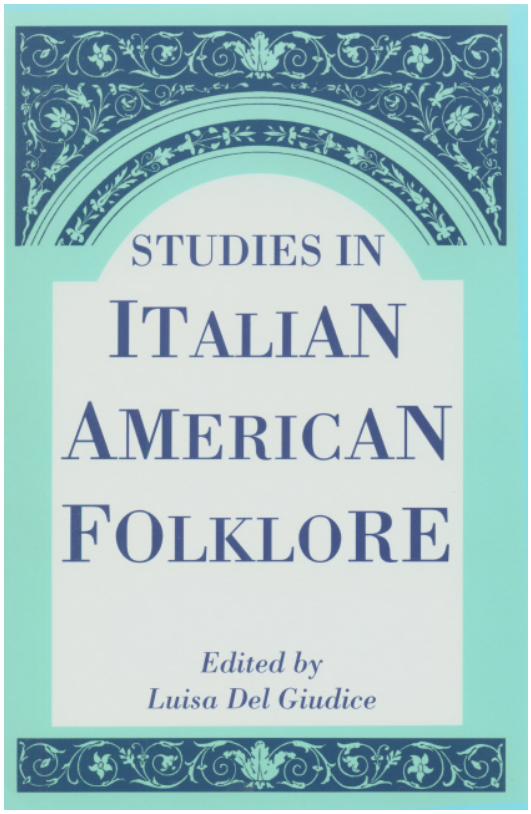
Studies in Italian American Folklore

Luisa Del Giudice



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Introduction

Luisa Del Giudice

In commemoration of the five hundredth anniversary of the voyages of Christopher Columbus to America, the Italian section of the American Folklore Society presents this collection of essays on Italian American folklife. This is one of the first efforts to bring together various voices to interpret the folkways of this ethnic group in America.[1] Midst the contrasting fanfare and backlash of the Columbian year, it appeared that some quieter and more thoughtful assessment of the Italian presence in this country was called for, one more in tune with the times. Further, an attempt to focus on an aspect of Italian culture little known and little appreciatedeven by Americans of Italian descent themselvesseemed long overdue.

Sensitivity to issues of cultural diversity has ideally been a practice of folklorists long before it became fashionable. This openness, however, is not just directed toward other groups, but also encompasses the various voices within one's own ethnic affiliation. Italians have known diversity throughout the centuries. The evolution of myriad city states and republics (the most powerful being the Venetian, Florentine, and Papal States) and a long history of foreign occupation (from the medieval Normans and Arabs in the South, to the later Bourbons and the more recent Austrians and French in the North) have each added layers to the ancient cultural substrata of pre-Latin and Latin tribes. These historical legacies have all contributed to a highly diversified social and cultural reality which today we recognize as composed of North, South (dividing at the La Spezia-Rimini line), and Central Italy; regional and linguistic Italies with further dialectical fragmentation within the regions; ethnic minorities (among them, Albanians, Greeks, Slovenes, Germans, and Provençals)many with separatist notions; and finally, the large Italian diaspora populations, most numerous in North and South America, but present on other continents (Australia, Africa) as well. Compound these peculiarly Italian cultural parameters with those that more generally applyclass, gender, religion, generation, and so forthand one begins to capture the complexity of Italy.

While many Italian Americans seem "starstruck," quick to point to illustrious Italian ancestorsMichelangelo, Leonardo, and Columbus himselfas a means, somehow, of "legitimizing" their background, few are as eager to call attention to a heritage more intimately theirs the folk cultural patrimony. With the conspicuous exceptions about

[1] As this book was under preparation, the following recent volumes on Italian American folklore came to my attention: Frances M. Malpezzi and William M. Clements, Italian American Folklore (Little Rock: August House, 1992); and David A. Taylor and John Alexander Williams, eds., Old Ties, New Attachments: Italian-American Folklife in the West (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1992).

whom we have heard so often, Italian immigrants to North America came largely from the more economically depressed areas of the country, possessing archaic features of peasant culture which they carried directly to the New World. The cultural patterns they here forged are both direct imports and creative inventions, wherein old (their regional and national Italian identities) and new (the local and national American realities) dynamically interact.

Although the bold achievement of Columbus in navigating an ocean merits commemorationwhile also recognizing the negative impact of the contacts he initiated on native peoplesit is equally true that each immigrant made a personal and more recent "journey of discovery" into largely unknown territory. Fueled by myths and misconceptions, and a desperate need to flee poverty and social decay, those first Italian immigrants to the New World sought refuge and economic well-being. Many discovered they had come to a physically and humanly hostile environment. Some adapted, eventually made peace, created a new "hybridized" culture, and some fled. Few originally intended to make this land a permanent home, but the majority remained. In the last two decades, interestingly, we are witnessing the phenomenon of reverse migration, as Americans of Italian descent return to Italy.

If Columbus's voyages engender ambiguity today, it is not only those far earlier, Asiatic immigrantstoday's Native Americans-who curse him. To both early and subsequent Italian immigrants, too, Columbus did not figure as an unqualified hero. He was sometimes invoked as the first cause of suffering and alienation for Italian immigrants: "Maledetto Cristoforo Colombo e quando ha scoperto l'America!" ("Damn Christopher Columbus and his discovery of America!") is a phrase I have heard on more than one occasion. Indeed, from the Italian folk perspective, the majority of paesani who debarked on these shores were as much victims of a capitalist, colonial mentality the pawns in global relocations of labour[2] and resourcesas the peoples these new waves of migrants might have displaced. Emigration, from the fin-de-siècle Italian government's perspective, was a means of alleviating domestic woes, a demographic safety valve through which, in addition, might trickle back some harder currency.

Christopher Columbus and immigration are intimately linked in the Italian folk mentality, and at a stretch, he may be seen as the prototype of the wandering Italian. Indeed, Columbus himself was an immigrant ante-litteram, since he settled and married in Spanish Madeira and his offspring were Spanish. He frequently appears in folksongs about immigration, for instance. In one widely known Northern Italian folksong, Columbus is the "discoverer" of a harsh and inhospitable land:

E Ii veniva Cristoforo Colombo,
E ha scoperto 'na parte del mondo,
E navigando sul mare profondo,
Fino all'Anerica, e noi siamo arrivà.

[2] As an Italian Canadian, I have chosen to use British variant spelling, which I consider a symbol of that identity, in the Introduction, Chapter 2, and the Bibliography.

E siam partiti dal porto di Genova,
E siam partiti con grande onore,
Trentasei giorni di macchina a vapore,
Fino all'America, e noi siamo arrivà.
. . . . . .
E in America noi siamo arrivati.
Non abbiamo trovato nè paglia e nè fieno.
Abbiam dormito sul duro terreno,
Come le bestie abbiamo riposà.
E l'Aanerica l'è lunga e l'è larga;
L'è circondata da monti e colline.
E con l'industria dei nostri italiani,
Abbiam formato paesi e città.[3]

But, more often, he has been blessed for making prosperity in the New World possible for destitute Italian peasants. To the descendants of those immigrants, Columbus became an emblem. Columbus Day, which occurs every October 12, is not so much a celebration of that first journey in 1492 as it is a public acknowledgment of Italian Americans and a self-celebration of their accomplishments and contributions to American society. Indeed, that each ethnic group be accorded a holiday in the national calendar may become a worthy feature of our diverse society. In Canada, Italian immigrants have fixed upon the more northerly navigator, Giovanni Cabotto (John Cabot), to serve a similar emblematic function. Italian immigrants are proud of their contributions to the New World. But most of themthat strata of Italian society upon which, as folklorists, we frequently focusdidn't plant the flag, but rather helped build America in brick and stone.

Is there some irony in the fact that an Italian Canadian is writing this "Columbian" introduction? Ought I to mention that my father could not enter the pearly gates of the America he sought? His navigations landed us a bit farther north, but could as well have landed us farther southall a matter of quotas and the immigration policy of the moment. My personal "voyages of discovery" have been many: as an Italian immigrant born in Italy and raised in Canada; as an Italian Canadian returning to Italy to "discover" Italian cultureofficially in Florence and more intimately in a town just south of Rome, my birthplace; as an Italian and Italian Canadian transplanted to the United States and coming into contact with both the older strata of immigrants and the newest clique of transatlantic Italian commuters. Personally the continental and transatlantic links remain vitalno side of this triangle must be severed for my own mental well-being. And so, I project, the ideal equilibrium for any immigrant might be this cultural pendolarismo between who one was and who one is, as one's cultural identity continuously evolves.

[3] These strophes were collected by me in Colleri and Feligara di Brallo (Pavia) in the mid-1980s. The first three strophes belong to one variant, and the final strophe to another.

I am not of the nativist school which aspires to study Italian American culture as a self-contained phenomenon; rather its dynamism arises from the historical and geographical dyad (even triad), and that requires a knowledge of the specific local Italian culture from which each form of Italian American culture evolved. Carla Bianco's The Two Rosetos (the one in Puglia, the other in Pennsylvania) offers, I believe, the model which best enables us to fully understand and appreciate the Italian American symbiosis. If we ignore the province of Fog-gia circa 1900, Roseto, Pennsylvania, will necessarily be fraught with mysteries and anomalies. An understanding of Italian regionalism is essential to the study of Italian American folkways.

But consciousness of two worlds is not merely a desideratum for researchers. It is the reason why Italian language acquisition for second- and third-generation Italians is so vital; why return trips of discovery are so important for Italian Americans. No Italian American can fully know himself or herself culturally until these rites of passage have taken place. They contribute richness to a cultural identity far beyond the abilities of a Mean Streets or Good Fellas. Of course, with the passing of timeand grandmothersand the severance of transatlantic ties, the Italian past dims in memory and seems to become less and less relevant. Or so it would appear, were it not for the fact that even third- and fourth-generation Italian Americans still feel the pull.

The reader will note that most of the essays in this book do not ignore Italian folk and national culture but make constant reference to them. These articles demonstrate that a more than superficial understanding of Italian American folkways is impossible without a broad background knowledge of the Italian language, Italian folkways, national and regional cultures and history. But they do not stop at cultural archaeology. Rather, all have been shaped by extensive field-work, where the dynamism of past and present reveals itself in living traditions. Yet, of the many variables which must be taken into consideration in the study of Italian Americans, regionalism appears to be the most significant.

The Calabrian villanella is a sung genre born in the southern Italian region and still alive among Calabrian immigrants in New York. Yet Anna Chairetakis's paper is more than a study of a specific song genre; it is a detailed ethnography of Calabrian Americans in the New York/New Jersey area and touches on traditional gender roles, social organization, foodways, traditional verbal exchanges, and other aspects of folklife. This context provides for an understanding of the vil-lanella, especially in terms of the psychological, symbolic interpretation that the author suggests. Chairetakis writes with conviction, excitement, colour, and a feeling for live performance; her essay is an intensely enjoyed unfolding of social interaction. Her work in the Italian American community has ranged from documentation of this sort, to the production of important musical recordings (listed in the bibliography) and festival organization and advocacy. It is worth noting, too, that the villanella singer De Franco has recently become a National Heritage Fellow.

My study of the "archvilla" in Toronto spans three decades of Italian life and customs in Canada and focuses on the mix of elite, popular, and folk cultures in the little-

examined "new" immigration. It, too, is a cross-genre commentary, which draws upon proverbs, customs, and foodways to provide a sense of the evolving social life of Italians in Canada. It shifts continuously between Italy and Canada and among ethnic pride, historical memory, and personal aspirations as these forces shape the interplay between real and mythic space in an architectural form. Ultimately the essay is historical and examines Fascism's use of the myth of Rome and Roman architecture and how these have helped imbue the arch with special meaning for Italian Canadians.

Sabina Magliocco deals with a most important topic in any discussion of Italian American folklifefoodways, in this instance those within the festival context. Because festivals are such a major form of Italian ethnic expression in North America, this essay provides important insights into both foodways and festivals as they converge in Clinton, Indiana's Italian festa. It also explores a little studied northern group of immigrants, the Piedmontese in Indiana, and helps right the imbalance in Italian American studies, which have so often focused on southern Italians (and to a lesser degree on central Italians). This article is firmly grounded in fieldwork, knowledge of Italy, and theory, as Magliocco refers to, among others, Hobsbawm and Ranger and their notion of the "invention of tradition."

Dorothy Noyes's contribution is the most historical in this collection, although she has carried out extensive fieldwork in Philadelphia's Italian community, which resulted in an important exhibit and catalogue (curated and written by Noyes) on Italian American traditions at the Fleisher Art Memorial (Philadelphia Folklore Project) in Philadelphia in 1989. This essay, based on contemporary newspaper accounts, focuses on the "invention" of Italy in and around 1929 by Italian Americans who undertook a "pilgrimage" to Fascist Italy organized by the Philadelphia chapter of the order Sons of Italy. Since Italian American organizations (whether town, regional, religious, social, professional or sports affiliated) are so much a part of Italian life in America, this article sheds important light on how such organizations may mediate and invent ethnic identity. It also reveals the vast distance which often separates these "official" representatives of the Italian community from the community itself, the rhetoric from the reality, the representation of events from the actual events.

Paola Schellenbaum, an Italian contributor, provides the most strongly theoretical essay in this collection, yet it is based on sustained fieldwork in the North Bay area of California. The author, who frames her work in reflexive ethnography, examines cultural stereotypes through a kaleidoscope of shifting perspectives: how Italians from differing regional provenances stereotype each other and Americans; how Americans view Italians; how, as an Italian researcher, she views Italian Americans and Americans. She positions the process in a historical context and focuses on the transformation of meanings and symbols through time as they may be distorted by memory and shaped by collective imagery. Like Magliocco, Schellenbaum gives central importance to the idea that emotional reactions may be strongly coloured by cultural conditioning.

Joseph Sciorra, who has long been interested in sacred space (from backyard shrines and altars to the Giglio procession and festival and, in his essay here, the Our Lady of

Mount Carmel grotto in Rosebank, Staten Island), has an ear for diverse and contrasting voices. Sciorra examines the ways in which people's words and actions engender meaning for the grotto. The multivocality emanates from three groups of people: the society members who constructed and currently maintain the site, the faithful who travel from all parts of the New York City metropolitan area to pray at the grotto, and the local clergy. From the whispered and written prayers of the faithful inside the grotto to the priest's diatribes against the society's brand of popular religion, the voices Sciorra captures are many. Further, the discourse around the grotto spans an ocean and centuries. Sciorra recalls the place of caves in popular Mediterranean religions, the conflict between Marian- and Christ-centered Catholicism, the centuries-old conflict between southern Italian peasants and the Roman Catholic clergy, and the current battle for inclusion and diversity in mainstream religions.

These essays span time and space. They focus on both new and old immigrants: from the largely post-World War II community in Toronto, Canada, to the more established Italian Americans of New York and Philadelphia. Geographically they range from large cities such as New York, Toronto, Philadelphia, and San Francisco to smaller communities like Clinton, Indiana, and San José, California. Regionally they deal with Italian American groups of Piedmontese and Calabrian descent, or more generally with the essential northern/southern Italian divisions. And in terms of national culture, the patria is the "mecca" of a pilgrimage fashioned by the "Supreme Venerable," Giovanni Di Silvestro, in 1929; it may also be a more archetypal place evoked through architectural nationalism in the archvilla. Further, the essays collectively address important parts of Italian American folklife: music, architecture, foodways, associations, religion, and ethnic representation and stereotyping.

This brief introduction should orient the reader to the six essays assembled here. Finally, in the interest of disseminating the work of previous scholars on the folklore of Italian Americans and Canadians, and in the hope of reviving research efforts in this field, I have appended a bibliography and index of Italian American and Canadian folklore to this collection.

And there came Christopher Columbus,
And he discovered a part of the world,
And sailing on the deep sea,
We arrived in America.

We departed from the port of Genova,
And we departed with great honour.
Thirty-six days on a steamship,
We arrived in America.

And in America we arrived.
We found neither straw nor hay.
We slept on the hard ground;
Like the animals we slept.

And America is long and vast;
It is surrounded by mountains and hills.
And by the hard work of our Italians,
We built towns and cities.

For an edited version of this "emigration song," compare Nuovo Canzoniere Italiano, "Trenta giorni di nave a vapore," on Roberto Leydi and Franco Crivelli, eds., Bella Ciao, Dischi del Sole, 1974.

1. Tears of Blood: The Calabrian Villanella and Immigrant Epiphanies

Anna L. Chairetakis

Introduction

"We were clearing the fields for a landowner in the Sila,"[1] recalls Raffaela De Franco of her adolescence during the post-World War II years. "We were all women, and we were singing. They always wanted me along because, young as I was, my voice was a trumpet, and I could both sing and throw the iettu. Suddenly, a man appeared with a large machine. It was a tape recorder, but at that time, none of us had ever seen one. We believed he was using an enchantment to steal our souls through our voices, and some of us talked of killing him on the spot."

Twenty-five years later, on the evening of February 23, 1975, I carried a tape recorder into the basement of Santa Rosalia Church in Brooklyn, New York, and found Mrs. De Franco and a group of her paesani (fellow townspeople) singing the villanella. At that moment I felt the way Heinrich Schliemann must have when he discovered Troy. I had been searching for Italian musicians to perform at the Smithsonian's Festival of American Folklife in Washington, D.C., that year and had thus far found few Italian Americans who knew or would claim their folk music. At last I had received a promising invitation from the sacristan of St. Rosalia's to hear "some of those little things we do in our dialect." One of these "little things" proved to be a chorus lining out drone harmonies which would have been pleasing to the Byzantines of southern Italy ten centuries ago.

The Calabrian villanella is a polyphonic song-poem elaborating on the ottava, or eight-line, hendecasyllabic, lyric verse form characteristic of south-central Italy.[2] It

[1] The Sila is the pre-Alpine mountain range that runs from Mr. Pollino on the southern border of Basilicata south to the Catanzarese lowland corridor.

[2] Ottava rima first emerged as a literary verse form at the court of Frederic II of Sicily in the thirteenth century, and was taken up by Petrarch and other Italian poets; it remains the compositional form most used by modern Sicilian poets. The ubiquity of the ottava in Italian folksong betokens its origins in oral tradition.

is native to Acri and nearby communes of the province of Cosenza in the northern Calabrian interior and belongs to an extensive tradition of similar unaccompanied choral singing which until recently flourished in the upland tangle of hilltop towns and villages that run the length of the south-central Apennines.[3] In Acri, as among the immigrants to the United States from that commune, the villanella exists in at least three melodic and structural variants. I estimate that the Acretanu repertoire of vil-lanella texts (excluding variants and historical texts now no longer current) may well run into the hundreds; I can only present a sample here.

The villanella is a genuine antique of a type of European polyphony employing two to three parts with a double drone. In spite of its interest as both a musical and poetic form, however, it has received little scholarly attention. Because it is difficult to master, is stylistically unorthodox by the canons of Western polyphony, and lacks the cheerful naïveté beloved of revivalists and composers in the folk vein, it has never left the oral tradition. There, however, it holds an honored place.

The following analysis, which links the social contexts, musical style, and poetics of the villanella, suggests that the genre as performance is a statement about the small group life and informal coalitions characteristic of Apennine society south of Rome. As such, it simultaneously announces women's prominent role within such groups and stresses the bonding of couples, and with it the ethos of patriarchal familism which infuses mountain social organization. Among Acretanu immigrants of the 1960s and 1970s, shifts in social relationships and economic roles have expanded the feminine domain and attenuated the ties connecting kin and neighborly groups. However, the villanella remains relevant as an embodiment of Cala-brian aesthetics and psychosocial dynamics. Villanella singing and reciting are acts of remembrance and meditation on both individual experience and collective identity which are important in the set of Calabrian practices and cultural icons that immigrants have integrated into their American setting.

The Acretani

The Brooklyn singers interrupted themselves with shouts of "Eccola! È arrivata!" ("Here she is, she made it!"). Greeting me with open arms and affectionate embraces were about twenty people of all ages, most of them related. The only props in the otherwise empty basement were some chairs arranged in a semicircle. To the side, a long table was laden with food fixed at home and packed in foil: baked pasta, rispelli (twists of fried dough), squagliatielle (circlets of boiled, then glazed, dough, flavored with anise or pepper), olives, pickled eggplants and hot peppers, home-cured hot and mild salami,

[3] The term villanella, "rustic dance, folksong" (sixteenth century) extends the primary meaning, "country girl" (diminutive of villana, "peasant"), in a manner recalling the pastorella and the northern Italian villotta. According to the standard sources, it was known first in sixteenth-century Italy as a "rustic" unaccompanied part song, then chiefly in France as a rather complex verse form (Preminger 1986; also see note 14).

homemade ricotta, imported mountain cheese, bread, and winea dark, Homeric red and an effervescent white, made in Brooklyn cellars from California grapes.

A small, moon-faced man, red with suppressed excitement, played the four-base organetto (button accordion) for dancing. He had been driven over from New Jersey for the occasion. A statuesque, black-haired woman of sixty accompanied him on the tambourine, with her brother, a grizzled, smiling man of flay, a former muleteer, who played the castanets. Everyone dancedpolkas, mazurkas, waltzes, and variants of the Calabrian tarantella. Those who sang the villanella and for the tarantella were all, with the exception of one youth who was learning, over forty.

This was, at the time, a regular Saturday night gathering of the Ac-retani. They had immigrated between the late 1950s and early 1970s from the large commune of Acri (thirteen hundred hectares), situated midway between the Ionian and Tyrrhenian seas in the Sila Greca and had attached themselves to preexisting Acretanu enclaves in Benson-hurst, Brooklyn; Belleville, Nutley, and Lyndhurst, New Jersey; and Westerly, Rhode Island. They worked in factories, as longshoremen, or ran small family businesses. Two distinct groups were represented among them: those from the paese, a bustling town of about eighteen thousand, and those from the hamlet of Serricella and other rural districts within the territory of the commune.

The first group, settled for the most part in Brooklyn, had been owner-shepherds, blacksmiths, shoemakers, carters; muleteers, shopkeepers, and silk makersbelonging, in short, to the subclass of artisans who also farmed. They remembered Acri as a jolly place. Calabria was their homeland, America a place of temporary exile to be tolerated but not loveda place to make money to take back to Calabria, where the landscape was inspiring, the mountain climate healthful, the food genuine, and social life full of pleasures. Even with grown children starting families of their own in America, the older members of this group were beginning to spend several months out of each year in Calabria as they neared retirement. Some were planning to repatriate altogether. Because of their Calabrian orientation and because they had little need of it in their daily lives, most of those over thirty had not learned English.

Those from the rural districts, on the other hand, had known a harder life, having worked as marginal sharecroppers, field hands, hired shepherds, and day laborers. Even those few who, as tenant farmers and small proprietors, had eaten well, worn shoes, and attended elementary school as children felt the isolation and abandonment by ”civilized” society experienced by all the country people. For until the 1960s, the rural hamlets had lacked paved roads, electricity, water, medical care, and other amenities of the twentieth centuryall but the most rudimentary stores and schools. Consequently, many in this group felt that Italy had wronged and excluded them so that they could not live as ”cristiani” (human beings). Although Calabria held powerful associations, it was a place to visit occasionally, but not to return to permanently. Their loyalty was to America, which had treated them better. While most of their time was spent among speakers of Calabrian, many of the adult members of this group had learned English fairly quickly.

The women of both groups had worked on their own farms and as estate laborers in Calabria. Some of those from artisan families had been silk makers in a small way. In the United States, these women continued in their breadwinning roles, largely in factories.

Notwithstanding their differing perceptions of and attitudes toward Italy and America, both rural and urban Acretanu immigrants had integrated a series of Calabrian practices and traditions into their American settings, creating, as have other immigrants and minorities, a vital, intense, and distinctive cultural life. In general, such a strategy has not produced conflicts for Acretani; on the contrary, it has eased the immigrant adaptive process and has helped to launch the younger generation into American life within parameters that are acceptable and pleasing to both young and old.[4]

Small-Group Life and Cultural Reproduction, 1960-1990

The Acretani have reproduced in America a modified version of the southern Italian modes of patriarchal household formation and economy and of social interaction. This lifestyle is characterized by a loose corporate management, by both parents and eventually grown children, of the resources and labor of the entire household and is aimed toward marrying and endowing all of the children, who then maintain ongoing interests in and dependencies upon parental and fraternal households. In such a field of intrafamilial and interhousehold relationships, the mother-daughter bond is perhaps the strongest. It expands over time to include daughters' husbands and children and to ramify among maternal siblings and their children.

Paralleling and sustaining these forms of social interaction are three orders of behavior, consisting of the flow and patterning of social life, food making and distribution, and expressive culture, particularly the verbal and musical arts. These are the foundations of adult small-group life, which is a primary locus of the creativity and cultural renewal of the community.

The small group is composed of kin cummari and cumpari [Italian comari and compari], persons considered kin through the institution of godparenthoodneighbors and former neighbors, people who grew up together in Calabria, and occasionally, hometown acquaintances brought closer together in the United States. Typically, siblings and their spouses form a stable core to which other couples adhere, but very often the small group may include single women isolated by widowhood, marital separation, or other circumstances. Members carefully weigh the degree of reciprocity in the frequency and length of visits; the exchange of information, food, favors and gifts between

[4] One of Bianco's main findings in her study of the Apulian American community of Roseto, Pennsylvania (1976) was that traditional folkways had highly adaptive functions on a number of levels in the lives of first-, second-, and even third-generation Italian immigrants. Looking at Celtic ethnicity in Britain, O'Brian (1982) found that "individuals were capable of fulfilling their roles in modern society and maintaining an active, vital subcultural life with no observable conflict." For an analysis of immigration and its impact upon Acri k-self, see Piselli 1981.

them; and inclusion in celebrations and work bees. In keeping with southern Italian social mores, the small group may include an individual of higher status who acts as honorary patron.

Such informal groupings are loosely connected in a web of kinship, friendship, secondhand friendship, and gossip. They are brought together periodically in the life-cycle celebrations shared by all, either through direct participation or through knowledge and discussion. Impinging on this relatively egalitarian network are several overarching and interpenetrating principles and structures. First is the still-imminent shadow of the oppressive two-class system that prevailed in southern Italy until about 1955, within whose bottom half most of the immigrants were ranked. Then there are the formal institutions of the immigrant community-church, ethnic social club, fraternal and political organizations, and festivalsthrough which a variety of values and aspirations are articulated. Finally, permeating family life, household organization, and public behavior is the hierarchy of gender, with men occupying a formally dominant position in the sexual division of roles, and a separation of male/public and female/private domains. As a general operating principal, southern Italian patriarchy mirrors the old class system, in which the poor, like women, were invisible. However, complementarity appears to supersede gender hierarchy in small-group relations; adult married women in fact play the central, leading roles in group organization and activity. In my observation, the Acretanu pattern is generally representative of mountain village society in Calabria, Campania, Molise, and Abruzzi.

To the greatest extent possible in an American urban or exurban setting, the Acretani follow the cycles of the agricultural calendar in Calabria. Both men and women put most of their spare time into growing, preparing, distributing, and consuming traditional foods. It is a process which shapes and nourishes, both corporeally and spiritually, most other aspects of social life. Indeed, as they engage in these activities, it would seem that the Calabrians are actually growing their culture.

In the spring, gardens are sown with tomatoes, basil, zucchini, eggplant, hot and sweet peppers, parsley, salad greens, and other vegetables. These are eaten fresh as they ripen and also preserved. Pickling and preserving begins in late summer: pressed eggplant or zucchini with hot pepper and garlic in oil or vinegar; pimentos; hot peppers of all kinds; sun-dried tomatoes; wild mushrooms and berries gathered by those who live near woodlands. Late in August, kin and neighbors collaborate in canning hundreds of jars of homegrown tomatoes, supplemented by ones from farmers' markets. September is for winemak-ing with grapes grown on backyard vines and arbors and purchased from California wholesalers. In November, green olives are bought, smashed, and cured with garlic and salt. In January, the men kill pigs or buy them fresh killed, and the women cure salami and hams which hang from the rafters of their cool, well-ordered cellars, over casks of wine. Every fifteen days, as in Italy, housewives do their baking: in addition to bread, they often make squagliatielle, rispelli, taralli (baked rings, flavored with anise or pepper), and varieties of pasta for company and holidays.

Men make ricotta and cheese and also procure prized shepherds' cheeses from Acri, and at Christmas and Easter they put rabbit or goat on the table.

Many of the tasks of gardening and processing are divided in culturally prescribed ways between men and women; some are shared. Generally, the male contribution is periodic, whereas women's involvement is ongoing and constant. The same applies to distribution. Women continually circulate the foods through the household and extended family and beyond. However, it is frequently a male prerogative to select and bestow special gifts of food, particularly the wine and prized cured meats and Italian handmade cheeses. Both men and women are strongly committed to the domestic food complex.

The home economy is motivated as much by social and psychological needs and gratifications as by values of thrift and serf-sufficiency. It gives a household social currency in the community of immigrants. It nourishes the family psyche, particularly that of the main breadwinner. Giuseppe De Caro of Westerly (aged thirty) put it this way: "When I get home from the plant at night, the first thing I do is go to the cellar, have one or two glasses of wine, and I just sit there. Then I go upstairs to my wife and children, and I feel great." By keeping a Calabrian homea particularly difficult achievement in the immigrant setting, where most working-class Italian women hold full-time jobs a woman constructs a central position in her family and in small-group life.

Further, food is inscribed with gender and sexual symbolism, which the Calabrians make explicit during conviviality. Salami and circles of bread are metaphors for male and female sexual parts. Served together, they present the image of imminent consummation; wine and hot pepper are the agents that ignite and unleash this force. Eaten together, round breads and "soupy" (suppressata [Italian soppressata] or salami) are believed to give strength and, implicitly, to make men potent and women fertile. In other words, consuming such foods becomes an act of contemplating and ingesting sexual potency and fecundity, as well as of renewing these states. In the immigrant community, not only the fertility and regeneration of the family, but that of the cultural community, are sanctioned in the commensal setting. Eating in this context becomes an act that reinforces being Calabrian and regenerates a common Calabrian identity at its very source.

Contexts of Villanella Singing

A trinity of sociality, food, and artful verbal play constitutes the setting in which the villanella is performed by adult immigrants from Acri. As company drops by, wine and preserved foods are brought out from their underground sanctum, complemented by homemade breads, store-bought cakes, and Italian and American coffee. In Westerly, on the night of Easter Saturday, round, braided, egg-studded breads (culluria), "soupy"

and wine are offered to Easter carolers playing the chi-tarra battente[5] and singing their praises and good wishes to each household on their rounds. Such foods act both on the body chemistry and on the perceptions, associations, and behavior of those present. When the company is congenial (quannu c'è na cumpagnia bona), they inspire an exchange of witticisms, rhymed when the participants are at their best. Here the paramount theme of coupling is suggested in a stream of allusions, jokes, and riddles. On appropriate occasionsan informal party, a holiday gathering, an impromptu visit from a musician or good singerthis can lead to dancing and villanella singing. Singing sessions are often informally planned"Ven-immu sta sira e facciamu na canteata" ("Let's come over tonight and sing"), someone will suggest.[6] When people know there's going to be singing, even when nothing has been said about it, the verbal play becomes a rehearsal, a warming-up process, a catalyst for the deep plunge into song.

The Italian contexts of villanella singing were far more numerous and varied, being functionally connected to work and to specific social events such as serenading, as well as to informal occasions such as those used by immigrants. Villanelle accompanied female group labor of many kinds: collecting firewood in the upland forests; transporting heavy loads of wood, water, and laundry, balanced on the head, over rough country lanes; and working on the great fruit, olive, and wheat plantations of the plains, where gangs of women hired out by the season and lived in barracks. Villanelle animated the backbreaking labor of harvesting and the neighborly conviviality of corn huskings, both organized through informal cooperation and labor exchange between friends and relations. Insulting verses were sung by women to warn, ridicule, or punish an obstreperous or promiscuous neighbor, or by men to destroy the heart and reputation of a rejected lover. Men and women sang villanelle together in night serenades, calling up verses of soul-piercing tenderness and desire designed to melt a girl's heart and declare to her family and the neighborhood that she was being courted and so out of bounds to other suitors. The sexes sang together at intense, wine-drenched, nightlong parties around the fire in winter months, when work was scarce and agriculture dormant. Or in summer, "We'd sing and frolic till dawn, and then go straight to the fields."[7]

Style, Structure and Variants

Two can sing the villanella, as Raffaela De Franco and her sister did during a rare and emotional reunion. While four or five singers make up the usual chorus, Bambina and Angelo Luzzi recall singing ten to fifteen strong. What majestic, mournful, and thrilling music they must have made on those dark winter hilltops! Not too distant, perhaps, from the "wolf-calling" choruses who, by their concerted howling in the

[5] The chitarra battente is an early modern prototype of the Spanish guitar in wide use throughout southern Italy until midcentury, now made by artisans in a few Calabrian centers.

[6] Transcriptions reflect the author's rather than the editor's criteria.-ED.

[7] A beautiful evocation of the "musical landscape" of Calabrian feasts is to be found in Plastino 1992.

forests, induced wolves to answer and betray their whereabouts. Indeed, one of the probable functions of villanella singing, with its powerful, far-reaching dynamics, was to locate female work parties. The sound carries farthest at the point in the singing when "beating" is intense and the high drone voice enters the chorus.

The villanella chorus may be mixed in sex, but to judge from its many female, work-related contexts and from the importance of the high drone part, the genre is basically feminine. The high drone (called lu iettu, or "the throw," in Serricella, and lo sguillo, "the peal," or caiauto in Acri) is in fact a part specifically designed for women, and it is generally agreed that the chorus sounds best when women are singing. Either sex, or both in alternation, may lead the singing. Leadership is informal, depending upon the skill, vocal qualities, and memory for texts of those present.

Singers stand in a closed circle, leaning against one another or with their arms around one another's shoulders if they are related. An unrelated woman will stand free or arm in arm with another woman. The singers' faces are serious, and their eyes are cast upward or gaze abstractedly into the center of the singing circle. As he delivers his lines, a male lead singer will rock his torso and throw his body into a conventionalized posture suggesting a cringe, twisting his head up and sideways away from the group with his eyes closed and his face in a grimace, like one in pain. Women are more sedate, but also rock and cringe while singing. Positioned thus, they sing into one another's faces, producing a vibrating effect on the sound waves called beating, a device used in vocal polyphony throughout southeast Europe.

The manner in which vocal unity and harmony are created out of monophony/ heterophony is the outstanding feature of villanella singing in all local variants of the genre, and indeed of mountain polyphony throughout southern Italy. Each line or couplet is begun by a leader. The leader is joined by, or drowned in, a chorus at the peak of the melody and the poetic utterance, which the whole group then reiterates with variations in both melody and text. The high-pitched, strident voice of the iettu of Calabrian polyphony climactically overrides and ornaments the final line of each couplet. In effect, a monophonic situation gives way to heterophony, in which other voices weave together subtle variants of the melody in loose unison. These distinct voices then merge to create the prolonged, bagpipelike drone chords that are a signature of every phrase ending.

In this way, unity is almost painstakingly constructed out of a concert of in dependent voices, sustained for a few breathtaking moments, then broken, to be recreated in succeeding lines of the song. This is a precise musical statement of the coalition dynamic, and more exactly of the close, yet informal, evanescent nature of small groups, prevalent in southern Italian social life and important as well in Italian American communities. This premise is supported by the manner in which singers consult with one another between verses, prompt the lead singer, argue over which version of the next verse to sing, or compose new verses.[8]

[8] For further observations on the group dimension in northern Calabrian singing, see Magrini 1989.

Applied to several examples of the villanella and closely related genres, the Cantometric method of cross-cultural analysis of song performance produces a stylistic profile which is distinctive from, though related to, the predominant urban Mediterranean style.[9] Alternating leaders overlap with a chorus singing unaccompanied polyphony in the highly individualized manner of group performance in the Mediterranean region. Long phrases, free meter, slow tempo, and liberal use of rubato accentuate and dramatize texts, although enunciation is rather slurred, with about 50 percent repetition. Typically found are four- and seven-phrase strophes with melismatic, descending phrases, drone harmonies, loud dynamics, and forceful accent, sung by narrow, raspy, nasal voices.

These features distinguish this Calabrian mountain genre from the "high lonesome" solo tradition of Naples, Sicily and the southern littoral (see Lomax 1955-56 and 1976; Carpitella 1991). From as nearby as the Cosentine coast, one finds accompanied choruses, whose four-phrase strophic tunes, short phrases, diatonism, lack of ornament, and moderate tempo give them a modern Western European flavor. On the other hand, comparison of villanella performances with examples from the southern Appennines, Sardinia and southeastern Europe yields similarities suggestive of common roots in an older tradition of Mediterranean singing that survived in isolated pockets of Sardinia, Corsica, the Balearics, and Appennine Italy-areas never absorbed (or incompletely so) by the centralized, imperial culture of the Graeco-Roman, Arab, and Spanish worlds.[10]

Three melodic and structural variants of the villanella have been reported to methe villanella and lassa piglia of Acri, and the villanella of Serricella. Others, from rural hamlets like Serricella, no doubt existed. In each of the variants, two lines of poetry from a total of eight are elaborated, when sung, into a verse of four phrases plus repetition and recapitulation. The following breakdown of a single verse (two lines of poetry) of the "Villanella di Acri" shows how this variant is performed.

[9] Cantometrics, devised by Alan Lomax and Victor Grauer, produced a world taxonomy of song styles matching the findings of cultural historians and cross-cultural social anthropologists (see Lomax 1976). Their sample includes individual profiles and composite profiles of the major Italian stylistic traditions. The ensuing description of Cosentine and Mediterranean performance styles derives from Cantometric regional profiles (Lomax, Index of World Song, in preparation) and from a Cantometric analysis applied to my own recordings.

[10] Dieter Christiansen suggested that this "Old Mediterranean" style is linked in the southeast with the music of the Adriatic islands of Krk and Brac, partsof Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Macedonia, Thrace, and northern Greece (personal communication, Spring 1978). For a similar analysis of Molisano singing using Cantometrics, see Chairetakis 1993.

VILLANELLA DI ACRI	E saputo ca all'America vu jire, ji lu diluvio pe ttia se vo voteare! (I've heard you're leaving for America, And may the deluge rain down upon you!)
First Leader:	E saputo ca all'America vu jire, ji lu diluvio pe ttia se
Chorus:	vo voteare-e-e
First Leader:	Aié se vo voteare
Drone:	e-e-e
Chorus and Drone:	Oi pe ttia se vo voteare-e-e!
[Recapitulation:]	
Second Leader:	E cca vu jiri e lu diluvio pe ttia se
Chorus:	va voteare-e-e
Second Leader:	E se d'e voteare
Chorus and Drone:	Oié pe mmia se vo voteare-e-e![a]
The first leader throws back his/her head and delivers the first couplet (canta), and the chorus (l'accuordo) comes in unevenly over the end of the send line in ragged two- or three-part harmony, which unifies in a sustained drone note at the end of the line. The first leader then repeats the last phrase of the couplet, with the high drone (iettu) coming in over the final droned vowel of the chorus. Chorus and iettu repeat the last phrase a second time. A second leader then returns or throws back (revota) the couplet in the Same manner, recapitulating or echoing, with the chorus and drone, different sections of the lines. Each phrase is long, lasting from six to sixteen seconds, and an entire couplet/verse takes from forty-five seconds to a minute to performthree times as long as the strophe in most European folksongs.	

[a] Note that in the last phrase the chorus/drone switches voice from the third to the first person.

Like the "Villanella di Acri," the lassa piglia was performed only in the urban center (Acri paese) by the artisan group, but it has a more complex structure than the villanella. Three leaders alternate within a single strophe, and the chorus elaborates

the couplet in such a way that it is gradually broken down to the e-e-e-a-e coda, the favored vowel combination in the dialect of the paese. There does not appear to be a high drone part in the lassa piglia. "La lassa piglia è stata fatta prima della villanella," Annunziato Chimento told me. "Una piglia, un'atra revota, e un'atra la finisce, e poi c'è quella che ietta." ("The lassa piglia originated before the villanella. One person takes up the song, another returns it, and a third finishes it; then there's the one who 'throws' the drone voice.")[11] A single verse (two lines of poetry out of a total of four) is sung thus:

LASSA PIGLIA DI ACRI

	Eh! Intrá ssi fuossi e dintra ssi valleate, ogni damiente mie d'introné si sente! (Eh! In these chasms and in these valleys, My every lament like thunder echoes!)
First Leader:	Eh!... Intrá ssi fuossi, e dintrá ssi valleate-e-e-e-a-a!
Second Leader:	Eh-e-e, dintrá ssi valleati, o-ogni damiente mie-e-e-e-e-a-e
Third Leader:	e d'introné si
Chorus:	sente-e-he-e, d'introné si sente-e-e! E-he-e-a, e-he-e-a![a]

[a] Collected from Francesco Chimento, Brooklyn, N.Y., 1976.

Villanelle were sung in towns surrounding Acri as well. Acretani view their own singing as very close to that of the ethnic Albanians (Gheghi, as they are known locally, from the Albanian phrase ghe, or "hey, you") from nearby settlements such as San Demetrio, Vac-carizzo, or Cavallerizzo. During seasonal agricultural labor, women from both ethnic communities worked and sang together, appreciating one another's proficiency in similar drone harmony traditions and enjoying novel differences in styles and texts. Female-dominated polyphonic songs, similar in function and performance style and no less striking, but not as long or structurally complex as the villanella, were sung in the uplands throughout south-central Calabria.[12]

[11] Lassa piglia translates as "leave/take" or "give/take." The lassa piglia has counterparts among Tosks and Labs in Albania, where the parts of song are termed ia merr ("takes it"), ia pret ("cuts it") and iso ("holds it") (Sadie 1980; Kruta 1981; Lortat-Jacob 1981). The lassa piglia also recalls old-style Greek Orthodox hymnody, which has been relatively stable since Byzantine times. Scholars of Calabrian culture speculate that the school of artisan/cultivated music that flourished in the environs of Acri (particularly at Bisignano) in the eighteenth century was Byzantine derived (Cesare Pitto, personal communication, October 1990). As yet, however, no one has studied the Byzantine influence on Calabrian music. For excellent current surveys and discussions of Cal-abrian music, see Plastino 1993, 1990a, 1990b, 1989.

[12] A verse of one such song from Feroleto Antico, sung in a piercing near-falsetto by two women accompanied by a man, is structured as follows (Lomax and Carpitella 1957: side 2, band 1):

Poetics of the Villanella

The French villanelle, which enjoyed great popularity as a verse form in sixteenth-century literary composition, apparently derived from Italian folksong (Preminger 1986; Sadie 1980).[13] In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, all regions of Italy had their villanelle (Calcaterra 1926). In Naples, however, "[the genre] achieved an artistic beauty all its own, and became known as Neapolitan" (Santoli 1968). Judging from the relative complexity of its sixteenth-century literary form and the modern Calabrian type, the villanella probably developed as an urban artisan as well as a peasant genre, as it appears to have done in Cosenza. In Calabria, it is likely that the term itself is of cultivated or literary origin and may have filtered in through the French presence in southern Italy. Acretanu (artisan) informants told me that the vil-lanella texts were written "over a hundred years ago, before our time, by a poet named Virginio" (whom I understood to mean Virgil). Vir-ginio, they said, wrote many songs which were lost in their written form, but passed down orally to their generation.[14] The contrived artfulness and arch tone of some of the texts I collected does suggest literary derivation or inspiration in a few instancesa not unlikely possibility, given the great influence of Provencal and classical traditions in Italy, as well as the presence of vigorous schools of literary composition in Calabria. Certainly the poetry often has a classical literary cast, particularly in its balance between one contrasting "voice" or argument and another, its persuasive tenor, and its artful use of conceits. At the same time, it is highly original.

Acretanu informants report that villanelle were frequently composed on the spot, although the songs told to me were not attributed to any one individual. It is my impression that authorship may be of slight consequence in the Calabrian context and recedes quickly into obscurity. As far as I know, villanelle are not now composed by immigrant Acretani. In both collecting and performance contexts, women are the primary, though not the only, sources of texts, and some have extensive repertoires of more than fifty texts.

When asked to repeat a villanella text, an Acretanu will recite it as an ottava (eight-line lyric poem in hendecasyllabic meter), which is how the songs have been transcribed by older collectors:[15]

A. First Leader (female) Second Female Singer joins in; they drone at end of phrase
BLeader begins repetition of A Second Female Singer joins in
CBoth repeat line B, drone
DMale Leader joins with new text, drones with prolonged chord on accordion.

[13] "[T]he v. since Passerate retained the following pattern: usually five tercets rhyming aba, followed by a quatrain rhyming abaa..." (Preminger 1986: 297). In our century, Dylan Thomas employed the villanelle form for his "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night."

[14] Roberto De Simone has made an imaginative historical study of the obscure Campanian beliefs which designate Virgil and the Sibyl of Cumae as the twin progenitors of oral tradition in southern Italy (De Simone 1984).

[15] I transcribed the texts as sung or dictated to me by the singers and present them here in that form. Inconsistencies appearing in the transcriptions in some cases reflect differences between the dialects of

Eh! Cchiù si bella e cchiù ci puort' affettu,
e pu mi muostri tanto madu coru!
Eh! De dacrimi de sangue ci di iettu,
lu vientu mi disperde li parodi.
Oije ma ssu pettuzzu tua forrá di vitro,
che lu da intra comparissi fori!
Ca i pub vedere se ci puorta bene,
o puramente si t'amó de core)[16]

(Eh! The more beautiful you grow, the more I love you,
And then you show me such a cruel heart.
Eh! I shed tears of blood,
And the wind scatters my words.
Oh, if only your little breast were made of glass,
So what is inside could show forth,
And I could see if you cared for me,
And if I loved you from the heart.)

However, De Simone (1973) finds for Campanian song, as we do for Calabrian, that in performance the hendecasyllabic line and the eight-line verse are broken down in many different ways, both metrically and syllabically. In the "Villanella di Serricella," a single couplet is broken down as follows:

VILLANELLA DI SERRICELLA

Eh! Cchiù si bella e cchiù ci puort'affettu, e pu mi muostri tanto madu coru! |

First Leader, male:	Eh! Cchiù si bella e cchiù ci puort'affettu,	[A]
	epu mi muostri	[B]
Leader and Chorus:	tantu madu corn!	
Second Leader, female:	Oi madu	[C]
Leader and Chorus:	coru [prolongation of final vowel]	
Leader, Chorus and Drone:	oijé tantu madu core! [prolongation]	

Acri paese and the hamlet of Serricella, and in others a wavering between dialect usage and standard Italian, which progressively penetrates and alters local and regional language. Often, unable to catch the texts as sung, I asked that they be dictated so they could be transcribed. In reciting the texts slowly for my benefit, my Acretanu informants frequently altered them slightly, adding a word or syllable here and there in process of explication, with the result that the meter of the poems as I have transcribed them is occasionally longer than eleven syllables. I did not feel, however, that I should correct or alter the texts as given to me. The translations are my own, along with any inaccuracies they may contain.

[16] Collected from Teresa Francese, Nutley, N.J., November 1987.

Line C is broken down into three parts, but sung as one musical phrase, so that the sung verse structure of the recited (or written) couplet is ABC (in Cantometric terms, simple strophe with variation).

This fact has convinced De Simone that these songs were not derived from the cultivated verse form, which is what earlier collectors assumed, and he notes that no attempt has been made, even with regard to the Neapolitan villanella, to relate present folk versions to older texts. In his view, while interesting from historical and philological perspectives, the value of classifying these popular song-poems into villanelle, motets, strambotti, etc., is small, since the poetic form is often only one component of the whole, which involves repetition and variation, music (often polyphony), gesture and even dance (De Simone 1973).

In the past, villanelle were composed on a variety of themes of local interest, particularly the exploits of bandits and other subjects of political and social concern (see Capalbo 1985: 137 and passim). Some contemporary informants remember these, but in keeping with late-twentieth-century trends in popular culture, the repertory now performed is almost exclusively of a personal, romantic nature. Social themes, such as immigration, poverty, and gender issues, are secondary or implicit.

In the youths of the singers, not long past, the villanella was the voice of courtship and lovemaking in their many aspects, of interpersonal communication of feeling, desire, and intention in a world where other channels were closed and open flirtation and dalliance out of the question. Looking at a modern collection of the texts, one sees that they fall into a natural thematic progression, like the poetry of Catullus, as follows:

Serenades to Wake a Lover from Her Slumbers

O padumella che tu sempri duormi,
risvigliati nu poco e penza a mmia.
farfalla che tu sempri duormi,
svegliati un poco e penza il tuo caro.
Ca lu suonne ti guasta ssi uocchi bielli,
ti guasta lu tuo viso quannu duormi.
Ca il sole si ristrugge i tuoi occhi,
e ristrugge il tuo viso quando dormi.[17]

[17] Collected from Raffaela De Franco, Belleville, N.J., May 1985.

(O little dove, sweetly sleeping,
Awake, and think of me!
O butterfly, deeply sleeping,
Wake up, and think of your sweetheart.
For Sleep will ruin those beautiful eyes,
Will spoil your face in slumber.
For the sun will destroy your eyes,
Will destroy your face in sleep.)

Songs Praising a Lover

A chissu duoco c'è comparso na stilla,
meracudo di Dio, quant'era bella!
Unn'era ranne, e manco pettirilla,
era giusto di misura e graziusella.
Tiene d' occhiuzzi de davero serpa,
e li capelluzzi della sita torta!
Puzzicchio d'oro e manuzza gentido,
e le jídita ca ci capi l'annello.[18]

(In this neighborhood a star has appeared:
Miracle of God, how lovely she is!
She isn't big, nor is she tiny;
She's a perfect size, and full of grace.
With the sweet eyes of a fascinator,
And hair of twisted silk.

A golden bracelet and soft little hands,
And fingers made for a ring.)

Songs of Desire, Avowal and Intention

U jire menne vuoglio nfuntanella
dove vanno le donne a se lavare.
E scegliere me la vuoglio la cchiù bella,
a nu padazzo me la vuoglio portare.
Chi genti ca mi a vidano tanta bella,
"Dove l'ha fatta ssa cacciariata?"
"L'aiu fattu allu buoscu di Favella,
dove vanno i cacciatori a cacciare."[19]

[18] Collected from Raffaela De Franco, Belleville, N.J., Fall 1984.
[19] Collected from Raffaela De Franco, Belleville, N.J., June 16, 1988.

(I wish to go to the fountain
Where the women go to wash themselves.
I want to choose the most beautiful,
And to a palace carry her away.
And those who would see my prize would say,
"Where did you bag your game?"
"I made her in the forest of Favella,
Where the sportsmen ride to hunt.")

Songs of Disappointment and Despair

Chi de coro che chiange e chi damente,
lassa chiangire a miu povera amante.
Ca chi perde d'amici e chi parenti,
ho cchih doloru che perdo un amante.
Ca chiddu perde mortu non è nente,
se stui l'uocchi e sa queta lu chianto.
Chinu perde bivo è fuoco arzendo,
che iere e momente passa davanti.[20]

(Whomever has known true sorrow and lamentation,
Leave my poor love alone to mourn.
Whomever has been bereft of friends and relations,
Suffers more, losing a lover.
For one who loses the dead will recover;
He will dry his eyes and still his weeping.
But for one who loses the living, it's a burning fire,
And every moment is yesterday.)

Songs of Departure

Strada appassiunata e mo te lascio,
piancendo mene vado la mia via.
Cento miglie de ttia vaio luntano,
e cento funtane fanne l'occhi mie.[21]

(Road of passion, now I leave you;
Weeping, I'm going on my way.
A hundred miles lie between us,
And a hundred fountains spring from my eyes.)

[20] Collected from Angelo Gabriele, Nutley, N.J., November 1977.
[21] Collected from Annunziato Chimento, Brooklyn, N.Y., Fall 1976.

Songs of Scorn

These songs, known as dispetti, are a class unto themselves. They were intended by cast-off lovers to inflict humiliation and even permanent ruin on the objects of their desire.

Facci e cucuzzielle incelenata!
Tu va dicienno ca no m'ha vudutu.
Allu bicchiero tua c'aiu iu bivutu,
allu lietto cu ttia ci signu statu.
Allo tavodo ma ci signu stata
c'aiu fattu tille ch'è vodutu.
Ssi quattro crosche che ci su rimaste,
dónalle a ssu maiale ch'è venuto.[22]

(Stupid zucchini face!
You go around saying you didn't want me.
I have drunk from your glass,
I have lain in your bed,
I have sat at your table
I've done with you what I wanted.
These four husks that are left over,
Give them to that pig who comes to you now!)

The only songs thematically and functionally unrelated to love and lovemaking are songs warning troublesome neighbors, composed and sung by women. This one comes from Teresa Francese (Nutley, N.J., November 1977).

A sse contuorne c'è na mala spina
vucca d'anvierne se potisse chiamare!
Ad ogni focodare e si avvicina,
ad ogne menestra va mettienne u sade!
Fatte l'affare tua, mala vicina!
Tu de d'affatti mia nun hai c'affare!
Ca s'iu passu da luoco qualche mattina,
e quattro cane te fazzo pigghiare!
Una si chiama scippe, e n'autra spurpa;
a poco poco te devo cacciare.

[22] Collected from Bambina Luzzi, Westerly, R.I., Spring 1981.

(There's a big pain in the ass in the neighborhood
Mouth of Hell could be her name.
She creeps up to every hearth,
And throws her salt in every broth!
Mind your own business, bad neighbor!
Keep your nose out of my affairs!
For if I pass by your place one morning,
I'll set four dogs on you.
One is called Tear-Apart, the other, Rip-the-Meat-off-the-Bone
Slowly, slowly, I'll drive you out!)

According to Ruth Finnegan's interpretation of the formula in oral poetry (1976), it is clear that one of the chief conventions of the modern villanella is theme itself, and within this sphere, the almost involutional development of the courtship motif. The formulaic devices of direct address and, secondarily, of soliloquy, dialogue, and the first-person narrative voice animate and intensify both theme and imagery.[23] Women are nearly always the protagonists of the villanella, the objects of its address, and the locus of its 'poetic art. The imagery draws from the natural worldflowers, trees, fruit, birds, serpents, and other animals; topography; parts of the human body, particularly the eyes, breasts, and hair. Such icons, often repeated in conceits extending throughout a poem, are associated with femininity and with states and processes adhering to women: beauty, fertility, sentiment, bonding, sexual penetration.

Figurative language can consist of various kinds of metaphor, such as synecdoche, personification, allusion, and occasionally punning. Sometimes it is regionally based, as in this mattinata (early-morning serenade), which is but one of many similar serenades found throughout south-central Italy. Individual couplets here are highly formulaic and easily interchangeable from one variant to another and can be added or subtracted, as Annunziato Chimento may have done here, without detracting from the sense and unity of the whole.

[23] "Why . . . look primarily to repeated word patterns . . . which form only part of the poet's conventional art, and not to all the other accepted patterns like music, parallelism, figurative language, use of soliloquy or address, themes known to be specially evocative for specific audiences, and so on?" (Finnegan 1976: 160).

Risvìgliate, no cchiù dormire!
Lèvate l'uocchiu tua l'amato suonne!
Lu suonne a ttia te guaste sse uocchie bielle,
te guaste le vise quanne.duorme!
Risvìgliate allu cantu dell'accielle,
nun te fare engannare de lu suone!
Ca pe amare a ttia, Miennode bella,
ci ha perso la maggiore de lu suonne!
Tanne le finirò le mie affanne,
quanne alle braccia mie vieni a ci duorme.[24]

(Awake, sleep no more!
Lift beloved Sleep from your eyes!
Sleep is spoiling those pretty eyes,
Ravaging your countenance as you slumber.
Wake to the songs of the birds,
And let not Sleep deceive you.
For love of you, my Almond Flower,
I have lost all repose.
My sorrows will only come to an end
When to my arms you come to rest.)

More often, however, the figures are entirely original, unique to a single poem, and develop progressively throughout, building drama. This is the case in the next example, in which the eyes stand for a girl, and the metaphor is extended through two elaborate conceits. The first of these alludes to a beautiful woman, lost among suitors and temptations (the "sea," which has magical and erotic associations), and inclining to another man/family connection ("foreign parts"). The second dwells on the beauty and perfection of the eyes and the power associated with beauty.

Mienzo 'sto mare dua verde biell'uocchi
che dunano gran pena all'arma mia.
Pio pe li phigghiare e non li puozzo;
crio che si nne vanno alia straniera.
Vorrà sapire ssu mastro de ss'uocchi,
pe mi nne fare n'atro paro a mmia.
I vuogghio fatti cumo su li vuostri;
s'uocchi so bielli, me fannu morire.
Me fo morire e me fo pazziare,
e a nu fuoco fo stare d'arma mia.[25]

[24] Collected from Annunziato Chimento, Brooklyn, N.Y., Spring 1976.
[25] Collected from Bambina Luzzi, Westerly, R.I., Spring 1981.

(Out in this sea, two pretty green eyes
Give torment to my soul.
I try to seize them and cannot;
I fancy they're drifting to foreign parts.
I would like to meet the maker of those eyes, To have another pair made for me.
I want them made like yours;
Those eyes are beautiful, they make me die. They make me die, they drive me mad,
They make a fire burn in my soul.)

A related device is that of using a single noun/image, such as "sleep," "night," or "heart" (the subject of the following song), repetitively and playfully throughout a text in both figurative and literal ways.

De corona ratiro una canzuna,
tutta da cora te voglio canteare.
Coro, ca te ricierche uno vaguro,
nu vuoglio n'atra amante te parlare.
Coro, che se ma fa chissu fagoru,
lu coro mio è du tuo, se de parleare.
Ca de du coro mio su lu patrunnu,
ma de du coro tuo m'e dare i chiave.[26]

(From my heart I draw out a song;
With all of my heart, I sing to you.
Heart, I seek a favor:
Let not another lover address you.
Heart, if you grant me this favor,
My heart is yours, and must speak to you.
For you are the mistress of my heart,
But to your own, you must give me the keys.)

Let us now look more closely at the sensuous imagery that permeates these songs. In the two classic mattinate quoted above, the courting male exhorts innocent beauty (dove, butterfly), in danger of being held in the power of Sleep beyond her time of maturation, to come to life sexually (wake up) and respond to his erotic call (song of the bird, bird being frequently a metonym for phallus).[27] The rose is a metaphor for a woman's imminent sexual awakening or opening (rose hanging from a bough, red rose of April) and woman's erotic life (blooming rose, mouth of roses; mouth and roses also being metony-mous with vulva). The elegant, spice-scented carnation, also a frequent image in southern Spanish folksongs, is a piquant aphrodisiac:

La rosa è belle e fa l'ordura assaie,
lu garofano è biello, e vinci cchitù.

[26] Collected from Annunziata Gabriele, Nutley, N.J., November 28, 1981.

[27] In northern Italian ballads, sleep is instead frequently equated with sexual activity, and is therefore to be feared and avoided (Del Giudice 1989).

(The rose is beautiful and sweet smelling,
The carnation is charming and more captivating.)

Or the girl sings, "Carnation of Love, let's go," to her lover, defying her parents. In these songs, the affinity of water, sea, and fountain images with the spume of erotic release and fulfillment is clear: "From the trunk [of a "tree loaded with diamonds"the fertile phallus] spouts a fountain." And

Viene, gioiuzza mia, e viene scatená
all'acqua frisca della tua funtana!

(Come, my joy, come and play
In the fresh waters of your fountain!)

Here is a teasing argument between a man and woman about sex, beautifully disguised in images of light and darkness, opening and closure, within a lattice of timethe hours of the day, the hours of love. "At my window no candle burns," a veiled metaphor for the fire that is said to burn between a woman's legs, can be understood as the denial of her desire, couched nonetheless in titillating language in this dialogue poem:

"È puno u sudo é fatto notto;
Bella, unne vedimme sta sera?"
"È furnó u iusso della notto,
alia fenestra mia un giarde cannila."
"Apre, bella mia, fenestra e porta,
ca l'ura è fatta, me aiu de jire."
"A porta mia none s'apre de notte,
venne de juorne chi me vuo vedire."

("The sun has sunk, night has come;
Beautiful, shall I see you tonight?"
"The right time of the night is past;
At my window no candle burns."
"Open, my beauty, window and door,
For the hour is come, and I must enter."
"My door doesn't open at night;
Those who seek me come by day.")

A leading motif of the villanella is the desirability of women, and even more, their inherent erotic power. In Calabrian folklore, feminine eros has a magical or supernatural dimension which emanates most strongly from the eyes, but is also associated with the hair. It is alluded to in the villanella with such imagery as a pair of green eyes floating in the sea, the "sweet eyes of a fascinator" (literally, serpent), and such epithets as "dark girl, you who do battle with the sun." A girl's linens not only announce her capacities and wealth, but also draw to her the man she wantsweaving and needlework were implicated in the practice and beliefs of love magic.

A ssi fenestre ssi bianchi panni,
de fore ci comiegnene d'entenne.
Ce voré mannare io dove ssa mamma,
se me donasse sse gioia de figlia.
U patri dici che era pittirilla;
a mamma dici ca nun avía le panne.
Illa se vota cu s'uocchi giranne:
"Garofado d'Amore, e iamme ninne!"[28]

(The white linens hanging at those windows
Invite our admiration from outside.
I want to send word to that mother
To give me her joy of a daughter!
Her father says she's too young,
Her mother that she has no linens.
But she turns around with flashing eyes
Saying, "Carnation of Love, let's go!")

Here, as in the next two examples, a woman declares her own desire. In Calabrian rural society, moreover, sexuality and reproduction do not appear to be compartmentalized, but are referents of one another as well as converging aspects of an integral state of being. The statement by a middle-aged Acretanu woman with seven children that "it [sex] is the happiness of the household" mirrors the frequently voiced maxim that "children are the joy of the family." The sentiment is charmingly conveyed in this villanella, a favorite among Acretani:

O giovaniello de zuccaro fatto,
ca si te vennera ta cattera d'io.
Pigghiera una vedanza e ti pesassi,
a una parte mettu d'uoru, e un'atra ttia.
Simpaticono mie!
Ca pu vedera quade cchitù gravasse,
e lassera l'uore e mi pigghierà ttia.
Ca d'uore se ne va a fedice spasso,
ed io cent'anni me guodo co ttia![29]

[28] Collected from Bambina Luzzi, Westerly, R.I., October 1985.
[29] Collected from Raffaela De Franco, Belleville, N.J., May 1975.

(O young man made of sugar,
If they were selling you, I'd buy you!
I'd take a scale and weigh you;
On one side I'd put gold, on the other,
you. Adorable one!
Then I would see which weighed the most,
And I'd leave the gold, and take you.
For gold vanishes with good times,
But you I can enjoy for a hundred years!

The cultural motifs emerging from this analysis are implicit in the romantic villanella texts as well. While erotic meaning is disguised, it shines through in the language of nature and its fertility. Because it was as difficult for men and women to approach one another as it was to reach the golden apples of the fairy tale, achieving this goal became a predominent theme of, and purpose for singing, villanella poetry.

Are those who transmit and receive the songs aware of the erotic burden of the texts? Is the figurative language interpreted by Acretani in the ways that I have suggested here? These are key questions because they lead us to an understanding of the place the villanelle heldand to some degree still holdsin Calabrian society. On the conscious level, insofar as I have been able to ascertain, even those with the most profound knowledge of the repertory do not interpret the texts this way. Rather, they seem entranced by the naturalistic beauty and wit of the poems and the magical coloring and powerful familiarity of the recurrent imagery. The imagery and "plot" of the songs hold for the insider a thousand connotations and awaken many personal memories and associations. The sensuous fantasy of the poetry, I believe, infuses singers and listeners with a liminal, but pleasurable, awareness of their underlying sexual content. Just as in dreams, latent meanings occasionally "poke through" their disguises in ways that are unmistakable to members of the cultureas in cases of clear, commonly used substitutions, such as "fig" for vulva.

This, too, is part of the artistry of the texts. The very fact that their erotic aspect is "covered" endows the poems with the power of discovery and releasean attribute of dreams and fantasiesin which those who sing and listen may indulge with freedom. For instance, of the following startlingly dreamlike paean to love and male potency in the feminine voice, singers offer a strictly literal interpretation. It is a favorite in the large repertoire of Bambina Luzzi, who is in her late forties and has raised six children and several grandchildren. Her handsome husband leads off the lines as they sing together:

Mienzo ssu chiano ci comieguerío,
un arbol caricata di diamanti.
Adura adura, la frunna cadía:
Cogliele, amure mie, ca su diamanti!
allu tringùnu 'na funtana eseía:
mera eumm'era frisca ed era gadante!
Allu eurino c'è lu bene mio
che duna resbiannuno a tutte quante![30]

(In the midst of this plain where we two meet,
Is a tree loaded with diamonds.
Heavy with perfume, its branches fall:
Gather them, my love, they're diamonds.
From the trunk spouts a fountain:
Look how fresh and fine it is!
At its crown is my beloved
Who gives splendor to everyone.

Dreams begin as private communions with the self. Acretani engage in dream reporting and interpretation, but share erotic dreams only with familiars of the same sex. The villanella texts are public declarations, heard and felt by all present, by both sexes, and sometimes the whole community. But because of their ambiguous and obscure language, the songs constitute a form of intimate discourse in a public setting. At the same time, the sensuous, preguant imagery with which they are filled creates an atmosphere in which lovemaking becomes a possibility. It is not to be imagined, however, that villanelle were traditionally performed by or for the courting couple alone, but rather a mix of ages and statuses. For the married and the middle-aged, moreover, the songs are intensely memory evoking and stimulating, imbuing their present with the excitement and passion of youth.

The many texts concerning the dark side of love strike another chord. It is one that is consonant with the performance style and emotional tone of the villanella. This, concurrently with eros a major sub-text of the genre, is lamentation. Villanella lyrics in this vein expose the talons of the social order I have outlined, which promoted a highly charged, but restrictive and often disappointing and brutal, connection between the sexes. It was all the more agonizing for women and poor people because sex and marriage were historically among the few avenues of pleasure, happiness, and self-realization open to these groups. Indeed, sexual and emotional disappointment and the feeling of "loneliness in a crowd" are believed to be leading causes of depression and suicide among men and women in southern Italy today.[31]

Writing of the relationship between the aesthetic conventions and social functions of Cretan funeral laments, Anna Caraveli argued that "[t]he main effects of lamenta-

[30] Collected from Bambina Luzzi, Westerly, R.I., February 1980.

[31] Interview with Dr. Rina Pinto, clinical psychologist, Tricarico, Matera, August 6, 1987.

tion on the women of the patriarchal Greek village society are to establish a strong sense of bonding among them, and to reinforce social roles and modes of interaction which can best serve as strategies for survival. Its effects on the community are the collective confrontation of death and the ensuing catharsis..." (Caraveli 1981; see also Caraveli-Chaves 1982). Similarly, the villanella permitted the members of two oppressed groupspoor men and their womento express together and to one another both the sorrows of their particular circumstances and those inherent in their respective and shared positions in society.

The lamentation formula derives form and power from a figurative language of torment (the "burning fire" and "tears of blood" of a discarded heart), deep sorrow ("my lament like thunder echoes"; "road of passion, now I leave you"), and desolation ("... in these caverns and in these valleys, my lament echoes"). It is dramatized through the repetition and recapitulation which occurs simultaneously in text, performance and melody, and grows, couplet by couplet, to a climax such as this: "But for one who loses the living, it's a burning fire/And every moment is yesterday." As with the erotic texts, the effect of this tripartite repetition and progressive intensification is one of an architecture of reasoned, artful argument woven into a grand, baroque crescendo of feeling. Imagery and metaphor, which in other contexts would be associated with tenderness, erotic pleasure, and fertility are inverted to invoke their opposites, as in "a hundred fountains spring from my eyes," and the "little breast of glass" (revealing a cruel heart). This device is used throughout the following dispetto to an emigrating lover:

E saputo ca all'America vu jire.
Ji lu diluvio pe ttia se vo voteare!
U bu troveare nè d'acqua nè vino,
si vuanno di siccheare li funteane!
Upu troveare chiesia pe ci jiri,
nemmen'i santi pe ti ci adoreare.
Mo vaie lunteane e pu ci arresimiglio:
Calabria bella, duve t'hai lasciate?

(I've heard you're leaving for America,
And may the deluge rain down upon you!
You'll find no water or wine,
And the fountains will run dry.

You'll find no church to enter,
Nor even saints to worship.
Now you are leaving, but later you will realize:
Beautiful Calabria, where have I left you!)

The Villanella and Mediterranean Cultural History

The foregoing interpretation of villanella texts derives less from a universalist Freudian symbology than from the sociocultural framework of the songs and their meaning and feeling for their singers. I have already described the primary settings of villanella singing, both in rural Calabria and in immigrant communities. Let us now scan it against the broader canvas of cultural history in the Mediterranean region.[32] Since the Bronze Age, the geographic and ethnic mosaic of the Mediterranean world has been characterized by intense economic, social, and demographic movement, along with great cyclic concentrations of wealth and power. As far as we know, honor has been the principal normative system (countervailed to some degree by the laws of church and state) governing marriage and kinship, transactions of property, and social status. Patronage and personal power have dominated politics and social relations. Beauty, eloquence, cunning, courage, skill, and honor can advance individuals or protect them from harm. In men, all virtues are encompassed in honor, just as pure and clever women embody the honor of the family. Too public an exposure of honor and related attributes, including such assets as women and wealth, invite the risk of harm or seizure by others.[33] Hence the complex interplay between disclosure and concealment, eros and purity, beauty and power, so prominent in Mediterranean social relations and body language, as it is in the poetic discourse of these songs.

In the context of diminishing natural resources in recent centuries, honor has served to strengthen competing, prepotent kinship groups (the family and kindred on the European side, the patrilineage in the Middle Eastthe primary stable units of social organization in the region) in their struggles with one another and against encroachments by world religious and state systems (Schneider 1972; Schneider and Schneider 1976: 86-100). A woman's virtue predicated the honor of her father's or husband's kindred.[34] At marriage, women were to be untouched, even by implication; within marriage, infidelity, and equally the appearance of infidelity, invoked severe sanctions. Nevertheless, the sexual nature of women was recognized, even in the teachings of Catholicism and Islam. Women were in fact held to be potent sexual beings, more so than men. At the same time, their fertility was greatly valued. A woman's sexuality, therefore, was strictly confined, which limited the erotic life of men and generated in both genders a high level of tension around sexual matters. In the Mediterranean world, one of the chief avenues for expression and release of such tension has been in the encoded poetics of song.

[32] On Mediterranean culture and society, see, for example, Braudel 1972, Davis 1977, Gilmore 1987, and Schneider and Schneider 1976.

[33] Garrison and Arensberg (1977) argue that in the circum-Mediterranean region, the symbolism of the evil eye is predicated on precisely thisthe risk of seizurewhich is then transmuted into a generalized fear of envy.

[34] Older Acretanu women look back with chagrin on courtship practices of their youth, according to which, they report, a woman might be compelled to marry the man who snatched her head scarf, as through that token her reputation and honor were held hostage.

As suggested earlier, however, villanella performance style marks an older, "backwoods" variant of Mediterranean culture. Part singing, slow tempo, repetitiveness, and relaxed enunciation link the villanella to Afro-European performance traditions that predate the orientaliz-ing influence that penetrated the region with the Greeks, the growth of Rome, and the domination of southern Italy by a series of Mediterranean empires, which put the agrarian masses under the yoke and women into seclusion (Lomax 1976, 1974). These features point to the survival of an older communal village pattern alongside and under the Old High Culture style of solo singing with long phrases, vocal tension, narrow intervals, embellishment, and elaborate texts. Although little is yet known about the indigenous society the Greeks encountered in southern Italy, there is evidence to suggest that it was one in which women had some prominence. Sybaris (founded in 720] B.C. on the Ionian coast some thirty kilometers northeast of Acri) conquered the Osco-Bruttian towns of the interior in the same century and was known for the elegance, voluptuousness, and freedom of its women (Gullace 1987: 10-13):

The women of the south, in fact, held a position of importance and authority far greater than their own, and the colonists had to take this into account when they married Pythagoras.. admitted women to his brotherhood [in Locri, Calabria]. Caulonia [Greek for lust], in order to give itself a noble origin, attributed its foundation...to a heroine, the Amazon Cleta. The importance of the woman was also a reflection of religious beliefs since women were the most loved and revered divinities . . .. (Gullace 1987: 25)

The women of Acri, like their counterparts throughout interior south-central Italy, played key roles in food production and social leadership. The association between polyphony and the importance of women in the food-production system and culture is one of the strongest Cantometric correlations (Lomax 1976). On the other hand, narrow, nasal, noisy voices and loud dynamics, also characteristic of the villanella, are suggestive of the sexual tensions and importance of male authority in southern Italian society (see Lomax 1955-56). Integrated rhythmic and tonal blend in singing are strongly associated with relatively egalitarian, complementary, solidary societies (Lomax 1976). The heterophony (chorus trailing a leader) and individualized rhythmic and tonal blend in villanella singing are indicative of a hierarchical, diffuse society operating largely through social networks (see Schneider, Schneider and Hansen 1972). The small group, however, strives for an impression of integration, just as it strives for tonal and rhythmic unison in the chorus. Hinterland southern Italy is the only area of southern and southeastern Europe where mixed choral polyphony is found. It may represent a later development out of sex-differentiated polyphony due to the weight given to the nuclear family and the bond between the couple by the Catholic church and their importance in the growth of small-scale mountain farming and artisan enterprises.

I have elsewhere drawn attention to the remarkable inter- and in-tracommunity differentiation that developed in another hinterland region of southern Italy (Chairetakis 1991). Others have examined distinctive local and regional patterns (for example, Bell

1979; Galasso 1982; Gait 1986; Schneider and Schneider 1976; and White 1980), and still others have described systems and processes common to the entire Mediterranean region (Braudel 1972; Davis 1977; Gilmore 1987; Schneider 1972, as well as more recent scholars). Both variations and commonalities need to be situated on the broader canvas of evolution, history, and social process. Throughout its known history, the Mediterranean has been a place of encounter and mediation between peoples, yet only a few cultural historians such as Bernal (1987) and Braudel (1972) have attempted to define the region in terms of such encounters. For the most part, anthropologists have eschewed explanation of their findings from this perspective. Seen through the Cantometric lens, focused on a performance style intermediate between Old European and Old High Culture, the multilayered, bimodal and trimodal character of southern Italian society becomes apparent. An analysis of the style cluster to which the villanella belongs shows the defining features of a complex, layered culture, and the historical sources of its tensions and contradictions. This outline continues to be fleshed out with the findings of ethnography and history. Here an interpretation of the villanella texts corroborates what we learn from performance analysis, while providing an insider's view of the structures and meaning of emotion and communication that have emerged from the Calabrian encounter.

Significance of the Villanella

The elements of style, form, poetics, and context that I have discussed converge in real performances and actual social situations, where the villanella functions as a complex metalanguage, as have novels for nineteenth-century women and films for twentieth-century Americansaffording, however, opportunities for participation as well as consumption. The romanticism and eroticism of the texts accentuate the importance of women and give expression to their fantasies and desires. In both its passionate and tragic modes, the villanella can be said to reinforce patriarchal familism by emphasizing the bond between the couple, in the sense that it evokes and renews the deep emotional and psychic patterns underlying the formation of the nuclear family. By the same token, it emphasizes the centrality of women, who, after accepting that bond, assume its greatest emotional and physical burdens while becoming, as they mature, the arbiters of small-group life.

In America, Calabrian women are equal wage earners, and as keepers of the Calabrian home, they are the sources of psychic renewal, comfort, and pleasure in an alien environment. In these dual roles, they enjoy status and greater parity with men. The influence of romantic popular culture, and an increasing dependence on home life by immigrant men, have produced a shift toward complementarity between married partners. The current preference for romantic villanella texts by both men and women testifies to such changes. These are also reflected in the choice made first by women singers, then sanctioned by men, to extend the performance arena for the villanella from small group gatherings to concert stages.

Thus the villanella links contemporary Calabrian immigrants to Calabria's recent past and to their roots in antiquity. Its language of style, form, and metaphor reflects Calabrian cultural history and aesthetics. It tells, in particular, of the Calabrian woman's continuing central position in the life of the small group, until now the wellspring of vitality and creativity within the larger community.

Moreover, as literary composition, the villanella betokens an underlying unity in Calabrian culture spanning the historically constituted classes. The oral folklore of the south shares much with literary culturefor example, the narrative "story-song" (sung by the cantas-torie, or "story singers"), such as the Orlando cycle possesses close-to-high-epic style. This idea challenges the prevailing view that southern Italian elite and peasant masses were deeply and irrevocably divided in a cultural sense, as well as economically and socially. It also suggests new avenues of inquiry into southern Italian aesthetics and expressive behavior.

What is the villanella's future as a performance genre? Learning to sing it is difficult, requiring time, practice, and a dedicated group of coparticipants. Not surpisingly, young Calabrians and Calabrian Americans are not learning the villanella. Those few who take up traditional music are drawn to instrumental and accompanied songs which are understandable in Western musical terms. The villanella does not lend itself to popular arrangements. Attempts to preserve, revive, and broadcast Calabrian folk music in Calabria itself, diffuse and sporadic as they have been, tend to favor material that is moderate to fast paced, rhythmically regular, and emotionally casual or melodramatic. The accompanied solo singer and virtuoso instrumentalist, performing banal urbanized arrangements of folksongs, appropriates tradition and blithely monopolizes the small public space dedicated to folk music.

Genres like the villanella are left to die out or are subject to what academicians are fond of calling the "process of cultural change." Far from being "natural," as the phrase implies, in our age such processes are orchestrated by a mass media selling consumer goods through uniform cultural representations, and/or by an uninspired educational establishment bent on promoting national middle-class tastes and values. The villanelle of this world are largely the province of culture managers and scholars who believe that folk art is an inferior, ephemeral species, or that it is so delicate and context dependent that if disturbed or revived it will shatter like a rare museum artifact.

The truth is that the setting of the villanella is not bound by the changing conventions of small-group life. Rather, its true stage is the entire panorama of Calabrian cultural history. The genre and its performers need to be cultivated and curated with the same attention accorded to the sonatas of Beethoven, the arias of Verdi, the urns and coins of antiquity, or the bronzes of Riaci. The villanella needs to be preserved as a living, performatory tradition by supporting its teaching and performance, and by audiovisual documentation and broadcasting. The villanella is an authentic regional

anthem.[35] If it was aired frequently on the media and performed at important Calabrian gatherings as such, it could have a powerful impact on the Calabrian spirit.

Calabrian American singers of the villanella are aware of its beauty and value. That is why they feel strongly about performing it publicly, in spite of the fact that the stage is not its genuine setting. Villanella singing is intensely evocative of Calabria to its immigrant performers and listeners. Its serious, deeply melancholic tone; the passionate, romantic, and high literary quality of the texts; and its distinctive poly-phonic mode make the villanella experience one of total immersion not only in Calabrian memories, but in Calabrian being. Raffaela De Franco tells us: "U cuoro è la cosa cchiù assai dell'antichità. Le altre cose vengono modificate, megliorate con il tempo. Però la viddanedda no' cambia. Resta sempre quella che d'era. Ed è sempre la cosa cchiù bella per nua."[36] ("The Calabrian chorus is the oldest thing we have. The other songs are altered and refurbished with time. But the vil-lanella never changes; it remains the same. And it is the most beautiful thing we have.")

Notes

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Second International Conference on Calabria and Immigration at the University of Wisconsin, Kenosha (1986) and published in La Calabria dei Paesi, edited by Cesare Pitto (1990). It is based on research carried out between 1975] and 1988] in the Acretani communities of Belleville, Nutley, and Lyndhurst, New Jersey; Bensonhurst, Brooklyn; and Westerly, Rhode Island. Over these years I worked with a core group of some twenty Acretani who sang villanelle, and I knew of many others. I am grateful to Luisa Del Giudice, Ellen Harold, Cesare Pitto, Susan Sly-movics, Edward Tuttle, and the readers who helped prepare this book for their valuable comments and suggestions.

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[35] Instead, "Calabrisella Mia," a sentimental composition of recent origin trivial-izing Calabrian traditional courtship, is the regional standard and passes for folk music.

[36] Raffaela De Franco, with her husband Giuseppe De Franco, is a 1991] National Heritage Fellow.

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2. The "Archvilla": An Italian Canadian Architectural Archetype

Luisa Del Giudice

Introduction

Over the past three decades, I have witnessed the Toronto Italian community's evolving expressions of ethnicity, first from the inside and more recently from the vantage point of a practicing folklorist. One need not be a student of architecture to be struck by the proliferation of the arch in the sixties and its waning in the nineties. Grand villas and bungalows and even cottages have arcaded verandas and porticos and garage doors. The arches proclaim that Italians live within.

Why the arch? What is its source? Why has it begun to lose favour? Such immediate questions prompted this study, yet even tentative answers required broadening the scope of inquiry. This paper therefore seeks to (1) place in relief the centrality of the home and family foyer in the Italian worldview; (2) examine briefly the immigrant's domestic environment, his interiorized "dreamscapes," and how he occupies and animates his built habitat; and (3) explore the sources and meaning of the arch as the archetypal architectural expression of Italian ethnicity. This study moves continuously between present and past time and between real and mythic space. Herein converge a focus on gardens, cantine and the ancestral relationship to land, and a description of the dreamed "archvilla"[1] and its relationship to the deeply embedded myth of Rome. The archvilla of Toronto eventually propels us back to the nationalistic ideologies and style exploited by Fascism in Italy. Given my relationship to the community, this paper is a synthesis of personal experience and memory, corroborated through fieldwork (from neighbours to land developers and homeowners) and traditional archival research.

The Dream House: Bridging Recollection and Projection, Reality and Symbol

Sometimes the house of the future is better built, lighter and larger than all the houses of the past, so that the image of the dream house is opposed to that of the

[1] A Toronto Star journalist coined this term in the mid-1980s to describe the multiarched exteriors typical of much Italian construction.

childhood home. Late in life, with indomitable courage, we continue to say that we are going to do what we have not yet done: we are going to build a house. This dream house may be merely a dream of ownership, the embodiment of everything that is considered convenient, comfortable, healthy, sound, desirable, by other people. It must therefore satisfy both pride and reason, two irreconcilable terms. (Bachelard 1964: 61)

Bachelard shows how the home may become one of the most powerful integrating forces for a human being's thoughts, memories, and dreams. So, too, does the archvilla, the new dream house of Toronto's Italians, function as a synthesis of ethnic pride, historic memory, and personal aspirations. If the dream house can indeed reveal the dream of the dreamer,[2] then we can read in these houses a composite image which may draw together intimate experience of Italian rural life, nostalgia for Italian urban landscapes, and a reaffirmation of the mythic past (both distant and proximate).[3] In the arch we witness the surfacing of a powerful cultural icon which hearkens back to ancient Rome, remained present throughout Italy's architectural history (recurring during periods of nationalistic fervour), was consciously exploited during Fascist rule, and has been most recently revisited by the Italians of Toronto. In its archvilla incarnation, it may, as dreams and utopias often do, point to that inversion principle so typical of the roverso mondo (topsy-turvy world), expressing what we are not and do not have; it speaks of unfulfilled desires. The archvilla, in other words, gives the illusion of the leisured and genteel life of the signore even though, in reality, the lifestyle of its inhabitants is something quite different.

According to Boudon (1977), built spaces are

> à la fois pratiques et mythiques, réels (eL tant qu'habitat con-struit et artefact humain) et/ou imaginaires (cf. la façon dolt ils sont vécus, ressentis etc.); pratiques en ce qu'ils nous "abritent" et que nous les façnnons de toute piece; mais aussi mythiques en ce que leur figure spatiale, leur conception selon une certaine vision du monde, renvoient à une cosmogonie que nous habitons implicitement. (p. 163)[4]

It is the interplay and intersection of real and mythic "space" in the archvilla that I will investigate.

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[2] "In che misura la casa sognata dice il sogno di chi l'ha sognata?" (Minicuci 1984: 155). Many of these preliminary observations come from Minicuci's excellent work on Zaccanopoli (Catanzaro), a study in the use of "space," from the real to the imaginary, the everyday to the ritual. All translations from Italian and French are the author's.

[3] On the complexity of "vernacular architecture" and the ways to arrive at meaning, see the introduction to Upton and Vlach 1986. See, too, Glassie 1986] for the "reading" of buildings, and how, taken collectively, they are revealing "products of desire and emotion."

[4] "Both practical and mythic, real (in as much as [they are] built habitat and human artifact) and/or imaginary (cf. the way they are lived, felt, etc.); practical in that they 'shelter' us and we fashion them as a unit; but also mythic in that their spatial shape, their ideation according to a specific worldview, points to a cosmology we inhabit implicitly."

The House in the Italian Folk Worldview

Master of the Castle

The home is primary and fundamental to the Italian immigrant, whose worldview largely derives from the collective wisdom of his folk patrimony. An important and almost universal proverb states, in its many variants, that there is no substitute for a home of one's own; that, in effect, it is better to be a pauper in one's own house than a king in someone else's ("Più vale il fumo di casa mia, che l'arrosto dell'altrui"). Related proverbs go on to state: "Casa propria, non c'è oro che la paghi;" "Casa mia, mamma mia;" and "In casa sua cias-cuno è re" (Arthaber 1929:120-26).[5] The home therefore is better than gold, as good as mother, and affords us our freedom.[6]

Having often left behind a precarious existence in a dilapidated house that was not his own, where family feuds over land could last generations, where the archaic law of primogeniture (by which an entire family patrimony was left to the firstborn male) might still be practiced, or where the incremental fragmentation of a family's land resulted in ever tinier parcels for each successive generation, the immigrant found the dream of becoming a master of one's own castlea homeownerto be one of the prime incentives for starting a new life.[7] Indeed, the purchase of a home was one of the first priorities for the newly arrived immigrant, and all personal and familial labours and sacrifices were orchestrated to achieve that goal. For instance, in order to save for the down payment on a home, extended and multiple families, even newlyweds, often shared preliminary living arrangements, sacrificing autonomy and privacy in the larger interest of thrift.

Italian immigrants do not like to rent and they do not like debt. If one is constrained to rent from a stranger, this is viewed as a temporary evil. Better a single patriarchal home which sees children and grandchildren living under one roof than sharing an apartment building with strangers. Even for second- and third-generation Italians, living with one's parents (if female) or one's new spouse's parents (if male) is still an accepted transition toward home ownership and independence, despite the more recent desiderata of privacy and autonomy. The Italian homebuilder often accommodates this traditional master plan (la casa patriarcale) by making every corner of the house livable, thinking ahead to its use by newlywed children. This is one of the reasons

[5] "Better smoke of my own house than roast meat in someone else's"; "One's own house is worth more than gold"; "My house, my mother"; "In a home of one's own, each one is king."

[6] Any Italian regional collection contains a substantial number of proverbs relating to the house, to thrift, and to workinterrelated aspects of any successful household. For a particularly useful and extensive proverb collection see the Atlante paremiologico italiano, under la casa, Chapter 5] ("La casa, vivande e vestiario"), especially pp. 135-62.

[7] Of course, an equally important motive for migration was the accumulation of enough capital to enable an immigrant to return to Italy to buy land and there become master of his own kingdom.

Italians dream about the large house which brings together the generations, an entire clan, under one roof.[8]

Italians as Builders

However humble the hovel, the immigrant laboured hard and long on its improvement, turning a shack into a respectable home.[9] If he did not have the skills himself, there was always a paesano or a relative who did. Through the paesano network, home improvements were often accomplished on a reciprocal basis, thereby making them affordable. I can remember many a weekend when the men of the clan were engaged in some project or other, my father called upon to paint someone's kitchen, an uncle reciprocating by helping to complete the cantina or add wrought iron to the veranda. Of course, cost was not the only factor considered, for, as Sciorra notes (in his 1989] essay on garden shrines and street altars): "pride in craftsmanship and the labor of one's hands is central to the Italian ethos" (p. 192).[10]

It is no accident that Italians so heavily dominate the construction industry in Toronto: they are builders, labourers, masons.[11] Such was their tradition in a deforested land of stone[12] with a long history of constructing the monuments, the palazzi, the towns which stand witness to a building "fever" going back to Roman times.

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[8] There are, besides, practical reasons for this arrangement. Italian grandmothers still accept their role as (largely unremunerated) baby-sitters to their grandchildren, thereby allowing their daughters (more rarely daughters-in-law) to return to work and help the household economy. Many a preschooler counts the grandmother, not the mother, as the prime caregiver (no less than in Italy). Conversely, these elderly parents may live with children in order to provide these services. This arrangement simplifies logistical problems in a tacit barter system, whereby free rent is enjoyed in exchange for apparently spontaneous services such as child care.

On the housing of pre-World War II immigrants to the United States, see a contemporary account in Williams 1938:38-50 (see chapter 3, "Housing"), and the more-recent Gabaccia 1984] for Sicilian Americans; the latter also provides insightful Sicilian proverbs relating to social ideals and relationships with friends and relatives.

[9] On the behavioural ingredients which go into remaking domestic built environments, see Jones 1980.

[10] This is true for Italian males and females since both make, construct, and produce with their hands. "Why buy it if you can make it?" truly seems to be a modus vivendi.

[11] They are also real-estate speculators, and many a small fortune has been made in buying and selling houses.

[12] On stonecutters at Washington's National Cathedral, see Hunt 1985. See also the Taviani film, Good Morning, Babylon, for a visual portrayal of the clichés relating to Italian stonecutters and craftsmen in general. The two stonecutter brothers defend, in the face of ignorant and unsophisticated would-be American employers, a long tradition of artistic excellence and the genealogy of the Italian craftsman which goes back to Michelangelo and beyond.

A New House

Italians beautify their homes, however modest they may be, in short ordermuch to the amazement of their non-Italian neighbours (the actual reaction may range from admiration to bewilderment to scorn). But the ideal remains the new house, built from the bottom up.[13]

Italians in Toronto have never been interested in the older areas of town, where weathered homes built in a foreign idiom are found. Wooden homes were always quickly converted to brick or stucco,[14] and these were mere stepping stones to suburban heaven-Wood-bridge (a more appropriate name might have been Brickhaven). Only a tiny minority of the second and third generation has come to appreciate the old, trying on cultural nostalgia and restoration, seeking out picturesque farmhouses in outlying towns, or building neo-Victorian homes on Upper Canadian models. Such Italians have perhaps begun to assimilate a more conservative and mainstream aesthetic,

This paradox of the Old World craving the new (and the New World craving the old) is a fundamental crux of the immigrant psychology and aesthetic which hearkens back to a deep-rooted prejudice against the oldthe "bad old days"found in an Italian peasant past, where everything old spoke of decay: crumbling, damp, dark, backward, Inversely, the upscale New World moves Italians backward toward oak, copper, pine, and stone. In Italy, therefore, there has been an upsurge in the building of villini or villette on the outskirts of town, away from historic centers. In fact, the upwardly mobile Italian peasant provides a neat counterpart to the suburban Italian immigrant in Toronto, and these new construction activities in Italy present a parallel dynamic of transition from an old to a new way of life, with many of the same alienating features (see Minicuci 1984).

The blighted, sprawling landscape of an Italy "in transition" provides ample evidence of the havoc that has been wrought by the razing of the old and the building of the new. Architectural conservation is hardly a cherished concept to middle- and lower-class Italians, who do not appreciate the old and the restored, or, in a word, their own folk patrimony. Old farmhouses stand abandoned while modern, jerry-built villini sprout up around them. Or where ex novo construction is not economically feasible (or is prohibited by law), old farmhouses may be renovated (essentially masked in stucco), Unlike the appreciation for rural Savoy, rural Provence, and rural Switzerland and their respective folk cultures fostered in those lands, for example, only the most

[13] On the modern vs. the old in architecture, see Cromely 1982.

[14] To Italians, wood is not a noble material, partly because it is more perishable, thereby requiring much maintenance, and partly due to cultural prejudice, coming, as they do, from a largely stone and earth culture. The noble materials are stone, marble, and, to a lesser degree, brick and concrete, which in Canada have largely replaced stone. The wooden houses of Anglo-Canada are not highly regarded. Even in cottage country, where houses are expected to be more casual, wooden structures, Italians have stuccoed them over, cleared trees, cemented patios, and asphalted driveways. If Augustus, founder of Imperial Rome, could boast that he had found Rome a city of brick and left it a city of marble, Italian Canadians can claim that they found Toronto a city of wood and left it a city of brick and concrete.

exiguous minority of Italians has the remotest appreciation of true vernacular or folk architecturerural or urbanor has actively sought to preserve its patrimony. Old houses remain, generally, unacceptable.

Ethnic Personalization of Space

We bear in us certain culturally determined uses of space about which we are not always conscious.[15] When one cultural group is placed in contact with others, however, these features gain salience. Just as the Italian's building and improvement mania becomes more evident when compared to the Anglo community, so his focus on certain areas of the home seems more obvious through juxtaposition. The garden, the refinished basement and the wine cellar, or cantina, for instance, may become focal points of his home.

Homes undergo constant improvement and ethnic personalization. This may take the form of the addition of a vegetable garden, a wine cellar, an outdoor oven, a grape arbor, or tricoloured planters for flowers. Given the Canadian climate, the extent to which some of these features may be used is clearly limited, but it cannot be denied that wine cellars and gardens are essential to the immigrant's sense of well-being. A table under a pergola, a veranda to enjoy the air and watch for human traffic, and an oven to make pizza and bread are traditional outdoor possessions which are cherished all the more because their use is compressed into a few months of clement weather. The Italian dreams of the sun (see Del Giudice 1993). The fantasies about the sunny landscapes and activities of his past typically ignore the realities of the boreal environment in which he lives, and persistently hearken back to that solar place of the mind.

Clustering

It has been noted that Italians invariably have clustered in most of the New World communities where they have settled. They live in ethnic neighbourhoods; they form "Little Italies."[16] This proximity to co-nationals, of course, serves an important physical and psychological function as Italians make the transition to their new home in a diffuse foreign landscape. Clustering has occurred at all levels, from clustering in homes, where multiple families have shared the same house, to streets which became known as "Italian," to entire neighbourhoods. Our entire extended family of aunts and uncles settled in the Rogers and Dufferin area when we first arrived in Toronto in the mid-1950s; more specifically, we lived on two or three streets only, among them Eversfield and Hatherley. The farthest relative lived perhaps a mile away and the consensus had it that he was somewhat aloof. Then, as we all moved to suburban meccas (e.g.,

[15] On the culture-related use of space and house forms, see Rapoport 1969.

[16] See Gabaccia 1984; La Ruffa 1988:135-39 ("Spatial Dimension of Italian-American Ethnicity"). La Ruffa corroborates that the preference for co-ethnics is carried over into affluent neighbourhoods as well.

Downsview, Willowdale), relatives still tended to cluster in smaller groups of twos and threes, generally in the same neighbourhoods but no longer communicable by foot. The women, since few aunts drove, consequently saw less of each other and relied more heavily on husbands and children for transportation, and on the telephone for daily conversations. With the passing of time, their needs seem to have been filled by grown families of their own, which kept them occupied and provided most of their socialization.

Oddly, it is now the second home in "cottage country" (which, for Italians, has been largely Wasaga Beach) which replicates the close proximity typical of that first phase of immigration when we all lived on neighbouring streets. Today, aunts and uncles can visit daily, strolling from one "cottage" (actually vacation homes) to another on weekends.

The Mental Landscape of the Italian Immigrant: Land and Food

Italians and Nature

Italians in Toronto, due to their largely peasant background, maintain an archaic relationship to land. Since many tilled the soil before coming to New World cities, land is viewed not as mere nature to be admired, or a manicured replica in the shape of an English garden, but as a productive asset capable of yielding wealth. Nature must be domesticated and made to produce. It is intimately connected with food, nourishment, the cornucopia.[17] I believe that a well-tilled field with plants set out in rows provides an aesthetically more gratifying experience to the typical Italian immigrant than a field of wildflowers on rolling hills.[18] Likewise, fishing is not merely a gentleman's hour of communion with nature but a source of food which nature offers to those who have the skill to seize it. Food gathered in this way can be frozen or given as gifts to extended family and friends. These Italians are, as I have heard it said, "meat fishermen." The same is true for hunting.

Women too have their food-gathering activities-many frowned upon by other ethnic groups and even by their own children: gathering dandelion greens, or snails, on vacant, undeveloped land was a frequent pastime before it became déclassé. They take pleasure in the open air, scavenging for the fruits of the landnature's bounty, free of charge.

[17] That Italians predominate in the building industry cannot be disputed, yet they are also heavily present in food-related enterprises: cheese houses, processed meat plants, banquet halls (see Harney 1992), catering, restaurants, grocery stores, bakeries, etc.

[18] On my father's first visit to California, it was farmland he wanted to see and which most moved him. The ocean and shoreline, too, were beautiful to him (primarily because they are a source of fish, perhaps), but the fields were more primal. This may reflect the personal experience of becoming a fisherman by adoption, while remaining a contadino by tradition.

Snails, mushrooms, and wild herbs are considered delectable, special foods since they require time, ingenuity, and tenacity and are wild, not cultivated.[19]

In her most worthy study of the use of spaceboth physical and symbolicin the Cainbrian town of Zaccanopoli (Catanzaro), an average village of about a thousand souls, Minicuci points to la terra (the cultivated lands) as the locus of nostalgia and fond dreams in the older generation:

è la campagna e il tempo qui trascorso che riempiono i racconti e la vita narrata. Le terre sono i luoghi della memoria, dell'immaginazione, di una socialità perduta e non più ritrovata, di una coralità rimpianta che, a distanza, fanno dimenticare la durezza della fatica e mitizzano il tempo. . . La nostalgia e il rimpianto che oggi si hanno di questi luoghi sono anche nostalgia e rimpianto di un tempo in cui si era produttivi, si faceva, si contava, si aveva un'identità legata al proprio ruolo, alia propria terra; il principio della produttività diventa in questo senso più importante di quello della territorialità. (1983: 112)[20]

The land therefore is a powerfully symbolic locus which links together a past, a place which was a source both of bitter frustration and interminable fatigue, but which also remains in the collective memory as a positive, representing a simpler and more harmonious life and clearly defined productivity. It was often also the setting where tales were told and songs sung, marriages forged and feuds begun. And one must remember that nostalgia constitutes a significant dimension of the immigrant's psyche.

It is not uncommon for immigrants of this first generation to plan return trips to Italy to coincide with various harvests (which often also are connected with their hometown's feast day) and to anticipate the pleasure of being present when grapes or figs or prickly pears are abundant. They may even return to their own land or that of their relatives and enjoy again the experience of participating in the harvest, despite the inevitable changes that have occurred due to technological advances and social mobility. These seasonal fruits hold such a treasured place in their memories that, despite customs regulations, it is extremely difficult to resist the temptation of returning with baskets of fichi d'India (prickly pears, or cactus pears) and, as I remember, even seafood (telline, a tiny bivalve, or scungilli, a murex), carefully packed

[19] I now recognize why going up to the mountain to scavenge for firewood holds so special a place in my mother's memories of her native Terracina (Lazio): it is an experience of joy and freedom and female companionship (see Minicuci 1983: 109] on the special nature of "going for herbs" for the women of Zaccanopoli). Minicuci notes too that for these women, meeting with other women always focused around some activity: knitting, sewing, mending; in short, women implicitly require a pretext to congregate, while men make no apologies for fraternizing in cafes and osterie, where they freely chat, argue, or play cards.

[20] "It is the land and the time spent there that fill the tales and the narrations of life. The lands are the loci of memory, imagination, of a lost and never-refound conviviality, of a mourned-for harmony that, from a distance, cause one to forget the harshness of work and mythicize time. . . The nostalgia and remorse that are felt for these places today also represent the nostalgia and lament for a time in which one was productive and active, one counted, one had an identity linked to one's own role, to one's own land; the principle of productivity becomes, in this sense, more important than that of territoriality."

in ice and wet dishtowels, not to mention the better-known cheeses and cured meats for which Italians have been infamous in customs offices in airports the world over. Fruits of the land remain one of the most evocative and prized souvenirs from a trip home.

The Garden of Plenty

It is this activity of cultivating and harvesting which makes the garden so psychologically important to Italians. Italians are among those groups guilty of cutting down stately trees, especially the "useless" elms, oaks, and conifers that produce no fruit. Mere shade trees are replaced with fruit trees. Backyard lawns are plowed into vegetable gardens or cemented over to make patios. Hybrid tea roses are rooted out to make room for tomatoes. Nature is thereby "cleaned up," ordered and made to produce. The few surviving flowersconcessions to the women of the houseare frequently potted. Trees are severely pruned. Many a time have I been admonished by my well-meaning father: why did I have so many flowers in my garden when I could have been growing tomatoes, rucola, etc?

In even a climate like Canada's, Italians have worked miracles with their gardens, coaxing high yields from a short growing season. And there is great pride in beating the environment to produce Italian delicacies: fresh figs, lemons and oranges. The climate is seen as a challenge and many have built carefully tended hothouses, wherein the fugitive, boreal sun is tricked into producing the jewel, the impossible. Indeed, there is a great traffic in seeds between Italy and Canada and then among Italians in Toronto, as they experiment with Mediterranean plants on the arctic glacial fan.

The Cantina

Like the garden and the kitchen, the cantina holds, symbolically and practically, an extremely important place in the home since it is linked to one of the immigrant's deep psychological centers: food as savings.[21] Recall that in a premonetary peasant economy, the cantina was a form of bank, guarding the comestible reserve against famine. Again, the dream of abundance can here be turned into a reality. The Paese di Cuccagna, insofar as it represented the collective fantasy of the hungry masses, may remain a lively, though subconscious, topos for the immigrant who amasses food to excess. The sausage links that hung from trees, the wine that flowed in the rivers in that never-never land, can now be carefully arranged in the cantina, the wine in barrels

[21] Curiously, Minicuci reports for Zaccanopoli that the same class of peasants-turned-homebuilders have not adequately provided food-storage space in their new homes, even though the need still exists. They instead turn a second bathroom or a spare bedroom into storage space (Minicuci 1984: 155). The problem is exacerbated by the fact that even today closet space is unknown in Italy, where vast armoires and chests take its place.

or arrayed in glass gallons on shelves, while the sausages and prosciutti hang from the joists.

Yet the cantina is also the repository for an important staple canned tomatoes, along with other vegetable preserves from the garden (beans, eggplant, zucchini), either in oil or vinegar marinades (giardiniera: pickled vegetables). Although in the past most of the preserves in the cantina were homemade, today it may be stocked with store-bought canned foods and pasta products. Of course, in addition to the cold cellar, most Italian Canadians have acquired large freezers for similar reasonsthey are the bank vaults of this urban peasantry.[22] Their culture of penury and thrift has taught them to save for tomorrow. They do not spare themselves the substantial effort that goes into food preservation, which is often a family affairalthough less so today than a few years ago.

The cantina therefore is something of a vault, a treasury, rather than merely a larder and a wine cellar.[23] But its importance as a wine cellar is primary. Ontario's archaic liquor laws and its liquor control board, which dispenses expensive, yet mediocre, wines, are as unacceptable to Italians as to other wine-drinking immigrants. The cantina therefore becomes a necessity. Italians make their own wine for the pleasure and pride of producing it and also to avoid what appear to be exorbitant and unjustified prices for a staple of life. There are few families who do not take part in autumn winemaking, either by crashing their own grapes (imported from California) in wine presses or by purchasing ready-crushed grapes (mosto), which they then ferment, filter, and age. The acidic smells around the basement and the heady feeling as we washed gallon jugs and helped fill them remain a powerful childhood memory.

Ethnicity and Upward Mobility: The Archvilla

The Archvilla

The archvilla is the typical home of first-generation Italians (now in their late fifties and sixties)who have become affluent.[24] These are large two-story brick houses with multiple bedrooms and bathrooms, basements, and garages. What makes them particularly identifiable as Italian homes are their rooftop terraces, arcaded porticos,

[22] As one Toronto woman coped with a house in flames (eventually it burnt to the ground), her immediate concerns were for a grandson, whom she quickly took to a neighbour's, her husband, who was napping in the bedroom, and her freezer full of meat.

[23] Recall that in Italy, the physical symbols of the padrona di casa (the "mistress of the house") were iron keys worn on the hip, which controlled the repositories of comestible assets (see Franceschetto 1977: 31-32).

[24] Although villas with many arches do not appear in Italy today, Minicuci (1984: 157) does report that in Zaccanopoli, arches frequently appear inside, where doorways are struck down and replaced by them. This phenomenon has likely to do with the falso rustico (or faux folk) popular in italy today and especially evident in furniture styles. The arch renaissance in Italy is less conspicuous, possibly due to the fact that Italians there are not in a "boundary zone" which necessitates emphasizing (or "hypercharacterizing") ethnicity to ensure cultural survival.

balustraded balconies and verandas, statuary, and fountains. The arches tend to be serial and never isolated, thereby creating a rhythmic effect. These houses may also feature terra-cotta roofs and columns, although columns are less frequent than arches, which figure throughout the construction, from freestanding arches to arcaded verandas and garage doors to arches over windows. And this is only the outside of the house.

][Typical suburban home with arched loggias enclosing a statue or fountain and a terrace.]]

The trend to arched construction began in the late 1960s, reached its peak in the 1970s and early 1980s, and now appears to be on the decline. The life cycle of this "invented tradition" (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) therefore spans three decades. The arches are an immediate marker of the presence of Italians. As one man told me: "Tu puoi andare dove vuoi, vedi una casa con le arcate, vai a domandare, parla italiano, ché non ti sbagli!"[25]

The arch indeed is seen as quintessentially Italian and recalls Italian tradition and the historic past. Thus it is in these terms that the genesis and raison d'être for the arch in Toronto might be explained:

][This Richmond Hill house has all the markers current in Toronto Italian architecture:
a concrete balustrade, arches, a terrace, a loggia, a large fountain, and statuary (David).]]

][Suburban archvilla.]]

][An archvilla with triple garage, arcaded veranda and uncharacteristic red-tiled roof.]]

][Variation on the arch: the inverted arch filled with wrought iron on the veranda.]]

Lo stile è venuto dall'Italia, logicamente,... da quei tempi... non so, di Nerone, dei tempi dell'arcata, ecc. Ora, tutti quei poveracci di Italiani che sono venuti qua, immigranti, è successo che hanno mandato a lavorare le mogli, i figli, i sorci, le gatte-tutti quanti hanno lavorato e hanno accumulato quattro soldi. E con quei quattro soldi che hanno accumulato hanno fatto la "casa bella." La "casa bella," che cosa b venuto in mente? Di fare le arcate antiche. . .. Tu la fai con due archi, io la faccio con quattro archi, quell'altro lo fa con cinque archi e così via. L'in-vidia degl'Italiani. So'[no] così sono.[26]

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[25] "You can go wherever you wish; when you see a house with arches, go and ask, speak Italian, and you'll never miss."

[26] "The style came from Italy, naturally, . . . from those times, I don't know, of Nero, the era of the arches, etc. Now, all those poor Italians that came here as immigrants, it happened that they sent their wives, kids, mice, cats to work everyone worked and they accumulated some money. And with that money that they accumulated they made themselves a 'beautiful house.' The 'beautiful house'what came to mind? [in what did it consist?] To make ancient arches. . .. You make it with two arches, I make it with four arches, the other guy makes it with five arches and so forth. Invidiousness in Italians. That's the way they are."

Not only is the home central to Italian identity, conversely Italians are central to the building industry, particularly in Toronto. Suburban developments such as Greenpark Homes and Royal Park are not only owned and managed by Italians, but Italians are their prime clients. The architectural style of the archvilla therefore was largely unmediated, since those who requested and those who built and designed these homes were essentially of the same group. Draftsmen (not architects) reflect and cater to their clients' desires.[27] The archvilla therefore can truly be seen as a popular form, springing from the immigrants' personal history and group aesthetics. This phenomenon appears to tap into an archetypical iceberg of which the arch is only the tip.

Arches occur wherever there are Italians. The affluent can incorporate them into their new custom homes; the less affluent instead plaster them onto existing structures, creating a new facade for their houses, frequently via a new arcaded veranda. The hybridizations are frequently pronounced, for instance in the older Victorian neighbourhoods where quaintly wood-shingled Queen Anne homes may be transformed by a brick arcaded veranda. Older Italian neighbour-hoods (for example, Dufferin and St. Clair, Dufferin and Eglinton, and College Street) have undergone this metamorphosis as arches now proliferate on verandas, balconies, and terraces. Today, even the modest woodland cottages of Wasaga Beach show off such combinations as wooden siding (frequently stuccoed) with imposing concrete columns or brick arches. The trend toward aggrandizing through form and materials is ubiquitous.

A more modest arch-bungalow. This tiny Queen Ann home has undergone an Italian facelift.

A wooden cottage with concrete columns in Wasaga Beach.

The flurry of arches has been identified as an embarrassing problem by architects and second- and third-generation Italians, and now many other Italians are willing to agree. The archvilla has indeed evolved into the "arch villain." As reported to me by a developer, architectural control committees are attempting to prevent another Woodbridge from ever occurring (see Bronner 1986). The tide is being stemmed. Indeed, in the newly developing areas of Richmond Hill and Newmarket, homes reflecting the Anglo-Victorian heritage of rural Ontario (for example, mixed-colour brick, gingerbreading, and gabled roofs) are now reasserting themselves. It is unclear whether these are the result of architectural preservation efforts and legislation or are signs of voluntary acculturation. This trend of "bring[ing] architecture into subdivisions," as one developer phrased it, is a respectable way of eliminating vulgar "ethnicity"Anglo-Canadian house forms, of course, historically stand aloof from being considered "ethnic" or "other."

Privacy, Prestige, Grandeur

[27] On the belief system of architects in relation to the social distance between them and those who inhabit their buildings, see Lipman 1969. He points out, for instance, that much of the frustration which arises among occupants of a building results from the architect's unfamiliarity with the ways of life of the residents. This is less true with custom-built homes, however.

The concepts of prestige, privacy, and independence are symptoms of upward mobility, and they have understandably taken root among Italians. Just like their European Italian counterparts, the villini dwellers, the Italians of the Torontonian archvilla are using homes as status symbols.[28]

And yet they often came from towns where differences did not exist, where a home did not function as a symbol of prestige but was merely a place to live. As Minicuci points out, even the homes of the dead are now burdened with representing the social status of those relatives still alive; they too have become symbols of prestige through the growth of family cappellae (crypts): "E i morti, rinchiusi anche loro in uno spazio privato e accessibile solo ai consanguinei e ai parenti, assumono su di sé il peso di notificare agli altri le nuove con-dizioni dei vivi, separati da essi e anche tra loro" (1984: 158).[29]

The homes of these upwardly mobile Italians are enormousmere size being a prime indicator of well-being. They create space all around them, thereby further isolating themselves from neighbours and potentially from each other within the home. That much of the space in the new palatial homes is superfluous cannot be disputed. Scale is all: bigger and more is better, from the number of arches to the number of garages.[30] But this is true of society in general: vacant, useless, conspicuous space is a symbol of social and economic status. The thirty-room mansions for families of three, typical of some of the more grandiose fortunes in Los Angeles, make this abundantly clear.

That Italians are constantly trying to keep up with neighbours may also be a result of clustering, since fellow Italians share their values and aesthetics and therefore also provide the immediate audience for their architectural "performances." By way of corroboration for this theory, we can note that certain neighbourhoods feature only the inverted arch, others the balustraded verandas, still others the arcaded porticos. It is as though the only range of options is presented by local endocentric choices, not by the entire available idiom. These are mi-crocosmic worlds in which the immediate

[28] ". . . la casa è diventata status symbol, permette soprattutto di notificare, visualizzandolo, un cambiamento di status, un salto di qualità dalla condizione dicontadino a quella di impiegato odi professionista, o, nel caso degli ancora contadini, di scindere la propria identità sociale dalla propria condizione di lavoro. Si pongono qui le radici di una nuova storia che li renda simili agli altri, a quelli che stanno bene, che vivono bene. . . "(". . . the house has become a status symbol, it above all allows one to visually signal [to others] a change in status, an improvement in the peasant's condition to that of employee or professional, or, in the case where he is still a peasant, to separate one's own social identity from one's working condition. Here strikes root a new history which makes him similar to others, to those who 'are well off' who 'live well'. . ..") (Minicuci 1984: 157).

[29] "And the dead, they too enclosed in their private space and accessible only to blood relatives, take onto themselves the burden of signaling to others the new [social] conditions of the living, separated from them and from each other."

[30] The attempts by Italian peasants to recreate cultural forms of i prominenti in the New World occur on many fronts, from villas to funeral rites (Mathias 1974).

community mirrors itself. Conformity is all important . . . until some bold spirit begins a new trend, a slightly different variation on the arch theme.[31]

Inhabiting the New Spaces: Discrepancies

Once the new environment, with porticos, terraces, and large dimensions, has been created, how does it affect the traditional way of life? How do Italians from a peasant origin and worldview inhabit their palazzo as the signore? The new spaces cannot help but emphasize the discrepancies in the Italian transition from old to new, from peasant to bourgeois. What does one do with the extra spaces?

Terraces, balconies, verandas, porticos are little used. Since they are not exactly appropriate to the Canadian climate, their value is confined to the fugitive summer: the terraces and porticos are almost never practical, the more informal veranda serving their function more congenially. The high population density of Italian towns and that country's less hostile weather made the balcony an excellent vantage point from which to observe street life. The Toronto suburbs provide precious little in the way of street activity to engage the onlooker. The tacit reciprocity of the stroll, the greeting, the pause the urban encounter between fixed and mobile participants disintegrates when either is subtracted. Consequently, the unanimated porticos and terraces can only be intended as "messages" for the public to read during drive-by inspections, not for the residents to use. Meanwhile, life goes on inside much as before, focused in the kitchen and the basement. Italians simply tend to be more private than they once were in their more compact ethnic neighbourhoods.

Living and dining rooms suffer the same fate. They are carefully decorated with rich brocades, statuary, and figurines; the dining-room furniture is expensive and large, but these rooms remain largely uninhabited. They are dusted daily, perfect museum piecesbourgeois dioramasfor public viewing en route to the basement or the kitchen where most informal socializing occurs.[32] And it is not even true that the dining room or living room is reserved for special occasions; often the basement serves even for festivities: family dinners, parties, baptisms, and so forth. It is, I believe, an abhorrence of formality that relegates most socializing to the basement or, ideally, to the outdoors although today banquet halls are being used for baptisms and parties. The basement, given its proximity to the cantina and to the less formal kitchen and family hearth, is a very popular place.

[31] In the mid-1970s, my father dreamt of a veranda with a long row of inverted arches, filled with wrought ironwork, but met with some resistance from my mother, a more retiring, less exhibitionist soul. Why did my father nourish this idea? For all its local novelty, the fact is that it was still traditional, yet countercurrent.

[32] On the conflict between middle- and working-class values as expressed through the parlour/ kitchen axis during the period 1885-1915] in America, see Cohen 1986. Cohen examines why workers and immigrants resisted the middle-class campaign to create "hygienic," unencumbered homes, to separate private from public space, and so forth.

This feeling of ill fitting one's environment fades with the subsequent, more assimilable generations. Lifestyles become more mainstream. I have heard of scenes from soap operas being played out in archvillas: a second-generation Italian housewife greets her construction-worker husband with a martini in the living room as he comes home from an exhausting day's work. Italians do not drink martinis; they are suspicious of hard liquor, a fortiori before dinner. Italian teenagers spend long hours in their bedrooms plugged into their private phones, high-tech stereo system, or personal television much as their non-Italian counterparts do. Traditionally, bedrooms were not inhabited during the day, but served solely for sleeping. Their spartan furnishings reflected this primal function: a bed, a bedstand, an ar-moire. The bedroom of the modern teenager instead is more of a miniapartment, an island on the domestic map.

The Toronto-born generations are clearly no longer intimidated by these removed, individualized spaces, just as they are no longer intimidated by or excluded from mainstream society. The spatial correlation is revealing. But this transitionthe parents directly concerned might refer to it as an oppositionis evident in all areas of their life, from music, dress, and foodways to other emblems of ethnicity.

Space and Gender

In Italy, the house was less intensely occupied during the diurnal hours than it is in Canada, where both the weather and the nature of social intercourse are radically different. Men, when not working, would spend time in the piazza, the bar (café), or the osteria; women, when not involved in the housework necessary to maintain an orderly home, were out doing errands, shopping, visiting neighbours, and chatting. The Italian urban environment has not been replicated in suburbia, although informal community halls, gelaterie (ice-cream parlours), cafés, tavole calde (often adjoining a bakery), and billiard halls are growing to fill the need for Italian male socialization. The older ethnic neighbourhoods (St. Clair, Eglinton, Rogers, and Dufferin) filled these needs, since they offered a more compact life with corner stores, bakeries, and groceries (meeting and greeting places), all within walking distance, which made a more highly socialized life possible.

While men have compensated for suburban dispersal by meeting at the cafés, billiard and community halls, or even malls (surrogate indoor piazzas), the Italian woman has suffered the effects of isolation. Not only does the size of the grander house require much more of her time in upkeep than the humbler older one, but since she is marooned at a substantial distance from neighbours and family and frequently does not drive, her days tend to be lonely. Gone are the days of her Italian youth in which she shared activity with other women in intimate spaces: the front stairs of home, the kitchen table or kitchen window, the public fountain to wash clothes, the small streets of the older towns. Female socialization has thus become more problematic and irregular.

So, too, has the quality of encounters changed. Women may watch favourite soap operas or do their grocery shopping together; they may help each other in the more

traditional processing of large quantities of foods (such as tomatoes and pickled vegetables), but the frequency and informality of their daily meetings (to gather greens, to draw water, to transact minute purchases, to attend mass, to leave flowers at the cemetery) have been drastically curtailed. It is my suspicion that European Italian housewives cling to their inefficient shopping habits, which require daily sorties outside the home, because they provide a moment's escape from in-house matters and a narrow window for much-needed socializing and exchange of information with friends and acquaintances (see Minicuci 1983: 107).

Another gender-related domestic ritual involves the introduction of first-time visitors to the home (particularly if it is new). When one enters the home, it is customary to give the visitor a tour. After a person leaves his or her shoes at the door, donning wool pattens or slippers,[33] there occurs something of a division of the sexes. Women embark on a tour of the bedrooms and the living/dining rooms, where all the female finery is on display, while men are steered downward to the cantina to be shown and sample the wine reserves, dried sausage, pro-sciutto, and other cured pork products.

The Secularization of Folk Icons

Italians have always personalized their space in ethnically marked ways. A look at the objects, the icons, and other outward modes of marking this space may further reveal a worldview in transition. Many Italians have literally built their fantasies out of recycled materials and junk-backyard grottos and shrines in the and stone, shell-encrusted fountains and rocailles, bright half-barrel flower planters, which may escalate into richly articulated "environments" (for example, Simon Rodia's Watts Towers).[34] Frequently these objects recreate memories or fantasies of a now-distant Italian past, seen through the filter of nostalgia and myth: scenes from pastoral Sicilian life in Vincenzo Ancona's telephone-wire miniatures (Sciorra 1985; Chaire-takis and Sciorra 1990), the Nola feast day and the ships of Columbus in Rodia's spiral towers (Posen and Ward 1985), scenes of pilgrimages in the grotto shrines and sidewalk altars of Italians generally (Sciorra 1989), the orange groves of Sicily recalled by the elaborate underground gardens of Baldassare Forestiere (Schuyt, Elffers, and Collins 1980: 160-63). This list could be expanded ad infinitum. These are the personal icons Italians have constructed.

Others instead acquire familiar and reassuring images to adorn their homes: the Madonna of Sorrows with seven arrows piercing her heart, serene Saint Anthony in his brown habit and smooth tonsure, the boyish-faced Christ with his halo and a crown of thorns on his heart. All Italians lived with these images in the New World no less than

[33] Here Canadian weather reinforces a European peasant custom of shedding zoccoli (wooden clogs), or some other regional footwear adapted to negotiate muddy fields and paths, for wool pattens (which, incidentally, buff the floors).

[34] On this sort of "spontaneous" architecture, see, for instance, Rosen 1979, and the newsletter Spaces.

the Old. Of course, one may also find idealized and sunlit Italian scenes: seascapes, generic images of rural and peasant life, romantic ruins in the countryside, the bay of Naples all in lights (the pictorial equivalent of the song Turn'a Surriente, "Torn'a Sorrento"), a plaster-cast Leaning Tower of Pisa, a plastic gondola lamp, miniatures of Michelangelo's David.[35]

As Italians become more affluent, their iconic idiom also evolves. Change is apparent in all areas of life, from the style of furniture to the foods one may eat (or the foods one no longer eats), to the music one listens to (see Del Giudice 1993), to the way one socializes. Some of these developments are directly related to the newly created environments, which then impinge on the type of life led inside them, while other changes instead reflect perceived notions of progress.

Why, for instance, have religious yard shrines become so rare?[36] Veiled Mary has yielded her place to nude David (himself veiled, but with only a strategic fig leaf); fountain saints have given way to frolicking putti. Imposing lions stand guard on the walkway, replacing a watchful Madonna in her niche. Living rooms or entranceways now have reproductions of famous paintings, or a gallery of family members[37] instead of yesterday's religious figures and sacred images on their walls. These new icons both (a) mirror the socially accepted images of italianità in art and architecture, a visual vocabulary even non-Italians can recognize and appreciate and which cuts across religious divisions, and (b) signal a rejection of the world from which the cafoni (rustics) came. Italy is Verdi, Michelangelo, and Leonardo, not the small towns inhabited by farmers. Peasant icons, associated with the older and more "backward" of Italian immigrants, have made way for the more upwardly mobile evocations of the patria.[38]

Yet David's fig leaf betrays a certain literal mindedness and moral sternness: the spirit of aristocratic Renaissance art is far from having been assimilated; these people are still ill at ease with nudes. Perhaps another indication of this unclear state of mind is the historical "promiscuity" which characterizes the displayed objects, a vertiginous blending of periods and styles which sets streamlined glass flowers in a rococo jardinière,

[35] On the work of primarily Tuscan image makers and their repertoire, see Sensi Isolani 1990. I would speculate that the popularity of the tower of Pisa and the David may, in part, be due to the fact that many image makers were, in fact, Tuscan. They did not restrict their images to Tuscany icons of course, but may have caused these two icons to become particularly popular among purchasers of modest means.

[36] This situation apparently sharply contrasts with that of second- and even third-generation Italian Americans, who still actively create yard shrines and street altars, as described by Sciorra 1989: 188.

[37] It is my impression that in the past only deceased ancestors were honoured with space on the wall. Photographs tended to display only the dead, either in small household altars, or as the centerpiece of cemetery markers.

[38] Anyone who has sought to fund a folk-oriented exhibit can corroborate how difficult it is to garner contributions from the local Italian community. Yet the son of a fisherman may be more than generous in funding an exhibit of the Macchiaioli or modern Milanese design.

a Renaissance David beneath monumental, Ro-man-style arches and columns, a demure Mary behind a gurgling zoo-morphic fountain[39] wreathed in dolphins and putti.

But how does the arch fit into all this? How has this Old World icon become a New World cultural expression?

The Arch as Cultural Archetype

One of the most prominent motifs to surface in the recent Italian Canadian renaissance is the arch. But why the arch?[40] Why not the balcony, the curtile, the Renaissance palazzo, or even the red-tiled roof?[41] Why has the arch come to symbolize quintessential italianità so well? What chords of the ethne's collective past does it strike?

The arch could have been recalled to memory through various prominent images: the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Leoclassical Palladian villas of the Veneto, the medieval porticos abundant all over Italy but most common in the towns of the Po Valley (from Vigevano to Vi-cenza, Padova, Mantova, Modena, and Bologna). It may also represent a recollection of southern Italian vernacular architecture of the past two centuries, namely the villas primarily associated with wealthy resort areas. Yet, although the use of arches in the history of Italian architecture has been continuous since Roman times, recurring with greater and lesser frequency to our day, I believe it is the Roman world and specifically the Roman world as mediated by Fascism to which the archvilla of Toronto refers.

Triumphal arches, aqueducts, ambulacra, arcaded amphitheatres, arenas, villas, and forums spring to mind. Roman arches (see Man-suelli 1981) and Hellenic columns were not only the typical idiom of the classical world, but the weight and importance of Rome as caput mundi imbued these forms with imperial power and prestige,[42] such

[39] I refer here to your standard precast, ready-made fountain-quite distinct in spirit from an entirely personal grotto or rocaille, produced by the rare individual.

[40] Some have tried to rationalize arches in economic terms, arguing that they are easy and inexpensive and proliferate for that reason. Others instead state that the arch is a challenge and appeals to the craftsmanly side of the Italian psy- che. Developers are supposed to shy away from them, since they are inessen- tial, labour intensive, and therefore expensive. Yet at least one proverb points to the inherent structural value of the arch. A now deceased brother-in-law, a fourth-generation Terracinese mason, taught his son Otello, my nephew, the importance of the arch: "L'arco tondo regge tutto il mondo." ("A full arch [can] hold up the entire world.")

[41] That the roof of red terra-cotta tiles (canali or tegole e imbrici) has not become more popular among Italians in Toronto remains a mystery to me, since many of them have fond memories of it, and it is part of so many immigrants' intimate experience of town and rural life. Terra-cotta roofs withstand the cold and snow and are to be found in northern as well as southern Italy; the tiles can be imported from Italy, as easily as indoor majolica tiles and marble are, thereby avoiding the need to create a new sector of industry.

[42] Further dignification accrued from the use of certain noble materials as well, such as marble, another feature of the classical world and lately to be seen more frequently in archvillas: "Marble is a traditional material symbolic of richness and rule; it does not cover the walls of case popolari but is

that they remain durable and powerful symbolswitness their recurrent use in public buildings from Monticello to Mount Vernon, or the monuments of the British Empire. In Italy, the Roman and classical motifs appear in the direct form of Roman ruins, and in mediated baroque, risorgimental, and Fascist architectural reincarnations. All were visually available to the Italian immigrant prior to immigration.

Recalling Rome in the New World

Since the archvilla does not recreate the home in which most immigrants were born and raised,[43] the source of this architectural hybrid calls for some investigation. There is internal evidence, in fact, that this style recalls, or seeks to recall, the monumental architecture of ancient Rome. This claim may invite a smile from art historians. Yet, as folklorists, we are focused on the processes which motivate the creation of products and not merely on the products. And here the most direct corroboration comes from Italian Canadians themselves. When randomly asked: "What do you think of when you see an archvilla?" their replies have ranged from a vague "ancient buildings" or "European"[44] to the extremely specific and frequent answer, "the Colosseum." The response therefore generally points to a far distant past situated somewhere in Roman times, i tempi di Nerone.

Physical evidence corroborating this Roman hypothesis abounds in Toronto. A conspicuous example is the Rotonda, a banquet hall built in the late sixties in the Dufferin and Eglinton area. It is unclear whether this red-brick replica of the Roman Colosseum began a trend of itself or merely grew out of a more generally shared aesthetic moment. What is clear is that the Italian community responded enthusiastically and immedi-

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found in the palazzi of the rich (and more recently, the villini of the bourgeoisie); it has no structural significance but clearly a decorative and symbolic one" (Ghirardo 1980: 118).

Apart from columns, posts, and lintels, recall that even in ancient Rome, pietre dure were used for revetment and sheathing only. The same building strategy governed the modern Roman Empire which Mussolini sought to create.

[43] As a structural, load-bearing device, the arch (and its three-dimensional correlate, the vault) survived in the vernacular forms of many regions. But its use in Toronto is more often superficial than structural; the arches are applied as surface decoration rather than being part of the internal skeleton of the building. More tellingly, none of the arched villas evoke the vernacular house forms of any regiontheir return to Italy is cosmetic rather than historical. This is the arch of modernity, not rusticity.

[44] On a "European" or "Mediterranean" architectural style, see romanità in architecture section in the text. Oddly, where response was sought from someone of more than modest education and from professionals and semiprofessionals in the building industry, there was a defensive tendency to widen the historical and ethnic scope by insisting that arches were not merely Italian but occurred in many geographic and historic contexts. This response is revealing for several reasons, but mostly because it seems to deny the current reality of Toronto, where the equation is exclusively arch = Italian (indeed, it may be scorned for this very reason). Had this trend flourished in Los Angeles, for example, the marker might have been Hispanic, since arches are also typical of the mission and the hacienda style, but Toronto's largest Mediterranean ethnic minority being Italian, the arches are definite markers of italianità.

ately. Arches began to appear in residential architecture, first cautiously, then by giant leaps. Although Italians had for decades formed a significant part of Toronto's ethnic mix, their expression of identity through architecture had never been so bold and assertive. I believe these prominent arches of the seventies marked a growing confidence and pride in italianità.

One cannot underestimate the importance of this single monument, the Colosseum, for Italians in general. Reference to it recurs from the Middle Ages onward as a symbol of Roman grandiosity and Roman cruelty (the site of Christian martyrdoms). More recently, it has appeared in countless contexts, from the symbol of the Italian The Rotonda, a red-brick replica of the Roman Colosseum (at Dufferin and Eglinton).

][Villa Colombo: arches over the windows and the red-tiled roof help identify this retirement home and recreation center as Italian territory.]]

Gold Cup matches to the logo for a ready-to-wear imports store to signs for pizzerias. Along with the tower of Pisa, it no doubt stands as one of the best-known Italian monuments in the world.

The "Toronto Colosseum" brought this icon once again to the fore for Italians in a rather bold way for the time. Yet it was not an isolated event. In fact, one may point to other banquet facilities and Italian public buildings in Toronto which continue in the Roman monumental vein, sporting names such as Villa Pompei (although it lacks the arches and incongruously displays a David in front). Villa Colombo, the Italian cultural and recreation facility for senior citizens, also features arches, a red-tiled roof, and, more unusual, an interior piazza. These buildings are, in a sense, the "monuments" of Italian Canadians in Toronto, the locus of family and community ritualssuch as weddings, baptisms, communions, and retirements.

Monumentality on the Domestic Front

Monumentality is replicated in the private sphere by the archvilla, again recalling the grander parts of the Italian pastthe glory of Rome. This "villa" with its atriums and loggias, terraces and porticos speaks of a life of wealth and ease, despite the fact that the Italians who reside there lead anything but patrician lives of leisure, working long, exhausting hours in all areas of construction.

Yet, one could object: were Italians aware of these symbols, their meaning, the weight of cultural history (Italian and otherwise) when building the archvillas? Could the presence of Roman ruins, together with Roman-revival architectural forms, in their own remote Italian experience have been enough to convey a significance which then was carried to the New World? That Italians themselves mention Rome in connection with the new homes ought to be a prime indicator that the Roman world is present to them. Furthermore, it is important to note that the generation largely responsible for the arches is made up of post-WW II immigrants, now in their sixties. What in the

collective memory of this generation could have revived the Roman world? I believe the answer is most plausibly found in the architectural expressions of Fascism.[45]

This generation, exposed to Fascism from the 1920s to the 1940s, could scarcely have avoided falling under the sway of Fascist rhetoric, with its repeated and pointed references to Imperial Rome. Furthermore, many immigrants came precisely from the depressed rural areas upon which Fascist social programs made an immediate and direct impact (for example, the bonifica of the Agro-Pontino, which involved many "colonists" from the Veneto). Their early experience of Fascism, however passive, afforded a range of positive ideals. Direct contact with Fascist propaganda, together with the continued use of Roman antiquity for nationalist purposes well after Mussolini (reinforced through popular culture and tourism), provided inspiration for the archvilla builders of Toronto. In order to assess the influence Fascism may have exerted on Italians of this generation, a historic parenthesis must be opened.

Fascism and Architecture

A Cautionary Note: The Historian's Perspective on Fascism

There is an inherent danger, I fear, in invoking the specter of Fascism to account for an "innocent," apolitical, New World, Italian architectural style, and it may, to some, appear unwarranted and even irritating. Historians such as Mack Smith and Lyttelton have warned of this danger (for architecture specifically, see Ghirardo 1980). The Fascist past, with its legacies of human sorrow and economic ruin, set the stage for the great post-war Atlantic migration of Italian Canadians. To suggest that these refugees from Fascist folly and brutality might willingly revisit those days may seem counterintuitive on its face. This is especially so since, as historians have noted, all brands of Fascism have tended to blend in popular consciousness and to become associated with the ultrafight German variety in Nazism. After all, Black Shirts and Brown Shirts formed part of the same Axis.

Yet the impact of Fascism on the Italian masses cannot be denied, and the Italian Canadian archvilla builders were a part of that experience before becoming immigrants. Only a closer examination of Italy in the Fascist era can help us understand more fully the immigrant's historical and cultural background. Fascism was a hugely popular and sweeping movement. During the 1920s and 1930s, intellectuals and artists en bloc joined the PNF (Partito Nazionale Fascista), and the masses, too, were swept up by the highly effective propaganda of the Fascist state. It was not merely the philosophy of an elite, as Futurism had been, but a mass movement embodied in lo Stile Fascista. The state had near-complete control of all significant aspects of Italian economic, political, and social

[45] Italians who migrated before Fascism, for instance, have not developed a similar architectural style. The icons of the older immigrants to the United States seem rooted in their own peasant cultures.

life.[46] It dictated policy from education to the style of literary criticism,[47] to music and film[48] and, last but not least, architecture. "Totalitarian" was Mussolini's word: "In un regime totalitario, come deve essere necessariamente un regime sorto dalla rivoluzione trionfante, la stampa è un elemento di questo regime, una forza al servizio di questo regime."[49] The state made full use of the mass media for propagandistic purposes and, indeed, broadcast the Fascist message to even the humblest folk through radio, cinema, newspapers, and public addresses. The state even sponsored the creation of the radio Balilla, an economical radio which would make its message even more accessible to the masses (see Cannistraro 1982] under "radio").

But the "years of consent" were over by the early 1940s, as disillusionment decisively set in. Even in the declining thirties, many had renounced Fascism. Few were more disenchanted than the ex-soldiers and future immigrants who emerged from their war experience poorer and more desperate than they had entered it and who thus, in the traumatic aftermath of World War II, quit Italy en masse.

Oral History of Fascism

As oral historians know, there are often wide gaps between ministerial and grassroots stories of war, between the "official" assessments of combat, on the one hand, and the recollections "from below"of soldiers who fought in the trenches, the sfollati who took to the hills, or those who trembled in occupied towns.

Mussolini was particularly astute in his attention to the masses and became a leader of vast influence. His simplified, emphatic, and rhetorical style, his imposing

[46] "Il nostro modo di mangiare, di vestire, di lavorare e di dormire, tanto il complesso delle nostre abitudini quotidiane, deve essere riformato" ("Our way of eating, dressing, working and sleeping, so much must our daily customs be reformed") (Jan. 1932). Hence the emphasis on the passo romano, a style of walking: "La Rivoluzione deve incidere profondamente sul 'Costume.' A tale riguardo la innovazione del 'passo romano' è di una importanza eccezionale. Anche l'abolizione del 'lei' servile e straniero e detestato dai grandi italiani, da Leopardi a Cavour, è del massimo rilievo" ("The Revolution must make a pro found mark on our 'Way of Life.' In this regard the innovation of the 'Roman step' is of exceptional importance. So too the abolition of the servile and foreign 'lei' form, detested by great Italians from Leopardi to Cavour, is of the maximum importance") (Mussolini, quoted in Biancini 1940). All subsequent citations followed by a date come from Mussolini's statements as cited in Biancini 1940.

[47] Apart from manipulative university appointments, the regime sent weekly veline to boycott unapproved authors; e.g., "Non occuparsi del libro di Luigi Russo, La critica letteraria contemporanea . . . " ("Do not pay any attention to Luigi Russo's book, La critica letteraria contemporanea. . . ")

[48] The Ministry of Popular Culture, in imitation of Goebbels's totalitarian censor machine, attempted to control all cultural life in Italy and progressed from monitoring the press, radio, films, tourism, music, theater, and literature to repressing intellectuals, artists, and creative people in general. Its final phase of expansion was intended to include all social classes in Italy in the national experience and became an instrument of propaganda. It was never as effective as its German counterpart, however (see Cannistraro 1982] under "Ministry of Popular Culture"; on the Fascist use of the mass media, see Cannistraro 1975.)

[49] " In a totantarlan regime, as a regime emerging from a triumphant revolution must be, the press is an element of this regime, a force in the service of this regime."

and charismatic manner, and his macho obsession with his own image made the Duce's presence strongly felt. His style possessed several characteristics which might be cited as specifically appealing to the masses; for instance, his addresses were full of pithy and easily remembered slogans, which were both repeated orally and blazoned in prominent letters on buildings all over the countryside. (Many of these can still be seen; one of the best known is "Meglio un giorno da leone che cento da pecora.")[50] He constantly presented himself as a man of action rather than a man of words, displaying his vigour through direct participation in physical activity: as a contadino plowing the earth or maneuvering a tractor, breaking ground for a new Fascist-sponsored building project, and so forth (see the photos in Mariani 1982: 247-57). In the later antiurban and new ruralism campaign, even more attention was focused, through Fascist programs and rhetoric, on the rural Italian. This brought even the most remote Italian in contact with Fascist ideas: "Rurali: Voi non siete una categoria di seconda classe nella vita della Nazione" (October 26, 1935).[51] Enough has been written and enough images of the Duce come to mind generally to suggest what his figure represented to humble Italians.

Given the political realities of the past four decades, it ought not be embarrassing to note that Mussolini still holdsif the truth be knowngreat fascination for common Italians, and this phenomenon ought, if it were not such an emotional and potentially explosive issue, to receive further attention.[52] Based on my limited experience in hearing war stories and anecdotal material about Mussolini, it would appear that, in a classic "bandit paradigm," Mussolini is perceived as a person who had good impulses and cared for the poor but who was ultimately betrayed by a close "member of the gang" (see Eric Hobsbawm, Primitive Rebels). Mussolini's greatest errors, in other words, were his ill-conceived alliance with the madman, Hitler; his stupid embrace of Germanic racism; and the idiotic, delusive warwar can never be condoned.

Nonetheless, Mussolini is still perceived as the vigorous leader of what, for the first time, became an efficient Italian social order. The most common cliché, of course, is

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[50] "Better a day as a lion than a hundred as a sheep."

[51] "Rural folk: you are not second-class citizens in the life of the Nation." "Rurali: vi esorto a rimanere fedeli alla terra perehé essa non tradisce mai" ("Rural folk: I beseech you to remain faithful to the land because it will never betray you") (Dec. 20, 1938). By then the Duce was ready to appeal to "le virtù intrinseche della razza [italica]" ("the intrinsic virtues of the [Italic] race") (Jan. 22, 1939), as he perceived them embodied in "i rurali = masse profondamente fedeli al Fascismo" ("rural folk = masses deeply faithful to Fascism") (Sept. 10] 1938). By the midtwenties, the Duce deftly avoided the ordinary word contadini ("peasants") in favour of other designations: lavoratori della terra ("workers of the soil"); genre dei campi ("people of the fields"); after all, "I fascisti rurali Sono I più solidi, i militi rurali sono i più disciplinati" ("Rural Fascists are the most solid, rural soldiers are the most disciplined") (Apr. 9, 1924). It is known, however, that Mussolini had no sympathy for the rural way of life, nor for the rural Italian, and detested dialect. Further, see Cannistraro 1982] under Strapaese and Stracittà on the two opposing movements of urbanism vs. ruralism.

[52] E.g., Passerini 1986, a study of the role of humour and the recollection of anecdotes in the oral memory of Fascism.

that he made the trains run on time.[53] For those who directly witnessed from close range the bonifica (land reclamation) program in the malaria-infested Agro-Pontino[54] and the new buildings going up everywhere, or the slow, but sure, eradication of the Mafia in the deep South,[55] Mussolini could not fail to impress. Indeed, the creation of new towns (at breakneck speed, one might add) was of enormous propaganda value for Fascism (Ghirardo 1989: 26). Those who were called to live there, to populate the new towns at home and in the African colonies (largely the destitute from the Veneto or from the Friuli and Romagna i bassaroli, unkindly baptized i meridionali del nord, "the southerners of the North"), however, have anotherstill largely untoldstory to tell.[56] Still another saga might be related by the local peasants, my grandparents among them, whose lands were confiscated under eminent domain to make way for the reclamation project; these tales, too, still await the telling.

What the common Italian generally remained innocent of was any understanding of the ideological and political ramifications of Fascist government. Yet, since the peasantry has never been a partner in political dialogue, except for fleeting moments in its history (for example, the early socialist leghe contadine), it would be unrealistic to look to Italian peasants for a negative view of Fascism, and hastier still to judge them for accommodating another wave of Bourbons. They were probably unaware of the truly elitist and paternalistic nature of Fascism beneath its veneer of concern for rurali and the staged "folk-loristic" events (in cleaned-up, merry-olde-Italy versions, of course), which it encouraged.

Fascism was hierarchic.[57] The classes were carefully segregated, and rural Italians were kept far from the cities and even the new rural towns such as Sabaudia. In official city planning of such towns, whether industrial or agricultural, contadino and factory workers were kept separate from officials or management (the "professional" classes).[58] The lower classes were literally kept in their place: "Both the ONC [Opera

[53] But note the positive peasant recollections already gathered by Edward Banfield and his wife in Basilicata (The Moral Basis of a Backward Society 1958: 96-98).

[54] "Da venti secoli, qui dominava la morte; e soltanto la Rivoluzione delle Camice Nere vi ha portato la vita e per sempre" ("For twenty centuries, death reigned here; and only the Revolution of the Black Shirts has brought you life and forever") (speech delivered in Littoria [Latina], Dec. 18, 1933).

[55] "Detesto i parassiti di tutte le specie" ("I detest parasites of all stripes") (Jan. 28] 1923). And, in Palermo in 1937: "Sicilia e Fascismo costituiscono una perfetta identità" ("Sicily and Fascism constitute a perfect match"); "Sicilia e Camicie Nere sono una cosa sola" ("Sicily and Fascism are one and the same"); "La Si-cilia è Fascista fino al midollo" ("Sicily is Fascist to the marrow"). In short, Black Shirts were apparently tougher than pin-striped suits: official gangster-ism supplanted local thugery.

[56] On some instances of the internal migration of the Veneti, see Franzina and Parisella 1986; Giannelli and Nesi 1986; Morbiato 1986; and Mura 1986.

[57] "Chi dice gerarchia dice scale di valori umani" ("He who says hierarchy says scale of human values"); "Lo stato è, alle sue origini, un sistema di gerarchie" ("The state is, in its origins, a system of hierarchies"); and "Nella silenziosa co-ordinazione di tutte le forze, sotto gli ordini di uno solo, è il segreto perenne di ogni vittoria" ("In the silent coordination of all forces, under the orders of one [man] only, is the perennial secret of every victory").

[58] On hierarchy as a guiding principle of Fascist architecture, see Ghirardo 1980: 116-17.

Nazionale per i Combattenti] and the Commission for Migration were responsible for putting severe constraints on the free movement of colonists and of day laborers in the reclamation program. In addition to requiring passes for movement within the Agro, the ONC forbade laborers to enter farm houses" (Ghirardo 1989: 55). Furthermore, the Fascists had little interest in encouraging various forms of folk culture. The new towns, for instance, had nothing resembling an osteria, a vital Italian folk institution. Ghirardo stresses that

The omission of a place for casual group gatherings could only be deliberate. In fact, it is clear that in all respects these were closed communities: geometrically closed in the urban layout, and dosed to visitors as well as new inhabitants. The layout of the cities with respect to the farmholdings kept the farmers at a safe remove from one another and from the white-collar workers in town. (1989: 78)

Fascism and Romanità: The Myth of Rome

The myth of Rome was central to Fascism: "Roma non è una città, mauna istituzione politica, una categoria morale" (March 18, 1934; and see Cannistraro 1982 under romanità).[59] The use of Rome as symbol of a glorious Italic past was a powerful force in fueling Italian nationalism and later in promoting Fascist expansionism in a general European climate which was both nationalistic and imperialistic. The myth of Rome was supposed to function as the myth of the Aryan races did for Nazism. Fascism and the "New Italy" saw themselves as merely breaking with their recent past[60] and continuing instead the greatness of ancient Rome.[61] As the official press stated: "Roma è il nostro punto di partenza e di riferimento; è il nostro simbolo o, sesi vuole, il nostro mito. Noi sogniamo l'Italia romana, cioè grande e forte, disciplinata e imperiale" (Rumi 1974: 28).[62]

The myth of Rome penetrated all aspects of Fascist Italy. and may be seen as the one unifying feature in a political ideology which was anything but monolithic (unlike Nazism). Debate focused not on whether Rome was a worthy model for Fascist Italy but on how one was more or less "Roman," more or less "Fascist," by the stance taken on any issue, from architectural style to foreign policy to one's very gait.

The official rhetoric of Fascism became increasingly larded with references to Rome. Mussolini was known as the DUX (or Duce), the icon of the Roman fasci was revived as the official emblem of the party and then the state, the titles of officials in the Fascist

[59] "Rome is not a city but a political institution, a moral category."

[60] "Quei terribili secoli di decadenza politica, militare, morale, che vanno dal 1600] al sorgere di Napoleone" ("Those deplorable centuries of political, military, moral decadence, that go from 1600] to the rise of Napoleon") (Oct. 27, 1937).

[61] I imagine the appeal to ancient Rome could also circumvent vexing regional-ism, recalling instead an age of romanità (read italianità), which united the entire Italian peninsula (in addition to the Mediterranean and points beyond) in a kind of Pan-Italianism.

[62] "Rome is our point of departure and point of reference; it is our symbol or, if you will, our myth. We dream of a Roman Italy that is large and strong, disci- plined and imperialistic."

hierarchy were Roman, and so their salute and the names of their corps (legions and lictors, for example; see Cannistraro 1982] under romanità and

> Fascio littorio). Indeed, in Fascism's imperialistic phases, Italy, like Rome, was seen as a civilizing force returning to African soil to carry forward the imperial work of Latin culture. Mussolini was the new Italian emperor, and the African colonies constituted the Italian Empire: "In effetti, il mito di 'Roma' aiuta il fascismo nella sua non facile ricerca d'identità, e contrassegna immediatamente, e in un certo modo giustifica, la sua vocazione istintiva all'espansione e alia con-quista" (Rumi 1974: 28).[63]

But Italian imperialism was justified as a more enlightened brand in a Europe where imperialism had long reigned and needed no apology per se: "C'è imperialismo e imperialismo. Il prussiano e il ro-mano. L'imperialismo della forza e quello dell'intelligenza. Il nostro imperialismo è romano, latino, mediterraneo. Si esprime attraverso un bisogno di tutti gli individui e di tutti i popoli. Il popolo italiano deve essere necessariamente espansionista" (Rumi 1974: 29).[64] The reasoning is gross but tenacious and apparently convincing. Expan-sionism is presented as a compelling need for all Italians. The desire for power is rendered pan-Italian, for the common Italian, who sees emigration to the colonies as a solution to poverty and unemployment, no less than the industrialist, who covets new sources of raw material and markets abroad. Expansionism would also boost Italy's sense of pride and destiny and place it firmly among the great powers of the world.

Yet Fascism could capitalize on the myth of Rome only because it was a motif with a long history in Italy; the Fascists did not create the myth. Politicians all through Italian history had used it, made the analogies, forged a sense of destiny through an alliance with the past. And in the minds of the common folk, too, Rome was seen as

[63] "In effect, the myth of 'Rome' helps Fascism in its not easy search for an identity, and immediately marks, and, in a certain sense, justifies its instinctive will to expansionism and conquest."

[64] "There is imperialism and imperialism. The Prussian [variety] and the Roman. Imperialism based on force and that based on intelligence. Our imperialism is Roman, Latin, Mediterranean. It expresses itself in the need of all individuals and all peoples. The Italian people must necessarily be expansionistic." "Nella dottrina del Fascismo, l'impero non è soltanto una espressione territoriale e mercantile, ma spirituale e morale" ("In the doctrine of Fascism, the empire is not merely a territorial and mercantile expression, but spiritual and moral as well") (Enciclopedia Treccani, under "Fascismo" [article contributed by Mussolini himself]). A few of Mussolini's thoughts on Italianimperialism follow: "Gli obiettivi storici dell'Italia hanno due nomi: Asia ed Africa. Sud ed Oriente sono i punti eardinali the devono suscitare l'interesse e la volontà degli Italiani. Questi nostri obiettivi hanno la loro giustificazione nella geografia e nella storia" ("The historic objectives of Italy have two names: Asia and Africa. South and East are our cardinal points which must stir the interest and the will of Italians. Our objectives find their justification in geography and in history") (Mar. 18, 1934). "Noi abbiamo fame di terre perchè siamo prolifici e intendiarno restare prolifici" ("We are land hungry because we are prolific and we intend to remain prolific") (Apr. 15, 1926). So, in fact, Mussolini's machismo led to taxes on celibates as well as rewards for procreativity (prizes to the hundred families, etc.)

the center of the world. It was the home of the Pope and the goal of many pilgrimages. Small matter that the myth of Rome as propagated by the Fascists was the secular Rome, relegating Rome as the capital of the Catholic world to a decidedly second place, just as few would recall that the Colosseum was the site of Christian martyrdoms.

This semisecularized symbol was and still is powerful[65] to central and southern Italians particularly.[66] Rome is regarded as the apex of worldliness and sophistication and the source of all power. It is to Rome that southern Italy has looked for economic and social improvement.[67] Rome is the hinge that keeps the North and the South of Italy together for better or worse. The axis of Milano/Rome could not more vibrantly symbolize this dichotomy and the two Italies: the industrial and progressive North married to the bureaucratic and backward South.

"Fascist" Architecture

Historians concur that Fascism "is not a generic concept but a phenomenon that must be studied separately in each country and one that lacks a single and central unifying significance," and further, "historians have established that Italian Fascism was not based on a coherent, monolithic system of ideas. Fraught with inconsistencies, its short-run political success derived from efforts to appeal simultaneously to diverse aspirations and social groups" (Ghirardo 1980: 112). So too, in the restricted area of architecture, there were competing "Fascist" styles. The architecture of the rationalists was modernistic and cosmopolitan, linking it to the European avant-garde, while the traditionalists clove more closely to the past and to Roman and Italian traditions. While traditionalists adhered to specific forms of classical architecture (such as the arch and column, and the "golden number"), rationalists insisted on a renewed spirit of classical simplicity and unadorned surfaces, leaving greater freedom to innovate.[68]

Yet the divisions were not as clear as one might imagine, and both sides believed they were the true inheritors of romanità. The traditionalists criticized the rationalists for being only too ready to embrace the modern "Teutonic," "Bolshevik" trends, forsaking a

[65] I can remember going to Italian films in Toronto as a child. The films about Rome, centering around a powerful and muscular Roman slave (Maciste), now strike me as being as popular with my father's generation as westerns were to his American counterparts. Based on my Terracinese background, I think that although Terracina is halfway between Rome and Naples, it is to Rome that one aspires, and the Romans, with their confident "me ne frego" ("I don't give a damn") attitude and sense of superiority that Terracinesi secretly admire.

[66] And the bulk of post-World War II immigrants came to Toronto largely from central and southern Italy (see Zucchi 1988] for these regional statistics).

[67] Consequently, Rome also stands as a source of some resentment on the part of the more affluent North, which has lately come to see itself as pouring millions into a black hole (the South), fueling the fires of disgruntled northern separatist movements.

[68] Architects such as Pagano saw modernity as valid since it sprang from the same spirit that animated the Renaissance and classical Rome (clarity of geometrical forms, various types of illumination, simple reiterative decorative schemes as expressions of modernity).

style specifically and uniquely Italian, while the rationalists accused the traditionalists of a slavish and mediocre repetition of past forms which were devoid of meaning for the modern world. In keeping with Fascist rhetoric, however, the architecture of this period seems to be both modernist and traditional, and herein lies its ingenious appeal to both future and past: "Italian Fascists praised a building or a program for its modernity and in the next breath lauded it for its solid roots in Italian tradition. More often than not, the Italian past was used to validate a program or action, from war to the Concordat" (Ghirardo 1980: 114).

> Without getting involved with the long and complex history of architecture during this period, with its various factions and phases,[69] it would be useful to highlight certain features which directly relate to our topic: the concept of romanità and mediterraneità, and how Fascist architecture consciously used traditionalism. If Fascism encouraged modernistic architecture in its inceptive phase and focused on industrial and urban design, it became, in its later phase, more concerned (for various domestic and foreign political reasons) with a return to ruralism and traditional design and with the creation of new towns[70] in rural settings (among these the land reclamation projects and the African colonies).
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> Mussolini the Builder

Why was architecture so important to the Fascist regime and an obsession with Mussolini himself? As the architectural historian De Seta points out, architecture is extremely important to dictatorial regimes: "l'architettura sollecita in modo diretto la fantasia megalomane di chi vuol passare alia storia . . . sia Mussolini, sia Hitler con maggiore de-terminazione, si espressero su tale argomento con una perseveranza ossessiva" (De Seta 1976: 8).[71]

Mussolini saw himself as the incarnation of the new Roman emperor and, like the first emperor, destined to expand Italy's presence in the world. Like the Roman emperors of the past, Mussolini was a builder of monuments, a founder of new towns, a colonizer. In order to focus on this analogy with the past, the Fascist regime poured millions of lire into archaeological projects, founded the Institute for Roman Studies, began the building of the University of Rome and of the Esposizione Universale di Romathe center of the "third Rome" erected triumphal arches, had the title "DUX"

[69] For an overview of architecture in Fascist Italy, see Danesi and Patetta 1976; Ciucci 1982; and De Seta 1976.

[70] On the new towns, see Millon 1978; Ghirardo 1989; and for a current bibliography, page 200, note 28] of the latter. On the Agro-Pontino and its history, see the extensive bibliography in Mariani 1982: 325-34. On the new towns of Italian East Africa, see Ghirardo 1989: 88-106.

[71] "Architecture prompts in a direct fashion the megalomaniacal imagination of he who wishes to be remembered in history . . . both Mussolini, and Hitler with greater determination, expressed themselves on this topic with obsessive perseverance."

(and Mussolini's image, too) engraved on public buildings, and conceived a large-scale exhibition of romanità to draw the masses' attention to the tradition of which they were heirs. Mussolini had entire quarters of Rome (from the historically "useless" periods) wiped away in order to forge large thoroughfares and "isolate" important Roman monuments such as the Augustan mausoleum.[72] He had a Foro Mussolini built, and

> among the Roman ruins had huge marble maps erected, tracing the Roman Empire of yesterday and the Empire of the present. Indeed, for Mussolini, architecture was the most important of all the arts since it contained in itself all the others.
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> Romanità in Architecture

"La romanità e la monumentalith divennero il risvolto formale del concetto storico-filosofico dell'eternità del regime."[73] The catchwords of architectural discourse were romanità, classicità, and for a limited period (from 193034, coinciding with the issue of European unity), mediterraneità (see Ghirado 1980: 115; Danesi 1976). These were the common points of reference for architects on all sides, since they could easily be connected to the ideological cornerstones of Fascist rhetoric.

Indigenous Mediterranean architecture united the Latin world, these proponents insisted. Modern architects such as Le Corbusier, Gropius, and Mies van der Rohe had merely returned to this verity in its stark geometricity. Mediterraneità, apparently, had to do more with the sun and the sea, white walls, and "spontaneous" (that is, vernacular) architecture and less with the monumental architecture of classical Rome. Most of the polemics on behalf of mediterraneità focused on the spirit and not the precise form, however.

The concept of romanità, on the other hand, had a tenacity and specific reference point in monumental Rome, which gave it greater weight. A polemic crystallized around Marcello Piacentini's plans for the University of Rome, engaging the architect with a Roman journalist and art critic, Ugo Ojetti, in a harsh debate focused specifically on the use of columns and arches. Piacentini's new plans included neither arches nor columns, much to Ojetti's chagrin. The exchange was passionate, aggressive and protracted in print.[74]

Ojetti put forth an empassioned apology for the arch and column:

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[72] See Kostof 1978] on the planning of the piazza around the mausoleum of the Emperor Augustan and its political and propagandistic motives. Compare Bergarno and Brescia for analogous demolitions and erectionsboth also overseen by the same favourite of the regime, Marcello Piacentini, professor of urban planning at Rome, to whom we shall return shortly.

[73] "Romanness and monumentality become the formal reflection of the historical-philosophical concept of the regime's immortality."

[74] On this polemic between Piacentini and Ojetti, see U. Ojetti, "Lettera a Marcello Piacentini sulle colonne e gli archi," Pegaso; M. Piacentini, "Risposta di Marcello Piacentini a Ugo Ojetti," La Tribuna; M. Bontempelli, "Archi e colonne: lettera urgente a Ugo Ojetti, La Gazzetta del Popolo. All three articles were republished in Casabella, February 1933. The last word was Ojetti's: U. Ojetti, "Ancora

> Per più di venti secoli arco, volta e colonna sono stati i segni di Roma. Erano l'arco e la volta il simbolo della Roma imperiale non solo alia vista, ma nella loro struttura e sostanza, nel modo con cui non troncavano ma abbracciavano lo spazio; nel modo con cui si flettevano a guida d'un altro cielo, e più sicuro, a pro-teggere l'uomo; nel modo con cui dominavano e regolavano le spinte opposte. Archi di trionfo, archi di ponti, archi d'acquedotti, archi di mercato, di templi, d'arene, di termi, di palazzi L'equilibrata potenza e la giustizia romana non potevano avere un simbolo più chiaro, più facilmente leggibile. E il mondo ha accettato archi e volte come ha accettato le norme del diritto romano. Così la colonna. . .. (Patetta 1972:316-17)[75]

He accuses Piacentini of wanting at all costs to appear modern at the risk of being "neither Roman nor Italian." While the Fascist rhetorical intent is evident in the not-so-veiled reference to imperialism, nonetheless Ojetti captures the essence of the architectural form and helps interpret its meaning.

Piacentini, among the points in his counterattack (on which I will not dwell), takes into account the genesis of the arch and its reputed inappropriateness because of modern technical and economic reasons and states boldly

Avresti preferito. . . una vuota ed enfatica scenografia, [di] una triste e povera parodia delle grandiose composizioni romane, come hanno fatto mille volte i francesi nei progetti dell' École des beaux arts, e come hanno costruito i loro gymnasia gli Americani del Nord . . . ? Passeranno . . . le imponderate esager-azioni delle correnti attuali, passeranno le mode fugaci, le vane idolatrie per certe forme contrarie al nostro clima, che è quello che è e che non muta mai, contrarie ai nostri fondamentali sentimenti. Ma tutto quanto non serve più ai nostri mutati costumi e bisogni, e non dice più nulla

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le colonne e gli archi (seconda lettera a M. Piacentini)," Pegaso, March 1933. The three articles of the Ojetti/Piacentini polemic also appear in Patetta 1972: 315-26.

For some photographic documentation of the "Neo-Roman" uses of arches in Fascist architecture see (1) Palazzo della Civiltà del Lavoro (at Rome, 1939, by architects Guerrini, La Padula, Romano) in De Seta 1983: 377] (plate 198); (2) the main square in Aprilia, a new town in the Agro Pontino (by architects Petrucci and Tufaroli, 1936), in Millon 1978: 338] (plate 14); (3) the new arcade, in Libya, ca. 1935, in Ghirardo 1989: 104] (plate 2.[41); and (4) the triumphal arch for Marshal Rodolfo Graziani, commander of the Ethiopian campaign, ca. 1937] (with a prominent "Dude" repeated over the arch), in Ghirardo 1989: 106] (plate 2.[43).

[75] "For more than twenty centuries, the arch, the vault, and the column have been the marks of Rome. The arch and the vault were the symbol of Imperial Rome not only visually, but in their structure and substance; in the way they did not break but embraced space; in the way they bent toward another sky, more sure in protecting man; in the way they dominated and balanced opposing thrusts. Triumphal arches, arches of bridges, of aqueducts, of marketplaces, of temples, of arenas, of spas, of palaces. The Roman sense of balanced power and justice could not have had a symbol more clear, more easily decipherable. And the world accepted the arches and the vaults just as it accepted Roman law. And so with the column. . .."

alia nostra anima, tutto quanto puro ricordo storico, cadrà. Anzi, è caduto, e per sempre. (Patetta 1972:325-26)[76]

From our limited vantage point of Toronto, we would have to say that history has proved Piacentini wrong.

The Arch as a Focus of National Identity

That heated debate could focus on architectural forms such as the arch and column in itself points to their inherent power of cultural representation. In hindsight it does not appear coincidental that my attention should have focused on the arch and the archvilla. That ethnography and nationalistic ideology should have come together in this study was surprising even to me. Yet two features of the research provided the important link: the fact that in the minds of many Toronto Italians ancient Rome is still present, and conversely, that a major architectural polemic in Fascist architecture should have been grounded in the arch (and column) as primal symbols of romanità.

Ojetti therefore seems vindicated: the arch and column remain the symbols of ancient Rome, of Italy, and they continue to speak to the Italian psyche. The arch persists as an important archetype.[77] Ironically, it was not in Italy nor still less in the African ex-colonies where the tradition resurfaced but in a New World colonywhere the rurali, after twenty years, were freed from the Italian neo-modernist establishment and could try their hands at monumentality. Thus in the sixties they gradually picked their way, as bricklayers, down memory lane, wherein converged an ancient, a classical, and a vernacular tradition. What they knew as peasants and what they had learned as conscripts in the neo-Roman Empire fused into a simple, single architectural icon: the arch. In the semiconscious search for appropriate representative symbols of renewed ethnic vigour, the arch spanned their migration from the Old to the New World.

The archvilla, although a flash in the pan on the crossing toward greater assimilation, captures a crucial moment in the Italian Canadian transition. This study is meant to witness and document this importantif fleetingethnic "renaissance": the pride, the nostalgia, and even the courage that a statement in brick reflects. Further, the arch-

[76] "Would you have preferred . . . an empty and emphatic scenography, [of] a shabby and poor parody of Roman grandiosity, as the French in their projects of the Ecole des Beaux Arts have done a thousand times, and as the North Americans have constructed with their gymnasia . . .? They will pass . . . the thoughtless exaggerations of current trends, and so will pass the fleeting fads, the empty idolatries for certain forms contrary to our climate, which remains what it is and will never change, contrary to our fundamental feelings. But all this no longer serves our changed habits and needs, and no longer speaks anything to our soul; all that is pure historic memory will fall, indeed has already fallen, and for all time."

[77] For instance, see the cover of the recently published Italian Americans Celebrate Life, The Arts and Popular Culture, edited by Paola Sensi Isolani and Anthony Julian Tamburri. Here again the arch and columns are chosen as an icon readily associated with Italian and Italian American culture, and with popular culture at that.

villa, in every sense an "invented tradition" (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), allows us to examine the anatomy of a tradition through its full life cycle.

The backlash is already in motion. Forward-looking local Piacen-tinis are busybut now volgarità replaces romanità as the axis of debate.[78] The second generation, accusing their parents of vulgarity, are embarrassed, intimidated, and will have nothing to do with the self-made style. In fact, there are signs that the arches are being pulled down, hidden, removed. One compromise solution is a blending with the arches and columns of postmodernism, thereby giving the appearance of both tradition and modernity simultaneously.[79] Thus the epigones of Michael Graves and Charles Moore offer a chic way to redeem bad taste.

][Tony's: this Italian restaurant (Yonge Street, north of Finch) has undergone "arching," but in a postmodem vein.]]

][Home displaying more recent trends:
note the grandiose columns, triple garage, and brick-cobbled driveway.]]

][Recent trends: note columns and balustraded balcony.]]

Still and all, it appears that where the arch is waning, the column is

> gaining, as it begins to replace the arch as the symbol of greater prestige and sobriety for the next generation. And so the cycle repeats itself.[80]

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[78] Serious architects, of course, divorce themselves from this style and generally label it a disaster of ugly "massing."

[79] One may further argue that archvilla builders are as much involved in a post-modern endeavor as the builders of Tony's Restaurant, since the façade's reference, whatever its sources, is to the same postmodern aesthetic, regardless of whether the builder's intention was deliberate or not (see Venturi, Brown, and Izenour 1982).

[80] As this essay goes to press, the following article has been brought to my attention: Ann Cameron, "The Contemporary Italian House in Toronto," Italian Canadiana 4] (1988): 84-92. I regret not being able to incorporate its ideas into the present paper.

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3. Playing with Food: The Negotiation of Identity in the Ethnic Display Event by Italian Americans in Clinton, Indiana

Sabina Magliocco

The tourist visiting Clinton, Indiana, on Labor Day weekend, the period of the Little Italy Festival, is likely to be assailed by the "taste of ethnographic things" (Stoller 1989) in the form of a wide range of foodstuffs. He or she can visit the Wine Garden and Winery and sample a glass of homemade wine; buy breadsticks and salami at the Mercato; see various kinds of pasta machines and espresso coffeemakers on display at the Piccola Casa; participate in a spaghetti- or pizza-eating contest, or perhaps a grape-stomping demonstration; witness the crowning of the Grape Queen; and buy all manner of Italian and non-Italian foods from the concession stands along Water Street. Food is indeed the primary focus of this festival, which can be more properly called an ethnic display event (Keyes-Ivey 1977), a carefully planned performance intended to draw tourists to this small and otherwise ordinary midwestern town.

That food is the focus of such an event should be of no surprise to anyone. Food is such an immediate part of daily life that its communicative powers are often taken for granted, though they have been noted by a number of scholars (Bahloul 1983; Douglas 1971; Kalcik 1984; Lévi-Strauss 1969; Stoller 1989). Foodways are also one of the most important symbols through which ethnic groups in America have maintained their individual identities and communicated them to the world around them (Kalcik 1984: 44; Camp 1989; Humphrey and Humphrey 1988). Food is in fact the most common form of symbolic ethnicity (Gans 1979) present in ethnic display events and multiethnic festivals, which Dorson has described as the "public" face of American ethnic folklore (Dorson 1981: 110). It is often a powerful symbol in private or "esoteric" ethnic events as well: baptisms, weddings, funerals, holidays, and family reunions (Dorson 1981: 110). The reasons for this are varied; one is that, as Klymasz (1973: 133) points out, the loss of the ethnic language or dialect often prevents the preservation of verbal folklore forms. But food, with its sensual qualities, is also a powerful reminder of the past and an ideal vehicle for communication (Stoller 1989: 34). In the American ethnic panorama, it is often the most pronounced "text" of ethnicity.

Following the lead of Jones's, Giuliano's, and Krell's important volume, Foodways and Eating Habits: Directions for Research (1981), numerous folklorists have examined food for its symbolic valence and communicative powers (Camp 1989; Brown and Mussel 1984; Humphrey and Humphrey 1988). In this paper, I will build on this scholarship by examining food symbolically, reading, as it were, the text in the form of food present in an Italian-theme festival in a multiethnic community. I will argue that various foods are chosen by the community to display different aspects of Italian American identity to varied audiences. The choice of certain foods over others for overt display suggests important aspects of community identity and the dynamics of ethnic representation. I will examine four different categories of food present at the Little Italy Festival: esoteric foods, present at the private level in each Italian American home; display foods, typically associated with Italians and presented for public sale and consumption; rechristened foods, basically American items, such as soda pop and ham sandwiches, Which are given Italian designations for this occasion; and pseudofoods, such as large wooden "cheeses," used mostly in games and contests associated with the festival. Each category of food plays a different role in the display of symbolic ethnicity and the maintenance of ethnic identity. Examination of these categories yields important insights into the interpretive process of tradition (Handler and Linnekin 1984: 273).

Background Factors of the Little Italy Festival

In order to discuss the performative roles of the various types of food outlined above, we must first investigate a number of background factors relating to the festival and its history, and the history of the town itself.

Immigration in Clinton

Clinton, Indiana (pop. 6,000), located on the Wabash River about twelve miles north of Terre Haute, originated as a mining town during the late 1800s. Local mine owners advertised abroad in handbills and posters for mine workers, attracting hordes of Europeans to the community. At first primarily Welsh miners arrived, but eventually many others followed; not only Italians, but Germans, Poles, Hungarians, Serbs, Ukrainians, and Yugoslavians were attracted by the promise of work.[1] By 1920, the coal mines were booming; "every house had a boarder"[2] as more and more immigrants came and later brought their families to Clinton. During the economic depression of

[1] Unlike Roseto, Pennsylvania, which was also settled by Welsh miners and later by Italians, Clinton did not experience a mass migration from a single Italian community. On the situation in Roseto, Pennsylvania, see Bianco's classic study in emigration, The Two Rosetos (1974).

[2] Joe Airola, from the videotape Clinton, Indiana, Family History, produced by Duane Busick and Madelaine Wilson, 1979.

the 1930s, the mine operators suffered financial reversals, and many coal miners were out of work. The collapse of the mining industry brought about a decline in Clinton's economy from which it has never fully recovered.

Most of Clinton's Italians came between 1895] and 1920.[3] Unlike other areas of the United States, which saw heavy immigration from the economically devastated areas of Italy's mezzogiorno, many Pied-montese, who had had experience working in the coal mines of that region, emigrated to Clinton. A number of others came from the subalpine regions of Trentino-Alto Adige and Friuli-Venezia-Giulia. These northern Italians then intermingled with the Sicilians and Calabresi who arrived later, mostly after 1900.

But the Italian immigrants faced a strange situation: although they all came from the same country,[4] they did not share a common culture or even a language with which to communicate. The various regions of Italy had developed widely different cultures and dialects due to a number of political, social and economic factors.[5] The immigrants, being largely from the peasant class, knew only their local dialects and had no knowledge of literary Italian, which is based on the Tuscan dialect, and in any case had only recently been designated as the official Italian language. Thus they could not communicate effectively with other Italians who spoke in a different dialect. Ernie Gillio told me that when his parents had emigrated to Clinton from near Turin, they could not even understand the Sicilians who became their neighbors.

The worlds of the northerner and the southerner were miles apart in other ways as well. Because of climactic factors, each area of Italy had developed distinctive foodways based on the ingredients cultivated and available locally. The Piedmontese diet was based on corn (maize) and dairy products. Polenta, a cornmeal mush seasoned with butter and cheese, was the characteristic food of this region. Wheat was scarce and expensive in the north before mass transportation; thus the Turinese developed the grissino or breadstick, a chopstick-thin (in its native form) sliver of flour, water, and salt. Rice, cultivated in the Po valley, was another staple of northern cuisine and turned up in foods such as risotto. Naturally the northern immigrants brought these and other characteristic foods from the north with them to Clinton.

Their southern neighbors, on the other hand, favored the olive-oil and tomato-based cuisine of the South, which has become identified with Italian cooking in this country. Their foods included the familiar specialties of tomato sauce and pizza (Williams 1938). Pasta was common to both areas, but northern forms included flat ribbons made with eggs and pastas filled with meat or cheese, while southern types were characteristically made without eggs and tended to be tubular in shape (Kittler and Sucher 1989: 122).

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[3] Ibid.

[4] But Italy had existed as a unified nation only since 1861. For a history of Italy, see Mack Smith 1969. Leeds (1974) fully discusses the impact of the unification on northern and southern Italy.

[5] For a discussion of the development of Italian regional cultures, see Mack Smith 1969] and Leeds 1974.

Even the religious background of the Italian immigrants differed: while all of the immigrants from Sicily and Calabria were Roman Catholic, a number of northerners were Valdesi, a Protestant sect from the Val d'Aosta. In Clinton, these Italians became members of the Presbyterian church. Under the pressure of Anglo-American discrimination, these regional differences eventually blurred somewhat. By the early 1920s, the area around Ninth Street in Clinton was known as "Little Italy." This ethnic enclave had many of the churchteristics of ethnic neighborhoods throughout the United States, including its own bakeries supplying Italian bread and griffin and markets selling imported Italian foods. Several immigrants opened restaurants in the neighborhood featuring Italian foods. The immigrants developed ways of communicating with each other despite dialect differences, and the first generation born in America spoke primarily English. But the distinctive regional differences which once divided Clinton Italians are still discernible in each family's culinary specialties. When visiting Italian American homes, one is just as likely to eat polenta alpine, Rio al latte, bang caudal, and zabbaione as lasagna, pizza, and cassata siciliana.

History of the Little Italy Festival

Like many ethnic festivals, the Little Italy Festival in Clinton developed for economic reasons after the Italian community on Ninth Street had begun to assimilate and disband. By the mid-1960s, the steady economic decline following the depression and the postwar flight to urban areas had dealt Clinton heavy blows. Most Italians had left the old neighborhood and lived in newly developed areas scattered around the town. Some first- and second-generation Italian Americans had migrated to cities in search of jobs; many had inter-married with other ethnic groups and led lives which were typical of small-town America. The town itself was in economic decline, and a series of newspaper articles in The Daily Clintonian suggested that it was in need of a new identity.

It was Bill Wake, then editor of Clinton's daily, who thought of a festival as a way of attracting tourists to Clinton, boosting the town's economy, and providing it with a new identity.[6] Wake patterned his idea after the nearby town of Rockville's Covered Bridge Festival, a highly publicized, nostalgia-oriented event which attracted many tourists from Indianapolis. Wake, who was not Italian American, nevertheless suggested the "Little Italy" theme be the festival's focus for two reasons: the town was known in the area for its Italian restaurants, and the Italian community had long organized a Columbus Day celebration which already attracted some attention. Many events could thus be transplanted from the Columbus Day festival to the Little Italy

[6] Interview with Martha Costello, Nov. 13, 1983. Along with Ernie Gillio, Martha Costello, a retired schoolteacher, was one of the first organizers of the Little Italy Festival. Though not Italian herself, she had lived in the Italian neighborhood in childhood and married an Italian. After she was widowed, working on the festival became a way to maintain contact with Italian friends and revitalize the memories of her husband.

Festival. Wake and other interested individuals formed the Little Italy Festival Town Board (LIFT); Wake was the first president and Italian American Ernie Gillio, then president of the Lion's Club, became the first vice-president. The board organized the first Little Italy Festival, which was held on Labor Day weekend of 1966.

At first, community reaction to the festival was mixed. Many older Italian immigrants, who had suffered discrimination and worse at the hands of Anglo-Americans, resented the festival. "[It was] like saying, you didn't treat us right when we first came, and now you're trying to capitalize on the fact that we're an Italian community and make some money off it," the daughter of one of the objectors explained. Moreover, as Raspa (1984: 190) has noted, the foodways of Italian Americans have consistently been the focus of stereotypes and blasons popu-laires in American folklore. Italian Americans are often taunted as "spaghetti benders," and certain foodways are perceived as exotic or even disgusting by non-Italians. It is not surprising, therefore, that there was resistance among Italian Americans, who were being asked to celebrate and market for mass consumption the very traits once held up by the dominant Anglo-American culture as examples of "backwardness."

Of no less import were the objections raised by members of other ethnic minorities in Clinton, who felt Italians were being singled out for special attention although they were not in fact the majority of the population. However, in spite of such objections, the festival persisted, and its benefits to the community in terms of financial assistance and community identity won over some of those with hostile attitudes. What made the festival a success was the strategy adopted by the early organizers, which allowed Italian Americans to conform in part to American stereotypes about them, while retaining control over some private aspects of their ethnic identity (see Klymasz 1970: 115). At the same time, the festival was structured to make Italian ethnicity accessible to everyone during its duration, much as St. Patrick's Day does nationally for Irish ethnicity: one has only to wear green to become temporarily Irish. The performance of foodways, through food-related festival attractions, activities, and events, is an integral part of this strategy.

Food-Related Events and Attractions

The display and performance of foodways take place in a number of contexts throughout the Little Italy Festival. Nearly all of these are open to the general public, making one aspect of Italian ethnicity readily accessible to persons of any background. The importance of food as a symbol in this festival is underlined in its first event, which takes place on the Friday preceding Labor Day: the Little Italy Festival Parade. Leading all the floats and cohorts of dignitaries is Joe Mandarino, pushing his fruit and vegetable cart. The cart, loaded with fresh produce, clearly stands for both the immigrants' past (many Italian immigrants, like Joe Mandarino, operated fruit and vegetable stands upon first coming to the United States) and their present: as Raspa

indicates, the reliance on fresh vegetables and fruits as ingredients in cooking is an important part of the identity of many Italian Americans (1984: 191). Also present in the parade are the newly elected Grape Queen and her court-grapes and their by-product, wine, being another important leitmotif of Italian identity throughout the festival.

Other food-related events during the festival include spaghetti- and pizza-eating contests (twice in three days), in which contestants from the town and general audience try to eat the largest amount of the designated food within a specified time; and grape-stomping contests (twice in three days), in which contestants step barefoot into large grape-filled vats and crush them in imitation of earlier winemaking techniques. Daily cooking demonstrations, featuring quickly made Italian dishes, are also held on the festival stage. A cheese-rolling contest, substituting large wooden rounds for the cheeses, tests contestants' ability to propel these "cheeses" the longest distance.

In addition to these events, the festival features a number of food-related attractions. Water Street is lined with concession stands selling various kinds of foods; these stands are put up by Clinton restauran-teurs, service organizations, and churches to raise money. The Wine Garden and Winery, built in imitation of a German American biergarrett in Indianapolis's Oktoberfest, demonstrate the process of wine-making and offer gustatory samples. In the area of Ninth Street, the Mercato is set up as a reproduction of the Italian market which once supplied the ethnic enclave with Italian foods; there one can buy breadsticks, pasta, and salami, as well as T-shirts and mugs proclaiming, "Kiss me, I'm Italian" and souvenirs of Clinton. Near the Mer-cato, the Piccola Casa (Little House) is arranged to depict a typical coal miner's house from the turn of the century. Patchwork quilts and McGuffy readers, nostalgia elements from an Anglo-American past, share space with pasta machines and espresso coffeemakers of various vintages, including a steam espresso maker very recently imported from Italy.

All of these diversions and events are structured to make Italian ethnicity (or a facsimile thereof) readily accessible to all festival participants and tourists. In flavor, however, they are typically American and scarcely resemble the kinds of activities which would take place at an Italian popular festival (Dundes and Falassi 1975; Falassi 1987; Silverman 1975).[7] The spaghetti- and pizza-eating contests, like the grape-stomping competition, seem to reflect the American preoccupation with competition (Stoeltje 1983: 242); the crowning of the Grape Queen emerges as a symbolic inversion of the democratic political system and an expression of an American fascination with royalty. More importantly, each of these events puts the Italian experience in anyone's reach: one does not, after all, have to be of Italian descent to eat fast or win a beauty contest. As Dorothy Gillio (who is Yugoslavian American) put it, "We all have to be Italian that weekend."[8]

[7] Most studies of Italian festivals have been conducted by regional ethnographers and are available only in Italian. Some of the most important works include Pitrè 1881; Cocchiara 1963, 1980; De Martino 1948; Toschi 1959; and Gallini 1971. See also the following collections of essays: Bianco and Del Ninno 1981] and Jesi 1977.

[8] Interview with Dorothy Gillio, Nov. 13, 1983.

In terms of actual food items, their performers, and their intended audiences, however, an interesting pattern appears, which may shed light on the dynamics of ethnic identity and ethnic display in this town. The nature of the text and its message become clear when one separates the food items into four categories and examines each one's makers, intended audience, and presentation context.

Esoteric Foods

These are prepared by group members for comembers and occur most often within the context of family meals and gatherings. While these foods are present at the festival, they are not usually apparent to tourists; they are usually found in private homes where the female head of the household is of Italian descent. Many dishes of a clearly regional origin continue to be popular at family get-togethers. These foods persist in a highly conservative form, showing clear links to the Italian tradition from which they came. The Fenoglios, for instance, reported that they often serve bagna cauda, a dip for vegetables made with butter, oil, garlic, and anchovies, on New Year's Eve. This dish is characteristic of the Piedmont region from which John Fenogho's mother emigrated. Other families also described favorite regional dishes, such as polenta, potato gnocchi (dumplings), and risi e bisi, a Venetian dish of rice and peas. While these dishes are not typically associated with Italians by Americans, they nevertheless remain important sensual links to tradition in many Clinton households. Naturally, many Italian American families also enjoy foods Americans commonly associate with Italians, such as lasagna and spaghetti. One young man said, "We always have to have lasagna on Thanksgiving. We have turkey and everything, but that lasagna's got to be on the table, too."[9]

In addition to private gatherings, esoteric foods also turn up in two other festival contexts: cooking demonstrations, and the Official Little Italy Festival Town Cookbook, published as a fund-raiser by a local service sorority, Kappa Kappa Kappa. Cooking demonstrations are held three times during the festival weekend on the open-air stage usually reserved for performances of rock bands, folk-dance groups, and singers. Three dishes can thus be prepared at each festival. The cook is usually a volunteer from the court of the Grape Queen-a young girl who enjoys cooking and has prepared the dish before, perhaps with family coaching. As the recipes change each year, there is no typical demonstration dish, but the recipes are culled from local Italian American women or the Official Little Italy Cookbook. The recipe I observed was for bagna cauda. Interestingly, two versions were made: the original one, with butter, oil, garlic, and anchovies, and a new one favored by younger Italian American cooks, which added tuna and cream. As far as I can tell, this variant is unique to Clinton and represents an innovative form of the type described by Klymasz (1973: 138-39).[10]

[9] Interview with John Fenoglio, Nov. 23, 1983.

[10] Alessandro Falassi has pointed out the similarity between this variation and the popular Italian tonnato, a tuna-based sauce. Tonnato, however, is normally served as a cold sauce for roast veal and not

The Cookbook, we are told in an introduction, was put together by Mrs. Diane C. Waugh, chairperson of Kappa Kappa Kappa, with the help of Miss Irma Pesavento, who collected the recipes from individual Italian cooks and their families. The booklet's audience, like that of the cooking demonstrations, is a mixture of Italian Americans and interested outsiders: after the first Little Italy Festival in 1966, there was an increasing demand for the codification of Italian recipes within the community itself, as well as a surge of interest on the part of outsiders. The book contains a preponderance of recipes with close analogues in regional Italian cooking,[11] as well as certain modifications-one recipe for zuppa inglese substitutes cherry-vanilla pudding mix for traditional egg custard (p. 66)-and a few recipes which can best be called "rechristened foods" (which I'll discuss later). The rich array of foods accurately reflects the regional origins of Clinton's Italian immigrants, with about 40 percent coming from the subalpine areas and the rest from Calabria and Sicily. The recipes range from well-known staples of Italian cuisine such as lasagne, pizza, and chicken cacciatore, to such regional specialties as chestnut soup, fried calf brains, roast squab, stewed rabbit, and sausage with chickpeas. A few, like fried potatoes or fruit salad, are found throughout the whole of Italy.

Esoteric foods are often most meaningful to the family members who make and partake of them. Their symbolic value lies in their sensual ties to immigrants' pasts, rather than their ability to reveal anything about the immigrants to outsiders. In preparing traditional foods for family reunions and special occasions, the Italian Americans of Clinton are essentially discoursing among themselves about the nature of their ethnicity. While there are non-Italians who express an interest in traditional food by buying the cookbook or watching the cooking demonstrations, it is fairly safe to say that these regional specialties do not carry the same emotional and affective meanings for them as they do for the immigrants and their families.

Display Foods

For non-Italians and Italians, food is a potent symbol of Italian identity during the festival. But to the average Clinton tourist, polenta, risotto, and stewed rabbit are meaningless as markers of Italian ethnicity. Because of the preponderance of immigrants from the southern part of Italy, the foods which have become most popular (and thus most closely identified with Italians) in America largely come from that area. These include pasta dishes with tomato sauce, pizza, and Italian sausage fried with peppers and onions, a dish also served at festivals in Italy. Espresso coffee and wine, found in both northern and southern Italy, are also associated with Italians. The

as a hot dip for vegetables. Also it is based on combining tuna with vinegar and oil and is not cooked, while the Clinton concoction requires cooking.

[11] My source for information on regional Italian cooking is Boni 1969. Boni, who has written numerous cookbooks, is regarded in Italy as the Fanny Farmer of Italian cooking.

wine-drinking habits of Italians must have made an especially strong impression on the beer- and whiskey-drinking midwestern population of Clinton.[12]

It is no accident, then, that these foods have been chosen to represent Italians to outsiders at the festival. They turn up in the eating contests, the grape stomping, the wine garden, and in the kinds of items on display at the Mercato and Piccola Casa: pasta in various shapes, pasta-making machines, and espresso coffeemakers. They also predominate in the food booths set up along Water Street, sponsored by Italian restaurants. Strollers can purchase pizza slices; sandwiches with sausage, meatballs, or Italian beef drowned in tomato sauce (the addition of which automatically spells "Italian" in the semiosis of American foodways); and Italian submarine sandwiches with salami and other cold cuts. These foods are readily identifiable as Italian by the average American. While they are not always consumed in Italian American households, they nevertheless bear some relationship to Italian food; they may be said to represent Klymasz's "transitional" layer of ethnic folklore (Klymasz 1973: 133) in that they combine some features of Italianness with many aspects of American fast food.

The performers of these foodways include both Italians and non-Italians; but in the case of Italians who sell them, it is no longer the individual, or the single family, making a statement about regional and ethnic roots, but rather the seller as a representative of Italian American culture communicating identity to non-Italians. That this type of food is mostly for display is borne out by the fact that few Italian Americans in Clinton subsist on it. In choosing to display food items which in fact do not reflect their regional subcultures, but rather the preconceived notions Americans have about Italian food, Clinton's Italians are conforming to American stereotypes and expectations as suggested by Klymasz (1970: 111). This strategy allows them to reserve certain other demonstrations of ethnicity-for instance, the colorful regional foodways which have often been the targets of American disgust-for the private sphere. Thus Clinton Italians can communicate a version of their ethnicity without violating the idea of Italianness present in the dominant Anglo-American culture (see Klymasz 1973: 139).

Rechristened Foods

Among the food concession stands along Water Street, one can find a number of ordinary American foods, such as soda, lemonade, and ham sandwiches, which have been given Italian (or Italian-sounding) names for the occasion. In 1983, for instance, the First United Methodist Church was selling pasticcetto di prosciutto, in reality a baked ham and cheese sandwich which bore little similarity to what a pasticcetto di

[12] Even as late as the 1960s, wine drinking was regarded as suspect in certain midwestern circles. When I was in grade school in Cincinnati, for instance, it came to the attention of my teachers that my parents permitted me to drink wine mixed with water with the evening meal, as well as coffee at breakfast. The school social worker immediately contacted and berated them for stunting my growth and turning me into a juvenile alcoholic.

prosciutto (cured raw ham in a pastry crust) would have been like in Italy, presuming this combination exists. Another stand bore hand-lettered signs proclaiming:

TAMARINDO [sic]	$.60
LEMONATI'O [sic]	$.60
GASSOSO [sic]	$.60
CORN DOGS	$1.OO

Closer inspection revealed that the stand sold orange juice, lemonade, and sodas. Clearly what was important was that these ordinary drinks should sound Italian, since there is little correspondence between their festival names and the Italian ones for these beverages.[13]

Further examples of rechristened foods may be found in the Cookbook. On page four there is a recipe for cedano ripiene [sic] (stuffed celery),[14] using celery, cream cheese, and pimento-filled olives-probably a rechristened American recipe, since neither cream cheese nor pimento-stuffed olives are found in Italy, and the celery is too small and narrow to stuff with anything. Interestingly, unlike other recipes, this one does not state an individual cook as its source. It is thus impossible to determine whether its author was an Italian American or simply a non-Italian contributor. A recipe for "cantaloupe Romana" (p. 53) calls for cantaloupe served with ice cream and Marsala wine-a very unusual combination for Rome, where melon is customarily an appetizer. Here, too, the contributor is mysteriously absent.

The point of all this is not to engage in a fruitless quest for authenticity; as numerous scholars have shown, the genuineness of a tradition is of no consequence in terms of its importance to the community as a symbol of identity (Dégh 1981: 130-31; Hobsbawm 1983). Any tradition may be subject to strategic manipulation by its performers when issues such as identity and emic/etic perceptions are at stake (Bendix 1989: 143). Rather, these elements contain important information about the performer of the item of folklore, its intended audience, and the political and social relationship between the two. In the case of the concession stands, the owner/operator was not Italian American, and I would hypothesize that the same is true of the contributors of the two recipes.

Why, then, is the adoption of a pseudo-Italian identity for the foods so important? Why not sell plain "ham sandwiches" or "sodas"? The answer, I think, lies in the nature of the festival itself, in its focus on Italian American ethnicity. Not only do activities and events deliberately put such an ethnic experience at anyone's disposal, but the semiotics of the festival demand that everyone adopt this ethnicity as his or her own.

[13] The Italian words are aranciata (orangeade), limonara (lemonade), and gassosa (soda), although today the brand names Sprite and 7-Up have largely displaced the old-fashioned-sounding gassosa to designate white cola.

[14] Italian sedano ripieno.

The LIFT board has long tried to discourage traveling food merchants from setting up their stalls along Water Street with the other concession stands; "We want to stay away from that carnival type; it's not supposed to be commercialized," says Ernie Gillio.[15] But this is clearly a contradictory statement, since the main purpose of the festival is in fact commercial.

It is the nonadherence to the Italian theme, rather than the profit motive, which the organizers find disturbing. In recent years, this has caused an increasing riff within the community and has threatened the Little Italy Festival itself.[16] Food peddlers petitioned the LIFT board, claiming that if Italians could sell their national foods, other nationalities ought to be allowed to sell theirs. Reluctantly the board finally gave in to the merchants in 1984, and now part of Water Street is called "International Street" and features American fast food as well as items from other ethnic groups. This has angered many of the local Italian food merchants, who have withdrawn their participation. According to one local resident, "[The festival] is not like it used to be; now there's hardly anything Italian about it."[17] By rechristening ordinary American foods with Italian-sounding names, American merchants are able to maintain the fiction of adhering to the Italian theme of the festival without actually threatening the status quo.

Pseudofood

The final category of food is actually not food at all. It is fake food-in this case, large wooden rounds substituting for cheeses in the cheese-rolling contest. Unlike the other festival contests, the cheese-rolling event bears a direct link to an Italian festival activity: the tiro al cacio, a cheese toss popular at festivals in cheese-producing regions throughout Italy. In the typical tiro al cacio, contestants toss or roll real cheeses at a mark or goal. The contestant whose cheese comes the closest wins all the other contestants' cheeses. In the traditional Italian context, cheese is real food with important symbolic links to the regional economy and the socioeconomic structure of the community: the tiro ostensibly gives poorer people a chance to win large amounts of the region's primary economic commodity in a classic example of the principle of festive redistribution (Solinas 1981: 221-22).[18]

Apparently in the early days, Clinton's Italians also used real cheeses for this event, which was then associated with the Columbus Day celebration; but as time passed, the feeling grew that it was wasteful and impractical to use actual cheeses, and wooden rounds replaced them. The substitution of pseudofood for real food in this activity

[15] Interview with Ernie Gillio, Nov. 13, 1983.

[16] In his article, "Festa Italiana in Hartford, Connecticut," Anthony Rauche describes an analogous situation in which resentments on both sides eventually led to the cancellation of the festival. In the case of Clinton, it is possible that the strategy of rechristening foods may deflect some of the conflict.

[17] Donna Sawyer, personal communication, Dec. 1988.

[18] See Mathias 1981.

marked an important turning point for Clinton's Italian Americans: from a subsistence-based economy and a worldview still tied to traditional Italian models, to one based on capitalism and consumption; from a culture closely tied to its Italian peasant roots, to one firmly rooted in the New World.

Because a festival is a transgressive genre (Bakhtin 1968), it is usual to find in it symbolic inversions of the usual social order. Thus in Italian peasant society, where the daily life was often marked by economic privation and hunger, festival was a time of ostentatious consumption of the primary agricultural products-what Gallini (1971) has called "the consumption of the sacred." In a premarket economy, this strategy allowed everyone to enjoy and consume the economic surplus, while at the same time ensuring a roughly even distribution of goods (Solinas 1981: 220). Within this ethos, the use of surplus cheeses for a cheese toss was not waste, but a sacred consumption of the primary economic product in a pastoral society.

The use of food in a game violated an important ethical and economic principle in Italian peasant culture: conservation. Food and play are normally antithetical: "Don't play with your food," Italian children are told at the table. Food-real food, that is-must not be played with because it is sustenance; playing with it dissipates not only its value, but also its symbolic charge. In the Italian peasant worldview, food, particularly bread, is sacred; leftover bread can be grated or made into other food, but should never be thrown away-or, according to one folk belief, one will be forced to pick it up in purgatory. If for some reason it must be thrown away, then it should be burned like other sacred household items, such as palms and olive branches from Palm Sunday.[19] In the festive context, however, playing with food becomes part of Bakhtin's carnivalesque: a deliberate transgression of the norm in an attempt to provide an antidote to everyday conditions; the "momentary, dramatic and carnivalesque antithesis of a harsh and persistent reality" (Lanternari 1981: 137). As such, the sensual qualities of food become extremely important.

Pseudofood is the furthest removed from the actual regional dishes whose smells, tastes, and textures are powerful reminders of the immigrants' ethnic and regional identities. It bears no connection to the community's means of production or to the local land-based economy. It has no characteristic food taste, smell or texture, since it is not meant to be eaten. It is, then, symbolic and highly abstract: food out of context, it is meant to be played with, created for use solely within the festive context. It is the very antithesis of food as sacred sustenance in Italian festivals. The substitution of pseudocheese for real cheese in the Clinton festival reflects the shift in the immigrants' economy (and thus also ethos) from subsistence to consumerism, from premarket to postmodern.

In the Clinton Little Italy Festival, food is a commodity not only to be marketed for its nutritional value, but also-and especially-for its symbolic value as a "text" of ethnicity. In this context, the symbolic valence of food is more important than its

[19] For an elaboration of this idea, see Counihan 1984.

reality. The participants in the cheese-rolling contest could theoretically use bowling balls, bocce, or frisbees if the object was simply to see who had the greatest skill at rolling things.[20] But because food is the central symbol of the Little Italy Festival, and because cheese is an item that turns up frequently in Italian cuisine, the idea of a cheese-rolling contest fits better with the festival's overall symbolic theme. This is essentially the same rationale we saw operating in the case of rechristened foods, only here it is taken one step further: the food itself is fake.

Pseudofood and rechristened food do not represent shams so much as a playful use of the symbols available in the cultural registen The entire Little Italy Festival is in fact a kind of elaborate "playing with food": the actual foodstuffs, facsimiles thereof, and the various symbolic meanings attached to them by different local groups. If we look at "playing with food" as "deep play" (Geertz 1972), we find that the range of food items and activities express and negotiate different political, economic, and social relationships present in Clinton among Italians, other ethnic groups, and visiting tourists. Through play and the manipulation of food as symbol, these relationships express themselves through the festival. For the immigrants and their family members who return to Clinton for the event, the preparation and consumption of traditional regional foods reinforces a sensual and affective link with old-country experiences. For first-, second-, and third-generation assimilated Italian Americans, festival foods assert and communicate ethnic identity both within the ethnic group and to outsiders. For non-Italians and tourists, the foods and activities at the festival can offer a taste of Italianness without any of the shock or inconvenience of total immersion in a foreign culture. The quantity and range of the foodways are a testament to the complexity of the political universe in which the festival exists and the cultural reality it plays with and embodies.

Notes

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[20] There is in fact a separate bocce tournament, with men's and women's divisions, which takes place during the festival, but because bocce is strictly an Italian sport, no tourists or outsiders participate. This tradition is thus similar to the "traditional Italian foodways" already discussed in the way it functions. For a treatment of the game of bocce and its permutations in the American diaspora, see Mathias 1974.

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4. From the Paese to the Patria: An Italian American Pilgrimage to Rome in 1929]

Dorothy Noyes

This is a story about the invention of Italy by immigrants in America. Those who know something of Italy's fragmented history, its multiple dialects, and its campanilismo (localism) immediately recognize the Italy of the American Columbus Day Parade as an "imagined community" (Anderson 1983). The parade's evocations of Columbus, Dante, Leonardo, Marconi, and other "national" heroes and contributors to international history have very little to do with the southern-Italian village reality of the great-grandparents of the children marching in red, white, and green ski jackets.

But the Columbus Day Parade of the third generation is not a site of cultural loss; rather it is one of creation. In such ceremonies, an ethnic elite has brought to life the "Italian community," unified within and distinct without, of such northeastern cities as Philadelphia. "Italian community" in this context is not a spurious exoteric label born of American failure to discriminate, but the object of a well-developed civil rehgion found convincing by many Italian Americans.

It cannot be denied that the Italian community-which has often worked quite effectively as a voting bloc, for instance-was constructed opportunistically by a small group who sought to consolidate their own power base. It is the upper middle class that benefits politically and economically from an ethnic identity transcending local and class boundaries. Italian Americanness in the early twentieth century, from the dedication of Columbus monuments to the campaign to teach standard Italian in the schools to the banquets honoring Italian American achievers, was clearly what Victoria De Grazia has termed a "culture of consent" (1981).

In this essay I examine a case where ethnic leaders tried to invigorate consent by consensus (Fernandez 1988). They not only claimed, but performed, authority by granting their followers a privileged experience of collective effervescence: a pilgrimage to Italy, culminating in an audience with Mussolini. The year was 1929, and the organizers were the Order Sons of Italy in America.[1]

[1] An earlier version of this paper was read at the American Folklore Society annual meeting in Philadelphia in 1989. I am grateful to the Library of the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies, Philadelphia, for access to L'Opinione and other sources on Italian Americans, and to the Philadelphia Folklore

The Impetus of the Pilgrimage

The Roman trip was planned by the leaders of the Order as a show of strength directed to rival organizations, Italian Americans generally, and the native political and business elite of Philadelphia. It also provided an opportunity to convert the fourteen hundred pilgrims, and the larger public who read daily newspaper accounts, to the Order's way of thinking.[2]

By 1929, Italian immigration to the United States had dropped off substantially, owing to discriminatory legislation and, later, to Mussolini's restrictions. The great majority of Italian Americans were peasants who had left the impoverished South in the great migrations after 1890. The skilled northern artisans who had come earlier did not mix much with the newcomers, for whom they felt no cultural affinity: in Philadelphia the Lucchesi plaster workers and the Friulani stonemasons had their own neighborhoods in the northern part of the city. The famed "Italian community" of South Philadelphia was a creation of middle-class southerners, professionals, and businessmen, who rapidly gained political control over the immigrant colonies (Varbero 1973).

The Order Sons of Italy in America was the largest of the many Italian American fraternal organizations active at the end of the mass immigration period. It was founded in 1905] in New York with the purpose, as the Order's official historian put it, "of uniting the Italians in one great organization which would enable them to struggle to become the authors of their own destiny and progress" (Biagi 1961: 15). By 1923, it had grown into an organization of 300,000] members in 1,190 lodges across the country (Nelli 1970: 117). In the 1920s, the Order had its own bank, insurance company, orphanages, scholarships, rebel programs, recreational centers, cultural activities, and citizenship classes wherever there was a significant Italian population.

Since 1921, the leader or "supreme venerable" of the Order had been a Philadelphia lawyer named Giovanni Di Silvestro. Di Silvestro was a talented propagandist who established a publicity bureau for the Order (Biagi 1961: 23). He was also a fervently vocal supporter of the Fascist regime in Italy. In 1922, without consulting the other "hierarchs" of the Order, Di Silvestro signed a pact with the Lega Ital-iana, the Fascist organization for Italians abroad, allegedly placing the Order under Italian government control, and sent a widely publicized and graciously received message to Mussolini, laying the 300,000] members of the Order at the Duce's feet (Biagi 1961: 21-23; Diggins 1972: 95).

As a result of Di Silvestro's pro-Fascist activities, the wealthy New York lodge, led by Fiorello La Guardia, seceded from the Order, taking its bank and huge membership

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Project for the opportunity to pursue fieldwork in South Philadelphia. It should be understood that I am speaking of the Order Sons of Italy in America only as it was in the 1920s; the Order firmly renounced Fascism before the Second World War.

[2] These newspaper accounts, published in the Philadelphia daily L'Opinione, are my principal source for this narrative, and I present long excerpts despite their exhaustingly florid Italian so that the reader may gain a sense of the detailed vicarious experience prepared for the original readers. I have noted the date at the end of each citation; the year in each case is 1929. All translations are mine.

with it (Diggins 1972: 95; Biagi 1061: 127; Duffield 1929: 664). A long legal battle ensued. By 1929, the New York lodge had formed a separate organization called the Sons of Italy Grand Lodge, which was gaining membership in New Jersey and even Pennsylvania, now the seat of the Order.

Di Silvestro's national and local ambitions were both threatened. He and his brother Giuseppe ran the weekly paper La Libera Parola in Philadelphia as a mouthpiece opposing the Republican political machine of Councilman William Vare, then an absolute power in Italian South Philadelphia. A split within the Pennsylvania lodges would make their task that much harder. The Order's press office therefore began releasing invective against the Sons of Italy Grand Lodge to such local Italian American periodicals as L Opinione, a daily newspaper printed in Philadelphia. The seceders were denounced as "apostles of discord, of the sedition of antipatriotism" (June 19, 1929); "men without a fatherland" (July 10); "false," "divided," "alarmist," "anarchic," "outcasts unworthy of respecting the laws," "who divide our community the better to dominate it" (June 27).

A rhetoric of purification defined the Order:

While the eternal enemies of the unity and the cohesion of Italians work to fragment, we work to assemble all our forces under the glorious banner of the Order. The few defections do not discourage us; on the contrary, they encourage us, and comfort us in continuing our work. Every organization that wishes to be truly great must have within it the moral force to purify itself, to liberate itself from the pathogenic elements which in the long run could undermine its existence. (June 10)

But as the Order spoke of expulsion and closing ranks, it worked at expansion. The "paladins of Italianà in America" (June 19) set out on a grand membership drive. Although claims from New York that the Order's membership had dropped to seventy thousand were no doubt gleefully exaggerated (July 25), the Order was clearly worried. Numerous press releases celebrated the great success of the campaign and the unparalleled excitement aroused by the opportunity to join the Order.

The pilgrimage was the centerpiece of this membership campaign, intended to be a spectacular manifestation of unity and loyalty. It was announced as a trip to pay homage to Mussolini and the new Italy, modern and disciplined: motives of general pride in that period among immigrants long stigmatized as backward and savage. Moreover, the trip offered an assuagement to homesickness, portrayed not as a failure to adjust to America, but a praiseworthy loyalty:

Those who for so many years have felt the pangs of nostalgia for the beloved places, and the desire to see their parents again, can finally satisfy these noble aspirations of their soul. The Sons of Italy offer the means with the superb initiative of the Pilgrimage. And even better: returning today to the beloved shores of the Fatherland, they will see Italy more beautiful, greater, and stronger than ever. (July 11)

The pilgrimage was vigorously advertised in L'Opinione, with promises of audiences with the Duce, the king, and the pope. In Di Silvestro's inimitable fashion, a series of press releases announced the excitement produced by the press releases, as well as more

substantive matters, such as the Italian government's lively support and the numerous preparations for "grand official receptions, with which the Great Mother will welcome her distant sons who return after a long absence" (June 10). Readers were enabled to follow the telegrammatic correspondence of Di Silvestro and the governor of Rome; they were encouraged to develop an interest in the progress of the organizing process and to cheer for each achievement.

There were several intended audiences for the pilgrimage made apparent in the first press releases. Among them was Mussolini himself, with the Fascist government. Di Silvestro clearly worked hard to impress the Italians with the Fascist fervor he had succeeded in raising. He had perhaps something to hope for from Italian government patronage: at the very least, decorations or shows of consideration to enhance his stature in the immigrant community.

The Sons of Italy Grand Lodge and the undecided Italian American elite were another audience, as proven by Di Silvestro's use of neutral or opposition newspapers as well as his own weekly to promote the pilgrimage. Against the evidence of the Order's mobilizing power, he hoped, the Grand Lodge would throw in the towel, and the undecided would make their choice for the Order.

Di Silvestro seems also to have hoped to impress the Philadelphia political elite with his international prestige and, more importantly, his potential influence over Italian American voters. The mayor of Philadelphia, Richard Mackey, did in fact consider it worth his while to offer a farewell luncheon to the organizers of the pilgrimage; the Italian ambassador came up from Washington for the occasion. Mackey entrusted Di Silvestro with greetings to Mussolini from Philadelphia and its citizens and expressions of his personal "admiration and esteem"; speeches were made about the great history of Philadelphia and the central contributions of Italian Americans to the city (August 22).

Di Silvestro's final goal was to persuade ordinary Italian immigrants of the Order's usefulness to them. For he had managed to obtain not only reduced passage rates on the vessel, but a more important concession: he had won from the Italian government the promise of an exemption from military service for the period of one year for all pilgrims, both present members of the Order and all those who declared the intention of joining (July 11). This was undoubtedly the single most important motivation for going on the pilgrimage. Since Mussolini had come to power in 1922, Italian Americans had been afraid to visit home because they were likely to be seized and drafted; even American citizens had not been free of harassment (Duffield 1929: 671; Diggins 1972: 101). Di Silvestro's great rival for the leadership of the Philadelphia immigrant colony, Charles C. A. Baldi, a supporter of the Vare machine, had never obtained this concession for them.

But Baldi, the most powerful Italian immigrant boss of the 1920s in Philadelphia (Varbero 1975: 169), was also a strong Fascist sympathizer, and he and Di Silvestro appear to have worked out an alliance of convenience by this time on certain issues of common concern. As another would-be unifier of the immigrant colony, Baldi must

have recognized in the pilgrimage a potential beyond the immediate goals of the Order. For Baldi was the proprietor of L'Opinione, and this paper, by publishing Di Silvestro's press releases in full, made it possible for a large northeastern readership to become vicarious pilgrims.

The Program of the Pilgrimage

On August 24, the eve of departure, Di Silvestro sent a telegram back to L'Opinione with his reflections on the implications of the event. Here is an excerpt:

In this vigil of preparation and of waiting, I have the clear vision of what is unfolding in every part of the United States, in the sanctuary of hundreds of families. I see adults and little ones eagerly surrounding the traveler to give him messages of love, to confide to him sentiments and hopes, in which gathering is reflected the rekindled flame of Italic love.

This memorable occasion, on which we embark with a mission of faith, is not only a tour of pleasure, but before all and above all it is a Pilgrimage, a spiritual festival, the goal of which is Italy, but in the course of which will be reaffirmed ever better the consciousness of the civic duties which we with joyful heart assumed toward this country of our choice, and which thus will come to root more deeply in our hearts in the commonality of our affection for Italy and for America.

It matters nothing that in this Italic spring, among the exuberant reflowering of our spiritual values, the echo of sinister voices is heard: it does not matter. We will remain serene at our post, in vigilant defense of the moral patrimony contained in the program of the Order and in the values of our lineage. Quite other tempests and other enemies must we face in the defense of our ideal, and we have always withstood, and we will always withstand, because we know that our cause is good, is holy, and will triumph. (August 25)

Fourteen hundred pilgrims embarked on the steamer Vulcania the next day. There awaited them an itinerary carefully designed as an initiation in the new national Italy. The program of the voyage appeared in L'Opinione as follows:

Monday the and of September, after a rapid crossing of barely eight days and a brief stop in Palermo, the Vulcartia will arrive in Naples and the enchanting Parthenope will give the Sons of Italy the most expansive and enthusiastic welcome that they can imagine.

Thursday September 5th, the arrival in redeemed Trieste, where a triumphal welcome has been prepared. The morning of the 6th, tour of the city and, in the afternoon, excursion to the world-famous Grottoes of Postumia, the surprising marvels of which are enough to justify the transatlantic voyage.

September 7th, visit to Ronchi, immortalized by the epic deeds of our bold men, and to the National Cemetery of Redipugha, where thousands of Legionnaires of our war lie buried. In the evening, arrival in Venice.

On September 8th the travelers will visit the marvels. of the "Queen of the Adriatic" and, in the afternoon of the same day, will attend one of those superb spectacles of life and color that call tourists from all over the world to the Lagoon: a regatta on the Grand Canal. On the 9th, Venice will give grand parties in honor of the Sons of Italy, who, before leaving the next day, will have the fortunate opportunity of attending the International Motorboat Competition.

On the 11th, Milan, the industrial capital of Italy, where life pulses with the same feverish rhythm as in the great centers of America, will host the Pilgrims, where the spectacle of the great Lombard city, vibrant with intense Fascist life, will constitute one of the best recollections they will carry back to America.

September 12th will be dedicated to an excursion on the Lombard lakes, to the enchanting Isolabella and the delicious Borromee. On the 13th, visit to Turin, regal and austere cradle of our Independence.

On the 14th and 15th, the Sons of Italy will visit Genoa, the "Superba," now become the dominant city of Mediterranean maritime commerce. From the homeland of Christopher Columbus, on the 16th, the travelers will continue to Bologna, the Athens of Italy, seat of one of the oldest and most learned universities in the world.

The 17th and 18th in Florence, the flowering natal city of Dante; excursions to the fertile hills of Fiesole, to the monuments and galleries of the capital of Tuscany.

On the 19th and 20th, visit to Perugia and Assisi, rich with Franciscan recollections.

From the 21st to the 24th of September, the Sons of Italy will stop in Rome, supreme goal of the Pilgrimage, where superb festivities await them, confirming once more the great influence and the prestige that the proponents of the Order have known how to conquer from the powerful Italic Organization. Among the celebrations in the capital are included excursions to the Roman castles; to the marvellous cascades of Tivoli; to Ostia, the antique-and, thanks to the Magnificent Duce, once again the modern-port of the Romans; and a grandiose reception will be given in honor of the Sons of Italy by the Governor of the Capital, in the halls of the Campidoglio, rich with our memories and glories.

September 24th the excursion ends and the travelers will be able to return to their own native regions to visit the beloved places, relatives, and friends of childhood before returning to America. (August 24)

The program was itself an indoctrination into a new identity: a reconstruction of the symbolic geography of "home" for people who knew only their native province and the great city of Naples or Palermo, whence they had left for America. Now the touching of the ship at these two ports would return them to the home they had left; but it would not stop there. Instead, it would round the peninsula entirely and come to rest at Trieste, a city as foreign as Marseille or Dubrovnik to the average southern Italian. The pilgrimage began by juxtaposing the two extremes of North and South before traversing the center: it ensured that all of the nation called Italy was included in the pilgrims' definition.

There was not only a cultural opposition, but a structural kinship between Trieste and the southern world of the immigrants. Trieste was l'Italia irredenta, only reclaimed for the nation since World War One. Like the population of emigrants abroad-some temporary, some permanent-it represented the vulnerable boundary of the nation. To have Triestini celebrate a common italianità with Sicilian immigrants was to secure the periphery through links with a sacred center (Shils 1975); each, seeing the foreignness of the other, would be the more impressed by the power of this center to bring them together.

After an initial emphasis on World War One battlefields and memorials, an evocation of the sacrifices made for the nation to establish the degree of commitment expected of good Italians, the pilgrimage would follow a tourist's route. This was the Italy of natural beauties, colorful festivals, Renaissance monuments, and universal geniuses: Columbus, Dante, St. Francis, and the Duce. But the cultural uniqueness of the nation was not the only emphasis: this was also an Italy raised to parity with modern nations, an Italy of commerce, industry, national politics, and intellectual attainments.

The South was not included: the steady crescendo toward the Roman climax could not be sustained in the crumbling cities of the Mezzogiorno. The South would be visited afterward, when the pilgrims would see familiar places and people through new eyes. Who knows what was meant to happen there? Perhaps the drabness and poverty would be less visible to eyes dazzled by the brilliant North. Or perhaps they would be all too clear, and the troublesome local loyalties of the immigrant would be superseded by an enthusiasm for the larger nation. In any case, the incentive of the visit home had been necessary to the success of the pilgrimage: the rigorous itinerary of the first part of the trip, with its inscription of the new map of Italy on the pilgrim's memory, would to some extent counter the spatial and interpretive freedom of the second part.

The Order did its best to guide the eyes of the pilgrims. It did not neglect its shipboard opportunity. The captive audience beguiled the tedium of the Atlantic voyage with a series of lectures: "The Meaning of the Pilgrimage"; "The Sons of Italy"; "The Order and Fascism"; "The Pioneers of the Order"; "Returning to Italy"; "Natives and Fascists"; "Rome"; "America"; "Our Program"; "Women in the Order"; "Italy and Her Colonies" (August 29). These lectures aroused, according to the dispatches, "the liveliest interest and enthusiasm" (August 30).

But the lectures were only the catechism. The climax of this first stage of the pilgrimage was a "baptism of italianità" (September 4) for the "neophytes" who had come on the pilgrimage without belonging to the Order. The organizers chose the time with care, holding the ceremony of initiation just as the Vulcania had entered Italian waters off of Sardinia. The readership of L'Opinione was encouraged to visualize the scene:

The grandiose ballroom, opulently decorated with Italian and American colors, was transformed into a Temple of the Order.

The Supreme Venerable, Grand Official Giovanni di Silvestro, assumed the chair. The hierarchs of the Order occupied the seats, constituted thus into a lodge ideal for ritual purposes, while hundreds of brothers sat around the vast hall.

A mass of circa 200] neophytes, whose requests were received just before embarkation, was initiated among the intense emotion of all present.

. . . The initiation rite unfolded, austere in its simplicity. At the swearing-in, including the patriotic credo, the neophytes responded in unison with a formidable "I swear!" expressing their new passion.

. . . The unforgettable ceremony closed in a delirium of ovations, with the direction of a message of devotion to President Hoover and words of faith hymning Italy and America, pronounced by the Supreme Venerable.

The ceremony was followed by a supper, offered by the Supreme Council as homage to the honorary members, Prince Rospigliosi, Conte Ciano, and the hierarchs of the Order: Ales-sandroni, Romano, Miele, Parisi, Aquilano, Guidi, Sebastiani and wife, Giaimo and wife, Palleria, Aiello, and Consiglio participating as guests of honor.

The orchestra and the magnificent chorus of the crew gave a marvelous concert, finishing with patriotic hymns, including the exalting Fascist hymn, "Giovinezza."

. . . The party lasted until two in the morning, when the Vulcania passed in sight of Cagliari.

Intense emotion pervaded the passengers and groups of ladies who knew Italy only by name. The hymn of the Order, "Giovinezza," and Italic songs were intoned, provoking an indescribable patriotic scene and demonstrating that if the object of the voyage was an affirmation of italianità, then it had been splendidly achieved. (September 5)

The arrival in Italy was no less carefully choreographed, both for he participant and for the reader:

Triumphally welcomed by the authorities and the people, we pilgrims of italianità arrived yesterday in Palermo.

The north wharf, next to which the Vulcania laid anchor, swarmed with an immense crowd, while the municipal band played the national anthems of Italy and America.

Myriad boats with friends and relatives of the travelers gathered along the sides of the superb ship, while 1,400 Sons of Italy, leaning over the decks of the boat, responded enthusiastically to the greetings, agitating Italian and American flags and pointing out the ship's flagpole, where the banner of the Order majestically waved. Passengers and people directed powerful cheers at the banner.

Received at the plank by the Supreme Venerable and the hi-erarchs of the Order, there came aboard Commendator Ferretti, representing the Honorable Parini, secretary of the Fasci all'Es-tero [Fasces Abroad]; His Excellency the Prefect Umberto A1-bini; the Podestà Hon. Salvatore di Marzo, professor of law at the University of Palermo; a delegation of Fascist women, cap-tained by Donna Itala Loiacano, mother of His Excellency Loaicano; and representatives of the Fascist Federation, of the Federation of Fascist Unions, of the Balilla, of the Avanguardists, etc. All directed themselves toward the ballroom, where the Podestà, in a vigorous speech, emphasizing the universality

of Fascism and hymning the friendship of Italy and America, presented the Supreme Venerable Giovanni di Silvestro, in the name of the city of Palermo, with an artistic and precious silver cup, symbolizing the Fasc del Littorio. The orator exalted the merits of the Supreme Venerable, well-known in Italy, declaring himself glad to be able to recall them in gratitude for an old friendship.

Fragrant bouquets of flowers were distributed by the Prefect, by the Podestà, and by Donna Itala Loiacano to all the ladies and young girls of the imposing caravan.

With a voice deeply moved, and with tears in his eyes, Di Sil-vestro replied, unloosing a winged hymn to Italy and to Fascism. The audience abandoned itself to delirious ovations. Prefect and Podestà embraced the fluent orator and offered to the travelers the incomparable hospitality of the beautiful Siculan metropolis.

With innumerable motorboats provided by the port authorities, the travelers disembarked to visit the city, whose palaces were opulently decorated for the occasion with Italian and American flags. Then they improvised brief excursions to the Conca d'Oro, welcomed everywhere by the waving of flags and enthusiastic demonstrations. (September 5)

The stop in Naples was not reported, but the final disembarkation in Trieste was described as nearly identical to the one in Palermo. The pilgrims were said to have been received with a "grandiose welcome": the cheering crowds on the wharf, the Italian and American flags, the anthem-playing bands, the podestà and authorities, the speeches. "The Sons of Italy felt at home in Trieste," the account takes pains to insist, and the sirens of factories and ships in the harbor "twittered with Italic joy" to greet them; in the noise, "the cries of the multitude and the cheers of the travelers became one" (September 8).

The progress to Rome was reported in much less detail; the reader learned only in general outlines of the superb sites visited and enthusiastic welcomes received. But the climax was chronicled at dizzying length:

Monday September 23rd, the hierarchs of the Order Sons of Italy were received by Prime Minister Mussolini at Palazzo Venezia.

Led by the Supreme Venerable Avvocato [lawyer] Di Silvestro and by Commendator Piero Parini, General Secretary of the Fasci all'Estero, the Hon. Eugenio Alessandroni and his father Pierluigi, the lawyer Stefano Miele and his gentle daughters, Cavalier Saverio Romano, the industrialist D. Sebastiani and his wife, the lawyer R. Giaimo and his wife, Cavalier Baldo Aquilani, Cavalier Francesco Balleria, Cavalier S. Parisi, the lawyeress Bevilacqua, and the illustrious artist Nicola D'Ascenzo took part in the delegation.

Entering the Duce's study, the visitors saluted in Roman fashion the Head of Government, who, smiling, recognizing Avv. Di Silvestro, called him by name, inviting him to advance, and when he was near, shook his hand cordially and asked for his news and news of the Order.

The dignitaries of the Order were received by the Duce with great cordiality, and for all He had kind words, staying to converse with them for a few minutes.

The Supreme Venerable Di Silvestro presented to the Duce the homage of the Organization, expressing to him the sentiments of profound devotion of the pilgrims and of the Sons of Italy in America, who in affectionate thought have followed their brothers intent on the sacred feast of italianità; he showed the desire of all the travelers to be received by Him, and presented Him with a petition, signed by several hundred Sons of Italy, which read,

"Excellency! We have left family and business to visit the sacred earth of beloved Italy, and we are glad to have been able to accomplish our sacred purpose. We have, however, an ardent desire to see Him who made Italy greater in the family of Nations and who makes us feel more proud than ever to be Italian; we desire ardently to see the Duce, and we turn to our Supreme Venerable that he may intercede with You."

Smiling with paternal condescension, Mussolini granted the desire of the Sons of Italy, fixing the reception for the morning of the 24th at Palazzo Torlonia.

. . . The return of the hierarchs of the Order to the hotels in which the Sons of Italy were lodged, and the announcement that the Duce would receive the travelers on the next day, provoked scenes of lively enthusiasm. At the Grand Hotel, where the largest nucleus of pilgrims had settled, there was a warm demonstration for the Head of the Order, to whom the travelers wanted to show their gratitude for the result obtained.

Early Tuesday morning, the gates of Palazzo Torlonia, Roman residence of the Duce, were besieged with hundreds of Sons of Italy; at nine they were admitted and passed in review by the Supreme Venerable Avv. Di Silvestro and by Commendator Parini, who during the wait for the Duce arranged them on the immense esplanade of the garden.

Di Silvestro and Commendator Parini met the Duce by the great door of the villa and He responded smilingly with cordial expressions to their Roman salutes; then, escorted by them, He went to pass in review the Sons of Italy, among whom, at His appearance, ran a shiver of indescribable enthusiasm. The show of enthusiasm which followed for several minutes in the marvelous Villa Torlonia was one of those that cannot easily be described: the irrepressible cries of "Viva il Duce," "Viva Mussolini" were repeated from mouth to mouth. Mussolini himself, so accustomed to manifestations of the kind, smiled, visibly moved, and many-among them the Avvocato Di Silvestro, who followed the Duce at a little distance-had tears in their eyes.

The Duce then stood in the center of the great esplanade between the Avv. Di Silvestro and Commendator Parini and pronounced a memorable speech, in which, after congratulating us for the superb success of the Pilgrimage, He said, among other things:

"Yesterday the best of friends, Di Silvestro, accompanied by the other heads of the Order, expressed to me your desire to see me. I accepted at once. I, too, had an interest in your seeing me thus, as I am in reality and not the way I am depicted by the detractors of Fascism and Italy.

"You have seen Italy in its cities and in its towns; you have also observed the Italian people working from morning to night with discipline and tenacity to repair the grave damage of the war. Many of you have been absent from Italy for years and have

therefore had occasion to observe the progress made and the distance covered in seven years of Fascism.

"When you have crossed the Atlantic again, tell the Italians from beyond the ocean and to Americans the entire truth of what you have seen, without exaggerating, because the truth of this our Italy, reborn to a new spirit, is supremely beautiful and exalting. And you, by means of your powerful Order, can bring about this beneficent diffusion of truth.

'I know that the American people, or at least the majority, have a sincere and lively sympathy for us, and you who have chosen the U.S. as your second homeland have the specific task of performing actions that contribute to maintaining cordial relations between Italy and America, and being loyal and faithful citizens of the great American Republic. The thought of the Fascist Government has always been clear and precise in this regard. This, however, does not mean that you should forget your Italian origin: rather, you should be proud of the millenarian stock to which you belong; you should be more proud of this Italy, which has given three civilizations to the world. Hold sacred the cult of heroes and remember that Christopher Columbus, the man who discovered America, was an Italian, and of this we admit no dispute.

I have told you what was dear to me, how I desired strongly to tell you before you return to your adopted country, that you might repeat it to your brothers beyond the sea; I close, confirming to you all my cordial and pure friendship."

The Duce's speech ended among enthusiastic ovations, which intensified as Miss Jolanda Di Silvestro, accompanied by Miss Miele, advanced gracefully toward the Duce, offering Him a rich bouquet of flowers tied with a tricolor ribbon.

The Duce took leave of the Sons of Italy and returned to the historic villa, accompanied by Parini and Di Silvestro, to whom He affably repeated His personal esteem and His appreciation for the Order.

To the representatives of the press, who, after the visit to Villa Torlonia, crowded around the Supreme Venerable, Di Silvestro declared that the pilgrimage could not have had a better crown.

The afternoon of the 24th of September, a superb, characteristically Roman September day, will remain as the most beautiful day in the history of the Order, as the sweetest recollection for all who participated in the pilgrimage.

After the visit to the Duce, the pilgrims, arrayed in a long interminable column, fulfilled the noblest mission of their celebration of love by placing flowers at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

. . . After a few minutes, the austere ceremony ended, and with it was completed the first pilgrimage of the Order Sons of Italy in America and Canada. . . (September 27)

From Consent to Consensus

Amid the Fascist rhetoric of these dispatches, the liturgical diction should not go unremarked. The trip is not a tour, but a "pilgrimage" (pellegrinaggio) or "consecration" (sagra); ideals and persons are not praised, but "hymned" (innegiare); the Order's initiation rite was a "baptism of italianità"; and so forth. The trip is designed as a ritual in stages: preparation and initiation in the liminal space of the ship; circumnavigation of the "sacred shores" of Italy; circumambulation of the country via its principal patriotic shrines; and a final penetration into the inner sanctum, where the deity reveals himself (Mussolini, with uppercase pronouns). At the end comes a ceremony of thanksgiving, with offerings laid at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The role of the Order's leaders as mediators is central to the experience. The participants in Sons of Italy rituals are by no means of equal status: on the contrary, all distinctions are rigorously preserved, with commendatori and avvocati being endlessly recognized as such. The "hierarchs" (gerarchi) baptize the two hundred anonymous neophytes and a smaller group of "honorary members," whose names are recorded in L'Opinione and who become the guests of honor at the celebration. Above all, Di Silvestro himself, the supreme venerable, becomes the high priest of italianità: it is he who sits at the right hand of the father and has his ear.

Although the preliminary publicity has said definitively that all pilgrims will be received by Mussolini (August 3), in Rome it is suddenly doubtful. Di Silvestro and the hierarchs alone are given audience. So Di Silvestro presents a petition from the pilgrims (in the composition of which we may deduce his guiding hand). They declare their burning desire to see the Duce, for which reason "we turn to our Supreme Venerable, that he may intercede with You." Mussolini, "smiling with fatherly condescension," now agrees, and on the next day, the pilgrims in the garden, having been passed in review by Di Silvestro, see the greatest man in Europe taking their leader by the hand and referring to him as "the best of friends" (September 27).

One might see this as simply another lesson in clientelism, a lesson perhaps not needed by immigrants who were already used to looking to a patron when they needed a job, a loan, or assistance with bureaucracy. They understood well enough their dependence on the powerhul.

Certainly Di Silvestro intended to demonstrate his superiority to other possible patrons, and hoped to profit by it politically. But he was not trying to reproduce precisely the old dyadic relationship of patron/client so characteristic of southern Italian social organization. Rather, he sought to enlarge the role of patron to that of leader: the leader whose authority is derived from the crowd itself (Durkheim 1915: 210). Di Silvestro spoke not as an individual, but as the voice of 300,000] Italian Americans.

The pilgrims were taught that power comes to the individual through membership in a group: this is the principle of Fascist corporatism. Twigs tied in a bundle cannot be broken; in unity is strength. The city of Trieste, as a body, came out to welcome the Sons of Italy, as a body: without the Order, the traveler would have been nobody,

but with it, all doors were open to him. The individual who dared return to Italy in 1929] ran the risk of arrest and conscription; the Sons of Italy obtained certificates of immunity, "proof of the consideration in which [the Italian Government] holds our Order" (July 11). Even the weather was swayed by the force of the group: "the clearest possible sky and sea seem to associate themselves with the ideal voyage of the great Order" (August 30). The Order enlarged the individual.

By massing together Venafrani, Sciacchitani, Avellinesi, and the holders of a thousand other local affiliations, the Order created an Italian American collectivity.[3] This higher-order status was projected back upon each individual constituting the whole: now each was an Italian American.

The pilgrimage gave content to this new identity: it provided the Italian American with memories of the new homeland. Now the immigrant could speak feelingly of the glories of Florence, the solemn military cemetery at Redipuglia, the industrial vitality of Milan: he had experienced them. Understanding that identity is not so much a matter of conscious will as of emotional associations: the organizers of the pilgrimage took the touchstones of identification with the paese-language, landscape, and local patrons-and translated them to the higher plane of the patria.

Village Italian was not standard Italian at all, but regional dialect. Moreover, within a broad regional dialect, there were innumerable local variations by which a villager could immediately recognize an outsider. And words were bound up with things and places: many did not represent abstract categories so much as they named local realities.

The language of the pilgrimage was standard Italian, the national tongue. Lacking the specificity and rich layers of associations of local dialects, the organizers perhaps sought to regain that affective resonance by the opposite strategy of abstraction. Words like "fatherland," "values," "faith," or "ideals" were too vague to admit of critical refusal and vague enough to permit the insertion of individual referents: "fatherland" could take on the meaning of "the village where I was born." Adjectives like "glorious," "exalting," and "splendid" were used to achieve the desired emotional orientation. Florid, repetitive diction and intricate syntax replaced the referential with the incantatory power of language.[4] But there was also an effort to tie the neutrality of Italian down to the specificity of geography and history, so that it might not be reduced to a mere lingua franca of convenience between the pilgrims. As soon as the Vulcania set sail, the language of the dispatches took on the Latinate lexicon typical of Fascist usage: "Italiano" became "italico"; "siciliano," "siculo"; "il Mediterraneo," "il Mare Nostrum," or "il gran mare latino." Mussolini's second Roman Empire, though never accomplished in fact, was effectively constructed in language (Mack Smith 1976; Fedel 1978).

[3] The Order gained in membership not only by the accretion of individuals, but by incorporating village-based mutual-aid societies as new lodges.

[4] See Bloch 1979] on the illocutionary force of ritual language and McDowell 1992] on "speech narcosis."

The landscape of home for the immigrant was strongly centripetal. At its limits was the wild land, a forbidding zone visited intermittently by individuals for foraging and pasturage, and in groups for annual visits to special shrines. The cultivated fields were spaces of everyday labor, where single families pursued their survival. Inside the village walls was the community, pressed into interaction by narrow streets opening into central spaces. At the center of all stood the church bell in its tall tower, visible from the surrounding countryside and audible throughout the village.

The landscape of Italy is constructed for the pilgrim in a similar manner. The cities of the peninsula, each with its distinguishing at-tribute-intellectual Bologna, industrial Milan, Franciscan Assisi-are sites to visit briefly for what they offer. Then there is the home village, the site where the small group deals with its particular affairs. But the center pulls the boundaries toward itself: Rome, with its immense population and thickly layered history, concentrates the nation into itself, with Mussolini at its apex, cynosure of all eyes.

Finally, the village had a local patron saint, often a specific invocation of the Madonna, whose business it was to look after local interests, and whose shrine was a point of access to divinity. But this was a divinity a rnisura d'uom o (to the measure of man), with whom offerings and favors were affectionately interchanged.

The Sons of Italy pilgrimage split the saint into two roles: the powerful, distant other, and the exemplary figure with whom identification was possible. The first was of course Mussolini, who revealed himself briefly only after suspense and priestly intervention, and who lost none of his awe-inspiring power in the encounter. The other was the Unknown Soldier, that quintessential nationalist icon (Anderson 1983), who encourages all his compatriots to sacrifice everything for their country. Since the pilgrims visited these two shrines in rapid succession, their respective emotional force must have been to an extent interchanged, with the personal charisma of Mussolini (a very concrete God the Father) lending vitality to the Unknown Soldier (a very abstract fellow creature), and the Unknown Soldier providing a more accessible outlet for affections provoked by Mussolini. In the pilgrims' flow of experience, then, the two aspects of the saint were perhaps partly reintegrated.

Thus the pilgrimage attempted to infuse the more abstract plane of the nation with the emotional energy of local attachments through a substitution of symbols. But the symbols alone were not sufficient: it was through bodily performance that they were made real. The shouts of "Viva Mussolini," the group singing of "Giovinezza," the sight of Cagliari through morning mists from the side of the ship gave the shipboard lectures some kind of objective reality: the pilgrims were feeling instead of being told to feel. The arrival to band music and sirens and crowds and swarms of boats underlined the moment; made the stepping onto Italian soil a translation and not mere motion. Walking over battlefields, entering Renaissance palaces, laying wreaths, hearing the voice of Mussolini, and setting eyes on the moving, breathing reality of what had been only an image in a photograph, all of this turned-or was intended to turn-assent into conviction. Not only rational consent to the leadership of the Order was involved: the

Order sought emotional consensus, a tear in Di Silve-stro's eye matched by the tears of each of his followers.

The Limits of Translation

It is not easy, however, for a modern reader to accept the tear in Di Silvestro's eye, much less those of the followers. Did they really succeed in sustaining such a pitch of exaltation as the dispatches would have us believe?

Of course we are guided by hindsight: we are instantly suspicious of the glamor of Fascism, which affected large numbers of native-born Americans as well as Italian immigrants in the 1920s (Diggins 1972). Behind the mass exaltation, we see elite calculation, and we would like to think that most immigrants would not fall for it.

There is some evidence to justify our mistrust. The Order's press releases naturally show us the experience designed for the pilgrims and not the complexity of what really happened. But certain lapses allow us to guess at the resistance of some pilgrims to the official definition of the event. We read nothing of the stop in Naples; perhaps this is to avoid repetition of the long accounts about Palermo and Trieste, although it is hard to accuse Di Silvestro of oversensitivity to redundancy. Why, though, do we read so little of the trip across Italy? It's possible, of course, that L'Opinione found better ways to occupy its pages, but one indication suggests something more. "Over 1400] pilgrims" left New York; but by the time we get to Turin, it is 350] (September 16). In Rome the numbers seem to rise somewhat: we have 400] mentioned on September 24, and an ambiguous "hundreds" on the day of the audience. But what became of the other thousand?

They can only have jumped ship at Palermo or Naples. Indeed, this is the obvious reason for those first two stops, however symbolically compelling might be the layering of Palermo upon Trieste. Clearly there was a compromise implicit in the very organization of the pilgrimage: in exchange for impressive numbers at the inauguration of the event, the hierarchs of the Order sacrificed control in Italy.

The majority of pilgrims, then, were not sufficiently inspired by their indoctrination to prefer the new national Italy and its sacred leader to their village and family. The organizers' efforts at consensus were not successful, or not successful enough: they had not infused the new objects of devotion with the same degree of reality as the old ones.

This was true not merely of the pilgrimage, but of Italian life in general in Philadelphia and similar cities. While the elite fought to establish the teaching of Italian in the schools and the commemoration of Columbus in festival and monument, ordinary immigrants were busy reconstructing the village in the city. Chain migration reassembled villagers: Italian Americans in South Philadelphia can still tell you which streets are largely Sicilian and which Abruzzese, and two generations ago the identifications were more local than that. In the face of an unsympathetic Catholic hierarchy, immigrants organized the festa of their patron saint themselves, the procession sometimes leaving

from a private house. Local dialects were maintained among paesani and taught to children.

Certainly the specificity of local identities has been eroded with time, as the younger generations intermarry and mingle traditions, and as the memory of the older one fades. But the fact of local identification has not. The "urban village," the neighborhood, has replaced the village of origin. While many young Italian Americans have "emigrated" to the suburbs, they make pilgrimages to the old neighborhood on holidays, and several of their siblings, equally prosperous, have preferred to remain there. They keep their parents' house or buy another down the street from it, and neighborhood personal networks thus persist. So does local pride and deprecation of local rivals: residents of individual blocks join forces to outdo all others in holiday decorations, for example. The neighborhood is delineated as sacred space in the annual procession of the parish church, and while Santa Filomena may be losing her grip in America, replacements are emerging: one such is the Blessed Mother of Juniper Street, an image placed on a house by a local man in fulfillment of a vow and maintained and illuminated since his death by the collaboration of the neighbors. Even language has been to some extent localized: South Philadelphia speech has lexical items unintelligible to other city residents. A baby who is fussy about eating is "skeevy," from Italian schifo ("disgust"). Little boys address each other as "mommy" in a complex development from the affective language of southern Italian mothers (Sorrento 1950).

Centripetal Identities

But while "[9th Street" evokes more to most South Philadelphians than do "Italy" or "America," it would be wrong to dismiss the latter as meaningless abstractions. The Columbus Day Parade, which celebrates the Italian passage to America not as the desperation of huddled masses, but as a heroic adventure with world-altering consequences, is enthusiastically celebrated, and the symbolic geography of the Sons of Italy pilgrimage is the same one that shapes Italian American perceptions today. Many descendants of Calabrian immigrants take authentic-that is, sincerely felt-pride in the achievements of Dante and Marconi as compatriots. In the same way, the construction of Italian immigrants as Italian Americans, a category equivalent to German Americans, Irish Americans, Polish Americans, and so forth, has allowed Italians to claim membership in America on an equal footing: they are a group like others with an old country, a language, a set of heroes; in short, with a "culture" to contribute to America's "multicultural heritage," a culture seen as a bounded and integrated thing (Handler 1988).

The identities of many Philadelphia Italian Americans are concentric (Caro Baroja 1957): they belong to a neighborhood, then to an ethnic group, and then to a city and a country. More than concentric, they are centripetal: since the neighbors are also

Italian Americans,[5] Philadelphians, and Americans, the coherence of local experience infuses the larger relations with authenticity. Converse1y, actions in the larger spheres are judged by their local consequences: it is time to question the leaders when the Philadelphia Naval Yard is in danger of closure, or when a trash-to-steam plant is being planned for South Philadelphia.

But local identities have little power to resist more general claims of authority. The paese persists against the attempted translation to the patria; it can even be a source of values by which to criticize the patria. But it is a smaller, not a competing, sphere of action. It is only on the rare occasions of direct local threat that politics are made at street level in South Philadelphia. As a rule, they are made by South Philadelphia's elected officials negotiating within a larger sphere: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, or America. The process of political representation moves the making of decisions to the outer circles of identity, away from the self. In the same way, nonelected "community leaders" gain power by their mobility between spheres: as selfdeclared voices of the Italian community, they are listened to in the larger context, and they gain local legitimacy in turn by having the ear of higher powers.

The Sons of Italy lost nothing by the pilgrims who chose to go straight back to their villages; indeed the Order gained by every pilgrim who signed up only to jump ship in Palermo. If not the framer of their experience in Italy, the Order was still the guarantor of their safe arrival. The emotion of return to a beloved place and people, the gratification bound up in the experience of the particular were attained through acceptance of a more general form of social organization, the Order and its Fascist principles. While the particular experience of home did not always validate the general claims of the Order, it did nothing to refute or change them: the two domains may have met in private reflection, but never in public dialogue. By foregoing the insistence on full identification with its program, the Order in fact increased its power to speak for its members without their interference. The patria did not abolish, but it successfully contained, the paese; consensus' at the inner level fed consent at the outer.

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[5] Even when this is not true of origins, it is true of culture: Italian South Philadelphia has a remarkable capacity for assimilating other ethnicitys, within, it is true, the limits of race. The question of race can complicate this circle of identities.

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5. Stereotypes as Cultural Constructs: Kaleidoscopic Picture of Italian Americans in Northern California

Paola Schellenbaum

I've travelled about the world enough to know that every race is as good as any other. But that's why you get fed up and try to put down roots, to have your own bit of land and your own village so that what you are will be worth a bit more, and will last a bit longer, than a mere cycle of the seasons.
Cesare Pavese, The Moon and the Bonfires

You need a village, if only for the pleasure of going away from it. A village means not being alone, knowing that in the people, in the vegetation and in the earth there is something that's yours which, even when you're not there, is there waiting for you. But it's not easy being there without getting restless.
Cesare Pavese, The Moon and the Bonfires

By afternoon we were at Sacramento, the city of gardens in a plain of corn; and the next day before the dawn we were lying-to upon the Oakland side of San Francisco Bay. The day was breaking as we crossed the ferry; the fog was rising over the citied hills of San Francisco; the bay was perfectnot a ripple, scarce a stain, upon its blue expanse; everything was waiting, breathless, for the sun. A spot of cloudy gold lit first upon the head of Tamalpais, and then widened downward on its shapely shoulder; the air seemed to awaken, and began to sparkle; and suddenly

"The tall hills Titan discovered"

and the city of San Francisco, and the bay of gold and corn, were lit from end to end with summer daylight.
Robert Louis Stevenson, To the Golden Gates

Introduction

The recent revival has brought to the fore a new and heated debate on ethnicity and ethnic relations in the United States and elsewhere. New paradigms are being developed to explain the ways people live and experience their ethnic "heritage," and social

scientists no longer depict immigrants as trapped in a traditional/modern bipolarity (Yans-McLaughlin 1990). Social conflicts and culture change are being interpreted through cultural processes because "dynamics of culture differentiation . . . are dynamics of differentiation through culture" (my translation), as Gaudier (1991: xvi) has pointed out. In spite of the debate between the "twilight of ethnicity" (Alba 1985) and "ethnic revival" (Smith 1981; Williams 1989) points of view, Italian Americans still ambivalently perceive their "Italian past" in opposition to an "American present." Among other cultural constructs, stereotypes have been used to show the creation of ethnic boundaries (Barth 1969) in everyday practice, and to highlight the "invention of tradition" (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Gaudier 1991) and the "paradoxical sense that ethnicity is something reinvented and reinterpreted" (Fischer 1986: 195) among Italian Americans in Northern California.[1]

Rather than focus exclusively on Italian Americans as Italian Americans, I have chosen to analyze stereotypes as the product of the interrelationships between the people and those who study them. The result is a kaleidoscopic picture that takes into account cultural variability and individual creativity, as well as public and intergroup social meaning. Thus, I have relied heavily on life histories, genealogies, historical materials as well as an analysis of secondary sources, arguing that it is impossible to understand Italian American stereotypes without examining the ways they are used by the people and those who write about them, and within the context of American society at large.[2]

Through informants, I investigated folk models of culture and history in order to point out how theories and ideas have changed through time and that they are, therefore, historically and contextually determined. Viewing common sense as a cultural

[1] Research among Italian Americans in Northern California was the basis of my degree thesis, defended at the University of Padua, Italy, in July 1990. I wish to thank Antonio Marazzi and Sylvia Yanagisako for their assistance throughout fieldwork, and Ben Kilborne, Elizabeth Mathias, Paolo Palmeri, Alessandro Falassi, and Patrick Mullen, who at different times read early versions of this paper and provided me with valuable feedback and bibliographic leads. I am grateful to Luisa Del Giudice for her careful reading: she has been a patient and extraordinary editor.

[2] Research on Italian American families in Northern California took place in the summer of 1988] and summer and fall of 1989] in the San Francisco Bay Area, where Italians have settled since the Gold Rush years. Sixteen families were studied: twelve ran a family-owned business, while four relied on other sources of income. Family firms were wineries and flower businesses in the Bay Area, and bars, grocery stores, and bakeries in San Francisco. Thirty-four people were interviewed (fifteen men and nineteen women) in a total of forty-eight interviews. Eleven key informants were also contacted (seven in the United States and four in Italy). Even if my sample was not statistically significant, it was nonetheless diversified by regional origin of the informants, their year of immigration, their age and education, their social and occupational status, their current residence and, for those who owned a family firm, its year of foundation. Compared to the East Coast, where ghettos and insular communitiesthe Little Italicshave proliferated, Italian American communities in the Bay Area are not circumscribed geographically, but rather extend into the surrounding areas. Also San Francisco was at the beginning of the century the only American town where northern Italians outnumbered southern Italians. According to Cinel (1982), four provinces were heavily represented: Lucca (Tuscany), Genoa (Liguria), Cosenza (Calabria), and Palermo (Sicily). My sample reflected this distribution.

system (Geertz 1983), I have analyzed stereotypes as cultural constructs, which convey symbolic meaning for a subjectively relevant ethnic identity. Cultural constructs and ethnic metaphors are a condensation of both private and public meaning: their effectiveness[3] is reexperienced in the interview. Consider, for example, the myth[4] of success among Northern California Italian Americans, a myth which fosters the belief that West Coast Italian Americans are "American" without in any way compromising their "Italian heritage." By way of contrast, according to the stereotype, East Coast Italian Americans, who operate according to different cultural constructs, still see themselvesand are still seenas a minority group, living in ghettos and incompletely integrated into American society.

Through life histories, I was not only able to collect information on families and family businesses during the last century, but I became methodologically aware that they represent a locus of interaction, an intersubjective field. Recollection gives past events meaning since it is filtered through a belief system based on present assumptions about successes and failures in the immigrant experience, and on what is perceived to be "Italian" and "American," often equated as traditional versus modern, hereditary versus acquired, ius sanguinis versus ius soli, and natural blood ties versus chosen bonds. Therefore I transcribed the interviews literally in order to emphasize a dialogue, a set of voices: those of my informants and my own, as the researcher.

In my interviews, I sought to go back and forth between two belief systems. For instance, my prototypical Italian features were subjected to greater conflict in my interactions with older informants, who reacted by trying to show and communicate their italianità, Italianness, and sometimes their accomplished acculturation. Younger informants, especially women, instead saw me as an ethnic resource and asked questions about the Italian way of life in the 1990s. In these conversations, Italy was not as idealized and the stereotypes became variegated. The interviews grew out of the personal rapport I was able to establish with these families, who shared with me the memories and vicissitudes of their past and present. Interviews were situation-ally bound, as well as limited by perceptions and stereotyping.

My processual view of culture, which emphasizes people as subjects rather than objects, has led me to question assumptions of the existence of an independent, neutral, separate and objective reality, which would lead to the legitimation of an unchangeable, "natural," everlasting status quo. Sollors (1986) has recently stressed the tension between descent and consent in the cultural construction of ethnicity over historical time (central to Italian. Americans in Northern California), while Ianni (1987) has

[3] Effectiveness is here thought of as the metaphors' and symbols' capacity to affect personal and social imagery that orients and constructs ethnic identity. Cultural and personal constructs help people make sense of their life and experience in the New World.

[4] I use the term myth in its wider meaning of a narration of facts and events referring to popular etiology and used to interpret social reality. It is part of everyday practice.

addressed this tension through stereotypes and "ethnotypes."[5] The stereotype, which refers to a supposed "essence" (Italian Americans are family oriented), contradicts the historically changing qualities of ethnic identity chosen as metaphor to represent and convey ethnic experience in the society at large.[6] Conzen et al. state that "the invention of ethnicity furthermore suggests an active participation by the immigrants in defining their group identities and solidarities" (1990: 38) and draw our attention to the process of ethnic group formation and definition in "concrete historical contexts,"[7] which is the ultimate goal of my work.

In this essay, I analyze the dialectical relationship between "modern" and "traditional" through stereotypes, viewing them as: (a) cultural constructs accomplished over historical time (for example, a kaleidoscopic perspective on the definition of ethnicity); (b) personal and emotional reactions to historical transformation (for example, present assumptions of failures and successes in the immigration experience); (c) mirroring myths (for example, that of success among Italian Americans in Northern California, shaped through their relationship with other ethnic groups and coethnics living on the East Coast); and (d) ethnic revival and the metaphorical use of ethnic identity in. everyday interactions (for example, the reconstruction of the history of California in ethnic terms).

This is an essay on how social actors create identities and memories, interpret histories, and how these, in turn, mold people's perceptions. Nowadays anthropological concern has turned upside down the nineteenth-century approach that the past created the present. The question to be asked is: "how did the present create the past? In order to account for the present, to justify it, understand it, or criticize it, the past is used, selectively appropriated, remembered, forgotten, or invented" (Tonkin, McDonald, and Chapman 1989: 5). The shift in anthropology has acknowledged that those categories that seem to be "natural" and fixed are neither one nor the other (Di Leonardo 1991); they are creations resulting from a process of "bricolage" and "debricolage" (Ardener 1989: 29), by which old events are often used for new purposes.

[5] Ianni defines the ethnotype as a process of cultural and psychosocial categorization, in terms of abstract metaphor instead of a socially organized group, that preserves ethnic identity when functional groups are absent. It differs from stereotypes because the latter are composed of beliefs on ethnotypes (Ianni 1987: 207).

[6] Ethnic categorization has been described according to different perspectives, sometimes stressing objective indicators (i.e., language, race, biological traits), and sometimes relying on self-ascription. In both cases it has not been recognized that ethnic boundaries (both intragroup and intergroup) are constantly redefined, and ethnic identity is constructed through social negotiation and bargaining. (See, for example, Barth 1969; Wallman 1980; Bernardi 1990.)

[7] The authors stress the need to consider "concrete historical contexts, particular factors and contigencies [that] impinge upon the process [of the invention of ethnicity], accelerating, decelerating, directing and redirecting it." The his-toricization of immigration not only refers to the fact that "time and space conditioned the process of ethnicization" but also to "the temporal axis encompassed such matters as the timing of migrations, the stage of development in the country of origin and in the country of destination, the incidence of economic and political cycles, and generational transitions" (my emphasis) (Conzen et al. 1990: 42).

This essay tries also to address questions of fact and fiction, maintaining that both informants and the ethnographer participate in the creative process, as Leach noted with his "all ethnography is fiction"

(1989: 34). Scholars in both folklore and oral history have raised similar questions (Titon 1980; Cohler 1982; Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 1989), variably stressing the point. The dichotomy between fact and fiction can be overcome if we realize that "the aptitude and willingness to treat what people believe to be true as if it were, indeed, true, is in many respects a hard-won anthropological privilege. . .. because the discourse in which fact and fiction are opposed is so well-established, it is difficult to escape from itdifficult to find a position that is not, in some way or another, an espousal of conventional oppositions" (Tonkin, McDonald, and Chapman 1989: 11). Treating stereotypes as cultural constructs sheds light on the fact that informants not only tell researchers their lives, not only recollect events when asked by the anthropologist, but also do so in their everyday lives. They interpret their past in order to act in the present, as revealed by the Italian Californians in this study.

Stereotypes as Cultural Constructs: A Kaleidoscopic Picture

When I first started fieldwork, I shaped my interviews on the basis of the conversations I had had the previous summer with an Italian American family (Schellenbaum 1988).[8] I wanted to talk about stereotypes in a different way, to avoid falling into the stereotype of the stereotype myself, and receiving as a response. a list of adjectives and names, decontextualized of their meaning and operative context.[9]

One possible way of allowing informants to talk about stereotypes was to ask about episodes and events where they felt they had been discriminated against and try to draw conclusions, together with the informant, about the historical context, the transformation of meanings and symbols through time.[10] A woman, who came to San Francisco as a baby in 1921] from a little village in Liguria, had once told me about la mano nera, "the black hand," a mafia phenomenon, mainly occurring on the East Coast, according to her.[11] In those first interviews, I found rich material dealing with the strong

[8] I did not use a structured questionnaire since my interviews were open-ended conversations in which I tried to follow the informant's lead.

[9] Obeyesekere speaks of "operative culture" and points out that "in cultural analysis it is not sufficient to delineate the culture: it is also necessary to see how it operates in collective or individual experience" (1981: 139-40).

[10] For a discussion of the relevance of historical analysis in anthropology, see Ortner 1984. Among others, Renato Rosaldo (1980) and Sylvia Yanagisako (1985) have stressed the historical approach in their studies, respectively, on Ilongot people in the Philippines and Japanese Americans in Seattle. For its application to the study of ethnicity, see Tonkin, McDonald, and Chapman 1989, and Conzen et al. 1990.

[11] X-VNI.AZ-BA.[88/1, interviewed on July 14, 1988. Interviews have been coded in a computerized data bank: the first letter refers to the diskette, the second group to the family and the informant, and the third group to the geographical area, the year, and the number of the interview.

ties with the Old Country, regionalism, and the foreign language one has to learn in order to become a citizen; the latter is a difficult step to take, not only "because one has to learn the history of the United States of America and show writing and reading skills," but also because symbolically the new citizenship means uprooting, cutting off, a final decision not to return to the homeland.[12]

Another way of persuading informants to talk about stereotypes was to study intergroup perceptions, and see whether regionalism had really been an organizing factor, in line with Cinel's (1982) work. Italy at the end of nineteenth century was a highly fragmented country and southern Italians had different customs from northern Italians. As we shall see, this was not only the case historically, but it recurs (along with other bipolarities, for example, East versus West Coast, North Beach versus Bay Area, southern versus northern Italians) in both the discourse and mass media (movies, journals, brochures) of today. Furthermore these polarities come up in historical reconstructions of Italian Americans in Northern California, both in popular and academic publications.

A third way of allowing informants to talk about stereotypes in other than stereotypical ways, as suggested by Spike Lee's film, Do the Right Thing, was to look at them in a systemic way: positing Italian Americans within a multiethnic society and seeing them in relation to other ethnic groups, and then comparing the mutual perceptions and mirroring categories as reflected in newspapers and written accounts of early immigrants to Northern California.

These three perspectives are all important, but still leave out the social actors and their subjective experiences. My position enabled me to analyze not only the historical transformation, the impact of regionalism, and the mutual interactions of different ethnic groups, but also the construction and reconstruction of stereotypes, the way they are used in the past and the present to mold people's perceptions. I attempted to maintain a multifaceted perspective: to observe and participate in my informants' experience as though through the lens of a kaleidoscope, by looking at the traces these events had left in their memories and narratives, and reexperiencing the events themselves in the form of emotional reactions during the interview.

It is my belief that memory is very much a condensation in the present of past events. In the creative process of memory, a "key mediating term between individual and society," both informants and researchers deal with "representations of pastness" (Tonkin 1992: 98): narratives and memories are selectively "distorted" according to the interviewee's present position in the society at large. Hence, race, social status, age, and

[12] Psychoanalysts, among others, have elaborated on such concepts as uprooting, detachment from the homeland, and fears attached to the return (Mellina 1987; Kristeva 1988; Grinberg and Grinberg 1989). The feeling of not belonging to either place or like a stranger in the country of origin is a recurring motif in the informants I interviewed. Ethnic identity is affected by these dynamics. Informants would speak of "two brains," "split brain" or "the culture of the suitcase." The former expressions refer to a problematic and potentially pathological attitude; the latter develops a functional locusthe tripwhere these problems are coped with.

gender are all variables to be considered when interpreting the informants' accounts.[13] I also agree with Turner that "it is structurally unimportant whether the past is 'real' or 'mythical', 'moral' or 'amoral'. The point is whether meaningful guidelines emerge from the existential encounter within a subjectivity of what we have derived from previous structures or units of experience in living relations with the new experience. This is a matter of meaning, not merely of value . . ." (1986: 36).

I hope to show how stereotypes, seen as cultural constructs, have helped people make sense of their life and experience in the New World and contributed to building that image, deposited in the collective imagery of both Italian Americans and those studying and interacting with them, which results in the formation of the myth of success.[14] Creating a kaleidoscopic picture allows me to bring into focus how my stereotypical ideas changed during research. I soon realized that not only was I there to collect ethnographic data on Italian Americans in California, but I could also scratch the surface of the stereotype and see how the acquisition of new notions influenced and modified my perception. I was interested in how this set of factors in turn conditioned the way in which Italian Americans perceive themselves and are perceived.[15]

"Measuring Italianness": The Analysis of Common Sense

In any stereotypical representation or perception, there are two elements at work in people's experience: the fixed and unchanging, and the superficial and distorted.[16]

[13] I looked at people as part of a wider network, partly coinciding with kinship. Women tended to understand these dynamic family relationships better. Gender affected memory. Women and men not only remembered or stressed different aspects of their immigration experience, but also used different ways of conceiving time and space. Whereas men described their experiences using goal-oriented activities and represented time in a linear, chronological way, women relied upon context. The women I interviewed, for example, organized their descriptions of their lives in terms of metaphors, relationships or ages of children, or childhood events (Schellenbaum 1993b).

[14] Images go beyond words; they are metaphorical in the sense that they convey a wide variety of both cognitive and affective meanings. For a similar definition, see Siebert (1991: 28-29). In speaking of "collective" imagery, I am aware of what Tonkin notes: "the word 'collective' is misleading, because there is no single undifferentiated collectivity which is 'the social'" (1992: 106), and the kaleidoscopic picture goes in this direction. I nevertheless use it here because it shows the homogenizing constraints of stereotypes.

[15] In this regard, doing fieldwork among California Italian Americans allowed for intragroup differentiation, because a second term in the analysis was introduced: East vs. West Coast. This was suggested by the informants themselves. Moreover, the intrinsic structuring power of the stereotype, which would limit perception, was actively involved while the interview was taking place. I had to reformulate my questions in order to follow the informants' lead, and still my perceptions of Italian Americans interacted with their perceptions of themselves in a dialectic of interpretation.

[16] Following are three definitions of stereotype that stress different nuances of meaning: "Something continued or constantly repeated without change, a stereotyped phrase, formula, stereotyped diction or usage. To fix or perpetuate in an unchanging form" (my emphasis) (Oxford English Dictionary); "A

A fundamental condition for constructing the stereotype, as describing or depicting a social group or an individual belonging to the group, is extrapolating from the context of a particular, thought to be representative, and generalizing it to the group as a whole, without considering spatial and temporal coordinates. In the case of Italian American immigration, this dynamic is even stronger because there are two cultural systems: one from the country of origin and one from the host country. As far as the former is concerned, the spatiotemporal crystallization reveals a rural and backward society, with poor immigrants often coming from southern Italy, whereas the latter describes the Italian American immigrant living in New York, who earns money making pizza and is constantly in conflict with blacks and Puerto Ricansstereotypes can move about a central axis like a spiral and endlessly reproduce other stereotypes. Taking their meaning from a group of related terms, ethnic stereotypes construct a moral vocabulary along dimensions of inclusion/exclusion, dignity and disdain, familiarity and strangeness, as Tonkin, McDonald, and Chapman, (1989) have observed for ethnos, from which the term "ethnicity" derives.

As Marazzi sharply points out, "Yet, it [the stereotype] is a cultural product, representing an indicator of perspectives and expectations, especially in the encounter with the diverse, the unknown. It has, moreover, another characteristic: it displays emotional reactions which are culturally conditioned" (my translation) (1990b: 10). In his view, not only are stereotypes directly related to emotions such as outbursts of anger (in this case, "Italian Americans are all mafiosi"), or happiness ("Italian Americans are all Latin lovers"), or fear ("blacks are all criminals"), where an ethnic group is treated as a scapegoat in any ambiguous situation, but he indirectly indicates an apparent dichotomy in the concept of the stereotype which is more oblique. According to Western thought, "scientific explanations" would be characterized by rationality, objectivity, linearity, and deep knowledge, in opposition to "common sense," where emotions, irrationality, subjectivity, and superficial knowledge are the case in everyday discourse. As a consequence, scientific discourse would be exempt from stereo-types, which instead would find fertile soil in everyday practice.[17]

By viewing stereotypes as cultural constructs, anthropologists can now deconstruct the stereotypical view of stereotypes by recognizing, with Geertz, that "there are a number of reasons [for] treating common sense as a relatively organized body of considered thought" (1983: 75): those following common sense in everyday life not only have ears to listen and eyes to see, but they effectively organize their lives and cope

relatively rigid and excessively simplified, distorted perception or concept of an aspect of reality, in particular of people or social groups" (my translation, my emphasis) (Dizionario della Lingua Iraliana, by Zingarelli); "A conventional and usually oversimplified conception or belief; one considered typical of a kind and without individuality; to form a fixed, unvarying idea (my emphasis) (American Heritage Dictionary).

[17] I wish to alert the reader to the danger of thinking that stereotypes are intrinsic to common sense. As Marazzi notes, they can be seen as indicators of the culture itself; only through a deconstruction is it possible to show how the stereotype is produced and reproduced in the cultural code.

with problems. As a consequence, the equation between stereotypes and common sense is relatively easy: following Geertz's lead, we can now look at stereotypes as cultural artifacts.[18]

In the commonsensical view, or in classical social theory, stereo-types were perceived in the past as a list of traits, and Italianness was something one could measure along a straight traditional/modern continuum. But stereotypes are more complex and grow out of the cultural construction of ethnicity, they are also strongly influenced by the locus of the interview, where differing subjectivities interact. The origin of the stereotype, both as interpreted by my informants and from my Italian vantage point, is dialectically located in the meanings of "Italian" and "American." I reached this dialectic of interpretation after realizing that to "measure Italianness," I needed to shift from a vectorial perception of "modern" versus "traditional" to multicentered models.

The Changing of Stereotypes in Fieldwork

Before leaving Italy for my fieldwork in America, I had several opportunities to talk about my research in various contexts, ranging from the informal to the academic. Common sense and stereotypes were intertwined in my interlocutors' minds. The usual questions focused on whether Italian Americans were still pizza makers or mafiosi. Those who were acquainted with migration processes would ask whether the Little Italies resembled insular communities and ghettos, where Italian and its various dialects were spoken in everyday interactions as a way of resisting integration and affirming ethnic identity. Others would ask about chain migration and whether immigrants would maintain quasi-kinship ties in the future. The stereotype would develop along well-known patterns, involving the notions that Italians in the past had large extended families, which encouraged what has been described as "amoral familism" (Banfield 1958).[19] Those who were more familiar with women's history asked whether Italian American women still belonged to the inner world of the household, cooking tomato sauce in the backyard and spending most of the day in a kitchen decorated with garlands of onion and garlic. By contrast, men would be members of the outer world of work and politics.

These ideas refer to a well-known binary opposition that equates women with the traditional, private and domestic world, as passive elements of social change, and men with the progressive, public and juro-political domain, as active elements of social change. In addition, this opposition is reinforced when Italian Americans are depicted as peasants approaching the "bright lights of the city." As feminist scholars (Maher

[18] In Local Knowledge, Geertz goes deep into the analysis of common sense. He lists four major characteristics: common sense belongs to the domain of nature (vs. culture); it is practical and concrete (vs. theoretical and abstract); it is simple and superficial (vs. deep and analytical); and it uses ad hoc hypotheses (vs. a rigorous scientific method) (1983: 91).

[19] Amoral familism is defined as the attitude according to which one owes nothing to anyone outside the family and effort should advance only the family.

1974; Di Leonardo 1984; Yanagisako 1985; Collier and Yanagisako 1987; Saraceno 1988) have pointed out, such stereotypes legitimize subordination of the supposed "keepers of tradition" (peasants and women) and avoid explaining the reasons why such oppositions are maintained and reproduced. Were this narration on Italian American ethnic typology to continue, we would soon realize that these different stereotypes in fact have emerged from classical sociological and historical literature on migratory processes.[20]

These much-discussed traits seem to suggest that we can measure Italianness and determine whether people still struggle for cultural identity according to how much they eat spaghetti or visit their relatives. The kaleidoscopic view is headed in another direction; it looks at the mechanisms that direct people's experience in the light of their ethnic heritage. In discussing excerpts from my fieldwork in Northern California, I will not only highlight some of the stereotypes I encountered, but also reveal which cultural processes and mechanisms are active in making and remaking the stereotype: "Ethnic groups in modern settings are constantly recreating themselves and ethnicity is continously being reinvented in response to changing realities both within the group and the host societies" (Conzen et al. 1990: 38).

Varieties of Meaning in Stereotypes

Talking about stereotypes has been, from the beginning, a difficult task, especially when connected, in people's minds, to the notion of prejudice. Stereotype and prejudice were mentioned in the interview only rarely, and, what is more important, with differing emphasis. Varieties of meaning change along with gender, position in society, age, and context. Considering people as belonging to social contexts allows them to claim a variety of identities (including ethnic identity) that would be mutually exclusive in other contexts (Schellenbaum 1991). Consider, for example, gender differentiation: whereas men reported that there was no longer any prejudice against Italian Americans, even though there had been in the past, women tended to underline the emotional

[20] Italians have been depicted in the past as "birds of passage" for their pattern of temporary migration, often attributed to the agrarian culture of their origin: the attachment to the family, the refusal to assimilate into the host society, the purpose of migration reduced to the accumulation of money to invest in the home country, and so on. Incidentally, what is striking about this metaphor used for Italians in the past, and for Hispanics in California and non-EEC immigrants in Italy today, is the apparent need for each country and epoch tohave its "uprooted" in order to reinforce its national identity. Italy, now. dealing with a new wave of immigration from non-EEC countries, is particularly sensitive to these issues. A second factor connected to the establishing of national identities and threatened by the presence of non-EEC nationals, is the recovering of Italians lost to emigration. Significantly, a pamphlet announcing an exposition on Italians in Australia recited: "In a present facing the arrival of other people who come to look for a job and better living conditions in our lands, we must remember what happened to our ancestors, a century ago." Further, several articles devoted to non-EEC immigration stress Italy as a country of emigration and immigration (e.g., Melotti 1990).

tones of stereotypes. Stereotypes have a different impact on the experience of men and women, as one can see in the following stories.

Stereotypes of the Past: A Paradox Leading to Success

An elderly man, who came to the United States when he was sixteen, early in this century, used to work in construction as an unskilled worker: "hard work . . . because let me tell you something you don't know: because all of us Italians, we were not seen very well."[21] VP felt he was a victim of the mechanisms through which the stereotype functions in everyday interactions: generalization which ignores diversity. Other ethnic groups,[22] now living together in the San Francisco area, expected from Italian immigrants behavior normally attributed to southern Italians, especially Sicilians, even though San Francisco was the only town where northern Italians outnumbered southern Italians.[23]

"They [other ethnic groups] are people who deceive you when they look at you; they are not stupid, but they think you are a pig. Coming from northern Italy, from the Marche region, we were not well seen at all . . . because we were not many."[24] It is clear here that VP not only became conscious of his ethnic origins when he arrived in the United States, but also had to adjust his reactions to the stereotype. His behavior in everyday life was guided by what other people thought he was: a southern Italian. As Ianni (1987: 202) points out, both "Italian" and "Italian American" were newly created categories in the New World. Varieties in ethnic origin, varieties of behaviors and life trajectories are canceled by the unifying power of the stereotype at work: the crystallization of traits nourishes what Cinel (1982) documents as regionalism. In his From Italy to San Francisco, he relates regionalism to the historical situation of nineteenth-century Italy, partly accentuated by the immigration experience.

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[21] X-MCH.VP-BA.[89/1, interviewed Oct. 2, 1989. He died in the summer of 1990. "Un lavoro duro . . . perché io ci devo dire una cosa. che Lei non lo sa: perchétutti noi, noialtri italiani in America eravamo malvisti." Interviews were conducted in both Italian and/or English, according to the informant's language fluency. When translated in these notes, they were in Italian.

[22] In San Francisco at the turn of the century, Chinese, Germans, Irish, and Italians were the major ethnic groups. In 1880, the Chinese formed 22.[64 percent of the total foreign population, while Italians were 1.89 percent. In 1900, the Chinese decreased to 9 percent and Italians reached 6 percent. In 1920, the Chinese were reduced to 2 percent and Italians represented 16 percent (Cinel 1982). In 1930, the Irish were the largest ethnic group (16.[5 percent), followed by Italians (16.1 percent) and English (16 percent), Germans (15.[4 percent), Swedish (8.[5 percent), and others (27.[5 percent). See Issel and Cherny 1986.

[23] Salvetti (1982) agrees with Cinel (1982) that from 1899] to 1914, 70 percent of Italians came from northern regions.

[24] "Sono gente [gli altri gruppi etnici] un poco che ti ingannano per guardarti, non sono stupidi, ma sono tutti per loro come maiale, Allora noi qui su dell'Italia, delle Marche non ci potevano vedere . . . delle Marche non c'era tanta gente."

When another informant, CC, a wine producer in Gilroy, was first asked about stereotypes and prejudices, he did not remember any discriminatory episodes.[25] He only briefly mentioned that Italians had been called nicknames such as dago "maybe in 1890, but this does not exist today anymore." What made CC say that Italians were not discriminated against? He had been born in the United States at the turn of the century of Italian parents. He had learned English in school, and had spoken at home the Piedmontese dialect which he now had totally forgotten, except for a few words with which he addressed me when we first met. It seems that for CC talking about stereotypes and prejudice of the past was less relevant than telling about the fortune accumulated through his business, and about the contribution Italians have made to society.

It is striking that the stereotype, when analyzed as cultural construct, adds connotations that go beyond the mere membership in an ethnic group. Stereotypes and ethnic categorization create boundaries that have to be constantly redefined through symbolic negotiation, which intersects with class, gender and, even more, with the group's status within society. It is not a coincidence that Italian Americans in Northern California, who see themselves as more successful than their coethnics on the East Coast, represent themselves as assimilated: this is subject to change according to both personal and social dynamics.

Generally speaking, Italian Californian men, when not denying prejudice, as did CC, tended to lessen the impact that discrimination had had on their life as young children. Another wine producer, now retired in Los Gatos, told about his father putting up a sign on El Camino Real.[26] It was the Prohibition era, and Italians were often thought to be engaged in illegal wine production. In 1932] many wineries reopened. It is also true that small family businesses made wine for "personal use" all through Prohibition,

Was it hard to be Italian?In the beginning, yes; when he [his father] started the winery, he put a sign on El Camino. I begged him, "Don't put a sign," but he did. I was in high school and people were making fun of us, they were calling us bootleggers . . . it wasn't easy, but now in the wine business, there is a lot of romance . . .

Children in school suffered from being discriminated against and often a desire to show ethnic pride became mixed with intergenerational conflict (Schellenbaum 1988). MG's story reveals that mechanism according to which stereotypes are explained as belonging to the past (as with CC) and limited to children's playful activities, something like an innocent game: "It's the same with all nationalities; we used to have names for everyone, but nowadays you can't do that. They called us wops, dagos, the Chinese chinks, there were nicknames for the Slavonians . . . the kids at school had a name for everybody. . .. there are so many different nationalities in school now, they have to get along."

[25] X-CNR.CC-BA.[89/1, interviewed with his wife, Oct. 5, 1989.
[26] X-OBS.MG-BA.[89/1, interviewed Sept. 28, 1989]

Introducing the time factor, MG stressed the change in ethnic relations and suggested that being of Italian origin in the 1990s is something to be proud of. Here, again, the Stereotype is used by the informant to convey images of well-being, success, and accomplished assimilation:

Do you remember any episode in which you felt proud of being Italian?Not really then; now, yes. I belong to a club, it's like the Rotary Club, and we meet once a week; we are eight Italians now and we have two people in the club who are not Italian and they always say, "Oh, I wish I were Italian."

Why?

I don't know, because they see we have a good time, we joke.

What are the characteristics of being Italian?We are a very happy group, we like to eat and drink; other groups know how to have fun, of course, but with Italians it shows more in their food, in music, in dancing. . ..

During fieldwork other defensive explanations emerged. For example, one informant related prejudice and discrimination to the fact that the one who comes late gets the worse jobs, as if that was a natural event, a fixed step in the social ladder: bisogna fare la gavetta, "one has to start from the bottom." What is evident here is that people, while telling about their past, reinterpret it in terms of the present, pointing out the progress Italians have made in society. As Yanag-isako points out, "Like Japanese Americans, they [other ethnic groups] too construct tradition by reconceptualizing the past in relation to the meaning of their actions in the present, thereby transforming past and present in a dialectic of interpretation" (1985: 2).

In informants' narratives, I frequently encountered symbols of paradoxical success. In talking of present and past vicissitudes of California, these informants reinterpreted American history and the economic history of California in ethnic terms. Relations with other ethnic groups are therefore important. A particularly profitable activity in Northern California, garbage collection, was to become a sector dominated by Italians through the Scavenger Society.[27] Interestingly enough, personal and societal history have become intertwined in the informants' minds. Explanations are being formulated in order to show a paradox: Italians reached a position in society through the garbage business: a "dirty" job no one wanted to do.[28]

A key informant,[29] whose father was actively involved in the society's foundation, reported in narrating his tale that at the beginning, this company was composed of individuals who owned a horse and carriage. "They were little operators," gathering

[27] For a detailed work, see Perry 1978.

[28] XIV-IPUS.JD-SJ.[89/1, interviewed Sept. 27, 1989. The sociological literature has often related this attitude to the immigrants' idea of accumulating money and investing it in the home country. In most cases, extreme dedication to work was a tool to reach other goals, such as social status, land in Italy, the house in America, and well-being for the children, in favor of whom the decision to return was constantly postponed (Gans 1962). Some scholars have described this as the "paradox of emigration" (Barazzetti 1983).

[29] XIV-IPUS.JM-SF.[89/1, interviewed Aug. 14, 1989.

garbage and, in general, anything other people threw away in the streets of San Francisco, Oakland and San José. According to JM, the genovesi had come to California in 1849 for the Gold Rush. When things changed and life in the mines became too hard, the genovesi left: some went back to Italy, others stayed. Those who were more inclined to work the land became farmers, those who were not went to the city. Italian manpower was not specialized, and became concentrated in three areas: in the fishing industry, with the Chinese; in construction, as unskilled workers; and in the garbage business, "a job that was to become something useful to the community." From 1870] to 1919, the genovesi, alone or in pairs, collected garbage in towns. In 1919] two companies were founded: the Golden Gate Disposal Company and the Sunset Disposal Company: "I guess you call that in Italian società anonima," said JM. Italians were still the major shareholders and some have passed their position on to their children and grandchildren. Lately the two companies have merged into the Norcal Disposal Company. Until ten years ago, Italian Americans were still the majority; now they have leading positions in the company and non-Italian capital has been accepted. Interestingly enough, many workers (some of them shareholders) are now Mexican Americans. Little is left of the old ethnic solidarity, even though, during the 1989] earthquake in the Bay Area, some observers did notice that, in the Marina districtnow inhabited by well-to-do Italian Americansgarbagemen had collected objects from destroyed houses and gathered them into a school so that people could reclaim them. Observers explained this in terms of the ethnic ties binding the inhabitants of the district and the disposal company together. In JM's words, Italian Americans have literally built California, and choices seem to be dictated by the free Will of the subjects, rather than restricted by societal limitations and historical facts: he speaks of the "inclination" to do a job and feels he is a protagonist of history.

Another informant's father was among the founders of the Scavenger Society at the turn of the century. JDV reported that Italians were the last to arrive:[30]

I suppose it's like many other things. The Italians have been good workers and when you go into a new area, you sometimes do the jobs that other people don't want to do. You see, in the United States the people who were here first were obviously the English, Scots, the French and then the Germans, and then . . . Irish came in later and Italians came in after the Irish, and every new country, every new people are discriminated against. That's been the history of this country and the history of other countries also.

Discrimination was heavier on the East Coast. The contrast between the East and West Coast was constantly mentioned and helps to build the image of successful Italian Californians. What is relevant to JDV is the confinement of prejudice and discrimination to the past, not because Italians were not "an inferior race"after all, Italian Americans have gained a place in society through hard work and dedicationbut because "the last shall be first":

[30] XIV-IPUS.JDV-SJ.[89/1, interviewed Sept. 27, 1989.

And . . . that happened, you know, for a little while; it's not that you are an inferior race, it's just that you are the last one here and everybody else is just a little bit jealous of your being eager and wanting to work and wanting to do something, wanting to get ahead, and they put little obstacles in your way. But Italians were eager and very progressive kind of people and they worked, they worked hard, they were smart, they bought the land. You see, a lot of people didn't want to work the land. Here in our own city, the Irish, they were politicians and business people . . . but you see, those people, they were not ranchers, they were not orchard people, nor did they want to get their hands dirty by becoming garbagemen, you see, scavengers, but as a result, the land became valuable, extremely valuable. . .. With wealth goes power, so Italians don't have any problems at all in getting any kind of job, being anywhere. You find them in government, any kind of situation, and in this community they are all very well thought of and very distinguished, important people.

Because individual vicissitudes have also shaped the way people make sense of their life and the ethnic group they belong to, let us see how another informant reinterprets Italian Californian history from a different perspective:[31] "In the last generation, most Italians here were farmers, dairy farms were Portuguese or Swiss. After World War II, this valley was growing very quickly. Around here there were Italian Americans growing all kinds of vegetables, and after World War II, they all came back; the GIs also came back because they loved it. The weather was so good and they began to build and it is still going on . . ."

His father went to the Bay Area alone, following an uncle and leaving the rest of the family in Italy. SF's father was neither in land, nor in the garbage industry:

He was a shoemaker. He never was in the position of making great money. When my uncle was given the land here . . . you see, we could have been much wealthier today. The first ones arriving here were farmers and they had land and their land turned to gold after the 1950s. I can show hundreds of families who were poor when we were kids. . .. They used to have pasta con le fave, pasta e fagioli [pasta and beans], and every night, they had nothing and now these guys are millionaires because of the land. . .. Most of them were farmers, trucking; there are few families in town. . .. These people opened canneries, and they were drying fruits and as they did that, the war broke out and they were guaranteed. Every piece of fruit was sold to the army and a lot of these people received some kind of help from the government, like machinery, etc. Then when the war was over, all that stuff was theirs, and they kept it!

In both JDV's and SF's accounts, Italians were able to turn poverty and inferiority into success and respect, helped by the favorable economic conditions of postwar California, but while the first puts emphasis on the inevitability of this trend, the latter stresses the macro-historical forces. Further, according to SF, Italians were not treated the worst during World War II, despite the fact that those who did not naturalize were described as "enemy aliens." The Japanese, of course, suffered more during the war.

[31] XIV-IPUS.SE89/1, interviewed Aug. 1, 1989.

In these last excerpts, stereotypes seem to belong to the past and, if anything, focus historical recollection through the lens of present time. Emotional denial is achieved through the belief that stereotypes were used either in the past (CC), or by children in school (MG); that they produce a paradoxical success (JM), that they are in the nature of the history of countries experiencing immigration (JDV), or that there were other ethnic groups in worse conditions during World War II, like the Japanese (SF). But stereotypes and prejudices may also evoke shame.

Wop, Dago, Guinea: The Evocative Power of Stereotypes

Here are the narratives of second-generation immigrants, who experienced prejudice for being "sons and daughters of," in spite of their fluent English and their assimilation into the "melting pot." Their stories describe the postwar years, when they were adolescents. A woman, employed by a newspaper, reported that those were years in which "we were not proud of being Italian . . . it was unpopular. When you lose something, it is difficult to regain it.[32] Another informant, in line with ES, says: "Remember, we are those who lost the war!"[33]

SF is a forty-five-year-old man, originally from Sicily and living in San José.[34] He has spent a great deal of effort in trying to open up new sections of Italian language at the high school where he has been teaching. His has been a losing battle since the beginning. Some years ago SF asked an Italian American colleague why she did not speak Italian with her children. She replied that her son was genovese, not Italian. According to SF, a major problem becomes apparent here. First, Italian Americans themselves do not contribute to building a unified image. Italy was fragmented when their ancestors came to America and regionalism still seems to be a strong factor. "There are twenty-three clubs in the Bay Area, all regional clubs!" comments SF, adding that now regional clubs have changed the requirements for enrollment: one Italian parent is enough, and non-Italian spouses may also join.

Following Sollors's "descent/consent" paradigm (1986), one can see a gradual shift from descent (ethnic origin) to consent (American society) and a constant tension, through the changing boundaries of the ethnic group, between regionalism and pan-Italian ethnic identity. Today belonging to a regional group is more a way to distinguish oneself, and the rivalry between regional groups becomes something to joke about

[32] XIV-IPUS.ES-SF.[89/1, interviewed Aug. 1, 1989.

[33] X-MCH.VP-BA.[89/1, interviewed Oct. 2. 1989. "Si ricordi che noi siamo quelli che hanno perso la guerrai"

[34] XIV-SF.IPUS-SJ.[89/1, interviewed Aug. 17, 1989.

during ethnic festivals. Clubs have changed their function through time,[35] and the way people belong to them has also been transformed, following the vicissitudes of the "colony." Italian Americans in Northern California have moved toward well-being, entering the circles of the upper and middle classes, and their organizations have changed from mutual-aid societies to charity organizations or foundations granting funds for research.

Recent interest in "Italian culture" by young people should be encouraged, according to another ethnic organization activist,[36] in order to document "the contributions that Italian Americans made to the city of San Francisco," and also to foster a sense of pride, "to tell those people coming from Central America, we were here during the Gold Rush." The determination to transmit this sense of pride is something SF is seriously committed to:[37]

I have a personal campaign . . . we have a census every ten years and I encourage every Italian to write "Italian" instead of "other white" or genovese, and I'm having a hard time, but I'm trying to do it as much as possible locally here. . .. Italian Americans are a "forgotten minority"; just because you are an Italian, you are doing well, you are assimilated and you don't receive any kind of help, but if you are doing well, if you are a successful Italian, then you are a mafioso. There is a terrible discrimination here; sometimes it is very subtle, sometimes it is very . . . do you ever watch TV? Every other TV movie that you watch, detective stories, every other criminal is called Costello, Mignano . . . or Don . . . some Italian name . . . there is not a way of getting away from it. . ..

Where do you think this comes from?

It is ingrained: if you are a black, you can dance, right? . . . if you are Chinese, you eat rice . . . if you are Italian, you are a mafioso. You don't even need to be a Sicilian. That's a problem . . . .

What are other prejudices?Italian is anything laughable, anything goes; you can ten any kind of jokes with impunity; you couldn't say that to a Mexican or a black . . .. Then look at John Travolta, Sylvester Stallone, that type of image: if you are an Italian, you are a macho guy with no brain, or a dummy guy . . . it is not subtle, it is on the top, on the surface.

In SF's words, the stereotype is described as a natural, ingrained fact, which operates through a spatiotemporal crystallization and superficial description of particular traits,

[35] The first organization was founded in 1858] and was called the Società Italiana di Mutua Beneficienza. It currently manages the Italian cemetery in Colma, California. Starting in 1869, it operated the Italian hospital, which was later closed. Since 1916, the Italian Welfare Agency has had a social and welfare program for elderly people living in North Beach; it is situated in Casa Fugazi, which was donated by John Fugazi to the Italian colony in 1913. The Vittoria Colonna Women's Club opened in 1909] and operated as a welfare agency for immigrant mothers. Today it is a charity organization which promotes fundraising activities. Other clubs were founded in the 1920s. For a detailed account, see Scherini 1976.

[36] XIV-EM.IPUS-SJ.[89/1, interviewed Oct. 4, 1989.

[37] XIV-SF.IPUS-SJ.[89/1, interviewed Aug. 17, 1989.

which are then generalized to everyone. The constraints that SF feels are part of the symbolic violence exerted by the stereotype: what is ingrained cannot be chosen, and his anger comes from the perceived impossibility of redefining ethnic boundaries by one's own criteria, and from the inevitability of being represented through stereotypes in films, which are chosen by others.

Further, the sexist biasItalian men as "macho guys with no brain"goes back to classical sociological literature, which depicted Italian culture as putting "a strong emphasis on male exhibitionism, strength, and sexual potency" (Glazer and Moynihan 1986: 189). The authors further write that "for two long generations, for immigrants and second generation alike, the burden of Southern Italian culture prevented Italo-Americans from making effective use of the public school system in New York" (my emphasis) (1986: 201). In both cases, too strong an influence is attributed to the unilinear etiological power of southern Italian culture and too little to the societal forces and living conditions in the host country. Ethnographers, historians and sociologists have played a crucial and largely unrecognized role as creators and manipulators of identity (see also, Tapper 1989; Leach 1989).

Lastly, prejudice can be remembered in dramatic ways. For LM it is not only a matter of noting that "there was a difference" between her and her schoolmates.[38] In this case, the awareness of being different emerges in traumatic terms because it seems asymmetrical. In the following excerpt, this woman, born in the United States in the 1920s, highlights the transformation of the meaning of prejudice, reporting one of the first events that made her aware of being different and being ashamed of that difference.

What did prejudice consist of?In general, prejudice has always existed . . . it's only recently that what is cultural or ethnic is also popular. But it still exists, that one thinks that Italians are all criminals, or that they belong to the mafia. It still exists. There is more education now. . ..
If you had to tell in four or five words how Italians were seen in the past, what would you say?

They always eat spaghetti, they are noisy people and speak with gestures . . . [long pause] that there always is this mafia element. In films criminals had Italian names. Nowadays people would write to newspapers and complain.
And in other contexts? At school or at work?It's difficult, because at school we were all the same, . . . all from Europe. A teacher in high school once told me "When you will have a job interview, refrain from eating garlic." It was an Irish who said that [long pause].[39]

[38] X-MCH.LM-BA.[89/1, interviewed Aug. 8, 1989.

[39] "E in che cosa consisteva il pregiudizio? In generale c'è sempre stato il pregiudizio . . . è solo in questi ultimi anni che tutto ciò che è culturale o etnico è popolare. Ma esiste ancora, che uno pensa che tutti gli italiani sono criminali,o che appartengono alia mafia, c'è ancora [il pregiudizio]. There is more education now Se tu dovessi riassumere in quattro o cinque parole come gli Italiani venivano visti? Mangiano sempre gli spaghetti, sono molto chiassosi e parlano con le mani . . . [lunga pausa] che c'è

Prejudice is emotionally loaded, and it was with tears in her eyes that LM reported the denigration her husband had had to suffer: "I'll think about it. . .. My husband will talk to you about this because I didn't suffer from prejudice, only the most subtle one, at work. He suffered from being called wop and dago, like being beaten because he didn't speak English. He went to school the day following his arrival."[40] The two terms, "wop" and "dago," were a difficult subject for LM, especially when she was asked to say more. She only knew they were used with scorn and contempt. These words were not neutral in her memory.

In asking about the meaning of these words, interesting explanations have emerged during fieldwork. If for "wop" all seemed to agree on the acronym meaning "without paper," for "dago" the story was different. One informant connected this word to the Venetian dialect, where "dago" is the first singular person of the verb dare, meaning dare botte, "to beat." The stereotype which depicts Italian Americans as violent and often engaged in disputes of various kinds is well documented in the literature (Nelli 1976; Glazer and Moynihan 1986), and is often connected to other stereotypes, such as that of Italian Americans all being mafiosi or exploited by the padrone system (Nelli 1976). Another suggested that the Irish mainly used the expression, since they could not correctly pronounce "dago" and would say "digo." The informantan old man from the province of Pesaroadded that the Irish were very jealous of the Italians who housed the Vatican and the Pope, these being the highest symbols of Catholicism. Here religion becomes a distinguishing feature, one of those ingredients that make ethnic pride creatively emerge in the new setting. Not only in the popular realm were the Irish and Italians considered to be at odds over religion, but this situation is reported in the sociological literature as well: "In the old neighborhoods there was antagonism between Irish and Italian Catholics" (Glazer and Moynihan 1986: 203). These explanations relate the popular images to facts and events and help to shape and recreate the stereotype.

According to a scholar working for the Library of Congress,[41] "dago" comes from Diego, a typical Latino first name. This term was used for all people whose physical traits were typically shortness, darkish skin and black hair. Mellina (1987) relates the word "dago" to "dagger," going back to the first explanation: that of Italians being

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sempre questo elemento della mafia. Nei film i criminali avevano i nomi italiani. Ora tutti scriverebbero delle lettere di reclamo ai giornali E in altri contesti? A scuola o sul luogo di lavoro, per esempio? È difficile, perché a scuola eravamo tutti così, . . . tutti dall'Europa. Una maestra una volta in high school mi ha detto 'quando andrai a farti intervistare per un lavoro, riguardati da non mangiare l'aglio.' Era una Irish che mi ha detto questo."

[40] Ci penserò. . .. Mio marito te ne parlerà Perché io non ho sofferto il pregiudizio, solo quello più sottile, sul lavoro. Lui l'ha sofferto come essere chiamato wop e dago, essere preso a pugni perché non parlava inglese. Lui èandato a scuola il giorno dopo di essere sbarcati."

[41] Personal communication. I had the privilege of meeting the team of field-workers from the Library of Congress, working under the supervision of Professor J. A. Williams and Dr. D. Taylor in the Columbian Quincentenary field project entitled "Italian Americans in the West," in the summer of 1989. I wish to thank them for useful suggestions and discussions.

violent and aggressive. As we can see, connotations attached to the term vary and are dependent on the personal experience of those involved. Emphasis on one element or the other helps to point out the forces creating the stereotype of the Italian American over time. These elements parallel scientific explanations of ethnicity. Ethnic difference is explained in both cases as related to a regional/spatial factor (the Venetian dialect), followed by a religious one (the Irish jealousy), and last but not least, by biological/ physical traits (phenotypical characteristics of Latin people).

Transforming the Stereotype: Change and Continuity

Italian Americans in the 1990s "celebrate life," according to the theme of the 1989] annual conference of the American Italian Historical Association.[42] At that meeting the change in Italian American stereotypes was documented.[43] Suffice it to say that stereotypes have changed through time because of the different socioeconomic scenario that affects Italian Americansnow well-off, if compared to previous times or to other ethnic groups belonging to so-called minorities. This is partly due to the fact that Italy itself has gained a position in world economics, and partly because of changing ethnic relations among groups in the United States. "They [Italian Americans] have their cultural, commercial and political élites and have reached a level of income, education and professional prestige that puts them on a par with, or even outshines, that of the British, German or Scandinavian communities" notes Marcello Pacini (1989), director of the Agnelli Foundation.

A man in his fifties, arriving in San Francisco in the early 1960s from Apulia, pointed out that Italian fashion and "made in Italy" in general are portato in alto da tutti, "highly regarded by all."[44] "In the 1940s and 1950s, it was not the same thing," he said, talking about his relatives' experience on the East Coast. "We were considered like blacks, we were looked down upon."[45] From the 1950s on, things have changed: "a certain number of Italians have been highly successful, we are not seen like blacks anymore."[46] Many are those achieving prominence on the national scene: the Cuomos, the Iacoccas, the Carluccis; many mayors of the city have come from Italian origins.

[42] The twenty-second annual meeting of the American Italian Historical Association (AIHA), entitled "Italian Americans Celebrate Life: The Arts and Popular Culture," was held in San Francisco from November 9-11, 1989, and saw a conspicuous number of papers on Italian Americans in the West.

[43] Martinelli reviewed research conducted over a wide time span (1932-1982) at Princeton University and Arizona State University (Martinelli and Gordon 1988). The source work for this subsequent research is Katz's and Braly's, in which one hundred students were asked to select from a list of eighty-four, those traits thought to be characteristic of different ethnic groups.

[44] XI-CRO.SA-NB.[89/1, interviewed Oct. 30, 1989.

[45] "Negli anni '40] e '50] non era così/eravamo considerati come i neri, eravamo guardati giù."

[46] "Un certo numero di Italiani ha fatto trionfo, non siamo più visti come neri."

"We are highly regarded worldwide, in all fields; we are not the same Italians who lost the war."[47] The man who is speaking is the owner of a famous North Beach Café, opened in 1975.[48] SA came to San Francisco with his wife, who then traveled back and forth during the following years until the opening of the café, which marked the definitive settling in the United States of SA's family. SA noted that in the last few years, North. Beach has become a museo di italianità, "a museum of Italianness";[49] bars and cafés proliferate everywhere: "In the 1970s there were only a couple of Italian bars. Nowadays Italian products are found everywhere. The word 'Italian' is enough in order to make money."[50]

John Williams writes:

Three forces have shaped the construction of pan-Italian ethnic identity since World War II. One is the reaction to the widespread stereotyping of Italian criminality. . .. The second is the reemergence of contemporary Italy as a leader in the production of high-fashion consumer goods. The third is the ethnic survival of the 1970s, an impulse toward "neo-ethnicity" that parallels the scholarly interest in ethnic studies. (1989: 4)

The reemergence of postwar Italy among the five most industrialized countriesa strong symbol for elite Italians themselveson the one hand, and the entrance of Italian Americans into the consumer economy, on the other, have resulted in the adoption of ethnic symbols of well-being. In "the satisfaction of wearing Italian fashions, driving Italian sports cars, or collecting objects designed by famous Italian designers . . . confined to a relatively small number of well-to-do people" (Williams 1989: 5), the middle class can identify symbolically. Further, the relatively low airline fares permit Italian Americans an occasional trip to Italy and now they can also attend standard Italian classes, organized by Italian culture centers and foundations. "This appeal is particularly strong with younger Italian Americans to whom the established pan-Italian modes of ethnic performance seem old-fashioned and trite" (Williams 1989: 5).

Ties with the land of the ancestors, whether they are still alive or not, are now reinterpreted through cultural and symbolic meanings which differentiate the attitudes of the elderly from the young. In the following excerpts, the economic gap distancing later generations from the early immigrants is pointed out through the descent/consent lens (Sollors 1986). SF made clear that for him the trip to Italy was a matter of choice and cultural interest,[51] whereas for his father, as well as for his relatives living in Italy, it meant visiting il paese, the village in the realm of obligation for the family, a descent category:

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[47] "Ora siamo più alti nel mondo, in tutti i campi; non siamo più gli italiani che hanno perso la guerra."

[48] XI-CRO.SA-NB.[89/1, interviewed Oct. 30, 1989.

[49] North Beach is one of San Francisco's Italian neighborhoods, the others being Portrero district and Colma (Cinel 1982). It is composed of ten blocks on the northeast side of the city, near Chinatown.

[50] "Negli anni '70] c'erano solo un paio di bar italiani. Ma ora il prodotto italiano va bene ovunque. Solo la parola 'italiano' va bene per fare moneta ormai."

[51] XIV-IPUS.SF-SJ.[89/1, interviewed Aug. 17, 1989.

You take a person like my father . . . he didn't leave Italy because he was doing well. . .. They couldn't get an education, they didn't know the glory of Rome, or Firenze or Venezia . . . they have never been there. For them Italy is their small, little town where they are from, on the top of the mountain. . .. When I go there, I talk to my uncle and. he asks me, "What are you going to do tomorrow?" I say, "I go to Siracusa to see a museum." "What are you going to see a museum?!" They don't have that . . . you see. You think of Italy and you think of Milano, Venezia, Firenze. . .. They think of Italy and they think of that, their village; even if they go there, they don't have an interest to visit other towns.

When did your father go back for the first time?

Forty years later, in 1966, and the main reason was to go and visit relatives, five brothers and two sisters, lots of people there . . .

When asked whether he would like to live in Italy, JB, a fourth-generation Italian American, graduating from Harvard Law School, replied:[52]

I would like to do it. I am not sure how much of a priority it is. . .. One thing I know for sure . . . I would like to live in Italy not because I have Italian origins, but I like Italy because I think it is a beautiful country, and even if I weren't Italian, I think I would want to live there, like I would like to have an apartment in Paris, right? I like Tuscany, I like Florence, I don't like Car-doso and Lucca, too many mountains. Florence has more rolling hills. . .. What I like is to find places which are unique.

If the actual function of trips to Italy has changed through time, trips are often justified through the bonds that still exist among relatives. It is interesting to note that the more time passes and changes occur in acquiring "American values," the more such moral ties are counted as important in the definition of ethnicity, as in the case of LM.[53] In 1949] her father went to Italy alone, after thirty years, for inheritance matters; then her mother and LM's family went in 1961] after her father's death. LM worked all year long to save the money"that trip was a turning point!"-because they went to both Italy and France to visit relatives and places in Europe. This family is originally from the Marche region, and was not able to recreate, as others have, a regional network. Since that trip, others have followed, reinforcing the ties with relatives through generations. LM's definition of Italianness owes much to the warmth with which she was received by relatives in Italy, and with whom she keeps in touch through letters and long-distance calls:

Your definition of Italianness?

Oh, good question . . . oh, what a good question! [Her eyes are suddenly full of tears.] The first response, it comes real quick: warmth . . . family orientation, hard work, doing things well, wonderful food [she laughs]; when a non-Italian talks, he always says that Italian food is good![54]

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[52] X-VNI.JB-BA.[88/1, interviewed July 23, 1988.

[53] X-MCH.LM-BA.[89/5, interviewed Sept. 27, 1989.

[54] X-MCH.LM-BA.[89/2, interviewed Aug. 18, 1989, " . . . quando un non italiano ti parla, dice sempre cheil cibo italiano è buono!"

Asked about her definition of an Italian American family, she replied that it depends on the times in which we live. Values have changed everywhere:

Our daughters, for instance; we have [in our family] that closeness, but then they also keep their distance. Their privacy. I didn't have any. My life was very much intertwined with my parents' and still is; my daughters are very loving, but they maintain their privacyjust as you are here now, you are away from your mother. They would not consider my feelings if they were to go and work in another country, whereas it was unthinkable for me.

But change and continuity are constantly mentioned when she speaks about the personal rapport one establishes with relatives and family:

There aren't only changes in time; the type of relation has also changed.[55] For example, let's take [my son-in-law's family]; è americanissima! [it is very American!]. They have been in the U.S.A. for four hundred years! He sees his parents once a year, they phone, but since he has been in graduate school, he came to California; their own life is different. His parents support his family; they always send a very good check for the children to start school, at Christmas and if they want to go back to visit; the father always gives money. I mean, they are loving and giving, but if they don't hear for three or four months, it doesn't matter. Whereas, when we go away, I call from the airport, siamo ritorati ["we are back"]. . .. [My daughter's] life has just taken a different direction.

The dichotomy of American versus Italian parallels other bipolari-ties: modern versus traditional, relations based on money and material objects versus relations based on love and warmth, loose bonds versus frequent contacts, choice versus obligations. All these labels refer precisely to socioeconomical and affective domains that are ambivalently perceived and that change meaning depending on context.

As Yanagisako notes for Japanese Americans, Italian Americans also participate in a shared, as well as separate, cultural process simultaneously:

The shared cultural process is one in which they construct a model for kinship relations out of two other models: one of their own perceived kinship past, and one of contemporary family and kinship relations among typical and hypothetical Americans. . .. Instead, this model of modern American family and kinship attributed to a nonexistent, hypothetical sector of Americansmost commonly conceived to be white and middle-classis constructed from bits and pieces of information and the more substantial cultural stories and dramas transmitted through schools, newspapers, television, novels, and other forms of mass culture. (1985: 257)

Far from being something rooted in blood ties, Italian Americans construct their ethnic identity through categories that are both shaped by and mold "cultural stories and dramas" (Yanagisako 1985: 257). By contrast, according to the stereotype, it is mainly inside the so-called famiglia affiatata, "harmonious family," and upon women, at the center of what I have called elsewhere "webs of kinship ties" (Schellenbaum

[55] "Poi non c'è solo il fatto the i tempi sono cambiati; ma anche il tipo di relazione."

1993), that the burden of the transmission and reproduction of so-called traditional values falls. The famiglia affiatata is a family where there is a feeling of affinity and of getting along well together. "In spite of a tendency for Italians to emphasize differences among themselves, there is in fact a strong ethnic bond based on those values that we do share: strong family ties, good food, religious traditions, a musical heritage, a beautiful and expressive language" (Scherini 1977: 69).

This refrain is always the same: Italian Americans have finally become as others have described them. In spite of this crystallized representation of the Italian American familywhich both contrasts and shares elements with the American nuclear family of the Wasp tradition and the supposed traditional family of the Italian pastfieldwork material seems to indicate a transformation of the stereotype: not only is the Italian American family experienced ambivalently and differently by men and by women, but younger women question their supposed role as keepers of tradition, as their mothers first did when they left the Old Country. The decision to immigrate always marks a break with something old, and the dichotomy old/new is constantly being revised on a cultural level. In our society, and among Italian Americans in Northern California, the family has often been depicted as a separate unit from society, a "safe" place (sometimes lessening the violent impact with the new society, as in the case of Italian Americans studied by Yans-McLaughlin 1974, 1977). It has played an ideological role (Di Leonardo 1984). Where a contradictory and complex reality is the case, symbols are needed to mask such a reality, and the motto Family First often serves this end.

Although perceived as natural and based on blood relations, kinship is best regarded as a cultural and symbolic construct that changes over the years. The loosening of kinship ties, which has resulted from immigration, changing job patterns, and residence mobility has led to stressing the moral aspects of kinship relations as opposed to their practical uses in the past, as in LM's case. Now that the ideal family type coincides with the nuclear family with a neolocal residence, independent from the extended family of past Italian tradition, the "work of kinship" (Di Leonardo 1987) is mainly a female affair, within the boundaries of domestic activities. Consequently, the more women are relatively independent as breadwinners, the more power they acquire within the family business in terms of decision making, the more their domestic role is emphasized in their "ideal image." In a similar way, the concept of marriage has changed from a pragmatic one to the myth of true romantic love, which has been fostered by the freedom to choose one's partner. Inheritance as well has become not only a transmission of goods but a way of conveying ethnic identity and love. In other words, family obligations are reshaped to accommodate career and personal interests outside the home, while women reorganize their changing personal and ethnic identities (Schellen-baum 1993).

Notwithstanding the changes occurring with the family, in both structure and meaning, positive ethnic stereotypes are used to illustrate the "American miracle" based on "two great hopes: the hope for personal freedom and the hope for economic opportunity" (Kennedy 1986: 64). Since Kennedy's A Nation of Immigrants, this metaphor has

been repeatedly used in presidential campaigns.[56] A young informant, whose goal is to contribute to American society by "becoming influential in politics," commented on presidential campaign speeches by noting:[57] "Well, it [ethnic origins] does come up at times. If anything, to be frank, I think I use it as a tool, to spice up the conversation. All people want to be different, that touch that makes you unique, so I use my own origins for that" (my emphasis).

This allowed him to say he felt "American first," with a glance to his ethnic origins:

Enriched by the distinct traditions of a Spanish and Italian background, I have not only benefited from a strong and supportive family, but I have learned the languages and cultures of both Spain and Italy in order to better understand my origin, It is perhaps not so unique in this country that i, a second-generation American, am the first in my immediate family to attend a university; nevertheless, it adds personal significance to my accomplishments.

When JB states that he "uses" his origins, this can be read through Barthian eyes, recognizing that "the sharing of a common culture is generally given central importance. . .. [it is] an implication or a result, rather than the primary and definitional characteristic of ethnic group organization" (Barth 1969: 11). Ethnic categorization, far from being a static listing of cultural traits, becomes in its dynamic implications an organizational process, "to the extent that actors use ethnic identities to categorize themselves and others for purposes of interaction" (Barth 1969: 13-14).

It is important to understand that, although objective characteristics, such as common origin and language, are important, "self-ascription and ascription by others" are central features of social organization, by which social actors view themselves and are viewed in ways which help them to orient their actions. JB uses his ethnic origins in one way with an American audience, and in another with an ethnic audience. In the complexity of social and personal networks, people do vary the degree to which they present themselves as ethnic (Epstein 1978; Wallman 1984; Signorelli 1986), and "different circumstances obviously favour different performances. Since ethnic identity is associated with a culturally specific set of value standards. . .."(Barth 1969: 25).

One circumstance in which informants claimed a rather distinctive ethnic pride was the public arena of commercial advertising, where Italian American family firms strive to create a traditional image. By reconstructing the vicissitudes of FB's family business, I was able to appreciate the ideological aspect of the following advertisement, published in a local newspaper, and became aware of what Marcus wrote: " . . . commonsensical narratives shape the way family stories are told in virtually every genre of speaking and writing in such [Euro-American] cultures, and incorporate basic assumptions about what a family ideally is and centrally refers to" (1988: 3).

[56] See, for example, Ianni 1987. Since 1984, when Geraldine Ferraro was running for vice-president, ethnotypes of what is "American" have been used to communicate positive and negative images in a political arena. The theme of being a son of immigrants was proposed a second time by Dukakis in his 1988] presidential campaign.

[57] X-VNI.JB-BA.[88/1, interviewed July 28, 1988.

[FB] had a successful color processing laboratory back in Palermo. But he visited relatives in the United States and decided he liked it here. That was in 1960. Six years later, he came back with his family to stay.

For a time, he worked at a photo lab in Palo Alto, learning the American way of doing business. . .. Then, in 1973, he began his own business. To it, he brought more than a quarter century of photographic experience and a near-miraculous eye for color quality.

In four years, the business has grown from three employees to twenty-five. From one location to four. To a gross income six times that of the first year. . . .

But it's still a family affair [my emphasis]. [FB]'s wife is in charge of checking and shipping. His son is a print processor. His brother is a custom painter. And two nieces work as book- keeper and machine printer. [FB] himself is president and general manager.

Like many before him, [FB] has done all right in America. It just goes to show, once again, what skill, hard work, and deter- mination can doespecially with a little family help.

This advertisement, directed toward both an Italian American and an American audience, well illustrates the discursive ingredients used by ethnics to show their success in American society. Here America was freely chosen by FB as a place to start his business, but his success rehed on the family. This family "ethos," to be passed on through the generations, encapsulates Italian American distinctiveness. Such traits are used by both partners of the interaction: by the actor and by his or her audience. FB's "It's still a family affair" motto, stressing blood bonds and descent, directly intertwines with JB's "American first" one, stressing consent and choice. One reinforces the other, and the dialectical tension between the two contributes to what Conzen et al. define as "the dual construction of ethnicity" (1990: 39) in post melting pot America.

Narration of Success and Successful Narratives

Ideological constructs are present in historical accounts: folk models of culture and history (Holy and Stuchlik 1981) are useful in analyzing the Italian American version of the California myth, as told by informants of various generations. There are two striking oppositions that seem to structure such a myth as recreated in their ethnic observations: the East versus the West, and the North Beach versus the Bay Area. Let us begin with the first.

Repeatedly, in the course of fieldwork, I recorded this adage: "Here we are not in New York." Italian Californians stressed their distinctiveness, focusing on the "California as the land of opportunity" myth. The East versus West opposition was based on the assumption that, on the West Coast, Italian immigration was more selective, both

in terms of numbers and regional origin.[58] In a publication, Gl'Italiani in California, (The Italians in California) (1911), by Ettore Patrizi, are listed the traits of the Italian immigrant. A sort of revised edition of this publication has recently appeared in the name of the "ethnic revival" which has characterized foundations' cultural programs in the early 1990s. In an article entitled "La ricchezza dei nostri emigrati" ("The Richness of Our Immigrants"), after enumerating the various activities of Italian Americans in California, Patrizi writes:

From it [this review] one draws that, from any point of view one observes them, our immigrants in this far western region are worth praise and admiration and are taken into great consideration by Americans, who, in addition to their moral and physical qualities, receive a positive impression from their exceptionally prosperous economic conditions and from the wealth they have, the greater part of which remains here in real estate, banks or corporations. Because, in contrast to what happens in the colonies back East, where our immigrants regularly send back or personally bring to Italy nearly all the fruits of their labor, especially if they still have their families there, they keep here a large portion of their money, encouraged by the four trustworthy Italian banks of San Francisco, by the good climate which recalls the mildest Italian regions, by the easy real estate and land investments, and by the example of coethnics who preceded them in this country, and who from these investments made conspicuous profits. (my translation, my emphasis) (1911: 52)

It was only 1911, and the wave of mass immigration was still to come, but in this passage, we can already see a number of elements which will be useful in the present discussion. Patrizi argues that Italian American assimilation went through a series of economic stages that Italians in California saw in opposition to those of the "eastern colonies." He adds that investments, whether to buy land or real estate in the New World, marked the end of the temporary phase of immigration and instead many Italian Americans made permanent homes in the United States.

The classic sociological literature has often used this East/West opposition to define Italian Americans as a group:

In the nineteenth century, Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay underwent serious crises attendant on rapid development, and the flow of Italian immigrants was deflected, ever more heavily, to the United States. There, the pioneers' task was already done. Only in one state, California, did Italian immigration coincide with early growth, and there Italians played an important role in the creation of vineyards and production of wine (just as they did in Argentina), in fishing, and in growing and marketing produce. In New York and the other industrial and commercial cities of the Northeast, where the great mass of Italian immigrants settled, the story was different. The energy and hard work that achieved wealth and social position for Italians in Argentina could in the United States achieve only a moderately comfortable working man's existence. . ..

[58] Italian American distinctiveness in the West has been addressed by, among others, Rolle 1972, and Gumina 1978.

And whereas emigrants from Northern and Central Italy continued for the most part to go to countries where their relatives had become established, to Latin America, the new streams of immigrants from the South headed for the United States. (Glazer and Moynihan 1986: 183)

This same story is retold with great variability. Here, again, age, regional origin, class, and gender significantly affect the contours of personal narratives. A young informant,[59] telling about Silicon Valley's rapid growth (his family owned properties rented to high-tech firms), defined early northern Italian immigrants as industrious people, who were "all striving for something. . .. This idea that we can do better . . . than our parents, and our parents can do better than their parents, a sort of improving. I know this is something that drives me, and something that drives my brother."

Consequently, JB's evaluation of eastern Italian Americans is biased by the assumption that they did not completely assimilate because they were less inclined to work hard. As noted by Di Leonardo, the "Culture of Poverty . . . focuses an family life as the cause of economic failure or success. It divorces individuals' economic statuses from the larger economy and its evolutions . . . it blames the victim" (1984: 21). This comment accounts for other interpretations in line with Lewis's Culture of Poverty such as Banfield's "amoral familism" and Glazer and Moynihan's "Italian village culture." In the informants' accounts, immigration to San Francisco was not only made up largely of northern Italians, but these people were also industrious and willing to invest in the host country, instead of sending remittances to Italy, as Patrizi pointed out. This meant they had to trust Italian prominenti, such as A. P. Giannini, J. Fugazi, and other bankers who helped reconstruct North Beach after the 1906] earthquake through a policy of small loans.[60]

The owner of a small souvenir store, which sells Italian videotapes, newspapers, and books, reported that his business shrank over the years because of the reduced number of Italian residents in North Beach.[61] But it was with pride that he said, This is the only store of this kind on the West Coast; here we are not in New York City."[62] Paradoxically, participation in California society seems to have meant dissolution of the Italian community. Those who have parents living in the East like EM explained, "Here, they want people to assimilate, the philosophy of life is American, while in Canada they respect ethnicity."[63]

Lastly, commenting on the exhibit poster, "Shattering the Stereotype: Italian Immigrants in Northern California 1850-1950," presented at the twenty-second annual meeting of the American Italian Historical Association, a visitor looked at the photo depicting mine workers in Angels Camp, California, at the beginning of the century,

[59] X-VNI.JB-BA.[88/1, interviewed July 28, 1988.

[60] On the origin of the Bank of Italy, see Salvetti 1989]

[61] XI-CVL.JV-NB.[89/1, interviewed Oct. 31, 1989.

[62] "È l'unico negozio di questo genere sulla West Coast, qui non siamo a New York."

[63] X-IAHF.EM-BA.[89/1, interviewed Oct. 4, 1989. "Qui vogliono che la gente siintegri, la filosofia di vita è americana, mentre in Canada hanno più rispettoper l'etnicità."

and said: "Which stereotype are we to shatter? The one depicting Italians viewed as blacks? California is not New York: we had the Gianninis, the Sbarbaros, the Fugazis . . . ; now Italians are millionaires! Why do they always depict us as if we were poor?"[64] Here what seems to be important again is something that makes the California American experience unique and distinct from other ones. Ethnic identity defines its boundaries through difference, and this is part of the paradox.

This continuous comparison between East and West Coast comes up as a burden in the conversation when it turns to North Beach and the "Italian colony." Past history takes on a mythic glamor, and the interview becomes colored with vivid memories of a Little Italy where standard Italian or Italian dialects were spoken on street corners, where everyone knew everyone, and where coethnic solidarity was strong when opposing the Chinese. The more this community has scattered toward peripheral, upper and middle class neighborhoods, the stronger such idealized perceptions have become to replace something that no longer exists. This mechanism becomes most apparent when comparing the perception people have of their community in San Francisco and in San José. As many have pointed out, one of the distinctive features of immigration dynamics was the fact that Italian immigrants were scattered everywhere in California, as is often the case in new worlds. These people were given land and settled in the countryside (Tuttle 1990) as well as in the city. There were early settlements in the Bay Area as well as in towns and on the coast (Cinel 1982; Di Leonardo 1984).

An ex-North Beach resident, who first moved to Marin County in the 1930s and then to the Bay Area after she married in 1939, remembered that her youth in North Beach was pleasant, despite difficulty and poverty:[65] "Children used to play in Washington Square, and during the Vendemmia, grape harvest, we would play to steal the grapes from the wagons. This game was called fuggi, fuggi,'run, run away.'"

Another old North Beach resident, JV,[66] reported, with a little sadness, that "now it's different, it has changed. . .. In early times we Italians were all here; you would not see Chinese. Now we all are Chinese; there are Italians but . . . here [in Washington Square] they [the Chinese] come early in the morning for physical exercise. The park is theirs."[67]

People living in the Bay Area consider North Beach the core symbol of their ethnicity, while others see in San José's Festa Italiana an authentic celebration. The identification of a place (North Beach) or of "true traditional" values (the San José

[64] "Quale stereotipo dobbiamo frantumare? Quello che gli italiani erano visti come neri? La California non è New York! Abbiamo avuto un Giannini, uno Sbarbaro, un Fugazi . . .; ora gli italiani sono miliardari! Perché sempre ri-trarci come dei poveracci?"

[65] X-VNI.AZ-BA.[88/1, interviewed July 15, 1988.

[66] XI-VNI.JV-NB.[89/1, interviewed Sept. 21, 1989. She had been living in North Beach for sixty-one years.

[67] "Ora è differente, è cambiato. . .. I primi tempi gli italiani eravamo tutti qui, I cinesi non li vedevi. Ora siamo tutti cinesi; gl'italiani siamo ma insomma . . . qui [in Washington Square] la mattina vengono a fare ginnastica. Il giardino appartiene a loro."

Festa) allows perceptions to be mutually exchanged. When asked about the difference between Italian Americans in San Francisco and the Bay Area, as a whole, an informant replied that in the city:[68]

They are all Chinese. . .. Italians in San Francisco have cultural, business ties to Italy. In San José you might have more Italians, but you don't have the cultural involvement you have in the city, but we are trying very hard to build this with the Heritage Foundation; that is our desire to do that. San Francisco has the Italian American women thing [Vittoria Colonna Club]; they have the cultural . . . il museo italiano [Italian museum], il consolato [the consulate]; they have more ties, more business ties, but also more linguistic ties, There are a lot of people in San Francisco still speaking the language, whereas here in San José you find people speaking English and Italian equally poorly.

Recounting North Beach history is a way of recreating a myth of success and renegotiating the boundaries which define ethnicity. In addition, such mirroring myths help structure mutual perceptions, such as East versus West Coast, North Beach versus Bay Area, northern versus southern Italians, Chinese versus Italian Americans. Changes occurring recently have reshaped people's perceptions of North Beach and its inhabitants. Italian Americans invariably speak of the Chinese in terms of "those who bought North Beach real estate sold by Italians in the past." Early immigrants (often northern Italians) are consequently held responsible for selling out properties in North Beach.

Tom Shaw, a researcher at the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development at the time of my fieldwork, conducted an interesting study on the change in interethnic relations, comparing newcomers and established residents in San Francisco. About the ways in which informants reconstructed the recent history of North Beach, he writes: "I have found that there is a more-or-less shared understanding (perhaps better termed a 'construction') of the events of the last quarter century in North Beach, amongst Italian-Americans in particular, that serves to define and locate the Italian-Americans vis-à-vis other ethnic groups in the community, especially the Chinese" (1988: 3).

"Chinese as other" and patterns of interaction, ranging from cooperation to achieve mutual economic goals, to overt ethnic hostility and exclusion, were the focus of Shaw's investigation. In order to illustrate Italian American group feeling, Shaw reports:

A common perception, which is not well supported by the facts, is that Chinese landlords raise commercial rents beyond what is reasonable, and that is why so many commercial spaces remain vacant for months, sometimes years in North Beach. In fact one of the most famous cases is that of a café. . .. When the Italian landlord doubled the monthly rent for the owner of this popular café, he threatened to move, and then did in fact move to a building owned by a Chinese landlord. The community vehemently condemned the first landlord. . .. Now almost two years have past [sic],

[68] XIV-IPUS.SF-SJ.[89/1, interviewed Aug. 17, 1989.

and most residents I've spoken with assume, obviously without knowing, that the first landlord who raised the rent was Chinese, and the one providing affordable space was Italian. Of course the situation was just the reverse. (1988: 7)

He therefore comes to the conclusion that Italian Americans celebrate their togetherness in terms of shared culture, rather than shared social relationships, or community.

In talking to North Beach residents and professionals, I have often encountered resentment for i cinesi in conversation, and, interestingly enough, it has increased the already existing split between northern and southern Italians, as reported in this excerpt: "North Beach used to be very Italian many years ago, let's say until the war. In postwar years, immigrants' children sold everything to the Chinese, and it is only with my generation, since the 1960searly 1970sthat we became again attached to the Italian image of North Beach."[69]

This historical reconstruction reveals the explanatory folk models that SA has used to motivate his actions. His point of view has been highly influenced by the fact that he is a first-generation immigrant, who came to the United States in the late 1950s from a small town in Apulia, and shows the attitude that new immigrants have toward old ones. For him, early northern Italian immigrants sold out North Beach. SA is committed to buying what the old immigrants sold out, which is real estate. "North Beach is more Italian now than in the 1950s," and his grandchildren will make it even more Italian.

The Chinese have a very old history; they are an ancient civilization which goes back to I don't know when. They are merchants. They have always been merchants. They are very far-reaching and they are business-oriented people. If this building's value is today ten, in five years it will increase to twenty, the Chinese give you fifteen today, Italians think they made a good bargain, but they are wrong. The bad thing about Italians: we only mind our own business and not our children's.[70]

According to him, in New York City Italians remain a group, while in San Francisco, "[Northern] Italians sold for money's sake.[71]

Another North Beach informant,[72] owner of a retail store specializing in Italian men's clothes, agreed that "this mass of Chinese comes from Hong Kong, they expand. Italians have been practically sent away, because when the Chinese decide to buy, they

[69] I-CRO.SA-NB.[89/1, interviewed Oct. 30, 1989. "North Beach era molto italiana molti anni fa, diciamo fino alia guerra. Nel dopoguerra i figli degli immigrati hanno venduto tutto ai cinesi e solo con la mia generazione, ossia daglianni '60inizio '70che si è ritornati ad essere attaccati all'immagine italiana-di North Beach."

[70] "I cinesi hanno una vecchissima storia; un'antica civiltà che risale a non so nemmeno io quanil anni. E sono commercianti, sono sempre stati commercianti. Sono molto lungimiranti ed hanno veramente il senso degli affari. Se questo palazzo oggi vale 10, tra 5] anni varrà 20; i cinesi oggi ti offrono 15; così gli italiani pensano di guadagnarci molto, invece non è così. Il male italiano secondo me: pensiamo solo per noi e non per i nostri figli."

[71] "Gli italiani [del Nord] hanno venduto per amore della moneta."

[72] XI-FTN.JF-NB.[89/1, interviewed Oct. 27, 1989.

don't stop before the price of properties.[73] Even if his clientele was mainly Chinese, he lamented that the clothes sold in his store were too elegant for them since they did not pay fairly. He said he had decided to close down and move into a better neighborhood, but he had not done it yet.

Italian settlement in North Beach underwent changes during the 1930s and 1940s. In those years Italian Americans moved southward to the Bay Area, or northward to Marin County, as many family histories show (Cinel 1982; Di Leonardo 1984; Schellenbaum 1988, 1990). Often the main reason for moving was to buy a house in a better area, leaving old and humid city centers, or to look for "more congenial" jobs, as reported by one informant. Some of those I interviewed had previously lived in North Beach, moved to Daly City or Marin County and then to more prestigious areas, such as Santa Clara County. What is their feeling about North Beach today?

Ethnic revival can be related to rapid changes North Beach underwent as an "ethnic territory" once emigration toward the outskirts of the city had taken place. In the absence of an ethnic community, ethnic belonging had to be symbolically recreated. As a response to change, "an idiom of ethnicity rather than one of community" (Shaw 1988:12)[74] was used to convey ethnic identity. In the popular images of North Beach ex-residents, this little neighborhood is still the ethnic locus par excellence, where people speak Italian, and where one can find "typical Italian stores," from grocery stores to bakeries; Italian designs, cars and music; and all kinds of restaurants. Old stores selling everything for making pasta, from the simplest matterello, "rolling pin," to very sophisticated machinery, can still be found in San Francisco's Little Italy. Ethnic stores are worth a visit, especially to buy presents and objects to celebrate some important events in the life cycle, such as a marriage, childbirth, or anniversary, as reported by LM, who went to a Very old hardware store in North Beach to buy a present for her first daughter's bridal shower: "I bought a strainer for pasta, the cheese grater, and other objects for the kitchen, such as dishes for daily use. Now you can also find them at Macy's, but at that time it wasn't easy; one had to go to specialized stores . . .![75]

Concluding Remarks

The kaleidoscopic lens has brought into focus the plurality of ethnic experience among Italian Americans in Northern California in the 1990s. Moreover, it has revealed the close relationship between stereotypes and common sense, when they are

[73] "Questa massa di cinesi arriva da Hong Kong, si espande. Praticamente gli italiani li hanno buttati fuori, un po' perché i cinesi quando hanno deciso di comprare, non guardano il prezzo delle proprietà."

[74] This introduces problems of methodology: how are we to count Italian Americans? On census variables, i.e., certified nationality? Or on self-ascription, i.e., the memory of ethnic heritage? For a discussion, see Rosoli 1989.

[75] X-MCH.LM-BA.[89/5, interviewed Sept. 27, 1989. "Avevo comprato lo scolapasta, la grattuggia ed altri oggetti per la cucina, tipo i piatti di terraglia per tutti i giorni. Ora si trovano anche da Macy's, ma allora non era facile trovarli, bisognava andare nei negozi specializzati . . . !"

seen as cultural constructs in the formation of ethnic identity. It also points to the need to reassess the ways we considered Italianness in the past. Rather than being something to be measured, it is actually a transformation of the past according to present assumptions of success and failure. This, in turn, leads to a reconceptualization of "modern American values" when contrasted with the "traditional Italian heritage." The descent/consent paradigm allows us to better understand the symbolic transformation in terms of ethnic idiom and metaphors rather than community. Finally, it is clear that stereotypical structure is what is perceived, and that the perception becomes part of the reality observed.

I have attempted to show the constant tension between bipolar oppositions, and that these opposed forces, rather than acting dichotomously, intertwine with other multifaceted aspects. The perspective of this essay is a alialogic one that deconstructs stereotypes through different lensesthose of gender, class, age, and historical transformationand reveals the mechanisms for social and personal bargaining and negotiation of meanings within social wholes. The Italian American family is an open social system, and immigrants are positioned within social networks. Moreover, women are not the only agents of cultural transmission; other sources concur to construct ethnic identity. This lens brings into focus the use informants have made of the stereotype according to its contextualization in discursive analysis. Finally, I have chosen to analyze folk models of culture and history as part of this essay's anthropological investigation in order to show how social actors orient their actions and make sense of their daily lives.

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6. Multivocality and Vernacular Architecture: The Our Lay of Mount Carmel Grotto in Rosebank, Staten Island

Joseph Sciorra

Indeed, everything comes alive when contradictions accumulate.Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Space

In October of 1937, a group of Italian immigrant men began constructing a grotto in the Rosebank section of Staten Island, New York. As members of the Society of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, they built the structure on property owned by the voluntary association. Today the lay organization maintains the upkeep of the elaborate shrine and celebrates the Madonna's July 16] feast with an annual procession through neighborhood streets and festa activities staged on society grounds. Devotees visit the shrine daily and during the two weekend-long festivities to pray before the statues of the Virgin Mary and the Roman Catholic saints housed at the grotto.

There has been much interest recently in the ethnography of vernacular architecture, that is, integrating the spoken word into the study of popular buildings in an attempt to gain deeper insight into the meaning of artifacts. Michael Ann Williams and M. Jane Young have explored the historical applications of lingusitic models to the study of material culture. These approaches, according to Williams and Young, privilege form and production over social use and cultural contexts. They call for increased attention to verbal data about the built environment itself: ". . . [T]here is a need to focus on the interrelationship of material and lingusitic forms and there is a need to develop our theoretical capabilities for interpreting written and oral evidence. Instead of reading buildings as texts, we need to pay attention to our interpretation of textual data" (Williams and Young 1991). What people say about the houses in which they live, the spaces in which they work, and the buildings where they worship offers a rich source of documentation on the social and symbolic use of vernacular architecture.

This essay attempts to address the multivocality of the Rosebank grotto by focusing on the ways people invest the site with meaning through expressive behavior, the spoken word, and the written text. Those who created, maintain, and interact with this built environment engender the site's social meanings through a host of individual

voices that complement, contradict, and sometimes contest one another. There is no single person or community of people that speaks authoritatively for the site, but a polyphony of overlapping voices that contribute to the shrine's symbolic meaning(s). This polyvalence links the lives of builders, association members, pilgrims, clergy, journalists, and the ethnographer in an intertwined dialogue in search of signification. A narrative-centered approach to vernacular architecture studies is intended to explore the ways individuals, identities, and ideologies converge and conflict in dynamic relationship to the built environment. I have attempted to replicate the diversity of opinion surrounding this site by discussing subjects more than once, but from a slightly different perspective. Hopefully the reader will not find these efforts tedious.

Let's Make Up a Story That's as Close to the Real Thing as We Can Get": Creating a History of the Rosebank Grotto

History is not a given but a process whereby the production of knowledge is (re)negotiated with each telling, inscription, or reading. Establishing a historical narrative that surviving builders of the grotto and its present-day caretakers can agree upon has become an increasing concern in recent years as people have had to contend with an inquiring ethnographer and journalist interested in the site's past. The ethnographer does not passively record narratives or "collect" oral histories, but instead enters into a dynamic social relationship composed of historically created, contextualized dialogue (Bakhtin 1988: 401; Hymes 1974: 3-28; Sapir 1949: 104-9, 544-59). The ethnographic experience is an unequal process in which one not only imposes the unique rules and stylistic features of patterned forms of speech such as interviews (Briggs 1987: 1-4), but ultimately maintains control over the wider public representation of this cultural exchange through selective editing and the genre conventions of the final written document (Clifford 1986: 3-8). In turn, permanent records, such as newspaper accounts and, ultimately, this published essay, affect the ways in which the community imagines itself and engenders its history. Thus the communicative interaction between individuals resulting from my involvement with the Rosebank grotto has become a crucial element in understanding this dialogized built environment.

][Visitors at Rosebank's grotto in honor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel during the 1988] feast. Photograph: Martha Cooper.]]

The Neighborhood

Italian immigrants began arriving in Rosebank in the latter part of the nineteenth century, but the majority settled sometime between 1900] and 1915] (Thompson 1972: 12). According to John Rumolo, the neighborhood's acclaimed historian and genealogist, present-day Rosebank families trace their roots primarily to towns in Italy's Campania region. Immigrants from the province of Foggia in the Apulia region, Calabrians, and Sicilians fleeing xenophobic hysteria and violence in New Orleans (Mangione and

Morreale 1992: 200-213) also made their way to the area. In the early part of the twentieth century, immigrant men worked as laborers, either in construction or on the railroad, as longshoremen on the nearby docks, or, like the vast majority, in some form of agriculture (Thompson 1972: 27).[1] It wasn't until the 1930s that Italian immigrants and their American-born children were employed in civil-service jobs (Thompson 1972: 43), with a number involved in WPA projects and as sanitation workers. Neighborhood men told me it was Italian labor that built and operated local factories such as the now-defunct DeJonge paper mill and the Sun Chemical dye plant, known locally as the "color works."

To help themselves meet the challenge of the United States, Rose-bank's Italian immigrants formed mutual-aid societies, which offered such benefits as unemployment and burial insurance. These voluntary associations were responsible for introducing and organizing religious processions and street feasts in honor of the Virgin Mary and patron saints of Italian towns. On Staten Island, immigrants from Contorsi and Auletta, neighboring towns in the province of Salerno in Campa-nia, celebrated two separate feasts in honor of St. Donato. The Con-torsi community in Thompkinsville held its festivities on August 7, and the Rosebank Aulettesi followed with their own celebration ten days later.

While the public adoration of St. Donato on the island ceased in the late 1950s, the Society of Our Lady of Mount Carmel continues to celebrate its spiritual patroness with a procession and outdoor feast. A weakened paese, or town, affiliation was supplanted in Rosebank by a national Italian identity presumably because no one Italian group predominated in the area and/or as a result of bigotry experienced at the hands of other ethnic groups in local positions of power, primarily Germans and Irish. Whatever the reasons, the figure of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was well suited to bridging divisive regionalism because of her popularity throughout southern Italy.

The Society of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was founded in 1903] as a self-help organization open to all Italians, irrespective of their town or regional affiliation. (While membership is now available to any Roman Catholic regardless of ethnicity, the organization remains predominantly Italian.) Society members originally met in the basement of St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church (171 St. Mary's Avenue, corner of Thompkins Avenue), which had been established the previous year as Staten Island's first Italian "national" or "ethnic" parish. It was un-der the tenure (1903-14) of the society first president, Andrew J. Palma (and father of Borough President Joseph A. Palma), that the organization purchased land and erected a meeting hall (Staten Island Advance, July 5, 1940). (The hall was listed at 16] Amity Place in newspaper articles before World War II, which was subsequently changed to today's 36 Amity Street.)

In a 1939 Staten Island Advance article, Vito Russo, the society's second president, explained at length the purpose and origins of the mutual-aid society. Although offered

[1] While it appears Rosebank's Italian immigrant women worked primarily in the home during this early period, Thompson poses a series of interesting questions regarding the available data (1972: 29-32).

in pure journalese, and taken in part from the society's 1903] certificate of incorporation, Russo's quoted words are an indication of how the immigrant organization was perceived at the time:

This organization was banded together under the guidance of a benevolent and religious spirit. Its function was to aid the people in sickness and distress, to promote a spirit of good fellowship and fraternity, a social and religious environment. This society existed along the lines of a father and son relationship. Many of the members today are the sons of that little group of Italian immigrants who 36] years ago symbolized the Americanism of the Italo-American of today. (July 13, 1939)[2]

After serving as president for twenty-five years, Russo was "unanimously" elected "president for life" in 1939, a position he held until his death on February 22, 1954.

Vito Russo

Vito Russo is credited with being the driving force behind the construction of the grotto and is intimately identified with the site. Much of my initial research focused on uncovering Russo's personal history and motivations for building the shrine. Aware of the important role that campanilismo, the intense identification with one's town of origin, continues to play in the lives of contemporary New York Italians, I was initially struck by the fact that Russo's fellow society members, and even his children, were not sure where Vito was born. One unidentified man attending the 1985] feast (whom I will call A.P. throughout the essay for purposes of clarification) told me Russo hailed from his parents' town, Orta Nova in the province of Foggia, in Apulia. Many believed he was born in Auletta, where a number of Rosebank residents trace their roots. I mistakenly reported Vito hailed from Sicily after one son confirmed a colleague's error (Sciorra 1989: 190).

A letter (April 9, 1989) from son Peter in response to my written inquiries provided important biographical information. Vito Louis Russo was born on November 6, 1885, in the town of Sala Consilina, in the province of Salerno. (Sala Consilina is approximately twenty kilometers south of Pola, the Campanian town from which immigrants transported their devotion to Our Lady of Mount Carmel to East Harlem, Manhattan.) Orphaned at an early age, Vito and his younger brother Giovanni immigrated to the United States with their steppar-ents and lived for a while on Manhattan's Lower East Side until settling in Rosebank in March 1895. Vito and Giovanni married the American-born sisters Theresa and Lilly Cavallo, respectively. Peter's letter does not indicate when Vito and Theresa married, but we can assume that it was around 1909, the year their first son, Michael, was born. The couple had seven children, two girls

[2] The dominant culture's view of Italian immigrant laborers as manifested locally in the Staten Island Advance is an important avenue of inquiry that is unfortunately beyond the scope of this paper.

and five boys, the majority of whom were born in the "old house" located at 6] Smith Street. Russo was known by the moniker "Friedman."[3]

One question I asked repeatedly during my initial interviews was: "What was Vito Russo's reason for building the grotto?" This question elicited a variety of answers. Current society president Thomas Chorale and Ruses grandson Vita discussed the immigrant's motives in this way:

V.R.: It's just something he wanted to do, you know. I guess he made a vow to the saint for something. I don't know what.
T.C.: That was his patron saint and that was it. (July 16, 1985)

Peter Ruse said his father wanted to construct the shrine because he had made a "promise" or vow that if he was able to come to America and "establish himself, get married," he would honor Our Lady of Mount Carmel by "building something" (July 16, 1988). Another son, James, maintained that the grotto was related to the death of Vito's youngest son, five-year-old Vito, Jr., who died in 1935] of pneumonia (March 6, 1989). It is possible Russo wasnt all that vocal about his motives, the loss of his namesake being too great to discuss without becoming emotional. Clearly Russo's creative undertaking aided and complemented the grieving process in a personal "search of structure and order, and the reaffirmation of self" (Jones 1975: 192).

What was Russo's model(s) for his Rosebank creation? Short of visiting Sala Consilina, I have been unable to verify the existence of a major grotto dedicated to the Madonna in the area of Russo's hometown. The southern Italian landscape, especially the area surrounding Naples, is rich in natural caves, formed out of volcanic residue, and artificial grottos, carved out of the rock's surface (Miller 1982: 22-23). In an account of his journey through southern Italy in the early part of the twentieth century, the English traveler Norman Douglas sardonically entitled a chapter of his book "Cave-Worship" to emphasize the importance of grottos in southern Italian vernacular Catholicism (Douglas 1983: 23-30). The grotto is a pervasive motif in oral and written narratives explaining the origins of popular Italian religious cults: where saints once found sanctuary (St. Angelo, St. Rocco); where a statue of the Virgin Mary was uncovered by a shepherd (Our Lady of the Snows in Sanza); where the bones of St. Rosalia were miraculously discovered on the outskirts of Palermo; or where St. Michael the Archangel appeared in Manfredonia. (It is interesting to note that St. Michael is Sala Consilina's spiritual patron.)[4] It is quite possible Russo also saw cavelike structures in the United States, such as the miniature grotto of Fatima in Harlem's Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church during one of his pilgrimages to the Manhattan feast (Orsi 1985), or even the impressive "Lourdes of America" that was under construction in

[3] Peter Russo wrote that his father was nicknamed "Freeman" because of his generosity. It is possible the appellation was written "Friedman" (Jackendoff 1987: B1) and Russo inherited it from the original owner of 6] Smith Street, as was the case with brother Giovanni's nickname, "John Mulligan."

[4] The importance of the grotto as a key cultural symbol cannot be overestimated. In America, Italian immigrants Baldassare Forestiere and Umberto Gabello tunneled sprawling subterranean dwellings in Fresno, California, and Jules-berg, Colorado, respectively (Mangione and Morreale 1992: 230).

the late 1930s at the Italian parish of St. Lucy's Church in the Bronx (Bianco 1980: 158-60).[5]

Most likely it was not any one structure that was Russo's "original." Before building the grotto, Russo assembled a shrine to Our Lady of Mount Carmel out of paper, cardboard, and aluminum foil in a sec-ond-floor room of his Smith Street home. In 1974, Vito's eldest son, Michael, was quoted in the Staten Island Advance, saying that his father used photographs of Italian churches to create miniature "cathedrals" in the room (July 17, 1974). Family members I spoke to, with the exception of Russo's eldest daughter, Ida, maintained the altar was up year-round and was not erected temporarily for the July 16] feast day. Advance reporter Beth Jackendoff wrote in 1987] (July 13, 1987) that Russo started building the paper chapel after his son's death, while James told me the indoor chapel was already up by 1935] and it was the stone grotto that was built in response to the boy's death. All those I interviewed, however, agreed that Russo based the grotto on his indoor shrine. As Thomas Hubka has pointed out, the folk designer generates design ideas in bricolage fashion, "disassembling or decomposing existing forms and composing new forms out of the abstracted ideas of bits and pieces of existing forms" (Hubka 1986: 430). The Staten Island shrine must thus be seen as a composite of grottos and architectural forms worked out by Russo and, as we shall see, by fellow society members who assisted in the shrine's construction.

Building the Grotto

A granite and bronze, tombstonelike memorial was erected on society property the year of Russo's death to honor "the founder and builder of the shrine." While Russo's central role in the history of the grotto cannot be ignored, he is not its single "author," working alone on this monumental structure like the solitary Simon Rodia on the Watts Towers. The collaborative effort of society members, along with the assistance of unaffiliated neighborhood men, played a significant role in the grotto's construction. Oral and written accounts of the shrine's creation reveal the difficulty in establishing a conventional, uncontested history of this vernacular site.

][Shrine builders, c. 1945 (lefi to right): Angelo Madrazzo, Thomas "Marsie" Tedesco, Vito Russo, and Phil Pasalano. Tedesco's son Joseph is seated on the bicycle. Courtesy: Thomas Tedesco.]]

[5] The Lourdes grotto has been reproduced in numerous places. The most famous replica was completed under Pope Leo XIII's papacy (1878-1903) on the Vatican grounds (Scotti 1959: 225; Casey 1967: 1031-33). After Bernadette Soubirous was canonized in December 1933, there was a proliferation of grotto construction on church grounds in the United States, especially parishes with large Italian congregations: Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Mount Vernon, New York, erected in 1947; St. Margaret's Shrine in Bridgeport, Connecticut, begun in 1941; King of Peace Church in Philadelphia, erected in 1943] (Schiavo 1949: 802-6, 546-57, 927-31); and Church of Notre Dame in New Hyde Park, Long Island.

Written documents such as newspaper articles offer invaluable information regarding the construction of the grotto at the same time that they obfuscate the historical record. Early coverage of the shrine in the Staten Island Advance posits conflicting versions about who actually built it. The headline for the May 7, 1938, article reads, "Shrine Built in Spare Time of Members Is Dedicated." It goes on to report that the grotto, which was begun in October of the previous year, was "built by the 46] members of the Mount Carmel Society . . . during their spare time after working hours." Four men are featured in that article: the masonry work is attributed to Umberto Summa (sometimes written Somma) of 191] St. Mary's Avenue and Angelo Madrazzo of 182] St. Mary's Avenue; Russo is given credit for the grotto's stone decorations; and Vincent Lupoli of 294] St. Mary's Avenue is said to have painted figures on the apse's walls and vault (which no longer exist). But in less than two months, a second article listed Russo and Summa as having done "most of the work on the shrine" (July 11, 1938). The following year, the newspaper first reported that the grotto was "built by Vito Russo" (July 13, 1939) and then four days later wrote that it was "[c]onstructed by members of the society" (July 17, 1939). Russo is championed as the sole builder of the Rosebank grotto in articles published after his death in 1954] and 1974.

Contemporary oral accounts continually shift attention between Russo and the volunteer labor of society members in an attempt to revise the perception that the shrine was the product of a single builder. Corrections are constantly being made in conversation, as was the case in this exchange recorded during the 1985 feast:

A.P.: And this man did all this work, all this handwork by himself.
Thomas Chirelli: Vito? Oh, he didn't do it all by himself.
A.P.: I mean, he had a lot of help. (July 16, 1985)

Earlier in the same day, Chirelli had explained Russo's role when asked how the indoor cardboard shrine had been translated into the permanent outdoor grotto: "He took it mostly from his head. He took that out of the model that he put home, and he took that model and we built this out here on his, you know-in other words, he directed, he told us, 'This, that, and the other thing.'" But it was Angelo Madrazzo, a professional mason, who served as the chairman of the building committee that "planned the grotto" (Staten Island Advance, May 7, 1938). While Russo was the catalyst for the grotto's construction, this built environment was ultimately the product of synergy.

Society members have been paying increasing attention to fashioning the historical record in a more formal and institutional manner. This revision addresses not only the working relationship between Russo and fellow builders, but also the attention the local newspaper has paid to one survivor of the initial construction team. In 1987, Staten Island Advance reporter Beth Jackendoff featured the grotto in two separate articles on the front page of the paper's Lifestyle section after attending a talk anthropologist Anna L. Chairetakis and I gave on Italian folklore in New York in which we mentioned the Staten Island shrine. The second article (July 13, 1987), complete with five photographs, played up the role of Thomas "Marsie" Tedesco, a society member Vito Russo's grandson had described to me as "one of the originals" (July 16, 1985).

Jackendoff's full-length article stated that Russo had originally approached Tedesco for assistance in converting the cardboard model into mortar and stone.[6] Some society members were upset at being excluded from the grotto's history and were prompted to write a short narrative on the organization and shrine. One active member, who gathered information from some of the society elders and wrote up the three paragraphs, explained:

It was done up [because] when somebody asks for a story, you have Marsie make one story, "I did this with Vito Russo." But you have a lot of the old-timers who have hard feelings. Not for nothing, but not one person did this, So I said, "Let's make up a story that's as close to the real thing as we can get." So when someone asks for a story of the shrine, I would give them this. (1989).[7]

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[6] The article, which relies on oral interviews and Advance copy dated May 7, 1938, reads in part:

Anyhow, "Friedman" Russo decided to use his paper tribute to Our Lady as a model for a more permanent structure, built from stone.

He went to his neighbor, Marsie-alias Thomas Tedesco-for help.

"Before we started the stone work, I made it all in metal," said Tedesco, 80, who still lives in Rosebank.

Then a few other men got involved. Al Somma [sic] and Angelo Madrazo [sic] did the brickwork. Vincent Lupoli did the painted figures within the shrine. And finally, in 1936, Tedesco and Russo started executing the grotto in stone.

And that's how the Our Lady of Mount Carmel shrine, an elaborate 30-foot-wide construction of arches and statues in a small, peaceful park on Amity Street, came into being.

[7] The photocopied document reads:

The Society of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was founded in 1903] for the purposes of assisting and aiding members of the corporation in sickness and distress, to promote fellowship and fraternity, and to educate members in matters of religion. The original officers were Andrew Palina, Saverio Laraia, Raffaele Bottone, Vincenzo DeSantis and Joseph Lombardo.

In 1915, the society purchased the property the shrine stands on. Con-struetion of the shrine began in the early 1930s by Vito Russo, who was then the president. Over a period of 20] years, Vito Russo along with other members of the society worked on the shrine. Among those members were Thomas Tedesco, Angelo Marrazzo [sic], Umberto Summa, Frank Columbo, Michael DePompo, Sr., Thomas Chirelli, Willie Orlando, Carmine Gagliardi, and Frank Carucci.

Thomas Chirelli is now the president of the society. James Russo, the son of Vito Russo, maintains the shrine along with Thomas Tedesco. The society holds an annual feast each July in honor of the Blessed Mother, with a parade through the streets of Rosebank and a mass at St. Joseph's Church sponsored by Mount Carmel Society.

The phrase "in sickness and distress, to promote fellowship and fraternity" is taken directly from Vito Russo's quote found in the July 13, 1939, Advance article Jackendoff sent me from the newpaper's clipping files, and which I subsequently mailed to the author. The society account differs from information culled from various Advance articles: the date of land purchase is listed as 1915, not 1914] (July 5, 1940); and construction of the grotto is said to have occurred in the early 1930s, instead of October 1937] (May 7, 1938).

Other society members mentioned in newspaper articles include: Charles Chiarelli, Nicolo DiCiangi, Luigi Mucciolo, Antonio Peduto, and Vito Piedalate, treasurer (1939); Anthony Rota, Matteo Scamardella, and Matteo Yaccacelli, financial secretary (1939).

I have withheld the speaker's name and the interview's full date so as not to foster rancor.

Confronted with increasing outside attention, local knowledge is thus codified for external dissemination.

We know from the May 7, 1938, newspaper account that one hundred sacks of cement were used in the initial masonry work. The fieldstones used in the central chapel were gathered by society members who worked on WPA jobs throughout the city. The brick foundation of the two flanking alcoves and the three towers atop the central apse were added at some undetermined later date. The smooth stones that cover the shrine's surface were collected by Russo, Chirelli, and other society members, who, employed by the sanitation department, would stop along their work routes to pick them up and carry them back to the society grounds in bushel baskets. The stone-studded grotto was assembled from sections cast in handcrafted molds. The stones were pressed into sandbox forms into which cement was poured. When the cement hardened, the wooden frames were dismantled, and the stone-encrusted sections were removed and secured in place with cement, wire, and/or metal rods. In the beginning, the stones had been applied directly to the grotto's cement-covered surface. According to Tedesco, the new method was arrived at quite by accident: "Some guy come along; he said, 'Youse doin' it the wrong way.' So he told us, he said, 'Why don't youse make a form, then put your stones? That's how.' We got all our stuff made like that. This guy here who told us, he must be pushing up daisies now" (July 16, 1985).

Since the first fieldstone was laid in October of 1937, the Rosebank grotto has been growing. The present-day shrine is the result of close to fifty years of work and is still not considered complete. The hall and the property have also been added to and repaired in the course of the past five decades. Again, the local newspaper makes a series of contradictory statements in its coverage of the evolving structure. On May 7, 1938, an anonymous Advance journalist wrote that the grotto "was completed last week," but one year later, the paper's readership was told, "The completed grotto . . . took one man two years to build" (July 8, 1939). Further construction was carried out before the 1940] feast and reported in the paper under the subheading, "Enlarging Shrine" (July 5, 1940). In 1954, the paper reported that Russo had died "before he had finished a grotto in honor of the saint." Tedesco, who repaired the grotto until his wife became ill in 1988, created two independent structures: a 1983] chapel to St. Anthony, and a crucifix salvaged from a church and restored in 1984. Today James Russo wants to build an arch he says his father had originally planned. Since the technical skills of the elders have not been passed on to the small number of younger men involved in the society, the arch remains unbuilt.

Society members are increasingly concerned about the grotto's future. In light of rising property taxes, the society is currently seeking an exemption from municipal real-estate taxes as a way of securing the grotto. In fact, the society's updated bylaws (1984) state that one of the main purposes of the organization is the "preservation of our shrine, a memorial to the Blessed Mother." But this is not a static interpretation of preservation. When I asked society members if they were interested in having their

grotto considered for landmark status, they were intrigued by the idea as long as such designation would not prevent them from doing further work on the building.

][Cast sections assembled in the shrine's far right corner, 1985. Photograph: Lillian Caruana.]]

][”It Looks Ancient, Like a Jeweled City”.' Liminaltiy and the Creation of Sacred Space]]

The themes of temporal, spatial, and social liminality are inscribed on the Staten Island grotto complex. The neighborhood, the voluntary association and club space, the grotto, and Vito Russo himself are invested with symbolic attributes that situate them between past and present, Italy and the United States, the home and the street, heaven and earth. This dislocation of time and space enhances the grotto's designation as a sacred site. Individual and communal performances in the forms of procession, pilgrimage, and prayer confirm and intensify the landscape's special status. Spoken, silent, and written prayer directed at the supernatural beings represented figuratively at the grotto articulates the belief that the Rosebank site is a place where communication between the mundane and the divine is not only possible but augmented.

The Neighborhood

The Rosebank residents I spoke with were more inclined to refer to the place where they lived as a ”town” rather than an urban ”neighborhood.” For them, the borough of Manhattan is ”New York,” or simply, ”the city.” Rosebank's narrow streets, lined with single detached homes and one-family row houses, contribute to the area's particular ”hometown” feeling. Children and grandchildren of immigrants still live in the houses purchased by progenitors before World War II. People who visit the grotto from other parts of the city, especially Italian Americans, are struck by the area's ethnic continuity. Society treasurer Michael De Cataldo explained, ”People come down here and say, 'I don't believe this! This place is like going back in time.' Why? This neighborhood is like locked within a shell” (March 6, 1989). This comment echoes Diana E. Thompson's observations, made in her 1972] study of Rosebank's Italian immigrant life in the early twentieth century. According to Thompson, the area possessed a certain ”geographical eccentricity,” whereby immigrants ”were simultaneously part of the metropolitan area and yet were cut off from it both geographically and culturally,” fostering a ”womb-like existence” (1972: 3).[8] These metaphors, full of organic and parturient referents, complement ancient grotto symbolism.

[8] This so-called insularity was broken historically during the 1920-30s with Fascist rallies and anti-Fascist counter demonstrations at the Rosebank house where Giuseppe Garibaldi once resided (Salvemini 1977: 85-88) and at nearby docks, bustling during World War II.

While the neighborhood's isolation may have been true in the beginning of the 1970s when Thompson wrote her account, the construction of condominiums for Manhattan-centric professionals and the Navy's development of a battleship homeport in neighboring Stapleton have certainly impacted on the predominantly working-class Rosebank.

To reach the shrine by car, one turns concentrically on Virginia Avenue, Fletcher Street, St. Mary's Avenue, White Plains Avenue, and finally Amity Street as if entering a maze or riding the spiraling back of a seashell. The grotto is set back from the property line at the end of a short, dead-end street, hidden from all but those in the know.[9] De Cataldo noted, "Either you come looking for this place, or you're not gonna find it" (March 6, 1989). During the 1991] feast, one middle-aged couple who visited the grotto for "special intentions" jokingly referred to the difficulty in locating the shrine as possibly garnering "special points with the Lord" for the "extra effort" their journey to Rosebank had entailed.[10] They had originally ended up on the far side of the borough searching for Amity Place; Amity Street is not listed in some map indexes.

The property offers a tranquil setting for pilgrims during the course of the year, a refuge from frenetic urban life. Sitting in the shade cast by the duster of landscaped trees one summer afternoon, I listened to the sound of songbirds, cicadas, church bells, distant dogs barking, kids playing, and the nearby gurgle of a fountain. The interruption of a blaring radio only served to accentuate the site's typically placid atmosphere.

The Hall

The hall that houses the voluntary association historically functioned as a male-only social club where men gathered after work, free from the responsibilities and restraints of the domestic space. The society hall was a home away from home, where men cooked their own meals without the help or presence of women.[11] (The women's auxiliary was established after World War II and today, its approximately forty members numerically dominate their male counterparts by two to one.) The hall's semisubmerged basement was the center of social activity for the organizations's male membership.[12] The cellar, burrowed out of the earth with brawn and pick, was a place where the "subterranean

[9] The nearby Meucci Garibaldi Museum (420] Thompkins Avenue), a New York City landmark listed in the National Register of Historical Places, is better known to historians and architectural connoisseurs than the Rosebank shrine. For information on Meucci and Garibaldi's stay on Staten Island, see Amfitheatrof 1973: 93-100.

None of the surveys of architecture on the island mentions the Rosebank grotto (Zavin and Shepherd 1970; Gabay and Szekely 1980), nor the museum, for that matter. Norval White's and Elliot Willensky's AIA Guide to New York City did not list the shrine until the third edition (1988: 829).

[10] Historically pilgrimage sites have been located in hard-to-reach places, and the travails of travel are considered an integral part of penance (Turner and Turner 1978: 201).

[11] Tension surrounding male and female spheres of association and dominance carrying over from Old World settings to the immigrant community is evident in a narrative collected by folklorist Carla Bianco among Italian immigrants in Roseto, Pennsylvania. The story, "The Nervous Wife," tells of a new wife's growing anger at her husband, who spends far too many evenings away from home. In versions collected in Italy, the home away from home was the town tavern; in America, the husband's hangout was the local Italian social club (1974: 184-86). For discussion of the traditional Italian tavern as an alternative site of conviviality and socialization, see Falassi 1980: 205-46.

[12] In a rare display of appreciation for Italian American aesthetics and culture, Barbara Grizzuti Harrison describes the vibrant social life her family created in the subterranean "heart and pulsing center" that was the domestic finished basement (1989: 438).

forces [and] the irrationality of the depths" (Bachelard 1969: 18) were celebrated in Saturday-night bacchanals of good talk and laughter. The club cellar functioned as a private cantina where members collectively pressed their own wine, stored it in barrels, and celebrated the communion of the "brotherhood of the grape." To the accompaniment of wine, food, and tobacco, society members cast stone-encrusted pieces for the grotto in the cellar. A number of men recall being sent as young boys by their mothers to fetch menfolk who socialized and worked way past midnight. Tedesco's repertoire of personal narratives about the grotto includes a story of intoxication when he and Russo repeatedly broke a grotto section in the course of an evening's work. In addition, the hall's upper floor has been a place where rites of passage and calendrical festivities have been celebrated. Thus 36] Amity Street has traditionally acted as a liminal setting, situated on the periphery of everyday life.

The Grotto

From pre-Christian times to the present, the grotto has been a major locus of religious activity in the West. Hermits and monks (as well as bandits) sought refuge from society in caves, and their subterranean temples in time became major pilgrimage sites. The cult of Our Lady of Mount Carmel has its origins in the first quarter of the thirteenth century, when a monastic order established itself in a cavernous monastery carved into the sides of Mount Carmel, a holy site located in Palestine (McGough 1967: 113-14; De Dios and Steggink 1967: 114-18).

The historical appeal of the grotto is undoubtedly due to its liminal position between the mundane world and the mysterious and often forbiding underground (Miller 1982: 11). The mountain's gaping hole is not only a passageway to the nether regions, but its "fertile depths and procreative convexities" (Bakhtin 1984: 339) are a source from which the supernatural springs forth. Jesus was originally believed to have been born not in a manger but a grotto, and Easter celebrates his resurrection from a cavernous tomb. It is at the grotto entrance where the divine, often in the form of the Virgin Mary, is made manifest. Religious iconography has historically situated the niche as "the place of the epiphany of God" (Burckhardt 1967: 75). Replicating the grotto structure is an attempt to tap into the powers of these natural formations.

In addition to form, two interrelated decorative elements, water and light, enhance the grotto's semiotic message of sacredness. Since antiquity, natural and man-made grottos in Europe have been linked to the calming and salutary effects of the primal force of liquid life. Recycled shells and smooth, round stones collected from the city's shores emerge from the Rosebank grotto's surface to echo Western aesthetic and spiritual precepts that imagine the seashell as the birth canal of female deities and the architectural container of religious statues. Springs of curative waters miraculously surging to the earth's surface, accompanying Marian apparitions, find their counterpart in the fountain that bubbles before the main chapel, where the statue of the Madonna is housed. I overheard a man ask if the water is blessed.

The brilliance of divine light and blinding revelation reverberates in the presence of decorative elements popular in religious vernacular structures.[13] In addition to shells and stones, the grotto is inlaid with bicycle reflectors, translucent plastic flowers, and glass marbles. An aureole of aluminum foil emanates from oval religious prints set in cement. A multicolored stained-glass lampshade crowns an alcove roof covering a statue of St. Ann and the Christ Child. Supplicants visiting during feast time leave an incandescent grove of candles in the central chapel. Electric lights outline, frame, and accentuate the religious statues and architecture. The shrine's decorative stonework, especially above the main chapel, is reminiscent of traditional lighting that once arched across city streets and outlined church facades for religious feasts in Italian American communities. According to Tedesco, electric lights were originally used on the shrine before the small stones were applied.

The grotto embodies a series of architectural chronotopes, i.e., temporal and spatial elements fused into an emotionally charged and value-laden artistic whole (Bakhtin 1988: 84-85, 243). Three interrelated time/space coordinates are superimposed on the contemporary topography of Staten Island: a primal, nonhistoric site; nineteenth-century Italy; and pre-World War II, Italian American New York City. The calendrical festival and accompanying procession, with its recycled mix of sacred and ludic components, further expand the threshold through which these and other moments and places emerge onto the Rosebank landscape.

][Electric lights and burning candles illuminate the left chapel, 1988. Photograph: Martha Cooper.]]

The perception of the grotto as a timeless fantasyscape was articulated best by a woman commenting to her husband and daughter one afternoon in late June of 1991: "It looks ancient, like a jeweled city." This fairy-tale architecture, with its turrets, crownlike roof, and stone surface sprouting verdure, most often evokes an imagined Italy of old. The translocation of Italy to the United States is a feat that continues to astonish, as witnessed in this architectural history offered by a Rosebank resident attending the 1985 feast:

A.P.: It was all constructed without blueprints, from the mind of the Old Country, you know. What they had over there, they tried to duplicate the same thing over here.

J.S.: Did you ever hear the old-timers talk about what they remembered from Italy, about something like this?

][Stones, sea shells, and bicycle reflectors adorn a grotto niche, 1985.
Photograph: Lillian Caruana.]]

A.P: Oh, sure. They had shrines over there. Beautiful shrines. And from their imagination, what existed over there, they tried to duplicate it. There were no plans for

[13] Robert Farris Thompson explores the "flash of the spirit" in Kongo aesthetic and metaphysical traditions employed by African American visual artists James Hampton and Henry Dorsey (1984:146-58).

construction, maps, or charts. This was all from their mind, from what existed over there. (July 16, 1985)

][A visitor admires the handicraft of the grotto's left wing, 1988.
Photograph: Martha Cooper.]]

Visitors point to the shrine's meticulous handicraft and "peasant" rusticity as evidence of a love of labor proudly proclaimed as an ethnic marker.[14]

This "Old World" craftsmanship at the service of religious devotion is aesthetically appreciated and highly valued, albeit believed to be out-of-sync with contemporary American society. The revered image of conjoined artistry and spirituality is inextricably linked to an overpowering nostalgia for "the old neighborhood," inhabited by immigrant parents and a vibrant Italian community life. For Italian American devotees of Our Lady of Mount Carmel who once attended the annual feast in the now predominantly Latino East Harlem, the Rose-bank grotto constitutes a key site in a constellation of alternative feasts to the Madonna that include Williamsburg, Brooklyn and Ham-monton, New Jersey.

Vito Russo

Whether he was a personal acquaintance or known simply as the anonymous "man who built the shrine," Vito Russo is perceived as having been endowed with social and spiritual attributes that marked him as special. Russo's ability to enjoin fellow society members on be-haft of his monumental undertaking, in addition to garnering a high level of praise (I have yet to hear a single word of malice uttered in conversations about Vito Russo), bespeaks a man groomed in the southern Italian ideal of masculine maturity: gregarious, modest, a good organizer, an ability to lead, and most importantly, respectful of others (Posen and Sciorra 1983: 35-36). His personal charisma cannot be denied if we recall the simple fact that he was in command as society president for more than haft his lifetime.

Neighborhood residents tell stories which situate Vito Russo at the crossroads of the supernatural and mundane. Again, I quote from the earlier conversation:

J.S.: You say he saw the Virgin Mary?
A.P.: He come out of that place and he saw a saint right in front of him. A vision of

[14] The pervasive and deeply felt regard for the well-crafted object in Italian American life rarely receives attention in mainstream culture. In The Brotherhood of the Grape, John Fante describes the joys of laying stone:

> He had a terrifying lust for work and bitter squint at the sun which, in his view, moved too fast across the sky. To finish a job brought him deep sadness. His love for stone was a pleasure more fulfilling than his passion for gambling, or wine, women... He wanted a wall to build-that was it. He didn't care what wall it was, but let it be a wall that brought respect from his friends, who knew he was abroad in the world, a workingman, a builder. (1978: 19-20, 116).

A recent cinematic expression of this ethos is found in John Turturro's moving film, Mac (1993), a homage to his carpenter father.

the saint in front of him.
J.S.: Where?
A.P.: Right here. Right in that basement. You see the basement door?
J.S.: Yea.
A.P.: He was workin' down there, makin' these things, and he come out, and he saw the vision of the Blessed Mother. In front of him. Then he had passed away. When did he pass away?
Thomas Chirelli: He didn't pass away then. He got sick. He had a sick throat for a year, then he passed away.
Another man: But he worked his lifetime here. This man gave all he had into this thing. (July 16, 1985)

Although the Russo family and society members maintain there was no miraculous cure or apparition prompting Russo to build the structure, the comment "He didn't pass away then" acknowledges a widely held belief in Russo's vision late in life. On another occasion, Russo was greeted, according to "Marsie" Tedesco, by a neighborhood woman who, unbeknownst to him, had recently died. The miraculous events described in both narratives occur at a vulnerable moment, when Russo is in transit from the society basement, where he worked late into the night on the grotto, to home. The stories that imply Rus-so's dedication to the shrine and his devotion to the Virgin Mary made him a prime candidate for paranormal experience.

Talking to God at the Rosebank Grotto

Pilgrims from all over the New York City metropolis, and as far away as Canada and Italy, travel to Rosebank to kneel quietly before the Virgin Mary or stand before the host of statues scattered across alcoves and ledges. The private nature of prayer did not allow me the opportunity to inquire about the substance of individual petitions (not that I didn't foolishly try). Society members suggested I search the written prayers tucked in the grotto's crevices and beneath the statuary to ascertain the shrine's importance in people's lives. A sampling of supplicatory text from July 1991: "Please help us find this missing boy," written on the back of a photograph of a young man, a student at St. John's University in Queens; "St Anthony/Please help Tony get healthy/ + come home + be happy"; and, in the same hand, "St. Jude/Please help me get my health back/the way I was. Help our/sons." A folded piece of pink stationery, addressed "For Our Lady Mt[.] Carmel" and stuck in the crook between Our Lady of Mount Carmel and the Infant Jesus, reads:

7-16-90
Dear Blessed Mother,
Please help me, overcome all
fear. By [sic] a car + drive it, with
confidence. Get me upstate + do what
is necessary [sic] + sell the house
without complications and very soon. Help me. Speak with
your son + tell him of my
wants + fears as I call upon him + the Holy Spirit
be my inspiration. I am
so alone. I belong nowhere.
No one wants to hear your problems.
I cant [sic] go on this way, fearful,
because Im [sic] lonely + alone.
Could you give me another house, my summer place. A
new home + some meaning to
life for me. I feel so desparate [sic].
Our Lady of Mt[.] Carmel
pray for me.
Thank you.
You know who I am.

][Lighting candles in the shrine's central apse, 1988. Photograph: Martha Cooper.]]

][Neighborhood women Nancy Russo (1.) and her sister (r.) sell candles to grotto visitors.
The photograph on the table depicts the statue of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel that survived a church fire and, later restored, temporarily stood in the grotto's far right chapel for the duration of the 1985] feast. Photograph: Lillian Caruana.]]

These texts reveal the simple truth that prayer's communicative power is believed to be intensified at this special site in Rosebank.

For years, Vito Russo's daughter-in-law Nancy and other neighborhood women have distributed candles, holy cards, and religious medals to supplicants during the feast. Mrs. Russo also offers a sympathetic ear to those who, visiting the grotto during the course of the year, stop at her home across the street. From her unique vantage point as grotto steward, Mrs. Russo has witnessed acts of faith performed by those seeking solace at the shrine. She has seen women walk on their knees up the brick-patterned walkway to the statue of the Virgin Mary. She has heard and in turn tells the histories of those who have paid a visit to the Rosebank Madonna:

J.S.: Do you find people coming here who made vows, who say that they have gotten the grace?

N.R.: Yes, they do. Yes, a lot of them do. There was one fellow, oh, this was years back. I was a little girl. One fellow was walking with crutches and the grandfather turned around and told him, "Throw those crutches away!" "But I can't! I won't be

able to walk!" He said, "I said, 'Throw them away!"' He threw them away and he walked.

J.S.: You saw this?

N.R.: No, I didn't see this, but I was told. (July 16, 1985)

Mrs. Russo and other community women provide testimony of spiritual resolve and hope in conversations with and about pilgrims who animate the grotto through prayer.

Although there are no major structural changes being made at this time, the shrine is augmented and transformed through the ongoing placement of ceremonial offerings such as candles and flowers. Michael De Cataldo calls the shrine "the nursing home of statues" because people donate their families' old, paint-chipped and broken religious statues instead of destroying them. The grotto complex as refuge is in keeping with the interrelated motifs of domus (Orsi 1985: xix-xx; Manning 1973: 188-92) and caritas exemplfied by the mutual-aid society established under the Blessed Mother's protective mantle. During the winter months, the religious figures are wrapped in plastic for safekeeping and stored in the apse behind a removable Plexiglas door or in the basement of the society hall. A statue of the Virgin Mary now in the society's possession survived a fire that ravaged a Staten Island church and was ultimately donated by a dying votary of the Madonna whose sister resides in Rosebank. One woman I spoke with mentioned the "warm feeling" that envelops her at the shrine with its array of religious statuary, not something she experiences inside the statueless "modern" churchs built or redesigned after the second Vatican Council (1962-65).

"The Priest Stole Our Statue"' The Grotto as Nexus Between Official and Vernacular Religions

The construction of meaning is not achieved without struggle in Rose-bank. Maintaining control over the grotto's use and interpretation is at the heart of current tensions between the local Roman Catholic clergy and society members. While the conflict is infused with particular contemporary details, it has its roots in the historic implementation of and opposition to the Catholic church's hegemony over the lay religion practiced in southern Italy and the United States, in particular Staten Island. The Society of Our Lady of Mount Carmel's involvement in the continuous search for signification and its evolving self-representation vis-<a224>-vis its sacred built environment situate its members and sympathetic neighborhood residents in opposition to local manifestations of a religious autocracy.

Context for Conflict

The tension between the church and the society has its roots in the broader context of popular religion in the Mezzogiorno, or southern Italy.[15] Richard Gambino has

[15] According to anthropologist Raffaele Pettazzoni, the tension between orthodox and "living" religions in Italy dates back to late antiquity with Rome's suppression of first, "mystery" cults, and later, Christianity (cited in Tentori 1982: 116-17). Pope Gregory I advocated a policy of co-optation in efforts to convert pagan Europe, seeking to transform pre-Christian temples and rituals through their new

pointed out the "inescapable truth" that there has existed a". . . historic bitter animosity between the Church and the people of the Mezzogiorno, an antipathy which is far from resolved in today's relations between the Catholic Church in America and Italian-Americans" (Gambino 1975: 229). While deeply religious, southern Italian agricultural workers at the time of immigration had little reverence for the church as an institution. In the Mezzogiorno, priests often came from landowning families and the priesthood was a means of solidifying mutual class interests (Gambino 1975: 229-30). Transferred to a southern paese, a priest often aligned himself with the local landowning aristocracy which mercilessly exploited the contadini, or peasants (Vecoli 1969: 229). As a result, there existed among southern Italian agricultural laborers a popular anticlericalism, which was often expressed in "attitudes of familiar contempt" (Gambino 1975: 229).[16] Regular attendance at Sunday mass was not a primary concern for the contadini. (In a telephone conversation with Ida Russo on March n, 1989, she informed me her father Vito did not attend weekly mass.) "The parish priest appeared to be regarded as a functionary who performed the necessary rites of baptism, marriages, and funerals" (Gambino 1975: 229).[17] Though official obligations were ignored, southern Italians considered themselves good Catholics.

When the Italian immigrants arrived in the United States, they were confronted with an Irish-dominated Catholic church that viewed their religious traditions as an unhealthy mix of pre-Christian beliefs and practices. In response to ecclesiastical prejudice, Italian immigrants petitioned for their own churches, where their religious customs would be understood. As Silvano Tomasi points out in his history of Italian parishes in New York City, Italian priests and their poor parishioners had very different agendas for establishing separate ethnic parishes. The former were "more concerned with ecclesiastical politics, their equality in the diocesan structure, and freedom of action" (Tomasi 1975: 122), while the latter sought official sanction of their worldview and a familiar institutional home that would provide sanctuary from the daily bewilderment, toil, and injustices of the New World. Tomasi maintains Italian-born priests were considerably more sympathetic to southern Italian religious practices, despite confrontations, than the Irish American religious hierarchy. It was second-generation Italian priests who

association with Christian symbols and authority (Burke 1978: 229). The struggle became especially acute during the Counter-Reformation in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In the face of growing Protestantism, the Roman Catholic church sought to reestablish hegemony over popular religious thought and practice by employing intimidation and violence (Ginzburg 1988), and by revamping popular feasts into officially sanctioned spectacle (Burke 1978: 230-31).

[16] Folklorist Carla Bianco recorded a second-generation Italian woman in Roseto, Pennsylvania: "It seems to me that we don't have that great respect for priests. Our old people here were the same. I think they came with that from Italy" (1974: 104).

[17] Male contadini's avoidance of church was inextricably tied to perceptions of gender roles and sexuality, and the place of the priest in the social order. The sexual escapades of the clergy have long been the subject of folk humor among Mezzogiorno peasants and their American descendants (Vecoli 1969: 229; Gambino 1975: 236). The "cuckolding priest" was also reason for concern as a potential threat to patriarchal notions of family honor (Orsi 1985: 84).

took the American Catholic church's "assimilationist ideology" to heart and "emerged enthusiastic Ameri-canizers" (Vecoli 1977: 36). These U.S.-educated priests moved to squash religious cults born in the Mezzogiorno that had taken root in America's cities.

Religious Tension in Rosebank

Disagreements about money and the role of the Madonna vis-à-vis Christ have historically been part of local religious strife. In the early years of Monsignor Anthony Cataggio's tenure (1905-58), St. Joseph's Church initiated a drive to build a parish school and raised considerable amounts of money from parishioners. The collected funds were used instead to construct a new rectory. Rosebank's Italian residents harbored resentment toward the church's second pastor as late as the early 1970s, when they were interviewed by graduate student Diana E. Thompson. She wrote: "[T]his action, among others, by Father Cataggio had an alienating effect on the community" (1972: 54).

The newly constructed grotto only increased this alienation by creating new arenas for friction. On May 6, 1938, Monsignor Cataggio sent his Irish assistant pastor, Andrew J. Farricker, to bless the society's recent architectural wonder. The Staten Island Advance reporter covering the event saw fit to quote part of Father Farricker's message, delivered to the estimated two hundred people attending the grotto's dedication: "'This shrine is here for your use-to come here whenever you want to,' said Father Farricker, 'but it does not take the place of the church. This cannot fill the needs of the church for you. Always remember that the Mother of God is second in your hearts and that Jesus, her son, is first in worship'" (May 7, 1938). Very similar sentiments about the Madonna and the grotto as an alternative site for worship would be voiced during the 1980s by Cataggio's successor.

Antagonism between the society and the local clergy deepened under the parish leadership of Monsignor John Villani (1958-83) and after the death of Vito Russo in 1954. A central part of the society's annual celebration is the procession through the streets on July 16. Marchers parade from the society grounds to St. Joseph's Church to attend a high mass in honor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and then return to the grotto. Until the late 1950s, the society marched not with a religious statue, as is common in other Italian American processions in New York, but with the society standard. In 1959, when the old wooden church was about to be replaced by the present-day brick structure, the pastor offered to return a life-size figure of the Madonna that the society had originally donated to the parish. The current Vito Russo continues the story:

V. R.: The club, years ago, donated that statue to the church. So when they built the new church, they [the clergy] asked us if we wanted the statue back because then they'll destroy it. So we said, "Naturally we'll take it back." And we had the statue all redone. Then we decided to go out in a procession with the statue. Because years ago,

you used to go out with the banner all the time. So we took the statue out the first year.

J. S.: When was this?

V. R.: It had to be the early '60s. So we went out the first year, the second year. At that time it was Monsignor Villani. We'd meet with him every year. He said he didn't want us to go out with the statue. So we asked him why and he said, "you can't." This and that. So we told him, "We're gonna go out with it." So we would like him to parade, too. So he came in the parade. And every procession, we'd bring the statue into the church for the mass. In the afternoon, we'd take the statue out again and bring it back to the church. And it stays there until after the feast; then we go to pick it up. And so finally he said, "You ain't gettin' it back."

J. S.: Just like that?

V. R.: Yea, just like that. So we said, "Why?" He said he shouldn't gave it to us in the first place and we have no proof that it was our statue, all this. So what could we do? We had our hands tied. So that ended that. (July 16, 1985)

As one elderly neighborhood woman succinctly put it, "The priest stole our statue" (July 16, 1985).[18]

According to society members, the current pastor, Monsignor John Servodidio, promised to return the statue soon after moving to Rose-bank in 1983. Then he reversed himself, declaring the archdiocese would not permit the society to parade the religious statue. Heated debates ensued, regarding money collected at the grotto and during the procession, a portion of which the society in turn gave to the church in the form of ever-increasing "donations" for the July 16] panegyric mass. The pastor soon resurrected a century-old argument first used by the Irish American clergy, which characterized lay organizers as unsavory characters who profited from the feast at the expense of the Roman Catholic church (Vecoli 1969: 234-35). Each year, during the society-sponsored

[18] In 1899, journalist and social reformer Jacob Riis wrote of the immigrant dev-otees of St. Donato residing in Manhattan's Little Italy:

> Between birthdays... the saint was left in the loft of the saloon, lest the priest get hold of him and get a corner on him, as it were. Once he got him in his possession, he would not let the people have him except upon payment of a fee that would grow with the years. But the saint belonged to the people, not to the church. He was their home patron, and they were not going to give him up. In the saloon they had him safe. (1974: 315)

In an interview I conducted in June 6, 1982, with the late Miguel "Papa" Manteo, master Sicilian puppeteer and longtime resident of New York's Little Italy, he relates a similar incident of a priest locking a saint's statue behind church doors from his congregation.

During the 1950s, two separate Italian saint societies in Jamaica, Queens, dealt with this problem in different ways. After the priest forbade the figure of La Madonna della Libra ("Our Lady of the Scales") to be removed from the church, devotees took to parading with a framed print of the Virgin. In the second case, members of the St. Anthony Society left their statue outside on the church steps while members attended the high mass inside (Mark Pezzano, personal comments, March 6, 1986).

A front-page article of the Staten Island Advance contains a photograph of Monsignor Villani walking alongside the flower-adorned float carrying the statue during the 1960] celebration (July 18,[1960: 1).

high mass, Monsignor Servodidio publically vilified and maligned the association from the pulpit in what one man described as "a fire-and-brimstone homily." Asserting a monophonic authority from his privileged position within the church service, the priest attacked people for placing Mary above Jesus and accused association members of not attending weekly mass. A society member elaborates:

He just doesn't like us. He feels we're like taking money from his territory. "You are portraying a religious [unintelligible] more like a phony like thing." We're not. When we go to church on the feast day, he'll bring up the fact that you cannot have faith in one saint. That is totally wrong. I think there is not one person in the congregation or one person in any Catholic church who doesn't have that faith in that one saint more than they have in anything else. Whatever it is, there is somebody you pray to more than anything else when something happens. So people do have faith in saints. But that's only his thing toward us because he's rebelling against the people who want to come up here and go to this thing [the grotto]. He ain't saying openly on the thing [the pulpit] but he is saying it. And he'll say the members don't go to church. Now that's a crock. (March 1989)[19]

Utilization of the grotto as an alternative site for worship sets the stage for discussion and interpretation of religious belief that directly challenges official orthodoxy and authoratative discourse.

By the late 1980s, the conflict had escalated to the point where the pastor refused to speak to or work with members of his own parish, i.e., representatives of the Society of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. (Monsignor Servodidio declined my request for an interview, stating he was "too busy.")[20] After repeated attempts to reestablish contact, society members wrote a "very polite, noncritical" letter to Bishop Patrick Ahern, petitioning for his assistance. The monsignor's response to the letter was described by one congregation member in this way: "He went nuts... He went off the deep end," and he subsequently sent a "nasty" (certified) letter to the society. The bishop in turn failed to contact the petitioning Rosebank residents. When one of the society's Board of Directors eventually reached him by telephone, Bishop Ahern asked the impossible: to inform the intransigent Monsignor Servodidio that the bishop wished to speak with him.

To add insult to injury, the pastor started a procession and outdoor bazaar in honor of the church's patron, St. Joseph, in 1988. While the stated motive for the recently invented tradition was to raise money for the parochial school, many believe it was a deliberate attempt to "show up" the Mount Carmel festa and establish the church-spon-sored event as the "real feast of Rosebank." It is ironic that the celebration is not held on or near the canonized carpenter's March 19] feast day, but in May to honor St.

[19] I have removed references to the speaker's identity for purposes of confidentiality.

[20] Thompson received a similar response from an uncommunicative Monsignor Villani in the early 1970s (1972: 51).

Joseph the Worker, the spiritual patron of those who labored on the grotto, and in a month traditionally associated with the Madonna.

In April 1989, a society officer active in church affairs told me

It seems like it's to a point where no matter what we try to do, I think it's going to get Monsignor more irritated. You know, we tried to go through the bishop, and the bishop obviously is not going to do anything, he's not going to get involved apparently. He's going to say, "Well, you work it out." Among ourselves we kept talking about going to the archdiocese directly, you know, go to the chancellery [sic] office. And that will only get him more-you know, he got upset with going to the bishop-he'll go nuts if we go to the cardinal. So, I don't know. It's at a point where, I don't know, we really don't know what to hope for anymore.

][A neighborhood woman prays to the Madonna in the Rosebank grotto's central chapel, 1985. Photograph: Lil-lian Caruana.]]

This despondency provoked the society into action. Intimidated by the possible repercussions from a vociferous and volatile pastor, the members of the Society of Our Lady of Mount Carmel did not appeal to Cardinal John O'Connor. Instead, they ended their historic affiliation with St. Joseph's Church in the summer of 1989] by sponsoring a high mass in honor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel at the predominantly Irish St. Mary's Church (1124] Bay Street), where they were welcomed and made to feel "at home." This action demonstrates that while religious tensions between Irish Americans and Italian Americans may have abated, intraethnic animosity in spiritual matters continues. A number of Rosebank residents, including society members, are deeply saddened by the fissure, given the intimate association once enjoyed by the society and St. Joseph's Church. The society, conceived in the sanctuary that was the church basement, is mandated by its 1984] revised bylaws (Article 34) to relinquish its assets and properties to St. Joseph's Church upon dissolution.

Folklorists, social historians, and cultural critics have examined the ways in which vernacular culture, and in particular popular religion, contests the official ideology of the dominant culture (Cirese 1982; Limón 1983; Lombardi-Satriani 1975; Thompson 1991; Williams 1988: 120-27; Yoder 1974). While the grotto does not directly "contest the social order through the direct symbolic statement of opposing values," it does offer "critical alternatives to those imposed from without and from above in the social structure" (Limón 1986: 222). The members of the Society of Mount Carmel do not seek to break from the Roman Catholic church, nor did they set out to purposely challenge their spiritual leaders. They do request full participation in their church, based on their clergy's acceptance of their religious beliefs and behavior inherited from past ecclesiastical teachings. They are searching for a more democratic involvement with their church, instead of the antiquated authoritarianism entrenched in their parish. Instead of being driven away, they want their voice to be heard on matters concerning a living religion, as practiced in the church as well as the streets. While they may not agree with my comparisons nor with the philosophy of the following communities, Rosebank residents are part of a continuum of outspoken Catholics, such as gays, women, pro-

ponents of liberation theology, African Americans, Haitian Vodun practitioners, and others who desire an inclusive and egalitarian Catholicism to define church organization and ultimately their relationship to the godhead. Rosebank's Italian Catholics join a chorus of diverse believers who envision a viable spirituality firmly rooted within the matrix of community life.

Coda: "So He Told Us, He Said. . . ."

Present in a number of the transcribed interviews in this essay are the quoted words of others. One of the most common types of language, reported speech authenticates past conversations through dramatization. This is true for dialogue one participated in as well as received secondhand, as in Mrs. Russo's narrative of heavenly intercession at the shrine. Reported speech also enhances the polyphonic nature of everyday speech by permeating the words of others with new meaning and subjectivity. The importance members of the Rosebank community attach to quoted speech in their conversations about the grotto illustrates its impact as "an object of interpretation, discussion, evaluation, rebuttal, support, [and] further development" (Bakhtin 1988: 337). The words of society members, pilgrims, and local clergy are framed and featured in discourse to confirm as well as challenge accepted social positions. In turn, this dialogism endows the grotto with an articulated and interpreted past in the service of present-day values and meaning. The dialogic character of the Rosebank grotto reveals the confluences and ruptures in the social life of the built environment.

Notes

The initial fieldwork for this essay was conducted in 1985] as part of my documentation of Italian American yard shrines in the New York metropolitan area. The article is based on a paper for Robert St. George's 1989] graduate course on American vernacular architecture at the University of Pennsylvania. My thanks to Steve Ohm who made available material on European grottos in the early stages of my writing. Research I conducted on voluntary associations as curator of City Lore's 1993] exhibition, '"Welcome to Your Second Home': New York's Ethnic Social Clubs," at the Museum of the City of New York aided my documentation of the Rosebank society. I would like to thank Daniel Garrett, Robert Orsi, and Robert St. George for their insightful comments on a first draft of this essay. Thanks also to Nell Larson, who served as mentor for the creation of measured drawings and a site plan of the grotto under a technical assistance grant from the New York Folklore Society. Unfortunately, I was unable to complete the drawings in time for publication. A special thanks to all those associated with the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel grotto who told me their stories.

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Bibliography of Italian American and Italian Canadian Folklore

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Although publications on the "Italian American Experience" have flourished in the past two decades, those relating to Italian American folklore have not. Studies have focused on history, the migration phenomenon (e.g., immigrants as a labour force, their settlement patterns, etc.), and the processes of acculturation (sociological, linguistic, etc.), yet rarely has the folk culture of Italian immigrants received more than passing attention. For the most part, studies of the expressive and ritual life of Italian immigrants have tended toward picturesque descriptions of festivals, peculiar superstitions, and quaint puppeteers, or their customs have been fleetingly touched on in ethnic histories of specific communities. With few exceptions (Speroni in San Francisco, for instance), Italian American culture has been treated from a nonfolklorist's perspective.

Looming on this earlier horizon (through the 1940s and 1950s)-because they represent exceptions-are the works of Phyllis Williams (1938) and Speroni. In the 1960s and 1970s, Bianco's work on the two Rosetos (the American Roseto in Pennsylvania and the earlier one in Puglia) was a sustained study of the dynamics of Italian American folklore, correlating Italian sources and New World traditions. With Bianco, then a visitor at Bloomington, Indiana, Italian American folklore entered the realm of "orthodox" research. Regrettably, few other monographs of such weight on Italian American folklore followed this pioneering work of the seventies. Mathias and Raspa (1985), a more recent work on the storytelling of an Italian American woman, again is a rare exception.

And there are few precedents for this bibliography as well. Two source bibliographies on Italian American folklore antedate the present one: Bianco's 1970] Italian and Italian-American Folklore: A Working Bibliography offers 35] entries on Italian American folklore, and the Italian American section of Georges's and Stern's 1982] American and Canadian Immigrant and Ethnic Folklore: An Annotated Bibliography (New York: Garland) brings the total to 86. After yet another decade, the present compilation, building upon these forerunners and integrating records and tapes, films and videos, and theses and dissertations, is able to accumulate some 250] entries. A modest leap forward in numbers perhaps, but several of the more recent studies may represent a greater leap in the general quality of research, given that much of the work is now being done by a growing number of "professional" folklorists.

Compiling this folklore bibliography presented several shoals of ambiguity from which I attempted to stay clear. A prime hazard resuited from the possible overlap with the social sciences. While some works in the area of cultural anthropology seemed to coincide with folklore interests, others did not. Further, what was to be done with the myriad sociological (and sociolinguistic) studies (e.g., Covello [1967]: The Social Background of the Italo-American School Child; Gans [1962]: The Urban Villagers: Group and Clan in the Life of Italian-Americans; and Whyte [1943]: Street Comer Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum), to say nothing of the many ethnic community histories that record aspects of social, cultural, and family life, which might be of interest to folklorists? And finally, were the Italians in South America (not to mention Australia)-societies which have hosted millions of immigrants and spawned the folklore of Italian Argentinians or Brazilians (e.g., Maria-Eugenia Morato's "Ma io sono brasiliano! An Ethnographic Study of the Ethnicity and Vernacular Expressive Culture of the Italian Immigrants in the City of Sao Paulo, Brazil," a 1987] University of Illinois Ph.D. dissertation)-to be ignored?

I chose not to include these studies since other bibliographies addressing the many sociopolitical aspects of the Italian American experience are readily available. (I do offer a few of the most recent ones at the end of this bibliography.) What follows-by now negatively delineated in terms of what it does not cover-nonetheless indicates directions and areas which might be profitably investigated by folklorists and others interested in the folklore of Italian Americans.

It would be naive to expect all source material relevant to the study of folklore to be found in scholarly journals and monographs. Often more may be gleaned and understood from an Italian American novel (e.g., Jerre Mangione's Mount Allegro), a poem (those of the Canadian Mary Di Michele), a painting (the "folkart" of Ralph Fasanella), or a film (The Godfather), in which aspects of Italian American folklife are featured (wedding scenes, music, religious rituals, neighbourhood clustering), than from secondary critical material.

There is also a wealth of information to be gathered from the many local community organizations for which Italian Americans are famous (see, for instance, Noyes's contribution to this collection). Many of these have sponsored commemorative publications for their members, which have ranged from collections of family histories to the photo documentation of community events and to cookbooks (e.g., Giovanni Bitelli, Anna Foschi, Emigrante: Storie, Memorie, Segreti della Buona Cucina dei Nostri Pionieri, Vancouver: Italian Senior Citizens Association and Centro Culturale Italiano, 1985; see, too, the bib-liographic section in Italian Americana 9(1) [1990]: 143-45). Further, some of the newsletters of these organizations frequently include folklore items provided by members (a recipe, a memorat, and so forth), but, given the ephemeral and local nature of these publications, they are not accessible or are available to members only. Some of the better organized of the Italian American associations, at a local or national level, publish journals to which one may subscribe (e.g., Arba Sicula: Journal of Sicilian Folklore and Literature, published by the national Sicilian American organi-

zation, although most of its material focuses on Sicilian rather than Sicilian American culture; or Tradizioni, the newsletter of the Italian Folk Art Federation of America).

Those interested in Italian American folklore may be well served by public-sector' folklife surveys (e.g., publications describing festivals; flyers which include recipes, customs, arts, and list performers; or exhibit catalogues), yet these, too, are hard to obtain. Some surveys, for instance, are more on the order of archival information for programming purposes (e.g., my own "Preliminary Survey of Italian Folklife in Los Angeles" for the Folk, and Traditional Arts Programs, Department of Cultural Affairs, Los Angeles in 1990). Many surveys, some more informal than others, never leave the city or state, and information about them may be gathered only through direct contact with the sponsoring government agency, for example a state folklorist or a municipal cultural-affairs department. It may be worth noting that most states and some cities (see Noyes's Uses of Tradition: Italian Americans in Philadelphia for the Philadelphia Folklore Project) have such programs. Museums which are solely dedicated to folk art (e.g., Craft and Folk Art Museum in Los Angeles, Museum of American Folk Art in New York), or those which provide temporary space in the form of special exhibits (some of which have dedicated time to Italian and Italian American traditions), are another excellent source for those wishing to pursue interests in this area.

Finally, a scattering of universities with programs in folklore maintain archives which contain field notes, recordings, photographs from local fieldwork, and student research papers, (e.g., Indiana University's "Italian American file"). Of course, the Library of Congress's American Folklife Center (AFC) remains an important repository and disseminator of folklife studies. As far as work sponsored by the AFC on Italian Americans is concerned, see the field notes and related materials from the center's Italiaas in the West Project, 1989-90, and the exhibit touring western cities in 1992-93.

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See, too, the ongoing bibliographies and publication notifications in the newsletter of the American Italian Historical Association, Joseph Velikonja, compiler and editor, and in the bilingual journal of the Agnelli Foundation, Altreitalie (International Review of Studies on the Peoples of Italian Origin in the World)

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1. "Public-sector folklore" generally describes folklore intended for the general public and may include presentations by museums; municipal, state, and national folklife centers, such as the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress (which may document traditions and organize festivals, forums, exhibits, etc.), heritage parks; and so forth.

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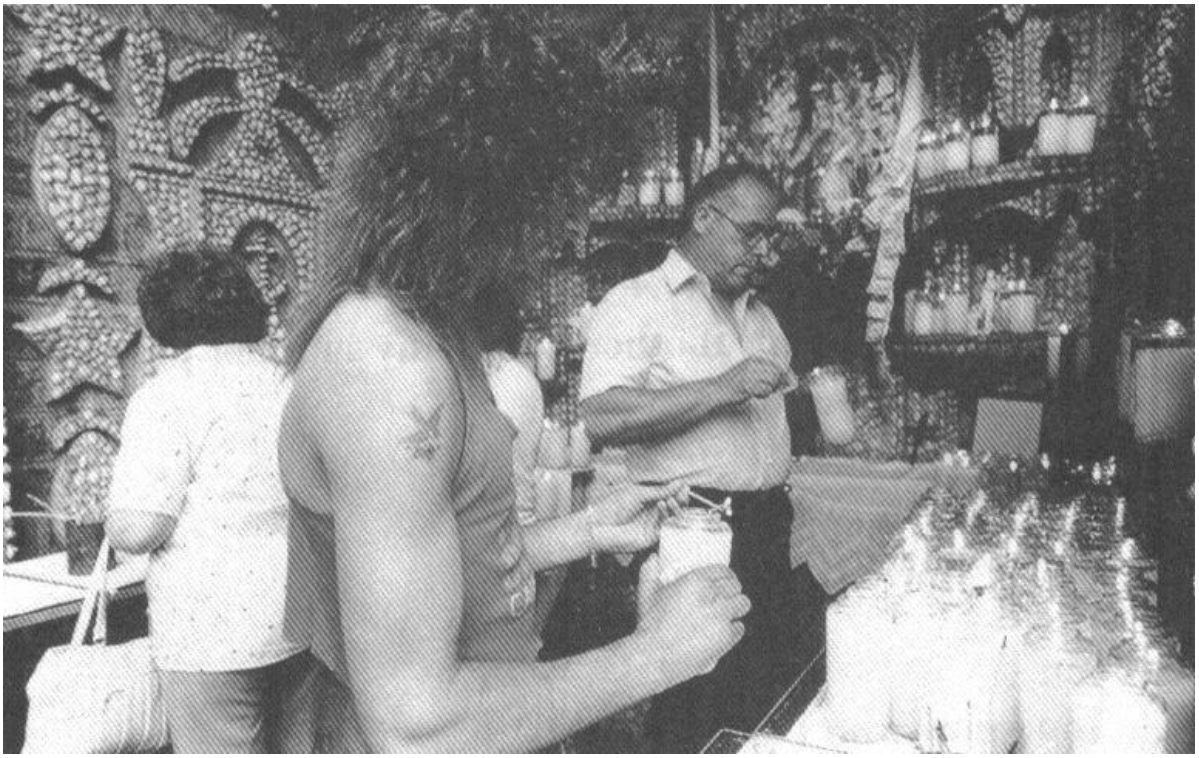

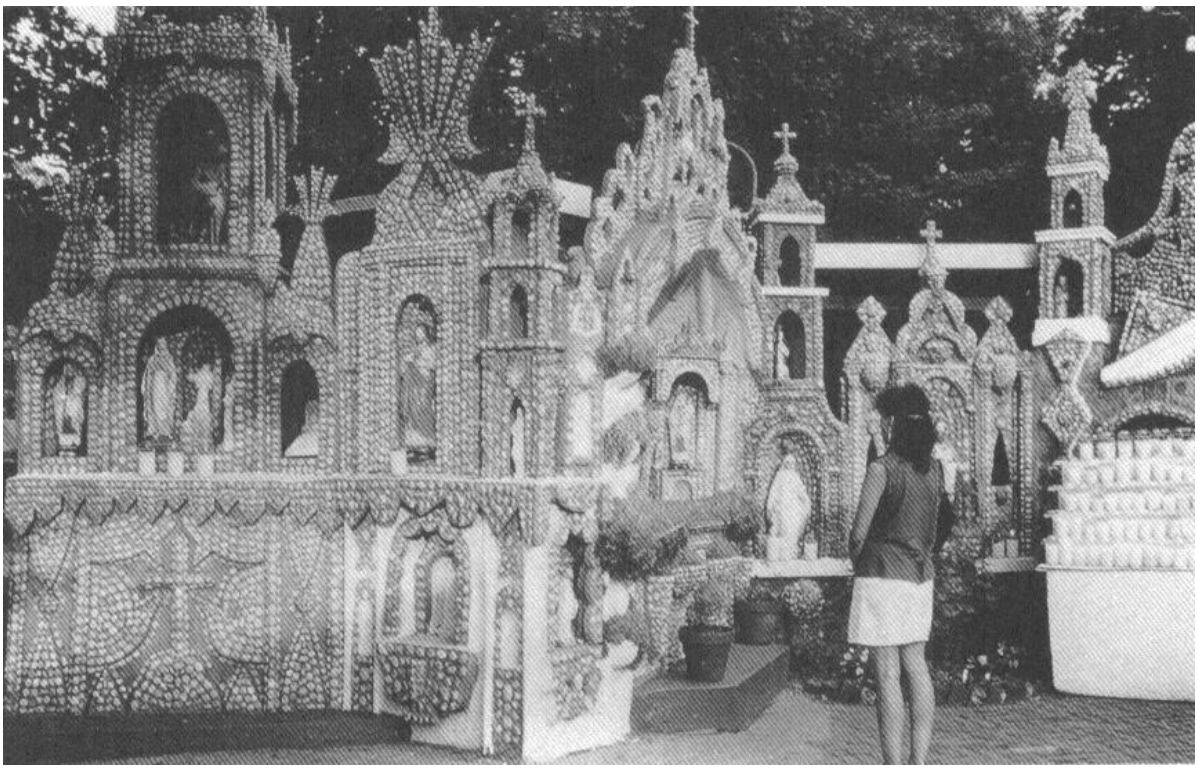

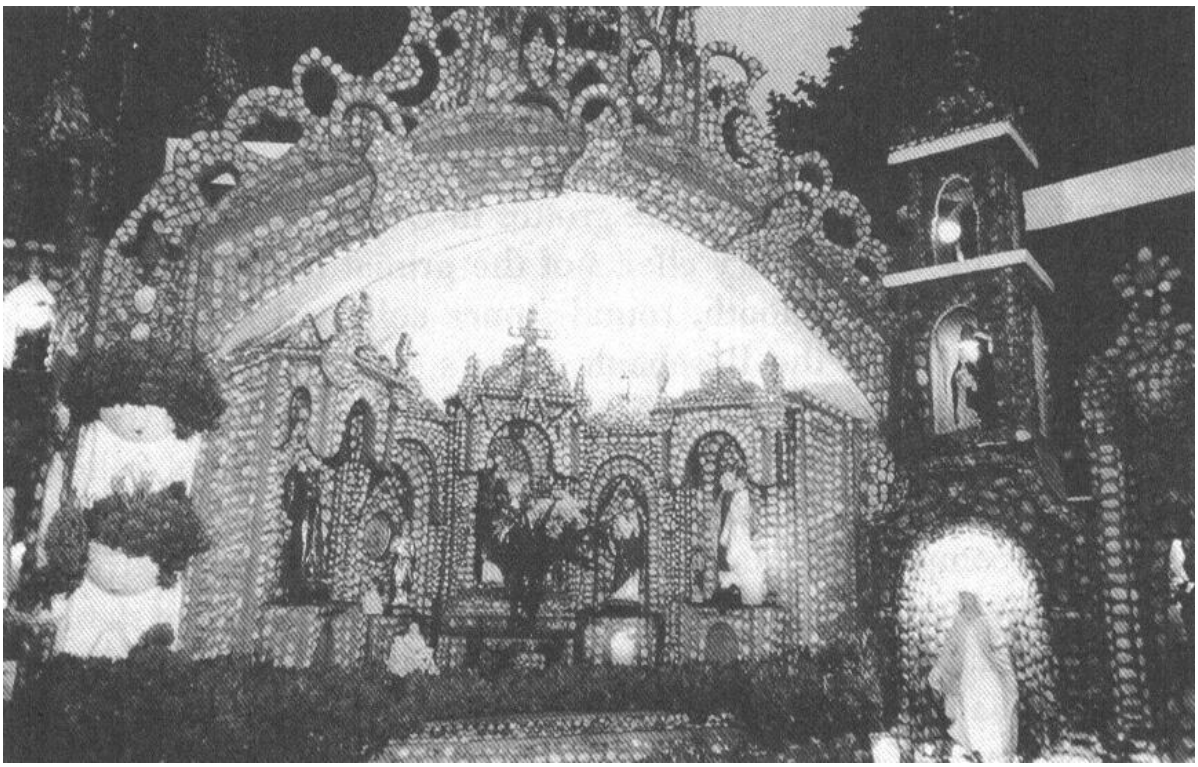

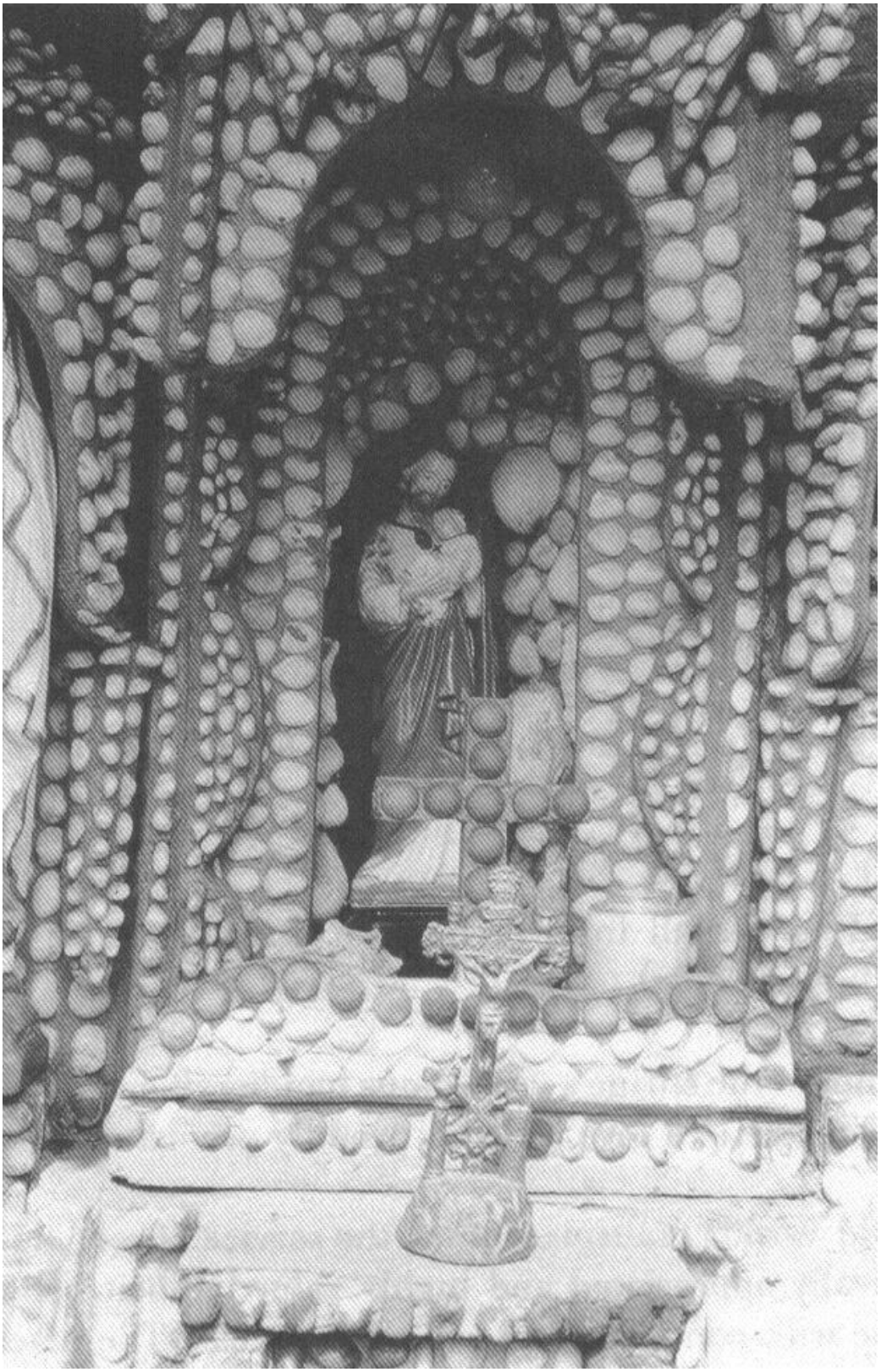

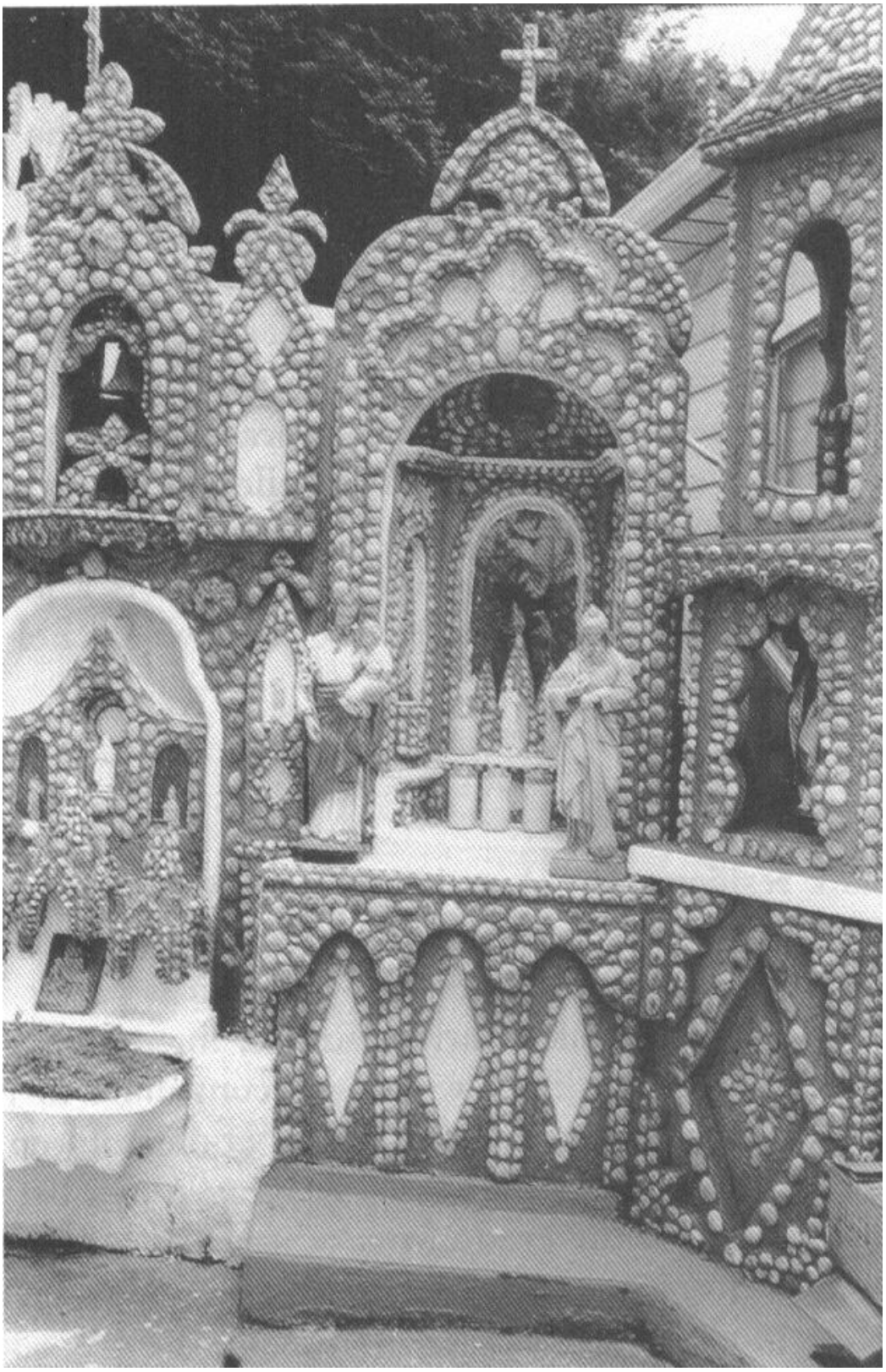


Tony's


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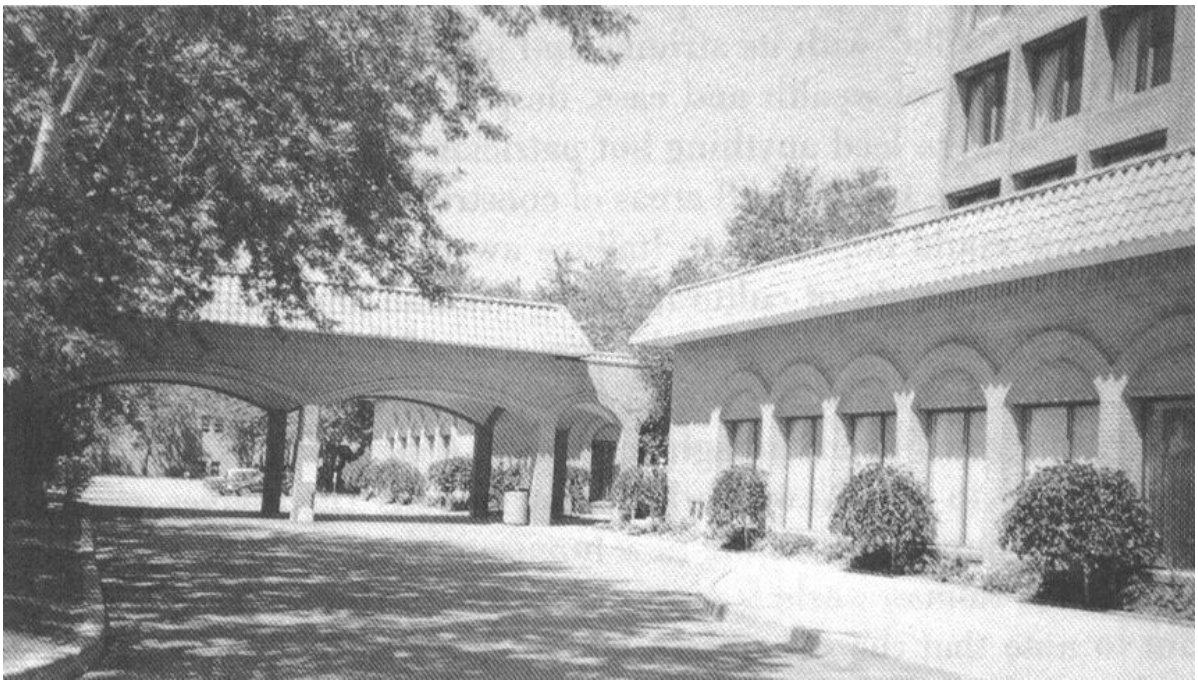

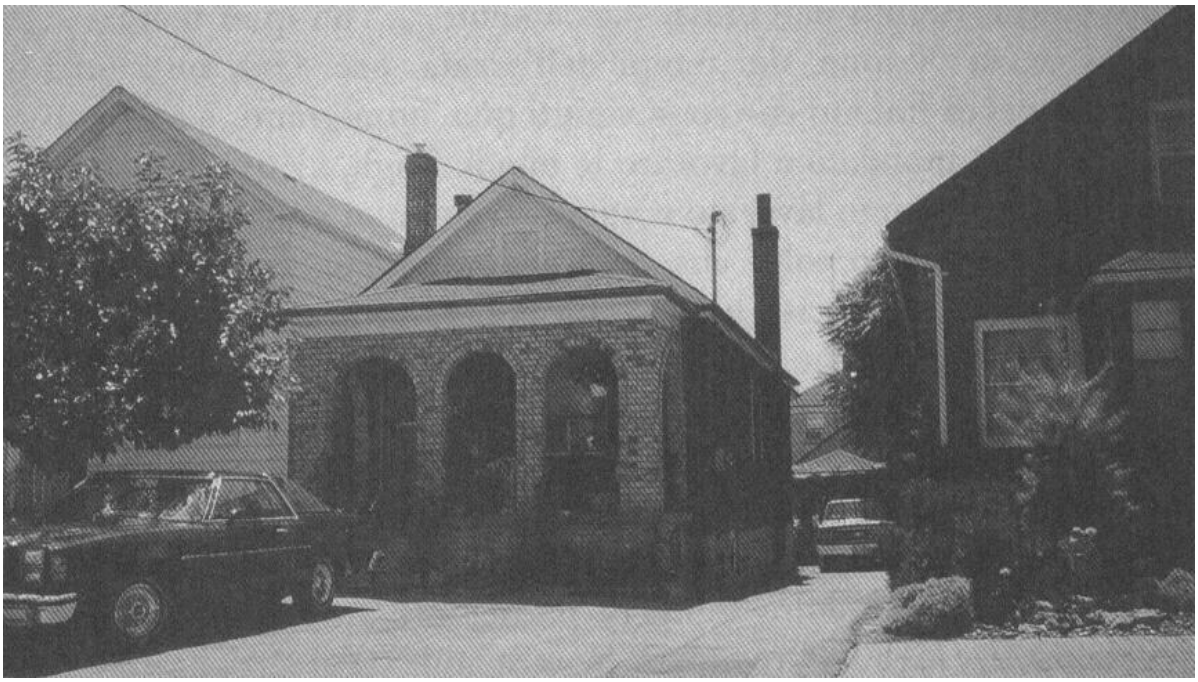

A critique of his ideas & actions.

Luisa Del Giudice
Studies in Italian American Folklore
1993