about the region. The map in figure 28 offers also the opportunity of observing that many details in the surroundings of Kapp Leigh Smith had remained quite approximate even after Albertini's journey.

67 See, for some examples the “Utkast till en Geologisk Karta öfver Spetsbergen af A. E. Nordenskiöld”, published in 1867 at a 1:1,000,000 scale; “Norge 232: Kart over Svalbard i 4 blade”, published by “Det Kongelige departement for Handel Sjøfart Industri og Fiske” in 1925, at a 1:500,000 scale; the map published in Andrée, Strindberg and Fraenkel 1931, the map in Albertini 1932 and the current official map published by the Norsk Polarinstitut via the Toposvalbard webGIS.



Fig. 23. «Albertini Bay» (also known as *Albertinibukta*). The toponym was first published in 1932
Source: TopoSvalbard-Norsk Polarinstitutt; Bing Satellite; GIS reprocessing: GREAL

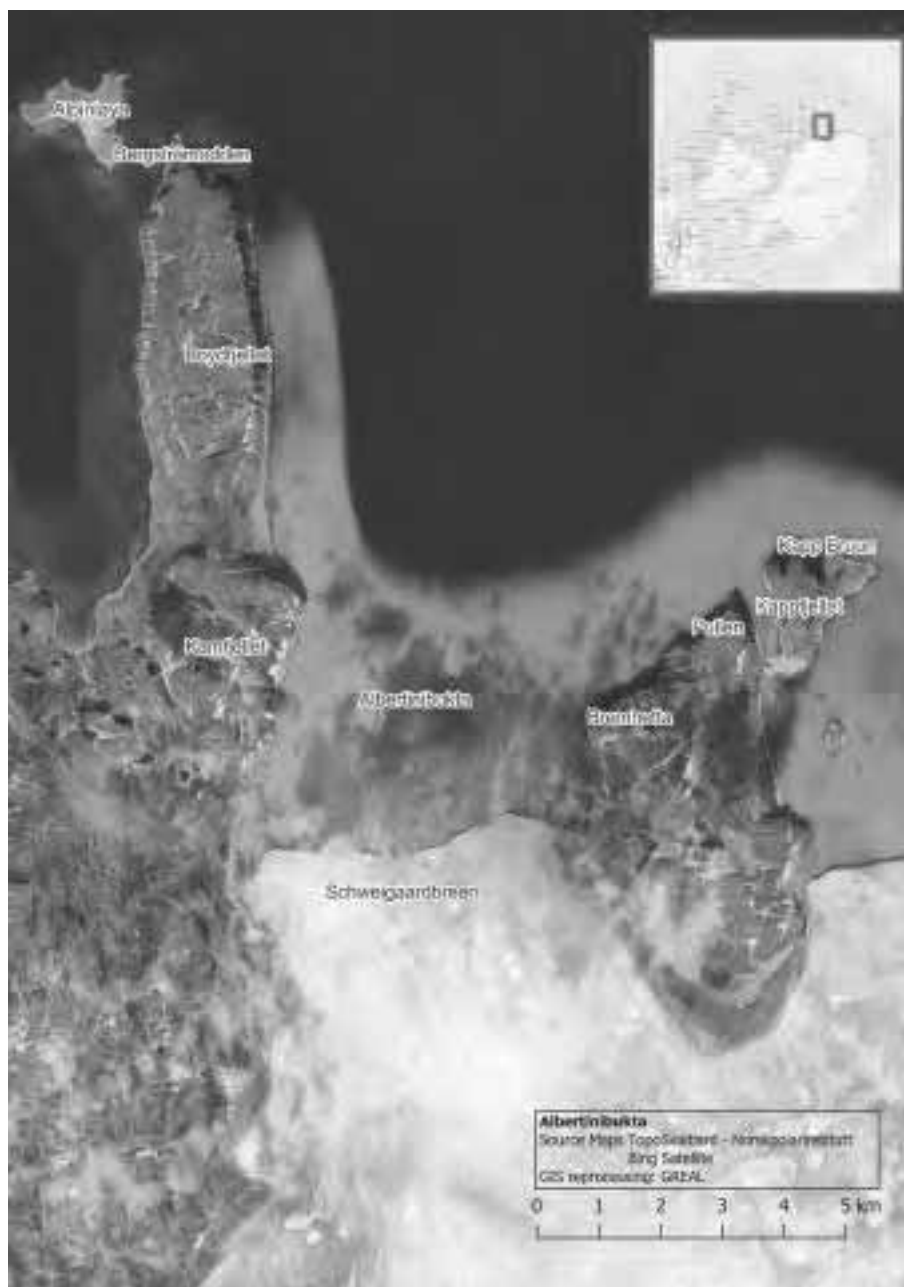


Fig. 24. Satellite image-map of Albertinbukta
 Source: TopoSvalbard-Norsk Polarinstitutt; Bing Satellite; GIS reprocessing: GREAL



Fig. 25. After a successful hunt, a killed reindeer is dragged before butchering
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»



Fig. 26. Kapp Laura

Sources: TopoSvalbard - Norsk Polarinstitut; Bing Satellite; GIS reprocessing: GREAL

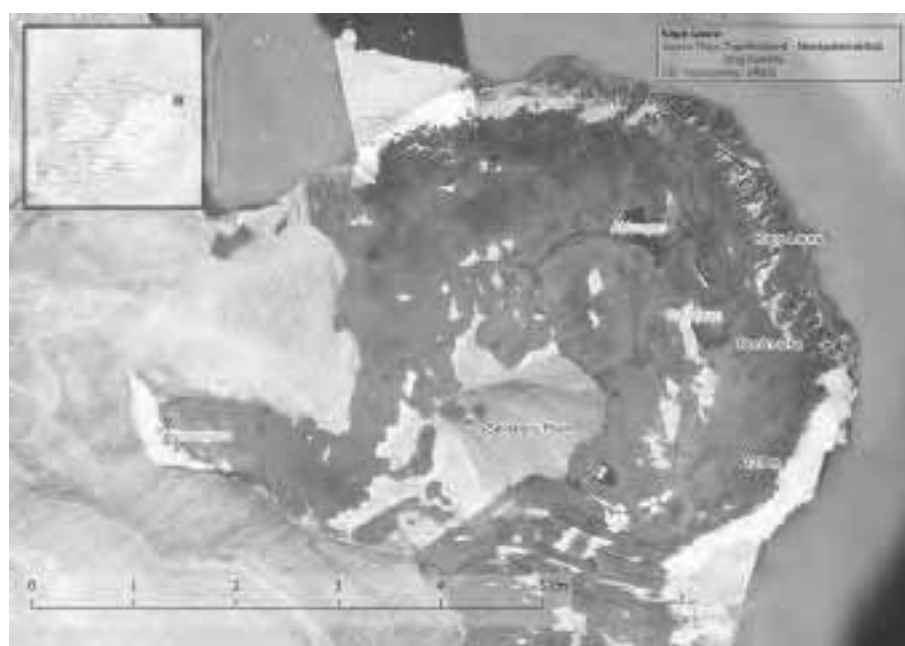


Fig. 27. Kapp Laura in a satellite image

Sources: TopoSvalbard - Norsk Polarinstitut; Bing Satellite; GIS reprocessing: GREAL



Fig. 29. Nordaustlandet, Storøya and Kvitøya
Source: TopoSvalbard - Norsk Polarinstitutt

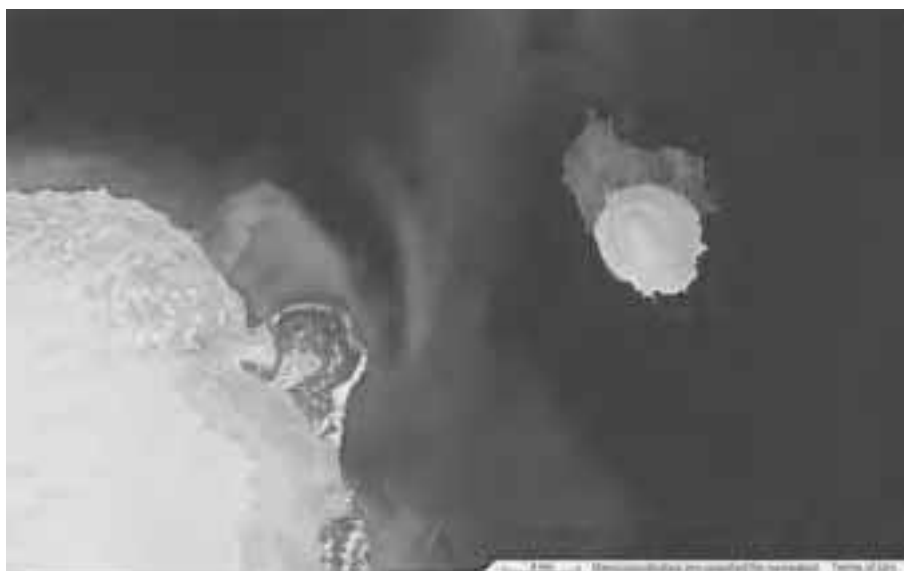


Fig. 30. Kapp Laura (left) and Storøya (right) in a satellite image
Source: TopoSvalbard - Norsk Polarinstitutt



Fig. 31. The patrol's tent at Kapp Laura
Source: Albertini, 1932

Contextually to the discovery of Kapp Laura, Albertini goes on to say that «*Ad Oriente della costa noto pure una ghiacciata formazione insulare separata da me da molta acqua libera: l'isola SUCAI*», i.e. “To the east of the coast I also note an icy insular formation, separated from me by a wide expanse of open water: Sucai Island” (M, p. 73). Bonola confirms the bearing, but adds an important detail: «*ad E. di questa terra scoprimmo pure una grande isola ghiacciata alla quale demmo il nome di Sucai*» (“to the E. of this land we also discover a large icy island to which we gave the name *Sucai*”, C, p. 28). Therefore, then, a “large icy island”, separated from Kapp Laura “by a wide expanse of open water”.

The discovery of this new island was communicated, and its toponym was later acquired in the official Norwegian repositories as *Sucaioya*. However, while the discovery of Kapp Laura is undisputed and the toponym positively associated to a land formation, the observation of “Sucai Island” was later attributed to an erroneous identification. The official comment reported on the Norsk Polarinstitutts toponym page is: “Not

possible to recognise this island as described, probably they have visited Kapp Laura and misinterpreted a part of it as an island”⁶⁸. The name, nevertheless, “Sucaioya” remains in the official toponymic repositories and TopoSvalbard even locates its coordinates at Lat. 80°04’09.8”N, Long. 27°17’00.2”E, which is actually a position in the sea at about 1.5 kilometres from Kapp Laura.

A different hypothesis could also be formulated, however.

Albertini’s 1932 shows Kapp Leigh Smith aligned north-south, and the connecting line between Kapp Laura and «*I. Sucai*» is almost perfectly east-west. Albertini also describes the new island by writing: «*una ghiacciata formazione insulare separata da me da molta acqua libera*». The adjective «*ghiacciata*» may be translated into English as “frozen”, “icy” or “covered with ice”.

If Albertini was most likely referring to a map (that he could have possibly later used as a base-map for the chart published in the memoir), showing Kapp Leigh Smith and Kapp Laura on a north-south line, an island appearing in the sea on an orthogonal bearing would have led him to interpret its direction as due east.

TopoSvalbard indicates the presumed position of Sucaiøya to the Northeast of Kapp Laura. Exactly along the same bearing, however, at a distance of 16 kilometres, lays the larger Storøya, an island whose most distinctive feature is a dome-shaped glacier called Storøyjøkulen, 235 m high above sea level. Storøya was present on Albertini’s patrol maps, but mistakenly represented with a different shape and with some positional approximation. Other aspects should furthermore be taken into account. On June 22, the day of the discovery of Kapp Laura, the patrol was experiencing good visibility after long treks and camps in fog. Clear views, unlike haze or mist, may facilitate uncertainty in the evaluation of distances in Arctic landscapes, particularly if at sea and if the observer cannot rely on familiar references. In fact, Albertini and the patrol were visiting that area for the very first time – after having retraced over the previous days Albertini’s 1928 trail. Since the men were virtually on top of the reliefs above Kapp Laura it is hard to explain how they could have mis-interpreted the shape of the feature that, although in small cartographic scale, they accurately mapped in their chart. It is easier to explain how they could have mis-interpreted the distance, across «*molta acqua libera*» (“much open water”) to a farther island whose shape was not consistent with what they

⁶⁸ See <https://data.npolar.no/placename/1406851f-fee1-5822-a980-dfac7339c6af>.

had on their maps. An additional deceiving factor was the possible visibility from the top of Kapp Leigh Smith⁶⁹ of the farther and larger island of Kvitøya (410 m high at its top), which might have been recognized as Storøya, reassuring the observer that their view was consistent with the objects they had on their approximate map.

Our assertion can also be supported by a picture published in the 1932 memoir in the series between pages 56 and 57. It shows the tent in proximity to the seashore (fig. 31) and has the caption: «*Individuiamo una terra e la chiamiamo 'Laura Land'*», i.e. “We identify a land and we call it ‘Laura Land’”. Part of an island is visible in the background on the left side of the picture. It features a large, dome-shaped ice cap, whose profile seems to be consistent with that of the southern region of Storøya. Closer, smaller and lower in a darker color, formations are visible on the right that could be consistent, in shape and position, with some of the small Frostøyane.

In the logbook entry for June 22, Zanetti reports that the *Heimen-SUCAI* returned to the Fosterøyane to complete the provision of eggs, but did not proceed beyond the islands due to solid ice formations. At Kapp Laura, the patrol attempted, unsuccessfully, to hunt two ducks.

Wireless communications took place as planned (LB, f. 28r; M, p. 73), with the patrol sharing its current coordinates and the information that their intention was to proceed southbound.

On June 23, in the early hours of the day, the patrol moved as planned towards the south, on the margin of the glacier. At around 4h they “are forced to cross a large wedge-shaped depression, full of crevasses” which compels the men “to perform major acrobatics on fragile snow bridges” (M, p. 73).

The patrol stopped at 9.30 as the dogs were exhausted and a strong wind was blowing. They placed the camp on the ice along the coastline and estimated their position at Lat. 78°40' N, Long. 27° E.

The *Heimen-SUCAI*, in the Hinlopenstretet, was standing still in fog and a humid southerly wind. No communication exchange took place between the patrol and the ship, nor between the ship and Rome, according to Zanetti, due to «*causa un fenomeno di perturbazione magnetica che per circa un'ora provocò l'evanescenza quasi assoluta di qualsiasi onda*» “a phenomenon of magnetic disturbance which for about an hour caused the almost absolute

⁶⁹ Bonola writes in his conference paper that «*Le coste orientali dell'isola strapiombavano in mare con enormi serratte di cinquanta metri e più d'altezza*», “The eastern coasts of the island plunged sheer into the sea in enormous seracs fifty metres or more in height” (C, p. 27).

evanescence of any wave” (LB, f. 28r). There was also a possible medical problem onboard, for which the Second in Command writes:

The sailor Hernest, who also serves as interpreter, complains of visceral pains and asks to be taken to King’s Bay. I have him examined by Peroni, who judges it to be an indisposition of no gravity and persuades him to be treated on the ship (LB, f. 28r)⁷⁰

The patrol broke camp at 1.30 GMT on June 24 and moved fast on excellent firm snow, and after 7 hours Albertini decided to stop not to overfatigue the dogs, estimating his position at Lat. 79°25’N, Long. 26E.

It is worth noting that both positional indications, if plotted on the Toposvalbard’s WebGIS, indicate points on the sea, respectively at 12 and 3 km distance from the current coastline. This might be due to difficulties in the correct determination of Longitude in the dead reckoning calculations; however, it is also important to notice that the Nordaustlandet eastern side is mostly occupied by the massive Austfonna glacier, whose margin is subject to variations in time.

Camped in the new position, Albertini evaluated what to do after having reached the southern extremity of Nordaustlandet, and considered backtracking as too a dangerous option. He therefore instructed the *Heimen-SUCAI* to move into Wahlenbergfjorden and wait there for the patrol’s arrival (LB, f. 28v; M, p. 75). The ship was, at the moment, standing still between Fosterøyane and Wahlenbergfjorden under overcast sky but overall better weather. Her crew took the opportunity for engaging in hunting.

The patrol broke camp at 23h GMT and continued its march towards the south, heading for Kapp Mohn on a solid and firm surface. Albertini and Guedoz, with sledge N.1, marched steadily until 7.30 GMT on June 25 but, at a certain point, lost contact with Urbano and Bonola that were following with sledge N.2. Albertini and Guedoz placed the camp at Kapp Mohn, after having covered about 40 kilometres on that day; the operation was done with difficulty, in worsening meteorological conditions. Around 9.30 Bonola was seen arriving at the camp on ski in the blowing wind. He notified Albertini that their dog-team had stopped for exhaustion. While a

⁷⁰ «Il marinaio Hernest, che funziona anche da interprete, accusa dei dolori viscerali e chiede di essere portato alla King’s bay. Lo faccio visitare da Peroni, che giudica trattarsi d’indisposizione di nessuna gravità e lo persuade di curarsi sulla nave».

thick fog developed, Albertini and Guedoz, having left Bonola at the tent to look after their dog team, backtracked following the traces of the leading sledge for about an hour, until they finally rejoined with Urbano and the exhausted N.2 dog team. March was resumed to the camp, food and rest were given to the dogs, in spite of the scarcity of the salt-cod reserves. As per a previous plan, Albertini reduced the men's daily rations down to 2/3, decreasing the available caloric allowance from about 4,000 to about 3,000 kcal, considered still adequate for short periods of action in summer conditions (Peroni, 1932, p. 129).

Meanwhile, in the Hinlopenstretet, the *Heimen-SUCAI* was sailing in a clear, sunny day. Zanetti tried to push south beyond the Fosterøyane but was soon stopped by solid ice; he then returned towards the north keeping as close as possible to the eastern coast of Spitsbergen. In crossing the mouth of Lomfjorden, the crew spotted a small vessel and assessed it to be used by hunters. In the evening, a strong southerly wind developed; the *Heimen-SUCAI* anchored in front of Wahlenbergfjorden. No telegraphic communication took place between the parties (LB, f. 28v).

At Kapp Mohn, weather was poor with thick fog. Departure of the patrol should have taken place at 00h GMT on June 26, but Albertini decided not to move in those conditions through unexplored regions. He therefore allowed the patrol to continue sleeping, "saving a ration" until 7.00.

On June 26 Guedoz succeeded in catching and recovering the dog Redd who had continued its estranged behaviour. Had he failed to recapture him, Redd would have been killed because he was becoming a problem for the patrol (M, pp. 76-77; C, «*Nota n.1*»). At the 10h scheduled communication window Urbano failed to get in contact with the ship. Weather was bad, with fog and snow. The men skipped another meal in order to conserve rations.

During the day, the *Heimen-SUCAI* moved back to the south-west and entered Lomfjorden, reaching the hunting vessel Olaf and meeting with her users, three Norwegian hunters. One of them had participated in the 1928 search and rescue operations. Zanetti requested information about any possible sightings of survivors from the *Italia*, but they replied that there was no evidence of their passage in the area, a relevant information since the three had locally "squalid winter quarters" (LB, f. 29r) and therefore had a permanent presence in the place.

Around 20h GMT, at Kapp Mohn, weather worsened into a blizzard with strong winds. The dogs were covered in snow and the patrol could not raise the wireless antenna to communicate with the ship.

Through the night between June 26 and 27 wind and snowfall increased in intensity developing into a storm; Albertini and his companions remained in the tent.

We hear the dogs howling in a heart-rending way: seized by terror at the violence of the gale, they hurl themselves against our tent, which threatens to be overturned.

We wait inside our sleeping bags, increasingly frozen and soaked, for nature to exhaust itself. In the evening the weather is diabolical, and at eight o'clock we devour our chocolate, the only meagre meal of the twenty-four hours (M, p. 77)⁷¹

The patrol's prolonged silence began to worry Zanetti, while the *Heimen-SUCAI* was experiencing bad weather too, with thick fog and snowfall. "We remain stationary at the anchorage of Lomme bay [Lomfjorden] and think with great sadness of the hard hours that our companions must live through in the midst of the ice desert" (LB, f. 29r)⁷².

On June 28 weather conditions over *Heimen-SUCAI* were even worse, with rough sea under a strong northerly wind. Zanetti was increasingly anxious for the patrol which was still unreachable by radio. He therefore ordered *Heimen-SUCAI* to exit the fjord and move southbound, through Hinlopenstretet. The idea was to take advantage of the fact that the wind had broken and pushed away the ice, opening the waters towards the outlet of the strait. Zanetti's intentions were to approach the south-western coasts of the Nordaustlandet, considering the possibility that the patrol, instead of moving across the central glacier in the storm, might have tried to reach the coasts. The ship made it beyond the «*Mountain Blak*» (Svartberget), but no sign of the patrol was spotted. Zanetti headed back north, coasting Nordaustlandet towards the «*Hiperyte Island*» (Brageneset, actually a peninsula).

In fact, the patrol had not moved from its position at Kapp Mohn for almost the entire day.

⁷¹ «Udiamo i cani lamentarsi in modo straziante: presi da terrore per la violenza dell'uragano si buttano contro la nostra tenda che minaccia di essere rovesciata».

⁷² «Restiamo perciò fermi all'ancoraggio di Lomme bay e pensiamo con molta tristezza alle ore dure che devono vivere i nostri compagni in mezzo al deserto di ghiaccio».

Around 23h GMT, noticing a temporary decrease in the intensity of the wind, the men struck the camp amidst the blizzard, spending much effort to gather and load the equipment buried under the snow. They then departed to the north north-west, to commence the 70 km crossing of Nordaustlandet towards Wahlenbergfjorden. Progress was extremely difficult as the wind became stronger again (M, p. 77). The sledges lost visual contact with one another. After a while, Albertini removed from the team, and put down, dog Pan who had stopped marching. A diversion was attempted to take the wind from a different angle, but the progress of the sledges was hampered by the strong wind. Another dog in Albertini's team (Abill) stopped pulling and was removed from the team; he was tethered behind the sledge. Visibility worsened and Albertini ordered the patrol to stop and place camp in the early hours of June 29. The men took shelter in the tent and the force of the storm prevented them from even exiting to reach the food packages in the sledges. This condition continued throughout the day.

In the Hinlopenstretet, the *Heimen-SUCAI* was also caught in the storm. Measured windspeed was 1000 metres per minute (60 km/h). In the evening weather improved and clouds broke over the ship's position.

The wind actually decreased later at Kapp Mohn, around 2h GMT on June 30. The patrol men worked to recover the camp and the dog teams, which were almost buried in the snow. Dog Flik was found dead and was butchered to serve as food for the others. Another dog, Storm, was about to die. It was put down and loaded on the sledge as food reserve for the team. Preparations for departure were painstaking and the patrol left at 6.30 in fog and bad weather. Soon the scenario worsened. Two other dogs, Tot and Ulve, stopped pulling and were removed from the team in the space of a few kilometres. The former was loaded alive on the sledge, the other one was unable to follow the moving patrol and was left behind. At 14h GMT the patrol stopped and placed the camp, again in strong wind, after having covered about 20 kilometres.

In spite of the difficulties, the patrol was able to raise the radio antenna and communicated with the ship. According to Zanetti, this occurred at the scheduled appointment at 20h (LB, f. 29v); Albertini indicates, instead, that communication took place at 00h on July 1st (M, p. 81). Albertini instructed Zanetti to prepare a supply depot for the patrol and the dog teams. The Second in Command specifies that, as per the instructions, the

depot was to be placed between Selanderneset and «Vegafjorden», (Palanderbukta) to be available in case the returning patrol, possibly hampered by weather, had difficulties in locating the ship in large Wahlenbergfjorden. The patrol remained blocked in position due to the adverse weather throughout July 1. *Heimen-SUCAI* began preparations to recover the patrol and moved away from Svarberget in the evening of July 1, anchoring in front of Selanderneset. Peroni and Norwegian crewmember «*Gienstein*» (most likely the «*Jelstein*» that Albertini had intended to be a member of the patrol)⁷³ were sent ashore to establish the requested depot with a 10-day food supply and a small sledge. No communication between the two parties took place.



Fig. 32. The patrol struggles to retrieve the materials covered with snow by the blizzard
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

⁷³ The same person is also indicated as «*Gisten*» in C, p.17.

The patrol stayed still in bad weather for most of July 2. Conditions were worsening; meals were taken once every 24 hours at 2/3 of the daily ration, the persistent bad weather caused clothing and equipment, particularly the sleeping bag, to remain wet and cold. Dogs were worn-out and another one died (Abill); the animals tried to seize the remaining food supplies. In spite of the bad conditions, Urbano was, nevertheless, able to communicate regularly with the ship on July 2, leading Zanetti to annotate an optimistic situation report. He seems to have been anticipating a rapid end of the patrol's journey: but he clearly did not have an accurate depiction of the companions' perspective. Albertini requested to integrate the depot with food for the dogs as well, and the order was duly carried out (LB, f. 30r; M, pp. 82-83).

Weather improved towards the end of July 2 and the patrol departed bound to West-North-West at 2h on July 3, in fog and on a difficult surface. The dog teams suffered other losses. Three animals had to be removed from the harness; one dog was loaded onto the sledge (Aboy), another one (Flik or Flok) failed to follow the patrol and was left behind, a third one, Redd, was removed but kept following. The men took on the harnesses and pulled to help the remaining dogs. The patrol was able to progress another 20 kilometres and, upon stopping, Urbano and Guedoz were sent to explore a nearby ice ridge while camp was set up by Albertini and Bonola. During the observation, as weather remained bad, Urbano and Guedoz stepped on a crevasse covered by a bridge of snow, endured a 40-metre-high downslide and, although virtually unharmed due to the abundant snow under them, they were unable to re-emerge on their own. They were rescued with difficulty by the two companions perilously come to their search, several hours later (M, pp. 84-86; C, p. 33). Weather remained unfavourable, with strong wind and heavy snowfall.

Unaware of this additional ordeal of the patrol, during the day Zanetti sent the ice pilot and three other Norwegian crewmembers, from *Heimen-SUCAI*, to inspect the passages to the south of the Hinlopenstretet. After a 6 hour excursion, they found pack obstructing the way roughly abeam "Cape Torrel" (Torellneset) (LB, f. 30v).

In the early hours on July 4 the patrol was under a persisting snowfall. Albertini writes:

We are by no means unconcerned; the great imperfection of the maps at our disposal, the natural error of our course - having always marched in fog and having often been forced to radically alter our direction because of the accidents of the terrain - prevent us from determining our coordinates except with great approximation. Ahead of us the ground appears cut by extremely wide crevasses in every direction, so that a condition indispensable for a new stage is perfect visibility (M, pp. 86-87)⁷⁴

On July 4 the *Heimen-SUCAI* spent the entire day in wait in front of Selanderneset. Watches were observing whether any trace of the patrol should appear either from the slopes around Whalenbergfjorden, Palanderbukta or from the reliefs of Selanderneset itself. Screening was particularly attentive because no radio contact had taken place in the past two days with the patrol (LB, f. 30v).

In the night between July 4 and 5 the patrol, still under the blizzard, suffered the death of dog Tot, immediately eaten by others. Around 9h on July 5 weather improved. In the following 12 hours, the men worked to recover the equipment buried under the snow, and to get ready for departure. Dog Aboy was put down before moving. At 21.30 the patrol left in fair visibility, heading north to pass by a large area of crevasses, then turned to the West-North-West. Other dogs, too exhausted to pull the sledges, were released from the harnesses and followed the patrol; men took on the harnesses and pulled the sledges with the remaining animals. The patrol finally came in sight of Wahlenbergfjorden and descended a ripid slope towards the sea. Albertini recalled the moment in his memoir:

Stopping for a moment, I saw our small caravan descending in jolts down the snowy slope, my companions also hauling, the dogs limping, struck from time to time by the sledges. Other dogs followed the caravan, whining, and on the stern of the second sledge, tied to a broken ski pole, the gaunt, frozen pennant fluttered; all around, the glacier was stained by the dark shadows of enormous storm clouds (M, p. 88)⁷⁵

⁷⁴ «Noi siamo non poco preoccupati; la grande imperfezione delle carte a nostra disposizione, l'errore naturale della nostra rotta, avendo sempre camminato nella nebbia e avendo spesso dovuto radicalmente modificare la direzione di marcia per le accidentalità del terreno, ci impediscono di valutare, se non con grande approssimazione, le nostre coordinate. Davanti a noi il terreno si presenta solcato da larghissimi crepacci in ogni direzione, per cui, condizione indispensabile per una nuova tappa, è una visibilità perfetta».

⁷⁵ «Fermatomi un istante, vidi la nostra piccola carovana scendere a sbalzi per la china nevosa, i compagni pure al traino, i cani zoppicanti di tratto in tratto investiti dalle slitte. Altri cani seguivano la carovana guaendo, e sulla poppa della seconda slitta legato a un rotto bastoncino da sci sventolava lo smunto gelato gagliardetto: il ghiacciaio».

Lacking any telegraphic update, the *Heimen-SUCAI* had remained still, during the day, in the expected position, Zanetti increasingly perplexed for the long silence.

The description provided by Albertini, along with his 1932 map, suggests that the patrol had descended the slope of Etonbreen and placed the camp on the narrow area of land between the front of the glacier and the Kløverbladvatna, for which Albertini provides a vivid geographic description:

A filthy, clayey, waterlogged place, where at every step one sinks in with the whole boot. The desolate stillness is broken from time to time only by the fall of erratic stones tumbling down from heaps of black earth (M, p. 88)⁷⁶

Bonola's comment complements it:

After so long, we were finally able to pitch our tent on dry ground upon the moraine. We spread our sleeping bag over two skis, hoping to have it dry at last, and lingered to admire the first signs of life. They were thin tufts of black lichens growing here and there among the rocks, and great flocks of gulls wheeling in the grey sky (C, p. 34)⁷⁷

In the evening the patrol established radio contact with the *Heimen-SUCAI* communicating their arrival within two days and warning that this exchange was to be expected as the last one. Given the proximity of the supply depot and of the ship, it was Albertini's intention to leave behind any unnecessary equipment, to eliminate weight and reduce the work strain on both his men and the dogs. For this reason, before departing, the group abandoned on the spot, among others, one of the two sledges, the heavy batteries of the wireless station and the sleeping bag linings (M, p. 88). Informed of the patrol's approach, Zanetti had *Heimen-SUCAI* prepared to welcome back the returning companions.

At 23h GMT the patrol struck the camp and moved away. In the early hours of July 7, after commencing its transfer, the group needed to cross

tutt'intorno macchiato dalle ombre nere di enormi nuvole temporalesche».

76 «Luogo sudicio, argilloso, bagnato ove si sprofonda con tutta la scarpa ad ogni passo».

77 «Dopo tanto tempo potemmo issare la nostra tenda all'asciutto sulla morena. Stendemmo su due sci il nostro sacco a pelo sperando averlo una buona volta asciutto e ci attardammo ad ammirare i primi segni di vita. Erano magri ciuffi di neri licheni cresciuti qua e là fra le rocce [sic] e grandi stormi di gabbiani che volteggiavano nel cielo grigio».

a section of Oxfordhalvøya. Since it was not covered with either ice or snow, it was necessary to walk on land, physically carrying all the equipment; Albertini notes that Guedoz took up personally, on this occasion, the 4-meter-long sledge and other materials for a total of about 50 kg. The crossing took 12 hours to complete and the men placed the camp around 11.00 GMT. At this point, only 4 dogs were still usable for hauling: Black, Yellow, Boy and Muss, all other surviving animals could only follow the sledge (M., p. 89).

The patrol spent the rest of the day sleeping and recovering from the challenge. Meanwhile, a dense fog enveloped the area; Zanetti noticed that visibility around the *Heimen-SUCAI* was no more than 10 metres (LB, f. 31r). Since the pack ice appeared to be melting and breaking up, the ship penetrated about 2 km deeper in the fjord, so as to get closer, under Selanderneset.

The patrol broke camp and started moving at 00h on July 8. It marched on the frozen sea for 5 hours, covering about 20 kilometres; Albertini hunted and killed two large reindeer spotted on the southern shore of the fjord. Camp was established there and the dogs were abundantly fed with the game meat.

A very strong southerly wind developed and swept the entire fjord – apparently while the patrol was resting in the tent (M, p. 89). The ship had to repeatedly adjust its position. Zanetti effectively describes the demanding situation in the logbook:

Several times the ship brakes the moorings and is driven out to sea. But the crew, which shows for Albertini and his companions almost our own solicitous expectancy, each time with delicate manoeuvre comes to bring the ship back to the spot closest and most convenient for those who will arrive from the bottom of the bay (LB, f. 31r)⁷⁸

Upon waking up for resuming their trek, the patrol spent some time in search for their materials that the wind had scattered “up to considerable distance” (M, p. 89).

At 01h GMT on July 9, the men departed for their last trek towards the ship, proceeding on the southern shore of Wahlenbergfjorden, apparently

⁷⁸ «Varie volte la nave ha rotto gli ormeggi e viene spinta verso il largo. Ma l'equipaggio, che mostra per Albertini e i suoi compagni quasi la nostra premurosa attesa, ogni volta con delicata manovra viene a riportare la nave sul sito più vicino e più comodo per quelli che arriveranno dal fondo della baia».

still in strong wind, but improving meteorological conditions. The bay ice, in the process of melting, made the march extremely difficult and the wind carried cold spray from the liquid water. The march cut across the inlet to Palanderbukta.

Still 10 kilometres far from Selanderneset, the patrol was able to identify the mast of *Heimen-SUCAI* and was correspondingly sighted by the ship, that hoisted the flag to confirm the identification.

Zanetti, Peroni and two Norwegian crewmembers disembarked on the ice and approached the patrol, while Della Valle installed again his camera in proximity of the ship to record the moment of arrival and boarding.

Albertini writes in his memoir (M, p. 90) that the encounter with Zanetti and the others took place at 11.00; Zanetti, in his last entry on the logbook, indicates quite a different time: 8.35 (LB, f. 31v).

Albertini, Urbano, Bonola and Guedoz boarded the *Heimen* through a ladder on her port side and were most warmly welcomed by the crew, who had worked intensely in the previous days to prepare orderly and comfortable spaces for the returning companions.

Della Valle's footage testimonies the happiness of the ship's crew assisting with the loading of the materials, the joyful expressions of the four otherwise worn-out men, the faces darkened by the long exposure to the Arctic daylight, the filth of the long march, and the evident loss in weight.

The group could finally enjoy a hot meal in the comfortably heated quarters of the ship and take a long and well-deserved rest.

Bonola comments in his conference paper:

As soon as we were back on board, the physical needs of civilization became urgent. To wash, to change our clothes, to sleep under blankets, to eat hot food after a month of such harsh and primitive living, all these seemed absolute necessities (C, p. 35)⁷⁹

About four hours after the arrival of the patrol, the last surviving dog of the team, Redd, after having painstakingly limped behind the patrol, arrived at the ship and was allowed onboard.

⁷⁹ «Appena a bordo i bisogni fisici della civiltà si fecero impellenti. Lavarsi, cambiarsi d'abiti, dormire con coperte, mangiare cibi caldi dopo un mese di vita tanto disagiata e primitiva, ci parvero necessità improrogabili».

Icebound

In the morning of July 10, Albertini was again in charge of the ship and took over, along with direct command, the duty of keeping the onboard logbook. In his first entry, he reported to have had a long conversation with Jakobsen leading to the decision for the attempt to exit the southern end of Hinlopenstretet and reach the eastern coast of Barentsøya. The *Heimen-SUCAI* moved then out of her position near Selanderneset at 9h GMT and headed south for 5 hours. At 16h, however, abeam the «*Isola Bastion*» (Bastianøyane), the ship found “an impenetrable belt of ice” (LB, f. 32r) and Albertini gave up the initial intent. Route was reversed and the ship headed to try a passage north of the Sjuøyane.

At 1h GMT on July 11, the expedition reached Lågoya, but found that it was impossible to proceed further as ice appeared to be solid there as well. While the ship returned towards the south, a strong wind developed up to a speed of 1200 metres/minute (72 km/h) and it was necessary to find shelter in the “Treurenburg Bay” (Sorgfjorden). The bad weather prolonged the stay until the day after, July 12; Albertini and other crewmembers therefore went ashore in Crozierpynten and visited the abandoned, but relatively well preserved, scientific station placed in 1899 by the Swedish-Russian Arc-of-meridian Expedition (1899-1902). Over the course of four years at the turn of the century, in several permanent or temporary locations in Spitsbergen, Russian and Swedish scientists had conducted accurate astronomical and trigonometric observations to measure 3°30' (until 1901, Kyzyurova, 2023, p. 4) and finally 4°10' (in 1902, see Conway, 1903, pp. 536-537) of a meridian between Long. 15° and 20° «East from Paris».

Trigonometric stations had been established from Keilhaufjellet to Vesle Tavleøya; the same expedition had also conducted the first complex investigations of auroras in the Arctic using optical instruments, some of which acquired data from observatories placed at Crozierpynten. The silent station that Albertini visited on July 11, 1929, documented also in Della Valle's film (...) had been an overwintering site during the campaigns and had written an interesting page in the progress of geographical studies.



Fig. 33. The abandoned Swedish wintering station in Sorgfjorden, seen from the north-west. The composite image was generated from the film DVD recording
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»



Fig. 34. Screenshot from the TopoSvalbard webgis, showing the ruins of the station in their current status. The low relief from which the film footage was taken on July 12, 1929, is visible in the top-left area of the image
Source: TopoSvalbard - Norsk Polarinstitut

On July 12, team dog Redd, who appeared not to be recovering from the march and was clearly in great pain, was put down onboard the *Heimen-SUCAI* (M, p. 92). Upon Albertini's request, Peroni performed an autopsy, finding a bundle of rope in the animal's stomach, a likely cause of death as the sled dogs typically used to try and eat harnesses and other objects when subject to severe hunger during the march.

On July 13 weather conditions improved and the ship left Sorgfjorden bound for the Hinlopenstretet, in the hope of finding passage through the southern mouth of the strait. An ice barrier, however, forced the ship to stop, again, abeam Torellneset; the day after, the situation was not changed.

Considering the failure, through the previous days, of the repeated attempts to cross southbound towards Barentsøya, Albertini decided to exit the strait through the north mouth and to circumnavigate Spitsbergen along the western side.

The passage towards the west was uneventful and in the evening of July 15, at 22h GMT, the *Heimen-SUCAI* moored at Ny-Ålesund. The call had been decided to disembark «Jelstein», the «cagnaro» (“dog keeper”) whose services were no longer crucial and sailor «Hernest» (LB, f. 34r), who was still in need of medical assistance due to an appendicitis (M, p. 92). The crew also received a bag of mail from Italy, containing letters and newspapers. The crew paused at the mooring station for about a day, taking a break from the strain of the expedition.

At 13h GMT on July 16 the ship left Kongsfjorden and sailed along “the thoughtful coasts” of Prins Karls Forland (M, p. 93), finding open waters and occasional fog.

On July 18, at 18h, Sørkapp was in sight and was rounded at 21h (LB, f. 34r), but then adverse conditions were encountered: dense fog, strong wind and increasingly dense ice. The *Heimen-SUCAI* found shelter in «Whales Bay» (Kvalvågen). The ship remained in that position for most of the following day, July 19, exiting the bay at 17.30 in the attempt of crossing the Storfjorden. The ice formations were very dense, though, and progress was challenging and slow. At 19.40, with the favour of the tide, the ship was able to overcome an initial ice barrage, and struggled to begin sailing east towards «Nigro Point» (Svarthuken).

After two days of “long and exhausting work”, *Heimen-SUCAI* had crossed the fjord and at 18h on July 21 it reached «Whales Point» (Kvalpynten). It coasted the «Deevi Bay» (Tjuvfjorden), and finally, at 23.50 GMT,

she rounded Svarthuken (LB, f. 35r).

In the early hours of July 22, the density of the ice prevented continuation towards the east; the ship returned to Tjuvfjorden and anchored there. Albertini decided to go back and try passage through Freemansundet, between Barentsøya and Edgeøya. This passage appeared very challenging as well.

Albertini annotates in the memoir that in fighting the ice-binding of the ship and in trying to force a way through ice formations, some benefit was achieved when tidal motions contributed to opening passages.

By now the conditions of the ice have accustomed our nerves to calmness and patience; they have taught us all the tricks of the ice and the means to overcome them. From the top of the crow's nest, for hours on end exposed to a wind often raging like a devil, with the long telescope we scan the surroundings meter by meter. We proceed in six-hour stretches, waiting for the tidal movements to loosen the ice a little (M, p 93)⁸⁰

The *Heimen-SUCAI* struggled north, but found the way blocked already as she was approaching Diskobukta. She therefore had to return towards the south. Around midnight, she anchored in the vicinity of Zieglerøya. On July 23 an inspection group went ashore for the usual observations. Here the men were surprised to find traces of a previous human passage.

There was a bit of emotion; (...) we discovered the ruined remains of a primitive shelter, a mound, spent cartridges; the whole ground around was strewn with the bones of bears and other Arctic animals. What impressions arise in the Arctic traveler whenever he finds signs of life is difficult to say; what tragedies, perhaps, upon that resource-less skerry? (M, p. 93)⁸¹

At 21h GMT, anchoring position was moved to the Tjuvfjorden and the ship remained there most of the day after. Continuous radio contact was maintained with a US expedition which was trying to reach Franz Joseph Land (Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa) and reported prohibitive ice conditions

⁸⁰ «Ormai le condizioni dei ghiacci hanno abituato alla calma e alla pazienza i nostri nervi; ci hanno insegnato tutte le malizie dei ghiacci ed i mezzi per vincerli. Dall'alto della coffa, per ore ed ore esposti ad un vento spesso indiavolato, col lungo cannocchiale, esploriamo i dintorni metro per metro. Si cammina sempre di sei ore in sei ore attendendo che i fenomeni di marea allentino un poco i ghiacci».

⁸¹ «...vi fu un poco di commozione; (...) scoprimmo un diroccato avanzo di primitivo ricovero, un tumulo, cartucce scariche; tutto il terreno intorno era cosparso d'ossa di orsi e di altri animali artici. Che impressioni nascono nel viaggiatore artico ogni qualvolta trova segni di vita, è difficile dire; quali tragedie forse su quello scoglio senza risorse?».

in the whole area. After having waited for news of some available passage, Albertini at 7 GMT on July 25 ordered departure and headed northbound, reaching the end of Storefjorden abeam "Cape Sporer", where the ship found again the passage barren by ice. Another attempt to exit the fjord to the south was then made, and Svarthuken was reached at the end of the day.

On July 26, the *Heimen-SUCAI* sailed along the coast at various distances from the shore, depending on the sea-ice, and was finally able to explore the eastern coasts of Edgeøya. It reached up a position abeam Freemansundet, but 15 km far from land due to the compact ice. In this phase and throughout July 27, basically, the ship was able to make only minor position changes to avoid getting icebound. On the second day, weather was unfavourable, with fog, snow and wind.

In the early hours of July 28, the boring routine of the crew was interrupted by the opportunity of hunting three bears that had approached the ship as close as 300 metres. Only one of them was eventually killed. Through the night and part of the day, Albertini was alarmed by the increase in the pressure of ice against the ship's hull, and the crew worked to prevent damages or blocks; a change occurred in fact during the day, but was a worrying one.

We suddenly notice an unusual and extremely rapid movement of the ice, compactly formed, from south to north. We had already reached, at the edge of the pack, the furthest position attainable to the northeast; an attempt to advance against the movement of the ice proved futile, and within two hours we were decisively beset, nor from the top of the crow's nest, within range of the telescope, was any open water visible.

For us there begins a period of nerve-racking, terrible waiting. With each successive movement the ice, instead of drawing away, closes in ever more tightly upon our flanks. In turns, one of us remains on deck to take bearings of the drift, to watch the condition of the ice and the pressures, and to sound the depth. We are constantly troubled by the possibility that the drift of the ice may carry us onto shoal waters (...).

For thirty consecutive days we do not change our position if not by effect of the drift, and it seems impossible to have time for playing bridge, for reading and discussing. Slowly, even our anxiety changed into a calm acceptance, in a full trust in our destiny. We grew accustomed to hearing, during the hours of low tide, the insidious creaking of the ice against our hull, and upon a great expanse that always accompanied our drift we traced out a wide promenade, which it pleased me to walk several times a

day in the company of the dogs (M, pp. 94-96)⁸²

The ice drift was slowly taking the *Heimen* towards the West, a fact which caused concern because the ship might have been dragged in shallow waters. The depth was frequently monitored by sounding (C, p. 38). The crow's nest was frequently used to look for possible passages through the ice. Urbano conducted meteorological observations, Bonola went ahead with his zoological sampling work. Pugliese kept in continuous contact with the various radio stations in Svalbard, Norway, Soviet Union and Italy to acquire data and to exchange information. In the boring routines of the first days, Albertini began to develop the idea of wintering in Franz Joseph Land. On August 2, seven puppies were born by sledge-dog Girl, an event that was documented in Della Valle's film (at 01.07.37).

Telegraphic exchanges took place between Albertini and Maltini in Rome, discussing the opportunity of reaching Franz Joseph Land, even if that would have implied to winter in the area; arrangements were envisioned to organize the necessary re-supply. Given the gravity of the decision to be taken, Albertini informed the crew about this perspective and asked whether they wished to continue or leave the expedition (LB, f. 38r).

In the night between August 7 and 8, a tragic accident struck the expedition. While involved in an emergency hunt to a polar bear, Giulio Guedoz was hit by a bullet from Albertini's weapon and died shortly after. The incident was communicated by Albertini to Maltini in Rome via an ciphred telegram in the immediate aftermath, and was reported in contemporary newspapers already on August 9; other accounts, in greater detail, were released after a more comprehensive report sent by Albertini on August 10. An article on *L'Avvenire d'Italia*, «*La tragica morte della guida Giulio Guedoz*» ("The tragic death of guide Giulio Guedoz"), published on August 11,

82 «La notte del 28 notiamo improvvisamente un insolito rapidissimo muoversi dei ghiacci in formazione compatta dal Sud al Settentrione. Già noi occupavamo ai limiti dei ghiacci la massima posizione raggiungibile al N.-E.; riuscì vano un tentativo di marciare contro il movimento dei ghiacci e nel giro di due ore fummo bloccati in modo netto, né dall'alto della coffa a tiro di cannocchiale era visibile acqua libera. Incomincia per noi un periodo di snervante, terribile attesa. Di marea in marea i ghiacci anziché allontanarsi si asserragliano sempre più ai nostri fianchi. A turno uno di noi è in coperta a rilevare la deriva, a sorvegliare le condizioni dei ghiacci e le pressioni, a sondare. Siamo sempre impensieriti dall'eventualità che la deriva dei ghiacci ci trasporti su bassi fondali (...) Per trenta giorni consecutivi non cambiamo la nostra posizione se non per effetto delle derive, e ci sembra impossibile di aver tempo di giocare al bridge, di leggere, di discutere. Lentamente anche la nostra ansia si trasformò in una calma rassegnazione, in una fiducia piena nel nostro destino. Facemmo l'abitudine ad udire nelle ore di bassa marea i subdoli scricchiolii dei ghiacci contro le nostre murate, e su un gran tavoliere che sempre accompagnava le nostre derive tracciammo un'ampia passeggiata che mi era gradito di fare varie volte al giorno in compagnia dei cani».

describes the sequence of events, presumably based on Albertini's reports.

The grave incident that caused the death of the valiant Valdostan mountain guide Giulio Guidoz [sic], of Pré-Saint-Didier, occurred at 22:30 on the 7th, while several members of the Norwegian crew of the *Heimen-Sucaï* and Guidoz himself, attacked by a starving she-bear which had already chased an unarmed Norwegian at 21:00, were engaged in a difficult struggle with the animal, only one of the Norwegians, Laing, being armed with a rifle.

Albertini, having instantly grasped the situation, armed himself with a rifle and descended from the ship, followed by Urbano and Bonola, to bring assistance to the Norwegians and to Guidoz; but, having reached a distance of eight metres from the group, he fell when the sheet of ice gave way. The rifle slipped from his hand and, in the fall, upon striking the ice, discharged, tragically hitting Guidoz.

The guide, promptly assisted by Albertini, Bonola, Urbano, and Della Valle and, not without difficulty, carried on board, was immediately treated by Dr. Peroni, who ascertained that the bullet, having entered from the right side of the back at the level of the liver, had exited anteriorly at shoulder height, perforating the lung.

At 00:15 on 8 August, death occurred despite the care administered and an attempted operation performed by Dr. Peroni in an effort to save Guidoz (*L'Avenire d'Italia*, 1929)⁸³

An account of the event is also provided by Bonola, with some minor discrepancies on timings and details.

At 23.00 on 7 August, while we were gathered in our small aft wardroom, we were called by the Norwegians because two of them, Julius and Johansen, were struggling on the ice with a large bear about 300 metres from the ship. Albertini and I ran there at once. Guidoz had preceded us. We were soon on the spot.

83 «Il grave incidente che ha provocato la morte della valorosa guida valdostana Giulio Guidoz, di Pré St. Didier, è avvenuto alle 22.30 del giorno 7, mentre alcuni membri dell'equipaggio norvegese della 'Heimen-Sucaï' e il Guidoz, assaliti da un'orsa affamata che già alle ore 21 [a]veva rincorso un norvegese inerme, si trovavano con essa impegnati in una lotta difficile, essendo solamente uno dei norvegesi armato di fucile, Laing. Albertini istantaneamente intuì la situazione, armatosi di fucile, discese dalla nave, seguito da Urbano e Bonola, a portare aiuto ai norvegesi e al Guidoz, ma, giunto ad otto metri dal gruppo, per la rottura della lastra di ghiaccio cadde. Il fucile gli sfuggì di mano e, nella caduta, per l'urto sul ghiaccio, il colpo partì, raggiungendo disgraziatamente il Guidoz. La guida, prontamente soccorsa da Albertini, Bonola, Urbano e Della Valle e con non lievi difficoltà trasportata a bordo, fu immediatamente medicata dal dott. Peroni, il quale riscontrò che la pallottola entrata dal lato destro della schiena all'altezza del fegato, era uscita anteriormente all'altezza della spalla perforando il polmone. Alle ore 0.15 dell'8 agosto, avvenne il decesso nonostante le cure prodigate e un tentativo di operazione eseguito dal dottor Peroni, per salvare il Guidoz».



Fig. 35. The Heimen-SUCAI icebound in proximity of Edgeøya

Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Through the fog one could glimpse an enormous bear which, made furious by a wound that had shattered its jaw, was vomiting blood and trying to hurl itself against the two Norwegians. Of the two, only one was armed with a rifle. Albertini was running. A thin sheet of ice broke under his weight. The butt of his rifle struck the ice and the gun discharged. Guido was hit in the right side of the chest, beneath the shoulder blade.

Albertini and I rushed to him. We lifted our poor friend and tried to stem the massive haemorrhage caused by the explosive bullet. It was impossible. With great difficulty we carried him back to the ship. Meanwhile other Norwegians who had come up killed the bear. Despite the care given him by Dr. Peroni, by Albertini, and by myself, poor Guido died a few minutes after being brought aboard the *Heimen* (C, pp. 39-40)⁸⁴

84 «Alle ore 23 del 7 agosto mentre eravamo radunati nel nostro piccolo quadrato di poppa, fummo chiamati dai norvegesi perché due di loro, Julius e Johansen, erano alle prese sui ghiacci con un grosso orso a 300 metri dalla baleniera. Albertini ed io accorremmo subito. Guido ci aveva preceduti. Fummo ben presto sul luogo. Fra la nebbia si intravedeva un enorme orso che reso furioso da una ferita che gli aveva fracassata la mandibola vomitava sangue e cercava di avventarsi contro i due norvegesi. Di questi solo uno era armato di fucile. Albertini arrivava di corsa. Una

According to Albertini's logbook (the entry does not mention the time at which the fatal hunt began), Guedoz was pronounced dead at 00.20 (LB, f. 38v). It is difficult to identify all the persons mentioned in the reports. The only Norwegian name present in the list from the Midt-Troms Museum seems to be Julius (Jensen); the same list does not mention any «Laing». Johansen is mentioned as the ship's Norwegian wireless operator by Pugliese (1932, p. 149). While Bonola does not mention a previous attack to a crewmember, the newspaper report does, though without mentioning the man's name. Given the annotation by Albertini in the logbook, this episode might have involved skipper Jakobsen himself (LB, f. 38v).

Giulio Guedoz – the last casualty in the tragedy of *Italia* – was buried at sea at 17.30 GMT (LB, f. 38v) on August 8. The time is reported as 18.30 on the *Avvenire d'Italia* article, which is not necessarily an inconsistency, because Italy's local time was GMT + 1. Furthermore, the second figure in the hour annotation appears to be corrected, initially written "8" and then overwritten, in larger format, "7", as if Albertini were uncertain as to what time (GMT or GMT+1 to use). Once again, Bonola's testimony complements the one by Albertini:

With hearts broken and torn with grief, we – his old patrol companions – kept vigil over him in the small quarterdeck throughout the night and the following day. We carefully wrapped the dear body in the national flag and pinned upon his chest the old, tattered pennant that had fluttered over our sledge on all our marches. (...) A mournful procession bore our comrade to his worthy burial place: the great frozen sea he had loved so dearly. We placed the body upon a sledge and carried it to a nearby stretch of open water. The Norwegians followed in silent reverence. We fastened a heavy cast-iron wheel to the poor dead man, paused for a moment in pious recollection, then slowly let the body slip into the dark sea. From the *Heimen*, the flag at half-mast seemed to offer the old Alpino the distant salute of his Aosta Battalion, of which he had spoken to us with such affection. We returned to the whaling vessel with a heavy weight upon our souls, and, sad and silent, resumed our hard work (C, pp. 40-41)⁸⁵

lastra sottile di ghiaccio si ruppe sotto il suo peso. Il calcio del suo fucile batté sul ghiaccio ed il corpo partì. Guidoz fu colpito all'emitore destro sotto la scapola. Albertini ed io ~~accorremmo~~. Sollevammo il povero amico, cercammo di frenare l'emorragia imponente prodotta dalla palla esplosiva. Impossibile. Con molta fatica lo portammo sulla nave. Frattanto altri norvegesi accorsi uccidevano l'orso. Nonostante le cure prodigategli dal Dott. Peroni, da Albertini e da me il povero Guidoz moriva. pochi minuti dopo il suo trasporto sull'Heimen».

85 «Con l'animo affranto e straziato, noi, i suoi vecchi compagni di pattuglia, lo vegliammo nel piccolo quadrato tutta la notte ed il giorno seguente. Racchiudemmo la cara salma nella bandiera nazionale e gli appuntammo sul petto la vecchia fiamma sdruscita che aveva garrito sulla nostra slitta in tuttae le nostrae marciae. (...) Un mesto corteo

The logbook reports that on August 10, an informal “pseudo-poll” was taken among the Italian crewmembers to decide whether to intentionally decide to overwinter, or to end the mission with the sailing season.

Only Zanetti and Urbano are favourable to the sacrifice of continuing the endeavour even at the risk of the wintering. The other four declare they prefer to disembark at Kings Bay. Only two of them adduced to me justifiable reasons (LB, f. 39v)

Albertini summarises in half a page the long idle period between August 11 and August 22, only annotating the boredom and the overall futility of the time spent as the *Heimen-SUCAI* was icebound adrift. A brief remark, «*abbandonata ormai per insufficienza di tempo ogni idea di sverno volontario*», “abandoned by now for insufficiency of time any idea of voluntary wintering”, clearly refers to the impossibility of properly organizing the logistics of a resupply for the expedition.

A sudden change is recorded on August 24.

At 18[h] suddenly the ice starts moving and wide channels of water open on every side. Without any cause, after 30 days of immobility. We depart immediately. On course for E-S-SE. We go until 1[h] on the 25 (LB, f. 40v)⁸⁶

Yet progress was modest: Albertini evaluated it in barely 20 miles, then there was another stop. Weather was bad, with heavy fog and temperatures around 0°C. In the afternoon wind from the north-east rose and increased, and the crew appeared about to fall back to the icebound routine; but the ordeal of stillness was finally over.

On August 26,

The ice widens suddenly and allows us a rapid movement toward South using wide channels ever more spacious. At the end of the day we are on

portava il nostro compagno alla sua degna sepoltura: il grande mare ghiacciato che egli tanto amava. Collocammo la salma sopra una slitta e la trasportammo fino ad un vicino spazio di mare libero. I norvegesi ci seguivano raccolti. Attaccammo una grossa ruota di ghisa al povero morto, ci fermammo un momento in pietoso raccoglimento, poi lasciammo scivolare lentamente la salma nel mare cupo. Dall'Heimen la bandiera a mezz'asta sembrava portare al vecchio alpino il lontano saluto di quel suo Battaglione Aosta di cui ci parlava con tanto amore. Tornammo alla baleniera con un grande peso nell'anima e tristi e taciturni riprendiamo il nostro duro lavoro».

86 «Alle 18 improvvisamente i ghiacci si mettono in movimenti e larghi canali d'acqua si aprono d'ogni parte. Senza alcuna causa dopo 30 giorni di immobilità. Partiamo subito. In rotta per E - S - SE. Camminiamo fino alla 1 del 25».



Fig. 36. Urbano and Albertini retract the sounding probe after having measured the sea depth under the drifting Heimen-SUCAI

Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

the parallel of S. Jacob Bay. The wind from N-E increases more and more in intensity and the sea increasingly clear of ice begins to become violently rough (LB, f. 41r)⁸⁷

In the memoir, Albertini adds a relatively important event, occurred before exiting the channels into open sea. As the *Heimen* was moving between two large ice floes, she suddenly climbed with the forward part of the keel on a submerged bridge of ice, getting temporarily stranded. It took much effort with tools on the part of the crew and the use of dynamite to release the ship (M, p. 99). The episode is also reported by Bonola (C, p. 41).

⁸⁷ «I ghiacci si allargano improvvisamente e ci permettono un rapido spostamento verso Sud utilizzando larghi canali sempre più spaziosi. - Alla fine della giornata siamo nel parallelo della S. Jacob Bay. Il vento da N-E aumenta sempre di intensità ed il mare sempre più sgombrato dai ghiacci incomincia ad agitarsi violentemente».



Fig. 37. Efforts to release the ship from the ice
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Franz Josef Land and Novaya Zemlya

August 27 found the ship sailing in rough sea, pushed by a north-easterly wind. The sustained cruise towards the south brought her close to “Hope Island” (Hopen). Course was changed to due east, in order to overtake vast ice masses, then route turned towards Kongsøya, the largest island in the «*Wiches*» archipelago (Kong Karls Land), one of the sites Albertini had planned to specifically inspect. The adverse weather conditions, with very high sea, wind and thick fog, discouraged the *Heimen-SUCAI* from approaching the islands, and navigation proceeded to the north. On August 27, Albertini and Zanetti alternated on watch every 12 hours; most of the crew, including the two in command, suffered from severe seasickness. The ship proceeded northbound and at the end of the day she was estimated to be 20 miles north of Kong Karls Land (LB, f. 42r; M, p.

100). The persistent bad weather induced the crew to avoid the attempt of a landing on the small islands. Rather, Albertini decided to reach Franz Joseph Land, then a particularly remote, barren and inhospitable group of islands under the sovereignty of the Soviet Union (Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa, Земля Франца-Иосифа).

In the morning of August 29, the weather and sea conditions improved. The *Heimen-SUCAI* cruised uneventfully and, at midnight, Albertini estimated his position at coordinates 79°50'N, 40°E (LB, f. 42r), approximately half-way between Kvitøya and Prince George Land (Zemlya Georga, Земля Георга).

Although apparently not in the ship's area, vast banks of fog were visible to her north; the ice, apparently, was quite vast and thick, forcing the ship to remain about 60 miles far from the coast, skimming the archipelago at that distance. This situation continued on into August 30 and, in the night, Albertini turned towards the north-east. The sea was moving in long waves that made navigation unpleasant for the crew. On August 31, as probabilities of getting into the Soviet archipelago thinned by the hour, weather was relatively sunny and fair. At 23h GMT, *Heimen-SUCAI* had Cape Flora (Mys Flora, Мыс Флора) in sight: the cape was the western extremity of Northbrook Island (Ostrov Nortbruk, Остров Нортбрук), the southernmost in the western part of the archipelago (LB, f. 42v).

In spite of the fog, ice conditions allowed the ship to turn north and approach Mys Flora down to 15 miles; it was impossible to proceed further, or to send a patrol due to the insufficient visibility.

Albertini was keen to explore Franz Joseph Land in spite of the evidently adverse conditions. His belief that some survivors of *Italia* could have actually reached that northern archipelago was shared also by former *Italia*'s Commander Umberto Nobile, who would later try to reach it while participating in the 1931 expedition of Soviet icebreaker *Malyghin* (Nobile, 1947).

On September 1, in the evening, radio contact was established between Soviet icebreaker *Sedov*, operating in the area, and the *Heimen-SUCAI*. Telegrams were exchanged between Albertini and a senior scientist on-board the Soviet ship, Prof. Rudolf Samoilovich⁸⁸. Albertini requested to know *Sedov*'s position and inquired about the possibility of a meeting with

⁸⁸ Rudolph Lazarevich Samoilovich (1881-1939) was a prominent Arctic scientist in the Soviet Union. He had supported the 1926 *Norge* expedition and was a crucial figure in the rescue of *Italia* survivors in 1928. For more information about his life see Tkachenko (2025, pp. 123-126).

Samoilovich. The Soviets communicated in detail that they had already thoroughly inspected many areas in the archipelago, adding that the *Sedov* was already returning to base, at which point the idea of a meeting was given up (LB, f. 43r-v).

On the same day, Albertini was notified that the *Heimen-SUCAI* had suffered damage to its propeller, losing a blade; cruising speed of the ship, Albertini annotates, was probably reduced down to 5 knots, a fact which might have disrupted dead reckoning in the previous days, making navigational estimations less precise. Late in the evening, the ship was still struggling northbound.

A hunt occurred at night, killing two polar bears.

The ship proceeded on and at 8 GMT on September 2, she was stopped 30 miles away from the British Channel (Britanskiy Kanal, БРИТАНСКИЙ КАНАЛ) by large ice formations. Albertini requested information to the *Sedov* about the ice conditions through the British Channel and the reply was that the icebreaker had to put effort in her way out of it, implying the absolute practical impossibility for the smaller and less powerful *Heimen-SUCAI* to make the passage on her own means (LB, f. 44r; M, p. 101). Albertini therefore ordered to head South-East in open waters for the rest of the day, and at night, he made a measurement with the mechanical log. The ship's speed turned out to be 6 knots. Bonola reports that the *Heimen-SUCAI* was finally in ice-free open waters at about Lat. 78°N (C, p. 43), but that the crew was soon to experience the drawbacks. Indeed, after the massive fuel consumption of the previous months, the now much lighter *Heimen-SUCAI* was even more prone to pitching and rolling into the waves, much to the distress of the crew. In the course of a few days, the dwindling supply of fresh water, which was now violently sloshing in the mostly empty large tanks, gradually became contaminated, deteriorating more and more in taste and quality.

Throughout the night between September 2 and 3 the ship sailed in relatively rough sea, with Peroni, Zanetti and possibly Albertini on watch in 6 hours shifts. At 20 GMT, in fog, Albertini believed to be in sight of the Novaya Zemlya (Новая Земля).

Novaya Zemlya has a total area of 90,650 km², with approximate size of 800 km x 100 km (reaching over 200 km in the southernmost region). It consists of two main islands, Severnyy (Северный i.e. "Northern") and



Fig. 38. Map from British Admiralty (1925b), sheet 2962, The North Cape to Einsamkeit Island, Novaya Zemlya is in the centre of the image

Source: OldMaps Online

(Proliv Matochkin Shar, Пролит Маточкин Шар), and many other rocks and islets. about 90% of the land area is «Arctic mountain desert, with a narrow belt of tundra in the far South; geologically, Novaya Zemlya is the northern limit of the Ural Mountains; highest elevation is 1,547 m». Winter temperatures average between -15°C and -30°C , summer ones between 20°C - 6.5°C , with significant differences between the average temperatures and precipitations between the northern and southern Island: -8.7°C and 150 mm/year against -5.7°C and 317 mm/year respectively (Island Studies, 2016, p. 1). Vegetation reflects a gradient from polar desert in the north and at higher elevations to Arctic tundra in the south-western portions of Yuzhny Island (Serebryanny *et al.*, 1998, p. 323). Flora includes Cyperaceae, Poaceae, dwarf shrubs such as *Betula nana* and *Salix* species, alongside mosses and lichens characteristic of calcium-rich soils (Serebryanny *et al.*, 1998, pp. 323-324; Island Studies, 2016, p. 2). According to the Encyclopædia Britannica, 1911, “Novaya Zemlya” article, faunal life

was sparse inland, limited to Arctic fox, lemmings, bears and occasional reindeer, while coastal zones hosted abundant bird colonies and marine mammals including walrus and seals. Human presence on Novaya Zemlya historically remained limited and seasonally oriented. By the early twentieth century, the local population consisted of small groups of Nenets and Russian Pomors engaged in fishing, hunting and trapping (Encyclopædia Britannica, 1911, pp. 4-5; CIA, 1958, p. vi). In 1956, just before it was removed for operating a nuclear test range, the total resident population numbered approximately 340 individuals, about two-thirds Nenets and one-third Russians (Island Studies, 2016, p. 3). The main settlement was, since the second half of 1800s on the western coast of Yuzhnyy Island. It was named Malye Karmakuly (Malye Karmakuly, Малые Кармакулы i.e. “Little Karmakuly”), and located in a fjord-like bay within Moller Bay (Zaliv Mollera, ЗАЛИВ МОЛЛЕРА); its inhabitants lived at a near-subsistence level based on marine and terrestrial resources (Scott Polar Research Institute, 1936, p. 115; CIA, 1958, p. vi).

Albertini referred to the prevailing local component as “Samoyed” in a generic ethnographic sense, using a contemporary terminology for Nenets populations (LB, f. 53r; M, p. 106).

At Malye Karmakuly stood a state-operated meteorological and polar station, which had introduced a permanent scientific presence on the archipelago. The station was established primarily to collect climatological data (Zeeberg, 2001, pp. 106-109). It was staffed by technical personnel and contributed to systematic meteorological observation in the Barents – Kara seas sectors, linking Novaya Zemlya to broader Arctic research networks. Albertini had the intention to land in «Karmakul», in the “wide Moller Bay”, where both the scientific station and the Malye Karmakuly settlement were located. Instead of planning a visit to the scientific installation, however, he apparently intended to contact the locally present «*vas-ta tribù di samoiedi*», i.e. “large Samoyed tribe” (M, p. 106). It is possible he considered that, had any trace of *Italia* reached Novaya Zemlya, roaming hunters or trappers were more likely to have noticed than Soviet scientific operators standing stationary in their base.

Deeming it unsafe to approach the island under low visibility, the *Heimen-SUCAI* turned with the bow to the sea and remained with engines running on idle, rocked by long waves.

At 4 GMT on September 4, Zanetti, who was on watch, reported that

visibility had improved and land was clearly visible. The *Heimen-SUCAI* approached the coasts towards «*Capo Bolsciaia-Levandoi*» (Mys Bol'shoy Ledyanoy, Мыс Большой Ледяной) and began searching for a safe mooring area, along the western coasts of the Severnyy, expecting to reach a safe anchorage to the South of Cape Nassau (i.e. Mys Nassau, Мыс Нассай).

In the 1932 memoir, Albertini adds many vivid descriptions of landscapes and sceneries viewed in Novaya Zemlya, a region which – unlike most of Svalbard – he was experiencing for the first time. As he was looking to «*Capo Bolsciaia-Levandoi*», indeed,

It appeared to me hooded in the white spume of a frenzied swell, and in a single glance revealed its hinterland of colourless steppes and glaciers spilling into the sea - all the biting features of this extreme Asiatic fringe (M, p. 103)⁸⁹



Fig. 39. Novaya Zemlya, from Cape Bolshaya Ledyanoi to Pankratevi Islands, in a section from British Admiralty (1925b)

Source: OldMaps Online; Bing Satellite; GIS reprocessing: GREAL

⁸⁹ «Eso mi apparve incappucciato dalla schiuma bianca di una risacca indemoniata e mi svelò di un colpo col suo retroterra di steppe incolori e di ghiacciai sfocianti in mare, tutte le mordenti caratteristiche di questo estremo lembo asiatico del Continente».



Fig. 40. Motorboat Laura during the observations in Novaya Zemlya; the large antennas are part of the radiotelegraphic systems

Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Navigation was conducted at a 2 mile distance from the coastline, in good weather, sunshine and mild temperature.

At 00h GMT on September 5 the ship was abeam “Cape Lutte”⁹⁰, i.e. Mys Litke (Мыс Литке). Apparently, at this point Albertini turned back and started coasting northbound. At 5 GMT, he annotates position abeam «Arcangel Bay»⁹¹ (Guba Arkhangel'skaya, Губа Архангельская) (LB, f. 45v); the *Heimen-SUCAI* cautiously enters it due to the presence of shallow waters and rocks awash, but after anchoring, in the afternoon and through the night no other operation was possible due to the presence of strong wind.

On September 6, at 14 GMT, Albertini decided to conduct an exploration of the bay using the motorboat, christened *Laura* after the Commander's mother. For the occasion, the motorboat was fitted with one of the portable radio stations. The observation party was composed of four men, i.e. Albertini, Urbano as pilot, Pugliese as wireless operator and Della

⁹⁰ Indicated as Cape Lutke in the 1925 Admiralty, 1:2,400,000 map.

⁹¹ Indicated as Arkhangel Bay in the 1925 Admiralty, 1:2,400,000 map.

Valle to take cinematographic documentation. After having sailed up to the end of the glacier entering the bay from the southeast, the motorboat moved north up to the immediate vicinity of “Gorbovi Island”, indicated as “Gorbovi Islands” (Ostrova Gorbovy, Острова Горбовы) on the map НОВАЯ ЗЕМЛЯ СЪ ЗАПАДНОЮ ЧАСТЬЮ КАРСКАГО МОРЯ (“Novaya Zemlya with the western part of the Kara Sea”), by N. Zem-balevskiy and K. Mescherskiy, 1897, 1:1,000,000. The plural indicates that the toponym referred to the whole group of small islands in the area. The 1925 Admiralty, 1:2,400,000 map has also “Gorbovi I.[sland]s” and the largest one is indicated as “Verkha I. (berg)”.

In the logbook, Albertini seems to refer to a “Gorbovi island” as if it were a single one, it is uncertain whether the group onboard *Laura* actually inspected either Verkha island, the relatively large formation to its south (which is also plausible) both of them or even the smaller islets of the Gorbovi group. In the memoir, he mentions that “we turned to the North through a narrow swept by extremely violent tidal currents” (M, p. 104), which seems to refer to the narrows passage between Verkha Island and the others. The observers identified the remnants of a Samoyed hut; during the return, *Laura* hit repeatedly “sandy shoals” in the shallow water of the bay. Prompted by the dangerous situation, the four men jumped into the waist-deep water to release the boat and returned to *Heimen* just before a strong, several-hour steady blow of wind.

September 7 was “a day of wind, fog and water”. Albertini went back ashore using, apparently, one of the launches fitted with the outboard engine (LB, f. 46v).

We reconnoitred the entire southern shoreline of the bay, encountering frequent anonymous markers consisting of poles driven into the ground, and pushing inland across barren steppes. We then carried out, as soon as the sea allowed, an exploration of the northern sector of Gorbovi. This latter excursion lasted eight hours [the logbook, p. , has 7] and led us to discover, on a rock, the well-preserved remains of a small hut, inside which we found numerous Russian inscriptions. We rejoined the ship after nightfall, with both our pumps working at full capacity to discharge the great quantity of water that the transversal waves had us take (M, p. 105)⁹²

92 «Perlustrammo tutta la costiera meridionale alla baia trovando frequenti segnalazioni anonime consistenti in pali conficcati nel terreno, e spingendoci nell'interno per steppe aride. Effettuiammo poi, appena il mare ce lo permise, una esplorazione nella zona settentrionale della Gorbovi. Quest'ultima esplorazione durò otto ore e ci fece individuare su uno scoglio i resti ben conservati di una piccola capanna in cui trovammo molte iscrizioni russe. Raggiungemmo la nave a notte fatta colle nostre due pompe in piena azione a scaricare la grande quantità di acqua

At dawn on September 5, the *Heimen-SUCAI* departed Guba Arkhangel'skaja and proceeded northbound towards Mys Nassau. Once again, the motorboat *Laura* was lowered to the sea and used by Albertini and his companions to inspect the shores, finding again “a large marker of stones and wood with a Russian inscription” (M, p. 105). The available quantity of fuel prevented to observe the coasts further north, and the ship began coasting the western shores of the Novaya Zemlya, southbound, taking advantage of a strong wind astern.

Operations in Novaya Zemlya continued until September 22. A summary of those days is given by Albertini in his memoir.

Fantastic scenes, to whose beauty we shall never grow accustomed; a different air, a different sun, a different water. Thus for all twenty days of this wandering life in Novaya Zemlya, from bay to bay, from one lee to the next, or rummaging among the ruined walls of abandoned Samoyed huts, admiration, wonder, and rapture would be our inseparable companions (M, p. 104)⁹³

che le onde trasversali ci fecero imbarcare».

93 «Scene fantastiche, alla cui bellezza non ci abitueremo mai; aria diversa, sole diverso, acqua diversa. Così per tutti i venti giorni di questa vita randagia della Novaya Zemlya, di baia in baia, di ridosso in ridosso, o a rovistare fra muti relitti samoiedi, l'ammirazione, lo stupore, l'estasi ci saran compagni inseparabili».



Fig. 41. Novaya Zemlya, from Pankratevi Islands to Mashigina Bay in a section from British Admiralty (1925b)

Source: OldMaps Online; Bing Satellite; GIS reprocessing: GREAL



Fig. 42. Large scale section from the British Admiralty map (1925b), covering the area of the Gorbovi Islands

Source: OldMaps Online; Bing Satellite; GIS reprocessing: GREAL

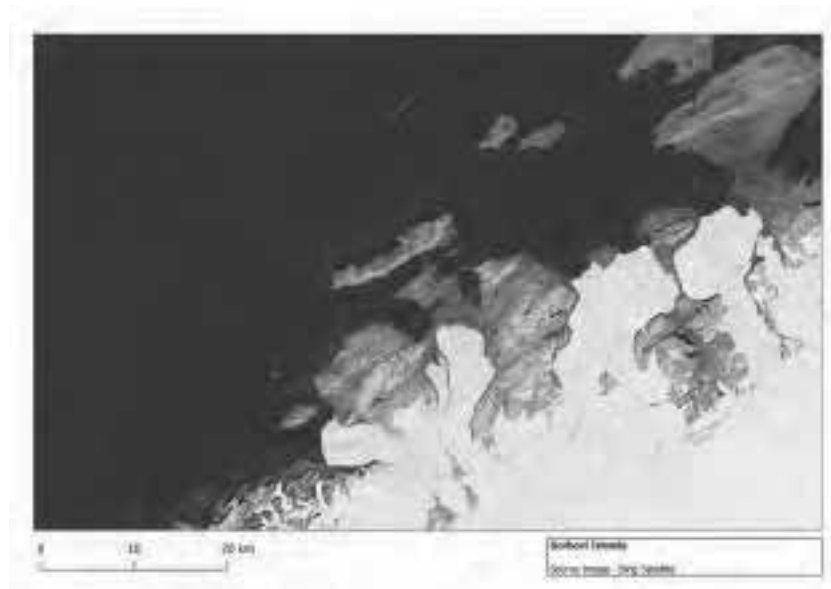


Fig. 43. The same area in a satellite view. Compared with the previous figure, it clarifies the approximate rendering of lands even on the best-standard nautical maps for Arctic use in 1929

Source: Bing Satellite; GIS reprocessing: GREAL



Fig. 44. Novaya Zemlya, from Mashigina Bay to C. Sukhoi Nos, in a section from British Admiralty (1925b)

Source: OldMaps Online; Bing Satellite; GIS reprocessing: GREAL



Fig. 45. Novaya Zemlya, from C. Sukhoi Nos to Moller Bay, in a section from British Admiralty (1925b)

Source: OldMaps Online; Bing Satellite; GIS reprocessing: GREAL

During these days, the crew began to experience again significant changes in day-night light conditions, given the progression towards astronomical winter. Albertini describes in several passages the feeling associated with this. It “gives back to us the emotions of the dawns and the sunsets, to which we were no longer accustomed, which chase one another (...) and astonish us for their superb wonder” (LB, f. 46v)⁹⁴.

At dawn on September 10, the *Heimen* was abeam Nordenskjold Bay (Zaliv Nordenshel'da, Залив Норденшельда) but conditions were not adequate for entrance, so the ship continued on and at 16h GMT was able to enter Maschigina Bay (Guba Mashigina, Губа Машигина). After having anchored at a provisional position, the launch fitted with the outboard engine was released and proceeded to sound the area in order to find a better location for a more stable anchoring, deeper into the bay. The ship stayed anchored in the bay throughout the day and night.

Observations did not take place in the morning, due to the strong

⁹⁴ «Ciò ci ridà le emozioni delle albe e dei tramonti, a cui non eravamo più abituati, che si rincorrono ed incalzano e ci stupiscono per la loro superba meraviglia».

wind. In the afternoon, Albertini took the launch fitted with the outboard engine and reached “the coast notwithstanding the strong breakers, in proximity to the Cape delimiting to the South the Bay” (LB, f. 48v)⁹⁵. Albertini, Urbano and Bonola made an excursion on land in the interior of the peninsula.

On September 12 the *Heimen-SUCAI* must remain in place due to wind and heavy snow. The weather cleared during the night but worsened again in the morning of September 13. Albertini gave up the idea of a thorough exploration of the bay. In the afternoon, he ordered the ship to depart, heading to «*Sulmenewa Bay*» (either the Northern or the Southern Guba Sul'meneva, i.e. Guba Severnaya Sul'meneva, Губа Северная Сульменева and Guba Yuzhnaya Sul'meneva, Губа Южная Сульменева, respectively). Navigation was uneventful and the *Heimen* anchored there at 20h GMT. During the night the crew saw an aurora borealis (LB, f. 49v), but weather worsened again in the morning of September 14. In the afternoon, however, a land team went ashore and trekked up to cape «*Prokofewa*» (Мыс Прокофьева, Mys Prokof'yeva), where a cairn and expended shell casings were found, and expedition tags were left.

On September 15, the motorboat was deployed in the attempt of exploring the northern coast of the bay and the “northern cape” (LB, f. 50v) Mys Stepovogo, Мыс Степового. The rough sea, however, prevented any landing attempt and the *Laura* returned back to the *Heimen-SUCAI* after five hours.

At dawn on September 16, the ship left. She travelled towards cape «*Sukoi*» (Mys Sukhoy Nos, Мыс Сухой Нос), in fog and strong wind. While proceeding in fog at 16 GMT at cruising speed (≈ 6 knots) the *Heimen-SUCAI* struck the seafloor and was turned immediately west, away from the shore, intensifying sounding procedures. In the area of the incident, water depth was then measured and found a mere “two fathoms” i.e. a 3.66 meters depth, just over the maximum draft of the *Heimen*. Fortunately, by this time into the expedition, the ship had largely burnt her fuel reserves, increasing her buoyancy and reducing her draft.

Since effective search operation during the night was no longer possible, the ship must find safe holding positions, far from the coast. Correct positioning was particularly necessary because the fuel reserves were low and it was mandatory to stop the engine when not underway. In order to

⁹⁵ «*L a costa non ostante i forti frangenti, a ridosso del Capo delimitante a Sud la Baia*».

make safe distance, that day the *Heimen* sailed for one hour outbound the coast before shutting down.

On September 17, Albertini would try and enter one of the two bays lying north and south of Mys Sukhoy Nos, i.e. Guba Melkaya (Губа Мелкая) and Guba Mityushikha (Губа Митюшиха), respectively. He was however warned by Jakobsen that such an attempt would be hazardous for the safety of the ship, particularly considering that weather was no way improving: rough sea, fog and wind persisted.

Throughout September 18 the *Heimen* was still stuck in adverse conditions and could not continue search.

After having repositioned in the open sea for the night, in the morning of September 19 the ship found herself drifted towards the coast. In the afternoon the crew was able to visually recognize «*Mollere Bay*» (Moller Bay), but the weather and the shallow waters discouraged the crew from approaching «*Karmakul*» (Malye Karmakuly). It was the primary and virtually only permanent settlement on Novaya Zemlya. At that time, a small, isolated Soviet polar outpost located on the southwestern coast of Yuzhny Island, at approximately Lat. 72°22'N and Long. 52°43'E. Situated along the Barents Sea in a small fjord-like bay with surrounding tundra, low hills, and proximity to glaciers, its geography provided a relatively sheltered harbor for summer shipping despite the severe Arctic climate, characterized by long polar nights, frequent strong winds, permafrost, sparse vegetation, and temperatures averaging around -5.7°C annually (with extremes from -44°C in winter to +24°C in rare summer highs), as recorded at the long-operating meteorological station (Matzko, 1993, pp. 6-7).

Established in 1870 by the Russian Empire as the first permanent settlement on the archipelago, Malye Karmakuly served as the administrative capital of Novaya Zemlya until 1924, when administrative functions began shifting southward (fully to Belush'ya Guba, Белушья Губа, later in the 1930s). It originated from resettlement efforts in the 1870s, when several Nenets families were relocated from the mainland to assert Russian sovereignty and to support colonization, hunting, and exploration (Brovina and Philippova, 2019, p. 2). By the 1920s, under Soviet administration, the site had evolved into a key polar meteorological and scientific station, established during the First International Polar Year (1882-1883) (Lüdecke, 2004) and maintained continuously thereafter, contributing to Arctic observations amid broader Soviet efforts to explore and claim northern ter-

ritories in the interwar period. The settlement featured rudimentary wooden buildings, including barracks, a church (from earlier times), warehouses, and facilities for the meteorological station, with a small pier facilitating seasonal access by icebreaker or ship for supplies and personnel rotation; no significant mining or industrial activity existed, unlike Svalbard.

Demographically, the population of Malye Karmakuly – and thus Novaya Zemlya as a whole – in the late 1920s remained very small, likely around 50-100 residents at most during overwintering periods, with higher summer numbers from seasonal visitors or expeditions. Historical records indicate the archipelago's total population was about 108 in 1911, growing modestly in the 1920s due to increased Soviet scientific and administrative presence, but still under 500 by the late decade. Population was predominantly Russian (including scientists, meteorologists, support staff, and occasional hunters or trappers), with a significant Nenets (indigenous) component – about 50-400 Nenets in small villages across the islands from the 1870s to the 1950s – subsisting on fishing, sealing, reindeer herding, and polar bear hunting. In the 1920s, Nenets families still formed a notable part of the community at Malye Karmakuly, though the settlement increasingly included Russian components (Serebrianny, 1996). In the night between September 20 and September 21, in persistent fog, a very strong wind blew from the South-West, pushing the *Heimen-SUCAI* again towards the shores. To avoid a dangerous drift, Albertini ordered the engine started during the night and head against the wind. On September 20 the Commander gave up his intention to visit the Samoyed settlement at Karmakul and concluded that fuel reserves were no longer sufficient to continue the operation.

The ship was therefore ordered back to continental Norway at 9 GMT on September 20, 1929. She turned away from Zaliv Mollera and raised her sail to begin the long crossing without engine power in order to save fuel. Heading was set to West-South-West.

Throughout the day and the subsequent night navigation took place on rough sea.

On September 22, presumably at 9 GMT, Albertini estimated a total of 140 NM covered in 24 hours (at 5.6 knots average) and a position at Lat 72°10' N, Long 44°E.

Another 140 miles were covered on September 23, to an estimated position of Lat. 71°50'N, Long 36°30'E at 9 GMT. Weather improved

and the sea calmed. Sunshine appeared and the sky remained clear in the night as well.

At dawn on September 24 the *Heimen-SUCAI* was in sight of continental Norway's Nordkapp and passed it uneventfully. During the night, nevertheless, a rapid degradation of weather ended up with a windstorm – Albertini defines it a “hurricane” (LB, f. 54v) – with speeds up to 1,400 meters/minute, i.e. 84 km/h and extreme roll, pitch and yaw. Albertini notes that the bow lamp and the radio aerial were carried off by the wind (LB, f. 54v). Bonola reports also the loss of a lifeboat and much other material (C, p. 45).

When calm returned, in the morning of September 25, the ship entered the fjords and navigation became uneventful for a while, leaving time and quiet to prepare arrival and for post-expedition reflections. “Today general cleaning onboard, on the deck and below deck” (LB, f. 54v). Yet, at 22h that night, another heavy storm with winds up to 1,200 meters / minute (72 km/h) forced the crew to search for a lee under a high cliff, that was approached by sounding hastily and tentatively.

Finally, at 16 on September 26, the journey was over. *Heimen-SUCAI* called in Tromsø, her own port of registration, welcomed by a crowd of onlookers on the pier. The Norwegian crew rested for a few days in the Arctic city, taking some well deserved time with their families and celebrating the end of the challenging five-month expedition.

For logistical reasons, the *Heimen-SUCAI* must make a final trip to Bergen; she departed Tromsø on September 30 at 16.30, proceeding uneventfully in the fjords. She finally arrived in Bergen at 6.15 on October 5, about 3 hours, 45 minutes ahead of schedule.

The last entry made by Albertini in the logbook (LB, f. 56v) is quite difficult to read, but it annotates that, given the early arrival, the *Heimen-SUCAI*, instead of mooring at the dock, proceeded towards the refuelling station deeper in the fjord to return the large number of barrels that had been taken on board to store fuel oil during the voyage.



*Fig. 46. Skipper Lars Jakobsen (centre) surrounded by Norwegian crew members during a break
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»*



Fig. 47. The Heimen-SUCAI cruising on sail
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Part II

The Logbook

Logbook. Manuscript volume, in folio, 38 × 25 cm, consisting of 54 papers (108 pages) written in dark ink, followed by 48 blank papers (36 × 24 cm). Contemporary binding in half leather and wooden boards, spine with four raised bands and gilt title and date, additional titles on the inside of the front cover on a parchment sheet with a decorative metal frame. On the recto of the final paper, a paper label from the “Ditta Raimondi e Pettinaroli”. [In] perfect condition¹.

THE LOGBOOK AS A SOURCE

The *Heimen-SUCAI* enterprise generated, inevitably, a wide and heterogeneous body of multimedia materials. Reports, notes, photographs, films, correspondence, telegrams, and much more accompanied setups, execution and aftermath of the voyage; some examples of these products are included and/or discussed in the appendixes to this volume. Within this documentary corpus, the *Libro di Bordo* – literally “on board logbook” – occupies a specific and somewhat ambiguous position. It is formally identified as the expedition’s logbook, yet it should not be confused with a mere ship’s nautical logbook, which was – by the way – usually the responsibility of the vessel’s skipper. The document under consideration was written instead by Gianni Albertini as Commander and reflects his personal responsibility for the whole voyage and, at the same time, his direct, embodied experience of it. As such, it appears as a hybrid document, oscillating between the systematic recording of events and a more subjective register in which lived feelings and sensations emerge. For this reason, in examining and discussing the manuscript, we have deliberately chosen to use both the terms “logbook” and “diary”, in order to highlight these two distinct yet intermingled dimensions.

In the panorama of sea travel and exploration writing, between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the ship’s log – or logbook – in general represents a particularly distinctive type of source. It often occupies an intermediate nature, partly as a technical document and partly as a cultural

¹ Note from Libreria Antiquaria Mediolanum, via del Carmine 1, Milano, reporting on the material condition of the *Libro di Bordo*. Document received by Giovanna Albertini D’Urso and forwarded to the authors on October 27, 2025. Original Italian «Volume manoscritto in folio di 38 x 25 cm composto da 54 carte (108 pagine) manoscritte in inchiostro bruno, seguite da 48 carte bianche (36 x 24 cm). Legatura coeva in mezza pelle ed assicelle, dorso a 4 nervi con titolo e data in oro, altri titoli all’interno del piatto anteriore su foglio di pergamena con cornice metallica decorativa. Al recto dell’ultima carta etichetta cartacea della “Ditta Raimondi e Pettinaroli”. Perfetta conservazione».

narrative. This has been highlighted by maritime historiography, which has described ship's journals as documents situated between institutional record-keeping and personal testimony. They originally arose for operational needs, as a record intended to preserve information about routes, coordinates, meteorological observations and other such data, in accordance with institutional and regulatory requirements imposed on maritime command (Stiaccini, 1995, p. 2). However, they also frequently became a medium for the representation of knowledge and self (Sorenson, n.d.), in which the author's subjective presence is deeply embedded. The traveller's experience is translated into writing and the very act of writing becomes an integral part of the journey itself.

This dual value has been widely recognized in numerous studies which, although originating in different fields, have chosen logbooks as primary sources. Ships' journals proved to be a form of evidence capable of revealing far-from-obvious information, supplementing the more immediately identifiable technical and event-based data for which they were usually meant. The practical and routine necessity of their compilation, the continuity and regularity of entries, and the blending of technical vocabulary with personal reflection endow these documents with the function of an "organised memory" of command, as captains also used them to account for decisions and to provide documentary evidence of their conduct (Stiaccini, 1995, p. 3).

This is obvious when the captain conceived the diary merely as a formal requirement, but it stands too, and even more, when a personal, almost narrative, intention was present.

Because of this complexity, logbooks have proved to be valuable sources for multiple types of research, extending beyond the domain of historical voyages. Brohan *et al.* (2009), for instance, used logbooks as an important basis for reconstructing climatic and environmental history. The authors analysed, among others, reports by William Scoresby, a whaling captain with a scientific education who undertook several voyages to the Fram Strait. On the one hand, his records provided pre-1850 climatic information, including air and sea-surface temperature and the presence of ice; on the other hand, they offered insight into the human experience of studying natural phenomena. In such cases, quantitative observation and qualitative description do not constitute separate layers of the text: they coexist as complementary ways of producing knowledge. Edinburgh

and Day (2016), on the same logic, analysed logbooks by polar explorers to investigate Antarctic summer sea ice condition between 1897 and 1917, that were then compared with contemporary satellite observations. In this sense, logbooks combine instrumental data with subjective perception, bridging empirical measurement and experiential knowledge within a single narrative framework.

The journals produced during the expeditions of Roald Amundsen (Amundsen, 1912), Robert Falcon Scott (Scott, 1914), and Ernest Shackleton (Shackleton, 1919) have been widely examined by historiography as complex writings informed by scientific observation, institutional practices and individual experience. In our own research we found this feature also in the technical and, at the same time, personal accounts from the Swedish 1897 Arctic balloon expedition, led by August Andrée (Andrée *et al.*, 1931).

All the examples above originated in the daily routine of logbook keeping and retained many of its formal characteristics, including regular entries, systematic attention to environmental status, and the need to document decisions taken. At the same time, they progressively incorporated narrative elements connected to self-representation, emotional response, and the reading of events, reflecting both the lived experience of polar travel and the cultural frameworks of the so-called “heroic age” of exploration (Scott, 1914; Barczewski, 2007; Jones, 2013a, p. 52). Scholars have used them to reconstruct routes, environmental conditions and scientific practices, as well as to analyse leadership, group dynamics and perceptions of the polar environment (Riffenburgh, 2015). Within this tradition, logbooks emerge as key sources for understanding how the exploratory work was conducted and recorded and how experiential knowledge was integrated.

Given the potentially broad interest in the use of and access to these valuable geo-historical sources, their preservation and dissemination are paramount. Today, this aim can be significantly fostered by digitization. In recent years, this process has increasingly been addressed in studies related to archival heritage and digital humanities as a response to the material fragility, limited availability, spatial constraints, and organizational problems that traditionally affect manuscript collections. From this perspective, the production of digital surrogates supports conservation strategies by reducing the handling of delicate originals while simultaneously enabling

wider circulation of their content beyond the boundaries of archives and libraries. Remote access to high-quality digital reproductions significantly broadens the community of potential users and facilitates scholarly work across geographical and institutional limits (Allegrezza, 2011; Guercio, 2013; Korthagen *et al.*, 2019; Rajan and Esmail, 2021; Blanke, 2024; Nistane and Mishra, 2024; Kakembo, 2025).

Several studies have also highlighted the methodological implications of digitising. High-resolution imaging, structured metadata, and searchable digital environments enable new forms of reading, comparing, and interpreting, allowing scholars to correlate textual, visual, and material features of documents in ways that are difficult to achieve through traditional access alone (Ciancio, 2013; Pasqui, 2024). Within this framework, transcription and data structuring play a central role, as they turn handwritten information into organised datasets that can be queried, aggregated, and reused for different purposes (Rothenberg, 1995; Korthagen *et al.*, 2019). Digitisation thus enhances the analytical potential of manuscript sources and contributes to the development of shared and interoperable research infrastructures (Pasqui, 2024; Kakembo, 2025).

With specific reference to ship's logbooks, a significant example is offered by the *Marine Observations of Old Weather* project, which clearly demonstrated the scientific and cultural relevance of large-scale digitisation (Brohan *et al.*, 2009). The project involved the systematic scanning of selected Royal Navy logbooks dating from 1938 to 1947 and preserved at the UK National Archives. More than 267,000 pages were acquired and made available online for research purposes, producing a substantial body of previously inaccessible data (Brohan *et al.*, 2009, p. 8). These materials contributed to the improvement of climatic records for the Second World War period, enhancing the reconstruction of mid-twentieth-century temperature and sea-surface condition patterns.

Beyond its primary focus on climate science, the project also illustrates how the digitisation of logbooks can contribute to creating shared and interoperable knowledge-bases. Once transcribed and published, these documents can be interrogated for purposes beyond the very original aims of the project, potentially extending to the study of mobility, environmental perception and maritime culture. High-resolution imaging preserves key material features of handwriting; transcription helps to understand difficult or fragmentary passages, and metadata ensure a stable connection

between the digital object and its physical source. Through this process, digital reproduction enhances the interpretive value of the manuscript, allowing logbooks to function simultaneously as scientific datasets and as historical-cultural sources.

Another example of the digitisation and online accessibility of a primary historical source can be found in the digital archive of the Scott Polar Research Institute. The digital archive allows users to engage with Scott's diaries through a curated online transcription of the original manuscripts. The entries are organised chronologically and presented as a day-by-day narrative on the Institute's web portal², enabling readers to follow the temporal unfolding of the expedition and its everyday routines. The diary is therefore hypertextually embedded within the structure of the portal: its entries are linked to additional writings and archival images, which situate the source both historically and geographically. This form of digital access prioritises readability, narrative continuity, and public engagement, and offers mediated access to archival materials, benefitting present-day readers.

For the above reasons, it is our belief that the transcription of the Heimen-SUCAI logbook can be regarded as a concrete contribution to research. The project involved the photographic documentation of the manuscript, from which the text was subsequently extracted and made available as part of the present study. Although this initiative does not entail the creation of a dedicated digital platform or database at this stage, it may nonetheless represent a step towards rendering an otherwise difficult and scarcely accessible document readable and usable for scholarly purposes.

The expedition has already been cited or discussed in historical, scientific, and narrative studies (among others, Bonola, 1931; Albertini, 1932; Nobile, 1975; MacKee, 1980; Ferrante, 1985; Bosco and Stone, 2003, p. 304; Kristensen, 2017; Alessandrini, 2019); however, the logbook constitutes a direct source that is made fully available here for the first time. Its transcription introduces a primary documentary layer to historiography that remains – to this day – only partially informed about the events of 1929. With this work, it is our intent to provide researchers with direct engagement with the words, observations, and perceptions recorded during the voyage.

² <https://www.spri.cam.ac.uk/museum/diaries/scottslastexpedition/>.

THE PROCESS OF TRANSCRIPTION AND TRANSLATION

An irregular handwriting

To analyze the *Heimen-SUCAI* logbook from a textual perspective, it is essential to begin with a reflection on its material genesis. The document appears as a dense manuscript, written in an irregular, slanted, at times scribbly, and often discontinuous hand, which has frequently proved to be very difficult to decipher. Such irregularity could be explained by two distinct sets of factors.

The first is physiological: the act of writing was generally performed at sea, sometimes under extreme weather conditions, aboard a ship often described as “dancing”, by a man subjected to freezing cold, physical and mental fatigue, and a profound sense of responsibility. In this perspective, the graphic form becomes an evidence of the moment of its creation: each word conveys the physicality of the gesture and the precariousness of the context.

The second explanation may lie in the private nature of the text, perhaps not directly intended for a public audience but conceived as a personal record of events and emotions. Albertini may have been writing the logbook for himself rather than for others to read in the first place. This hypothesis is supported by comparison to other documents he wrote at that time (for instance, letters or official communications), in which the handwriting appears much more controlled and legible, while still preserving distinctive, particular personal traits.

Such an assumption could reinforce the sense of authenticity and truthfulness of the narrative, transforming the diary into a personal account of an experience recorded in real time. Thus, while the logbook is a direct and indispensable source for reconstructing the events of the expedition, it also serves as a source for understanding the man who wrote it, revealing across its entirety the vivid presence of a living human voice.

From a technical point of view, it holds true that Gianni Albertini's handwriting in the logbook has often posed significant challenges to interpretation and transcription. The irregularity and discontinuity of the script frequently result in words or passages that are only partially legible or entirely obscure when considered out of context. In order to address

these difficulties, the process of understanding was grounded in careful comparison with other texts written by the same author. In particular, Gianni's memoir of the expedition published in 1932 proved to be an essential reference, as it allowed several unclear terms, expressions, or place names to be identified through parallel formulations or recurring narrative patterns. This comparative approach often made it possible to preserve the semantic integrity of the text, avoiding arbitrary or overly speculative reading.

Nevertheless, not all problematic passages could be resolved through external sources. In such cases, the transcription necessarily involved an educated compromise between the logical coherence of the sentence and the graphical similarity of the handwritten forms. When this is the case the "interpreted" word is written down between chevrons "<...>". This choice was guided by the intention to remain as faithful as possible to the material evidence of the manuscript, while at the same time producing a readable text. Whenever this balance could not be achieved with sufficient certainty, and the risk of misinterpretation appeared too high, the passage was left untranscribed and marked as "[illegible]". Fortunately, these cases were few, and their explicit indication reflects a deliberate editorial choice aimed at acknowledging the difficulties of manuscript reading without forcing the text into speculative solutions. We have decided to simply correct obvious orthographical errors, caused by hurried or inattentive writing; in these cases there is no specific marking in the transcript. Deletions have been retained; whenever the underlying word could be confidently read, it has been transcribed and shown as struck through. Line breaks that interrupt a word have also been preserved and indicated by an equals sign (=).

Finally, it is important to emphasise that the transcription was conceived also as a collective endeavour. Alongside the authors' analysis, the process benefited from the direct involvement of Albertini's daughter, Ms. Giovanna Albertini D'Urso, and granddaughter, Ms. Cecilia Risso, who kindly provided essential support in deciphering particularly difficult passages. We are deeply grateful for their constant, patient, and generous support, without which this work would not have been possible in its present form.

Translating a 1929 logbook

The English translation of the logbook should be understood as a particularly complex task. The text was originally written in Italian, in 1929, within a specific historical, cultural, and linguistic context, and is here translated, almost a century later, for a present-day, international reader. This temporal and cultural distance inevitably affects the translation process, which is in itself an interpretive exercise requiring continuous negotiation between fidelity to the source and readability in the target language.

Within this framework, the translation was guided by the intention to remain as close as possible to the original wording. In many cases, this resulted in a deliberately literal rendering, even when this choice produced a less fluent English prose. Such an approach was adopted in order to preserve lexical precision and to avoid the loss of subtle shifts in meaning, which might otherwise occur if stylistic smoothing or excessive adaptation were applied. In a limited number of cases, however, a less strict translation was preferred. When an absolutely literal rendering implied the risk of obfuscating the writer's intended meaning, idiomatic or semantically equivalent expressions in English were used to more effectively convey the nuances of the original text.

Particular attention was also paid to the formal structure of the diary. The transcription retains the original line breaks and layout of the manuscript; accordingly, the English translation was designed to maintain a comparable amount and distribution of text. This approach was intended to respect the rhythm of the writing and the relationship between textual form and meaning that characterises the original document. At the same time, preserving a similar textual length was meant to facilitate the parallel reading of the manuscript, its transcript, and its translation, allowing the reader to more easily follow the correspondence between the original and the English passages. Naturally, line breaks interrupting words from the original Italian been omitted, as they were not semantically relevant in English.

This section continues by presenting the reader with the following contents: on the left page, a photographic reproduction of the original manuscript; on the right page, two columns containing, respectively, the transcription of the Italian text (on the left) and the corresponding English translation (on the right).

TRANSCRIPTION AND TRANSLATION



*Fig. 48. Front cover of the «Libro di Bordo»
Source: Albertini family archive*

Nota bene

The «Libro di Bordo» is property of the *Società Storica Lombarda* and is reproduced here with its kind permission.

The first written paper of the manuscript contains on the *verso* (2/v) the following introductory dedication, with no signature:

Transcript	Translation
A Gianni Albertini bene augurando questo libro di bordo è dedicato che raccoglierà nuovi segni dell'amore – della fede – e dell'audacia di nostra gente sulle desolate e gloriose distese dell'Artide	To Gianni Albertini wishing him well this logbook is dedicated, to collect new marks of love – of faith – and of courage of our people on the desolate and glorious expanses of the Arctic
Milano il 29 di aprile 1929 A. VII	Milan April 29, 1929 Year VII

The following four papers contain dedicatory signatures, arranged in a discontinuous layout, by various individuals connected with the preparation of the expedition. The majority appear to belong to mothers or relatives of the missing crew of the *Italia* and of the Italian members of the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition. Other names are not legible or cannot be identified. None of these signatures are transcribed here.

Omnia Fiunt in dies
mitiora

— . — . — .
A. Mid Mamma-
e
a quella
di

Tutti i miei compagni

Transcript	Translation
Omnia Fiunt in dies mitiora	Omnia Fiunt in dies mitiora*
A mia Mamma -	To my Mum -
e a quelle di Tutti i miei compagni	and to those of All my companions
_____	_____

Note: **All things become milder day by day*

Puntato a punt. che
è destinato ad accogliere le
impressioni, le pene o fare
i Teleri del north Wappi
alune e i See d'allo N. pila
che ho radicate nello monte
e che non fatica a tenere,
mi loro particolari, per
me tanto simili esse
sono alle mie stessa
natura. - Per scelte indurto
e Teleri il Dutacco. -

S'io inizio a muovere
il 15 Wappi non è che io
documenti di i giorni che
predecesso, le fatti che ordinati,
i sofferamenti di umidità,
le figure di collaboratori,
gli amici che incontrano
i filistei che osteggiarono.

Transcript	Translation
Premetto a questo libro che è destinato ad accogliere le impressioni, le gioie o pure i dolori del nostro viaggio alcune idee della vigilia che ho <radicate> nella mente e che non fatico a tenere, nei loro particolari, per me tanto simili esse sono alla mia stessa natura.- Poi sarebbe indiscreto e doloroso il distacco.- S'io inizio a scrivere il 15 Maggio non è ch'io dimentichi i giorni che precedettero, le fatiche ostinate, i soffocamenti di sensibilità, le figure dei collaboratori, gli amici che incoraggiarono i filistei che osteggiarono. -	I preface this book which is intended to receive the impressions, the joys or even the pains of our journey with some ideas of the eve that are <rooted> in my mind and that I have no difficulty to keep, in their details, so similar as they are to my very nature.- Then it would be indiscreet and painful to part from them.- If I begin to write on May 15, it does not mean that I forget the days that preceded, the stubborn efforts, the suffocation of sensitivity, the figures of the collaborators, the friends who encouraged the philistines who opposed.-

Nelle azioni terminate
e lasciare una traccia
nella vita di un uomo.
hanno una più maggiore parte
le fondamenta che le
superstrutture.

Ognuno si ripara a
fatica dalle proprie fatiche.
ed è ingrat. che egli fa
un uomo, e dimentichi come
i propri deboli.

Per noi incantevole
offrì la lotta, contro la natura,
che, contro un sovrano,
è condotta con maggiore
accanimento, prevalentemente
da chi più ama la
natura stessa.

L'inizio di queste lotte
non le fure di quell'altro.

Nelle azioni destinate a lasciare una traccia nella vita di un uomo hanno sempre maggiore parte le fondamenta che le soprastrutture.- Ognuno si separa a fatica dalle proprie fatiche. - ed è ingrato chi oblige un uomo a dimenticare i propri dolori. – Per noi incomincia oggi la lotta contro la natura, che, controsenso magnifico, è condotta con maggiore accanimento generalmente da chi più ama la natura stessa. – L'inizio di questa lotta segue la fine di quell'altra	In actions destined to leave a mark in a man's life, the foundations always play a greater role than the superstructures.- Everyone separates with difficulty from their own efforts. – and is ungrateful the one who forces a man to forget his own sorrows. – For us, today begins the struggle against nature, which, as a magnificent contradiction, is generally waged with greater fervour by those who love nature the most. – The beginning of this struggle follows the end of the other
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letta. Inell. he all'anno.
con battuto in patria ~~con~~
cento gli uomini piò ech:
si ed ingrati, maldicenti
e uanni di puerite.
Cent. eni è difficile
ma la spada.

Cent. la natura è
facile rampa la propria
spada ma difficile
enir feriti all' cuore.

Ma val meglio un
mercen di spada ed
un cuore selto, che
cento spada con un
cuore remante.

Compro prima il facies
salto riparandomi da tutto
ciò che preuda.

lotta. Quelli che abbiamo combattuto in patria contro contro gli uomini pidocchio= si ed ingrati, maldicenti e scarni di generosità. Contro essi è difficile usar la spada. Contro la natura è facile romper la propria spada ma difficile esser feriti al cuore.— Ma val meglio un mozzicone di spada ed un cuore saldo, che cento spade con un cuore tremante.— Compirò quindi il faticoso salto separandomi da tutto ciò che precede.-	struggle. Those whom we fought at home against against the petty and ungrateful men, slanderous, and lacking in generosity. Against them it is difficult to use a sword. Against nature it is easy to break one's sword but difficult to be wounded at the heart. — But it is better a stump of a sword and a steady heart, than a hundred swords with a trembling heart. — I will therefore take the arduous leap, separating myself from all that precedes. -
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Alla 20 h. meere del 15
facciam. ciò che non avam.
ma creduto di fare in
quel giorno. Partiam.

Temp. inclemente -
Pioggia di notte. Pochi minuti
prima di dar ordine a
Lutken di mettere in
moto le macchine

accampammo a terra ma
manna che fu. all'ultimo
momento io rimasi nel
mio cancrio.

D. Ne miei pensieri con
finire a questo momento.

Alm. - bad. quanto
persone in squammi che
ci accamparono.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 15. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 15 MAY 1929
Alla 20 h. precisa del 15 facciamo ciò che non avremmo mai creduto di fare in quel giorno. – Partiamo. – Tempo inclemente – Pioggia dirotta. Pochi minuti prima di dar ordine a Jakobsen di mettere in moto le macchine accompagnò a terra mia mamma che fino all'ultimo momento era rimasta nel mio camerino. Da tre mesi pensavo con terrore a questo momento. ---- Abbiamo a bordo <quattro> persone in soprannumero che ci accompagnano.	At exactly 20 h. on the 15 we do what we would never have believed we would on that day. – We depart. – Inclement weather – Torrential rain. A few minutes before giving Jakobsen the order to startup the engines I accompany ashore my mum who until the very last moment had stayed in my cabin. For three months I had thought with terror of this moment. ---- We have on board four persons in excess who are accompanying us.

fino a Kristian Sundet. Essi sono Aponte Freddi Restivo e uno studente del [...illegibile ...]. Per poco non si aggiunge anche Doglio della Gazzetta del Popolo che all'ultimo momento fu trovato nascosto nella stivetta di poppa. – È di guardia Urbano fino a mezzanotte. Si è stabilito nei giorni scorsi che Zanetti – Urbano – Peroni e Bonola si alternino con turni di guardia di 12 ore ciascuno. – La navigazione tra i fiordi è ormai per me primizia già gustata. Osservo ciò che mi circonda con tristezza non per ciò che vedo ma per ciò che penso. – Al passare lento degli anni all'incallire costante dello Spirito. -	To Kristian Sundet. They are Aponte Freddi Restivo and a Student of [...unreadable ...]. Doglio from <i>La Gazzetta del Popolo</i> almost joined as well who at the last moment was found hidden in the stern locker. – Urbano is on watch until midnight. It was established in the past days that Zanetti – Urbano – Peroni and Bonola will alternate in 12-hour watch shifts each. – Navigation in the fiords is by now for me a novelty already tasted. I observe what surrounds me with sadness not for what I see but for what I think. – Of the slow passing of the years of the constant hardening of the Spirit. -
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I nostri poveri ospiti sono allo
meglio nutriti: nello stesso
salotto da pranzo.

Il sonno fu preceduto
da un pranzo generoso in
cui il nostro fu 2.
rivolto solo all'attività
d'arte culinaria.



Fui vegliando all. mattino
da 2 anelli che mi portò
una lettera di mia mamma
in cui stava scritto tutto
quanto essa non mi disse
a voce prima di partire
per paura di dare troppo
piangere.

Vi è del sale nell'aria.

La mattina è movimentata
per l'uscita dei cani dalle
loro cane. Tutti o dieci
grano per la coperta prima
l'ubano e poi alcuni.

I nostri poveri ospiti sono alla meglio sistemati nella nostra saletta da pranzo. Il sonno fu preceduto da un pranzo generoso in cui il nostro Guedoz .- rivelò doti filtratissime d'arte culinaria.-	Our poor guests are as best as possible settled in our little dining room. Sleep was preceded by a generous lunch in which our Guedoz .- revealed most refined talents in the culinary art.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 16. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 16 MAY 1929
Fui svegliato alla mattina da Zanetti che mi portò una lettera di mia mamma in cui stava scritto tutto quanto essa non mi disse a voce prima di partire per paura di dover troppo piangere.- Vi è del sale nell'aria. La mattina è movimentata per l'uscita dei cani dalle loro casse. Tutti e dieci girano per la coperta prima titubanti e poi sicuri.	I was woken in the morning by Zanetti who brought me a letter from my mother in which everything was written that she did not tell me verbally before leaving for fear of having to cry too much.- There is salt in the air. The morning is busy due to the dogs coming out of their crates. All ten of them go around the deck at first hesitant and then confident.

Li incantano a maffa
tan h. o. l. i. p. i. m. i. o. s. i. e. l. i.
p. i. m. i. a. n. n. i. c. i. e. l. i. c. a. r. a. t. t. e. r. i. s. t. i.
d. o. i. s. i. n. g. o. l. i. c. a. r. a. t. t. e. r. i. s. t. i.
D. o. i. s. i. n. g. o. l. i. c. a. r. a. t. t. e. r. i. s. t. i.
p. i. u. f. u. l. v. o. e. s. s. o. i. l. p. i. m. o.
h. e. m. i. a. c. c. e. s. s. o. l. e. m. a.
a. n. n. i. c. i. n. i. o.

Il p. i. u. e. n. e. r. g. i. c. o. i. l. p. i. u.
p. o. t. e. n. t. e. q. u. e. l. l. i. h. e.
i. n. e. n. t. e. p. i. u. r. e. p. e. t. t. o. a.
c. a. m. p. o. p. o. l. i. l. i. c. h. i. a. n. n. i. o.
"M. u. s. s. i. n. g. o. l. i. c. a. r. a. t. t. e. r. i. s. t. i."

La p. i. n. e. r. a. l. e. f. e. m. m. a
"G. i. t. i. n. g. o. l. i. c. a. r. a. t. t. e. r. i. s. t. i."

Il f. a. r. t. e. b. e. n. e. l. o. d. e. l. l. o. m. a. r. e.
c. i. f. a. m. o. t. a. n. e. d. i. v. e. n. i. i. n. e. a. n. n. i. c. i. n. i. o.
h. e. o. n. i. l. l. a. r. i. e. n. i. d. a. n. t. e.
a. l. M. a. t. e. r. D. e. l. i. n. S. u. d. a. n. o.
p. a. r. i. n. o. i. e. a. P. u. g. l. i. e. r. e. p. u.
i. f. l. a. m. m. a. n. t. i. d. e. l. l. e. m. a. r. c. h. e.
e. s. t. i. t. u. t. t. e. i. l. p. a. n. o.

Si incominciano a manifestare tra loro i primi odi e le prime amicizie e le caratteristiche dei singoli caratteri.- Do il nome "Lis", al più fulvo; esso è il primo che mi accordò la sua amicizia. Il più energico, il più prepotente, quello che incute più rispetto ai compagni lo chiamiamo "Muss",.- La <piccola> femmina "Girl",.- _____ Il forte tremolio della nave ci fa notare diversi inconvenienti. Le oscillazioni dovute al Motore Bolinder danno gravi noie a Pugliese per i filamenti delle sue valvole.- Egli tutto il Giorno	They begin to show among themselves the first hatreds and the first friendships and the characteristics of the individual characters.- I give the name "Lis" to the tawniest; he is the first who granted me his friendship. The most energetic, the most overbearing, the one who inspires most respect in the companions we call him "Muss".-. The little female "Girl".- _____ The strong trembling of the ship makes us notice various inconveniences. The oscillations caused by the Bolinder Engine give serious trouble to Pugliese for the filaments of his valves.- He the whole day
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e la notte. Cava per
tentare di sospendere con
molle la nostra stanzina.

Pure Urban. vede:
nei stumenti meteorolo-
gici ballare nello loro
rete ed è chilo. pato a
diminuzione gli agli
degli apparecchi scriventi.
ed a legare gli stumenti.

Al pan di zucchero.
fiori dei fiori per un paio
d'ore e la nostra nave con
grande entusiasmo marino
ci a ballare vivacemente.

Ciò ci dà modo di
notare le variazioni Seti
marinai che si ne tutti.

L. 80 % . —

Alla nostra notte stanzina
cammina con Nani in
modo perfetto.

e la notte lavora per tentare di sospendere con molle la sua stazione. – Pure Urbano vede i suoi strumenti metereo= logici ballare nella loro sede ed è obbligato a disinnestare gli aghi degli apparecchi scriventi ed a legare gli strumenti. – Nel pomeriggio usciamo fuori dai fiordi per un paio d'ore e la nostra nave con grande entusiasmo incomin= cia a ballare vivacemente. Ciò ci da modo di notare le scarse doti marinaresche di noi tutti.- L'80%. ---- Alla sera la nostra Stazione comunica con Roma in modo perfetto.	and during the night he works trying to suspend with springs his station. – Urbano too sees his meteorological instruments shaking in their place and he is forced to disconnect the needles of the recording devices and to tie down the instruments. – In the afternoon we exit the fjords for a couple of hours and our ship with great enthusiasm begins to dance lively. This gives us a way to notice the poor seafaring skills of us all. – The 80%. – In the evening our Station communicates with Rome in a perfect manner.
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Petani, con i suoi diversi
telefoni. Poi mi sono di-
S. M. U. M. e con me del
Puri Bute del Consiglio Nazionale.



Alla mia entranza
nel porto di Kuntzevskij.

Vi è una penombra
di remi alla marea che
rende evanescenti le luci
dei casolari sulle rive.

Con una canoa partiamo
e teniamo i nostri quattro
ospiti e subito partiamo,
con un poco di Kuntzevskij
nell'animo per continuare
l'esperienza; e nelle acque
morte, nella penombra,
le bandiere tese nel vento
iniziano il viaggio.

Una giornata lunga e vana
protege il nostro indolente

Potemmo così ricevere diversi telegrammi tra cui uno di S. M. il Re ed uno del Presidente del Consiglio Norvegese.	We were thus able to receive several telegrams including one from H.M. the King and from the Norwegian Prime Minister.
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 17. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 17 MAY 1929
Alla una entriamo nel fiordo di Kristiansundet.- Vi è una penombra di semialba nordica che rende evanescenti le luci dei casolari sulle rive. – Con una lancia portiamo a terra i nostri quattro ospiti e subito partiamo con un poco di tristezza nell'animo per questa nuova separazione; e nelle acque morte, nella penombra, la bandiera tesa nel vento iniziamo il viaggio. – Una giornata limpida e ventosa protesse il nostro indolente	At one o'clock we enter the Kristiansundet fjord. – There is a half-light of Northern first dawn that makes evanescent the lights of the cottages on the shores. – With a launch we bring our four guests ashore and we depart right away with a bit of sadness in our souls for this new separation; and in the dead waters, in the half-light, with the flag taut in the wind we begin the journey. – A clear and windy day protected our indolent

viaggio Rai per di
 lentamente la nostra vita
 di barto. in nome della - Alhian.
 frate le ore di part. alle 9.30 alle
 13- alle 17- alle 21. - e frate 2 in
 man. che un po' l'altitudine
 delle fiducia riparte in lui.
 staser. le Harone
 Radio finiano e fu pienamente - 5
 il buon P. gli in Nassini re
 per 500 parole - Nicovano
 R. gli altri Ple parano
 un. di S. Larkite - 5 un.
 di J.E. Balbo - Bonab. che
 la notte versa in di guardia
 dormi sapientemente.
 Sul fronte delle parate
 rian. al Rovers. delle
 mole Vigten.



All. un. è messo.
 nam. in gran parte
 ancora sugli. - Vi è chiaro
 ancora e più. - Una gran de
 luna d'argento si manifesta

viaggio tra i fiordi.- Lentamente la nostra vita di bordo si normalizza – Abbiamo fissato le ore dei pasti alle 9.30 alle 13 – alle 17 – alle 21.- e Guedoz si mantiene sempre all'altezza della fiducia riposta in lui. – Stasera la Stazione Radio funzionò egregiamente ed il buon Pugliese trasmise ben 500 parole - Ricevemmo tra gli altri telegrammi uno di S. Santi- tà ed uno di S.E Balbo. – Bonola che la notte scorsa era di guardia dormì saporitamente. – Sul finire della giornata siamo al traverso delle isole Vigten. -	Journey through the fjords.- Slowly our life on board is normalizing – We have set meal times at 9.30 at 13 – at 17 – at 21.- and Guedoz keeps up to the trust placed in him. – Tonight the Radio Station worked excellently and good Pugliese transmitted a full 500 words - We received among other telegrams one from H. Holiness and one from H.E Balbo. – Bonola who was on watch last night slept soundly. – By the end of the day we are abeam of the Vigten islands.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 18. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 18 MAY 1929
Alla una e mezzo siamo in gran parte ancora svegli. – Vi è chiaro ancora e già. – Una grande luna d'argento ci meraviglia -	At half past one most of us are still awake. – It is bright still and already. – A large silver moon astonishes us -

fin per d. le acque con tutte
frati musicali le scoglie
radenti. - nuda e cupa -
exen frati dall'acqua
morta come per un
funerario d. incensurabile
le indolente; la benedice
e per le incensurabile frati
a rifarsi.
Perché le meraviglie
del cennatino o via alla e
flamante e battente in
coperto frati e tardare,
solo tardi verso mezzogiorno,
ricompariranno una alle
volte. Le mattine e
luminosissime e la tempera-
re rimane più o meno
Opura. Si nei regni
frati il suo lavoro. - Pagine
offi frati alle pure celle
piccole stazioni portati li
con il riposo libero.
Barola sopra un tempo

tingendo le acque con tinte quasi musicali. – Le scogliere radenti – nere e cupe – escono fuori dall'acqua morta come per un fenomeno di incommensurabi= le indolenza; la bandiera a prua incomincia già a sfilarsi. – Poiché le meraviglie del connubio tra alba e tramonto ci trattennero in coperta fino a tarda ora, solo tardi verso mezzogiorno ricompriamo uno alla volta. – La mattina è luminosissima e la temperatu= ra incomincia già a scendere. Ognuno di noi segue già il suo lavoro. – Pugliese oggi fu alle prese colle piccole stazioni portatili con al seguito Urbano. – Bonola dopo un vano	colouring the waters with almost musical shades. – The sheer cliffs – black and sombre – rise from the dead water as if for a phenomenon of incommensurable indolence; the flag at the bow already starts to unravel. – Since the wonders of the union between sunrise and sunset have kept us on deck until late, only late around noon we reappear one by one. – The morning is very bright and the temperature is already dropping. Each of us is already following his own work. – Pugliese today was busy with the small portable stations, accompanied by Urbano.- Bonola after a vain
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Tentat. v. di prendere all'anno
alcuni fattoriani preferisco di buon
e d'appuntare la bar di via. -

Personi sono cecchi e fare ricerca
ta dalla nostra salute di
furo, e bello valle fet. prof.
furo e che peba le patate. -

Lo approfittai del sole
limpido per dare un occhio
al sentante e procedere alla
sua rettifica. - Oggi alle 15
passiamo il 66° 33 e tale
event. fort. piam. con Misty
e maree e glaci. -

I cani sono sempre la mia
prediletta compagnia. Lo studiare
i loro odi e le loro amicizie
è cose altamente interessante.

Girl se la fa con tutti.
ed è rispettata anche dai
più cattivi. Riusci ad entrare
in amicizia coi due giovani
maculati. -

tentativo di prendere all'amo alcuni gabbiani preferisce dedicarsi ad aggiustare la bandiera.- Peroni sonnecchia forse sicura= to dalla nostra salute di ferro, e Della Valle fotografa Guedoz che pela le patate. – Io approfittai del sole limpido per dare un occhio al sestante e procedere alla sua rettifica. – Oggi alle 15 passammo il 66° 33 e tale evento festeggiammo con Wisky e marrones glacé.- I cani sono sempre la mia prediletta occupazione. Lo studiare i loro odi e le loro amicizie è cosa altamente interessante. Girl se la fa con tutti ed è rispettata anche dai più cattivi. Riuscì ad entrare in amicizia coi due giovani maculati.-	attempt to hook some seagulls prefers to dedicate himself to fixing the flag.- Peroni dozes off perhaps reassured by our iron health, and Della Valle photographs Guedoz who peels potatoes. – I took advantage of the clear sun to give a look at the sextant and proceed to its adjustment. – Today at 15 we passed the 66° 33 and such event we celebrated with Whiskey and marrones glacé.- The dogs are always my favourite occupation. Studying their hates and their friendships is a highly interesting thing. Girl gets involved with all and is respected even by the nastiest ones. She succeeded to befriend the two young spotted ones.-
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Eri sano huff in in - Ham,
mo spardo spenito e
sentate e stem. sempre
anione - Si assomigliano
in modo in pensiero,

Puflire stare in
risci e con un cane con
S. Paolo -

Alle 24 siamo in
pieno Vest Fies -

A perente i prof.
semi delle Hofoten spiccano
in un verso verso S. Paolo
to - Le acque calde e
di gusto per far 5, non
ortente del intate Sam.
una skana sensazione di
spazio, di grandite, di
antico.



Fu una giornata veramente
primaverile passata negli ozii
e nelle letture -

Lo sciato in coperta

Essi sono buffissimi – Hanno uno sguardo spaurito e scrutatore e stanno sempre assieme.- Si assomigliano in modo impressionante. Pugliese stasera non riuscì a comunicare con S. Paolo.- Alle 24 siamo in pieno Vest Fiord.- A ponente i profili scuri delle Lofoten spiccano su un rosso vivo di tramonto.- Le acque calme di questo gran fiordo non ostante delimitate danno una strana sensazione di spazio, di grandiosità, di antico.	They are very funny – They have a timid and observant look and are always together.- They resemble each other in an astonishing way. Pugliese tonight did not manage to communicate with S. Paolo.- At 24, we are in deep in Vest Fjord.- To the west, the dark outlines of the Lofoten stand out against a deep red sunset.- The calm waters of this great fjord, though enclosed, give a strange feeling of space, grandeur, antiquity.
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 19. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 19 MAY 1929
Fu una giornata pienamente primaverile passata negli ozi e nella lettura.- Io sdraiato in coperta	It was a fully spring-like day spent in leisure and in reading.- I lying on the deck

alternai le piazze del sale col
calcolo di passaggio al mare sia
no di sole. -

Zanetti: oimè presente alle
molte cose della nostra casa,
Pugliese venne in afflittico
per la messa e punto della
piccola stanzina portatile,
Seminanti: i due Dottori.

Alle 19 siamo in vista
di Trapani. Rimettiamo
cane nelle loro casse non
ostante il loro protestante fur-
bano latrare. -

Arriviamo alle barche
alle 79 h. 25 in precise. -

È domenica, un gran
sole fuori attivo, una gran
folla arrivata sulla banchina.
Vedo tra i presenti alcuni
viri noti che pur non
riconosco. -

Dopo pranzo fu affare
la Portuante con una bottiglia
di Whisky che ci diede modo.

alternai le gioie del sole col calcolo di passaggio al meridia= no di sole.- Zanetti onnipresente alle molte cure della nostra casa, Pugliese sempre in traffico per la messa a punto delle piccole stazioni portatili, dormienti i due dottori. Alle 19 siamo in vista di Tromsø. Rimettiamo i cani nelle loro casse non ostante il loro protestante furi= bondo latrare.- Attracchiamo alla banchina alle 19 h. 25 m precise.- È domenica, un gran sole quasi estivo, una gran folla assiepata sulla banchina. Vedo tra i presenti alcuni visi noti che preferisco non riconoscere.- Dopo pranzo festeggiamo la Pentecoste con una bottiglia di Wisky che ci diede modo	alternated the joys of the sun with the calculation of sun's passage at meridian.- Zanetti omnipresent to the many cares of our household, Pugliese always busy with the fine-tuning of the small portable stations, the two doctors asleep. At 19 we are in sight of Tromsø. We put back the dogs in their crates despite their protesting furious barking.- We dock at the quay at 19 h. 25 m precise.- It is Sunday, a great almost summer-like sun, a large crowd packed on the quay. I see among the attendance some known faces that I rather not acknowledge.- After dinner we celebrated the Pentecost with a bottle of Whiskey which gave us the opportunity
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Si discute fino all'alba sulle
"Contraffazioni Sill" e all'uni-
verso. —



partate di lavoro.

Quinto mattino alle 10
col buon Saether mi recano
all'istituto geotecnico dove egli
col mettere in una lunga
conversazione per avere una
costante informazione di
pallottini meteorologici e una
costante segnalazione delle
varie balneazioni per i suoi
siti balneari mercantili nei
nostri paraggi.

Inoltre concetti alla loro
stazione N.T. un appuntamento
giornaliero.

far parte del resto delle
partate lo passerai allo ricerca
di un motore con motore
a parte calda che intendo
caricare sulle Heim.

Completando il resto delle
ordinazioni si presenta c

di discute fino all'alba sulla "Contrapposizione dell'io all'uni= verso,,----	of discussing until dawn about the "Opposition of the self to the universe"----
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 21. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 21 MAY 1929
Giornata di lavoro. Questa mattina alle 10 col buon Saether mi recai all'Istituto Geo Fisico ove ebbi col Direttore una lunga conversazione per avere una costante trasmissione di bollettini metereologici e una continua segnalazione delle varie baleniere posizioni delle baleniere incrocianti nei nostri paraggi.- Inoltre concretai colla loro Stazione R.T. un appuntamento giornaliero.- Gran parte del resto della giornata lo passai alla ricerca di un motoscafo con motore a testa calda che intendo caricare sull'Heimen. Completammo il resto delle ordinazioni di quanto ci	Workday. This morning at 10 with the good Saether I went to the Geophysical Institute where I had with the Director a long conversation to have a constant transmission of meteorological bulletins and a continuous reporting of the various whalers positions of the whalers cruising in our surroundings.- Furthermore I finalised with their R.T. Station a daily scheduled contact.- Large part of the rest of the day I spent in search of a motorboat with a hot-bulb engine that I intend to load onto the Heimen. We completed the rest of the orders for what we

manca di viveri -

Fu dopo pranzo che
col frate bar. feci un
lungo giro nel murglo
Fier. d. Tien 3/.



Durante tutta la
notte io non chiusi
occhio - È stato l'ultim.
posto, l'ultim. contatto col
mundo, e le preoccupazioni
di celare le lacrime di ripassare
le dimenticanze, mi assale
in modo preoccupante -

Durante la notte con
Urbanò campì nel fero il
cellar. d. di un motore
con motore semid. ul. o pubblico.

Mi feci di acpietare tale
meno vanto di poter me in
spinto vivere - Alle mattina
fuano caricati tutti i viveri
dell'equipaggio sotto il mio comando
e diretto con fello; la più lo stop
e le panni e tutto pronto d.
mursario alla nave - Fu rinascuto
il pieno di olio ed

manca di viveri – Fu dopo pranzo che col fuori bordo feci un lungo giro nel meraviglioso Fiordo di Tromsø.	lacked in provisions – It was after lunch that I took a long ride with the motorboat in the marvellous Tromsø Fjord.
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 22. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 22 MAY 1929
Durante tutta la notte io non chiusi occhio – È questo l'ultimo porto, l'ultimo contatto col mondo, e le preoccupazioni di colmare le lacune di rimpiazzare le dimenticanze, mi assale in modo preoccupante. – Durante la notte con Urbano compii nel fiordo il collaudo di un motoscafo con motore semidiesel a petrolio.- Mi decisi di acquistare tale mezzo sicuro di potermene in seguito servire.- Alla mattina furono caricati tutti i viveri dell'equipaggio sotto il mio costante e diretto controllo; la pece la stoppa e legnami e tutto quanto di necessario alla nave. Fu rinnovato il pieno di olio ed	During the whole night I did not close an eye – This is the last port, the last contact with the world, and the worries of filling the gaps of making up for oversights assail me in a troubling way. – During the night with Urbano I carried out in the fjord the testing of a motorboat with a semi-diesel petroleum engine.- I decided to purchase such a vessel, sure that I could make use of it later.- In the morning all the crew's provisions were loaded under my constant and direct supervision; the pitch, the tow, the timber and everything necessary for the ship. The oil supply was renewed and

enumerata le riviste S. petro. Co.
e mille altre cose furono
asportate che all'ultimo
momento si venivano
manovrando - Fuori. Definit.
gli accordi coll'istituto
proprio e nella mattina
mi recai anche a visitare
il console Francese dichiarando
a lui che fra l'altro per e per
per con minor speranza le
richieste di Andersson sul bar
Nemo. per me e per il
mio paese la stessa
importanza che le richieste
del figlio involuto.

Avendo in animo di
partire stamattina alle 10
e dovetti rimanere alle 12
il salpare in corso dell'arrivo
di Jakobson - Per manovra
di Sua e lui che non riteneva
possibile post. fare il suo
ritardo - Partiamo - Le
banchine anticipate di gente
curiose, di parente dell'esperto.

aumentate le riserve di petrolio – e mille altre cose furono acquistate che all'ultimo momento si verificarono mancanti – Furono definiti gli accordi coll'istituto geofisico e nella mattinata mi recai anche a visitare il console Francese dichiarando a lui che quantunque e purtroppo con minor speranza le ricerche di Amundsen Guilbau hanno per me e per il mio paese la stessa importanza che le ricerche del Gruppo Involucro. – Avevo in animo di partire stamattina alle 10 e dovetti rimandare alle 12 il salpare in causa dell'assenza di Jakobsen.- Poi mancai di dire a lui che non ritenevo possibile giustificare il suo ritardo.- Partiamo.- La banchina assiepata di gente curiosa, di parenti dell'equipag=	reserves of petroleum were increased – and a thousand of other things were purchased that at the last moment turned out to be missing – The agreements with the geophysical institute were finalised and in the morning I also went to visit the French consul declaring to him that although and unfortunately with less hope the searches for Amundsen Guilbau have for me and for my country the same importance that the searches of the Envelope Group*.- I had in mind to depart this morning at 10, and I had to postpone at 12 the casting-off due to the absence of Jakobsen.- Then I failed to tell him that I did not consider it possible to justify his tardiness. - We depart.- The dock crowded with curious people, with relatives of the crew
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Note: *By the name «*Gruppo Involucro*», “Envelope Group”, the Italian search parties and press designated the six men who had remained trapped onboard Italia when it had taken off after the first crash. The message given by Albertini to the French consul referred to the crew of flying boat *Latham 47* who had disappeared while transferring Roald Amundsen and his pilot Dietrichson to Svalbard. This included René Guilbaud, Albert Cavalier de Cuverville, Gilbert Brazy and Émile Valette.

Pio - Invece partito mi era o era
 pochi giorni e lo era partenza.
 Per poco tempo fu detto.
 Sull'ultimo giorno di fine di.
 Alle 1830 usciamo. Per
 Sall'Hour e Fio5 partito
 lo per 14° W nel
 per mare di Barents.
 Porto. poco il misuratore
 di velocità non ha potuto
 in grado di constatare che
 la nostra nave marcia a
 7.6 n. di. - Il mare di
 Barents fu per tutto lo
 giornata buono con mare,
 ciò non ostente salvo io e
 Zanetti tutti non paiono dalla
 circolazione.



Navigazione normale
 e di consueto colla N. p. r.
 dischettere. Bolchini sono
 in grado di assolvere alle
 proprie mansioni perché

gio- Questo partire mi emoziona poiché questa è la vera partenza.- Per poco tempo godemmo dell'ultima quiete dei fiordi.- Alle 18 30 usciamo fuori dall'Hommer Fiord ponendo la prua per 14° W nel gran mare di Barents.- Porto a poppa il misuratore di velocità sono ben presto in grado di costatare che la nostra nave marcia a 7.6 nodi.- Il mare di Barents fu per tutta la giornata buono con noi, ciò non ostante salvo io e Zanetti tutti scompaiono dalla circolazione.-	This departing moves me since this is the true departure.- For a short time we enjoyed the last quiet of the fjords.- At 18 30 we go out from the Hommer Fiord, setting the bow to 14° W into the great Barents Sea.- I bring aft the speed meter; I am soon able to ascertain that our ship goes at 7.6 knots.- The Barents Sea was for the whole day kind to us, nonetheless except for me and Zanetti everyone disappears.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 23. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 23 MAY 1929
Navigazione normale e di conserva colla Regina Elisabetta.- Pochissimi sono in grado di assolvere alle proprie mansioni poiché	Normal navigation and in company with the Queen Elizabeth.- Very few are able to perform their own duties since

Quanto più calminiamo il
 mare, lo nave lo accusa.
 con con un rollio impetuoso,
 risonante. Per un fatto, 5.45.
 Si nota all'uffici dell'Heimkehr
 mio e di Lanett. che ci alterna
 mo di là in là ore alle guardie.
 Alle 18,30 rileviamo l'isola.
 per niente per 50 miglia a
 S-W del Nolo degli Ovi.



Alle 12,30 incontriamo le
 prime nebbie di ghiacci e
 75 lat. Nord.

Il pomeriggio il mare
 è sempre più impetuoso.
 e fu nelle ultime ore delle
 giornate che il vento da
 Est ebbe forse il carattere
 di uragano. — Fu una
 notte non facile — fu violenta.
 Il mare scappò. Dai loro
 ammassi i barili di olio
 fecero pantofole rotolando

quantunque calmissimo il mare, la nave lo accusa con un rullio impressionante. Nessun fatto degno di nota all'infuori della stanchezza mia e di Zanetti che ci alterniamo di tre in tre ore alla guardia. Alle 18,30 rileviamo la nostra posizione per 50 miglia a S-W dell'Isola degli Orsi.-	although the sea is very calm, the ship takes it with an impressive roll. Nothing noteworthy apart from my and Zanetti's tiredness, as we alternate every three hours on watch. At 18,30 we fix our position as 50 miles S-W of Bear Island.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 24. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 24 MAY 1929
Alle 12.30 incontriamo le prime schiere di ghiacci a 75 Lat. Nord. Nel pomeriggio il mare andò sempre più ingrossandosi e fu nelle ultime ore della giornata che il vento da Est crebbe fino ad assumere carattere di uragano – Fu una notte non facile.- La violenza del mare strappò dai loro ammarraggi i barili di olio facendoli paurosamente rotolare [in]	At 12.30 we encounter the first fringes of ice at 75 Lat. North. In the afternoon the sea kept growing heavier and heavier and it was in the last hours of the day that the wind from the East increased up to the character of a hurricane – It was not an easy night.- The violence of the sea tore from their lashings the barrels of oil making them tumble fearfully [on]

coperto. Finire su d. d. d.
lavoro - full. coperto sparsa
continuamente. Se in d. d.
finire non fu facile cose
pote riparo. E. p. i. cose.

Sel. tardi il tempo. i
calor. e d. all'alt. i in
frutti arum. nuovo e
apparire Cap. S. d. d. d.
Sp. i. hyper.



Ma lo pallido vicino
sp. i. hen presto. - Entom. a
pari a fare. e d. arum. prima
del giunto & nel refo.
della parienza - ghiaccio polipianti,
nethia e forchia all' erimonte -
eterno s. p. arum. interrogativo
alla bussola - occhi vers. l'alt.
al misterioso braccio della
colpo per il rini. M. o. il d. d. d.) -
macchine e rallent. - freddo -
impazienza -

Con franto. l'istemo ribati
ora in presto refo. S. parienza

coperta. Furono ore di duro lavoro – Sulla coperta spazzata continuamente da ondate furiose non fu facile cosa porre riparo ad ogni cosa.- Solo tardi il tempo si calmò ed all'alba in un quieto azzurro nevoso ci apparve Capo Sud delle Spitzbergen. -	deck. They were hours of hard work – On the deck, continuously swept by furious waves, it was not easy thing to secure everything.- Only late did the weather calm down and at dawn in a quiet snowy blue South Cape of Spitzbergen appeared to us.–
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 25. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 25 MAY 1929
Ma la pallida visione sparì ben presto – Entrammo quasi a forza ed ancora prima del giusto d nel regno della pazienza – ghiacci galleggianti, nebbia e foschia all'orizzonte – eterno sguardo interrogativo alla bussola – occhi verso l'alto al misterioso braccio della coffa (ora il sinistro ora il destro) – macchine a rallenti – freddo – impazienza – Con quanta tristezza ritrovi ora in questo regno di pazienza	But the pale vision soon disappeared – We entered almost by force and even before the right moment into the realm of patience – floating ice, fog and mist on the horizon – an eternal questioning gaze at the compass – eyes looking up at the mysterious arm of the crow's nest (now the left now the right) – engines idling – cold – impatience – With how much sadness do I now find again in this kingdom of patience

le mie impazienze dello scorso
anno. pochi sanno. presento
no. - mucciano. tutto giorno
su una rotta di N-W- o S-E
al limite di ripe di pack ice
profonda circa 30 miglia
ed addensato alle coste
N delle Svalbard - Nitergo
che vale all'incirca di
ghiacci neri. dovuti al
forte vento di Est. Si fanno
veri che convogliano i ghiacci
del mare di Barents nel
mare di Groenlandia. Sono del
pe in preda alle correnti
del golfo che li convogliano
sulle coste ecc. Sventale
delle Svalbard. -

Piuttosto bene tutto -
i sofferenti del mal di
mare ritornano. fuori dei
loro buchi pieno di appetito.

Potrei distinguere due specie
di mal di mare; quella del
reclamo di fianco alla reppola

la mia impazienza dello scorso anno pochi sanno quanto io so.- Incrociamo tutto giorno su una rotta di N – W – o S – E al limite di <siepe> di pack ice profonda circa 30 miglia ed addossata alle coste W delle Svalbard.- Ritengo che tale abbondanza di ghiacci siano dovuti al forte vento di Est dei giorni scorsi che convogliò i ghiacci dal mare di Barents nel mare di Groenlandia dandoli poi in preda alla corrente del Golfo che li convogliò sulle coste occidentali delle Svalbard.- Poi stiamo bene tutti – i sofferenti del mal di mare ritornarono fuori dai loro buchi pieni di appetito. – Potei distinguere due specie di mal di mare; quello del secchio di fianco alla seggiola	my impatience of last year few know as much as I know.- We cruised all day on a route of N – W or S- E at the edge of a hedge of pack ice about 30 miles deep and pressed against the western coasts of Svalbard. – I believe that such an abundance of ice is due to the strong east wind of the past days that carried the ice from the Barents Sea into the Greenland Sea giving it to the Gulf Stream which drove it towards the western coasts of Svalbard.- Then we are all well – those suffering from sea- sickness came out of their holes full of appetite.- I was able to distinguish two types of sea-sickness; the one with the bucket beside the chair
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del proprio lavoro e quello
 del vecchio. Si fanno al
 proprio letto - Offi
 amman. le prime
 fedi della stesura e fu
 fatto per cani - molti
 nel loro "Sipino delle
 casse" - In tutto sono
 alle 17 le nostre pensioni
 fu fornita per 30 miglia.
 e W. del Capo Sud della
 Reno di Principe Carlo -
 Stano. Pugliese pote
 colle radio comunione
 regolarmente con Nemo -
 E la prova del fuoco. -

giornata di N. chitto del
 'Nepo' - Alle prime ore del
 mattino. si levò un vento che
 misurato diede 63 Km/ora. erio ferra
 guala Deaufert. - Stano. tutto il
 giorno alle cappe colle piume al



del proprio lavoro e quelli del secchio di fianco al proprio letto.- Oggi ammazziamo le prime foche della stagione e fu fortuna pei cani – magri pel lungo “digiuno delle casse” – Questa sera alle 17 la nostra posizione fu fissata per 30 miglia a W. del Capo Sud della terra di Principe Carlo.- Stasera Pugliese poté colla radio comunicare regolarmente con Roma.- È la prova del fuoco.-	of their own work and those with the bucket beside their own bed.- Today we kill our first seals of the season and it was a fortune for the dogs – thin from the long “crate fasting” – This evening at 17 our position was fixed at 30 miles W. of South Cape of the Prince Charles land.- Tonight Pugliese was able by the radio to communicate regularly with Rome.- It is the trial by fire.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 26. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 26 MAY 1929
Giornata di etichetta del “Regno”.- Alle prime ore del mattino si levò un vento che misurato diede 63 km/ora ossia forza 9 scala Beaufort.- Stemma tutto il giorno alla cappa colla prua al	Day of etiquette of the “Kingdom”.- In the early hours of the morning a wind rose that was measured 63 km/hour air strength 9 Beaufort scale.- We spent the whole day heaving with the bow facing the

Vento e macchine e rallent. -
Anzi fermi in attesa. Sol. var. var. e
fuso del vento e detti di intensità e
e se possibile iniziare attività, par. di
che dei di. Seive le manovre di par. di
avvicinamento allo costa. -

E benenice - 2 anott. buon.,
Scien. sempre, ci offre un a
tutto di no. invenzione ed alle
no. sturam. e primo Danicoff
hott. fi. di. Camp. pe. - Si accende
le stufe; esso si rese necessario
specialmente per ricaldare il
prodotti. o supericiere di. chi
Sopra le lunghe soste in
plancia, rientro intimato. -

Puflere confermo l'iniz. dello
cont. ininto delle me comunicaz.
ni. -



Sen pre nel. Negro. L'ann. rem.
vi punto zona non si. no. Vacci. di. ghiacci
e post'ann. non si. E Vacci. d'acqua. -
Si. offren. sempre più l'impossibilità e
l'incapacità di. pro. par. - Mercanti. sempre
in canali d'acqua. E here. o, presumibilmente,
30 mi. gli. Sali. ke Fjord. Sten. anch'altre
vi ore fermi; Val. ore utilizzari per
provare le armi su alcuni gattiani. -
Benolo pure all'ann. il no. primo
esemplare e lo manipolo per l'imbalsamazione.
marine. - Perfetta la comunicazione S. P. o. -

vento e macchine a rallenti- Quasi fermi in attesa.- Solo verso sera la forza del vento cedette di intensità e ci fu possibile iniziare attraverso grandi ghiacci di deriva la manovra di avvicinamento della costa.- È Domenica- Zanetti buono, come sempre, ci offrì una torta di sua invenzione ed alla sera sturammo la prima Domenicale bottiglia di Scampagne.- Si accese la stufa; essa si rese necessaria specialmente per riscaldare il quadrato a disposizione di chi dopo le lunghe soste in plancia, rientra intirizzito.- Pugliese conferma l'inizio della continuità delle sue comunicazio=ni.-	wind and engines at low speed- Almost still in wait.- Only towards evening the force of the wind weakened and it was possible for us to initiate through large drift ice the manoeuvre to approach the coast.- It is Sunday – Zanetti good, as always, offered us a cake of his own invention and in the evening we uncorked the first Sunday bottle of Champagne.- The stove was lit; it became necessary especially to warm the wardroom for those who after long shifts on the bridge, return chilled.- Pugliese confirms the start of continuity of his communications.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 27. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 27 MAY 1929
Sempre nel Regno - L'anno scorso in questa zona non vi era traccia di ghiacci e quest'anno non vi è traccia d'acqua.- Si afferma sempre più l'impossibilità e l'inutilità di programmi.- Incrociamo sempre in canali d'acqua libera a, presumibilmente, 30 miglia dall'Ice Fjord.- Stemmo anche oltre sei ore fermi; tali ore utilizzai per provare le armi su alcuni gabbiani.- Bonola prese all'amo il suo primo esemplare e lo manipolò per l'imbalsamazione.- Perfetta la comunicazione S. Paolo.-	Still in the Kingdom – Last year in this area there was no trace of ice and this year there is no trace of water.- It becomes ever clearer that there's impossibility and uselessness of programmes.- We continue to cruise through channels of open water at, presumably, 30 miles from Ice Fjord. – We also stood still over six hours; I used those hours to test the weapons on some seagulls.– Bonola caught his first specimen on the line and prepared it for taxidermy.- Perfect communication with S. Paolo.-



Pomer. niente nelle mattina.
 Pelle e neve nella notte -
 Alle prime ore del pomeriggio nel
 pomeriggio in corso di un N.E.
 arriviamo. La Elisabeth - la
 avviciniamo ed il mio Capitano.
 venne a bordo da noi - Eri
 incaricato al largo in attesa di tempo
 favorevole - Riprendiamo la via
 staccando tutti fin a che un.

Me ne di verso N-E e
 permett. di vedere la alta montagna
 nevosa della Tero di Principe Carlo.

Vicino piena di fieno; grande
 montagna nevosa e lontana
 in una linea linea di arredo.

Possiamo vedere anche in ampio
 zona di acqua. Ehere la roppian
 attraversando le nevi. Intorno dallo
 Tero - Alla fine del giorno, vicino
 fermi, nel momento verso sperando.



fermati di pan sole e di
 grande mattinata. Sempre
 fermi - Le domani mattina non
 si sarà nulla difeso alla intenzione
 di piacere ritentare. Si allontanare
 verso W per cercare un passaggio
 più a S passando da Bell Fiord.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 28. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 28 MAY 1929
Nessuna novità nella mattina.- Nebbia e neve nella notte.- Nelle prime ore del pomeriggio nel girovagare in cerca di una strada avvistiamo la Elisabeth.- La avviciniamo ed il suo Capitano venne a bordo da noi - Essi incrociarono a largo in attesa di tempo favorevole.- Riprendiamo la via stancamente fino a che una striscia di sereno verso N-E ci permette di vedere le alte montagne nevose della Terra di Principe Carlo.- Visione piena di fascino; grandi montagne nevose e lontane in una tisica linea di azzurro.- Possiamo scorgere anche un'ampia zona di acqua libera che raggiungiamo abbreviando la nostra distanza dalla Terra – Alla fine del giorno, siamo fermi, pel momento senza speranza.-	No news in the morning.- Fog and snow during the night.- In the early hours of the afternoon while wandering in search of a route we sight the Elisabeth.- We approach her and her Captain came aboard our ship – They had been cruising offshore waiting for favorable weather.- We resume the route wearily until a strip of clear sky towards N-E allows us to see the high snowy mountains of Prince Charles Land.- A vision full of charm; great snowy and far mountains in a sickly* line of light blue.- We can also see a wide area of open water that we reach shortening our distance from the Land – At the end of the day, we are still, for the moment without hope.-

Note: *The Italian term «*tisica*» has mainly a medical sense to designate a person suffering from consumption (*tisi*, in Italian). In colloquial language it is sometimes used as an adjective to indicate something precarious, thin or weak.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 29. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 29 MAY 1929
Giornata di gran sole e di grande inattività. Sempre fermi.- Se domani mattina non si sarà nulla definito colla situazione dei ghiacci ritenteremo di allontanarci verso W per ricercare un passaggio più a S passando da Bell Fiord.-	A day of full sun and of full inactivity. Still motionless.- If tomorrow morning nothing will be resolved with the situation of the ice we will try again to get away towards W to search for a passage further S passing through Bell Fjord.-

Urban, ha ormai, manifestato
regolamento le caratteristiche delle sue
emissioni materiche. Per più
luttuosa usare gli apparecchi riservati
mentre essi sono luttuosi e
inservibili per le oscillazioni
della nave. - Per parer gli lavano
e determinare l'indice y del
morte, utente. -

Prima debito come perkins.
in punto perfetto. -

I cani sono le mie più
raffinate ricchezze. - V. sono i
due bianchi, tipici dello zampone
due, robusti e marici, che sono
le più. Da una fortissima amicizia.

Essi sono veri e proprii
attaccati, i loro zamponi, un po'
amici ed in modo fulmineo.

Per due volte riuscì per vero
miracolo a riappare ai loro denti
e Murr e Boy. -

Murr e Boy sono pure amichevoli
ma Murr padrona di Boy,
mentre lei i due Bianchi li è
molto parte. -

Oggi mentre per alcune ore
furono attaccati ad un gliacino
fecero vedere i più poveri cani.

Per loro una parte il
risultato a cont. della nave. -

Urbano ha ormai incominciato regolarmente le annotazioni delle sue osservazioni metereologiche.- Non può tuttavia usare gli apparecchi scriventi essendo essi assolutamente inservibili per le oscillazioni della nave.- Nel pomeriggio lavoriamo a determinare l'indice γ del nostro sestante.- Guedoz debuttò come prestinaio in modo perfetto.- I cani sono la mia più d raffinata ricreazione.- Vi sono i due bianchi, tipici della razza Groenlan= dese, robusti e massicci, che sono legati da una fortissima amicizia.- Essi sono terribilissimi perché attaccano i loro simili, sempre assieme ed in modo fulmineo.- Già due volte riuscii per vero miracolo a strappare ai loro denti e Muss e Boy.- Muss e Boy sono pure amicissimi ma Muss padroneggia su Boy, mentre tra i due Bianchi vi è assoluta parità.- Oggi mentre per alcune ore fummo attraccati ad un ghiaccio feci scendere i più giovani cani.- Fu per loro una gioia il risentirsi a contatto colla neve.-	Urbano has now begun regularly the recording of his meteorological observations.- He cannot however use the writing devices as they are absolutely unusable due to the oscillations of the ship.- In the afternoon we work to determine the γ index of our sextant.- Guedoz debuted as a baker in a perfect way.- The dogs are my most refined recreation.- There are the two white ones, typical of the Greenlandic breed, robust and massive, that are bound by a very strong friendship.- They are extremely fierce because they attack their kind, always together and with lightning speed.- Twice already I managed by true miracle to save from their teeth both Muss and Boy.- Muss and Boy are also close friends but Muss dominates Boy, while between the two Whites there is absolute equality.- Today while for some hours we were moored to an ice floe I let the youngest dogs go down.- It was a joy for them to feel themselves in contact with the snow again.-
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Passano molte egl' eff. tt.
 pratici - da me prov. genti - Sella. m.
 l'eff. sp. o m. v. m. m. m. m.
 vent. e refl. ch. de N-W.

Off. iniziari accanitamente
 ed imparare il Mare iterando
 while esse in due null. parte gl.
 a saper ricevere e hanno ottare.

Stabili di 12 ore i m. gli m. m. m.
 in occupano anche di particolare
 a spaccare la tavola, acc. due lo
 stufe e pulisce l'An. di ato. -
 mine, fuorissima la reazione
 contro l'elichetto del N. W. -



Scumbando molti - più frequent.
 quasi la nave m. m. m. m. m. m.
 m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m.
 Il vent. m. m. m. m. m. m. m.
 m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m.
 come cel. p. m. m. m. m. m. m.
 m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m.

A l'ora m. m. m. m. m. m. m.
 Capitan. m. m. m. m. m. m. m.
 e ci è fatto del cap. m. m. m. m.

Il p. m. m. m. m. m. m. m.
 m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m.
 m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m.
 m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m.
 m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m.
 m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m. m.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 30. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 30 MAY 1929
Nessuna novità agli effetti pratici.- Sempre girovaganti.- Solo una leggera speranza verso sera per un vento a raffiche da N-W.- Oggi iniziai accanitamente ad imparare il Morse ritenendo utile essere in due nella pattuglia a saper ricevere e trasmettere.- Stabilii che durante le guardie di 12 ore i singoli incaricati si occupino anche di apparecchiare e sparecchiare la tavola, accendere la stufa e pulire il Quadrato.- Inizia, furiosissima la reazione contro l'etichetta del Regno.-	No news of practical significance.- Still wandering around.- Only a slight hope towards evening due to a gusting wind from the N-W.- Today I started intensely to learn Morse considering it useful that two people in the patrol be able to receive and transmit.- I established that, during the 12-hour watches each person on duty should also take care of setting and clearing the table, lighting the stove and cleaning the Wardroom.- The fierce rebellion against the Kingdom's etiquette begins.-

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 31. MAJ 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 31 MAY 1929
Scorribande inutili – più frequenti.- quasi la nave incominciasse ad annoiarsi per non spuntarla contro il ghiaccio.- Il vento incuneando e curvando il suo sartame la fa spesso parere come col pelo irto – per la rabbia e la ostinazione.- A sera ritroviamo l'Elisabetta.- Il capitano pure viene a bordo da noi.- e ci è grato del cognac che gli offriamo.- Nel pomeriggio io e Urbano dopo un lungo lavoro riusciamo a determinare le nostre coordinate.- Lungo lavoro in quanto siamo sprovvisti di tutte le tavole oltre i 60° di Lat Nord.- È cosa ardua	Useless wanderings – more frequent.- as if the ship herself were beginning to grow bored for not succeeding against the ice.- The wind pressing into and bending her rigging often makes her seem like with a bristling fur – from rage and obstinacy.- In the evening we find the Elisabeth again.- The captain comes again on-board with us.- and is grateful for the cognac that we offer him.- In the afternoon Urbano and I after long work are able to determine our coordinates.- A long work since we are without all the tables beyond 60° North Latitude.- It is hard thing

nell'art. 1. l'uso del motore. E
 Il Vapore delle navi non è
 impenibile le lettere ed motore in
 moto; l'assenza di sicurezza per le
 continue presenza di ghiacci e la
 impenibilità di uso di sicurezza
 artificiale, complica la situazione.
 Tutti i nuovi progetti decisi che non
 videro in tale situazione non si
 simile condizione - l'unico caso
 nelle piazze di via l'unico caso
 fatto per noi è l'unico caso
 delle nostre famiglie.



Mattino di neve - di nuovo impenibile
 di ghiacci - Come pure il primo
 pio - Vento di intemperie - Salvo in
 colfa o un gelido di vento in
 vento perché di lavoro è penibile
 vedere più lentamente.

Pugliese della mattina prima
 si alza fino a notte. Tanto
 consumo, antellina di sole, le
 proprie ore nel suo buco radio-
 telegrafico - Con una passione ed
 una passione esemplare egli,
 l'attorno, realizza la perfezione.
 Per noi contenti dei risultati
 raggiunti, elabera i migliori colla

nell'artico l'uso del sestante. – Il tremore della nave rende impossibili le letture col motore in moto; l'assenza di orizzonte per la costante presenza di ghiacci e la impossibilità di uso di orizzonte artificiale complica la situazione.- Tutti i navigeri dicono che mai videro in tale stagione non videro simile condizione.- Nelle giornate di ozio l'unica cosa grata per noi è il ricevere telegrammi dalle nostre famiglie.-	in the Arctic the use of the sextant. – The ship's trembling makes readings impossible with the engine running; the absence of the horizon due to the constant presence of ice and the impossibility of using an artificial horizon complicate the situation.- All sailors say that never they had seen in that season not seen such a condition.- On idle days the only pleasant thing for us is receiving telegrams from our families.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 1. JUN. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 1 JUNE 1929
Mattina di neve – di scarsa visibilità – di ghiacci.- Come pure il pomeriggio.- Vuoto di interesse.- Salire in coffa è un sollievo di tanto in tanto perché di lassù è possibile vedere più lontano.- Pugliese dalla mattina quando si alza fino a notte tarda consuma, centellinandole, le proprie ore nel suo buco radio-telegrafico.- Con una passione ed una pazienza esemplare egli, taciturno, realizza la perfezione.- Poi mai contento dei risultati raggiunti, elabora i progressi colla	Morning of snow – of poor visibility – of ice.- As well as the afternoon.- Empty of interest. – Climbing up to the crow's nest is a relief from time to time because from up there it is possible to see farther.- Pugliese since morning when he wakes up until late at night spends, sipping them slowly, his hours in his radio-telegraphy hole.- With an exemplary passion and patience he, taciturn, achieves perfection.- Then never satisfied with the results achieved, he elaborates on progresses with

cello stesso impiego con cui potrebbe
carricare un S. fatto -

Da lui un Co. Stazionario S.P.A. e
ci informo del continuo ingran-
giamento della intermitte e puerile
dei nostri repali - Puffiere
vale tanto al punto peso - #

Nella notte, deciso di andare
gli indugi - Basen semi sulle
informazioni interne, allo stato
di spiacce del 15 Fier 5 chiedo
al Pilot. S. tentare con
Securiam la via verso Est.

U. fu un episo. S. Soloroso sul
fiume della giornata. Tre gli
altri cani giovanissimi ve-
ne e un più vecchio. Il
tempo. S. Berni in osservazione
per molti giorni e mi fornì
la convinzione che era forse completa-
mente inutilizzabile - lo feci
uscire. Fu Soloroso; me ne
un cane parlo 5 troppo vecchio
è un solista. Egli mangiava
a sedimento degli altri cani più
giovani e più forti e più attenti al
lavoro -



Si fece durante la notte
e il piano ogni tentativo -

collo stesso impegno con cui potrebbe correggere un difetto.- Da tre sere la Stazione S Paolo ci informa del continuo miglioramento della intensità e purezza dei nostri segnali.- Pugliese vale tanto oro quanto pesa.- # Nella notte decido di rompere gli indugi – Basandomi sulle informazioni intorno allo stato dei ghiacci dell' Is Fiord chiedo al Pilota di tentare con decisione la via verso Est.- Vi fu un episodio doloroso sul finire della giornata.- Tra gli altri cani groenlandesi ve ne è uno più vecchio del tempo. Lo tenni in osservazione per molti giorni e mi formai la convinzione ch'esso fosse completamente inutilizzabile.- Lo feci uccidere.- Fu doloroso; uccidere un essere perché è troppo vecchio è un delitto. Egli mangiava a detrimento degli altri cani più giovani e più forti e più atti al lavoro.-	with the same commitment with which he could correct an imperfection.- For three evenings the St. Paolo Station informs us of the continuous improvement of the intensity and purity of our signals.- Pugliese is worth his weight in gold.- # In the night I decide to break the hesitations – Encouraged by the information about the state of the ice of the Is Fiord I ask the Pilot to attempt decisively the way toward East.- There was a painful episode at the end of the day.- Among the other Greenland dogs there is one older than time. I kept him under observation for many days and developed the conviction that he was completely unusable.- I had him killed.- It was painful; to kill a being because it is too old is a crime. He was eating to the detriment of the other dogs, younger and stronger and more suited to work.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 2. JUN. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 2 JUNE 1929
Si fece durante la notte e il giorno ogni tentativo -	Every attempt was made during the night and the day

per fare più facile osservare - Per i
 giorni più, non intendo lo lungo
 è ordinato voglia alcuni enti
 punto - Munkat. all'elco di
 flieci in punti stile, e ne
 stanno. tutto lo sviluppo parato
 cari. era -



È una grande vittoria.
 Vittoria con più attore.
 24 ore di lavoro - bene. non. parte
 le me meraviglie qualità attore.
 park su di circa 3000 m.
 riori. - fare modo in modo.
 meraviglie - uno vero, di fare
 all'he Fias usiamo, fissati in
 acqua. Loro ed alla 21 che
 attacciamo. al partito delle
 Baie -



più alla 00. con Urban. - Barolo -
 e Jeltan partiamo. alla volta
 di Advent Bay - Fu un. mare.
 fatica di 7 ore nella parte delle.
 25 Advent Bay grava (am).
 per qualche ora, sensuente, in
 parte. nuovo villaggio di miserie.
 Munkat. di tanto in tempo

per forza[re] questa fascia avversa – Non si sortì però, non ostante la lunga ed ostinata veglia alcun esito positivo – Incontrati all'alba dei ghiacci impenetrabili, ce ne stemmo tutta la nebbiosa giornata contro essi.-	to force this adverse belt – However, despite the long and obstinate vigil, no positive result was obtained – Having encountered at dawn impenetrable ice, we remained all the foggy day against it.-
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 3. JUN. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 3 JUNE 1929
È una giornata vittoriosa.- Vittoria conseguita attraverso 24 ore di lavoro.- La nostra nave palesò le sue meravigliose qualità attraverso pack ice di circa 3 metri essa riuscì a farsi strada in modo meraviglioso.- Verso sera, di fronte all'Ice Fiord usciamo fuori in acqua libera ed è alle 21 che attracciamo al fastice della Baia.-	It is a victorious day.- Victory achieved through 24 hours of work.- Our ship revealed her marvelous qualities through pack ice of about 3 meters she managed to make her way in a marvelous manner.- Toward evening, in front of the Ice Fiord we come out into open water and it is at 21 that we moor to the fast ice of the Bay.-
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 4. JUN. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 4 JUNE 1929
Già alle 00. con Urbano – Bonola – e Jelsten partiamo alla volta di Advent Bay – Fu una marcia faticosa di 7 ore nella neve molle.- Ad Advent Bay girovagammo per qualche ora, sonnolenti, in questo strano villaggio di miseria.- Incontrando di tanto in tanto	Already at 00. with Urbano – Bonola – and Jelsten we set out towards Advent Bay – It was a tiring march of 7 hours in the soft snow.- At Advent Bay we wandered for a few hours, drowsy, in this strange village of misery.- Encountering from time to time

Il v. leffi, V. p. Canadese, e
ingegneri. Si rettano ed sono pro
spere. Si carbone - fanno teleferiche
Hauptan. Spelau d. con mo
mura in un punibile i la.
carichi - Alle nov. riunim-
a d. in un punibile i d. in un punibile
mura da cui l'ethim,
spitale ecc. gli aus. no non
letti per Scrivere -

NAVE HE!
- 5. JUN 1929

21v

le desperate figure di quei minatori.- Facce strane – occhi dilatati.- espressioni anormali.- Il villaggio, tipo Canadese, è ingombro di rottami ed ovunque sporco di carbone.- Grosse teleferiche trasportano gigolando, con una musica incomprensibile i loro carichi.– Alle nove riuscimmo ad incontrare i dirigenti delle miniere da cui ebbimo ospitale accoglienza ma non letti per dormire.- La giornata passata a New City ebbe per caratteristiche il nostro sonno, la cattiva specie dei viveri offerti, e lo strano sarcasmo dell'Ing. Svedrup titubante se consegnarci o no i cani – Solo a sera per un ordine pervenutoci da Oslo decise di darmi sei cani e noi senza por tempo in mezzo partiamo alla volta della nostra nave.-	the desperate figures of those miners.- strange faces – dilated eyes.- abnormal expressions.- The village, Canadian type, is cluttered with debris and everywhere dirty with coal .- Large cableways transport creaking, with an incomprehensible music their loads.- At nine we managed to meet the managers of the mines from whom we received hospitable welcome but no beds to sleep in.- The day spent in New City was characterised by our being sleepy, the poor quality of the offered food, and the strange sarcasm of Eng. Svedrup hesitant on whether giving us the dogs or not – Only in the evening following an order arrived from Oslo did he decide to give me six dogs and we without wasting time departed towards our ship.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 5. JUN. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 5 JUNE 1929
Partiti a mezzanotte arrivammo solo a mezzogiorno alla Nave dopo un bestiale lavoro per la neve neve bagnata ed i cani	Departed at midnight we arrived only at noon at the ship after a brutal effort due to the wet snow snow and the dogs

versa all'incanto ne capomuto.
 Il buon King dell'anno scorso
 lo hanno amato e vecchio e
 svelto: sostituito con Ben che
 si riputò di fare il suo dovere
 fare anch'egli più e meno
 esercitare vecchio -
 Partiamo molto più la
 King Bay che con una
 fortuna era ancora rappresentativa.
 fuori subito verso intoppi
 di ghiaccio -



Neppure. E King's
 Bay all'alto franò ancora
 il sole hanno save alle cose
 determinanti il verso del paesag-
 gio, l'aspetto più alto e
 colpito l'animo nelle sue
 più delicate parti. - Rivoli fanno
 le menti un paesaggio noto, ma
 istintivamente vidi come una
 cosa nuova che aveva in se come
 l'ombra pesante di mistera di un
 pensato, angoscioso. La mancanza di vite,
 e la presenza in definite e latente
 di una presenza sopramundale

senza allenamento ne capomuta. Il buon King dell'anno scorso lo trovai ammalato e vecchio e dovetti sostituirlo con Pan che si rifiutò di fare il suo dovere forse anch'egli per la sua eccessiva vecchiaia – Partiamo subito per la Kings Bay che con mia fortunata azione raggiungiamo quasi subito senza intoppi di ghiacci.-	untrained and without a lead dog. The good King from last year I found him sick and old and I had to replace him with Pan who refused to do his duty perhaps also due to his excessive old age - We depart immediately for Kings Bay which thanks to my fortunate action we reached almost at once without problems of ice. –
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 6. JUN. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 6 JUNE 1929
Raggiungemmo la King's Bay all'alba quando ancora il sole basso dava alle cose determinanti il senso del paesaggio, l'aspetto più atto a colpire l'animo nelle sue più delicate parti.- Rividi forzando la mente un paesaggio noto, ma istintivamente vidi come una cosa nuova che avesse in se come l'ombra pesante di tristezza di un passato angoscioso.- La mancanza di vita, e la presenza indefinita e latente di una generosità soprannaturale	We reached King's Bay at dawn when the still low sun gave the things defining the sense of the scenery the aspect most capable of striking the soul in its most delicate parts.- I forced my mind to make out a familiar landscape, but instinctively I saw it as something new carrying within it the heavy shadow of the sadness of an anguished past.- The absence of life, and the undefined and latent presence of a supernatural generosity

faceva pensare se realmente
non fosse un sogno quello
sentire di ricadere
fantasma. ed anche che
int. avv. di. lo schiavo fantasma
sull' Hanger, dopo essere arrivato,
non aveva più. Sulle navi.
permane d'ieri ed oggi.

Per persone. Tempo.
America. al ghiaccio di
Baia 15 Kilom. ch. Cantano
de Ny alismo 5 e non sono
subito per i primi tentativi.
di. addestramento di cani.
Sei risultati e molta
sabbia, voci anche e frustate.

Mi convinco delle necessità di
putare a termine frutt. addestramento
in modo risolutivo. Sate la sua
importanza. Ufficiali una
esatta conoscenza delle condizioni
di ghiaccio al Nord. Se
pertanto si invia la nave al
Nord per una rapida intervista.

Io restai con Urban. - Napoli.
P.V. e frutt. atteso sulla

faceva pensare se realmente non fosse un sogno quella sembianza di ricordo.- Lontano col cannocchiale intravvidi lo scheletro gigantesco dell'Hangar, legno senza anima, monumento della nostra passione d'ieri ed oggi. – Non perdemmo tempo.– Ancorammo al ghiaccio di Baia 15 kilometri lontano da Ny Alesund e scendemmo subito per i primi tentativi di addestramento dei cani.- Scarsi risultati e molta rabbia, voci rauche e frustate.- Mi convinsi della necessità di portare a termine questo addestramento in modo risolutivo data la sua importanza. Urgendomi una esatta conoscenza delle condizioni dei ghiacci al Nord, decisi pertanto di inviare la nave al Nord per una rapida intervista. Io restai con Urbano – Bonola- D V e Guedoz attendato sulla	made one wonder whether that semblance of memory really was not a dream.- In the distance with the telescope I caught a glimpse of the gigantic skeleton of the Hangar, wood wi- thout a soul, monument to our passion of yesterday and today.– We wasted no time.– We anchored to the ice of the Bay 15 kilometres away from Ny Alesund and immediately went down for the first attempts at training the dogs.- Poor results and much anger, hoarse voices and whiplashes.- I became convinced of the necessity to complete this training in a decisive way given its importance. Urged by a precise knowledge of the ice conditions in the North, I therefore decided to send the ship North for a quick reconnaissance. I stayed with Urbano – Bonola D V and Guedoz camped on the
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costo S. dell. King's Bay:-

Sherman. anche le Chiese
N.T. portatile ed. completa
collaud. - con pure ogni
materiale di pattuglia per poterlo
esprimere nelle mat. co -



Le notte fu penata coi
cari e le slitte - Difficilmente,
hi non conosce quest'arte,
dimin. fino a punto, no intenzionale
e difficile d'adattamento di
una muta di cani al lavoro
e dopo tutto la formazione
di un capo muta.

Però. tutti le formazioni
paribili, cambiando, mischiando,
arrivando di temperare, soffocando
o neutralizzare le loro ne
buone e le cattive, rispettando
gli odii e le amicizie e i
caratteri insufficienti, cercando
di trasformare la gelosia e
la prepotenza in lotta di

costa S. della King's Bay.- Sbarcammo anche le stazioni R.T portatili onde completare il collaudo.- come pure ogni materiale di pattuglia per poterlo sperimentare nella pratica.-	southern coast of King's Bay.- We also unloaded the portable radiotelegraph stations in order to complete the testing.- as well as all patrol equipment to be able to test it in practice.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 7. JUN. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 7 JUNE 1929
La notte fu passata coi cani e le slitte.- Difficilmente, chi non conosce quest'arte s'immagina quanto sia interessante e difficile l'addestramento di una muta di cani al traino e sopra tutto la formazione di un capo muta.- Provammo tutte le formazioni possibili, cambiando, mischiando, cercando di temperare, rafforzare o neutralizzare le tendenze buone o le cattive, rispettando gli odi e le amicizie e i caratteri insofferenti, cercando di trasformare la gelosia e la prepotenza in arte di	The night was spent with the dogs and the sledges.- Hardly, the one who doesn't know this art can imagine how interesting and difficult it is to train a team of sledge dogs and above all the formation of a lead dog.- We tried all possible formations, changing, mixing, trying to temper, strengthen or neutralize the good or bad tendencies, respecting hatreds and friendships and intolerant temperaments, trying to transform jealousy and dominance into the art of

comando, l'aperta in
interro di Carlo, la
sensibilità in arte di
non c'è.

Caricatura e satira:
primi risultati verso mattino
franco usperi il "Carne".

"Lis" fu nominato capo
morte dello slitta di punte.

Durante la giornata
oltre 25 una all'andata
caccia di anitra per noi e
di poche per cani, facemmo
primi esperimenti colle
radio portatili che diedero
risultati non ancora brillanti;
mi per la ancora perfetta conoscenza
pratica del Mare del Nord norvegico.

Domani, p.c.; solo tre
ore penti alle prime ore dell'8
avremo già pranzi sul lavoro
della morte.



Partimmo all'una di notte
verso Est nella farsa.

comando, l'apatia in rudezza di lavoro, la sensibilità in arte di slancio.- Cominciammo a sortire i primi risultati verso mattina quando ripresi scopersi il "Cane".- "Lis" fu nominato capo muta della slitta di punta. Durante la giornata oltre ad una abbondante caccia di anitre per noi e di foche per i cani, facemmo i primi esperimenti colla radio portatile che diedero risultati non ancora brillantissimi per la ancora [im]perfetta conoscenza pratica del Morse del buon Urbano.- Dormimmo poco; solo tre ore perché alle prime ore dell' 8 eravamo già pronti pel lavoro delle mute.-	command, apathy into endurance in toil, the sensitivity into art of impulse. We began to achieve the first results toward morning when upon resuming I discovered the "Dog".- "Lis" was appointed lead dog of the head sledge. During the day in addition to an abundant hunt of ducks for us and seals for the dogs, we carried out the first experiments with the portable radio which gave results not yet very brilliant due to the still [im]perfect practical knowledge of the Morse by good Urbano.- We slept little; only three hours because in the early hours of the 8 we were already prepared for the work with the teams.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 8. JUN. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 8 JUNE 1929
Partimmo all'una diretti verso W Est sulla fascia	We departed at one o'clock headed W East along the belt

di terra ondulato che delimita a
sud la Bay di Bay. - In tre ore superiamo
i 15 km. che ci separavano da
Ny Alun 5 - N. p. fatto alcune compere
alla Bukt. in via. Il ritorno
dallo 13 facciamo ritorno al
campo - fa due venti furiosi,
e meraviglie.

'Lis' è un intelligente
cani, pieno di vitalità e di
punti. Egl. Suenk il
ritorno avevo già imparato a
guardarmi di tanto in tanto;
non ricordo che gli compenso
la responsabilità che gli è
stata assegnata - Tienan.
Nella Valle di p. da 12 ore in attesa
del nostro ritorno.

L' Hinner è caricato
nelle baie e può continuare di
notte - Tienan è tenuto il pilota
di ghiacci che mi dà le
suggerimenti molto che delle buone
condizioni con di cui da ghiacci
al Nord - La cosa è realmente
sorprendente - Le navi raggiungono
le isole Norweg, e il pilota salta

di terra ondulata che delimita a Sud la King's Bay.- In tre ore superammo i 15 Km che ci separavano da Ny Alesund.- Dopo fatte alcune compere alla Butike iniziamo il ritorno ed alle 13 facciamo ritorno al campo.- Le due mute funzionano a meraviglia.- "Lis" è un intelligente cane, pieno di vitalità e di puntiglio.- Egli durante il ritorno aveva già imparato a guardarmi di tanto in tanto; segno sicuro ch'egli comprende la responsabilità che gli è stata assegnata – Troviamo Della Valle digiuno da 12 ore in attesa del nostro ritorno.- L'Heimen è ancorata nella baia a poche centinaia di metri – trovo a terra il pilota di ghiacci che mi dà la sorprendente notizia ch delle buone condizioni condizioni dei ghiacci al Nord.- La cosa è realmente sorprendente.- La nave raggiunse le isole Norway, e il pilota salito	of undulating land that borders King's Bay to the South.- In three hours we covered the 15 km that separated us from Ny Alesund.- After making some purchases at the Butike we began the return and at 13 we returned to the camp.- The two dog teams work wonderfully.- "Lis" is an intelligent dog, full of vitality and determination.- He during the return had already learnt to look at me from time to time; a sure sign that he understands the responsibility that has been assigned to him – We find Della Valle fasting for 12 hours waiting for our return.- The Heimen is anchored at the bay a few hundred metres away – I find on land the ice pilot who gives me the surprising news of the good ice conditions conditions in the North.- The thing is truly surprising.- The ship reached the Norway Islands, and the pilot boarded
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Sull. scivolo all' Udo. vide. var.
 avanti le acque libere e perdute di
 vecchio! - Si verificò con le
 variaz. dell. mare. elevato sopra
 riva, che cioè la fusione
 di ghiacci al Sud ed all' W
 fanno supporre acqua libera ed
 N. ed all' E, T per l' arrivo
 dell. corrente del Golfo -
 Velenoso. un. clam.
 indugi. un. ent. am. il campo e
 con due barche naviganti. apr.
 cosa a bordo -
 Navig. am. alle 18 -



Fu in' azione sopra tutto -
 Senz. alcun intoppo, superando
 ogni previsione ottimista, ed in
 aperta continuata delle condizioni dei
 ghiacci alle 17 navi. e Nidam.
 all' bel. Wagon del gruppo delle
 otto isole. Navigando al Nord in
 acque completamente libere non
 neppure. e attenzione anche di
 ghiacci. mentre a mezzogiorno
 dall' Mito di Hinko per cui
 il ghiaccio era ancora compatto

Sulla sommità dell'isola vide verso levante le acque libere a perdita di occhio! – Si verifica così la verità della mia ostinata supposizione; che cioè la grande presenza di ghiacci al Sud e all' W facesse supporre acque libere ad N. ed all'Est per l'azione della corrente del Golfo.- Velocemente, senza alcun indugio smontiamo il campo e con due barche trasportiamo ogni cosa a bordo- Ripartiamo alle 18.-	At the top of the island he saw toward the east the open waters as far as the eye could see! – Thus is confirmed the truth of my stubborn supposition; that is the great presence of ice to the South and the W might suggest open waters to the N. and the East due to the action of the Gulf Stream.- Quickly, without any delay, we dismantle the camp and with two boats we brought everything back on board- We departed at 18
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 9. JUN. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 9 JUNE 1929
Fu un'azione sorprendente.- Senza alcun intoppo, superando ogni previsione ottimista, ed in aperto contrasto colle condizioni dei ghiacci alle 17 siamo a ridosso dell'Isola Wagen del gruppo delle sette isole. Navigando al Nord in acque completamente libere non scorgiamo a settentrione ombra di ghiaccio mentre a mezzogiorno dallo stretto di Hinlopen in su il ghiaccio era ancora compatto	It was a surprising action.- Without any hindrance, exceeding all optimistic expectations, and in clear contrast with the ice conditions at 17 we were close to Wagen Island of the seven islands group. Sailing northward in completely open waters we did not see to the North the slightest trace of ice whereas at noon from the Hinlopen strait upward the ice was still compact

cento. Ca. cento. Delle Ten. di Nord Est.
 Alle 23 sbarco con Peroni e Nelli. Vili
 caricati sulle due slitte e con feltran
 e Banda e fu 5.25 con l'intenzione
 di raggiungere Capo Nord e la Capanna.
 Per di Beverly Sun Set per una
 investigazione preliminare.



Fu una marcia entusiasmante
 che durò nell'andata circa otto
 ore sulla neve ghiacciata scacciata ed
 enormi di ghiaccio si pensava che
 si fosse il collare di Sifon. Fu
 alle nostre esultanze. Monte.
 Teniamo alle 5 Capo Nord e
 fu per me un vero soddisfazione
 e l'intera ritirata avvenne alla
 maniera mancava di vitto.
 I reperti dei miei bracciali sulle
 navi erano: Ripiofano, molto
 sulle Capanne di Beverly. Le navi
 ancora che non sa chi sono.
 avvicinati alle nostre missioni
 nelle parti attese a S. per fare

contro la costa della Terra di Nord Est.- Alle 23 sbarco con Peroni e Della Valle caricati sulle due slitte e con Jelstein e Bonola e Guedoz.- con l'intenzione di raggiungere Capo Nord e la capanna base di Beverly Sundet per una investigazione preliminare.-	against the coast of North East Land.- At 23 I disembark with Peroni and Della Valle loaded onto the two sledges along with Jelstein and Bonola and Guedoz.- with the intention of reaching North Cape and the base hut of Beverly Sundet for a preliminary investigation.-
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 10. JUN. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 10 JUNE 1929
Fu una marcia interessante che durò nell'andata circa otto ore svolta tra ghiacci seraccati ed enormi dighe di pressione che diedero il collaudo definitivo alle nostre eccellenti mute.- Toccammo alle 5 Capo Nord e fu per me immensa soddisfazione e tristezza ritrovare assieme alla immensa mancanza di vita i segni dei miei bivacchi dello scorso anno.- Ripiegammo subito sulla Capanna di Beverly che trovammo ancora chiusa da chiodi arrugginiti colle sue iscrizioni sulle pareti atte a difendere	It was an interesting march that lasted on the way there about eight hours carried out among serac-filled ice and enormous pressure ridges that provided the definitive test for our excellent teams. We reached North Cape at 5 and for me it was an immense satisfaction and sadness to find, along with the immense absence of life the signs of my bivouacs from last year.- We turned immediately towards Beverly Hut that we found still sealed with rusty nails with its inscriptions on the walls meant to protect

Il mio contenuto ~~Salt~~ da eventuale
funz. - "This depot is put here to
help Nohikis and Am-Sen's lost
parties ---"

Sch. Sam. La parte ed
nell'interno delle capanne.
Nohikis il peso enorme di una
relazione un. pari. I nomi
sperimentati Salim-Sen e del glacier,
l'interno e la parte rivestita
di neve e ghiaccio. Mi pare
che la non si fermi più certo
il calore delle querce che ce
in noi grande preparazione.
La verso anno il Serpente.

Durante, alcuni ore mi
grandi banchi di granito che
proteggiamo. La capanna in pochi
a pelo ed in attesa che la ore
notturna indovino. La neve.

Repent. alle 18 ed 21
in sole quattro ore raggiungiamo
la nave.

il suo contenuto dall da eventuali furti.- “This depot is put here to help Nobile’s and Amundsen’s lost parties... . Schiodammo la porta ed nell’interno della capanna sentii il peso enorme di una solitudine senza pari.- I viveri deteriorati dall’umidità e dal ghiaccio, l’interno e le pareti rivestite di neve e ghiaccio.- Mi parve che lì non vi fosse più certo il calore della speranza che era in noi quando preparammo lo scorso anno il deposito.- Dormimmo alcune ore sui grandi banchi di granito che fronteggiano la capanna in sacchi a pelo ed in attesa che le ore notturne indurissero la neve.- Ripartiamo alle 19 ed [alle] 23 in sole quattro ore raggiungiamo la nave.-	its contents from possible theft.- “This depot is put here to help Nobile’s and Amundsen’s lost parties... . We removed the nails from the door and inside the hut I felt the enormous weight of an unparalleled solitude.- The food spoiled by humidity and ice, the interior and the walls covered in snow and ice.- It seemed to me that there was no longer the warmth of hope that had been in us when we prepared the depot last year.- We slept a few hours on the large granite slabs that face the hut in sleeping bags and waiting for the nighttime hours to harden the snow.- We depart again at 19 and [at] 23 in only four hours we reach the ship.-
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Fu un giorno di lavoro intenso
 e di preoccupazioni non
 semplici. Alcuni non sono più al
 completo le sue spalle - la
 preparazione di simili pattern. 5
 giorni di più sono riprese in
 ragione. Put. con una 5 conto.
 di veri cantanti, ciascuno a
 2 giorni per gli altri uomini -
 anche con plurimamente. 25 giorni
 di lavoro. Riprendono tutti i
 primari. Si sono 25 m. a 5 m.
 10 sett. 5. e. alle varie tabelle
 e numerazioni. Alla sua
 sono stanchi. L'anno scorso di un
 partenza per ripetere quanto ho
 già fatto e di cui so la difficoltà
 dei pericoli mi preoccupano
 poco preoccupazioni -
 Vorrei una Telstein in dieci
 con di 50 m. che non intendo
 partire con 5. anche al 100
 Si. calce. Due. Vichichi -



Lavoro nei preparativi
 e nel lavoro di fronte l'obiettivo
 che inoltre, oltre al tempo che
 bisogna, anche non scriver solo.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 11. JUN. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 11 JUNE 1929
Fu un giorno di lavoro intenso e di preoccupazioni non semplici. Allestimmo quasi al completo le due slitte.- La preparazione di simili partenze è quanto di più duro si possa immaginare. Porto con me 5 cassette di viveri contenenti ciascuna 5 giorni per quattro uomini – ossia complessivamente 25 giorni di viveri.- Ripassammo tutti i finimenti dei cani ad uno ad uno adattandoli alle varie taglie e numerandoli.- Alla sera sono stanco. L'imminenza di una partenza per ripetere quanto ho già fatto e di cui sò le difficoltà ed i pericoli mi procura non poca preoccupazione.- Verso sera Jelstein mi dice candidamente che non intende partire essendo ammalato.- Si cacciarono due trichechi.-	It was a day of intense work and of not simple preparations. We outfitted almost completely the two sledges.- The preparation for such departures is one of the hardest things one can imagine. I carry with me 5 boxes of provisions each containing 5 days' worth for four men – that is a total of 25 days of food.- We reviewed all the dog harnesses one by one adjusting them to the various sizes and numbering them.- By evening I am tired. The imminence of a departure to repeat what have already done and of which I know the difficulties and dangers causes me not a little concern.- Toward evening Jelstein tells me frankly that he does not intend to leave being ill.- Two walruses were hunted -

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 12. JUN. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 12 JUNE 1929
Sorvolo sui preparativi e sul lavoro di queste giornate che inoltre, oltre al tempo che stringe, anche non scrivendoli	I pass over the preparations and the work of these days which, beyond the pressure of time, even if unwritten

certo non si cancellano,
dalle mie memorie.

Tutto è pronto alle 22-
la Cava. frutt. ho in un
cell. più o meno 2 arcti e
Jakobson - Poi caliamo le
slitte sul ghiaccio -



I cani pure sono
attaccati alle slitte. - E
hanno un. bottiglia di
champagne - Sono le

2 P.M.T. per le partenze -
l'ultima, prima a me
e due -

I nostri compagni sono partiti fra la commozone di tutti,
anche se l'apparecchio cinematografico di bella Valle non ha
sopreso che delle fredde strette di mano e se noi ci siamo
impegnati in un saluto quasi militare mentre essi scomparivano
nella notte.

Per qualche settimana tocca ora a me l'onore di continuare
questo libro di bordo.

Oggi l'Heimen è restata all'ancoraggio a ridosso dell'isola Walden
e noi abbiamo ritenuto la nostra vita di bordo per questo periodo
d'assenza di Albertini. Farà il suo turno di guardia anche Eugène
e bella Valle ci aiuterà alla sua volta a far da mangiare e a
tenere in ordine la nostra casa. I turni di guardia saranno di 24 ore.

certo non si cancelleranno dalla mia memoria.- Tutto è pronto alle 22 .- A lavoro finito ho un lungo colloquio con Zanetti e Jakobsen- Poi caliamo le slitte sul ghiaccio.-	certainly will not be erased from my memory.- Everything is ready at 22.- When the job is finished I have a long conversation with Zanetti and Jakobsen- Then we lower the sledges onto the ice.
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 13. JUN. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 13 JUNE 1929
I cani pure sono attaccati alle slitte.- È bevuta una bottiglia di champagne.- Sono le 2 G.M.T quando partiamo.- L'ultimo pensiero a mia madre.-	The dogs too are harnessed to the sledges.- A bottle of champagne is drunk.- It is 2 G.M.T when we depart.- The last thought to my mother.-

certo non si cancellano,
dallo mio memoria -

Tutto è pronto alle 22-
la Cava. frutt. ho in un 1°
cell. più o con 2 arcti e
Jakobson - Poi caliamo le
slitte sul ghiaccio -



I cani più sani,
attaccati alle slitte. - E
hanno un. bottiglia di
champagne - Sono le

2 P.M.T. per le partenze -
l'ultima, prima a me
me dice -

I nostri compagni sono partiti fra la commozione di tutti,
anche se l'apparecchio cinematografico di bella Valle non ha
sopreso che delle fredde strette di mano e se noi ci siamo
involontari in un saluto quasi militare mentre essi scomparivano
nella notte.

Per qualche settimana toccò così a me l'onore di continuare
questo libro di bordo.

Oggi l'Heimen è restata all'ancoraggio a ridosso dell'isola Walden
e noi abbiamo ritemperato la nostra vita di bordo per questo periodo
d'assenza di Albertini. Sarà il mio turno di guardia anche Eugenio
e bella Valle ci aiuterà alla sua volta a far da mangiare e a
tenere in ordine la nostra casa. I turni di guardia saranno L. 24022.

The following entries are written by Piero Zanetti, Second in Command.

Transcript
I nostri compagni sono partiti fra la commozione di tutti, anche se l'apparecchio cinematografico di Della Valle non ha sorpreso che delle fredde strette di mano e se noi ci siamo irrigiditi in un saluto quasi militare mentre essi scomparivano nella nebbia. Per qualche settimana tocca così a me l'onore di continuare questo libro di bordo. Oggi l'Heimen è restata all'ancoraggio a ridosso dell'isola Walden e noi abbiamo sistemato la nostra vita di bordo per questo periodo d'assenza di Albertini. Farà il suo turno di guardia anche Pugliese e Della Valle ci aiuterà alla sua volta a far da mangiare e a tenere in ordine la nostra casa. I turni di guardia saranno di 24 ore.
Translation
Our companions departed amidst the emotion of all, even though Della Valle's film camera captured only cold handshakes and we stiffened into an almost military salute while they disappeared into the fog. For a few weeks it does falls to me the honor of continuing this logbook. Today the Heimen remained at anchor close to the Walden island and we have arranged our life on board for this period of Albertini's absence. Pugliese will also take his turn at watch and Della Valle will help us in turn with cooking and keeping our home in order. The watch shifts will be of 24 hours

NAVE HEIMEN
14. JUN 1929
2004

All'ora una ci stacciamo dall'ancoraggio dell'isola Walden e invasions tutta la giornata al largo per evitare di restare bloccati dai ghiacci che il forte vento di N.W. spinge verso di noi. All'appuntamento delle ore 20 riusciamo a comunicare distintamente con la pattuglia dell'est. Dopo ci avviciniamo all'isola Loo per esplorarla.

NAVE
15. JUN 1929
2004

Esplorata l'isola Loo nelle prime ore del mattino facciamo di nuovo rotta verso le Sette Dole tenendoci quanto più vicino è possibile alla riva di cui notiamo attentamente la costa. Nessuna comunicazione con la pattuglia.

NAVE HEIMEN
16 JUN 1929
2004

La nave si avvicina a nord dell'isola Walden e ci compaiono da Bruni e da Julius approfittando della buona giornata per fare un giro d'esplorazione alle Sette Dole.

All'appuntamento di questa mattina riceviamo distintamente le comunicazioni di Albertini. La marcia della pattuglia dell'est prosegue con una regolarità meravigliosa, che nulla riesce a turbare. Questa sera Bruni ha fatto il pane.

NAVE HEIMEN
17 JUN 1929
2004

Continuiamo a incrociare dinanzi a Burley Soundet, ma siamo tutti fermi da Albertini non tornerà indietro. Il tempo è discreto anche se il cielo è quasi costantemente coperto, e la temperatura è mite.

Nessuna comunicazione con la pattuglia.

Transcript
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 14. JUN. 1929
All'ora una ci stacciamo dall'ancoraggio dell'isola Walden e incrociamo tutta la giornata al largo per evitare di restare bloccati dai ghiacci che il forte vento di N. W. spinge verso di noi. All'appuntamento delle ore 20 riuscimmo a comunicare distintamente con la pattuglia dell'est. Dopo ci avviciniamo all'isola Lov per esplorarla.
Translation
STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 14 JUNE 1929
At one o'clock we detach from the anchorage at Walden Island and cruise all day offshore to avoid getting trapped by the ice that the strong N.W. wind is pushing towards us. At the 20 scheduled contact we managed to communicate clearly with the east patrol. Afterwards we approach Lov island to explore it
Transcript
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 15. JUN. 1929
Esplorata l'isola Lov nelle prime ore del mattino facciamo di nuovo rotta verso le Sette Isole tenendoci quanto più vicino è possibile alla terra di cui scrutiamo attentamente la costa. Nessuna comunicazione con la pattuglia.
Translation
STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 15 JUNE 1929
Having explored Lov island in the early hours in the morning we set course again toward the Seven Islands keeping as close as possible to the land whose coast we examine carefully. No communication with the patrol.

NAVE HEIMEN
14. JUN 1929
2004

All'ora una ci stacciamo dall'ancoraggio dell'isola Walden e invasiamo tutta la giornata al largo per evitare di restare bloccati dai ghiacci che il forte vento di N.W. spinge verso di noi. All'appuntamento delle ore 20 riusciamo a comunicare distintamente con la pattuglia dell'est. Dopo ci avviciniamo all'isola Loo per esplorarla.

NAVE
15. JUN 1929
2004

Esplorata l'isola Loo nelle prime ore del mattino facciamo di nuovo rotta verso le Sette Dole tenendoci quanto più vicino è possibile alla riva di cui notiamo attentamente la costa. Nessuna comunicazione con la pattuglia.

NAVE HEIMEN
16 JUN 1929
2004

La nave si avvicina a nord dell'isola Walden e ci accompagna da Bruni e da Julius approfittando della buona giornata per fare un giro d'esplorazione alle Sette Dole.

All'appuntamento di questa mattina riceviamo distintamente le comunicazioni di Albertini. La marcia della pattuglia dell'est prosegue con una regolarità meravigliosa, che nulla riesce a turbare. Questa sera Bruni ha fatto il pane.

NAVE HEIMEN
17 JUN 1929
2004

Continuiamo a incrociare dinanzi a Burley Soundet, ma siamo tutti fermi da Albertini non tornerà indietro. Il tempo è discreto anche se il cielo è quasi costantemente coperto, e la temperatura è mite.

Nessuna comunicazione con la pattuglia.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 16. JUN. 1929

La nave si ancora a nord dell'isola Walden e ac=
compagnato da Peroni e da Julius approfitto della buona giornata
per fare un giro d'esplorazione alle Sette Isole.
All'appuntamento di questa mattina ricevemmo distintamente
le comunicazioni di Albertini. La marcia della pattuglia dell'est
prosegue con una regolarità meravigliosa, che nulla riesce
a turbare. Questa sera Peroni ha fatto il pane.

STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 16 JUNE 1929

The ship anchors north of Walden island and
accompanied by Peroni and Julius I take advantage of the
good day to make a reconnaissance trip to the Seven
Islands. At the morning's scheduled contact we clearly
received communications from Albertini. The march of
the east patrol continues with marvelous regularity, which
nothing can disturb. Tonight Peroni baked bread.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 17. JUN. 1929

Continuiamo a incrociare dinanzi a Beverly Soundet,
ma siamo tutti persuasi che Albertini non tornerà indietro.
Il tempo è discreto anche se il cielo è quasi costantemente
coperto, e la temperatura è mite.
Nessuna comunicazione con la pattuglia.

STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 17 JUNE 1929

We continue cruising in front of Beverly Soundet,
but we are all convinced that Albertini will not return.
The weather is fair even though the sky is almost
constantly overcast, and the temperature is mild.
No communication with the patrol.



Tutto il giorno navighiamo lungo le coste nord della
Zona di Nordst e dello Spitzbergen.
All'appuntamento delle ore 20 abbiamo ricevuto segnali di ottima
intensità dalla pattuglia svezia però riuscire a ottenere dall'Urbano
la loro posizione. Sicuro però della marcia di Albertini decido
lo stesso con il capitano di fare rotta verso l'Heimölen e così
nelle ultime ore del giorno l'Heimölen mette la prua verso il sud.



Nelle prime ore del mattino gettiamo l'ancora al-
l'attesa della baia di Wahlenburg dopo avere durante tutta
la navigazione approfittato della buona visibilità per scrutare
attentamente le coste.

Dopo mezzogiorno viene uiso un orso che imprudentemente si
era spinto in mare fin presso la nave.

All'appuntamento delle ore 20 riusciamo finalmente ad avere
notizie precise e rassicuranti dai nostri compagni. Essi
hanno fatto molta strada.

Vino una nebbia da nebbia e si leva un vento di sud
umido e forte.



La sera il tempo cattivo continuava a restare fermo
all'ancoraggio di qui.

Oggi sia all'appuntamento del mattino che a quello della sera
abbiamo potuto comunicare con Albertini. Urbano non riesce
a sentirsi distintamente, ma Sugliosi assicura che la nostra
radio trasmette molto forte e che non può tardare il momento
in cui anche la pattuglia dell'est potrà sentirsi in chiarezza.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 18. JUN. 1929
Tutto il giorno navighiamo lungo le coste nord della Terra di Nordest e dello Spitzbergen. All'appuntamento delle ore 20 abbiamo ricevuto segnali di ottima intensità dalla pattuglia senza però riuscire a ottenere da Urbano la loro posizione. Sicuro però della marcia di Albertini decido lo stesso con il capitano di fare rotta verso l'Hinlopen e così nelle ultime ore del giorno l'Heimen mette la prua verso il sud.
STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 18 JUNE 1929
All day we sail along the northern coasts of the Northeast Land and of Spitzbergen. At the 20 scheduled contact we received signals of excellent strength from the patrol yet we were unable to obtain from Urbano their position. Sure however of Albertini's march I decide all the same with the captain to set course for the Hinlopen and so in the last hours of the day the Heimen turns the bow southward.
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 19. JUN. 1929
Nelle prime ore del mattino gettiamo l'ancora all'altezza della baia di Wahlemborg dopo avere durante tutta la navigazione approfittato della buona visibilità per scrutare attentamente le coste. Dopo mezzogiorno viene ucciso un orso che imprudentemente si era spinto in mare fin presso la nave. All'appuntamento delle ore 20 riusciamo finalmente ad avere notizie precise e rassicuranti dai nostri compagni. Essi hanno fatto molta strada. Verso sera scende la nebbia e si leva un vento di sud umido e forte.
STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 19 JUNE 1929
In the early hours of the morning we drop anchor abeam Wahlenberg Bay after having throughout the whole navigation taken advantage of the good visibility to scan the coasts attentively. After midday a bear is killed that imprudently had ventured into the sea right up to the ship. At the 20 scheduled contact we finally manage to obtain precise and reassuring news from our companions. They have covered a great distance. Towards evening the fog descends and a humid strong southerly wind rises.



Tutto il giorno navighiamo lungo le coste nord della
Zona di Nordst e dello Spitzbergen.
All'appuntamento delle ore 20 abbiamo ricevuto segnali di ottima
intensità dalla pattuglia svedese però riuscire a ottenere dall'Urbano
la loro posizione. Sicuro però della marcia di Albertini decido
lo stesso con il capitano di fare rotta verso l'Heimlen e così
nelle ultime ore del giorno l'Heimlen mette la prua verso il sud.



Nelle prime ore del mattino gettiamo l'ancora al-
l'attesa della baia di Wahlenburg dopo avere durante tutta
la navigazione approfittato della buona visibilità per scrutare
attentamente le coste.

Dopo mezzogiorno viene ucciso un orso che imprudentemente si
era spinto in mare fin presso la nave.

All'appuntamento delle ore 20 riusciamo finalmente ad avere
notizie precise e rassicuranti dai nostri compagni. Essi
hanno fatto molta strada.

Vino una nebbia da nebbia e si leva un vento di sud
umido e forte.



La sera il tempo cattivo continuava a restare fermo
all'ancoraggio di qui.

Oggi sia all'appuntamento del mattino che a quello della sera
abbiamo potuto comunicare con Albertini. Urbano non riesce
a sentirsi distintamente, ma Sugliere assicura che la nostra
radio trasmette molto forte e che non può tardare il momento
in cui anche la pattuglia dell'est potrà sentirsi in chiarezza.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 20. JUN. 1929
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Causa il tempo cattivo continuiamo a restare fermi all'ancoraggio di ieri. Oggi sia all'appuntamento del mattino che a quello della sera abbiamo potuto comunicare con Albertini. Urbano non riesce a sentirci distintamente, ma Pugliese assicura che la nostra radio trasmette molto forte e che non può tardare il momento in cui anche la pattuglia dell'est potrà sentirci con chiarezza.
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STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 20 JUNE 1929
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Because of the bad weather we continue to remain stationary at yesterday's anchorage. Today both at the morning scheduled contact and at the evening one we were able to communicate with Albertini. Urbano cannot hear us distinctly, but Pugliese assures that our radio transmits very strongly and that the moment cannot be far off when the patrol in the east too will be able to hear us clearly.

NAVE HEIMEN
21 JUN 1929
Mose

Nelle prime ore della giornata ci portiamo con la nave vicino alle isole Forster e rendiamo a fare provvista di uova di anatre. Ve ne sono a migliaia su questi nostri selvaggi. E mentre noi deprediamo i nidi le anatre ci volano intorno gridando altamente la loro protesta. Qualcuna cade sotto i nostri colpi. All'appuntamento della sera comuniciamo con Albertini che ci salodisce per la rapidità della nostra marcia.

NAVE HEI
22 JUN 1929
Mose

Anche oggi ritorniamo alle isole Forster a completare la nostra provvista di uova. E anche oggi buone notizie dalla pattuglia. Il tempo nebbioso impedisce ogni attività e movimento con la nave. D'altra parte non è più ora possibile spingersi più a sud delle isole Forster poiché il ghiaccio si distende compatto.

NAVE HEIMEN
23 JUN 1929
Mose

Continua il tempo nebbioso e il vento umido da sud. Oggi nessuna comunicazione con la pattuglia. Non ci è più stato possibile di comunicare con la stazione di San Paolo causa un fenomeno di perturbazione magnetica che per una ora provocò l'evanescenza quasi assoluta di qualsiasi onda.

Il marinaio Hermet, che funziona anche da interprete, accusa dei dolori viscerali e chiede di essere portato alla King's bay. Lo faccio visitare da Peroni, che giudica trattarsi d'indigestione di vermina gravata e lo persuade di uccarsi sulla nave.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 21. JUN. 1929

Nelle prime ore della giornata ci portiamo con la nave vicino alle isole Forster e scendiamo a fare provvista di uova di anatre. Ve ne sono a migliaia su questi scogli selvaggi. E mentre noi deprediamo i nidi le anatre ci volano intorno gridando altamente la loro protesta. Qualcuna cade sotto i nostri colpi. All'appuntamento della sera comunichiamo con Albertini che ci sbalordisce per la rapidità della sua marcia.

STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 21 JUNE 1929

In the early hours of the day we bring the ship near the Forster Islands and go ashore to get a provision of duck eggs. There are thousands of them on these wild rocks. And while we plunder the nests the ducks fly around us loudly crying their protest. Some fall under our shots. At the evening scheduled contact we communicate with Albertini, who astonishes us by the speed of his march.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 22. JUN. 1929

Anche oggi ritorniamo alle isole Forster a completare la nostra provvista di uova. E anche oggi buone notizie dalla pattuglia. Il tempo nebbioso impedisce ogni attività e movimento con la nave. D'altra parte non è per ora possibile spingerci più a sud delle isole Forster poiché il ghiaccio si distende compatto.

STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 22 JUNE 1929

Again today we return to the Forster Islands to complete our supply of eggs. And again today, good news from the patrol. The foggy weather prevents all activity and movement with the ship. On the other hand, for now it is not possible to push farther south of the Forster Islands because the ice stretches out solid.

NAVE HEIMEN
21 JUN 1929
Mose

Nelle prime ore della giornata ci portiamo con la nave vicino alle isole Forster e rendiamo a fare provvista di uova di anatre. Ve ne sono a migliaia su questi nostri selvaggi. E mentre noi deprediamo i nidi le anatre ci volano intorno gridando altamente la loro protesta. Qualcuna cade sotto i nostri colpi. All'appuntamento della sera comuniciamo con Albertini che ci salodisce per la rapidità della nostra marcia.

NAVE HEI
22 JUN 1929
Mose

Anche oggi ritorniamo alle isole Forster a completare la nostra provvista di uova. E anche oggi buone notizie dalla pattuglia. Il tempo nebbioso impedisce ogni attività e movimento con la nave. D'altra parte non è più ora possibile spingersi più a sud delle isole Forster poiché il ghiaccio si distende compatto.

NAVE HEIMEN
23 JUN 1929
Mose

Continua il tempo nebbioso e il vento umido da sud. Oggi nessuna comunicazione con la pattuglia. Non ci è più stato possibile di comunicare con la stazione di San Paolo causa un fenomeno di perturbazione magnetica che per una ora provocò l'evanescenza quasi assoluta di qualsiasi onda.

Il marinaio Hermet, che funziona anche da interprete, accusa dei dolori viscerali e chiede di essere portato alla King's bay. Lo faccio visitare da Peroni, che giudica trattarsi d'indigestione di vermina gravata e lo persuade di uccarsi sulla nave.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 23. JUN. 1929
Continua il tempo nebbioso e il vento umido da sud. Oggi nessuna comunicazione con la pattuglia. Non ci è pure stato possibile di comunicare con la stazione di San Paolo causa un fenomeno di perturbazione magnetica che per circa un'ora provocò l'evanescenza quasi assoluta di qualsiasi onda. Il marinaio Hernest, che funziona anche da interprete, accusa dei dolori viscerali e chiede di essere portato alla King's bay. Lo faccio visitare da Peroni, che giudica trattarsi d'indisposizione di nessuna gravità e lo persuade di curarsi sulla nave.
STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 23 JUNE 1929
Foggy weather and the humid south wind continue. Today no communication with the patrol. Nor have we been able to communicate with the San Paolo station because of a phenomenon of magnetic disturbance which for about an hour caused the almost absolute evanescence of any wave. The sailor Hernest, who also serves as interpreter, complains of visceral pains and asks to be taken to King's bay. I have him examined by Peroni, who judges it to be an indisposition of no gravity and persuades him to be treated on the ship.



Questa mattina abbiamo avuto comunicazione dalla pattuglia della prodigiosa loro marcia di ieri e di stanotte, che li porta quasi nel vicinato sud della Lusa di Nordost. La Albertini ha avuto istruzioni di attendere il nostro ritorno alla Wahlenburg bay.

Il tempo è migliorato da ieri, ma il cielo è sempre coperto. Abbiamo fermi tra la baia di Wahlenburg e le isole Foster mentre l'equipaggio approfitta della sosta per fare battute di caccia.



Quasi per tutto il giorno c'è stato il sole e il cielo sereno, approfittiamo della buona visibilità per spingerci a sud nello stretto di Hinlopen, ma poco dopo un miglio dalle isole Foster siamo fermati dalla banchisa compatta. Ritorniamo di nuovo al nord investigando quanto più possiamo dello Spitzbergen il lato verso il mare. In fondo al Lomme find risorgiamo una nuvoletta, ma rimandiamo ad altro giorno la visita a quei cacciatori.

Alla sera si leva un forte vento da sud e ritorniamo ad ancorare la nave all'altezza di Wahlenburg bay.

Nessuna comunicazione dalla pattuglia.



All'appuntamento delle ore 10 riceviamo segnali dalla pattuglia, ma subito dopo si leva di nuovo un forte vento da sud e viene pure a cessare la voce dei nostri compagni.

Nella mattinata andiamo ad ancorarci nella Lomme bay e verso

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 24. JUN. 1929
Questa mattina abbiamo avuto comunicazione dalla pattuglia della prodigiosa loro marcia di ieri e di stanotte, che li portò quasi sul versante sud della Terra di Nordest. Da Albertini ho avuto istruzione di attendere il suo ritorno alla Wahlemberg bay. Il tempo è migliorato da ieri, ma il cielo è sempre coperto. Restiamo fermi tra la baia di Wahlemberg e le isole Forster mentre l'equipaggio approfitta della sosta per fare battute di caccia.
STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 24 JUNE 1929
This morning we received communication from the patrol about their prodigious march of yesterday and last night, which brought them almost into the southern side of the Northeast Land. From Albertini I received instruction to await his return at Wahlemberg bay. The weather has improved since yesterday, but the sky is still overcast. We remain stationary between the Wahlemberg Bay and the Forster Islands while the crew takes advantage of the stop to go on hunting trips.



Questa mattina abbiamo avuto comunicazione dalla pattuglia della prodigiosa loro marcia di ieri e di stanotte, che li porta quasi nel vicinato sud della Lusa di Nordost. La Albertini ha avuto istruzioni di attendere il nostro ritorno alla Wahlenburg bay.

Il tempo è migliorato da ieri, ma il cielo è sempre coperto. Abbiamo fermi tra la baia di Wahlenburg e le isole Foster mentre l'equipaggio approfitta della sosta per fare battute di caccia.



Quasi per tutto il giorno c'è stato il sole e il cielo sereno, approfittiamo della buona visibilità per spingerci a sud nello stretto di Hinlopen, ma poco dopo un miglio dalle isole Foster siamo fermati dalla banchisa compatta. Ritorniamo di nuovo al nord investigando quanto più possiamo dello Spitzbergen il lato verso il mare. In fondo al Lomme fiord osserviamo una navicella, ma rimandiamo ad altro giorno la visita a quei cacciatori.

Alla sera si leva un forte vento da sud e ritorniamo ad ancorare la nave all'altezza di Wahlenburg bay.

Nessuna comunicazione dalla pattuglia.



All'appuntamento delle ore 10 riceviamo segnali dalla pattuglia, ma subito dopo si leva di nuovo un forte vento da sud e viene pure a cessare la voce dei nostri compagni.

Nella mattinata andiamo ad ancorarci nella Lomme bay e verso

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 25. JUN. 1929

Quasi per tutto il giorno c'è stato il sole e il cielo sereno, approfittiamo della buona visibilità per spingerci a sud nello stretto di Hinlopen, ma poco dopo un miglio dalle isole Forster siamo fermati dalla banchisa compatta. Ritorniamo di nuovo al nord costeggiando quanto più possiamo dello Spitzbergen il lato verso il mare. In fondo al Lomme fiord scorgiamo una navicella, ma rimandiamo ad altro giorno la visita a quei cacciatori. Alla sera si leva un forte vento da sud e ritorniamo ad ancorare la nave all'altezza di Wahlemborg bay. Nessuna comunicazione dalla pattuglia.

STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 25 JUNE 1929

Almost for the whole day there was sun and a clear sky, we take advantage of the good visibility to push ourselves south into the Hinlopen Strait, but a little over one mile from the Forster Islands we are stopped by the compact pack ice. We return again to the north coasting as much as we can along the side of Spitzbergen toward the sea. At the end of the Lomme fiord we make out a small boat, but we postpone to another day the visit to those hunters. In the evening a strong wind rises from the south and we return to anchor the ship off Wahlemborg Bay. No communication from the patrol.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 26. JUN. 1929

All'appuntamento delle ore 10 riceviamo segnali dalla pattuglia, ma subito dopo si leva di nuovo un forte vento da sud e viene pure a cessare la voce dei nostri compagni. Nella mattinata andiamo ad ancorarci nella Lomme bay e verso

STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 26 JUNE 1929

At the 10 scheduled contact we receive signals from the patrol, but immediately after a strong wind from the south rises again and the voice of our companions also falls silent. In the morning we go to anchor in Lomme bay and about

meggiorno salgono a bordo tre cacciatori che colà si trovavano con la nave Blaf. Tutti sono tre Sørensen di Hummelst due da tre anni si trovano nelle Stalhard e che passano l'inverno a questi ultimi mesi cacciando nelle coste nord ed est dello Spitzbergen. Hanno aspetto aperto e intelligente. Uno di loro fu l'anno scorso con il capitano Sora a Mosel bay. Comandiamo notizie e informazioni degli spenditi, ma essi escludono che qualcuno sia passato in questi ultimi dieci mesi per questi luoghi.

Nel pomeriggio istituiamo loro la visita e ci rechiamo a visitare i loro squallidi quartieri d'inverno.



Anche oggi nessuna notizia da Alletini. Continua sempre il cattivo tempo con neve e nebbia fitta. Ruttiamo perciò fermi all'ancoraggio di Homme bay e pensiamo con molta tristezza alle ore dure che devono vivere i nostri compagni in mezzo al deserto di ghiaccio.



Giornata ancora più tempestosa di ieri e mare gonfio e agitato sotto il vento forte di nord. Non riceviamo alcuna notizia da Alletini e comincio a essere preoccupato del loro silenzio anche in causa di questo persistente maltempo.

brido perciò di fare un' esplorazione della zona di Nordost nel lato verso l'Hindloper quanto più a sud ci sarà possibile per il caso che i nostri compagni dal ghiacciaio centrale siano sbarcati nella costa. Approfittiamo del vento di nord che ha soffiato e soffiato i ghiacci verso sud per cinque fino a sud della Mountain Blaf, ma non riusciamo a trovare traccia

mezzogiorno salgono a bordo tre cacciatori che colà si trovavano con la nave Olaf. Essi sono tre Swensen di Hammefest che da tre anni si trovano nelle Svalbard e che passarono l'inverno e questi ultimi mesi cacciando sulle coste nord ed est dello Spitzbergen. Hanno aspetto aperto e intelligente. Uno di loro fu l'anno scorso con il capitano Sora a Mossel bay. Domandiamo notizie e informazioni degli sperduti, ma essi escludono che qualcuno sia passato in questi ultimi dieci mesi per questi luoghi.

Nel pomeriggio restituiamo loro la visita e ci rechiamo a visitare i loro squallidi quartieri d'inverno.

at noon three hunters come aboard who were there with the ship Olaf. They are three Swensen from Hammefest who for three years have been in Svalbard and who spent the winter and these last months hunting on the north and east coasts of Spitzbergen. They have an open and intelligent look. One of them was last year with Captain Sora at Mossel bay. We ask for news and information about the missing, but they rule out that anyone has passed in these last ten months through these places. In the afternoon we return their visit and go to see their squalid winter quarters.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 27. JUN. 1929

Anche oggi nessuna notizia da Albertini. Continua sempre il cattivo tempo con neve e nebbia fitta. Restiamo perciò fermi all'ancoraggio di Lomme bay e pensiamo con molta tristezza alle ore dure che devono vivere i nostri compagni in mezzo al deserto di ghiaccio.

STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 27 JUNE 1929

Again today no news from Albertini. The bad weather continues with snow and thick fog. Therefore we remain stationary at the anchorage of Lomme bay and think with great sadness of the hard hours that our companions must live through in the midst of the ice desert.

incontrammo salgono a bordo tre cacciatori che loro si trovarono con la nave Blaf. Tutti sono tre Sørensen di Hummelst che da tre anni si trovano nelle Stalhard e che passano l'inverno a questi ultimi mesi cacciando nelle coste nord ed est dello Spitzbergen. Hanno aspetto aperto e intelligente. Uno di loro fu l'anno scorso con il capitano Sora a Mosel Bay. Comandiamo notizie e informazioni degli sveduti, ma essi escludono che qualcuno sia passato in questi ultimi dieci mesi per questi luoghi.

Nel pomeriggio istituivamo loro la visita e ci recavamo a visitare i loro squallidi quartieri d'inverno.



Anche oggi nessuna notizia da Allettini. Continua sempre il cattivo tempo con neve e nebbia fitta. Ristiamo perciò fermi all'ancoraggio di Homme Bay e pensiamo con molta tristezza alle ore dure che devono vivere i nostri compagni in mezzo al deserto di ghiaccio.



Giornata ancora più tempestosa di ieri e mare gonfio e agitato sotto il vento forte di nord. Non riceviamo alcuna notizia da Allettini e comincio a essere preoccupato del loro silenzio anche in causa di questo persistente maltempo.

Decido perciò di fare un' esplorazione della zona di Nordost nel lato verso l'Hindloper quanto più a nord ci sarà possibile per il caso che i nostri compagni dal ghiacciaio centrale siano sbarcati nella costa. Approfittiamo del vento di nord che ha soffiato e soffiato i ghiacci verso sud per cinque fino a sud della Mountain Blaf, ma non riusciamo a trovare traccia

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 28. JUN. 1929

Giornata ancora più tempestosa di ieri e mare gonfio e agitato sotto il vento forte di nord. Non riceviamo alcuna notizia da Albertini e comincio a essere preoccupato del loro silenzio anche in causa di questo persistente maltempo. Decido perciò di fare un'esplorazione della Terra di Nordest nel lato verso l'Hinlopen quanto più a sud ci sarà possibile per il caso che i nostri compagni dal ghiacciaio centrale siano sbarcati sulla costa. Approfittiamo del vento di nord che ha sospinto e rotto i ghiacci verso sud per giungere fino a sud della Mountain Blak, ma non riusciamo a scorgere traccia

STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 28 JUNE 1929

An even more tempestuous day than yesterday and a swollen and agitated sea under the strong wind from the north. We receive no news from Albertini and I begin to be worried by their silence also on account of this persistent bad weather. I therefore decide to make an exploration of the Northeast Land on the side toward the Hinlopen as far south as will be possible in case our companions from the central glacier have reached the coast. We take advantage of the north wind which has driven and broken the ice southward to reach south to the Mountain Blak, but we cannot make out any trace

della pattuglia.

Verso mezzogiorno indietto e andiamo ad ancorarci a ridosso dell'isola Hipsuete a nord della baia di Wahlenburg.



Ha infuriato tutto il giorno una brezza temibile con vento di nord di più di 1000 metri al minuto.

I nostri amici non si sono fatti vivi e il loro silenzio pesa su tutti noi tragicamente.

Verso mezzogiorno si calano e s'affaccia il sole di tra le nuvole nere. Che qualche buona notizia della pattuglia possa domani far tornare il sorriso anche nei nostri cuori!



Nelle prime ore del mattino l'Heimenn lascia l'ancora: raggiunge l'isola Hipsuete e partiamo ad esplorare minuziosamente la baia di Wahlenburg. Ma il canonicale non ci mostra che un'uguale distesa bianca e nel ghiaccio della baia un rugginare di foche.

Alle ore 11 avvistiamo la baleniera Viking che si sta ritirando al nord dopo avere inutilmente cercato una strada fra i ghiacci a sud dell'Heilöper.

Questa sera, finalmente, all'appuntamento delle ore 20 riceviamo un comunicato di Albutini. Sono le grandi parole che ci dicono tutto il loro inferno di questi ultimi giorni, e infine due brevi parole: tutto bene, le quali fanno riprendere i nostri cari commisti e ritornare l'allegria fra noi. Albutini mi dà pure istruzioni per fare un deposito di viveri fra capo Schander e il Agafjorden per l'eventualità che la pattuglia non possa subito raggiungere la nave.

della pattuglia. Verso sera torniamo indietro e andiamo ad ancorarci a ridosso dell'isola Hiperyte a nord della baia di Wahlemberg.
of the patrol. Toward evening we turn back and go to anchor in the lee of Hiperyte Island north of Wahlemberg bay.
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 28. JUN. 1929
Ha infuriato tutto il giorno una bufera terribile con vento di nord di più di 1000 metri al minuto. I nostri amici non si sono fatti vivi e il loro silenzio pesa su tutti noi tragicamente. Verso sera il vento si calma e s'affaccia il sole di tra le nuvole nere. Che qualche buona notizia della pattuglia possa domani far tornare il sereno anche nei nostri animi!
STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 29 JUNE 1929
A terrible storm has raged all day with a north wind of more than 1000 metres per minute. Our friends have not shown signs of life and their silence weighs tragically on all of us. Toward evening the wind calms and the sun peeps out from among the black clouds. May some good news from the patrol tomorrow bring back clear skies also to our spirits!

della pattuglia.

Vengo ora torniamo indietro e andiamo ad ancorarci a ridosso dell'isola Hipsuete a nord della baia di Wahlenburg.



Ha infuriato tutto il giorno una brezza temibile con vento di nord di più di 1000 metri al minuto.

I nostri amici non si sono fatti vivi e il loro silenzio pesa su tutti noi tragicamente.

Vengo ora il vento si calma e s'affaccia il sole di tra le nuvole nere. Che qualche buona notizia della pattuglia possa domani far tornare il sorriso anche nei nostri cuori!



Nelle prime ore del mattino l'Heimenn lascia l'ancora: raggiunge l'isola Hipsuete e partiamo ad esplorare minuziosamente la baia di Wahlenburg. Ma il canonicale non ci mostra che un'uguale distesa bianca e nel ghiaccio della baia un rugginare di fochie.

Alle ore 11 avvistiamo la baleniera Viking che si sta ritirando al nord dopo avere inutilmente cercato una strada fra i ghiacci a sud dell'Philopen.

Questa sera, finalmente, all'appuntamento delle ore 20 riceviamo un comunicato di Albutini. Sono le grandi parole che ci dicono tutto il loro inferno di questi ultimi giorni, e infine due brevi parole: tutto bene, le quali fanno riprendere i nostri cari commisti e ritornare l'allegria fra noi. Albutini mi dà pure istruzioni per fare un deposito di viveri fra capo Schander e il Agafjorden per l'eventualità che la pattuglia non possa subito raggiungere la nave.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 28. JUN. 1929

Nelle prime ore del mattino l'Heimen lascia l'anco= raggio dell'isola Hiperyte e passiamo ad esplorare minuzio= samente la baia di Wahlemborg. Ma il cannocchiale non ci mostra che un'uguale distesa bianca e nel ghiaccio della baia un nereggiare di foche.

Alle ore 11 avvistiamo la baleniera Viking che se ne ritorna al nord dopo avere inutilmente cercato una strada fra i ghiacci a sud dell'Hinlopen.

Questa sera, finalmente, all'appuntamento delle ore 20 riceviamo un comunicato di Albertini. Poche e grandi parole che ci dicono tutto il loro inferno di questi ultimi giorni, e infine due brevi parole: tutto bene, le quali fanno spianare i nostri visi corruciati e ritornare l'allegria fra noi. Albertini mi dà pure istruzione per fare un deposito di viveri fra capo Selander e il Vega fiorden per l'eventualità che la pattuglia non possa subito raggiungere la nave.

STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 30 JUNE 1929

In the early hours of the morning the Heimen leaves the anchorage of Hiperyte Island and we proceed to explore minutely Wahlemborg bay. But the telescope shows us only an identical white expanse and, in the ice of the bay, a dark speckling of seals.

At 11 hours we sight the whaler Viking returning north after having vainly sought a passage through the ice south of the Hinlopen.

This evening, at last, at the 20 scheduled contact we receive a communiqué from Albertini. Few and weighty words that tell us all their hell of these last days, and finally two brief words: all well, which smooth our frowning faces and bring cheer back among us. Albertini also gives me instructions to make a depot of provisions between Cape Selander and the Vega fiorden in case the patrol could not immediately reach the ship.



Dopo la notizia di ieri sera oggi lavoriamo tutti
ziosamente a mettere in ordine la casa e a prepararla festosa
e pulita per i nostri cari compagni.

Verso mezzanotte, avendo il vento, lasciamo l'ancoraggio dell'isola Hipsøy
e andiamo a metterci nei porti di capo Selander. Si qui si danno
a fare lavori e finiscono con una delle piccole navi e viene
di riserva per dieci giorni da andare a collocare nel deposito
tra capo Selander e il Vigafjorden.

Nessuna comunicazione dalla pattuglia. A mezzanotte siamo in
ascolto della nuova stazione trasmittente dell'or. Maltini fatta
intendere opportunamente per rendere più stretti i nostri rapporti
con Roma, ma non riusciamo che a presipire dei segni
debolissimi.



Questa mattina abbiamo avuto una lunga conversazione
attraverso alla radio con la pattuglia. I nostri compagni
sono di nuovo fermi al centro del vasto ghiacciaio della
linea di Nordet, ma ormai possono considerarsi come
al termine della loro gloriosa impresa e vincitori nella
dura battaglia. Albertini mi comunica di aggiungere al
deposito di Vigafjorden anche viveri per i cani, e nel pomeriggio
mi uco a completare secondo le intenzioni il deposito.
Si trovano collocati colà: una scatola di pemmikan, una scatola
di cioccolato, due scatole di giambone e due di lingua, due scatole
di biscotti d'avena e due di plamon, una botte di petrolio e

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 1. JUL. 1929

Dopo la notizia di ieri sera oggi lavoriamo tutti gioiosamente a mettere in ordine la casa e a prepararla festosa e pulita per i nostri bravi compagni.

Verso sera, cessato il vento, lasciamo l'ancoraggio dell'isola Hyperite e andiamo a metterci nei pressi di capo Selander. Di qui scendono a terra Peroni e Gienstein con una delle piccole slitte e viveri di riserva per dieci giorni da andare a collocare nel deposito tra capo Selander e il Vega fiorden.

Nessuna comunicazione dalla pattuglia. A mezzanotte stiamo in ascolto della nuova stazione trasmittente dell'on. Maltini fatta costruire appositamente per rendere più stretti i nostri rapporti con Roma, ma non riusciamo che a percepire dei segni debolissimi.

STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 1 JUL 1929

After last night's news we all work today joyfully to put the house in order and to prepare it festive and clean for our good companions.

Toward evening, the wind having ceased, we leave the anchorage of Hyperite Island and go to place ourselves near Cape Selander. From here Peroni and Gienstein go ashore with one of the small sledges and reserve provisions for ten days to be placed in the depot between Cape Selander and the Vega fiorden.

No communication from the patrol. At midnight we are listening for the new transmitting station of hon. Maltini built expressly to tighten our ties with Rome, but we succeed only in perceiving very faint signals.



Dopo la notizia di ieri sera oggi lavoriamo tutti
ziosamente a mettere in ordine la casa e a prepararla festosa
e pulita per i nostri cari compagni.

Verso mezzanotte, avendo il vento, lasciamo l'ancoraggio dell'isola Hipsley
e andiamo a metterci nei panni di capo Selander. Si qui si danno
a fare lavori e finiscono con una delle piccole nittate e vivaci
di riserva per dieci giorni da andare a collocare nel deposito
tra capo Selander e il Vigafjorden.

Nessuna comunicazione dalla pattuglia. A mezzanotte stiamo in
ascolto della nuova stazione trasmittente dell'or. Maltini fatta
intendere opportunamente per rendere più stretti i nostri rapporti
con Roma, ma non riusciamo che a presipire dei segni
debolissimi.



Questa mattina abbiamo avuto una lunga conversazione
attraverso alla radio con la pattuglia. I nostri compagni
sono di nuovo fermi al centro del vasto ghiacciaio della
linea di Nordet, ma ormai possono considerarsi come
al termine della loro gloriosa impresa e vincitori nella
dura battaglia. Albertini mi comunica di aggiungere al
deposito di Vigafjorden anche vivaci per i cani, e nel pomeriggio
mi uco a completare secondo le intenzioni il deposito.
Si trovano collocati colà: una scatola di pemmikan, una scatola
di cioccolato, due scatole di giambone e due di lingua, due scatole
di biscotti d'avena e due di platano, una botte di petrolio e

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 2. JUL. 1929

Questa mattina abbiamo avuto una lunga conversazione attraverso alla radio con la pattuglia. I nostri compagni sono di nuovo fermi al centro del vasto ghiacciaio della Terra di Nordest, ma oramai possono considerarsi come al termine della loro gloriosa impresa e vincitori nella dura battaglia. Albertini mi comunica di aggiungere al deposito di Vegafiorden anche viveri per i cani, e nel pomeriggio mi reco a completare secondo le istruzioni il deposito. Si trovano collocati colà: una scatola di pemmikan, una scatola di cioccolato, due scatole di giambone e due di lingua, due scatole di biscotti d'avena e due di plasmon, una latta di petrolio e

STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 2 JUL 1929

This morning we had a long conversation over the radio with the patrol. Our companions are once more halted in the centre of the vast glacier of Northeast Land, but by now they can consider themselves at the end of their glorious enterprise and victors in the hard battle. Albertini informs me to add to the Vegafiorden depot also provisions for the dogs, and in the afternoon I go to complete the depot according to the instructions. Stored there are: one box of pemmican, one box of chocolate, two boxes of ham and two of tongue, two boxes of oatmeal biscuits and two of plasmon, one can of oil and

un raso di bancha. Uno strano nero agitato dal vento
segue nello sfondo bianco della neve quello che è stato
il nostro lavoro.



Uno sera il pilota dei ghiacci e altri tre uomini dell'equi-
paggio partono con il motorino per esplorare lo stato dei
ghiacci a sud dell'Hindkop. Ritornano dopo sei ore e
comunicano che la bancha si intende compatta al-
l'altezza di capo Lovel.

Nessuna notizia dalla pattuglia



Anche oggi siamo stati tutto il giorno a mutare dal-
l'alto della rocca in qualche segno dei nostri compagni
potere sorgere in fondo alla baia di Wahlenburg o
allo sbocco del Vigafindus o sopra la cupa bastionata
di capo Selander. Dura la novità della nostra vita
di bordo si riducono alle notizie che aspettiamo di rice-
vere dalla pattuglia, costretti come siamo a questa
attesa nella baia di Wahlenburg. Ma oggi come
ieri la radio di Uman è tacita.



Anche oggi come ieri e come i giorni scorsi
è passato mutando continuamente il panorama orientale.
Comincio a non sapere più che cosa pensare di questo

un sacco di baccalà. Uno straccio nero agitato dal vento
segna sullo sfondo bianco della neve quello che è stato
il nostro lavoro.

one sack of salt cod.

A black rag fluttering in the wind marks against the white background of the snow
what our work has been.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 3. JUL. 1929

Verso sera il pilota dei ghiacci e altri tre uomini dell'equi-
paggio partono con il motoscafo per esplorare lo stato dei
ghiacci a sud dell'Hinlopen. Ritornano dopo sei ore e
comunicano che la banchisa si stende compatta al-
l'altezza di capo Torrel.

Nessuna notizia dalla pattuglia

STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 3 JUL 1929

Toward evening the ice pilot and three other members of the
crew set off in the motor-boat to explore the condition of the
ice north of the Hinlopen. We returned after six hours and
reported that the ice-edge stretched out compact at the level of
Cape Torrel.

No news from the patrol

un raso di bancha. Uno strano nero agitato dal vento
segue nello sfondo bianco della neve quello che è stato
il nostro lavoro.



Uno sera il pilota dei ghiacci e altri tre uomini dell'equi-
paggio partono con il motorino per esplorare lo stato dei
ghiacci a sud dell'Hindkop. Ritornano dopo sei ore e
comunicano che la bancha si intende compatta al-
l'altezza di capo Lovel.

Nessuna notizia dalla pattuglia



Anche oggi siamo stati tutto il giorno a mutare dal-
l'alto della rocca in qualche segno dei nostri compagni
potere sorgere in fondo alla baia di Wahlenburg o
allo sbocco del Vigafindus o sopra la cupola bastionata
di capo Selander. Dura la novità della nostra vita
di bordo si riducono alle notizie che aspettiamo di rice-
vere dalla pattuglia, costretti come siamo a questa
attesa nella baia di Wahlenburg. Ma oggi come
ieri la radio di Uman è tacita.



Anche oggi come ieri e come i giorni scorsi
è passato mutando continuamente il baranimento orizzonte.
Comincio a non sapere più che cosa pensare di questo

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 4. JUL. 1929
Anche oggi siamo stati tutto il giorno a scrutare dall'alto della coffa se qualche segno dei nostri compagni potesse scorgersi in fondo alla baia di Wahlemborg o allo sbocco del Vega fiorden o sopra la cupa bastionata di capo Selander. Oramai le novità della nostra vita di bordo si riducono alle notizie che aspettiamo di ricevere dalla pattuglia, costretti come siamo a questa attesa nella baia di Wahlemborg. Ma oggi come ieri la radio di Urbano è taciuta.
STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 4 JUL 1929
Again today we have spent the whole day scanning from the crow's-nest to see whether any sign of our companions could be made out at the bottom of Wahlenberg Bay or at the Vega fiorden mouth or upon the dark bastion of Cape Selander. By now the novelties of our life on board are reduced to the news we wait to receive from the patrol, forced as we are into this waiting in Wahlenberg Bay. But today as yesterday Urbano's radio has remained silent.
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 5. JUL. 1929
Anche oggi come ieri e come i giorni scorsi è passato scrutando continuamente il lontanissimo orizzonte. Comincio a non sapere più che cosa pensare di questo
STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 5 JUL 1929
Today like yesterday and the past days was spent continually scanning the far-off horizon. I am beginning to no longer know what to think of this

ritardo e di questo silenzio della pattuglia.
Stasotte abbiamo comunicato abbastanza distintamente con
la nuova stazione dell'aerovolo Maltini.



Finalmente! Questa sera Albertini ci ha comunicato di
essere giunto nella baia di Wahlenburg e di comunicare
con noi con la radio per l'ultima volta. Aspettiamo con
impazienza il momento in cui potremo portargli nella
nave.



Una nebbia fitta avvolge costantemente per tutto il giorno
ogni cosa e ci impedisce di vedere a dieci metri dalla nave.
Stiamo sempre in attesa della pattuglia e la nave appro-
fitta dello spazio della banchina per voltarsi di circa
due chilometri nella baia e addorarsi a capo Selanden.



Oggi si leva un violentissimo vento da nord e varie volte
la nave ha rotto gli ancoraggi e viene spinta verso il largo.
Ma l'equipaggio, che mostra per Albertini e i suoi com-
pagni quasi la nostra premurosa attesa, ogni volta con
delicata manovra viene a riportare la nave nel sito
più sicuro e più comodo per quelli che arriveranno dal
fondo della baia.

ritardo e di questo silenzio della pattuglia. Stanotte abbiamo comunicato abbastanza distintamente con la nuova stazione dell'onorevole Maltini.
delay and of this silence of the patrol. Tonight we have communicated quite distinctly with the new station of the honorable Maltini.
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 6. JUL. 1929
Finalmente! Questa sera Albertini ci ha comunicato di essere giunto nella baia di Wahlemborg e di comunicare con noi con la radio per l'ultima volta. Aspettiamo con impazienza il momento in cui potremo festeggiarli sulla nave
STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 6 JUL 1929
Finally! This evening Albertini informed us that he has arrived in Wahlemborg bay and that he is communicating with us by radio for the last time. We await with impatience the moment when we can celebrate them on the ship.
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 7. JUL. 1929
Una nebbia fitta avvolge costantemente per tutto il giorno ogni cosa e ci impedisce di vedere a dieci metri dalla nave. Stiamo sempre in attesa della pattuglia e la nave appro= fitta dello sfacelo della banchisa per inoltrarsi di circa due chilometri nella baia e addossarsi a capo Selander.
STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 7 JUL 1929
A thick fog constantly envelops everything throughout the day and prevents us from seeing ten metres from the ship. We are still waiting for the patrol and the ship takes advantage of the breaking-up of the ice-edge to push about two kilometres into the bay and to lie close under cape Selander.

ritardo e di questo silenzio della pattuglia.
Stasotte abbiamo comunicato abbastanza distintamente con
la nuova stazione dell'aerovolo Maltini.



Finalmente! Questa sera Albertini ci ha comunicato di
essere giunto nella baia di Wahlenburg e di comunicare
con noi con la radio per l'ultima volta. Aspettiamo con
impazienza il momento in cui potremo portargli nella
nave.



Una nebbia fitta avvolge costantemente per tutto il giorno
ogni cosa e ci impedisce di vedere a dieci metri dalla nave.
Stiamo sempre in attesa della pattuglia e la nave appro-
fitta dello spazio della banchina per voltarsi di circa
due chilometri nella baia e addorarsi a capo Selanden.



Oggi si leva un violentissimo vento da nord e varie volte
la nave ha rotto gli ancoraggi e viene spinta verso il largo.
Ma l'equipaggio, che mostra per Albertini e i suoi com-
pagni quasi la nostra premurosa attesa, ogni volta con
delicata manovra viene a riportare la nave nel sito
più sicuro e più comodo per quelli che arriveranno dal
fondo della baia.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 8. JUL. 1929
Oggi si leva un violentissimo vento da sud e varie volte la nave ha rotti gli ormeggi e viene spinta verso il largo. Ma l'equipaggio, che mostra per Albertini e i suoi compagni quasi la nostra premurosa attesa, ogni volta con delicata manovra viene a riportare la nave sul sito più vicino e più comodo per quelli che arriveranno dal fondo della baia.
STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 8 JUL 1929
Today a very violent south wind rises and several times the ship has broken her moorings and is driven toward the open. But the crew, who shows for Albertini and his companions almost our own solicitous expectancy, each time with delicate manoeuvre comes to bring the ship back to the spot closest and most convenient for those who will arrive from the bottom of the bay.



Oggi, tanta letizia, letizia e gioia sono veramente
nel cuore d'ognuno di noi.
Alle ore 8, 35 sono saliti a bordo Albertini, Urbano, Borda
e Friedberg. L'Heimen aveva le bandiere ventolanti e
ha cercato di accogliere i visitatori con l'animo e con l'anore
con i quali li avrebbe accolti la famiglia e la patria.
Il sole splende splendente e mare e cielo sono di un
bell'azzurro mediterraneo.



Severo in gente
parenti i cui nomi sono profusa-
mente raccolti nel mio
cuore.

Adesso la mia nave in perfetta
ordine ed i compagni affettuosamente
si più potero attendere.

Alle mattina, dopo un sano
profondo ripieno in esame
il problema. Dopo un lungo
colloquio con Jakobson deciso
si ● Tentare di avvicinare
la corte Dr. dell'isola Barroto
formando la tentata sus all'Alto
Popolo = Partiamo alle 9.
ma più alle 16 al

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 9. JUL. 1929
Oggi, santa Letizia, letizia e gioia sono veramente nel cuore d'ognuno di noi. Alle ore 8.35 sono saliti a bordo Albertini, Urbano, Bonola e Guedoz. L'Heimen aveva le bandiere sventolanti e ha cercato di accogliere i vittoriosi con l'onore e con l'amore con i quali li avrebbero accolti la famiglia e la patria. Il sole splende sfolgorante e mare e cielo sono di un bell'azzurro mediterraneo.
STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 9 JUL 1929
Today, Saint Laetitia, delight and joy are truly in the heart of each one of us. At 8.35 hours Albertini, Urbano, Bonola and Guedoz came aboard. The Heimen had her flags flying and tried to welcome the victors with the love and with the love with which their family and their homeland would have welcomed them. The sun shines dazzlingly and sea and sky are of a beautiful Mediterranean light blue.

The following entries are written by Gianni Albertini, Commander.

Transcript	Translation
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 10. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 10 JUL 1929
Sorvolo su questa parentesi i cui segni sono profondamente scolpiti nel mio animo.- Ritrovai la mia nave in perfetto ordine ed i compagni affettuosi ne di più potevo attendermi. Alla mattina, dopo un sonno profondo riprendo in esame il problema.- Dopo un lungo colloquio con Jakobsen decido di tentare di avvicinare le coste Or. dell'Isola Barents forzando la testata Sud dell'Hinlopen.- Partiamo alle 9 ma già alle 16 al	I pass over this parenthesis the marks of which are deeply engraved in my soul.- I found my ship in perfect order and the companions affectionate nor more could I have expected. In the morning, after a deep sleep I take up again the problem.- After a long conversation with Jakobsen I decide to attempt to approach the E. coasts of Barents Island by forcing our way through the southern head of the Hinlopen.- We depart at 9 but already at 16

traverso delle isole Burton Rossie.
una fascia impenetrabile di
ghiacci. Deciso il ritorno entro
Pentane in eventuale passaggio
al N delle 7 isole.



Le pagine seguenti
sono scritte da me in rapporto
ad una noiosa malattia, forse
connessa col complesso di stipsi
merali e frici delle viscere di
Capo Mohn.

Navigazione alle 1. L'isola
per la quale verso E non
è possibile andare per la
compattanza dei ghiacci.

Decidiamo di ritornare al
Sud - Un fortissimo vento
di burrasca con oltre 1200 m
al secondo ci sorprende
lungo il cammino e ci oblige
a cercar riparo nella piccola
Baia di Tremembay.

traverso della Isola Bastian troviamo una fascia impenetrabile di ghiacci.- Decido il ritorno onde tentare un eventuale passaggio al N delle 7 Isole.-	abeam of Bastian Island we find an impenetrable belt of ice.- I decide to return so as to attempt a possible passage to the N of the 7 Islands.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 11. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 11 JUL 1929
Le pagine [che] seguono furono scritte da me in seguito ad una noiosa malattia, forse causata dal complesso di strapazzi morali e fisici della Marcia di Capo Mohn. Raggiungiamo alle 1 l'Isola Low oltre la quale verso E non è possibile andare per la compattezza dei ghiacci.- Decidiamo di ritornare al Sud – Un fortissimo vento di burrasca con oltre 1200 m al secondo ci sorprende lungo il cammino e ci obbliga a cercar riparo nella piccola Baia di Treurenberg.-	The pages [that] follow were written by me after an annoying illness, perhaps caused by the combination of moral and physical strains of the March to Cape Mohn. We reach at 1 the Island Low beyond which to the E it is not possible to go due to the compactness of the ice.- We decide to return to the South – A very strong gale wind with over 1200 m per second surprises us along the way and forces us to seek shelter in the little Treurenberg Bay.-

Vi è sul fuso di Tale
Bac. l'avanzo del fruttone
di meno di una Spedizione
Sent. per vedere. - 1899.



Siamo al gal. tutto il
giorno a ventar rifugiati
nella piccola Baia per il
forte vento.

Oppi sweet uccidere
Red; i miei lamenti erano
diventati stridenti come
paralisi gli avevo c. q. r. tutto
il vero portatore.

Molto soffrì; le caratteristiche
di frate valeroso cane sono tali
da fare a lungo pensare.

Egli, colla sua personalità magra,
colla sua terribile pancia iniziale
per l'uomo aveva negli ultimi
temp. rubito una preferenza.

Vi è sul fondo di tale Baia l'avanzo del quartiere di sverno di una Spedizione Scientifica svedese.- 1899*.	There are at the bottom of that Bay the remains of the winter quarters of a Swedish Scientific Expedition .- 1899.
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 12. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 12 JUL 1929
Siamo obbligati tutto il giorno a restar rifugiati nella piccola Baia per il forte vento.- Oggi dovetti uccidere Red: i suoi lamenti erano diventati strazianti ed una paralisi gli aveva colpito tutto il treno posteriore.- Molto soffrì**: le caratteristiche di questo valoroso cane sono tali da fare a lungo pensare. Egli, colla sua personalità strana, colla sua terribile paura iniziale per l'uomo aveva negli ultimi tempi subito una profonda	We are obliged all the day to remain sheltered in the little Bay because of the strong wind.- Today I had to kill Red: his wails had become heartrending and a paralysis had struck his whole hindquarters. I suffered greatly: the traits of this valiant dog are such as to make one ponder long. He, with his strange personality, with his terrible initial fear of man had in recent times undergone a profound

Notes:

* The date appears to have been added, probably at a later time, with a different ink colour.

**Given that Albertini tends not to follow the standard orthographical rules for these cases, it is impossible to discern here whether his intention was to write «soffrìi/soffrì» ("I suffered") or «soffrì» ("he suffered"). We have decided to opt for the former reading, as the following phrase seems to reflect the man's feelings toward the suppressed animal.

altissimi del suo carattere.

Ora è morto; ma lo hanno gli.
Se vedessi d'egli combattuto con
noi o per noi in ogni
parte: allora, storia indimenticabile.
L'ultimo giorno. Nel suo spirito;
lanciano. Si tentò in tante piccole
prove. Dopo le zeppe con S. e
ritte; arrivo sulla nave
solo tre ore dopo noi, Salitoni
si accucciò in un angolo
una mano a petto.
Poi ne fece l'autopsia.



Unica. fuori del nostro
rispetto. Si retti verso S. anche
coll'intenzione di tentare
l'Hul. per ed in continuazione
fatti dal vento. Se fuori
noni.

alterazione del suo carattere.-	alteration of his character.-
Ora è morto: ma la battaglia	Now he is dead: but the valorous battle
da valoroso ch'egli combatté con	that he fought with
noi è per me in ogni	us is for me, in every
particolare, storia indimenticabile.-	detail, an unforgettable story.-
L'ultimo giorno Red era sfinito:	On the last day Red was exhausted:
lanciando di tanto in tanto piccoli	uttering from time to time small
guaiti seguiva zoppicando la	yelps he hobbled after the
slitta; arrivò sulla nave	sledge; he arrived on the ship
solo tre ore dopo noi. Salitovi	only three hours after us. Having boarded,
si accucciò in un angolo	he curled up in a corner
senza muoversi più.-	and moved no more.-
Peroni ne fece l'autopsia.-	Peroni performed the autopsy.-

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 13. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 13 JUL 1929
Usciamo fuori dal nostro	We leave our
rifugio diretti verso S. ancora	refuge heading toward S. again
coll'intenzione di tentare	with the intention of attempting
l'Hinlopen ed in ciò incorag=	the Hinlopen in so encouraged
giati dal vento dei giorni	by the wind of the
scorsi.-	past days.



Li spingian. fin.
al Navaro di Cap. Toul.
ove i ghiacci ci impedivan.
nettamente l'avanzata.

Dopo maturo riflessione
deciso pertanto di tentare
dal Sud aggirando lo Spitz-
bergen occidentale



Dall' Houl. per alle King's Bay!
Via ormai da un lunghissimo
percorso. Arriviamo alle 22.

Porta sorpresa è un sacco di
porta a noi giunti dall' Houl.
La vita a Bado, per esse,
per varie ore si paralizza.
Opur. vive e respira
l'aria della Patria =

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 14. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 14 JUL 1929
Ci spingiamo fino al traverso di Capo Torel ove i ghiacci ci impediscono nettamente l'avanzata.- Dopo matura riflessione decido pertanto di tentare dal Sud aggirando lo Spitz= bergen occidentale	We push as far as abeam of Cape Torel where the ice definitely barred our advance .- After mature reflection I therefore decide to attempt from the South by circling western Spitzbergen.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 15. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 15 JUL 1929
Dall'Hinlopen alla King's Bay!- Via ormai da me ben spesso percorsa. Arriviamo alle 22. Grata sorpresa è un sacco di posta a noi giunto dall'Italia.- La vita a Bordo, per essa, per varie ore si paralizza. Ognuno vive e respira l'aria della Patria.-	From the Hinlopen to King's Bay!- A way by now well-travelled for me. We arrive at 22. Appreciated surprise is a bag of mail come to us from Italy.- Life on Board, because of it, for several hours is paralysed. Everyone lives and breathes the air of the Homeland.-



della mattina quando Jekst-
e l'intendente; il primo port.
Sa me in libertà, ed il
uovo annullato.

Riparte alle 15 - In in
mare morto, verso l'isola
in vite, verso Sud lungo la
costa presso della Terra di
di Carlo, le navigazioni e
volpe segnalano entro.



Le navigazioni le proseguono
tutti il giorno sempre per
ostacolato della nebbia -

Alle 18 avvistiamo Cap. Sud
che viene soppiato alle 21.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 16. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 16 JUL 1929
Alla mattina sbarco* Jelstein e l'interprete: il primo parte da me in libertà, ed il secondo ammalato.- Riparto alle 13 – In un mare morto, senza luci né vita, verso Sud lungo le coste pensose della Terra di Re Carlo, la navigazione si svolge regolarmente.-	In the morning I put Jelstein ashore and the interpreter: the former leaves from me at liberty, and the latter ill.- I set off again at 13 – In a dead sea, without lights nor life, toward the South along the pensive coasts of King Charles Land, the navigation proceeds regularly.-

Note: *The handwriting clearly reads «*sbarchio*» which may suggest a moment of indecision between the two possible alternatives: «*sbarchiamo*» (“we disembark”) or «*sbarco*» (“I disembark”). We have found this detail interesting and we have interpreted it as a quick afterthought – an assumption of personal responsibility for a potentially crucial decision.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 17. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 17 JUL 1929
La navigazione ha proseguito tutto il giorno sempre più ostacolata dalla nebbia – Alle 18 avvistiamo Capo Sud che viene doppiato alle 21.-	Navigation has continued all day ever more obstructed by fog – At 18 we sight South Cape which is rounded at 21.-



Cost. gli anni le canti
 orientali dell. Spitzberg -
 alle 21 navi. ab. pari -
 rifugiarsi nell. Whales Bay e l'isola
 delle navi fitte, del vento
 violento, e dei sempre più
 impenetrabili ghiacci, e
 chiedere un aiuto all.
 letto -



Tutti le mattina.
 rimangono fermi nell.
 Whales Bay. Alle 17.30
 navi. Dall. Base all' interno
 di attraversare var. Est lo
 Stor Fjorden.



Dep. m. el. l'attenti
 predeprende. Le enormi ghiacci
 del. poche continue di nulla

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 18. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 18 JUL 1929
Costeggiamo le coste orientali dello Spitzbergen.- Alle 21 siamo obbligati a rifugiarci nella Whales Bay obbligati dalla nebbia fitta, dal vento violento, e dai sempre più impenetrabili ghiacci, a chiedere un armistizio alla lotta.-	We coast along the eastern shores of Spitzbergen.- At 21 we are obliged to take refuge in Whales Bay obliged by the thick fog, the violent wind, and the ever more unpredictable ice, to ask for an armistice in the struggle.-

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 19. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 19 JUL 1929
Tutta la mattina rimaniamo fermi nella Whales Bay. Alle 17.30 usciamo dalla Baia coll'intenzione di attraversare verso Est lo Stor Fjorden.	All morning we remain stationary in Whales Bay. At 17.30 we leave the Bay with the intention of crossing eastward the Stor Fjorden.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 02*. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 02* JUL 1929
Dopo molti tentativi guadagnando tra enormi ghiacci solo poche centinaia di metri	After many attempts gaining among enormous ice only a few hundred metres

Note: *Wrong date stamp: 02 JUL instead of 20 JUL.

all'ac. rian. Aligati a
fermare per riprese, forati
sotto mare, i faticosi cammi-
alle 19 s. ver. Nipso Point.



Dopo mezzogiorno e
fatti. Cui. raffinamenti
alle 18 Wahler ~~the~~ Point.
indi convogliati a la
Devi Day Seppian. alle
23 s. Nipso Point.



Dopo attenti esami in Dev.
impossibile proseguire ver.
Est. Retriam. eucampae.
nell. Devi Day.

Deciso allora di tentare
il passaggio al Nord nell.
flutto del Circolo di Rumb. Edge.

all'ora siamo obbligati a fermarci per riprendere, favoriti dalla marea, il faticoso cammino alle 19.<40> verso Nigro Point.	per hour we are obliged to halt to resume, favoured by the tide, the arduous journey at 19.<40> toward Nigro Point.
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 21. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 21 JUL 1929
Dopo molto e faticoso lavoro raggiungiamo alle 18 Wahles Ba Point. indi costeggiando la Deevi Bay doppiamo alle 23 50 Nigro Point.	After much and laborious work we reach at 18 Whales Point. then coasting along Deevi Bay we round at 23 50 Nigro Point.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 22. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 22 JUL 1929
Dopo attento esame si trova impossibile proseguire verso Est. Ritorniamo ancorandoci nella Deevi Bay.- Decido allora di tentare il passaggio al Nord nello Stretto fra l'isola di Barents e Edge.-	After careful examination we find it impossible to continue toward the East. We return anchoring in Deevi Bay.- I then decide to attempt the passage to the North in the Strait between Barents island and Edge.

W. f. all'attacco delle
Bisco Bay e messarsi a
ritiro a fare.

A mezzanotte ci ancoriamo
presso l'isola Ziegler.



Femi tutto il giorno
all'ancoraggio.

Alcuni S. si vedono
sull'isola e bastano in esse
un cumulo e avanti S.
verba capanne.

Dalle 21 salpiamo. on S.
spatore nelle Bisco Bay il nostro
ancoraggio.



Di nuovo femi. f. ci cerchiamo
al N ed al S. di fermare le vie
onde raggiungere le coste orientali
dell'isola ES. a me interessanti.

Ma già all'attacco della Disco Bay è necessario retrocedere. A mezzanotte ci ancoriamo presso l'isola Ziegler.	But already upon the entrance to Disco Bay it is necessary to retreat. At midnight we anchor near Ziegler island.
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 23. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 23 JUL 1929
Fermi tutto il giorno all'ancoraggio. Alcuni di noi scendono sull'Isola e trovano in essa un cumulo e avanzi di vecchie capanne. Alle 21 salpiamo onde spostare nella Deevi Bay il nostro ancoraggio.	Stationary all day at anchor. Some of us go ashore on the Island and find there a heap and remains of old huts. At 21 we weigh anchor in order to move into Deevi Bay our anchorage.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 24. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 24 JUL 1929
Di nuovo fermi. Già cercammo al N ed al Sud di forzare la via onde raggiungere le coste orientali dell'Isola Edge a me interessanti.-	Again at a standstill. So we tried to the N and to the South to force the way so as to reach the eastern coasts of Edge Island interesting to me.-

Tali tentativi, che a noi
aveva salvato alcuni esultanti
ci hanno convinto delle
attuali impossibilità e
ferme sui passi. - Secondo.

Il di più in Trans. su per
ma ora non ha senso -

Quindi, questa alleanza, con
un' spedizione armata
diretta in quelle regioni e
attendendo domani informazioni
che possano influire in una
nostra decisione -



Prima mattina presto
alle 7 abbandoniamo il nostro
ancoraggio e dirigiamo verso il N.
Nelle prime ore del pomeriggio siamo
sul fondo dello Stos in corrispondenza
a Capo Sporer siamo arrestati dai
ghiacci. Decido un tentativo a S. S.
La giornata mancando ci trova
nei pressi di Capo Negro.

Tali tentativi oltre a non aver sortito alcun risultato ci hanno convinto della attuale impossibilità a forzare quei passi.- Soprassiedo. Il dirigere su Francesco Giuseppe per ora non ha senso.- Questo stesso abbiamo <comun[icato]>* con una spedizione americana diretta in quelle regioni ed attendo domani informazioni che possano influire su una mia decisione.-	Such attempts besides not having yielded any result have convinced us of the present impossibility of forcing those passages.- I give up. Heading for Franz Josef for now makes no sense.- This same thing we have communicated to an American expedition bound for those regions, and I await tomorrow information that may influence my decision.-
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Note: *This line is considerably difficult to decipher. The second word seems to be orthographically incorrect. It could be read as: «tesa/o», «stera». Respectively then this could be interpreted as: «stessa/stesso» (“same”) or «sera» (“evening”). The last word in the line cannot be reliably read. We have come to different possible alternative interpretations, all conjectural: «Questo stesso abbiamo <comun[icato]>» (“this same thing we have communicated”); «Questa sera abbiamo <comun[icato]>» (“This evening we have communicated”); «Questo stesso abbiamo [in] comun<e>» (“This same thing we have in common”). We have opted for the first one for the following reason. The 1932 memoir, which frequently appears to be derived almost verbatim from the logbook latter has: «*fummo tutto il giorno in collegamento con una spedizione americana che da vario tempo tentava di raggiungere la Terra Francesco Giuseppe*» (“We were in communication all day with an American expedition that had for some time been trying to reach Franz Josef Land”) (Albertini, 1932, pp. 93-94).

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 25. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 25 JUL 1929
Questa mattina presto alle 7 abbandoniamo il nostro ancoraggio e dirigiamo verso il N. Nelle prime ore del pomeriggio siamo sul fondo dello Stor in corrispondenza a Capo Sporer siamo arrestati dai ghiacci. Decido un tentativo a Sud. La giornata morendo ci trova nei pressi di Capo Negro.-	Early this morning at 7 we abandon our anchorage and steer toward the N. In the early hours of the afternoon we are at the bottom of the Stor opposite Cape Sporer we are stopped by ice. I decide on an attempt to the South. The day, dying, finds us near Cape Negro.-



Amante. Tutta la notte continuiamo a
verso N-W a 5 avanzare lungo la costa
attentamente orientale dell'isola
E di più o meno vicino alla costa
a mano dei ghiacci.

Rafforziamo alla mattina il
navio dello Skutts Freeman.

Il ghiaccio ancora con patto e
viene circa 15 miglia lontano dalla
costa. Tutto il giorno restiamo attraccati
al ghiaccio e solo verso sera ci
accendiamo di macchine di bloccaggio
e corriamo in partenza verso di
10 miglia verso N-W. Il ghiaccio è
in condizioni tali da precludere
ogni possibilità di azione:
la nostra vita a bordo
appare come paralizzata.

L'avevo tempo di leggere, di
fissare a Midg e di dormire e
però allo spale non ho più
chiusato.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 26. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 26 JUL 1929
Durante tutta la notte continuiamo verso N-W ad avanzare lungo la costa settentrionale orientale dell'Isola Edge più o meno vicino alla costa a seconda dei ghiacci.- Raggiungiamo alla mattina il traverso dello Stretto Freeman.- Il ghiaccio ancor compatto ci tiene circa 15 miglia lontano dalla costa.- Tutto il giorno restiamo attaccati al ghiaccio e solo verso sera un accendersi di minaccia di bloccaggio ci consiglia uno spostamento di 10 miglia verso N-W.- Il ghiaccio è in condizioni tali da precludere ogni possibilità di azione.- La nostra vita a bordo appare come paralizzata.- L'aver tempo di leggere, di giocare a Bridge e di discutere è cosa alla quale non ero più abituato.-	Throughout the whole night we continue heading N-W advancing along the northern eastern coast of Edge Island more or less close to the shore depending on the ice.- In the morning we arrive abeam Freeman Strait.- The ice still compact keeps us about 15 miles away from the coast.- All day we remain moored to the ice and only towards evening a sudden threat of being locked-in suggests us to shift 10 miles toward N-W.- The ice is in such a state as to preclude any possibility of action.- Our life on board seems paralysed.- Having time to read, to play Bridge and to talk is something to which I was no longer accustomed.-



fiornate una storia. Pella e neve
e vento di N.E. I ghiacci si
migliano un po' più attorno a
noi obbligandoci a continui spostamenti
e spesso per creare di mantenere
in acqua libera. La nostra vita
è normale fuori vista ed
abitativa. - Mamma l'azione.



Alle due di notte 2 anelli
fu il di guardia mi vegliò.
Ma la persona a noi più di 300 m.
dalla nave di tre ore - Inflazione
gli stivali con Pagine ed alcuni
nostri miniatori la caccia.
Solo un uovo viene ucciso
dopo una sparatoria di alcune
50 colpi.

Sempre fermi in un ghiaccio.
Durante il pomeriggio lavoriamo
sistematicamente per creare di
spostarci in una zona di ghiacci
più piccoli ed evitare con le punte
la buca. Tutta la notte fuori
cibare la notte usata.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 27. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 27 JUL 1929
Giornata senza storia. Nebbia e neve e vento di N-E. I ghiacci si stringono sempre più attorno a noi obbligandoci a continui spostamenti e fughe per cercare di mantenerci in acqua libera.- La nostra vita è normale quasi vuota ed abitudinaria.- Manca l'azione.-	Uneventful day. Fog and snow and N-E wind. The ice closes ever tighter around us, obliging us to continual movements and flights to try to keep ourselves in open water.- Our life is normal almost empty and routine.- Action is lacking.-

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 28. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 28 JUL 1929
Alle due di notte Zanetti che è di guardia mi sveglia per la presenza a non più di 300 m dalla nave di tre orsi – Infilatimi gli stivali con Pugliese ed alcuni norvegesi iniziamo la caccia.- Solo un orso viene ucciso dopo una sparatoria di oltre 30 colpi.- Sempre fermi tra enormi ghiacci.- Durante il pomeriggio lavorammo accanitamente per cercare di spostarci in una zona di ghiacci più piccoli ed evitare così le pressioni che durante tutta la notte fecero cigolare le nostre murete.-	At two o'clock at night Zanetti who is on watch wakes me because of the presence no more than 300 m from the ship of three bears – Pulling on my boots together with Pugliese and some Norwegians we start the hunt.- Only one bear is killed after shooting more than 30 shots.- Still motionless among enormous ice.- During the afternoon we worked relentlessly to try to move into an area of smaller ice and thus avoid the pressures that throughout the night made our bulwarks creak.-



Salvo in bianco. La storia. S. punto.
fatti senza storia. - sempre più
salvo S. no a Sud no M. più
cruce S. di venti e delle maree.
Piemonte di cruce No più S
banchi e d'aver capo. L'ho. e
N. e S. - Nei con tutti la mossa
dei ghiacci na perian. più S.
fosse gli effetti di venti. -

Salvo l'W più favorevole.

Avvenimenti ogni. Si nota il
2 Apr. la fine tutta il mondo.
7 capolini che allora per
amercamente.

Quasi contemporaneamente
Maltoni mi telese di Roma
che sarebbe opportuno per noi
rappresentare. Piuttosto anche
certe di uno verso.

Io ripenso che non c'è
mai opportuno uno verso coll'attende

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 29. JUL. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 29 JUL 1929
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 7. AGOS.* 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 7 AUG 1929
Scrivo in blocco la storia di questi giorni senza storia.- Sempre fermi derivando ora a Sud ora N. a seconda dei venti e delle maree.- Presumo di essere tra grandi banchi ed avere acqua libera a N. e S.- Noi con tutta la massa dei ghiacci non possiamo quindi godere gli effetti dei venti.- Solo l'W può giovarci.- Avvenimenti degni di nota il 2 Agosto la Girl mette al mondo 7 cagnolini che alleva poi amorosamente.- Quasi contemporaneamente Maltini mi telegrafa da Roma che sarebbe opportuno per noi raggiungere Francesco Giuseppe anche a costo di uno sverno.- Io rispondo che non vorrei mai affrontare uno sverno coll'attuale	I write in one block the story of these days without events.- Always motionless drifting now to the South now to the N. depending on the winds and the tides.- I presume we are among large floes and have open water to N. and S.- We with all the mass of the ice cannot therefore enjoy the effects of the winds.- Only the W can help us.- Events worthy of note, on 2 August Girl brings into the world 7 puppies which she then lovingly rears. Almost at the same time Maltini telegraphs me from Rome that it would be expedient for us to reach Franz Josef even at the cost of an overwintering.- I reply that I would never wish to face an overwintering with the current

Note: *date stamp was initially wrongly set to JUL. Hand-corrected to «AGOS», standing for the Italian name of the month *agosto* ("August").

attualmente che pure se solo uno
non si ferma - e cioè l'ultimo
mi riparte che il Ducato
esaminato il mio. Telegrafo
h. stornato per il nuovo. attualmente
si vengo h. 100.000 se parte forma
e h. 100.000 se parte partito -
Io. curi. per si in tutto
certi. con tempo. per
le indispensabili ordinazioni
di materiale e per le rimozioni
in del contratto nave -
Io. curi. lo vengo come
l'adempimento di un dovere -
l'animo, e ancor più il
repentinamente non mi spinge
a tale impresa - Io. curi.
compito per le ingiun-
zioni - Io. curi. espone le
umiltà di certi che ci
vanno numerosi il scelfo -
l'impresa su. lo. che curi.
peribile. thare. che non potrei
aprire per se no mi riparte
puisse -

attrezzamento che prevede solo uno sverno di fortuna.- A ciò Maltini mi risponde che il Duce avendo esaminato il mio telegramma ha stanziato per il nuovo attrezzamento di sverno L. 100.000 da parte governo e L. 100.000 da parte partito.- Io entrai quindi in immediato contatto con Tromso sulle indispensabili ordinazioni di materiale e per la rinnovazione del contratto nave- Io considero lo sverno come l'adempimento di un dovere.- L'animo, ed ancor più il ragionamento non mi spingono a tale impresa – I miei compagni sono per la maggioranza contrari - Ad essi <esporgerò> le necessità ed i concetti che ci rendono necessario il sacrificio.- Comunque <dirò> loro che essendo possibile sbarcare chi non potesse seguirmi preparino una risposta precisa.-	equipment that allows only for a makeshift overwintering.- To this Maltini replies to me that the Duce having examined my telegram has allocated for the new overwintering equipment L. 100,000 from the government and L. 100,000 from the Party.- I therefore entered at once into contact with Tromsø about the indispensable orders of supplies and for the renewal of the ship's contract- I consider the overwintering as the fulfilment of a duty.- My spirit, and still more my reason do not impel me to such an enterprise – My companions are for the majority against it - To them <I shall lay out> the necessities and the concepts that make the sacrifice necessary.- In any case <I shall tell> them that, since it is possible to disembark anyone who cannot follow me, they should prepare a precise answer.-
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|| l'altra opus più solenne
qui gran male annalla

E finì una dura giornata
subinata a buttare in ombra
una di tutto sul nostro
animo. e la nostra forza.
alle 00.30 in rep. ed un
incidente siamo da poco
avendo davanti la caccia
ad un orso affamato che
per poco non ci riuscì a mettere
in atto il tentativo. Di
attentato a Jato che,

questo mare -

Il nobile mentecato, certo
il più puro di noi tutti, quello
che meno si meritava tal
fine, ci abbandonare -

Oggi alle 17,30 Sep. stesso
regolare attentato di morte di
parte del Dott. Perini siamo
a lui seppellire in mare -
Avendo anche nella bandiera

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 8. AUG. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 7 AUG 1929
..... L'altra ogni gran dolore Ogni gran male annulla* È questa una dura giornata destinata a buttare un'ombra nera di lutto sul nostro animo e la nostra forza.- Alle 00.20 in seguito ad un incidente d'arma da fuoco avvenuto durante la caccia ad un orso affamato che per poco non riusciva a mettere in atto un il tentativo di attentato a Jakobsen, Guedoz muore.- Il nobile montanaro, certo il più puro di noi tutti, quello che meno si meritava tal fine, ci abbandona.- Oggi alle 17,30 dopo steso regolare attestato di morte da parte del Dott. Peroni diamo a lui sepoltura in mare.- Avvolto nella nostra bandiera	 The other every pain And every woe bids wane* This is a hard day destined to cast a black shadow of mourning over our spirit and our strength.- At 00.20 following a firearm accident that occurred during the hunt for a hungry bear which had almost succeeded in putting into effect an the attempt on Jakobsen, Guedoz dies.- The noble mountaineer, surely the purest among us all, the one who least deserved such an end, leaves us.- Today at 17,30 after drawing up the formal certificate of death by Dr. Peroni we give him burial at sea.- Wrapped in our flag

Note: *These two verses are quoted from the poem *Amore e Morte*, (Love and Death) by Giacomo Leopardi (1798-1837). The translation we propose here is from the edition in English by Francis Henry Cliffe (Leopardi, 1893, p. 134).

regli che per la sua anima
poteva avere inviate e Salvi
Sulini, senza nulla preferire
di questo freddo mare.

Sullo mare è stato il
vincere a mezz'ora.
Sul piccolo, tutti parenti nei
e l'epi v. v. v., quando si
accennato da noi.

Riprende a bordo la vita
normale. - Oppure si nei
verbo, in recato, i sentimenti
incedi, il sole eletto di
cui la grande anima
di questo ~~mare~~ è ben segue.



-dumia fuit in dies mitiora-

,egli che già la sua anima grande aveva inviata ad altri destini, scende nella profondità di questo freddo mare.- Sulla nave è alzato il tricolore a mezz'asta.- Sul ghiaccio, tutti presenti noi e l'equipaggio, Guedoz si accommiato da noi.- Riprende a bordo la vita normale.- Ognuno di noi serberà, in segreto, i sentimenti i ricordi, il dolore eletto di cui la grande anima di Guedoz è ben degna.- - Omnia fiunt in dies mitiora -*	,he who had already sent his great soul toward other destinies, descends into the depths of this cold sea.- On the ship the tricolour is flown at half-mast.- On the ice, all of us present and the crew, Guedoz takes leave of us.- On board normal life resumes.- Each of us will keep, in secret, the feelings the memories, the hallowed grief to which the great soul of Guedoz is indeed worthy.- - Omnia fiunt in dies mitiora -
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Note: **All things become milder day by day.*



È in noi tutti: un
 grande enorme ed
 ardente fero per apparire
 veri - Ma punto è il nostro
 dovere verso noi ne possiamo entrare
 e verso gli altri dello stesso
 impresa - Al mattino
 di ghiaccio e mettere in
 leggero movimento i nostri
 piedi ad avanzare qualche
 miglio verso N.W. partendo in
 zone di piccoli ghiacci -



Oggi dico ai miei
 compagni le ripetute sollecitazioni
 allo stesso. In ogni momento io avevo
 pregato loro di dire a me interamente
 la verità. Solo Zamboni e Uthman
 sono favorevoli al sacrificio e
 continuano l'impresa anche a
 rischio dello stesso. - Gli altri
 quattro dichiarano di preferire
 sbarcare alla King's Bay. - Solo
 due di essi mi addormentano.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 9. AUG. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 9 AUG 1929
È in noi tutti un generale enorme ed evidente sforzo per apparire sereni- Ma questo è il nostro dovere verso noi reciprocamente e verso gli scopi della nostra Impresa.- Nel mattino i ghiacci si mettono in leggero movimento riusciamo quindi ad avanzare qualche miglio verso N.W portandoci in zone e di piccoli ghiacci.-	There is in all of us a general enormous and evident effort to appear serene- But this is our duty toward each other and toward the aims of our Endeavour.- In the morning the ice sets in slight movement we manage therefore to advance a few miles toward N.W bringing us into zones of small ice.-

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 10. AUG. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 10 AUG 1929
Oggi chiedo ai miei compagni la risposta relativamente allo sverno. In argomento io avevo pregato loro di dire a me interamente la verità. Solo Zanetti e Urbano sono favorevoli al sacrificio di continuar l'impresa anche a rischio dello sverno.- Gli altri quattro dichiarano di preferire sbarcare alla Kings Bay. Solo due di essi mi addussero	Today I ask my companions the answer regarding the wintering. On the subject I had requested them to tell me entirely the truth. Only Zanetti and Urbano are favourable to the sacrifice of continuing the endeavour even at risk of the wintering. The other four declare they prefer to disembark at Kings Bay. Only two of them adduced to me

giunti a celi noli vi -
 Avanziam. circa 5. pulke
 nio. - All. me. tele. a
 Malkini il puer. Comincio. Murat.
 intor. allo volpiment. dell
 incidente e pure Rlyce l'ento
 delle puer. - veteriani di offi -
 Il temp. è p. p. - nell'at. - e
 la temperatura. rimane
 nullo. zero -



Il luogo centom. è inaccessibile
 per tutti i punti fissi -
 Alkandente anche per un'offi:
 uno di tempo op. idee di
 meno volentieri -
 la nate vito mare inutile
 ed impenetrabile - Sen. per tempo
 il Dr. p. la nate mitologico,
 il nate parafeno - i can -

giustificabili motivi.- Avanziamo ancora di qualche miglio.- Alla sera telegrafo a Maltini il preciso Comunicato Riservato intorno allo svolgimento dello incidente e pure telegrafo l'esito della pseudo-votazione di oggi.- Il tempo è grigio – nebbioso – e la temperatura si mantiene sullo zero.-	justifiable reasons.- We advance a few more miles.- In the evening I telegraph to Maltini the precise Confidential Com- munique about the unfolding of the incident and I also telegraph the outcome of today's pseudo-vote.- The weather is more and more – foggy – and the temperature remains at zero.-
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 11. AUG. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 11 AUG 1929
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 22. AUG. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 22 AUG 1929
Il blocco continuò inamovibile per tutti questi giorni.- Abbandonata ormai per insuffi- cienza di tempo ogni idea di sverno volontario.- La nostra vita scorre inutile ed impaziente.- Sono passatempo il Bridge, le novità metereologiche, il nostro gramofono.- i cani.-	The blockage continued immovable for all these days.- Abandoned by now for insufficiency of time every idea of voluntary wintering.- Our life flows useless and impatient.- The pastimes are Bridge, the meteorological novelties, our gramophone.- the dogs.-



giornate di notte e
si caricano. l'uniforme si pare
presenti. - Nel pomeriggio compare a
pochi metri dalla nave un
orso. Sceso in superficie per
ricambiare ma lo caccia senza
nessun risultato, pochi canali
d'acqua ci attendono. l'uniforme
muore.

Doy e Mass sono nel frattempo
spariti. fa' da parecchie ore
non compare e lo chiamano il
fatto alle prime. dell'orso fanno
più molti amici non hanno
memoria. - Alle 18 improvvisa-
mente i ghiacci si mettono in
movimento: le larghi canali d'acqua
si aprono sopra porta. - Sono alcuni
canali sopra 50 metri di immobilità.

Partiamo subito. - la rotta per
E - S - SE. comincia. fine.
alle 1 del 25.

Calcol d'aver percorso 20 miglia
al massimo. - le nubi fitte
na corrente. memoria.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 24. AUG. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 24 AUG 1929
Giornata di novità se si considera l'uniformità dei giorni precedenti.- Nel pomeriggio compare a pochi metri dalla nave un orso. Scendo con Pugliese per rincorrerlo ma la caccia riesce senza risultato perché canali d'acqua ci ostacolano l'inseguimento. Boy e Muss sono nel frattempo spariti. Già da parecchie ore sono scomparsi e leghiamo il fatto alla presenza dell'orso facendo pei nostri amici non buoni pronostici.- Alle 18 improvvisamente i ghiacci si mettono in movimenti e larghi canali d'acqua si aprono d'ogni parte.- Senza alcuna causa dopo 30 giorni di immobilità.- Partiamo subito.- In rotta per E – S – SE. Camminiamo fino alla 1 del 25.- Calcolo d'aver percorso 20 miglia al massimo.- La nebbia fitta non consente pronostici.-	Day of novelties if one considers the uniformity of the previous days.- In the afternoon there appears a few metres from the ship a bear. I go down with Pugliese to chase it but the hunt turns out without result because channels of water hinder our pursuit. Boy and Muss went in the meantime missing. Already for several hours they have disappeared and we link the fact to the presence of the bear making for our friends not good predictions.- At 18 suddenly the ice starts moving and wide channels of water open on every side.- Without any cause after 30 days of immobility.- We depart immediately.- On course for E – S – SE. We go until 1 hour of the 25.- I calculate to have covered 20 miles at most.- The thick fog does not allow forecasts.-



Fatti ancora: Temperature
 eccellenti, attenti allo scirocco - nullo - e
 un sito: Rukh - Nel pomeriggio 2
 ore il N-E e va aumentando verso
 mezzanotte. Due piccole fache marine -
 le catturiamo. i nostri Br. di
 che intanto alle interrogazioni
 ai ghiacci ~~esse~~ anche il mare.
 un c. per altro po'.



I ghiacci si allargano
 improvvisamente e ci permettono
 un rapido spostamento verso Sud
 utilizzando i larghi canali nei
 più spericolati. Alla fine dello spostamento
 siamo nel parallelo dell'Is. Smith
 Bay. Il vento da N-E aumenta
 un po' di intensità ed il
 mare un po' più spumoso dei
 ghiacci invernali ad aprirsi
 violentamente.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 25. AUG. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 25 AUG 1929
Fermi ancora. Temperatura oscillante attorno allo zero – nebbia e umidità terribili- Nel pomeriggio si leva il N-E e va aumentando verso sera.- Due piccole foche uccise.- Poi continuiamo i nostri Bridge, che unitamente alle interrogazioni ai ghiacci è sono ormai il nostro unico passatempo.-	Motionless again. Temperature oscillating around zero – fog and terrible humidity- In the afternoon the N-E rises and increases toward evening.- Two small seals killed.- Then we continue our Bridge, which together with the interrogations to the ice is are by now our only pastime.-

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 26. AUG. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 26 AUG 1929
I ghiacci si allargano improvvisamente e ci permettono un rapido spostamento verso Sud utilizzando larghi canali sempre più spaziosi.- Alla fine della giornata siamo nel parallelo della S. Jacob Bay.- Il vento da N-E aumenta sempre di intensità ed il mare sempre più sgombro dai ghiacci incomincia ad agitarsi violentemente.-	The ice widens suddenly and allows us a rapid movement toward South using wide channels ever more spacious.- At the end of the day we are on the parallel of S. Jacob Bay.- The wind from N-E increases more and more in intensity and the sea increasingly clear of ice begins to become violently rough.-



ho un mare agitato.
 e con vento fresco e
 peoria. S. NE a spianare
 a sud per fuori a tenere
 p' lido Hope, in di prou di an.
 verso E per portarsi alle
 spalle dello stesso di spiacci
 quasi del vento: Effettuato
 l'approccio in vista, alla
 prova al N l'accesa in tutto dello
 King Chal. Le nubi, anche
 aiutata del vento, ci impedirono
 di avvistare. È una giornata
 di buona in di av. late, il
 freddo è aumentato in un
 tirare, pieno di fitta e
 qualche nevicata allungata
 molto da rimbombi di vento.



Lo è l'aurora: ci
 altissimi di sole in sole
 o alle spalle. Tutti gli altri
 sono aumentati del mal di mare
 la superficie ormai se po cre

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 27. AUG. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 27 AUG 1929
In un mare agitatissimo e con vento teso e poderoso da NE ci spingiamo a Sud fino quasi a toccare l'Isola Hope, indi procediamo verso E per portarci alle spalle della massa di ghiacci spinti dal vento.- Effettuato l'aggiramento iniziamo colla prua al N l'accostamento della King Charl.- La nebbia, anche aiutata dal vento ci impedisce di avvistarla.- È una giornata di danza indiavolata.- Il quadrato è trasformato in un bivacco pieno di fetore e sporchizia e popolato abbondante= mente da rantoli di vomito.-	In a very rough sea and with a steady and strong wind from NE we push ourselves South until almost touching Hope Island, then we proceed toward E to place ourselves to the rear of the mass of ice driven by the wind.- Having carried out the bypass we begin heading N the approach to the King Charl.- The fog, also helped by the wind prevents us from sighting it.- It is a day of devilish dancing.- The wardroom is transformed into a bivouac full of stench and filth and abundantly populated by rattles of vomit.-
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 28. AUG. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 28 AUG 1929
Io e Zanetti ci alterniamo di dodici in dodici ore alla guardia.- Tutti gli altri sono annientati dal mal di mare che infierisce ormai da 20 ore.	I and Zanetti alternate in twelve-hour shifts on watch.- All the others are prostrated by seasickness which has been raging for 20 hours now.

Pure noi due non contiamo.
 ormai più le nostre vocanti.
 Del mare del gran. piuma.
 con 20 miglia. a Nord delle
 Isole di Tonga, Gherl. Sempr
 vento e nullo e mare
 furinissimo. - M. che
 importa? - Le pare o al
 Nord ed o piuma. soffire
 durante in attesa.
 I piuma non non pari.
 Il mare eptelino. o
 ripieno. di piuma.
 piuma. -
 Noi siamo in tentativo di
 accostamento allo Fiazfuz
 dent.



Il mare si è verso mattina
 calato. Dopo una ultima notte
 d'infuria. Piuma. Mito il
 piuma. l. navigatore in capo al
 piuma a N.E. e piuma. E. Alle 24
 piuma. d'ora 79° 50' N. 40° E. gr.
 Nullo e piuma. bardi in vista
 a Nord.

Pure noi due non contiamo ormai più le nostre raccate.- Al morir del giorno riusciamo essere 20 miglia a Nord della Isola di Kong Charl. Sempre vento e nebbia e mare grossissimo.- Ma che importa? – La prua è al Nord ed è piacevole soffrire durante un [illegibile].- I ghiacci sono scomparsi. Il mare agitatissimo è ripieno di piccolissimi frammenti.- Decidiamo un tentativo di accostamento alla FrazJoseph Land.-	Even us both also no longer count our heaves anymore.- At the dying of the day we manage to be 20 miles North of the Island of Kong Charl. Always wind and fog and a very heavy sea.- But what does it matter? – The bow is to the North and it is pleasant to suffer during an [unreadable].- The ice floes have disappeared. The very rough sea is filled with very small fragments.- We decide an attempt at approaching the Franz Joseph Land.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 29. AUG. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 29 AUG 1929
Il mare si è verso mattina calmato dopo una ultima notte d'inferno.- Proseguiamo tutto il giorno la navigazione in acque libere prima a N.E e poi a E. Alle 24 presumo d'essere 79° 50' N. 40° E. Gr. Nebbia a grandi banchi in vista a Nord.	Toward morning the sea calmed after a last night of hell.- We continue navigation all day in open waters first to N.E and then to E. At 24 I presume to be [at] 79° 50' N. 40° E. Gr. Fog in large banks in sight to the North.



Sempre navighiamo per E o nel
 c'è di una gran folla di
 ghiacci che non pare voler
 finire - Continuano a essere 60
 miglia l'orizzonte. Nella prima
 ore del passaggio si lava un
 forte e fresco vento da S-E che
 che esordi in S-E lungo.
 Tutto la notte sta di ghiaccio.
 Sempre lungo l'orizzonte che pare
 ora verso N-E.



Sempre con ghiaccio e
 per panico. A un punto della
 lungo in S-E che non fanno pace
 alla parte della notte bene -
 Si affrettano le speranze si potrà
 raggiungere l'arcipelago -
 Per un momento ucciso
 un orso avvicinandosi colto
 nave a trenta metri -
 alle 23 a 50 miglia verso
 N-N-E è visibile capo Flere -

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 30. AUG. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 30 AUG 1929
Sempre navighiamo per Est sul ciglio di una gran fascia di ghiacci che non pare voglia finire.- Costeggiamo a circa 60 miglia l'Arcipelago.- Nelle prime ore del pomeriggio si leva un forte e fresco vento da Sud che alza enormi onde lunghe.- Tutte la notte sto di guardia.- Sempre lungo la costiera che piega ora verso N-E.-	We keep sailing East on the edge of a great belt of ice that does not seem to want to end.- We skim the Archipelago about 60 miles off.- In the early hours of the afternoon a strong and fresh wind from the South that raises enormous long swells.- All night I stand in watch.- Still along the coastline which bends now toward N-E.-
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 31. AUG. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 31 AUG 1929
Sempre costeggiamo la gran barriera accompagnati dalle lunghe onde che non danno pace alla danza della nostra barca.- Si allentano le speranze di poter raggiungere l'arcipelago.- Questa sera abbiamo ucciso un orso avvicinandolo colla nave a trenta metri.- Alle 23 a 50 miglia verso N.NE è visibile capo Flora.-	We keep coasting along the great barrier accompanied by the long waves that give no peace to the dance of our boat.- Hopes of reaching the archipelago slacken.- This evening we killed a bear bringing the ship to within thirty metres from it.- At 23 at 50 miles toward N.NE cape Flora is visible.-

Offi le parato per me.
e lin v se e e minire di
stare mto il per. ali opato
nel pante.



Durante la notte le par
fascia che amei certiffiam.
So le par piege de san ante
a No5 permett a de di avvicinare
a per m. h. l. 15 m. gli. de Cap.
Fluo... Campi banchi di ghiacci
di Tene (land ice) compunam.
L'idea: Con - per m. h. l. lito un
pe' di visibilita' ci permettelle
di fare Tena. - Attendiamo
tutto il periglio.

Nas. me veniam. fatti i
uguali sul fedov - l'ubio
immediatamente e Sanci lovia
in disparte chiedendo la me
posizione e interrogando sulla
possibilita' di un incontro.

Oggi la giornata fu serena e limpida e ci permise di stare tutto il giorno all'aperto sul ponte.-	Today the day was clear and bright and allowed us to stay all day in the open on the deck.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 1. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 1 SEP 1929
Durante la notte la gran fascia che ormai costeggiamo da tre giorni piega decisamente a Nord permettendoci di avvicinarci a presumibili 15 miglia da Capo Flora. Ampi banchi di ghiacci di terra (land ices) confermano l'idea.- Con ogni probabilità un po' di visibilità ci permetterebbe di toccare terra.- Attendiamo tutto il pomeriggio.- Verso sera sentiamo forti i segnali del Sedov.- Invio immediatamente a Samoilovic un dispaccio chiedendo la sua posizione e interrogandolo sulla possibilità di un incontro.-	During the night the great belt that we have now been coasting for three days bends definitely to the North allowing us to draw near to a presumed 15 miles from Cape Flora. Broad banks of land ice confirm the idea.- In all probability a bit of visibility would allow us to touch land.- We wait all afternoon.- Toward evening we hear strong signals from the Sedov.- I send immediately to Samoilovic a dispatch asking for his position and inquiring about the possibility of a meeting.-

Il mulo ripartendo ripartendo S. l'amp.
Pavone da loro, entrati nell'Anghelo
e camminando, d'essere già
in rotte per il ritorno. —

Offi cantatam. Si avere
una pala dell'elice rotte;
Cio' quindi gli anni di
calcoli da me entrati nella
navigazione stimata. — Or
non facciano conto più di
5 miglia all'ora. —

Alla 00 nam. sempre in
rotte verso N- in cui vi
canali via sotto i ghiacci di
Perie. —



Stando ancora.

Due piccoli e pesanti orsi.
Centinaio le navigazioni verso
Nord- alla 8 nam. arrivati
a 30 miglia dall'imbocco del
canale Artico. Da ghiacci
fatti e pesanti. Tattiche
vide le proporzioni. Suo

I Russi rispondono segnalando l'ampio lavoro da loro eseguito nell'Arcipelago e comunicando d'essere già in rotta per il ritorno.- Oggi constatammo di avere una pala dell'elica rotta; ciò spiega gli errori di calcoli da me eseguiti nella navigazione stimata.- Ora non facciamo certo più di 5 miglia all'ora.- Alle 00 siamo sempre in rotta verso N- in ampi canali tra sottili ghiacci di terra.-	The Russians respond reporting the extensive work carried out by them in the Archipelago and communicating that they are already en route back.- Today we found that we have a broken propeller blade; this explains the errors in calculations made by me in the dead-reckoning navigation.- Now we certainly do no more than 5 miles per hour.- At 00 we are still on course toward N- in wide channels among thin land ice.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 2. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 2 SEP 1929
Stanotte ammazziamo due piccoli e giovani orsi.- Continuo la navigazione verso Nord- Alle 8 siamo accostati a 30 miglia dall'imbocco del Canale Britannico da ghiacci grossi e pesanti.- Jakobsen vide le propaggini Sud	Tonight we kill two small and young bears.- I continue navigation toward the North- At 8 we are stopped 30 miles from the entrance of the British Channel by large and heavy ice.- Jakobsen saw the southern extensions

Sull' isola. Hekma - Per n. 500.
che ritenere all'incirca 50, e
per solennemente l'idea di
zaffirino F. f. che era anche
lo strumento di tutti
questi dati. La relazione del
Corno. appunto dal Feder.
Non si ritenere che
fattorie al Feder notizie
sulle condizioni di ghiaccio e
mi è spedito che l'unità
del locale Mt. Tanico vicino
al campo ghiaccio. Dura. Carera.
Parigian. tutti il giorno.
per S-E - alla me-
facci. la parte col fedi per
determinare la velocità delle
nave sopra la portata di
una pala sull'elice durante
la ultima battuta - Per
facciam. che noi no si !

dell'Isola <Hokner>.- Non vi è altro che ritornare abbandonando, se pur dolorosamente l'idea di raggiungere F.G. che era ormai solo sostenuta da sentimenti sportivi data la relazione del lavoro eseguito dal Sedov.- Prima di ritornare chiedo tuttavia al Sedov notizie sulla condizione dei ghiacci e mi è segnalato che l'uscita del Canale Britannico richiese al rompighiaccio duro lavoro.- Navighiamo tutto il giorno per S-E.- Alla sera faccio le prove col Loch per determinare la velocità della nave dopo la perdita di una pala dell'elica durante l'ultima battaglia – Non facciamo che sei nodi!- -----	of <Hokner> Island.- There is nothing else but to return abandoning, albeit regrettably the idea of reaching F.J. which was by now sustained only by sporting sentiments given the report of the work carried out by the Sedov.- Before returning however I ask the Sedov for news about the condition of the ice and I am informed that the exit from the British Channel required hard work by the icebreaker.- We sail all day toward S-E.- In the evening I make trials with the log to determine the speed of the ship after the loss of a propeller blade during the last battle – We don't make but six knots!- -----
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Panfilos. Tutto è
notto ed il panno in direzione
S-SE. Il mare relativamente
agitato per cause al solito.
Niente Zanti? non pare tutto
nelle loro catene così che sel.
con Pers. in altitudine. Si vi
va vi ore alle prade -
Alle 20 m. h. di tempo
e la cute alle 20 m. h.
Zanti. - Ma le nubi
con 5. fessure. così molto
e molto. e la panna al mare
Mare. Tutto molto in alto.
Si molto. - Erano con 5.
Lunghe e stentoree in
spira con 5. alle nubi.
piccola nave ed i nubi
però stentoree -

Numerosi nubi

Senz'altro intanto a noi -

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 3*. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 3 SEP 1929
Navighiamo tutta la notte ed il giorno in direzione S-SE. Il mare relativamente agitato fa come al solito tranne Zanetti scompaiono tutti nelle loro cabine così che solo con Peroni alterno di sei in sei ore alla guardia.- Alle 20 sembra di scorgere a S le coste della Nuova Zembla- Ma la nebbia essendo fittissima coi motori a rallenti e la prua al mare restiamo tutta notte in attesa di visibilità – Enormi onde lunghe si [illegibile] in ogni modo alla nostra piccola nave ed i nostri poveri stomaci.- Numerosi trichechi danzano intorno a noi.-	We sail all the night and the day in the direction S-SE. The relatively rough sea does as usual except for Zanetti, everyone disappears into their cabins so that with Peroni only I alternate in six-hour watches.- At 20 it seems we glimpse to the S the coasts of Novaya Zemlya- But the fog being very thick with the engines idling and the bow to the sea we remain all night waiting for visibility – Enormous rogue waves [unreadable] in every way against our little ship and our poor stomachs.- Numerous walruses dance around us.-

Note: *hand-corrected date, from “2” to “3”.



Alle poste. unq.
n. p. a. de Zaur. - h. e. di
grasia, nel d. p. due ore di
meno, quello la corte e
nettamente visibile # h. m.
e. d. a. t. e. n. e. v. l. h. e.
n. p. a. t. i. n. e. d. a. h. a. r. i.
f. o. r. t. a. l. i. - N. e. d. d. i. r. e. p. p. e.
n. i. c. u. a. n. c. a. r. a. p. p. i. e. d. d. i.
C. a. p. N. a. t. a. n. - T. u. t. t. o. i. l. p. i. n.
c. a. n. i. s. e. l. i. C. i. n. p. d. o. e. c. e. l. d. o.
e. t. n. o. f. a. r. m. a. t. e. n. e. a. n. t. e.
p. r. i. m. a. r. i. l. e. c. a. t. e. f. f. i. c. i. a. n. o. a. d. u. e.
n. e. g. l. i. p. a. r. t. i. i. t. r. a. n. l. u. b. o.
a. t. t. e. d. l. l. d. e. i. c. - P. a. e. r. o. p. l. i.
n. e. p. u. m. o. d. i. e. n. e. p. u.
e. p. a. l. i. h. e. a. e. n. l. t. e. i. t. n. e. a. n. o.
a. v. o. e. t. e. e. x. t. r. i. n. a. m. e. n. o. -
a. l. l. e. d. u. n. i. a. n. o. a. l. B. a. i. e. n. d. i.
c. a. p. l. u. b. t. e. ?

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 4. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 4 SEP 1929
Alle quattro vengo svegliato da Zanetti che è di guardia, solo dopo due ore di sonno, perché la costa è nettamente visibile. # Iniziamo ad accostare più volte respinti però dai bassi fondali- Decido di raggiungere un sicuro ancoraggio a S di Capo Nassau.- Tutto il giorno con un sole limpido e caldo ed una giornata veramente primaverile costeggiamo a due miglia questo strano lembo artico dell'Asia.- Paesaggi sempre nuovi e sempre eguali che a volte stancano a volte entusiasmano.- Alle 24 siamo al traverso di capo Lutte.-	At four I am awakened by Zanetti who is on watch, after only two hours of sleep, because the coast is clearly visible. # We begin to approach several times but are driven back by the shallow waters- I decide to reach a safe anchorage to the S of Cape Nassau.- All day with clear and warm sun and a truly springlike day we coast two miles off this strange Arctic strip of Asia.- Landscapes always new and always the same that at times weary at times enthuse.- At 24 we are abeam of cape Lutte.-



Alla 5 attenzione
arrivat: al Bureau delle Arcipel
Bay perian. i esse inteneri
non autenti lo han. profu di
o l'altre sans. syle regle
arrivat: -

Vi 5 un paese affi
in sentiri h. l. - I relit. phur.
cobent: i man di cui
sen carichi guto vire han.
fui e ca guto pelli di
han. sele diversale man.
esp. in agittat? aspettati-
f'insperian ch'io.

prava guto mettine, cel
sile l'imp di ch'io e nel
vire lo recense di guto
Dario 8 tale di ricenpe
sami di ogni seffenne
futuro. - Nel pensari pp. e
nelle natti in l'ave ed.

insiste un rivoluzionario
vento. -

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 5. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 5 SEP 1929
Alle 5 stamattina arrivati al traverso della Arcangel Bay passiamo in essa intemerì non ostante la bassa profondità e l'abbondanza degli scogli emergenti.- Vi è un paesaggio indescrivibile.- I soliti ghiacci cadenti in mare di cui son cariche queste terre hanno qui e con questo pallido terso sole invernale nuovi asp̃ inaspettati aspetti- L'impressione ch'io provai questa mattina col sole limpido che v'era nel vedere lo scenario di questa Baia è tale da ricompen= sarmi di ogni sofferenza futura.- Nel pomeriggio e nella notte si leva ed insiste un violentissimo vento.-	At 5 this morning having arrived abeam of Arcangel Bay we pass into it undaunted notwithstanding the shallow depth and the abundance of emergent rocks.- There is an indescribable landscape.- The usual ice falling into the sea with which these lands are laden has here and with this pale clear winter sun new asp̃ unexpected aspects- The impression that I experienced this morning with the clear sun that there was on seeing the scenery of this Bay is such as to recompense me for every future suffering.- In the afternoon and in the night there rises and persists a very violent wind.-



Alle 14 con Puyhine
con R.T., When. con motinista e
Nello Valle partii per una
esplorazione costiera ed interno
"Sama". Arrivammo. Le fante
del fan ghiaccio: spiccate
nella Annapel Bay e poi
vignano. a Nord fu. al
vicer. All. nel fether. Induriam
no i verti di uno capano.
Sancis 545 fe navigare e di
qualche emersione per iuti conti.
perche saltiere. - N. Ternano.
Top 5 ore in tempo per
spingere a furia ventata di perche
se che ci st. 10 nelle notte
ad una pericolosa manovra
colle navi; per rendersi ingaggiati
ad una guerra a. Su 5.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 6. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 6 SEP 1929
Alle 14 con Pugliese come R.T. Urbano come motonauta e Della Valle partii per una esplorazione costiera col motoscafo “Laura,,.- Avvicinammo la fronte del gran ghiacciaio sfociante nella Arcangel Bay e poi piegammo a Nord fino al ridosso dell'Isola Gorbovi. Individuam[=] mo i resti di una capanna samoieda.- La navigazione ci diede qualche emozione per urti contro secche sabbiose.- Ritornammo dopo 5 ore in tempo per sfuggire a furiosa ventata di poche ore che ci obligò nella notte ad una pericolosa manovra colla nave, per ridossarci maggiormente ad uno sperone a Sud.-	At 14 with Pugliese as R.T. Urbano as motorboat pilot and Della Valle I set out for a coastal exploration with the motorboat “Laura”.- We approached the front of the great glacier debouching into Arcangel Bay and then we turn to the North up in proximity of Gorbovi Island. We identified the remains of a Samoyed hut.- The navigation gave us some thrills because of bumps against sandy shoals.- We returned after 5 hours in time to escape a furious wind blow of a few hours that forced us in the night to a dangerous maneuver with the ship to bring ourselves more under the lee of a spur to the South.-



La giornata è servita
nelle 15 acqua e sale nell
mattinatto rappun. con un
banco. La corte è bene in esse
Si lunghi pali conficcati
nel fango. - Fanno anche
delle riparazioni. -

Sono in attesa di poter
vedere un'alt. esplorazione
al nostro negli anni
retrospettivi della Base,
e poi di allontanarsi e
Archangel di notte a Capo
Nansen. Il solo è di notte di
piccoli ghiacci ormai ben
sotto l'orizzonte. - Ciò è ridet
le emozioni delle alt. e di
bramanti, a cui non erano più
abituate. che si rinevano e
incalcano. e ci stupivano
per la loro superba meraviglia.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 7. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 7 SEP 1929
La giornata è di vento nebbia ed acqua.- Solo nella mattinata raggiungo con una lancia la costa e trovo su essa dei lunghi pali conficcati nel terreno.- Faccio anch'io delle segnalazioni.- Sono in attesa di poter svolgere un'altra esplorazione col motoscafo negli antri settentrionali della Baia, e poi di abbandonare l' Archangel diretti a Capo Nassau.- Il sole è di notte di parecchi gradi ormai basso sotto l'orizzonte.- Ciò ci ridà le emozioni delle albe e dei tramonti, a cui non eravamo più abituati.- che si rincorrono ed incalzano e ci stupiscono per la loro superba meraviglia.-	The day is of wind fog and water.- Only in the morning do I reach the coast with a launch and find on it long poles driven into the ground.- I too make signals.- I am waiting to be able to carry out another exploration with the motorboat in the northern recesses of the Bay, and then to leave the Archangel bound for Cape Nassau.- The sun at night is now several degrees below the horizon.- This gives back to us the emotions of the dawns and the sunsets, to which we were no longer accustomed.- which chase and run after one another and astonish us for their superb wonder.-



Alla prima ora del
pomeriggio: parti al meeting,
verso Nord coll'intenzione di
esplorare i fondi a settentrione
dello sbocco: - St. Am. fuori
porta: - Ecco una Zamboni:
Wham. e Berd. - Il tempo
calmo ci fa portare una
manta fuori, anche
solitario al limitare di
porto sp. glie. Tem. arietale
e due, bagnate da sempre
nuovi corroni e sopra sul
suo bar. - Preparamo su
un risotto una capanna
in considerazione discreta
mentre hanno in cui
Pariam. una Canaro con
bastante una immersione in
russo. - Appena. et la
noce a notte fatta: -

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 8. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 8 SEP 1929
Nelle prime ore del pomeriggio parto col motoscafo verso Nord coll'intenzione di esplorare i fiordi a Settentrione della Gorbovi.- Stiamo fuori 7 ore.- È con me Zanetti Urbano e Bonola.- Il tempo calmo ci fa gustare enormemente questo andare solitario al limitare di queste spoglie terre asiatiche e dure, bagnate da sempre nuovi colori d acqua pel sole basso.- Scopriamo su un isolotto una capanna in condizioni discretamente buone in cui troviamo una lamiera con battuta una iscrizione in russo.- Raggiungiamo la nave a notte fatta.-	In the early hours of the afternoon I set out with the motorboat toward the North with the intention of exploring the fjords to the North of the Gorbovi.- We are out for 7 hours.- With me is Zanetti Urbano and Bonola.- The calm weather makes us greatly enjoy this solitary going at the edge of these bare Asiatic and hard lands, bathed by ever-new colours of water due to the low sun.- We discover on a little islet a hut in moderately good condition in which we find a sheet of metal with a stamped inscription in Russian.- We reach the ship when night has fallen.-



All'Alba alba. Suro.
colla nave la Ankerfjel Bay e
Dirigo vers. Nord: Norvegian.
alle 9 h. Cap. Nassar mi
celato in mare il motore
esplod. le vicine del Capo
stesso mentre la nave muove.
al Capo Tiv. su un
pennantato in pess. salute
in scari e legno, con un
overdose russo - hyperbolic
a continuare all'Anker verso
Nord per mancanza. Si rifà
Dirigo a Sud coll' intensione
di raggiungere la Nordkyst
Bay - Norvegian. tutto il
giorno spinti da un forte
vento in poppa.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 9. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 9 SEP 1929
All'alba abbandono colla nave la Archangel Bay e dirigo verso Nord.- Raggiungiamo alle 9. h. Capo Nassau ove calato in mare il motoscafo esploro le vicinanze del Capo stesso mentre la nave incrocia al largo.- Trovo su un promontorio un grosso segnale in sassi e legno con una iscrizione russa.- Impossibilitati a continuare coll'Heimen verso Nord per mancanza di nafta dirigo a Sud coll'intenzione di raggiungere la Nordeskjold Bay.- Navighiamo tutto il giorno spinti da un forte vento in poppa.-	At dawn I leave with the ship the Archangel Bay and head toward the North.- We reach at 9. h. Cape Nassau where lowered into the sea the motorboat I explore the vicinity of the Cape itself while the ship loiters offshore.- I find on a promontory a large marker of stones and wood with a Russian inscription.- Unable to continue with the Heimen toward the North for lack of diesel oil I head South with the intention of reaching the Nordeskjold Bay.- We sail all the day driven by a strong tail wind.-



All' alba siamo al
Pavus. Sella. Merdeskjold
Bay ma le condizioni del
vento e del mare non ci
consentono di imbarci.

Proprio. alle 15 alle 16
entriamo nello Manhi pri.

Bay - Diam. per 5. parrisaria
mente e subito lo lascio.
ed facciamo di allentare
per trovare con successo
un miglior corso. alle
17 ore nello Baie stesse.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 10. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 10 SEP 1929
All'alba siamo al traverso della Nordeskjold Bay ma le condizioni del vento e del mare non ci consentono di entrarvi.- Proseguiamo oltre ed alle 16 entriamo nella Maschigina Bay.- Diamo fondo provvisoria= mente e subito la lancia col fuoribordo si allontana per trovare con sondaggi un miglior ridosso alla nave nella Baia stessa.-	At dawn we are abeam of Nordeskjold Bay but the conditions of wind and sea do not allow us to enter it.- We proceed further and at 16 we enter Maschigina Bay.- We anchor provisionally and immediately the launch with the outboard moves off to find by soundings a better position for the ship in the Bay itself.-



Sempre alla fonda nell.
 Manig. Day: Il vento sell.
 mattinata ci impo. Si
 novaci: Sel. nel pancia
 alle lancia co il pui barto
 rapp. la cata non attente
 i feto fangenti, a n dero
 ol Capo. Slin tate a fu 5 l.
 Dario: con Mare. e B. n el
 facian. no. canoate
 nell' inter. Sella pancia
 Turen. clario. Si pui Dio,
 con m. uchi e vari facchi
 Si rechi a via ituppi.



Non ci putano.
 novaci tutto il panno.
 per il vento infuochi.
 Un. hupio. Si neve ci
 amate lo neve l'istichio.
 B. natto

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 11. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 11 SEP 1929
Sempre alla fonda nella Maschigina Bay.- Il vento dalla mattinata ci impedì di muoverci.- Solo nel pomeriggio colla lancia ed il fuori bordo raggiungo la costa non ostante i forti frangenti, a ridosso del Capo delimitante a Sud la Baia.- Con Marco e Bonola facciamo una camminata nell'interno della penisola.- Terreno classico di tundra, con muschi e rari fiocchi di secchi e <vivi> sterpi.-	Still at anchor in the Maschigina Bay.- The wind since the morning prevented us from moving.- Only in the afternoon with the launch and the outboard I reach the coast notwithstanding the strong breakers, close to the Cape delimiting to the South the Bay.- With Marco and Bonola we take a walk in the interior of the peninsula.- Classic tundra terrain, with mosses and rare tufts of dry and <living> shrubs.-

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 12. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 12 SEP 1929
Non ci potemmo muovere tutto il giorno per il vento infernale.- Una bufera di neve ci ammantò la nave letteralmente. Di notte	We could not move all day because of the infernal wind.- A snowstorm literally cloaked the ship. At night

il temp. si rimbiana - E un.
pittac. divino nell'acqua
notturno. Dell'olho veder
le montane cariche di neve
e di fanghetti per il humore.
non spiccare su un celo
fuso e purissimo; fanno
a loro carico infinite penne
e finite stelle.

Ad uno ad uno le
indiscrezioni; Venne verso
orienti, fece coi satelliti,
la Vega, Oriani, la Pleiade,
i fuochi, Marte, l'ur.
la polare all. Zenit;
ad uno ad uno in sovrano
quasi communi.

il tempo si rischiarà.- È uno spettacolo divino nel crepuscolo notturno dell'alba veder le montagne cariche di neve e di frangenti per il burrascoso mare spiccare su un cielo terso e purissimo; fanno a loro corona infinite tremule e timide stelle. Ad uno ad uno le individuiamo: Venere verso oriente, Giove coi satelliti, la Vega, Orione, le Pleiadi, i Gemelli, Marte, l'orsa, la polare allo Zenit; ad uno ad uno indoviniamo quasi commossi.---	the weather clears.- It is a divine spectacle in the nocturnal twilight of dawn to see the mountains laden with snow and with breakers from the stormy sea stand out against a clear and very pure sky; around them there forms a crown of infinite trembling and timid stars. One by one we pick them out: Venus toward the east, Jupiter with its satellites, Vega, Orion, the Pleiades, Gemini, Mars, the ursa, the pole star at the Zenith; one by one we guess them almost moved.---
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Per andare a Samara
la notte scorsa, vinsi. In
all' alba, dato il meraviglioso
rumore delle navi, avrei potuto
cogliere nel momento buono la
cappellata delle Barche -
Il mattino il cielo si
cristallizzò di nubi e nubi e
vento e mare in preda. Le
sabbie! così che nel pomeriggio
decisi di salpare dritti a
Sulamerica Bay! Nessuno
fermo in sette Barche alle
20 dopo cinque ore di
navigazione ben faticosa -

Durante la notte ammirammo
atteriti ad una aurora
boreale giungente di colori
così vivaci il cielo e
le stelle si muovevano.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 13. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 13 SEP 1929
Non andai a dormire la notte scorsa, sicuro che all'alba, dato il meraviglioso sereno della notte, avrei potuto eseguire col motoscafo Laura la esplorazione della Baia.- Verso mattina il cielo si oscura di nuovo e neve e vento e mare impedirono la sortita; così che nel pomeriggio decisi di salpare diretto a Sulmenewa Bay: Demmo fondo in detta Baia alle 20 dopo cinque ore di navigazione tranquilla.- Durante la notte assistiamo attoniti ad una aurora boreale guizzante di colori ed animante il cielo e le stelle di nuova vita.-	I did not go to sleep last night, sure that at dawn, given the marvelous clear night sky, I would have been able to carry out with the motorboat Laura the exploration of the Bay.- Toward morning the sky darkens again and snow and wind and sea prevented the sortie; so that in the afternoon I decided to set sail directly to Sulmenewa Bay: We dropped anchor in said Bay at 20 after five hours of quiet navigation.- During the night we witness astonished an aurora borealis darting with colours and animating the sky and the stars with new life.-



Sempre sempre irripetibile
per mare e con buona motricità.
Solo nel principio si capiva la
per peritica. La neltica; ne
appettiam. ed fuai fatto per
rappagare la cute - a piedi
rappagiam. il Cap. Rottosella
che Mariani. un anetto e
di bersagli vecchi - Faceiam.
pure nei in tal punto una
reprobatione colle nostre targette
d'alluminio. - Rientram. a
bado per mano =

La nostra unica occupazione
in queste ventate giornate di
neltica è il Brigo.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 14. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 14 SEP 1929
Sempre tempo impraticabile per mare e con lancia o motoscafo.- Solo nel pomeriggio si acquieta pur persistendo la nebbia; ne approfittiamo col fuori bordo per raggiungere la costa.- A piedi raggiungiamo il capo Prokofewa ove troviamo un ometto e dei bossoli scarichi.- Facciamo pure noi in tal punto una segnalazione colle nostre targhette d'alluminio.- Rientriamo a bordo per pranzo.- La nostra unica occupazione in questa terribile giornata di nebbia è il Bridge.-	Still impracticable weather at sea and for the launch or motorboat.- Only in the afternoon it calms down though the fog persists; we take advantage of it with the outboard to reach the coast.- On foot we reach cape Prokofewa where we find a cairn and spent shell casings.- We too at that location make a signal with our aluminum tags.- We return on board for dinner.- Our only occupation on this terrible day of fog is Bridge.-



Al pomeriggio, insieme, col
motore, celli intesa di
esplorare il fondo delle Baie
e il capo. Settantamila li-
bre per petrolio. Lottano. Rendere
in senso, e si poter sbarcare
tutte le cariche del mare.
Dopo cinque ore di tentativi
fuerono ritorni alla
Nave. Due ore. Sembrano all'alt.
di partire alle 10.30 di capo
Sutici.



Un'ora. Delle Baie
alle 5.10. - subito perire
il silenzioso. in mare.
Per tanto e venire una
fatta, nulla e sentita.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 15. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 15 SEP 1929
Nel pomeriggio usciamo col motoscafo coll'intenzione di esplorare il fondo della Baia ed il capo Settentrionale.- Non potemmo tuttavia trovare un ridosso ove poter sbarcare date le condizioni del mare.- Dopo cinque ore di tentativi facemmo ritorno alla Nave.- Decido domani all'alba di partire alla volta di Capo Sukoi.-	In the afternoon we go out with the motorboat with the intention of exploring the inner end of the Bay and the Northern cape.- We could not however find a spot where we could land given the sea conditions.- After five hours of attempts we returned to the Ship.- I decide at dawn tomorrow to depart for Cape Sukoi.-

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 16. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 16 SEP 1929
Usciamo dalla Baia alle 5.30.- e subito poniamo il solcometro in mare.- Non tarda a venire una fitta nebbia e vento.-	We leave the Bay at 5.30.- and immediately put the log into the sea.- A thick fog and wind are not long in coming.-

alle 16 multe mi
paroffi di capo SUKOI
Tutian. No lo nebbi di
liano su i luoghi di
improvvisamente molte asen.
in pieno viceret una bella ete
sul futo. - Una prout virat.
un W e prouti reas. fl.
e liberan. del percolo. -
Appen. essent. a bella ete
reas. fl. an. San fether
d'aspe. - Durant. la notte
ci allentam. e un. as.
della cet. e del m. ete
quato, pu. riprimen. la
m. i. nasse m. ete, ce m.
stem. cullati. Se. man.
ante luoghi, p. e. e
ristant. be. tutte le
m. si. essent. -

alle 16 mentre nei paraggi di capo SUKOI tentiamo tra la nebbia di riconoscere i luoghi d'amo improvvisamente mentre eravamo in piena velocità una tallonata sul fondo.- Una pronta virata verso W e pronti scandagli ci liberano del pericolo.- Appena avvenuta la tallonata scandagliamo due fathom d'acqua.- Durante la notte ci allontanammo a un'ora dalla costa e col motore spento, per risparmiare la ormai scarsa nafta, ce ne stemmo cullati da enormi onde lunghe, precise e sistematiche tutte le ore di oscurità.-	at 16 while in the vicinity of cape SUKOI we attempt amid the fog to identify the places we suddenly strike while we were at full speed the bottom.- A quick turn toward W and quick soundings free us from the danger.- As soon as the grounding occurred we sound two fathoms of water.- During the night we stand off at a distance of one hour from the coast and with the engine shut down, to save the now scarce diesel oil, we stayed rocked by enormous long waves, precise and systematic all the hours of darkness.-
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Per alcune voci
rappresentanti non rimane. E
accertare. Per altre voci.
le cose non sono le stesse.
non potremo. avvicinarla
e per le condizioni del
mare e per i disordini pare
sulle sost. facciano.

Talvolta mi dicono che
l'idea nostra di cultura
non è nulla. Ma,
valutandola per pericolo per
la nave. Per ora. E. molto
al largo della, salute, anzi,
e coi motori spenti.

Il tempo non va
in glorie, a seguire, nulla,
evento.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 17. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 17 SEP 1929
Non ostante vari tentativi non riuscimmo ad accostare.- Due volte vedemmo la costa ma data la nebbia non potemmo avvicinarla am e per le condizioni del mare e per i discordi pareri sulla identificazione.- Jakobsen mi dichiara che il voler insistere ad entrare o nell'una o nell'altra Baia costituirebbe grave pericolo per la nave.- Passiamo la notte al largo colle solite onde, e coi motori spenti.- Il tempo non vuole migliorare, acqua, nebbia e vento.-	Despite various attempts we did not succeed in entering.- Twice we saw the coast but given the fog we could not approach it because of the conditions of the sea and because of the differing opinions on the identification.- Jakobsen states to me that insisting on entering either one or the other Bay would constitute a grave danger for the ship.- We spend the night offshore with the usual waves, and with the engines shut down.- The weather does not want to improve, water, fog and wind.-

Note: the mark following the word «*colle*» is regarded as unintentional, given the visible trace of the pen on the original manuscript.



All'alt. il tempo è
sempre bello.
Nella il mare alto in
poco migliorato. E sempre;
il vento. Fuso rian. euc.
fermi. — Per tutto il giorno
non ci periamo. unione
per anch'io mancando di molto.



Alla mattina le
carte è molto asciutto.
Sullo nord. Sive di fronte
notte a motori spenti. —
Al pomeriggio in discesa
la Molluc Bay; in le condizioni.
Il mare non ci consiglia.
di avvicinarsi allo zona
di Rematun. —

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 18. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 18 SEP 1929
All'alba il tempo è sempre nebbioso sebbene il mare abbia un poco migliorato.- A mezzogiorno, del nostro fuso siamo ancora fermi.- Per tutto il giorno pure non ci possiamo muovere per assoluta mancanza di visibilità.	At dawn the weather is still foggy although the sea has improved a little.- At noon, by our time we are still motionless.- For the whole day we likewise cannot move due to absolute lack of visibility

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 19. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 19 SEP 1929
Alla mattina la costa è visibile assai avvicinata dalla nostra deriva di questa notte a motori spenti.- Nel pomeriggio individuiamo la Mollere Bay; ma le condizioni del mare non ci consigliano di avvicinarci alla zona di Karmakul.-	In the morning the coast is visible much closer owing to our drift during this night with engines shut down.- In the afternoon we make out Mollere Bay; but the conditions of the sea do not suggest us to approach the area of Karmakul.-

data anche le macchine di
fandoli. - Ci teniamo al largo
co i motori spenti attende-
mo con pazienza più favorevole.

Nella notte il vento
aumentò fino a 800 m.
e nei cantieri. -
Sanzione spaventosamente e
neisamente. -



La notte ed il
vento non cessano.
Al paraggio e nella notte
il vento aumentò e diminuì
e di colpo spirò da S-W
ad' opporgli i motori
e la prima ondata ebbe
pericoli avvicinando
alla costa. - Minimo
ceri in mezzo fra le
linee di notte. -

data anche la bassezza dei fondali.- Ci teniamo al largo ed a motori spenti attendiamo condizioni più favorevoli.- Nella notte il vento aumenta fino a 800 m. e noi continuiamo a danzare spaventosamente e noiosamente.-	given also the shallowness of the waters.- We keep offshore and with engines shut down we wait for more favorable conditions.- During the night the wind increases up to 800 m. and we continue to dance frightfully and tediously.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 20. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 20 SEP 1929
La nebbia ed il ventone non cedono.- Nel pomeriggio e nella notte il vento aumentò a dismisura e ci obbligò spirando da S-W ad opporgli i motori e la prua onde evitare pericolosi avvicinamenti alla costa.- Diminuisco così in modo grave le riserve di Nafta.-	The fog and the big wind do not yield.- In the afternoon and in the night the wind increased without measure and blowing from S-W forced us to oppose it with the engines and the bow so as to avoid dangerous approaches to the coast.-Thus I severely reduce the reserves of diesel oil.-



Il vento è aumentato.
Soprattutto Se obliqui
a iniziare alle venti Smeade.
È forte il mar aut.
Si metter la prima sull'Espe.
La Vinta sembra un 8 preso
alle 9 P.M.T. Dal fero
Si Moller Bay colle vele
abbate, spuntano. Il vento
da Sud moniano. La via
con rotte WSW. -

Il mare è peruviano. 5
per tutta la giornata e
la notte. Si un Smeade
abbate. - Si punti piccolo.
wave e con punto mare
la vita diventa impensabile.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 21. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 21 SEP 1929
Il vento è aumentato talmente da obligarci a rinunciare alla visita Samoiede.- È questo il momento di mettere la pura sull'Europa La triste decisione è presa alle 9 G.MT. Dal Largo di Mollere Bay colle vele alzate sfruttando il vento da Sud iniziamo la via con rotta WSW.- Il mare è pessimo è per tutta la giornata e la notte fu un danzare atroce.- Su questa piccola nave e con questo mare la vita diventa impossibile.-	The wind has increased so much as to force us to give up the visit to the Samoyeds.- This is the moment to set the bow toward Europe The sad decision is taken at 9 G.MT. From Off Mollere Bay with the sails hoisted taking advantage of the wind from the South we set out on course WSW.- The sea is awful and for the whole day and the night it was an atrocious dance.- On this small ship and with this sea life becomes impossible.-



Lungo mare
 Teso. - Orsè
 enanti. - Il vent. ci
 aint. ciò non ostenta
 afor molte M. S. e S
 in 24 ore il foel
 ci 88 per fatto 140
 miglia. - Se n. n. p. n. n.
 n. n. n. n. n. n. n.
 72° 10' lat. N. 44° E. fr.
 Pers. n. n. n. n. n.
 mare onole anch. nel
 para. n. n. -



Altra 140 miglia
 alle g. f. n. t. n. n.
 la n. n. p. n. n. n.
 altra. c. n. n. n. n. n.
 otten. go 71° 50' lat. N. n. S
 36° 30' E. n. fr.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 22. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 22 SEP 1929
Sempre mare teso.- Onde enormi.- Il vento ci aiuta ciò non ostante a far molta strada ed in 24 ore il Loch ci dà per fatte 140 miglia.- La nostra posizione stimata è quindi 72° 10' Lat. N. 44° E.Gr. Pessima visibilità e mare orribile anche nel pomeriggio-	Still a heavy sea.- Enormous waves.- The wind helps us nevertheless to make much distance and in 24 hours the log shows 140 miles made.- Our estimated position is therefore 72° 10' N Lat. 44° E.Gr. Very poor visibility and horrible sea also in the afternoon-

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 23. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 23 SEP 1929
Altre 140 miglia.- Alle 9. GMT. rilevo la nostra posizione e con altezza circ meridiano ed ottengo 71° 50' Lat. Nord 36° 30' Est. Gr.	Another 140 miles.- At 9 GMT I fix our position and with altitude meridian circle and I obtain 71° 50' Lat. North 36° 30' East. Gr.

Il mare ci dà riposo. ed il
sole ricompensa. - fa gran
parte grande di ocean.
in m. di sublimi -

Quando le notti ment
si prende in mano. -

le notti amate, dalle
stelle lumini, il mare
passa concesso. in

quelle lunghe voglie

all'anima mia

insonni celestali ed
inamollate. -



All'alba avventurosi
primi fari del Nord Navigio e
colle prime luci i profeti
veri delle coste e di Capo
Nord più tardi. -

Il mare ci dà tregua ed il sole ricomparso ci fa gustare questa giornata di oceano in modo sublime.- Durante la notte monto di guardia io stesso.- La notte lunata, dalle stelle luminose, il mare pauroso concedono in quella lunga veglia all'animo mio sensazioni colossali ed incancellabili.-	The sea gives us respite and the reappeared sun makes us appreciate this day of ocean in a sublime way.- During the night I take the watch myself.- The moonlit night, the bright stars, and the fearsome sea grant, in that long vigil, to my spirit colossal and indelible feelings.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 24. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 24 SEP 1929
All'alba avvistammo i primi fari del Nord Norvegia e colle prime luci i profili neri della costa e di Capo Nord più tardi.-	At dawn we sighted the first lighthouses of Northern Norway and with the first lights the black profiles of the coast and later of North Cape.-

Il mare fu tranquillo e
 tranquillo. Non nulla -
 Montagna. Capo. Ne 5
 fedi. S. delle spazzature. c'è
 S. che fu. S. imp. effe -
 Durante la notte ci separa
 un mare. con vento di
 1400 m. Per ballare. me
 con tanto con punto nave -
 Le lampade di prima e
 l'aria delle N. di. fu
 asportati. del vento -
 Intanto le ceneri sul
 fine della notte -



Parigi. Tutto
 il più. in i. fieri -
 Offi. pul. generale
 a br. S. nel punto e

Il mare fu durante la giornata tranquillo.- Rasentammo Capo Nord godendo dello spettacolo ciclopico ed che questo tempo offre.- Durante la notte ci sorprese un uragano con vento di 1400 m. Non ballammo mai così tanto con questa nave.- La lampada di prua e l'aereo della Radio furono asportati dal vento.- Ritornò la calma sul finire della notte.-	The sea was calm during the day.- We skirted North Cape enjoying the cyclopean spectacle that this weather offers.- During the night we were surprised by a hurricane with wind of 1400 m. We never rocked so much with this ship.- The bow lamp and the Radio aerial were carried off by the wind.- Calm returned at the end of the night.-
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TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 25. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 25 SEP 1929
Navigammo tutto il giorno tra i fiordi- Oggi pulizia generale a bordo, sul ponte e	We sailed all day among the fjords- Today general cleaning on board, on the deck and

detto coperto. - alle 22
si sapeva in alt. buona.
Si vento con 1200 mch.
che ci offe e ancora
nell'evento in idono
cento m. nuova parte
della carta che poteva
arrivare in ostente
l'evento e furio si rendeva
fu loro ci aiuto si
tanto in tanto.

Vi fu ancora boreale
Succinto la ten parte.



alle 16 turbina. e
banchina. Si Transp. - Ma
per fell enio. e salute del
molo.

sotto coperta.- Alle 22	and below deck.- At 22
ci sorprese un'altra burrasca	another gale surprised us with
di vento con 1200 metri	wind of 1200 metres
che ci obligò a cercare	that forced us to seek
nell'oscurità un ridosso	in the darkness a lee
contro una scoscesa parete	against a steep wall
della costa che potemmo	of the coast which we were able
avvicinare non ostante	to approach notwithstanding
l'oscurità a furia di scandagli.-	the darkness by dint of soundings.-
La luna ci aiuta di	The moon helps us
tanto in tanto.-	from time to time.-
Vi fu aurora boreale	There was an aurora borealis
durante la tempesta.-	during the storm.-

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 26. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 26 SEP 1929
Alle 16 tocchiamo la banchina di Tromsø.- Una gran folla curiosa ci saluta dal molo.-	At 16 we touch the quay of Tromsø.- A large curious crowd greets us from the pier.-



franta di Timpf con tutte le
caratteristiche della vita di
part. Dopo di cui si mar-
cia - in noi per - è un
stato inimitabile. Mantene-
mentre, se per lo
molto, forse di fatica -

La sera del 28 offre all'epi-
paffi in pane, al fra 5 Hotel
presenti tutte le persone del
pane - pane intinto e
conchione, e favorevoli mi-
ceranti dei giornali -

Invece di partire il 29 se-
di rimandare di un giorno
mentre è stato chiesto ciò
solt. e per aff. In serie per
la Danimarca al loro paese

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 27. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 27 SEP 1929
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 28. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 28 SEP 1929
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 29. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 29 SEP 1929
Giornata di Tromsø con tutte le caratteristiche della vita di porto dopo sei mesi di navigazione.- In noi però è una strana invincibile tristezza.- Manteniamo sempre la nostra divisa di fatica.- La sera del 28 offro all'equipaggio un pranzo al Grand Hotel presenti tutte le personalità del paese.- Grande intimità e cameratismo e favorevolissimi commenti dei giornali.- Invece di partire il 29 decido di rimandare di un giorno essendomi stato chiesto ciò dall'equipaggio che desidera passare la Domenica al loro paese*	Day in Tromsø with all the characteristics of port life after six months of navigation.- In us however there is a strange invincible sadness.- We still keep our work clothes.- On the evening of the 28 I offer the crew a dinner at the Grand Hotel with all the notables of the town present.- Great intimacy and camaraderie and very favorable comments from the newspapers.- Instead of departing on the 29 I decide to postpone by a day this having been asked of me by the crew, who wish to spend Sunday in their town*

Note: *Tromsø was *Heimen's* port of registration and homebase.



Se partenze che
 devono arrivare alle 16 o
 imparate alle 16.
 Prim. di partire insieme
 visita alla ch. del nuovo
 Sepp. anche di Hauke e del
 podestà: Selpem. alle 16,30.



È un po' part. per te
 di navigazione mi senti:
 fardi colori, alcune volte apatici,
 altre volte violenti di colori e di
 impressioni - All'ora il
 platea e basso - Per la notte
 elice avvertita non evasione
 int. nella silenziosità -

Anche pensare esterni nel
 West Frisland. Non
 riser. navigando la notte e
 fare e nell'apote. di perenni
 e segue non per non
 preferisce.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 30. SEP. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 30 SEP 1929
La partenza che doveva avvenire alle 10 è rimandata alle 16. Prima di partire riceviamo visita oltre che del buon Scetri anche di Hansen e del podestà.- Salpiamo alle 16.30.-	The departure that was to take place at 10 is postponed to 16. Before departing we receive a visit, besides from good Scetri also from Hansen and from the mayor.- We set sail at 16.30.-

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 1. OKT. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 1 OKT 1929
È una giornata questa di navigazione nei soliti fiordi calmi, alcune volte apatici, altre volte violenti di colori e di impressioni.- Abbiamo il pilota a bordo.- Per la nostra elica avariata non avanziamo certo molto velocemente.- Anziché passare esterni nel West Fiorden stiamo sempre a ridosso navigando tra scogli e fari e villaggetti di pescatori e acque sempre meno profonde.-	This is a day of navigation in the usual calm fjords, at times apathetic, at other times violent with colours and impressions.- We have the pilot on board.- Because of our damaged propeller we certainly do not advance very fast.- Instead of passing outside in the West Fiorden we always keep in the lee sailing among rocks and lighthouses and little fishing villages and ever shallower waters.-



Continu. nunc che lo
nav. per ora. - Appuntamento
della aqua bupulle di ferd
in via. il larso di appun-
tamento di notte hegele-
Avvisare a Dupa alle
6.15 or.



Porch h. hely for
I nunc an. per la 10
supra. al 5 punto alla
Nift. co ubbion con collo
nario di hede de ore
supra. l.

TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 2. OKT. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 2 OKT 1929
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 3. OKT. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 3 OKT 1929
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 4. OKT. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 4 OKT 1929
Continua normale la navigazione.- Approfittando delle acque tranquille di fiordi iniziamo il lavoro di prepara= zione dei nostri bagagli- Arriviamo a Bergen alle 6.15 del	Navigation continues normal.- Taking advantage of the calm waters of the fjords we begin the work of preparing our baggage- We arrive at Bergen at 6.15 of the
TIMBRO: NAVE HEIMEN 5. OKT. 1929	STAMP: SHIP HEIMEN 5 OKT 1929
Poiché ho telegrafato il mio arrivo per le 10 dirigomi al deposito della Nafta ed <utilizzare> così [il tempo] collo scarico dei barili da ora disponibili.-	Since I have telegraphed my arrival by 10 I proceed to the depot of the fuel oil to <use> [the time] unloading of the barrels now available.-

Part III

Logbook Discussion

THE INTERPRETATION OF A PRIVATE DIARY?

The *Heimen-SUCAI* enterprise generated, inevitably, a wide and heterogeneous body of multimedia materials. Reports, notes, photographs, films, correspondence, telegrams, and much more accompanied setups, execution and aftermath of the voyage. Some examples of these products are included and/or discussed in the appendices to this volume. Within this documentary *corpus*, the *Libro di Bordo* occupies a specific and somewhat ambiguous position. It is formally identified as the expedition's logbook, yet it should not be intended as a mere ship's nautical journal, which was – by the way – usually the responsibility of the vessel's skipper. The document under consideration was written instead by Gianni Albertini as Commander and reflects his personal responsibility for the whole voyage and, at the same time, his direct, embodied experience of it. As such, it appears as a hybrid document, oscillating between the systematic recording of events and a more subjective register in which lived feelings and sensations emerge. For this reason, in examining and discussing the manuscript, we have deliberately chosen to use both the terms “logbook” and “diary”, in order to highlight these two distinct yet intermingled dimensions.

This dual nature could be observed also from a literary point of view: Albertini alternates between two registers. On the one hand, there are passages of objective description, characterized by a concise style, where the author limits himself to recording facts and circumstances. On the other hand, a more intimate voice emerges, charged with additional layers of meaning. The text, in fact, weaves together straightforward denotation and nuanced connotative dimensions. At a lexical level, however, this division is not always consistent. The book combines technical and nautical vocabulary with terms of a more poetic or lyrical nature. This coexistence sounds natural in Albertini's narration and demonstrates the hybrid character of the text, between factual report and personal storytelling.

Our analysis, in this section, will therefore try to identify and understand the author's personal voice as it emerges from the writing.

Any written account, whether public or private, for different reasons or in various degree, inevitably bears traces of the author's individuality. This may become particularly evident when the record is produced under the demanding conditions of command in stranger and remote seas.

Nevertheless, if we accept this diary to have a mainly private nature, such traces may become even more visible, offering privileged insights into the human behind the act of writing. From this standpoint, the book can be read as a space for self-reflection and, at times, self-analysis. Alongside the objective notations of daily events, the intimate voice registering fear, nostalgia, joy and wonder emerges. Observations of data alternate with introspective commentary, creating a complex, valuable – sometimes even jarring – texture.

AN EMOTIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LENS

Over recent decades, human geography has undergone what is often described as an *emotional turn*: a shift that has brought growing interest in emotions, affects, and the sensorial dimension of experience as elements that actively participate in the production of space and socio-spatial relations (Anderson and Smith, 2001; Davidson and Smith, 2009; Puttilli and Santangelo, 2018). Reflection on spatial subjectivity has its roots in the humanistic geography of Yi-Fu Tuan (1977), for whom *place* is space endowed with meaning through experience, while *space* represents the more abstract and potential dimension within which human attachments are formed and sedimented. This critical trajectory developed alongside critiques of a long-standing tradition of “detached” spatial descriptions, which privileged measurable observation and Cartesian forms, relegating lived experience, the body, and the emotional resonance of places to the background (Davidson and Smith, 2009; Madau, 2018).

In these authors’ view, geography should propose a rethinking of the relationship between emotions and space: these should be considered as relational, situated and also socially produced phenomena that emerge through interactions among subjects, environments, bodies, objects, practices and narratives (Davidson and Milligan, 2004; Davidson and Smith, 2009). From this perspective, places enter analysis as active components of experience, capable of orienting perceptions, behaviours, memories and sense of belonging; in parallel, emotions contribute to shaping the meaning of places and the subjective geographies that traverse them (Yi-Fu Tuan, 1977; Anderson and Smith, 2001; Bondi 2005; Puttilli and Santangelo, 2018).

This approach also engages with the broader discussion between “emotion” and “affect”: the debate has indeed provided geography with a lexicon to describe both “named” and more articulated emotions as well as personal “intensities” that are harder to grasp, describe, or classify within stable emotional categories (Anderson, 2009; Davidson and Smith, 2009). Geographical research has in this sense developed conceptual tools to describe more diffuse feelings and shared emotional climates, elements that Anderson encompasses in categories such as “collective affects” and “atmospheres”. The notion of *affective atmosphere*, as an example, might be particularly useful: it captures material and immaterial qualities that per-

meate place and situations when lived by humans, and can be felt by many as a common experience, without belonging to a single individual (Anderson 2009, pp. 79-80). These atmospheres emerge from relations among bodies, materials, sounds, light, rhythms and expectations.

Within this framework, space ceases to function as a mere external container and becomes an existential dimension for human life, co-constituted through experience: geographical analysis thus may gain tools to consider lived-life as a legitimate component of situated knowledge (Davidson and Milligan, 2004; Filep *et al.*, 2015, p. 464).

One of the core assumptions of emotional geography concerns the spatiality of emotions. These along with moods and affective orientations take shape within concrete contexts and are inseparable from the material, sensorial and symbolic conditions of places. Relations, as the cited authors seem to imply, among subjects, between everyday practices and institutional arrangements and between memories and expectations all play a significant role (Anderson and Smith, 2001; Cerutti, 2020).

In our discourse, the power of relations emerges several times. Throughout the pages of the old manuscript, emotions rise from all types of relations: with persons (whether physically present or far away and longed for), animals (both companions in the adventure or encountered in the wilderness), environments (either familiar or unknown).

This perspective makes it possible to examine how landscapes, infrastructures, atmospheric conditions, temporal rhythms, and social configurations influence ways of feeling and inhabiting space. At the same time, it allows for an analysis of how emotions shape spatial perceptions and human behaviour. What is felt as welcoming or hostile, inhabitable or repellent, familiar or alien also depends on the emotional resonances produced through interactions between subjects and places.

In extreme or unfamiliar environments, these dynamics become particularly visible. Cold, darkness or continuous light, silence, vastness, isolation, challenges and strain shape how space is perceived and narrated (Filep *et al.*, 2015; Mocellin and Suedfeld, 1991). The contribution of emotional geography, here, is in making these interactions analytically visible without reducing them to individual responses detached from contexts. Emotion should be considered as an interpretive trace of the relationship between subjects and their environments.

Particular importance is also assigned to the body as the primary

threshold of experience. The body participates in the construction of lived space (Davidson and Milligan, 2004). In extreme environments such as polar regions, the body is exposed to cold, fatigue, risk and sensory deprivation or, conversely, to heightened *stimuli* such as intense light, wind, or the sound of water and ice. These conditions translate into bodily states that shape emotion, judgements, and everyday practices (Filep *et al.*, 2015; Mocellin and Suedfel, 1991).

In the light of the foregoing discussion, emotional geography may provide a particularly suitable framework for interpreting travel memoirs and expedition diaries produced in extreme environments, such as the one here considered. This approach allows for an analysis of the relationship between embodied experience and landscape, between affective intensities and material configurations, and between narrative practices and the production of lived space.

From this perspective the logbook's account is not reduced to "subjective" testimony devoid of technical and scientific value. Rather, it is treated as a document capable of conveying geographies of experience, situated inner landscapes, and shared atmosphere, with significant interpretive implication for the understanding of places.

The chapter that follows will make reference to emotional geography as a theoretical lens through which Gianni Albertini's Arctic expedition logbook should be read. One of the aims of the analysis is in fact to examine how emotions, affects and atmospheres emerge through the interaction with the Arctic environment, and how they contribute to the construction of a subjective and lived geography, intertwining space, body, relationships and writing.

A THEME-BASED ANALYSIS

The discussion of the logbook presented in the following chapters will be organized thematically. The choice comes from the practical need to provide a clear and coherent framework for reflection. Given the length and complexity of the manuscript, grouping the material around a series of main recurring themes allows for an easier reading of its contents and of Albertini's ideas and emotions that structure the narrative. Focusing on recurring themes may be also useful for a broader interpretive purpose. In this sense it may be possible to move beyond the level of individual events and to reach a more comprehensive understanding of the meanings that underpin the Commander's experience. The recurrence of images, reflections, words makes it possible to draw what may be described as a personal "universe of sense", encompassing values, emotions, symbolic associations through which the author perceived and interpreted his voyage. The thematic analysis thus aims to see the interaction between external conditions of sailing (weather, climate, space, isolation) and the subjective dimension that gave them meaning.

The first thematic section, *Nature, Landscape, Exploration*, addresses the relationship between the man and the Arctic environment, which represents one of the central interpretive axes of the logbook. Moving beyond a strictly descriptive reading of landscape, we seek to understand how the Arctic is encountered, interpreted, and emotionally elaborated throughout the voyage. The natural world is an active force that shapes temporal rhythms, regulates movement, and continually challenges human intentions. Conditions such as ice, fog, and prolonged waiting impose forms of adaptation that continuously redefine the crew's possibilities and hopes.

Within this framework, landscape descriptions are a privileged space that mediates between external observation and inner resonance. The Arctic becomes a field through which Albertini articulates perceptions, emotional responses, and symbolisms that contribute to constructing the meaning of the endeavour. Exploration therefore emerges as being shaped by the encounter with an environment perceived as both demanding and generative.

The second thematic section, entitled *Gianni Albertini, Commander*, shifts the focus from the external world to the surfacing of a personal and nar-

rative identity within the logbook. The ways in which Albertini's sense of self emerges through solitude, responsibility, and the psychological burden associated with command, will be investigated. The logbook seems to be a privileged space in which the tension between subjectivity and leadership is articulated, allowing the author to express doubts, fears, and reflections. Particular attention is devoted to the emotional and relational frameworks, including the persistence of familiar bonds and the continuous comparison between past and present experiences.

The third thematic section focuses on the representation of the ship *Heimen-SUCAI*. The chapter examines the multiple layers through which the vessel is narrated, highlighting her role as a technological device that enables movement and, at the same time, as a lived and inhabited space that assumes the symbolic and emotional functions of a domestic environment. Within the confined spatial and environmental conditions of the Arctic, the ship becomes a microcosm in which routines, hierarchies, and forms of collective life are negotiated, transforming her into a central point of protection, belonging, and emotional stability.

The crew is examined as the fourth theme. Particular attention is given to the internal composition of the group, highlighting the coexistence of two distinct human realities: on the one hand, Albertini's Italian companions, who occupy the central narrative space of the diary and form a network of intellectual, emotional, and collaborative relationships; on the other, the Norwegian sailors, whose technical expertise is essential for navigation but who remain largely in the background within the narrative economy of the logbook.

The analysis further explores the individual profiles of Albertini's closest collaborators, whose roles contribute to shaping the collective identity of the expedition through complementary forms of competence, reliability, and mutual trust. At the same time, the chapter investigates the everyday dimension of life on board, where moments of intense physical and scientific activity alternate with periods of forced immobility, giving rise to shared domestic practices, recreational habits, and forms of intellectual exchange that strengthen the group's cohesion.

The last section is devoted to *Sledge dogs and wildlife*. The analysis focuses on the multifaceted relationship with animals, which unfolds primarily through hunting practices and the management of sledge dogs, revealing a moral and practical economy governed by necessity, adaptation, and

emotional negotiation. Hunting emerges as an intrinsically ambiguous activity in which subsistence needs, routines, and scientific interests coexist without clear boundaries. Then, the analysis is oriented to the team dogs, which constitute the logistical core of Arctic mobility and are portrayed as agents endowed with distinct temperaments, social hierarchies, and relational dynamics. Albertini's remarks reveal a form of practical knowledge based on understanding and redirecting the animals' behavioural tendencies: training becomes a process that balances discipline with respect for natural instincts. This generates emotional attachment that coexists with the utilitarian demands of survival.

THE LOGBOOK OVERTURE

Gianni Albertini's logbook opens with a dedication addressed to the Commander, accompanied by a series of signatures – some of them no longer identifiable – belonging to individuals who, in different ways, supported the organization of the *Heimen-SUCAI* journey. The first six of them appear to be by mothers and relatives of the missing crew members of *Italia*. Only after these initial pages does the Commander begin writing his diary with the phrase:

Omnia Fiunt in dies mitiora
A mia Mamma e a quelle di Tutti i miei compagni¹

Albertini's own dedication, framed by the Latin motto, immediately establishes the ethical and emotional horizon of the narrative. The phrase «*omnia fiunt in dies mitiora*» ("everything becomes milder day by day") introduces a temporal and consolatory dimension, suggesting an ethics of endurance in which relief from suffering is entrusted to the gradual work of time. Before any account of the Arctic mission unfolds, Gianni situates the expedition within a network of care and shared vulnerability, shifting the emphasis from heroic achievement to moral endurance.

The term "companions" here does not only refer to the member of the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition, but also to the missing men of the airship *Italia*. In this sense, the dedication to the mothers becomes inseparable from the moral imperative to search: the journey is not aimed at conquering or exploring, but at heeding a call of responsibility toward those who did not return.

The text continues as follows:

Premetto a questo libro che è destinato ad accogliere le impressioni, le gioie o pure i dolori del nostro viaggio alcune idee della vigilia che ho radicate nella mente e che non fatico a tenere, nei loro particolari, per me tanto simili esse sono alla mia stessa natura. Poi sarebbe indiscreto e doloroso il distacco. S'io inizio a scrivere il 15 Maggio non è ch'io dimentichi i giorni che precedettero, le fatiche ostinate, i soffocamenti di sensibilità, le figure dei collaboratori, gli amici che incoraggiarono i filistei che osteggiarono. Nelle azioni destinate a lasciare una traccia nella vita di un uomo hanno

¹ LB, f. 6v: "Everything becomes milder day by day. To my Mom and to those of All my companions".

sempre maggiore parte le fondamenta che le soprastrutture. Ognuno si separa a fatica dalle proprie fatiche. Ed è ingrato chi obbliga un uomo a dimenticare i propri dolori²

Albertini introduces the logbook by defining its function: the book is meant to “receive” impressions, joys, sufferings of the journey. The choice of the verb «*accogliere*» (receive) frames the diary as a space of hospitality, not a mere instrument of recording. Writing, in this sense, offers a place where emotion, perceptions and uncertainties may be deposited and preserved. This function of reception extends beyond the experience of the Arctic itself. The Commander insists on including within the logbook a set of “ideas of the eve”, that he describes as deeply rooted in his mind and closely intertwined with his own nature. By doing so, he refuses to consider the expedition as beginning with the physical movement into polar space. The journey is presented as the outcome of a prior process of mental and ethical sedimentation. Setups and moral positioning constitute the foundations upon which the expedition is built. Albertini therefore situates the journey within a dense social and emotional landscape shaped by collaborators, friends, and opponents alike, and marked by fatigue, solidarity, conflict, and perseverance.

This perspective informs his assertion that “in actions destined to leave a mark in a man’s life, the foundations” matter more than superstructures. For this reason, any attempt to detach the narrative of the journey from these preliminary ideas would be, in his words, both “indiscreet and painful”. A separation between before and during – between intention and action – would amount to a form of violence inflicted upon experience itself. The logbook must preserve the continuity between what precedes the journey and what unfolds within it. Forgetting one’s own labours and sufferings – Albertini suggests – carries an ethical cost, since memory remains inseparable from responsibility.

² LB, f. 7r-v: “I preface this book which is intended to receive the impressions, the joys or even the pains of our journey with some ideas of the eve that are rooted in my mind and that I have no difficulty to keep, in their details, so similar as they are to my very nature. Then it would be indiscreet and painful to part from them. If I begin to write on May 15, it does not mean that I forget the days that preceded, the stubborn efforts, the suffocation of sensitivity, the figures of the collaborators, the friends who encouraged the philistines who opposed. In actions destined to leave a mark in a man’s life, the foundations always play a greater role than the superstructures. Everyone separates with difficulty from their own efforts. And is ungrateful the one who forces a man to forget his own sorrows”.

NATURE, LANDSCAPE, EXPLORATION

Cultural backgrounds of an expedition

One of the first themes that emerges reading the logbook is the relationship between human being and nature – more precisely between the explorer and the remote contexts he explores. That can be considered as one true pivotal conceptual core, one that is partly aligned with, and partly divergent from, the cultural framework of that time.

In general, European cultural attitudes toward nature and landscape during the 1920s and 1930s were characterized by tensions between nostalgia and technological optimism, with the environment functioning as a complex symbolic terrain of national identity and social transformation (Sawchuk, 2008, p. 273; Cronin, 2016, p. 329). These attitudes were likely rooted in romantic legacies that continued to inform the ways in which nature was imagined, valued and politicised (Zechner, 2011), but often coexisting uneasily with projects of domination, including the colonial one, based on modernisation and technological control (Cronin, 2016; Dederig, 2018). The Romantic conception of nature was grounded in the rejection of mechanistic interpretations and in the affirmation of nature as a living, organic, and unified entity, of which human beings are an integral part (Mendoza, 1998, p. 54). This organic dimension was complemented by an aesthetic conception of knowledge: landscape could be apprehended through a sensitive and reflective experience. Alexander von Humboldt (1850; 1856) emerged as one of the principal theorists of the aesthetic mediation of knowledge. For Humboldt, the reduction of nature to isolated elements constitutes a distortion of its essential character, since the meaning of landscape arises from the simultaneity of impressions and emotions experienced by the observer. This Romantic conceptualization of nature influenced early 1900 European intellectual discourse by providing a framework for different outcomes. Sources from various national contexts reveal nuanced and sometimes ambivalent perspectives, in which occasionally a dichotomy between nature and human emerges (Linnel *et al.*, 2015).

In Germany, for example, Stokoe (2018) analyse photographic discourse as showing a shift between pessimistic nostalgia for a seemingly disappearing, slower pace of life and a more optimistic, technological uto-

pianism. In Britain, figures such as George Stapledon emphasized holistic approaches to landscape that foregrounded spiritual values and imagination (Moore-Colyer, 1999). In other contexts, particularly under nationalist regimes, landscape imaginary was more explicitly mobilized for political purposes: in Greece, the Metaxas' regime integrated land and nature into its ideological rhetoric through forms of peasantist nationalism and neo-romanticism (Douros and Angelis-Dimakis, 2021).

Across these different cases, landscapes increasingly emerge as sites of political and ideological struggle, where old romantic imaginaries, cultural meanings and national narratives converged.

Fascist discourses described nature as an aggregate of disordered environments whose transformation would contribute to the renewal of society. The concept of the Italian *bonifica integrale* articulated this vision by linking land reclamation and subjection to the physical and ethical reshaping of society (Serpieri, 1937, pp. 128-130; Caprotti and Kaïka, 2008, p. 617; Armiero and Graf von Hardenberg, 2013, p. 292). This vision reflected a broader European ideology in which nature was understood as fundamentally governable, and its domination became a central expression of modern state power (Binde, 1999; Caprotti and Kaïka, 2008, p. 615).

Within this ideological framework, Nature was also assigned a formative role. Mountains, rural areas and open landscapes were presented as settings capable of shaping bodies and dispositions through exposure, labour and physical exertion. Fascist narratives emphasised endurance, strength and obedience as qualities produced through sustained contact with demanding environments, particularly in mountain regions associated with the memory of the Great War and with rural ideals (Pastore, 2000; Armiero and Graf von Hardenberg, 2013, p. 294). Nature functioned as a pedagogical space in which individual character and collective identity were forged, reinforcing a model of citizenship grounded in discipline and sacrifice.

In this sense, Gianni Albertini fits seamlessly into his broader sociocultural context. When he took command of the expedition, he was twenty-seven years old and he had grown up as part of a social *milieu* that had access to organised sport and mountaineering practices, particularly within educated and urban elites of northern Italy. Under Fascism, this social segment was further consolidated and expanded through systematic policies of sport and leisure (Dogliani, 2014, pp. 250-251). As a member

of the SUCAI, Albertini had been formed within a cultural environment in which mountaineering functioned as a moral and disciplinary practice as much as a sporting or recreational one.

The decision to depart responds, in fact, to a moral duty toward the country and aligns with Fascist ideals of exploration as service and sacrifice. However, the natural environment Albertini encounters ends up proving far more complex and resistant than the diffused idea of nature as a space to be mastered and subordinated (Sawchuck, 2008, p. 273; Schultheiss, 2009, p. 14; Caprotti and Kaïka, 2008, p. 615). The logbook reveals a silent misalignment between the shared ideological premises and his personal, lived experience.

In Albertini's account, the Arctic environment is a living, pervasive presence that constantly shapes perception and language, absolutely not a mere background to the expedition's activity.

Light, sea, ice, wind, silence, solitude considered as fundamental elements of the polar world, are absorbed into the author's experience and transformed into matter of writing and reflection. They are evoked and generally described in a straightforward, almost documentary tone, but often punctuated by lyrical outbursts revealing a more introspective voice. This weaving between observation and emotion achieves to blur the boundaries between the Arctic as a tangible, geographical space and the Arctic as an existential one. In this sense, the Arctic is transformed into a realm shaped by the explorer's inner experiences, emotions, and reflections. The harshness, isolation, and beauty of nature evoke responses that redefine the context, turning it into a space where personal meaning and existential questions arise.

This theme will be addressed through an inquiry into how Albertini perceives and represents nature. The path will try to identify two parallel levels of interpretation. The first is a sensory level, which concerns the immediacy of perception: the way in which lights, sounds, movements, atmospheres are recorded and translated into writing. The second is a moral and cultural plane, shaped by the author's intellectual background and by the broader imaginaries of his time. The act of "seeing" the arctic becomes an act of interpreting it, filtering the raw experience through the moral and symbolic lens of the early twentieth-century explorative voyages.

Through the intersection of these two planes, it might be possible to

draw the kind of image of the natural landscape that emerges from the Commander's words and what form of relationship he establishes with it.

Building on this perspective, the analysis will also seek to understand how Albertini positions himself in relation to nature. Is he an observer, a rival, a lover of it? Or perhaps all three at once? Is there one attitude that prevails, or does his stance shift over the course of the journey? Does it vary with situations, with mood, or with the changing environment itself? Exploring these questions may help to reveal a hypothetical evolution of his gaze throughout the 1929 expedition.

A further aspect that this analysis will attempt to explore concerns the possibility of reading Albertini's often poetic and lyrical reflections as gateways to his inner world. Beyond the geographical dimension of exploration, the logbook seems to open into an introspective journey, in which the encounter with the Arctic landscape becomes an encounter with the self. Through his engagement with remoteness, hostility and sublime Albertini appears to test his own limits, measuring himself against the infinite. In this sense, his writings oscillate between the desire to grasp the world and the awareness of its inaccessibility.

Particular attention will be devoted to the language Albertini uses in his description of nature: at times concise and essential, at times deeply poetic and lyrical. Ultimately, then, the analysis will seek to understand how Albertini, through written language, fixes and crystallizes a geographical context shaped by his own gaze: the landscape is formed in the very act of being written. In this process, the explorer's perspective evolves from observation to active participation in the "construction" of a place.

A fight against Nature?

The decision to begin the analysis on *Nature, landscapes, exploration* is suggested by the structure and the tone of the logbook itself. Before the daily entries begin, Albertini includes a brief introduction, written before departure, on May 15, 1929. In this section he gathers and sets down those «*idee della vigilia*» ("ideas of the eve"), anxieties, memories of efforts and emotional tension that precede the journey. This preface records the state of mind with which the Commander begins his endeavour, recalling the labour of preparation, the encouragements and the resistances he had encountered.

It is within this section that Albertini writes:

Per noi incomincia oggi la lotta contro la natura, che, controsenso magnifico, è condotta con maggiore accanimento generalmente da chi più ama la natura stessa³

The placement of this reflection at the very threshold of the logbook, in anticipation of landscapes to be seen or experienced, is a signal of the centrality of the relationship between Albertini as an explorer and the natural world. Nature is already introduced as a presence that demands engagement, effort and emotional investment.

Particularly revealing is the phrase «*controsenso magnifico*» that can be translated as “magnificent contradiction” which describes the fight against nature. By describing the struggle in these terms, Albertini acknowledges the ambivalence that characterises the relationship between man and natural world. On the one hand, nature is loved; on the other it is confronted, challenged and resisted. The contradiction lies in the paradox of fighting what one admires. This love does not cancel the struggle, rather it motivates it: to love nature is to desire to know it, and thus the desire to test and measure oneself *against* it, even when the terms of the encounter are inherently unbalanced.

The adjective “magnificent” is equally meaningful. Albertini does not attempt to resolve or diminish this contradiction; instead, he recognises it as intrinsic to the human relationship with nature and even finds beauty in it. The «*controsenso*» is not presented as a problem to be solved but, rather, as a constitutive tension, an oxymoronic relation to be embraced as the journey begins.

This struggle against nature is not, in fact, oriented toward conquering or defeating it. Rather, it expresses a desire to come into contact with it. The main purpose of the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition is to search for the missing survivors, if there are any, of airship *Italia* (Albertini, 1932, pp. 3-7). In this frame, nature is an antagonist to confront, as it is the very force that prevented their return, but not, *per se*, an enemy to be subdued. The same dangerous, yet intensely charming nature that, in 1928, had drawn the flyers with its attractiveness is also the setting of their disaster. In 1929, Albertini and his crew seem to share the very same fascination.

³ I.B, f. 7v: “For us, today begins the struggle against nature, which, as a magnificent contradiction, is generally waged with greater fervour by those who love nature the most”.

This landscape, which was once and still is an object of attraction and geographic curiosity, now forces Albertini and his own crew into a struggle, as they navigate to search for the missing.

The expedition is not driven by the pursuit of geographical primacy or by a desire to prevail over an uncharted land. The struggle is instead bound to a sense of duty and of care. When he writes that the struggle is waged “by those who love nature the most”, the expression might be understood as reference to himself, to Nobile and to the crews involved: men come to the Arctic out of admiration and scientific curiosity and who now find themselves confronting the same nature in order to rescue those lost in it.

In the original Italian, the formulation «*da chi più ama la natura stessa*» can grammatically refer to either the singular or the plural. This ambiguity can support the idea that the statement applies collectively to all those engaged in the expedition and for this reason it has been translated here as “by those”.

Moving forward, if the logbook opens with the explicit declaration of a “struggle against nature”, this stance does not remain stable throughout the narration. It is possible that, at the outset, Albertini had imagined himself in the position of an adversary (never an enemy), as someone called to confront a natural environment and to test himself against it. Yet, once the journey begins and the daily experience of navigation replaces the anticipatory tension of the eve, the vocabulary of conflict almost completely disappears. In the entries that follow, Albertini rarely represents his relationship with the landscape as a battle⁴. The encounter with nature is, more than anything, observation and wonder. There are certainly challenges but the tone is rarely antagonistic.

The only moment in which the language of struggle resurfaces with full clarity is on July 18, when the *Heimen-SUCAI* is forced to seek refuge in Whales Bay:

Costeggiamo le coste orientali dello Spitzbergen. Alle 21 siamo obbligati a rifugiarci nella Whales Bay obbligati dalla nebbia fitta, dal vento violento, e dai sempre più impenetrabili ghiacci, a chiedere un armistizio alla lotta⁵

4 An exception is the entry of September 2, LB f. 44r «*Alla sera faccio le prove col Loch per determinare la velocità della nave dopo la perdita di una pala dell'elica durante l'ultima battaglia*» (“In the evening I make trials with the log to determine the speed of the ship after the loss of a propeller blade during the last battle”).

5 LB, f. 34v: “We coast along the eastern shores of Spitzbergen. At 21 we are obliged to take

Here the metaphor of warfare returns, triggered by a concrete moment of physical vulnerability. The thick fog, the violent wind and the impenetrable ice combine to annul visibility and agency, reducing the crew to impotence. In this passage the struggle becomes a moment of surrender in the evocative word “armistice”. An “armistice” is defined as an agreement between conflicting sides to temporarily suspend hostilities. Usually, it implies a relationship between forces that are comparable enough to negotiate. In the context of the Arctic, however, such parity does not exist. Nature operates on a scale that is fundamentally incommensurable with human intention. Albertini is aware of this and yet deliberately uses this military word, maybe as a ritual gesture: he formally requests a pause in a struggle that he himself had initially conceptualized. The verb “ask” underscores the awareness of asymmetry; he has no authority to impose it. It is an admission of limits, the fight (the navigation) cannot go on, and it is the Arctic who dictates the pace, allowing or denying movement.

This passage might be read as an attempt to hold together the desire to measure himself against the natural world and the awareness that such a test can only take place within the limits set by that world. Hence, to confront nature is possible only when nature allows it. The Arctic environment grants or denies passage, visibility, navigation, condition for movement. When fog closes in, when ice blocks the route, when wind is too violent, the appropriate response is acceptance, recognising that the encounter takes place within constraints that Albertini and his crew do not establish.

The fact that the idea of “struggle against nature” appears only at the beginning and in this isolated episode of July 18 suggests that Albertini’s stance moves away from antagonism toward considering the natural world as a presence to be read, awaited, endured and above all admired.

A lover of nature?

As already noted, Albertini’s diary frequently reveals – sometimes clearly, sometimes only in hints or subtle nuances – a poetic inclination and a lyrical gaze upon the landscape. These moments coexist with the more denotative, technical remarks required by the logbook format and by the

refuge in Whales Bay obliged by the thick fog, the violent wind, and the ever more unpredictable ice, to ask for an armistice in the struggle”.

practical demands of operation. This coexistence of registers is one of the defining features of his writing and suggests a attitude that may go beyond mere observation. Even in passages where the tone appears predominantly descriptive, a sensitivity to atmosphere, light and emotional resonance quietly surfaces. Such sensitivity might be read as the trace of a deeper attachment to the natural world, that at times approaches that of a true lover and admirer of nature. His gaze often verges on the lyrical and, in certain moments, even on the romantic.

This is already noticeable in the opening pages of the diary. The entry for May 17, two days after the departure, begins with the standard data on the ship's time and position. The *Heimen-SUCAI* is in the Kristiansundet fjord and it is the day on which the journey truly begins, as the crew leaves the last "comfortable" harbour behind.



Fig. 49. A member of the expedition observing the coastline from the deck of the vessel
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Alla una entriamo nel fiordo di Kristiansundet. Vi è una penombra di semialba nordica che rende evanescenti le luci dei casolari sulle rive⁶

Even in this simple description, in which Albertini adheres more strictly to the chronicle of sailing, one can already detect a slight inclination toward a more sensitive and lyrical gaze. The account of the ship's entry into the fjord retains, on the surface, its informational function: the time, the light conditions, the mention of the houses along the shore. At the same time, however, it introduces lexical choices that do more than merely conveying an objective piece of information. The phrase «*penombra di semialba nordica*» (“half-light of Northern first dawn”) easily evokes a mental image of a suspended, liminal atmosphere, and the lights of the houses – described with the Italian word «*evanescenti*», which can be rendered in English as “evanescent” – turn an otherwise ordinary detail of the landscape into a delicate, nuanced, almost painterly image. It remains, of course, an essential description, functional to narrating the voyage.

A similar sensitivity emerges very clearly in another entry, which can be taken as a particularly telling example for the depth of the reflections it generates. On May 18, the ship is in the Vest Fjord, a setting that is geologically and morphologically exceptional, where the Lofoten islands rise as steep mountains directly from the sea and the landscape clearly reflects deep geological time and repeated glacial processes (Nordgulen *et al.*, 2005). Albertini writes:

A ponente i profili scuri delle Lofoten spiccano su un rosso vivo di tramonto.- Le acque calme di questo gran fiordo non ostante delimitate danno una strana sensazione di spazio, di grandiosità, di antico⁷

Here the descriptive function of the logbook gives way to a more openly affective and contemplative look. The landscape is interpreted by the Commander through sensations and abstract qualities. The dark silhouettes of the islands emerging against the intense red of the sunset produce a strong chromatic contrast, carefully noted, while the calm waters of the fjord do not generate a sense of enclosure, as one might expect

6 LB, f. 11r: “At one o'clock we enter the Kristiansundet fjord. There is a half-light of Northern first dawn that makes evanescent the lights of the cottages on the shores”.

7 LB, f. 13r: “To the west, the dark outlines of the Lofoten stand out against a deep red sunset. The calm waters of this great fjord, though enclosed, give a strange feeling of space, grandeur, antiquity”.

from a delimited space, but rather an unpredicted feeling of openness and vastness. Yet this grandiosity is not dynamic or overwhelming, but rather still, suspended. The perception of the landscape as “ancient” seems to arise precisely from this stillness. The fjord appears untouched, unaltered, as if withdrawn from historical time and from human intervention. The absence of a visible movement in the water reinforces this impression: unlike a restless sea, whose motion suggests transformation and flux, the calm surface conveys a sense of inertia, of continuity without change.

These terms, «*grandiosità*» and «*antico*», thus move beyond physical description, and attribute to the landscape a temporal and almost metaphysical depth. Albertini’s phrasing suggests the impression of an archaic world, generated by ancient geological processes, perceived as carrying a sense of primordial time that exceeds both individual experience and historical chronology. Such a perception points to an emotional and imaginative engagement with the natural environment, in which space becomes charged with meaning and evokes impressions that are closer to awe than to simple observation.

When Nature reflects inner life

The frequent use of the lyrical language, especially when more evident, reveals a constant permeability between the external world and Albertini’s inner life. Even when the writing remains anchored to navigational facts, fleeting poetic accents, metaphorical choices and personifications signal that the landscape is never merely described but indeed felt. This stylistic tendency allows the Arctic environment to appear as a surface on which emotions are projected and that gives rise to feelings in the observer. This reciprocal influence turns the logbook into a textual space in which the Commander can be interpreted through an emotional-geographical lens. His inner states emerge in the way he observes the natural world, within a perspective that understands the relationship with places as a complex hybridization of affects, actions, sensations, meanings, lived experiences, memories, and images (Cattedra *et al*, 2018, p. 310). Among recurring images that may illustrate this dynamic, we can find the figure of “dead waters”: each time it appears, it conveys different resonances, from melancholy, to wonder, to quiet resignation.

Dead waters

On May 17, immediately following the scene of entrance into the Kristiansundet fjord, a passage in the logbook describes the departure. The description of the landscape and emotional tone intertwines with a greater lyricism, clearly intended to underline the importance of that moment.

Con una lancia portiamo a terra i nostri quattro ospiti e subito partiamo con un poco di tristezza nell'animo per questa nuova separazione; e nelle acque morte, nella penombra, la bandiera tesa nel vento iniziamo il viaggio⁸

Here Albertini is much less purely factual and uses the elements of the landscape as mirrors of his inner state.

After taking the guest passengers ashore, he notes that the departure takes place with a touch of sadness in the soul for this new separation, made perhaps even more difficult by it being the last one from people who are not part of the expedition and therefore it represents a complete detachment from what is familiar.

The expression «*acque morte*» (“dead waters”) may variously refer to the grey, dull colour of the water produced by particular light conditions or by the reflection of the coast, or to the stillness of the sea surface. This strong adjective also seems to reflect the state of mind of the writer himself: it heightens the melancholy of the moment.

The «*penombra*» (“half-light”) also helps reinforce this atmosphere: it is both a condition of light and an emotional filter that envelops the scene of the departure. Half-light and dead water thus somehow slow down the perception of the moment, inviting reflection on the significance of this final parting.

The flag taut in the wind, on the other hand, introduces the only dynamic note and becomes a symbol of the enterprise that is about to commence. The flag therefore signals the beginning, pointing forward towards the mission to come, while the dead water and the half-light remain aligned with the feeling of separation.

The expression «*acqua morta*» (“dead water”) reappears in the diary only

⁸ LB, f. 11r: “With a launch we bring our four guests ashore and we depart right away with a bit of sadness in our souls for this new separation; and in the dead waters, in the half-light, with the flag taut in the wind we begin the journey”.

a few pages later, in the description of a landscape on May 18, when the *Heimen-SUCAI* is located near the «*Vigten*» islands. In this case, no clear sense of melancholy emerges here, as it did in the earlier passage, yet the fusion between landscape and inner state remains. The same image can be charged with different meanings depending on the emotional context and on the feelings that the landscape is capable of eliciting. Here the mood is more positive, tied above all to a sense of wonder and astonishment at the beauty that nature offers the crew.

Alla una e mezzo siamo in gran parte ancora svegli. Vi è chiaro ancora e già. Una grande luna d'argento ci meraviglia – tingendo le acque con tinte quasi musicali. Le scogliere radenti – nere e cupe – escono fuori dall'acqua morta come per un fenomeno di incommensurabile indolenza⁹

The moonlight, unlike the half-light that accompanied the “dead waters” the day before, is the primary source of wonder. The scene takes place at 1:30, at a moment when the sun still illuminates the sky and the presence of a silver moon makes the atmosphere extraordinarily beautiful. The moonlight transforms the surface of the water into a lively mirror: its movements may recall a vibration. Albertini chooses his wording with care – “tinting the waves with almost musical shades” – creating a subtle synaesthesia that connects sight and hearing, suggesting that the light vibrates and thus seems *almost* capable of producing a sound. The adverb “almost” introduces an important rhetorical caution: it evokes a possibility and therefore reinforces the sense of wonder without creating an actual illusion.

The synaesthesia is particularly effective in the original text. In Italian, an adjective derived from the colour *argento* (silver), such as *argentino*, carries not only a visual connotation but also an acoustic nuance associated with the sound of metal (as shown by expressions like *voce argentina*, “silver voice”, or *risata argentina*, “silver laugh”), where the adjective does not describe colour but rather a sound that is typically clear, bright and crystalline¹⁰. This semantic association allows the reflection of the silver

⁹ LB, ff. 11v-12r: “At half past one most of us are still awake. It is bright still and already. A large silver moon astonishes us – colouring the waters with almost musical shades. The sheer cliffs – black and sombre – rise from the dead water as if for a phenomenon of incommensurable indolence”.

¹⁰ Cf. the recurrent use of the adjective *argentino* in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Italian poetry to denote sharp, clear, and resonant sounds. In Gabriele D’Annunzio (1908), the

moon on the water to be perceived as something that visually “resonates”.

Continuing his description, Albertini shifts his focus to the “land”, to the cliffs. These are described as «*scoogliere radenti*», rocks that barely emerge from the water. The adjectives «*nere e cupe*» (black and sombre) form a synonymic doublet that intensifies the quality of darkness, which stands in contrast to the silvery brightness of the waters. The cliffs are indirectly personified, because their rising out of the water is presented as a phenomenon of “incommensurable indolence”. They seem lazy, as if it were an effort for them to reveal themselves. *Indolence* suggests a lack of desire to move, a minimal dynamism, and this indolence is *incommensurable*, evidently a comparison against the vibrant vitality of the water’s luminous surface.

What is most evident in this passage is the feeling of wonder and admiration for nature. It is a collective sentiment, because the moon astonishes “us”: the plural form indicates that Albertini feels able to involve the entire crew in expressing the emotion produced by a nature that grants them a spectacle filling both the eye and the soul.

The metaphor of dead water appears one last time on July 16, when the expedition is navigating along the coasts of «*Terra di Re Carlo*» (Prins Karls Forland). Albertini writes:

In un mare morto, senza luci né vita, verso Sud lungo le coste pensose
della Terra di Re Carlo, la navigazione si svolge regolarmente¹¹

In a very different context, the reference returns. There is no moon to illuminate the scene, no sense of wonder: the landscape is described as motionless, lifeless, marked by silence. The expression «*coste pensose*» (“pensive coasts”) introduces a personification rich in meanings. The coasts, of course, cannot literally be thoughtful; it is perhaps Albertini himself who is. Once again, nature becomes the medium through which an inner feeling, not explicitly named, becomes perceptible through the

term appears in strongly phonetic and sensory images such as «*croscio argentino*», referring to the sound of falling water, and «*precipitar dei cristalli argentino*», describing the ringing noise of crystal as it falls, where the adjective emphasizes brilliance, musicality, and acoustic luminosity. A comparable usage is found in Giovanni Pascoli (1974), particularly in *Myricae*, where *argentino* qualifies voices and natural or animal sounds («*voce argentina*», «*gridi argentini*», «*ringhi argentini*»), in keeping with a poetics of listening that foregrounds timbre and sound symbolism, associating acoustic sharpness with purity, delicacy, and emotional vibration.

11 LB, f. 34r: “In a dead sea, without lights nor life, toward the South along the pensive coasts of King Charles Land, the navigation proceeds regularly”.

way things are seen.

The moment of the expedition in which this passage appears makes the meaning of this “pensiveness” clearer. The long march across Nordaustlandet – the most concrete and hopeful action for finding survivors – has now ended without success. Albertini, Urbano, Bonola and Guedoz have returned unharmed, but no survivor was found. It is an outcome that inevitably leaves a sense of bitterness and perhaps even of failure. The ship continues her navigation, but hopes have diminished. At the same time, difficulties are multiplying: a series of ice entrapments, bad weather conditions, and tightly packed ice often prevent progress. It is a moment in the expedition marked by fatigue and uncertainty.

Within this emotional context, the landscape often becomes a surface onto which the inner weight of the experience is projected. The dead sea now reflects a sense of suspension, of forced slowing, perhaps of weariness. The “pensive coasts” suggest a silence inwardly absorbed, a silence that may in fact be Albertini’s own. In this case nature acts as a mute interlocutor that allows the Commander to express his self without the need for direct language.

A sickly hope

Another passage from the logbook confirms how often Albertini allows his inner state to filter through his landscape descriptions. On May 28, during a phase in which navigation is slowed down and route plans must often be adjusted, he writes:

Riprendiamo la via stancamente fino a che una striscia di sereno verso N-E ci permette di vedere le alte montagne nevose della Terra di Principe Carlo. Visione piena di fascino; grandi montagne nevose e lontane in una tisica linea di azzurro¹²

The adverb «*stancamente*» (“wearily”) immediately introduces the emotional tone of the passage. Navigation is made difficult by the ice: movements are slow, often halted, and the weariness is both physical and mental. The lexical choice, therefore, seems to convey the frustration accumulated over the previous days. Resuming the route is not an energetic

¹² LB, f. 18v: “We resume the route wearily until a strip of clear sky towards N-E allows us to see the high snowy mountains of Prince Charles Land. A vision full of charm; great snowy and far mountains in a sickly line of light blue”.

gesture but rather a laborious progression, already almost resigned to yet another obstruction that might occur at any moment.

The atmosphere shifts when a “strip of clear sky” appears. Clear weather is traditionally associated with hope, with a sense of opening and relief; here it seems almost like a distant, small gap through which nature grants a clearer sight. Just a narrow opening in the sky is enough for the eye to reach the distant snowy mountains, a faint but meaningful sign.

The initial description of the scene is objective, neutral. After this note, however, Albertini feels the need to add a further sentence, repeating the description in a more lyrical mode. He insists on specifying that the “vision is full of charm”, and the “strip of clear sky” becomes a “sickly line of light blue”.

The choice of the adjective «*tisica*» is particularly significant. In this context, it indicates something thin, slight, almost insubstantial; but it also evokes the semantic field of sickness, weakness and lack of vitality. The blue that appears at the horizon is not a full or particularly encouraging colour: it is a fragile, meagre blue, granted only in minimal measure by a nature that seems to offer no more than what is strictly necessary to spark the faintest glimmer of hope. A light that does not burst forth but struggles to assert itself; a brightness that is neither healthy nor vigorous, and that precisely for this reason mirrors the weary emotional state of the observer.

In this image nature appears almost parsimonious: it offers a very faint touch of hope, insufficient to dispel the oppression of bad weather and fatigue. And yet even this sickly line of blue is capable of eliciting an emotional response in Albertini: it is, for him, a “vision full of charm”. Once again, the landscape seems able to suggest what Albertini perhaps does not state directly: a sense of trust that still exists, but that is as draining as the navigation through the ice.

That dawn at Kings Bay

One of the most charged moments in the logbook occurs when the *Heimen-SUCAI* reaches Ny-Ålesund, the site from which airship *Italia* departed the previous year. Albertini is familiar with the location: he worked there in 1928 (Albertini, 1929, pp. 24-35). A distinctive landmark next to the mining station was, since 1926, the airship wind-shelter that was com-

monly referred to as “the hangar” (Nobile, 1930, p. 125; Trojani, 1964, pp. 178-179; Roura, 2009b, p. 33; Reymert, 2016, p. 12). The Commander knows its silhouette, its presence in the landscape; and yet the place does not appear to him as something recognizable...

The arrival at Kings Bay takes place on June 6 and the logbook entry for that day opens as follows:

Raggiungemmo la King's Bay all'alba quando ancora il sole basso dava
alle cose determinanti il senso del paesaggio, l'aspetto più atto a colpire
l'animo nelle sue più delicate parti¹³

Arrival into the bay takes place at dawn. To the simple chronological indication, Albertini is careful to add a perceptual and interpretive dimension. He notes that the low sun exerts a particular influence on the way the landscape is perceived. When he refers to “the things defining the sense of the scenery”, he evokes that ensemble of natural and artificial elements which, from a purely material point of view, constitute the scene unfolding before the ship, a scene already familiar to him. Yet the low sun and the quality of the light enveloping these forms at that hour produce a deeply emotional effect. The perception of the environment at that moment is not neutral but shaped by an atmosphere of beauty and sublimity that deeply touches the human spirit. One might even be tempted to discern in this response a trace of *Sehnsucht*, i.e. that specifically Romantic longing in which desire reaches toward something unattainable (Scheibe and Freund, 2008; Esposito, 2023; Vanderheiden, 2025).

He continues by reflecting on the emotions that this vision awakens in him. The Commander appears almost surprised that a landscape he knows so well should reach him now as something unfamiliar.

Rividi forzando la mente un paesaggio noto, ma istintivamente vidi come
una cosa nuova che avesse in se come l'ombra pesante di tristezza di un
passato angoscioso. La mancanza di vita, e la presenza indefinita e latente
di una generosità soprannaturale faceva pensare se realmente non fosse un
sogno quella sembianza di ricordo¹⁴

13 LB, f. 22r: “We reached King’s Bay at dawn when the still low sun gave the things defining the sense of the scenery the aspect most capable of striking the soul in its most delicate parts”.

14 LB, f. 22r-v: “I forced my mind to make out a familiar landscape, but instinctively I saw it as something new carrying within it the heavy shadow of the sadness of an anguished past. The absence of life, and the undefined and latent presence of a supernatural generosity made one wonder whether that semblance of memory really was not a dream”.

The paradox he offers is striking: he must force his mind to recall the place as he remembers it, because his instinctive perception is that it is something new, estranged and transformed. Yet this sense of strangeness is accompanied by what he calls a “heavy shadow”. This oxymoronic expression conveys the weight of sadness linked to an anguishing past.

Albertini obviously carried with him vivid memories of the previous year. These memories probably portrayed the Kings Bay as the centre of feverish activity: the site where preparations for the expedition of *Italia* were underway, full of movement, purpose and the hopeful energy of exploration. The disaster, however, had extinguished that vitality. On June 6, 1929, the landscape is serene, still, devoid of human life or activity, beautiful and emotionally arresting. It is so profoundly different that the memory of the previous year seems almost a dream.

The generosity of nature, and perhaps of something that carries along a quiet hint of the divine, manifests itself in the splendour of the landscape offered at dawn: a beauty capable of touching the human spirit so intensely up to the point of reshaping the emotional relationship with the past. In the presence of such *grandeur*, the now darkened memory of the previous year begins to take on the texture of a dream, as though the anguish it carried had been softened into unreality by the overwhelming grace of the landscape before him.

Albertini then turns his gaze to the airship hangar, a structure he glimpses from afar through the spyglass:

Lontano col cannocchiale intravvidi lo scheletro gigantesco dell'Hangar,
legno senza anima, monumento della nostra passione d'ieri ed oggi¹⁵

This brief lines condense a symbolic transformation. The choice of the word «*scheletro*» (“skeleton”) is significant. Albertini could have opted for a neutral term such as “structure”, but *scheletro* evokes immediately the idea of something dead, stripped of its purpose and therefore of its vital function.

In a material sense, the word is appropriate, since the hangar is no longer covered with canvas and the only remains are its wooden frames. Yet its dominant semantic connotation points toward death, loss, and the absence of vitality.

¹⁵ LB, f. 22v: “In the distance with the telescope I caught a glimpse of the gigantic skeleton of the Hangar, wood without a soul, monument to our passion of yesterday and today”.



Fig. 50. Ny-Ålesund airship hangar

Source: Centro Documentazione Umberto Nobile, Aeronautica Militare

The expression «*legno senz'anima*» reinforces this association. “Soul-less” timber might be understood literally, as an inanimate object, but it also acquires a metaphorical value. The soul of the hangar was its being part of a human endeavour, its purpose, its function, its operation. With the end of the *Italia* expedition – tragic as it was – that function has dissolved. No longer hosting men, work or preparations, it serves no purpose anymore. Its soul is therefore lost, because the very reason for which it was created no longer exists. In this sense, the employed synecdoche – where the part, the wood, stands for the whole, the hangar – further underscores how the object has been reduced to its essential material remnants.

Yet, while acknowledging this loss of vitality, Albertini assigns a new meaning to the hangar: he defines it as a monument. A structure that survives its original purpose in order to take a commemorative function: it preserves the memory of what once was, bearing witness to a value, an action, an undertaking. The abandoned hangar thus becomes a visible trace and symbol of collective passion. It certainly stands so for both yes-

terday and today, for those who departed with the airship in 1928 and for those who returned in 1929, animated by the same fervour. But it could also stand for a wider community of which they all represent. Indeed, the “our” in “our passion” might operate on more than one level: it refers to the shared commitment of the expedition’s participants across the two years; but it can also be expanded to encompass a broader, shared human drive toward exploration and discovery, an enduring desire to push beyond the known and engage the natural world with courage, curiosity and hope.

In the Kingdom of patience

A specific reflection is required for the concept of the «*Regno della pazienza*» (“Kingdom of patience”), an expression that, although appearing only a few times in the logbook, seems to underpin Albertini’s interpretation of the Arctic environment as a whole. The recurrence of this term is limited, yet its semantic and conceptual weight is remarkable: it does not function as a mere rhetorical flourish, but rather as a key through which the author interprets both the geographical context and the experience of sailing in those polar regions.

The first occasion on which Albertini introduces the concept is an entry dated May, 25:

Ma la pallida visione sparì ben presto – Entrammo quasi a forza ed ancora prima del giusto nel regno della pazienza – ghiacci galleggianti, nebbia e foschia all’orizzonte – eterno sguardo interrogativo alla bussola – occhi verso l’alto al misterioso braccio della coffa (ora il sinistro ora il destro) – macchine a rallenti – freddo – impazienza¹⁶

The expression comes immediately after the disappearance of a brief phase of clear sky on the previous day, and a sudden shift in environmental conditions. What follows is a first concrete description of what this “Kingdom” entails for Albertini. The Arctic asserts itself through floating ice, fog and mist on the horizon, slowing down the navigation and forcing the crew into a state of constant vigilance and uncertainty.

Progress becomes hesitant: the engines run at reduced speed, attention

16 LB, f. 16v: “But the pale vision soon disappeared – We entered almost by force and even before the right moment into the realm of patience – floating ice, fog and mist on the horizon – an eternal questioning gaze at the compass – eyes looking up at the mysterious arm of the crow’s nest (now the left now the right) – engines idling – cold – impatience”.

alternates between the compass and the crow's nest, the cold intensifies and impatience emerges. From this very first appearance the "Kingdom of patience" is thus presented as an experiential condition, a "temporary somewhere" defined by obstruction, delay and enforced waiting, where movement is restricted and human action must abide and adapt to the rhythm imposed by ice and weather.

In fact, the choice of the word "Kingdom" is not neutral. It implies a domain governed by its own rules, clearly distinct from other realms, and subject to an authority that cannot be questioned. By defining the Arctic as a "Kingdom of patience", Albertini frames the polar environment as a space in which sovereignty does not belong to human beings, but to nature itself. It is nature that dictates the conditions of movement, the rhythm of action and the limits of what is possible. Within this kingdom, human will, planning and technical competence are repeatedly subordinated to forces that remain largely uncontrollable. Patience, functioning as a defining label and primary characteristic, thus appears not as a voluntary virtue, but as a quality that is demanded, or better, imposed upon anyone who crosses the threshold of this realm. To enter the Arctic is to accept its authority and to submit to a regime in which waiting, endurance, and adaptation replace initiative and control.

Particularly significant is, in fact, the expression that appears on the following day «*etichetta del Regno*» ("etiquette of the Kingdom"). The term *etichetta* is here semantically layered, and not easy to be interpreted. On the one hand, it could be understood as a label or designation, referring to *pazienza* ("patience"), the required element that primarily defines this space, that visitors must hold when entering that particular Kingdom. On the other hand, *etichetta* also recalls the meaning of *etiquette* or protocol, that is, a set of behavioural norms regulating action within a formal and hierarchical context. Applied to the Arctic landscape, the term thus suggests that entering the "Kingdom of patience" entails accepting an unwritten code that cannot be negotiated or circumvented.

Accepting the etiquette of the Kingdom therefore means acknowledging one's subordinate position and learning a way of inhabiting a space based on caution and waiting. This acceptance, however, is far from easy. Indeed on May 30, Albertini records: «*Inizia, furiosissima la reazione contro l'etichetta del Regno*»¹⁷.

¹⁷ LB, f. 19v: "The fierce rebellion against the Kingdom's etiquette begins".



Fig. 51. The Heimen among floating ice
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

This “fierce reaction” is triggered by a series of days marked by immobility and the impossibility of moving forward, conditions that severely test the “patience” required to the entire crew.

It is possible to understand the Kingdom as an existential condition that goes beyond the geographical space. First of all, it is not in fact a clearly delimited physical place, identifiable through precise coordinates; rather, it is a realm that comes into being under certain circumstances: when ice thickens, fog and haze reduce visibility, movement slows down or become impossible and time itself seems to stretch. In this sense the Kingdom is less a space than a state. It emerges whenever the expedition is forced into waiting, time dilates and days become indistinguishable from one another. One can therefore speak of a temporal regime, in which patience becomes the dominant mode of existence. Within this regime, in fact, time is no longer experienced as a neutral, linear progression, oriented toward goals and outcomes, but as a stagnant duration that shapes

perception and subjectivity. Waiting becomes a fundamental constraint of everyday life and patience is a stance imposed by a different form of time that suspends initiatives, frustrates intention and forces the individual to *inhabit* duration itself.

Immediately after describing the first entrance into the Kingdom, Albertini introduces a personal and retrospective dimension, explicitly linking the landscape to his own previous inner experience and thereby acknowledging the existential implication of the situational regime. He writes:

Con quanta tristezza ritrovi ora in questo regno di pazienza la mia impazienza dello scorso anno pochi sanno quanto io so¹⁸

The sadness evoked here does not stem solely from the harsh environment, but rather from a confrontation with himself: with a former impatience that is now reconsidered in light of a knowledge acquired through private awareness (that only some on board *Heimen* possess) of this context. Albertini recalling his past impatience, as felt in the hard 1928 expedition, suggests a process of intimate change: having already been in the Kingdom, he has accumulated consciousness and his very sense of self has been reshaped through endurance and long test of patience. The remark «*pochi sanno quanto io so*» explicitly frames this experiential initiation, something difficult to communicate and that remains accessible only to those who have undergone it.

The Kingdom thus becomes, in a broader sense, a space of self-awareness, in which the environment tests human beings and at the same time reflects back an image of their reactions, fragilities and limits. By enforcing immobility the Kingdom compels the individual to confront his own expectations, frustration and illusion of control.

Still a lover of nature in the end?

This paragraph aims to focus on Albertini's relationship with nature and landscape during the final phase of the expedition, in order to assess whether the profound changes experienced along the journey also affected his inner disposition and, consequently, his way of perceiving and

¹⁸ LB, ff. 16v-17r: "With how much sadness do you now find again in this kingdom of patience my impatience of last year few know as much as I know".

describing the natural world he is still exploring.

The final phase of the expedition corresponds to a moment in which the emotional and narrative context has significantly shifted. The long march across Nordaustlandet – which had embodied the most concrete hope of locating the survivors (Albertini, 1932, p. 58; Alessandrini and Casagrande, 2021, p. 11) – had come to an end without success. Although Albertini and his companions returned safely, the failure to find the missing men inevitably diminished the great expectations that had accompanied the departure. As the expedition continues, it does so under a more sombre and disillusioned atmosphere.

This emotional burden was certainly further intensified by the fatal hunting accident in August, in which Guedoz had lost his life, an event that deeply marked the group and cast a dark shadow over the final months of the journey. Against this background of fatigue, loss and dim hope, it becomes particularly meaningful to observe how Albertini continues to engage with the landscape and whether nature still retains the capacity to elicit wonder, consolation or a form of emotional reward. Denotative, short and factual descriptions became more frequent in the last pages of the logbook, focusing on ice conditions, weather and practical constraints. This is probably due to habits: certain scenes, repeatedly encountered, no longer demand detailed description. Yet the sensitivity to landscapes absolutely does not disappear.

One particularly revealing passage we can take as an example is the entry on September 5:

Vi è un paesaggio indescrivibile. I soliti ghiacci cadenti in mare di cui son cariche queste terre hanno qui e con questo pallido terso sole invernale nuovi inaspettati aspetti. L'impressione ch'io provai questa mattina col sole limpido che v'era nel vedere lo scenario di questa Baia è tale da ricompensarmi di ogni sofferenza futura¹⁹

The passage opens with the adjective “indescribable”, signaling the inadequacy of language to describe what is being perceived and marks a shift from mere observation. At the same time, Albertini explicitly refers to the “usual ice falling into the sea”, a formulation that implicitly acknowledg-

¹⁹ LB, f. 45v: “There is an indescribable landscape. The usual ice falling into the sea with which these lands are laden has here and with this pale clear winter sun, new unexpected aspects. The impression that I experienced this morning with the clear sun that there was on seeing the scenery of this Bay is such as to recompense me for every future suffering”.

es familiarity and repetition. At this stage of the journey, scenes are no longer new: that landscape has been traversed over a long period of time now. The choice of «*soliti*» (“usual”) suggests a process of habituation, a normalization of what once appeared extraordinary.

Yet this familiarity does not result in indifference. On the contrary, under the “pale, clear winter sun”, these same familiar elements acquire «*nuovi inaspettati aspetti*» (“new unexpected aspects”). This expression is particularly effective for its paronomasia, which reinforces the sense of renewed surprise. What is habitual reveals itself anew; what is already known becomes once again capable to trigger wonder. Most significant is the conclusion of the passage, in which Albertini underlines that the vision of the bay is sufficient to repay “every future suffering”. Here, nature becomes an active agent able of offering consolation and recompense; beauty functions as a form of emotional restitution for previous fatigue and also for struggles still to come. Here the idea of nature’s generosity re-emerges (as it notably did in the description of Kings Bay) confirming that, even in this last phase of the expedition, the landscape still retains the power to give.

A few days later, Albertini returns in fact to the theme of generosity, with nature that “gives back”. On September 7, he notes that the sun, now several degrees below the horizon at night, offers again the emotions of dawns and sunsets, sensations to which the crew had ceased to be accustomed.

Il sole è di notte di parecchi gradi ormai basso sotto l’orizzonte. Ciò ci ridà le emozioni delle albe e dei tramonti, a cui non eravamo più abituati, che si rincorrono ed incalzano e ci stupiscono per la loro superba meraviglia²⁰

The emphasis is here on the recovery of an emotional experience that had been suspended during the period of continuous daylight. In the manuscript, the statement seems to be initially closed by a full stop after the word «*abituati*» (“accustomed to”). Yet Albertini must have chosen to reopen the sentence continuing with a lowercase letter: the dawns and sunsets “chase and run after one another and astonish us with their superb wonder”. This syntactic hesitation might suggest that the full stop

²⁰ LB, f. 46v: “The sun at night is now several degrees below the horizon. This gives back to us the emotions of the dawns and the sunsets, to which we were no longer accustomed, which chase and run after one another and astonished us for their superb wonder”.

is undone as a beauty which demands further articulation is (suddenly?) re-experienced. The phrase «*ci ridà*» makes nature once again appear as an agent capable of giving, waking emotional intensity and sense of wonder.

It can be observed that this tendency reaches its highest intensity in the entry dated September 12, when Albertini describes the “nocturnal twilight of dawn” in explicitly exalted terms.

È uno spettacolo divino nel crepuscolo notturno dell'alba veder le montagne cariche di neve e di frangenti per il burrascoso mare spiccare su un cielo terso e purissimo; fanno a loro corona infinite tremule e timide stelle. Ad uno ad uno le individuiamo: Venere verso oriente, Giove coi satelliti, la Vega, Orione, le Pleiadi, i Gemelli, Marte, l'orsa, la polare allo Zenit; ad uno ad uno indoviniamo quasi commossi²¹

He defines the scene as a “divine spectacle”, a choice of words that places the experience on a transcendent plane that acquires a sacred dimension. The snow-covered mountains, battered by the rough sea, stand out sharply against a sky described as “clear and most pure”, while the stars seem like a crown around them, in an almost liturgical image.

In this passage Albertini seems to shift from a collective visual experience to a form of intimate, yet shared, participation. The crew begins to enumerate stars and planets. This act of naming, on the one hand, reflects a scientific and navigational habit, grounded in orientation and astronomical knowledge; on the other hand, it becomes a deeply emotional and slow gesture, «*ad uno ad uno*» (“one by one”). This phrase underlines an almost reverent attention with which the celestial bodies are identified. The act of recognition is not Albertini's alone, but of the whole crew, suggesting, with the closing words “almost moved”, a shared sensibility and a common affective response to the vision of the sky.

To conclude this reflection it is worth quoting another entry, written only three days before the return. This brief note seems to condense and summarise how nature is experienced by the Commander:

È una giornata questa di navigazione nei soliti fiordi calmi, alcune volte apatici, altre volte violenti di colori e di impressioni²²

21 LB, f. 49r: “It is a divine spectacle in the nocturnal twilight of dawn to see the mountains laden with snow and with breakers from the stormy sea stand out against a clear and very pure sky; around them there forms a crown of infinite, trembling and timid stars. One by one we pick them out: Venus toward the east, Jupiter with its satellites, Vega, Orion, the Pleiades, Gemini, Mars, the Ursa, the Pole Star at the Zenith; one by one we guess them almost moved”.

22 LB, f. 56r: “This is a day of navigation in the usual calm fjords, at times apathetic, at other

The fjords are described as “the usual ones”. But the same familiar fjords can appear “apathetic” or, at other times, “violent in colours and impressions”. The same place may appear inert or overwhelming, depending on the material, emotional or experiential conditions under which it is perceived. The opposition here does not depend exclusively upon objective transformations of the landscape and phenomena, but also on the interaction between the external scene and the inner disposition of the observer. Wonder, intensity and emotional impact emerge from a subtle alignment between the state of mind of the subject and the conditions offered by nature at a given moment. What changes is not always and only the place, but the way it is experienced.

An inhabited contradiction

The final reflections of this chapter may usefully begin by returning to the point from which Albertini’s logbook sets out: the idea of “the struggle against nature”, defined from the very first pages as a “magnificent contradiction”. This formula places the endeavour within a long-standing tradition of geographical ventures, one in which men’s action is framed in an heroic tension with an environment perceived as resistant, hostile, or at least indifferent to human will (Carey *et al.*, 2016; Sowards, 2017; Leane, 2019; Haines, 2024). At the outset, the Arctic appears primarily as a space to be confronted, crossed and negotiated through technical competence, physical endurance and thorough planning.

As the analysis has shown, however, this notion of struggle does not remain stable throughout the logbook. Through an ordeal in which moments of victory and hope contrast and give way to sadness and boredom, Albertini’s relationship with the Arctic traverses changes and shifts. It is sometimes felt as an irresistible force, dictating rhythms, movements, perceptions and emotional states and some others as a generous and benign power inclined to dispense hope and wonder.

In this sense, the initial “contradiction” is not *resolved* but *inhabited*. It is internalized within the geographical experience itself, revealing how exploration is not only a matter of advancing through space, but also of learning to dwell within its constraints, temporalities and uncertainties. The Arctic landscape thus appears as an active agent in the production

times violent with colours and impressions”.

of meaning, capable of reshaping the practice of the expedition and the explorer's understanding of his own place within nature.

This becomes evident in the recurrent oscillation between descriptive precision and emotional projection. Elements such as "dead waters", "pensive coasts", patterns of light or immobile horizons are never reduced to physical conditions alone. They operate as relational figures through which inner states, such as fatigue, uncertainty, wonder, melancholy, become legible without being directly named. The environment absorbs, reflects and amplifies emotional tensions, translating them into spatial and atmospheric forms. From this perspective, as already mentioned, the Commander's writing may be, among many other things, read in terms of emotional geography. Space is apprehended through moods, rhythms and affective resonances as much as through routes, obstacles and spatial reference points (Davidson and Milligan, 2004, p. 524; Anderson 2009, p. 80). The Arctic landscape emerges as a mediator between external conditions and interior states, enabling the explorer's subjectivity to surface indirectly through descriptions of light, colour, form and stillness.

In the final phase of the expedition, the relationship with landscape seems to undergo a further, subtler transformation. The diary increasingly records a sense of familiarity with the Arctic environment: the "usual fjords", the recurring ice formations, the already known rhythms of light and stillness. Description in some cases are more denotative, as if repetition no longer required renewed elaboration. It is almost possible to assert that landscape, in this sense, has been learnt.

This shift, as previously analysed, might be read against a markedly altered emotional backdrop. The unsuccessful march on the Nordaustlandet, which concretely diminished the initial hope of finding survivors and the fatal hunting accident that claimed the life of Guedoz cast a shadow on the closing weeks of the expedition. The tone of many passages of the diary reflects this accumulation of fatigue and disillusionment. Yet familiarity of landscapes and grief do not entail indifference to nature. Even when the landscape becomes "usual", its capacity to surprise does not vanish. When Albertini pauses to record moments of exceptional beauty, he marks them as gifts rather than something granted. Beauty appears to offer breaks among efforts and it is repeatedly described as a form of compensation: almost a return given by nature in response to suffering, waiting and restraint.

It is within this attentive openness to what the environment gives that Albertini's stance toward nature may ultimately be understood: not as that of a fighter, nor that of a detached observer but rather that of someone who knows the value of effort and resilience, always remaining receptive, capable of wonder and grateful even after repetition, fatigue and loss. His logbook allows us to recognize him as a lover of nature, able to listen, respect and respond; endlessly eager to search for what cannot be found, to seek beyond the mist, beyond the space, beyond himself.

GIANNI ALBERTINI, COMMANDER

Tales of polar heroes

Before delving into the “self” that emerges from the logbook, it is worth depicting the cultural horizon saturated with heroic archetypes in which Gianni Albertini was forged: a narrative universe that offered model of masculinity, discipline, sacrifice and national duty, against which his Arctic experience would likely be measured, internalized and in part, maybe, reworked.

Narratives of polar exploration in the first decades of the twentieth century constructed the cultural model through a complex negotiation between traditional heroic ideals and modernising forces, producing nationally distinct patterns of representation. The introduction of aviation fundamentally changed preexisting notions of masculine heroism. America created the “technological explorer” archetype around Byrd (Cronin, 2016), while Peary was constructed as a heroic figure defined by courage, perseverance, and personal endurance (Dick, 2004, p. 5). Norwegian press coverage renegotiated heroic narratives through imaginaries of the Arctic landscape surrounding figures such as Amundsen (Cronin, 2010), while drawing on a strong public appetite for masculine intrepidity in polar regions, already embodied by national heroes like Nansen (Aas, 2005, p. 6). Soviet media transformed polar aviators into symbols of collective socialist virtue emphasizing self-discipline and collective effort (McCannon, 2010). In Italy, polar exploration narratives between 1900 and 1930 were constructed through two primary figures: Luigi Amedeo di Savoia, “Duke of Abruzzi”, and Umberto Nobile. The narrative attributed leadership and initiative to the Duke of Abruzzi, framing him within a cultural discourse that celebrated exploration as the undertaking of exceptional individuals. Press accounts of his voyage to remote regions emphasized courage, sacrifice, and perseverance, presenting the expedition as heroic enterprise. Within this narrative, the explorer emerged as a champion embodying the presumed cultural superiority of his nation, while exploration itself became a means to assert political ambitions and enhance national standing (Cauli, 2019, p. 155). Nobile’s heroism is centred on technical skill, courage, and engineering mastery, publicly celebrated through official discourse that emphasized his role as inventor, builder, and commander

of airships, and framed his achievements as a source of national prestige and technological modernity. (Zani, 2003, pp. 71-72). These two heroes were deeply embedded in Italy's aspirations for international recognition and personal heroism was linked to national glory. The figure of the hero, however, smoothly evolved across temporal periods, shifting from romanticism and sacrifice in the pre-World War I era, toward increasingly politicised narratives under Fascism (D'Ayala Valva, 2008), where heroic status proved contingent on a political alignment. The Duke of Abruzzi's failure to reach the North Pole (1900), set nevertheless a world record of maximum reached latitude: it therefore granted him heroic status through international attention and cultural legacy. Nobile became a popular hero in Italian Fascism after his 1926 *Norge* flight, while the aftermath of the *Italia* disaster destroyed his reputation and created a fracture between Mussolini's regime and polar studies (Zani, 2003, p. 63).

It is important, therefore, to keep in mind the cultural background within which Gianni grew up, a framework that likely influenced the formation of his self. His personal trajectory was shaped by a close and complex involvement in Nobile's polar ventures: he participated in the 1928 *Italia* expedition and later took part in the rescue operation following the disaster. When the Arctic re-enters his life, it should be considered as a space already charged with moral and symbolic weight, shaped by heroic expectations, public failure, political fracture and personal loyalty.

With this background in view, the following reading of Albertini's logbook, seeks to understand the kind of "self" that emerges from his writing, attentive to the ethical tensions, personal reflections and representation.

A need for writing

Albertini's diary seems to originate from a fundamentally personal need, even though it formally takes the shape of a logbook. As already noted, the handwriting is often chaotic and difficult to decipher, especially when compared with the orderly and more controlled script of the Second in Command, Piero Zanetti. This graphic disorder suggests a form of writing that responds simultaneously to duty and necessity. On the one hand, the keeping of a logbook was an essential requirement during a naval expedition, intended to record facts, routes and events. On the

other hand, Albertini's writing appears only partially oriented toward such function. As it was previously observed, it is shaped by urgency, fatigue and emotional pressure and seems less concerned with legibility or future readers than with the act of recording facts and thoughts for himself.

The logbook often functions as a space in which Albertini records his own state of mind, doubts, memories and opinions, beyond data and events. The narrative voice is predominantly anchored in the first person singular: the "I" frequently prevails over the collective "we", even though the text is produced within a strongly communal living context such as a polar journey. The expedition is, in fact, a collective enterprise, governed nevertheless by strict roles, discipline and shared objectives; yet the diary mostly foregrounds an individual voice.

This emphasis on the self might also reflect Albertini's specific position as Commander. Personal responsibility emerges as an undercurrent in the logbook: the weight of decision-making, the concern for the men, the awareness that any mistake could have serious, or even fatal, outcomes. Albertini is obviously responsible for the safety of his crew and companions, many of whom were also close friends, and he also bears the expectations of those waiting at home. In particular, the families of the missing men placed their hopes in the mission, entrusting him with the task of finding survivors.

For us as readers, the logbook can therefore be interpreted as a means through which Albertini's confrontation with the burden of command becomes visible, making it possible to trace his enthusiasm, fears, certainties and uncertainties.

The Arctic environment, as discussed earlier, with its isolation and temporal suspension, seems to amplify this inward turn. Separated from the world and from familiar, social and emotional networks, Albertini reflects on absence and distance. The figure of his mother, for example, returns at various moments, introducing a deep intimate dimension that contrasts with the expected impersonality of common technical logbooks.

The log becomes a place of reflection to compare the present and the past. Memories, previous experiences and earlier stages of Albertini's relationship with polar environment often surface in the text, indicating that the voyage is experienced both as a physical journey and as a biographical and existential passage. The self that emerges from the diary is thus layered and evolving.

Albertini's diary points to a more complex role of writing. It becomes legitimate to ask whether this text functions primarily as a private instrument of thoughts and account of events or whether it is shaped, consciously or unconsciously, by the possibility of being read, interpreted and reused beyond the immediate context of the expedition. Even when apparently addressed to the self, the act of writing may therefore be influenced by an implicit awareness of future readers, institutional expectations, or historical transmission.

This ambiguity becomes particularly significant if we consider that the logbook did later serve as the basis for the book *La Heimen Sucai nei Mari Artici* ("The Heimen Sucai in the Arctic Seas") published in 1932. Several extracts from the diary are reused, sometimes almost verbatim. The "I" that takes shape in the logbook therefore moves along a fragile boundary between intimacy and narration, between lived experience and its future representation, between experience as lived and experience as told. The logbook thus emerges as a site where self-reflection and self-construction are inseparably intertwined, revealing how subjectivity is gradually produced through the practice of writing, even before it is fully articulated in a published narrative.

The figure of the mother

The figure of Albertini's mother, Laura Brambilla, appears for the first time in the diary at a significant and highly symbolic moment: the day of the departure from Bergen, which also coincides with the very first day of recording on the logbook itself. May 15, just a few minutes before ordering the engine start:

Pochi minuti prima di dar ordine a Jakobsen di mettere in moto le macchine accompagno a terra mia mamma che fino all'ultimo momento era rimasta nel mio camerino. Da tre mesi pensavo con terrore a questo momento²³

This passage places the mother at the very threshold of the expedition, we could say at the point of transition between land and sea, from a

²³ LB, f. 8v: "A few minutes before giving Jakobsen the order to start up the engines I accompany ashore my mum who until the very last moment had stayed in my cabin. For three months I had thought with terror of this moment".

familiar world towards the Arctic space. The setting is particularly significant: «*camerino*». The cabin is an intimate and enclosed space within the ship, that temporarily functions as a domestic refuge that resists the imminent departure. The mother's presence lingers until the "last moment", suggesting an attempt to delay, or at least soften, the emotional rupture implied by departure.

What emerges here is not an image of heroic enthusiasm, but rather one of vulnerability. Albertini explicitly associates this moment with «*terrore*» ("terror"), a feeling he had been anticipating for months. The fear does not relate to the danger of the expedition itself in this case, but to the act of separation. The logbook thus opens with a deeply personal scene, in which the Commander's authority is still suspended and the self is defined through an intimate relational bond. The maternal figure marks the departure as an emotional boundary, framing the journey as a geographical displacement intermingled with a profound affective rupture.

The next day, Laura is no longer physically present, yet her figure immediately returns through writing. On May 16, Albertini notes:

Fui svegliato alla mattina da Zanetti che mi portò una lettera di mia mamma in cui stava scritto tutto quanto essa non mi disse a voce prima di partire per paura di dover troppo piangere²⁴

This brief annotation registers a shift from physical presence to mediated contact. The mother's voice crosses spatial distance in epistolary form, highlighting the role of writing in maintaining bonds and proximity. Albertini does not simply record the fact of having received a letter; he explicitly remarks on its content, emphasizing that it bore everything she did not speak before departure. Writing thus emerges as a medium that allows what direct presence had inhibited, offering a space in which emotion can be expressed without one being overwhelmed by it. The logbook, in this passage, records the event of receiving the letter itself and, implicitly, the emotional effect of the words written in it. By noting the significance of his mother's message Albertini reveals the depth of his emotional attachment to her.

²⁴ LB, f. 9v: "I was woken in the morning by Zanetti who brought me a letter from my mother in which everything was written that she did not tell me verbally before leaving for fear of having to cry too much".



Fig. 52. Laura Brambilla Albertini aboard the ship, accompanying her son in the final moments before the expedition set sail

Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

That bond transpires with particular intensity in the brief annotation dated June 13. On that day, the land patrol composed of Albertini, Urbano, Bonola, and Guedoz sets out on the long and dangerous march across the ice of Nordaustlandet in search of the missing men.

The entry reads:

I cani pure sono attaccati alle slitte. È bevuta una bottiglia di champagne.
Sono le 2 G.M.T. quando partiamo. L'ultimo pensiero a mia madre²⁵

Here the reference to Laura is reduced to only five words, concluding a sequence of short, factual statements that describe the final setup for departure. Yet precisely because of its brevity and placement – as the last sentence and the final word before he stops writing in the logbook – this

²⁵ LB, f. 26v: “The dogs too are harnessed to the sledges. A bottle of champagne is drunk. It is 2 G.M.T. when we depart. The last thought to my mother”.

annotation carries considerable emotional weight. The entry is written at a moment of heightened awareness. Albertini knows what lies ahead and is fully conscious of the physical danger and the endurance required by a month-long journey with sledge dogs across the ice. The preceding days are marked by organization, preparation and command, by the careful management of men, supply, equipment and timing.

Against this background, the phrase «*L'ultimo pensiero a mia madre*» (“The last thought to my mother”) represents a rupture. It marks the passage from the role of Commander to that of individual, from procedural rationality to an intimate emotional gesture. The mother appears here as the final reference before direct exposure to risk, almost as a ritual act that accompanies the transition from the relative safety of the ship to the radical uncertainty of the ice. Leaving the vessel, which momentarily functions as a familiar and protected space, becomes a second separation, echoing the initial departure.

At the same time, this final note may also be read as a gesture of detachment from writing itself. The logbook remains on board while the patrol advances onto the ice towards the unknown. The act of marking a “last thought” therefore signals a physical departure and at the same time a suspension of narrative. In this sense, the diary operates as a fragile medium of connection with the world left behind, an instrument through which experience can still be ordered, recorded and potentially transmitted. Should the march have ended in tragedy – had the patrol been lost and never found – whatever Albertini might have written in other notebooks while they were in Nordaustlandet would have possibly vanished with him. The logbook, by contrast, remains on the ship retaining the possibility of returning home. For this reason, the moment Albertini ceases recording his action in the ship’s log is itself significant and emotionally charged. To take leave of writing the logbook is thus to relinquish, however temporarily, a form of contact, and to enter a space in which both communication and self-representation are somehow interrupted and might be so for good.

In this sense in both moments of departure, the maternal figure assumes the same function: that of emotional anchoring, a stable point of reference in the face of uncertainty and risk.

The emotional centrality of his mother within Gianni’s personal world finds expression in a symbolic act of naming. Her name was first given to

the expedition's motorboat, «*Laura*»²⁶ (Albertini, 1932, p. 104), second, the dedication of a newly identified headland at the eastern side of Nordaustlandet, «*Terra di Laura*» – officially known today as Kapp Laura (Albertini, 1932, p. 73; Harland, 1997, p. 106) – reveals how the Arctic landscape itself becomes a repository of memory and affect.

The burden of command

The responsibility of command felt by Gianni Albertini emerges in the logbook in multiple and interconnected ways, revealing itself through bodily tension, spatial awareness, emotional strain and constant operational engagement. Responsibility can easily be read through pages in which it emerges not as an abstract principle but in terms of concrete practices and states of mind, particularly in moments of preparation and crossing of thresholds. The first and most evident manifestation of Albertini's burden of command can be found in the entry of May 22:

Durante tutta la notte io non chiuse occhio – È questo l'ultimo porto, l'ultimo contatto col mondo, e le preoccupazioni di colmare le lacune di rimpiazzare le dimenticanze, mi assale in modo preoccupante. Durante la notte con Urbano compii nel fiordo il collaudo di un motoscafo con motore semidiesel a petrolio. Mi decisi di acquistare tale mezzo sicuro di potermene in seguito servire. Alla mattina furono caricati tutti i viveri dell'equipaggio sotto il mio costante e diretto controllo; la pece la stoppa e legnami e tutto quanto di necessario alla nave. Fu rinnovato il pieno di olio ed aumentate le riserve di petrolio – e mille altre cose furono acquistate che all'ultimo momento si verificarono mancanti – Furono definiti gli accordi coll'istituto geofisico e nella mattinata mi recai anche a visitare il console Francese dichiarando a lui che quantunque e purtroppo con minor speranza le ricerche di Amundsen Guilbaud hanno per me e per il mio paese la stessa importanza che le ricerche del Gruppo Involucro²⁷

26 LB, f. 46r: «*Alle 14 con Pugliese come R.T. Urbano come motonauta e Della Valle partii per una esplorazione costiera col motoscafo "Laura"*» ("At 14 with Pugliese as R.T. Urbano as motorboat pilot and Della Valle I set out for a coastal exploration with the motorboat 'Laura'").

27 LB, ff. 14v-15r: "During the whole night I did not close an eye – This is the last port, the last contact with the world, and the worries of filling the gaps, of making up for oversights, assail me in a troubling way. During the night with Urbano I carried out in the fjord the testing of a motorboat with a semi-diesel petroleum engine. I decided to purchase such a vessel, sure that I could make use of it later. In the morning all the crew's provisions were loaded under my constant and direct supervision; the pitch, the tow, the timber and everything necessary for the ship. The oil supply was renewed and reserves of petroleum were increased – and a thousand of other things were purchased that at the last moment turned out to be missing – The agreements with the geophysical

This entry highlights the burden of command, here, as a form of personal and physical strain. Insomnia is the first and most immediate consequence: Albertini remains awake, worried. Furthermore, the awareness of standing at a threshold «*l'ultimo porto, l'ultimo contatto col mondo*» (the last port, the last contact with the world), probably intensifies this condition. The port is of course a logistical step, but it also represents a symbolic boundary beyond which isolation from the world becomes definitive.

Responsibility also emerges as anxiety over completeness, Albertini repeatedly refers to the fear of omissions and oversights, revealing a concern that goes beyond efficiency. The meticulous verification of supplies, fuel, materials and equipment reflects an understanding that survival and success depend on the absence of gaps, for which he feels responsible. The anxiety translates into an almost obsessive attention to detail, through which the Commander attempts to prevent uncertainty by controlling what can still be controlled.

A sort of hyper-presence of the Commander emerges. Albertini emphasizes his «*costante e diretto controllo*» (“constant and direct control”) over loading activities and setups, as well as his continuous involvement in testing equipment and making decisions. Command is never delegated. The self that comes out of the pages is one that takes charge by remaining constantly present, mentally and physically, across all phases of arrangements.

In these few lines, responsibility emerges as a multi-layered and pervasive burden. It is first of all technical and logistical: concerning ship, engines, fuel and supplies. It is also scientific and institutional, as shown by the call at the Geophysical Institute. It also assumes a diplomatic and symbolic dimension in the visit to the French consul, where Albertini explicitly frames the search as a national endeavour. He declares that his expedition will also undertake the search for Guilbaud and Amundsen's group, who had disappeared while attempting to rescue the survivors of the *Italia* disaster. On June 18, 1928, Roald Amundsen had departed from Oslo aboard a *Latham 47* aircraft piloted by René Guilbaud, heading north toward Svalbard to take part in the search operations, before vanishing after his last radio message near Bjørnøya (Barr, 1977, p. 564; May and Lewis, 2015; Ytreberg, 2021). The expedition is thus framed as a continu-

institute were finalised and in the morning I also went to visit the French consul declaring to him that although and unfortunately with less hope the searches for Amundsen and Guilbaud have for me and for my country the same importance that the searches of the Envelope Group”.

ation of an international rescue effort (Barr, 1977; Bosco and Stone, 2004, p. 303; Michaels, 2006, p. 312; Alfei, 2023; Alfei, 2025) and as a gesture of solidarity across national and institutional boundaries.

At the same time, the responsibility is also profoundly human. Beneath the catalogue of preparations lies the awareness of being accountable for the lives of those on board and for the fate of the missing men.

A similar condition surfaces in the days before the march on ice, when setups for the departure of the land patrol are underway. Once again, the logbook foregrounds intensity, fatigue and concern, as well as the Commander's direct involvement in every phase of organization. The detailed listing of supplies, days of food, equipment and dog harnesses emphasizes the Commander's hyper-presence and his assumption of personal duty in the entries of days 11 and 12 of June. As in the previous passage, responsibility comes out in physical exhaustion and emotional stress.

Alla sera sono stanco. L'imminenza di una partenza per ripetere quanto ho già fatto e di cui so le difficoltà ed i pericoli mi procura non poca preoccupazione²⁸

Albertini openly acknowledges fatigue and anticipatory concern, rooted in his awareness of having already experienced similar journeys and of knowing their dangers. Here the burden of responsibility is linked to memory and experience: he knows what lies ahead.

Albertini's strong focus on the organization also emerges from his explicit decision to limit what is written in the logbook. He notes:

Sorvolo sui preparativi e sul lavoro di queste giornate che inoltre, oltre al tempo che stringe, anche non scrivendoli certo non si cancelleranno dalla mia memoria²⁹

In a phase in which concern for readiness becomes a priority, even writing the log turns into a secondary and less necessary action. The logbook contains what is essential, while many details are deliberately left out for reasons of urgency. At the same time, Albertini feels the need to specify that the absence of written descriptions does not imply forgetful-

²⁸ LB, f. 26r: "By evening I am tired. The imminence of a departure to repeat what have already done and of which I know the difficulties and dangers causes me not a little concern".

²⁹ LB, f. 26r-v: "I pass over the preparations and the work of these days which, beyond the pressure of time, even if unwritten certainly will not be erased from my memory".

ness. On the contrary, by stating that those days will not be erased from his memory, he implicitly underscores their weight and importance. The remark somehow suggests that the intensity of the moment exceeds what can reasonably be transferred onto the page.

The responsibility of command manifests itself primarily through a continuous need to make decisions. This activity becomes a repeated, everyday act, often carried out under operational uncertainty, emotional and moral pressure.

These decisions operate on different levels: in the management of discipline and interpersonal relations, in the balance between institutional duty and the individual freedom of companions and in technical choices that entail immediate material consequences.

A first example of this decision-making process emerges at the very moment of departure, when the expedition is delayed due to the absence of Jakobsen:

Avevo in animo di partire stamattina alle 10 e doveti rimandare alle 12 il salpare in causa dell'assenza di Jakobsen. Poi mancai di dire a lui che non ritenevo possibile giustificare il suo ritardo³⁰

The episode is significant for Albertini's reaction, which consists precisely in his decision to refrain from addressing the issue with Jakobsen. He is clearly aware of the unjustifiability of the delay, to the extent that he defines his own silence as a «*mancanza*», that is, an omission on his part. This self-acknowledged omission suggests that Albertini consciously chooses to suspend the immediate exercise of authority. Such restraint may be interpreted as an attempt to preserve the emotional balance of the group at a particularly sensitive moment: the eve of departure, when tension is already high. In this context, cohesion and calm appear to be prioritized.

A particularly revealing moment in the logbook, which illuminates Albertini's modes of command, concerns the possibility of an overwintering, a prospect that the Commander frames explicitly in terms of responsibility and duty. The discussion takes place in a context of uncertainty and pressure, following institutional communications and the availability of

30 LB, f. 15r: "I had in mind to depart this morning at 10, and I had to postpone at 12 the casting off due to the absence of Jakobsen. Then I failed to tell him that I did not consider it possible to justify his tardiness".



Fig. 53. Gianni Albertini (centre), between Peroni (left) and Zanetti (right), preparing equipment and supplies for the sledge march across Nordaustlandet
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

new resources, which make the option of overwintering theoretically feasible. It is within this framework, in the days between July 28 and August 7, that Albertini formulates a clear statement of his understanding of command:

Io considero lo sverno come l'adempimento di un dovere. L'animo, ed ancor più il ragionamento non mi spingono a tale impresa – I miei compagni sono per la maggioranza contrari – Ad essi esporgerò le necessità ed i concetti che ci rendono necessario il sacrificio. Comunque dirò loro che essendo possibile sbarcare chi non potessi seguirmi preparino una risposta precisa³¹

³¹ LB, f. 38r: "I consider the overwintering as the fulfilment of a duty. My spirit, and still more my reason do not impel me to such an enterprise – My companions are for the majority against it – To them I shall lay out the necessities and the concepts that make the sacrifice necessary. In any case I shall tell them that, since it is possible to disembark anyone who cannot follow me, they should prepare a precise answer".

Overwintering is thus presented as a moral and national obligation rather than a personal desire. Albertini openly acknowledges that neither his «*animo*» (“spirit”) nor his «*ragionamento*» (“reason”) incline him toward such an undertaking. Despite his inner resistance, he accepts the prospect in the name of a higher duty linked to the mission and to the country. A clear contrast emerges here between responsibility toward the expedition’s purposes and that toward the men under his command.

Significantly, Albertini does not impose this choice. He allows for the possibility that those unwilling to follow him may disembark, while at the same time requesting a precise answer. Withdrawal is therefore not forbidden, but neither trivialised. The decision must be conscious, explicit and justified.

This passage reveals an ethical form of command, grounded in accountability rather than coercion. Responsibility here is exercised through the request to decide and to explain. Albertini recognizes he must “lay out necessities and concepts” that make the sacrifice worthwhile, thus taking on himself the burden of persuasion.

A final example further reinforces the personal dimension of Albertini’s duty, with particular regard to technical choices and their material outcomes. During a period of severe weather, on September 20, he notes that winds force the ship into continuous manoeuvring in order to avoid dangerous proximity to the coast.

Nel pomeriggio e nella notte il vento aumentò a dismisura e ci obbligò spirando da S-W ad opporgli i motori e la prua onde evitare pericolosi avvicinamenti alla costa. Diminuisco così in modo grave le riserve di Nafta³²

The situation is initially described in collective terms, as a manoeuvring constraint imposed by external conditions. Yet this collective framing abruptly shifts, when Albertini writes that he severely reduces the reserves of fuel. This oscillation between the operational plural and the decisional singular is significant, and occurs in different entries of the logbook. While the circumstances compel action, the final decision – and the weight of its consequences – are clearly assumed by the Commander. The use of the first-person singular marks the moment in which necessity becomes choice, and choice becomes personal accountability.

³² LB, f. 52v: “In the afternoon and in the night the wind increased without measure and blowing from S–W forced us to oppose it with the engines and the bow so as to avoid dangerous approaches to the coast. Thus I severely reduce the reserves of diesel oil”.

Notably, the loss of resources is recorded without rhetorical justification. The consumption of oil is presented as necessary, yet it remains a loss, and is acknowledged as such.

It can therefore be said that the responsibility of command is experienced and narrated by Albertini as something that ultimately rests on the individual, even when decisions are shaped by collective conditions and external factors.

Measuring the Present against the Past

Several passages discussed above already point toward another recurring dimension of Albertini's self-narration: a continuous comparison with past experiences. His concern for what lies ahead is often grounded in prior knowledge. When he expresses anxiety, hesitation, or awareness of risk, it is frequently because he already knows what such undertakings entail. The reflection on the past, however, does not involve experience alone, but it carries along an implicit dialogue with a "past self".

This inward confrontation appears from the very early pages of the diary and it is often prompted by lived situations and surrounding landscapes. An entry dated May 15 states:

La navigazione tra i fiordi è ormai per me primizia già gustata. Osservo ciò che mi circonda con tristezza non per ciò che vedo ma per ciò che penso. Al passare lento degli anni all'incallire costante dello Spirito³³

A particularly introspective form of dealing with the past is offered by these lines. By defining the navigation in the fjords as a «*primizia già gustata*» ("a novelty already tasted" or "first fruits already enjoyed"), Albertini suggests that what was once experienced as novelty has now become familiar. The lexical field he employs is closely connected to *taste* and *pleasure*: *primizia*, in Italian, may refer to the first fruit of a season, something new, valued and often prized, while *gustata* explicitly evokes enjoyment. These choices imply that the fjords were once lived with a sense of discovery and delight.

³³ LB, f. 9r: "Navigation in the fiords is by now for me a novelty already tasted. I observe what surrounds me with sadness not for what I see but for what I think. Of the slow passing of the years, of the constant hardening of the Spirit".



Fig. 54. Gianni Albertini using the sextant
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

At the moment when that writing is made, however, the same landscape no longer produces the same effect. Although the scenery remains something that can still be “tasted”, it now functions primarily as a stimulus for reflection, generating a feeling of sadness. The fjords act as a trigger for a broader meditation on time and on the effects of accumulated experience. The reference to the slow passing of years and to the «*incallire dello spirito*» (“hardening of the Spirit”) is particularly telling. The verb *incallire* evokes a physical process by which the body hardens through repeated friction and effort. Applied to the spirit, it may suggest an inner transformation produced by time and experience: a gradual loss of sensibility accompanied by an increased capacity for endurance. It may point to a form of emotional hardening and, meanwhile, to the resilience acquired through repeated exposure to difficulty. In this sense it might be interpreted as a reference to a perceived inner toughening and a gradual loss of that emotional freshness often associated with youth and first encounters.

The logbook shows how the relationship with the past is frequently activated by the landscape itself, that frequently acts as an “evocative place” (Poplin, 2020). Environments that one re-encounters in his life are – so to speak – “written with memories” (Donohoe, 2014, p. 25) and the ones that Albertini passed through the previous year recur. Yet, they do not always generate the same sensations or emotional response. What changes is the disposition of the self, shaped by commitment, time and by having lived through the ordeal. A clear example of this dynamic, already discussed elsewhere, can be found in the notion of the «*Regno della pazienza*». When Albertini finds himself once again, like the year before, within this regime of enforced waiting and immobility, he explicitly connects the present condition to a past inner state expressing sadness. It is the rediscovery of his own impatience from a time elapsed. This reflection could now be read in light of the phrase «*incallire dello spirito*». The sorrow stems first of all from having to face once more a difficult scenario; but also from the awareness that the previous prolonged exposure to such environment has intimately changed his spirit.

This dynamic can be read in light of Yi-Fu Tuan’s notion of “deep involvement” in experiencing a place (Tuan, 1975, p. 164). Tuan emphasizes that a sense of place is produced by the passage of time *in primis*, and above all by an intense, embodied, and affective engagement with space. Albertini’s diary reveals how such involvement becomes legible precisely when the Commander encounters the material traces of his own past passage – often artificial remnants. It is them that most strongly activate reflections of this kind and prompt the Commander to engage in a confrontation with the past. The greatest emotional intensity associated with this process could be identified in two main episodes. The first occurs in the already mentioned arrival at Kings Bay on June 6. There, Albertini experiences the landscape through a constant comparison between past and present. Although the place is familiar to him from 1928, it no longer appears recognisable. It had been once a site of activity, preparation and hopeful expectation, that had been shattered into grief and despair by the disaster. Now it meets him as silent, peaceful, and emotionally charging. The serene beauty of the dawn transforms the memory itself, making the anguished past seem almost unreal, like a distant dream.

The other moment that we can choose as example occurs during the sledge journey across the ice, some days later, when Albertini with a pa-

trol reaches Nordkapp and the Beverly hut. Here the past is not recalled through memory alone, but encountered materially, through places, objects, and traces left behind during the previous expedition. The visit produces a complex emotional response on June 10.

Toccammo alle 5 Capo Nord e fu per me immensa soddisfazione e tristezza ritrovare assieme alla immensa mancanza di vita i segni dei miei bivacchi dello scorso anno. Ripiegammo subito sulla Capanna di Beverly che trovammo ancora chiusa da chiodi arrugginiti colle sue iscrizioni sulle pareti atte a difendere il suo contenuto da eventuali furti. "This depot is put here to help Nobile's and Amundsen's lost parties...". Schiodammo la porta e nell'interno della capanna sentii il peso enorme di una solitudine senza pari. I viveri deteriorati dall'umidità e dal ghiaccio, l'interno e le pareti rivestite di neve e ghiaccio. Mi parve che lì non vi fosse più certo il calore della speranza che era in noi quando preparammo lo scorso anno il deposito³⁴

Albertini describes the arrival at the hut as a moment marked by the simultaneous presence of «*immense soddisfazione e tristezza*» ("immense satisfaction and sadness"). Satisfaction stems from the successful arrival with the newly tested sledges and from the recognition of a familiar site and tangible traces of his own past actions: the bivouacs, the depot, the visible proof of an expedition carried out with purpose. It had been prepared the year before to help Nobile's and Amundsen's missing men, and was stocked with basic necessities (Albertini, 1929, p. 88; Bosco and Stone, 2004, p. 304). Yet this contentment is immediately overshadowed by sadness. The landscape appears to be devoid of life, unchanged, and indifferent, and the depot reveals its failure through its very intactness. The fact that it had remained unopened is a material evidence of a defeated hope. The fact that the door is still nailed shut, that the nails are rusty and that the provisions inside are damaged by ice and humidity is an indication that the lost parties never passed through this place. The deteriorated supplies and wall covered with ice and snow testify the passage of time; objects cease to function as tools and instead become remnants.

34 LB, f. 25r-v: "We reached North Cape at 5 and for me it was an immense satisfaction and sadness to find, along with the immense absence of life the signs of my bivouacs from last year. We turned immediately towards Beverly Hut that we found still sealed with rusty nails with its inscriptions on the walls meant to protect its contents from possible theft. "This depot is put here to help Nobile's and Amundsen's lost parties...". We removed the nails from the door and inside the hut I felt the enormous weight of an unparalleled solitude. The food spoiled by humidity and ice, the interior and the walls covered in snow and ice. It seemed to me that there was no longer the warmth of hope that had been in us when we prepared the depot last year".

This material evidence of absence is accompanied by an overwhelming sense of solitude. Albertini speaks of «*un peso enorme di una solitudine senza pari*» (“enormous weight of an unparalleled solitude”), a formulation that suggests a complex layering of conditions. This solitude is first of all physical, highlighted by the landscape, deserted of human presence, and by the silence of a place remained untouched. Yet it is also temporal, produced by the gap between the past and the present: the hut preserves the traces of a “before”, no longer accessible and separated from the “now” by “what did not happen”. Finally, the solitude is existential: it stems from the awareness that hope invested in the depot has not been fulfilled. The hut is emptied of meaning, it is a container of absence.

The passage culminates in Albertini’s final remark «*mi parve che lì non vi fosse più certo il calore della speranza*» (“it seemed to me that there was no longer the warmth of hope”). Here the past is reread as a moment charged with expectation and confidence, now lost. Hope has cooled down, mirroring the frozen space in which it once dwelled.

A reflective Commander

Taken as a whole, the logbook renders a figure of Albertini that cannot be reduced either to the impersonal role of Commander or to a purely private subjectivity. The “I” that emerges from the pages is shaped by authority, commitment, memory, and affection. Writing becomes for him, at the same time, a professional obligation and a personal necessity: a space in which decision, fears, doubts and reflections can be noted at the very moment in which they are lived. The self that takes form is continually produced through the act of writing under conditions of pressure, isolation and uncertainty.

Albertini appears to be, above all, a very reflective person, deeply attentive to his own inner states and to the ethical weight of command. Responsibility is never abstract: it is embodied in insomnia, in fatigue, in the constant need to decide, justify, persuade. Even when he suspends authority or opens space for withdrawal, he does so through a conscious assumption of accountability. Command, in this sense, is experienced less as a power than as a burden. At the same time, the diary reveals a self that remains vulnerable and affectively exposed. The recurring presence – either materially or in thought – of the mother marks moments of de-

parture and emotional thresholds, offering an intimate counterpoint to the operational logic of the expedition.

This reflective dimension is made explicit in passages where Albertini acknowledges the profound impact of the polar environment on his inner life. During a night watch he writes that the moonlit night, the bright stars and the forbidding sea grant his soul «sensazioni colossali ed incancellabili»³⁵, suggesting an experience that exceeds the practical dimension of sailing and enters the realm of existential perception. Similarly, ordinary moments of conviviality become occasions for philosophical reflection, like when a shared bottle of whisky gives rise to a discussion lasting until dawn on the «contrapposizione dell'io all'universo»³⁶. These episodes reveal how, within the Arctic contexts, Albertini continuously opens spaces for questioning himself, interpreting his own position within the world and his relation to immensity, nature and time.

In this sense, Albertini's logbook offers more than a testimony of a polar expedition. Seen in its historical context, in the aftermath of the *Italia* disaster and within a political climate that increasingly celebrated discipline, heroism, and national prestige, Albertini embodies a form of command that only in part aligns with the dominant rhetoric of his time. While the voyage is framed and expressively defined by him as a “national duty” (Albertini, 1932, pp. 4, 7), embedded within institutional and political expectations, his self-representation consistently avoids triumphalism or self-mythologization.

Albertini appears instead as a technically competent, intellectually alert and morally cautious Commander, whose authority is grounded in experience. The repeated attention to fatigue, hesitation, and inner conflict contrasts with a specific type of contemporary narratives: even when he accepts actions justified in the name of national duty – such as the decision to overwinter – he sees them as burdens to be carried and explained and does not emerge as personal ambition or heroic destiny.

This attitude, his sensitivity to landscape, nature, memory and emotion-

35 LB, f. 54r: «Durante la notte monto di guardia io stesso. La notte lunata, dalle stelle luminose, il mare pauroso concedono in quella lunga veglia, all'animo mio sensazioni colossali ed incancellabili» (“During the night I take the watch myself. The moonlit night, the bright stars, and the fearsome sea grant, in that long vigil, to my spirit colossal and indelible feelings”).

36 LB, ff. 13v-14r: «Dopo pranzo festeggiamo la Pentecoste con una bottiglia di Whisky che ci diede modo di discutere fino all'alba sulla “Contrapposizione dell'io all'universo”» (“After dinner we celebrated the Pentecost with a bottle of Whiskey which gave us the opportunity of discussing until dawn about the ‘Opposition of the self to the universe’”).

al state paints a man attentive to complexity, capable of questioning his own role as a Commander and as a human in the world. As already noted, dominant contemporary discourses on exploration and technology tended to emphasize conquest, mastery and the assertion of human will over hostile environments. In Albertini's writing, however, such frameworks recede into the background. The narrative distance itself from heroic and triumphalist representations of exploration as conquest, replacing them with an experiential account, grounded in admiration for nature and in self-interrogation.

THE SHIP HEIMEN-SUCAI

The *Heimen-SUCAI* was a Scandinavian seal-hunter (generally indicated as «*baleniera*», i.e. “whale hunter”, in the Italian sources). Solid and technically well equipped, yet relatively small in scale, designed for navigation in difficult seas and specifically reinforced to withstand impacts with ice.

In the logbook, however, the ship emerges not merely as a means of navigation. The *Heimen* immediately reflects the image of the ship as living microcosm (Gilroy, 1993, p. 4): an inhabited, fragile and mobile space that encompasses the human presence within the vastness of the marine environment. It is at once home and refuge, technical instrument and travelling companion, a place of protection, yet also a body exposed to the forces of the sea.

Through frequent acts of personification, the ship is represented in the diary almost as a living being, at times human, at times animal, capable of mirroring the emotional states of the crew. Maritime sources, in general, demonstrate a profound linguistic and narrative tendency to personify ships, treating them as living entities with emotional and spiritual qualities. Linguistic evidence includes the traditional use of feminine pronouns when referring to ships (Ryan, 2006, p. 58). While poetic texts such as Coleridge’s *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1834) offer a particularly visible example of this convention, the same gendering is deeply embedded in maritime prose, reflecting an “inherent linguistic and pragmatic belief” that ships are feminine (Dževerdanović-Pejović, 2017). Beyond linguistic personification, maritime narratives frequently suggest a deeper form of identification, in which the ship is experienced as an extension of the mariner’s own body acting as a sensitive surface that absorbs, amplifies, and reflects emotional states (Papadopoulou, 2019). The ship as an object has been examined within geography through different interpretive lenses, gradually evolving from being a marginal element to the status of a subject of interest within contemporary research (Lambert *et al.*, 2006; Hasty, 2011; Hasty and Peters, 2012). Historically, she has been regarded as the geographical equivalent of the telescope for astronomy: an essential technology for extending the scientific ‘vision’ and collecting data on the physical world (Sorrenson, 1996, p. 222). In the eighteenth century, ships such as James Cook’s *Endeavour* were designed for missions both as means

of transport, and as geographical instruments for probing the unknown and charting coastlines (Sorrenson, 1996, pp. 224-226). Even less 'orthodox' vessels, such as those used by seventeenth-century pirates – e.g. William Dampier – have been examined as sites of geographical knowledge production, as their freedom of movement enabled unique observations of flora, fauna, and meteorological phenomena (Hasty, 2011, pp. 46-47).

As a social space and a 'mobile home', human geography has examined the ship also as a human microcosm or heterotopia (Casarino, 2002, pp. 12-13; Lambert *et al.*, 2006, p. 488; Foucault, 2010, p. 21; Lago, 2016), where hierarchies of class, gender, race, and sexuality are reproduced, negotiated, and contested. Within this environment, political economies, material geographies, and forms of knowledge emerge through everyday maritime practices, reflecting broader historical geographies of the sea and the complex relations of power, autonomy, resistance, and negotiation that shape seafaring societies (Lambert *et al.*, 2006, p. 487; Ryan, 2006, p. 582). A well-known example is the study of Lady Brassey's ship *Sunbeam*, described as a 'home on the ocean'. In this case, the vessel functioned as a "portable little England", i.e. a domestic environment that enabled observation of the outside world while filtering it through the imperial and domestic values of the Victorian era (Ryan, 2006, p. 586).

Geography has also employed the ship as a lens through which to examine global trade networks and imperial expansion (Hasty and Peters, 2012, p. 663). Ships have been described as 'vectors of law' projecting national sovereignty across oceanic spaces, linking European centres of calculation with distant colonies (Benton, 2010, p. 112). Through the ship, geographers analyse globalisation as a series of material encounters and conflicts, such as the transatlantic slave trade or the commercial activities of the East India Company, considering the vessels also as an accounting and political space (Ogborn, 2002, p. 161; Featherstone, 2005).

Geography has then further examined the ship through the lens of "mobility", as a technology in that works across a fluid and unstable surface. This approach explores how the movement of the vessel interacts with non-human agents such as currents, winds, and storms, producing complex relations between human agency and the vitality of oceanic environments. It also considers the effects on crews, whose tasks must be performed on a constantly oscillating surface, highlighting the physical and sensory dimensions of maritime labour (Hasty and Peters, 2012, p. 669).

This section will seek through the logbook to understand the role attributed to the ship within the Commander and crew's experience. It tries to adopt a multi-layered analytical lens to explore how the vessel emerges in the diary first and foremost as an instrument: a technological device that enables movement through geographical space and thus makes both the expedition and its unfolding events possible. Within this perspective, ship and sea can be read as the two poles of a relational system that reflects the broader enduring tension between humans and nature. The analysis then considers the ship as a "home", a recurring concept in the diary, and as a social microcosm in which routines, hierarchies, emotional bonds and functional roles must be regulated within a confined spatial setting, shaping life on board. Finally, the section will also explore how and why the ship occasionally appears in the diary as a quasi-living entity, capable of expressing and reflecting the moods, tension and intention of those who inhabit it.

The ship as an instrument

At several points in the logbook, the ship is described in strictly functional terms, as a technical instrument whose primary purpose is of course that of navigation. In these passages, attention is directed toward speed, measurements and the practical difficulties of operating nautical tools in Arctic conditions.

This technical register is closely related to the very nature of a logbook. As a form of writing rooted in maritime practice, the expedition's diary requires precision, regular observation and the entry of measured data. From the outset, however, the voyage is conceived as a broader documentary enterprise. Alongside the diary itself, a range of additional materials is produced, including meteorological records, measurements of wind speed and technical observations related to sailing. Within this wider framework, Albertini repeatedly chooses to include precise quantitative detail in the logbook itself.

When he does so, the adopted language foregrounds functionality and performance rather than subjective experience.

One example is how the ship's movement is rendered through numerical values, as when Albertini notes on May 22 a first use of the mechanical log and that he is able to determine that the *Heimen* is progressing at 7.6

knots. He also uses the logbook to record the practical difficulties encountered in making such measurements. The Arctic environment is, in fact, occasionally presented as a space that resists and destabilises the ideal of precision. On May 31, for example, the fix of position is hampered by constant trembling of the ship while the engine is running, the absence of a clear horizon due to ice conditions, and the limits of inherent to the instruments.

Even episodes of damage and mechanical failure are occasionally narrated with the same functional logic. When one blade of the propeller is found to be broken, the damage is linked to errors in dead-reckoning calculations, prompting a reassessment of the ship's actual speed, found to be decreased down to approximately five nautical miles per hour. This happens on September 1 and Albertini, the following day, describes evening trials with the log in order to re-evaluate the ship's speed.

Taken together, these examples, scattered across the diary rather than concentrated in a specific phase of the voyage, do not point to a progressive shift in Albertini's perception of the vessel. Instead, they reveal the selective activation of a technical register whenever he needs the logbook to fulfil its documentary function. In such moments, the *Heimen-SUCAI* is consistently represented as a navigational means, bound to measurement, performance and operational limits. This instrumental image of the ship is only a partial layer of its representation through the logbook, and it co-exists with other modes of description.

“Our home”

Beyond its instrumental function, the ship also emerges in the logbook as an inhabited space – an *espace vécu* (Frémont, 1980) – easily associable with the idea of a “home”. This dimension becomes visible through brief but recurring references to everyday practices, shared routines and moments of domestic intimacy that take place on board.

In a specific case, May 19, Albertini explicitly refers to *Heimen* as “our home”:

Io sdraiato in coperta alternai le gioie del sole col calcolo di passaggio al meridiano di sole. Zanetti onnipresente alle molte cure della nostra casa, Pugliese sempre in traffico per la messa a punto delle piccole stazioni por-

tatili, dormienti i due dottori³⁷

This passage offers a snapshot of everyday life on board. Albertini describes himself lying on deck, alternating pleasure of sun with astronomical calculations, while Zanetti is described as being constantly engaged in the many tasks required by “our home”; Pugliese is busy adjusting the small portable wireless stations and the two doctors are asleep.

Within a few lines, the ship is thus presented as a space in which several activities coexist: scientific and navigational work, technical maintenance, domestic care, leisure and rest. The explicit reference to “our home” is particularly significant, as it frames these heterogeneous practices within domestic vocabulary. Here the *Heimen* functions as a workplace and as a home emerging as a lived interior that must be cared for, organised and inhabited.

Significantly, this domestic feeling of the ship is not limited to Albertini’s own perspective. During the period in which he is absent on the march with Urbano, Bonola and Guedoz, the logbook is written by Zanetti, who likewise refers to the vessel literally as “home” on two different occasions. The terms thus may appear as part of a shared vocabulary, reflecting a collective experience of living on the ship.

Other passages convey the same sense of domesticity more indirectly, through descriptions that evoke warmth, conviviality and shared everyday rituals.

On Sunday May 26, the logbook records a moment of collective pause:

È Domenica. Zanetti buono, come sempre, ci offrì una torta di sua invenzione ed alla sera sturammo la prima Domenicale bottiglia di champagne. Si accese la stufa; essa si rese necessaria specialmente per riscaldare il quadrato a disposizione di chi dopo le lunghe soste in plancia, rientra intirizzato³⁸

Here Albertini narrates that Zanetti has prepared a homemade cake, a bottle is opened in celebration of the day, and the stove is lit to warm

37 LB, f. 13r-v: “I lying on the deck of the transcription alternated the joys of the sun with the calculation of sun’s passage at meridian. Zanetti omnipresent to the many cares of our household, Pugliese always busy with the fine-tuning of the small portable stations, the two doctors asleep”.

38 LB, f. 18r: “It is Sunday. Zanetti good, as always, offered us a cake of his own invention and in the evening we uncorked the first Sunday bottle of Champagne. The stove was lit; it became necessary especially to warm the wardroom for those who after long shifts on the bridge, return chilled”.

the «*quadrato*» for those returning chilled after long hours on the bridge. Although the vessel is not explicitly named as a home in this passage, the scene might recall that of a hearth, suggesting comfort, protection and a temporary suspension of hardship.

The idea of the ship as a home might emerge also when the Commander temporarily separates from it in order to undertake the march across Nordaustlandet. At this moment, the departure from the vessel marks a detachment from a familiar and protective space. As discussed earlier with reference to the figure of Albertini's mother, moments of separation acquire a strong emotional resonance in the diary. Leaving the ship implies, in that case, distancing oneself from a domestic centre that has structured everyday life. This is evident upon his return from the march, July 13, when the Commander writes:

Ritrovai la mia nave in perfetto ordine ed i compagni affettuosi né di più potevo attendermi³⁹

In these few words, he frames his return as a re-entry into a familiar and emotionally sustaining environment for which he had clearly been longing.

This domestic dimension of the ship coexists with the instrumental or operational descriptions, emerging whenever the logbook shifts its focus from navigation to lived experience.

The ship as a living being

In several passages of the logbook, the *Heimen-SUCAI* is described in terms of how it behaves and reacts, as if she were herself participating in the voyage. The ship is frequently represented through processes of personification, reflecting the intense and prolonged proximity between crew and vessel, as well as the embodied experience of navigation in an environment dominated by movement, waiting, and endurance. Through this personification, the ship becomes a responsive presence, capable of mirroring emotional states.

In the entry of May 16, the ship is described as leaving the fjords and, once in open waters, as beginning to dance lively and with great enthusiasm:

³⁹ LB, f. 31v: "I found my ship in perfect order and the companions affectionate nor more could I have expected".

Nel pomeriggio usciamo fuori dai fiordi per un paio d'ore e la nostra nave con grande entusiasmo incomincia a ballare vivacemente⁴⁰

In English, the verb “to dance” might appear as a straightforward human gesture. However, in Italian “*ballare*” is a more or less conventional way of describing the often abrupt and rhythmic movement of a vessel in rough waters and does not itself necessarily imply an intended personification. What is more revealing in this passage are the adverbs that qualify this movement. The ship does not merely move or “dance” but does so “with great enthusiasm” and “lively”.



Fig. 55. The Heimen-SUCAI leaving Tromsø
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

⁴⁰ LB, f. 10v: “In the afternoon we exit the fjords for a couple of hours and our ship with great enthusiasm begins to dance lively”.

Through these terms, Albertini seems to endow the *Heimen* with a form of emotional participation in the voyage. The movement of the ship is described as an animated, almost joyful reaction to navigation in more open seas. She appears to share the experience of leaving the confined space of the fjords, expressing a vitality that may mirror, and perhaps amplify, the mood on board. It is almost possible to say that here Albertini felt the ship less like an inert vehicle and more as a responsive companion in the journey.

The fact of attributing emotional states to the ship is not isolated. In the final days of May, while the expedition is repeatedly halted by the ice in what Albertini defines as the Kingdom of patience, the *Heimen* appears to reflect the frustration and psychological fatigue of the crew.

Scorribande inutili – più frequenti – quasi la nave incominciasse ad annoiarsi per non spuntarla contro il ghiaccio⁴¹

Here the ship is explicitly described as beginning to “grow bored”, a condition that emerges from a situation of stasis, where repeated, futile manoeuvres fail to overcome the resistance of the ice. The boredom of the ship is a projection of the crew’s own emotional state: impatience, weariness, and the sense of being trapped within an environment that hampers progress.

In this case it could be said that personification becomes a narrative strategy through which Albertini externalizes collective emotions.

This process of projection intensifies in the passage that immediately follows, where the emotional state attributed to her shifts from boredom to anger and obstinacy:

Il vento incuneando e curvando il suo sartame la fa spesso parere come col pelo irto – per la rabbia e la ostinazione⁴²

Here the figurative register changes. The ship is no longer implicitly compared to a human subject capable of feeling boredom, but rather to an animal, evoked through the image of “bristling fur”. This is a powerful simile, easily associated with instinctive reactions such as aggression, resis-

⁴¹ LB, f. 19v “Useless wanderings – more frequent – as if the ship herself were beginning to grow bored for not succeeding against the ice”.

⁴² LB, f. 19v “The wind pressing into and bending her rigging often makes her seem like with a bristling fur – from rage and obstinacy”.

tance, or defensive tension. The wind, by forcing and bending the rigging, visually produces this effect, yet Albertini interprets it emotionally, transforming a physical deformation into a sign of anger and stubbornness.

The *Heimen* shifts from boredom to rage. While boredom corresponds to immobility and suspended time, anger emerges as a response to prolonged resistance and repeated failure. In this sense, animalization appears well suited to expressing a more “primal” and visceral emotional state, one that exceeds rational control. *Heimen*’s obstinacy mirrors the crew’s own growing frustration in the face of an environment that cannot be negotiated or overcome.

Alongside the vessel, the sea itself is repeatedly endowed with agency and emotional qualities. This tendency is consistent with a broader narrative approach through which Albertini frequently personifies nature as a whole, giving environmental elements intentions, moods and forms of responsiveness. This is applied to wind, to light and to atmospheric conditions, often described as active presences and not as a passive background. Within the specific context of a maritime expedition, the sea is the primary medium through which the journey unfolds and, at the same time, the most immediate counterpart to both the ship and the crew.

The sea is in fact rarely described in neutral language, it is characterized through vocabulary that suggests vitality, temperament and even moral disposition.

On some occasions, water is described as benevolent. On May 22, Albertini notes that «*Il mare di Barents fu per tutta la giornata buono con noi*» (LB, f. 15v: “the Barents Sea was for the whole day kind to us”), depicting the sea as a favourable presence. The adjective «*buono*», literally “good”, does not describe here merely a condition of calm but suggests a form of benignity, reinforcing a recurring idea of a generous nature capable of granting support to human endeavours.

This image is sharply contrasted by passages in which the sea appears violent and hostile. On May 24, Albertini describes how:

La violenza del mare strappò dai loro ammarraggi i barili di olio facendoli paurosamente rotolare [in] coperta. Furono ore di duro lavoro. Sulla coperta spazzata continuamente da ondate furiose non fu facile cosa porre riparo ad ogni cosa⁴³

⁴³ LB, f. 16r-v: “The violence of the sea tore from their lashings the barrels of oil making them tumble fearfully [on] deck. They were hours of hard work. On the deck, continuously swept by



Fig. 56. “Housekeeping”
Source: film «Il Mistero dell’Artide»

Here the sea is “violent” and the waves are “furious”, continually sweeping the ship’s deck. The choice of the term *fury* is particularly significant, since it emotionally charges the marine element as an agent capable of anger and aggression. It almost seems that the sea is intentionally hostile. Human labour in this case is a difficult reaction to an external force that exceeds control, emphasizing the asymmetry between the crew and the natural element they confront.

In other cases, the sea is represented as an authority that determines the limits of action and repeatedly interrupts or suspends human movement. Throughout the logbook, moments in which navigation is slowed or diverted because of water conditions recur with notable frequency, especially in proximity to the coast. On September 19 – for example – despite having Mollere Bay in sight, the crew refrains from approaching it

furious waves, it was not easy thing to secure everything”.

because «*le condizioni del mare non ci consigliano di avvicinarci*»⁴⁴. The decision to wait offshore for better conditions, once again, reflects the broader attitude of patience and submission to natural timing, in coherence with the logic of the Kingdom of patience.

Alongside violence and restraint, the sea can also give soothing feelings. On September 16, after moving away from the coast and having switched the engines off, «*ce ne stemmo cullati da enormi onde lunghe, precise e sistematiche tutte le ore di oscurità*»⁴⁵ throughout the hours of darkness. The verb “to rock” evokes rhythmic motion and a sense of relative containment, a temporarily reassuring presence. Finally, on September 23, the sea is said to “grant a truce”, allowing the crew to experience “this day of ocean in a sublime way”. Once again, relief is presented not as a permanent condition but as something momentary, conceded by a generous but parsimonious nature.

Taken together, these passages show how the sea in Albertini’s diary is a constant element of interaction. It is capable of cradling the ship or, conversely, of violence and agitation; it may grant a temporary peace or refuse passage altogether.

A dancing climax

Although not organised as a deliberate narrative arc, a subtle form of progression emerges in the logbook through a recurring image of the ship “dancing” on the sea. This metaphor, initially introduced with lightness and even enthusiasm, gradually acquires increasingly negative connotations, tracing an unintentional climax that mirrors the growing physical and psychological fatigue of the crew.

In the early stages of the voyage, the movement of the ship is described in lively and almost playful terms. As already mentioned, the vessel “dances vividly”, so its motion is energetic and animated. At this stage, the oscillation of the *Heimen* is still compatible with curiosity and a certain excitement associated with an initial open navigation.

As the journey progresses, however, the same vocabulary begins to shift. On the entry dated August 27, Albertini writes:

44 LB, f. 52r: “In the afternoon we make out Mollere Bay; but the conditions of the sea do not suggest us to approach the area of Karmakul”.

45 LB, f. 51r: “we stayed rocked by enormous long waves, precise and systematic all the hours of darkness”.

È una giornata di danza indiavolata. Il quadrato è trasformato in un bivacco pieno di fetore e sporchizia e popolato abbondantemente da rantoli di vomito⁴⁶

Here the dance becomes “devilish”, marking a first semantic intensification. The adjective introduces a sense of excess and loss of control. After that, the dance comes out to be relentless, as the long waves give no peace, on August 31:

Sempre costeggiamo la gran barriera accompagnati dalle lunghe onde che non danno pace alla danza della nostra barca⁴⁷

So, a dance that was initially a sign of vitality and enthusiasm gradually transforms into an incessant and oppressive movement. In later entries, the image acquires more openly negative tones. On September 19:

Ci teniamo al largo ed a motori spenti attendiamo condizioni più favorevoli. Nella notte il vento aumenta fino a 800 m e noi continuiamo a danzare spaventosamente e noiosamente⁴⁸

Here the *Heimen* is said to be “dancing frightfully and tediously”, a formulation that combines fear of peril with the monotony of being accustomed to such difficult adventures. So, the dance is no longer exciting nor fatiguing but emotionally “numbing” as if the crew were psychologically fed up. Finally, on September 21:

Il mare è pessimo e per tutta la giornata e la notte fu un danzare atroce. Su questa piccola nave e con questo mare la vita diventa impossibile⁴⁹

Concluding the climax, the dance turns to be “atrocious”. The metaphor has fully inverted in its initial value. The final sentence underscores that on such a small ship, in such a sea, life itself becomes impossible.

46 LB, f. 41v: “It is a day of devilish dancing. The wardroom is transformed into a bivouac full of stench and filth and abundantly populated by rattles of vomit”.

47 LB, f. 42v: “We keep coasting along the great barrier accompanied by the long waves that give no peace to the dance of our boat”.

48 LB, f. 52v: “We keep offshore and with engines shut down we wait for more favorable conditions. During the night the wind increases up to 800 m and we continue to dance frightfully and tediously”.

49 LB, f. 53r: “The sea is awful and for the whole day and the night it was an atrocious dance. On this small ship and with this sea life becomes impossible”.

Here the movement of the *Heimen* is not a descriptive image but an expression of exhaustion, vulnerability and human endurance pushed to its final boundary.

Through this gradual semantic shift, the recurring image of the dancing ship functions as an indirect register of accumulated strain, translating prolonged weariness into a narrative form.

The ship is to sea as humanity is to nature

The *Heimen-SUCAI* constitutes a bounded and regulated microcosm, entirely dependent on the surrounding marine environment, yet completely separated from it. Thus, it is possible to read it as an heterotopic space (Foucault, 2010, p. 21; Lago, 2016), in the sense of a *somewhere* simultaneously embedded within the Arctic context and set apart from it.

As a heterotopia, the vessel concentrates human presence, routines and hierarchies within a limited and fragile enclosure, producing a space governed by its own rhythms, temporalities and rules. Life on board unfolds according to repetitive cycles of waiting, observation, maintenance and endurance, often disconnected from conventional markers of time. This suspension might come up to be particularly evident during prolonged phases of immobility, when the ship becomes a stationary enclave in an otherwise dynamic and unstable environment. At the same time, the *Heimen* remains constantly exposed to outside forces that exceed her control. Wind, ice and sea continuously penetrate this enclosed space, challenging its order and threatening its integrity. The heterotopic character of the ship lies in the coexistence of separation and permanent interaction with the outside.

Taken as a whole, the logbook may suggest that this relationship between the *Heimen* and the sea comes to mirror a broader configuration of the human relationship with nature. Throughout the diary, the vessel repeatedly epitomises the human presence itself: vulnerable, dependent on care and maintenance, “alive” and constantly exposed to forces beyond her control. Indeed, the ship is sometimes described as “small”, a qualification that underscores not so much *weakness*, rather *disproportion*: the imbalance between human means and the scale of the natural environment.

Conversely, the sea instantiates nature in its most general sense: active, responsive, at time benevolent, at time violent, but never negotiable. It

grants passage, respite or truce only temporarily, according to rhythms and conditions that remain external to human will.

The constant interaction between the *Heimen* and the sea thus reproduces the fundamental tension that often recurs in the logbook between human agency and natural forces. This analogy is not deliberately constructed, nor does it function symbolically in a rigid sense; rather, it emerges from the repetition of relational patterns that operate simultaneously at different scales.

THE CREW

In Albertini's logbook, nature – observed, described and internalized – is accompanied by a second, less visible, yet equally decisive horizon: that constituted by his travelling companions and the ship's crew. In a context marked by isolation, slowness and the impossibility of withdrawing from communal life, human relationships likely assume a central role in shaping everyday experience.

As discussed above, the ship effectively takes the form of a closed and mobile space, a temporary micro-community in which individuals differing in role, training, character and nationality are required to share time, rhythms and uncertainties. In his diary, Albertini inevitably records this collective dimension, yet he never addresses it directly: he does not devote reflections to his relationship with either his companions or the Norwegian crew. Instead, he mentions episodes and individuals without ever fully exploring the theme of coexistence or openly questioning it. Nevertheless, through brief annotations, oblique observations, and descriptions that appear marginal, Albertini conveys the complexity of a communal life shaped by repeated gestures, implicit solidarity and tensions that are rarely made explicit.

On board, two clearly distinct human groups can be identified. The first is composed of Albertini's Italian travelling companions: including the Commander himself, they number eight in total. These men belonged to Albertini's immediate social and intellectual circle; at least some of them were already known to him prior to the expedition, in several cases they were close friends or former university colleagues. Their presence on the ship therefore does not represent an encounter with full *otherness*, but rather a reshaping, under peculiar conditions, of pre-existing relationships.

The second group is constituted by the Norwegian crew, who were responsible for operating and navigating the vessel. Unlike his companions, these men remain largely external to Albertini's narrative horizon. The logbook offers virtually no reflections on them, and they seldom appear as individual figures within the text.

The only one who clearly stands out and is portrayed as active in several situations is Jakobsen, identified in the later memoir as the "head of the crew". Three additional names appear in the logbook as part of the crew: «Jelstein», «Hernest» and «Julius» (the last two in Zanetti's section).

The other Norwegian sailors remain unnamed and substantially absent from the narrative. Significantly, while each of Albertini's companions is mentioned in various occasions, the Norwegian crew, tends to be considered a collective, but is almost entirely silent.

This asymmetry reveals a selective economy of attention that privileges those figures with whom Albertini shares a common cultural and biographical background. By contrast, the Norwegian crew – essential to the operation of the vessel and thus to the material feasibility of the rescue mission – appears to be perceived primarily in functional terms. Their relative anonymity reflects a form of narrative marginalization rooted in their role as enablers of the expedition, rather than as drivers in the Italian humanitarian initiative.

Piero Zanetti

Piero Zanetti held the position of Second in Command. He shared with Gianni Albertini a deep passion for mountaineering, and together they had accomplished several first ascents in the Alps, particularly in the Mont Blanc massif (Capozzi, 2019, p. 132), being both part of the CAAI (*Club Alpino Accademico Italiano*) (Beltrametti, 2012, p. 9). During the five months of the mission, Zanetti also worked as a special correspondent for the newspapers *La Stampa* and *Il Corriere della Sera* (Capozzi, 2019, p. 132).

Albertini describes Piero as a long-standing friend, bound to him by an earlier shared experience in the Alps, and entrusted with significant responsibilities during the expedition. These included the management of the ship's provisions and the delicate task of rationing. Furthermore, Zanetti is temporarily handed-over command of the vessel – during Albertini's march on ice with sledge dogs. He is, in this period, responsible for the *Heimen*, for coordinating the patrol recovery operations and for managing radio communications. Albertini credits him as having carried out these tasks with careful timing and balanced judgment (Albertini, 1932, p. 22). In his memoir, the Commander emphasizes Zanetti's moral qualities portraying him as generous, attentive to the many practical and emotional demands of life in the Arctic.

In the logbook he is frequently mentioned. His name appears repeatedly in connection with the ordinary routines of life on board, particularly with regard to watch duties, that he often shares or alternates directly

with Albertini. Several entries record Zanetti as being in charge during the night – sometimes waking up the Commander to report events. Beyond these operational references, Zanetti also emerges in descriptions of house-keeping activities. He is associated with the care of the shared living space and with moments of sensible touch that marks the routine, such as in food preparation. In other passages, his presence is linked to Gianni's own fatigue and strain, as the two are shown repeatedly shifting duties. Albertini notes on May 23:

Nessun fatto degno di nota all'infuori della stanchezza mia e di Zanetti che ci alterniamo di tre in tre ore alla guardia⁵⁰

Or on August 28:

Io e Zanetti ci alterniamo di dodici in dodici ore alla guardia. Tutti gli altri sono annientati dal mal di mare che infierisce ormai da 20 ore. Pure noi due non contiamo ormai più le nostre raccate⁵¹

The same pairing appears in more implicit form in passages describing phases of collective withdrawal from activity. Referring to a day – May 22 – spent in the Barents Sea, Albertini observes that, despite overall favourable conditions «*salvo io e Zanetti tutti scompaiono dalla circolazione*» (LB, f. 15v: “except for me and Zanetti everyone disappears”).

Even in its brevity, this remark reinforces the sense of a shared burden, in which Zanetti and the Commander remain visible as the two figures most consistently associated with endurance, presence, and the continuous management of demands on board.

This also emerges at a moment when the crew is confronted with the possibility of overwintering. The logbook records an explicit consultation, during which Albertini asks his companions to state their position on this prospect, emphasizing his request for complete honesty. On the entry date August 11 and 12:

Oggi chiedo ai miei compagni la risposta relativamente allo sverno. In

50 LB, f. 16r: “Nothing noteworthy apart from my and Zanetti's tiredness, as we alternate every three hours on watch”.

51 LB, ff. 41v-42r: “I and Zanetti alternate in twelve-hour shifts on watch. All the others are prostrated by seasickness which has been raging for 20 hours now. Even us both also no longer count our heaves anymore”.

argomento io avevo pregato loro di dire a me interamente la verità. Solo Zanetti e Urbano sono favorevoli al sacrificio di continuar l'impresa anche a rischio dello sverno⁵²

The logbook does not further elaborate on the different standings and the reasons behind them. Nevertheless, this passage places Zanetti among those who would have accepted the possibility of overwintering, had it become necessary. In this respect, his position appears aligned with that of Albertini, indicating his willingness to follow the expedition leader even in the face of a prolonged and uncertain extension of the journey.

A concise indication of Piero's character appears in a brief entry, registered on May 26:

È Domenica. Zanetti buono, come sempre, ci offrì una torta di sua invenzione ed alla sera sturammo la prima Domenicale bottiglia di champagne⁵³

The expression "as always", is particularly significant, since it suggests a recurrent and *taken-for-granted* quality rather than an isolated gesture. The diary thus encapsulates Zanetti's presence through a simple act of care, associating his figure with generosity, reliability in everyday duties, and a relationship of familiarity with the expedition's Commander.

That month in which Zanetti writes the logbook

During Albertini's absence on the inland march across Nordaustlandet, the logbook is temporarily entrusted to Zanetti, who records the ship's activities from June 13 to July 9. This section of the diary is of particular importance, as it constitutes a direct and continuous source on the events that took place on board during those weeks. Albertini's 1932 memoir, by contrast, necessarily concentrates on the experiences lived on land by the Commander and his fellows. For this reason, Zanetti's entries offer a complementary perspective, documenting an otherwise only marginally represented phase, which deserves further, future, dedicated analysis.

Zanetti's handwriting is clear and regular, and his style is sober. The

⁵² LB, f. 39v: "Today I ask my companions the answer regarding the wintering. On the subject I had requested them to tell me entirely the truth. Only Zanetti and Urbano are favourable to the sacrifice of continuing the endeavour even at risk of the wintering".

⁵³ LB, f. 18r: "It is Sunday. Zanetti good, as always, offered us a cake of his own invention and in the evening we uncorked the first Sunday bottle of champagne".

entries largely preserve a factual and operational tone with consistent adoption of the present tense and simple vocabulary. Sentences are often paratactic and the narrative proceeds through concise factual statements: navigation routes, anchoring points, weather conditions, ice movements, radio communications, and provisioning activities are reported with regularity. Zanetti documents the continuous cruising along the northern coasts, the reconnaissance trips, the hunting excursions. It also describes the systematic organization of life on board, including watch duties and the preparation of food, hence ensuring narrative continuity despite the change in authorship. Occasionally he punctuates the recording with brief lyrical or descriptive passages, which never develop, however, into extended or deep reflections.

This section of the diary introduces a more sustained temporal experience of waiting. The rhythm of the entries is increasingly structured around scheduled radio contacts with the patrol, the frequent absence of communication, and the careful monitoring of weather and ice that limit mobility. As days pass without news, Zanetti records growing concern, while remaining focused on his specific duties, such as exploration and the set-up of emergency depots, should Albertini's party be unable to immediately reach the ship. The repeated scanning of the coastline and the horizon, as well as the detailed attention given to contingency planning, frames the ship in this moment as a space of vigilance far more than reconnaissance.

Throughout this period, Albertini remains a constant point of reference within the narrative. Zanetti consistently situates his own actions according to orders received by the Commander, before his departure and by radio thereafter. The final entries culminate in the restoration of direct contact and, ultimately, in the return of Albertini and his companions aboard the *Heimen*, an event described in celebratory and collective terms. Zanetti's contribution to the logbook thus documents a phase marked less by movement than by responsibility, coordination, and wait, offering a "static" complementary perspective to Albertini's "dynamic" storytelling of the expedition, while reinforcing the shared framework of duty and attentiveness that structures life on board.



Fig. 57. Piero Zanetti welcoming the patrol back onboard
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Marco Urbano

Marco Urbano emerges as one of the most central figures, both technically and humanly, of the expedition. A young engineer, only twenty-five years old, he was entrusted with an important responsibility: the recording and interpretation of meteorological observations.

This choice was grounded in a pre-existing interest and in careful preparation, further refined in the months preceding departure under the guidance of the director of the Brera Observatory (Albertini, 1932, p. 22). Urbano thus entered the Arctic expedition as a figure defined by technical competence: responsible for measurements and positioned as a knowledgeable mediator between instruments, data, and atmospheric conditions, he was tasked with interpreting an extreme and unfamiliar environment. Both the logbook and the report he produced after the expedition (Urbano, 1932, see Annex 2) foreground the practical difficulties of car-

rying out such work under polar conditions, repeatedly drawing attention to engine-induced vibrations, impacts with ice, and the spatial constraints of life and work on board.

Alongside the scientific role, Urbano was also fully integrated into the operational activities. Albertini regarded him as one of the strongest members of the patrol and entrusted him with the safety-critical task of operating the portable radiotelegraph stations: a function that placed him at the centre of the communication system linking the ship to the patrol marching across Nordauslandet.

This decision by Albertini testifies his opinion of Urbano as an outstanding crew member, since the latter had minimal previous experience with the life-saving radio devices and almost taught himself in their use immediately before departure.

In the logbook, Marco is mentioned several times and consistently appears involved in a wide range of activities related to the ship and the expedition. These include the testing of the motorboat, the maintenance and use of instruments, experiments with radio equipment, systematic meteorological annotations, dead reckoning, and regular watch duties. Alongside these tasks, he is also engaged in physical labour, marches across the ice, and the ordinary routines of daily life on board, thereby exemplifying a model of versatile competence and sustained commitment. This breadth of involvement is also reflected in Urbano's position regarding the idea of overwintering. Alongside Zanetti, he is one of the two companions who express their willingness to go on with the enterprise, aligning himself with the Commander resolve at a decisive moment.

In Albertini's account, Urbano appears as discreet yet omnipresent: silent, reliable, and able to adjust to every necessity. His reliability, the Commander notes in his memoir, became particularly evident during the most difficult moments of the march across Nordaustlandet. Indeed, by insisting on Urbano's "moral composure" (Albertini, 1932, p. 23), Albertini acknowledges him as an indispensable companion, one whose qualities would make him essential for any future Arctic enterprise.



Fig. 58. Marco Urbano extracting recorded paper-tapes from the meteorological instruments
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Augusto Bonola

Augusto Bonola was the youngest member of the expedition. A twenty-three-year-old medical student, he was entrusted with biological and naturalistic research, a role for which he had prepared carefully in the months preceding departure, under the guidance of Professor Chigi at the University of Bologna (Albertini, 1932, p. 23). He was equally capable of handling scientific observation and physical demands in the Arctic environment.

Albertini, in his book, portrays Bonola as a devoted and generous companion, whose youthful enthusiasm and moral integrity make him particularly sensitive to the events that occurred during the journey. This sensitivity is presented as part of a deeply reflective temperament, characterized by restraint, determination and a strong sense of responsibility. Described

in the memoir as reserved and introspective, Bonola does not allow his anxieties or passion to surface, maintaining composure even under strain.

In the logbook, Augusto Bonola is painted through ten concise references, that place him within both the collective routines and the exploratory activities. His name is frequently mentioned along with those of the Commander and Marco Urbano, indicating a close association among the three. They are repeatedly recorded as acting jointly during the main expedition actions, navigational tasks and excursions, including those in the northern fjords of the Gorbovi area⁵⁴, at times also involving Zanetti.

Bonola is also associated regularly with watch duties, taking part in the rotation of shifts alongside other crew members. The logbook documents also episodes that align with Augusto's scientific mandate within the mission. Notably, he is described capturing and preparing specimens, including an entry of May 27:

Stemmo anche oltre sei ore fermi; tali ore utilizzai per provare le armi su alcuni gabbiani. Bonola prese all'amo il suo primo esemplare e lo manipolò per l'imbalsamazione⁵⁵

Here Bonola's first successful catch and its subsequent preparation for taxidermy is described. This episode explicitly reflects his engagement in naturalistic research and situates his actions within the broader scientific objectives of the journey. A more comprehensive understanding of Bonola's role as a naturalist emerges only after the expedition, through scientific publications.

A zoological report he authored subsequently (Bonola, 1932, see Annex 3) was included in Gianni Albertini's 1932 book. Despite limits imposed by the fact that the expedition had science only as a secondary goal (Bonola, 1931, p. 125), the report documents a significant body of observations and collections, encompassing birds, mammal, insects and others. Among those, the scientific results described include the identification of species new to science – among them a cestode dedicated to Albertini and a chironomid later named *Orthocladius bonolai*.

54 LB, f. 47r: "Nelle prime ore del pomeriggio parto col motoscafo verso Nord coll'intenzione di esplorare i fiordi a Settentrione della Gorbovi. Stiamo fuori 7 ore. E con me Zanetti Urbano e Bonola" ("In the early hours of the afternoon I set out with the motorboat toward the North with the intention of exploring the fjords to the North of the Gorbovi. We remain stopped 7 hours. With me is Zanetti Urbano and Bonola").

55 LB, f. 18r: "We also stood still over six hours; I used those hours to test the weapons on some seagulls. Bonola caught his first specimen on the line and prepared it for taxidermy".



Fig. 59. Augusto Bonola embalming fauna specimens
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Achille Peroni

Achille Peroni, a 25-year-old doctor, was entrusted with medical assistance on board and with the undertaking of specific physiological research during the expedition. Under the guidance of Professor Foà, Director of the Institute of physiology in Milan, he was prepared to investigate the effects of extreme cold and continuous daylight on basal metabolism. In parallel, and on behalf of Professor Natta, Peroni conducted several analyses of atmospheric composition, addressing the possible influence of the Arctic ice cap – characterized by the absence of vegetation – on carbon dioxide levels (Albertini, 1932, p. 24).

Along his research activities, Achille played a central role as physician, offering attentive care whenever illness occurred on board. Even in the most critical situations – Albertini notes in the book (1932, p. 24) – he acted with a competence and dedication that exceeded what might have

been expected given his young age and limited experience.

In the logbook, Peroni's name appears among those assigned to watch duties, situating him within the regular organization of life on board. He is also recorded performing everyday tasks, such as baking bread, which place him within the shared domestic economy of the *Heimen-SUCAI*.

Annotations show how Peroni is repeatedly consulted in matters concerning health. Several entries note that he examines crew members and assesses their status, often taking important decisions. In one case, when Zanetti is in command of the *Heimen*, a sailor reports visceral pain:

Il marinaio Hernest, che funziona anche da interprete, accusa dei dolori viscerali e chiede di essere portato alla King's bay. Lo faccio visitare da Peroni, che giudica trattarsi d'indisposizione di nessuna gravità e lo persuade di curarsi sulla nave⁵⁶

Here Peroni examines the man and evaluates his condition as non-serious, persuading him to remain on board and to continue treatment on the ship. This episode illustrates the scope of Peroni's medical authority, as his clinical judgment carries significant consequences: the physician's decision rests on the assumption that the condition will not worsen and that continued care on board will be sufficient. More broadly, the episode encapsulates the range of medical decisions Peroni is required to make in other circumstances, including the determination of causes of death in both humans and animals.

In one such instance, following the death of a sledge dog on July 12, Peroni performs an autopsy. In this case, establishing the cause of death is a preventive measure, aimed at ruling out the presence of contagious disease or other causes which may affect the expedition.

He is also responsible for trying to save Guedoz's life after the accident and for formally certifying his death, acts that mark his role as the expedition's medical authority at a moment of extreme gravity. Throughout the diary, Peroni's presence is thus registered through concise references that associate him with medical evaluation, procedural responsibility and participation in the collective routines of the ship.

In addition to his clinical responsibilities, Peroni also produces a de-

⁵⁶ LB, f. 28r: "The sailor Hernest, who also serves as interpreter, complains of visceral pains and asks to be taken to King's bay. I have him examined by Peroni, who judges it to be an indisposition of no gravity and persuades him to be treated on the ship".

tailed scientific report, documenting medical research carried out during the expedition. This report (Peroni, 1932, see Annex 1) reflects the dual nature of his role: on the one hand as ship's doctor responsible for health and medical decisions and on the other hand as a researcher operating within a broader scientific network. The document focuses primarily on physiological research into basal metabolism in the polar environment. This work was developed from indirect calorimetric measurements conducted on several members of the expedition. Peroni reports a general decrease in basal metabolism, cautiously presenting his findings as preliminary. The report also includes geophysical observations on atmospheric composition and ozone, as well as an extensive analysis of nutrition and provisioning, comparing expedition's diet with those adopted in other polar missions. Finally, he records medical observations noting the absence of common respiratory and rheumatic illnesses, which he attributes to the aseptic character of the Arctic environment and patterns of immunity linked to limited external contact.



Fig. 60. Achille Peroni performing instrumental measurements
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Franco Pugliese

Franco Pugliese, aged twenty-seven, was responsible for the radio-telegraphic systems. His role was established well before departure, as he oversaw the entire preparation of the onboard radio equipment, ensuring its functionality in the demanding conditions anticipated for the voyage.

During the journey, Pugliese maintained regular communication between the *Heimen* and Rome, operating almost continuously from the radiotelegraphic cabin. His work placed him at the centre of the expedition's communication infrastructure, linking the crew to external networks while operating within a confined and highly specialized space. Albertini's memoir presents Pugliese as a technically focused and disciplined figure, whose contribution lay primarily in the sustained management of a complex and delicate technological apparatus.

In the diary, Pugliese's presence is, in fact, usually associated with the practical and temporal demands of radio communication. He appears engaged both in the handling of the portable radio stations – occasionally accompanied by Urbano – and in the continuous operation of the main onboard system. The entries about him often emphasize the experimental and adaptive nature of his work, carried out in close connection with other members of the crew. The successful transmission of lengthy messages is explicitly recorded in the logbook as a significant moment, suggesting that the radio proved particularly effective thanks to his work⁵⁷.

Albertini repeatedly notes the intensity and duration of Franco's commitment, such as on June 11:

Pugliese dalla mattina quando si alza fino a notte tarda consuma, centellinandole, le proprie ore nel suo buco radio-telegrafico. Con una passione ed una pazienza esemplare egli, taciturno, realizza la perfezione. Poi mai contento dei risultati raggiunti, elabora i progressi collo stesso impegno con cui potrebbe correggere un difetto⁵⁸

Here his work is described by Albertini through a temporal rhythm that

57 Cf. LB, f. 11v: "Stasera la Stazione Radio funzionò egregiamente ed il buon Pugliese trasmise ben 500 parole. ("Tonight the Radio Station worked excellently and good Pugliese transmitted a full 500 words".

58 LB, f. 20r-v: "Pugliese since morning when he wakes up until late at night spends, sipping them slowly, his hours in his radio-telegraphy hole. With an exemplary passion and patience he, taciturn, achieves perfection. Then never satisfied with the results achieved, he elaborates on progresses with the same commitment with which he could correct an imperfection".

spans the entire day. From the moment he rises in the morning until late night, within the confined space of the radiotelegraphic cabin. This image emphasizes the focused discipline of Pugliese's activity. Albertini here characterizes him as taciturn, absorbed in a task that he never considers complete: transmission is followed by transcription, adjustment and further refinement. His efforts are consistently acknowledged and valued by the Commander, who ultimately condenses Franco's worth into a striking formula: «*Pugliese vale tanto oro quanto pesa*» (LB, f. 20v: "Pugliese is worth his weight in gold").

Franco Pugliese's radiotelegraphic report (Pugliese, 1932, see Annex 4) outlines both the achievements and technical challenges, emphasizing the crucial role of radio as the expedition's sole means of communication with the outside world. One of the most significant innovations described in the document was the use of lightweight portable radiotelegraphic stations (approximately 30 kilograms), specifically designed to be transported on sledges and employed by exploratory patrols. Despite exposure to severe environmental stressors, including impacts, blizzards, and extremely low temperatures, these devices successfully maintained contact with the base ship over distances ranging from 10 to 350 kilometres, surpassing initial expectations.

The report devotes considerable attention to magnetic and atmospheric phenomena characteristic of polar regions, particularly the effects of auroral activity and magnetic storms on radio transmission. Pugliese documents how, during episodes of intense aurora borealis, the atmosphere appeared to become "impermeable" to shortwave signals, resulting in communication blackouts that could last for several days, as recorded on July 9. Interestingly, during the same disturbances, medium and long waves displayed the opposite behaviour, often being received more effectively than under normal conditions. The report also notes a correlation between radio interference and fluctuations in atmospheric ozone levels, which, during magnetic storms, could reach values nearly double those typically observed.

Meteorological observations further complicated existing assumptions about radio communication. Contrary to expectations, the report suggests that local weather conditions did not directly influence signal reception, as radio waves travelled primarily through the upper layers of the atmosphere. However, a particularly unusual observation indicated that the

presence of fog banks near receiving stations tended to strengthen signal intensity beyond normal levels.

Despite the technical difficulties encountered and the extremely limited timeframe available for constructing the radiotelegraphic equipment – only one and a half months – the expedition successfully demonstrated the effectiveness of shortwave transmissions for long-distance communication. A stable and continuous connection was maintained with Rome's San Paolo Station, located approximately 4,000 kilometres away, allowing for the transmission of more than 60,000 words of communication traffic.

The report also highlights the ingenuity and adaptability required to maintain the functionality of the equipment under extreme conditions. Strong vibrations generated by the ship's engine interfered with the transmitter valves, forcing to develop emergency solutions, including the elastic suspension of the valves and on-board modifications to the circuitry, in order to stabilize the transmitted signal.



Fig. 61. Franco Pugliese operating the wireless station
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Umberto Della Valle

Umberto Della Valle joined the expedition as a cinematographic operator, following an agreement with the Ente Nazionale della Cinematografia that helped to supplement financial resources. At forty years of age, he was the oldest member of the crew and Albertini remarks that “he was the only father among us” (1932, p. 25).

His role therefore primarily addresses documentary and representational needs, rather than the rescue or scientific objectives of the mission.

Although formally hired as a professional operator, Albertini portrays him in the memoir as an enthusiastic participant in the enterprise. He is framed, however, less in terms of technical specialization and more in his personal qualities: *twice good* and a “dear friend” (Albertini, 1932, p. 25).

In the logbook, Umberto is mentioned less frequently than other members, yet his presence emerges through a series of episodes that situate him within the shared experience of life on board and ashore.

His role as cinematographic operator emerges explicitly on only two occasions. The first is a moment – May 18 – in which he is noticed by Albertini photographing Guedoz, who is peeling potatoes. The second appears in the section of the diary written by Zanetti, where Della Valle is mentioned while filming the moment of the patrol’s departure.

I nostri compagni sono partiti fra la commozione di tutti, anche se l'apparecchio cinematografico di Della Valle non ha sorpreso che delle fredde strette di mano e se noi ci siamo irrigiditi in un saluto quasi militare mentre essi scomparivano nella nebbia⁵⁹

This highlights how the presence of the film operator actively shapes the scene he is meant to record. Although Zanetti notes the collective emotion surrounding the departure, he also observes that Della Valle’s camera captures only “cold handshakes”, while the crew stiffens into an almost military salute. Rather than documenting intimacy or farewell rituals in their spontaneity, the film recording contributes to eliciting a self-controlled and restrained gesture on the part of the crew, aligned with codes of composure and duty, thereby influencing bodily attitudes and muting emotional expressions.

⁵⁹ LB, f. 26v: “Our companions departed amidst the emotion of all, even though Della Valle’s film camera captured only cold handshakes and we stiffened into an almost military salute while they disappeared into the fog”.

Apart from these moments, Umberto is otherwise described as usually engaged in the ordinary activities shared by the rest of the Italian companions. The logbook presents him as being involved in everyday tasks on board and taking part in selected operation on land, rather than as an external observer.

An example occurs during the phase in which the sledging equipment is tested in the Kings Bay area. While Albertini, Urbano, Bonola and Guedoz undertake a trip to Ny-Ålesund, in order to train the dogs and to purchase supplies, Della Valle remains on watch at the temporary camp, waiting for their return. During this interval, which extends for twelve hours, he is recorded as remaining without food, while the ship attempts to make her way northward through the ice.

Taken together, the sparse references suggest that, although less visible than other companions, Della Valle participates fully in the collective experience of the *Heimen-SUCAI*.



Fig. 62. Umberto Della Valle shaving onboard
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Giulio Guedoz

In Albertini's 1932 memoir, the portrait of Guedoz differs a bit from that of most other members of the group. From the opening statement «*Le parole non bastano per dire di lui*», “words are not enough to describe him” (Albertini, 1932, p. 25), the author makes clear that he is not offering a functional or professional profile but rather a personal and affective one. Notably, in this description no reference is made to Guedoz's death.

Unlike other figures, Giulio is not primarily defined by a technical or scientific role, but by a long-standing relationship and familiarity that predates the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition, originating in their shared experience during the 1928 journey. Albertini emphasized Guedoz's identity as a “mountaineer” from Courmayeur, deeply attached to his Alpine environment and to mountain life. His cultural background is presented as rooted in manual skill, adaptability and practical intelligence. The episode set in the hut at Beverlysundet serves to highlight a defining trait: Giulio's inability to remain idle. Albertini in fact describes him as making harnesses for the dogs, preparing missing equipment and assisting the crew in the most diverse tasks on *Heimen-SUCAI*. The brief mention of his severe seasickness – faced without complaint or display – reinforces the image of a man who does not withdraw from duty and never seeks attention.

Referring to the sledge march, Guedoz is described as “incomparable” (Albertini, 1932, p. 25). His dedication appears total and is directed toward the concrete care of his leader, with a constant effort to spare Albertini fatigue and anticipate his needs. In moments of difficulty, the Commander states that he wished to know Guedoz's opinion.

In the logbook, Giulio appears regularly alongside the other members of the expedition, most often in connection with concrete activities taken care of on board. Several entries refer to his works: he is associated with bread-making, the preparation of generous meals, and the management of food supplies. At the same time, like other Italian companions, he is involved in a wide range of tasks that exceed any fixed expertise. This becomes particularly evident in the organization of the patrol. Guedoz is selected to take part in the sledging march, paired with Albertini, while the second team is composed of Urbano and Bonola. His inclusion in the patrol shows the level of closeness he had with the Commander.

Guedoz's death

Guedoz's death occurred on 8 August at 00:20, as the tragic consequence of a firearm accident that had taken place a shortly before during a polar bear hunt on the ice. The detailed dynamics of the incident were communicated by Albertini to Rome via radiotelegraph and were subsequently reported in contemporary newspapers⁶⁰. According to these accounts, Guedoz had moved to assist two Norwegian hunters who were confronting the animal with only one rifle, while other members of the expedition attempted to reach the scene. During this attempt, an accident occurred on unstable ice, leading to the unintended discharge of a firearm that fatally wounded Guedoz (Nobile, 1975, p. 301).

In the logbook the event description focuses less on the dynamic and more on the immediate aftermath and the emotional and practical consequences of the loss, as illustrated in the following passage:

È questa una dura giornata destinata a buttare un'ombra nera di lutto sul nostro animo e la nostra forza. Alle 00,20 in seguito ad un incidente d'arma da fuoco avvenuto durante la caccia ad un orso affamato che per poco non riusciva a mettere in atto un tentativo di attentato a Jakobsen, Guedoz muore. Il nobile montanaro, certo il più puro di noi tutti, quello che meno si meritava tal fine, ci abbandona. Oggi alle 17,30 dopo steso regolare attestato di morte da parte del Dott. Peroni diamo a lui sepoltura in mare. Avvolto nella nostra bandiera, egli che già la sua anima grande aveva inviata ad altri destini, scende nella profondità di questo freddo mare. Sulla nave è alzato il tricolore a mezz'asta. Sul ghiaccio, tutti presenti noi e l'equipaggio, Guedoz si accomiata da noi. Riprende a bordo la vita normale. Ognuno di noi serberà, in segreto, i sentimenti i ricordi, il dolore eletto di cui la grande anima di Guedoz è ben degna. *Omnia fiunt in dies mitiora*⁶¹

60 Cfr. *Giornata di dolore sulla "Heimen=Sucal", La guida valdostana Guido è morta per un incidente di arma da fuoco*, in *La Stampa* (ed. Torino), sabato 10 agosto 1929; *La tragica morte della guida Giulio Guedoz, resoconto della spedizione S.U.C.A.I.*, in *L'Avenire d'Italia*, domenica 11 agosto 1929. http://www.archiviolaStampa.it/component/option,com_lastampa/task,search/mod,libera/action,viewer/Itemid,3/page,1/articleid,1155_01_1929_0191_0001_16800257/.

61 LB, ff. 38v-39r: "This is a hard day destined to cast a black shadow of mourning over our spirit and our strength. At 00.20 following a firearm accident that occurred during the hunt for a hungry bear which had almost succeeded in putting into effect an attempt on Jakobsen, Guedoz dies. The noble mountaineer, surely the purest among us all, the one who least deserved such an end, leaves us. Today at 17.30 after drawing up the formal certificate of death by Dr Peroni we give him burial at sea. Wrapped in our flag, he who had already sent his great soul toward other destinies, descends into the depths of this cold sea. On the ship the tricolour is flown at half-mast.

The entry opens with an explicit evaluative statement that contrasts with the factual tone of the following description of the accident. The first lines rather frame the day itself as a moment of collective rupture “destined to cast a black mourning shadow on our spirit and our strength”. Hence, the introduction is not neutral but introduces a shared emotional horizon, expressed through a collective “our”, anticipating the tragical nature of what is about to be reported.

The account then returns abruptly to a precise and controlled chronology. The time of death is recorded with precision, the cause is defined as accidental firearm discharge occurring during a bear hunt. No attribution of blame is sought and the event is inserted within the operational risks inherent to the expedition. The statement “Guedoz dies” is delivered without embellishment, underscoring the irreversibility of the loss while maintaining narrative restraint.

Following the factual announcement of death, Albertini shifts once more in tone, constructing an immediate moral portrait of Giulio. He is described as “the noble mountaineer”, “the purest among us”, and as the one least deserving of such an end. This idealization emerges instantaneously within the logbook itself, transforming the man into a figure of exemplarity at the very moment of loss.

The narrative then focuses on the sequence of formal and symbolic acts that follow the death. The description of them unfolds through a sequence of short sentences that impose an heavy rhythm. Each action is recorded: the formal pronouncement by Dr. Peroni, the wrapping of the body in the national tricolour, the burial at sea, and the lowering of the flag to half-mast. The accumulation of these gestures confers a solemn cadence to the account. The farewell to Giulio takes then place onto the ice, with both the expedition members and the ship’s crew present. This setting, suspended between sea, ship and land, is sketched with striking immediacy, becoming fully imaginable for the reader as a space in which separation is formally enacted.

After the solemnity of the funeral rite and its narration, life on board returns to routine, almost as if to state immediately that the mission must go on. This resumption, however, is not the same as before: it is a forced, emptied normality, one that coexists with absence. The following sentence

On the ice, all of us present and the crew, Guedoz takes leave of us. On board normal life resumes. Each of us will keep, in secret, the feelings the memories, the hallowed grief to which the great soul of Guedoz is indeed worthy. *Omnia fiunt in dies mitiora*”.

in fact shifts grief from the collective to the individual plane: “each of us will keep, in secret, the feelings, the memories, the elected grief”. Mourning no longer finds space within the writing of the logbook but it is internalized and silently preserved, and pain becomes something “hallowed”, almost ennobled and therefore safeguarded.

It is likely no coincidence that this page is preceded by an annotation written in smaller script and placed above the main text, possibly at a later moment. It quotes two lines from Giacomo Leopardi’s poem *Amore e Morte*, from the “Aspasia cycle”: «L’altra ogni gran dolore / ogni gran male annulla» (Leopardi, 1987, p. 388), that can be translated as “The other every pain / and every woe bids wane” (Leopardi, 1893, p. 134).

In Leopardi’s poem, Love and Death are presented as sibling forces, as they are capable of annulling the burden of suffering inherent in human existence. Both represent moments in which individual pain is overcome: Love through an excess of feeling that absorbs and transcends the self, Death through the definitive release from suffering altogether. By invoking these lines, the annotation introduces a reflective, almost metaphysical



Fig. 63. Giulio Guedoz onboard the Heimen-SUCAI
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

layer that contrasts sharply with the otherwise factual tone of the description of Guedoz's death.

It is plausible that, in this extremely dramatic moment, the Commander limits himself in the main body of the entry to recording only what must be recorded – actions, facts, decisions – while entrusting the emotional weight of the event to the literary quotation placed at the margin. Leopardi's words thus allow grief and loss to be expressed indirectly, through a borrowed poetic voice, rather than through direct personal commentary.

The record of that day ends with the Latin phrase «*omnia fiunt in dies mitiora*»⁶², the same sentence that appears at the opening of the logbook and also of the memoir. The placement of this quote at the very bottom of the page, after a stretch of blank space and separated by a vertical wavy line, gives it a significance that goes beyond its semantic content: it is a visual and textual pause. The graphic sign suggests a moment of suspension, marking a clear separation between the recorded events and a different register of reflection. Grief and consolation are entrusted to a Latin formula and to an abstract dimension of time, which may also be read as an attempt to mediate the emotional burden associated with the loss of a companion and the traumatic circumstances surrounding his death. It may further be suggested that the presence of the same phrase at the opening of the logbook was not programmatic, but could represent a later addition, retrospectively shaped by this episode and by the need to frame the narrative of the expedition within a temporal and emotional horizon of gradual consolation.

A collective mission

In the logbook, the descriptions of activities and duties of Albertini's Italian companions constitute one of the structural threads of the narrative. The entries alternate between precise recording of performed tasks and passages in which the Commander clearly emphasizes his personal and professional esteem for them. In these moments Albertini's commentary manages to construct a collective portrait grounded in competence and shared responsibility.

Alongside this work-related dimension, a daily life marked by convivial and domestic moments emerges with particular clarity, contributing to the

⁶² "All things become milder day by day".

depiction of an atmosphere of familiarity and cohesion. The bread baked by Guedoz, the culinary initiatives of Zanetti and the meals described as generous or successful are just examples of how the narrative shifts from the level of the expedition to that of communal life.

Periods of enforced inactivity further accentuate this dimension. Albertini records idleness, boredom, card games such as bridge, reading, discussion and the discomfort of men accustomed to action who suddenly find themselves “paralysed” by waiting.

July 26:

Il ghiaccio è in condizioni tali da precludere ogni possibilità di azione. La nostra vita a bordo appare come paralizzata. L'aver tempo di leggere, di giocare a Bridge e di discutere è cosa alla quale non ero più abituato⁶³

August 24:

La nostra vita scorre inutile ed impaziente. Sono passatempi il Bridge, le novità metereologiche, il nostro gramofono, i cani⁶⁴

These circumstances appear several times in the log and often the only event capable of interrupting stasis is the arrival of telegrams, experienced as a vital contact with the homeland and as a moment of intense collective emotional participation. Messages are the element that temporarily suspends isolation and momentarily reconstitutes the bond with the world outside the heterotopia.

Overall, the relationship that emerges between Albertini and his Italian fellows is certainly hierarchical, yet neither rigid or distant. The authority is consistently tempered by a strong dimension of sharing effort and responsibility, but also rest, conviviality and frustration. The most difficult decisions take place within this enclosed human framework, in which duty toward the expedition coexists with a clear sense of affection and camaraderie.

Within this context, the death of Guedoz represents a threshold. The loss abruptly interrupts the continuity of life on board and puts to test

63 LB, f. 36v: “The ice is in such a state as to preclude any possibility of action. Our life on board seems paralysed. Having time to read, to play Bridge and to talk is something to which I was no longer accustomed”.

64 LB, f. 40r: “Our life flows useless and impatient. The pastimes are Bridge, the meteorological novelties, our gramophone, the dogs”.

precisely that shared normality which had been progressively constructed. The «*generale enorme ed evidente sforzo per apparire sereni*»⁶⁵ (“general enormous and evident effort to appear serene”) and to resume routine does confirm the extent to which the expedition is lived as a collective undertaking, routed on deep human bonds as well as on operational roles.

65 LB f. 39v: «È in noi tutti un generale enorme ed evidente sforzo per apparire sereni. Ma questo è il nostro dovere verso noi reciprocamente e verso gli scopi della nostra Impresa» (“There is in all of us a general enormous and evident effort to appear serene. But this is our duty toward each other and toward the aims of our Endeavour”).

ANIMALS

This chapter focuses on the analysis of the relationships between Albertini – and more broadly, the crew of the *Heimen* – and the animal world: an interaction that runs throughout the logbook and constitutes a concrete and very revealing layer. Animals do not appear as marginal presences but rather as material – and possibly symbolic – interlocutors of life in the Arctic environment.

In the context of early twentieth-century polar exploration, such centrality of animals was structurally embedded in expeditionary practice. Dog sledging constituted a core logistical system, shaping routes, daily routines and limits of action. As Savitt and Lüdecke emphasise, polar expeditions operated as complex organisational systems in which mobility, scientific work and survival were tightly interlinked, and sledge-dogs were a crucial component of the system (Savitt and Lüdecke, 2022). At the same time, the material dependence on animals extended beyond transport. Both historical and archaeological studies show that animal bodies – whether as functional supply, food or specimens – were continuously incorporated into the expedition's economy, blurring the boundaries between environment and equipment (Sverdrup, 1904, pp. 17-18; Fraser-Miller *et al.*, 2021).

The discussion will here consider in particular two distinct yet interconnected domains that emerge in the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition: the practice of hunting and the bond with the sledge dogs. In both cases, the diary conveys a complex non-univocal form of interaction, in which utility, habit, scientific curiosity and a playful component coexist without being “reconciled” into a single meaning.

Hunting emerges as a structurally ambiguous practice.

First of all, it is a practice of necessity. Numerous records from other polar expeditions confirm that fresh meat obtained through hunting – especially seals and, in Antarctic contexts, penguins – played a role in sustaining both human crews and dog teams. Nutritional studies and retrospective analyses underline that seal meat and blubber were repeatedly identified as optimal sources of energy for working dogs, while also providing essential nourishment for men in prolonged periods of isolation (Orr, 1966; Fraser-Miller *et al.*, 2021).

Historical reconstructions of expedition diets further demonstrate that,

in moments of scarcity or immobilisation, parties were often compelled to rely almost entirely on hunted animals, making killing a routine act of subsistence rather than an exceptional event. Fresh meat was valued also because it was widely believed to protect against debilitating conditions such as scurvy. (Harrowfield, 2019; Guly, 2011).

Yet hunting in polar regions cannot be reduced to a matter of survival alone. Several historical studies highlight how, within the same expeditionary cultures, it also retained a leisure or sporting dimension. In Arctic and sub-Arctic contexts, expeditions were sometimes explicitly framed as “sport-hunting” ventures, where technical skill, competition and personal accomplishment were part of the exploration (Nobile, 1947, p. 94; Jones, 2013b; Stone, 2005, p. 54).

Even in settings primarily devoted to scientific or logistical objectives, material traces and written accounts attest to the presence of shooting practices disconnected from immediate necessity, functioning instead as forms of recreation, training or interruption of monotony during periods of enforced inactivity (Nobile, 1975, p. 281; Roura, 2009a).

In line with this, the logbook of the *Heimen*, on the one hand, addresses the hunt as concrete necessity: providing food for the dogs and, often, for the crew themselves. On the other hand, there are several references to hunting for the men’s pleasure or simply for overcoming boredom. A third dimension is actually added to this duality, in line with only a few other examples in the history of exploration: scientific research.

Many of the polar creatures encountered – and killed – were still little known at the time and therefore considered worthy of close observation, documentation, and classification, a process that often transformed them into visual and material trophies. It is no coincidence that many of Della Valle’s film sequences focus precisely on prey, lingering on their bodies and features, nor is the fact that Bonola carried out systematic naturalistic research on Arctic fauna, thus inscribing the act of hunting within a broader framework of exploration.

This link between killing and production of knowledge is not limited, in fact, to strictly “scientific” expeditions: historical work on sub-Arctic hunting economies for example shows that sustained hunting activity could also generate systematic observation and geographically useful knowledge. Stone, for instance, notes that even in a context where hunting was pursued “for profit and sport”, the hunter could remain an attentive

observer of wildlife and natural features, producing information that later contributed to a significant knowledge base about remote regions (Stone, 2005).

Alongside these functions, hunting sometimes appears as a reiterated gesture rooted in habit, almost automatic, especially during moments of forced immobility, when the stillness seems to demand an action capable of breaking the suspension of time.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, socially shared care for environmental protection and wildlife conservation was not yet developed as it is today. With very few exceptions, virtually all inhabitants of the Arctic and explorers considered hunting a normal practice, often recorded in its continuous oscillation between play, necessity, scientific curiosity and routine.

The second theme addressed in this chapter concerns the relationship with sledge dogs, a bond characterized by continuity, familiarity and expertise. Albertini emerges from the diary as a deeply committed and knowledgeable observer of the dogs, showing a genuine interest in their individual characters and behavioural differences. His attention is also grounded in practical competence: as an experienced handler, he is well aware that training dogs for sledge work requires a careful understanding of their natures, temperaments and mutual relations within the team.

In the expeditionary culture of the period, this practical skill was inseparable from an explicit moral tension: whether dogs should be protected as valuable assets to be returned “safe and sound”, or treated as expendable resources for maximising performance. A well-known formulation of this dilemma appears in Scott’s reflections on dog management: “there are two ways in which dogs may be used – they may be taken with the idea of bringing them all back safe and sound, or they may be treated as pawns in the game, from which the best value is to be got regardless of their lives” (Scott, 1905, p. 340).

Importantly, the same polar discourse insists that high performance cannot be obtained without ethical cost. As Murray’s comparative analysis (2008) of Scott’s and Amundsen’s expeditions makes clear, the relationship between explorers and their dogs was never resolved into a single ethical position. Rather, moral tension appears as a constant feature of polar exploration: attachment and care coexist with calculation, discipline and sacrifice, regardless of the specific strategies adopted.

The ambivalence observed in Albertini's logbook, therefore, does not represent an exception. Within the daily life of the journey, dogs are treated as working animals, indispensable to mobility and survival, functioning, in this sense, almost as part of the expedition's equipment. At the same time, however, the logbook repeatedly reveals a parallel register of respect and emotional attachment. The dogs are named, observed and evaluated as individual beings and their wellness becomes a recurring concern. They are not humanized, yet neither reduced to anonymous tools. Rather, they occupy a precise position as a different type of companions whose cooperation is essential and whose suffering is acknowledged. Affection and esteem emerge in various passages, particularly since dogs and men share the same physical hardship, the same cold, fatigue and risk, thus inhabiting a common experiential horizon.



Fig. 64. Some of the Italian crew members sharing a drink on deck
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Hunting in the Arctic

A first and fundamental dimension of hunting in Albertini's logbook is that of material necessity. Hunting is presented as a response to concrete needs: the provisioning of food for both the crew and the sledge dogs. The killing of animals is inscribed within the logic of survival and appears in this sense at moments when the resources are scarce or irregularly available.

On May 25, Albertini records the killing of the first seals of the season:

Oggi ammazziamo le prime foche della stagione e fu fortuna pei cani –
magri pel lungo “digiuno delle casse”⁶⁶

By describing this capture as “fortunate for the dogs”, Albertini frames hunting as an action intended to *convert* animal life into a resource serving the purposes of the expedition.

This logic recurs elsewhere in the diary, e.g. on June 7, when an “abundant hunt of ducks for us and seals for the dogs” (LB, f. 23v) takes place alongside the first experiments with the portable radio. Here the juxtaposition of these activities makes hunting appearing as one task among others within the daily routine, placed on the same narrative level as technological tests.

The understanding of hunting as a necessary practice could be further confirmed by an exemplary passage drawn not from the logbook itself but from Albertini's memoir. While the diary glosses over the preparatory phase preceding the march across Nordaustlandet, the book offers a very detailed account of the equipment loaded onto the sledges. Albertini notes loading his Mannlicher rifle and a Smith & Wesson revolver and specifies that each member of the patrol was required to carry a hunting knife. Alongside weapons intended for hunting, the Commander records the inclusion of basic cooking ingredient – dried onions, salt, pepper and a tin of butter – described as necessary for the preparation of Arctic game (Albertini, 1932, p. 60).

Yet the logbook does not allow hunting to be confined to the realm of necessity alone. The same gestures that ensure subsistence also generate moments of pleasure, competition and enjoyment, in which hunting be-

⁶⁶ LB, f. 17v: “Today we kill our first seals of the season and it was a fortune for the dogs – thin from the long ‘crate fasting’”.

comes a ludic and sporting activity.

Several scenes depict hunting as an opportunity deliberately taken during pauses in navigation or periods of relative stasis. Some episodes are recorded during the period when Zanetti was writing the log, a phase in which life on board was slower and the ship's movements were more exploratory in nature.

Nelle prime ore della giornata ci portiamo con la nave vicino alle isole Forster e scendiamo a fare provvista di uova di anatre. Ve ne sono a migliaia su questi scogli selvaggi. E mentre noi deprediamo i nidi le anatre ci volano intorno gridando altamente la loro protesta. Qualcuna cade sotto i nostri colpi⁶⁷

On June 21, while collecting duck eggs, the scene is described in almost theatrical terms: nests are plundered, ducks circle overhead “shouting their protest”, and some are shot. The emphasis falls on action, dynamism, and interaction, turning hunting into a lively, almost staged encounter between humans and animals. Similarly, another passage by Zanetti shows how hunting is conceived as an opportunity – made possible by pauses in navigation and moments of relative stasis – to counteract waiting and to re-introduce activity into the otherwise suspended rhythm of the expedition.

Restiamo fermi tra la baia di Wahlemberg e le isole Forster mentre l'equipaggio approfitta della sosta per fare battute di caccia⁶⁸

Albertini's own entries also register on several occasions hunting as a form of sport and excitement. Revealing is the passage dated July 28, when he is awakened to hunt three bears spotted near the ship:

Alle due di notte Zanetti che è di guardia mi sveglia per la presenza a non più di 300 m dalla nave di tre orsi. Infilatimi gli stivali con Pugliese ed alcuni norvegesi iniziamo la caccia. Solo un orso viene ucciso dopo una sparatoria di oltre 30 colpi⁶⁹

67 LB, f. 28r.: “In the early hours of the day we bring the ship near the Forster Islands and go ashore to get a provision of duck eggs. There are thousands of them on these wild rocks. And while we plunder the nests the ducks fly around us loudly crying their protest. Some fall under our shots”.

68 LB, f. 28v: “We remain stationary between the Wahlemberg Bay and the Forster Islands while the crew takes advantage of the stop to go on hunting trips”.

69 LB, f. 37r: “At two o'clock at night Zanetti who is on watch wakes me because of the presence no more than 300 m from the ship of three bears. Pulling on my boots together with Pugliese



Fig. 65. Crew members hauling a walrus onto the vessel

Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Here a sudden mobilization is recorded: boots are pulled on, companions gathered, shots are fired, and the hunt unfolds as a collective action-oriented event. More brevity characterizes other entries: “we killed a bear by bringing the ship to within thirty metres from it” (LB, f. 42v), “tonight we kill two small and young bears” (LB, f. 43v). In these cases, the act of killing is reduced to a bare notation, stripped of explanation. In one instance, it is even further reduced in the minimal formula “two small seals killed” (LB, f. 41r), on August 25, which almost reads like a tally or score.

This oscillation between necessity and play produces an ambiguity that may appear striking from a contemporary perspective, but was fully consistent with the cultural and moral frameworks of the early twentieth century. In Albertini’s writing, the same act of killing can be framed alternatively as a matter of survival, a routine task, or a moment of excitement and contest, without any sense of contradiction.

and some Norwegians we start the hunt. Only one bear is killed after shooting more than 30 shots”.

A revealing example that powerfully condenses this almost paradoxical ambiguity emerges in the memoir, during an encounter with a mother bear and her cub.

Sul suo versante orientale troviamo uno scoscendimento atto a portare la slitta su terra ferma, ed a distrarmi dal fascino, che sempre esercita questo cercar ricovero sui gelidi scogli dell'Artide, sopraggiunge una grossa orsa a pochi metri da noi con un piccolo orsacchiotto; per sua fortuna non ho il fucile a portata, e in pochi minuti la inseguono già inutilmente i miei sci e le mie pallottole, tanto veloce essa corre verso il Nord, spingendosi avanti col muso il piccolo figlioletto curioso che preferisce guardare indietro. Mi commuove quella grossa orsa che arrischia i miei colpi pur di portare in salvo il suo piccolo; penso quale sproporzione vi sia tra ciò che vedo e la dura legge della fame e del freddo a cui è confinata tra questi ghiacci nomadi⁷⁰

Moved by the animal's effort to protect her little one, Albertini acknowledges the emotional force of the scene and reflects on the disproportion between its tenderness and the "harsh law of hunger and cold" that governs Arctic life. This is a law in which he implicitly recognizes himself as equally implicated, as one living being among others within the same circle of life. Significantly, in fact, this moment of empathy does not undermine the legitimacy of hunting, nor does it call its practice into question. Immediately, he chooses to pursue the bear, firing his revolver – only the absence of a rifle within reach seems to prevent the killing.

This episode thus shows that compassion and ease in killing are not opposing ethical positions but parallel dimensions that coexist within the same experiential and moral framework.

Sledge dogs

In early twentieth-century polar travel, sledge dogs were not a marginal

⁷⁰ Albertini, 1932, p. 63: "On its eastern side we find a steep descent suitable for bringing the sledge onto solid ground, and as I am momentarily distracted from the fascination – always exerted by this search for shelter among the icy rocks of the Arctica – large she-bear suddenly appears just a few metres from us, accompanied by a small cub. By good fortune, I do not have my rifle within reach, and within a few minutes my skis and my bullets are already chasing her in vain, so swiftly does she run northwards, pushing ahead with her snout the little, curious offspring, who prefers to look back. I am deeply moved by that great she-bear, who risks my shots in order to bring her cub to safety; I reflect on the disproportion between what I witness and the harsh law of hunger and cold to which she is condemned among these nomadic ice fields".

accessory but a core component of expeditionary infrastructure. They enabled mobility, extended the spatial reach of field parties, and shaped the daily organisation of work on ice through routines of feeding, training, team formation and discipline. In this sense, dogs were embedded in the expedition as a “dog-based sledging system” whose effectiveness depended on planning, knowledge, and continuous operational adjustment (Savitt and Lüdecke, 2022).

At the same time, contemporary polar culture articulated an explicit moral-practical tension in how dogs ought to be treated: they could be used with the intent of bringing them back “safe and sound”, or they could be treated as instruments, exploited for maximum performance regardless of their lives (Scott, 1905, p. 340).

This double horizon – dogs as indispensable working technology, and dogs as living beings exposed to decisions about risk, suffering and sacrifice – forms the broader historical frame within which Albertini’s logbook should be situated (Murray, 2008).

Albertini’s relationship with sledge dogs can somehow further sharpen the ambivalence already observed in the practice of hunting. If dogs are indispensable working animals, fully integrated into the technical apparatus of the expedition, they are at the same time perceived as living beings endowed with character, endurance and agency.

Observation

Albertini devotes a considerable amount of time to observing their individual character. Throughout the logbook he repeatedly pauses to note differences in temperament, behaviour and attitude to work.

As early as May 16, he writes:

La mattina è movimentata per l'uscita dai cani dalle loro casse. Tutti e dieci girano per la coperta prima titubanti e poi sicuri. Si incominciano a manifestare tra loro i primi odi e le prime amicizie e le caratteristiche dei singoli caratteri. Do il nome “Lis” al più fulvo; esso è il primo che mi accordò la sua amicizia. Il più energico, il più prepotente, quello che incute più rispetto ai compagni lo chiamiamo “Muss”. La piccola femmina “Girl”⁷¹

⁷¹ LB, ff. 9v-10r: “The morning is busy because of the dogs coming out of their crates. All ten of them go around the deck at first hesitant and then confident. They begin to show among themselves the first hatreds and the first friendships and the characteristics of the individual characters. I give the name ‘Lis’ to the tawniest; he is the first who granted me his friendship. The most

The release of the dogs from their crates is described as a moment carefully observed in itself. Albertini follows their movements across the deck, “at first hesitant and then confident”, and lingers on the gradual emergence of internal dynamics within the group. The Commander starts to interpret the pack as a social body, structured by affective bonds and conflicts. Names are assigned on the basis of physical traits and relational or behavioural qualities. Lis⁷² is defined through as the first “who grants his friendship”. The *direction* of the relational act is significant: friendship is presented as something initiated by the animal and acknowledged by the human, attributing the dog a capacity for choice and relational intent.

Albertini’s attentive gaze is registered in other passages of the diary, especially during the first days of the expedition, a phase in which observation of dogs lays the groundwork for their future use.

On May 18:

I cani sono sempre la mia prediletta occupazione. Lo studiare i loro odi e le loro amicizie è cosa altamente interessante. Girl se la fa con tutti ed è rispettata anche dai più cattivi. Riusci ad entrare in amicizia coi due giovani maculati. Essi sono buffissimi. Hanno uno sguardo spaurito e scrutatore e stanno sempre assieme. Si assomigliano in modo impressionante⁷³

This entry further reinforces Albertini’s sustained engagement with dogs, defining it as his “favourite occupation”. Studying them is described as “highly interesting”, with observation emphasized as an activity valued in itself. This choice of words reveals how the Commander regards the animals as the focus of a form of attention that fills both time and thought, beyond their practical role in the expedition’s logistics and aims. Once again, Albertini organizes his account around social relations. Hatred and friendship remain the primary categories through which canine behaviour is interpreted, suggesting a persistent reading of the pack as a relational system. Girl is portrayed as socially skilled and respected, even by the most aggressive individuals. The inseparability and physical resem-

energetic, the most overbearing, the one who inspires most respect in the companions we call him ‘Muss’. The little female ‘Girl’”.

⁷² The same dog is called “Lys” in the memoir and “Liss” in Bonola’s conference paper.

⁷³ LB, ff. 12v-13r: “The dogs are always my favourite occupation. Studying their hates and their friendships is a highly interesting thing. Girl gets involved with all and is respected even by the nastiest ones. She succeeded to befriend the two young spotted ones. They are very funny. They have a timid and observant look and are always together. They resemble each other in an astonishing way”.

blance of the two young spotted dogs are noted with amusement: the phrase “they are very funny” introduces an almost playful dimension to the observation. Compared to the earlier entry, this passage deepens the affective and observational register: the dogs are watched over time, their relationships followed, and their behaviours analysed with curiosity and enjoyment.

On May 29:

I cani sono la mia più raffinata ricreazione. Vi sono i due bianchi, tipici della razza Groenlandese, robusti e massicci, che sono legati da una fortissima amicizia. Essi sono terribilissimi perché attaccano i loro simili, sempre assieme ed in modo fulmineo. Già due volte riuscii per vero miracolo a strappare ai loro denti e Muss e Boy. Muss e Boy sono pure amicissimi ma Muss padroneggia su Boy, mentre tra i due Bianchi vi è assoluta parità. Oggi mentre per alcune ore fummo attraccati ad un ghiaccio feci scendere i più giovani cani. Fu per loro una gioia il risentirsi a contatto colla neve⁷⁴

Here, Albertini once again takes care to specify that the dogs constitute his preferred occupation, defining them explicitly as his “most refined recreation”. He continues to structure his descriptions around relationships. Two white Greenland dogs are identified as being bound by an exceptionally strong friendship, characterized by absolute equality between them, showing Albertini’s sensitivity to different forms of social organization. At the same time, the pair is described as extremely aggressive, capable of attacking other dogs “always together and with lightning speed”. Violence is integrated into the social portrait of the group. Albertini recounts having intervened “by a true miracle” to save Muss and Boy, highlighting his position as an active mediator.

Contrasts and relationships are carefully articulated, with hierarchies clearly defined within the familiar map of the pack traced by the Commander.

The final lines shift in tone, Albertini releases the younger dogs onto the ice, recording the event as “a joy for them, to feel contact with the snow again”.

⁷⁴ LB, f. 19r: “The dogs are my most refined recreation. There are the two white ones, typical of the Greenlandic breed, robust and massive, that are bound by a very strong friendship. They are extremely fierce because they attack their kind, always together and with lightning speed. Twice already I managed by true miracle to save from their teeth both Muss and Boy. Muss and Boy are also close friends but Muss dominates Boy, while between the two Whites there is absolute equality. Today while for some hours we were moored to an ice floe I let the youngest dogs go down. It was a joy for them to feel themselves in contact with the snow again”.



Fig. 66. Gianni Albertini during a seal hunt on the ice
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Training

The sustained attention to the dogs' individual character is, of course, not an end in itself. It acquires a full significance in view of the expedition's future plans: the long sledge journey of the patrol across the ice. The success of the march depended both on physical strength and endurance and on the effective training and coordination of the dog teams. In this contexts, Albertini's prolonged observation of temperaments, affinities and hierarchies emerges as a crucial preparatory phase. Knowing the dogs meant knowing how to assemble the two teams, managing conflicts and distributing efforts.

The effective training phase begins on June 6, when the expedition anchors to the ice of the Kings Bay, fifteen kilometres from Ny-Ålesund.

Ancorammo al ghiaccio di Baia 15 kilometri lontano da Ny Alesund e scendemmo subito per i primi tentativi di addestramento dei cani. Scarsi

risultati e molta rabbia, voci rauche e frustate. Mi convinsi della necessità di portare a termine questo addestramento in modo risolutivo data la sua importanza⁷⁵

Here, the dogs are brought ashore for their first attempts at sledge training. Albertini frankly records the outcome as “poor results and much anger, hoarse voices and whiplashes”. The entry registers frustration, noise, and physical coercion. Albertini frames the moment as necessary, given the importance of training, which is presented as indispensable to survival and mobility in the environment.

The day after, the training continues:

La notte fu passata coi cani e le slitte. Difficilmente, chi non conosce quest'arte s'immagina quanto sia interessante e difficile l'addestramento di una muta di cani al traino e sopra tutto la formazione di un capo muta. Provammo tutte le formazioni possibili, cambiando, mischiando, cercando di temperare, rafforzare o neutralizzare le tendenze buone o le cattive, rispettando gli odi e le amicizie e i caratteri insofferenti, cercando di trasformare la gelosia e la prepotenza in arte di comando, l'apatia in rudezza di lavoro, la sensibilità in arte di slancio. Cominciammo a sortire i primi risultati verso mattina quando ripresi scopersi il “Cane”. “Lis” fu nominato capo muta della slitta di punta⁷⁶

This entry develops the training phase into a sustained and meticulous process, extending through the night and described as both intellectually and practically demanding. Albertini insists that only those familiar with this “art” can fully grasp how difficult and engaging the training of a dog team truly is, especially the formation of a lead dog. Training is presented as a skill-based practice requiring knowledge, patience and above all experimentation.

75 LB, f. 22v: “We anchored to the ice of the Bay 15 kilometres away from Ny Alesund and immediately went down for the first attempts at training the dogs. Poor results and much anger, hoarse voices and whiplashes. I became convinced of the necessity to complete this training in a decisive way given its importance”.

76 LB, f. 23r-v: “The night was spent with the dogs and the sledges. Hardly, the one who doesn't know this art can imagine how interesting and difficult it is to train a team of sledge dogs and above all the formation of a lead dog. We tried all possible formations, changing, mixing, trying to temper, strengthen or neutralize the good or bad tendencies, respecting hatreds and friendships and intolerant temperaments, trying to transform jealousy and dominance into the art of command, apathy into endurance in toil, the sensitivity into art of impulse. We began to achieve the first results toward morning when upon resuming I discovered the ‘Dog’. ‘Lis’ was appointed lead dog of the head sledge”.

The most revealing passage lies in the Commander's detailed account of how individual traits are managed and transformed. He describes a continuous process of trial and adjustment: changing formations, mixing dogs, carefully modulating their interaction in order to temper, strengthen or neutralize both positive and negative tendencies. Significantly, every trait is respected, even those that may appear problematic. Jealousy and aggressiveness are redirected to "art of command", apathy in "endurance in toil" and sensitivity into the "art of impulse". Characters are therefore not erased but reoriented, reshaped and *put into service*.

This logic brings into full relief the importance of the prolonged observation described in earlier entries. Respecting "hatreds and friendships" and acknowledging "intolerant temperaments" becomes a prerequisite for effective training.

The emergence of the first results in the morning, underscores the urgency and priority of this work. Albertini notes that they all slept only three hours before training resumed, a detail that highlights the pressure imposed by the expedition's schedule and the perceived necessity of continuing the process without interruption. The nomination of Lis as lead dog – already singled out earlier for having granted his friendship – appears as the result of careful observation and intense methodical effort.

In the days that follow, the dog teams begin to operate effectively, marking the success of the training phase and their readiness for the patrol's departure.

Dogs as companions, dogs as instruments

As already suggested, Albertini's logbook, consistently places sledge dogs in an intermediate position between companionship and instrumentality. They are indispensable working animals, subjected to training, discipline and physical effort and at the same time, individual beings endowed with character and agency that share difficulties of adventure with men.

These two dimensions emerge in numerous passages that contribute to shaping this ambivalent picture.

The moment following the first training phase offers one of the clearest expressions of Albertini's relationship with the dogs. Reflecting on the efficiency of the two teams he writes:



Fig. 67. Gianni Albertini with a sledge dog in the crate onboard Heimen-SUCAI

Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

Le due mute funzionano a meraviglia. “Lis” è un intelligente cane, pieno di vitalità e di puntiglio. Egli durante il ritorno aveva già imparato a guardarmi di tanto in tanto; segno sicuro ch'egli comprende la responsabilità che gli è stata assegnata⁷⁷

This passage condenses the specific form of bond that emerges between Albertini and the dogs, particularly with the lead one. It cannot be said that the relationship is neither symmetrical nor sentimental, but surely it seems to be grounded in mutual recognition within a hierarchical framework. The intermittent exchange of glances establishes a direct, exclusive line of communication between man and dog, bypassing both the rest of the team and verbal command. Lis' gaze is interpreted as conscious acknowledgement of the role entrusted to him, while Albertini is the re-

⁷⁷ LB, f. 24r: “The two dog teams work wonderfully. ‘Lis’ is an intelligent dog, full of vitality and determination. He during the return had already learnt to look at me from time to time; a sure sign that he understands the responsibility that has been assigned to him”.

cipient of that awareness. The bond that emerges is intensely relational, combining affective recognition with a form of internalized command, silently confirmed.

Brief entries in the diary prove an affective dimension that shapes Albertini's relationship with the dogs. When Boy and Muss disappear, presumably because of a bear's presence, he refers to them as "our friends"⁷⁸ and the note carries a tone of quiet concern. Likewise, during a period of relative stasis, the birth of Girl's seven puppies is record among the "events worthy of note"⁷⁹, despite having no immediate operational relevance.

The death of the dogs constitutes one of the most revealing moments in the logbook, as it exposes the tension between affection and utility that structures the Commander's relationship with them. It is in these moments that the dogs appear, at once, as companions whose loss is felt and as functional elements within an expeditionary economy governed by necessity.

On June 1:

Vi fu un episodio doloroso sul finire della giornata. Tra gli altri cani groenlandesi ve ne è uno più vecchio del tempo. Lo tenni in osservazione per molti giorni e mi formai la convinzione ch'esso fosse completamente inutilizzabile. Lo feci uccidere. Fu doloroso; uccidere un essere perché è troppo vecchio è un delitto. Egli mangiava a detrimento degli altri cani più giovani e più forti e più atti al lavoro⁸⁰

This episode offers the clearest articulation of the dog's instrumental status within the expedition. After days of observation, Albertini reaches the conclusion that the old Greenland dog is "completely unusable" and orders him killed. The decision is framed as painful and explicitly named

78 LB, f. 40v: «Boy e Muss sono nel frattempo spariti. Già da parecchie ore sono scomparsi e leghiamo il fatto alla presenza dell'orso facendo pei nostri amici non buoni pronostici» "Boy and Muss went in the meantime missing. Already for several hours they have disappeared and we link the fact to the presence of the bear making for our friends not good predictions".

79 LB, f. 37v: «Avvenimenti degni di nota il 2 Agosto la Girl mette al mondo 7 cagnolini che alleva poi amorosamente» "Events worthy of note, on 2 August Girl brings into the world 7 puppies which she then lovingly rears".

80 LB, f. 20v: "There was a painful episode at the end of the day. Among the other Greenland dogs there is one older than time. I kept him under observation for many days and developed the conviction that he was completely unusable. I had him killed. It was painful; to kill a being because it is too old is a crime. He was eating to the detriment of the other dogs, younger and stronger and more suited to work".

as a moral transgression – “to kill a being because it is too old is a crime” – yet it is nonetheless carried out in the name of collective efficiency. The dog’s continued presence is justified only in functional terms: he consumes food “to the detriment of the other dogs, younger and stronger and more suited to work”. Utility thus becomes the ultimate criterion of legitimacy. Here is shown how, within the expedition’s economy, the value of a dog is ultimately measured by its capacity to work, even when this assessment clashes openly with Albertini’s ethical sensibility.

A second episode reverses this logic. While Red is also killed, the narrative treatment is radically different.

Oggi dovetti uccidere Red: i suoi lamenti erano diventati strazianti ed una paralisi gli aveva colpito tutto il treno posteriore. Molto soffrì: le caratteristiche di questo valoroso cane sono tali da fare a lungo pensare. Egli, colla sua personalità strana, colla sua terribile paura iniziale per l'uomo aveva negli ultimi tempi subito una profonda alterazione del suo carattere. Ora è morto: ma la battaglia da valoroso ch'egli combatté con noi è per me in ogni particolare, storia indimenticabile. L'ultimo giorno Red era sfinito: lanciando di tanto in tanto piccoli guaiti seguiva zoppicando la slitta; arrivò sulla nave solo tre ore dopo noi. Salitovi si accucciò in un angolo senza muoversi più⁸¹

This entry stands out for both its length and its semantic intensity. Albertini does not simply record Red’s death, but reconstruct his gradual physical decline and the effort with which the dog continued to follow the patrol. Red is described as exhausted, paralysed in the hind legs, yet still attempting to keep pace with the sledge, but arriving on the ship hours after the others. Albertini frames Red’s experience speaking of the “battle” the dog fought alongside the men and defines him as «*valoroso*» (“valorous”), a term that places Red within the same ethical register used to describe human endurance and courage during what he defines an “unforgettable story”. The emphasis is not on utility but on shared struggles. Red’s transformation over time, his peculiar personality and

81 LB, ff. 32v-33r: “Today I had to kill Red; his wails had become heartrending and a paralysis had struck his whole hindquarters. I suffered greatly: the traits of this valiant dog are such as to make one ponder long. He, with his strange personality, with his terrible initial fear of man, had in recent times undergone a profound alteration of his character. Now he is dead: but the valorous battle that he fought with us is for me, in every detail, an unforgettable story. On the last day Red was exhausted: uttering from time to time small yelps he hobbled after the sledge; he arrived on the ship only three hours after us. Having boarded, he curled up in a corner and moved no more”.

his capacity to endure sufferings are foregrounded, suggesting a form of participation in the expedition that goes beyond functionality. Killing here is not an utilitarian decision but an act of mercy, a response to the unbearable pain of a companion-in-arms. Red's death is narrated with a gravity and attentiveness that goes beyond the idea of dogs as valuable but, after all, expendable resources.

An ambivalent relation

The relationship with the animal world emerging in the logbook is fully consistent with the cultural, moral and practical frameworks of early twentieth-century polar exploration. Within this historical horizon, animals were integral to expeditionary life, embedded in systems of survival, knowledge production and daily routine.

It therefore does not resolve into a single ethical or symbolic framework. Rather, it unfolds as a field of negotiated coexistence in which necessity, habit, curiosity, affect and violence intersect without cancelling one another.

Hunting and the management of sledge dogs reveal parallel forms of ambivalence. In both cases, animal life is subjected to instrumental logics dictated by survival, mobility and efficiency; yet at the same time it is approached through observation, attention and, at times, empathy. The same logbook can register the killing of an animal as a routine act, a sportive gesture, a scientific opportunity or a morally charged event, never perceiving these registers as mutually exclusive.

The sledge dogs, in particular, crystallise this tension. As working animals, they are disciplined, trained, selected and, when deemed necessary, sacrificed. As companions, they are named, watched, worried over and mourned.

Murray's comparison of Scott's and Amundsen's expeditions makes clear that this tension between attachment and instrumental calculation was not an anomaly but constant in polar exploration, articulated differently but never resolved into a single ethical position (Murray, 2008).

In this sense, the animal world becomes a privileged lens through which the expedition's inner logic is revealed: a moral economy governed by necessity and hierarchy, yet continually unsettled by moments of recognition, attachment and loss.



Fig. 68. Training sledge dogs
Source: film «Il Mistero dell'Artide»

CONCLUSIONS

Late at night we find ourselves again within our old, valiant stern cabin, and our smile is even sadder. It seems that we have not found what we were seeking. Indeed, we have not found what we sought; yet our ten thousand miles remain there, immovable within our souls – unyielding, firm, iron like the law that prevented us from finding; true as our sadness, indestructible as the duty we have fulfilled (Albertini, 1932, p. 111)

Due to an unfortunate series of circumstances, the summer of 1929 in the Svalbard region proved particularly unfavourable for navigation through ice. Its extent and persistence forced the *Heimen-SUCAI* to remain engaged in a struggle for her own safety, during much of the days, weeks, and months that should have been spent in the search task. At the close of the enterprise, Albertini declared to the authorities that he believed there was no longer any hope of finding survivors of the *Italia*; not long thereafter, Alessandrini, Arduino, Caratti, Ciocca, Lago, and Pontremoli's "presumed deaths" were officially announced (Alessandrini, 2019, p. 194).

Nevertheless, when one compares Albertini's original plan with the areas he actually reached, it becomes clear that much was actually accomplished, in spite of the adverse season. The exploration conducted by the *Sedov* under Samoilovich in the Franz Joseph Land archipelago – an undertaking the *Heimen* could not have carried out, given its limited capabilities compared with those of an icebreaker – effectively filled much of the "gap in knowledge" left by Albertini's inability to reach those islands. When the "*sucaini*" returned to Italy, exploration was incomplete only with regard to the Wiches, White, and Viktoriya islands (Остров Виктория) – that is, Kong Karls Land, Kvitøya, and Viktoriya. A singular stroke of fate added a note of irony. On 6 August 1930, exactly one year after the voyage of the *Heimen-SUCAI*, a very similar vessel, the *Bratvaag*, also a Norwegian seal-hunter, anchored in proximity to the shores of Kvitøya, deploying part of the crew ashore. With a reconnaissance comparable to those of the Italian observers in 1929, the Norwegian crew fortuitously discovered human remains and the traces of a makeshift camp. The sailors' first thought to have discovered the remains of the missing men of the *Italia*; on a closer inspection, they realized that they had actually found the much older remains of the 1897 Andrée Polar Expedition. Their mysterious disappearance had captured the imagination of many contempo-

raries. Among them was Umberto Nobile, who had followed the story with interest in his youth, while dreaming of flying to the North Pole one day; and the poet Giovanni Pascoli, who had dedicated one of his *Hymns* to Andrée⁸².

The discovery, thirty-three years later, of what remained of the expedition arrived mostly unexpected and rose much sensation. Moreover, the extraordinary wealth of diaristic, scientific, and photographic documents that the three Swedes had gathered, made the sudden reappearance of their voices across death even more striking, placing them fully among the great polar explorers. Their story deeply moved Europe and, undoubtedly, Albertini as well, adding, certainly, a note of emotion to his personal story.

There was only one example of an Arctic or Antarctic catastrophe that had remained shrouded in the strictest mystery: Andrée. The exception was excused, given the exceptional means by which Andrée had undertaken his journey without return. Yet even the mystery of Andrée was revealed (Albertini, 1932, p. 113)

With his typical humility, the Italian explorer omitted to note that, had the ice conditions been only slightly more favourable, he and his men of the *Heimen-SUCAI* might easily have been the authors of that revelation, which left so strong an impression on Europe at the time. What mattered to Albertini, as it emerges from his account, is that two of the three remaining islands – Kong Karls Land and Kvitøya – were “extensively explored” in 1930, and it became clear that no trace would have been found there of what the *Heimen-SUCAI* had sought in 1929.

Although far inferior in means, and therefore in operational possibilities, to the rescue expeditions that had set out in 1928, the voyage of Al-

⁸² Nobile so writes in (1975), p. 111. Pascoli's imagined synthesis about Andrée's view of his own feat is in some powerful verses of his (1906, p. 118): «*E venne, all'uomo alato, odio del giorno / che sorge e cade, venne odio del vano / andare ch'ama il garrulo ritorno. / Egli era in alto, al colmo: era l'umano / fato a' suoi piedi. Andrée si sentì solo, / si sentì grande, si sentì sovrano*». (“And there arose, within the wingèd man, a hatred of the day/that rises and falls; a hatred of the vain/going that loves its chattering return./He stood on high, at the summit: at his feet / lay human fate. Andrée felt himself alone,/ felt himself great, felt himself sovereign”). They astonishingly match an entry Andrée made in his diary the on the first night of the flight; Pascoli had died in 1912, Andrée's diary was recovered in 1930. “It is not a little strange to be floating here above the Polar Sea. To be the first that have floated here in a balloon. How soon, I wonder, shall we have successors? (...) We think we can well face death, having done what we have done. Is not the whole, perhaps, the expression of an extremely strong sense of individuality which cannot bear the thought of living and dying like a man in the ranks, forgotten by coming generations?” (Andrée 1931, p. 352).

bertini and his companions originated in the intention of demonstrating that everything possible and reasonable had been attempted: five months of travel, 10,000 nautical miles, 700 kilometers by sledge for a patrol that repeatedly risked its life and survived only thanks to exceptional training, careful preparation, and personal determination.

From a political standpoint, by supporting the endeavour of *Heimen-SU-CAI*, the Fascist regime tried to show – also because this was somewhat expected internationally – that nothing had been left undone in seeking a reasonable conclusion to the unresolved mystery of airship *Italia*. The expedition, widely followed by the media of the time, was celebrated in Italy for its national character, even though it once again demonstrated how presence and action in the still precariously ecumenical spaces of the Arctic depended heavily on international cooperation. Although the governmental narrative presented the expedition above all as Italian, it was clear that Norwegians and Soviets had contributed crucially to the final picture of the searches, no less than they had in 1926 and 1928.

Within the significant flow of public and private communication that emanated from the expedition, even in its most delicate and complex phases, the regime's narrative shaped the tone of the how reports were relayed by press and other means and governed – certainly with Albertini's participation – the elements brought to the foreground and those kept in the background. The rhetorical accents of the official accounts ultimately did present, but in some degree ended up flattening and fading, some distinctive features of the expedition that constituted – and still constitute today – its particular excellence.

Italy had sent other scientific and technical expeditions toward the High North since the Duke of the Abruzzi's *Stella Polare* in 1899-1900 (Di Savoia *et al.*, 1903; Ciaglia, 2021). For the most part, however, these had been undertakings of greater complexity and organizational burden. Albertini, by contrast, succeeded in exploring many of the areas where the missing men might have been, by means of a small vessel, appropriately chosen based on a criterion of versatility. The *Heimen*, with her equipment and customized configurations, served most effectively as a multipurpose platform for search and rescue in Arctic environments. The system proved equally adequate in open-sea crossings, coastal navigation, shoreline searches, and, of course, in supporting deep inland operations. When Albertini described the means in the expedition as “old-fashioned”,

he was pointing out a methodological aspect, clearly identifying that the system was particularly suitable for the intended goals, within the existing constraints. The march across Nordaustlandet in 1929, like the rescue marches of 1928, took place within an organizational framework typical of nineteenth-century Arctic exploration, albeit with a careful selection – based on technical preparation and prior experience – of the most advanced instruments available at the time.

The key to its operational success – in spite of its sorrowful, but virtually conclusive outcome about the search of the missing – lay in an unparalleled capacity to understand the actual requirements of an expedition in that region, both in its nautical and surface components. This capacity was quickly developed: in 1928, arriving in Svalbard for the first time, Albertini himself confessed to felt as a novice in that environment. This ability to quickly and perfectly adjusting to the new context drew, no doubt, upon his most solid training as a mountaineer.

Surprisingly neglected in collective memory are the research activities and scientific results the expedition actually produced: data not merely observational, but genuinely innovative. In proportion to its size and complexity, the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition's research components rivalled technically, methodologically and in terms of concrete results those of airship *Italia*, much of whose scientific output was obviously lost in the catastrophe. The reports published after the expedition could provide useful data and methodological insights for similar studies in future Arctic expeditions.

Overall, the activities conducted by Albertini in Svalbard, both in 1928 and 1929, had a local but long-lasting impact on the geographical studies about the region. On June 22, 1929, Albertini, Guedoz, Urbano and Bonola discovered Kapp Laura, one of the few reliably visible lands in a region of Nordaustlandet covered by huge and ever-changing glaciers; although not explicitly mentioned in the 1932 memoir, the map annexed to it assigned, to a previously unnamed bay in the north of the island, the name «*Albertini Bay*». The toponym was later accepted and now there is, officially, an *Albertinibukta*⁸³ in Svalbard; it lays in a region of other places named after Italian and international explorers whose stories crossed in those two fateful Arctic summers⁸⁴. Before more developed technol-

⁸³ See <https://data.npolar.no/placename/4962ba03-02cf-53f7-9abd-735306312b6d>.

⁸⁴ Among others, it is worth remembering Finn Malmgrenfjorden (after Swede Finn Malmgren, *Norge* and *Italia*'s meteorologist), Soraberget (after Gennaro Sora, Italy's Alpine Corps officer and

ogy-based systems were adopted, geographical documentation and mapping relied heavily – and this was definitely the case in 1929 – on the direct surveying and reconnoitring by explorers. Albertini's work contributed to correcting cartographic errors and to building a better global awareness about the nature of lands that were still enveloped in some degree of mystery. The Arctic was still, at that time, a region of our world in which lands could be found, that had never been stepped upon by human foot. The *Heimen-SUCAI* did give something towards a more complete and perfected knowledge about this part of the planet.

Even the uncertain – and finally disproven – identification of Sucaiøya retains some historical value; a value testified, after all, by the fact that the placename eventually made it to official present-day repositories⁸⁵. The «*Isola SUCAI*» is just one among many other misidentified islands in history; a further testimony that exploration has often been a process in which the very limits of human reach and understanding were put to test.

With all this, a reflection on the story of this voyage, as we did see it, i.e. mostly through the eyes of its Commander, should not be limited to historical or technical aspects only. There is much more to the human side of it, a human side that we have strived to understand by reading the logbook, as a new source of information, along with the already published ones.

In the Arctic quest of *Heimen-SUCAI*, Gianni Albertini's complexity stands out clearly. A disciplined interpreter of the aspirations of his time, a mountain-climber and explorer of recognized excellence even in his youth, he was undoubtedly aware and protective of his prerogatives as Commander. Yet, he was far from any superhuman pose typical of some others among his contemporaries. The diary reveals his full awareness of his own limits, and even in moments of victory, his satisfaction seems more the feeling of a man who rejoices in having obtained, through tenacity and hardship, a concession from the iron laws of nature. In him there appear to coexist the traditional qualities of past Arctic explorers and the features of modern exploration based on scientific planning and technological means.

In several passages of the memoir and the logbook, he expresses clearly that, to achieve his aims, the expedition should ideally have deployed

rescuer in 1928, discoverer of Alpinjøya), Viglieriberget (Alfredo Viglieri, Navy officer onboard *Italia*), Čuchnovskijodden (Boris Grigoryevich Chukhnovsky, Soviet aviator and a rescuer in 1928).

85 See <https://data.npolar.no/placename/1406851f-fee1-5822-a980-dfac7339c6af>.

the full range of contemporary technology: icebreakers, ships, aircraft. Constrained by available resources he chose means he himself called “antiquated”, but whose nature and use he had mastered and could employ with maximum effectiveness. Like explorers of the past, he possessed a sense of leadership that enabled him to decide by authority not only on operational matters but also on the management of the narrative itself. Yet this authority softened when he perceived the necessity of collective decision-making on crucial issues such as the possible wintering. More than once he resorted to “long conversations” with his Second in Command, Zanetti, and with Jakobsen, captain of the *Heimen-SUCAI*, before undertaking – or refraining from – operations with potentially serious consequences. At the critical moment of attempting an approach to the coast of Novaya Zemlya, he entrusted the final decision to Jakobsen’s expert judgment, and after the latter’s negative opinion, he renounced the attempt.

Throughout the expedition, Albertini lived and narrated, as a central element, his synergy with his Italian fellows as true companions in arms. He also praised the dedication, shared purpose, and human worth consistently shown by the Norwegian members. At the end of the day, it is hardly surprising that longstanding friendship and shared sense of belonging led him, in his accounts, to place the former in the foreground and the latter in the background: this is in the nature of the circumstances and prior experiences. His judgments almost always reflect an inner light that tended, during and after the expedition, to soften possible tensions or criticisms; this was sincerely the vision he wanted for the expedition as it was unfolding, and that he wished to preserve as its legacy.

In examining the data and facts nearly a century later, we may agree that such vision was not far from the truth.

As it has been analysed in detail, Albertini’s perception of the relationship with nature appears as a major aspect in his endeavour. Like many great explorers of the past, he continually sought – and was often granted by the circumstances – an attentive understanding of environments, situations, and the harsh laws of life and death in the Arctic. He allowed himself to be deeply struck by what he saw and experienced, letting it pervade his spirit; and in turn the surrounding world became a projection and resonance of his inner states. In 1929 Albertini was a young and already accomplished explorer, surrounded by new technological horizons and by the rhetoric of a victorious human struggle against the cruel nature.

Yet, he clearly perceived that the nature's force surpassed him and his companions. He transfigured this awareness in powerful feelings about the implacable limits posed to human efforts; but also about the greatness of creation, standing as an eternal and somewhat benign background to the transience of human things. He observed and listened carefully to the places, the environments, the team-dogs, the wildlife, the sudden encounters with life and death.

Since the beginning of the voyage – as he was progressively departing from civilization to bring his companions and friends towards the unknown – Albertini allowed the experience to leave an indelible mark on himself and his men. After five months he returned physically and spiritually worn-out. This is clear even in the scrawled handwriting and technical brevity of the final logbook entry, which is not associated – unlike the initial one – with any page of reflection. Such reflections, however, would later be developed in the memoir, resuming and condensing thoughts that were surely those of the end of the journey, reconsidered and ordered in subsequent meditation.

The expedition that Albertini narrates to himself and to us in the diary ends, almost abruptly, with his last operational task as Commander: bringing the *Heimen* back to the dock and unloading the empty fuel drums.

After this act, Engineer Albertini, apparently, discharged the vessel and her Norwegian crew from the mission and dissolved the Italian group. He left Bergen after resuming, with his men, the clothes of civilian life, as a distinguished member of the Milanese high society and of the *Club Alpino Italiano*.

A portion of the remaining funds was used to erect a monument to commemorate Giulio Guedoz in Pré-Saint-Didier, his native village; the gimballled compass that had guided the patrol through the ordeal of Nordaustlandet was donated to the Sanctuary of Notre-Dame de la Guérison, where it may still be seen.

In the years that followed, Albertini recounted the enterprise in various occasions, always consistent with his interpretation of it. He went on living a relatively long life that combined further exploits and dangers with ordinary professional activity and the deep, respectful love of a large family, until his death in 1978 at the age of seventy-six.

We do not know how often, in the decades that followed, his heart returned to the days of the *Heimen-SUCAI* and to the sufferings of Nor-

daustlandet and Edgeøya; nor do we know whether the wish he expressed in the logbook and later in the memoir – *omnia fiunt in dies mitiora* – proved true for his restless spirit.

However, observing now, as posterity, the events of those days, it is difficult to escape the feeling that the synthesis of the endeavour – and perhaps of much of Albertini's entire life – is contained in the words he wrote while still young, as the echoes of the experience were vivid in him.

Within us will remain forever the weight of the enterprise: all our lives we shall be pursued by the fever of seeking without hope what cannot be found, by the anxiety of scrutinizing what does not exist, beyond the fog, beyond space, beyond ourselves (Albertini, 1932, p. 110)

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ANNEX 1

MEDICAL AND PHYSIOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS BY DR. ACHILLE PERONI¹

When Albertini offered me the position of physician of the Arctic Expedition he was preparing, he expressed the wish that I too, like the other members of the Expedition, should concern myself with research that would, so to speak, take advantage of the exceptional environmental conditions that would frame our period of exploration in the hyperborean regions: for my part, I was to carry out research in physiology.

It was natural for me to turn for advice and assistance to the person who had been the author of that modest measure of biological training I had acquired by developing my graduation thesis and by engaging in other experimental research. Professor Carlo Foà, Director of the Institute of Physiology of the University of Milan, with the youthful enthusiasm and optimism that are characteristic of him, took a keen interest in my plans and immediately proposed a programme of work, placing at my disposal all the material that his Institute could provide.

In a few pages I shall set out what my order of research was and what results I obtained from it; I shall not, however, venture into deductions or interpretations of what I have derived from my experiments, since I do not possess sufficient authority to do so; I shall limit myself to making known, to those who may be interested in the matter, the data and the numerical figures which one day may be re-examined, checked, and perhaps used.

I myself acknowledge that my results are readily open to criticism, but such criticism can be countered due to the particular nature of the subject under study, which is still uncertain in its physiological characteristics, and to the multiplicity of external factors that may have influenced it, rather than to the technique employed, which I feel entirely confident of having applied with a precision and a rigor no less than that used in a normal experimental laboratory.

I shall also set out what my physician's eye observed of interest in the field of the physiology of nutrition, and I shall report on some geophysical research that was entrusted to me, since I was in possession of the instruments suitable for carrying it out.

¹ In translating this report, we have partially edited the tables for better readability of data.

Research on Metabolism

The environmental factors that can influence the physiological functions of the organism (man or animals in general) are: temperature, barometric pressure, humidity, and solar radiation.

In our case, the exceptional nature of the environment consisted precisely in subnormal temperatures and in the continuous solar radiation that exists in the Arctic regions during the summer months.

The gross manifestations of the vital activity of a living organism are given by:

1. the electrical energy that manifests itself at every contraction of the heart and of the respiratory muscles;
2. the mechanical energy by which the heart places the blood under pressure in the vessels and the respiratory muscles expand the thorax;
3. the work of secretion of the kidney and of the other excretory glands;
4. the work of the receptor organs that receive stimuli and of the nerves that conduct excitations;
5. the energy of the vital processes that continue to take place in all the cells forming their basal tone even when the specific function is silent.

This vital activity, therefore – a continuous and inevitable consumption and the sum of the combustions proper to all the cells necessary for the maintenance of the “status quo” of the living organism and of the reactions provoked by the arrival of nutritive substances in the tissues – is clearly distinguished from the contingent consumption of energy caused by the work of digestion, by external work, and by the regulation of temperature.

All these forms of energy, which arise directly and indirectly from the chemical energy contained in the organic substances present in the organism, are transformed and developed in the form of heat, which can be measured either by direct calorimetry or by indirect calorimetry (that is, by determining the oxygen consumed and the carbon dioxide emitted). Physiology teaches us that the measurement of this heat produced by the transformation of chemical energies into necessary energies represents a constant in a living organism (mouse, dog, or man), and that, when it is

measured in such an organism twelve to eighteen hours after the last meal, in a heated environment in order to exclude the intervention of the chemical regulation of internal temperature, it yields a standard value that depends solely on the body surface of the organism and on its weight. This constant, in the same individual and under the environmental conditions mentioned above, is a datum of the greatest importance and varies under the influence of certain physiological and pathological factors.

From this constant value for each individual, which represents the inevitable consumption of energy absolutely necessary for the preservation of normal life, an attempt was made to establish a standard value for all individuals, which was called basal metabolism. It expresses the quantity of heat, expressed in calories, produced per hour and per square metre of body surface when the subject is in complete rest, fasting for twelve to sixteen hours, in an environment at an average temperature of 16°. This value, therefore, which is not a physiological entity in the true sense of the word but a conventional mental construct, is in reality very little physiological, because it is very difficult to isolate the organism from all other contingent activities.

Once this concept of basal metabolism had been established – a numerical value expressing the inevitable consumption of energy absolutely necessary for normal vegetative life – it was sought to determine which contingent factors could influence it, and it was seen that, in addition to digestion and work, temperature had a very important effect on the values of basal metabolism.

Professor Foà therefore advised me to study what variations would be produced, in the basal metabolism of the members of the Expedition, by the living in an environment that was much colder and characterized by solar radiation by day and by night.

He also advised me to investigate what influence these factors might have on the specific dynamic action of foods, which, manifesting itself in an increased production of calories, follows the intake of food and reaches its highest levels especially after the ingestion of protein substances, and which likewise yields characteristic values and curves for carbohydrates and for fats. This phenomenon would seem to be of great importance in relation to thermogenesis, especially as a capacity to withstand very low external temperatures.

Among the instruments for the determination of basal metabolism,

I had the choice between those operating on a closed circuit and those on an open circuit. But although the former are less fragile, they have the drawback of yielding very approximate values and of revealing only oxygen consumption, without allowing the determination of the respiratory quotient.

The choice therefore fell upon the practical and extremely ingenious apparatus constructed by Haldane for the examination of air in mines and caissons. It is a portable type of his apparatus for the volumetric analysis of gases, with a sampling burette of ten cubic centimetres, with automatic regulation of ambient temperature and pressure. The determination of carbon dioxide is obtained by measuring the decrease in volume of the air sample when this is passed into the chamber containing a 10% solution of caustic potash, and oxygen is evaluated by measuring the gas that is absorbed in the chamber containing a 10% solution of caustic potash and pyrogalllic acid.

This apparatus, which is manufactured by Siebe Gorman & Co., is of absolute precision despite its small size and has only the defect of being extremely fragile, being constructed entirely of blown glass. Foreseeing the assaults of the sea, as soon as I was installed on the *Heimen* I fixed it to the only half square metre of free wall in our small wardroom, and in this way I was able to withstand with impunity all the onslaughts of the storms of the Barents Sea.

For the methodology of air sampling, I adhered to the technique and the calculations of Douglas.

The subjects to be examined, in the morning after fasting for twelve hours, were kept awake in bed for half an hour to three quarters of an hour. I then had them exhale, by means of a special mouthpiece with a valve, into an impermeable bag with a capacity of 150 litres of air, for a duration of ten minutes. By determining the percentages of oxygen and of carbon dioxide contained in samples of 10 cc taken from the bag, I was thus able to calculate the amount of oxygen consumed and of carbon dioxide emitted in ten minutes, and, by measuring with a gasometer the volume of air contained in the bag and by means of appropriate calculations, to obtain in this way the values of basal metabolism.

On some of my companions on whom I carried out research in the Arctic regions, I had also performed determinations of basal metabolism before departure, obtaining perfectly normal values.

Reconciling the requirements of my research with the respective general and specific activities of my companions was not an easy matter, above all in view of the large number of determinations I carried out on each individual. From each of them I received the most patient and most interested cooperation, notwithstanding the fact that submitting to the experiments was rather onerous.

I was able to carry out the determinations of the specific dynamic action of foods only on myself, since this investigation requires that the individual be kept under observation for several hours, a condition incompatible with the various duties of my companions. I shall therefore set out the results of these latter investigations with even greater reservations than I do for the data concerning basal metabolism.

Numerous investigations have been carried out to study the variations produced by climate on basal metabolism, but almost all of them concern studies conducted in warm temperate or tropical climates.

From the experiments of Almeida and Knipping there would appear to result a lowering of basal metabolism in tropical regions; they would explain the phenomenon by acclimatization, with a slow and progressive modification of basal metabolism, until it becomes fixed at values more compatible with the new climatic conditions to which the individual is exposed. Investigations, however, carried out by Eikmann in Batavia would be in contrast with those of the aforementioned authors.

The only person who has carried out investigations of basal metabolism in the Arctic regions is Lindhardt, who conducted studies in Greenland. I have not been able to read his original work; I only know that he found, according to the seasons, very considerable differences in the values of gaseous exchanges.

The question of the influence of climate on basal metabolism cannot, I believe, be definitively resolved; I therefore consider it of interest to publish the contribution of my research to this still open question.

The determinations of basal metabolism were begun by me about one month after we were in the Arctic regions. For the meteorological characteristics of the period during which the investigations were carried out I refer to the meteorological report of Engineer Urbano.

It need only be noted that in the environments in which we lived there was an average temperature of 8°-9°.

I set out in the following table the results obtained, expressed as varia-

tions from the mean basal metabolism value of 40.

Subjects	Dosages	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	Mean Value	Mean Respiratory Quotient
PERONI age 25	13	-7.6	-1	-4	0.84
PUGLIESE age 27	9	-6.4	+3.7	-4.5	0.87
ZANETTI age 30	6	-6.4	+2.4	-2.3	0.84
URBANO age 25	10	-8.9	-2	-3.6	0.90
GUEDOZ age 23	5	-7.6	+3.7	-2.8	0.92
BONOLA age 23	7	-8.9	-3.8	-5.9	0.86
DELLA VALLE age 40	7	-1.6	+10	+4.6	0.89

With regard to research on the specific dynamic action of foods, the results concerning proteins and carbohydrates do not present any particular interest. By contrast, the investigations carried out with fats yielded, in seven determinations, an average increase in basal metabolism of 12% and a respiratory quotient of 0.86, whereas under normal conditions it is 0.74.

From the examination of the data set out above, it is not possible to draw definite conclusions; they represent only a contribution to a question in physiology that is still open and very obscure. In all the subjects examined, except one who was the oldest and the least robust in constitution, I found a decrease in metabolism which, without reaching the values given as expressions of pathological conditions, nevertheless appears notably evident.

Although it is generally believed that a decrease in ambient temperature produces an increase in basal metabolism, according to my research a prolonged stay in the Arctic regions, where the mean external temperature in June was -0.38° , in July -1.62° , and in August -0.20° , and that of the environments in which we lived was 8° - 9° would result in a decrease in

endogenous oxidations, with a consequent decrease in basal metabolism.

The question still remains open as to whether, and to what extent, the phenomenon of continuous solar radiation may have influenced the results obtained by me.

As regards the determination of the specific dynamic action of foods, I can only state that I noted an increase in the respiratory quotient compared with the usual value, attributable to the ingestion of fats. To provide an explanation of this phenomenon is, for the time being, premature, especially if one takes into account that my determinations of the specific dynamic action of foods were carried out on a single individual.

It is, however, natural to compare these results with the well-known habit of the populations inhabiting the Arctic ice cap of subsisting on diets composed predominantly of fats.

Geophysical Research

The Haldane apparatus in my possession, which, although it had a sampling burette of only ten cubic centimetres, never gave me a margin of error greater than 0.01%, allowed me to carry out several determinations of the atmosphere between the 79th and the 81st parallels.

The absolute absence, on the Arctic ice cap, of arboreal masses might lead one to suppose that this fact could influence the composition of the atmospheric air, since one of the principal means of destruction of carbon dioxide is thus lacking.

In none, however, of the numerous determinations I carried out did I find any appreciable variation from 20.93% oxygen and 0.03% CO₂, which are the normal percentages of these gases in the atmospheric air of our regions.

On the advice of Professor Natta of the Polytechnic of Milan, I also attempted to determine, by means of a very rough method, whether the ozone in the air of the Arctic regions presented a percentage different from that of our climates.

Professor Natta had been led to advise me to undertake this research by the conjecture that the continuous solar radiation, and therefore the greater abundance of ultraviolet rays in the air of the Arctic ice cap, might influence the amount of ozone in the atmosphere.

For the determination I had to content myself with a very rough meth-

od. I made air bubble through an acidic solution of potassium iodide, containing a few drops of starch solution, measuring the air during its passage with the same gasometer that I used for the determinations of basal metabolism. After the passage of several tens of litres of air, owing to the reaction of hydrogen peroxide, even with the air of our regions the liquid becomes coloured a more or less intense blue. Having established a test colour intensity, I observed that, with the change of different localities and with changes in atmospheric conditions, there were variations in the quantity of air necessary to reproduce the test colour.

I preserved the colour test and repeated the experiment in Milan, but here the same quantity of air was required as that which I habitually had to bubble through the revealing liquid in the Arctic regions. Normally, therefore, the percentage of ozone in the air of the Arctic ice cap would not differ greatly from that of our regions.

I did, however, observe a very interesting coincidence: during the period from 11 to 15 July, radiotelegraphic communications, both on short waves and on long waves, between our ship and the outside world were totally interrupted, and Pugliese diagnosed this as one of those so-called cases of *fading*², which are characteristic of the Arctic regions and are attributed to variations in atmospheric electricity. During the same period of time, in three ozone determinations, I required only half the volume of air that I normally needed in order to reproduce the test colour. The ozone would therefore have been doubled. There must undoubtedly exist a logical connection between the increase in ozone that I ascertained and the phenomenon of *fading* that was simultaneously observed: it is in fact known that ozone is formed from the oxygen of the air not only through the action of ultraviolet rays but also through the action of electrical discharges.

It would have been interesting to be able to observe the variations of ozone during another period of phenomena characteristic of the Arctic regions and attributed to variations in the electrical state of the atmosphere, namely during the aurora borealis. We were, however, able to observe this phenomenon only once toward the end of our explorations, but I was unable to carry out the ozone determination because of the stormy state of the sea.

² In the original Italian text, Peroni uses the term “feeding”. It is obviously an erroneous spelling for the word “fading”, which is therefore adopted here.

I draw the attention of specialists to these observations, which seem to me to be reasonably interesting, because I believe they are worthy of further study.

Notes on Nutrition

I consider it appropriate to set out some data concerning the provisioning of the Expedition and that of the patrol.

As regards the customary diet of the Expedition, Albertini devised crates containing food for eight men for seven days in such a way that each of the fourteen meals of the week would be different from the others. This variety of food is very important to observe, because it is very easy for a diet composed of preserved products to become monotonous. The quantity of food for each individual was fixed at an average of about 4,500 calories per day, a figure that was established on the basis of the data provided to us by previous expeditions. In practice, we found that such a diet was absolutely excessive, and the contents of one crate sufficed on average for more than ten days.

Large quantities of cabbages, potatoes, apples, and oranges were also taken on board. These vegetables kept very well for more than four months.

The winter provisions consisted of oat biscuits, Plasmon biscuits, powdered milk, Nestlé condensed milk, chocolate, legume flours of the Dahò type, which are very nutritious and very practical because of their ease of cooking, and above all of pemmican. Altogether, this constituted a reserve for eight men for three hundred days.

The Italian Biochemical Institute, directed by Professor Lorenzini, supplied us, by generous donation, with a vitamin and antiscorbutic preparation which was to constitute our defence against scurvy in the event of overwintering.

In the preparation of this product, Professor Lorenzini, who had already made a similar preparation for the Nobile expedition, followed the principle of concentrating a very strong dose of vitamin in a relatively small volume of solvent, in order to reduce, as far as possible, the volume and weight of this item of equipment, to obtain a preparation of unalterable activity and capable of withstanding low temperatures without freezing - an event which, if it were to occur, would destroy the vitamin

activity of the product.

For the extraction of the vitamin, five thousand lemons were used, from the pressing of which one hundred and sixty litres of juice were obtained; during this procedure special precautions were taken to reduce to a minimum the exposure of the juice to air, since oxidation also diminishes vitamin activity. The juice obtained was concentrated at low temperature and under vacuum. The residue was treated repeatedly with alcoholic solutions of different concentrations. To the final solution in 70° alcohol there was added the antiberiberi vitamin (obtained by the method of fractional alcoholic precipitations from fifty kilograms of yeast and fifty kilograms of rice bran).

The product was distributed in 120 bottles of 100 grams each. The preventive dose was fixed at eighty drops per day per individual. This preparation of Professor Lorenzini is truly excellent both in activity and in practicality. In biological tests on guinea pigs and pigeons placed respectively on diets of vitamin C (antiscorbutic) and vitamin B (antiberiberi), this preparation proved to be extremely active.

One hundred grams in fact contained approximately one hundred and sixty "pigeon units" of antiberiberi vitamin and one hundred and forty-four "guinea-pig units" of antiscorbutic vitamin.

I consider it of interest to examine, from the physiological point of view, the diet of the members of the patrol during the circumnavigation of Nordaustlandet, especially by comparing it with the various diets that have been proposed by physiologists for individuals engaged in severe exertion, and with those that were employed by other Arctic expeditions.

Normally the caloric requirement of an individual at rest is 2,640 calories according to the most widely accepted views. For moderate work 3,300 calories are required, for more strenuous work 3,900 calories, and for very strenuous work 5,200 calories.

The British troops during the war received a ration composed of: proteins 142 g, fats 187 g, carbohydrates 435 g, corresponding to a total of 4,200 calories.

Among the diets for individuals performing very strenuous work, mention should be made of that proposed by Atwater for the members of an American football team (proteins 226 g, fats 354 g, carbohydrates 654 g), with a total of 6,590 calories.

Among the diets of workers performing heavy labour in very cold cli-

mates, it is interesting to recall those of Swedish wood-splitters, which ranged from a minimum of 6,500 calories (with 196 grams of fat) to 8,300 calories (with 390 grams of fat). The normal pre-war diet of Russian lumberjacks consisted on average of 210 grams of protein, 91 grams of fat, and 860 grams of carbohydrates, with a total of 5,100 calories.

In one of the most recent treatises on the physiology of work, Lorentz proposes for those who devote themselves to sport the following typical diet expressed in calories:

[Food]	Usual (calories)	In "Training" (calories)
Meat, eggs, cheese	600	1800
Bread	750	750
Potatoes	200	200
Fat	800	2400
Vegetables, fruits	450	550
Chocolate	350	900
Milk	250	650
Total	3400	7250

We thus see how the habitual diet of an individual who performs light exertion must be increased when that exertion is more severe, and what large quantities of calories are necessary when such work is carried out at very low temperatures.

Turning to the practical question of the nutrition of an Arctic expedition, I shall transcribe the diets used by the most well-known explorers of recent decades.

The diet of Cagni's patrol consisted of:

[Food]	[Quantity]
Biscuit	400 g
Tinned meat	250 g
Pemmican	300 g
Butter	95 g
Milk	34 g
Liebig	10 g
Legume powder	27 g

Pasta	50 g
Sugar	50 g
Coffee	10 g

This diet corresponds to a total of approximately 4,500 calories. The marching rations of the Scott and Shackleton Expeditions to the South Pole were respectively:

Food	Scott	Shackleton
Pemmican	280 g	290 g
Pemmican supplement	-	50 g

Food	Scott	Shackleton
Biscuit	400 g	-
Plasmon biscuits	-	450 g
Cheese	70 g	75 g
Cocoa	180 g	220 g
Plasmon	60 g	30 g
Sugar	150 g	120 g
Oat flour	60 g	30 g
Pea flour	60 g	-
Corresponding calories	6000	5400

Both the rations of Cagni and those of Scott and Shackleton have the drawback of being composed of elements that are too heterogeneous, to the detriment, therefore, of the simplicity of preparing the provision boxes and of preparing the meals.

Much more rational is the daily ration adopted by Amundsen during the expedition with which he reached the South Pole. It is as follows:

[Food]	[Quantity]
Pemmican	350 g
Chocolate	40 g
Oat biscuits	300 g
Milk powder	70 g

A ration that corresponds approximately to about 4,300 calories. The ration that had been devised by Albertini for the circumnavigation of Nordaustlandet consisted of:

[Food]	[Quantity]	Calories
Pemmican	235 g	1200
Oat biscuits	240 g	1100
Chocolate	125 g	600
Plasmon biscuits	100 g	450
Savoury biscuits	120 g	450

[Food]	[Quantity]	Calories
Nestlé condensed milk	110 g	400

It thus amounted to a daily total of approximately 4,110 calories. Naturally, this was the maximum ration, which was never used in full; indeed, since the circumstances of the exploration required the economizing of provisions, the members of the patrol subsisted for thirty-two days on only two thirds of the established ration, thus introducing approximately 3,000 calories per day.

Although they had to endure very severe exertion, at no time did the members of the patrol report that the diet proved insufficient with regard to physical performance. It would therefore seem to be demonstrated that all the diets proposed by physiologists for workers engaged in heavy labour or for athletes exceed the actual requirements of the organism.

One remains furthermore perplexed when one considers the type of diet used by Cagni, Shackleton, and Scott, which, in addition to being of irrational composition, is also faulty in its excessive quantity, in comparison with that adopted by Amundsen and by Albertini: certainly, a system of provisioning so abundant can only impair the speed of a march.

I therefore believe that for a march in the Arctic regions lasting five or six weeks, carried out during the summer months, which must proceed very rapidly and which, because of the nature of the itinerary, cannot establish depots and must therefore make do with very light equipment, the ration adopted by Albertini is sufficient. It is my opinion, however, that if the Expedition were to last longer than such a period of time and

especially if it were to take place in spring, it would not be prudent to go below 4,000 calories without having to fear a detriment to the physical performance of the men.

Medical Notes

As regards my duties as physician, I have very little of interest to report that was personally observed by me.

For the medical equipment I took as a basis the battalion field kit, which was supplied to me by the Milan Committee of the Italian Red Cross. I supplemented it with surgical instruments offered to me by the firms Viola and Baldinelli, and with drugs and special products provided by the companies Zambelletti, Sandoz, Cofa, and Merck. My activity as a physician was reduced to a minimum.

As had already been observed by all those who have travelled in the Arctic regions, notwithstanding the low temperature and the easy fluctuations of temperature when one passes from heated environments to the outside, and the high atmospheric humidity – all factors that are refrigerant and rheumatizing *par excellence* – there did not appear among the members of the expedition any rheumatic diseases, not even the most trivial ones.

None of us suffered either from colds or from pharyngitis throughout the entire period of the expedition, not even the members of the patrol who were obliged to sleep in sleeping bags that were almost always wet.

Having questioned the physicians of the mining colonies of Kings Bay and Advent Bay, I learned that in these groupings of individuals colds and influenza appear very late, in the month of May – that is, when they have their first contacts with ships arriving from the continent – and that these diseases, after a first *poussée*, do not appear again until the following year.

Dr. Warshall of the Shackleton Expedition states that during their expedition the members never suffered from colds during the first year, but that all of them were affected in the following year, when they opened for the first time a bale of new clothing.

In 1926 the members of the expedition of the *American Museum of Natural History* on the south-west coasts of Greenland observed that in certain Eskimo settlements the inhabitants were affected by acute inflammations of the upper respiratory tract, whereas in others there were no traces of the inflammatory process; in the former it was observed that,

during the current year, contact with the outside world had already taken place before the arrival of the expedition; in the latter, by contrast, 48 or 72 hours after their arrival, acute inflammations of the upper respiratory tract developed in all the members of the settlement. Having later come into contact with the Polar Eskimos, who in that year had certainly not yet had contacts other than with the members of the expedition, there developed, seventy-two hours after the arrival of the latter, in all the members of the settlement, an acute catarrhal affection of the upper airways, without any of the members of the American expedition falling ill.

According to Knud Rasmussen, this type of infection dies out and does not reappear until the following year, when new contacts with the outside world occur.

According to recent views, both the common cold and catarrhal inflammations of the upper respiratory tract would be caused by a filterable virus, through the action of which even the activity of the usual saprophytic organisms of the upper respiratory tract would be heightened. After the infection, an immunity would remain that would last seven or eight weeks.

It is my opinion that my observations and those of all those who have concerned themselves with the question of rheumatic diseases in the Arctic regions can be coordinated as follows:

1. The air of the Arctic regions is aseptic, as is also demonstrated by the fact that wounds there generally follow an aseptic course, and in the very large accumulations of timber that are found on the ice or on the coasts of the islands of Spitsbergen and that come from the mouths of the Lena and the Yenisei, one never finds any trace of putrefaction, a process which, even in wood, is almost exclusively of bacterial origin.
2. Individuals who have spent the winter in the polar regions are already immunized against the bacterial flora present in their own upper airways and therefore, no longer being subject to the possibility of reinfection, can with impunity expose themselves to refrigerant and rheumatizing causes.
3. Conversely, individuals who always live in or who have spent the winter in the Arctic regions fall ill with inflammations of the upper respiratory tract as soon as they come into contact with pathogenic agents carried by newcomers, and they in turn become immune

until the following year.

4. The fact, moreover, that these individuals are rarely in contact with foci of infection, and therefore have less possibility of immunization against infections, explains the generalization of the inflammatory process of the upper airways to all the members of these colonies of the hyperborean natives.

ANNEX 2

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS BY ENGINEER MARCO URBANO¹

A study, even a summary one, of the meteorological regime of a region can be carried out only on the basis of data collected by a good number of stations distributed throughout the area and operating over a long series of years.

The installation on board the expedition ship of a complete station for the recording of atmospheric conditions therefore did not have as its direct purpose the study of the meteorological regime of the zone traversed, nor even the recording of the principal climatic characteristics of the region, which were already known.

The sole aim was to collect accurate data on the atmospheric conditions of the area and thus to contribute, together with the meteorological stations installed on the western coasts of Svalbard and on the northern coasts of Norway and Russia, to providing the data necessary for a complete study of the regime of the Arctic regions.

In the particular case, the data collected by us acquire a certain value because of the absolute lack of permanent stations along the route followed, and thus prove to be valuable in supplementing the results that can be derived from the observations carried out by the Norwegian and Russian stations mentioned above.

The station was equipped with the best that modern manufacturers produce for the observation, reading, and recording of meteorological data.

In the choice of the instruments I had been guided by the assured expertise of Professor Bianchi of the Brera Observatory, who, after a precise calibration and careful adjustment of the instruments themselves, took care to give me the most detailed instructions for obtaining scientifically accurate results.

The set of instruments, all manufactured by the “Filotecnica di Milano”, was as follows:

For the reading of atmospheric pressure, the marine mercury type was discarded *a priori*, since it would certainly not have withstood the violent

¹ In translating this report, we have partially edited the tables for better readability of data.

shocks of the ship against the ice; a less precise but more robust type was used instead, namely an aneroid dial barometer. This type of barometer, however, gave excellent results; in fact, at the check carried out at the Geophysical Institute of Tromsø on our return from the cruise, an error of only a few tenths of a millimetre was found in comparison with the calibration carried out at departure, an error smaller than the approximation attainable in reading.

The station was also equipped with an aneroid barograph with drum recorder of the standard marine type.

Atmospheric temperature was recorded by a bimetallic-arc thermograph, and the results were checked by readings on two alcohol thermometers, one maximum and the other minimum, and by a probe thermometer.

For the measurement of the relative humidity of the air, the station was equipped with a hair-recording hygrometer, having had to renounce a psychrometer, which is more precise but poorly suited to providing reliable results at temperatures below 0°C.

In addition, a registering cup anemometer was installed, checked by a propeller anemometer for the instantaneous reading of wind speed.

The instruments were installed in a special double-walled louvered meteorological screen mounted at the stern of the ship: the only possible arrangement, although not ideal, imposed by the limited space and by the need to protect the instruments from the possibility of being reached by waves that might sweep the deck.

The recording instruments were greatly disturbed by the considerable vibrations imparted to the ship by the Diesel propulsion engine and by the violent impacts of the vessel against the ice, which imposed disturbing oscillations on the light pen-carrying pointers. After testing various systems, we adopted as the best solution an elastic suspension with coil springs, which eliminated the small vibrations, while the large oscillations were almost entirely damped by a system of shock absorbers based on elastic rubber sponge and wood wool. Nevertheless, the inconvenience was never entirely eliminated, so that some charts turned out blurred by vibrations and in some places interrupted.

The data collected certainly do not allow definitive deductions to be drawn regarding the general meteorological regime of the area, which can only begin to be seriously studied with the data supplied by the stations recently installed, all the more so because the Svalbard region, situated at the

boundary between two zones with completely different meteorological characteristics, comes to have atmospheric conditions that are extremely inconstant and highly variable, making their study difficult.

The south-western limits of the area are in fact under the direct influence of the meteorological regime of the Atlantic Ocean, which pushes up to this latitude the final branches of the Gulf Stream, so that the western coasts of the archipelago have a climate less severe than that of regions at the same latitude.

The north-western coasts, on the other hand, are subject to the meteorological regime proper to the Arctic ice cap, exposed as they are to cold northerly winds and to the cold current coming from the north-east, which, carrying along the drifting pack ice, wedges itself into the stretch of sea open between Svalbard and the Franz Josef Archipelago: these flat and uniform coasts thus prove to be completely covered by ice that descends continuously to the sea, concealing the coast proper.

To these fundamental factors are superimposed local influences due to the particular geographical constitution of the region. Thus Nordaustlandet, which is entirely covered by an immense ice cap that extends to the sea, leaving free only a narrow coastal strip toward the Hinlopen Strait and the north-eastern coast, constitutes, with its great ice-covered surfaces, a source of strong cooling of the air that stagnates there, generating a regime of cold gravitational winds which, radiating from the centre of the island, descend violently perpendicular to the coast and prove to be entirely independent of the general regime of the region.

In the Svalbard area, atmospheric temperature in the summer season increases uniformly as the season advances, reaching a maximum toward mid-July and then beginning to decline gradually. The fact that the sun never sinks below the horizon causes the daily temperature range to remain within very narrow limits, so that between the daily maximum and minimum there is normally no difference of more than 4 degrees Celsius.

The relative humidity of the air presents very high mean values and follows a daily curve inversely proportional to that of temperature, likewise with very small variations.

Toward the beginning of August, shortly after the summer peak, the period of great fogs begins, which lasts until mid-September, when the period of equinoctial gales sets in.

The persistent fogs in this region are caused by the imbalance between

the temperature of the air, which decreases rapidly as the sun lowers toward the horizon, and that of the water, whose evaporating surface – left free by the ice of the disintegrating pack – is still increasing.

Novaya Zemlya presents, on its western coasts, a meteorological regime very similar to that of the northern European coasts facing the Atlantic.

Although the climate is very severe because of the high latitude over which the island extends, it nevertheless does not display the characteristics of Arctic zones, owing to the strong influence exerted on its regime by the main branch of the Gulf Stream, which, having crossed the southern Barents Sea, impinges precisely upon the western coasts of the island and then goes on to dissipate by bending northward, while the cold north-eastern current affects only the eastern coast.

The western coasts also lie on the route of Atlantic cyclones, which, after crossing the ocean, touch the northern coasts of Norway and reach as far as Novaya Zemlya, before then turning northward.

In the following tables are set out the principal data of the daily meteorological observations collected during the months of navigation.

June

Day	Position	Temperature			Pressure at 0°			Relative humidity			Wind direction			Wind speed			Cloud form			Cloudiness			State of weather
		9h	15h	21h	9h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	
1	78°07' N – 7°40' E	-3.0	-3.0	-3.4	763.0	765.5	766.5	86	82	84	NE	NE	NE	880	720	780	Cu.-Nb.	Cu.-Nb.	Cu.-Nb.	10	10	10	o
2	78°00' N – 11°10' E	-4.0	-3.8	-3.6	766.0	763.5	761.5	98	98	100	N	N	N	420	640	320	Cu.-Nb.	Cu.-Nb.	Str.-Cu.	10	10	10	f-s
3	Ice Fjord	-1.4	-0.2	+0.2	760.5	760.0	757.5	82	62	80	E	—	SW	150	0	300	Ci.-Cu.	Ci.-Cu.	Ci.	6	6	3	b-o
4	Prince Charles Foreland	-4.2	+0.3	+0.8	757.0	759.0	760.0	96	96	78	N	E-NE	E	200	50	40	Ci.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	3	8	3	e-s
5	Prince Charles Foreland	-3.0	-3.5	+0.3	760.5	758.5	758.0	80	82	92	E	E	N	600	180	300	Str.	Str.	Str.-Cu.	8	6	6	o
6	Kings Bay	+4.6	+4.8	+3.8	754.0	751.5	751.0	74	51	70	—	S-SE	SE	0	100	230	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	6	4	5	b-o
7	"	+3.0	+3.0	+1.9	752.5	753.5	754.5	85	82	99	E	E	E	550	400	500	Ci.-Cu.	Ci.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	2	5	7	b
8	"	+2.5	+3.1	+0.6	756.0	758.5	759.0	99	98	99	NE	E	S	45	50	40	Str.	Str.	Str.	9	10	10	o-s
9	80°10' N – 16° E	-0.2	-0.4	-3.2	758.5	760.5	761.5	99	95	98	E	E	E	360	110	180	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	Str.	10	10	10	o
10	L. Walden	-1.2	+1.4	-0.4	762.0	762.0	762.5	87	78	84	—	E	E	0	120	90	Str.	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	8	7	6	o
11	"	+2.4	+0.2	+4.5	761.5	762.5	762.5	95	75	75	E	E	—	160	40	0	Str.	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	9	8	4	o
12	"	+1.3	-1.0	-1.0	763.5	764.0	763.5	85	99	98	E	E	E	40	200	180	Str.	Str.-Cu.	Str.	9	10	9	o
13	"	-2.5	-2.8	-2.6	761.0	760.0	757.0	99	99	100	NE	NE	N	350	240	200	Str.	Str.	Str.-Cu.	10	10	10	c
14	Seven Islands	-2.5	-2.4	-1.2	754.5	754.5	755.0	100	98	99	N	NW	S	400	180	40	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	Str.	10	10	8	s
15	"	+1.5	+1.4	+1.3	758.0	760.0	760.5	97	90	89	SW	W	—	240	80	0	Str.	Str.	Str.	9	10	10	o
16	"	-1.2	-1.0	-1.1	763.5	765.0	765.0	90	92	97	NE	NE	N	180	190	180	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	9	9	10	o
17	"	+0.1	+0.3	+0.2	765.5	765.5	764.5	90	94	96	E	E	SE	190	200	180	Str.	Str.	Str.-Cu.	9	10	10	o
18	L. Walden	-0.2	+0.8	+0.1	765.0	765.5	765.5	90	90	80	SE	E	E	100	150	50	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	Str.	8	10	10	o
19	Hinlopen Strait	+0.8	+2.5	+0.1	767.0	767.5	767.5	95	90	98	W	W	S	70	120	230	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	9	10	o
20	"	+0.0	+0.2	-0.5	767.5	768.0	768.0	99	98	100	S	E	S	450	400	320	Str.	G.-Str.	Ci.-Str.	10	10	8	o
21	"	+3.2	+3.0	-0.3	768.0	767.5	767.5	85	99	100	E	E	SE	50	70	210	Str.	Str.	Ci.-Str.	10	10	7	o
22	"	+2.0	+2.3	+1.3	768.5	769.0	769.0	85	80	95	SE	SE	S	50	120	30	Ci.-Str.	G.-Str.	Str.	7	10	10	o
23	"	+3.8	-0.2	-1.2	769.5	770.5	771.0	65	95	100	NE	NW	E	80	240	450	Cu.	Cu.	Cu.	2	3	7	b
24	"	-0.2	+2.5	+0.0	771.0	771.0	770.0	95	75	95	SE	NE	NW	400	100	250	Ci.-Cu.	Ci.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	2	8	7	b
25	"	-0.2	+2.8	+2.0	763.5	757.5	752.5	95	95	80	S	S	S	410	180	220	Str.	Str.-Cu.	Ci.-Cu.	10	5	3	b
26	Louise Bay	+0.2	+1.2	-0.2	752.5	752.5	753.5	100	95	99	NE	NE	NE	470	300	500	Str.	Str.	Str.	8	9	10	o-s
27	"	+1.2	+0.3	-0.5	757.0	757.5	758.0	75	80	75	N	N	N	250	320	280	Str.	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	4	8	9	o
28	Foster Is.	+0.4	+0.8	-1.5	759.0	758.0	757.0	82	85	95	N	NW	NW	340	380	220	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	Str.	9	7	10	o
29	"	-2.0	-1.2	-0.8	755.5	754.5	751.5	100	99	95	NW	NW	NW	200	350	180	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	s
30	"	-0.3	+1.8	+1.0	755.0	758.0	757.5	100	89	85	E	E	N	60	80	170	Ci.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	Str.	3	10	10	b-o

July

Day	Position	Temperature			Pressure at 0°			Relative humidity			Wind direction			Wind speed			Cloud form			Cloudiness			State of weather	
		09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h		
1	Foster Is.	+0.2	+0.2	+0.8	758.5	738.0	757.0	100	99	95	NW	NW	NW	210	350	180	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	9	o-s
2	"	+1.0	+1.4	+1.0	757.5	756.5	757.5	95	75	75	N	N	N	180	150	110	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	10	o-s
3	Hinlopen Str.	-0.3	-0.1	+0.8	758.5	758.0	758.0	100	98	100	N	N	E	75	50	120	Str.-Cu.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	10	s
4	"	+0.8	+2.5	+1.5	759.0	760.0	760.0	100	99	78	S	SE	S	85	220	250	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	10	o-s
5	"	+0.3	-0.6	+1.4	760.0	760.0	758.0	100	100	95	S	N	E	80	60	60	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	10	o-s
6	"	+1.4	+2.1	-1.2	757.5	756.5	755.5	95	85	97	S	S	S	210	170	340	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	Str.	8	7	10	10	o-f
7	"	+2.2	+4.2	+4.2	755.0	755.0	755.5	90	50	60	S	S	S	120	210	210	Str.-Cu.	Cu.	Str.-Cu.	9	8	10	10	o-b
8	"	+5.1	+4.0	+2.8	757.0	759.0	758.5	52	51	75	S	S	S	210	260	650	Str.-Cu.	Cu.	Cl.-Cu.	8	5	3	3	b
9	C. Sander	+4.1	+6.2	+5.8	755.5	755.0	755.5	56	53	60	SE	SE	SE	550	610	400	Cl.-Cu.	Cl.-Cu.	Cl.	2	2	1	1	b
10	"	+5.0	+0.4	+0.0	763.0	764.0	764.5	90	98	94	S	S	S	30	320	250	Cl.	Cl.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	1	6	2	2	o-b
11	Hinlopen Str.	+3.0	+4.1	+5.0	761.0	759.5	758.0	100	99	78	S	S	S	400	1200	380	Cl.-Cu.	Cu.	Str.-Cu.	3	6	10	10	b
12	Sernow Bay	+7.5	+4.9	+5.1	755.5	754.0	752.5	65	75	75	S	S	SW	650	920	220	Str.-Cu.	Str.	Str.	9	10	9	9	o-b
13	"	+7.0	+4.8	+2.0	751.0	751.0	751.0	70	85	97	S	S	S	150	120	120	Cl.-Cu.	Cl.-Cu.	Cu.	2	4	6	6	b
14	Hinlopen Str.	+3.2	+1.4	+1.8	751.5	752.0	752.0	88	94	98	N-NW	N	N-NW	890	560	400	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	9	10	10	10	o-m
15	Coast N West [sic] Land	+2.0	+2.6	+2.7	753.0	754.0	755.0	100	92	85	W	SE	N-NE	480	300	120	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	10	o-m
16	Kings Bay	+3.4	+3.0	+2.6	756.5	757.0	757.5	74	82	93	-	SW	SW	0	400	380	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	8	10	10	r
17	Coast W West [sic] Land	-0.2	+3.0	+0.6	759.0	759.5	760.0	97	90	97	SW	S	SE	600	200	400	Str.	Str.	Str.-Cu.	10	10	10	10	o
18	Coast SE	+0.4	+0.5	+1.4	758.5	755.5	752.5	100	98	99	W	E	N	320	420	980	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	10	o-m
19	Whales Bay	+3.4	+5.0	+1.2	755.5	757.5	758.5	81	75	95	N-NE	N-NE	N-NE	1100	600	120	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	9	10	10	o
20	Stor Flood	+1.2	+1.0	+1.3	760.0	760.0	759.0	97	91	82	W	SW	SW	140	210	180	Cl.-Str.	Cl.-Str.	Cl.-Str.	8	7	4	4	o-b
21	"	+2.5	+3.5	+3.0	759.0	759.0	758.5	85	86	78	-	-	W	0	0	110	Cl.-Str.	Cl.-Str.	Cl.-Cu.	5	4	3	3	b
22	Derrie Bay	+6.5	+2.6	+1.4	753.5	752.5	751.5	68	89	98	-	S	SW	0	280	270	Cl.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	Str.	8	9	10	10	o
23	"	+1.0	+2.4	+2.2	750.0	750.5	751.5	100	98	95	SW	-	N-NE	240	0	400	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	8	5	5	f
24	"	+2.6	+2.8	+1.4	755.0	755.0	755.0	92	88	95	N-NE	N-NE	N-NE	400	200	180	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	10	o
25	"	+3.2	+3.4	+1.8	754.5	753.0	751.5	75	70	81	W	W	W	280	120	400	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	6	4	6	6	b
26	Coast S - Edge Is.	+1.2	+3.2	+0.8	740.0	748.0	749.0	88	92	96	N-W	NW	-	600	100	0	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	10	o-f
27	Ogle Strait	+1.6	+1.0	-0.2	750.5	752.0	755.0	94	100	98	N	NE	NE	360	410	400	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	10	o-r
28	"	+0.1	+0.6	-0.1	757.5	756.5	755.5	90	94	100	N-NW	NW	NW	300	350	200	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	10	o-s
29	"	+0.4	+1.4	-0.8	753.0	753.0	753.0	95	98	100	NW	NW	N	300	150	300	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	10	s-f
30	"	-0.6	-0.4	+0.4	753.0	753.5	753.5	100	98	99	N	N	NE	320	250	150	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	10	o-s
31	"	+1.0	+0.8	+0.5	755.0	755.0	754.5	100	99	100	NE	NE	NE	400	380	30	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	10	m-o

August

Day	Position	Temperature			Pressure at 0°			Relative humidity			Wind direction			Wind speed			Cloud form			Cloudiness			State of weather
		09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	09h	15h	21h	
1	Oliga Strait	0.0	+2.0	+0.9	753.5	754.0	754.5	100	99	96	N-NE	S-SE	S-SE	250	250	150	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	f-s
2	"	+0.2	+3.3	+1.8	755.5	756.0	757.0	96	91	92	NW	-	-	60	0	0	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	m-o
3	"	-2.2	-1.6	-1.7	757.5	757.0	757.0	96	97	99	N-NE	N-NE	N-NE	260	520	300	Str.	Str.	Str.	8	8	10	b-f
4	"	-0.7	-0.2	+0.7	757.0	757.0	757.0	98	97	97	N-NW	N-NW	-	250	120	0	Str.	Str.	Str.-Cu.	10	10	5	o-s
5	"	-0.4	-0.4	-1.7	760.0	762.0	762.0	97	97	98	N	N	N	200	250	200	Str.	Str.	Str.-Cu.	10	10	10	o-f
6	"	-1.0	-0.2	-1.8	765.0	766.0	768.0	92	86	82	-	-	-	0	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	b
7	"	-1.0	+2.5	-1.4	768.0	767.0	765.0	85	75	90	-	SE	E-SE	0	100	120	-	-	-	0	0	0	b-f
8	"	+0.4	+1.5	+0.5	763.0	763.0	762.5	95	90	97	E	E	E	120	100	110	-	-	-	0	0	0	f
9	"	+0.4	+0.3	+0.1	762.0	761.0	759.5	98	97	98	E	E	E	250	350	200	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	f-s
10	"	+3.3	+1.2	0.0	758.0	755.0	753.0	98	95	95	-	-	-	0	0	0	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	f-o
11	"	+0.2	+0.9	+0.5	753.0	752.5	752.0	96	96	96	E-SE	-	E-SE	220	0	110	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	o
12	"	+0.8	+0.6	+0.2	752.5	753.0	754.0	96	96	97	-	E-SE	-	0	100	0	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	o-f
13	"	+2.6	+2.0	+1.0	755.5	758.0	758.0	94	85	95	-	E	NE	0	100	150	A-Cu.	A-Cu.	A-Cu.	8	8	10	o
14	"	+4.0	+0.3	+0.8	758.0	758.5	758.0	87	99	99	N	N	N	300	300	250	A-Cu.	A-Cu.	A-Cu.	8	10	10	o-m
15	"	0.0	-1.0	-1.9	758.0	758.0	758.5	99	98	100	N	NE	NE	250	150	150	Str.-Cu.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	o-f
16	"	-2.0	+1.2	-1.3	759.0	760.0	761.0	95	86	95	-	-	S-SW	0	0	100	Cl.	Str.	Str.	5	3	10	b
17	"	-1.3	+0.6	-0.2	763.0	762.5	762.0	94	84	86	-	-	-	0	0	0	Cl.-Cu.	Cl.	Cl.-Cu.	7	3	3	b
18	"	+0.2	+2.3	-1.5	761.5	761.5	760.5	89	77	91	-	S-SE	S-SE	0	300	250	Cl.	Cl.-Cu.	Cu.	1	2	10	b
19	"	-0.5	+0.5	-1.5	760.0	759.5	759.5	92	88	98	E	E-SE	E	350	200	200	Str.-Cu.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	o-s
20	"	+1.0	+0.5	-1.5	760.0	760.5	761.0	99	82	91	E	E	SE	250	200	100	Str.	Cl.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	10	8	9	s
21	"	-2.4	-1.3	-1.8	762.5	764.0	766.0	94	82	90	-	-	S	0	0	110	-	Cl.-Cu.	Cl.-Cu.	0	6	6	b
22	"	+1.9	+2.2	+1.6	766.0	765.5	765.0	100	100	100	SW	SW	SW	450	500	300	Str.-Cu.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	o-r
23	"	+1.5	+2.5	+1.2	767.0	767.5	767.0	100	97	96	W	-	-	100	0	0	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	f
24	"	+1.4	+1.6	0.0	765.0	761.5	759.0	100	97	99	SE	E	E	250	250	350	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	f
25	"	+1.5	+0.3	-0.1	760.0	760.0	759.5	99	98	99	S-SE	E	E-NE	250	250	350	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	f
26	"	+0.5	+0.6	+0.2	760.5	760.0	758.0	100	97	96	N-NE	NE	E	550	600	650	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	f
27	"	+0.0	-0.2	-0.5	755.5	756.0	756.0	100	98	98	E	E	E	900	900	950	Str.	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	10	10	10	o-r
28	Coast S. Wyches Is.	+2.0	-0.5	-1.0	758.5	758.5	758.5	88	98	97	NE	N	N	750	800	1000	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	Str.-Cu.	10	10	10	o
29	79°15' N 35°/40° E	-0.6	-1.2	-1.4	757.0	756.5	754.5	100	95	98	N	N	N	950	750	700	Str.-Cu.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	o-s
30	79°20' N 40°/47° E	+0.9	+0.6	-0.4	754.5	755.0	756.0	96	95	98	E	SE	S	150	400	150	Str.	Str.	Str.	10	10	10	f-s
31	Entrance to British Channel	+0.3	+1.2	-0.7	762.5	766.0	767.0	90	88	98	SE	SE	-	200	150	0	Cu.	Cu.	Cu.	3	2	5	b

ANNEX 3

REPORT BY DR. AUGUSTO BONOLA

In having to address in this brief chapter the zoological results obtained by the Albertini Expedition, it is first of all necessary to emphasize that – by the very nature of the Expedition, which was exclusively exploratory – such results were limited. In fact, the Albertini Expedition had neither the purpose nor the equipment suitable for carrying out accurate biological research in the regions of the Svalbard, which have already long been the object of zoological expeditions, among which, most recently, that organized by the University of Oxford in 1921. Only the eastern part of Nordaustlandet had not yet been the object of exploration, but it consists of an immense glacier that falls sheer into the sea; within it there emerges a small rocky escarpment, the only strip of free land discovered up to the present (Laura Land). As regards marine biological research, it must likewise be observed that the means at the disposal of the *Heimen-SUCAI* were limited, and for this reason it was only possible to carry out very fragmentary collections, which make but a slight contribution to the knowledge of the interesting fauna and flora of the polar seas surrounding the Svalbard. This region has already been the subject of numerous and well-equipped biological expeditions, such as that carried out by the vessel *Helgoland* in 1898. In addition to this, it must be added that other causes – for example, the rapidity of travel over the ice on skis, the loss of much material abandoned or damaged during the patrols – further restricted the biological contribution made by the Expedition.

Nor was it possible to devote greater attention to marine research during the ship's return voyage, since it was necessary to take advantage of the few moments in which the vessel itself was free from the ice in order to continue the route. In any case, the results of the general observations carried out and the small amount of material collected and identified can contribute something to the knowledge of the fauna of this part of the Arctic Ocean and of the lands found there.

We shall precede the catalogue of the animal species recorded with a few brief remarks on the distribution of the fauna in the regions explored by us.

In May and June, during navigation in the Barents Sea, large flocks of seabirds were sighted – at intervals – (particularly *Fulmarus*); they were

found in groups of thousands, especially around areas where the pack ice was broken and where, consequently, there were greater opportunities for the birds to feed on fish. These birds were not at all frightened by the presence of man, and we – from the ship – hunted them, taking them with a hook, which they readily bit in order to eat the piece of bait attached. Other birds very frequent in the Svalbard and likewise found in very numerous flocks were the eiders and various species of guillemots.

The first seals seen by the Expedition appeared off King's Bay and Advent Bay; they were then found in many other localities; in Wahlenberg Bay (Hinlopen Strait) some walruses were also killed from the ship and others were seen around the Seven Islands (situated north of Nordaustlandet). Several polar bears were seen and killed: they appeared in particular abundance along the northern coast of Nordaustlandet and off Edge Island.

Numerous herds of reindeer were also seen and approached, especially at Cape Platen (the northern part of Nordaustlandet) and in Wahlenberg Bay. On the return voyage along the coasts of Novaya Zemlya many bones of these ruminants were also seen.

These are the general observations on birds and mammals: it may be noted here that the majority of these animals were seen exclusively along the coasts, where moss and some lichens develop more readily. In the interior of Nordaustlandet, crossed for the first time by our Expedition and consisting of an enormous ice cap, no traces whatsoever of fauna or flora were observed, whereas in the coastal zone to the north and east of the same island it was possible to carry out the few faunistic observations and captures reported above.

As regards the material collected in glacial waters, and in particular the diatoms gathered, it was obtained during the ship's return voyage. When large slabs of ice, breaking, overturned, they often revealed on the lower, previously submerged surface yellowish patches: these patches appeared to be composed in large part of diatoms.

With regard to the material collected and studied by various specialists, as will appear from the attached Catalogue, the most noteworthy zoological results are represented by an interesting species of cestode (Bothriocephalid), found in the stomach of seals and shown to be a species new to science: this species has been dedicated to the leader of the Expedition under the name *Tetrabothrius albertinii*. Also new is a species of chironomid

dipteran, found on a log carried by the current onto the coasts of Ziegler Island, which Dr. Goetghebner has named *Orthocladus bonolai*. A species of earthworm found among the moss at Reindeer Camp (Cape Platen) was previously known only from Alaska, and of the numerous diatoms found and collected, more than eighty are species new to the Svalbard (see the interesting publication by Fr. Vito Zanon: *Diatoms of Olga Strait*, in “Mem. Pont. Acc. N. Lincei”, Rome, 1931). A jellyfish found on the western coasts of Novaya Zemlya also presented biologically interesting characters and harboured in all its specimens numerous individuals of hyperiid crustaceans as inquilines. Among the insects collected, numerous collembolans found among the thick moss of Cape Platen are worthy of note. A certain number of spiders were also captured in various localities. Among the birds collected, *Plectrophenax nivalis subnivalis* appeared of interest, as it more closely resembles the forms of western Greenland than those of Scandinavia.

The most interesting or new species collected by the Albertini Expedition have been the subject of specific publications by the specialists who kindly undertook the task of identifying them, and to whom our most sincere thanks are due. (See *Zoological Material Collected by the Albertini Expedition in the North-Eastern Svalbard*, in “Bollettino di Zoologia”, Naples, 1931).

We are also pleased to express here our warmest thanks to the distinguished Professor Alessandro Ghigi, Director of the Institute of Zoology of the Royal University of Bologna, who, in addition to placing the collecting material at our disposal, was generous with advice and assistance and kindly provided – upon the return of the Expedition – for the sorting of the material and for facilitating its study and its dispatch to the respective specialists.

Catalogue of Species Collected by the Albertini Expedition in Svalbard and Novaya Zemlya

Birds (identified by Prof. ALESSANDRO GHIGI – Bologna):

Plectrophenax nivalis subnivalis (BREHM) – Ziegler Island, 23 July 1929.

Somateria mollissima borealis (BREHM) – Ziegler Island.

Fulmarus glacialis (L.) – Ziegler Island, 23 June 1929.

Erolia maritima maritima (BRÜNN) – Ziegler Island, 23 June 1929.

Phalaropus fulicarius (L.) – Ziegler Island, 23 June 1929.

Sterna paradisaea (BRÜNN) – Ziegler Island, 23 July 1929.

Larus hyperboreus (GRUN):

- a) juvenile specimen – Arkangel Bay, September 1929;
- b) " adult – Edge Island.

Pagophila eburnea (PHIPPE):

- a) specimen – Treuremberg Bay;
- b) another specimen – Edge Island.

Rissa tridactyla tridactyla (L.):

- a) specimen in autumn plumage – Arkangelo [sic] Bay;
- b) " adult in spring plumage – Edge Island;
- c) " juvenile – Cape Nassau (N. Zemlya).

Stercorarius pomarinus (TEMM.) – Cape Nassau.

Uria grylle mandti (MOUDT) – Arkangel Bay.

Uria lanivia lanivia (L.) – Advent Bay, 6 June 1929.

Insects

Diptera Chironomidae (identified by Dr. M. GOETGHEBUER – Ghent):

Orthocladius consobrinus Holug.

Orthocladius bonolai Goet., new species, in numerous specimens on a tree trunk on Ziegler Island.

Collembola (identified by Dr. ERNESTO CAROLI – Naples):

Xenilla humicola O. FAB. – 12 specimens from the Reindeer Camp (Cape Platen) and 5

from Treuremberg Bay (Hinlopen).

Arachnids (identified by Prof. LODOVICO DI CAPORACCO – Florence):

Micryphantes nigripes E. S. – Cape Platen.

Erigone psycrophila Th.

Typhochrastus spetbergensis Th. – (Cape Platen).

Amphipod Crustaceans (identified by Prof. Anita Vecchi – Bologna):

Gammarus sp. – 2 incomplete specimens found in the stomach of a seal.

Hyperia alba MONT. – 23 specimens, inhabitants of jellyfish. Novaya Zemlya.

Oligochaetes (identified by Prof. UMBERTO PIERANTONI – Naples):

Enchytraeus kincaidi EISEN. – Reindeer Camp (Cape Platen).

Nematelminths and Platyhelminths (identified by Dr. DINO BRIGHENTI – Bologna):

Controcaecum osculatum RUD. – Numerous juvenile specimens adhering to the intestinal mucosa of a seal.

Dyctiophyme SP. – Juvenile specimens.

Tetrabothrius albertini BRIGH. – New species: it is a small Bothriocephalus found in a certain number of specimens in the stomach of a seal, and the differential characters of this species will be described elsewhere, when the species itself is formally described.

Scyphozoan Jellyfish (identified by Dr. VALERIA NEPPI – Verona):

Cyanea capillata ESCHSCHOLTZ. – Coasts of Novaya Zemlya: 5 specimens.

Diatoms (identified by Rev. Father VITO ZANON – Trivento):

Achnantes hyperborea GRUN. – Olga Strait.

" *lanceolata* BREB.

" var. *elliptica* CL.*

" *linearis* W. SM.*

" *minutissima* KTZ.*

" " var. *cryptocephala* GRUN.*

Achnantes taeniata GRUN.*

" *trinodis* ARNOTT.*
Amphiprora alata forma *minor* PERAG.*
 " *kryophila* CLEVE.*
 " *paludosa* W. SM.*
Amphora marina W. SM.*
 " *laevis* var. *laevis* GREG.*
 " *stauoptera* CLEVE.*
 " *ovalis* var. *lybica* EHB.
Asterionella inflata HEIBN.*
Auricula minuta Cleve.*
Bacillaria socialis GREG var. *kariana* GRUN.*
Biddulphia aurita (LYNG) BREB. – Olga Strait.
Ceratoneis arcus KTZ.
Chaetoceros borealis BAILEY.*
 " *concavicornis* MEUNIER.*
 " *decepiens* CLEVE.*
 " *glacialis* MEUNIER.*
 " *socialis* LAUDER.*
Cocconeis dirupta var. *typica* CLEVE.
 " *scutellum* var. *genuina* CLEVE.
Coxinodiscus excentricus EHB.*
 " *curvatulus* var. *odontodiscus* HUSTEDT
 " " " *kariana* CLEVE e GRUN.*
 " " " *minor* GRUN.*
 " *lacustris* var. *hyperborea* RATTR.*
 " *oculus iridis* var. *borealis* CLEVE.
Cymbella incerta var. *naviculacea* GRUN.*
 " *parva* W. SM.*
Ventricosa KTZ.
Diatoma hiemale var. *mesodon* GRUN.
Dimerogramma minor RALFS.*
 " *williamsonii* Greg.*
Fragilaria groenlandica MEUNIER.
Frustulia rhomboides var. *saxonica* (RABH) DE TONI.
 " *vulgaris* (THW.) DE TONI.*

Gomphonema exiguum var. *arctica* GRUN.

" *parvulum* KTZ.

" " var. *subelliptica* CLEVE.

Kamtschiaticum var. *sibirica* GRUN.*

Grammatophora angulosa var. *hamulifera* GRUN.

Gyrosigma distortum W. SM.

Hantzschia amphioxys GRUN.

Melosira arctica (E.) DICKIE.

" *undulata* var. *Normanni* ARNOTT.*

" *ambigua* MÜLLER. – Olga Strait.*

" *sulcata* KTZ. forma *coronata* GRUN.*

Meridion circulare AG.

Navicula (*Caloneis*) *bacillaris* GREG.*

" " *cocconeiformis* GREG.

" " *consimilis* A. S.*

" " *cuspidata* var. *ambigua* EHB.*

" " " *lanceolata* GRUN.*

" " *directa* var. *remota* GRUN.

" " " *subtilis* GREG.*

" " *glacialis* CLEVE.

" " *lanceolata* var. *phyllepta* KTZ.*

" (*Diploneis*) *litoralis* DONK.

" " *kariana* var. *detersa* GRUN.*

" " " *frigida* GRUN.*

" " *libellus* GREG.

" (*Schizonema*) *mollis* WILM.

" " *ramosissima* forma *genuina* CL.*

" " " var. *amplia* CL.*

" " *rotheana* RAB.

" " *mutica* forma *göppertiana* BLEISCH.

" (*Stauroneis*) *septentrionalis* GRUN.

" (*Caloneis*) *silicula* var. *genuina* CL.*

" " " *curta* GRUN.*

" (*Stauroneis*) *spicula* DICKIE.*
" " *transitans* var. *erasa* CL.*
" " *trigonocephala* CT.*

Nitzschia acuta HANTZ.*
" *acidularis* W. SM.*
" " var. *closterioides* GRUN.*
" *amphibia* var. *acutiuscula* GRUN.*
" *angularis* var. *affinis* GRUN. – Olga Strait.
" *frigida* GRUN.*
" *hungarica* GRUN.*
" *lanceolata* W. SM.*
" *palea* W. SM.*
" *polaris* GRUN.*
" *rigida* var. *rigidula* GRUN.
" *sigma* W. SM.*

" *spathulata* var. *hyalina* GREG.*

Nitzschia subtilis var. *glacialis* GRUN.*

" " " *paleocea* GRUN.*
" *vitrea* var. *recta* HANTZ.*
" *vidovichii* GRUN.

Homoeocladia taeniata MEUNIER.*

Pinnularia borealis EUB.
" *balfouriana* GRUN.*
" *divergentissima* GRUN.
" *hemiptera* var. *interrupta* CL.*
" *quadratarea* A. S.
" " var. *constricta* ÖSTR.*
" " " forma *interrupta* A. S.*
" " " *dubia* A. S.*
" " " *cuneata* ÖSTR.*
" " " *minor* ÖSTR.*
" " " *stuxbergii* CL.*

" *stauroptera* var. *interrupta* CL.*

" *subcapitata* GREG.*

" *viridis* NITZ.*

" " var. *commutata* GRUN.*

Pleurosigma (Rhoicosigma) stuxbergii var. *rhomboides* CL.*

" " " *latiuscula* CL.*

Rhopalodia musculus var. *gibberula* KTZ.*

Scoliopleura tumida var. *adriatica* GRUN.*

Surirella ovalis var. *ovata* KTZ. – Stretto di Olga.

Synedra affinis var. *parva* V. H.

" " " *fasciculata* KTZ.*

" *ulna* var. *aequalis* KTZ.*

Tetracyclus rupestris (A. BR.) GRUN.*

Thalassiosira kryphila JÖRG.*

" *fallax* MEUNIER.*

Tropidoneis lepidoptera GREG.

" *vitrea* WILM.*

" *pusilla* GREG.*

* The diatoms marked with an asterisk are all new for Svalbard.

ANNEX 4

RADIOTELEGRAPHIC REPORT BY FRANCO PUGLIESE

The results obtained with a radiotelegraphic installation in the polar regions often assume considerable interest, both because of the scarcity of data that up to the present have been obtainable from Arctic expeditions that made use of radio, and because of the particular characteristics of the propagation of Hertzian waves in the polar regions, due to special climatic and magnetic conditions.

The manner in which electromagnetic waves propagate, and the consequent study of the wavelengths most suitable for ensuring the desired communications, are then of practical interest all the greater in proportion to the importance of the radiotelegraphic service in an Arctic expedition, for which radio is the sole means of communication with the outside world.

And since the results obtained from them depend in large part on the preparation, design, and construction of the stations, we shall first briefly examine the characteristics of the apparatus employed by our Expedition, before setting out the results.

The preparation of the radiotelegraphic equipment had to be carried out in a very short time. Some foreign firms that had given assurances for the complete supply of the stations were subsequently unable to do so, so that a month and a half before the date fixed for departure the entire installation still had to be built.

Only the valuable assistance spontaneously given to us by Engineers Allocchio and Bacchini, who offered to construct in their Milan workshops all the radiotelegraphic equipment, the enthusiastic cooperation of our engineer friends Gnesutta, Pagliari, and Sandri, and that of the workforce of the firm, who worked day and night on the construction of the stations, made it possible to prepare in so short a time the impressive mass of material that was to be installed on board the *Heimen-SUCAI*.

Multiple were the services required of the Expedition's radiotelegraphic installation: first of all, to make it possible for the patrols detached from the ship to keep in communication with it. In other words, stations had to be designed of very small weight, yet at the same time robust and resistant

to the elements, such as to be transportable on sledges, operable under extremely unfavourable conditions by personnel with little experience, and having a range of at least four hundred kilometres in regions constantly subject to sunlight which, as is known, greatly diminishes the radius of action of a radiotelegraphic station.

Furthermore, a station had to be built that would ensure a constant connection with Italy, taking into account the distance of about four thousand kilometres to be covered, and above all the strong fading caused by the persistence of sunlight and by the magnetic phenomena of the Arctic regions.

Finally, it was necessary to have a radiotelegraphic installation that would ensure communication between the *Heimen* and the coastal stations of Svalbard and Norway and with other ships.

In addition to all this, the eventuality of overwintering had to be foreseen, and thus the construction on site of a fixed station, operated by a motor independent of that of the ship.

The portable stations, having to satisfy the above-mentioned requirements, were therefore made up of three cases: one of 30 × 35 centimetres containing the transmitter and the receiver, another containing the batteries, and a third with the accessories and the antenna material. The question of power supply was much discussed, taking into account the weight, autonomy, and reliability obtainable with the various systems. Finally, the decision was reached to employ dry cells for the anode supply and for the filaments, a solution which experience later proved to be entirely satisfactory.

The aerial support consisted of three telescopic aluminium tubes, each three metres in length, and was secured by means of guy wires. The complete station, which could be brought into operation in a few minutes, was capable of functioning for eighty hours and weighed only thirty kilograms.

The shipboard station had to have considerable power in order to meet the imposed conditions; however, this power was limited by the dimensions of the radiotelegraph cabin of the *Heimen* (2 × 1.90 metres) and by the capacity of the ship's own engine plant. In order to obtain the maximum stability of the signals, notwithstanding the oscillations of the aerial due to the wind and those of the ship, a circuit with a master oscillator was adopted. The maximum power available for supplying the installation was 1.2 kW at 3,000 volts d.c., provided by a generating set specially construct-

ed by the Marelli company. The d.c. motor was supplied at 32 volts by a Delco generator set, which at the same time provided the ship's lighting.

A petrol engine of 3.5 horsepower was considered as a reserve and in the event that it should be necessary to transport the transmitting apparatus to the wintering quarters.

The transmitter comprised a 100-watt triode master oscillator, followed by a neutralized triode amplifier of 800 watts. Operation was decided on wavelengths between 60 and 18 metres.

Finally, a musical spark station of the Marconi type, 250 watts, was installed for wavelengths between 300 and 800 metres.

There were two shipboard receivers, covering the range of short, medium, and long waves.

The installation of the stations on board the ship was carried out at Bergen in the ten days preceding departure for the Arctic. The radiotelegraph cabin was situated at the stern of the vessel, above the deck, and between it and the ship's masts two distinct aerials were connected: one four-wire inverted-L for medium waves, and another single-wire aerial 20 metres long for short waves.

The installation of the entire radiotelegraphic system required several days, so that only shortly before departure for Tromsø was it possible to begin transmissions, using the call sign LDIV officially assigned to us.

Also embarked at Bergen was the Norwegian radiotelegraphist Mr. Johansen, who was particularly useful to us not only as an excellent radio operator, but also as an interpreter in our communications with the Norwegian stations.

The Shipboard Station

The connection with IDO, the San Paolo Station in Rome, kindly placed at our disposal by the Royal Navy as our correspondent in Italy, was begun regularly from the very day of departure from Bergen, and the wavelength of thirty metres was chosen, which from previous experience had proved to be the most suitable for transmissions carried out over a path only partly covered by darkness.

Serious difficulties were encountered in the first days of navigation because of the very strong vibration imparted to the ship, and hence to the transmitter, by the ship's engine, to such an extent that it was necessary to

suspend the valves elastically in order to reduce the vibration of the filaments, and moreover to modify the original master-oscillator circuit into a self-excited Hartley circuit which, by means of an appropriate reduction of the ratio between inductance and capacitance, was much less affected by variations in capacitance produced by the vibrations of the transmitter. A special shielded receiver, constructed on board, made it possible to monitor at every moment the quality and stability of the emitted wave.

The Mullard oscillator triode was subsequently replaced with two Philips T.B. 2/250 triodes, which consumed less heater current and oscillated more readily on twenty metres. On thirty metres the normal supply power was 700 watts and the antenna current about 4 amperes, measured at the base of the 20-metre aerial excited on the third harmonic, with the counterpoise excited on the fundamental.

Under such conditions the strength of our signals in Italy was generally good, that is, such as to permit in the evening the transmission of several hundred words.

The Portable Stations

Once the shipboard stations had been set up, and after we had arrived at the Spitzbergen, trials were begun with the portable stations, which, naturally, we had not been able to test in the regions and under the conditions in which they were to operate.

First, the wavelength of 55 metres was chosen, which was considered the most suitable for covering relatively short distances in full daylight; and in fact, during an initial test carried out between Advent Bay and the ship while the latter was off Cloven Cliff, at a distance of about 100 kilometres, the signals from the portable station were received with an intensity such as to give confidence in the successful outcome of future links.

A radiating system was studied and adopted, consisting of a 12-metre-long oblique single-wire antenna and of a counterpoise composed of three wires, each 11.50 metres long, spread out in a fan shape on the ground beneath the aerial. With this system, a current of 0.5 ampere at the base of the aerial was obtained with 5 watts of input power, and the emitted wave proved to be extremely stable, notwithstanding the oscillations of the aerial due to the most violent winds.

Considering the extremely unfavourable conditions under which these

stations – the first to be used in an exploration with sledges – were to have to operate, that is, being subject to violent shocks and to being buried for long hours under the snow, and, on the other hand, the absolute necessity that no failure should deprive the patrol of the only means of communication with the ship, a meticulous inspection of every component part of the stations became necessary, together with special protection of the batteries against any infiltration and against excessive lowering of their internal temperature, which would have reduced the capacity of the batteries.

Engineer Marco Urbano, who was improvised as a radiotelegraphist during the voyage between Bergen and the Seven Islands, brilliantly fulfilled his task as patrol operator, managing to communicate regularly with the ship throughout the entire exploration of Nordaustlandet, whenever the blizzard did not prevent him from raising the aerial.

And the results obtained with the portable station exceeded the expectations placed in it, since at distances varying between 10 and 350 kilometres, over land, in full daylight and under the most adverse atmospheric conditions, the signals of the patrol always reached the base ship (which replied on thirty-one metres) with an intensity such as to be normally received on loudspeaker.

Subsequently, one of these stations was installed on the motor launch, using a small aerial three metres high and seven metres long, while as counterpoise a wire arranged along the edge of the boat was employed. The installation served excellently for coastal explorations in Novaya Zemlya, maintaining communication with the ship over distances of several tens of kilometres.

Scientific Observations

In parallel with the radiotelegraphic service proper, a series of observations was carried out on the behaviour of the various frequencies in relation to the time of day, meteorological conditions, and the magnetic phenomena characteristic of the Arctic regions.

It is evident that the very nature of the Expedition, the extreme lack of space on board, and the environmental conditions did not permit the use of the most accurate means of scientific investigation. For example, it was not possible to carry out measurements of the height of the Kennelly-Heaviside layer, which, according to the prevailing theory, would

consist of an ionized layer generated by solar radiation in the upper strata of the atmosphere; this layer, being conductive, would have the property of reflecting Hertzian waves back to the earth and preventing them from being lost into space.

The height of this layer appears to vary according to the altitude of the sun, the geographical position, and the season, and to it are attributed the fadings that occur in the reception of radiotelegraphic signals.

Now, the study of the Heaviside layer is especially interesting in the Arctic regions, where the solar rays persist for long months and where magnetic phenomena are more evident. Nevertheless, the body of observations collected in the Arctic over five months, even if made with not overly accurate means, can serve to provide a sufficiently clear idea of the behaviour of Hertzian waves in these regions.

The reception of short waves was carried out with a receiver comprising a detector valve followed by two low-frequency amplifiers. For medium and long waves, on the other hand, a Marconi apparatus with four valves was used, of which two were low-frequency amplifiers.

The signal strength was measured by the shunted-telephone method, a method sufficiently accurate if used with the proper precautions.

Influence of Wavelength, Time of Day, and Direction of Origin on Wave Propagation

The general behaviour of short waves (10-100 metres) in the polar regions does not seem to differ greatly from that in temperate zones, and this can be explained by the fact that short waves, particularly those emitted by the more powerful and distant stations, are not appreciably affected by the attenuation due to passage through a zone that is continuously in daylight – a zone which is usually rather limited in extent in comparison with the distance previously travelled by the signal.

Even for weaker stations, especially amateur ones, the local light factor does not have great importance, so much so that it was possible to communicate normally at noon with the Australian and New Zealand experimental stations, from sixteen to twenty-one (G.M.T.) with the European ones, and later in the night with the North and South American stations. For these communications, an experimental transmitter with an absorbed power of 20 watts had been constructed on board.

According to the different hours, wavelengths of twenty or forty-two metres were employed: the former for North and South America, preferably from 23.00 onwards, the latter for communications with Europe and with the Antipodes. Commercial stations (Java, Buenos Aires, Eindhoven, etc.) on fourteen to seventeen metres were received with the greatest intensity between ten and sixteen hours.

The thirty-metre waves, however, were those most suitable for continuous services and those least affected by fading. The San Paolo station on 32 metres and the other European stations on 30–35 metres began to be audible at about 18.30, reached a maximum intensity around midnight, and then disappeared towards 3 a.m.

Normally the reception of IDO was carried out on loudspeaker, and in that case the signals were intelligible at a distance of some tens of metres from it.

The conditions of propagation of medium waves (200-800 metres), normally employed for communications not exceeding a distance of 1,000 kilometres, were almost identical at every hour to those of temperate countries during daytime; in practice, however, the range of the signals was greater than in those regions, because atmospheric discharges on these wavelengths were weaker, and interference with other stations more rare.

Long-wave transmissions, almost all of them very powerful, were received very well at every hour, but slightly weaker than in Europe.

Influence of Meteorological Conditions

From the examination of the variations in signal intensity of numerous stations of different frequencies and distances, and from the comparison of these data with those relating to the local meteorological conditions and those of the territories lying between the transmitting stations and our receiving station¹, it was possible to establish that no direct relationship appears between reception intensity and meteorological conditions.

This is moreover in accordance with the results obtained by various American scientists, and can be explained by the fact that the waves, travelling through the upper layers of the atmosphere, are not influenced by

¹ Footnote in the original text, written by Franco Pugliese: "We owe these data to the kind interest of Professor Bjørn Helland Hansen, Director of the 'Norske Meteorologiske Institut', whom we thank for the valuable assistance given to us in these researches".

phenomena affecting only the lower part of it.

It was, however, possible to establish that the presence of banks of fog in the vicinity of the receiving station almost always produced signals stronger than normal.

Meteorological conditions, on the other hand, influence the operation of radiotelegraphic services much more strongly when they give rise to greater or lesser quantities of atmospheric discharges. These discharges, which produce very disturbing noises in the telephones, are in the Arctic regions of much lower intensity than in temperate regions, especially on medium and long waves. On short waves, the frequencies most affected are those between twenty-five and fifty metres, especially during the night hours.

Influence of Magnetic Phenomena

Among the problems that most directly concern the field of radio transmissions is that relating to the anomalies that occur in the reception of signals – anomalies that reveal themselves through sudden attenuations or increases in intensity, and that often bring about the interruption for several hours, sometimes for some days, of radiotelegraphic services.

Observations on these phenomena made for more than a decade by well-known scientists such as Austin, Anderson, Pickard, and Prescott appear to establish a direct relationship between terrestrial magnetism and anomalies in radio transmissions. And since it is now recognized that terrestrial magnetic storms are closely connected with periods of abnormal solar activity, it is probable that the presence of an extraordinary number of sunspots gives rise to a period of increased radiotelegraphic disturbances.

Now, one of the phenomena most manifestly due to solar activity is the aurora borealis, whose luminosity is believed to be caused by the bombardment of the rarefied atmosphere by negatively charged corpuscles coming from the Sun, and whose height above the Earth's surface varies from one hundred to four hundred kilometres.

And since the aurora borealis occurs almost exclusively in the polar regions, and precisely up to the 70th parallel, only in these regions is it possible to determine with a certain precision the influence of the aurora on anomalies of radio transmissions.

On July 9 there occurred the first of these phenomena, undoubtedly due to a magnetic storm, although the continuous sunlight of that season prevented us from ascertaining the presence of the aurora borealis.

Whereas in the preceding days communications had been carried out under excellent conditions, suddenly at eight o'clock on the 9th the atmosphere seemed to become totally impermeable to short waves, to such an extent as to render completely inaudible for two days even the signals of the most powerful stations.

The Green Harbour station, only 300 kilometres from us and reporting the same reception conditions, scarcely succeeded in perceiving our transmissions on thirty metres, while for us it was impossible to receive its signals on thirty-three.

Contrary to what had been observed by other Arctic expeditions, the atmospheric disturbances during these phenomena did not disappear at all; on the contrary, they manifested themselves with a continuous crackling of considerable intensity.

At the same time, on medium and long waves reception took place under excellent conditions; indeed it was noted that long waves were received with intensity greater than normal.

Only at twenty-one hours on the 11th did the first signals on 30 metres begin to be received, then on 20, and finally from 40 to 100, until within the space of half an hour the atmosphere again became permeable to the waves and traffic was normally restored.

An important observation confirming the magnetic nature of the cause of the radiotelegraphic disturbances is given by the fact that on the 9th and 10th, by measuring the amount of atmospheric ozone, Dr. Peroni repeatedly obtained ozone percentages double the normal value. Later in the season, when darkness made the aurora borealis visible, the same radiotelegraphic phenomena described above were constantly repeated, although with lesser intensity, accompanied by an increase in atmospheric ozone. It was indeed repeatedly possible to observe that the fading of signals is the greater the more extensive and intense the aurora borealis, and the lower its lower limit descends. Variations in luminosity are often reflected instantaneously in decreases of signal strength.

Also noteworthy is the perfect correspondence between the intensity with which we received the San Paolo station and that with which our signals were received in Rome: the fading of one station was unfailingly

followed by that of the other, while more than once, during an aurora borealis, we heard San Paolo communicating to stations located almost at our antipodes that it was no longer able to receive them.

But apart from the rare days on which these magnetic storms hindered short-wave transmissions, communications with Rome were always carried out in a completely satisfactory manner. Proof of this is the fact that, with the short-wave installation alone, the total traffic of words transmitted and received exceeded sixty thousand words, without counting communications with the patrols and the experimental ones.

The medium-wave installation, which also functioned perfectly, served excellently to connect us with the surrounding ships and with the Norwegian and Russian coastal stations when short-wave communications were momentarily interrupted.

We can therefore conclude by affirming the complete practicality and convenience, in a polar expedition, of the use of small portable short-wave stations for communication with patrols. Furthermore, the possibility, with installations of relatively modest power and with a judicious choice of wavelengths, of remaining constantly in communication with the outside world.

We close these notes by expressing our grateful thought to those who, with personal sacrifice of time and money, made possible the preparation of the radiotelegraphic installation under particularly difficult conditions; to Admiral Professor Giuseppe Pession, Director General of Posts and Telegraphs, who enabled us to obtain valuable facilities; to Captain Bacarani, commander of the San Paolo radiotelegraphic station, and to the other operators who with such enthusiasm carried out the service entrusted to them; and finally to all the Italian radio firms, too numerous to recall here by name, which vied with one another in generously offering us the material required for the stations.

ANNEX 5

“CINEMATOGRAPHIC IMPRESSIONS” FROM THE HEIMEN-SUCAI EXPEDITION

The cinematographic materials collected by Umberto Della Valle during the *Heimen-SUCAI* expedition were used to produce, a few months after the Arctic journey, a black-and-white, silent film titled «*Il Mistero dell'Artide*» (“The Mystery of the Arctic”). A digital copy is preserved in the private archive of the Albertini family in Milan. The file, in DVD-video format, has a total run time of 98 minutes and contains scenes introduced by a total of 122 titles and intertitles. Brief excerpts from it were shown at the Italian Geographical Society, Rome, on April 8, 2024, and at the *Museo Scienza e Tecnologia “Leonardo da Vinci”* in Milan on March 18, 2025, during public events related to the expedition and the beginning of this research work. We now wish to present here a brief commentary on the film in its complex.

In an interview with Renato Loreti in *Cinema-Teatro*, n. 9, of November 16, 1929, Umberto Della Valle, “a few days” after his return to Rome, synthesized his own experience in the voyage of the *Heimen-SUCAI*.

I have brought back to Italy over 4,000 metres of exposed film, film that will document what the expedition accomplished amid dangers of every kind. (...) A great enemy of film is humidity, which in those regions often causes electrical discharges on the film stock, scratching it in zigzag patterns. Not to mention the light, which changes rapidly in both intensity and colour. I had to work extensively with coloured filters, which alone made it possible to obtain sharp and perfect shots. (...) My automatic Kinamo performed miracles, as during the terrible storm in the Barents Sea. (...) But what visions appeared before my eyes! If, in order to shoot ordinary films, one could travel the world capturing scenes against the backdrop of real nature, there would be images of infinite beauty to create. I filmed such sunsets over the picturesque fjords of Norway that not even the greatest artist could imagine or paint them (Martinelli, 1994, p. 12)²

² «Ho riportato in Italia oltre 4.000 mt. di pellicola impressionata, pellicola che documenterà quanto la spedizione, in mezzo a pericoli d'ogni sorta, ha compiuto. (...) Una grande nemica della pellicola è l'umidità che, in quelle regioni, provoca spesso delle scariche elettriche alla film, rigandola a zig-zag. Non parliamo poi della luce che cambia rapidamente di intensità e di colore. Ho dovuto lavorare molto con gli schermi colorati, i quali soli potevano rendere possibile una ripresa nitida e perfetta. (...) La mia Kinamo automatica ha fatto miracoli, come durante la terribile tempesta del mar di Barents (...) Ma quali visioni sono apparse ai miei occhi! Se per riprendere normali film si potesse girare il mondo, riprendendo le scene sullo sfondo della natura reale, ci sarebbero da fare dei quadri

Upon the release of the film, magazine *Kines* published a brief announcement, with the title «*La Spedizione Universitaria nell'Artide comandata da Gianni Albertini*» (“The University Expedition in the Arctic commanded by Gianni Albertini”). It reads:

It is a film throbbing with the harsh life of those spirited young men who did not hesitate to confront the icy Arctic sphinx in order to search for their lost brothers. Hunger, cold, the blizzard in the desert of ice, the infinite solitude that grips even the bravest hearts - all the hardships and dangers of a polar journey were challenged and overcome by that handful of daring men who, under the steady leadership of Gianni Albertini, with the most modest of means and aboard a tiny vessel, ventured into the white mystery of the Arctic to ask it, in vain, for the secret of its latest tragedy. The film is an ENAC production (*Kines*, June 1, 1930, p. 6)³

In both the aforementioned occasions, in 2024 and 2025, Della Valle's work was presented by Christian Cinetto. He is an expert on the history of the *Italia* expedition, as well as a professional director, documentarist and film-maker, with Arctic experience in that capacity.

We have developed the following informal remarks based on his comments and presentations, and we thank him for having allowed us to do so.

In the 1929 expedition, the presence of a professional cinematographer was not an accessory but an integral element. The decision to bring Umberto Della Valle on board – according to Albertini himself – was motivated primarily by the opportunity to secure additional financial support for the voyage; it also reflected a pioneering understanding of the power of images to convey news of polar exploration. At a time when non-fiction cinema was still emerging and the very notion of scientific documentaries had not yet been fully theorized in Italy, Della Valle's work stood at the threshold between technical recording and narrative construction. This developmental phase in content production is reflected by the fact that, long before the very term “documentary” was adopted, Della Valle

d'infinita bellezza. Ho girato dei tramonti tali sui pittoreschi fiordi della Norvegia che nemmeno il più grande artista potrebbe immaginare e dipingere».

3 «È un film palpitante della vita aspra di quei giovani animosi che non hanno esitato ad affrontare la gelida sfiga artica, per andare alla ricerca dei fratelli perduti. La fame, il freddo, la tempesta nel deserto di ghiaccio, la solitudine infinita che stringe il cuore ai più forti, tutti i disagi e tutti i pericoli di un viaggio polare ha sfidato e vinto quel pugno di ardimentosi che, sotto la guida sicura di Gianni Albertini, con mezzi modestissimi, su di una minuscola nave, hanno osato spingersi nel bianco mistero dell'Artide, per chiedergli, invano, il segreto della sua ultima tragedia. Il film è di produzione ENAC».

described his product as “cinematographic impressions”.

Immediately recognizable by his well-groomed moustaches, the man was forty years old at the time of the journey, which made him the most senior member of an otherwise very young Italian crew. He was among a small and highly specialized group of Italian professionals, particularly trained in the difficult job of early twentieth-century filmmaking. He was among the most expert professionals in this field, having begun his career in 1914; in 1924 he had joined the organization called *L'Unione Cinematografica Educativa* (LUCE) and in 1928 was aggregated to the *Ente Nazionale per la Cinematografia* (ENAC). By then, he had already acquired extensive experience in handling bulky and heavy cameras, fragile and flammable film stock, and the demanding logistics of filming in remote environments. Arctic operations meant working in small boats – the *Heimen-SUCAI* herself was not a large vessel, then came the tiny motorboat *Laura* – in freezing temperatures, with constant attention to exposure, framing, and the physical preservation of the material – factors that turned each shot into a challenge.

«*Il Mistero dell'Artide*» is more than a visual record of a hazardous expedition. It constitutes one of the earliest Italian examples of what may properly be called a filmed geographical travelogue. Through carefully composed sequences, attention to faces and gestures, and the observation of everyday life under extreme conditions, Della Valle gradually constructs a narrative that conveys not only action but also atmosphere, tension, strength and, at the same time, vulnerability.

Unlike the journalistic gaze of a visiting reporter, Della Valle's camera reflects the perspective of someone who was fully *within* the expedition. He shared the same dangers, the same exhaustion, and the same moments of uncertainty as the others in the crew. This proximity allowed him to capture scenes of work, waiting, survival, and even hesitation with rare naturalness. The subjects of his lens are not performers but companions, and their expressions, whether restrained or spontaneous, reveal an intimacy that anticipates later documentary practices based on participation rather than observation from a distance.

A subject for future study would definitely be the actual making of the film and its technical aspects. Footage was taken by different cameras in different conditions, associating a static tripod-mounted machine with a smaller hand-held device. The latter was often deployed on the field to

collect impressive – a bit noisier, but more dynamic – images, for instance from onboard the running sledges or motorboat. It was carried along in the patrol's voyage through Nordaustlandet, and often used to document the men in full action or dealing with the consequences of blizzards and storms. Curiously, the presence of the camera was not mentioned by Albertini either in the logbook, or in his 1932 memoir: we know about it only from the later conference paper by Bonola, and we may try to guess some of the scenes acquired with it by considering the context and the type of rendering.

In general, the quality of the filmed materials is remarkably high for the standards of the time and proves very effective in creating a powerful storytelling.

Technically and stylistically, Della Valle demonstrates a conscious effort to transform visual “impressions” into an articulated discourse. This appears evident in the fact that, for instance, the sequence of scenes and episodes follows more a narrative development than the expedition actual chronology (e.g., when the birth of the Greenland dog puppies, occurred on August 7, is presented *before* the visit to the abandoned scientific station in Sorgfjorden, actually made on July 12).

The structure, rhythm, and choice of motifs in the film suggest an early form of authored documentary. This appears in how movement across ice, encounters with wildlife, the stark alternation between life and death in the Arctic landscape are described.

In this sense, Della Valle does not merely record an expedition; he interprets it as a human feat that can be recognized as such. This is certainly in line with the propaganda spirit typical of his time and his working environment, but is due to his own artistic decision as well.

In light of the above, it is possible to understand why the film – at least in the version we watched – does not make any mention whatsoever about Guedoz's death, even though he is presented in the beginning and appears in several scenes. If this is true also for the original 1929 edition, then the reason for this striking omission should be sought not as much in a choice by either Della Valle or Albertini, whose vision about the voyage the film appears to faithfully share in many parts. Rather, it should be ascribed to some kind of political input, as if acknowledging Guedoz' fate in the very operation which was to be Italy's final act of *pietas* towards the tragedy of the airship, would have shed a grim light on the noble endeavour of the

gallant Youth.

Today the film stands as a crucial historical source. It documents not only a search and rescue mission in the High Arctic, but also the culture of exploration, the material conditions of early twentieth-century fieldwork, and the emergence of cinema as a tool of scientific, narrative, and human testimony.

In the following pages, we will present a synthesis of the film contents, by quoting all of its intertitles in Italian and presenting their translation into English. Although Della Valle's story-telling is continuous, we wished to divide it into narrative sections and consider them individually. A brief introduction presents, for each section, some aspects that we found relevant.

Time	Section	Remarks N.B. When indicated, time-stamps should be considered with a ± 1 second tolerance
00.00.00 00.00.36	Main Title  	Credits. The <i>Ente Nazionale per la Cinematografia</i> (ENAC) is indicated as the film production company. The title « <i>Il Mistero dell'Artide</i> » is followed by a comment, presenting the film as a “Diary of the Italian Expedition led by Gianni Albertini in the Arctic Regions” (« <i>Diario della spedizione italiana condotta da Gianni Albertini nelle regioni artiche</i> »), and a further clarification that the document consists in the “Cinematographic impressions by operator Umberto Della Valle” (« <i>Impressioni cinematografiche dell'operatore Umberto Della Valle</i> »).

00.00.36 00.02.37	Introduction	The introduction consists of a sequence of 3 intertitles explaining the rationale of the expedition, followed by another intertitle and a scene presenting Albertini and SUCAI President Roberto Maltini discussing the voyage. <i>Intertitles (original text and translation at hh.mm.ss):</i>	
		00.00.36	
		Un anno dopo la catastrofe che aveva colpito l'aeronave italiana vittoriosa del mistero dell'Artide, un manipolo di giovani audaci si apprestava ad affrontare, sopra una piccola baleniera, il deserto di ghiaccio.	One year after the catastrophe that had struck the Italian airship, victorious in [unravelling] the mystery of the Arctic, a small group of daring young men was preparing to face, aboard a small whaling vessel, the desert of ice.
		00.01.01	
		Il compito che la Patria aveva loro affidato era arduo e grande: strappare alla Sfinge bianca il segreto sulla sorte dei perduti...	The task that the Fatherland had entrusted to them was arduous and great: to wrest from the white Sphinx the secret of the fate of the lost...
		00.01.18	
		...quel segreto che gli sforzi generosi compiuti, nei giorni grigi della catastrofe, dalle più grandi nazioni del mondo, non erano riusciti a svelare.	...that secret which the generous efforts undertaken, in the grey days of the catastrophe, by the greatest nations of the world, had failed to reveal.

		00.01.38	
		L'On. Roberto Maltini, Presidente della SUCAI, che ideò la Spedizione, e Gianni Albertini che la comandò e la condusse attraverso l'Artide.	The Hon. Roberto Maltini, President of the SUCAI, who conceived the Expedition, and Gianni Albertini, who commanded and led it across the Arctic.

00.02.37 00.05.15	The expedition prepares to depart Bergen	The film begins with a “glance at the charming Nordic city”, Bergen, where the last preparations for the departure of the <i>Heimen</i> are taking place. The section includes a sequence of scenes in a progressive logical close-up to the harbour.	
		00.02.37	
		Parte Prima	First Part
		00.02.40	
		Bergen, Maggio 1929 A.VII. Mentre fervono gli ultimi preparativi per l'imminente partenza, diamo uno sguardo alla graziosa città nordica.	Bergen, May 1929, Year VII [of the Fascist Era]. As the final preparations for the imminent departure are underway, we cast a glance at the charming Nordic city.

00.05.15 00.05.35	Painting the name SUCAI on the bow of Heimen 	In spite of the intertitle referring to Albertini, the painter is actually Bonola. Footage in various parts of the film reveals that the name <i>Heimen</i> was indicated on the front of the superstructure, in capital letters. The stern of the ship also sports the same name in capital letters followed by what appears to be a numeral (possibly a “I” or “II” in thinner lines) surmounting the name of the registration port, Tromsø, at 00.55.14 The bow only features, prominently, the name SUCAI, all in capital letters. The most visible feature “signatures” of the ship during the expedition are, in fact, these dark letters on the bright background of the bow.				
		<table><tr><th colspan="2">00.05.15</th></tr><tr><td> Il nostro Comandante, Gianni Albertini, vuole personalmente battezzare con lo sportivo nome italiano la nave che ci condurrà nel regno dei ghiacci. </td><td> Our Commander, Gianni Albertini, wishes to personally christen, with the sporting Italian name, the ship that will carry us into the realm of ice. </td></tr></table>	00.05.15		Il nostro Comandante, Gianni Albertini, vuole personalmente battezzare con lo sportivo nome italiano la nave che ci condurrà nel regno dei ghiacci.	Our Commander, Gianni Albertini, wishes to personally christen, with the sporting Italian name, the ship that will carry us into the realm of ice.
00.05.15						
Il nostro Comandante, Gianni Albertini, vuole personalmente battezzare con lo sportivo nome italiano la nave che ci condurrà nel regno dei ghiacci.	Our Commander, Gianni Albertini, wishes to personally christen, with the sporting Italian name, the ship that will carry us into the realm of ice.					

00.05.35 00.07.58	Final preparations	Scenes of the crew, their acquaintances, and bystanders onboard and around the ship; the loading of materials and supplies. This is followed by footage of the refuelling process and the loading of crates containing the dogs for the sledge patrols. The expressions of the Italian crewmembers reveal confidence and concentration at the same time, while the camera highlights the feverish, final preparation works and the public attention surrounding the voyage to begin.	
			
			
			
		00.05.35	
		La madre del Comandante, che ha accompagnato il figlio fino a Bergen...	The Commander's mother, who has accompanied her son as far as Bergen...
		00.06.00	
		...assiste con noi alle operazioni che precedono la partenza.	...witnesses with us the operations that precede the departure.
		00.06.45	
		Carichiamo nafta...	We take on fuel oil...
		00.07.22	
		...ed imbarchiamo le mute dei cani.	...and we embark the dog teams.

00.07.58 00.09.30	Ready for departure	May 15. The scenes present the Italian and Norwegian flags being solemnly hoisted. Visitors and guests are disembarked and final farewells are exchanged.	
		00.07.58	
		15 Maggio. Stiamo per salpare. Già la bandiera sale a portare il suo grido tricolore sul grigio del cielo brumoso...	May 15. We are about to set sail. Already the flag is rising, to carry its tricolour cry against the grey of the mist-laden sky...
		00.09.04	
		Gli ultimi saluti, le ultime strette di mano...	The final farewells, the last handshakes...
00.09.30 00.10.06	Casting off	Scenes of the <i>Heimen-SUCAI</i> leaving the quay and commencing navigation along the west coasts of Norway towards Tromsø mark the beginning of the narrative.	
		00.09.30	
		...e abbandoniamo gli ormeggi.	...and we cast off the moorings.

00.10.06 00.12.36	The crew	Footage shot on deck in brief individual portrait sequences, introducing first the Italian crewmembers (Albertini is not included). They are presented one by one with close-up views and, in spite of a somewhat required <i>nonchalance</i>, appear to be a bit circumspect in front of the camera, apparently with the sole exceptions of Della Valle himself and Guedoz. His name is erroneously indicated as “Guido”, as it was actually Giulio, and “Guidoz” instead of “Guedoz”. After a break with series of landscape images, the fjord pilot is shown at the bow. His name is not mentioned, he is only described by the intertitle reading that “The fjord pilot, a lean and taciturn Norwegian, guides the course”. After another scenic landscape, the text “Our Norwegian crew is made up of solid people, hardened to every hardship” precedes a sequence in which the men are collectively shown, with no indication of names. Here for the first time – and this “iconeme” will return a second time towards the end of the film – the Norwegian crew is shown as a group. Men surround skipper Lars Jakobsen, in the centre, who appears smiling confident at the camera. The supportive role of the Norwegian crew is cited by Albertini in both his logbook and memoir. Such role, to be attributed to their professionalism and natural character, but also obviously to their direct competence and “ownership” of the <i>Heimen</i>, is confirmed and clearly-highlighted by Della Valle’s story-telling.
		
		
		

00.10.06	
La SUCAI inizia la rotta tra i fiordi. Siamo tutti sul ponte: Piero Zanetti... Coman- dante in seconda	The SUCAI be- gins her course in the fjords. We are all on deck: Piero Zanetti... Sec- ond-in-Command
00.10.26	
...Marco Urbano... meteorologo	...Marco Urba- no... meteorologist
00.10.35	
...Augusto Bono- la... naturalista	...Augusto Bono- la... naturalist
00.10.44	
...Franco Puglie- se... radio-telegra- fista	...Franco Puglie- se... wireless-op- erator
00.10.54	
...Achille Peroni... medico	...Achille Peroni... physician
00.11.02	
...Umberto Della Valle... operatore cinematografico	...Umberto Della Valle... cinema- tographer
00.11.13	
...Guido Guido (sic)... guida valdo- stana	...Guido Guido (sic)... Valdostan mountain guide
00.11.38	
Il pilota dei fiordi, un norvegese asciutto e taciturno, guida la rotta.	The fjord pilot, a lean and taciturn Norwegian, guides the course.
00.12.07	
Il nostro equipag- gio norvegese è composto di gente solida, rotta a tutte le fatiche.	Our Norwegian crew is made up of solid men, hardened to all efforts.

00.12.35 00.14.42	Stop-over in Tromsø	The arrival in Tromsø is shown, as the <i>Heimen-SUCAI</i> is welcomed by a crowd on the quay. There are many children, intrigued and drawn to Della Valle's camera. Further preparations are hinted: the loading of the hot-bulb motorboat is shown.	
			
			
			
		00.12.35	
Giungiamo a Tromsø, la città più nordica d'Europa, sentinella della civiltà sull'Artide...		We arrive at Tromsø, the northernmost city of Europe, a sentinel of civilisation upon the Arctic...	
		00.13.29	
...ed attracciamo dinanzi ad una folla di curiosi.		...and we dock before a crowd of curious onlookers.	
		00.14.07	
Completiamo il carico, imbarcando un motoscafo.		We complete the loading, taking aboard a motor launch.	

00.14.40 00.22.39	High-sea crossing	The intertitle “We leave the world behind us. From now on, before our bow, there will be only the infinite sea and the desert of ice. Long live Italy!” opens for the crossing phase. Relevant scenes are the exit from the fjords, the midnight sun. Scenes of life on board are presented, including the Italians taking a break on deck and sledge dogs allowed outside the cages; the Italian crew is shown helping with the care of the ship and everyday activities. The rough and nauseating high-sea crossing, effectively described by the perfectly mounted camera, are introduced by an ironic caption: “The Barents Sea undertakes to make our navigation less monotonous”. Images of the cruise along ship «<i>Elisabetta</i>» (sic) follow.	
		00.14.40	
		22 Maggio, sera. Si salpa. Lasciamo il mondo dietro di noi. D'ora in poi non avremo davanti alla prua che il mare infinito e il deserto di ghiaccio. Viva l'Italia!	May 22, evening. We set sail. We leave the world behind us. From now on, nothing lies before our bow but the infinite sea and the desert of ice. Long live Italy!
		00.16.00	
		L'Artide ci accoglie con l'infinita melanconia del “sole di mezzanotte”.	The Arctic welcomes us with the infinite melancholy of the “midnight sun”.
		00.16.21	
		Navighiamo verso Advembay (sic), a lunghe giornate senza sera, che la monotona vita di bordo non riesce ad abbreviare.	We sail toward Advent Bay, through long days without evening, which the monotonous life on board cannot shorten.

		00.17.26	
		Il gagliardetto dei Gruppi Universitari garrisce al vento gelido del Nord.	The pennant of the University Groups flutters in the icy wind of the North.
		00.18.38	
		Attraversiamo il Mare di Groenlandia grigio e brumoso	We cross the grey and mist-laden Greenland Sea.
		00.18.57	
		Per distrarci collaboriamo alla toilette della nave.	To distract ourselves, we lend a hand in the ship-keeping.
		00.19.26	
		Il Mare di Barentz si incarica di rendere meno monotona la nostra navigazione.	The Barents Sea takes it upon itself to make our voyage less monotonous.
		00.21.42	
		Abbiamo incontrato la nave Elisabetta (sic), diretta alla King's bay.	We encountered the ship Elisabetta (sic), bound for King's Bay.
		00.21.58	
		L'Elisabetta è sprovvista di radio e ci ha chiesto di scortarla.	The Elisabetta is without wireless and has asked us to escort her.

00.22.39 00.33.55	In Isfjorden and Kongsfjorden	The pictures at the beginning of this section show sailing through progressively more abundant and larger ice fragments and floes in varying weather and sea conditions, forcing the ship to move slowly in search of passages. Other scenes present the loading on-board of the hunted seal, its skinning and butchering by the crew. The view of a wide and continuous icy surface is shown in association with the approach to «<i>Advembay</i>» (sic, Isfjorden, in fact). External images of the <i>Heimen-SUCAI</i> standing still in the ice follow, with crewmembers and dogs moving around to familiarize with the environment. Images of the dog team acquired in Long-yearbyen are then shown, as it arrives towards the ship pulling the sledge. The following footage shows a phase of navigation through ice and then scenes of the Italian crew getting acquainted with the equipment, the dogs and the setting up of radio devices. Based on the images, the men's clothing and their use of sunglasses, this training phase appears to take place in good weather and mild temperature. The images were shot in Kongsfjorden. Other images follow of the dogs and land-crew training. From this section onwards, it is possible to see, at times, distinct differences in the footage, apparently taken respectively by the two types of cameras, as mentioned in the introduction.				
						
						
						
<table><tr><td colspan="2">00.22.39</td></tr><tr><td>Parte Seconda - La spedizione Albertini nell'Ar- tide</td><td>Second Part - The Albertini expedi- tion in the Arctic</td></tr></table>			00.22.39		Parte Seconda - La spedizione Albertini nell'Ar- tide	Second Part - The Albertini expedi- tion in the Arctic
00.22.39						
Parte Seconda - La spedizione Albertini nell'Ar- tide	Second Part - The Albertini expedi- tion in the Arctic					

		00.22.45	
		Il mare si è finalmente placato...	The sea has finally calmed down...
		00.23.09	
		...e i primi ghiacci, punte avanzate della calotta polare, tagliano la nostra rotta.	...the first ice [fragments], advanced outliers of the polar ice cap, cut across our course.
		00.24.05	
		Conquistiamo il nostro primo trofeo di caccia polare...	We claim our first polar hunting trophy...
		00.24.50	
		...che ci affrettiamo a liberare dalla sua morbida pelliccia. È la prima carne fresca che possiamo offrirci.	...which we hasten to strip of its soft fur. It is the first fresh meat we can treat ourselves to.
		00.25.32	
		Il paesaggio è cambiato. I ghiacci ci sbarrano la rotta, sempre più serrati, sempre più compatti...	The landscape has changed. The ice bars our way, growing ever more tightly packed, ever more solid...
		00.26.02	
		A stento Albertini, che è salito in coffa, riesce a scoprire qualche passaggio.	With difficulty Albertini, who has climbed up to the crow's nest, manages to make out a few passages.
		00.26.45	
		Giungiamo in vista di Advembay (sic).	We come into view of Advent Bay.

		00.27.31	
		Dobbiamo rinunciare ad accostare Advembay (sic). Una muta di cani che dovevamo imbarcare ci giunge attraverso il campo di ghiaccio.	We must give up approaching Advent Bay. A team of dogs that we were to take aboard reaches us across the ice field.
		00.28.05	
		Abbiamo ripreso la rotta verso il nord...	We have resumed our course northward...
		00.28.25	
		...dove iniziamo l'addestramento dei nostri cani...	Where we begin the training of our dogs...
		00.28.51	
		...e proviamo la piccola stazione radio da campo.	...and test the small field radio station.
		00.30.31	
		Drizziamo il nostro primo accampamento.	We set up our first camp.
		00.31.20	
		L'addestramento dei cani continua ad assorbire tutte le migliori cure. Da essi potrà dipendere, fra poco, la nostra vittoria e, forse, la nostra vita.	The training of the dogs continues to absorb all our best efforts. Upon them will soon depend our success and, perhaps, our lives.

		00.32.00	
		Quelle povere bestie restano ag- giogate in perma- nenza, anche du- rante il riposo, per abituarle a portare i finimenti.	Those poor animals remain permanently harnessed, even during rest, in order to accustom them to wearing the gear.
		00.33.01	
		L'ora del pasto, l'unica gioia della loro giornata!	Mealtime, the only joy of their day!

00.33.55 00.42.42	Navigation towards Nordaustlandet, preparation and deployment of the patrol	This section opens with the sailing phase through the ice, “bound for King’s Bay” (actually Nordaustlandet), onboard routine activities and the <i>Heimen-SUCAI</i> moored at a large block of ice. Chunks of snow are hoisted aboard the ship by ropes and then crumbled into smaller pieces to be stored in the fresh-water tank. The episode is situated in proximity to Waldenøya. There follows a depiction of food supplies being thoroughly packed into sealed wooden boxes by Albertini and Peroni – i.e. the expedition Commander and physician, a testimony of the importance of the action. Camp materials and sledges are prepared and disembarked. Dogs are shown being commanded onto the ice, teams are assembled. The departure of the patrol is shown, as seen by the camera placed on the ice a certain distance from the star-board (right) side of the ship. The patrol is then observed briefly as the two teams move away.	
			
			
			
		00.33.55	
		Abbiamo ripreso la navigazione diretti alla King's Bay...	We have resumed navigation bound for King's Bay...
		00.34.15	
		...guidati dall'occhio sicuro e dalla voce potente del pilota dei ghiacci.	...guided by the sure eye and powerful voice of the ice pilot.
		00.35.33	
		Sostiamo presso l'isola Walden...	We stop near Walden Island...
		00.36.09	
		...dove facciamo rifornimento di acqua dolce, sotto forma di neve.	...where we take on fresh water in the form of snow.

00.36.57	
Si preparano intanto i viveri per la pattuglia che si spingerà a esplorare la Terra di Nord Est.	Meanwhile, sup- plies are prepared for the patrol that will push on to ex- plore North East Land.
00.37.39	
Un'accuratezza infinita occorre nella chiusura delle casse...	Infinite care is re- quired in sealing the crates...
00.38.07	
...che vengono in ultimo diligente- mente stuccate.	...which are final- ly carefully sealed with pitch.
00.38.23	
Anche il carica- mento delle slitte esige la massima diligenza.	The loading of the sledges also demands the ut- most diligence.
00.39.05	
Poi le slitte, che pesano a carico completo circa 250 chilogrammi, vengono calate sul ghiaccio.	Then the sledg- es, which weigh about 250 kilo- grams when fully loaded, are low- ered onto the ice.
00.40.08	
Nell'appariglia- mento dei cani oc- corre una grande conoscenza della loro indole, per evitare baruffe.	In pairing the dogs, a deep knowledge of their temperament is required so as to avoid fights.
00.40.50	
Oggi, 13 Giu- gno, la pattuglia, guidata da Gianni Albertini, parte per affrontare il deserto di ghiaccio.	Today, June 13, the patrol, led by Gianni Albertini, sets out to face the ice desert.

		00.42.25	
		Con emozione profonda, seguiamo con lo sguardo i nostri compagni, finchè si perdonano nella candida immensità del pack.	With deep emotion, we follow our companions with our eyes until they are lost in the white immensity of the pack.
		00.42.40	
		Fine della 2a Parte	End of the 2nd Part

00.42.42 01.05.28	Separate reconnaissances	This section presents the activities of <i>Heimen-SUCAI</i> in her navigation towards the Sjuøyane. Landscape views alternate with images from the crew's activity on the ship, the hunting and butchering of walrus, with close-up views of their severed heads featuring the tusks. In one case, a tusk is even hooked and moved up and down to show the movement of the mouth. Though quite gruesome for present-day sensitivity, the images were perceived differently at the time and may have been considered of cultural interest. The wording of the intertitle, calling the walrus a "monster", was at the same time a rhetoric statement about its size and strength, and an admission of the impressive, somewhat frightening feeling that the Arctic wilderness inspired. Footage showing the patrol in action follow, including scenes of sledges running, camp activities and reindeer hunting. Attention switches back onboard the <i>Heimen-SUCAI</i> in her navigation and the encounter, at Lomfjorden, with the crew of a stranded vessel, possibly waiting for the tide to refloat. The situation is peculiar, but the tone remains calm and somewhat generic: another clear instance of the "kingdom of patience" as in Albertini's definition, never mentioned but certainly felt by Della Valle too. Scenes of wildlife alternate with the crew collecting eggs from bird's nest – the episode is described by Zanetti in the logbook. Then come scenes of the patrol placing a camp; a tent is mounted and the wireless station is setup with Urbano, Bonola and Guedoz rising the antenna. Urbano seats in front of the transmitter to send a telegram. The image is clear, in good weather conditions, orderly in the movement and almost demonstrative in tone.
		
		
		

	 	The following scenes present the <i>Heimen-SUCAI</i> moored at the ice in proximity to Selanderneset with crew moving around, in wait, or collecting water from pools formed on the surface of the ice. Other routine activities onboard and landscapes are shown. A subsequent scene of the patrol feeding the dogs, eating and then dismantling the camp, referring apparently to a later moment, seems in actual continuity with the previous patrol segment. It is followed, however, by insertions of images from various moments of the sledge runs and camp phases, rolled by the handheld camera in much more dynamic sequences. In those, different environmental conditions are shown. Another scene presents Albertini aiming with his rifle, then – at a later moment - a killed seal is shown being flensed by him, with Guedoz watching, to provide the dog teams with food. The following scenes present the patrol approaching <i>Heimen-SUCAI</i> from a wide expanse of ice, with two men moving away from the ship on ski to meet the arriving party. Della Valle is once again taking footage standing a few metres from the vessel, so that the patrol closely passes him by – Albertini is seen looking towards the camera and waving with his right arm. The camera then turns to capture the final walk on skis to the ship. The men are greeted by their companions. They then climb onboard via a wooden ladder attached the port (left) side, while the dogs and materials are seen being loaded onboard, in the background, by Norwegian crewmembers.
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	A clip follows showing the patrol on deck with their Italian companions, left to right Guedoz, Peroni, Zanetti, Urbano, Bonola and Albertini. The final scenes in this section present close-up views of Albertini and Urbano, leaders of the respective sledge teams, presumably commenting on their experience. Since Nordaustlandet was considered the most probable refuge for possible <i>Italia</i> survivors, the final intertitle of this section acknowledges that the hopes remained unfulfilled: “The Arctic has guarded its secret”.						
	<table><tr><td colspan="2">00.42.42</td></tr><tr><td>Parte Terza - [S]pedizione Albertini nell’Artide</td><td>Third Part - Albertini Expedition in the Arctic</td></tr><tr><td><text is very briefly visible>.</td><td></td></tr></table>	00.42.42		Parte Terza - [S]pedizione Albertini nell’Artide	Third Part - Albertini Expedition in the Arctic	<text is very briefly visible>.	
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		00.44.22	
		...cui togliamo la pelle che conserveremo fra i trofei di caccia.	...from which we remove the skin, which we shall keep among our hunting trophies.
		00.44.37	
		...mentre la carne interromperà, per qualche giorno, la monotonia dei viveri in conserva.	...while the meat will break, for a few days, the monotony of the preserved provisions.
		00.45.40	
		La costa della Terra di Nord Est è popolatissima di trichechi e noi ne approfittiamo largamente.	The coast of North East Land is teeming with walrus, and we take advantage of this largely.
		00.46.28	
		Dove saranno i nostri compagni della pattuglia? Che faranno in questo momento? Il nostro pensiero li accompagna nella dura marcia sui bianchi campi desolati...	Where might our companions of the patrol be? What are they doing at this moment? Our thoughts follow them on their hard march across the white, desolate fields...
		00.47.08	
		Anche i loro fucili non mancano di selvaggina...	Nor do their rifles lack game...
		00.47.19	
		...più nobile e più estetica della nostra: le renne.	...more noble and more graceful than ours: reindeer.

		00.48.00	
		Continuiamo a costeggiare la costa della Terra di Nord Est. Rari incontri rompono la monotonia del viaggio.	We continue to skirt the coast of North East Land. Rare encounters break the monotony of the voyage.
		00.49.00	
		Alla Lomme Bay avvistiamo una baleniera incagliata sulla riva.	At Lomme Bay we sight a whaling vessel stranded along the shore.
		00.49.29	
		Stormi di sterco-rari animano la desolazione del paesaggio.	Flocks of skuas enliven the desolation of the landscape.
		00.49.52	
		Sbarchiamo su di un'isoletta per raccogliere uova di anatra.	We land on a small islet to collect duck eggs.
		00.50.58	
		La vita della pattuglia è, certo, più varia e dinamica.	The life of the patrol is, certainly, more varied and dynamic.
		00.52.18	
		La radio mantiene la pattuglia in comunicazione con la nave.	The radio keeps the patrol in communication with the ship.
		00.53.45	
		Con febbrile attesa ed intensa emozione riceviamo periodicamente notizie della pattuglia.	With feverish anticipation and intense emotion, we periodically receive news from the patrol.

		00.53.59	
		Siamo presso Capo Selander, inaccostabile a causa dei ghiacci. Ci ancoriamo per attendere l'arrivo della pattuglia.	We are near Cape Selander, inaccessible because of the ice. We anchor to await the arrival of the patrol.
		00.55.19	
		Inganniamo, come meglio possiamo, l'attesa.	We pass the time as best we can.
		00.55.56	
		Abbiamo notizie della pattuglia ancora lontana da noi.	We receive news from the patrol still far from us.
		00.56.15	
		Nelle soste è necessario tenere i finimenti alti da terra per impedire che i cani, tormentati dalla fame, li divorino.	During halts, it is necessary to keep the harnesses raised off the ground to prevent the dogs, tormented by hunger, from chewing them.
		00.56.51	
		Dopo i cani, gli uomini...	After the dogs, the men...
		00.57.06	
		Ed ogni giorno il campo è levato e la marcia viene ripresa...	And each day the camp is struck and the march is resumed...
		00.57.37	
		...marcia dura, estenuante, che il silenzio bianco e profondo rende più triste.	...a hard, exhausting march, made all the more bleak by the deep, white silence.

00.58.32	
Desolazione...	Desolation...
00.59.02	
...neve, neve, neve...	...snow, snow, snow...
00.59.18	
I viveri stanno per mancare. Gli spettri della fame e dello sfinimento inseguono la pattuglia sul campo bianco infinito...	Supplies are running out. The spectres of hunger and exhaustion pursue the patrol across the infinite white expanse...
00.59.57	
A Capo Monh (sic) la tempesta di neve immobilizza la pattuglia per sei lunghi giorni, sotto la violenza delle raffiche, impedendo anche di drizzare l'antenna della radio.	At Cape Mohn a snowstorm immobilizes the patrol for six long days, under the violence of the gusts, even preventing the raising of the radio antenna.
01.00.22	
Molti cani sono morti di stenti e di fatiche...	Many dogs have died from privation and exhaustion...
01.00.36	
I superstiti non reggono al doppio sforzo che loro si richiede.	The survivors cannot withstand the double effort demanded of them.
01.01.01	
Una foca: carne fresca per i cani, finalmente!	A seal: fresh meat for the dogs, finally!

		01.01.54	
		Le povere e valoro- se bestie posso- no saziarsi, dopo tanto digiuno.	The poor and brave animals can satisfy their hunger after such prolonged fasting.
		01.02.11	
		Finalmente, dopo 30 giorni di mar- cia e 700 chilo- metri percorsi, la pattuglia giunge in vista della nave.	At last, after 30 days of marching and 700 kilome- tres covered, the patrol comes in sight of the ship.
		01.04.58	
		Dei naufraghi dell'Italia nulla, nemmeno una traccia. L'Artide ha conservato il suo segreto.	Of the castaways of the Italia, nothing, not even a trace. The Arctic has guarded its secret.

		01.08.38	
		Abbiamo ucciso un orso bianco, la preda più utile del cacciatore polare. A noi giunge gradita più la sua carne che non la ricca pelliccia.	We have killed a polar bear, the most useful quarry of the polar hunter. Its meat is more welcome to us than its rich pelt.
		01.09.35	
		Marco Urbano, il meteorologo della spedizione, con i suoi misteriosi strumenti compie ogni giorno osservazioni scientifiche.	Marco Urbano, the expedition's meteorologist, carries out scientific observations every day with his mysterious instruments.
		01.10.19	
		Fine della 3a Parte	End of the 3rd Part

01.10.26 01.26.49	The Heimen-SUCAI gets repeatedly icebound	The section switches back to a more dramatic tone, opening with the ship icebound. Images of efforts by crewmembers to release the ship are shown. There follows footage of landscapes and of the crew's excursions in the area. At 01.12.01 brief footage of the visit to the abandoned "Norwegian", actually Swedish, station in Sorgfjorden is shown. In a clip showing the visit to graves on Zieglerøya, Peroni can be seen crouching by one of them, taking note of the inscription on the wooden marker. Another crewmember, possibly Guedoz, with a rifle slung over his shoulder for protection against bear attacks, examines another grave under Urbano's watchful eye. Then the two men observe a cairn. The following sequence is more epic in tone and shows the <i>Heimen-SUCAI</i> fighting her way through the ice, but once again getting icebound. Images at 1:16:30 show a crewmember skiing down an ice-mound with the vessel in the background. That appears to be a continuation of the footage presented at 1:10:36 (the same crewmember was visible climbing the mound). Relatively long views of the ice expanse and various formations (mounds, icicles) contribute to rendering the sense of boredom and powerlessness that was certainly felt by the crew. Then the men appear engaged in several ordinary activities, including scientific research and hunting, unsure whether they will be forced to overwinter there. A sense of sudden relief comes – with images showing a long-awaited motion – when the ice opens and the ship can again continue her journey. The epical narrative continues, though, as the challenging advance through ice is followed by scenes of men trying to assist to push away growlers and ice blocks with long pikes.
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		The victory follows, however, as the ice disappears progressively and becomes “no longer a problem”. Yet, the need to go on sail “in order to save fuel” adds a further touch of adventure. Human will – that seems to be the moral – achieves to overcome some of the obstacles posed by nature through perseverance and strife. Now, part of the strife is also the one towards a better knowledge of the Arctic: more scientific work is thereby presented. In this case, the focus is on Achille Peroni’s experiments in physiology and Earth science.		
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		01.12.01	
		Sulla costa osserviamo i resti abbandonati di una spedizione scientifica norvegese...	Along the coast we observe the abandoned remains of a Norwegian (sic) scientific expedition...
		01.12.37	
		...e sull'isola Ziegler alcune tombe di esploratori...	...and on Ziegler Island a few graves of explorers...
		01.12.57	
		...e tracce del passaggio di altre spedizioni anteriori alla nostra.	...and traces of the passage of other expeditions that came before ours.
		01.14.38	
		La prua blindata della Sucai continua la sua lotta contro il ghiaccio...	The armoured bow of Sucai continues its fight against the ice...
		01.15.18	
		...finchè la nave non resta completamente bloccata.	...until the ship remains completely icebound.
		01.15.31	
		Augusto Bonola inganna l'ozio imbalsamando esemplari di uccelli polari.	Augusto Bonola passes the time embalming specimens of polar birds.
		01.15.50	
		Parecchi orsi cedono la loro pelle per arricchire la nostra collezione.	Many bears give away their skin to enrich our collection.

		01.16.35	
		I ghiacci diventano minacciosi. Lo spettro di uno svernamento sul pack aleggia intorno alla Sucai.	The ice becomes threatening. The spectre of a winter on the pack haunts the Sucai.
		01.18.38	
		Le correnti marine ci portano alla deriva insieme ai ghiacci. Si scandalizza continuamente il fondo per renderci conto dei movimenti.	The sea currents carry us adrift together with the ice. We continuously sound the seafloor in order to understand the movements.
		01.19.08	
		Siamo bloccati da trenta giorni e nulla fa prevedere la liberazione.	We have been stuck for thirty days and nothing suggests freedom.
		01.19.37	
		Improvvisamente i ghiacci si sono aperti: siamo liberi!	Suddenly the ice opens: we are free!
		01.20.20	
		La nostra prua riprende a mordere la barriera di ghiaccio. Facciamo rotta verso la terra di Francesco Giuseppe.	Our bow resumes biting the icy barrier. We head for Franz Joseph Land.
		01.21.13	
		La navigazione è difficilissima. Più volte alcuni di noi debbono scendere sul pack ed aprire il passo alla nave.	Navigation is extremely difficult. On several occasions, some of us have had to climb down onto the pack and open a way for the vessel.

		01.22.37	
		Siamo ormai sul mare libero. Gli ultimi ghiacci frantumati, che galleggiano intorno a noi, non sono più da temere.	We are now in open water. The last shattered ice floating around us is no longer to be feared.
		01.23.37	
		Il Comandante fa il punto per controllare la rotta.	The Commander takes a position fix to verify the course.
		01.24.04	
		Quando il vento ce lo permette, issiamo le vele per risparmiare la nostra riserva di nafta.	When the wind allows, we hoist the sails to spare our reserves of fuel oil.
		01.25.01	
		Achille Peroni ci sottopone ai suoi esperimenti di metabolismo...	Achille Peroni subjects us to his experiments on metabolism...
		01.25.39	
		...in rapporto alla speciale nutrizione e alla temperatura...	...in relation to the special nutrition and to the temperature...
		01.25.54	
		...oppure si immerge nei suoi studi prediletti sull'ozono.	...or he immerses himself in his favourite studies on the ozone.

01.26.49 01.31.37	Search in Novaya Zemlja	In this section, the <i>Heimen-SUCAI</i> has left Svalbard and is now on the western coasts of Novaya Zemlya. The far and solitary shores paint an overall picture of remoteness. The film hints to eternal cycles of nature, represented here by the seagulls “undisputed masters of these beaches” and by the “birth” and drift of icebergs from the glaciers. In such remote frontiers, human presence is temporary and precarious – as testified by the scarce remnants of the Samoyed huts and the explorers’ outposts visited by the crew.	
			
			
			
		01.26.49	
		Si fanno molte ricognizioni in motoscafo sulla costa della Nuova Semlja (sic)...	Many reconnaissance trips by motor launch are carried out on along the coast of Novaya Zemlya...
		01.27.32	
		...sbarcando anche spesso sul litorale...	...often landing as well on the shore...
		01.27.44	
		...dove troviamo avanzi di vecchie capanne di Samojedi.	...where we find the remains of old Samoyed huts.
		01.28.00	
		...e tracce del passaggio di vecchi esploratori.	...and traces of the passage of early explorers.
		01.28.19	
		I gabbiani sono i padroni incontrastati di queste spiagge.	The gulls are the undisputed masters of these beaches.

		01.28.52	
		Seguiamo il fronte di immensi ghiacciai strapiombanti. È da queste ciclopiche barriere che si staccano gli enormi icebergs, che le correnti trasportano al largo.	We follow the front of immense overhanging glaciers. It is from these cyclopean barriers that the enormous icebergs break away, carried offshore by the currents.
		01.30.44	
		In vista di Arkangel-bay (sic), nella Nuova Semlja (sic).	In sight of Arkhangel Bay, in Novaya Zemlya

01.31.37 01.37.13	Return to continental Norway  	This section tells a story of return. The Arctic Sphynx had nothing else to offer the explorer but the agonies of days without end, in spaces which are not meant to welcome human presence for more than a brief while. The homecoming is described in a progression of arrivals among humans, first in the northern outpost city – that is Tromsø – and even more in the larger and livelier Bergen. In this metaphorical <i>nostos</i>, the explorers are welcomed by crowds of onlookers, portrayed as if they had morally participated from afar in the struggles and hardships of the endeavour. The Italian crew receive mail from home and are reunited with loved ones and acquaintances: they have clearly shed, in appearance and manner, the nature of explorers and returned to the sphere of their ordinary lives.
01.31.37		
Lunghi, eterni tramonti fra i fiordi, agonie di giorni senza fine...		Long, endless sunsets in the fjords, agonies of days without end...
01.32.05		
Arriviamo a Tromsø...		We arrive to Tromsø...
01.33.30		
...dove con la posta ci giunge il primo saluto della patria...		...where, with the mail, the first greeting from the homeland reaches us...

		01.33.49	
		...e ripartiamo subito alla volta di Bergen.	...and we depart right away towards Bergen.
		01.35.20	
		Bergen, l'ultima tappa. Il nostro viaggio è finito.	Bergen, the final stop. Our journey is over.
		01.36.33	
		Fra coloro che ci aspettano sulla banchina è la madre di Gianni Albertini.	Among those waiting for us on the quay is Gianni Albertini's mother.

01.37.13 01.38.17	Epilogue	The epilogue offers a brief reflection which aims to poetically connect the expedition of the <i>Heimen-SUCAI</i> with its immediate precedent and cause, i.e. the unlucky endeavour of <i>Italia</i>. Both enterprises are described as modern manifestations of a century-old drive inherent to human nature: the endless desire to push ahead the boundaries of mankind's presence and action; beyond ever new limits, towards ever new horizons. It is a heritage which may sometimes bring to tragedy and loss, but finds in courage, selflessness and generosity a relief to the burden of suffering. It is a legacy that, in the intent of the narrator, finds in the "Youth of Italy", with its ingenuity, intimate strength and "renewed energies", a promise of moral redemption.	
		01.37.13	
		Ad Oslo, nel Museo Artico sono conservati gli avanzi di una nave vichinga.	In Oslo, at the Arctic Museum the remains of a Viking ship are preserved.
		01.37.34	
		La leggenda narra che anche essa, come la nostra valorosa Heimen Sucai, abbia un tempo sfidato l'Impero dei ghiacci, spintavi dalla inestinguibile sete di nuove conquiste, di nuovi orizzonti[.]	Legend has it that her too, like our valiant Heimen Sucai, once challenged the Empire of Ice, driven by an unquenchable thirst for new conquests, for new horizons.

		01.38.00	
		Così la Giovinezza d'Italia, sorretta dal rinnovato, ardente spirito della Patria e dall'esempio sublime dei compagni perduti, ha assolto davanti al mondo il compito che la volontà del Duce le aveva affidato.	And so the Youth of Italy, upheld by the renewed, ardent spirit of the Fatherland and by the sublime example of the lost companions, fulfilled before the world the task entrusted to it by the will of the Duce.

Index

PREFACE	V
FOREWORD	VII
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	XI
PART I	
THE EXPEDITION OF THE <i>HEIMEN-SUCAI</i>	
Preparations and geographical context	2
Geochronology	39
PART II	
THE LOGBOOK	
The logbook as a source	140
The process of transcription and translation	145
Transcription and translation	148
PART III	
LOGBOOK DISCUSSION	
The interpretation of a private diary?	374
An emotional geographic lens	376
A theme-based analysis	379
The logbook overture	382
Nature, landscape, exploration	384
Gianni Albertini, Commander	412
The ship <i>Heimen-SUCAI</i>	432

The crew	446
Animals	470
CONCLUSIONS	489
REFERENCES	497
ANNEX 1 Medical and physiological observations by Dr. Achille Peroni	511
ANNEX 2 Meteorological observations by Engineer Marco Urbano	527
ANNEX 3 Report by Dr. Augusto Bonola	534
ANNEX 4 Radiotelegraphic report by Franco Pugliese	543
ANNEX 5 “Cinematographic impressions” from the <i>Heimen-SUCAI</i> expedition	553

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