

CALANDRA
ITALIAN
AMERICAN
INSTITUTE

il Bollettino

dedicated to the history and culture of Italians in America



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Dear Friends,

This has been a most delightful spring semester for us at the Institute. In addition to our regular public programming and newly revamped *Italics*, there were two major events that have truly made a mark.

One is our annual conference about which you will read on pages 4–5.

The second major event was an international workshop sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation. In March of 2014, a group of eighteen scholars of Italian American and American studies, from the United States and Italy, convened for three days in Bellagio, Italy. The goal of the meeting was two-fold: to engage a group of Americanists in Italy on the subject of Italian-American culture and history, and to create a dialogue between those scholars and teachers of Italian American studies in the United States that will build a network of intellectual exchange. From this grid of Italian and American professors, we propose to build a framework that will result in a consistent and rigorous conversation and collaboration between the two groups on both sides of the ocean.

Why did we feel there was a need to establish this connection? In examining the reception and study of Italian Americans in Italy two things became patently clear: The number of people who did so was small indeed, and many of those who engage American studies do it without considering the history and culture of Italian Americans. Italian American studies needs to be available at the graduate level if we are to see true progress within the United States in terms of Italian Americana becoming part of a national discourse. We need to insist on Italian American studies being included in both Italian and American studies programs.

The next step in this process is to develop further the Italian American Studies Network that was established

during this gathering. We have already offered courses at the University for Foreigners in Perugia, Università della Calabria, and Università degli Studi di Palermo. We are also working to develop curricula at the Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale and Seconda Università degli Studi di Napoli.

Our meeting coincided with three editorial events of historic proportion. Fordham University Press released two books this spring—an anthology of poets of the Italian diaspora who write in Italian, and a translation of Francesco Durante's *Italoamericana*, an anthology of Italian writing in the United States in the early twentieth century. Lastly, the Italian journal *Studi italiani* will include a section titled "Oltreoconfine" dedicated to Italian writing outside Italy.

The results of our Bellagio meeting will move forward and develop programs—symposia, conferences, and university courses—that will benefit from the above-mentioned publications. All of this, in turn, will form the basis for Italian American studies as part of the university curricula in both Italy and the United States.

The terrain of this cross-cultural study is extremely fertile and yet very much uncultivated. We look forward to an increasing number of younger scholars who can and will now feel encouraged and empowered to engage in a critical but undeveloped field within the university. Bellagio has begun to change all of that.

Looking forward, we hope to see you at one or many of our upcoming programs. A calendar of events can be found online at www.qc.edu/calandra/ where you can also sign up to receive announcements via email, subscribe to the *Italian American Review*, and read about additional Institute endeavors and collaborations.

Arrivederci a presto,

Anthony Julian Tamburri, Professor and Dean

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Photographs on cover and
at right: Bellagio Center, Italy,
by Joseph Sciorra.



ITALIAN AMERICAN STUDIES NETWORK

The Italian American Studies Network (IASN) was formed on March 4, 2014, in Bellagio, Italy, at the Rockefeller Foundation Center, by eighteen scholars from Italy and the United States who are committed to the study of the Italian diaspora, specifically to the Americas, with particular regard to the north, where Italian emigrants have settled, set roots, and created a sociocultural milieu grounded in some form of *italianità* (read, also, *italicità*). Our use of the term *italianità* is neither essentialist nor reductive; it is intended to signal a mobile, migrant, and transformative historical process of cultural metamorphoses through geographical dislocation and adaptation.

The scholars who met at Bellagio included, from Italy: Patrizia Ardizzone (Università degli Studi di Palermo), Leonardo Buonomo (Università degli Studi di Trieste), Ottorino Cappelli (Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale), Marina Camboni (Università degli Studi di Macerata), Margherita Ganeri (Università della Calabria), Donatella Izzo (Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale), Diego Lazzarich (Seconda Università degli Studi di Napoli), Giorgio Mariani (Sapienza–Università di Roma), Maddalena Tirabassi (Centro Altreitalie, Globus et Locus); and from the United States: Mary Jo Bona (Stony Brook University), Peter Carravetta (Stony Brook University), Fred Gardaphé (Calandra Institute, Queens College, CUNY), Paul Giordano (University of Central Florida), Djelal Kadir (Penn State University), Cristina Lombardi-Diop (Loyola University, Chicago), Graziella Parati (Dartmouth College), Joseph Sciorra (Calandra Institute, Queens College, CUNY), Robert Viscusi (Brooklyn College, CUNY), Anthony Julian Tamburri (Calandra Institute, Queens College, CUNY).

The three-day meeting in Bellagio, “Transcending Borders, Bridging Gaps: Italian Americana, Diasporic Studies, and the University Curriculum,” which ran from March 4–6 and was led by Gardaphé and Tamburri, afforded scholars the opportunity to showcase numerous fields of study, thus creating a platform for dialogue that spans various disciplines (e.g., American Studies, Anthropology, Cinema Studies, Film Studies, Folklore, History, LGBT Studies, Literature, Media Studies, Political Science, Sociology, Women’s and Gender Studies) from a variety of perspectives (e.g., gender, race, sexual orientation) in an international exchange of ideas on the Italian diaspora. This will also include how the diasporic experience relates to Italy today as a point of arrival for immigrants, especially from different parts of the Mediterranean basin and the continent of Africa.

Basic goals of the IASN will include:

a) continued recuperation of an archive and the facilitating of research and scholarly access to historical documents, literary texts, biographical accounts, personal memoirs,

statistical tracts, periodicals collections, demographic registries;

- b) reconsideration of the canonical narrative of immigration and assimilation;
- c) re-visioning historiographic templates that have defined the scholarly discourse and pedagogical curriculum to date;
- d) re-examination of economic realpolitik that has determined the course of dislocations and demographic transformations in, out of, and into Italy.

The IASN will promote international fora through conferences, seminars, publications, and public outreach where students, teachers, and researchers can continue to study the historical phenomenon of *italianità* in and across numerous scholarly disciplines. Specific goals at this juncture include the development of strategies for:

- e) future work on national and international conferences;
- f) faculty development through exchanges and the preparation of future teachers in American studies;
- g) creating a comprehensive plan of funding strategies for approaching such entities as the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Italian American Foundation, Globus et Locus, Italian Language InterCultural Alliance, and other public and private foundations whose mission is to support transnational education;
- h) creating greater ties and deepening the relationship between the local Italian-American community and academia vis-à-vis Italian American studies.

The overarching goal of the IASN is to maintain an ever-widening collaboration between organizations and individuals who hold a strong interest in the study of the history, culture, and future developments of manifestations of *italianità*, and who seek to further explore the ways in which this process undergirds and complicates the transformative history of migration both within and beyond the geopolitical and geocultural borders of Italy today.



REFLECTING ON THE CALANDRA INSTITUTE'S "MAFIAS: REALITIES"

The Calandra Institute should be congratulated for imagining and organizing a remarkably productive conference on mafias and their representations. For a very long time, attention to mafias flourished in popular culture and the mass media but received less attention in academia, save for a small number of specialized criminologists. In consequence, mafias are underappreciated as phenomena that transcend the overly popularized Sicilian and Sicilian-American variants. They are, as well, too readily conflated with “organized crime,” in general. As an interdisciplinary endeavor, the Calandra Institute conference took a big step toward challenging these misconceptions. Both historians and social scientists analyzed mafias outside as well as inside the United States and Italy. Scholars of film and literature drew attention to recent transformations in the ways popular culture represents mafiosi, their practices, and values. Perhaps most important, the conference also included writers and journalists who have studied anti-mafia processes, both in the criminal justice sector and among committed citizens. That mafias, where they flourish, coexist with and provoke anti-mafia movements is a memorable take-away from the conference.

— Jane Schneider, *The Graduate Center, CUNY*
and Peter Schneider, *Harvard University*

The interdisciplinary mix of scholarship at the “MAFIAS” conference produced an exciting two days of discussion that connected political activism and critical analysis. The comparative work exemplified by Jane Schneider’s keynote address on “Mafia Emergence” should inspire us to investigate the research links across cultures in order to address the larger transnational patterns and global issues. The plenary with Vincenzo Scotti was an inspiring opportunity to hear firsthand about the political anti-mafia efforts that made recent history in Italy.

The session on the photography of Letizia Battaglia and Franco Zecchin raised the most urgent questions about our roles as scholars. This panel vividly showed the recursive relationship between representation and reality. Panelists Paula Salvio and Deborah Puccio-Den, asserted compelling points about how the photography provided documentary evidence and created an aesthetic response in order to influence people’s reactions and provoke activism. As scholars we often spend years writing articles about historical books, films, or events but for very small, specialized audiences. Looking at case studies like the anti-mafia photography should make us think about how our scholarly work could reach a wider audience with greater effect. Especially when we write and teach about topics like the violence and corruption of the mafias, should we be able to impart ideas about how to combat both the representations and the realities, or perhaps how to use the representations against the realities?

Other highlights include Joseph Cosco’s analysis of the gangster film tropes in *Black Caesar*, John Gennari’s scrutiny of mobster self-fashioning in the coaching profession, and Fred Gardaphé’s passionate reading of a personal encounter. Overall, the presentations at the “MAFIAS” conference challenge us to innovate comparatively and to think through the relationship between the production of mafia images and metaphors and the mafias’ actual violence and destruction.

— JoAnne Ruvoli, *Ball State University*



AND REPRESENTATIONS OF ORGANIZED CRIME" CONFERENCE

Organized crime is understudied and often riddled with misconceptions and stereotypes. The "MAFIAs" conference offered a much-needed platform to discuss current trends, problems, and next steps to improve our understanding and dispel myths of organized crime. This conference offered an excellent environment for academics, researchers, and journalists worldwide to convene, showcase cutting-edge research, and reflect on national, international, and transnational organized crime from multiple perspectives, providing a broad perspective of the phenomenon.

Focusing on the current portrayals of organized crime as well as recent anti-organized crime and law-enforcement efforts was useful for understanding the relationships between public perceptions, policy development, policing, and education initiatives. Additionally, three critical topics were addressed: the role of gender, the impact of technology, and intersections with other crimes. Each of these three areas has not received the attention it truly warrants, and learning that researchers and academics around the world are studying these topics was exciting indeed.

As an academic who wishes to inspire future scholars, I was pleased to have two undergraduate criminal justice students accompany me to the conference, which allowed them to present their research to an international audience in a professional setting. Their participation enriched their experiences and enabled them to network with experts and develop contacts for future research. The conference provided a cohesive and academically nurturing environment, which boosted our students' confidence and further reinforced their interest in the study of organized crime.

The conference offered a snapshot of important research projects occurring in the broader discourse of organized crime. It was timely, refreshing, and a real treat.

— Aunshul Rege, Temple University

This year's conference at the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute (co-hosted by John Jay College of Criminal Justice) was able to show that development of organized crime, known by the term mafia and considered a singular phenomenon, is in fact an international phenomenon. By bringing together scholars from several countries, who are researching organized crime in Columbia, Cuba, India, Italy, Japan, Sweden, and the United States, the Institute provided a fruitful discussion and scholarly exchange that offered a multifaceted perspective on a topic of great importance in the new millennium.

The well-chosen presentations highlighted an interdisciplinary overview of mafia studies, which dealt with topics like economy, gender, history, law, and media perceptions. The conference provided the possibility to establish connections and networks between scholars from all around the globe, granted insight into actual political and social problems in different countries, and opened the way for academic discussion, an elemental part of scholarly and academic research.

The staff of the Calandra Institute did an excellent job hosting the conference. The stimulating discussions were due in part to their behind-the-scenes work, providing the most convenient environment for academic work and exchange. The highest level of research and best performance is exactly what the Institute offered its visitors. The next conference is a must to attend.

— Frank Jacob, Queensborough Community College, CUNY



ITALICS SPRING 2014 HIGHLIGHTS

In the Spring 2014 season, *Italics* aired a variety of programs on its local cable and online YouTube channels.

In March, Anthony Julian Tamburri sat down with Donna Chirico to discuss his newest publication, *Re-Reading Italian Americana: Specificities and Generalities On Literature and Criticism*. The book examines Italian-American literature and its criticisms and poses questions about the best ways to move forward in the emerging field.

In April, Women's History Month occasioned two important interviews with pioneering voices in Italian-American women's literature: novelist Helen Barolini, and literary critic and poet Daniela Gioseffi.

Italics also attended the National Italian American Foundation's New York Spring Extravaganza, which took place at Cipriani 42nd Street in Manhattan.

In May, the Italian Language InterCultural Alliance hosted a seminal event at the Calandra Institute that *Italics* covered extensively and for which it produced bilingual media. The "New Southern Question" was an in-depth conversation between Pino Aprile, author of the recent book *Il Sud Puzza*, and Antonio Giordano on the unique difficulties facing the *mezzogiorno*, or southern region of Italy. Principal among these challenges are the effects of rampant pollution and associated human and environmental health issues.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Calandra Institute is seeking presenters for its conference "Bambini, Ragazzi, Giovani: Children and Youth in Italy and the Italian Diaspora" which will take place at its Manhattan venue on April 24-25, 2015.

The Italian family has been a quintessential subject for scholarly research and creative work in Italy and among various diasporic communities, with matters relating to children and youth receiving significant exploration. In the United States, notable inquiries concerning youth issues include sociologist William Foote Whyte's urban ethnography *Street Corner Society* (1943) and educator Leonard Covello's *The Social Background of the Italo-American School Child* (1967). The twenty-first century brings new lines of inquiry as well as new issues, such as changing family structures, Internet culture, and increased migratory movement.

Novels like Edmondo De Amicis's *Sull'oceano* (1889) and Melania Mazzucco's *Vita* (2003) explore children immigrating to the Americas, while the memoirs *Nero di Puglia* (1980), by Antonio Campobasso and *The Skin Between Us* (2006), by Kym Ragusa movingly discuss the childhoods of their bi-racial authors. While scholars have discussed youth culture and their media depictions, e.g., *Guidos* and *Jersey Shore*, little work has been done on such topics as consumer culture targeting children—from picture books to Disney films to video games—that use Italian and Italian ethnic characters.

Working from interdisciplinary and transnational perspectives, this conference seeks to expand and update knowledge concerning historical and contemporary childhood and youth in Italy and among the diaspora and former colonial sites. The deadline for submitting paper or panel abstracts for consideration is September 12, 2014. Please see the Call for Papers on our Website www.qc.edu/calandra for submission instructions.



EXHIBITION AT THE CALANDRA INSTITUTE

Tutta la Famiglia
A Photographic Exhibition of
Community Life in Gloucester, MA

Photographs by
Paul Cary Goldberg

OPENING

Thursday, September 18, 2014, 6pm

PANEL DISCUSSION

Monday, November 3, 2014, 6pm

QUEENS COLLEGE CELEBRATES FORTY YEARS OF ITALIAN AMERICAN STUDIES

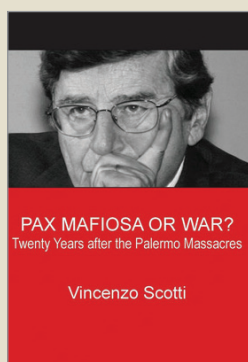
On March 26, 2014, Queens College, the Calandra Institute, and colleagues celebrated the anniversary of the founding of Italian American studies at Queens College.

The gathering took place on campus in the Rosenthal Library and was attended by faculty, staff, and students. The program featured Queens College Interim President Evangelos Gizis; Fred Gardaphé, Director of the Italian American Studies program; Anthony Julian Tamburri, Dean of the Calandra Institute; Herman Haller, Professor of Italian; and Peter Vellon, Professor of History. A video presentation highlighted past and present developments of the program.

In 1974, Richard Gambino, professor and author of *Blood of My Blood: The Dilemma of the Italian-Americans*, offered the first known course in the study of Italian American culture. Since then, a wide and varied field of interdisciplinary study in the social sciences and humanities has developed.

In 2013 Tamburri and Gardaphé created the first sequence of graduate courses in Italian American studies. Today, Italian American studies at Queens College is a vibrant field with an undergraduate minor, a graduate concentration in the Master of Arts in liberal studies, and a secondary course of study in the Master of Arts in Italian studies.

NEW PUBLICATIONS



Pax Mafiosa or War: Twenty Years After the Palermo Massacres
Vincenzo Scotti
Bordighera Press 2014

The presence of the Mafia in Italy continues to be strong, its influence on civil and political life increasingly more evident, and many areas of southern Italy remain under the grip of Mafia clans. This

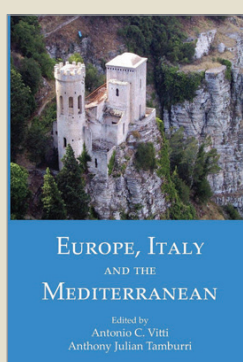
form of organized crime has established links with other global criminal organizations, and their operations are interwoven with terrorist activities, and arms and narcotics trafficking. The money laundering of proceeds from criminal activities has created an expanding gray area where the line between legality and criminality is blurred and interference has become increasingly violent.



Italoamericana: The Literature of the Great Migration, 1880-1943
Edited by Francesco Durante and Robert Viscusi
Fordham University Press 2014

Edited with extraordinary skill, *Italoamericana: The Literature of the Great Migration, 1880-1943* brings to an

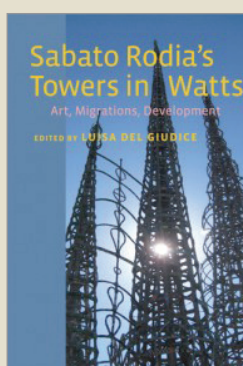
English-speaking audience a definitive collection of classic writings on, about, and from the formative years of the Italian-American experience. Originally published in Italian, this landmark collection of translated writings establishes a rich, diverse, and mature sense of Italian-American life by allowing readers to see American society through the eyes of Italian-speaking immigrants. Filled with the voices from the first generation of Italian Americans, the book presents a unique treasury of long-inaccessible writing that embodies a literary canon for Italian-American culture, the greater part of which has never before been translated.



Europe, Italy, and the Mediterranean
Edited by Antonio Vitti and Anthony Julian Tamburri
Bordighera Press 2014

This is a collection of essays from the inaugural conference of the Mediterranean Centre for Intercultural Studies, which took place in Erice, Sicily, in May 2013. Contributors to the volume include:

Lucilla Bonavita, Ryan Calabretta-Sajder, Alfonso Campisi, Giuseppe Grilli, Abdelkarim Hannachi, Gaetana Marrone, Luisa Messina Fajardo, Trinis Antonietta Messina Fajardo, Daniela Privitera, Anthony Julian Tamburri, Gino Tellini, Giulia Tellini, Maria Rosaria Vitti-Alexander, Alicia Vitti, Antonio Vitti, and David Winkler.



Sabato Rodia's Towers in Watts: Art, Migrations, Development
Edited by Luisa Del Giudice
Fordham University Press 2014

The extraordinary Watts Towers were created over the course of three decades by a determined, single-minded artist, Sabato Rodia, a highly remarkable Italian immigrant laborer who wanted to do

"something big." Now a National Historic Landmark and internationally renowned destination, the Watts Towers in Los Angeles are a personal artistic expression and collective symbol of "our town—our people." Featuring fresh and innovative examinations—in areas such as cultural and class politics, folklore, historical preservation, immigration, Italian-American life, and multicultural neighborhoods—*Sabato Rodia's Towers in Watts* is a much-anticipated revisitation of the man and his towers.



ITALIAN AMERICAN REVIEW

The *Italian American Review* (IAR) features scholarly articles about Italian-American history and culture, as well as other aspects of the Italian diaspora. The journal embraces a wide range of professional concerns and theoretical orientations in the social sciences and cultural studies. The IAR publishes book, film, and digital media reviews and is currently accepting article submissions.

VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 includes:

- “Resisting Discrimination and Anti-Semitism on the Culture Page of *L’Unità del Popolo*, 1939–1941,” by Brendan Hennessey
- “Becoming American: “Manila John” Basilone, the Medal of Honor, and Italian-American Image, 1943–1945,” by Michael Frontani

For more information, go to qc.edu/calandra. Under the publications menu, click on *Italian American Review*.

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FALL 2014 PUBLIC PROGRAMS

PHILIP V. CANNISTRARO

SEMINAR SERIES IN ITALIAN AMERICAN STUDIES

Wednesday, October 29, 2014, at 6 pm

Sabato Rodia's Towers in Watts: Art, Migrations, Development

LUISA DEL GIUDICE, Independent Scholar

Thursday, November 13, 2014, at 6 pm

Embroidered Stories: Interpreting Women's Domestic Needlework from the Italian Diaspora

EDVIGE GIUNTA, New Jersey City University

JOSEPH SCIORRA, John D. Calandra Italian American Institute

Monday, December 1, 2014, at 6 pm

Personal Effects: Essays on Memoir, Teaching, and Culture in the Work of Louise DeSalvo

NANCY CARONIA, University of Rhode Island

EDVIGE GIUNTA, New Jersey City University

WRITERS READ SERIES

Monday, September 22, 2014, at 6 pm

JOSEPH LUZZI reads from *My Two Italies* (Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2014)

Thursday, October 2, 2014, at 6 pm

JOANNA CLAPPS HERMAN reads from *No Longer and Not Yet* (SUNY Press, 2014)

Thursday, October 9, 2014, at 6 pm

DOLORES DELUCE reads from *My Life: A Four Letter Word: Confessions of a Counter Culture Diva* (Double Delinquent Press, 2014)

EXHIBITION

Tutta la Famiglia: A Photographic Exhibition of Community Life in Gloucester, MA
Photographs by Paul Cary Goldberg

Opening: Thursday, September 18, 2014, 6pm

Panel discussion: Monday, November 3, 2014, 6pm

All events are free and open to the public.

All events are held at the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute, 25 West 43rd Street, 17th floor, New York NY 10036.

RSVP by calling (212) 642-2094. Please note that seating is limited and seats cannot be reserved in advance.

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