

**From the Unity of Italians to the Unity of Italics:
The Languages of Italicity around the World
15-16 April 2011**

**Parallel Sessions
Abstracts**

Agnoletto, Stefano - Kingston University, London
“Becoming Italians abroad: The Italian Workers in Toronto”

Abstract: The purpose of my proposal is to describe the process of "Italianization" which affected the Italian workers in the ethnic niche of the Toronto construction sector during the 1950s and the 1960s. It was the consequence of the impact of the work experience in a urban society on the various town and regional identities and languages which had represented the stronger background of Italian immigrants. The strikes of 1960 and 1961 were the ways that made the Italian workers both “Canadians” in front of the native citizens and “Italians” in their unified community. Finally they achieved a hybrid "Regional-Italian-Canadian" identity and language combined with a new urban-proletarian self-representation.

Anderson, Kyle David, Centre College
“Reaching for Renaissance: The Function of Italy in China”

Abstract: This paper provides an analysis of key Chinese debates and discourses into which notions of the Italian Renaissance were imbedded during the late Qing and early Republican periods in China (1900-1920s). Using Prasenjit Duara’s recent theorization of global cognitive systems (2009), my analysis builds on the previous work of Irene Eber (1975) and Gang Zhou (2005) to demonstrate how theorizations of Italian rebirth by leading intellectuals Liang Qichao, Li Dazhao, Hu Shi, and Jiang Fangzhen were designed to naturalize renaissance phenomena and thereby solidify China’s cultural sovereignty and authenticity in a modern world system.

Angelilli, Christina - Ohio State University
“National and Regional Languages – A Look at the Use of the Definite Article”

Abstract: The goal of this study is to analyze the use of the definite article with possessives in three constructions with kinship terms in modern Italian by comparing data taken from 86 questionnaires distributed in Siena and Lecce. The data demonstrate that use of the definite article differs by type of possessive construction and geographical location. This paper concludes by analyzing these deviations from the traditional grammar rules and points out that these innovations in the spoken language, although not yet incorporated into the standard language, may constitute an important new feature of the “neostandard.”

Barnes, Hilary - Fayetteville State University
“An Italian Island in Mexico: The Case of Chipilo”

Abstract: The present study discusses the Italo-Mexican community of Chipilo, Puebla, founded in 1882 by immigrants from a Veneto-speaking region in northern Italy. In Chipilo, both the Veneto language and culture have co-existed with Spanish for over 128 years and Veneto remains the first language of many bilinguals. This presentation will trace the role of the Italian origins in forming the unique culture observed in Chipilo, as evinced by the local language, cuisine, and traditions. Continued contact with Italy has led not only to the maintenance of Veneto language and culture but also to the establishment of a unique Chipileño identity.

Bartholini, Aurelia - Independent scholar
“Il piacere della lettura e l’arte del fare. Forme di creatività correlate nella cultura e arte italiana”

Abstract: Invito a preservare la cultura italiana (parole di Napolitano) La cultura come bene primario e la centralità del libro. La lettura e l’anima faber dell’uomo, ovvero il potenziale di energie, speculative tecnologiche e artistiche, che si sprigionano talora dal piacere di tale atto. Alcuni esempi di creatività nel “rapporto d’amore” con i libri: nel passato e nel nostro tempo (XX secolo) Implicazioni dello studio dell’Italiano, e/o della seconda lingua, e l’interazione tra le materie umanistiche e le discipline scientifiche, nel più recente dibattito. La rete tra Italics: finalità, obiettivi e imperativi. Auspicio conclusivo (Not for profit, but for democracy!)

Benini, Stefania - University of Pennsylvania
“Tra Mogadiscio e Roma: le mappe emotive di Igiaba Scego”

Boglioni, Eleonora – University of Milan
“La lingua speciale della storia dell'arte”

Abstract: Il lavoro è la tesina finale del master svolto presso l’Università degli studi di Milano sull’insegnamento dell’italiano come L2/LS,. Verte sulla lingua speciale della storia dell’arte, indagata in base ai livelli caratterizzanti di lessico, morfosintassi e testualità, con quello aggiuntivo del parallelismo con la critica letteraria. Individuate le caratteristiche salienti, si suggeriscono accorgimenti didattici per uno studente che abbia la storia dell’arte come obiettivo formativo accademico. L’analisi si sviluppa secondo la dimensione verticale delle lingue speciali, individuando un campo ristretto gravitante attorno ai testi (manuali-saggi) secondo la dimensione diafasica della formalità e diamesica della lingua scritta.

Cedola, Andrea – University of Cassino

“Vecchi e giovani, o della malinconia presente degli italiani”

Abstract: In occasione dei centocinquanta anni dell’Unità d’Italia, mi propongo di rileggere alcuni sviluppi di quelle vicende attraverso lo sguardo di due scrittori siciliani del Novecento. Nella loro reinvenzione del passato, "I vecchi e i giovani" di L. Pirandello (1909) e "Il Gattopardo" di G. Tomasi di Lampedusa (1958) non soltanto offrono (come sempre i romanzi storici) una cifra d’interpretazione del presente, ma vanno oltre, descrivendo una crisi esistenziale e conoscitiva cui la situazione storica non fa che da innesco narrativo. Vi ritroviamo, dunque, la malinconia di una condizione postuma: il sentimento di precarietà e lo smarrimento – come per una catastrofe – della memoria, del senso e della certezza stessa della nostra presenza nel mondo-caos.

Cid Jurado, Alfredo Tenoch - Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana

Crivelli Minutti, Eduardo - Benemérita Universidad Autónoma

“I linguaggi della memoria e i meccanismi semiotici di conservazione dell’italianità nel caso di Chipilo in Messico”

Abstract: Chipilo è una popolazione nella regione centrale di Puebla, Messico, gli abitanti provengono dal nord di Italia, emigrarono nel 1882 e erano predominantemente di origine veneto. Mantengono la loro cultura originale in certi aspetti che viene rafforzata inoltre dalla cultura italiana odierna.

Attraverso l’analisi semiotica e la comprensione dei meccanismi di ogni sistema per conservare e trasmettere la memoria collettiva si osserva la relazione tra lingua e l’oggettistica, lo spazio e l’architettura, la culinaria in alcune manifestazioni della vita culturale. Essendo così possibile l’osservazione di aspetti presenti nei diversi sistemi semiotici che consentono di capire i legami tra la cultura “chipileña” e l’italianità contemporanea.

Di Pietro, Antonietta - Florida International University

“Expositions and *Italianità*: The 1861 Italian National Exposition in Florence and the Italy’s Pavilion in the 1925 *Exposition des arts décoratifs modernes* in Paris”

Abstract: Italy became a nation in 1861, and sixty years later Benito Mussolini was elected to parliament and began his rise to power, which culminated in the 1925 coup d’état and the beginning of his personal dictatorship. In both years, a monumental expression of the new governments’ political and ideological aims was created in an international setting: the 1861 Italian National Exposition in Florence and the Italy’s Pavilion in the 1925 *Exposition des arts décoratifs modernes* in Paris.

The primary purpose of this paper is to analyze the use of materials and symbols by the Italian governments of 1861 and 1925 to create *sites of memory* that favored retrospection into a glorious past and anticipation of a radiant future. This research will attempt an evaluation of the similarities and differences of the sites of memory in Florence and in Paris to trace the two nascent nations’ claims to legitimacy.

Gallo, Cinzia - Liceo Classico “Gargallo”, Siracusa

“Palomar di Italo Calvino e le sue influenze sui media: Alias”

Abstract: La comunicazione illustra gli influssi di Calvino sulla struttura, sui temi, sul messaggio della serie TV Alias, in cui un personaggio legge Palomar. Questo testo e le Lezioni americane consentono il raffronto. In *Visibilità*, intanto, Calvino riconosce come la televisione, rappresentando un aspetto della cultura attuale, contribuisca a formare il materiale da cui la facoltà immaginativa trae la sua ispirazione. Il linguaggio, d'altra parte, è a volte inadeguato ad esprimere la complessità della realtà, che ha spesso significati nascosti, cosa che Alias dimostra già nel titolo. Anche il valore dell'Esattezza è presente in Alias, che ha una rigida struttura (quattro serie di ventidue episodi ciascuna, ricorrenza del numero 47) assimilabile a quella di Palomar (intreccio di trama verticale e orizzontale). Rimandano, ancora, a Calvino, l'importanza attribuita all'elemento visivo e alla scienza, come base dei contenuti narrativi, la difficoltà di arrivare ad una vera conoscenza, l'opposizione verso ogni forma di omologazione, di controllo e di manipolazione dell'esistenza umana in nome dei suoi valori più autentici.

Giacalone, Christine Guedri - United States Military Academy-West Point

“Nearing Language Death in New York: The Case of Sicilian”

Abstract: The debate whether Sicilian is a language or dialect is longstanding. One thing that cannot be disputed is that the numbers of U.S Sicilian speakers is decreasing exponentially. In this research I investigate language maintenance and variation among first, second and third generation Sicilian-American in the New York City area. I examine motivation for language usage, variation and preservation. Results come from questionnaires and recordings of twenty Sicilian-Americans. In my findings, I report a sharp decline in maintenance from second to third generation. I argue that language retention starts in the home and offer strategies and resources for language preservation.

Giudici, Marco - Bangor University

“Italicity in Britain: Italian Cafes in Wales as a Case Study”

Abstract: Britain is one of the European countries where the impact of Italicity in economic, social and cultural terms is clearly visible. Within Britain, Wales is, surprisingly, the nation where Italicity has had a major influence on social life; thanks to a long-established migration pattern, the Italians together with their cafes have become a noticeable feature of the Welsh social landscape. This paper stresses the use of Italicity that the Italians and the Welsh have reciprocally made at both an institutional and popular level, fostering the idea of a unique Welsh-Italian connection in an academically-neglected part of the British Isles. The paper utilises a wide range of sources including TV programmes and series, newspapers, diaries and interviews.

Giumelli, Riccardo - University of Florence
“L'età degli italice: una narrazione nel tempo”

Abstract: Il contributo che vogliamo portare riguarda, sintetizzando, l'età degli italice, proprio nel momento in cui l'Italia e gli italiani compiono i 150 anni dall'Unità. Noi pensiamo che l'identità italice sia culturale, è forma mentis e modus vivendi e pertanto gli italice compiono un altro compleanno: difficile da riconoscere ma con più candeline, proprio perché antecedente all'italianità, che l'ha oscurata nel periodo degli Stati-nazioni ma che in quello della glocalizzazione assume nuovo senso. Lavoreremo quindi sulla variabile tempo dimostrando come l'italicità sia caratterizzata da pluriappartenenza, plurilinguismi e narrazioni che possono essere spiegate, tuttavia, anche da linguaggi non verbali.

Gubitosi, Patricia - University of Massachusetts, Amherst
“Italian Presence in Argentinean Spanish”

Abstract: Italians are one of the most significant migration groups in Argentina. Their presence began in the second half of the 19th Century, and is still important: almost 60% of the general population in Argentina has an Italian ancestor. Besides the effect that this immigration had on the Argentinean culture (food, religion, etc.), there is also a notorious influence in the Spanish spoken in this South American country: not only words that have become familiar in the Argentinean Spanish, such as *laburar* (from Italian *lavorare*), or *cucha* (from Italian *cuccia*), but also the emotional, expressive and very vivid gestural language that has come to characterized the Spanish spoken in the Rio de la Plata area. This presentation will show how Italian continuous influencing on this dialect of Spanish.

Guzzo, Siria - University of Naples “L’Orientale” – University of Salerno
“The Bedford Italian Community: Language and Identity”

Abstract: The town of Bedford in the British East Midlands is home to the largest Italian community in the UK that began to arrive in town in the early 1950s to seek employment in the local brick industries which were in desperate need of labour. Earlier results collected by means of a questionnaire survey (Guzzo 2005) revealed quite a significant use of Italian and an extremely strong ethnic identity perception within the Bedford composite hybrid community of speakers. Earlier analyses of the phonological features of the 3rd generation adolescents show realisations, especially among the males, highly untypical of this area of Southern England, including significant amounts of deaspiration of voiceless plosives and relatively close monophthongal realisations of the FACE diphthong (Guzzo 2007). Through natural occurring data collection, I question whether other phonological and morphosyntactic features of the English could reveal interesting patterns in Bedford Italian English (BIE) across the three generations.

Luconi, Stefano - University of Padua
“The Troubled Road to Italicity in the United States”

Abstract (max. 100 words)/Tema (massimo 100 parole): The establishment of a “network society in which the Italian nature is one of aggregation and recognition” (Bassetti 1998) involves the assumption that Italy and Italian features are conceived as positive values. This was not the case of the perception of that country when Italians landed en masse in the United States in the late nineteenth century. Rather, such an influx contributed to the deterioration of the image of Italy. However, in roughly one hundred years, Italy has overcome its previous liabilities, so that both the progeny of the turn-of-the-twentieth century newcomers and the American public are nowadays glad to identify themselves with Italian culture and to join the network of Italicity.

Marenzi, Elisa - University of Bern
“*Marios and Marias*: How Young Italo-Australians Perceive and Perform Italianness”

Abstract: Italians in Melbourne have been an influential ethnic minority who have significantly changed the landscape of the city since the early 1960s. Two generations later, Italo-Australians are expected by their elders to inherit and revive a set of cultural and linguistic values to keep the community alive. Here I give an overview of the current status of the Italian community in Melbourne and show how the third generation negotiates its Italian identity linguistically and meta-linguistically. Ethnographic observations are presented that highlight their ritual behaviour and demonstrate what ‘being Italian’ means in Australia nowadays.

Meyers, Sophia - Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame
“A Purismo Artist in Indiana, Luigi Gregori (1819-1896)”

Abstract: Luigi Gregori (1819-1896), professor and artist in residence at the University of Notre Dame, brought the language of the Italian Renaissance to nineteenth-century midwest America. A member of the nationalistic Purisma movement, Gregori proudly imitated the style of fourteenth-century masters as an expression of unified Italian identity. During his seventeen years in America, Gregori decorated five churches and participated in many national exhibitions, winning a gold medal at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago. Gregori's intercontinental success demonstrates the universal aesthetic of the Rinascimento.

Perolino, Ugo – “G. D’Annunzio” University of Chieti-Pescara
“Mitografie letterarie e idea di nazione in Oriani, Carducci, Serra”

Abstract: L’opera storica e narrativa di Alfredo Oriani costituisce un momento significativo della rielaborazione dell’eredità risorgimentale nella vita culturale dell’Italia

postunitaria. Oriani fu considerato un precursore del nazionalismo e dell'africanismo, in aperta polemica con le mitografie carducciane. L'intervento intende analizzare le contrapposte narrazioni politico-letterarie attraverso la riflessione e la testimonianza di Renato Serra, il quale interroga l'opera di Oriani e Carducci nell'imminente esplosione di irreversibili crisi internazionali, quali la guerra di Libia e la Grande Guerra.

Segatori, Stefania – “G. D’Annunzio” University of Chieti-Pescara
“La questione della lingua e della poetica nazionale in Nievo”

Abstract: Intervento sulla questione della lingua in uno scritto minore di Nievo (“Studi sulla poesia popolare e civile massimamente in Italia”, 1854), dove l’autore delle “Confessioni” enuncia il suo ideale di poesia nazionale e propone un’analisi attenta sull’efficacia del dialetto nella produzione poetica. Si tratta di una parte della mia tesi di dottorato su Nievo in corso di pubblicazione per la Olschki.

Sturmar, Barbara - University of Trieste
“Il linguaggio di un italiano ‘assimilato’: Italo Svevo”

Abstract: L’italianità è strettamente collegata alla letteratura triestina a cavallo tra XIX e XX secolo e lo scrittore Italo Svevo, nato proprio nel 1861, conìò questo pseudonimo per evidenziare la sua identità culturale, proprio perché viveva in una città ancora politicamente asburgica. Nel Profilo autobiografico il letterato insistette in tono solenne sulla sua italianità, conseguenza non soltanto di una nazionalità (acquisita appena nel 1918) ma anche dell’impegno patriottico dimostrato negli articoli pubblicati su “L’Indipendente”, fucina dell’irredentismo triestino. Svevo, pur affermando di «scrivere male» e possedendo una padronanza libresca dell’italiano, elaborò una prosa profondamente attuale, perfetta metafora dell’italianità linguistica contemporanea.

Tordi, Rosita – “SICL” (Società Italiana di Comparatistica Letteraria)
“Il primo Savinio: *Les Chants de la mi-mort e La vraie Italie* (1919-1920)”

Abstract: Musicista, scrittore e pittore, Andrea de Chirico, nom de plume Alberto Savinio, si trasferisce nel 1906 a Monaco di Baviera dalla nativa Atene, quindi a Parigi e infine in Italia. Il tema della comunicazione si limita alla sua produzione in lingua francese tra il 1914 e il 1920

Tulante, Meriel - Philadelphia University
“The Language of ‘Alta moda’ in Film: Italian Identity and Global Anxiety”

Abstract: "The Language of 'Alta moda' in film: Italian Identity and Global Anxiety"
The future of Italian haute couture is addressed in two recent films: *Valentino. The Last Emperor* (Tyrnauer, 2008) and as a plotline in *Gomorra* (Garrone, 2008). These films,

from an American and Italian perspective, seek to explain the role of the Italian fashion industry as a unique signifier in a global context and, at the same time, chart the demise of this world. The contrast between past and present, myth and reality is stark as anxieties about globalization and the fate of a particularly Italian identity are brought to the fore. The directors capture this moment of change and question the survival of this Italian industry and the potential obsolescence of nationally defined creative output.

Veneziano Broccia, Lillyrose with Joshua Berger, Heather Brown, Jane Kotapish -
University of Pennsylvania and Elijah House Production

“A bega: The Transfer and (Re)Invention of the Madre lingua”

Abstract: Our short film, ‘A bega, records the transfer of one of Italy’s many mother tongues, Sicilian, from its birthplace, Agrigento, to its new home, South Philadelphia. It captures the growing pains experienced by one of the daughters of this madre lingua as she works to lay her reinvented linguistic roots so far away from her home.

“A bega” is a homage to Sicily, South Philadelphia, courageous, sometimes desperate, and ironic women, that have been crossing the ocean for generations. With them these women bring recipes from their Mediterranean kitchens, glances full of curiosity and nostalgia, and languages with which to recount their tales, sing their lullabies and to recite the incantations needed to face everyday life: the madre lingua spoken by many young people today, which they discover is neither Sicilian nor Italian nor English. Theirs is the totem object in which form and content, function and symbol meet: the eternal linguistic suitcase of the immigrant, or better, “a bega”.

“A bega” is an Elijah House Production which was featured at “Corpo a cuore,” the XXIV Incontri internazionali di cinema e donne in Florence, Italy in October 2002.

Weinberg, Carla - The University of the Arts, Philadelphia

“Italians in the Black Sea: The *Ogdoas* by Alberto Alfieri”

Abstract: The *Ogdoas*, a fifteenth century text in Latin in the form of eight dialogues by Alberto Alfieri, survives as an only copy at the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan. It was first edited and published by Antonio Ceruti in 1885 in *Atti della società ligure di storia patria*. My presentation stems out of a work: *Education, Civic Virtue, and Colonialism in Fifteenth –Century Italy: The Ogdoas of Alberto Alfieri* authored by Ann Matter and myself, of imminent publication. Here I intend to trace a brief biography and the historical context of the author, a summary of the content of the dialogues, the meaning and limits of the *Ogdoas* as a literary text and as a source of historical and cultural information. I focus in particular on the sections of the work which deal with the Italian presence and activities in Crimea and in the Black Sea, on the author’s perception of the colonial world and of his own role as an educator and an expatriate.