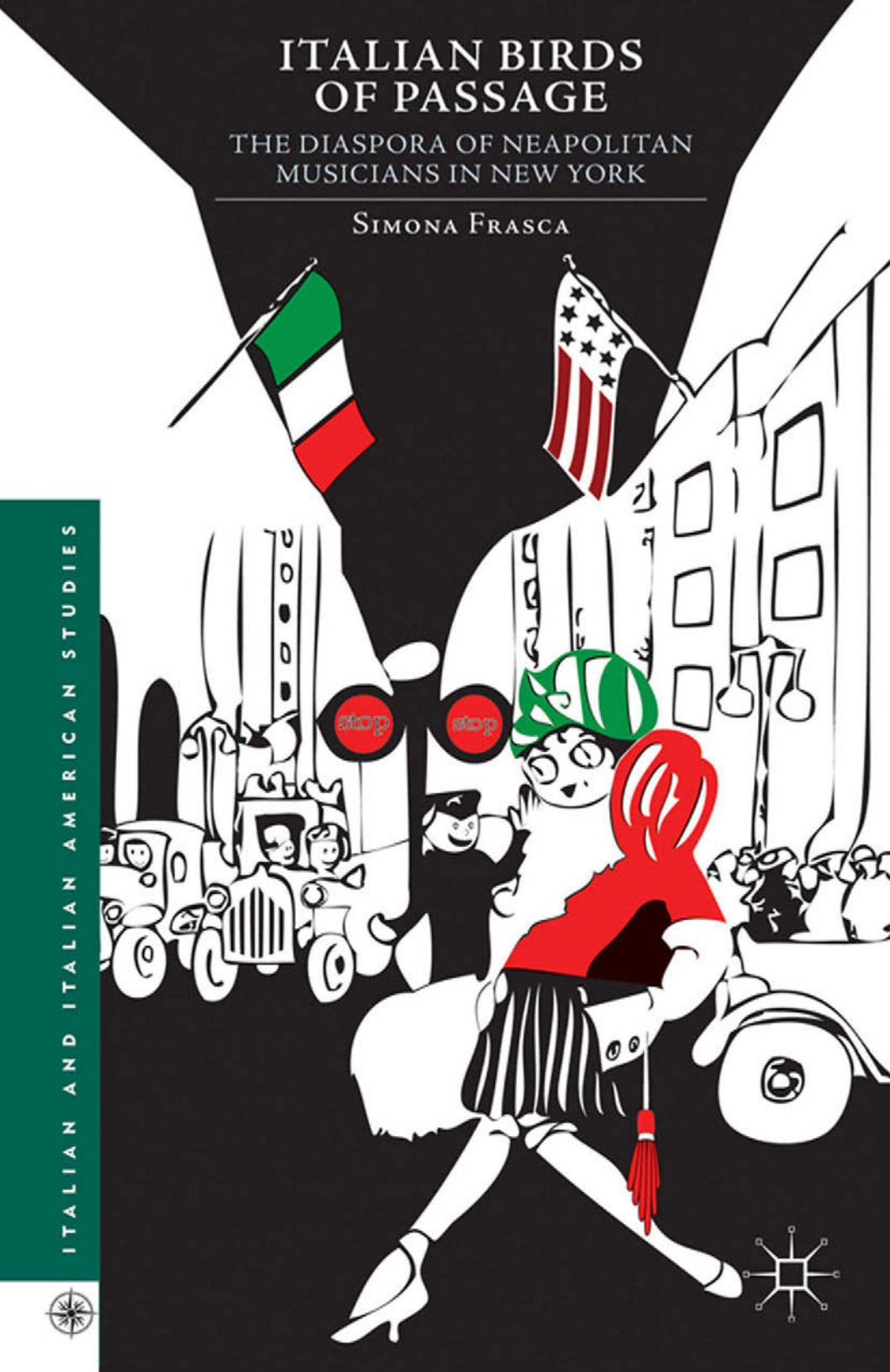
ITALIAN BIRDS OF PASSAGE

THE DIASPORA OF NEAPOLITAN MUSICIANS IN NEW YORK

SIMONA FRASCA



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Stanislao G. Pugliese
Hofstra University
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Italian Birds of Passage

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Italian Birds of Passage

The Diaspora of Neapolitan Musicians in New York

Simona Frasca

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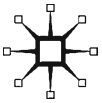

ITALIAN BIRDS OF PASSAGE

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For Carlo

It's the ramblin' man, arrived on a whim
Banned from the land of the mandolin
In a strange land, scrambling, hustling, gambling
Neapolitan gold

—Manifest aka Vesuveo 2002

Contents

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Introduction to the American Edition

I can't help but be proud of the American edition of *Birds of Passage*. After publication in Italy in 2010, my dear birds have flown far and have reached the US shores, the place where the story you are about to read originated. I thank Chris Chappell, senior editor of Palgrave Macmillan, and Stanislao G. Pugliese, editor of the Italian and Italian American Studies Series, for having believed in my work.

Birds of Passage is the fruit of research begun years ago in Siena, Tuscany, a city far from the cultural context of which I speak here. Yet, it is important because it is there that I encountered the first musical documents of this thrilling adventure. The research continued thanks to award of a Fulbright research grant in 2003 and the completion of my doctorate in history and analysis of music cultures at the Sapienza University of Rome in 2007. From 2010 to the present many studies have been published that have revealed themselves to be useful for my investigation. With respect to the Italian edition, after a necessary bibliographical update I tried to render the narration more fluid by skimming over stories and events that sound more familiar to an American than they would to an Italian. Conversely, I tried to clarify some notions relating above all to the Italian popular dialect song of the beginning of the twentieth century that might be more difficult for an American to comprehend. Finally, in the face of the richness and variety of sources I have tried to limit direct quotes to those from the time period and have given preference to those that have only rarely been examined previously. In general, those quotations have been selected that are more suitable to underpin the specific objectives and focus of this book.

Once again I wish to thank all those who have supported me in these years and who have contributed to enriching this examination with their reminiscences, advice, and insights. In particular, I wish to thank Marcello Piras, for the food for thought that he provided me during our long friendship, and retired professor Giuliana Muscio, for having taught

me to read and interpret some cultural phenomena linked to emigration. My thanks go to the Fulbright Commission of Rome for having believed in this research by financing my American journey and to the Department of Humanities of the Sapienza University of Rome, in particular Professors Giovanni Giuriati and Francesco Giannattasio, who have followed the various phases of this research. I am also grateful to Renato Di Benedetto, retired professor of history of music, for having constantly helped and supported me and to Professor Massimo Privitera for having provided me with important suggestions. My thanks go to the editorial staff of the performing arts section of *Il Manifesto*, in particular to Francesco Adinolfi and Roberto Silvestri, who gave me the opportunity to publish some articles taken from the present research and build a true work in progress, to Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli Vittorio Emanuele III, in particular to Gennaro Alifuoco, responsible of web services and digital library, and to Sara Velez, vice director of the Rodgers & Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound of the New York Public Library.

The Italian publisher in Italy, Silvio Malgarini, all staff at the Libreria Musicale Italiana, and Vincenzo Caporaletti, the editor of the popular music studies series, also deserve my thanks. I am also grateful to Professors Giorgio Bertellini, Francesco Durante, Martino Marazzi, Pellegrino D'Acierno, Victor R. Greene, and Marsha Siefert for their support during the years of my research, and Professors Iain Chambers and Fred L. Gardaphé for their kind endorsement.

In addition, I am particularly grateful to my friends B. Amore, Sal Canzonieri, Lino Nivulo, and Ernie Rossi for the information provided to me from the United States, also to Ernie's father, Louis Rossi, who left us a few years ago. I also wish to thank Ugo Mollo who sadly passed away recently and Antonio Sciotti for the information provided to me from Italy and Giuliana Fugazzotto for allowing me to consult part of her archive. My thanks go out to Giovanni Vacca for some enlightening interpretations of the relationships between Neapolitan song and the concept of modernity, to my dear friend Jason Pine for his constant support as a scholar, and to Marco Sannini for helping me revise some scores. I also wish to thank the brothers Fernando and Roberto Esposito of the Phonotype Record for providing me some data and events.

I am grateful to Rita Bullock, John Gentile, Tony Giangrande, Aldo Mancusi, and Mark Pezzano for giving me permission to quote my interviews to them. I fondly thank Professor Joseph Sciorra at the Calandra Italian American Institute for his availability as tutor during the research phase in New York, Mark Guglielmo, aka Vesuveo, for his "Neapolitan gold" rap song, which I reproduce here in the exergue with his kind permission, Delia Catalano, the nephew of the poet E. A. Mario for giving

me access to her photographic archive, Scott Webel for his creative work on the indexes and Charles Sant'Elia, who made the translation; without his intervention this book would perhaps still be awaiting translation. I'm always grateful to Walter, my brother Fulvio and my parents Autilia and Ugo for many forms of support that helped me constantly.

Finally, my special and sincere thanks go to Professor Enrico Careri, Nando Coppeto, president of the Roberto Murolo Foundation, and to Arturo De Vivo, head professor, Department of Humanities at Federico II University, Naples, they provided significant support for this project. As well as I gratefully acknowledge SEPS, European Secretariat for Scientific Publications, for financially supporting the English translation of the book.

Introduction

The pages that follow present a reconstruction of the historical and musical path of immigrants from southern Italy, especially Naples and the area around the city, upon coming to North America at the beginning of the twentieth century. In this story the harbor of New York symbolizes the first substantial step toward an exceptional case of ethnocultural syncretism. This story consists of silences and the historiographic voids, and its protagonists are men and women who represented the strength of an artistic movement that was rich, complex, and often painful. Like migratory birds, the *birds of passage* of the title, the individual protagonists of this movement crossed and recrossed the Atlantic Ocean much like a pendulum that oscillates to and from marking an imaginary line.

My tale illustrates some contours of Neapolitan song, one of the greatest elements of Italian song; thanks to emigration, Neapolitan song began to develop in the broader context of the history of the Italian American community. To tell this story, I investigate the relationships and exchanges between Neapolitan song and commercial American music at the time when due to the largest modern Italian immigration the two repertoires come into direct contact. That was also the crucial time when popular music became music for the mass market.

This is not a book on the cultural history of Italians in the United States even though aspects of that culture are also important for this study and are analyzed here. References in these pages to cinema, to theater, and to other forms of artistic expression of the Italians who emigrated support the principal thesis set forth here. For this reason I refer at times to a few texts related to the other disciplines of drama and culture to provide additional food for thought.

The modern Neapolitan song we refer to is an art repertoire that is dense and composite; in part, it reinvents the popular tradition of Campania, the region where Naples is located. Neapolitan song reached its most mature form in the second half of the nineteenth century. The achievement of grafting the popular onto the Western classical art repertoire, which is at the heart of this tradition, has long been a subject of

discussion. Roberto De Simone provides a glimpse of this when he analyzes the "Tammurriata di Pimonte," a grafting onto a popular form—the *tammurriata*—of textual cross-references derived in part from the nineteenth-century classical repertoire and in part from the popular context, in a sense thus cultivating a continuous tension that never reaches a formal solution.[1]

The modern Neapolitan repertoire from the end of the nineteenth century occupies a specific place in the history of Italian song. It presents itself as a musical microcosm in a century and in a space we can relate to, a city with its own cultural boundaries, due to its pronounced characteristics of cultural autonomy and autarchy. The recurrent themes of this song tradition generally revolve around the eternal pain of the loss of love, a feeling identified with the beloved woman but often also with the city itself. The ways in which this mood is represented connect the Neapolitan repertoire to that intimate and crepuscular Romanticism in which the recovery of popularizing subjects, often with poignant connotations, converges with the idea of loss, of nostalgia, and the rediscovery of humanity. This complex of sublime emotions remained the guiding principle of most of the second European Romanticism.

From the end of the nineteenth century to the first decades of the twentieth century, Neapolitan song found itself holding a peculiar position in the history of modern music and culture. When considering the segments into which people's days are divided, one is dedicated to relaxation and free time—that is, hours and money to spend on diversions, usually during the nighttime—while the other, the daytime, is consecrated to work. Electricity and the reproduction of sound lead to important transformations in how people spent their nighttime social life and leisure. The invention of phonorecording allowed music to be accessible to many through the spread of the cylinder and the flat disc. In this way Neapolitan song rightfully entered the era of musical technology. It came fully alive in the transition phase and became a cultural hybrid: formerly a product of the late nineteenth century with specific local and ethnic associations, it went on to become a commodity of mass culture projected into the territories of the nascent transnational culture.

In this passage from one sociocultural sphere to another, few observers were capable of grasping the radical transformation of the Neapolitan repertoire. Rich in historical, social, economic, and purely aesthetic implications, this music has rarely found a voice capable of doing it justice in analytical terms and bearing a critical approach. Much has been written over the decades about Neapolitan song, but often those writings are animated by a marked hagiographic and anecdotal tendency and

lack the perspective to explain the repertoire's modernist tension. Most of the literature on the subject consists of lists of titles, dates, and names organized by chronology. Few studies attempt to place Neapolitan song in the broader sociocultural panorama of the national tradition and in the cross-sectional perspective that includes phenomena such as emigration and the consequent opening toward new cultural influences such as national or international European influences.

This study focuses on the Italian literature produced in the second half of the twentieth century, for example, the fundamental three-volume text by Ettore De Mura;[2] this was the first book attempting a historical arrangement and can be considered a true and proper encyclopedia.[3] De Mura was an author and theater director, journalist, and essayist, but above all he knew how to create the first study tool for generations of passionate students of Neapolitan song. His encyclopedia (1969) followed his anthology *Poeti napoletani dal '600 ad oggi* (1966)[4] and reunited in a single work the best sources produced up to that time, from the writings of Benedetto Croce and Salvatore Di Giacomo to more recent ones by Vittorio Paliotti and Max Vajro. De Mura's encyclopedia also includes the memoirs of the artists Anna Fougez and Beniamino Gigli as well as the songbooks and booklets of popular festivals, such as the Piedigrotta. In addition, there are monographs about publishers such as Curci and fictionalized correspondence from the world of the *cafè chantant* of Rodolfo De Angelis and Sebastiano Di Massa. Much of the lore gathered in De Mura's encyclopedia resulted from a reworking of the author's firsthand experience. This explains the numerous inconsistencies in the book and the difficulties encountered in reconstructing the biographies of some of the artists mentioned in its pages.

Some years prior to the publication of De Mura's work, the book *Un secolo d'oro* by Giovanni Sarno was published;[5] it is one of the most complete collections of Neapolitan poetry intended for song. A long time after this the work *La canzone napoletana* by Pietro Gargano and Gianni Cesarini appeared,[6] which had the merit of putting the subject back into play by expanding and updating the field of observation. This was followed by the essential essay by Roberto De Simone *Appunti per una disordinata storia della canzone Napoletana*,[7] which considered the subject from a specific research perspective and from more complex terms. More recent texts of a historical nature include *La canzone Napoletana* by Salvatore Palomba and *Storia della canzone napoletana dalle origini all'epoca d'oro* by Carmelo Pittari.[8]

Among the most important texts are the first two contributions by women, Marialuisa Stazio's book, which has a sociological bent,[9] and the first monograph on the Neapolitan recording industry by Anita Pesce,

which includes a detailed survey on Phonotype's discography catalogue.[10] Also noteworthy is the miscellaneous volume on the *sceneggiata* edited by Pasquale Scialò.[11] The publisher Magmata, which was founded in 2002, launched the publication of biographical profiles of a few important exponents of ancient and modern Neapolitan song. In this regard, I also cite Ciro Daniele's monograph on the poet Vincenzo Russo[12] and one by Mimmo Liguoro on Giovanni Capurro,[13] the author of "'O sole mio." Magmata also published *Nuova enciclopedia illustrata della canzone napoletana* by Pietro Gargano, an updated work based on De Mura's Encyclopedia. A few texts on song in standard Italian that were published in the past decade recognized the role of Neapolitan song as belonging to the genre that among a few others gave birth to Italian tradition as primogeniture. Among these texts are *Storia della canzone italiana* by Gianni Borgna, *Storia della canzone italiana* by Felice Liperi, and *La musica italiana* by Paolo Prato.[14] Finally, in 2009, through collaboration between the University of Naples Federico II and the Fondazione Roberto Murolo, the Centro Studi Canzone Napoletana came into existence; it promotes research and curates the edition of the *Quaderni* (journals) of the Centro Studi.

In the meantime, a new generation of scholars authored important contributions; particularly important are historical and biographical research works, such as those authored by Antonio Sciotti, and above all the monograph on Gilda Mignonette, who was among the female protagonists of this story.[15] In addition, there is an anthropological investigation of the underground economy and contemporary Neapolitan neomelodica by Jason Pine.[16]

All these works reflect a diversified bibliographical scenario and a cultural context characterized by broad fluctuations and variants, even in the spellings of the names of the protagonists of Neapolitan song.

This book takes a narrower field of investigation as its subject, namely, the Neapolitan song formalized in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This type of song is a musical product of the first industrial age and a prototype of Italian consumer music. It was geared toward entertaining the audience at public feasts and at private celebrations and moved listeners so greatly that they would purchase the sheet music or the records, thus ushering in the practice of private listening. Having reached its most mature phase in the early years of the twentieth century, Neapolitan song was a cultural experience much like the poetic experiments of Salvatore Di Giacomo, Libero Bovio, and Ferdinando Russo. It perfectly represented the clear boundary between rural Italy, still absorbed by the centuryies-old question of the national language, and a country strongly drawn toward modern urbanization as exemplified in the major European and

American cities. Neapolitan song was a music destined to become part of a national musical repertoire and capable of erasing the notable local differences precisely at the moment when, due to the persistent use of dialect, it most clearly declared its belonging to a specific geographical area. That is to say, its ability to absorb many influences from abroad made it one of the most dynamic forms among others from Italy.

In the preface to Marialuisa Stazio's book, Alberto Abruzzese comments on the *Storia della canzone napoletana,* published in 1961 by Sebastiano Di Massa. He highlights that the constituent elements of the process of industrialization and homogenization of the music genre in question are not discussed in Di Massa's investigation; nor is discussed its link to free time and the development of the city, of factories, of public transportation, of consumption, of tourism, of feasts, and of fashion. That is, a synthesis based on a socioeconomic perspective and examining Neapolitan song in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as an extraordinary phenomenon of collective music consumption was absent.[17] Indeed, this present book intends to follow the path opened up by Stazio's study and with the support of Abruzzese's observations seeks to distance itself from that "historicism, idealism, literary sketch, urban worldliness, local folklore" that Abruzzese speaks of.[18]

My research will place the repertoire of Neapolitan song of the twentieth century in the context of an increasingly popular culture by inviting readers to recall that, on the one hand, Neapolitan song fully belongs to the modern urban repertoire and on the other it represents the past, what must be surpassed. The pressure of events that would lead to the experience of the twenty-year period of Fascism only accelerated the process of erosion of regional traditions and dialects.[19] In this connection, the Neapolitan song of the 1920s and 1930s was attacked and ultimately relegated to a marginal role. Fascism pursued above all the achievement of a standard unitary language through concise strategic control that would lead to the expunging of all vernacular forms from Italian. In this way the Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini brought to completion the process of national cultural unification begun with the country's first phases of political unity in 1861. In the new framework designed by Mussolini, ancient European cultural realities like the one that evolved many years before the national Italian unification in Naples—the former capital of the flourishing kingdom of the two Sicilies that was defeated by Savoy and by the nineteenth-century ideals of fatherland and liberty—were left crushed under the weight of politics that did not contemplate local realities. The censorship exercised by the Fascist regime repressed the cultural ferment and the song traditions of the local minority, such as Neapolitan theater and cinema, because it considered them forces opposed to the idea

of a national culture.[20] This was made abundantly clear since the years of the First World War. The age of nationalism that led to that conflict could not tolerate notable differences within a country that only in 1861 had taken the path to unification. Italy was still absorbed by problems resulting from unification and linked the Neapolitan song to high levels of illiteracy and usage of dialect and song; the cultural industry associated with the song seemed like a waste from the past, a Bourbon legacy, the expression of a political and cultural reality that was swept away by the new course of history. That new course was shaped by the patriot heroes Mazzini and Garibaldi, who dedicated their lives to the ideal of national unity and formed new political alliances.

As we have come to know, the repertoires of jazz, rhythm and blues, and rock 'n' roll all started from the experiences of rural blues, of folk songs steeped in the music of European and Latin American immigrants; thus it is only right to investigate the origins of the Italian song tradition, assigning the Neapolitan song a prominent place if for nothing else but its seniority.

I could borrow what Sandro Portelli writes regarding Woody Guthrie in highlighting the syncretic aspect that proves fundamental in the analysis of folk music repertoires that holds for Italy and the Neapolitan repertoire as well.[21]

Modern Neapolitan song grew out of a tradition that has carried on since the end of the nineteenth century until today and has succeeded in influencing tango, blues, rock, protest songs, popular melodrama, and cinema, and it has given a personal character to all of them by modulating a euphonic language with a pronounced transnational and dynamic approach. In 1947, Brian Rust, who was among the greatest scholars of jazz, took into account the importance of this legacy and its unique twofold local and global dimension when he deregionalized the genre by placing it in relation to the New Orleans jazz scene. He singled out the forms, themes, and spirituality that put the Neapolitan people and African Americans on the same level. With regard to some recordings of Neapolitan songs made in that American city, Rust had gathered something more than a simple analogy between the music of old Naples and the relatively modern music of New Orleans. Furthermore, he affirmed that no one who harbored an interest in jazz could allow himself to ignore any folk music whatsoever, certainly not one as distinctly ethnic as Neapolitan music.[22]

Indeed, the theme of interrelation and fusion is what I want to draw attention to here above all in order to reflect on how much this musical exchange and transmission could have had an impact in Naples through the channels fed by emigration. After all, emigration is a phenomenon of

great anthropological and cultural interest, especially here with respect to Neapolitan song.

In this book I will focus on two cities in particular, Naples and New York, because of their importance in the musical panorama of the period in question. From the end of the nineteenth century to the early decades of the next century, Naples was one of the greatest centers of national music publishing. At the same time New York became a symbol of modernity in music, foreshadowing its role as place of the creative and productive avant-garde, a place it held for all of the twentieth century. Naples and New York were also the two greatest ports of departure and arrival, respectively, during the years of the most massive Italian exodus from 1880 to 1924. The latter is the year when entry quotas were established to regulate the flow of new arrivals. The exodus of the Italians—something American observers preferred to call diaspora, highlighting its aspect of dispersal—takes on unique connotations in the overall history of national emigration. In fact, the Italian emigrants of the early twentieth century were not exceptional travelers or wealthy bourgeois on extreme quests; nor were they solitary and heroic proletarians venturing into the new world in search of fortune with the daring attitude of a modern Ulysses. The emigrants of the early twentieth century were rather different from the stateless exiles who emigrated in the two previous centuries when emigration began on a noteworthy scale. The historian Augusta Molinari writes that in the main maritime seaports of Genoa, Naples, and Palermo, the waves of emigrants modified the relationship between the city and the port and its activities. The crowd—she explains—that milled around on the piers had particular characteristics because those who embarked were not travelers but emigrants, socially different from those who usually frequent ports. The people who remained in the city felt fear and mistrust against those who were poor and desperate. It is for this reason that there came to be an invisible wall between the city dwellers and the emigrants.[23]

The emigrants of these decades were, thus, desperate, without means, but confident and impelled to carry out their choice; they made up the millions who shared the same destiny.

Emigration is always a dramatic change, but in the context of music history it also was a positive factor. By emigrating, the musicians and singers trained in the Neapolitan area came into contact with a wider musical scene. Their musical integration into the new world was an inevitable process and triggered a magnificent interchange of experiences and technologies and exceptional feedback. Regarding the encounter between the

emigrants and Americans, some integration strategies were quickly developed on the basis of actors' gestures and language, strategies that were brought to life in the theater by formidable personalities such as Farfariello and De Laurentiis. These strategies often made possible exceptional points of contact and sometimes even a true and proper suture of differences between ethnicities, music becoming the channel of communication.

Among the principal terrains of encounter between Italian-Neapolitan and American musical culture, the most noteworthy were the hybrid forms of musical notation that combined written and oral traditions and went by the names of stock arrangement, lead sheet, and head arrangement. These materials were musical successes that were passed around in diverse musical circuits through distribution channels in the great cities of the United States. The original scores and sheet music came to be acquired by ethnic publishing houses, and after changing the language of the text they made it a success, marketable to the ethnic community to which it was addressed. The sheet music, stripped of its original language, became the principal means of integration of the emigrants who Americanized themselves. This aspect became evermore necessary for them with the outbreak of the First World War when in response to the looming war, loyal emigrants from every part of the world united in one nation.

While immigrants from southern Italy moved to the American continent, a kind of return emigration of American music began to spread in Italy, and Naples in particular proved to be a receptive territory. Even though this subject clearly deserves a book all to itself, a part of the research here is dedicated to the repatriation of the emigrants. Although there is a lack of texts illustrating the repatriation in the context of Neapolitan song, the description of the back and forth movement of the Italian emigrants would be incomplete if it did not take into account the reverse swing that returned emigrants to Italy with important cultural implications arising from it. In many musical scores—in the majority of cases, they are the property of private collections—the influence of American music in Naples beginning in 1910 becomes evident, as is highlighted in the essay by Marcello Sorce Keller.[24]

Neapolitan music producers and publishers described the arrival of American music as a true invasion that relentlessly swept away the Neapolitan tradition. One of the reasons for this dissemination was the massive arrival in Europe of American bands. At the beginning of the twentieth century, these bands were engaged on tours evermore frequently, thanks to faster means of transportation. Adriano Mazzoletti noted that Italy was completely cut off from the first tours of American musicians and orchestras that performed in many European nations from 1905 on.

As a result, Italy lagged about ten years behind continental Europe where American music was concerned. Thus, in New Orleans, musicians who were born in Italy or were the children of Italian emigrants supplied their irreplaceable contribution to the birth of a new music; this music crossed the Atlantic but stopped on the other side of the Alps.[25]

The explosion of American dance music through all of Europe can be seen in the international success of the dancer couple Vernon and Irene Castle and of James Reese Europe's band. Even though Italy was not among the preferred destinations of these groups—instead, they performed in British and French theaters because it was easier to travel there—Italians were nevertheless smitten with the new fashions: foxtrot, one-step and two-step, shimmy, ragtime, blues, and tango, which was the true pioneer of the conquest of American music in continental Europe. All of this took place in an era when the record industry and evening entertainment industry were just in their infancy. It remains undeniable that even for the gathering of information regarding this repertoire there is still a certain dearth of historic sources. Furthermore, the surviving repertoire suffers from the fact that for a long time it was deemed ephemeral material and was barely conserved for posterity. After all, consumer music is often considered of scant artistic value according to the standards of art music and is said to be derivative from opera and salon music. For this reason the market did not necessarily require quality control or a guarantee that works would last over time. We are located halfway between the different repertoires that this music draws from in the process of formation.

The southern regions and some rural zones of the north of Italy were involved in the exodus to the United States. The percentage, however, was higher among the populace of southern Italy. From Abruzzo to Sicily, towns and villages contributed many to the stream of emigrants.

Neapolitan song also was affected by emigration, and for Italian music publishers in the United States the phenomenon turned out to be favorable because it led to a further expansion of their slice of the pie of the cultural market. Not only the publishers but all of the professionals that surrounded the production of songs benefited from this move to America in ways that were unthinkable in the Italy of those years. For many artists, going to play in America represented a long-awaited breakthrough. In the 1910s and 1920s entire bands moved from Italy to America thanks to the success of musicians such as the Neapolitan Giuseppe Creatore who left Naples and became a leading personality of band music in the United States. American observers of this wave of migration described the phenomenon as a true musical deluge. It is then curious that the same apocalyptic term was adopted by Neapolitan publishers when American music arrived in their city.

Across the Atlantic, in the United States the recording market was already growing rapidly as indicated by information according to which "Tiger Rag" recorded by the Italian American band Original Dixieland Jass Band sold a million copies in 1917. Artists with some ability and wanting to play in America could reach out to an impressive number of listeners because a record was a democratic object transcending class boundaries: gramophones did everything themselves; they did not require concert halls or a particular protocol to be used. Moreover, the marvels of the technology caused much less fear in the United States than in Italy.

It is easy to suppose that the intense activity of publishing houses that sprung up in New York and that of transplanted musicians helped to promote the first substantial contacts between the Neapolitan light repertoire and the American tradition. According to John Gentile, a pianist who had moved from Naples to New York in 1929—and accompanied many female emigrant singers, such as Gilda Mignonette, Ria Rosa, and Rosina De Stefano—in Naples one of the channels through which for a certain period of time many musicians became aware of American commercial music production was created by emigrant relatives who sent sheet music of American origin to their loved ones back in Italy.[26] But the means of production and consumption of this hybrid Italian-Neapolitan-American music remains one of the great mysteries of modern history. The Italian emigrants were an uncomfortable legacy: quickly forgotten by their country of origin but not yet integrated into the history of the country that welcomed them, they were subjected to a double relegation to oblivion. Following Enrico Caruso's glorious arrival in America, a mixture of skepticism and condescension prevailed with respect to the careers of the singers, composers, and various performers linked to the world of emigration. This social and cultural hiatus concluded at the end of the 1930s with the artistic success of Louis Prima who started out from the syncopated music of his city, New Orleans, and was among the first Italians born in America to spread his music in that place and become successful.

Prima and his contemporaries were artists whose identity by then was totally hyphenated,[27] that is Italian-American. As a result, their feeling of belonging vis-à-vis their country of origin was transformed through a multiple and wholly unprecedented overlapping of conventions and musical, verbal, physical, and social languages. It needs no further clarifying that the different spellings adopted for the word Italian-American represent the gradual integration of the Italian emigrant into the American context. In the pages that follow I have preferred the more conventional form Italian-American. There is no lack of cases where the variants with or without the hyphen could coexist in the same time period since

integration progresses more quickly in certain contexts than in others. From a historic point of view, furthermore, it is important to point out that music provides a privileged perspective for analyzing this process of ethnic integration.

A further important clarification must be made with respect to the use of two recurrent terms here that also explains the reason why here one speaks of Neapolitan performers and musicians and not southern Italians in the broadest sense. The nonchalance with which we commonly adopt the adjectives "Neapolitan" and "Italian" as almost interchangeable is based on the fact that "Italian" as such is an idea, an ethnic and cultural abstraction applied to emigrants from Italy in the early twentieth century. In fact, Italian identity was linked to the region and usually the city of origin both by outsiders and among themselves. Thus, there existed communities of Sicilians, rather than Neapolitans or Abruzzese, who discovered that they were Italians and belonged to the same nationality only after having reached America. Their identity was rarely perceived as a national one. The emigrants' belonging to the motherland was established primarily through the reconfirmation of their common cultural roots, which in the case of Italians consisted of music as well as food. Regarding the musical tradition, most emigrants did not make a distinction based on geographical provenance. That is, in this case the borders of the old Bourbon kingdom and its capital Naples prevailed, and the emigrants identified above all with the Neapolitan repertoire. South of Rome the lyrics of the Neapolitan songs were understood by nearly all Italians, including those who migrated, bought records, and went to the theater to listen to Neapolitan artists on tour. All of this allowed for a widespread penetration of Neapolitan song among the emigrants. This repertoire for a long time then represented Italian song for the Italian emigrants, and this explains why outside of Italy there still exists confusion regarding the difference between Italian song and Neapolitan song. Even today, in Sicily there exists a considerable number of Sicilian singers who sing in Neapolitan, and this is evidence of what I write. Thus, those who study Neapolitan song in relation to the migratory phenomenon are constrained to follow this terminological confusion and adopt the term "Neapolitan" to designate the musical repertoire enjoyed by the emigrants, tout court, and "Italian" to refer to the entire ethnic group.

In the Italian sources little is left of the adventuresome biographies of the artists who crossed the Atlantic and often the entire expanse of the United States as well to establish themselves in the great urban centers on the West Coast. The discography published by Richard Spottswood in 1990 on ethnic music produced in America up to 1942 has partially restored the hope of being able to retrace the careers of many emigrant

artists who had close ties with the production of Neapolitan song for consumers. Just as fundamental is the supporting documentation of the Rigler and Deutsch Record Index,[28] which gathers information on approximately 615,000 recordings of commercial music made in the United States before 1950 and is preserved in the five largest American sound archives: the Belfer Audio Laboratory and Archive of Syracuse University; the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division of the Library of Congress; the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound of the New York Public Library; the Stanford University Archive of Recorded Sound; and the Yale Collection of Historical Sound Recordings.

The essential study by Emelise Aleandri on Italian-American theater in New York,[29] the corresponding one on the San Francisco scene by Lawrence Estavan,[30] and the research by Victor Greene[31] of emigrants' music at the beginning of the twentieth century particularly with regard to the white European ethnic group, are important writings directly focusing on the cultural and musical environment that is the subject of my study. The other titles in the bibliography cover various aspects of the field of research, such as the contribution by Ruth Glasser[32] on the musical activity of the Puerto Rican community in New York from 1917 to 1940. By means of historic reconstruction of a few record labels, this work reveals the existence of Neapolitan artists who collaborated on musical experiences with Latin American musicians.

In those years artists were not yet bound to the imperatives of specialization in their art and moved between diverse entertainment disciplines. In view of this mobility, research in the history of cinema has proven essential. Particularly helpful in this regard are the books by Enza Troianelli and Giuliana Bruno on the emblematic case of the Neapolitan Elvira Notari,[33] the first female director to export her productions to the United States in the early days of silent films. In addition, the studies by Giuliana Muscio and Giorgio Bertellini of the contributions of Italian and Italian-American artists to American cinema was also essential.[34] Lastly, the precise historical and anthropological inquiry by Simone Cinotto regarding the food habits of the Italian community that was established in New York shortly after the great migration was useful for my study.[35] In addition, this book also draws on a great number of studies of jazz and on a more ephemeral bibliography composed of music festival booklets, record label catalogues, journalistic coverage, published and unpublished interviews, most of them gathered by me during a study visit financed by the American Fulbright Commission for cultural exchange.

The story that is about to begin is subdivided into six chapters based on the memories of those who are still living, press clippings, web pages, and a sometimes slender, but for that reason all the more precious,

bibliography. This history identifies Enrico Caruso as the pioneer who paved the way for virtually all of the other performers of the first phase of Italian emigration. The first three chapters address these subjects. Part of chapter 2 and the entire chapter 6 are dedicated to the history of the record labels, to the work of orchestra conductors and arrangers who have guaranteed the survival of this repertoire. Chapter 4 focuses on the reverse journey of some artists who returned to Italy, thus resembling the migratory birds referred to in the title of this book. Chapter 5 deals with some aspects of gender within the Italian community, the so-called Great Emigration, the move of millions of Italians in the years between 1880 and 1925, represented an undoubted advancement of consciousness that led to the redefinition of gender roles and of the significance and scope of female artists' influence in both the individual and collective spheres. The opinions of Mimì Aguglia, for example, an important artist in this context, bear witness to the complexity of the woman question; yet, these views were associated with Italian emigrant women in the years in which the United States was engaged in the debate about the extension of suffrage.

I have chosen the period of time from 1895—the beginning of the era of the record marked by the publication in Naples of "'A risa," a reworking of an original African American piece that would represent the first example of interrelation between the Neapolitan and the American repertoires—to 1940 when virtually all substantial transformations in the Italian community began to be recorded. At the end of the 1930s the scenario changed; the Italian Americans became Italian-Americans. The Italian Writers Project of the Municipal Reference Archive of New York, an important source for this research, registers sociocultural and economic conditions of the Italian ethnic minority in the United States emphasizing precisely that period of the twentieth century. In those years an ethnic prototype took shape that was no longer the simple combination of two terms, Italian and American, but something new. This new generation appeared just before the outbreak of the Second World War. For that era Italian-American music presented itself as an innovative language that would no longer be in debt to the one that was imported from the motherland. For example, the boogie-woogie and consumer jazz genres in which the Italian emigrants were participating were formalized, and well-defined musical personalities emerged.

By the time the Second World War began, the generation of Italian-American musicians with ties to the Neapolitan repertoire had definitively completed the next step toward integration. However, in terms of historiography, there is a void regarding the first four decades of the twentieth century, a time of repression resulting from nationalistic, antimodernist,

and anti-emigrationist prejudices. These developed more or less noticeably in the years we are concerned with here and have remained a constituent element of the Italian-American until today.

Due to difficulties in tracing facts, this book follows some apparent detours from the central path of this study, namely, the analysis of musical exchanges between Naples and New York. This investigation remains essentially a work in progress, and future studies should be conducted for example on some other aspects such as on performers and artists who did not demonstrate a substantial interest for American music. The clash between the innovative contributions of emigrant artists on the one hand and their conservative tendency on the other has led to the formation of a new generation of musicians who are fully Italian-American and who give their art an identity and style all its own.

Let me entrust the final words of this introduction to Rita Berti, one of the last living performers of the Neapolitan repertoire in New York, with whom this phase of the emigration of Neapolitan music ends:

> We were in the Galleria Umberto in Naples, I was very excited; in front of me was the great Gennaro Pasquariello. All of a sudden my manager asked him: "Maestro, what name do you see for this *piccerella* [young girl] [?" He looks at me: "What's your name?" "Rita." He starts counting on his fingers the four letters of my name, then he listed the letters of the alphabet, and says to me: "B, stops on the B the sound of your name. *Piccerè* [girl], for me Berti is perfect, short, like your name." The fifties were also the times for Neapolitan song. In America as in Italy, theater changed, faded away. Except for Atlantic City where Jimmy Roselli, Jerry Vale, and also Italians like Gianni Morandi, Mauro Nardi, Mauro Caputo perform, there are no longer all those theaters of long ago where all the singers, even new talent, could perform. The less well known names can now only perform at dinner parties, very much in vogue here; people get together to celebrate some occasion and there's always a stage for a singer called upon to perform, like in the *Godfather*, Francis Ford Coppola's film. Atlantic City is a little bit like Las Vegas; the managers organize the shows of the big names of the Neapolitan-Italian songs but no one truly is interested in the music, they go there to play in the casino. Until the early eighties, the Walk Theater in Brooklyn between 18th Avenue and 64th street and the Brooklyn Academy of Music were active. In New York, when I arrived in the fifties, there was a great ferment for Neapolitan artists. I had a radio broadcast at WOV, an Italian radio station, together with Joe Masiello in the morning at 11:15 and we had a big following, not just of Italians. Our program was called Olio Gem and we sang the classic Neapolitan repertoire accompanied by Dick Dia's orchestra. The last great aftershock for Neapolitan music culture was in 1978 when Mario Merola[36] came and together we did a few *sceneggiate*; the success was enormous. Attention to Neapolitan song definitively waned

at the end of the seventies. I remember with sadness a show with Nino Taranto's company, I was reciting together with Dolores Palumbo and that was the last Neapolitan show at the Academy of Music; someone as an insult destroyed all of the orchestra seats and from that day on the theater managers no longer wanted to host an Italian show. The Italian American public is very different from the Neapolitan public, there are many true aficionados of Neapolitan song, but most love the anthologies of songs without respect for the history. It is sad to see the young aspiring singers that go up onto the stage with sheet music without making the effort to memorize the words. I perhaps had more fortune because I worked in a period of great musical vivacity. I was 20 years old when at the Teatro Bellini in Naples I worked in the famous Piedigrotta of Furio Rendine. During one of the encores of the show, Gennaro and Vincenzo Gardenia participated. Gennaro was the first great Italian-American actor to be engaged in Hollywood. They were taken with my voice and offered me a contract in America. I had already travelled in 1949 with Cafiero-Fumo Company and Luisa Conte; we had been in Brazil for almost 6 months. But the Gardenia's contract was the true beginning of my American career.[37]

Chapter 1

The Cultural Context of the Italian-American Community in New York at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

The Italian Populations in the Neighborhoods of New York

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Italian immigrants constituted a rather complex ethnic group. Often, they were defined as "people in the middle" because of having both of their identities negated; no longer Italian, they were not yet American. They belonged to a group that initially was an anthropological creation; they were living in a no-man's-land, much like physical and psychological nomads. The self-image of this generation of immigrants was characterized by a never-ending mobility—no longer there, but not yet quite here. Suspended between nations, so to speak, the Italian immigrants were forced to create their own identity. The story of emigration is replete with the trauma of mournful and dire events, of tragedy and death. Explained another way, emigration was an exodus that included painful separation, a severing of the connection to the source of cultural references and affections. What counts most in this passage, which is in a sense a kind of death, is the complex connection based on memory. That is, upon leaving their homeland, the immigrants are soon forgotten, and upon arriving in their new land, they find it difficult to integrate themselves into the new culture. In fact, not many of those native to the host country were disposed to accept a historical presence as disturbing as that of such large numbers of immigrants.

This last aspect should be seen in relation to the conditions under which the Italians entered their new geographical context during the Great Emigration, that is, in the period between 1880 and 1924, the year

in which the Johnson-Reed Act, better known as the Immigration Act, took effect. It was this federal law that established a fixed quota for immigration into the United States with a pronounced bias against southern Europeans. The 1924 law established an annual quota of 3,845 entries even though the provisions on family reunification for naturalized Italians greatly elevated the effective number of these entries.[1] The conviction spread that a large number of Italians, Greeks, and Slavs would damage the cultural and genetic patrimony of the nation. The tenor of the debate was especially heated; for example, for a certain time, Louisiana debated whether the children of Sicilian immigrants should attend white schools, black schools, or have schools created specifically for them. The southern Italians were especially disconcerting because of their dark skin tones. The right to American citizenship had for a long time been limited to free whites, and in the case of Italians, it was difficult to determine to which ethnic group they belonged. This fact, on record in Louisiana, together with other similar incidents regarding other ethnic minorities, above all the African American community, shows the extent to which the very idea of US citizenship was inextricably tied to the concept of race and skin color. Over the course of these pages we shall again revisit the concept of whiteness.

The phenomenon of Italian immigration to the American continent had its start during the second half of the eighteenth century. Missionaries, churchmen, adventurers, political exiles, and revolutionaries represented the core of Italian immigration until 1880. After this, the qualitative and quantitative characteristics of Italian immigration changed completely. The average number of immigrants was then about 600,000 a year, and the several million who came to America were classified according to sex, age, and physical strength.

There arrived specialized workers who were predominantly from northern Italy; among them were farmers, farm workers, miners, weavers, machine operators, mechanics, smiths, printers, tailors, bookkeepers, seamen, teachers, doctors, lawyers, and even sculptors, painters, and musicians (these last amounting to 0.9 percent).[2] In general few immigrants had experience with occupations not linked to agriculture and of that small percentage many were proto-industrial workers. The Italians were excluded from the highest paying and best jobs not only due to their lack of technical skills but also due to a strong prejudice against them.[3] In most cases, they were very poor people lured by economic potential and the desire for social emancipation available to them on the American continent.[4]

For the average American, the arrival of the immigrants can be described in a collective diary detailing how they were perceived: welcome

or, rather, unwelcome.[5] In any event, in the past century, the history of migrations is in fact the story of its representation in the theater, in the cinema, and for us, above all, in music. It is a story that becomes more and more complicated, and because of this it exerts a great deal of fascination. It merges with new and exciting phenomena, such as industrialization, urbanization, and the birth of modern American culture and mass communication. Here is the possibility of a self-representation that longs for an aesthetic value; this value derives from the total absence of a specialized artistic field, the kind in which no one is solely a musician or an actor but does a little of everything when searching for a language that can express this new ethnic identity.

In the repertory of immigrants, music occupies the most important place; singers and composers who traveled with their scores were ready to export them to the new world. The venues in which these were presented were theaters, music clubs, and, later, dance halls. Obviously, in view of the multidisciplinary character just mentioned, this often resulted in singers also being actors and dancers, and their performances used various talents of the kind that prevailed among the genres. Certainly, it is quite probable that among the emigrants, the very first place in which the artists performed their traditional songs—at times Americanized, that is to say, with the insertion of words or phrases translated into English—was on board the ships that transported them to America. There are many testimonies of journalists who record that, from the port of embarkation at Naples, among those departing were numerous singers and musicians. The first encounter of the travelers with the English language, without their expecting it, occurred as soon as they got on board. There were those who had already completed passages and were not unfamiliar with the language of the land they were traveling to. An observer who had embarked from Naples in 1900 noted that as soon as the ship reached the coast of Gibraltar, something strange happened. The Italian provincial songs that had prevailed changed to American airs, a shift prompted by those who had been in the United States.[6]

The principal theatrical centers of the immigrants were New York and San Francisco, and the type of theatricality was predominantly southern or, rather, a complex whole that included high and low cultural forms whether in repertory or in the way theatrical spaces were organized according to Italian tradition. Still, in the 1930s the arrival of immigrants with the highest degree of education, especially in San Francisco, forced a modification of the repertoire. This led to abandoning dialect in favor of Italian and more middle-class or bourgeoise theatrical models.[7] The 1910s and 1920s saw frequent tours by important Sicilian theatrical families, such as those of Angelo Musco and Giovanni Grasso. From these then

emerged prominent figures such as Mimì Aguglia, an actress whose role I widely discuss in the chapter dedicated to Italian women (chapter 5).

At the dawn of immigrant music and theater, Farfariello was the most important exponent of and witness to this complex, multifaceted reality. In 1919, Carl van Vechten, a journalist with *Theater Magazine*, provided an interesting description of the multicolored world of the Italian community he observed in a theater not far from Mulberry Street, the center of the New York's Italian residents:

> We are in one of the delightful old Bowery theatres with its sweeping horseshoe balcony.... The theatre is filled with all sorts and conditions of men and women, working men in their shirt-sleeves... women with their oval olive faces suckling their babies, or with half-nude infants lying over their knees.... Then... the orchestra strikes up a tripping tune and Farfariello appears in evening clothes. He walks to the footlights and announces his first song, "Femmene-fe," a trifle about women. The song over, he leaves the stage... a transformed Farfariello enters; from hair to toe he is a French singer of the type familiar at Coney Island. He has transfigured his eyes, his nose is new; gesture, voice, all his powers, physical and mental, are moulded in this new metal. He shrieks his vapid ditty in raucous falsetto; he flicks his spangled shirt; he winks at the orchestra leader and shakes his buttocks; his bosom has become an enormous jelly.... Farfariello goes on, singing, acting, impersonating. Perhaps next he is one of the Bersaglieri, perhaps a Spanish dancer, or an Italian schoolgirl.... The applause grows wilder and wilder, the shouts more thunderous, as the half hour of his appearance dwindles away, and sooner or later, mingled with the "Bravos!" are the cries of "Iceman!", "Iceman!", this iceman who sings folksongs of his native country to amuse his customers.... Of all Farfariello's numbers this is the most popular and perhaps deservedly so, for to his Italians it suggests both home and the adopted country.[8]

In New York, most entertainment venues were concentrated in Harlem and in Little Italy. According to an estimate made in 1910, in the Little Italy district there were about 40 musical cafés and 17 concert halls and other places that offered entertainment to the Italian community. The community presented itself in its best form for anyone who attended evening activities associated with music. There were even open performances of marionettes, a custom imported from Italy. The oldest company, active until 1922, was Manteo's Marionette Theater at 84 Mulberry Street. One of the most successful was Remo Bufano's theater on MacDougal Street;[9] there were also successful improvised concerts in barbershops, venues traditionally reserved for men. In general, in the years of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, the Italian community in New

York appeared to be a happy enclave where everyone had an opportunity to share in the public performances of music.[10]

As referred to in the Introduction, the work of the Italian Writers Project in the Municipal Reference Archive of New York is of substantial help in providing a clearer view of the settlement of Italians in American cities according to the regions from which the immigrants originated. We are referring to a study commissioned by the American government on the living conditions of ethnic minorities in the United States during the 1930s.[11] The New Deal, the federal program responding to the devastating crisis of 1929 and inaugurated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, also covered artistic and cultural activities. The state created some programs directed at intellectuals, artists, and writers who were without commissions due to the crisis and offered them the possibility of continuing to work. That is, the program promoted a particular relationship between art and milieu and experimentation in exchange for a compensation equal for all. This favored an expansive production of research of an ethnic, anthropological, and social bent and of a local character, such as the Federal Writers Project.

From this source, it is possible to ascertain the distribution of Italians in various neighborhoods of Manhattan and other urban areas of the city. The text used by young Italian writers, who collected material relevant to their countrymen concerning employment, social status, culture, and health, became part of a larger project on the diaspora in New York. It became a monograph published in 1921 by John Howard Mariano titled *The Italian Contribution to American Democracy*.[12] The official estimate of Italians residing in New York neighborhoods was 310,000 altogether, distributed according to the list that follows into nine large areas of settlement:

1. Mulberry Bend Park, corresponding today to Columbus Park (Worth, Lafayette, Houston Streets, the Bowery): Genovese, Calabrians, Neapolitans, and Sicilians, a total of 111,000.
2. Lower West Side (Canal, West 4th, West Broadway, North River): Calabrians, Piedmontese, Tuscans, Neapolitans, a total of 70,000.
3. Middle East Side (East 9th Street, East River, 2nd Avenue, 33rd Street): Sicilians and Calabrians, a total of 18,000.
4. West Side (34th Street, 59th Street, North River, 9th Avenue): Neapolitans, Genovese, Turinese, Milanese, a total of 15,000.
5. East Harlem (134th Street, 125th Street, 2nd Avenue to East River): Neapolitans, Calabrians, Sicilians, and Salernitani, a total of 75,000.
6. White Plains Avenue: 3,500 Neapolitans.

7. Van Cortlandt: 2,000 Sicilians.
8. Gun Road Hill: 1,500 Calabrians.
9. The rest—15,000—were living in various locales.

The district between 10th and 11th Avenues and 34th and 59th Streets had 11,000 inhabitants per acre in 1921. The first Italian settlement in New York was around the area of Mulberry Street at the southern end of Manhattan, which was in fact the city's first Little Italy. Most of the inhabitants of this area came from southern Italy; the language they spoke was a mixture of dialects, and the social customs conformed to the models imported from the motherland. But this was true only of the first generation of immigrants; for the children of this generation the rapport with the new country changed significantly. With regular attendance in American public schools, the majority of them retained only a limited knowledge of the languages and dialects spoken in the family. Subsequently, a new Little Italy was born in the area of southeastern Harlem, which was inhabited by African-Americans.[13] The heart of this community was represented by those southerners who, wanting to be socially redeemed, moved a long way from the teeming and often debilitating reality of Mulberry Street. Many northern Italians who were highly educated joined them: doctors, lawyers, real estate agents, and business owners. The northerners also colonized the West Side of Manhattan around 9th Avenue, south from 59th Street, and the area of Washington Square, Bleecker, MacDougal, and Sullivan Streets. Here, most found jobs in the restaurant business, and very soon many immigrants became owners of places where they had previously worked as waiters.

A wealthy colony of Sicilians and Calabrians had settled in the Bronx between Hughes and Arthur Avenues, while in South Brooklyn, along President, Sackett, Columbia, and Bergen Streets and in the Williamsburg district, there was ample representation from all regions of southern Italy. Other Little Italies rose up in Ozone Park and Long Island City, where there were factories in which most of the workforce was Italian.

Toward the middle of the nineteenth century, hundreds of political refugees who left following the failure of the insurrections for Italian national unity sought refuge in the United States, and among them was Giuseppe Garibaldi himself.[14] Finally, after the revolts for independence in the 1800s, a number of Italian political refugees and exiles settled in the borough of Staten Island, even before the large colony on Mulberry Street had been founded. Here, the number of Italians increased from 50 in 1882 to 40,000 in 1936. According to data provided by Mariano, the total number of Italian residents in the five boroughs of New York in 1921 was 440,250 and an official estimate in 1930 of the metropolitan New

York area put the number at 1,070,000 Italians—that is, almost a quarter of the Italians living in the United States made their home there.

Upon arriving in the New York area, many Italians preferred to seek refuge in areas away from the city, where life was less costly and settling less traumatic. After the Civil War (1861–1865), the population of New York greatly increased. The new European arrivals crowded into brick houses that were poorly made and unhealthy, but the wealthy Americans remained devoted to the higher housing standards they had been used to. The architectural style and the conditions of the lodgings reflected the social status reached in New York in those years among the population: the poor immigrants on one side and the rich Americans on the other. The social differences were marked, and in the face of uncontrolled increases in house prices and of bad hygienic and sanitary conditions determined by the presence of a high number of immigrants, the only solution made by the local government of New York was to construct new buildings to be shared by people at the same social level without giving up the aspects of elegance and exclusivity that served to distinguish people of the wealthy middle class from poorer immigrants.[15]

After having put aside a sufficient amount of money, many moved again to the metropolitan areas, where tens of thousands of Italians were employed in the construction of one of the first and most impressive subways in the modern age in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens. It was in this phase of mass immigration at the beginning of the twentieth century that the Italian community developed a vital cultural and social life. This unfolded even through the numerous churches of various faiths everywhere in the city; the churches also tended to ameliorate the nostalgia inherent in the immigrant experience.[16] An important element tied to the cultural memory Italians had of their homeland was reflected in the number of commemorative statues of Italian figures. There were seven examples: three of Christopher Columbus, one of Giuseppe Garibaldi in the main park of Washington Square, one of Giuseppe Mazzini in Central Park, one of Giuseppe Verdi, and one of Dante Alighieri. There was also a remarkable quantity of images, especially as compared to those of other ethnic minorities in New York, except for the Germans, who also had erected seven statues.[17]

Publishing Activity and Religious Festivals

Initially, the most successful publishing activities were those dedicated to spreading the culture brought from Italy. There were three daily newspapers published regularly in the city. Of these, the *Il progresso italo-americano* was one among the oldest Italian dailies published in the

United States. It later became the *America oggi* and had a circulation of 82,000 copies. The *Corriere d'America* was the second most widely circulated daily and had a circulation of 34,000 copies. Unlike these two dailies, which were pro-Fascist, *La stampa libera* had a communist orientation and a circulation of 30,000. The first Italian newspaper circulated in New York was *L'eco d'Italia*, founded in 1849, and published until 1894.[18] Its publisher, G. P. Secchi de Casali, took a conservative editorial stance, bent on defusing prejudices against Italians. Others in this list were *Il corriere della domenica* and *Il crociato* (weeklies with a Catholic orientation) and *La fiaccola*, the organ of Italian Protestants. In addition to these general newspapers, there were many publications dedicated to special groups of readers, such as papers for musicians, barbers, hairdressers, and even cobblers. According to American sources, the Italian community was the most active and energetic of the ethnic communities in maintaining its own culture. For example, there were many organizations whose principal purpose was the diffusion of Italian culture in America. The oldest of these organizations was the Dante Alighieri Society of New York at Rockefeller Center, which is still in existence today and has branches all across the American continent. Another organization was the Casa Italiana of Columbia University; by the end of the 1920s it had over 16,000 volumes and special collections related to Italian art and literature. There were also foundations with scholarships for the most deserving Italian students. According to Giulia Morelli, a young writer who participated in the project sponsored by the US federal government, Italian booksellers who depended on the diffusion and maintenance of Italian culture had their starts in early Italian travel agencies and banks. Actually, these were the places where immigrants went to collect mail from Italy. During this time, the immigrants made use of these same agencies to send money, exchange currencies, and buy stamps.

The continuous inflow of immigrants created the need to find books written in Italian. In general, we are speaking of immigrants who worked in road and railroad construction in other cities or on the borders of other states and returned to New York for intervals of a week to 15 days. Not all of them were literate, but those who were able to read acquired books for themselves and for their friends. For many, reading became a collective pastime when they were not working. The literature in these books was mediocre; the immigrants were sufficiently acquainted with the adventures of Guerino il Meschino, of the kings of France, of Bertoldo, Bertoldino, and Cacasenno, and they were familiar with novels about tragic and clandestine love affairs, about foundlings, and about sensational crimes, such as those in the works of Carolina Invernizio. The demand for such publications became so great that some exchange

agencies instituted departments to sell books at the cost of one dollar, and at the time a dollar and a half was exchanged for one lira.

One of the first book dealers was Pietro Vanni; in his store on Bleecker Street he offered a complete line of newspapers published in Italy and a wide variety of escape literature. Francesco Tocci, who also owned a bank and an agency on Mulberry Street, opened a business on the same street, next to Vanni. The shop was stocked with literary works of a higher quality and thus appealed to a small number of more cultured readers, but it also offered scores of popular songs and music books. The example of Vanni and Tocci was followed by others who slapped together impromptu book shops on Mulberry and Mott Streets, but these did not last long. Moreover, on Bleecker Street, Pietro Mongillo and Vincenzo Cardillo opened shops that specialized in the sale of records and rolls for player pianos. Cardillo was the owner of a small print shop where he published popular songs and other music of the same type. We can hazard a guess that he was probably related to Salvatore, the esteemed musician who immigrated to New York in 1903 and died on Long Island in 1947.[19] Salvatore was the author of "Core 'ngrato" and many other songs. "Core 'ngrato," one of the most famous songs written in NY, was performed by Enrico Caruso.

Like Cardillo's shop, the Italian Publishing Company at 135 Bleecker Street sold records. It was also a print shop, where all kinds of books and newspapers were printed. The Italian Book Company, often mentioned here because of its twofold connection to the activities of the La Canzonetta di Napoli publishing company, was located on Mulberry Street. Finally, in 1928, after the book exhibition at the Casa Italiana at Columbia University, a permanent exhibition of Italian books was established on 46th Street. It was the result of an initiative by Ambassador Giacomo De Martino and the Honorable Franco Ciarlantini, journalist and socialist politician who had gained Mussolini's trust and was a prolific writer of travel books, in collaboration with the National Fascist Federation of the Publishing Industry, whose president was Ciarlantini. Initially, the exhibition remained open temporarily for the entire spring and summer of 1928. After it was closed, however, it was decided to keep the experience alive with a permanent venture. The institution would have a long life, and it spread to many centers within the United States as hundreds of Italian books and other publications were dispatched by the New York office.

Religious festivals were also occasions to present musical and theatrical performances, not only for Italians in Italy but also for those residing in New York. In addition to the holidays of Christmas and Easter, the Italians of New York celebrated the feast of St. Anthony on June 13; of

Saint Francis on October 4; of Our Lady of Mount Carmel on June 14, 15, and 16; of the Assumption on September 20; and also the feasts of St. Martin, St. Lucy, St. Rocco, St. Joseph, and St. Blaise. They also celebrated Carnevale (Carnival), Garibaldi Day on June 2, and the Armistice on November 4, and there were some events tied to festivals instituted during the two decades of Fascism. But the most important feast by far because of the role that music played in it was the Feast of San Gennaro on September 19. The venue was Mulberry Street. There, Italians gathered and sold all types of merchandise. The religious ceremonies came to be celebrated in the Franciscan Church of the Most Precious Blood at 113 Baxter Street. The processions moved through various streets in Little Italy. The lights, the altar of the saint, the fireworks, and the music were the principal attractions of the occasion.

Some Italian neighborhoods had local feasts of their own depending upon the patron saint and of the circumstances pertaining to that particular community. The feasts served to collect money that officially had to be used for the construction of some public place or to pay back money advanced to defray the costs of preparing the feast. However, some sources of information consulted for the publications of the Italian Writers Project made no secret of having retained money collected during religious festivals—a true and undeniable racket. Nonetheless, these events remained occasions of entertainment and used talents that were profoundly popular. It is difficult to find in these contexts names that stand out in Italian and Italian-American music and theater. Concerts and dances were organized; the most common dances were the tarantella, the quadrille, and the polka, but the most popular musical pieces were Neapolitan: " 'O sole mio," "Santa Lucia," "Maria Marì," and "Torna a Surriento." The Italian Writers Project emphasizes the fact that 75 percent of Italian immigrants were from southern Italy; thus, it is not surprising that the songs played most often were Neapolitan. These songs were instrumental in uniting under one musical parentage the great variety of Italian regions represented in New York.

Musical Venues

Theaters, Concert Halls, and Schools

American government research of the Italian Writers Project speaks of a small number of theaters in which one could actually come into contact with Italian culture and language. This opinion is in complete opposition to the very rich panorama described in daily newspapers and magazines. These list numerous entertainment venues for Italian immigrants

in New York. On the other hand, if the former were true, it would be difficult to account for the great number of artists who chose the path of immigration because they were attracted to an easy way to earn money and to the collective enthusiasm of their countrymen in America. Official data from the Italian Writers Project list five principal venues. These were the Italian People's Theater at 201 Bowery, the Academy of Music on Ashland Place and Lafayette Avenue in Brooklyn, the Giglio Teatro Venezia on 7th Avenue and 58th Street, the Longacre Theater at 48th Street and Broadway, and also the Teatro d'Arte. The majority of the performances hosted by these places were staged on weekends and were a mixture of musical numbers and dramatic pieces. Moreover, the sources mention two cinemas specializing in Italian films: the Verona Cinema at 108th Street and 2nd Avenue and the Ideal Cinema on 8th Avenue and 44th Street.

The difference in opinion between the two sources is, however, understandable if one considers that the research of the American government was conducted during the 1930s when the community had assumed, at least in part, sharper cultural dimensions. That is, it tended less toward improvisation and extemporaneous passion. As a matter of fact, that research considers almost exclusively the cultural repertoire of opera and the symphony although there are subtle hints that point to the existence of a great number of legitimate theater and vaudeville companies.[20]

The Italian opera was introduced to New York in 1825 when Manuele Garcia and his family inaugurated the first regular season. The Garcias were followed by the Patti family, the best known of whom was soprano Adelina. She debuted in 1859 at the Academy of Music in Brooklyn, a venue later known by the acronym BAM.[21] The concerts in the program at this venue, which was one of the principal houses in the city, included various types of music, not the least of which were operatic and symphonic. Three separate areas in the facility were equipped and reserved for different functions: musical performances, theater productions, readings, recitals, chamber music performances, and film showings. At the BAM appeared: John Philip Sousa's band,[22] minstrel BPO Elks, exponents of *negro music* [*sic!*]—probably performers of spirituals—and vocal groups of various ethnic origins. Judging from the artistic quality of the program booklets and the products advertised in them (perfumes, limousine services, furs, precious stones, musical instruments), BAM was a place frequented by people of the upper middle class. The prices themselves present clear evidence of this: $60.50 for a season ticket for the first seventeen rows in the orchestra and $6.60 for a single performance; $55 for a season ticket in the first three tiers of boxes and $6.50 for a single performance. The other principal venue in New York was the Metropolitan

Opera House, which was managed by the noted Udinese, Giulio Gatti-Casazza, from 1919 to 1935. Under his leadership, up to 1933, the theater hosted about 2,120 performances of 68 Italian operas and presented the works of 26 Italian composers, providing significant support to the city's musical revival. The Italian Writers Project tells of numerous instrumentalists employed by the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra: opera singers such as Rosa Ponselle, Beniamino Gigli, Titta Ruffo, Luisa Tetrazzini, Enrico Caruso, and Nino Martini; soloists such as Pietro Yon, organist and composer; Melchiorre Mauro Cottone, also an organist and composer; and the already mentioned Vincenzo De Crescenzo, and Ricci, the young violinist. In addition, there were performances by Guy Lombardo, the band and orchestra leader.

Many of the venues whose programs were printed in newspapers had short lives, sometimes lasting only a few seasons, and they hosted ethnic vaudeville performances. For this reason, it has been difficult, if not impossible, to preserve any recollection of them. According to notices published in *La follia di New York*, a weekly covering the cultural activities of the Italian community in Manhattan, Bronx, and Brooklyn—the areas with largest Italian population—there were far more venues dedicated to the performing arts than those listed by the Italian Writers Project. Regarding the 1910s and 1920s, based on advertisements published in this weekly, there were more than thirty concert halls and theaters. A short list follows:

1. Sirignano Concert Hall
2. Dewey Theater
3. Villa Elena, of Sig. Figundio at 24 Garfield Place, Brooklyn, essentially a rudimentary cinema where, above all, Neapolitan singers, duos, and comics performed
4. The above-mentioned People's Theater of Manhattan
5. Palm Garden in Brooklyn
6. Harlem River Park on 126th Street and 2nd Avenue
7. Sangerbund Hall between Smith and Schermerhorn Streets (Brooklyn)
8. Murray Hill Lyceum, a concert hall on 3rd Avenue and 34th Street
9. Orpheum, Brooklyn
10. Victoria Theater, Brooklyn
11. Dreamland Theater, at 184 Mulberry Street
12. Star Casino, in Harlem at 107 East 107th Street
13. The above-mentioned Theater Garibaldi
14. New York Hippodrome
15. Bronx Welcome Theater

16. Aeolian Hall
17. Majestic Hall
18. Florence Theater on the Bowery
19. The famous Thalia Theater at 46–48 Bowery
20. Amsterdam Opera House on 44th Street between 8th and 9th Avenues
21. The noted Maiori Theater on the Bowery
22. The Grand Theater between Grand and Chrystie Streets, which also had a cinema
23. The Strand Theater on 47th Street and Broadway
24. Gotham Theater
25. Laurel Garden Theater
26. Caffeè Concerto Pennacchio (Pennacchio's Musical Cafè), formerly the Umberto I Room and then the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III
27. Olympic Theater on 14th Street, where, above all, there could be seen the company of Nofrio di Giovanni De Rosalia, a celebrated Sicilian comedian and writer
28. Werba Theater in Brooklyn
29. Verona Theater on 108th Street and 2nd Avenue
30. Maiori Eden Theater in Newark, another place owned by Antonio Maiori, actor and lead comic of the company that bore his name, which was among the most important, along with one managed by Gugliemo Ricciardi
31. Metropolis Theater, 142nd Street and 3rd Avenue
32. Farfariello's, the theater of the noted Neapolitan comedian, on 14th Street and 6th Avenue.[23]

The Thalia Theater, in particular, was among the most active of these because it succeeded in hosting regular weekly performances, primarily thanks to the role of the owner, Feliciano Acierno. He was the father-in-law of the celebrated singer Gilda Mignonette and was always attentive to the demands of the Italian community. As expressed in *La follia di New York:*

> If the Thalia has become for several weeks a favorite haunt in this area, the credit belongs wholly to its owner, Sig. Feliciano Acierno, who doesn't spare expense and sacrifice to make it truly worthy of the most discriminating and intellectual audiences in the community. Every night, as a matter of fact, the audience is packed and the reason for this becomes quite clear from the moment that Signora Teresa De Matienzo begins to sing. She is the most radiant star of the Italian-American music hall singers. Then there's Signor Farfariello, a comedian without rival, as well as the congenial Donici sisters and the Gritelli couple. Clemente Giglio also appears,

> an actor who has gained true prominence with his hilarious farces, not to mention American acts, films, and orchestral concerts, which complete the varied and interesting program. It is enough to say that a few evenings ago, Mimì Aguglia was present at one of the shows at the Thalia and had genuine words of praise for Farfariello, De Matienzo, Giglio, and the Donici sisters, declaring herself happy to be counted among artists who are so intelligent and who gain themselves well deserved honors on the American stage.[24]

The list of theaters, although long, is not sufficient to establish whether these places were reserved exclusively for the Italian community, how many people they would have held, or whether they followed regular schedules. I get some information from an announcement that appeared in 1927 about the opening of one of the many theaters in New York:

> Built in the design of the architect Eugene De Rosa, is a new theater of impressive type in its Renaissance structure and style, at 54th Street, 254 West Broadway, New York. This theater, which bears the name of its owner, Signor Fortunato Gallo, is constructed according to standards so modern that they respond wonderfully to the demands of the era, whether in the large rows of comfortable seats it offers or in the exquisite delicacy of the artistry with which it is adorned. It holds 1300 and has wonderful acoustics and a marvelous organ made by the Aeolian Company. The heating and ventilation system is ultra-modern. This new theater is the ideal place for any artist desiring to give concerts or recitals. To this end, it has a special stage. Currently, it is available only on Sunday afternoons and evenings.[25]

Considering some of these facts, like the number of seats, the organ constructed specifically for this theater, and the ventilation system, it is clear that the place was planned for performances of very high quality and appeal. Therefore, the plan was aimed at an audience that was used to spending a good part of its money on entertainment, that possessed a definite degree of aesthetic consciousness, and that was able to appreciate the program selections.

It is equally interesting to consider the number of schools of music, acting, and dance advertised in *La follia di New York*, which were found in the three boroughs and the two decades mentioned earlier:

1. The acting school of Giovanni De Rosalia at 421 East 116th Street
2. The Italian conservatory of music in Brooklyn
3. The conservatory of music of Prof. A. Arulli on Madison Avenue
4. The acting school of Salvator Lo Turco (formerly the Aguglia company)

5. The international college of music, directed by Francesco and Achille Minutolo
6. The singing school of Signora Virginia Novelli, trained at the conservatory of San Pietro Majella of Naples, located at 1901 Lexington Avenue with vast repertoire of grand opera
7. Luigi Coltelli's school of dance on Bleecker Street
8. Conservatory of music directed by Enrico Rossi, trained at the conservatory of San Pietro a Majella of Naples located at 418 Hooper Street in Brooklyn.

The importance of music for the Italian community was such that in 1924 a kind of syndicate was formed to oversee all aspects related to the activity. It was a corporation, of course, that concerned itself with musical products from conception through manufacture and marketing. Again from *La follia di New York:*

> The Vincent Publishing Company (158 West 45th Street, New York, Telephone Bryant 1673), recently incorporated in the State of New York, is a well-known association of artists under the auspices of an element very well known in the field of Italian-American music. The Vincent Publ. House is dedicated to assuring Italian talent a place of merit in the world of American music and to exploit the commercial potential of its own music. Precisely because of the absence of an efficient corporation until now, the compositions of our artists have been valued only as they enrich American publishing houses, without any profit to the authors who often have had to renounce the paternity of their work, even allowing foreign names to be substituted for Italian ones. The Vincent will publish its own editions, make phonographic records, and cut rolls for player pianos. It will have its own orchestra, its own auditorium, and will, in short, control the entire process from composing music to distributing it to the public.... To give the enterprise an absolutely popular and essentially Italian character, we have decided to put on sale a limited number of shares, which we offer preferentially to our countrymen.[26]

Other than maintaining a program of musical shows and dramas over the course of the month, the theaters were also places for holding so-called "evenings of honor," for artists who were very popular in the community. These evenings were elegant affairs of musical and dramatic presentations. For example, on March 30, 1922, the noted dialect poet Pasqualotto was honored in Acierno's Thalia Theater on the Bowery. On that occasion, major artists of the day appeared on stage—Teresa de Matienzo, Griselda Picone, the Amauli couple, the comedian Alfredo Bascetta, the Neapolitan singer Gennaro Quaranta, and the tenor Vittorio Somma.

The dramatic presentation of the evening was entrusted to the Perez-Cennerazzo Company, which presented the one-act play *Core 'e pate*. At the end the evening, there was another concert with the Parisi couple and the comic Aristide Sigismondi.[27]

Radio Broadcasts

During the fourth decade of the twentieth century, along with the theaters and schools for Italian artists and performers, the radio soon proved itself to be an important instrument for spreading Italian political ideas and music. The radio station for Italian residents in New York was WOV; it was located at 132 West, 43rd Street in Manhattan.[28]

Programs in the Italian language were hosted by the radio stations WEDV, WBNX, and WHOM. In the years between the two wars, there were more than 200 stations across the United States that transmitted in Italian. Until the beginning of the Second World War, the birth and the development of the official Italian radio in America was inextricably tied to the work of "*fascistizzazione*," the promotion of Fascism, undertaken by Mussolini at the start of the 1930s. That is, this development began when the short wave radio of the Ente Italiano per le Audizioni Radiofoniche (EIAR, The Italian Corporation for Radio Broadcasting) at Prato Smeraldo was inaugurated and first had the capacity to reach the United States.[29]

It goes without saying that the principal objective of such operations was to create consensus and support for the Fascist regime. With an efficient operation based on the example of American radio broadcasting, the official Italian radio, especially those Italian-American stations that hosted broadcasts from Italy, was established to transmit, above all, cultural and musical entertainment. In regard to the latter, the choice was oriented toward symphonic and operatic repertoires and band performances. In particular the band performances turned out to be popular not only with immigrant audiences but also with Americans, few of whom had any knowledge of Italian music. Still, Americans too were charmed by the aesthetic quality of those performances, which were among the best of their type even in the United States.[30] Even popular Neapolitan songs played an important role in this context; all those that had been written down seemed to lend themselves to a kind of sweet sound, ideal for radio consumption. The radio, writes Luconi, reveals itself more and more as an instrument of performance rather than as a tool for propaganda.[31]

Certainly it was not only propaganda that benefited from the revolutionary potential offered by the new means of transmitting information. Even the anti-Fascist radio had a significant existence through exemplary figures such as Fiorello La Guardia, the future mayor of New York, and through various organizations such as the Italian News Service. As with American radio, broadcasts aimed at the ethnic community consisted of commercial programs, whose sponsors played an essential role in maintaining the programming and giving a political cast, specifically to the news depending on the degree to which they supported the Fascist regime.[32]

The Italian-American radio sustained itself with the financial assistance of sponsors such as Paramount, Macaroni Roma, Ronzoni, and Medaglia d'Oro Coffee; in addition, the Rex Furniture Factory and different brands of oil, such as Gem, Buon Pranzo, Mamma Mia, and Ali d'Italia, sponsored broadcasts.[33] Behind these Italian brands was the highly mechanized apparatus of American production. The products advertised rapidly became well known and available both in the immigrant markets and in domestic stores as part the process of the integration and Americanization of the ethnic minorities. In a way, this was the answer to the question of "how to become an American citizen." American stores included products of the Mediterranean kitchen; over time, these became industrialized compared to their production in the mother country. That is, products were assimilated very quickly following a completely successful experience of cultural exchange.[34]

Like other forms of communication tied to the world of immigrants, the radio stations were managed by families. The radio companies maintained the original flavor of southern traditions even if they did not create any new ones. Their method of putting on shows was very similar to that of the American vaudeville and the American radio. However, the commercial character of this format, tied to ideological motives, did not succeed in assuring the survival of the varied world of Italian-American radio after the Second World War.[35]

In the years after the war, Italian-American radio went into a long existential twilight for a few decades, animated only by the feeble pulsing of nostalgic musical broadcasts and by the efforts to collect money for relatives who were far away and in difficulty. The goal was to unite the ideal Italian-American community under one common umbrella. Even if this study focuses on cultural events relating to Italian-Americans in the first four decades of the twentieth century, it is interesting to refer to contemporary Italian-American radio because it is undergoing a phase of true rebirth. This revitalization lasted at least through the first years of

the 2000s; then came the phenomenon of web radio stations, many of which assume a polemic character to combat the stereotype of the Italian immigrant—violent, chauvinistic, and nostalgic—that played an important role in music at the start of the twenty-first century and in the cinema of the past and present.

Current Italian-American radio presents itself as the only means of communication offering music that creates a new version of the collective historical memory of the immigrants. Currently, newspapers paint a vivid picture of Italian-language radio in the United States, being aided by modern instruments of information technology that combine the speedy transmission of information with savings in capital and human resources. This medium, which was given up for dead in the 1940s, has assumed a strong role thanks to a renewal that completely changed the purpose of the instrument itself. Once a venue for propaganda and escape, radio is today a medium of reflection and of reestablishment of an identity. In testimonies—collected in the course of this research—of Lawrence Tamanini, Lina del Tinto Demarsky, who recently moved from radio to television, and Angelo Mazza, the controversial phases of the Italian-American culture are recollected and viewed from a historical perspective. Until a few years ago, Tamanini was the director of the popular Italian-American Hour, which was broadcast every Sunday after midnight by WBCE in Levittown, Pennsylvania. The program drew a heterogeneous audience that ranged from people in their twenties to those in their late sixties, and it was heard all over the Delaware Valley. His opinions were in keeping with observations regarding the *macchina dello spettacolo* (the performance machine) offered by Luconi:

> My contacts with contemporary Italian culture are limited to music and books, the reason being that I don't live in Italy and all the information that I receive comes through music and the Internet. For this reason, I always chose my guests from the world of Italian-American culture. Preference goes to the arts: to writers, musicians, and actors, for one simple reason. The Italian-American community and its organizations have failed to support the products of these artists. I write for a few magazines that should focus on the Italian-American culture, but even my contributions are received in a controversial manner because I express accurate and often critical views about Italian-American organizations. The second place on the list of guests is reserved for the second generation because they are witnesses to fascinating stories of lives occurring at very different moments in our history. They are survivors of the years of the Great Depression and have fought in Second World War; it is they who have created better living conditions for us all and have done this as an act of love and not for gain. A prominent place with respect to music goes first of all to jazz because it is

> a genre that, by definition, is free. I find it difficult to broadcast pieces by Italian jazz musicians because no one has ever responded to all the letters I have written to Italian record labels requesting promotional materials and CDs. I often consider Italian-American jazz musicians such as Pat Matino, Joey Defrancesco, and Joe Lovano because I believe that they possess an approach that maintains the freshness of the first Italian jazz musicians in America. In general, I try to stay far away from the standard music offered by other programs aimed at Italian-Americans, which play Sinatra, Dean Martin, and Tony Bennett. In general, the requests of listeners don't interest me much. If I followed a predetermined list of songs, I would make them listen to Zucchero continuously. One can't let the inmates run the asylum. In addition, the fact that I use the Internet has enabled me to draw many listeners, and therefore, I broadcast what I prefer: jazz, blues, classical music, and opera, and perhaps I have contributed to the spread of new names in the panorama of music.[36]

As far as music is concerned, Tamanini's statement identifies a clean and very real split in Italian-American culture. On the one side there is the generation of Frank Sinatra and his contemporary performers; this generation responds to the archetypical Italian-American canon mentioned earlier, to the stereotype of the immigrant who has suffered and who, for this reason, is ready to cheat anyone. Spiteful and trigger-happy, this stereotypical immigrant is often deceived by friendship and the spirit of camaraderie because, at the bottom of his heart, he is a good man who loves his mother and his wife, even if he is also a Don Juan.

On the other side there's the generation that has almost forgotten the identifying prefix *Italian*, the identity that is only slightly preserved in family names. Members of that generation remember this identity only when they come face to face with fields in which Italians excel, such as music and other aesthetic languages, that is, they respond to the old stories about Italian artists, intellectuals, and scientists.

For the most part agreeing with Tamanini's opinion, Lina del Tinto Demarsky, a careful observer of the community, speaks of having decided to host a cultural program, *The Lina del Tinto Show*, for a leading television station in Manhattan in order to combat the negative image of Italian-Americans. The stereotype of Italian-Americans as provincial and obtuse, with a mentality resistant to reading but inclined to complain because their old system of values, continues to be violated.

Another exponent of Italian-American radio is Angelo Mazza; he lives in New York, and from the mid-1970s to 1996 he hosted a program for station WFUV. Speaking about the history of Italian-American radio, and in the quotation that follows, he confirms several of the points discussed above, such as the relationship between radio and the food industry and

between the immigrants and the motherland. He also discusses the complex relationships, until now hardly researched, among the different ethnic groups of immigrants:

> I ran my program *Italian Symphony* for as long as I was permitted; there was no political pressure to eliminate it. When the station changed format, it cancelled all ethnic shows from its schedule. I had focused on Italian culture for two hours per week. There was a top-40 of classics from the 1950s through the 1970s and interviews with Italian and Italian-American personalities: writers, directors, singers, often from New York, still great in number in those years. Ninety percent of the show was in Italian. My perception of the evolution of this instrument of communication prompts me to say that it experienced a rapid acceleration at the start of the twentieth century with the enormous influx of immigrants to the United States. The radio programs provided an opportunity for the new arrivals to keep in contact with their country of origin and to alleviate their sense of nostalgia, which many felt was unbearable. At the beginning, brands such as Ronzoni and Pastene were the principal sponsors of these broadcasts, which went on for hours and hours during the day, every day, as opposed to today, when the major parts of the shows are limited to an hour or two hours a week. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the most famous Italian actors and entertainers in America, if not all of them, appeared on the radio; among them were Riccardo Cordiferro, Silvio Minciotti, and Giulio Amauli, who was famous for his character Pasquale COD (the acronym for "cash on delivery," and thus for his character), and the Barbato family. The golden age of our radio was the 1930s and 1940s. There were dozens of radio stations that established and promoted the Italian-American identity: WOV (later WADO), WFAB, WHOM, WMCA, WPCH, WBNX. Almost all of them have vanished. There were noted hosts such as Renzo Sacerdoti of WEDV, who began in New York in those very years and continued to be successful until the 1980s. The major part of the material relating to the history of the radio of the Italian-American community has been supplied by him. Sacerdoti was the principal personality of the radio, a true professional; he focused on news from Italy, but people expected all types of news from him, including traffic and weather. He was one of my inspirations when I worked in radio. Another important personality was Mr. Iraci, a truly self-made man, host and owner of WOV, the principal Italian-American radio station. WOV's signal reached from Rhode Island to Atlantic City in New Jersey. The programs were on the air from 6 a.m. until 8 p.m., followed by Italian opera until 10 p.m. Progresso Foods, one of the sponsors, grew precisely because of the marketing of its name via radio. After the Second World War, in fact, a correspondent from WOV in Italy, Giuliano Gervi, interviewed families that had collected and sent to the company a number of trial products for acquisition. After a war of such dimensions, success was guaranteed. The station competed with

WHOM, which had such prominent celebrities as Giulio Amauli; the actor was on air from 6 to 10 in the evening. Whether or not WHOM and WOV destroyed each other because of their rivalry is unclear. WHOM became the first radio station broadcasting in Spanish in New York. WOV changed its call letters to WADO, but after a little while it too lost its Italian audience and was entirely acquired by Hispanics. The situation has changed significantly during the last few years. Many programs emanate from university stations or from stations in small cities, with a much reduced signal and range. With a special receiver, however, it is possible to remain tuned into various channels like the ICN (Italian Communication Network) in Queens or Radio Maria. If, at first, the radio was listened to because of that sense of nostalgia that I touched upon earlier, today listeners tune in to an ethnic Italian channel because there they can find something not available any place else, for example, updates of local events or interviews with personalities often neglected or not easily accessible. The music covers the entire spectrum, from the classics for the older generations—records sold during the last wave of immigration in the 1960s—to the more recent hits collected by those who visit Italy regularly and search for music, not out of nostalgia, but out of a desire to find new mementos of their vacations.[37]

Chapter 2

Enrico Caruso: The First Neapolitan Star

La follia di New York

During the first decades of the nineteenth century, the foremost entertainment publication in the Italian language on the east coast of the United States was *La follia di New York*, a weekly devoted to humor and varying in size from eight to fourteen pages. The newspaper's masthead depicted the face of a woman against the background of skyscrapers, and the woman wore a ribbon on her head on which was written the Latin phrase "castigat ridendo mores" (one corrects customs through laughter). The newspaper was founded in 1893 by Francesco Sisca and his sons Alessandro (the director who went by the pseudonym Riccardo Cordiferro) and Marziale, the editor-in-chief.[1] The newspaper office was located at 169 Mott Street in Manhattan.

La follia di New York featured detailed articles on culture and customs accompanied by a great number of announcements and advertisements of products of every type—even kitchen recipes had a place in these columns—with an eye toward music in particular. This was the general tendency followed by other American publications as well, which earned a great deal of money by advertising companies that manufactured discs and music cylinders. This Italian weekly contained advertisements for gramophones, phonographs, music stores—for example, for the shop of Antonio Grauso, the maker of mandolins at 192 Grand Street—as well as names of publishers and editors such as Antonio Mongillo[2] and Ettore De Stefano. The latter, a native of Altavilla Irpina in the Province of Avellino, left for America in 1887 and was the creator of the *Rivista musicale* (Musical review), another weekly founded in America.[3] One of the most long-awaited events of the week on Sisca's newspaper was the column by Enrico Caruso, who signed without charge copies of his

famous caricatures. Thousands of them were printed exclusively for *La follia di New York* starting in 1906.[4]

The tone of the weekly was strongly oriented toward the integration of cultures in order to keep Italian roots healthy. In an issue published in 1910 the paper announced the American version of the popular Neapolitan feast of Piedigrotta, to be held in the middle of September:

> So now we have even in America the picturesque feast of Piedigrotta. It will take place on September 7 and 8 at Harlem River Park, which is at 126th Street and Second Avenue, featuring a competition of Neapolitan songs, for which three prizes have been established: the first of $40, the second of $25, and the third of $15. While during other years the feast of Piedigrotta has been celebrated in various cafè chantants in the community, this year there will be another, and this one will be better than all those in previous years. It will exceed all the expectations of the public. To be convinced, all one has to do is read the beautiful program: a characteristic parade will march on both evenings, starting at 4 p.m. from 116th Street and moving along First Avenue, then returning from 104th Street along Second Avenue and crossing all the streets in between. The parade will consist of a colorful musical band, Japanese-style, made up of 500 young people and a cart with allegorical figures. At 7 p.m. there will be a triumphant entrance into the park, preceded by a squadron of knights. At 7:30 p.m. songs entered in the contest will be performed, alternating with cinematic presentations, among them the Johnson-Jeffries fight. At about 10:30, voting for the prizewinning songs will take place. The park will be splendidly decorated and illuminated by Venetian-style lanterns. The orchestra will be directed by Maestro Raffaele De Luca. The best popular singers of the community, above all the very popular Farfariello, will take part in the feast. Enough said. Whoever wishes to enjoy himself on the evenings of the 7th and 8th of this month will be at Harlem River Park.[5]

It is difficult to say how much the American feast resembled the original Neapolitan one. In any case, several important elements survived, such as the allegorical carts, the procession, and, above all, the song contests that offered three finalist prizes and the privilege of being published in a printed volume.[6] This last aspect holds particular significance, and every year after the American Piedigrotta, as after the Neapolitan feast, there was published a detailed account of the event with particular attention to the scores of the songs.[7] Coverage in the ethnic Italian newspapers is the only documentation that has preserved the memory of the event. Thus, one reads in the September 17, 1911, issue of *La follia di New York*:

> The Piedigrotta event is also worthy for this reason: it has inspired the dialect Italian-American poets, those who have stuffed their rhythmic

> vernacular compositions into two volumes published for the occasion. The first, published by Mr. Salvatore Russo, contained the verses of Giovanni di Rosalia, Eduardo Migliaccio, Alfredo Melina, Alessandro Verdile, di Guy, Salvatore Baratta, as well as the following songs: "'O Core Mio" (My heart) (words by F. Amodio, music by R. Buonsanti), "C'o 'nfinfere 'nfì, c'o 'nfinfere 'nfa" (words and music by G. Camerlingo)… as well as various prose pieces. It is published in an elegant typeface by Sisca & Sons Company at 314 Pleasant Ave. The second volume is published by the Technical Printing Company of 215 Canal Street; it was compiled by Prof. Domenico Jetti and contains the most popular dialect songs by Nicola Giambone.… Typographically, like the first volume, the second leaves nothing to be desired. From a literary point of view, whatever the judgment of the public may be, it is undeniable that Salvatore Russo and Nicola Giambone can rightly be called two outstanding curators of the dialect muse.

The poets mentioned above were among the most prolific of the community at the beginning of the 1900s. This is especially true of De Rosalia, Migliaccio, and Melina, whom I will speak about again. The tone of the account is typical of published volumes relating to the Neapolitan Piedigrotta. Therefore, not only is the idea taken from the original but the same critical approach is adopted as well, an indication of the immigrant nature of this enterprise, which continued unchanged for a long time.

Those who collaborated in writing *La Follia di New York* were animated by a strong desire to present a positive image of the Italian community as one composed of artists and intellectuals who concerned themselves with the psychological import of the immigrant experience and were fully aware of the difficulties encountered in the process of integration. A brief article, appearing on August 29, 1909, refutes the existence of a kind of collective malady that had been theorized by a certain Dr. D'Ormea. He thought it was caused by psychological problems tied to immigration. The columnist writes:

> According to recent psychological research, which reveals disturbing phenomena related to mental illnesses that develop in immigrants who return to their homeland from America, the causes of such illnesses could be diverse: discomfort related to their ethnicity, anxiety associated with seeking work, worries about their ignorance [of American ways], physical stress, privations of every type, and bitter disappointments. I beg to differ with the eminent psychiatrist. Although my opinion may be different from one held by someone trained in this field, permit me to explain to the doctor that mental derangement is determined by the fact that anyone who comes to America very quickly forgets the past in order to change his way of life completely.[8]

The way in which the Siscas's newspaper took part in the debate of the Italian community of New York through constant attention to the music and to the way the community itself attempted to integrate into the American city followed the steps of the formation of the Italian-American ethnic group. This aspect helps us understand how much the community grew and identified itself with the music. Among the immigrant musicians, there were very different levels of professionalism. There were singers famous in Italy with an already strong following in America, also semiprofessionals who had had modest training, and finally there were unknown voices as well as singers who only improvised.

Enrico Caruso's Recording Career with the Victor Talking Machine Company

The man who played a fundamental role in defining the positive prototype of the Italian immigrant as one who achieved social status and was self-determined—within the dimensions that define the model of an immigrant "self-made man"—was Enrico Caruso. Born in Naples in 1873, the tenor had an unconventional musical education. As a young boy he was a male contralto in church. Lacking adequate preparation, he began a career as a singer of popular Neapolitan songs and then turned to opera singing after a period of intense study. He began his career, therefore, with some technical deficiencies. His deep tone caused a certain ambiguity to arise when his vocal register was evaluated. In fact, during the initial period of his career, tenors were being offered baritone roles. In a letter from London dated June 10, 1906, Caruso recalls his student years to his colleague Oreste Noto:

> I began singing at 10 years of age in church. We delighted all of the faithful, at least I think so, because I never had any sign of disapproval from them. Furthermore, with what I earned as a liturgical singer, I supported two families, who pushed me to go on. At 19 years of age, I decided to study with a master, whom I left after 11 lessons because he didn't seem to be able to resolve the problem that was consuming me: whether to be a baritone or a tenor. Perhaps, however, at this time, I was little interested in studying. A little later, the baritone Missiano brought me to his teacher, Mr. Vergine, who saw from the start that I was young and then that I had a weak voice. Then, after two auditions, he decided to give me lessons via a regular contract. At this time, my voice was indeed so thin that the other students, my colleagues, called me "the wind that comes through the window."[9]

Later on, this timbric quality worked in Caruso's favor because it permitted him to assume a very personal vocal character and to determine his own style.

By the end of the 1890s, Caruso had completed his education brilliantly and had begun to obtain notoriety in Europe. It was in the first years of the twentieth century that the tenor came to the decision to move permanently to New York, this having been preceded by excellent reviews of his first recital at the Metropolitan. Moreover, he had reacted badly to attacks by the Neapolitan press, which did not appreciate the stylistic novelty he introduced, namely, a style of heartfelt and communicative singing as opposed to that of the so-called graceful tenors who were his contemporaries.[10]

Caruso received numerous acclamations in New York. Ybarra recalls that the more his fame increased in the city, the more the demands for his appearance grew. A chain of Caruso restaurants sprang up; spaghetti à la Caruso, dressed with chicken livers, was a regular item on the menu. The fact that it was served the same way as the staff of the tenor prepared it spurred hundreds of Caruso's fans to consume enormous portions of the dish.[11] In 1908 the novelty musical piece "My cousin Caruso" became popular. Composed by Gus Edwards with lyrics by Edward Madden, the song in the following year appeared in the *Miss Innocence* review, which was produced by Florenz Ziegfeld. That song was the precursor to a style of novelty songs inspired by the Neapolitan tenor.[12] New Yorkers welcomed Caruso as if he were an old friend and gave him affectionate slaps on the back every time they saw him pass by on the street. "At his usual corner table in the Knickerbocker dining-room, he presided boisterously over his entourage of fellow singers, often joined by Gatti-Casazza, Toscanini, Rachmaninov, and Fritz Kreisler."[13]

Caruso remained at the Metropolitan until 1920, the year before his death. He received fabulous offers, lived a comfortable life, and all of this was extraordinary because it was the life of an Italian who continued to define himself as an immigrant.

The story of Caruso exemplifies a new phase in the social life of Western people. In his time, a new method of listening to music was born. The first phase of the music recording industry reached one of its most significant moments when the Victor Talking Machine label put the Neapolitan tenor under contract. It was then that Caruso prepared himself to be a luminary of the Italian opera, turning himself into the first musical star in the history of recorded music. Although more than a century has passed, the memory of this lucky enterprise, at once commercial and aesthetic, is still alive among older members of the Italian community in New York. Aldo

Mancusi, a Neapolitan who immigrated to America with his family when he was four years old, is the founder of the Caruso Museum of Brooklyn, New York. The museum comprises three rooms and a cinema hall built in the top floor of Mancusi's home where this passionate senior citizen has gathered together rare pieces from his own collection and from that of his father as well as a modest number of machines that will reproduce in contemporary quality the sound of a phonograph he has restored. According to Mancusi, the signing of the contract between Caruso and the Victor Company was an event that completely changed the American media's perception of Italians and visibly tempered, at least in some places, the ferocious racial prejudice toward them. Mancusi recalls that when Caruso became a star, acclaimed even at the Metropolitan Opera on November 23, 1903, with his participation in a production of *Rigoletto,* the Italians finally felt proud of their ethnicity. Before that, they were considered to rank below "colored" people and at times were regarded as not even worthy of being treated as human.[14]

It is true that though Americans admired Italy as the birthplace of the arts, they tended to nurture a contrary opinion or at least an ambivalence toward Italian immigrants, even more so and most especially toward those from the south. The antisouthern prejudices presented themselves also as anti-ethnic prejudices. American culture promoted a distinct separation between the Italy that was a tourist destination and a symbol of cultural refinement as opposed to the Italy that was the country from which the emigrants came, a barbarous land, inhabited by violent individuals who were backward both culturally and socially. In 1871, at the dawn of the Gilded Age, and before the mass arrival of Italian immigrants, the writer William Dean Howells in *Suburban Sketches: A Collection of Short Fiction* set in Boston, speaks of the southerners as "half-civilized people," arguing that there was a different level of civility between southern and northern Italians, and he highlights several similarities between the Italian (but not necessarily the southern Italian) and the African American, above all in the attitude to sociality that is expressed in a similar way concerning the importance given to the language of music and culinary skills.[15]

At the end of the nineteenth century, newspaper accounts abound that describe southern Italians as brigands, as despicable, dangerous characters who must be taught civility if they are to integrate peacefully and profitably on American soil.[16] In Italy, at the same time southerners were considered very emotional, little inclined to observe legalities, and male chauvinists of incongruous [*sic*] physicality. Such characteristics were later used in newspapers, literature, entertainment, journalism, etc. to describe Italian immigrants generally, and such stereotypes formed a picture of an emerging official and popular southern Italian culture, also

evident in theater, cinema, and music. The ghettoization to which Italians seemed to be relegated (although voluntarily as they built their lives and their realities on the streets of the Little Italies of Manhattan, the Bronx, or Brooklyn) left them isolated from mainstream America, which was not interested in them.[17] Elements judged to be primitive—passion, jealousy, aggressive physicality—weakened the effects of anti-Italian racial prejudice when seen in the context of Italian art. Burning love, treachery, strong emotion, the trappings of brigandage, and blackmail became part of the poetry of the picturesque and salvaged in a positive way the principles on which the notion of racial inferiority was based and which Bertellini defined as "southernism."[18]

One of the most difficult episodes of the Italian-American community occurred in 1909 when Joe Petrosino, an Italian native of Padula in the province of Salerno, was assassinated in Palermo. Petrosino was head of a special New York police squad and among the most formidable enemies of the so-called Black Hand, a para-Mafia organization that engaged in illegal trafficking between Italy and New York. This incident gave tangible proof of the validity of certain stories to those who still doubted the reality of the existence of criminal ties between the Italians and Italian-Americans. The spread of anti-Italian prejudice was linked to different factors and was nourished, above all, by the conviction that Italians were by nature inclined toward criminal enterprises, a prejudice difficult to defend against. Indeed, the ethnic stereotyping of Italian-Americans as rancorous and violent continues as much today as in the past thanks to what is portrayed on television and in the cinema.[19]

In one of the books on Italian-American history that included extreme interpretations of events in the Italian community, one reads that in several American states on the east coast, Italians were considered one of the less desirable ethnic groups and were depicted as dark-skinned people. In addition, the newspapers often published less-than-credible stories about the Black Hand, which gave the impression that criminality was widespread throughout the Italian immigrant population.[20] But ambivalence continued to oppose this view. The opinion of white American Protestants of the extraordinary ability of Italian artists to write excellent music or to employ a refined style when portraying subjects in their paintings was at least as, and even more, widespread than was racial prejudice. Therefore, the raising of the Italian to the state of "being human," to quote Mancusi, was accomplished through the arts, and in this music played a primary role. Music, together with the other performing arts, became in a short time a symbol of the Italian community; it was the means by which it reached a more prosperous standard of living and a heightened level of acceptability. Caruso presented himself as a champion of Italian music,

and for this reason, he became a universal emblem of it and of everything positive that Italian immigrants could represent.

In the first decades of the twentieth century in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx, the three areas of New York with the highest percentage of Italian immigrants, theaters and concert halls were quite numerous. This fact must be seen in light of several aspects tied to the changed economic conditions of both native and immigrant American families. The first of these concerns the increase in earnings, which were significantly elevated when compared to those of residents of Italy. The second aspect was the birth of the concept of free time, which is that part of the week that the laborer dedicated to entertainment. In the United States, between 1910 and 1929, following the rapid development of technology, the earnings of the average middle class increased by 40 percent. In this regard, Gary Cross writes that the twenties produced a wealthy population with an ever-growing access to automobiles and other consumer goods. Europeans watched with longing the land that possessed the secret of maintaining such high salaries. But mass production was also destined to create an era of pleasure in the community. Placed at the center of everyone's personal experience would be entertainment and no longer work.[21]

In the first decades of the twentieth century, the American entertainment industry developed rapidly and selectively to the point that many people already identified entertainment as a social evil. By that time, the debate over this question had fully matured. On the other hand, the scarcity of money and of work made Italy look backward in the context of this debate raging in the social sciences. In America, as in France and England, the rise of industry and of technology had produced a more refined observation of the social and economic transformation that included the creation of free time and the recognition of its value, of democratic forms of recreation, and of the transformation of the worker into a consumer. This development anticipated issues typical of modern mass culture. Free time, on the one hand, and rising salaries, on the other, permitted increases in the scheduling of paid performances as well as the establishment of places where they could be enjoyed. If workers had not had the time and money to invest in evening entertainment, very probably the invention of talking machines, that is, the phonograph and the gramophone, would have remained a curiosity noticed only by readers of patent notices. The true revolution created by the inventions of Edison and Berliner was not so much in usable technology, so rudimentary that it could have already been put into place in the sixteenth century, but in their cultural effects and in economic progress.

The story of the record companies at the start of the era of sound reproduction well illustrates how a rediscovery of modern technology brought

unexpected benefits to culture at the beginning of the twentieth century and thus fixed its very course irreversibly creating a new type of consumer: the record buyer. On this topic, Marsha Siefert has written a number of illuminating essays. In one of these, she emphasizes that the concept of technical fidelity undergoes a veritable linguistic metamorphosis because it takes on a specific aesthetic quality when it is interpreted based on values of the culture of music. The concept of technological "fidelity" did not exist before then, and it emerged thanks to the Victor Talking Machine and Caruso, wherein a technological object guarantees faithfulness to the original sound. So for the first time there is a demonstrable value made in relation to a product culture. Before that technology was a thing of little value that could not be put in relation with the fidelity to sound: to hear the real sound you had to hear it live. As early as 1902, the Victor Talking Machine Company, created to put gramophones on the market, had turned a profit from these modern cultural values by advertising the technological benefits of Edison's cylinder.

Everyone who put his or her voice at the disposal of the new media participated by rights in this technological advantage. The Victor Company succeeded in capitalizing on this culture, promoting these recordings made by excellent opera singers such as Enrico Caruso. The recordings were introduced as being able to reproduce the sound of live performances from both a technical and a cultural point of view. They were also touted as a way to give democratic access to a style heretofore reserved for the privileged only. Thus, the Victor Company used the celebrated image of the fox terrier and of the tenor Caruso to legitimize the talking machine as a completely American musical instrument.[22]

The experiments of Thomas Alva Edison with the phonograph aimed at making this marvel of technology an instrument of social utility in service to the American government and the history of the nation. On numerous public occasions, in interviews and exhibitions, Edison emphasized the importance of the medium, and he was ready to permanently imprint in the memory of Americans the speeches of Washington, Lincoln, and Gladstone, as well as the voice of the celebrated singer Adelina Patti. In truth, Edison had imagined the future of his invention working with the telephone, as the invention of Antonio Meucci, which was not different from a dictaphone. However, the scientific community perceived immediately the exceptional potential of this invention and it resulted in Edison successfully selling the license to the Edison Speaking Phonograph Company in 1878, a year after his invention. On this transaction he made $10,000 and about 20 percent profit. The company created by Edison shared offices and finances for a while with the new Bell Telephone Company of New York.[23] Initially, however, the operations

did not produce the desired results because of the lack of interest on the part of Edison, who was by then dedicating himself to experiments with electric light. Edison's invention of the phonograph was recorded in November 1878; at the end of the 1880s came the announcement of the invention of the gramophone by Emile Berliner, an American of German origin. The two events created a rivalry of a few decades that inspired the first commercial marketing strategy in the modern business of selling cultural products.

Edison's phonograph possessed certain characteristics that made it the preferred product for a long time, at least in America. Different from Berliner's invention, Edison's instrument could both reproduce sound as well as record it; it permitted maintaining a constant recording speed, and it cost less, but in 1891 the price of a phonograph was still at about $150. But what distinguished the gramophone from the phonograph and made the former a better musical instrument was the way in which the sound was recorded. The phonograph used cylinders, the gramophone read discs from side to side. This aspect guaranteed a more faithful reproduction of sound without sacrificing the volume of the recording.[24] The great difference that provoked a cultural rift and the main disparity between the two systems of reproducing sound consisted of the way in which the gramophone (Victor T. M.) was publicized and advertised. This happened when the Victor Talking Machine Company—the company created by Eldridge R. Johnson, proprietor of a music store in New Jersey—entered into partnership with Berliner after his machine was improved. Subsequently, the Victor Talking Machine Company was able to corner the European market and become the vehicle for European culture in America. Without having a market in which to introduce the gramophone, which, unlike the phonograph, still strove to establish a commercial position in America, Johnson and Berliner succeeded in importing their machine to London with the Gramophone Company.[25]

The brand name of the Gramophone Company had been created by William Barry Owen, an agent of Victor in England, after he failed in an attempt to sell the rights of Berliner's invention to a European distributor. This meant that the gramophone, once established and on the market in Europe, had to be used primarily for music appropriate to the European market, that is, with a focus on the great operatic repertoire of the nineteenth century.

In 1901 the catalogue of the Gramophone Company included 5,000 titles. This abundance of offerings prompted Victor to attempt importing European titles to America. Immediately, the idea arose of creating an elegant product with this material—the famous Red Seal Catalogue was put on the market in 1903—to sell records at twice the price of ordinary

ones made by vaudeville singers at the Victor Company. They were aware of the fact that anyone disposed to spend the sum of $3.00 would know that a record by an opera singer would be more valuable than one by any music hall performer.[26] Fred Gaisberg, an accompanying pianist, became a talent scout for Victor and began to put opera singers under contract, signing the contracts with them in their home towns. The young Neapolitan tenor, Enrico Caruso, was recruited in this manner in 1902, when the performer had attained prominence at the *La Scala* theater in Milan. Caruso had already distinguished himself in the city of Milan in 1897 during his first engagement at the *Lirico* theater. Gaisberg had been in Milan for several days already and took notice of the young tenor when he sang "Studenti! Udite," an aria in the prologue to *Germania*, a newly composed opera by Alberto Franchetti. It was truly a brainstorm that spurred Gaisberg to accept Caruso's request of 100 pounds sterling in exchange for recording ten songs. When the company in London received Gaisberg's cablegram, it responded by refusing him permission to pay the tenor the exorbitant sum he had requested. But Gaisberg had already paid the money out of his own pocket in order not to lose what he considered a unique opportunity.[27]

The deal was a great success and gained much attention for the new tenor, a star of Italian opera just a few months before his name became tied to that of the Metropolitan Opera of New York and to that of Victor records. The deal made it possible to faithfully reproduce his voice across the planet and thus made the gramophone and the record products that would define music. Ultimately, this changed the meaning and definition of culture and, above all, gave credibility to an aesthetic value heretofore unknown. Caruso *was* the Victor Company also because the recordings of that label were playable only on a Victor machine; therefore, the company communicated through a specific technology a specific and unique aesthetic as well. It was this philosophical, commercial, and media-oriented aspect more than others that defined the physiognomy of the new object. This object, the gramophone, had been difficult to understand up to this point, over and above the initial enthusiasm for a machine capable of reproducing and storing sound. The Victor machine was a strange new technology, like a Martian still waiting to dress itself in clothing that would prove that it needed to stay on Earth.

In the meantime, Edison's machine, the phonograph, demonstrated itself to be more limited than that of Johnson and Berliner. In this phase, it was destined to play a secondary role because the company leaders had not identified a repertoire adequate to their talking machine, which was also thought at first to be the most effective technology to reproduce music.

Historians discuss this dawning phase of the record industry by dividing it into two periods, with a hiatus at the turn of the century. It was only at the start of the new century, twenty-three years after the official invention of Edison's phonograph, that the talking machines were more clearly seen in relation to the world of music and considered a means of mass entertainment capable of reproducing sound faithfully. The phonograph, not withstanding its enormous success,[28] would have been nothing more than a lucrative attraction along with the nickelodeon,[29] and without investments of capital and a radical cultural change, the gramophone would not have made the leap in quality that placed it next to other, more traditional musical instruments, such as the piano; however, it was really the commercial approach, the advertising strategy, that changed the destiny of the talking machine and determined the future of music. Fidelity and volume, aspects over which the war between the phonograph and the gramophone had always been waged, were also the two qualities that concerned opera singers in live performances. On the stage, the understanding of the libretto and its sound, full-bodied and vivid, was the principal element of a good performance. Those best adapted to recording and reproducing sound, it turned out, were the voices of tenors because of the harmonic quality and the type of resonance produced.[30]

The new musical instrument had to be tested by the musical community and had to be legitimized by a representative of traditional European music who would be able to compose or to perform with the new medium, preferably in the cultural capital of the United States: New York. At this point, the problem was to establish which of the brands would reproduce music most faithfully and, above all, what it would mean for the American public to have music reproduced faithfully. Edison responded to Victor's launching of the Red Seal series with the Diamond Discs, clear recreations of the original and proven by the so-called tone tests. These were public performances across the country in which the live voice of the singer alternated with a recorded version, during which the public was invited to decide where one ended and the other began.

To Edison's slogan that "comparison with the living artist reveals no difference," Victor responded with a publicity campaign through leaflets, posters, and advertisements in newspapers in which Caruso was pictured along with a Red Seal product with the slogan "Both are Caruso."[31] Victor's published announcements were much more impressive than those of Edison, and the company that manufactured cylinders took out advertisements covering a sixteenth of a page or even a quarter of a page. Victor took out whole page ads in the newspapers or even double pages that depicted Nipper, the fox terrier, immortalized next to the gramophone and the image chosen as the logo of the company, as well as a

gigantic portrait of Caruso. The same image was put on sale by retailers at the price of $2.50. The incessant and never-ending campaign of the Johnson and Berliner Company exploded onto the pages of the *Saturday Evening Post*. The weekly, chosen because the number of its subscribers rose from 700,000 in 1904 to a million at the end of 1908, was the means through which Victor's publishing campaign reached its apex.

The new musical instrument changed the rules of listening and, above all, the very concept of enjoying opera because it separated and isolated arias from whole compositions as if they were truly separate songs and offered them in just a few minutes to the consumer. Listeners enjoyed them in the comfort of their home, and thus the continued distribution of the phonograph and the gramophone freed listeners at the beginning of the century from having to attend traditional concert hall performances. Instead, listeners could attain a private rapport with music. The possibility of reproducing pieces of music in infinite number and bring it into the daily lives of people radically transformed the social dimensions of listening to music. All this came about thanks to a happy and unique conjoining of European culture and American technology. Caruso was the perfect symbol of this synthesis; he was the son of southern Italian immigrants, and he ransomed himself and all the Italians from an ancient and terrible prejudice. The success of this formula spurred the other labels to search for tenors who could compete with Caruso. Thus in 1909 Edison's company put Riccardo Martin and Leo Slezak under contract while Columbia chose the Spaniard Costantino, the Italian Alessandro Bonci, and the Irishman John McCormack. Even so, Siefert insists, none of these artists were in such demand as to command the price of $3.00 per record, the price of the Red Seal recordings by Caruso.

The brands sought to take advantage of a rivalry typical among the most famous interpreters of opera. It was actually with one of the names cited above, Alessandro Bonci, that Caruso was often contrasted. In 1908 the two had already become real competitors in a contest for tenors in Bologna. On that occasion, the Neapolitan had won great acclaim for his excellent performance as Mario Caravadossi in Puccini's *Tosca*. The atmosphere of rivalry between the two tenors became tense in the following year when both moved to New York. The newspapers made an art of feeding the tension, provoked, perhaps, more by gossip than by real resentment between the two men. A daily attributed to Bonci a statement that was typical: "When I sit in the metro, I am very careful not to look at the girls in front of me; otherwise I might end up like Caruso."[32] The allusion to a case of sexual molestation in which the Neapolitan tenor was implicated was explicit also because the episode caused Caruso to be denounced, and it created bad publicity in newspapers halfway across

the world. Contrary to expectations, however, this kind of publicity was followed by an outpouring of great sympathy on the part of many of his supporters.[33] The *Tribune* recognized in the man from Romagna some superiority in phrasing and diction. Richard Aldrich of the *New York Times* argued that in richness and fullness of color, the voice of Bonci could not be compared to that of Caruso. The former was inferior in that it could not create that sensual spell of Caruso's marvelous voice, whether in mid-voice or in the extraordinary fullness of "fortissimo." In addition, Bonci's bitter attacks could not compensate for Caruso's ability to create the pleasure and emotion that moved his most reasonable admirers to force sound beyond the fullness of volume and to exaggerate phrasing in such a way as to open a floodgate of tears.[34]

Well before becoming the most famous tenor of the repertoire of Italian opera, Caruso had supported the music business that sprang up in Naples, when as a faithful if not incisive interpreter of Neapolitan and other romantic songs he participated in the performance of plays, singing between one act and another, at feasts, in trattorias, or in so-called *periodiche*, private performances in the salons of the city's bourgeoisie and nobility. *Periodiche* promoted occasions for the popularizing of Neapolitan songs at a time when live performance was the most important way to enjoy music.

Caruso started to tour Europe immediately after his success in Milan, and along with the arias that had made him a celebrity, he performed pieces from his repertoire of songs in Neapolitan dialect. His interpretation of "Funiculí, funiculà" at the concert in honor of Czar Nicholas II at the beginning of 1899 remains famous. The recordings for Victor were an unavoidable catalyst for the tenor's future achievements, but he himself understood all of the power and the danger of that new fascinating and revolutionary technology for listening to music. In an interview he gave in 1917 to a representative of the record house, he said:

> I like cutting records, but I do not enjoy myself. How can that be? I fear it more than the most demanding recital because everything must be absolutely perfect, the perfection of a perfect mechanism. I must be the heart, the spirit, the feeling of that which I sing, and I also need to be an artist. I wish that those who have not heard me in the theater would not limit themselves to buying only one of my recordings. To judge me, they should have at least three or four or even more. I wish that they would listen to both light and serious roles, in both operatic and theatrical repertoires, and thus I would be happy. I am proud that my voice will never be lost, but I am also a little afraid. Because a tradition is a great responsibility, true?[35]

Enrico Caruso provided important support in communicating a positive image of the southern Italian immigrant in New York. His sunny, confident, and reassuring face was used in periodicals and leaflets of the Italian community in America to sponsor every type of Italian product from pasta to coffee, from oil to newspapers, and, obviously, the gramophone and the recordings manufactured by Victor. The Neapolitan tenor was the first star from the world of opera to sell a million copies of the aria "Vesti la giubba" from *Pagliacci*.[36] The Victor brand, created by Johnson and Berliner, was responsible for a double revolution, both aesthetic and cultural. The company transformed a technological event into a formidable aesthetic object and thus initiated a cultural phenomenon—the creation of the very concept of audience—besides democratizing a product once reserved for the elite. In 1912 a brochure of the Victor Talking Machine Company stated that "the Victor is an excellent substitute for the opera. For every person who can attend the opera, there are a hundred who cannot. However, many thousand lovers of the opera in the latter class have discovered what a satisfactory substitute the Victor is, for it brings the actual voices of the great singers to the home, with the added advantage that the artist will repeat the favorite aria as many times as may be wished." The price of records varied from $.75 for a generic singer of "coon songs"[37] to $5.00 for a set of four arias from *Rigoletto* to $6.00 for a set of six from *Lucia di Lammermoor*.[38] A range this wide meant that the labels were responsible for determining both the artistic value of a performer as well as a cultural hierarchy, all of which were presented with those democratic aspects that are associated with the mass production typical of modern culture.

The Neapolitan Recordings of Caruso in America

Caruso always maintained very close continuity and ties of friendship with the Italian community notwithstanding the fact that from his early days in New York, he was a very famous and wealthy personality thanks to theatrical engagements that were enough to place him into the most exclusive environments of the community. He was generous by temperament. In 1909 he launched a collection for the earthquake victims of Messina and Reggio Calabria with a donation of $8,000. The subtle yet firm connection with his compatriots was kept intact thanks wholly to the fact that the pieces he chose to sing on nonofficial occasions were oriented very often toward the repertoire of Neapolitan songs. Furthermore, his own court made up of musical accompanists, secretaries, friends, and others was Neapolitan. In 1909 the tenor recorded in

New York a Neapolitan melody "Mamma mia, che vò sapé" (What does my mamma want to know?) by Ferdinando Russo and Emanuele Nutile. And throughout the years he also continued his recordings of pieces more or less famous from the Neapolitan songbook, such as "Canta pe' me" (Sing for me) by Libero Bovio and Ernesto De Curtis, which was recorded in 1911. "'O sole mio" (My own sun) by Giovanni Capurro and Eduardo Di Capua and "Santa Lucia" (Santa Lucia) by Enrico Cossovich and Teodoro Cottrau were recorded in 1916; "Maria Marì" (Maria Maria) by Vincenzo Russo and Ernesto Di Capua was recorded in 1918, and "'A vucchella" (The little mouth) by Gabriele D'Annunzio and Francesco Paolo Tosti was recorded in 1919.[39]

The number of Neapolitan songs or songs with Neapolitan settings that Caruso recorded is 21. All were completed in the studios of Victor in New York and in Camden, New Jersey. In the majority of these, there appeared American or at least non-Italian orchestral directors. At least two of the directors mentioned in Caruso's recording history, Walter B. Rogers and Josef Pasternak, worked as much in the operatic repertoire as in that of march music and in the arranging of American and ethnic and dialect songs. Collecting news about Rogers and Pasternak is difficult because it involves the precariousness of using unreliable and incomplete sources. About Pasternak we can recall a 1919 recording of "Old fashioned garden," which became very popular and was featured in *Hitchy-Koo,* Cole Porter's musical of 1919. In that musical the song was sung by Olive Kline and recorded by Victor in that year, four months after the debut of the revue at Nixon's Apollo Theater in Atlantic City and two months after the New York debut at Liberty Theater. The brief time between the live performance and the recording indicates the growing demand for recorded music on the part of listeners at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Pasternak and Rogers, who recorded songs from opera with Caruso, sacred music, and Neapolitan songs, were arrangers of marching music and of pieces for bands, the most popular types of music at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Rogers completed numerous recordings with his band; among these, Victor published "Boy Scouts of America," an arrangement of John Philip Sousa's piece, and "Parade of the wooden soldiers," arranged by Jessel. Among the recordings for band "Liberty forever" is also remembered; it is an anthem written for tenor and arranged by Caruso himself and by Vincenzo Bellezza, and it was performed by the Victor Military Band at Carnegie Hall on April 30, 1918.[40]

In 1911 the Neapolitan tenor recorded "Core 'ngrato" (Ungrateful heart), written for him by the editor of *La follia di New York*, Riccardo

Cordiferro, and by Salvatore Cardillo, a composer and orchestra leader and owner of a small music publishing house in New York. This song is the most celebrated among a group of compositions created in America in the Italian community. In 1912 it was the turn of "Tarantella sincera" (Heartfelt tarantella), written the year before by Eduardo Migliaccio, known as Farfariello, and by Vincenzo De Crescenzo, a pianist who was among the most popular composers in the theater circuit and in the nascent Italian-American cinema. In 1919 there followed "Scordame" (Forget me) with lyrics by Salvatore Manente and "Sultanto a te" (Only to you) by Riccardo Cordiferro. The music of both songs was written by Salvatore Fucito, a name absent from books on the history of Neapolitan music. He was someone who likely had a fully developed career on the other side of the ocean, that is on American soil, since his name appears often along with that of Caruso as his accompanying pianist and personal secretary. Finally, in 1920, the tenor recorded "I' m'arricordo 'e Napule" by P. L. Esposito and Giuseppe Gioè, the latter a master whose artistic development took place in New York.

To this list must be added the songs that are referred to as hybrid, that is, songs that are difficult to place geographically because they were born midway between Naples and New York, such as "Guardanno 'a Luna" (Watching the moon) by Gennaro Camerlingo and Vincenzo De Crescenzo, published in 1904, a year after De Crescenzo moved to New York and six years before Camerlingo moved there. Another such song is "Uocchie celeste" (Blue eyes) (1917), for which De Crescenzo wrote the music and Armando Gill wrote the lyrics.[41] In this phase of the history of music, it doesn't seem there are significant stylistic differences in the Neapolitan compositions written in Naples and those written in New York, except for a more pronounced flavor of pathos and more nostalgic desire in the songs composed in New York evoking memories of the Italian city. The hybrid nature of these songs can be explained by the fact that often the text of a song written in Naples was put to music in New York and vice versa. This would explain how without ever having traveled to America, an author could hear one of his songs played by an immigrant master, sometimes not known to him until then. More rarely—as in the case of the composer Raffaello Segrè, an immigrant to São Paolo, Brazil, in 1906 or the case of De Crescenzo[42]—it was the poet himself who sent verses from Italy to a composer in America where the verses would be set to music through a real process of composition in which the two writers corresponded.[43]

The recordings that testify to the rapport that Caruso enjoyed with nonoperatic music are varied and diverse, including even those from the repertoire of light music in the English language. Side by side with music and love songs by noted authors, such as "Non t'amo più" (I don't love

you anymore) by Luigi Denza, "La mia canzone" (My song) by Francesco Paolo Tosti, both recorded in 1902, "Mattinata" (Morning) by Ruggiero Leoncavallo, written specifically for the gramophone and recorded in 1904, and "Addio" (Goodbye) by Rizzelli and Tosti in 1910, as well as those by authors less well known, such as "Triste ritorno" (Sad return) by Barthelemy recorded in 1906 and "Eternamente" (Eternally) by Massoni-Mascheroni in 1911, Caruso recorded traditional Scottish pieces such as "Auld lang syne" (1908), English songs such as "For You Alone" (O'Reilly-Gheel 1910), "Love Is Mine" (Teschemacher-Gartner 1911), and pieces he composed himself in collaboration with Earl Carroll, such as "Dreams of Long Ago" (1912) and "Tiempo antico," translated into English by Carroll himself as "Olden Times."[44]

We now turn to Neapolitan songs composed in New York, except for "I' m'arricordo 'e Napule," whose thematic uniqueness in comparison to the other compositions demands special analysis later on. Instead, I will discuss the other four compositions born in the American city and the two hybrids. They are love songs, usually songs about a betrayed or forgotten lover who turns to the woman he loves. That is, the songs use one of two poetic models most common among Neapolitan songs. The most famous composition of the group and among the most famous of all the Neapolitan repertoire, is "Core 'ngrato" (Ungrateful heart), which is the first of this type since it was recorded in 1911 and introduced this poetic mode to the Italian community. Here are the verses in Caruso's recording:

Catarì, Catarì,	Catherine, Catherine
Pecché me dice sti parole amare?	Why do you say those bitter words to me?
Pecché me parle e 'o core me turmiente	Why do you speak, and torment my heart?
Catarì?	Catherine?
Nun te scurdà ca t'aggio dato 'o core,	Don't forget that I gave you my heart,
Catarì, nun te scurdà!	Don't forget, Catherine!
Catarì, Catarì, che vene a dicere	Catherine, Catherine, what are you saying
Stu parlà ca me dà spaseme?	This talk that hurts me so?
Tu nun ce pienze a stu dulore mio	You don't think about my pain
E nun ce pienze tu, nun te ne cure.	You don't think about it, you don't care.
Core, core 'ngrato	Heart, ungrateful heart!
T'è pigliato 'a vita mia	You've taken my life,
E tutt'è passato	And it's all over,
E nun ce pienze cchiù!	And you don't think about it any more.

II	II
Catarì, Catarì	Catherine, Catherine,
Tu nun 'o saie ca 'nfino int' a na chiesa	You don't know I've even gone to church
Io so' trasuto e aggio priato a Dio,	To pray to God,
Catarì	Catherine.
E l'aggio ditto ca pe sto dolore	And I've told Him that because of this pain
Catarì, vurria murì.	Catherine, I want to die.
Catarì, sto a suffrì nun se po' credere,	Catherine, I am suffering beyond belief
Sto a suffrì tutte le pene	I'm suffering all my pains and with my faith which is a holy thing
E cu na fede ch'è na cosa santa,	I await my redemption or my end.
Aspetto chesta grazia o sta cundanna.	Heart, ungrateful heart
Core, core 'ngrato	You've taken my life,
T'è pigliato 'a vita mia	And it's all over,
E tutt'è passato	And don't think about it any more!
E nun ce pienze cchiù![45]	

In the first stanza or strophe, the poet-singer becomes conscious of already being excluded from the world of the woman he loves. Evoked repeatedly through the mention of her name, the woman appears pitiless in her intention to torment her erstwhile lover. Hints of a tumultuous amorous rapture are created by the obsessive repetition of her name, Catarì, an anaphora (repetition to create emphasis) in lines 1–7, which indicates that there is a caesura between the two segments of the first verse (ll. 1–6, 7–10), and the repetition of her name both in lines 4 and 6 and in lines 1 and 7. In the first phase, the rhythm of the lines moves with impulse and inflections (lines 1–6 making up the first musical sentence), which is followed by a second phase (lines 7–16) that is more intense either because it begins a step higher, a departure justified by the use of the anaphora, or because of the more rapid growth in tension, suggested in lines 7 and 8. The rhythm reaches its peak in verse 9 and declines in the following line, where both the second major part of the stanza as well as the second musical sentence end. But the decrease in tension is apparent only since the repetition, in line 11, of the word "core"—which substitutes for "Catarì" as a synecdoche—would seem to establish an implicit anaphoric relationship with lines 1 and 7. According to this interpretation, the refrain seems intimately related with what precedes it, and this would explain its natural connection to the peak of this climactic progression.

Line 11 is also the turning point of this graduated design. Here, therefore, also begins the definitive decline of the lyrical-musical plan, and

it would suggest the reason why the noun "core" appears in the title of the song. The attention focuses on the suffering poet. The pain returns to declare itself openly in the refrain of four lines, which record in three very brief moments his falling in love and the subsequent breakup after the happiness of the beginning. Catarì becomes an ungrateful heart that devours her lover's affection ("T'è pigliato 'a vita mia"); her love for him is over ("E t'è passato"), and she no longer thinks about him ("E nun ce pienze cchiù!"). The climax is repeated nearly identically in the second stanza with the same anaphora and name repetition. The environment, heretofore unmentioned, is now imagined to be a church, before God ("'nfino int' a na chiesa / Io so' trasuto e aggio priato a Dio"), who is invoked as a witness to the truth and the highest judge of the pains associated with a love that wishes to die even more than to be relieved ("E l'aggio ditto ca pe sto dolore / Catarì, Vurria murì").

An aspect to consider is made apparent by the perfect correspondence between the musical logic and the textual logic, above all in the first alternation of the refrain. This ongoing process of raising tensions continuously is a characteristic typical of the style Caruso was credited with introducing to the opera. It would explain, so to speak, that song writers would explicitly write for the tenor, items reserved for him and specifically designed for him from creation to performance.

The theme of ungrateful love that operates wickedly against the lover returns in two songs set to music by Fucito, "Scordame" and "Sultanto a te," and "Guardanno 'a Luna" by Camerlingo and De Crescenzo. In the first stanza of "Scordame," the theme of ingratitude becomes that of infamy (terminology peculiar to Neapolitan musical language), which indicates behavior that is cruel and villainous. Here the protagonist expresses the treachery and the impossibility of redressing it. The heart is clearly a metonymy for love and becomes a commodity of little value. The beginning lines are as follows:

I' nun te crero cchiù: sì stata 'nfama,	I don't believe you anymore; you've been untrue,
chi ne fa una 'o ssaie ne po fà ciento.	If you did it once, you'll do it a hundred times.
Fallo credere a n'ato 'o giuramento,	Tell your promise to someone else who doesn't know your heart.
dà 'o core tuio a chi nun sa cumm'è.	Make him believe your vows of love.

The theme of infamy returns in the second and last stanzas of the second song mentioned earlier. References to the heart and to the pain of love reappear.

E tu sì bella e core nun ne tiene,	Even though you are beautiful, you have no heart.
tu nun te cure 'e me pecché sì bella,	You don't care about me because you are so beautiful.
'nfama, nun saie quanto te voglio bene,	Traitor, you don't know how much I love you,
'nfama, nun saie quanto me faie penà.	Traitor, you don't know how much you hurt me.

"Guardanno 'a Luna," the song by Camerlingo and De Crescenzo, is composed in three stanzas that lead to a crescendo in which the poet invokes the moon as a witness to his rage over the treachery visited upon him by Rusina, his beloved. Thus, in the first two lines of the first stanza, the theme turns to ingratitude, and he accuses the woman of being with another man, whom the poet sees with his lover, as he explains in a conversation with a heavenly body: "Oj Luna lu', chi mai s'ʻo pensava / Ca ʻngrata me faceva ʻo tradimento" (O, Moon, who would have ever thought / that untrue woman would betray me?).

An amorous rapture that involves a lull without specific action is the psychological dimension that underlies the other songs in the American group. "Tarantella sincera," the older of the two, is a song about happy love; the tempo of the tarantella contributes to its sentimental poetic character.[46] An aspect we should take note of refers to the political and social context in which this song was born. We recall that the year it was composed was 1911, and in that same period in California and other western states, women had won the right to vote by referendum although that victory was not ratified as federal law until 1920. Suffragism was the topic of a debate that had already begun in the nineteenth century. An illustration of the type attested to by the song mentioned above shows how distant this perception of the feminine role was from that prevailing in American society. This was a perception that could be found even in the environment in which immigrant women lived, if only in an ambivalent way. Migliaccio, the author of the lyrics "Tarantella sincera," was an intelligent man and a comic writer; he knew how to joke about the different human typologies found among the immigrants. Thus, he adopted an ironic tone to describe this specific condition of women.

In the end, "Uocchie celeste" is a song based on the customary likeness between the eyes of a beloved woman and the color of the sea and the sky.[47] "Tiempo antico," a song written by Caruso in 1916, differs in character from those compositions mentioned before. First of all, because it is written by the tenor it is unique in the group, and as Vaccaro maintains, it must be

interpreted in relation to his private life. Informed by a sensitive and emotional spirit, by a need for autobiographical expression that pertains to the artist's own experiential journey, the song is true poetry in music. It revives the two-part structure of "Core 'ngrato," or rather uses two full stanzas of ten verses closed by a refrain of four, one complementing the other:

I	I
Era lu tiempo antico	It was a long time ago.
Pe mme lu paraviso	For me, it was a paradise
Ca sempe benedico	That I will always bless
Pecché cu nu surriso	Because with a smile
Li bbraccia m'arapive	You opened your arms to me
E 'mpietto me strignive.	And embraced me tightly.
Chino 'e passione	Full of passion,
Currevo 'mbraccio a te,	I ran to your embrace,
ma tu ca sì 'nfamona	but you who are so treacherous
te cuffiave 'e me.	made a fool of me.
Ah! Chillu tiempo antico	Ah! Those old times
Te sì scurdata oj ne',	You've forgotten alas girl;
penzanno sempe dico	thinking of old times, I always
che ne sarrà de me.	ask, what will become of me?
II	II
'A primmavera trase,	Spring is coming
'o sole scarf' ammore	the sun warms my love
e da stu core scasa	and from this heart
nu raggio de calore	the heat of passion flows,
penzanno ca i' torno,	thinking that when I return
e cchiù nun trovo a te.	I won't find you again.
Tu te ne sì ghiuta	You have gone away
cu n'auto 'nfantasia	with another for a caprice
e a chesta vita mia	and opened a wound
na fossa aie araputo!	in my life.
Ah! Chillu tiempo antico	Ah! those old times
Te sì scurdata oj ne',	you've forgotten alas girl;
penzanno sempe dico	thinking of old times, I always
che ne sarrà de me.[48]	ask, what will become of me?

Vaccaro describes the song as a heartfelt and bitter memory of the tenor's first wife, Ada Giachetti, who ran away with the family's chauffer ten years earlier. Caruso found love again only two years after the composition in 1918 when he married Dorothy Benjamin. The first six lines of the song, therefore, would recall, from this point of view and with the necessary distance in time from those events in his life, a happy phase of the tenor's life that had passed. The "Olden Times" in the title coincide with

the full enjoyment of married life, but both ecstatic and painful tones appear equally in the first six lines of the second part, in which "un raggio di calore scasa," (the heat of passion flows from—i.e., is the "ruination" of) "stu core" (this heart). Put another way, "this heart is undone by a rage of passion," as if in the act of expressing passion its definitive loss is recorded more dramatically. The theme of betrayal is taken up in the central lines of both stanzas, creating an authentic equation of emotions. Referring again to the theme of the lover's infamy, Caruso sings in the first part: "Full of passion, I ran to your embrace, but you who are so treacherous made a fool of me." The identical accusations returns in lines 7–10 of the second stanza where "'nfantasia" means "caprice." The refrain, stated twice, describes a straight fall into the abyss of abandonment, which means being cut off from all hope in the final refrain.

Among the Neapolitan compositions born in an American context, the most interesting seems to be "I' m'arricordo 'e Napule." I shall pause on this one in order to explain several aspects of it. I will also explore several elements and focus more closely on musical performance in an attempt to demonstrate how this song, in presenting memories of Naples, identifies the music with the city. There are three points to keep in mind: the definition of the song, the style, and the genre of music to which it belongs, and the uniqueness of the document examined with respect to the style it belongs to.

The song was written in 1919 by P. L. Esposito, that is, Pasquale Esposito. He was born in Naples probably in 1887 and immigrated to New York, where he died in 1952. It seems that the poet had chosen this signature to distinguish his name from that of Gaetano Esposito, known as Pasqualotto, a poet of certain popularity also established in New York. He too was an author with an established reputation; according to the opinion of Ettore De Mura, he was so well known that he lent his verses to several songs signed by the same E. A. Mario, such as "La mia dorge freddigliosa" (1926)[49] (My sweet chilly girl) and "Mamma sfurtunata" (1932)[50] (The unfortunate mother). Giuseppe Gioè, the author of the music, the composer of the song, chose the path of immigration; his contacts helped him establish himself very quickly in New York. He was among the most famous immigrant composers. In his honor evening galas were organized: for example, the one at the Egling Casino on 156th Street and Saint Ann Avenue. The gala included two operettas that the maestro was particularly well-versed in.[51] "I' m'arricordo 'e Napule," published in the American city by the same Gioè who here is identified by his anglicized baptismal name Joseph,[52] caused a great stir in America thanks especially to the masterful interpretation by Caruso who had recorded the song the year before. Caruso wrote a letter to the two authors who were grateful to the tenor for having sung their song. It is worth quoting a passage in

order to understand how deeply rooted Caruso's solidarity with his fellow countrymen was: "You don't need to thank me for the pleasure of singing those lines that, only the day before yesterday, I recorded on the Victor Talking Machine. I have not even heard the test version played, and in this there is the entire soul of three 'True Neapolitans' who feel nostalgia for their beloved and beautiful city."[53] Very probably, Gioè decided to publish the score and to register his rights as an author only when the song became a real success in the year the tenor died. It is interesting to note that in the same year (1921), shortly after the death of Caruso, the same two authors—Gioè using the name Joe Gioie—signed another song, "Caruso 'mmiez' a li angeli" (Caruso among the angels) sung by Eduardo Ciannelli, a name renowned from the world of the Italian-American theater.[54]

Here is the original text of the song as it was published in America:

I
I' m'arricordo 'e Napule 'e matina,
Quanno schiarava juorno a ppoco a ppoco,
'Nu ventariello doce e 'n'aria fina,
Spuntava 'o sole 'ncielo comm' a fuoco,
Nu fruscio 'e fronne, nu canto d' aucielle,

Te salutava 'a tutt' 'e nenne belle,

E 'a 'nu guaglione 'mmanech' 'e 'ncammise
Sentive chesta voce 'e paravise.

Rose d' 'o mese 'e maggio,
Rose pe' 'nnammurate,
Cu st'aria 'nbarzamata,
Vuie dint' 'o lietto state?

II
I'm'arricordo 'e Napule 'e cuntrora,
'O sole te cuceva 'e sentimento,
'Na coppia 'e 'nnammurate a 'na cert'ora,
Se deva a Margellina appuntamento.
Chillo Vesuvio visto da luntano,
'O mare che sbatteva chiano chiano,
Mentre de' scoglie respirav' addore,

Sentive n'ata voce 'e vennetore.

Chi tene 'a 'nnammurata
Ch'è bella, isso è geluso,
I' tengo 'e perziane
Apposta pe' chist'uso.

I
I remember Naples in the morning,
When day dawned little by little,
In a sweet little wind and clear air,
The sun rose in the sky like fire,
The rustle of leaves and the singing of birds,
I greeted for you all the beautiful young girls.
And from a young man in shirt sleeves
I heard this heavenly voice:

May roses,
Roses for lovers,
With this fragrant air,
How can you stay in bed?

II
I remember Naples in the afternoon,
The sun rouses your passion,
A couple of lovers at a certain hour
Plan to meet at Margellina.
With Vesuvius in the distance,
And the sea that beat slowly,
While you breathe the fragrance of the shore,
I heard another voice of a street peddler.

Whoever has a beautiful sweetheart
Will always be jealous
I have the window blinds
Made just for this purpose.

III
I' m'arricordo 'e Napule 'e nuttata,
'Ncopp' 'a ll'onne, Pusilleco durmeva,

e te menava n'aria profumata,
'O manto 'argiento 'a luna le spanneva.

E quanno m'arricordo 'e chillo cielo,
(Caruso canta: E quanno 'e chillo cielo m'arricordo)
Me vene all'uocchie 'e lagrime 'nu velo,
Pare ca veco 'e stelle na curona,

E sento ancora l'eco 'e 'sta canzona.

Oj varca lenta e stracqua;
I' penzo 'a nenna mia,
C' 'a voglio bene ancora
E moro 'e gelusia.

III
I remember Naples at night
At the top of the waves sleeps Posillipo,
Sending down perfumed air to you.
The moon casts its silvery mantle over the sky.
And when I remember that sky
(Caruso sings: And when that sky I remember)
My eyes become veiled in tears.
It seems that I see a crown among the stars,
And I hear the eco of this song again.

Oh, slow and tired boat;
I think of my girl,
Whom I still love
And I die of jealousy.

From the point of view of poetic form, with the structural repetition three times, "'I m'arricordo 'e Napule" enters the canons of popular Neapolitan songs according to the model that seems to have had success at the end of the nineteenth century, the years several scholars have identified as origin of modern Neapolitan songs.[55] Furthermore, three poetic texts discussed earlier "Uocchie celeste," "Tarantella sincera," and "Guardanno 'a Luna" also use this model. Without wanting to fix a definite, absolute point of departure from which to date the publication of songs composed according to the three-part scheme, it is enough here to discuss this as the emblematic song of the Neapolitan repertoire—defined as such because it is motivated by a stated desire to explain the identity of this genre—a song that corresponds to this simple structure. We are speaking of "Comme se canta a Napule" (How they sing in Naples), published by Bideri in 1911. It is the first Neapolitan song for which E. A. Mario, the pseudonym of Giovanni Ermete Gaeta, one of the principal and most prolific exponents of dialect and Italian songs of the first half of the twentieth century, also wrote the music. More about him will be said later. "Comme se canta a Napule" is an argumentative piece, written in response to a famous song writer, Salvatore Gambardella, who had offended Mario, calling his compositions "papucchielle," that is, songs of little value.[56] Other, more famous, compositions that reproduce this structure are "'O sole mio," which was composed in 1898, and "Maria Marì" composed in 1898. The song "Fenesta che lucive" (Light in the window) was a popular version of the Sicilian "canzunedda" (little song) of the Baroness of Carini and

dates back to the sixteenth century. The Neapolitan version is a transcription of the work of Giulio Genoino to which Mariano Paolella had added two verses in 1854.[57] The structure of this song does not seem to be a new invention that should be included in the modern phase of the evolution of Neapolitan song—even if it was used frequently in this period. Instead, it should be considered to be a formal archetype.

Every section of "I' m'arricordo 'e Napule" consists of an instrumental introduction of eight beats for the first section and four for the other two; of a verse of hendecasyllabic (i.e., containing eleven syllables) lines rhyming (a-b-a-b-c-c-d-d), which have an evocative character; and of an additional *corpus* in a different meter, specifically four seven-syllable lines arranged in eight beats of a lyrical quality. The concept of the interpolation of lines in the first *corpus*, as in farces or tropes, was frequently seen in librettos of comic operas in the eighteenth century to imitate or parody popular models.[58] Therefore, the principle can be summarized as such: an initial verse of hendecasyllabic lines; another line interpolated or added, which is presented as a kind of fossil or lyrical discovery: a lullaby, a nursery rhyme, a *stornello* (i.e., a type of folk song), or a proverb. This is in no way connected to the main verse, and as such is, or can be, presented as nonsense.

Each of the three sections of the song represents three sketches of Neapolitan life, which reproduce a few poetic motifs in the music of this repertoire, pictured during specific hours of the day. The song is typical of the genre, for it depicts the character or nature of the scene described. The first section pictures Naples at first light ("I' m' arricordo 'e Napule 'e matina"). The lines describe, step by step, all of the changes of that meteorological phenomenon.[59] The last line of the verse introduces a variation of eight beats, which in the text becomes an extended voice that sings, in a type of poetic reminiscence, a love song that includes typical attributes of poetic love song music (e.g., roses, the month of May, the lovers who idle in the salutary air). The first added corpus seems to derive from a preexistent repertoire as does the second, which appears in the following verse. I am speaking here of quoting the real or imaginary talk of peddlers as is implied in the last hendecasyllabic line of the first verse ("Sentive chesta voce 'e paravise") and expressed explicitly in the final line of the second ("Sentive chesta voce 'e vennetore"). The added corpuses (*corpora* in Latin) are, therefore, tied to the verses thematically and are evocative of the place and time. Here, the call of the rose sellers is clearly indicative of the freshness of the morning.

The second poetic verse projects an image of early afternoon ("I' m'arricordo 'e Napule 'e controra"), and these hours coincide with the hottest hours of the day, in which work and business are stopped and

people often sleep.[60] The scene now portrays two lovers again ("'na coppia 'e nnamurate a' na cert'ora") and places them in a specific urban setting, in the area of Mergellina, along the sea among places that are dearest to Neapolitan music. The quiet sea makes its first appearance ("'O mare che sbatteva chiano chiano"). Busy contemplating the moment, the singer hears another voice ("sentive 'n 'ata voce 'e vennetore"), which introduces in the last hendecasyllable a change in tempo from 6/8 to 2/4. This voice tells of a love that is fleeting and, specifically, of a jealous lover. The "perziane" are the outside shutters that are usually slotted and serve to diminish the light coming through the windows, both reducing the heat and obscuring what is inside from indiscreet eyes. This is the actual thematic connection between the verse and the added corpus because it is the vendor of shutters who begins to sing the seven-syllable lines. The section ends with a return to the initial 6/8 tempo.

The last verse has a nocturnal setting ("I' m' arricordo 'e Napule 'e nuttata").[61] The last addition is also introduced by a verse that anticipates the musical universe of the last quatrain, perhaps a folk song or very old song ("e sento ancora l'eco 'e sta canzona"). The piece ends with melancholic tones; in the score, the tempo is noted as a barcarole at that point. This is justified by a nocturnal setting with an opening modulation of D major to D minor. The initial gaiety of the beginning verses is spent, and the parting is complete, that is, the lover had to abandon what he held most dear, perhaps the very land of his birth projected in the likeness of the woman he loves ("i' penzo 'a nenna mia / C' 'a voglio bene ancora / E moro 'e gelosia").

The piece begins with an instrumental introduction, a kind of refrain, followed by 16 successive beats in the description. The most significant idea of the entire piece is, as emphasized, that of inserting at the end of each verse a poetic digression, which has been called a corpus and which has been placed in italics. The technique creates great variety, maintaining the listeners' attention; despite their expectations, in the absence of a true refrain, it appears as though the satisfying sense of repetition is missing and, paradoxically, this induces an almost pleasing sense of musical frustration.

The themes of remembrance and solitude and the desire to return, at least emotionally, to one's native land and to one's beloved is an element of Neapolitan songs shared by many popular traditions, such as that of the tango, another urban repertoire popular at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. As an example, I cite the title "Mi noche triste" (My sad night), which Carlos Gardel sang in 1917, three years before Caruso recorded the piece by Esposito and Gioè. Gardel debuted the song in his historic performance on October 14 at the Esmeralda Theater in Buenos Aires. The piece is the finest example

of the *tango-canciòn*, that is, a song solely instrumental.[62] Gardel's name, moreover, is closely tied to the performance of one of the most famous examples of tango, "Volver," the precise meaning of which is "to return." Written in 1935, this is one of many tangos composed during his association with the composer Alfredo Le Pera; it remains famous precisely because it sums up in the title one of the major poetic themes of this music.

The tango and the song performed by Caruso share a common origin in the world of the immigrants, in which the late romantic ideal of loss and nostalgia assumes an added value because it finds objective aspects in the historical events of the exile.[63] "I' m'arricordo 'e Napule" was conceived emotionally in Naples even if it was written in America. The Neapolitan dialect used is that which is spoken in Naples, and the images derive from the reality of Naples, which shared little or nothing with the imaginary that the immigrants would soon absorb in New York. Judging from the language used and the aims of the composer, the lines do not reflect any transformation, and this would not lead one to think about an Italian-American hybrid phase at this point. In the immigrant context, for example, the word "nenna," which in Neapolitan means "young woman," was one of the first terms to undergo a radical transformation through a substitution with "ghella," a mispronunciation of "girl," as in the comic sketches and songs written and performed by Migliaccio. The images evoked were not only specific to a geographical context, like Vesuvius or the quarter near the sea, but also to a generic one. Sweet, soft wind, the boat that moves slowly through the water, the roses, and the shutters that hide the loved one from the eyes of strangers are images typical of the Italian city. None of this could have been compared to the noise, the penetrating odors, and the multicolored anthropological mixture of an American city. Above all, in the most notable Italian-American texts written almost contemporaneously with this piece, there seem to be no signs of the technique, so to speak, of anthropomorphism—of attributing human characteristics to objects and places, as in the third verse of the song in which the boat sails on "tired" ("stracqua") and the hill of Posillipo sleeps.[64] Nor is there any space for that pseudo-religious spirit that made itself known via the crown of stars, a presumed reference to the Madonna of Piedigrotta, one of the chief Marian cults of the city. We are looking at a text in pure dialect, which has not yet been contaminated by the new cultural framework. This musical example attests that in the absence of any linguistic osmosis, the transition to a new environment was still only a physical one for the immigrants. Once they had entered into the American life they experienced a radical change that would get recorded in their songs. Before that they seemed to have lived exclusively in the memory of what they had left behind.

The song—lyrics, music, and the recording—is still famous today because of its principal interpreter. The written music is very simple and straightforward but suggestive. The piece is a medium waltz with a 6/8 time signature in the key of D major. It starts with eight measures (figure 2.1) consisting of an instrumental introduction also used as an interlude. Following the rhythmic patterns of the verse, the introduction is structured on a two-measure phrase repeated four times: the first measure is a pointed quarter note, four sixteenth notes, a triplet of thirty-second notes, and a final semiquaver; the second measure is composed of two long notes (a pointed half-note or two pointed quarter notes). The starting note for each phrase changes according to the harmonic sequence that resembles the one in the verse (I—II min—V—I—IV min—I—IV min—I).

The melody (figure 2.2) of the verse (two measures per hendecasyllable) states a phrase composed of eight measures repeated twice: the first

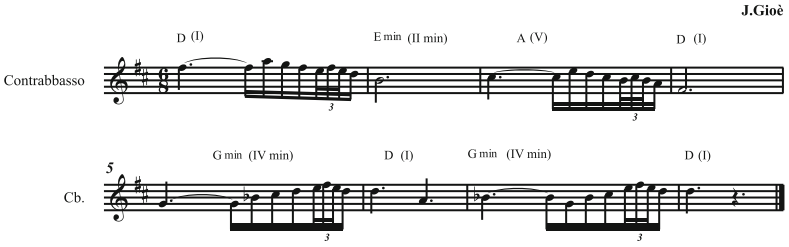

Figure 2.1 Instrumental introduction.

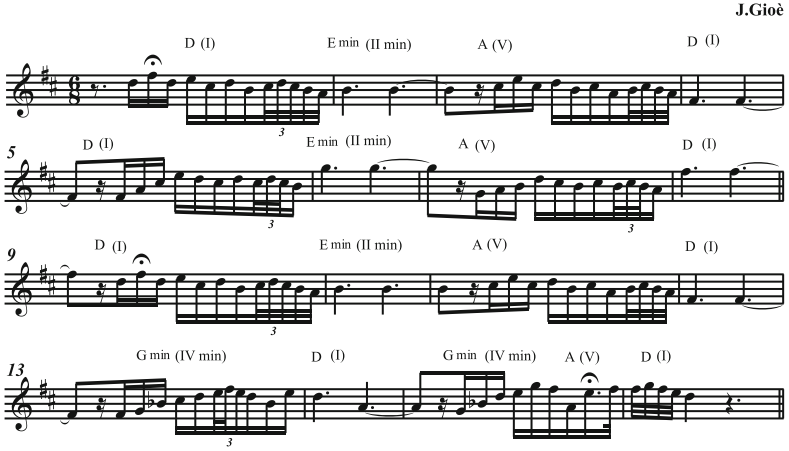

Figure 2.2 Melody.

eight on a simple I—II min—V—I cadence, the next eight going through a minor IV chord, emphasized by the note Bb (min 6th of the key) in the melody.

This creates a suggestive chiaroscuro effect; even the melodic profile of the instrumental introduction (or interlude) follows closely that of the verse.

All of this accentuates the distance from the quatrain of seven-syllable lines, stressing its character as an unrelated element in the song until it appears there. Near each added corpus, the orchestra suspends the tempo of the piece with a punto coronato (fermata or pause sign); this introduces the quatrain and varies the speed of the interpretation/performance. In the first corpus, the orchestra speeds up, the score reads "poco più mosso" (more rapidly). The second corpus changes tempo, taking on a more moderate speed. It is made up of two parallel phrases, not chiaroscurically opposed. Of the melodic profile there remains only the flourishing finale of each phrase. The third corpus takes up the 6/8 tempo once more but with the slower pace of a barcarole and a minor tonality. The general effect is from a progressive distancing to a fading. All of this suggests the sensation of a flowering in the self of an unconscious collective of the kind, however, into which the self tends to plunge. This supports the hypothesis that the song emerges from an unconscious elsewhere, fed by the memory of an abandoned land.

Whoever regards the performance of the orchestra as dry and rudimentary should know that this is because at the dawn of the recording age, in the recording studio, orchestras played with fewer members. Moreover, they played on a wooden platform in front of a single large megaphone, shaped like a funnel, or a number of megaphones placed close to each instrument. These were then connected to the megaphone of the soloist in order to combine the sound of the instruments with that of the voice. The system of megaphones terminated in a tube at the end of which was placed an acoustic diaphragm with an etching needle on a rotating blank wax matrix. An alternate conductor directed the arrangement with technicians near the singer, having to intervene, sometimes even curtly, to move the singer away from or to bring him closer to the megaphone in order to control the sharpness or softness of the sound so that the quality of the recording would not be ruined. As for the complement of the orchestra, the strings were replaced by brass because it had a more reliable quality for discs and created a more penetrating sound. Brass instruments were also more adaptable to the kind of sensitivity possessed by the etching needle. All of this created a great inconvenience for the singer, the musicians, and the technicians.

The first striking aspect of the recordings of Enrico Caruso is a certain impetuosity, almost an irascibility, in the vocal performance. This characteristic, in some ways uncommon, is less evident in the recordings of the most famous Neapolitan songs where the tenor's voice is closer to the broader and more measured style of classical performances. This is true for example in his recording of "'O sole mio." At times, it is claimed, this characteristic is vaguely affected, as in "Addio a Napoli" (Farewell to Naples), without those peaks of dramatization that otherwise would be accentuated. The Neapolitan songs composed in America permitted the tenor an absolute freedom of interpretation.

"I' m'arricordo 'e Napule" was recorded on September 14, 1920, during the tenor's third last recording session. The song is a testament to the love the tenor felt for his distant city. Some features of the song are tied to a type of vocal expression that induces one to hear this emotional state more distinctly.[65]

The recording under considerations is an "unicum" (lat. unique document); without any other contemporary recordings of the same song one cannot make any comparisons.[66] The song, and with it a great part of the tenor's Neapolitan production, points to a transitional stage of music, midway between the repertoire of European culture and nascent popular urban music. The way the recording was made—the approach of the singer, who follows a type of operatic vocal discipline, the presence in the recording studio of an orchestra leader, the score which is the point of reference for the orchestra that accompanies the soloist—connect this song to the Western classical-operatic repertoire even though the piece is not a product of cultured music, tout court. Rather, it appears to be something more complex that induces one to investigate the emergent popular music (or consumer music) repertoire. Caruso's song was specifically created and destined for the record; this observation is proved by the fact that the year in which the sheet music was published follows the year in which the record was licensed. If the record had not achieved success, the author would probably not have published the music. The audience for this type of music is the general public—not the people who go to concert halls, not the high middle class, and certainly not the aristocracy.[67] The structure of this song, its morphology, is itself a hybrid. The use of the three added corpus instead of a refrain—an always equal repeated part—is somewhat unique. The features listed here do not necessarily relate to the geographical provenance of a song, in this case New York; instead, I am talking about elements that are traced with ever greater frequency to Naples as the recording industry continues to develop.[68]

The uniqueness of the song performed by Caruso also lies in its power to offer some glimpses of Naples in a musical framework. Its memories are perennially alive in the minds of an entire community that claims its identity and belonging through music. Here again emerges the song by E. A. Mario "Comme se canta a Napule"; by its very character that today could sound derivative and redundant, this song expresses well its profound sense of having acquired its identity through the description of the city. This is the text:

I	I
Comme se canta a Napule	You should learn
t' 'o vvuó' 'mpará, pecché giá te n'adduone	how they sing in Naples
ca dint''o core va nu raggio 'e sole,	because you already realize
sentenno na canzone…	that when you hear these songs
	a ray of sunshine fills your soul…
E Napule chest'è, chesto pò dá…	In Naples, this is, this can give
pò dá speranze a chi nun spera cchiù:	hope to one who hopes no more,
resate allère e freve 'e passione…	happy laughter, and fever of passion
E basta sulamente nu mandulino	All you need is a mandolin
	to praise those beautiful tresses, those sweet eyes…
p'avantá 'e ttrezze belle e ll'uocchie doce…	The air of a garden
n'aria 'e ciardino,	a whisper
nu filo 'e voce,	a passionate heart
nu core ardente,	that laughs or cries, but always
ca, ride o chiagne, vò' sempe cantá!	wants to sing!
II	II
Canzone ca suspirano	Songs that sigh,
dint'a na varca o sott'a nu barcone…	In a boat or under a balcony
Canzone, allère e triste, ca ogne core	Songs that are happy or sad, that
se 'mpara 'e ogne stagione…	Every heart learns in every season.
E a chi è straniero e vène, o se ne va,	And even in a stranger, who comes and goes, the heart
core lle dice: 'Canta pure tu,	says: You sing too,
ricòrdate stu cielo e sti ccanzone…'	Remember this sky and these songs.
E basta solamente […]	And all you need […]

III	III
Pe' chi se canta a Napule	For whom do they sing in Naples?
tu 'o vvuó' sapé? P''e rrose e p''e vviole,	Do you want to know?
p' 'o cielo e 'o mare e maje pe' fá tesore…	For the roses and the violets,
p''ammore e p''e ffigliole	For the sky and the sea, and never just for treasure…
	For love and young girls
Perciò chi nasce dint'a 'sta cittá,	So whoever is born in this city,
passa, cantanno, tutt''a giuventù,	spends his entire youth singing,
nuttate 'e luna e matenate 'e sole…	his nights in the moonlight,
	his mornings in sun
E basta solamente […]	And all you need […]

The lyrics of "Comme se canta a Napule" recall some motifs of Neapolitan songs: the ray of sunshine evoked every time a melody moves a heart, sighs, passion, a garden breeze, roses and violets, crying and laughter, youth and young girls, and above all the mandolin of the refrain, which evokes female characteristics (beautiful hair and sweet eyes) and brings relief from all tension and anger. The strong connection between Naples and the Neapolitan song is undeniable. The latter is a combination of poetic and aesthetic features inferred from the spatial dimensions of the city itself, from its physical geography, and from ideas that become, in this way, an audible etiology and contribute to giving the song that characteristic lyrical and musical imprint. The song thus persuades one to go beyond its history and talk about its geography as well.[69]

Speaking more generally in certain social contexts, such as the one I am analyzing here, it is clear that the study of historical processes alone is not able to analyze in depth the cultural processes of the modern and contemporary age. The issue of space, historical geography, and urbanization is an integral part of the theory of society. In this regard, David Harvey emphasizes quoting Anthony Giddens[70] that if spatial-temporal connections are characteristic constituents of the social system, then the question of space is certainly too important to be left exclusively to the field of the traditional study of geographers. From Marx onward through Weber, Durkheim, and Marshall—Harvey writes—there has been a strong and almost hegemonic predisposition to give priority to the time and the history with respect to space and geography; this has led to a distortion in the reductive sense in the understanding of some processes among which I would count/include the Neapolitan song as a cultural process formalized into the twentieth-century popular repertoires.

When the immigrants first came to America, they were forced to rethink the poetic and then the formal characteristics of their songs if they did not wish to revise the latter only on the basis of memory. This manner of rethinking happened over time, but before this could occur, a phase of suspension intervened. Even before the immigrants became aware of what was happening, the uprooting took the form of nostalgia, the feeling of loss and regret. This is the state that informs the song of Esposito and Gioè as interpreted by Caruso. The nostalgia over the loss of one's native land is continued within the *settenari* (seven-syllable line). These lines are inserted where the structure of the song form subsequently formalized provides for the placement of the chorus (or refrain) and creates a hiatus that appears almost as an act of the collective unconsciousness.

Caruso and Armstrong: The Italian-American and the African American, Comparing Ethnicities

Another cultural event of no less importance was caused by the entrepreneurial politics of the Victor Company impacting the social sphere. The record label had contributed unknowingly and in a clear manner to the retention/rehabilitation of Italian immigrants. The indisputable evidence for this is Caruso, the Italian master, who, thanks to his discipline and success, was able to combat the ethnic prejudice and change the racist sentiment of an entire generation. This is perhaps one of the reasons that music, more than any other art form, acquired added value for Italian immigrants; music was what could rescue them from any image of social inferiority and start them on a path that was universally recognized as positive.

Integrationism is one of the principles on which any ethnic group questions itself when it is induced, primarily by economic necessity, to come to a strange land and set down roots. The newcomers seek to survive and to preserve their original cultural features. In the debate that has raged since the abolition of slavery in the African American community, one disputed question was whether or not to integrate. On the one hand, people like the educator and writer Booker Taliaferro Washington considered integration an adjustment to white Protestant society. On the other hand, people like W. E. B. Du Bois, a historian, poet, and activist, fiercely opposed integration. Du Bois was among the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909. Unlike Washington, Du Bois believed that black people should challenge and confront white people in all fields. The history of the African American in the early twentieth

century runs between these two extremes. The same intellectuals who from the start had framed their positions differently eventually became spokespersons sometimes of one and at other times of the other hypothesis, with the intention of offering guarantees of social survival and ways of preserving cultural identity. This question was of greater urgency for the African American community than for other ethnic groups because of the color of their skin, which in an incontrovertible manner was stated in every moment of their diversity.

In the social hierarchy delineated by Nativism at the end of the nineteenth century, the African American did not occupy the bottom level of the pyramid, at least not always according to some episodes in which blacks interacted with other ethnic minorities. For example, the event that occurred in 1895 in Spring Valley, a flourishing mining center in Illinois, saw the black community strongly offended and even attacked by European immigrants, particularly by Italians. It was said that black Americans were respectful of the law, good workers, and not as dangerous as people of other ethnic groups, an obvious reference to the Italian immigrants.[71] The most significant danger, according to the opinion of some observers and according to public opinion among white and black Americans, came from Italian-Americans. The principle of integrationism, therefore, fed a debate that did not sound strange to the Italian community.

Whether Italian immigrants, most of whom were of dark complexion and from the south of Italy, were to be considered white was a subject debated in America in the years of mass immigration. Even if the Italians were recognized as white, the topic became difficult to address when it came to the question of race. As has been discussed, in the perception of Americans and in the view of positivist Italian anthropologists, Italians were of two different types: those from the south and those from the north. Moreover, there was the well-known, sad episode of 1890 where nine Italians were lynched and accused, without proof, of murdering David Hennessy, the police chief of New Orleans. Hennessy had been investigating the possible connection between criminals in the city and the Italian community, and the capture and execution of the accused Italians supported the notion of the violent nature of southern Italians and their refusal to become civilized.[72] In the anthology titled *Are Italians White?* Jennifer Guglielmo reflects on the fact that most Italian immigrants remained in the poor and working classes much longer than the majority of other European immigrants; Italian immigrants also often lived in blue-collar sections among people of color.[73] As is incisively documented by the historian Robert Orsi, this proximity—in terms of class, color, and geography—has given Italians a particular eagerness to

affirm their white identity so as to create a palpable distance from their black and brown neighbors and to receive the obvious benefits associated with being white. Regarding the process of naturalization undergone by her grandmother just before the Second World War, when Italy declared war on Germany, Louise De Salvo explains an equation from a study by Jacobson on the different shades of whiteness on the basis of which a woman having become an American citizen is classified as dark white or black white.[74] The racial ambiguity of the Italian immigrants, their in-betweenness, as Orsi calls it based on a quote from John Higham—their being Caucasian due to geographic provenance but dark-skinned in terms of physical attributes—derives in part from prejudices among northern Italians against southern Italians that predate the era of immigration. These prejudices arose in part from the historical circumstances of immigration of southern Italians at a time of a reborn Nativism. At the same time, there was the Great Migration of African Americans from the south to the north, and migration of African Caribbeans and a little later of Puerto Ricans and Mexicans northward. Italians belonged to the first wave of dark-skinned immigrants, and they inevitably were assimilated with other dark-skinned people in northern and Midwestern industrial cities.[75]

In sociocultural contexts with a lesser degree of solidarity or in a context made up of immigrants from different ethnic groups, music—as I have emphasized—reveals itself as a major vehicle for integration of Italians into the United States.[76] A journalistic report in 1919, which announces the opening of a new music vendor—the Nicoletti Music Store—proves interesting:

> The name is not new to our readers, but the store is brand-new; in fact, at the moment of this writing, it has yet to open all of its doors to the public. Here there is a little of everything, but principally a selection of rolls for the pianola, produced by the best houses: complete operas, or nearly, dance tunes, love songs, all, in short, that art and technology can offer in the way of family entertainment. In addition to the musical rolls, the store offers good books, various types of stationery, types of writing desks, picture postcards, cigars, sweets.… As one can see, the name music store is quite modest and says very little.[77]

The music store had an enormous drawing power, and it was music that drew customers into all fields of the cultural industry and provided a means of escape from the vagaries of everyday life.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Booker T. Washington was the major supporter of the principle of integration of blacks in America.[78]

However, the problems of ethnic minorities also drew the attention of Du Bois, who wrote at length about immigrants, especially the Italians and African Americans at the beginning of the century.[79] Around 1910 Washington traveled to Europe, a trip that gave rise to a social and political study that discussed also the south of the continent, specifically Sicily and Naples, which were identified by the writer as "the land of the emigrant." In the book based on his research, Washington draws a parallel between the immigrant population from Europe and the black community in the American south and attempted to identify a commonality of integration in American society. The similarity between blacks and Italians was a burning question; in the first decades of the twentieth century, the kind of welcome immigrants received when they arrived in the United States was based on a color line that separated the whites from races of color—primarily Blacks, Asians, and Mexicans. From the moment the Italians arrived in America, they were placed in the first group, that is, among the whites. However, even if no one ever officially cast a doubt on the whiteness of the Italian immigrants, they remained an undesirable ethnic group.[80] According to Washington, what determined the similarity among various ethnic groups was not skin color but a common social conflict, that is, both immigrant Europeans and blacks in America had to reposition and rethink their realities in light of the radical change in their living conditions. In a democracy where everyone is given the possibility of bettering himself or herself, there is no reason why racial difficulties cannot be overcome. In such a society, whites and blacks should be able to live in harmony instead of working against each other.[81]

This is what the black musician Louis Armstrong put into practice with his music; with his conciliatory attitude in public he was the very exemplification of what Washington's theory of integration had proposed. Here is what jazz musician and historian Gunther Schuller has to say about Armstrong based on what the musician had said about himself:

> "That's my livin' and my life. I love them notes. That's why I try to make 'em right, see?" Those words—Louis's own—are as good a summation and explanation of that phenomenon called Louis Armstrong as can be found. In some profound sense it is not much more complicated than that. There is, of course, his talent, his genius, if you will. But Louis always felt, and deep-down knew, that his talent, his ability to put his lips to his horn and produce "all them beautiful notes" was a gift he has been chosen to receive and to exercise in music every day. All pride aside, he saw himself simply as courier, a bearer through whom music could be transmitted. Armstrong the "entertainer" could not get used to the idea to be portrayed

> as Armstrong the "artist." "Just getting 'em right" and make audiences happy with his music *was* his life, and the trumpet *was* the instrumentality through which he expressed himself.[82]

If only Louis Armstrong and Enrico Caruso had had the ability to maintain the identity of their people through their music, the success they achieved would have presented a positive and not a belligerent example of social integration.[83] But it was perhaps too much to ask that the two ethnic minorities should demonstrate the will to unite in finding common ground in this conflict. In fact, regarding the publication of Washington's study, several immigrant Italian intellectuals officially took the stance of completely breaking with the black race. They expressed this position in tones of nearly irrational racial hatred toward the black author. *La follia di New York* published an unsigned editorial—most probably the work of Alessandro Sisca, who also posed as an intellectual animated by a sincere spirit of socialism—that was a crushing review of Washington's book and clearly highlights the ethnic-cultural contrast.[84]

Sisca's attack on Washington makes use of nearly the entire classic canon of rhetorical invective. At the start, the objective evidence about the color of the American author is presented as something negative. A person of this type is in reality not a benefactor, writes the Italian commentator. He claims such a person is not someone who founds schools with philanthropic motives but is a coward, a "peeping Tom." Sisca continues the review by calling Washington a skillful deceiver who has succeeded in fooling even the president of the United States in order to "grind his own ax." Once having "scientifically" demonstrated the mediocrity and danger of Washington, the commentator attacks him taking up cudgels directly against the assumptions of his book, "clearly a heap of stupidities or, worse, slanderous lies." The fun is now over; the Italian has constructed his offensive not on the basis of the study's contents, as would have been appropriate, but based on racial prejudice, frustrating any interpretative attempt to evaluate the intellectual strength of the two writers on an objective basis.

Chapter 3

The Music of the Immigrant Takes on Mass Appeal

From Opera to Vaudeville: The Comedians, Writers, and Singers of Caruso's Era

The exceptional career of Caruso in America gave many the naïve assurance that moving to that continent would by itself guarantee success to anyone who attempted a repetition of the tenor's experience. At the end of the 1920s, in the years immediately following Caruso's death and until just before the Second World War, music and the theater increasingly became excellent means by which to promote Italian identity in America. There was no lack of people who fooled themselves into believing they were artists and who actually established companies to avail themselves of the opportunity to more easily enter America. The principal port of entrance for Italian immigrants was New York. Samuel Fuller, the film director born in New York in 1912, was an illustrator, photographer, and journalist in Manhattan in the 1930s before his career in cinema and provides an interesting description of the city:

> According to the writer Gene Fowler, the expression "nevertheless" perfectly describes the atmosphere of New York in the Roaring Twenties.… These were also the "dry" years of Prohibition marked by brutality and organized crime. When the Twenties had finally roared themselves out, America found itself in the hard years of the Depression, during which Manhattan seemed like an island of fabricated artifice with a paradoxical predilection for the natural and the primitive.… Manhattan may have had bread lines during the Depression years, but it rivaled Paris when it came to restaurants, good times and entertainment in general. Blacks and Whites tried to understand each other through art, and the most accessible art forms of the period were music, theatre and the movies. Manhattan is and was a city of taxis, and cabs were always available to take you to the

> vaudeville and movies houses, billiard halls, dance palaces and the numerous speak-easies, ranging from sleazy to the deluxe.... If I end here with Gene Fowler's words, it is because he and so many artists of the past and present have proven that the electric wonders of 42nd Street and Broadway or the skyscrapers of Manhattan can still inspire a sense of mystery and poetry. But another comment he once made about Manhattan still rings just as true across the decades: "Manhattan seldom wants you, but you'll always want Manhattan!"[1]

This last affirmation can be adapted perfectly to the existential and psychological state of the immigrant. New York was the place that everyone desired to be, just like one would want a delicious apple, and this was true not only in the years of the Depression but also in those that preceded it.

Many singers from the milieu of Neapolitan song habitually went to New York and from there to other major cities of the American continent. They appeared in concert halls and theaters, cut records, and became the means for a creative exchange that accelerated the physiological recreation of their own repertoires. New York was the preferred destination, the port of entry for these immigrants. Thanks to a flourishing economy and an increasing number of Italian music and drama schools, theaters, and concert halls, where audiences consisted not only of Italians, the immigrants developed an awareness of the advantages of free time and of spending money on evening entertainment, an uncommon thing for ordinary people although not for the upper classes in Europe. Entertainment production for the consumer in New York as compared with that in Italy was truly factory-like. The singers and publishers who established themselves in New York entered into a rhythm of production hitherto unknown, and the profits were always above expectations.[2] The names of many Italian authors and performers appear and reappear in the pages of newspapers, in the credits printed on records, and in the theater: Alessandro Sisca, Roberto Ciaramella, Mario Nicolò, Tobia Acciani, Giuseppe De Laurentiis, Mimì Aguglia, Farfariello, Alfredo Melina, Gaetano Esposito, Alfredo Bascetta, Gennaro Amato, Dan Caslar, Gaetano Lama, Gilda Mignonette, E. A. Mario, Attilio Giovannelli, Gennaro Camerlingo, Carlo Renard, Salvatore Baratta, Leo Brandi, Aldo Bruno, Salvatore Quaranta, Francesco Pennino, Gennaro Bianchi, Vincenzo De Crescenzo, Pasquale Esposito, Giuseppe De Luca, and Rosina De Stefano. Once again, the excitement over music and the theater in this context appears to be not only a vehicle of relaxation but also a tie to the motherland. In a country in which strange customs and habits were very widespread, where each community spoke a different

language, the phonograph furnished the means to reconstruct a kind of protected environment that resembled the country of origin. The recording of songs in the mother tongue reinforced traditional values and a sense of indispensability of their culture among the immigrants.[3]

This was the principle of Americanization for the immigrant population, put into effect by the record labels and by film production houses when they promoted ethnic culture. After all, it is understood that the cultural identity of a people is judged by its symbolic value, which is maximized through artistic expression. The works that ethnic groups produced certainly influenced American cultural contexts; in fact, research on the relationship between the two cultural environments—American and non-American—reveals that they are very important. Bertellini emphasizes the importance of the cultural models devoted to entertainment and pleasure that matured among ethnic immigrant minorities in terms of developing the taste and social life in the melting pot of urban space, New York. Addressing these topics allows me to point out a relevant contribution to a larger discussion on the emergence of the American cinema as a dominant cultural medium that began at the start of the twentieth century. From this, it follows that the question concerning the theory about the reception of silent films in New York and throughout the United States must take into account the fact that cinematography and American popular culture in general are syntheses of American models marked by non-American cultural contributions.[4]

The process of turning immigrants into Americans was very complex, and it challenged the very concept of the national identity of the American people, itself an abstraction. Thanks to a relevant bibliographical excursion into the history of culture, science, aesthetics, and social policy, Bertellini shows a correspondence between the concept of Americanization and that of a racial character's ability to change. In this sense, the life of an individual is presented as a synthesis of visible and less visible elements—biological and physical traits on the one hand and moral and spiritual on the other. Heredity in cooperation with an environmental determinism influences the adaptability of immigrants and their capacity to become American. Americanization is the acquisition of a set of moral and economic views that define the American way of life.[5] Taken as a whole, the mass of ethnic groups, despite being different from each other in appearence, immediately came together when the United States entered the First World War. However, in the recollections of immigrants, only when an appeal to a love of country had to be made did they realize that they were still not integrated into the American social fabric. In an article appearing in the August 1919 issue of *La Follia di New*

York, Edward Corsi, a Sicilian immigrant and militant in the Republican Party, who in the course of his life held very important positions such as commissioner of Immigration and commissioner of Education under Presidents Hoover and Roosevelt and was even being nominated as a New York mayoral candidate in the 1950s, approached the problem in an intelligent manner. He underscored the fact that the movement toward Americanization had been profoundly paternalistic up to that point because every reform made seemed like an imposition. His idea derived from the presupposition that the process of integration should naturally stem from the ethnic groups it addressed and should not be a solution put into place because of the needs created by war at that moment. Often in their history, Americans had made the mistake of considering immigrants capable of organizing and providing for themselves without intervention from the government to promote social integration, wrote Corsi, and they became aware of their mistake only when the mobilization of the labor force affected the conduct of a war. Thus, the reality was that millions of people who had lived in America for years had nevertheless not yet understood how the nation was governed and had no influence on its governance. They remained without representation and were excluded from the political life of the country. Slowly, the vastness and complexity of the phenomenon revealed itself when it became known that among the two million enlisted men, two hundred thousand could not read enough to understand written orders and letters from dear ones.[6] Edward Corsi counted the number of languages and dialects spoken in America in those years, and the total was more than one hundred. The data he produced were even more alarming when it became clear how many uneducated people there were: many thousands did not speak English, two million had no education, and three million at the age of military service were not yet naturalized.

The Italians made up a large percentage of these numbers, and they had developed a deep awareness of the problem. On the one hand, therefore, they attempted to preserve their diversified culture, and on the other, they desired to integrate into the new context. Integration, as emphasized already, created a great deal of fascination in artistic circles. In an attempt to absorb the most significant elements of the throbbing musical scene in New York, Italian immigrant musicians, writers, and singers adopted a new language known by various names: Italglish, Italo-Americanese, and even Italiese, broken Italian, and pidgin. The elements that made up this linguistic hybrid were a mixture derived from Italian dialects, southern for the most part, something quite primitive, descended from the mother tongue to which were grafted Anglo-American terms.[7]

Eduardo Migliaccio and Tony Ferrazzano

One of the first actors responsible for the early stage of the integration of Italian and American was Eduardo Migliaccio, known by the stage name of Farfariello.[8] The place where he learned the integrated language was the bank where he worked in Hazelton, Pennsylvania, before going into the theater. His clients, almost always illiterate, dictated letters to him for their dear ones far away; he memorized them all and used them when he decided to dedicate himself to the theater exclusively. It was in New York, where he moved to work at the Banca Avallone on Mulberry Street, that he earned the pseudonym of Farfariello, derived, according to Durante, from the refrain of a comical song with a mischievous tone.[9] At age 32, Migliaccio had about 150 comic sketches in his repertoire; he worked in the theater and sang light Neapolitan songs to which it seemed he dedicated himself without particular success in the first years of his career at the marionette theater on Mulberry Street. He had particular histrionic gifts and experience related to long and laborious practice in live shows.

The *macchietta*, whose most plausible translation in English is "sketch," grew out of a widespread inclination that was deeply rooted in popular American culture since the middle of the nineteenth century. The massive presence in New York of European immigrants immediately created the problem of how to represent the human and cultural reality they faced. The image of a world so varied made it necessary to revisit the very concept of whiteness, creating a hierarchical gradation between the races generally seen as white. Eastern Europeans were different from southern Europeans, and they all belonged to the white race. Because of this fact, even the high- and low-born literary, journalistic, and visual narratives and also the illustrated periodicals faced the question of how to explain all of this in cultural terms. To create characters reducible to a specific ethnocultural typology was the most efficacious response. The contributions of the "science" of phrenology and of Darwinian evolution provided an additional impulse in that direction. In this way, human types were born that were connected to countries of origin: the Irishman as well as the Greek, the Jew, the Italian, the Hungarian, each with characteristics that were the fruit of an imaginary consolidation made up of prejudices, stereotypical images, and picturesque elements.[10] Thanks to a tendency toward the grotesque and to the congenial value of the multifaceted reality of the American city, the sketch was the best adaptation in terms of music and theater of modern urban chaos because it restored with the immediacy of a snapshot or a witty joke the human complexity of a city in perennial and elusive transformation.

The sketch revealed itself as an exceptional landscape in which cultures could intertwine and ethnic comparisons could be made. The popular theatrical performances steeped in sketches that joked about different stereotypes enjoyed an enormous success and were able to attract large audiences. The performances were repeated several times on the same day. For this reason, the companies endured workdays that were exhausting. In the Italian context, in addition to Migliaccio, there was another noted comedian, a Sicilian, Giovanni De Rosalia (born in Palermo in 1864, died in New York in 1934), who took on the stage name Nofrio. The presence of Sicilian writers and performers in the Italian community was as significant as that of the Neapolitans. The musical repertoire in Italian-American catalogues for the first three decades of the 1900s consists in large part Neapolitan and Sicilian songs. Among the most interesting artists recorded along with De Rosalia were Rosina Gioiosa Trubia, Leonardo Dia, Paolo Citarella, Pietro Conigliaro, and Paolo Dones.[11]

These were the performers and writers who participated with their voices in the great historical-anthropological fresco that was the Italian colony. Some of these went beyond the borders of the ethnic environment, as in the case of Citarella, whose works came to be republished in Italy under different labels, among them Columbia, Odeon, and La Voce del Padrone [His Master's Voice], reinterpreted, parodied, or revisited by others. Sicilian has an ancient linguistic and poetic tradition, in some ways older than the Neapolitan if one considers that the very form of the sonnet, the Italian metrical-poetic form par excellence, was the work of the Sicilian Giacomo da Lentini and of the coterie of poets that flourished in the elegant court of Frederick II in Palermo in the thirteenth century.[12] This tradition acted as a hereditary influence on songs that connected with those found in the popular traditions of Sicilian ballad singers.

Farfariello's was the tragicomic figure of the immigrant as poor as a church mouse—Accardi defines him as "Chaplinesque"[13]—while Nofrio played the foolish, fun-loving jester. De Rosalia's company worked on the weekends, on an intense schedule from 8:30 in the evening until 2:00 in the morning, performing musical and dance numbers often accompanied by the showing of silent films. It is easy to imagine that, as in the case of Farfariello, the work was very demanding.[14] Moreover, De Rosalia was himself an excellent impresario, owning his own record label called Nofrio Records, which was founded by the Neapolitan Clemente Giglio.

Farfariello was in the habit of dressing in the most bizarre manner, posing as an ancient Roman, a gravedigger, or a peasant with costumes made to order in the shop of Frank De Caro on Grand Street, the most famous Italian-American designer of banners, standards, and uniforms.

Farfariello played a fundamental role in the birth of the consciousness of the Italian immigrant in New York. In particular, he created certain southern-style costumes according to a technique perfected in Naples and following the example of the most famous Neapolitan comedian, Nicola Maldacea. His style reflects many comedians and comic writers who, like Farfariello, experimented with new rules of performance and language and who contributed substantially to changing predominantly dialect sounds to diglossic and anglicized versions used by immigrants. But in the theater world their artistic experience remained substantially unique. The performances of Farfariello provided an avant-garde glimpse deep into the recesses of Italian immigration. Humor was the narrative means most adaptable to plumb the depths of this world, to manifest the transformation of the immigrants. Persisting in this direction, Farfariello made his type of performance a model. His comic signature confronted dilemmas in a dignified way, helping immigrants construct their identity in the new world and decide which aspects of the cultural provenance could and should be passed on to future generations. Farfariello placed on the public stage what immigrants experienced privately. According to Romeyn, with Farfariello, we enter the moral universe in continual transformation.[15]

The success of Farfariello leads me to believe that from the beginning the Italian community in New York, notwithstanding its undeniable nature as a colony, worked toward supporting theatrical and musical productions independent of the Italian market (even if such productions were not completely unknown in Italy). These productions enjoyed wide circulation in the United States, thanks to the work of entrepreneurs and musical publishers, through recordings that in America became mediums of communication and entertainment more rapidly than in Italy. In fact, in Italy rather meager profits did not permit the phonograph to spread widely, and it remained a luxury item for a long time.

The typical structure of Migliaccio's sketches—writes Haller—consisted of two introductory verses, which were sung, followed by a prose text, and an epilogue, with poetry and prose, music, and acting by this performer-manager. Two examples of this four-part structure are the sketches titled "'O Spuorto 'e Mulberry Stritto" (Sport of Mulberry Street) and the more famous "Pascale Passaguaie" (The troubles of Pasquale).[16]

One of the most interesting compositions written by Migliaccio is "'Mpareme a via d' 'a casa mia," a song in which his attempt to integrate different musical repertoires is very apparent. The song is an adaptation of the famous American number by Irving King, "Show me the way to go home"; Farfariello's version was conducted by Nathaniel Shilkret,

one of the principal orchestra conductors of ethnic repertoires.[17] Using preexisting songs derived from other repertoires was common among musicians during the first decades of the nineteenth century through the practice of stock arrangement and of lead-sheet and head arrangement.[18] Successful songs were also brought into the immigrant environment, the arrangements of these then became adapted to the language and the expectations of whoever performed them and of the potential audience. This practice was also followed in Naples as is shown in a celebrated number at the end of the nineteenth century: "'A risa" by Berardo Cantalamessa.[19] In the memoirs of Nicola Maldacea we read about an event in Naples in 1895:

> "'A risa" is by Cantalamessa, lyrics and music. But the music, to be truthful, is not the actual work of this best and late-lamented artist. He and I had met in Salon Margherita, and ever since then we were good friends, often going for pleasant walks together. On a certain day, after a rehearsal at the Salon, we stopped in the Galleria at a shop by the side of the Crociera, which opens onto the road to Rome to the right, where now there is the De Santo Bakery. For the first time there were phonographs in Naples, a very recent invention. In order to hear the human voice, one had to place a type of rubber pear-shaped object to his ear [headphone], which was connected to other rubber cylinders linked to the machine that reproduced sound. The major attraction was a popular song by a black North American artist. I don't remember the name of the song. I know only that it created in Cantalamessa and me a very great impression because it communicated an irresistible joy. The singer laughed at the sound of the music, and his laughter was so spontaneous and so entertaining that he [Cantalamessa] was prompted to imitate it.[20]

The success of the song was great, and soon among the very first Italian records there was even a version of the record "'A risa" with the title "La risata" (The laugh).

Cantalamessa's song is an adaptation of "The Laughing Song" by the black artist George W. Johnson. The first real recording star, Johnson had started his career manufacturing Edison tinfoil cylinders in 1877. His recordings of "The Laughing Song" and of "The Whistling Coon"—another famous composition of that era—for Columbia and for other labels remained extremely popular for the entire 1890s. Of these there are tens if not hundreds of versions, and the Neapolitan is only one of many parodies of the song.[21] Moreover, the song by Johnson and Cantalamessa sheds light on another important aspect that relates to the business of selling music and confirms the idea that this type of production had already been, from the start, strongly oriented to widespread circulation across

borders. Its circulation was helped by the simplicity of its structure and the technical reproducibility of the object itself.

Even in the case of stock arrangements, lead-sheets, and head arrangements, it must be added that this custom acquired an additional value when practiced in the world of the immigrants. As Greene affirms, in order for a song to become popular, it must establish a close emotional relationship between its authors and its audience. Whoever writes ballads must have an extraordinary ability to capture the listeners' ear and to appeal to their tastes.[22] If an immigrant writer appropriates a popular American song, the procedure becomes even more complex. Indeed, the writer must manifest his dual identity as an immigrant and as an American because by taking possession of a musical document well known in his country, he or she realizes a close emotional relationship between himself or herself and the audience. On the other hand, inasmuch as he/she is the author of both the translation and of the adaptation, he or she intervenes directly in the item and gives life to an emotional relationship by introducing that song into an unfamiliar cultural context. In so doing, the artist participates on the symbolic level in the integration of the immigrants into the new world.[23]

An interesting study of stock arrangements has shown how common it was to change originally published arrangements to fit the needs of the musicians.[24] In a sample of thirteen stock arrangements and forty recordings before 1930, Chevan reveals that three quarters of those included were made according to this practice. This shows that in jazz and, I might add, in commercial music of those years, the use of written music and exchanges among repertoires were widespread. This hypothesis reevaluates the role of oral transmission in the musical inventiveness of repertoires of noneducated Americans at the beginning of the twentieth century. Farfariello probably was not particularly enthusiastic to participate in the cultural and musical osmosis to which, nevertheless, he made a fundamental contribution. According to the recollection of Arnold, a jazz musician, director of a swing orchestra, and son of Farfariello, the comedian had a strong bent toward conservatism. But some of his statements help to understand an increased awareness of the necessity for change in advance of an imminent integration, even in musical terms, on the part of the Italians, who wished to free themselves from their image as immigrants at the beginning of the 1900s. Arnold Migliaccio recalls:

> I decided to abandon Neapolitan variety music. From the time that I was very young, say about 15 years old, I had accompanied my father on the stage. I beat time with a kind of drum made up of a tambour and a plate, but the tempo of the *marcetta* was always the same; at first I enjoyed myself

> on stage with my father and his sketches, but after a while I became bored. In the 1930s and 40s, American music was of a stupefying beauty and novelty. Anyone who wanted to become a musician had to pay attention to it; from that direction emanated the most innovative things, the most modern musicians and styles. At 20, I became attracted to that music, and so I started to play jazz, first as a drummer; then I went to the guitar. I tried a few numbers in this style, even with my father who let me do it once in a while, but for him music was what he had become familiar with on the stages of the immigrant theaters.[25]

We now return to Farfariello's song and seek to examine the innovation that the Italian artist introduced into the American song. This is an excerpt of the song adapted by Farfariello with the Italian and English translations side by side:

Non so perchè pensaje	Non so perché mi venne in mente	I don't know why I want to go to Broadway…
d'andare a Broduè…	di andare a Broadway…	I wanted to go and see
vulette andà a vedè.	volli andare a vedere.	Thousands of lights …
Migliara 'e lampetelle…	Migliaia di luci…	your head will spin,
te giren' 'e cirvelle,	ti gira la testa,	and you'll want to scream.
c''a forza 'e alluccà.	a forza di urlare.	
Portame a casa mia	*Portami a casa mia*	*Show me the way to go home.*
me voglio andà a cuccà,	*voglio andare a dormire,*	*I want to go to bed …*
M'ha fatto male, i' crere, quell'urtemo bicchiere.	*Mi ha fatto male, penso, quell'ultimo bicchiere*	*I think that last drink did me in.*

The five stanzas are composed of eight lines, each of which has seven syllables, with stressed and unstressed syllables alternating at the end of each line. Inserted between them is the refrain, the part that survives from the original American text. The stanzas are not from the original; they are the work of Farfariello, and they depict brief episodes of a comical nature, depicting everyday occurrences in the lives of immigrants. Here, the comedian identifies himself with a simple soul who, as if in a nearly unending labyrinth, goes to Broadway for the first time, throwing himself into an unlikely romance and exposing himself to all the nighttime vices of an unknown territory, ending up, as was common in this context, in the hands of the law.

What follows is from the original song, which Farfariello had restored, translated, and interpolated in various ways:

Show me the way to go home
I'm tired and ***I want to go to bed***
I had a little drink about an hour ago
And it went right to my head
Where ever I may roam
On land or sea or foam
You will always hear me singing this song
Show me the way to go home.

The Italian performer had clearly elaborated on his text, extracting the sense from the first four lines of the original, thereby, as is indicated in bold, taking from it only the parts in which the comic aspect is most evident and that are best suited to his spirit as a vocal artist.

From a formal point of view, the reworking in Neapolitan reveals itself as a kind of hybrid, halfway between a popular song of the oral tradition and a song for urban entertainment in the 1920s; this song was also destined to be recorded on disc. Farfariello's song did not present itself as a closed piece with a fixed number of verses according to an established schema. The number of verses was, in fact, changed from time to time by the writer-performer. Various performers created and gathered realistic events by using a scenario in which appear famous narrative structures, characters, and situations, to which he refers on stage as a common experience shared by actor and audience. In this way, the artist brings life to an episode of the collective life, removing the distance between the performer and the audience. Thus, the bond that supports this mode of creation-execution-performance and the one described by Geraci about the professional storytellers in Southern Italy and Sicily in particular becomes stronger signing a more direct derivation of the repertoire of Italian-American macchietta to the oral tradition of storytelling.[26]

The refrain is the only remnant of the original and interrupts the train of thought of the performer. More important, the type of musical accompaniment, because of its Dixieland accent, is connected to a domain of paid musical entertainment; thus, a commercial item has been created that has completed the road to the urban repertoire destined to be reproduced infinite times for uses and functions yet to be discovered.[27] The structure of Farfariello's song is cyclical, like many popular southern Italian songs. The decision to place realistic and descriptive aspects from daily life into music is a characteristic of this repertoire. Farfariello had taken up this practice when he was in Naples; in New York he was

influenced by American vaudeville and, in part, by the tradition of Tin Pan Alley.[28] "'Mpareme a via d' 'a casa mia," therefore, sounds like a graft between the Italian tradition and the American, which was developing its formal character in those years. Proof of this comes from the fact that the last verse stands alone because a disc 10 inches in diameter in the 1920s generally contained three-and-a-half minutes of music on each side to a maximum of about five minutes, thereby limiting the sketch's duration. However, if we pay attention to the sense of what is related in the sketch, we will have no problem imagining a continuation of the narration itself; this is how it differs from popular songs in the oral tradition, which do not face any constrictions on length.

Irving King's was one of the most often played songs during the 1920s, and though it demanded a kind of vocal execution dictated by the musical pretence that the singer is drunken man, it lent itself to various types of performance. Among the most celebrated and the least faithful to the original—as opposed to what occurred with Farfariello's recording—is the double version of the California Ramblers orchestra, one of the most famous American groups in the second half of the 1920s. In fact, in the years following 1917, when the Original Dixieland Jass Band had begun to record its famous Victor series, popular music was usually played by small combos made up of no more than five members who played in the style of the ODJB. At the beginning of the 1920s, the demand for dance music grew, and the record companies of New York began to search for larger ensembles capable of playing the latest hits. In November of 1921, a group of nine members recorded two numbers for Vocalion label: "The sheik" and "Georgia Rose," which were placed on the market with the slogan "Played by the California Ramblers." The name of the band, which had been chosen carefully, was elegantly exotic, absolutely removed from the aura of the east coast of the United States in order to show that the music was new and unconventional. Following that band's example, the Original Memphis Five, the Original Indiana Five, the Tennessee Tooters, and the Arkansas Travellers were established; all these bands resided in New York. The California Ramblers were, above all, a studio band, and for about ten years they recorded for all the record companies, sometimes under the name of Golden Gate Orchestra.[29]

Both the versions of "Show me the way to go home" were recorded with an orchestra in New York in 1925. The first was made on September 17 on a Perfect Pathè disc, but it was of a quality inferior to that of the other. That other one was made in December of the same year for Columbia. Practically nothing of the original song remains in either version; in order to maintain the rhythm and presence of the voice, the song came to resemble an ordinary dance band number introduced by an instrumental solo.

As emphasized earlier, even Farfariello's version recorded in New York on March 17, 1926, maintains the pronounced Dixieland style in the performance of the ensemble that accompanies the singer. This aspect frees the dialect song from a traditional context and integrates it into a musical panorama that developed from folk to popular. As a result, the song was destined to enter the commercial record market. In this guise, it was adapted to being played at home or in one of the vaudeville houses that crowded the streets of Manhattan—vaudeville houses much like the one Farfariello describes in the lyrics of the song as filled with a light that confused simple souls to the point of losing his sense of direction and, with the help of a few drinks, forget his way home.

The linguistic aspects Haller describes as typical in about forty sketches by Farfariello are also present in "'Mpareme 'a via d' a casa mia." Thus, in line two of the first stanza, we see the toponym with phonological adaptation of "Broduè" for "Broadway" and in other places "Bruccolino" and "Cunailando" for "Brooklyn" and "Coney Island." Another adaptation based on the sound of an English word is in the last line of the fourth stanza, "uor" for the word "what." Borrowings of the most common English nouns and adjectives are spread throughout the song, often as Italianized transcriptions of a strange tongue with the addition of a final vowel, as in line 1 of the second stanza "naise ghella" for "nice girl" or in line 2 of the last stanza "gioggio" for "judge," and in line 3 "trinche" for "drink." In addition, one notices mixed verbal constructions such as "mi know you" instead of "I know you" in line 2 of the second stanza.

Haller emphasizes that the linguistic mixing is frequent with names and words that reflect the habits of immigrant life. Thus, by observing the borrowings just mentioned, we can infer that contacts of Italians with the legal system were frequent, as were those with brothels and night spots. However, taking into consideration other comic sketches that concerned the world of humble labor, one finds translations such as "barbe gaie" for "barber guy," or rather "barbiere"; "sciaine brush" for "shine (with) a brush" or rather "lustra-scarpe" ("shoe-shine"); "loffaro" for "loafer, i.e., "idler." References to the home and family are frequent: "tenemente" for "tenement" and "basciamento" for "basement." Then there are references to the entertainment world, such as "muvinpiccio" for "moving picture," "clubbo" for "club," "barra" for "bar," "sciò" for "show," and "parlar rummo" for "parlour room."[30] A unique construction occurs in line four of the fourth stanza "Che pelle è chesta cà," where "pelle" might mean drunkenness since this dialect term, which appeared across a few areas around Avellino, meant that very same condition of induced euphoria. As Haller emphasizes, many of these transfers have an uncertain character, and a great many of them simplify the English pronunciation or

only approximate it, which is typical of immigrants. The variants "ghiela/ghella," "pulis/pulisso/pulezio," "bisinisso/besenesse" illustrate the range, the fluctuation, and the uncertainty of nonstandard usages. Such variations lent themselves to linguistic jokes based on double meanings and to the creation of such hybrids as are typical in comic sketches. In fact, they were also used to meet the demands of rhyme and rhythm.[31] This seems to lead us to an inevitable result, as Greene writes when affirming that in addition to providing a social scenario/panorama, the texts of the songs suggest another type of authenticity. In fact, they communicate something significant through the expression of emotions by using metaphor, satire, and humorous phrases and tricks. The songs permitted oppressed minorities and marginal social groups to reveal deep feelings through a coded language, which was intelligible only to those who took part in it. In places where hegemonic groups placed restrictions on the freedom of communication among minorities, these groups failed to control song lyrics that to them seemed absolutely innocuous. Lamentation and protest become the themes represented in the songs of the immigrant community without running the risk of breaking the law.[32]

The principal theme of the comic sketch is focused on the immigrant's disorientation and feeling of loss in the context of New York. At the end of the nineteenth century, the city started to be described through gothic literary attributes—such as "sensationalist" and "wicked"—and through biblical references such as Babel and Babylon. These characteristics were seen as describing the epitome of multiculturalism and immorality by which the American metropolis came to be identified. The phenomenology of fear, of which the sketches of Migliaccio are excellent examples, is a central element in mass urbanism. The descriptions of New York as a place of warnings and moral dangers were abundant in the literature of the middle of the nineteenth century because, for a time, the city had become a symbol of urban decadence in the collective imagination. Not only country folk, who at least had never visited the big city, but also more sophisticated middle-class citizens never dared enter those dark and malodorous alleys in the poor neighborhoods overrun by criminal immigrants, where primitive customs prevailed.[33] Curiously, Farfariello's sketch revealed the other side of the question. It concerned an immigrant who gives one of the most vivid descriptions of disorientation, presenting a stranger who is marginalized. It seizes upon and dramatizes the fear that Americans attributed to the immigrant as a result of his being in New York. Farfariello's narrative invention resolved in an ironic key the ethnic and racial question, and it seems to have ended the search for a two-faced representation of the city, both symmetrical and opposed to each other. The fear of the unknown lingered on both sides—on the American side, which viewed the wave of immigration both paternalistically and

skeptically, and on the immigrant side, which was unprepared and caught between mistrust and phobia.

Among the approximately fifty most famous recordings of Farfariello there are others like "'Mpareme 'a via d' a casa mia" that came from translation and adaptations of American originals. All released by Victor, their titles are as follows: "'O richiamato" (The recalled), parts 1 and 2 recorded on April 6, 1916, with music written by Roger and text by Ferrazzano with an accompaniment by King's Orchestra; "Addò fatiche Giuvà," an adaptation of "Where do you work-a John." This was written by Mortimer Weinberg and Charley Marks with music by Harry Warren,[34] and it was recorded on January 20, 1927, with Alfredo Cibelli's orchestra; "Yes, we have no bananas" with music by Irving Cohan and orchestration by Ted Levy, recorded in Camden, New Jersey, on July 17, 1923. There was also "O Katharina" with music by Richard Fall and lyrics by Gilbert, produced in New York on April 30, 1925. Both the piece by Cohan and this last one by Fall were recorded by Columbia at the same time—that is to say, in the same month and year as Farfariello's was recorded—by Giuseppe Milano, one of the most interesting performers of this musical context.

The discography compiled by Spottswood reports three titles found in no other source: "Where is Mr. Meyer," lyrics by Migliaccio and music by Anton Profes, the orchestra being directed by Bruno Reibold and the item recorded in the Victor studios in Camden, New Jersey, on December 20, 1927. The others are: "Sta canzone fa accussi (This song goes like this) pi'- pi'- pi'pippi" by Irving Caesar, Cliff Friend, and E. Migliaccio; and "Mo chisto è 'o sfizzio vio" (That's my weakness now) by Bud Green, Sam H. Stept, and E. Migliaccio. The last two appeared on either side of the same Victor record, produced on March 26, 1929, with orchestral accompaniment directed by Alfredo Cibelli.[35]

Some of the sketches performed by Farfariello were written by Tony Ferrazzano. Information about him is scarce, but from a brief biographical reconstruction provided by Durante, we know that the 1910s were his most productive years, and that in addition to sheet music, he published in anthologies of songs and sketches and also in various other types of works. His poetry, which employed a patriotic-ironic tone in regard to the Italian-Turkish War and the First World War, appeared in editions, which are very rare, of 1915, 1916, and 1919.[36] Durante's analysis confirms that a genuine partnership was established between Farfariello and Ferrazzano, who was himself a performer and author of some sketches under the name Totò. Farfariello and Ferrazzano had a close friendship during the time when Migliaccio appeared at Caffè Ronca. This place, later to become Caffè Roma, was located on Broome Street, on the corner of Mulberry Street. A meeting place for all Italian variety artists in New York, it was founded

by Pasquale Ronca, an immigrant from Avellino, who later became the impresario for Italian songs for the Brooklyn Academy of Music and for Giovanni Ronca, who had followed his older brother to America in 1892.[37] Farfariello lived close to the Caffè, at 57 Kenmore Street, and it was there that Ferrazzano introduced himself, showing Farfariello a few of his compositions. Although not perfect, they convinced Farfariello of Ferrazzano's potential, and thus some of the most famous comic sketches of the Italian colony's repertoire were born. One of the most amusing sketches was "La lengua 'taliana" (The Italian language). Its structure is very similar to what Haller describes in regard to the other sketches of Farfariello. It begins with an introduction of four hendecasyllabic lines, in alternating rhyme, followed by four five-syllable lines:

Che bella cosa la lengua 'taliana
Chi l'ha criata addà campà cient'anne
Mentre la lingua 'ngrese o americana
Nun la capisco manco si me scanne.
Ma n'ata lengua
Cchiù bella nc'è
Quanno mia moglie
Me nzurta a me.[38]

The Italian language is a beautiful thing. Whoever created it should live 100 years.
But I couldn't understand the English or American language
even if you killed me.
But there's no language
more beautiful
than when my wife
insults me.

Two stanzas of eighteen lines follow in alternate and contiguous rhyme, then a prose piece, and then a last stanza, which consists also of eighteen lines. As is clear by now, this is unqualified praise for the language of the motherland. The humor springs partly from the play on Anglicisms, discussed earlier, but above all from a pronounced taste for hyperbole, as is seen in this fragment from the prose part:

Eravamo tutte 'taliane e calavrise, e questo dicevamo che la lengua napoletana è la cchiù bella! … che poi se vogliamo la lengua 'mericana è una lengua 'taliana struppiata, avutata sotto e 'ncoppa, perciò noi diciamo: femmena eccà li femmene le chiamano *uomene* E po' la lengua 'taliana è liscia! Quello ca è significa. Pane significa pane, non già che il pane lo chiamate: preta!"

We were all Italians and Calabrians,[39] and we said that the Neapolitan tongue is the most beautiful.… We also said that, if you please, the American language is a damaged Italian, turned upside down. So we say "femmena," and here they call "femmene" "womene."[40] And then the Italian language is clear! It means what it says. "Pane" means "pane" and not what in America they call "preta."[41]

A version of this witty and complex sketch was filmed in *The Movie Actor*, a movie in which Farfariello plays three famous character types: the ignorant immigrant Pasquale Passaguai, the Parisian variety star, and the gangster of Little Italy.[42] As Bertellini says, the reference to Naples is a constant in the film. In his frequent use of the vernacular, Farfariello exposes an expressive critical dimension of the diaspora that is much more complex than the mere recollection of the city and of its culture as a simple dynamic of the return to one's origins.[43] In this way, the production of films set in Naples or drawing inspiration from the Neapolitan language and song are a subgenre of Italian-American cinema with specific characteristics.

Apropos of *The Movie Actor* and of the activity of Farfariello in general, Muscio says that the resistance to assimilation finds in the sketch artist a kind of ironic cantor to whom, because he brings to the stage a fawning anti-Americanism shared by the greater part of this countrymen, the Italian culture in America perhaps paid greater attention. *The Movie Actor* brought to the screen a creation of Italian-American culture, a distinctive form that undergoes a change in emphasis and gesture to preserve itself when it comes into contact with the American form. In this process, this culture becomes something that is no longer recognizable by the Italians and yet not completely absorbable by the Americans either, like the entertaining slang of Little Italy, the songs of Jimmy Durante, Louis Prima, and Dean Martin.[44]

Giuseppe De Laurentiis

Like Farfariello, the other immigrant comedians of whom records remain showed little interest in integrating into the repertoire geared to the American consumer. Among these is Giuseppe De Laurentiis, active during the first half of the twentieth century and author of comic routines, often in collaboration with Frank Amodio, a figure who turns up in the context of the Italian-American theater. For De Laurentiis, the encounter with American culture occurred on a linguistic plane, while for the most part his music did not connect with it. But the author was also a singer of ballads in Italian or rather of songs translated into the mother tongue, tinged with dialect elements, that preserved the structure of the original music, that is, the American structure. Among other sketches, De Laurentiis published "Chist'è New York" (This is New York), a genuine bravura piece, with a very dense lyrical text, recited all in one breath except for the musical introduction composed of one stanza of eight lines each with eight syllables and a brief prose stanza of four lines in the body

of the piece; these lines also have eight syllables and are repeated three times during the performance.

Songo stato a Nuva Yorche Quasi 'n anno e quatte mise, chello ch'aggio visto e 'ntiso nun 'o putite immaginà: …	I've been in New York Almost a year and four months. What I've seen and heard You can't imagine:
1. *Appena arrivai a* ***battaria****, m'avita credere, parola mia, me credevo arrassusia che ero iuto a pazzaria … ma l'amico che m'era purtate mi ricette: … "Ccà se sta sempre occupate, ccà perfino 'e sfaticate stanno sempe ammuinate". Po' sagliette 'na scalinata. Rint' 'o treno fui vuttate, 'mmiezo 'a folla fui menate, comme sarda fui insaccate … Suffrette cchiu' chella jurnata ca tutto 'o tempo d' 'a traversata …*	1. *When I arrived at the* ***Battery****, you must believe what I say, I felt isolated, as if I had entered a madhouse … the friend who had brought me there said.… "Here, people are always busy, and, even the idlers are always crowded together." Then I climbed a staircase and went into a train. I got into the middle of a crowd and was pushed around; it was like being packed in a sardine can.… I suffered more that day than I did during my entire trip across the ocean.…*
E chista è Nuova Yorche Ca se corre 'ncoppa e sotto, chi te tira e chi te votta e doppo siente "escuse mì".[45]	And this is New York where people rush above and below. They pull you and push you and then all you heard is "excuse me."

The sing-song rhythm is maintained during the recitation of the prose piece, and it is this perpetual rhythm, always the same, that suggests the logical and natural chaining of images described by the comedian. That is, the performer rattles off the experiences of the immigrant who enters into contact with an unknown and hostile world. The entire text, not simply the refrain accompanied by orchestra, is punctuated with a very pronounced syllabication, thereby accentuating the often irritable, nearly exasperated tone of the performer. In the introduction accompanied by music, we realize that the "I," the narrator, is an immigrant who has returned home and who wishes to share with his audience, which is not ignorant of such events, the experience of moving to America for a year and four months. Here, De Laurentiis is a bird of passage, a migratory bird, one of the many Italians who, having faced the very hard challenges of integration, preferred to return to their homeland and for the same reason decided not to make another attempt at immigration.[46]

The first prose section describes the approach to the port of New York; the "battaria" is actually Battery Park, which is the gateway to Manhattan. It is here that the protagonist has his first experience of social alienation ("me credevo arrassusia, che ero iuto a pazzaria" ["I felt isolated, as if I had entered a madhouse"]). The second image is the entrance into the subway with trains incredibly crowded in which our man receives a battering from all sides (6 kicks, 25 punches, 150 shoves), which make him cry all morning. He returns to the memory of his crossing, if in a humorous key ("I suffered more that day than I did during my entire trip across the ocean"). His suffering is such that upon arrival back home, the poor fellow must recover in bed, "sick"—bewildered and frightened. The soft rhymes—ato/ata/ate—speed up the feverish rhythm of this segment. The first musical insertion follows, which sums up this voyage into the unknown: "This is New York, where people rush above and below," an obvious allusion to the vertical aspect of the city, to the underground of the subway, and to the above-ground streets and skyscrapers. There are pushes and elbow shoves from all sides—a new reference to the alienation of the citizen and of the stranger who has not integrated—notwithstanding the excuses that come every instant with the inevitable apology, here expressed in broken English as "escuse mì" (excuse me).

The second prose segment continues with a critique of the equation of modernity with progress. "If this is paradise," De Laurentiis asks himself, "what can hell be like?" They call the train a convenience, he tells us. But to hell with this convenience; if he were going to be murdered, wouldn't it be better if he went on foot?

A list of distinct ethnies of great suggestiveness follows, above all because, contrary to what the piece has said so far, it is presented as something positive. ("However, I must tell you that there are good things, too. There are people of every nation, religion, and association"). The ambivalence with which the immigrant observes the new continent is something intrinsic to this phase of the Italian exodus. Song was a means through which the Italian immigrants passed on the experience of the difficulties they had endured in connecting with the new culture, producing a mixture of characteristics that were positive and negative at the same time. For example, the contradictory attitudes toward Christopher Columbus are typical; he was celebrated in many songs during these years. On the one hand, the Genovese explorer was recognized as a hero for having discovered a new world and for having offered immigrants the possibility of redemption; on the other hand, he was dethroned from his exceptional role because he bore primary responsibility for discovering a world that was strange and extremely difficult. In this way, the Italians put themselves on the same plane as the other immigrant ethnic groups. In

criticizing through music some aspects of the new life, the artists depict the new arrivals in a psychological dimension of great discomfort because of the dangers found in an existential condition they do not understand and fear. As in compositions of immigrants from northern Europe and Germany, in some Italian texts the idea of abandoning family and home is rejected completely. Common to all immigrant groups is the theme of disaffection and disappointment tied to the arrival in and adaptation to a new context. The immigrants coming from the south constantly complained about their treatment by Anglo-Americans, and the stories in their songs express a general confusion in face of the incomprehensibility of the cultural and behavioral norms of the host people. All of this is accurately described in the piece by De Laurentiis.

The awareness of participating in the formation of a multiethnic world is expressed in De Laurentiis's song. It continues his story with a list of populations among which, it is interesting to note, Neapolitan singers are distinguished as a group. As already emphasized by the reference to the Calabrians in Farfariello's sketch about the Italian language, the internal division within the Italian populace into regional subgroups, which continued to be referred to by immigrant performers and writers, is an undeniable indication that the very concept of Italy as a nation was still vague and lacking in historical significance.

The third and last prose section presents some usual terms of Farfariello's pieces, which reintroduces Anglo-Italian-Neapolitan slang: "faittature," or rather "pugili," "picchiatori," relating to the word "to fight"; "pulisse," for "police"; "condutture" for "conductor"; "i bosse 'e fatturia" for "factory bosses"; "i proprietari di fabbriche" for "factory owners"; "pezze" for "pence" (used also to mean dollars); and "ghelle" for "girls."

The last prose section repeats the enthusiastic tone adopted in the preceding section introduced by the adversative "però" ("however"). The uniqueness of the American city is objectified and based on its total belief in progress, which is, above all, a product of urbanization in the name of which the city has allowed itself to be transformed. The writer tells us that "Sotto 'a terra tutte pertose" ("underground there are lots of holes"), alluding to the subway; and adds "Sotto all'acqua e sotto 'e case, vire 'o treno ca esce e trase" ("under the water and under houses, trains enter and then emerge"). Trains pop up from everywhere, from bridges that connect Manhattan to the mainland, and one sees houses everywhere. There are automobiles, aeroplanes, and buildings of one hundred floors. And it won't take a moment for them to build you a tenement: "Automobili, arioplani e palazze a ciento piane, int'a manco nu mumento ccà te fanno nu casamento." It is a fast-moving observation that captures,

as if in cinematic frames, an image typical of the era and of the place. Above all, it draws our attention, yet again, to the new perception of time—here instantaneous because it is expressed in the rhythm of modern industrial man—that in southern Italy is slow because it is marked by natural tempos and, above all, by the work of farmers and fishermen. All of the meaning of this part is focused on the home, which in New York becomes mobile; this is an ironic allusion to the properties owned by Jews and rented by Italians, and to the wide access to money that the Jews have. The next sentence focuses on another fundamental aspect of Italian-Catholic society. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the American family was already experiencing a troublesome phase: "Fathers don't recognize their children, and children don't recognize fathers," and as adults the children live as boarders, as if in pensions, demanding every attention—meals, rest, and clean, new shoes—without giving anything in return. De Laurentiis reports that in the Italian-American family the relationship is based exclusively on economic and capitalist foundations with no room for sentiment or sympathy; the last is a legacy of rural Italian culture based on the principle of having children as an insurance for parents in their old age.

What Esther Romeyn emphasizes regarding the family when speaking of Farfariello also applies to De Laurentiis. The Italian-American community is a society based on the *domus*, according to its meaning in Latin, that is, the ideals of success and of reward are defined based on a system of values and moral standards characteristic of the family. Individuals must surrender their desires and decisions to the authority of the family and refer everything to its hierarchy. The *domus* was what designated the boundaries of Italian-American culture. This was in total contrast to the culture of America, a place where moral values fluctuated and where the authority of the family was jeopardized. Many immigrants feared that the lure of the style of family life in America would entail the loss of their most traditional values and the substitution of family interests by those of individuals. That is, they feared the American way of life would cause the collapse of their internal social order. There were attractions that played against these social ideals: clubs, theaters, playgrounds, bars—these places of entertainment were also objects of a desire too long repressed in the homeland. Romeyn defines these places as "the geography of rebellion," a reality recreated perfectly in the shows of Farfariello as in those of De Laurentiis.[47]

The typical education of the immigrant proved to be without value on the American continent. It is exactly this disturbing aspect that De Laurentiis stresses in the closing of the piece, where he renews the Italian

pride that was opposed at the beginning of mass immigration of the nineteenth century by the ugly hypothesis on the part of white Americans that Italians truly belonged to an inferior race.

De Laurentiis then revives the feeling toward national pride in many places in his sketches. In "L'Italia al Polo Nord" (Italy at the North Pole), a piece dedicated to the achievement of Umberto Nobile, he says:

> This is not intended to criticize America / but in all due respect to this hospitable land / when it's about a great Italian man / many pretend not to understand, or they claim that he is not Italian. / Do you know what a newspaper once did? / It said that Marconi was an Irishman. / Certain others, if you please, say that Christopher Columbus was Jewish. / It's true that one can say whatever he wants, / but Christopher Columbus did not have a beard. / In fact, ask some Indian if Christopher Columbus sold merchandise for a profit [an explicit criticism of the well-known mercantile abilities of the Jews]. / And perhaps today or tomorrow / you'll hear them say that Nobile was an Indian / because of his skin color. / There's too much jealousy here. / That's why they've shut the doors / but we come through the "back." / Listen, I believe that Italy is small, / but it sends out great minds who make an impression on all great nations. / And so viva Italia, viva Nobile, viva Columbus, and viva Marconi.[48]

In "'O pugilatore italiano" (The Italian boxer), a piece dedicated to Primo Carnera,[49] De Laurentiis denounces in the same terms the subordinate position of Italian immigrants, especially the marked indifference of American newspapers toward events in the Italian community, however exceptional, such as those associated with the great boxer:

> His victories are facts that cannot be denied; / and even if someone wanted to challenge that, / he'd have a real fight on his hands. / So for now, remember this: / God will think about the future, / but whoever tries to stand up to Carnera / will have a rough time of it. / For me, there's still a lot of jealousy, / and this you can imagine / because with all of the victories he's won / I've never seen his name in a newspaper headline. / This is because he's Italian. / If he were American, / the papers would be full of stories about him. / But he gets his satisfaction by using his hands; / they don't talk about him in the newspaper, / and he sends people to the hospital.[50]

De Laurentiis's skits fully recorded the discussion that identified Italians with criminal organizations, often affiliated with the Black Hand, which had regularly appeared in vaudeville sketches, in newspaper articles, and in cartoons since 1905–1906. In 1906, in fact, *The Black Hand* was the title of a film that became the model for crime films with Italian gangsters as the protagonists. The film tells a story about blackmail, the Mafia,

gangsters, and moral redemption set in an Italian neighborhood in New York. It is conceived in a manner that is halfway between realism and racial prejudice. As Bertellini writes with regard to the early American cinema, the treatment of gambling, prostitution, and violence in Little Italy satisfied ethnographic prejudices pertaining to the life of the Italians of New York. In this way, it made visible and, at the same time, mythologized what many Americans imagined life in the most degenerate neighborhoods of the metropolis was like; those neighborhoods were the ones where Italians usually lived but where Americans were too frightened to go.[51] Many of De Laurentiis's texts seem to be written precisely to stress the honest and upstanding nature of the Italian citizens of America and to discredit the ancient but tenacious equation of "Italian" and "mafioso."

De Laurentiis was also a performer of melodic songs, the kind in which the connection between two linguistic entities—the Italian-Neapolitan and the American—was evident more than anywhere else. In particular, his rendition of "For me and my girl" should be noted. This is an adaptation of the celebrated song by Ray E. Goetz, Edgar Leslie, and George W. Meyer, and is better known by the title "For me and my gal." It provided the title for the film of that name in 1942, directed by Busby Berkeley, with Judy Garland and Gene Kelly. Apropos of this recording, it is useful to quote the words of Mark Pezzano, an Italian-American collector interviewed in the winter of 2003 in New York. What follows sheds light on the musical tastes of the first Italian immigrants in North America:

> In the 1920s and 30s the Italians who came to New York felt a profound detachment from their homeland, and whatever allowed them to remember Italy was welcomed. Among all of these, the Neapolitans were the most nostalgic. Therefore, the Neapolitan songs made here were more Neapolitan than those written in Italy. Something different happened in the case of humorous songs, the writers of which, since they were not as closely tied to the original models, granted themselves the use of a few new elements. In this group, one of the best was Frank Amodio, who wrote most of the sketches for Giuseppe De Laurentiis, but Farfariello was also unsurpassed as when he performed his sketch using expressions typical of Neapolitans here.[52] In any case, in the 1950s, seafaring songs, barcaroles, and pattern songs were still being composed, more than were being written in Naples. Another famous New York writer was Luigi Canoro,[53] the author of "Aggio perso a Maria" (I've lost Maria), a song in the rhythm of the habanera, the most famous version of which is by Ria Rosa. Another methodology that achieved great success was that in which were composed Italian-Neapolitan songs emanating from the original American version, of which "For Me and My Girl" is an example. The text, an adaptation of the English by Frank Amodio, is a slow foxtrot in which De Laurentiis, playing with the assonance, helped create puns and word tricks in Neapolitan.[54]

Armando Cennerazzo

Like the sketches by De Laurentiis, the major part of Italian production in America is devoted to conserving the styles and themes taken from Italy, with a resistance to new elements from the country to which the immigrants had come. This was dictated by an unconscious desire to maintain a solid and undying rapport with the homeland. On the other hand, the same term "birds of passage" also expresses the immigrants' ambivalence toward the homeland they left behind and to which they return repeatedly, whether physically or emotionally. An example is Armando Cennerazzo who had many different interests.[55] An analysis of his documents, housed in the Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III in Naples, shows that his innumerable interests ranged from dialect theater to social dramas and to songs written by authors who preferred structures and themes closely related to the Italian-American environment with scarce consideration for that formal aesthetic element that would be appreciated more by the American (wasp) audience. Cennerrazzo was also a promoter of the culture of the community and opened the Biltmore Theater.[56] The interests of the author emerge from the parcels stored in the Neapolitan library containing the musical material collected by Cennerazzo in New York, where he moved at age twelve, and during his frequent returns to Italy. The materials probably represent the tastes of a great part of the Italian community in New York, and they are oriented toward an attachment to the aesthetic of Italian realism in the late nineteenth century, at least as far as the theatrical texts accompanied by music are concerned.

The collection of several hundred scores forms an anthology of famous songs published in Naples and sold in New York in American editions, such as "Zappatore" (Farmer), the famous song by Libero Bovio and Ferdinando Albano, published in America by the Italian Book Company in 1929. There are also songs that are less well known, such as "Sul' io, Carmè" (Me only, Carmela) with slow waltz notations by Raffaele Chiurazzi and Giuseppe Bonavolontà, published in Naples by La Canzonetta and in New York by the already mentioned Italian Book Company in 1920. Moreover, the collection includes sketches probably written in America, such as "'O guaglione 'e malavita" (Boy of the underworld) by A. Caro and V. Buonomo, the original edition of which was published by Mauro V. Cardilli located in New York on Bleecker Street; and "Zi Tore" (Uncle Tore) by Cennerazzo and by Giovanni Del Colle. This song also includes the following notation: "an unsurpassable creation by the comic Giuseppe Milano, copyright 1918 by the Italian Book Company." The song is about an event focused on the tragedy of a mature man—Milano uses the phrase "nigro te" as an expression of

self-pity—dragged to the United States by his daughter who has gone there to marry an American. He laments the fact that he has to adapt to a new, unknown lifestyle. The sketch opens and closes with a quotation from "Fenesta ca lucive" (Light in the window). The collection contains other songs such as "Lettera a mamma" (Letter to mama) by Cennerazzo and J. Gioè (published by Schettino Music Roll Company in 1924 at 327 East 113th Street, New York). In a moving tone this song seems to take up the thesis of "Senza mamma" (Without mama), the celebrated musical in three acts written in 1931 by Cennerazzo and maestro F. Nino Pen, that is, Francesco Pennino, the maternal grandfather of the director/producer Francis Ford Coppola. In addition, the collection includes romantic songs such as "L'urdema serenata" (The last serenade) by Nicolino D'Avanzo and Luigi Donadio, published by the same authors in New York in 1923. Like many other songs, this one was also available on a music roll. There are also dramatic songs such as "Disonore" (Dishonor) by P. L. Esposito and D. Ietti (copyright by Italo Bella, 2353 Ocean Parkway, Brooklyn) and sung by Carlo Renard, a prominent exponent of the world of Italian-American theater; "Vendetta 'e core" (The heart's revenge) by Cennerazzo and Mario Ostuni (copyright 1924 by Mario Ostuni, 601 East 187th Street, New York); and "Senza curtiello" (Without a knife) by Capurro and Mario Nicolò (Italo-American Editions, 187 Grand Street, 1926, by V. Esposito). This last piece is part of the Piedigrotta Rossi of that year, and just as the Piedigrotta of the following year, this one included "Io veco 'o paraviso" (I see paradise) by G. Pisano and M. Nicolò, published by Ceria, an Italian-American house.

The collection also includes dance tunes such as "Tic-ti tic-t á gira e rigira" (Turn and turn again), a foxtrot by Feola and Gaetano Lama published in 1920 in the American edition by the Italian Book Company. The same Cennerazzo probably included a few of his performances, since some of these scores show handwritten notes in the margins signed notes written in pencil. Included in Cennerazzo's collection are some English songs, such as "If You Want the Rainbow (You Must Have the Rain)", with lyrics by Billy Rose and Mort Dixon and music by Oscar Levant and published by the Remick Music Corporation in 1928. Among the items in the collection are also a certain number of operas and operettas about New York such as '*Nguerra* (At war), an opera in two acts by Cennerazzo with music by Ralph De Luca as well as *Misero indiano* (The poor Indian), with lyrics by Cennerazzo and music by Nick Aversano.

Collections of songs are also present, including one that was probably created in transit from Naples to New York; its music and only part of the lyrics are by Mario Nicolò, one of the principal musicians of the Italian-American scene. A few American Piedigrottas, like the one of 1924

published by Marechiaro edition set in 127 Mulberry Street, and edited by Alberto Campobasso, are also included; in these Piedigrottas there are collected items signed by many of the Italian composers and poets living in New York, such as Giovanni Ingenito, Guglielmo Onofri, Vincenzo De Crescenzo, the above-named Campobasso, Farfariello, Giuseppe De Luca, and Mario Maiori. The Piedigrotta of 1927, printed by the Naples Music Company of 181 Grand Street, New York, includes, in addition to the names just mentioned, those of Pasquale Buongiovanni, Cennerazzo, E. Battiparano, A. Paganucci, and Gennaro and Salvatore Quaranta.

Cennerazzo was among the most careful observers of the community of which he was a part. The care with which he preserved the documents that make up the collection removes all doubt that he was scrupulous in recording the trends and the tastes of his compatriots at the height of Italian immigration. Based on the names just mentioned, we can formulate a hypothesis about this material, which probably includes all the most frequently performed and valued pieces in the community in the first half of the twentieth century. Once again, even if the presence of some English songs bears witness to an interest in an exotic repertoire, which naturally did not lack appeal as inclination toward syncretism. The variety and the absolute eclectic nature of the music collected by Cennerazzo bears witness, moreover, to the fact that the concept of an ethnic group is something extremely changeable and elusive when trying to define one's cultural identity. It is completely and constantly reshaped because the characteristics of a group in constant motion change without pause, and this fact encourages artists to express the nature of the connection between them and their ethnic group.

Raffaele Balsamo

The case of Raffaele Balsamo (b. Caserta May 7, 1885; d. Naples November 22, 1946) is emblematic of the enormous difficulty of reconstructing important dates in the life of a Italian performer who was a long-time resident of America. There are only sparse Italian and American sources available, and in this case, they also contradict each other. A brief biographical profile of the tenor can be found in De Mura's *Enciclopedia*.[57] A recording for Favorite (1–35323) of "Serenata a Surriento" (Sorrento serenade)[58] with accompaniment by a string band made on September 22, 1909, confirms what De Mura writes apropos of the timidity of the still young performer not only because of the technical medium used but also because of the singer's general disposition. Not yet comfortable with public appearances, Balsamo sounded good technically because his voice was endowed with an excellent, clear intonation, but at times he seemed shy.

From Spottswood's discography, we learn that Balsamo was active in America from 1922 to 1928, a period during which, according to De Mura, the tenor had already made a trip back to Italy. In the history of American recording there is no mention of any recording in the period from 1914 to 1919; during that period, according to De Mura, Balsamo had again traveled in America. Moreover, the recordings cited by Spottswood do not seem to derive from Italian origins but were in all probability made in America because the orchestras were led by maestros active in New York. This indicates that the singer was actually there. The first recording sessions were for Victor under the direction of Shilkret and were completed in October 1922. The eight recordings that followed were made for Columbia between December 1922 and March 1923. This is a group of songs by very famous Neapolitan authors (Tagliaferri, Lama, E. A. Mario), songs that were probably in Balsamo's repertoire, and therefore he succeeded in using them with complete confidence in the recording studio. In December 1923 the tenor began to record some songs that, judging from the names of their authors, were American in origin. Among them are "'A canzone 'e Santa Lucia" (The song of Santa Lucia) by Luigi Donadio and Raffaele De Luca (Vi 77274);[59] "Arrivanno a Napule" (Arriving in Naples) by Francesco Pennino (Co E5260); "Cielo celeste" (Blue sky) (Co 14021-F), the Italian version of the celebrated Mexican song "Cielito lindo," which itself is an adaptation recorded by many other Italian performers in New York. Other songs in this group were "Vals d'ammore" (Waltz of love) by Balsamo with music by Giuseppe De Luca (Ok 9181 and Co 14772-F); "Napule e tutt'ora" (Always Naples), again by Giuseppe De Luca (Vi 77928); "Suonne di aprile" (Dreams of April) by Pennino; "Terra luntana" (Distant land) by Pasqualotto and E. A. Mario (Ok 9188); "Mamma luntana" (Distant mother) by Alfredo Bascetta (Ok 86008); and "Senza mamma" (Without mama) by Pennino (Ok 86022). The list would be longer, but nothing could be added to the material of the quality of those choices made by the singer when he decided whether or not to record the song.

In conclusion, there are a few dance numbers or those that are close to a more American typology, that is, rhythmically richer. These were produced between 1923 and 1924, and among them are "Fronn' limons' focstrott" (Lemon leaves foxtrot) (Co 14013-F), grafted to a dance rhythm sustained by a vocal style typical of the "a fronna 'e limone" (lemon leaves) song. It was usually performed at full length with microintervals, chromatic flourishes, and without instrumental accompaniment. Here the presence of musical instruments determines the innovation through the maintainance of the traditional features of the style.[60] The piece was recorded on the other side of the Columbia disc that included

"Vommero e Mergellina" (Vomero and Mergellina), a melodic song; this too does not offer a list of the writers' names. Often, in fact, as in this case, a dance number was paired with one in a different tone, and at times this was inspired by nostalgia. Similar reasoning inspired another Columbia record (14081-F), on which are recorded "Terra d' America" (The land of America), a nostalgic song, and the celebrated "Fox trot della nostalgia" (Nostalgic foxtrot), both melancholic dance numbers. Except for a few titles, therefore, the recordings of Balsamo are essentially of traditionally melancholic songs and of spoken scenes; this is because his vocal timbre, the very quality of his sound, was particularly adaptable to the theater, which was typical of the generation I am discussing. In an attempt to align Italian and American sources, I can hypothesize that, those who resided in America for the first time from 1914 to 1919 engaged mostly in concert work, as De Mura recalls. Balsamo returned to America and lived there from 1922 to 1928, this time to dedicate himself to studio recording. It was then that he grasped the great penetrating ability of the record and, above all, the possibility of drawing audiences to him in greater number than was possible in live performances.

This, therefore, is an important development; while touring America, Italian performers of commercial songs realized that the record would penetrate the music market more rapidly and that it would create a more profitable relationship in terms of time and money. That is, while the market for live performances would decrease, the market for the record, thanks to its ability to be distributed contemporaneously in various places, would increase by virtue of its immediacy.

Giuseppe Milano

A contemporary of Balsamo was Giuseppe Milano, about whom, however, nothing is said in Italian sources. A baritone, he performed dramatic songs thanks to his dense vocal timbre, which was rich in feeling. He began to record in New York in 1915, and he remained active in the recording studio until 1929. In the 1930s, no records under his name were released. He was surely an artist for the WOV Radio Station in the early 1940s because some of his records made for radio have survived. These were made together with Nino Gabrè, under the direction of Nick Aversano, a musician who matured in the American context. Milano's discography is very rich, numbering about two hundred titles, in which the compositions of Francesco Pennino abound. This is because of their mutual understanding of the sentimental-melancholic style, which prompted the baritone

to move even into the environment of Italian-American drama. Finally, traces of his presence in New York can be found as early as 1909.[61]

An important element that helps to reflect upon the excessively confident attitude with which the ethnic music market was managed in the United States is the absence of transpositions of tonality between one singer's version of a song and another's version of the same number. In fact, an item performed by Milano "'A busta d' o core" (The envelope of the heart) by Gennaro Capolongo with lyrics by G. Bugni was recorded in New York by Balsamo as well; the tonality of the song's framework is consonant with the voice of a tenor, but it is inappropriate for Milano's baritone register. Because he is very flexible with his highly dramatic style, however, he rises to the occasion here and there, preserving the timbre of his voice. Balsamo's recording on the Columbia label (14249-F) was made in January 1928, while that of Milano for Brunswick (58049) came a little earlier in December 1927. The arrangement is by Romano Romani, and the fact that Milano first, without transposition, and then Balsamo would have recorded it makes think that the song was not written for Milano. It was performed by the orchestra and the soloist, just as Romani had arranged it, without any intervention to improve the performance, not even—and this is to the point—the transposition of tonality.

Even Milano, like many of his colleagues, recorded adaptations of American songs: "Yes, we have no bananas," put into Italian by Frank Amodio (1923, Co E9069); "Cielo celeste" (Blue sky) (1924, Em 12133); "O Katharina!" (1925, Co 14130-F); "A canzone d' 'o carcerato," translated into Italian-Neapolitan by Amodio from the original "The prisoner's song" by Guy Massey (1926, Vi 78696); and finally "Figlio mio," a translation of the celebrated "Sonny Boy" (1928, Co 14413-F).

As noted, "O Katharina!" was recorded contemporaneously by Farfariello. Milano's version is more engrossing than that of the comedian. Milano clearly enunciates each syllable, and the reference to the contemporary novelty genre called Dixieland is more evident in his rendering than elsewhere, above all in the marked nature of the breathing and in the appeal to a series of devices, such as whistles and base-drum beats. These highlight the comic-grotesque character typical of the genre to which the piece belongs to refers.[62]

"Sonny Boy" was originally written by Ray Henderson, Bud G. DeSylva, Lew Brown, and Al Jolson; it was published in 1928 and was the musical theme for the film *The Singing Fool*. After having achieved success in 1927 with *The Jazz Singer,* the first talking film, in which he was made up to look like a black jazz musician, Al Jolson made *The Singing*

Fool the year after. The film immediately became a great cinematic success and remained popular for about a decade. It was supplanted only by *Gone with the Wind* in 1939. In *The Singing Fool,* Jolson plays the part of a song writer and entertainer who has just separated from his wife. The only thing that succeeds in making him happy is his beloved son, but the wife prevents him from seeing the boy. One day, he receives a telephone call from her to let him know that his son is in the hospital near death. Desperate and alone, Jolson sings an incredible version of "Sonny Boy." The song has a sugary and sentimental tone, but it was an absolute commercial success. Certainly, it was this aspect that permitted its easy passage into the melodic Neapolitan repertoire, which was inclined toward emotional themes tied to the family. Milano was the perfect performer for this item. His voice, characterized by a natural vibrato, was warm and heartfelt; no one in the Italian community knew how better to perform the role of Al Stone at the bedside of his Sonny Boy.

Joe Masiello

One among the singers who were unknown in Naples and who spent their entire careers in New York was Joe Masiello. He was one of performers of the first generation of Neapolitan artists who were molded in America. According to Mark Pezzano,[63] Masiello was born in Naples, but at the age of four he had already moved with his family to the American city. Endowed with a voice that was warm and well trained and also both elegant and versatile, he knew how to perform both dramatic and sentimental repertoires. Unlike many of his Italian colleagues, he tried singing in English, as shown in a few duets with the Neapolitan Ria Rosa, who remained faithful to her original language. Masiello had a long career—almost thirty years. He withdrew from the scene in 1961. Among his recordings there is one that should be singled out because of the cultural circumstance in which it was composed "'A festa d' 'e marenare" (Sailors' feast) with music by John Gentile.[64] This number was born as a song of exile in New York, far from the place from which the themes and the verses are drawn. This is somewhat like what occurred in 1898 with "'O sole mio," composed on the shores of the Black Sea. Masiello's song is set during the Feast of the Madonna della Catena (Madonna of the Chain), whose cult was celebrated in the church of the same name in the Santa Lucia section of Naples at a time when the urban design of the city was very different from what it is today. The church, built in 1576 beneath Mt. Echia, from which surged plumes of water containing sulfur

and iron, was very close to the sea, near the ancient port of Provenzali. The refrain tells us:

Vene 'na vota all'anno 'a festa d' 'a Madonna
'a festa Nzegna oè
c'avvimo mbriacià d'acqua zurfegna.
Stanotte 'e guaie l'avimmo jettà a mare
stasera è festa grande, è festa nosta
è festa 'e marenare.[65]

The feast of the Madonna comes once a year, the feast of the *Nzegna*, oh! We have to welcome that sulfur water. Tonight we throw all of our troubles into the sea. Tonight, there's a great celebration, our celebration, the sailors' feast.

There are exact references to the place other than the church and its ancient site. There is a specific reference to the surges of sulfur water, "zurfegna" in Neapolitan. This song is about an environment that had nothing to do with the one that the immigrant in New York was used to, where the maritime context that sustains these lyrics is absent. The song is actually a clear appeal to a collective memory throbbing in the shared absence that removed the cultural alienation the immigrant experienced at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Chapter 4

Birds of Passage: The Immigrants Return Home

Dan Caslar

The image of the bird of passage has been adopted by American historians as a metaphor for immigrants during the epoch of mass immigration at the start of the twentieth century. The theme "returning home" is complex and deserves its own study, one that takes into account the linguistic and formalistic aspects that immigrant musicians borrowed from the American continent. Until now, we have been occupied with the history of Neapolitan immigrant songs, dealing with the work of artists who preferred to spend their careers in America and, in their musical choices, have sometimes shown an interest in the American repertoire. One of our aims has been to find signs of musical syncretism between the immigrant tradition and that of the host country. In this context, it is important to deal with the topic of return to the homeland, at least to some extent, in order to understand fully the concept that underlies the term "bird of passage" and the dynamic of nomadism, which represents the generating principle that justifies the use of that term.

Among the composers closest to the musical experience of the new continent and the most nomadic of the generation of the first half of the twentieth century was Dan Caslar, a unique and complex figure who serves as an example of the oscillating movement of immigrants at the beginning of the century. Born as Donato Casolaro in Naples in 1892, he later took the pseudonym Dan Caslar. Caslar was among the first Neapolitan composers to absorb American rhythms and styles.[1] Felice Liperi claims that Caslar collaborated with Irving Berlin, who was among the greatest representatives of the American ballad tradition.[2]

Caslar left for America when he was very young; he studied at the New York Conservatory of Music, and, in the 1910s he was hired by Florenz

Ziegfield as a conductor and as an arranger of compositions for ragtime musicians such as Ford Dabney, Will Marion Cook, Joe Jordan, and others working back then for the Ziegfield Follies. According to the publication dates of some of his music and according to the ads that announced his concerts, he was active in New York by 1913. In New York, he had taken a job with a maritime company, which failed after a year. After trying other types of work, Caslar took up the piano again and found a position at a place in Coney Island in south Brooklyn. After having worked his way up for a few years, he wound up on Broadway, where he met Rudolph Valentino at the prestigious Café de Paris. From September 1914 to March 1915 he worked with his orchestra at Reisenweber's on Columbus Circle. Numerous ads in the *New York Times* publicized the evening performances of Dan Caslar's orchestra at Reisenweber's restaurant as early as September 1914.

A fashionable venue, Reisenweber's dinner-cabaret offered musical performances of various kinds: Caribbean orchestras, Hawaiian groups such as Clark's Royal Hawaiian Serenaders, and Cuban ballet performers. This was also where Sophie Tucker appeared; she was one of the most famous American entertainers of the 1920s and a prominent exponent of burlesque and of vaudeville using blackface makeup typical of the minstrel show. Tucker recalled her debut at the Manhattan restaurant and wrote that Reisenweber's started the Jazz Age and changed New York nightlife completely. She and her colleagues opened two days before Christmas 1916. They entertained during the dinner hour and put on a late show. Her band played for the dancing during dinner and again during the supper hour. Another band relieved them until the supper crowd came in. The entertainment was the best the town had to offer. One proof of this was that all the other places started to copy what Reisenweber's was doing. People began to demand jazz bands and something more than ballroom dance teams and a line of girls.[3]

The experimental bent of Reisenweber's drove the managers of the place to search for unique musical numbers in order to attract customers who were more and more demanding and curious. The restaurant was one of the places where the Original Dixieland Jass Band performed. The ODJB had first played in a recording studio, having come from New Orleans, but it quickly moved on to Chicago and then to New York. The leader of the group was an Italian-American, Nick La Rocca. The group did not play music that was completely new; in fact, many bands played a repertoire similar to that of La Rocca's band. But what made the New Orleans combo famous was the level of popularity it reached with its live performances in New York. As Schuller recalls, the band of James Reese Europe, like the others as well, gave wealthy white audiences of

New York an absorbing and exciting music. But something that energetic and lively as what the ODJB played at Reisenweber's restaurant had never been heard before in New York. Neither had New York, unlike Chicago, ever enjoyed many contacts with musicians from New Orleans. In New York, the apparently unrestrained polyphony of the ODJB was truly a new phenomenon. For years the city had been accustomed to listening to melodies and accompanying songs that were simple and predictable. Above all, the extramusical effects taken from the novelty repertoire that the group sometimes employed, such as the sounds of animals, created a great attraction. The ODJB was a white band, but it played with an energy and a mastery of technique that made it sound like a black group. Nor would it have been possible for a black group to attain similar notoriety in those years of pronounced and persistent racism.[4] The energy Schuller mentions was an attraction not only for the patrons of the New York restaurant but also for the other musicians who gravitated to the area. In the theater district and in wealthy neighborhoods along Broadway around 40th Street, an exciting musical hybridization had already developed in the first decade of the twentieth century. A musician such as Dan Caslar, who wanted to find his place in the New York scene—so much so that he Americanized his name—could certainly not remain indifferent to the effervescent accumulation of musical genres of the kind conceived by Italian-Americans.

Among the first influential American compositions we recall an instrumental foxtrot titled "Honey Bunch," published in 1915, of which there exists a text dated the same year. Two other Caslar songs were published in 1915: "Someone" and "Yo San."[5] In 1913 Caslar gained international acclaim with "Pretenting" [*sic*], but as a result of the crisis of 1929, he was forced to leave America and to return to Naples without financial resources. Here, he met Michele Galdieri, the son of the poet Rocco Galdieri. Back then Michele Galdieri was the manager of the Curci publishing house, a company headquartered in Naples; the two men then founded the Galdieri-Caslar partnership. They remained famous because they signed a few celebrated numbers of the Italian songbook, among which the most famous is "Quel motivetto che mi piace tanto" (That little melody that I like so much), featured in the *Strade* review of 1932.[6] Caslar's career then flourished in the cinema. He composed soundtracks, writing the music for about 11 films from 1932 until 1950, nine years before his death. The first of these films was *Tre uomini in frack* (Three men in tails) by Mario Bonnard, based on a work by Michele Galdieri; the last was *Taxi di notte* (Night taxi) by Carmine Gallone. The casts of both titles included famous singers: Tito Schipa in the film by Bonnard and Beniamino Gigli in the one by Gallone. These are films, then, in whose

production music played an essential part. Thanks to the choice of Caslar as writer of the soundtracks, they were guaranteed success because he was among the most valued Italian professionals of those years.

Glimpses of the Spread of American Music in Naples: From "'O sole mio" to the Foxtrot

Dan Caslar exemplifies the migratory nature of many Italian musicians; their constant going to and returning from America prompts to inquire about the way these nomadic artists contributed to the spread of American music in Naples. Leafing through issues of catalogues of music publishers, I can identify with relative certainty the date when the songs conceived in American rhythms began to increase. Up to 1909–1910, the Neapolitan repertoire was made up mostly of marching songs, barcaroles, waltzes, mazurkas, polkas, and boleros. An element of great fascination in the study of this repertoire is the speed with which the American dance tunes, once they had spread through the mother country, spread across Europe and, after a few years, began to affect deeply rooted musical traditions such as the Neapolitan. Thus, the Boston waltz, a variant of the original, was born in America around 1870 and spread through Europe after 1900. Among the first numbers composed in Naples bearing the name Boston waltz are "Doux vertige" (Sweet dizziness) by Carly Chiappello in 1909, "Boston" by Caputo in 1910, "Nostalgia" by Agostino Magliani, "Spensieratezza" (Carefree) by Mariano De Vito in 1910, and "Sogno d'amore" (Dream of love) by Eduardo Tagliaferri in 1911. These are instrumental compositions, but there is no lack of songs with lyrics in Italian as well. Often, the introduction of an American rhythm signals the change in the text from dialect to Italian, perhaps in an attempt to internationalize the song repertoire through a language that had recently become the national idiom. Thus, primarily in the 1920s, a few composers, such as Giuseppe Bonavolontà and Ciro Aschettino, composed songs in Italian inspired by the world of American music: "Sotto il cielo dell'Italy" (Under the Italian sky), "Lo shimmy delle lucciole" (The fireflies' shimmy), and "Tutto è jazz" (It's all jazz). From 1909 on, people in Naples began to lend an ear to American music even if momentarily, for they had heard that dances had become popular among middle-class audiences, which ensured that the most extreme elements were filtered out. The music of the rest of the decade was nearly unchanged; the primacy of the genre always belonged to Europe, and in this musical context the Boston dance and its variants seemed an isolated curiosity.

De Mura states that true musical colonization arrived from America at the earliest only after the First World War, between 1918 and 1920, but that date anticipates perhaps by a few years a time when the Neapolitan panorama changed drastically with the arrival of the foxtrot, the one-two-step, the shimmy, the tango, and with the beginning of the 1920s the Charleston and Black Bottom.[7] The foxtrot, formalized around 1910, had its origins in the one-step and two-step dances; from London, these genres spread across Europe after the First World War. After the 1920s, two variations were created, the slow foxtrot and the quickstep. The first examples of the one-step and the foxtrot in Naples are "Il frenetico" (The frantic) by Gaetano Lama. Notations for an American foxtrot were published for the first time and not coincidentally by the already mentioned Italian Book Company, a publishing house affiliated with La Canzonetta; it also published "Lasciamoci" (Let's end it) of 1920 and "Alla larga dalle donne" (Stay away from frenetico) in 1921, two foxtrots by Americo Giuliani.

"Valzer d'amore," a foxtrot by Armando Gill, appeared in 1924.[8] This piece includes a typical bipart structure found in other contemporary products; after an instrumental introduction of eight beats indicative of a foxtrot, there follows the beginning of the song in the tempo of a mazurka. In 1924 there appeared also an exhilarating number by Gustavo Albin with lyrics by Pasquale Ripoli; it was entitled "'O jazz-band." An allegretto notation in 2/4 time articulates the sorrow of a newly married man who does not enjoy his new state because of the presence of impertinent and overbearing relatives and friends:

> We've been wed among a great deal of chatter/but in fact we're not really married at all because papa argues with mamma/and your uncle jumps in/ and then grandpa answers, backed up by Titì./I can't take this anymore!/ Concetta, I don't want to hear this jazz/jazz/jazz-band/anymore!

The text suggests that the song was conceived according to the style of contemporary musical elements pertaining to the jazz band. The score, composed of eighth and sixteenth notes as well as a number of acciaccatura notes, seems to be an attempt to imitate the complex rhythm of jazz.

The second half of the 1920s saw the absolute ascendancy of the foxtrot and all of its multiple variations. In the Gennarelli Piedigrotta of 1925, no less than nine of fourteen songs performed in the contest that year were foxtrots, shimmies, and one-steps. Among these was "A suon di jazz" (By sound of jazz), a foxtrot by G. Buonincontro and Gino Franco.

The number was an ironic interpretation of the new, very popular music of those years:

> And so—howls and whistles, olè! / What loud noises / dogs / cats / chimpanzees / it's Noah's arc, every jazz "endiable" [Fr. "boisterous"] / The latest novelty of high culture is jazz / only jazz / Now lovers hidden away in cabarets / are all about the sound of jazz / always jazz / The old people at the fireside / the newlyweds in a "sleeping car" / make passionate love only to the sound of jazz!

At about the same time the shimmy spread in North America. This dance first appeared around 1910 and moved to Europe during the 1920s. In 1924, the first models of the shimmy composed in Naples appeared: "Che vuol dire lo shimmy" (What's the shimmy?), a foxtrot shimmy by Quintavalle and Leone, and "Satanic jass," a shimmy by Angelo Anselmi. The first variations began to appear about 1925: "La piccola bambola" (The little doll), a shimmy blues with lyrics by Giovanni Griffo; "Mascherina blù" (Blue-eye mask), a shimmy blues number by Frustaci, and "Mary Pickford," a shimmy blues number by Griffo.

The 1920s also marked the birth of the Charleston, the famous dance introduced by Josephine Baker. It was James P. Johnson, the African American composer of ragtime and symphonic music and writer of reviews, who formalized the elements of this dance in 1923 in the black review *Runnin' Wild*. This review contributed to the spread of the style first on Broadway and then throughout Europe at a surprising speed over the course of only a few years. Indeed, in 1927, there already were examples of the Charleston in Naples: "Brigata allegra" (The happy brigade) by E. A. Mario and Carlo Loveri and "Comme è pussibile?" (How is it possible?) by Mario Nicolò and Pacifico Vento.

Examples of the maxixe (Brazilian tango) began to circulate in the 1920s, but there is evidence of an earlier maxixe in Italy in the first decade of the 1900s, namely, one titled "La mattchiche" (another word for the Brazilian tango), performed by Annita Di Landa.[9] In Brazil, at the end of the nineteenth century, there were many learned writers who took an interest in popular music, and there were composers of commercial music who enriched indigenous music with European influences, particularly in assimilating the dance. One of the most significant black and Latin American products that emerged from the assimilation of European elements around 1870 was given the name maxixe and then became famous as the Brazilian tango, much as the samba and finally the bossa nova did.[10] In Europe the samba/maxixe seems to have been introduced around 1890. "Amore indigeno" (Native love) by Enrico Contursi in 1924 is perhaps the first Neapolitan example of this style in the 1900s.

Regarding the spread of the rumba in Naples, from the original rumba of Cuban origins that has a sustained rhythm requiring more skill to perform, a version developed that was slower, more clichéd, and simpler and was performed in dance halls. It spread quickly in America and Europe during the 1930s. Among the first examples of rumba composed in a Neapolitan setting was "La rumba delle fragole" (Strawberry rumba), sung by Gilda Mignonette. I will discuss this piece in the next chapter. Meanwhile, among the first rumbas definitely composed in Naples there are two examples from 1938: "Rumba di maggio" (May rumba) by Mimì Giordano and "Elda" by Mario Marrone.

During the 1920s American songs became widespread throughout Europe attested by the great quantity of records and scores produced during that period. Ragtime records were made throughout Europe by dance orchestras that added items from America to their repertoires. What came to Europe, with the possible exception of England, was a commercial song repertoire that was spread by club and music-hall managers. This music, often inferior in quality, began to change European tastes. In the second decade of the 1900s, rag was being written almost everywhere, in Spain, France, Italy, and even in parts of Yugoslavia. And in those years, the French Orchestre Tzigane Du Volney recorded the famous "Oh that yankiana rag" in a somewhat bizarre style.[11]

Music from America continued to spread through the more wealthy classes of those who possessed a gramophone and who could acquire popular American records. Rag was also composed in Naples or, rather, Neapolitan artists in America were intrigued by the new genre. Ninì Bijou, a singer of a certain prominence in the first half of the twentieth century, around the first decade, recorded in America or in Italy a piece titled "Alla martinique" (à la Martinique), a simple and catchy Neapolitan transposition of an African American rhythm that took its place in a line of genres then characterized in Italy as exotic.

The surprising speed with which rag took root in all of Europe was matched by the pace at which the tango spread. One of the first examples of contamination between Neapolitan songs and the habanera is the famous "'O sole mio," written in 1898 by Giovanni Capurro and Eduardo Di Capua. It is a Neapolitan song par excellence, whose identity, however, because of its hybrid character, is ambiguous. The date of its composition, moreover, anticipates the entrance of American music into Italy by more than a decade.

It is difficult to establish that this song, recorded by Enrico Caruso in New York in 1916, is the pure and uncontaminated essence of a local musical culture—assuming it is even correct to use a definition of this type for any musical tradition. "'O sole mio" shows its mixed character,

derived from a combination of its dialectical linguistic register and an exotic rhythmical pattern. It is a habanera, a dance rhythm preceding the tango, arriving in Europe from Cuba around the second half of the nineteenth century. Perhaps the success of Bizet's *Carmen* played a role in giving this dance rhythm a place in the musical circles of Naples.[12]

In the 1920s in Naples, the habanera developed into the tango, a related form that revolutionized the social customs associated with traditional music and prevalent in the first half of the twentieth century. Of the numerous Brazilian and Argentine varieties of the tango, the one that reached Naples is a binary dance with a slow pace. But the word "tango" is generic; it designates nothing more than a piece of music with a binary tempo that is very rhythmical. In Brazil, the tango had the same structure as ragtime or a march and a lively rhythm that the Brazilians, as mentioned earlier, also called maxixe. The varied terminology appears to be a symptom of a still-vague definition applied to the genre. In any case, the most universally known tango is the Argentine; it took on its most modern form among the immigrant Italian, German, French, Spanish, and Jewish communities in the Rio de la Plata basin. These communities were connected because they maintained active commercial relations.[13]

In the Rio de la Plata basin, the immigrants participated in the birth of a new linguistic code, the Lunfardo, a slang used by criminals and later by the poor and even the middle classes that developed much like Creole did in New Orleans.[14] These ethnic minorities imported a popular culture whose basis was a music derived from a binary rhythm of Cuban provenance. The leading figures of the so-called guardia vieja (old guard) represented the first musical symbols of this new ethnic reality, the melting pot of musical cultures. In their music, we find the archetype of the Argentine tango, the written records of which appeared contemporaneously with those of ragtime music.[15] This type of tango is heterogeneous, including mixed elements deriving from different ethnic traditions and perhaps this was the deciding factor that enabled it to spread quickly, like wildfire.

In Argentina, Creole literature, the fruit of a linguistic mixture of the ethnic minorities who immigrated there, has as its reference point the Italian immigrants whose community was most representative of the culture of the Rio de la Plata basin. Until the 1930s the Italians made up 40 percent of the entire population. The linguistic integration was a very rapid and inexorable phenomenon, which included bold and varied solutions, explainable in part as a result of the presence of a largely poor and poorly educated immigrant population. A hybrid language emerged from the meeting of a more or less broken Spanish and an Italian marked by the influence of several dialects.

This linguistic impulse becomes apparent in the theater where language is formalized and becomes tied to the tradition of *sainete*, a type of popular theater that takes its name from a homonym that, at the beginning of the sixteenth century was the name of a brief dramatic work of a playful nature in only one act. It was used as a kind of intermezzo with musical accompaniment and with comic caricature-like characters. Many works of this genre put on the stage Italian musicians who found this new geographical context very difficult. In *Conservatorio La Armonia*, by Discepolo, de Rosa, and Falco (1917), a text that can be defined as a *comedia asainetada referencial* or a work of the *sainete* genre with an often grotesque tone that focuses on the social aspects, habits, and idiosyncrasies of antiheroes. In this work, the two musician protagonists, San Francesco and Leonardo, fail in a tragicomic manner because of their presumption and their inability to adapt to the inferior quality of music in the new world. Something similar happens in another work of a grotesque nature by Discepolo to the title character Stefano, a musician and composer (1927).

Elsewhere, however, Italian asserted itself over the Creole, for example, in *La vida es un sainete* by Vacazezza, in which the Italian tenor Bongiardino overcomes the singer Marengo even if his victory is achieved through cunning and not obvious ability given that the Italian takes advantage of Marengo by pretending to be his friend. The musical abilities of the Italian in this case are not the decisive factor. In fact, they are actually of little importance. In all such works, the Italian musicians come from Naples; their undeniable musical preparation and their talent, however, do not necessarily help them integrate. It almost seems as though their origins are a hindrance rather than an advantage that could accelerate their adaptation into society.

In this context, a Neapolitan type of Cocoliche was created in addition to the Genovese. The character appears in the theater playing the mandolin or the guitar and is characterized as much by his desire to integrate socially as by his obvious musical talent. The same term cocoliche will be used later, in fact, to indicate the linguistic combination of a Spanish-Italian dialect spoken by the first generation of Italian immigrants to South America. A few words from cocoliche later enriched the criminal jargon of lunfardo and Argentine Spanish.[16]

At first, the Hispanics met the immigrant Italians with great skepticism because the new arrivals threatened to destroy the traditions of the country. Then the perspective changed, and in the course of a handful of decades, the image of the Italian in Argentina became one of a serious and scrupulous worker who helped in constructing the new fatherland and who mixed with the Argentines themselves. The transformation was

explicit in the strategy of legitimization the Italians used, that is in their music and the figure of the gringo. Originally, "gringo" was a term used to designate Italians specifically, and it appeared often in the songs of the Italian-Argentine repertoire. The change in its meaning obviously responded to a new political reality, but this development was not inevitable. In fact, this transformation was at the center of a fiery debate that was never truly resolved between conservative and progressive factions in the field of Argentine folklore. Meanwhile, this dispute provided many ideas musicians and poets needed to produce a rich and high-profile repertoire.

In the 1930s, an era when musicians contended on stage for power, money, and fame, theaters were no place for outsiders and strangers. Nevertheless, the success of the Italian immigrants was unstoppable and swift. It is in the tango that we find the clearest evidence of the presence of the Italian musicians. For example, in the texts emphasis is placed on the ideal of the masculine worker who labors every day to save money, thinking only of the good of his family and his country.

Through Argentine social and political history, it is possible to trace the history of the tango and divide it into phases from the brothel stage (1880–1916) to the "tango-canción" lyrical tango (up to 1955) and finally to the avant-garde period (from 1955 on). In each of these phases, the Italian presence is always decisive. The first two stages are the most interesting from a social point of view because the image of the Italian plays a role in the depiction of the lower classes as a whole.[17]

Between 1910 and 1911 the tango began to spread in Europe. The rhythmical strength, the variety of movements, and the characteristic figures of dance ensured its immediate success. Later on, the music changed and lyrics were added, and gradually some of the original elements were lost. From 1914 on, in the magazine *La canzonetta*, news of all kinds about the new dance began to appear. Technical descriptions of movements and of fashions, photos of dancers, and numerous columns dedicated to the new dance were published. As already noted, in 1917 "Mi noche triste," a piece performed by Carlos Gardel, appeared. Apparently, in that same year the Neapolitan composers began to write the first tangos in the form of songs, as evidenced by the publication of the already mentioned "Tango napulitano."

Starting in 1923, the number of songs in the tempo of the tango gradually increased so much that, by the end of the third decade in Naples, the model itself had already taken its place in the Neapolitan repertoire, much as in preceding decades the marches and tarantellas had. Additional evidence of this definitive adoption is the fact that, initially, songs composed in the rhythm of the tango usually adopted for their subjects an

exotic geography, close to the place where the dance itself had originated. However, later on, after the 1920s, the genre showed that it had gone well beyond the state of a simple musical curiosity, and its text had developed into a repertoire dance without referring to its origin and integrated into the Neapolitan repertoire.

But this tendency, on the other hand, is true of many musical repertoires when they meet a new formal model. The same is even true for other dances I have discussed: the spread of a genre is directly proportional to the progressive freeing of the text from narrative and meta-linguistic constraints.

The absence of the names of immigrant artists among the writers of dance tunes composed in Naples suggests that the spread of American music came through scores and records from outside Italy, but the most popular music circulating in Naples was produced in the city itself or was copied there from the original and then exported to the Italian emigrant community. This was because the poetic aspect of the songs and the precision of the dialect and of the Italian language remained prevalent elements in the rhythmic-melodic construct. The artists who migrated to America continued to show an appreciation for the Neapolitan product because for them it remained more authentic.

In conclusion, the syncopated music and the Latin-American rhythms created a great surge of innovation throughout Europe at the beginning of the 1900s. In Italy, the appearance of new rhythms coincided with the end of the First World War, and among musical centers Naples demonstrated the least resistance; even at the national level, there was an anticipation for certain modern currents in popular music.[18]

Two Border Authors: E. A. Mario and Gaetano Lama

The Neapolitan repertoire at the beginning of the twentieth century endured with great flexibility and interactivity through the adoption of some American rhythmic models. The record industry was a dominant reality on the horizon, and America dealt with this market steadfastly by virtue of its privileged position as a rich country and as a land of encounters and clashes between very different cultures.

E. A. Mario and Gaetano Lama are among the principal exponents of the Neapolitan song of the first half of the 1900s, and they represent, one almost in contrast with the other, the two positions at the heart of the repertoire in Neapolitan dialect. The first current is embodied in the Italian community of New York, and it finds in E. A. Mario an elegant and prolific poet who was aware of the aesthetic and social values of the song. The

second current sees in Gaetano Lama the symbol of a type of Neapolitan avant-garde artist who is ready to modernize the panorama of song, which was perceived as worn-out and trite by many of its exponents.

In the 1920s a heated debate in Naples followed the invasion of American dance tunes and of music coming from other geographic regions. In 1921 the poet Rocco Galdieri placed the problem in relation to the success of the Neapolitan song in Italian; in a successful attempt to supplant song in dialect, Italian song had sought support in other repertoires, above all, the foxtrot. This is what Ferdinando Bideri wrote in *La tavola rotonda* magazine in 1926, focusing on the question of domestic and export markets:

> It's unanimous: The reign of the Neapolitan song is over! And this idea is not inspired by a precautionary skepticism, but it is—unfortunately—painfully true.…
>
> Something has been accomplished, but there is more quantity than quality, and the nauseating popular Italian song, based on *visin, piedin, carin* (in the feminine) ["little countenance, little foot, little dear"] in the tempo of the foxtrot, jazz, the one-step, the Charleston, and the shimmy, has invaded the domestic as well as the export market without leaving any room for that beautiful song, which is true, emotional—whether happy or sad—and is always simple, democratic, touching, and able to arouse emotion. Here, instead, one has to engage in ballet steps, to kick one's legs, to spin in order to maintain the audience's attention on the legs and on the starlets' other parts. Thus, the lyrics become secondary in order for the simple popular song to adapt itself to the dancing mimicry of music-hall singers of whatever nationality. Naturally, instead of moving as before from the salon to the street and then to the theater, the songs make the journey in reverse, and they spread artificially until they invade every venue and they become obsessive.[19]

E. A. Mario was certainly among the principal figures of Neapolitan song and among the most significant representatives of the Italian song at least during the first four decades of the twentieth century. The corpus of his work numbers in the hundreds; he was the author of very famous Italian songs such as "Vipera" (Viper) in 1919, "Le rose rosse" (The red roses) in 1919, and "Balocchi e profumi" (Playthings and perfumes) in 1929. He also wrote the anthem "La leggenda del Piave" (The legend of the Piave) in 1918. In anticipation of other studies that shed more light on the musical and poetic contributions of Mario,[20] I focus only on a few aspects of his artistic experience in America. Although faithful to the classical melodiousness of the Neapolitan song, Mario was very careful to appreciate the economic and symbolic potential offered by

the masses of Italian consumers who had migrated to America. He himself became, perhaps despite himself, the symbol of the southern immigrants with the writing of "Santa Lucia luntana" (Santa Lucia far away) in 1919.

At the beginning of the 1920s, with the introduction of American and other foreign rhythms into the structure of the traditional Neapolitan song, Mario explained the tactics of his offensive by speaking of a "cure for the spelling and syntax of a sick song—the tenth muse."[21] His battle calls into question the major representatives of Italian literature and of the tradition of the novel in the nineteenth century. Many supporters of classicism in music supported him, and on August 20, 1920, through his initiative, the society called Amici della Canzone (Friends of song) was founded in Naples. Its purpose was to confer on this expression of art a blessing more significant and long-lived than what it had had on the street, in the salon, or in the cabarets.[22]

Among writers who had moved to New York, it was a common practice to claim ownership of the songs of others composed in Naples in order to avoid paying copyright fees to the authors and, above all, to create with this deception a reputation that otherwise would have been difficult to attain. In October 1922, at the age of thirty-eight, Mario took himself to New York for the first time with the idea of reappropriating songs of his that were circulating unchecked under several different names. The sources for reconstructing this period of his biography are scarce.[23]

Mario returned to New York several times over the next two years because his name began to be identified with his face, and that face had become for immigrants an emblem of the most deeply rooted Neapolitan tradition, a tradition that gave strength to those who fought the hard battle for survival. Mario's work was doubly important for the Italian immigrants. It preserved the song in its most traditional essence and also protected the ethnic identity of the Italians in New York. Once again, it is this added value, symbolized in song that created solidarity among Italian immigrants. Even if Mario composed *tammurriate*, tarantellas, and tango songs—such as the celebrated "Balocchi e profumi"—the nostalgic vein of his songs remains constant and this aspect more than any other for many decades reinforced his connection with the world of the immigrants.

Born a year after Mario, Gaetano Lama was a composer and arranger of songs.[24]As prolific as the author just discussed, Lama was, above all, among the first and most elegant writers of modern dance music. That is, his work belongs to the songs derived from American and French repertoires, the latter a tradition that proved more expansionist than the

former. Lama's image as an innovator permitted him to assemble a group under the name of La bottega dei quattro (Workshop of the four): Libero Bovio, Nicola Valente, and Ernesto Tagliaferri. These three exponents of the new generation of authors wanted to renew the song tradition. Lama maintained an excellent rapport with Mario Nicolò, one of the principal transitory figures in this process, who acted as a mediator moving between New York and Naples in the first half of the 1900s. Lama's first full score was actually a dance tune from another geographic provenance; it was a waltz, "Amor che passa" (Love that fades) written in 1908. Two years later, together with E. A. Mario, Lama wrote his first song "Stornelli al vento" (Stornelli's ditties, or Songs in the wind).[25] After 1910 and for about thirty years, Lama was a composer for and managing director of La Canzonetta, a musical publishing house that also published a magazine by the same name. From that moment on, because of his very presence, it became synonymous with innovation in the Neapolitan tradition. Lama's activity for La Canzonetta was not limited to music he himself wrote, but he also published the work of others, becoming one of the principal music publishers in those years. In this role, Lama helped greatly to spread the new music in Naples.[26] The fact that he was well known there helped him in having no significant competition in New York and he soon became well known here too. We certainly cannot forget the great success he achieved, in Naples and in New York, when both welcomed the already mentioned foxtrot "Il frenetico." In part his success could be attribted to his enthusiastic acceptance of the novelty originating from the very world the immigrants had to deal with daily; it was this new world that furnished the original versions of the rhythms, which the Italian immigrants then began to imitate more or less openly.

Enrico Caruso, NYC, 1911.

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Postcard advertising Caruso, 1915 ca.

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Caruso's Funeral by Giulio Parisio, 1921 Napoli.

With kind permission of Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III, Napoli/Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali-Italia.

Funeral procession of Caruso by Giulio Parisio, 1921 Napoli.

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Anna and Roberto Ciaramella, 1940 ca.

With kind permission of Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III, Napoli/Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali-Italia.

Roberto Ciaramella, 1913.

With kind permission of Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III, Napoli/Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali-Italia.

Ada Bruges, 1935.

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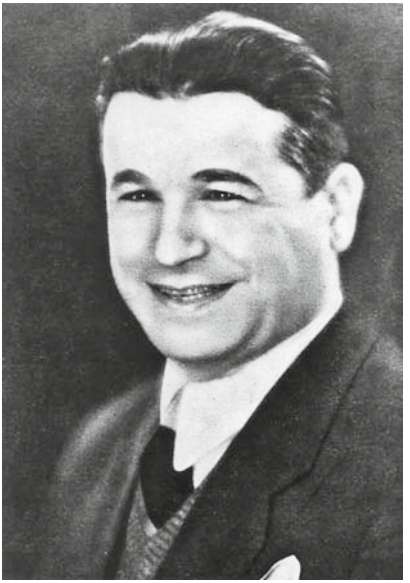

Leo Brandi, 1920.

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Mimì Aguglia [Cennerazzo Archive].

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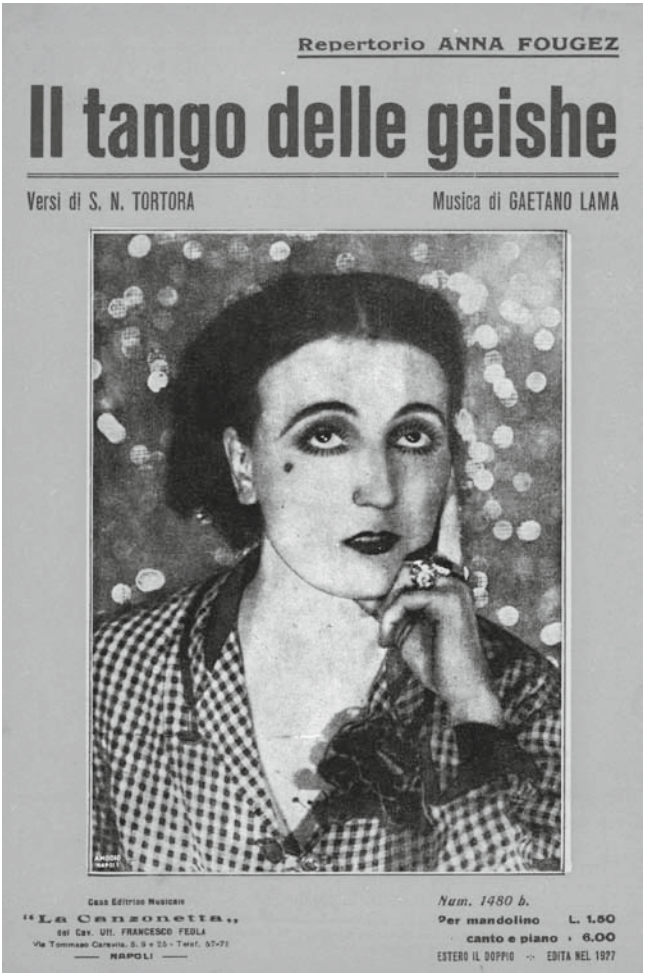
Cover picture of the popular score Santa Lucia luntana by E.A. Mario.
Kindly granted by Delia Catalano.

E. A. Mario as a young poet.
Kindly granted by Delia Catalano.

A young Gilda Mignonette.
Kindly granted by Antonio Sciotti.

Advertising for a record by Gilda Mignonette.
Kindly granted by Antonio Sciotti.

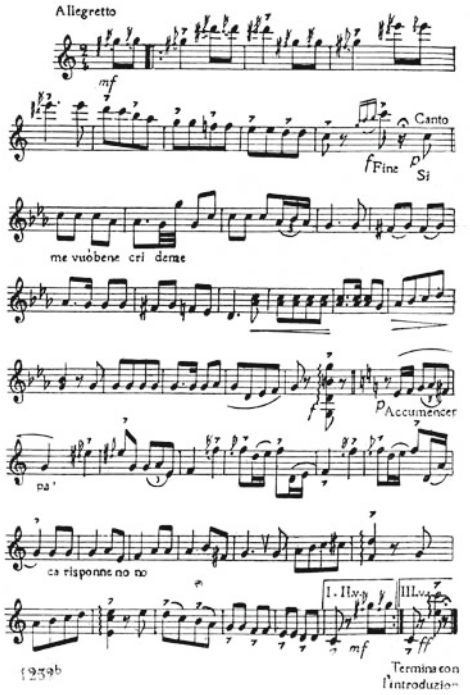


Sheet music cover of "Il tango delle geishe," well-known song in the repertoire of Anna Fougez and Gilda Mignonette.

Courtesy of the publishing house La Canzonetta.

'O jazz - band

Versi di P. RIPOLI — Musica di G. ALBIN



1.
Si me vuò bene, crideme,
mo nu' ne pozzo cchiù :
'st'ammore me dà tuosseco,
me leva 'a giuventù.
Maie 'n'ora 'int' 'o silenzio,
maie tu t' astrigne a nme;
maie 'na parola — é inutile ! —
te pozzo dì, pecchè :
Accummencia papà,
ribatte mamma,
sopraggiunge zi zi:
Po' succede e, pò,
ca risponne no'-no',
sostenuta 'a Titi.
Nun me ne fido cchiù !
Nun voglio cchiù senti
'stu jazz
jazz
jazz
jazz band, Cuncetti !

2.
Partimmo, meh 'mbarcammoce,
scappammo addo' vuò tu
ca dinto a' casa 'e mammeta
nun voglio starce cchiù !
Che bellu matrimmonio !
Che bella coppia, oj' nè !
Simmo spusate a chiacchiere
ma a fatte no, pecchè
Accummencia papà, ecc.

3.
Nemmanco 'a notte, pienzece,
quiete avimm' 'a stà :
parole, allucche, strepite,
niente cumbine a fà.
E ca tu faie miracule,
ca tu t'astrigne a nme ! ?...
Io nun arrivo, crideme,
a m' addurmì, pecchè :
Accummencia papà, ecc.

Courtesy of the publishing house La Canzonetta: "'O Jazz - band" song by Ripoli-Albin, edited in 1924.

Advertising of the Sceneggiata "Addio Felicità," 1928. Mario Gioia is the last on the left.

Kindly granted by Nando Coppeto, with the kind permission of Fondazione Roberto Murolo.

The singer Mario Gioia at the beginning of his career in America, circa 1920.

Kindly granted by Nando Coppeto, with the kind permission of Fondazione Roberto Murolo.

Chapter 5

Music Is Woman

From the Theaters of Naples to the Stages of New York

The popular culture that manifests itself in the new media, above all the cinema, has a distinct character. In America, the twentieth century saw the feminization of products for the emerging mass of consumers.[1] Debates arose in different environments on the topic since the fear of a radical change began to spread. For example, scholar Gavin James Campbell emphasizes the substantial difference between the principles of masculinity and femininity that are cultivated in music more than in any other cultural context. He argues that music became one medium by which men and women articulated their anxieties about changing gender roles. He goes as far as to make qualitative judgments of the great composers, such as Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Chopin, according to the degree of masculinity expressed in their works. The debate touched on topics associated with the battle of the sexes, using arguments that were very advanced for those years. Included in the discussion was the very role of the professional female musician; some of them believed that female musicians should not confine themselves to the performances of music written solely by men but, as the pianist Fanny Bloomfield-Zeisler had already written in 1891, should inspire women to compose music not simply in imitation but based on their their own musical sensibilities.[2]

With regard to silent films and vaudeville shows, Bertellini provides a close examination of the phenomenon of feminization by drawing from contemporaneous sources. In particular, Bertellini draws on a source dating from 1909 by Giovanni De Rosalia, which appeared in the column "Sicilian scenes" in *La follia di New York*.[3] The Sicilian comedian emphasized the idea that the increasing presence of women in the audience at vaudeville performances was to blame since constant and, according to De Rosalia, obsessive interest in leisure-time habits distracted women from taking care of their families. De Rosalia concluded that between

Sicilian puppet shows, frequented only by men, and films, attended predominantly by women, the former was certainly a minor evil because that would mean that women would stay at home to raise their children, cook meals, and keep the house in order. In this way, they would not threaten traditional family and social models.

But the time was already ripe for a definitive change. During the years of the First World War, there emerged a type of orchestra composed entirely of female members. In part, this was a response to the fact that many men had been fighting at the front since 1917, the year the United States entered the First World War. The world of jazz offered an interesting picture regarding the participation of women. During the 1920s, the number of women bands rose. Even if the performances were not always of good quality the success of these groups was ensured by the intrinsic novelty of the show. A stage with ten or even twenty young women who played saxophones, clarinets, trumpets, accordions, banjos, double basses, and drums, even if rudimentary in arrangement, was a spectacle that was sure to draw audiences to live performances. These groups were also used in the cinema, which was then still new. Dozens of film clips depict female groups that played music, especially syncopated music, for production companies like Paramount. Lee De Forest, the inventor of one of the first processes for bringing sound to images, adapted his invention to the filming of a few brief performances of female bands.[4] A few of these groups, such as the Blue Bells, the Harlem Playgirls, Rita Rio and Her All-Girl Orchestra, and the Ingénues, were first active in Chicago, a city of great musical significance. They usually specialized in novelty repertoires and musical styles such as Dixieland and Tin Pan Alley, and many had the good fortune to tour from Africa to Australia, passing through Europe and Asia with their concert performances.[5] Billy Wilder remembered this sensual, electric atmosphere in 1959, when he filmed *Some Like It Hot*, the incredible story of two penniless musicians who pretend to be women. They sneak into a female band in order to hide from a killer working for Al Capone, who wants to kill them because they witnessed the St. Valentine's Day Massacre of 1929. There were even all-female groups in the context of the opera and symphony: the New York Ladies' Orchestra, the Philadelphia Women's Symphony, and the Salt Lake Women's Orchestra.[6] The phenomenon of all-girl bands, whether white, mixed, or black, grew in the following decades until it reached significant proportions up to the beginning of the Second World War.[7]

In the first half of the 1900s, many women in Italy participated in the creation of a new cultural environment as writers, performers, artists, etc. In the years of Fascism, notwithstanding rules restricting the entrepreneurial autonomy of women and the debate over women's suffrage that

took place almost exclusively among the middle class in Rome and a few other cities, there emerged figures who produced texts and pursued lifestyles that influenced collective sensibilities; among them were Carolina Invernizio, Liala, Matilde Serao, Francesca Bertini, and Elvira Notari.[8] They were writers, journalists, actresses, and producers—the last three active in Naples—and even if not devoting themselves explicitly to women's emancipation movements, sometimes, as in the case of Serao, they openly opposed the status quo, and through their careers and their work they projected a feminine vision of the world. The artistic experience of the Neapolitan Elvira Notari, in particular, exemplifies the profitable rapport between the cinema and music. Generally speaking, the director considered music as something halfway between a functional and a logical tool in regard to the cinema. In Notari's opinion, the cinema drew on its theatrical/dramatic roots and presented stories containing bloody violence with characters who are doomed to an unhappy life. These characters are subject to compulsive social and cultural habits as exemplified in *Assunta Spina*, a celebrated film based on a play of 1915 by Salvatore Di Giacomo. The attention given to the songs to be performed, the presence of orchestras in the films, and the emphasis on the choral point of view to portray the emotions in the movie indicate that Notari's sensibilities were strongly oriented toward a new kind of cinema. This was perhaps on account of her exposure to listening within an urban environment steeped in music of all forms: from symphonic and operatic, thanks to the presence of music curators and the old and prestigious Teatro San Carlo, to the popular language of the street singers (*posteggiatori*). Naturally, she was also familiar with the language of the café chantant, which spread widely through dozens of Neapolitan concert halls. While the cinema used music to insert itself gradually into theaters and cabarets, in the case of Notari music was one of the most important subtexts leaving behind its imprints on the viewers' mind.[9] In the end, Notari's films are important because they stirred a great deal of interest in America. A great part of her success was fueled directly by the American market; it was this market more than the great cinematic productions such as *Quo Vadis?* and *The Last Days of Pompeii* that created a fictitious image of the immigrants and an idea of Italy different from the official one.[10] The movies of Dora Films, Elvira Notari's production company, depicted places in her distant homeland that were most dear to immigrants. Those places were portrayed as though they were animated postcards, and commissioned films were often simply travelogues. The production of such brief travelogue films, like the type made by E. Burton Holmes, also played a major role in the construction of an attractive fiction about the American West in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This fiction appealed not

only to tourists but also to immigrants, who were searching for a place to put down roots.[11] Therefore, the travelogue form probably constituted another important channel of contact between seemingly distant cultural models.

In Naples one of the so-called stars among the most appealing singers was Lydia Johnson. She gave a strong impetus to the spread in Italy of syncopated American music in the second half of the 1920s even though she never toured America. Born as Lydia Abramovic in Russia in 1896, Johnson became a dancer in the variety theater of her hometown, Rostov. At a very young age, she married the English dancer Albert Johnson. She arrived in Italy in 1920 and then traveled all over Europe from there and returned to the peninsula in 1924 as a variety singer performing a syncopated repertoire. Lydia Johnson embodied an epoch, a lifestyle; she gathered the excitement of her time to herself, and she made it her own. Then she reintroduced it onto the stage through her exciting sensibilities as a woman born for the theater.

At the Teatro Eldorado of Naples, where she received continual recognition, she alternated with Anna Fougez, an incomparable artist of that time. On those evenings, the place was crowded with men ready to do anything to support either performer. Johnson continued to sing until 1944 and made brief appearances in commemorative performances.[12]

Adriano Mazzoletti has reconstructed the singer-dancer's career; he went on to assign her a prominent place in the Italian popular music of the 1920s. Her role in the birth of Italian jazz was notable. In 1925—according to Mazzoletti—at the age of twenty-nine, Johnson decided to sign a contract with the Riviera Five, following the example of Mistinguett, who had hired the Mitchell Jazz Kings. Johnson performed for about a year with the Riviera Five, bringing in this manner a first-class jazz orchestra into the theaters of nearly half of Italy. She came onto the stage dressed in a bizarre costume, wearing a golden tailcoat, a rhinestone top hat, and black gloves. In her hand she held a baton with which she directed the ensemble while she danced and sang "Johnson," her signature song composed by Dino Rulli, and "Yes, sir, that's my baby."[13]

The example of Johnson, who did not play a role among the artists who emigrated to North America (she was an immigrant to Italy) applies here because of its uniqueness and because of the versatility of this artist across the repertoire of the Italian cultural scene. Her personality opens the door to a rich area for study, that is to say, one relevant to the participation of women artists in the music of Italian immigrants. It is due to her personality that Johnson holds such an important and innovative role in this phase of the history of song.

The Italian exodus caused emigrants to orient their life to parameters different from those to which they had been previously habituated. They had to change perspective if they wanted to build a communicative rapport with the new reality. In the awakening of an awareness tied to their voyage to the American continent—which became the more painful the more necessary it seemed—the phenomenon of immigration that relates to Italy after the unification confers a new image on women. Women were no longer primarily seen as the affectionate and perennial domestic *lares* (or protectors) but as modern figures who succeed in the new role of a sensual idol that is presented as the only alternative to the idol of the solicitous mother. The southern Italian woman in America, in contact with a complex, multiracial, and democratic society, earned a living, took care of herself, became a cultural entrepreneur and promoter, and developed her own political beliefs in a way that was quite the opposite of what she had done before. Certainly, the new way of life was much more open than would have been the case in Italy, and especially in the south, where the socioeconomic system of the late nineteenth century did not allow women to reach the level of integration and of social exposure that America made possible. Notwithstanding these important changes, however, stereotypes persist in some fields of study, such as in Italian-American literature. This literature continues to keep alive the image of the immigrant Italian woman who is absorbed by her duties in the family.[14]

In New York, Italian venues dedicated to entertainment and enjoyment were often crowded with women. These were the first places where women met in large numbers, and, as already noted, this unprecedented phenomenon was seen by Italian male observers in an extremely negative light. The café chantants presented shows that were mixtures of dialect songs, almost always Neapolitan, and of moving pictures. These were venues where men usually predominated. The new media were creating profound social changes within the Italian community, and they attempted to radically redefine the roles and responsibilities of the genders. This redefinition amounted to feminizing moral and cultural principles and offering new ways to receive and enjoy entertainment by presenting most of these forms from a female's perspective.[15]

Theatrical life in the northern part of the United States was very different from that in Italy for the immigrants and especially for the artists. This was due primarily to differences in the economic system. The more money was invested in the entertainment industry, the more the quality of the products increased and the more diversified they became. The early twentieth century saw the beginning of massive contributions by women to artistic activity associated with ethnic vaudeville. The singers—exponents

of the Neapolitan song—contributed successfully through their performances both live and in the recording studios, and thus they helped sustain this part of the market of ethnic culture. Among these artists, Gilda Mignonette deserves pride of place for having played a pioneering role in promoting contact between the Neapolitan traditions and American rhythms. Along with her, other artists, such as Ria Rosa, Clara Stella, Teresa De Matienzo, Rosina De Stefano, and Mimì Aguglia were important.

Aleandri, focusing on the presence of women on the stage of the ethnic theater, furnishes a cross-section of those who appeared during the early days of the cafè chantant or the Italian caffé-concerto (elegant coffee houses where music was performed) in New York in the years between 1895 and 1903. That is, these artists performed something halfway between professional theater and popular entertainment, which included episodes that were markedly gruesome as well as acutally violent. The caffé-concerti or coffee houses were the true and proper venues for entertainment based on the European model; among these venues was the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III, named after the king of Italy, which was located on Mulberry Street near Canal Street. The place was initially a salon-bar that offered evening performances of a group of strolling Neapolitan musicians or a singer accompanied by a guitar or mandolin. The performers played popular songs and music reminiscent of Neapolitan melodies. Among the singers of romantic songs who performed at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III were professionals and semiprofessionals such as Luigia Franchi and her husband, Vincenzo, who sang variety duets together.

Life was sometimes hard for immigrant artists, as demonstrated by two incidents Aleandri refers to as examples of the hypersensitive temperament attributed to Italians. One evening, during a duet as the two lovers were about to abandon themselves to a love scene, the male actor's fiancée, who was present in the theater, pulled out a pistol, shot toward the stage, and killed one of the two singers. The other episode concerns a singer who, blinded by jealousy over the attention paid by an admirer to his sweetheart, violently struck the woman in the face, giving her a black eye. Following these episodes, it was necessary to have a police officer present during evening performances.[16]

Mimì Aguglia

Among the first performers to publicly symbolize the major successes achieved by Italian immigrant women artists is Gerolama, known as Mimì Aguglia, a variety singer and actress born in Palermo in 1884. Aguglia abandoned the world of the Neapolitan song very soon after coming to America.

Her youthful, formative decision was to have far-reaching implications for her mature years. In Italy, she is remembered, above all, as a singer; in the United States there is no trace of her in texts on music, but her name comes to the fore in histories of the cinema. For example, Muscio describes her as an immigrant actress and a figure midway between the international and immigrant performers in search of a better future. Aguglia's name is thus linked to that of other Italian immigrants associated with American cinema, such as Cesare Gravina, who was Neapolitan and an associate of the director Eric von Stroheim, Henry Armetta, Frank Puglia, and Paul Porcasi.[17]

The information available about the life of Aguglia contains gaps, and these appear in American as well as in Italian sources; but the sources are also sometimes contradictory. A precocious talent, Mimì Aguglia started off quite young, as did many of her colleagues. When she was just five years old, she appeared in the operetta *La Bastiglia*; at age ten, she was contracted by the drama and variety company of Luigi Maggi, which performed in the province of Naples. At fourteen, she was the lead actress and singer of the Teatro Machiavelli in Catania with Giovanni Grasso, and her parents and sisters also worked in that company. In 1901 the company broke up because of financial difficulties, but her father resolved the problem by signing a contract for Mimì to be the attraction in a variety show in Naples and for her two sisters, Sara and Teresa, little more than children, to work as a duet.

Aguglia quickly became a star, without being Neapolitan, and was acclaimed for her talent. Known in all the public theaters, Aguglia limited her repertoire to Neapolitan songs—and it is for this reason that I am speaking of her here—and she sang these songs in duets with her sister Sara. In 1902, in Salerno, she was brought to trial for having performed the song "'A serva" (The servant) with lyrics that were considered risqué. She was acquitted when she demonstrated by singing before the judges that a good part of her repertoire consisted of songs of the same type and that had upset no one. Aguglia's activity in Neapolitan variety theater confirmed the relationships between various types of performances popular at that time and exported to America, relationships that sometimes cause confusion when one attempts to define them as professional careers. Regarding these activities not much information is available in historical sources.[18] In 1904 Aguglia returned to the theater as lead actress in the company of Nino Martoglio with Giovanni Grasso and Angelo Musco, major writers from Sicily. She was welcomed by Italian theaters in London and Paris, in Germany, Austria, and America, and it appeared that she would receive the same financial treatment reserved for Eleonora Duse, an exemplary case in modern theater.[19] In 1905 Aguglia married Vincenzo Ferraù,

the manager of the Aguglia-Ferraù company and continued her brilliant career performing in Sicilian, Italian, and even in English and Spanish. Her uncommon capacity to act with conviction in a foreign language and the enthusiastic popularity she attained led her to abandon singing and to dedicate herself exclusively to the theater and the cinema. In 1914 she appeared in a production at the Washington Square Theater, the first Italian theater of San Francisco, where dramas, comedies, farces, sketches, stories, opera pieces, songs, and American ballets were performed. In addition, new works by Sardou were also performed there as well as *La cena delle beffe* (The jester's supper) by Benelli; *La signora delle camelie* (The lady of the camellias) by Dumas; *La fiaccola sotto il moggio* (The torch under the bushel) by D'Annunzio; *Salomè* by Wilde; and *Il padrone delle ferriere* (The foundry boss) by Ohnet.[20] In 1955 she played a small part in *The Rose Tattoo*, a drama by Tennessee Williams directed by Daniel Mann and starring Anna Magnani. Her name is listed in the credits of about 30 American films in both English and Spanish. In Lisbon, in the old Dona Amelia Theater, next to commemorative plaques dedicated to Sarah Bernhardt and Eleonora Duse, a similar plaque celebrates the career of Aguglia. She died in Los Angeles in 1970.

Her first official appearance occurred in 1908. All of the newspapers, including *The New York Times*, took pains to cover her comings and goings. In 1908 and 1909 Aguglia made many successful appearances on the New York stage, playing parts in Sicilian plays by authors from her homeland, foremost among them Luigi Capuana. At the end of 1909 the Aguglia company left on an extended tour of Cuba. During this period her renown in the Italian-American community grew. In 1911 in the column entitled Fra le quinte (In the wings) in the weekly *La follia di New York* there appeared an enthusiastic review of her work: "At the municipal theater of Rio De Janeiro, Aguglia was crowned as the new Duse. A critic of *Il corriere italiano*, a daily published in Rio De Janeiro, writes that Aguglia possesses all the qualities that enable her to surpass the greatest dramatic and tragic actresses who, until then, had walked onto the stage."[21]

Aguglia is of interest in our context here primarily because she was the first female Italian artist from the world of Neapolitan song who expressed her opinions at a time when the debate over extending the right to vote to women burst into the limelight. She embraced a position that was controversial, wavering, and at times reactionary. The question of voting rights concerned all immigrant Italians and not only women. Thus, the same question also shaped a strong anarchist movement and was one of the reasons why this movement was not eclipsed by socialist

movements that were also very well rooted in the Italian colony. Apropos of the spread of socialist and anarchist ideas, Vecoli mentions that according to a report of the Department of Justice, of the total of 222 radical newspapers not in English, 27 were Italian. That is, Italian newspapers ranked second only to those in Hebrew and Yiddish.[22] In 1910 less than 25 percent of the Italian immigrants had been naturalized and could vote; this made it impossible for most Italian immigrants to gain civil rights by means of political action. Anarchism and the various struggles of trade unionism revealed themselves as ideal ways for achieving the objectives that appealed to revolutionaries.[23] Music was ready to record this phenomenon, and the production of records referring to events and characters tied to anarchism is significant. In 1926 Raoul Romito recorded "La morte di Caserio" (The death of Caserio) (Co. 60018-F). This was a remake of the piece by Pietro Cini that became famous because of the title "Aria di Caserio." That song was dedicated to Sante Caserio, the young Milanese anarchist who in 1894 had stabbed the French president Sadi Carnot. Caserio was later guillotined and became an emblem of the social struggles of the poorest classes.[24] The experience of Sacco and Vanzetti, arrested on May 5, 1920, because they were found in possession of weapons and published material of a subversive kind, is certainly the most exemplary of these events. Alfredo Bascetta dedicated a few songs to supporting them during the years of their legal proceedings. Of these songs, the most famous is "Lacrime 'e cundannate" (Tears of the condemned) (Okeh 9316).

In 1908, at the age of twenty-four, Mimì Aguglia was hailed by an anonymous reviewer in the *New York Times* as a symbol of modern realism in the theater and had achieved fame all over Europe and America. What followed then is very interesting because it reveals that Aguglia had a clear awareness of a question that was political, social, and ethnic at the same time. She articulated this question in a personal cultural vision regarding the differences between Italians and Americans:

> "I never studied for the stage at all"—said Signora Aguglia yesterday through an interpreter—"I am a daughter of artists and was born an artist. The artist feels emotions and perceives things. I do not study my movements: I learn my words, and then I leave the rest to my feelings for the moment. When I cry, I shed real tears; when my heart is wrung, it really is aching. We people of Sicily are carried away by our emotions. We have not learned repression, and we are not ashamed of the great primal human emotions, the love of man for woman, of father for child, of husband for wife. We do not hide these things and try to overcome them. They are with us always, and we try to interpret them with the same intensity with

> which we feel them in our own lives. When I learned months ago from Mr. Frohman, a theatrical agent along with Joseph Shurmann for Duse, Bernhardt, and for other actresses, that I was coming to America, I began to study English, so that I might know your people and your wonderful country better."[25]

Asked what she thought of the American women she had seen so far, she said:

> The women of Sicily are quite different from the women of America. In fact, there are no comparisons. There is no 'woman question' in Sicily: and I don't see why there ever should be. Life there has remained without complexity, and conditions do not raise the living problem at all. We live in sunshine—we never see gray days such as these. With the brightness of sunshine life is different somehow. It is shorter and quicker, and its emotions are more strong. Today we are here, tomorrow we are gone. I was born in the village of Catania, Sicily, where my people still live. The women there are happy, and large families are the rule. Oftentimes, there are as many as 23 children in one family. I know I shall like America because it is new, energetic, and hospitable.[26]

Mimì Aguglia is a very clear example of the integration of the immigrant performer. The fact that she abandoned her singing career after reaching America and that she chose an acting career explains very well her desire to emerge from an ethnic isolation in which many Italians preferred to live. It is useful to recall as a model who is both contrary and complementary the figure of Rosina Gioiosa Trubia, who was already mentioned. A Sicilian like Aguglia, Trubia was a soprano, and she was one of the few singers who performed songs she herself wrote; she was active in the recording studio from 1924 to 1930. She wrote autobiographical songs that were nostalgic and nationalistic and at times even tragic. In the vocal repertoire of immigrant women, her song "Sta terra nun fa pi mia" (This land is not for me) stands out. It was recorded on the Brunswick label in 1927, and it is one of the most intense musical testaments of this phase of the Italian diaspora. The vocal style, simple and sorrowful, is structured in a narrow melodic space, revealing a nondidactic adoption of the theme of separation and nostalgia articulated in a solemn pace, almost resembling a funereal litany. The music of Rosina Gioiosa Trubia sounds lonely and melancholic; it embodies the emotional quality of the immigrant Italian woman at the dawn of her journey toward awareness and emancipation.[27]

In the catalogue completed by Spottswood, there are only four entries for Aguglia's work for Columbia in New York; all of them are in

Sicilian dialect and signed by the Nicastro-Marrone partners: "Torna ammuri"(Come back my love) (Co 14242-F); "Siti d'ammuri" (Thirst of love) "Stornelli siciliani" (Sicilian folksongs) (Co 14242-F); "Zitidduzza" (Little fiancee) (Co 14258-F); "Sicilia mia" (My Sicily) (Co 14258-F). Aguglia, like other immigrant artists, felt a pressing desire to emulate the most acclaimed Hollywood stars. That she abandoned Neapolitan song was a sign that she wanted to break with a tradition that did not offer, at least not in those years, a professional international career. In its open declaration of its own ethnic identity, the song in dialect did not permit any process of osmosis, of Americanization.[28]

Gilda Mignonette

In contrast to Aguglia, Gilda Mignonette apparently had no desire to be integrated into the American musical world. Resistant to assimilation, Mignonette was proud of her role as ambassador of the Little Italies in the United States and was known in Italy as the Queen of the Emigrants. In the United States she was known by different appellations, among which the foremost were Queen of Diamonds and the Carusiana,[29] honoring her attempt to establish continuity with the tradition represented by Enrico Caruso. Mignonette remains still the most notable female example from the world of Neapolitan popular music in the years of the Great Arrival. The singer came to America for the first time in 1926; in Italy she had simply been one of many female singers possessing a certain talent who frequently appeared in the theater. However, her career is extremely important because it sheds light on various aspects of musical taste that Italians and Italian-Americans shared in those years.

Gilda Andreatini (Mignonette's real name) was born in Naples. Her birth date is still uncertain; the oldest sources indicate that it was April 1, 1890,[30] but newer sources claim an earlier date of 1886.[31] Her father was a teacher, and her mother had inherited the title of *marchesa* (marchioness) from her family. As soon as Mignonette's reached the age of twenty, she concentrated on performing songs that tended to be in the latest fashion, above all French songs. During her performances, she also danced, and she began to travel in Sicily. She then established herself in Catania, a city that in those days was an important stop for touring Neapolitan artists. Next, the singer settled in Palermo, and she began to adopt a repertoire closer to her type of voice, which was clearly dramatic. After having achieved limited acclaim in Italy, Mignonette began her first foreign tour in 1910 and visited South America, Hungary, Spain, and Russia. After other Italian experiences that gradually became more and more

rewarding and among which the most important was with the company of Raffaele Viviani,[32] she moved to America, probably following the advice of Roberto Ciaramella.[33]

In New York, Mignonette married Franco Acierno, the son of Feliciano Acierno, who was manager of the Acierno Theater on the Bowery, which was by then known as one of the principal Italian theaters in New York. The anecdotes about Mignonette the artist, whose veracity seems difficult to challenge, actually contain large doses of fanaticism when put to the test. Tony Giangrande was one of the principal collectors of Neapolitan songs in New York and a great fan of Mignonette to the point of financing a great celebration in her honor every year (he went as far as to hire Carnegie Hall). Giangrande argues that Mignonette had entertained a connection with the Mafia; the singer probably performed where she was requested in exchange for ample remuneration in cash, but this theory has yet to be supported by adequate sources.[34]

Mignonette reached the apex of her career with "'A cartulina 'e Napule" (Postcard from Naples), a musical manifesto for the Italian immigrants in America that was written in New York in 1927 by Pasquale Buongiovanni and Giuseppe De Luca. The song entered the melancholic *larmoyant* canons of immigrant song, as demonstrated by the music that Mignonette later performed and by the characters she brought to the stage—not infrequently dressed in South American–style clothes. The singer showed her receptiveness toward the influences of American music. Mignonette never sang in English, but her songs in both title and in adopted rhythms reflect the new American musical tastes of the time: the foxtrot, tango, shimmy, one-step, and two-step. Her frequent trips back and forth to Italy and America placed her in the enviable position of always being up-to-date with the latest musical developments in both countries.

Her tours anticipated her stay in Naples in the autumn, a stay that coincided with the Piedigrotta celebration, during which the publishers presented new songs for the singing contests. Once Mignonette had committed the new products to memory, she returned to America and used them in concerts during the rest of the year. These repeated travels encouraged an intense musical exchange of which the singer was the author until June 1953 when, after suffering a cerebral hemorrhage, she died in a steamer offshore in the Gulf of Naples on her return to the city.

Among the Neapolitan singers, Mignonette was the most active in the recording studio; The twenty-four records she had made in Italy were released in America by a record label dedicated to Italian-American music: Geniale Record. After having lent her voice to other, similar labels, the singer chose to record for the most famous production houses. The songs are both in dialect and in Italian; the first versions were made in the 1920s

for Geniale. These were followed by songs recorded for Columbia, Victor, Okeh, and Brunswick. It is interesting to note that for the major recordings English translations of the titles appear next to the title in Italian or Neapolitan, such as "'A canzone d' 'a felicità " ("The song of happiness"), "Tutta pe' mme!" ("All to myself") (Co 14653F); "Ninna nanna" ("Rockabye baby"), " 'O calore d' 'a staggione" ("The season's height") (Br 58008); "'Nterra Surriente" ("On the land of Sorrento"), "Sulo dicenne 'Napule'" ("Only saying 'Naples'") (Br 58089); "Si dormono 'e sserene ("If the sirens should sleep"), "Questa è l'Italia ("This is Italy") (Br. 58197); "Serenata malandrina" ("Apache's serenade"), and "Il valzer di mimosa" ("Mimosa waltz") (Br. 58198).

Other than by Italians who understood the songs' original idiom, these discs were probably bought by Americans intrigued by the musicality of an unknown but profoundly euphonic language. Beyond the cataloguing of the originals, the translations of the songs' titles into English permitted penetration into a record market far larger than the Italian-American one.

Many of the recordings Mignonette made for Geniale are written by Mario Nicolò, already identified as a Neapolitan composer who showed himself in New York to be among the most active in keeping Neapolitan traditions alive. Songs by Gaetano Lama are also not lacking, such as "Così" ("Like this") (Br. 58028), which was recorded in New York in 1927; "Il tango delle geishe" ("Geisha tango") (Br. 58054) was recorded in New York in 1928; the more famous "Napule e Maria" ("Naples and Mary") (Br. 58090), "Te chiamme Maria" ("I call you Mary") (Br. 58094), and "Serenata a mmare" ("Serenade on the sea") (Br. 58095) were all recorded in 1928 in the American city in an arrangement by Omero Castellucci.

"Il Tango delle geishe" seems to be one of the most important songs in the United States. Published in 1927 by La Canzonetta publishing house, the song journeyed to New York and was published by the Italian Book Company. The next year, Mignonette recorded it in America. Written in Italian, this song reflects the disengagement of compositions written in the 1920s and 1930s with the rhythm of contemporary styles such as the tango. Very little is known about the song's authors in Italy, and it is most likely an Italian-American product. Another song produced by Brunswick and sang by Mignonette with success in that year was "Fra un tango, un fox trot, e uno shimmy" ("Between a tango, a foxtrot, and a shimmy") by Battiparano and Mignone.

This last song consists of three stanzas and a refrain with a festive atmosphere. It begins by describing a "great hall" ("gran salon") in which "the dancers are in full swing" ("le danze fervono"). The men and women are "tall and venomous" ("alto e venefico"), and it is in their dance that

"the flirting starts" ("sovente il flirt inizia sì"). The mothers watch their daughters intently but lovingly, almost inviting them to taste pleasure without being compromised by the young men's flirting. They penetrate the ambiguous world of the *tabarin* (music hall) in which the modern sound of a jazz band prevails until the scene transforms itself into that of a real brothel. The word choice becomes increasingly compromising. Repeated words allude to dubious places and situations: "orgy," "false pretenses," "pimps and women." The song follows the rhythm of a habanera-tango, and the piece seems to indicate that these dances lead naïve young women into moral corruption: the refrain tells us that "Between a tango, a foxtrot, and a shimmy, / youth is lost." ("Fra un tango, un foxtrot e uno shimmy, / la gioventù si perde così.") The last line ("La gioventù finisce così/ Youth ends up in this way), definitely dampens the festive approach of the beginning and puts the emphasis on the disenchantment experienced over the unveiling of a social environment that openly expresses all of its destructive power.

In this context, the most interesting of the singer's recordings is "La rumba delle fragole" (Strawberry rumba) by Enzo Bonagura with music by Giuseppe Cioffi; it was recorded in November 1933 for Columbia (14804-F). The song sounds like an evocation of the success of one of the first examples of rumba, "The Peanut Vendor" of 1931. That song was written by Marion Sunshine and L. Wolfe Gilbert and was derived from the original Cuban song "El manicero," which was set to music by Moises Simóns.

Love, Live, and Laugh, the 1929 film by William K. Howard, tells the story of an immigrant Neapolitan accordion player who at the outbreak of the First World War, returns to Europe to fight against Germany for his homeland. In the credits of this film, along with Abel Baer, the author of the original music, L. Wolfe Gilbert is also listed. The film features a few famous Neapolitan songs whose authors are not credited, among them "Santa Lucia" and "Funiculì, funiculà." A knotty problem in the history of music that should not be underestimated concerns foreign authors and Neapolitan-Italian songs. Clearly, Italian immigrant musicians absorbed American musical models, but what and how much the Americans had imported from Italian musical models remains unclear and worthy of being investigated.[35]

Echoes of Italian culture can be found in a few songs written by American composers. An example is the work of Albert Joseph Al Piantadosi (1884–1955), a pianist, composer, and American publisher active in New York and the author of the music and lyrics of songs with titles such as "My Mariuccia Take a Steamboat" (1906), "Goodbye Mister Caruso" (1909), and "On the Shores of Italy" (1914). Piantadosi was a composer renowned in New York; he was perhaps Irish in origin, judging

by the title of one of his pieces, "I'm Awfully Glad I'm Irish" (1910). He wrote the music for "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier" (1915), a song with a pacifist message to protest against the First World War. The music for the song was written by Alfred Bryan and made this song one of the best-selling songs in the year of its release; in the first three months alone it sold 650,000 copies.[36]

"The Peanut Vendor" was among the first successful songs that contributed to introducing the style of South American music—or rather all of the musical production born south of the United States—to New York in the 1930s. The recording of the celebrated tune performed at New York's Palace Theater by Cuban Don Azpiazu and his Havana Casino Orchestra sold many thousands of copies in just two years. Thanks to that success, the music publisher Edward B. Marks published about 600 songs from Central and South America in one year. Marks wasn't the only one to recognize the potential of this repertoire; it was also seen, for example, by the Peer Society. That society was founded in the 1920s by Ralph Peer, a man whose sincere passion for orchestras and arrangements with a Latin American flavor was so great that he imported very successful popular tunes into the United States. He put these tunes on the market with texts translated into English at just the right time.[37] Even if in the Italian text performed by Mignonette the peanuts of the original title became strawberries, the feeling of sensuality remains in the background of the song. Janet Topp Fargion writes that in many Cuban songs flirting and nibbling are often linked, and many texts referring to food also have an implied sexual meaning.[38]

To analyze Mignonette's vocal quality and to gather possible interpretations of her more traditional songs in Neapolitan and her songs of exotic inspiration, such as "La rumba delle fragole," I begin with her "'A cartulina 'e Napule." In this song, *melismas* (several notes for one syllable), dramatic accents, and sharp, dark tones prevail and are made possible by the excellent technique of performance characteristic of Mignonette. Her voice was profoundly dramatic and characterized by a kind of twilight timbre. Mignonette had an ideal intensity of voice that generated a perfect dramatic rhythm consisting of an expectation, a culmination, and a relaxation of the phrase. The singer enunciated as if to carry the emotion through to the point of emphasis. An aspect of this technique is the frequent breaking in the singing of a word, *as if* the voice had been interrupted by something surprising from outside the music, an unexpected cry, a lament only barely perceptible. This aspect is essential to the dramatic character of Mignonette's performance.

What happened in the transition from the classical Neapolitan repertoire to one that was integrated with the new American music? With

a different and more pronounced rhythm, the dramatic intensity of Mignonette's voice became smoother, above all in the subtle tones of sexual irony. This is evident, for example, in the song inspired by the rumba of Moises Simóns. "La rumba delle fragole," the Cuban example, loses its exotic character and its docility not only because of its translation from Spanish to Italian but also because of its passage into another repertoire. It is as if the artist, even though singing in Italian, does not succeed in detaching herself completely from that rough, prickly character of popular Neapolitan singing. This seems to be, indeed, one of the peculiar aspects of the very abstract concept of *napoletanità* or Neapolitaneity the writer Raffaele La Capria speaks of when describing the relationship between the popular dialect and the dialect used by middle-class song writers.[39]

However, even though the above-mentioned rumba retains here and there a certain roughness in vocal expression, all the rest is changed and tamed. An example of such change is suggested by the recording of "Il Tango delle geishe" by S. N. Tortora (the pseudonym of the poet Salvatore Neri) and Gaetano Lama. The piece was published in 1927, contemporaneously with "'A cartulina 'e Napule." Both songs were recorded by Brunswick in New York in 1928 in an arrangement by Romano Romani. Both the score and the text of "Il Tango delle geishe" are well known. The song tells the sad story—probably derived from the 1914 Puccini opera *Madama Butterfly*—of a geisha and her lover, "a brown-haired mariner / carrying in his eyes / the enchantment of the sea … / And locked in his heart / the fever of love" ("un bruno marinar / portava negli occhion / l'incanto del suo mar … / E chiusa in cuor / la febbre dell'amor"). After the man leaves her heartbroken, the song closes with a meditative coda that seems to suggest the rhythm of the barcarole-coda in "I' m'arricordo 'e Napule" by Caruso: "Shattered by love / the small playing of pleasure / disappeared in mystery!" ("Spezzata dall'amor / Sparì col suo mister / Il piccolo trastullo del piacer!").

The two songs seem similar, because of the sadness evoked and the sense of an operatic "*a parte*." The song's tango rhythm prevents Mignonette from becoming the center of attention. She must allow herself to be led in the dance, despite the fact that she alone sings the song.

Something similar happens in "La rumba delle fragole"; the dramatization of the song was very much diluted, but Mignonette could not do away with it completely because that would mean renouncing her style. The dramatic character of Mignonette's singing is doubtlessly mitigated once again by the passage from dialect to Italian, but certain aspects survive that make the southern, Neapolitan, origins of the performer evident.

Let's see which aspects these are. Above all, there is a strongly cadenced pronunciation, a doubling of initial consonants and of those in the body of a word, as in "*b*bambole," "fra*gg*ili," and "*b*bianca" in the second stanza. In verse 7, in relation to */nt/* in the participle "cinguetta*nt*i," the voice sings producing "cinguettan*d*i" with "d" instead of "t"; again in the following verse in the adverb "pian pian," the transformation of the weak labial */p/* into the corresponding sound */b/* yields the pronunciation "bian bian." To identify what can explain the success of Mignonette in Naples as well as in the Italian-American community, I must include her assertive character, the sharpness of her voice, and her talent for putting on a show. This last aspect in particular earned her more respect than her colleagues who did not demonstrate the same flexibility of performance in moving from the dialectical repertoire to the one in Italian.

Beginning with the 1930s in Italy, the antidialect and antiregional orientation of the Fascist regime became more emphatic. For example, the very process of linguistic acculturation, which had as its objective the nationwide adoption of a standard Italian language to the detriment of the dialects, became of primary importance. But the dialect in some contexts wasn't banned by the action of the government, but rather almost claimed as the government's property. Thus, it was settled with the provisions regarding the press that the ancient tradition of singing competitions, such as the Festival of Piedigrotta, or that of theaters of national importance, such as that of Eduardo De Filippo, did not fall among the experiences that were to be repressed in the vernacular.[40] However, Mignonette, like other Neapolitan performers, saw the appreciation by government for her cultural work increase, so she represented in some way the exception to the rule.[41]

In the last phase of her recording career, Mignonette recorded with the Victor label. She made a few records for Victor with an unequivocal nationalistic sentiment: "Faccetta nera" (Little Black Face) and "Africa tricolore" (Tricolour Africa) (Vi V-12354); "Chitarra romana" (Roman guitar) and "E l'italiano canta" (And the Italian sings) (Vi-V 12355). During the war in Ethiopia, Mignonette appeared on the stage dressed as a legionnaire singing "Faccetta nera." In one of her most well-received performances in Boston at Opera Theater in 1936, as many as 15,000 Italians who could not get seats in the theater began to sing that very song at the top of their lungs outside the theater, assisted by the loudspeaker that projected Mignonette's voice. They then moved in procession through the principal streets of the city, with the Americans applauding, probably without knowing the profound political meaning of the collective act they witnessed.[42]

In the Italian colony, the relationship between the entertainment world and the bellicose spirit of nationalism became closer during the first

decades of the twentieth century. It was a relationship in which a taste for Roman antiquity played a role. Ancient iconography contains explicit nationalistic characteristics, and the revival of this aesthetic is important in this phase of the immigrant experience. The history of Rome as well as the references to the military campaign in Libya, to the First World War, and to the colonial undertakings of the Fascists helped to establish a cultural identity for the Italian immigrants. This explains the constant reference in the cinema as well as in music to Italian patriotic sentiments. In 1917, the year that the United States entered the First World War, a large number of films exalted Italy for its colonial campaigns and for participating in the war. This was because the cinema supported racial prejudice.[43] The heroism exhibited in films as well as that evoked in Mignonette's songs counterbalanced the prejudices evident in the American media's negative representation of the Italian immigrants as people overly subject to passions, unreliable, and ready to betray an ally.

Teresa De Matienzo

The career of Teresa De Matienzo is significant because she was one of the first women artists to immigrate to North America.[44] De Mura emphasizes that De Matienzo was a popular singer in American variety shows and was known as "A signora d' 'e ccerase" (The lady of the cherries), from the title of a song "'E ccerase," written by Alfredo Melina. Information about De Matienzo is scarce, at least in Italian sources. The singer is quoted in a section on her husband in De Mura's encyclopedia, but De Mura furnishes no other information to explain her prominent role in the American theater. Sciotti identified 1907 as the year that the singer left Naples for New York.[45] More information regarding the singer's work in New York is contained in an article that appeared in *La follia di New York*:

> This congenial singer of Neapolitan songs, having left the United States for an extended tour of Cuba, wishes to recognize the Italian colony for all the tribute with which it has favored her. Forming an engaging trio along with the talented Maestro Vincenzo De Crescenzo and the popular dialect poet Salvatore Baratta, she will perform an evening's entertainment that truly promises to be grand. On this occasion, the Sivori-Bonacci drama company will appear in public for the first time in New York, performing Zola's masterpiece *Teresa Raquin,* in which the part of the female protagonist, Madam Raquin, will be played by that eminent actress Signora Antonietta Sivori (who, by the way, is the mother of Signora De Matienzo). The skill that made her famous makes her worthy to share laurels with other stars

> of the Italian stage: T. Salvini, Maironi, G. Pezzana, Gustavo Modena, and others. A great vocal concert will follow in which, other than De Matienzo, who will sing the most beautiful and the newest melodies written by that magician of Neapolitan song, Vincenzo De Crescenzo, popular artists appear such as E. Migliaccio (Farfariello), G. Raimo (Pichillo), M. Bruno, G. Quaranta, the Fucito-Baccigalupo duo, and Zacconi will also participate. And as if that were not enough, in order to revolutionize the field of popular singing, the two masterful soloists Migliaccio and De Matienzo will sing a duet, for that evening only, of the much applauded "Calandrella Calandrè" by Baratta and De Crescenzo. In short, a great affair![46]

The name of the singer appears again in a brief section of a text by Lawrence Estavan on the Italian theater of San Francisco. Estavan mentions the fact that De Matienzo was a famous performer of Neapolitan songs. Together with another woman in this context, Antonietta Pisanelli Alessandro, she made her fortune on the dialect stage of the Italian community. In these performances, there was more than just Neapolitan music. For example, the drama *La Tosca* of Victorien Sardou enjoyed great success. As in other plays, a series of musical numbers were performed, and often De Matienzo was the singer. In one of these instances, she was noticed by Alfred Aratoli, and he then introduced her to the San Francisco public, enabling her to move to the west coast of the United States.[47]

The Liberty Theater refers to was a place that symbolized the rebirth of the ethnic theater in San Francisco. Later, with the departure of Mimì Aguglia around 1914, the Washington Square Theater, which had until then been the temple of Italian theater, passed from Italian into American hands. The American owners turned it into a cinema and a vaudeville house. When all seemed to be getting worse, it was the Neapolitan impresario Antonietta Pisanelli Alessandro who with her management abilities and energetic personality raised the money for the construction of a new theater for Italian artists. A woman of great character, Pisanelli busied herself everywhere in the city; she built and rented theaters, conducted business with all types of people, and was even able to build a Chinese theater in Chinatown and a Spanish theater in Mexico at the same time. However, her principal focus was the Italian theater. Having raised an extraordinary amount of money, she succeeded in obtaining the California Theater on Broadway between Grant Avenue and Stockton Street. She gave it a new name, the Liberty, and once it was renovated, it became the definitive center for Italian theater in San Francisco. It was here that in January 1917 De Matienzo's company was contracted for three months.[48]

The other important source of information about De Matienzo is the Spottswood discography according to which the musical duet form was

very familiar to De Matienzo who made records with Francesco Daddi, Giuseppe Milano, and Raffaele Balsamo, three of the major performers of the popular Italian dialect repertoire of the first half of the twentieth century. De Matienzo eventually married one of her colleagues, Alfredo Melina, a painter and poet, who had immigrated to New York at the beginning of the twentieth century. Melina enjoyed a certain notoriety in the American city for having written songs set to music by masters established and living in America such as Vincenzo De Crescenzo. His most famous song "Core furastiero" (Foreign heart) was written for a duet with music by E. A. Mario (1923).

The recording career of De Matienzo began in 1910 with a 12" disc made for Columbia with Francesco Daddi: "'A malavita" (A hard life) (Co E50054) by G. Pennino. The song was probably inspired by sceneggiata-songs, a genre very much in vogue at the beginning of the century thanks wholly to the presence in the American city of Roberto Ciaramella's company. De Matienzo and her husband returned to the recording studio for three sessions in August of 1916, this time for Victor, and recorded 11 numbers. Most of these include credits for authors famous in Naples, and according to the titles, they were in keeping with the traditional Neapolitan singing style. That is to say, they were without elements that would make one think they were influenced by African-Latino-American music.[49] Among these songs were "Fore 'o cunvento" (Outside the convent) (Vi 68479) by Diodato Del Gaizo[50] and Alberto Montagna; "Nucenzia e santità" (Innocence and holiness) (Vi 68479) by F. Cinquegrana and G. Montagna;[51] "Ll'ammore a tre" (The love of three) (Vi 69130) a piece published in 1910 by Edoardo Nicolardi and Francesco Buongiovanni; "'A vigna 'e Catarina" (Catarina's arbor) (Vi 69204) by Francesco Feola, the founder of La Canzonetta, and Nicola Valente, a prolific composer. Valente later allowed himself to be influenced by American music and wrote the operetta *Lo shimmy verde* (The green shimmy) in 1925.

De Matienzo collaborated with Giuseppe Milano on four recordings on both sides of two records by Victor, all of which were published in New York. The first two songs were recorded on August 2, 1916: "'O ciardeniero e 'a munacella" (The Gardener and the Nun) by Alberto Montagna and "'O suldato e 'a viviandiera" (The Soldier and the Waitress) by E. Cinque (Vi 67984). The second record, made on June 6, 1917, included "'Ncoppa all'evera" (On the grass) by Gennaro Camerlingo, a singer and author who left Italy for America in 1910, and "Albergo 'e ll'allegria" (Hotel of merriment) by Salvatore Gambardella (Vi 69544).

De Matienzo recorded four other songs with Raffaele Balsamo, this time on two discs for Columbia: "'A guappa sorrentina" (Tough girl from Sorrento) by L. Tutela and "'A canzona 'e Piererotta" (Piedigrotta song) by

G. Leone (Co E7988) in December of 1922. In the next year she recorded the already mentioned "For 'o cunvento," this time credited to Alberto Montagna alone, and "'O scialle" (The shawl) by the same author (Co E5248, 60042-F).

It is in the recordings she made alone that De Matienzo demonstrated a certain interest in the repertoire that had been influenced by American rhythms. She made her debut singing by herself on a record in November 1910 a typical Neapolitan song, "Calandrella, Calandrè" (Little lark) (Vi 63801),[52] and in 1923 she recorded songs with an American flavor, often without the composer's name listed on the label, as in the following cases: "Fronn' e limone focstrott" (Lemon frond foxtrot)—already recorded by Balsamo, a variant of "Fronn' limons' focstrott—on the other side of an Okeh disc containing "Sant'Antonio d'Afragola" (Ok 9125); "Americanate" (Americanesques) (Ok 9128); "Cielo celeste" (Blue Sky) (Ok 9134), yet another Italian version of "Celito lindo," signed by a certain Mario. On the flip side of that record is a recording of "Gigolette," a foxtrot from the operetta *Libellentanz* by Franz Lehár; "Danza come sai danzar tu" (Dance like you know how to dance) and "Fox trottata" (Co 14009-F) in Italian. This latter was a sign of the distancing from the dialect shared by many musicians after they were introduced to the new American musical styles.

The Other Female Performers

Mimì Aguglia, Gilda Mignonette, and Teresa De Matienzo represent three female types of immigrant artists who after their arrival in America moved between two spheres of art: singing and acting. It is through the quantitative and qualitative aspects of their work that they remain the principal female artists in this theatrical and musical world. However, the musical panorama would remain incomplete without mentioning the activities of other leading women in Italian-American vaudeville. The artists to be discussed next do not seem to have been immediately influenced in their performances by American rhythms; instead, they were representative of a type of melodic singing associated with their home country. This is the case with Ida Papaccio who, as was common during the period from the late nineteenth and to early twentieth century, had gallicized her name to Ada Bruges, which was considered decidedly more endearing. Many female singers from France and Spain who came to Naples during their theatrical tours had inspired the local performers, who then adopted exotic and evocative names. Some also adopted the vocal styles and the decadent and sometimes grotesque inclinations of

their foreign colleagues. Thus, along with Bruges, there were names such as Ninì Bijou, Ester Bijou, Ninì Biricchina, and Ida Cardoville.

When she was very young, Ada Bruges had the chance to audition with the tenor Fernando De Lucia in order to study opera singing as a soprano despite the fact that popular singing appeared to be more rewarding and more attractive. Her foreign tours were numerous and among mandatory stops were those in North America. It was during one of these trips that she recorded a few discs for Victor and for Okeh between July and November of 1929; in all, she recorded ten numbers in keeping with the Neapolitan taste for popular songs. The only one in an American rhythm was the famous "Tango delle capinere" (Tango of the black caps) by the musical writing team of Cesare Andrea Bixio and Bixio Cherubini (Vi V-12092), published by the Bixio Company in 1928. Certainly, the notoriety of the song, produced by its "sinful exoticism,"[53] constitutes the major fascination with songs of her repertoire.

Almost nothing is known about Amelia and Stella Bruno, except for the list of recorded songs mentioned in Spottswood. Amelia Bruno was gifted with a voice that was not trained, at least not in regard to the canons of opera. Among the recordings in her name are "'A malavita" (Underworld) (Vi 68474), written by Gaetano Pennino. This song was composed in New York and—presumably—had already achieved success because it had been recorded six years earlier by Teresa De Matienzo. Stella Bruno was a soprano with a somewhat limited tessitura (range). In the list of songs attributed to her, "For 'o cunvento" (Outside the convent) (Em 1233) stands out. It was recorded on a 9 inches disc in 1919, but it too had already been recorded by De Matienzo. It is probable that this item was part of a group of compositions that entered into the canons of the most famous songs embraced by the immigrant community, probably because of its catchy melody and the dramatic event it recalls.

Another performer of the first half of the twentieth century worthy to be mentioned here is Silvia Coruzzolo. In this regard it is useful to quote Louis Rossi's testimony. Louis Rossi's father had been among the principal publishers of Neapolitan music in New York. Louis Rossi, himself an amateur publisher of this type of musical, died in September 2006. Here's what he said to me during a video interview made in 2003:

> Until a few decades ago, WOV, an Italian radio station, broadcast a program of about two hours of Neapolitan songs.[54] Among the regular guests was Roberto Ciaramella, one of the singers who very often came to New York from Naples, and Joe Masiello, a performer who is quite well known here. My job was to accompany the artists on tour on behalf of Geniale, my father's record label. For this reason, I was often with Gilda Mignonette,

> the most important artist in our catalogue. Her husband, Frank Acierno, used to pick me up in his automobile, and together we would go to watch Mignonette. They lived at the corner of Elizabeth Street. Then they moved to a very beautiful house on Ocean Parkway in Brooklyn. Often with us was Silvia Coruzzolo, his sister-in-law, who was also a singer.

Coruzzolo belonged to one of the most famous singing and stage companies on New York. She was born in Naples in 1889, and she debuted in the theater at the age of six. Since her childhood, her repertoire had consisted of melodic songs, comic sketches, and imitations; she was also an expert singer of Spanish-style songs that she performed while accompanying herself with the castanets. She was contracted in America in 1913 by the impresario Feliciano Acierno and appeared there in a trio with Mimì Maggio and Roberto Ciaramella. Then she married the comic actor Oscar Andreatini, the brother of Mignonette, and she lived with him in New York for several years; she died in Naples in 1956.[55]

The recording sessions in which she starred in New York ran from November of 1927 for Victor to June of 1929 for Brunswick. She recorded a little more than 40 songs in Neapolitan and Sicilian dialect and in Italian, but none of them seemed to imitate American rhythms, except perhaps for "Tango Mariù" (Mariù's tango) (Ok 9442), which was recorded in New York in February 1929 and written by Di Napoli and Tagliaferri; that song was a Neapolitan creation and perhaps imported from Italy.

There are no Italian sources regarding three performers who, judging by the number of songs they recorded, had a strong public following: Clara Stella, Ria Rosa, and Rosina De Stefano. Clara Stella, a soprano, began to record in the 1930s. Notwithstanding the fact that in those years, American rhythms were being widely circulated, none of her records can in any way be considered an attempt at assimilation in that sense. Records in dialect signed by Neapolitan composers prevailed. I point to a relatively recent recording of "Senza mamma e nnammurata" (Without mama and lover) of 1941 (Co 15076-F) by Luigi Donadio and Domenico Ietti; this was one of the best-known songs written by Italian-Americans and circulated widely among the major immigrant singers. The same observations apply to Rosina De Stefano, a performer to whom the song just mentioned is doubly tied because she recorded it twice in 1927 (Artista R2064, Rialto R2064) and in 1930 (Vi V-12167).

It is also useful to quote Louis Rossi again in regard to Ria Rosa as he provides an interesting piece of information about the singer in the relation with the immigrants' environment:

> Among the famous artists here in New York, I recall Vincenzo De Crescenzo, who arranged some of Caruso's songs and often worked with

Salvatore Cardillo, who published music first in a place on the west side and who then came to Mulberry Street.[56] Then there was Alfredo Bascetta, the comic, who was the most entertaining of all of them. He used to stay in the store with us all day long, and I remember that when there was a blackout, he became deathly afraid because he didn't know how he was going to get home. I got the car and accompanied him and his friends who had been stuck there with him. It took hours for me to get back home; distances in New York are not short like they are in Naples! Of his songs, I remember one that was a great success, "Paese mio" (My homeland). He was also the writer of "Mamma luntana" (Distant mama), a song that was under contract with us.[57]

Carlo Renard also had some success for a time. He lived in Brooklyn on 86th Street. With the closings of the theater and the ending of the variety shows for the season, he ended up like many others and appeared in private celebrations.[58] I then recall a certain D'Auria who was, for a long time, an important impresario who organized show boats—shows in which singers performed on boats that cruised in New York Bay. The affairs were always very crowded, and all the artists wanted to work with him because he paid very well. Even the theaters did extremely well before the Second World War: the Caruso Theater, the Italian Theater, the People's Theater, and many others. During the week, they presented burlesque shows, but on the weekend the theaters were put into the hands of the Italians. Finally, there were the women. Mignonette was the most famous but also the most mercenary. I remember that her husband, Frank, succeeded in finding her a part in an American film, but she stubbornly insisted on a fee higher than what was offered, and she lost an excellent contract. There was Ria Rosa, also among the most famous in immigrant circles, who even shot a film with Carlo Buti. Then there was Gina Santelia, and finally, in more recent years, Rita Berti. I also remember an unfortunate artist by the name of Mafalda, who came from Naples sure that she would succeed. She had a very self-possessed attitude but, unfortunately, she did not become popular among Italians. Perhaps, who knows, her voice was too low.[59]

In all likelihood, the film mentioned by Rossi is *I due gemelli* (The twins), a musical comedy probably released in 1938. It is a production of the Victor Italian Film Company with an amusing plot. It tells the story of a party celebrating the birth of a child, which proves to be disappointing and tiresome. The parents hope, above all, that the guests leave in order that they can enjoy the radio broadcast of songs by two vocalists, Buti and Rosa.[60] Carlo Buti, born in Florence in 1902, was one of those performers who, although not Neapolitan, made an significant contribution toward keeping alive this repertoire, participating in many of the Piedigrottas after 1931 and working in many American tours. Ria Rosa made 70 recordings in America within a relatively brief period, from 1922 to 1929, a sign of rapid success. Along with works by Neapolitan authors, a

number of them was written by immigrants: "Te voglio sempe bene" (I'll always love you) by Peronace and Donadio; "'O riturnello" (The refrain) by Peronace and Ingenito (Pathè 02098); "Arrivanno a Napule" (Arriving in Naples) (Em 12125xx) by Gennaro Camerlingo and Francesco Pennino; "'A partenze" (The departure) by Peronace and Ingenito (Em 12126); "Perduta" (Lost) (Em 12125xx) by Pennino; and "Fattura nera" (Black spell) and "'O puntiglio" (Stubbornness) by Luigi Donadio (Em 12127). Along with songs with a sad and nostalgic tone, which was dear to immigrant Italians, Ria Rosa also recorded songs with new American rhythms, songs that achieved relative success, such as the habanera "Aggio perso a Maria" (I've lost Maria) by Luigi Canoro and "Sciurillo 'e maggio" (Little May flower) by Gildo and Libaldi. This last was a composition, like the one written by Canoro, and was almost certainly born in a colonial environment; at first glance it appears like a grafting of Neapolitan and American styles.[61]

Strangely, the number by Gildo and Libaldi is not mentioned in Spottswood; presumably if the song was composed in New York, the recording was made in Italy in the 1930s or later, when the singer had returned to Naples more or less permanently. A waltz with lyrics, the piece is a sweet and gentle love song in two stanzas with the refrain, "My little May flower, / little May flower, / that's in this heart of mine. / By kissing it shapes me up. / The moon watches and laughs. It gives us courage" ("Sciurillo 'e maggio mio, / sciurillo 'e Maggio / 'ncoppa a 'stu core mio, / vasanno m' dà foggia. / 'A luna guarda e ride, c' dà curaggio"). The vocalization is sweet and measured and so different from the style of dialect singing as to suggest the existence of an original version of the song, perhaps in English. Only the use of Neapolitan allows to place this item among the songs of this repertoire because all of the other aspects point to a creation that is foreign to the canon of this tradition. The arrangement of the song and the orchestral accompaniment, with a prevalence of brass, seem to be inspired by a tradition other than the Neapolitan. This is supported, above all, by the repetition of the refrain, at the end of the piece, when the rhythm changes to that of a Charleston, and the song undergoes an unexpected shift and becomes more like a true piece of modern dance. As the wind instruments come in with the evident quality of swing, the song loses its initial melodic/singing character.

Another performer of interest is Nina De Charny, who was an eccentric and tormented personality. Identified by De Mura as Giovanna Cardini, she was born in Naples in 1889.[62] Historical records indicate that the singer had a career of only seven years, but she achieved a certain recognition. She had already toured in Italy in 1909, and the next year her name appeared on posters in London as the sole Neapolitan singer along with a number of French, English, and American vocalists. To America

she brought a repertoire of both well-known and just released songs, as did other singers during those years, especially Mignonette.[63]

De Charny's name disappears from Italian sources, only to reappear in American sources. In 1916 the singer participated in various recording sessions in New York each year until 1923. Her discography is rich: 80 recordings for Victor, Pathè, and Okeh. It is interesting to note that the songs were written primarily by immigrant composers; according to De Mura, the singer had broken her connection with Naples, and whatever she performed from that repertoire had to have been imported through the channels of musical publishing. Her first recordings immediately reflected the new climate; we are referring to "Feneste 'e nfamità" (Window of shame) (Vi 69149), and "'E vvoce 'e Napule" (Voices of Naples) (Vi 69154) by G. E. Pasqualotto and Gennaro Quaranta. This pair appears often in the list of songs performed by De Charny. Another name famous in immigrant circles appears along with theirs, Francesco Pennino, the author of "Senza mamma."[64] There exists a list of songs written by Pennino and performed by the singer.[65]

De Charny was one of the few singers who recorded a great number of songs by immigrant writers and who was also one of the principal leading forces behind the Italian-American stage. The musical and poetic vein of Pennino conformed to the painful and perennial nostalgia of the immigrant without any particular interest in the canon of modern music offered by the American stage. Many immigrants refused to assimilate their style with the Americans models for they were intent upon preserving at least this intimate and distinctive aspect of their identity as Italians.

Some items in De Charny's discography were written by Gennaro Camerlingo, Alfredo Bascetta, and the singer herself, while others of Italian origin are songs by Pacifico Vento, Di Giacomo, the Bovio-Valente twosome, and Francesco Buongiovanni. And from both worlds, there are songs by Mario Nicolò. Also in the case of De Charny, there is no particular evidence for any preference to for American music. On the other hand, while her voice did not seem particularly skilled at articulating more rhythmical songs, it remained rich in vibrato, deep and dramatic, such as in "'A fronna," (The leaf) while in some cases it is lyrical and bright, such as in "Sì" (Yes) (Vi 69934), an entertaining number in Anglo-Neapolitan by Ricciardi.[66] However, this was far from that lightness of performance that was required in songs of modern American inspiration.

The artistic career of Gina Santelia is similar to that of De Charny. Santelia was also committed to recording and performing in America. The singer was active, above all, in the 1920s, but her presence in New York is evidenced only in a few programs of the Cinematografo Sirignano (known as the Sirignano Concert Hall) in 1909.[67] Santelia was a successful

performer of the modern repertoire of Gaetano Lama, Pasquale Frustaci, and Ernesto De Curtis. In close touch with the immigrant environment, Santelia had an intense recording career. In New York, where she often appeared on stage with Farfariello, she was considered for a long time the best café chantant performer. She was the mother of Vito Scotti, one of the most sought-after character actors in Hollywood in the period after 1950 because of his markedly Italian-American features.[68]

The Archivio della Canzone Napoletana of RAI Italian Public Broadcasting contains nearly 50 recordings by Santelia. The survival of a relatively rich corpus of songs leads to believe that hers was not a fleeting success. The fact, then, that her performances were recorded makes think that the natural focus of her work was on the immigrant market where, it is important to remember, the distribution of recorded music was far more efficient than in Italy. Among Santelia's songs, I single out from the RAI catalogue "Mamma campagnola" (Country mamma), a feminine version of the more celebrated "Zappatore" (Farmer), recorded by Nick Aversano. Santelia debuted in the recording studio for Columbia in 1916; her songs are a miscellany of pieces by Neapolitan writers such as Tagliaferri, Lama, Falvo, and Gill. She recorded Gill's "'O zampugnaro 'nnammurato" (The piper in love) (Co E3147) in October 1916.[69] In 1917 she sang numbers by immigrant composers such as Raffaello Segrè, F. Cataldo, and D. J. Camerlingo together with a certain Arthur De Nunzio, but then returned to recording alone. The songs made in 1917 were also products of Italian-American songwriters such as Donadio, De Luca, Cennerazzo, Gioè, Tony Miccio, Amodio, and Quaranta. In Spottswood's discography, there are nearly 60 songs published by Columbia, Victor, Okeh, and Gennett. None of these were produced by Italian-American labels, a sign perhaps that these had already abdicated to the American companies, which were better organized and more productive and therefore too hard to compete against.

Gifted with a bright and well-trained voice, Santelia performed the songs made in America with versatility and with a flair for high notes, unparalleled among female singers of those years. In her case, as well, there is no particular attention to the American repertoire even if my assertion is suggested by the listening of only several of her recordings.

Chapter 6

The Record Labels, the Producers, and the Orchestra Directors

The Italian-American Record Labels

The last chapter of this study is dedicated to discussing the role of the record industry, a difficult task considering the scarcity of sources. The role of the American record industry is fundamental because the emergence of records at the beginning of the twentieth century helped music move from being folk music to becoming a consumer product. The first record labels, limited to popular material, were considered archival institutions, dedicated to the preservation of music by placing it on a stable, solid medium. Music, then, no longer had to rely on being passed along by oral means only, such as by musical productions that remained in great part primarily folk art in inspiration, vocalization, themes, and instrumental arrangements. But music's transference onto the disc created a method of diffusion different from the direct transmission of traditional folk music. Above all, however, recorded music gave rise to the wide distribution and internationalization of the repertoire, something that had been unthinkable until then. This aspect transformed folk music into popular music and made possible the birth of a genre that took the name "dance music." In Italy, the term was translated as "*ballabili*," and this music spread the African-Latin-American repertoire to local, deeply rooted traditional repertoires such as the Neapolitan.

What Ruth Glasser emphasizes in regard to the Dominican Republic also applies to some extent to all the ethnic repertoires at the beginning of the twentieth century. During the occupation of Haiti by the Americans between 1915 and 1934, the music of this part of the Hispaniola island, which includes the Dominican Republic on the east coast, was literally

invaded by both North American and Cuban models. In part, this happened through radio programs and records imported from the United States. The occupation of the Dominican Republic, which lasted from 1916 to 1924, had substantially the same result. The Dominican Republic began to import American records beginning in 1913. These included *danzas*, *danzones, canciones, zarzuelas,* operas, and two-steps. Notwithstanding the clear Hispanic-American origins of these models, none of the records were Dominican products. It was necessary to wait until 1928 to hear a record produced in the Dominican Republic by a Dominican artist.

In the meantime, the most important singer of the country, Eduardo Brito, who recorded for Victor in New York, had grown up imitating Cuban music, which he had heard from records circulating in his native city. This led to the paradox of Brito being contracted as a Cuban singer, which concealed his true origins. This situation was perfectly in line with the musical heritage he and the vast audience of Latin American listeners shared.[1]

The spread of recorded music provoked a loss or derailment of cultural identity, a process that, from the beginning of the era of recorded music to the present, has never ceased. From this observation, one can say that record music transformed the popular folk repertoires, taking from them their peculiarities and unique qualities and subjecting them to that phenomenon of globalization in which we are currently still immersed. However, it is equally true, as far as the beginning is concerned, that music destined for the consumer preserved many traditions that otherwise would have been lost. Among these I can count the traditions of the Neapolitan song, which took steps to defend and renew itself thanks to its very contact with other repertoires.

The production and distribution of certain types of music was based upon economic considerations above all others, and such considerations occupied the center of attention among record companies, which selected artists not solely based on the catchiness of their music or its adaptability to dance, but also on the basis of demographic factors, such as the density of a certain population in a given area. Moreover, record companies based their decisions on geographical and economic considerations, such as roads that were already trading routes, and political ones as well. The tight economic ties between the United States and Latin American countries have played an important role in the exchange of musical repertoires over many years. Thus, by the beginning of the 1920s, US broadcasters had established affiliate radio stations and film and music companies throughout Central and South America and were thus able to control this territory.

Returning to the Italian context, the exchange of stimuli and repertoires between the United States and Latin America was transposed not

only among immigrants but also among residents of Naples. Thanks to the gramophone and also to the activity of agents such as Fred Gaisberg, the representative of the Berliner Company in Europe, Italian performers and artists made contact with unknown repertoires. This is the case with "'A risa," (Laughter) a song already mentioned, performed by Berardo Cantalamessa.[2]

Once again, it is useful to start with Naples because the nomadic nature that this research must assume continues to turn our attention to the principal provenance of the repertoire I have chosen to examine. In the Italian panorama, Naples became one of the chief venues of musical production early on, thanks to the rapport established between Beka, a German label, and the Neapolitan firm of the Espositos.

Beka was a record company born of the fusion of minor labels in Germany thanks to the work of Carl Lindström. In Naples, Beka assigned some of its matrices to a local company, already the seller of phonographs, gramophones, and record cylinders. It was called Esposito di Raffaele Brothers, which in 1909 renamed itself the Neapolitan Phonograph Company. This company produced discs bearing the Sirena label, and around 1911 it changed its name again and became Phonotype Record. In this later phase of its existence the company had to be supplied with presses to make discs independently from the parent company. The activity of the Esposito company included various aspects of musical production. The family was employed in assembling and selling phonographs and gramophones, and it contracted with the often-mentioned La Canzonetta, the prestigious publishing house. In addition, the Esposito company also founded two others: Marechiaro and Santa Lucia. The latter was founded with Antonio De Marino, the owner of the Italian Book Company and manager of Klarophone Record in New York, which was bought out by Esposito in 1924. Contacts with North America were also established through the activities of the Italian-American Geniale Record and with Italian style, which in fact manufactured the matrices for Phonotype for the immigrant market. Fernando Esposito, an heir to the company, recalls various aspects of the activity tied to the commercial dealings of the Neapolitan firm. His memories return a music scene very stimulating and exciting.[3]

For example, the experience of CERIA, Case Editrici Riunite Italia-America (Italian-American United Publishing Houses) must be considered. The firm was founded in Naples by that same Rossi who, as Esposito explains, by 1916 had begun his publishing activity with Rossi and Company with headquarters in Manhattan at 187 Grand Street and who moved to number 191 in the 1930s. Ceria of Naples was managed by Mario Nicolò, a very active musician during the 1920s and 1930s and

the author of many of the songs already mentioned. He was also a cornet player for the band and orchestra and a good drummer, notwithstanding the fact that since his birth he had been without a left forearm. In 1924 Nicolò and Rossi organized the first production of the Piedigrotta Rossi. For Ceria, and coinciding with various productions of the festival, Nicolò published a few songs with an American flavor. Here is a list of a few representative titles:

Piedigrotta Rossi

1924 at the first Rossi Festival

- "L'ultimo foxtrott" ("The last foxtrot") (A foxtrot) A song by Ripoli-Nicolò in a foxtrot tempo.

1926 at the third Rossi Festival

- "Giovinezza che canta" ("Youth that sings") (A one-step with lyrics) A song by Giuseppe Tetamo and Mario Nicolò in an allegretto tempo.

1927 at the fourth Rossi Festival

- "Comme è pussibile?" ("How is it possible?") (A Charleston) A song by Pacifico Vento and Mario Nicolò in a Charleston tempo.
- "Bionda" (Blond) (A one-step stornello) A song by Tetamo-Nicolò in an allegretto tempo.
- "Terra andalusa" ("The land of Andalusia") A pasodoble by Tetamo-Nicolò in an allegretto tempo.

1928 at the fifth Rossi Festival

- "Foot-ball mania" ("Latest Charleston") A song by Mario Nicolò in a Charleston tempo.
- "Idillio oceanico" ("Ocean love affair") (A sentimental foxtrot) A song by Mario Nicolò in a foxtrot tempo.

This issue contained publicity for the Neapolitan Electric Jazz Band of Mario Nicolò.

1930 at the sixth Rossi Festival

- "Esule" ("Exiled") A song by Giuseppe Tetamo and Mario Nicolò in the tempo of a slow foxtrot.
- "Americanate" ("Americanesques") (A one-step) A song by Guido Izzo and Mario Nicolò in the tempo of a one-step.

1931 at the seventh Rossi Festival

- "Libertà di baci" ("Freedom of kisses") (Modern foxtrot) A song by Franco Barile and Mario Nicolò in the tempo of a foxtrot.

In 1928, Mario Nicolò left Rossi and changed Ceria into MIA Musicale italo-americana, which remained in Naples until 1936 and then moved to America where it remained active until the end of the 1950s.[4] Ernest Rossi was an important publisher; he produced musical scores and discs for Geniale Record, his recording company. In 1927 he published one of the greatest successes tied to the immigrant world, "'A cartulina 'e Napule" sung by a young vocalist, Mario Gioia. Gilda Mignonette's version of the song became very popular.

Probably the spread of Neapolitan song in America occurred through records rather than through scores written on sheets. Initially, the publishing houses that produced this repertoire were Italian-American companies that specialized in music for immigrants, such as the already mentioned Geniale Record, the Italian Record Company, and Nofrio Record. Later, the market was dominated by Columbia, Victor, and Okeh. But more than record publishing houses, the Italian-American companies were really cliques. As a matter of fact, every label came to be surrounded by singers or actors who collaborated intensely and collectively produced songs and sketches. As we have seen, the career of Gilda Mignonette was exemplary in this regard. Her career started through Italian-American companies; then Mignonette went on to record for the most famous American companies. I can suppose that the strong contact the Italian artists maintained with the record agents associated with the American environment played more than a marginal role in American production.

Alfredo Cibelli

For evidence of what has just been said, let's look at Alfredo Cibelli and his versatile role in various professions—talent scout, composer, singer, tour manger, and publisher. He was one of the most interesting personalities in this context in both the Italian and American cultural scene. Together with his parents and his brothers, Salvatore and Eugenio, the latter a tenor and contemporary of Enrico Caruso, Alfredo emigrated from Naples to New York in 1908. After having worked as a mandolin player in a few restaurants and music clubs in the city and as a baritone at the Metropolitan Opera House, he chose the career of a record producer. He became head of the foreign department of the Victor Talking Machine Company.[5]

Alfredo Cibelli was academically trained as a versatile musician and orchestra leader. With various skills relevant to small orchestras, such as Cibelli's Neapolitan Orchestra, the Victoria Orchestra, and the Orchestrina Napoletana, he recorded many instrumental versions of items in the Neapolitan repertoire. In addition, he sang duets with his brother Eugenio, and he directed some of the most famous performers of the Hispanic and Italian repertoires under contract with Victor: Juan Arvizu, E. Palacio Coll, Rodolfo Ducal, Carlos Gardel, Tito Guizar, Alfonso Ortiz Tirado, Enrico Caruso, Gilda Mignonette, Eduardo Migliaccio, the Silvia Coruzzolo and Roberto Ciaramella duo, Ada Bruges, and Amelia Bruno.[6] It was certainly thanks to him that many Italian performers made contact with the Latin American musical world, often successfully adopting its rhythms and poetic inspirations, even highlighting their physical similarities.

Collecting information about Alfredo, an important figure in the context of American dance music at the beginning of the twentieth century, is not easy. I once again found help in the study by Glasser on the community of Puerto Rican musicians. The scholar explains the ties between the Italian musician and producer and the musicians with whom he worked. One of Cibelli's goals was to maintain constant contact with music dealers.[7] Glasser's work seems to be perfectly in keeping with the customs even the Italians followed, that is to say, they recycled the music of others, sometimes permitting songs previously known only in English to achieve notoriety in other ethnic repertoires.[8]

The Major American Labels Record Ethnic Music

The immigrant artists recorded for nearly all the American labels. The leaders of the record companies realized that absorbing an immigrant community into America must occur first of all through the channels of music and the cinema. These media were able to restore to the immigrants a positive self-image, one they could embrace without fear of losing their geographic and cultural horizons. Here I agree with Chambers's claim that sound has the capacity to create community since he writes that sound constitutes a "home."[9]

The principal companies for which the Italians made records in America were Columbia, Victor, Okeh, and Brunswick. In 1917 Columbia introduced a new publishing branch that recorded jazz bands, but the first recording house that published this music commercially was its rival Victor. Specifically, in February of that year Victor had made the first recording of one of the best known Italian-American jazz bands,

the Original Dixieland Jass Band. Victor achieved exceptional success in sales only a few days after the release of the record, and thereby it helped launch the American historical and cultural phase known as the Jazz Age.

The ODJB went to the Columbia studios on January 30, 1917, and made a few test takes of two popular items in its repertoire: "Darktown Strutters' Ball" and "Indiana." Columbia held back from releasing these pieces because it did not want to publish music that sounded unintelligible. A few days later, however, the directors of Columbia learned that Victor had published a few of the band's other pieces and that it had produced a record that was becoming a colossal success. Hurriedly, Columbia released its recordings by the band and obtained the same results. After making a few recordings for Aeolian, the ODJB contracted exclusively with Victor. Columbia sought to make up lost ground by contracting with W. C. Handy, known as Father of the Blues, and his ragtime orchestra from Memphis and other bands that also played jazz.[10]

While the two giants of recording contested for the juiciest parts of the market, Okeh grew because it adopted a different strategy and opted to specialize in black music and in blues influenced by jazz. Victor and Columbia had also recorded black artists, but their work was intended for white buyers. The idea of engaging black artists for audiences of color was so successful that in 1921 the Okeh Race Series was introduced. This became one of the principal sources of jazz. Most artists of jazz, blues, and spiritual music made at least one record for that Okeh series before it closed down in the summer of 1935 after 966 recordings. The quality of its recordings was so good that collectors consider those recording the touchstone against which to judge other records produced in those years.[11]

At the same time, Okeh started a series dedicated to music that was of distinctly American origins—hillbilly, ragtime, mandolin songs, calypso—and ethnic music, Hebrew, European, and Russian. At the start of the 1920s, following Okeh's example, Columbia also began to publish so-called race records, records that, in the modern parlance of marketing, were aimed at the black community. In 1900 the American population was made up of 13.5 percent immigrants, and the majority of them were concentrated in metropolitan areas on the east coast. For them Victor produced about 20,000 ethnic musical titles at the beginning of the 1920s while its primacy was constantly being challenged by Columbia.

Until 1923 Columbia's release of jazz records and those of commercial music followed a numerical sequence/series number in the general catalogue. Later, however, numbers of specific series were instituted. The great interest in dance made the competition between Columbia

and Victor even sharper. In 1929, in fact, Victor started its own line of race records. The two houses continued to compete fiercely through the years, taking niches in the market from each other and stealing artists, thus accelerating the recording and the spread of musical production. Many of these recordings, however, were doomed because commercial music did not have the distinctive attributes of artistic music and once the stock of records of a particular piece had been sold out and the success of the contracted performer had dimmed, the matrix was destroyed. The honor of being preserved belonged only to recordings of symphonic and operatic music.[12]

Rosario Bourdon

If the music was more varied according to ethnicity of the performers, the record companies put under contract the same conductors and orchestras placing a sort of signature on the disk and turning to, especially in the case of conductors, a few representatives known in the circuit. In the case of the orchestra leaders, a few well-known representatives worked within the ethnic circuit. This was the case with Bruno Reibold, Rosario Bourdon, Romano Romani, and Nathaniel Shilkret, names that recur often in the credits of records of Italian artists.[13]

Almost nothing is known about Reibold and Romani, but it is easy to suppose that they were familiar with every type of musical repertoire—operatic, symphonic, jazz, ethnic, and country—because specializing in a particular genre was fairly unknown in this phase of record history. Therefore, their artistic experience must have been similar to that of Rosario Bourdon and of Nathaniel Shilkret, the most famous composer and director of that era and that type of music.

The Canadian scholar Robert Thérien has dedicated a few studies to Rosario Bourdon, publishing them through the *Virtual Gramophone: Canadian Historical Sound Recordings*.[14] A cellist and arranger as well as a composer and orchestra leader, Joseph Charles Rosario Bourdon was born in Lonqueuil, Quebec, on March 16, 1885. His father was an amateur singer, and his mother, a cellist, gave her son his first musical training. Thérien points out that Bourdon was an extremely talented musician and that his presence was very influential in the first years of the Victor Talking Machine Company's existence.

A child prodigy, Bourdon was admitted to the Ghent Conservatory in Belgium when he was only twelve years of age. After just eight months of study, he won an award with special mention as the best student in the school. At fourteen years of age, he was already a cellist of some note in European and Canadian circles. In those years, the United States drew great attention from musicians, and Bourdon, in search of better career

opportunities, began to play for the Cincinnati Orchestra in 1904, for the Philadelphia Orchestra from 1904 to 1908, and for the St. Paul Orchestra in Minnesota from 1908 to 1911. In those years, he even came close to directing an orchestra, and he became an American citizen. His first cello recordings for Victor date back to 1905, when he was contracted to remake some recordings of the famous cellist Victor E. Sorlin. In 1909 he became the permanent cellist for the Victor Company, and he assumed the role of codirector with the already mentioned Josef Pasternak.

For Victor, Bourdon worked to arrange music, write piano accompaniment for other artists of the company, and direct the Victor Concert Orchestra, the Victor Symphony Orchestra, the Victor Salon Orchestra, and for a while also Sousa's Band. On the cello, he accompanied a few Victor Red Seal catalogue artists, such as Alma Gluck and Enrico Caruso. In 1931 he ended his collaboration with Victor. Then he worked for radio station NBC at the Brunswick Company. In the last years of his career, he dedicated himself, as did many of his colleagues, to composing soundtracks for the film industry and to writing the music for a few Laurel and Hardy films and for animated cartoons by Walt Disney. He died in New York in 1961. Throughout his career, as Thérien states, Bourdon's aim was not to gain fame and success so much as to spread, via the disc, the voices and the inspiration of the composers whose music he performed. For this, he received the admiration of all the musicians he worked with. It was said that his best quality was the balance he displayed between his native talent and his acumen.

Thérien focuses on analyzing Bourdon's activity as it relates to European culture, but he says nothing about the hundreds of recordings of ethnic music, not only of the Italian type, of which Bourdon was the director and on which he certainly worked as an arranger. Whether it was because his recordings were extemporaneous or because they were destined for the consumer market, there is apparently no critical study available that analyzes the production of Bourdon, someone who was among the principal directors and composers of entertainment music in twentieth-century America.

Nathaniel Shilkret

Something similar happened in the case of Nathaniel Shilkret, whose biography I have tried to reconstruct on the basis of the few sources available.[15] His baptismal name was Naftule Schüldkraut, and he was born on December 25, 1889, in Queens, New York, to Austrian immigrants, Wulf (William) Schüldkraut and Krusel (Rose) Zeiger.

Nat was the first of five children; there followed Jack, a pianist and band leader; Harry, a horn player; Lew, a pianist; and a sister named Ray, about whose musical talents I have no information. Nat began studying violin and clarinet at age five and then moved on to the piano. In 1896 he joined his first orchestra, the New York Boys' Symphony Orchestra. Only six years later, in 1902, the same orchestra announced Shilkret's presence by characterizing him as a phenomenal clarinetist who was only nine years old, even though, in reality, he was three years older. This discrepancy remained uncorrected in the musician's biography and, at times, has created difficulties in reconstructing various stages in his professional life.

In 1905 Shilkret became a member of the Russian Symphony Orchestra and Arnold Volpe's Orchestra. Two years later, he went to play with the New York Philharmonic. During the first decade of the twentieth century, he was a member of many other important groups, such as the Metropolitan Opera House Orchestra and the Orchestra of Victor Herbert and Arthur Pryor. In 1914 Shilkret married Anna Finston who, in the following year, gave birth to his only child, Arthur. It was in that period (probably encouraged by his wife to accept work close to home) that Nat Shilkret began to work for Victor as an arranger and orchestra leader.

In 1921 Shilkret and his colleague Eddie King, another Victor employee, formed the Shilkret Orchestra. In 1923 Shilkret directed John Phillip Sousa's band in the first of several recording sessions of the famous band under his direction. It was during this period that the most interesting episode of Shilkret's biography occurred. The musician was named director of Victor's light music section, which included all music that was not part of the symphonic and operatic repertoire or belonged to traditional American marching band music. In that role, Shilkret formed the Victor Salon Orchestra, already mentioned in relation to Bourdon. Shilkret presented this orchestra to the public as a "concert orchestra that played popular music in novel arrangements."[16] This statement is important because it explains Skilkret's interest in some repertoires that had previously been completely unknown to him, such as the ethnic Neapolitan. These repertoires attracted him because of the possibility of rearranging the songs in a fresh way capable of creating a musical product that sounded "novel."

The Victor Salon Orchestra, like the All-Star Orchestra, was born in a specific American musical context during the 1920s, when many bands, although they featured imposing names, were never listed in the programs of dance halls or theaters. Their activity was limited, in a kind of assembly-line fashion, to consumer music, and therefore they became known as studio bands. Those groups employed musicians who were available, from time to time, to record whatever popular number would

earn money for the recording company. Many of the bands did not have a specific sound, and they all sounded very similar to the listeners' ears. In part, this was because the items recorded were very often the same and made up the so-called stock of success. And often the same band—with the same personnel, the same instrumentation, and in the same sessions—made the same recording, which was then published under different titles and different record labels. This situation was true only in part for the first groups directed by Shilkret; in his orchestras he usually made use of excellent musicians who were already famous. The All-Star Band too was noted for using proficient musicians. Among such well-known musicians were Miff Mole, Joe Venuti, Carl Kress, and others who would soon become famous, such as Jimmy McPartland and John Cali. Moreover, those groups also included Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, and Glenn Miller, musicians who would later become the most prized directors of dance orchestras.

The success of the Victor Salon Orchestra was such that, in 1925 it debuted at WEAF Radio in New York and then appeared on the Eveready Hour on NBC. Shilkret's statement, quoted above and taken from *Phonograph Monthly Review,* appears in a series of autobiographical memoirs titled *My Musical Life*, which Shilkret began to publish in 1926. His name appeared more and more frequently in important circles of American dance music. Thus, it happened that in April 1927 he directed Paul Whiteman's band for an electric recording of *Rhapsody in Blue* by George Gershwin. The event was the result of a classic stroke of luck because, after an altercation with Gershwin, Whiteman left the podium, and the baton literally flew into the hand of the young Shilkret. His name is not listed in the credits, but it appears that the composer approved of his work. After all, two years later Shilkret was made director of the first radio broadcast of another of Gershwin's symphonies, *An American in Paris*.

The next decade saw Shilkret still employed in radio shows of commercial enterprises, such as *Music That Satisfies*, sponsored by Chesterfield for CBS (1931–1932), the Smith Brothers' *Songs You Love* for CBS/NBC (1933–1935), and the *Palmolive Beauty Box Theater* for NBC (1934–1935). The exposure offered by radio was exceptional, and Shilkret decided to go on to the cinema and moved to Hollywood in 1935. His musical activity in this new professional phase proceeded in step with his film work; when he was between films, he directed orchestras that accompanied singers. He had already debuted in a film in 1928 when he composed the music for a Warner Brothers' production of *Lilac Time*, but that had been an isolated incident. In Hollywood, Shilkret linked up with RKO Studios, and he wrote the soundtrack for many movies, among them *Mary of Scotland*

(RKO 1936), *Swing Time* (RKO 1936). *Everybody's Doin' It* (RKO 1937), and *Toast of New York* (RKO 1937). In 1936 he received an Oscar nomination for *Winterset*.[17]

Shilkret's activity career continued writing scores for a few movies with Laurel and Hardy, among them *The Bohemian Girl* (MGM 1936), *Way Out West* (MGM 1937), and *Swiss Miss* (MGM 1938). In the 1940s, he founded the Nathaniel Shilkret Music Company and continued to write soundtracks for some celebrated movies such as *Shall We Dance?* (RKO 1942), *Ode to Victory* (MGM 1943), *Calling All Kids* (MGM 1943), *Hoodlum Saint* (MGM 1945), and *Faithful in My Fashion* (MGM 1946). At the same time, he dedicated himself to classic compositions, and in 1942 he wrote *Concert for Trombone* for Tommy Dorsey. Unfortunately, after that first performance, all news about this work remained lost for about 60 years. Something similar happened with *Genesis Suite*, which the composer wrote together with Igor Stravinsky and Arnold Schönberg. The piece was performed in 1945 at the Wilshire Ebel Theater of Los Angeles. Stravinsky and Schönberg saved some parts of the composition, but the work in its entirety was stored in Shilkret's home and was destroyed in a fire. In the 1950s the composer's activity was limited to conducting recording sessions and to a few films, among them the first movie by Stanley Kubrick, *The Flying Padre,* in 1951. After the death of his wife in 1958, Shilkret retired from the profession; he died in New York in February 1982. In addition to the high quality of many of Shilkret's works, his achievement consists of an impressive number of recordings. His son Arthur has estimated the number of copies of his work to be 50 million, something without parallel in the recording industry in those years.

Even though a few scholars have reconstructed the biographies of some orchestra directors and composers in the world of ethnic music,[18] it is difficult to draw conclusions about the method used in making these recordings—sometimes without particular regard to the musical text, to the voice of the soloist, and to the length of time necessary to complete the project. In addition, even before one recording was completed, the focus of the producers had already turned to next one. And yet, in the case of the conductors just discussed, I find a fluidity of execution and a coherence in musical instrumentation, that which in other cases are almost completely lacking.

Conclusion

Initially, the topic of this work was inspired by the kind of debate that occurred soon after the unification of Italy. Among the multiple themes of discussion that occupied the majority of the intellectuals, philosophers, and scholars in those years and in the years that followed, the debate revealed that, well before the era of mass immigration, the hegemony of one part of Italy (the north) would push the rest of the country (the south and the economically depressed rural areas) toward a diaspora that is one of the most intense in modern history. This reading of the history of modern Italy has in its theoretical foundation the image of southern Italy's relation to the opulent and modern north as a "*palla di piombo*" (dead weight), to borrow a famous phrase. This phrase was used by the Sardinian intellectual Antonio Gramsci with all of its critical power when he confronted the Italian Socialist Party against which, more often than not, he advanced his arguments.

In Gramsci's theory, the socialist proletariat of the industrial north adopted the ideology that the ruling middle class sought to impose on the entire working class itself. The middle class identified the causes of southern Italy's backwardness not with historical but with biological factors. For this argument, it used the support of scientific positivism that had circulated in Europe since the end of the nineteenth century.[1] According to Gramsci's perspective, the notion of the "dead weight" had deep roots in the reforming and corporative tradition within the socialist movement.[2] Historical research provides evidence that, in reality, the southern question and its reflection on immigration responds to far more complex assumptions and contexts. In fact, these contexts involve socioeconomic and historical reasons that share little with the argument that is at the basis of the political ideology of the Italian Socialist Party, an argument Gramsci refuted.[3]

My study has penetrated the events of a socially stratified collective—according to the model of a stratified and nonstratified (or egalitarian) society created by Norton H. Fried and recovered by Marcello Sorce Keller—in which factors such as power, wealth, and prestige determine the conscience of the group. The stratification thus influences music

as well as other cultural behaviors, and music in particular then often becomes a symbol and metaphor of other aspects of socioeconomic life, the basis for ethnoanthropological studies.[4] In a society stratified from the point of view of economics, musical repertoires coexist that respond to various social groups that do not necessarily have commercial relationships with each other. When social mobility exists—as in the case of the immigrant community—an individual can easily enter into contact with individuals from other social strata and ethnic groups and can adopt new habits and tastes, sometimes abandoning characteristics of his or her own class or original social stratum. In the specific case of immigrant groups, the stronger the social pressure that confronts the subordinate group, the more the individual belonging to this group tends to adopt behaviors of the ruling class, abandoning little by little his or her own cultural and social codes. In this way, the immigrant participates in the design of what Nettl defines as urban music sprung from secondary urbanization or rather from the rise of urbanization as a multicultural democratic phenomenon that is accessible to all and had a profound technological impact from the beginning of the twentieth century on.[5]

One of the assumptions of my research has to do with assessing the Italian diasporic experience as something positive, by recasting and reformulating cultural codes in light of a true social rebirth. As Gilroy states, the elements that analyses of the diaspora allow us to perceive can establish new visions of it. They can also give rise to a new solidarity because these elements do not define a linear voyage that has a final destination—namely, identity—rather, they suggest a different modality of connected social, economic, cultural ways or forms among different ethnic groups, or they deal with issues of the diasporic phenomenon. The elements of the immigration experience represent more than a protracted condition of social bereavement occasioned by the trauma of exile, of loss, and of brutality. Rather, they generate a more indefinite emotional state, in which the alienation from one's birthplace and cultural estrangement can produce penetrating visions and creative talents that go beyond making perceptible only the anxiety over the possible loss of racial and national unity and of the stability of an imaginary ethnic spirit.[6]

I have pointed out that because Neapolitan song was produced in the context of the immigrant community, that is, in a context with continually shifting nuances of style, it appeared to be kind of fading. Thus, the question is whether the subject of my study belongs to the repertoire of folk music or to that of popular music. I have concluded that the Neapolitan song belongs to that concoction of repertoires that was composed of songs originating in folklore but that also included songs from salon music and light opera as well as songs from parodies of operas.

In addition, I explained that Neapolitan songs produced from the end of the nineteenth century on were assimilated into the repertoires of tango, jazz, rebetiko (a type of Greek folk music), fado, and flamenco.[7] Subsequently, I have shown that in the traditional environment of the most famous Neapolitan songs, vernacular songs produced in the immigrant community would be judged as mere copies by exponents of the Neapolitan song produced in Naples. In this regard, I recall the experience of E. A. Mario, as reported in chapter 4, who went to New York to protect his name, tired of the fact that many of his songs were falsely attributed to other unknown immigrant authors.

The route that I have taken with its many bends and twists convinces me more and more that the Italian immigrants, although thrown into a multicultural and multiethnic new context, for a long time preserved their specific ethnic identity in America. Once the music repertoire lost its social function—as in the case of the comic songs of Farfariello and De Laurentiis, this was tied to local models of ballad singers working primarily in southern Italy and about whom Mauro Geraci speaks in detail—its ability to survive, to redefine itself, and to find new functions depended upon the behavior of the social group to which that repertoire belongs. That is, the future of the repertoire depends on the community whose traditions it expresses and on how important the community considers the repertoire and its preservation as memory and symbol of a local or national identity.

Being uprooted puts the immigrant in a state of suspension in which he or she lives until he/she develops a new individual and collective consciousness of the self. In the existential incubator in which immigrants found themselves immersed, the Italian immigrants experienced and comprehended their new environment without a well-defined plan. They were drawn to what they still did not understand by a social dynamic that lures the stranger with the happy promise that "everything is possible." In time, the immigrant's identity changes, he/she negates his/her original identity. Sometimes immigrants transform themselves even to the extent of rendering their name unrecognizable, as in the cases of Dan Caslar and Harry Warren, which I have discussed. However, like an adolescent who must sever the symbolic umbilical cord to face life as an adult, the immigrant individual sometimes lives in a painful limbo in which certainties do not exist but social obligations and ties are still strong.

Playing their own music made it possible for the immigrants to retain their own identity and, as a result, to earn the recognition and respect of other ethnic groups. In the North American urban context, ethnic groups often identified themselves stereotypically as musicians. Such stereotypes are not static but change and renew themselves with

the passage of time. Nettl states that at the end of the nineteenth century the Irish were considered the guardians of the popular music tradition, but subsequently this role passed to the Italians. The stereotypes of musicians have identified—the extent to which this corresponds to reality is not known—a relationship between the concept of music (and of musicality) and a specific ethnic group that in this way gains respect and a unique position among other ethnic groups and the ruling class. Nettl argues that an ethnic group subject to discrimination can make progress and earn social respect for itself by providing entertainment services, the most important of which is music.[8] This interpretation can be adopted to explain the Italian immigrant experience. From an initial stage of discrimination, which I have briefly touched upon in chapters 2 and 3, where I cited episodes of lynching, the Italians moved to portraying themselves in a positive image through expressing their musical skills. I note here the great number of Italian-American singers and musicians, especially in the second half of the twentieth century, such as Liberace, Louis Prima, Connie Francis, Dean Martin, Frank Sinatra, and Perry Como, and the generation of artists who expressed themselves in specific idioms, such as film music, jazz, heavy metal, rock and roll, and hip-hop.

In the initial phase of their establishment in North America, the Italian immigrants' temporal perspective lacked definition; their present was divided at the center between nostalgia for the past and fear of the future. The relationship with the new space/territory was erratic, almost psychotic. The choice of naming one the Italian community's major journals *La follia di New York* (New York Craziness) is symptomatic in this regard. This psychotic dimension can also explain the relatively brief existence of theaters and concert halls dedicated to performances for immigrants, topics that were discussed in the first chapter. The new arrivals experimented with and tried new things as if invited to a banquet without knowing who was the guest of honor. That is, the immigrant took a small taste of a new, unknown existence, and slowly allowed himself/herself to be contaminated as he/she contaminated in turn. As I have explained, especially in chapter 2, the stronger the Italians' desire to integrate the more violent were the racial attacks against them. Once the break with the world of their origin was complete and once they realized the necessity of adopting the cultural and social codes of the ruling classes in order to be accepted socially and to secure affluence and prestige, they began to deny their music, dialect, and traditions. These expressions became only memorials to and symbols of a state of indigence that has been or will be overcome. No museum, no monument memorializes this precarious existence.

In the course of chapter 2, in our discussion of Enrico Caruso I highlighted technological developments that have had strong social and cultural repercussions, above all the invention of phonograph and gramophone recordings. This development sparked a true cultural revolution. As proof of how animated the conflict between musical professionals and purists—still decades away—would become, I cite the debate set off by the pianist Glenn Gould and culminating in his famous article on the prospects and potentialities of recording. The article was published in *High Fidelity Magazine* in 1966 and posits the absolute value of a recording as a musical object, thereby refuting the argument of the detractors of recorded music.

My research has demonstrated the importance of the disc as the principal instrument for spreading the music of the immigrants. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the acquisition by consumers of this technological contrivance—in Italy it was not yet as widespread—was the first stage in the integration and emancipation of the immigrants from the status of an "intruder." Domestic use of recorded music was the great phenomenon that Italian artists, the performers of songs, experienced as they completed their American tours. Recordings were objects for preservation because they provided music with the material support it needed to transcend time. Recordings were also creative instruments because they immediately influenced existing musical genres and gave them rebirth.[9] The disc enabled quicker penetration of the music market, saved time, and helped earn money inasmuch as it became a true "visitor's ticket," which preceded concert appearances and created an expectation among the listeners. Moreover, from a socioeconomic point of view, the disc was an accelerant to social expectations tied to the primary objective of acquiring prestige, something I have already referred to.

The invention of Edison's phonograph and the incisions/recordings that derived from it made it possible to package music, thus rendering it available at any moment. Citing the arguments of Theodor W. Adorno and Walter Benjamin about the technical reproducibility of works of art, Molino writes that the technical revolution in the media at the beginning of the 1900s created a transformation in music. However, while technology remains morally, politically, and aesthetically neutral, the effects it has on the creation and/or transformation of objects is so radical that it gives birth to diametrically opposed positions of condemnation (Adorno) or affirmation (Benjamin).[10]

In the course of this study I have maintained that records have been a source of integration for another reason as well. Their creation involves both technicians and instrumentalists who are not necessarily from the same ethnic group as the one to which the singer who made the recording

belongs. This aspect demonstrates the universal and transcendental value of music in regard to expressing solidarity above all in environments of alternative cultures (i.e., minority cultures and those of the ethnic diaspora).[11] We must keep in mind, however, that this phenomenon occurs more rarely with famous singers since their entourage comprises professionals who are often trusted because of a shared ethnic background and thus shared participation in the construction of a cultural model. This is true of Enrico Caruso, Gilda Mignonette, and Farfariello. However, in the majority of cases, the time needed for the production of a record destined for the ethnic market did not permit the kind of attention to the product dictated by the criteria for best quality. Sometimes, any musician available at the moment would do, and it mattered little whether that musician was of another nationality, Polish, Hispanic, or Italian! It was only necessary that the person knew how to play the part assigned without any kind of errors that would compromise the recording.

In this way, in the Victor Orchestra and in other studio groups mentioned, I come across a veritable melting pot, a mixture of people from very diverse geographic backgrounds who created a new style of music under the supervision of a stable of arrangers and composers contracted for the purpose by the record company. All of this led to the formation of a transethnic musical style, a cultural assimilation in a dynamic flux of cultural codes that predicted music acquiring a global dimension. Nettl supports this very idea stating that in the twentieth century the relationships between most of the world's cultures have become so close that cultural interaction, viewed through music, has become a major focus of ethnomusicological research.[12] With regard to Italian emigration at the beginning of the 1930s, ethnic interaction becomes an essential element that prepared the future of Italian-American music, which then developed further in the context of rock and roll, jazz, and contemporary pop.

As Bourdieu has noted, taste is intimately connected with the social class to which one belongs. Every class identifies itself not only through economic capital but also through cultural capital, and from childhood, each individual is directed toward certain tastes. As one grows up, one acquires tastes, for food as well as for music, according to a system of values, the needs, and the lifestyle of the class to which one belongs and whose cultural capital one shares. Thus, one refuses or adopts new tastes based on the social class to which one belongs.[13] It is the ideal and symbolic value of the culture of a class that determines the preservation of the class or social group itself. As long as a group exists, so too do the particular psychological needs through which tastes and specific, identifiable cultural tendencies are expressed.

Apropos of taste, I cannot refrain from speaking about its relative importance vis-à-vis the value attributed to musical repertoires. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the value of music had to do with the industrialization of music. The position of the artist in the market, the tension between tradition and technology, the relationship between social classes and community, the ethnic and national influences, the interaction between the public and the private arenas are common to all repertoires. These tensions come from the same fundamental idea (or process) according to which music is considered a commodity. As a result, there is confusion between the aesthetic and the commercial dimension (what works in the market influences the aesthetic model), and a new cultural hierarchy emerges in which the concepts or values of "high" and "low" are continually rethought.[14]

I have dealt with these themes in chapters 3 and 5, and in chapter 4 I have attempted a brief analysis of the "repertoires of return." There, I briefly discussed a few authors, such as Gaetano Lama, who have acknowledged extra-European repertoires with an American provenance. In this case, I have been able to discuss only traces of evidence that may be helpful to carrying out future research. However, we have to keep in mind that products of this type circulating in Europe were often colorless imitations of American models that had very limited influence on the course and development of the repertoires. Here it is appropriate to rely on the hypothesis of Robinson, according to which, for example, Theodor W. Adorno's severe judgment of jazz was in reality based on mediocre examples of this music circulating among the German orchestras during the years of the Weimar Republic.[15]

In chapter 5, I introduced the theme of gender and analyzed the contribution of some female performers with regard to the cultural and social impact of their musical activity. For a few of these, I have attempted to describe the specific elements of their musical style. The case of Gilda Mignonette, along with a few examples of men already mentioned, such as Raffaele Balsamo and Joe Masiello, enters into Lomax's classification of musical styles: the facial expression is sad, the throat is distended and flushed with strain, the brow knotted with a painful expression. Many tunes are long and highly ornamented in Oriental style, and the prevailing mood of her music is tragic, melancholy, nostalgic, or sad. In her dance tunes, the mood is characterized by frenetic gaiety and a rather aggressive release of energy. The performer sings solo songs, the universal subject is love, the beauty of women, or the torments of courtship. Lomax also states that modern Europe is the land of the narrative ballad and of the slightly ironic love songs, which have come to characterize the European folk song repertoire. More than any others, this musical

style that Lomax refers to has influenced the development of folk songs in the immigrant colonies of North and South America.[16] At this point, it is appropriate to note the uniqueness of the journey of women's emancipation in the context of the Italian community in America. In particular, in terms of performance and the appropriation of public space, their emancipation contrasts markedly with the themes of the songs that many of them performed: repressed passion, fear of sexual contact, negative female models, secret offenses, promiscuity, and submission are typical themes found in the female repertoires even in the immigrant community. The only exception was the lone voice of Rosina Gioiosa Trubia; the small number of records at my disposal unfortunately does not permit analysis of her work. The sexual themes and the position of women reflect the social organization of southern Italy. These themes shaped the southern musical style and can be found in the repertoires of the first phase of immigration to North America.

For those who study the immigrants' field, Neapolitan song and its performance in public, there remain a few unanswered questions about the production of the emigrants who left at the beginning of the twentieth century. For example, one might ask whether, during performances, musical numbers were executed according to original arrangements or based on the preferences of the band that played them. One also wonders how much leeway was given to the creative impulses of the musician and what determined his role in the recording studio. Under what circumstances were instrumental songs sung? How did such songs spread and how were they broadcast in words, and, finally, what was the relationship between the music makers and the group of listeners? Specifically, how did the latter interact with and intervene in the creative act? All of this is important because, as Lomax states in stressing the social value of the musical act, "a song is a complex human action: music plus speech, relating performers to a larger group in a special situation by means of certain behavior patterns, and giving rise to a common emotional experience."[17] Music is a profoundly conservative language; because of its nature as a cultural phenomenon rooted in a social group, it represents the security and the identity of the group of which it is the expression. "Only the most profound upheavals such as the arrival of a new population, the acceptance of the new set of mores, or migration to a new territory, involving complete acculturation, will transform profoundly a musical style, and even then the process takes place very slowly."[18]

To attempt conclusions at this point sounds, perhaps, premature because the study of this field is only partially completed and is still ongoing so that it seems more appropriate to include than to conclude: to collect data, establish relationships with other disciplines, construct a research

methodology, refute sources, and identify materials. Putting aside this landslide of considerations from the synthesis, the singling out of what I call the American journey of the Neapolitan song suggests an additional scenario. The supply of songs circulating in America, which were often unknown in Italy, and contact with Italian-American collectors permit us to identify the dividing line in consumer tastes between residents of southern Italy and the immigrants. For a certain period, these tastes ran on two parallel tracks; the history of the Phonotype Record and of the Rossi family, discussed in chapter 6, is emblematic in this regard. Later on, a natural inclination toward separation took hold. This was dictated by new cultural and social roles, not the least of which was the combined role to which the song, the theater, and the cinema of the immigrants had to respond. When rising international tensions led to the outbreak of the Second World War, even the American scenario changed radically and its impact on Italian music and on the Neapolitan song took on new dimensions. As I have already emphasized in the introductory pages, the Italian-American was a new ethnic prototype that appeared on the scene at the end of the 1930s.

Louis Prima with his uniquely southern somatic characteristics—he was of Sicilian origins—tending toward the rich rhythms and expressiveness of jazz is the man who more than anyone else had successfully decanted Italian music into the American tradition. In doing so, he represented the musical integration of the Italians into America. As if they were ideal soundtracks, his most famous songs complemented the feasts, weddings, and other celebrations of the Italians: "Felicia No Capicia," (Felicia Doesn't Understand), "Please No Squeeza Da Banana," "Just a Gigolò" "I Ain't Got Nobody," "Angelina," and "Zooma Zooma!" His success developed in perfect accord with the humor of the times because of his ability to collect and at times anticipate musical tastes during and after the Second World War, tastes that met the expectations of the Italians as well as of many Americans. Even Louis Prima paid tribute to the Neapolitan repertoire; in this regard, his version of "Maria Marì" is important. It is a piece written in 1899 by Vincenzo Russo and Eduardo Di Capua. After a syncopated elaboration midway between boogie-woogie and Dixieland styles that the Italian-American singer used, the song appears to be totally deconstructed to the point of losing the most profound character of the original song.

Prima's career represents one of the most important moments in the history of American entertainment music. Prima was a pioneer for entire generations of Italian-American singers; he rendered an enormous service by directing once and for all the natural inclination of Italians toward melodies in the wake of syncopated groove. Contemporaneously

with him there appeared the crooners, Dean Martin, Perry Como, and Vic Damone. After him, but not necessarily following in his footsteps, was the generation of teen idols: Frankie Avalon, Fabian Forte, Bobby Darin, Annette Funicello, Connie Francis. Then followed also the doo-wop groups, such as Dion DiMucci and the Belmonts, Frankie Valli's Four Seasons; and in the 1960s the rockers Felix Cavaliere, Mitch Ryder, and Frank Zappa. Finally, that line also includes Bruce Springsteen, whose origins are Dutch, Irish and Italian.

The purest southern Italian element did not follow the road to integration by adopting new models; it extinguished itself at the beginning of the 1940s. After the first phase of adjustment, lacking the original context, the Neapolitan song and other songs in Italian dialects in a form closest to the imported tradition remained a music without a home and on its way to exhaustion. But this was a fate already predetermined because among groups characterized by great social and geographic mobility, the rate of mobility and differentiation tends to increase, and the group then no longer correlates directly with its social and ethnic origins.[19] This extinction of the original music was contemporaneous with the birth of a new generation of Italian-American performers represented by Louis Prima, Frank Sinatra, and Dean Martin.

Recently, Pine and Pepe have highlighted the persistence of cultural venues and alternatives to the Italian-American mainstream in the contemporary repertoire of neomelodica music, a repertoire born of the fusion of various elements taken from the folk and urban traditions of classical Neapolitan song with stylistic, formal, and thematic elements of contemporary Anglo-American and Latin-American pop music. The two scholars write that until the late 1990s neomelodica music was popular among Neapolitan and Sicilian immigrants in the New York area, particularly in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Bensonhurst, a sales hub of Italian and Neapolitan LPs, cassettes, CDs, VHS cassettes, and DVDs. The proprietors of the Bensonhurst music shop S.A.S Italian Records, Rita Conte and her mother Silvana, recalled meeting several *neomelodici* singers in the mid-1990s. Among those singers were Natale Galetta, Mauro Nardi, and Mauro Caputo. Singers also performed in Brooklyn at private parties for Italian-Americans in restaurants and banquet halls, such as Gargiulio's in Coney Island and the Italianate banquet hall El Caribe in Mill Basin. Singers have also performed at Italian-American festivals in New York City, including the Feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and St. Paulinus of Nola (the Giglio Festival) in Brooklyn's Williamsburg and at the Feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in the Bronx. Unlike classic Neapolitan song, neomelodica music appears not to have made significant inroads in the Italian-American scene. When *neomelodici* singers have performed in the

New York area, they have had to concentrate more on the classic Neapolitan songs in their repertoires. Two factors contribute heavily to this phenomenon. The first is that younger Italian-Americans tend to be uninterested in Italian and Neapolitan music, preferring Anglo-American and African American popular music, particularly hip-hop. The older Italian immigrants who are still interested in listening to Italian and Neapolitan music are unlikely to keep abreast of new trends and maintain classic Neapolitan song (and *sceneggiata* songs) as their reference.[20]

Neomelodica repertoires aside, I agree with Pelinski's statement of apropos of the tango,[21] another important repertoire of Italian origins I discussed in chapters 2 and 4. Pelinski writes that the transition from one group to another, and therefore from one culture to another, implies a reciprocal acquisition, both unchanged and innovative, of cultural elements. This acquisition happens through a process of dialogue often marked by conflict, whether it is expressed in general or ethnic terms or both.

The publication in 1942 of "'A canzone 'e Pearl Harbor" (A song of Pearl Harbor) ended the stage of protective purism, so to speak, of the Italian immigrants. It is a song in a march tempo with a vamp (a short sequence in standby function that precedes the singing); this technical device is employed above all in the vocabulary of jazz. The text is the Italians' declaration of allegiance to the United States: "Uncle Sam, mo c'aie dichiarate guerra/ e staie chiammanne 'e surdate Americane / Nun te scurdà ca tutte nuie Italiane/ Simme pronte a vendicà Pearl Harbor // Nuie stimamm' 'a patria nosta / addò 'o sango nuoste 'e nnato / Ma po' simme assaie annurate / 'e cumbattere pe tte!" (Uncle Sam, now that you've declared war / and are calling American soldiers / Don't forget that all we Italians / Are ready to avenge Pearl Harbor // We esteem our fatherland / where we were born / But we are very honored /to fight for you!)

Ideally, "'A canzone 'e Pearl Harbor" inaugurates a new phase in which the Italian immigrant must take sides against the European and Japanese dictatorships if they wish to remain an American citizen. For Italian-Americans, this soon meant choosing to belong not to the country from which they still preserved their surname, but to the country that has given them the possibility of social advancement and redemption.

History

- 1825 Garcia family inaugurates the first regular season of Italian opera in New York
- 1849 *L'Eco d'Italia* was founded, the first widespread Italian newspaper in New York
- 1859 the soprano Adelina Patti makes her debut at the Academy of Music in Brooklyn
- 1873 Enrico Caruso was born in Naples
- 1877 Edison submits the patent for his phonograph
- 1880 date that conventionally indicates the beginning of the most massive wave of Italian immigration to the United States
- 1887 announcement of the invention of the gramophone by Emile Berliner
- 1893 Sisca family founds the weekly *La Follia di New York*
- 1895 Berardo Cantalamessa records in Naples "'A risa," a reworking of the famous "The laughing song" by the black singer George W. Johnson
- 1897 Farfariello emigrates to America at age fifteen
- 1900s Neapolitan bandleader Giuseppe Creatore moves to America
- 1901 ca. Armando Cennerazzo moves to New York
- 1901 Mimì Aguglia moves from Catania to Naples
- 1902 Gaisberg brothers record the voice of Caruso in Milan for the first time
- 1903 Caruso plays Rigoletto in his first performance at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York
- 1903 Maestro Vincenzo De Crescenzo emigrates to New York
- 1908 Mimì Aguglia makes her first tour in New York
- 1908 ca. Alfredo Cibelli moves with his family to New York
- 1909 Caruso records for the first time a Neapolitan song "Mamma mia che vò sapé"
- 1909 In Naples the first valse-boston "Doux vertige" by Carly Chiappello is published
- 1910 ca. Annita Di Landa records in Italy "La mattchiche"

- 1910 ca. Ninì Bijou records "Alla martinique," one of the first Neapolitan examples of rag
- 1911 Riccardo Cordiferro and Salvatore Cardillo write in New York "Core 'ngrato," the famous song dedicated to Enrico Caruso
- 1911 Bideri publishes "Comme se canta a Napule" by E. A. Mario
- 1911 black leader Booker T. Washington publishes *The Man Farthest Down*
- 1911 the Società Fonografica Napoletana becomes Phonotype Record
- 1913 Dan Caslar moves to New York
- 1913 Silvia Coruzzolo is cast in America by impresario Feliciano Acierno in a trio with Mimi Maggio and Roberto Ciaramella
- 1914 Caslar is hired at Reisenweber 's on Columbus Circle
- 1914 Nat Shilkret begins working with Victor Records
- 1914 Raffaele Balsamo makes his first visit to New York
- 1916 Caruso records "'O sole mio"
- 1916 Ernesto Rossi founds in New York a publishing house of the same name
- 1917 Carlos Gardel plays "Mi noche triste," the song is referred to by many as the first example of tango-canción
- 1917 Victor Records puts on the market the first jazz record of the Italian American band, Original Dixieland Jass Band
- 1919 the Italian Book Company publishes "Il frenetico-The frantic" by Gaetano Lama, with indication of American foxtrot
- 1919 E. A. Mario writes "Santa Lucia luntana"
- 1920 Caruso records "I'm'arricordo 'e Napule"
- 1921 Caruso dies
- 1921 Okeh record label launches the Race Series
- 1922 E. A. Mario makes his first trip to New York
- 1924 the Immigration Act that establishes quotas of entry for immigrants is enacted
- 1924 the Vincent Publishing Co. is founded in New York, a kind of union of Italian artists
- 1924 Mario Nicolò and Rossi organize the first edition of the Festival Rossi, a sort of American Piedigrotta
- 1924 In Naples Albin and Pasquale Ripoli publish the song "'O jazz band"
- 1924 "Amore indigeno" by Enrico Contursi is among the first examples of Neapolitan samba / maxixe
- 1925 the California Ramblers record "Show me the way to go home"

- 1926 Farfariello records "'Mpareme 'a via d''a casa mia," the Anglo-Italian-Neapolitan version of "Show me the way to go home"
- 1926 Gilda Mignonette makes her first trip to New York
- 1927 the first examples of Charleston appear in Naples: "Brigata allegra" by E. A. Mario and Carlo Loveri, and "Comme è pussibile" by Mario Nicolò and Pacifico Vento
- 1927 Pasquale Buongiovanni and Giuseppe De Luca write "'A cartulina 'e Napule," musical manifesto of Italian emigrants in America, played for the first time by Mario Gioia and great success of Gilda Mignonette
- 1929 Giuseppe De Laurentiis records "Chist'è New York"
- 1929 E. A. Mario publishes in Naples the tango-song "Balocchi e profumi"
- 1931 Cennerazzo and Francesco Pennino publish the musical drama *Senza Mamma*
- 1931 Harold Godsoe directs *Santa Lucia luntana*, one of the few surviving films produced by immigrants and inspired by the famous song written by E. A. Mario
- 1932 Bud Pollard shoots *'O festino o la legge*, one of the first sceneggiata-movie products in the environment of the southern immigrants, the discographic edition is made by Roberto Ciaramella's company
- 1933 Mignonette records "La rumba delle fragole" inspired by the original English "The Peanut Vendor"
- 1934 Cennerazzo opens his theater, the Biltmore on Broadway, between 47th Street and 8th Avenue
- 1935, the Italian Writers Project is published
- 1935 WOV, the first Italian radio station is born
- 1936 Mario Nicolò transforms Ceria into MIA (Musicale Italo Americana) and transfers the publishing business to America
- 1936 in Boston, at the Opera theater, 15,000 Italians applaud outside the theater one of the most famous performances of Mignonette
- 1938 first examples of rumba instrumental written in Naples: "Rumba di maggio" by Mimì Giordano and "Elda" by Mario Marrone
- 1938 Carlo Buti and Ria Rosa singing together in *I due gemelli* (The twins), an American production by Victoria Italian Film Company
- 1940 Alessandro Sisca dies in New York
- 1942 Paolilli, the publisher in Providence, Rhode Island, publishes "'A canzone 'e Pearl Harbor"

Notes

Introduction

1. This "tammurriata," beyond its rhythm and its own melodic identity, presents several distinctive traits. Above all the melodic line of the first singer continuously interchanges the traditional structure of major mode (with the fourth degree altered) to a minor mode in the cadences. The lyrics are also interesting, the first set referring to the famous "Fenesta ca lucive," generally known through nineteenth century as Neapolitan song of melodic-romantic craftsmanship and the second set being the authentic version of "Spingole frangesi" from which Salvatore Di Giacomo drew upon for his well-known song of the same name. Needless to say, the two pieces appear in their truest light as emblematic texts, whose language is always related to the meaning of the magical-ritual tradition. One in fact notes, especially in the version of *Fenesta ca lucive*, the continual relationship between images associated with death, even the macabre, and the constant erotic allusions in the interpolations. Lastly, notable is also the considerable quantity of these interpolations in the songs where these, besides being present in the usual octosyllabic forms (nursery rhymes, "doggerels," or o "barzellette" poetic compositions of seven or eight syllables set to music), are also present in the same hendecasyllabic forms of the songs.… This special form of "tammurriata" may be observed principally at the feast of St. Ann in the town of Lèttere. Here in fact on the Saturday night following the 26th of July, singers and musicians who converge in honor of St. Ann dance and sing from midnight on. De Simone (1979, 137).
2. De Mura (1969).
3. To this end Ugo Mollo, collector and great connoisseur of Neapolitan song, loved to recall his participation in *Lascia o raddoppia*, the Italian well-known television broadcast conducted by Mike Bongiorno, in the episodes of May 16 and 23, 1957, when the only bibliographical source, beyond periodicals and the publishing houses' files, consisted of Rino Mannarini's *Storia della canzone Napoletana,* which was little more than an annotated collection of songs.
4. De Mura (1966).
5. Sarno (1962).
6. Gargano and Cesarini (1984).

7. De Simone (1983), 1st edition.
8. Palomba (2001); Pittari (2004).
9. Stazio (1991).
10. Pesce (1999).
11. Scialò (2002).
12. Daniele (2002).
13. Liguoro (2004).
14. Borgna (1996; Liperi (1999); Prato (2010).
15. Sciotti (2007).
16. Pine (2012, English text awaiting publication in Italy).
17. Abruzzese, preface in Stazio (1991, 10–12).
18. Ibid.
19. The most recent sociolinguistic studies prefer to speak of the opposition between sociolinguistic varieties in an attempt to neutralize the old and discriminating opposition of language versus dialect. See Klein and Baiano "Dialetto e fascismo a Napoli: questioni di politica linguistica" [Dialect and Fascism in Naples: Questions of linguistic policy] (2000).
20. Let us recall Giovanni Gentile's 1923 school reform, even if it is useful to remember that the regime tolerated and indeed supported the use of dialects as an integral part of school programs until the beginning of the thirties. See Klein and Baiano, 365.
21. Portelli states that in the United States it is senseless to speak of folklore as intact and of separate oral cultures; American folklore has always circulated whether orally or in print or on theater stages and moved without particular setbacks to radio and records since the twenties. See introduction in Guthrie (1997, 12).
22. Rust (1954, 11).
23. Molinari, "Porti, trasporti, compagnie" [Harbors, transports, companies] in Bevilacqua, De Clementi, and Franzina eds (2001, 250).
24. Sorce Keller "American Influences in Italian Popular Music," 124–36.
25. Mazzoletti (1983, 31).
26. From an interview conducted by the author, New York, May 2003.
27. From the word hyphen, which unites the two words Italian and American that define the double ethnic identity. On the term, see Tamburri (1991); Gabaccia "Razza, nazione, trattino" [Race, Nation, Hyphen: Italian-Americans and American Multiculturalism in Comparative Perspective] in Guglielmo and Salerno, eds (2003, 61–78); Muscio and Spagnoletti (2007, 9).
28. Rigler and Deutsch Index of Recorded Sound (RDI), a union catalog of 78-rpm disc holdings from several major research libraries.
29. Aleandri (1999).
30. Estavan (1991).
31. Greene (1992 and 2004).
32. Glasser (1995).
33. Troianelli (1989); Bruno (1995).
34. Muscio (2004); Bertellini, *Italy in Early American Cinema*, (2010).
35. Cinotto (2001).

36. Lived from April 6, 1934, to November 12, 2006—singer and actor, one of the leading exponents of the modern *sceneggiata* repertoire (1970–1990), a mixture of traditional folk singing and popular melodrama. *Sceneggiata* is mostly known in areas populated by Italian immigrants; besides Naples, the second homeland of *sceneggiata* is probably Little Italy in New York City.
37. Interview conducted by the author in New York, April 2003.

1 The Cultural Context of the Italian-American Community in New York at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

1. Vecoli, "Negli Stati Uniti" in Bevilacqua, De Clementi and Franzina eds. (2002); Gabaccia (1994).
2. "This refers to the type of man under the age of forty because between 1887 and 1900, it was that same America that encouraged Italian immigration to promote the industrial and agricultural progress to which it was committed. Sex, age, and strength were the criteria by which the 'desirability' of the immigrants to America was evaluated because it was the economic value of an individual that determined his or her permanence here" (D'Ambrosio 1924, 44).
3. Vecoli "Negli Stati Uniti," 57; see also, Vecoli (1987).
4. The Italian scholars of emigration do not hesitate to use the word "exodus" to define the expatriation of Italians during the period under consideration. Golini and Amato state that the second phase of the emigration, which ranges from the first years of the twentieth century to the First World War, coincides with the beginning of the process of the industrialization in Italy. And yet, historically that phase is as important as that of the Great Emigration. In fact it was a true and real exodus that drew an average of 600,000 persons a year, for a total of nine million people. The peak, not only of that phase but also of the entire history of emigration, was reached in 1913, when the number was more than 870,000. The course of the phenomenon reveals both great highs and great lows as a consequence of the major influence exerted upon the flow of immigrants by the international labor market, especially that of North America. As a matter of fact, immigration during this period was primarily from Europe and specifically about 45 percent of all immigration was absorbed by the United States: it is the people of southern Europe that fueled this transoceanic streaming (largely 70 percent of it). ("Uno sguardo ad un secolo e mezzo di emigrazione italiana" [Golino and Amato "A Look into a Century and a Half of Italian Emigration"] in Bevilacqua, De Clementi, and Franzina eds [2002], 49–51).
5. Muscio (2004, 25).
6. Greene (2004, 88).
7. San Francisco played a primary role in this migratory phase. In fact, the Italians gathered there initially because they were attracted by the presence

of gold mines and subsequently because California put in place policies to support agricultural activities that particularly touched the sensitivity of the Italian immigrants who were for the most part agriculturalists and farmers (Vecoli "Negli Stati Uniti," 62).

8. Van Vechten "A Night with Farfariello," 32; see also Romeyn, "Juggling Italian-American Identities," 95–96.
9. The information appears in an article published in *La follia di New York*, October 9, 1927, as part of a series of articles published in signed installments by Giuseppe Cautela under the title *The Italian Theater in New York*.
10. "It is well known that Italian operatic arias as well as folk tunes were heard almost everywhere, even outside in the streets. In those settings pushcart peddlers accompanied the hawking of their wares with song, and there organ grinders added their tunes for whatever income passersby offered. Popular songs could also be heard in the Street, emanating from the several ethnic music stores in the Italian Lower East Side. In the neighborhood of Bayard, Mott, Mulberry, and Elizabeth Streets, as one visitor put it, one could listen to 'clever ditties about the eternal subject of mirth [and] mothers-in-law' coming from those shops. While no direct reference is available as to what particular songs were heard in these outdoor performances, it is certain that these establishments provided musical entertainment that dealt with the plight of the new Italian arrival. Observers of these venues have referred to them generically as the 'caffè concerto.' Such restaurants, bars, and music halls playing Italian music arose in the 1890s and early 1900s to provide comfort and entertainment for the Italian working class seeking respite from their hard labor. These musical places were undoubtedly popular and certainly accessible to the poorest of workers. Their admission charge was as little as five to ten cents" (Greene 2004, 88–89).
11. The material in this research was later merged into the *Federal Writers' Project* (1938).
12. See also Mariano (1921).
13. For a more detailed analysis of the ethnic composition of East Harlem, see Orsi (1992).
14. Vecoli, "Negli Stati Uniti," 55.
15. The construction of luxury buildings like the cooperatives in Chelsea or the Dakota Building are an example of this. The immigrants crowded into the tenements, and hygiene and sanitary conditions posed intermittent problems until the 1930s. Davidson writes that affordability and unassuming dignity had always been a goal of apartment advocates. In 1867, 1879, and 1901, Progressives had pushed through laws requiring small increases in the standards of ventilation, light, and sanitation in tenements, which were often disease-ridden firetraps. In the 1870s, the Brooklyn philanthropist Alfred Tredway White built handsome complexes of worker houses like the Tower Buildings in Cobble Hill, which featured a toilet in each apartment, outdoor staircases, meticulous brickwork, and wrought-iron railings. But it was the Depression that brought the issue of how to house the have-nots into the

realm of public policy. In 1935 the New York City Housing Authority rehabilitated a neighborhood of crumbling Lower East Side tenements by tearing down every third house to maximize light and air and renovating or rebuilding the rest. In the end, the First Houses project required near-total reconstruction, but the result inaugurated the public housing era and remains an emblem of its promise (Davidson 2011).

16. In the 1930s there were about twenty Roman Catholic churches, two Protestant, one Presbyterian, two Baptist, and two Seventh Day Adventist churches. The oldest was St. Anthony's between Sullivan and West Houston Streets, founded in 1862. On the religious habits and sense of nostalgia of the Italian-Americans, see Varacalli, Primeggia, LaGumina, and D'Elia (1999).
17. *Federal Writers' Project*, *New York City Guide, Racial Groups*, File 1620, 2781 words, 1.
18. See also Vecoli "Negli Stati Uniti," 66; more in general, see Vincent A. Lapomarda, "Italian-American Press" in Varacalli, Primeggia, LaGumina, and D'Elia (1999).
19. De Mura (1969, vol. 1: 214).
20. The Italian theater in New York has always been a very fluid institution; groups were continually forming, merging, shifting, and dissolving. In 1936 there were eight acting companies, the smaller of these with no regular theaters but using houses available at rents they could afford. Productions of these groups included vaudeville, dramatic sketches, and comedy. The *Teatro d'Arte* was perhaps the most stable and interesting of the Italian theaters; established in 1928, it was devoted to the presentation of dramas and comedies of this character (*Italian Writers Project*, folio 8).
21. The information is debateable because the place officially began its operations two years later, in 1861. In 1859 the Philharmonic Society of Brooklyn decided that the Athenaeum, the space where concerts were offered between 1857 and 1860, was too small for this type of performance. Thus, the wealthiest residents of Brooklyn planned for the construction of a larger place that was christened the Brooklyn Academy of Music. The inaugural concert took place on January 15, 1861. It is probable, therefore, that the information regarding Adelina Patti relates to a performance at the Athenaeum, not at the BAM.
22. Known by his title of the "March King," he was the best known band leader in the United States; he directed the American Marine Corps Band, and after 1892 he became director of his own band, with which he toured the entire world. Bibliography and sources on Sousa are extensive and varied, for example, Bierley (2006); J. P. Sousa Collection, Archives of the U.S. Marine Band, Washington, D.C. (2011); The Sousa Archives and Center for American Music at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (2011).
23. The sources used are *La Follia di New York* and the *Italian Writers Project*.
24. *La Follia di New York*, March 15, 1914.
25. Ibid., September 4, 1927.
26. Ibid., October 12, 1924.

27. Ibid., March 26, 1922.
28. This is how the birth of the station was announced: "Finally, the Italians of New York can boast of having a radio station that is on par with the great American stations. Thanks to the care taken by our countryman, John Iraci, we can say with pride that we have won a place of importance in the field of radio broadcasting. Situated in the heart of the theatre district of New York, 50 feet from the Times Square on 43rd Street, WOV has an enviable location. The building belongs to the same station and is called the WOV Building. Here are found three studios, specially constructed, and offices that are richly appointed. The station operates for 10 hours per day, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Eighty percent or four-fifths of the time is taken up by commercial affairs, evidence that the station is considered the greatest medium of publicity among the Italians (*La follia di New York*, February 24, 1935)."
29. With regard to the propaganda of the regime, Stefano Luconi writes that Benito Mussolini was relatively slow to realize the radio's potential for propaganda. This delay was either due to the slow spread of radio broadcasting in Italy or due to the failure in experimenting with broadcasting of propaganda. In 1926, Italy had only 26,865 radios in the entire country, a number so small as to render unthinkable the use of this instrument to launch a program of political indoctrination among the masses. In 1924 the Marquis Luigi Solari, a man entrusted by Marconi with the commercialization of his inventions in Italy, had suggested that Mussolini initiate regular news broadcasts to North America. [The project became a reality several years later.] The Italian language programs broadcast via shortwave were aimed predominantly at Italians in foreign lands, above all North and South America. However, the broadcasts were not conceived for these specific transatlantic catchments, but constituted a reintroduction beyond the sea of several of the same programs broadcast in the interior of the peninsula. The project's declared purpose was to reestablish spiritual ties between Italian immigrants and their descendants on American soil with the mother country (Luconi 2004, 85, 88). And elsewhere Luconi emphasizes again that in 1928 the Supreme Council on Radio Oversight—the organ conceived by the Ministry of Communication the year before to allow the state to regulate radio broadcasting and, therefore, to enable the regime to control political content—decided to install a shortwave transmitter with the power of 12 Kw at Cecchignola, a location near the gates of Rome, renamed Prato Smeraldo for this purpose (87).
30. The part played by Italians in the spread of band music in America is a varied and complex matter. Here it is enough to recall the figure of Giuseppe Creatore, already noted in the introductory pages. Born in Naples on June 21, 1871, Creatore moved to the United States in 1899, touring coast to coast and even into Canada. In 1906 he returned to Italy, where he formed a new band that he brought with him when he returned to America. He quickly became successful through his mastery of performance and musicality, which made his reputation vie with that of John Philip Sousa. His celebrity status encouraged the emigration of other Italian band leaders to America. As a result of

running into competition with other newly formed bands, in 1917 he dedicated himself to an operatic repertory and, after 1931, to a symphonic one as well. He made records with the Creatore Band for major labels of that time and has left many transcriptions of operatic music for band, some of his scores are preserved at Yale University. See Anesa (2004).

31. Luconi (2004, 93).
32. On this point, Muscio writes that the Italian-American actors worked for diverse media like the radio and the cinema, giving life to a cultural niche industry even more substantial than that found in contemporary Italy. There were more records of Neapolitan songs produced in the United States than in Naples, and the Italian radio was more widespread in America than in Italy, and regarding the 1930s, more Italian language films were made in New York than in Italy. This supremacy of the culture of the immigrants has never been recognized. The Italian-American radio acted as a synthesis or as a crossroads for this experience, but the reconstruction of its history is still sketchy (2004, 344).

    It is helpful to point out that, with regard to the records of Neapolitan songs produced in the United States, the date can be authenticated only if related to publication and distribution because often, as emphasized in the course of this study, the origins can be traced directly to Naples.
33. Above all, as relates to macaroni, commercial time was so packed with an increasing number of ads from different companies that at the end of the 1930s, it came to the point where an explicit appeal had to be made: "We wish to make an appeal to the Italian radio stations to abolish all commercials regarding macaroni. . . . Is it really true that Italians think about nothing but macaroni? It's absolutely nauseating. Why not do as is done with songs? When a song becomes too popular and is sung too often, they stop playing it so as not to annoy people too much. Well then, macaroni commercials have become a real pain in the neck!" (*La follia di New York*, April 30, 1939).
34. In this regard, see the already mentioned work of Cinotto (2001); Luconi "Not only 'a tavola,' " and Giunta and Patti (1998, 40–70).
35. The sponsors, essentially those that made up the food industry, having established a solid position in the market, no longer invested in radio commercials, causing a gradual decline in the medium (Muscio 359).
36. Interview with the author (Levittown, Pennsylvania, August 2005) published in "Songs of Italy" (Frasca 2005).
37. Interview with the author (New York, September 2005) published in "Songs of Italy" (Frasca 2005).

2 Enrico Caruso: The First Neapolitan Star

1. Alessandro Sisca was born in San Pietro in Guarano in the Province of Cosenza in 1885. He was a prolific intellectual with ties in America to anarchist and socialist circles. Animated by a strong anticlerical spirit, he was an

activist writer and an author of essays, plays, poetry, and songs. The lines in "Core 'ngrato" are his; this is the celebrated song dedicated to Enrico Caruso and set to music by Salvatore Cardillo in 1911. At the age of eighteen he founded *La follia di New York* together with his father and brother. Before moving to the United States, the Sisca family spent a long time in Naples; it was here that Alessandro developed a clear interest in the world of arts, especially popular theater. In 1892 the Siscas immigrated to America, and after spending a year in Pittsburgh, the young Alessandro established himself permanently in New York, where he died in 1940 (Durante 2005, 350–53). His fame as an intellectual and a poet went beyond the Italian community; for example, he published for Schirmer publishing house of New York the song "Oi, Luna," put into music of Salvatore Cardillo as well and interpreted by the baritone Giuseppe De Luca and translated into English. The interesting thing is that the publishing house had not published even one Neapolitan song before that year, 1921 (*La follia di New York*, April 10, 1921). For other information about Sisca, see Bencivenni (2011, 108–15).

2. According to Emelise Aleandri, Mongillo's music store was located at 131 Mulberry Street, and Mongillo was the first publisher to import, publish, and sell musical scores originating in Italy. For example, his was the American edition of "Mannaggia 'a mugliera (Damned wife); it's the title of a song by Aniello Califano and Raffaello Segrè, a song selected for the 1905 Piedigrotta (the festival that featured a song-writing competition) and published in Italy by Bideri publishing house, the next year. Mongillo's activities also included the sale of other products, such as tobacco, cigars, postcards, *solfeggio* manuals, and theatrical works. Mongillo's store stayed in business from 1901 to the 1930s (Aleandri 1999, 18).
3. De Stefano must have been a person of some importance in the Italian circles of New York given that on the occasion of his marriage *La follia di New York* published in the January issue of 1907 a long laudatory profile.
4. Caruso's work as a sketch artist is contemporaneous with and sometimes anticipatory of the avant-garde movement of the beginning of the twentieth century. Through many different publications, such as Britain's *The Studio*, the tenor made his caricatures known to futurists and to German artists at the beginning of the century. In these, there were echoes of Aubrey Beardsley, the creator of the *Liberty*, that pleased Oscar Wilde; Honoré Daumier, the author of lyrical poetry; of Erté and of the Viennese artists of the *Jugendstil* (like the famous Mascagni in masquerade); of the Neapolitan Antonio Bulifon, a seventeenth-century engraver; and of the cubists, recognizable in the outrageous design of the Cyrano di Bergerac, a kind of puzzle of squares, crosses, and lines. The portraits of heroes of this troubled epoch, such as Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari, show that Caruso frequented circles that appreciated a taste for the avant-garde and that he had a flair for good design, without improvising. He did not succeed in establishing his own style, but he demonstrated a notable eclectic ability and a rare skill at grasping details at first glance. A few examples of his are small masterpieces: the gloomy

bespectacled Gustav Mahler, which echoes the work of Klimt; Alessandro Bonci equipped with guitar and mustache; President Roosevelt in top hat and stripes; Mischa Elman in the shape of a violin; the daring Luigi Barzini; Costa, Cordiferro, Ernesto De Curtis, and other singers of Neapolitan melodies; Guiglielmo Marconi between two antennas; the stern Rossini; a tiny king Vittorio Emanuele; a Lina Cavalieri, gaunt and not very seductive, with an interminable neck that she stretches under a sweep of raven hair (Gargano and Cesarini 1990, 124–27 passim).

5. *La Follia di New York,* September 4, 1910.
6. Here is how De Mura recalls the birth of the Piedigrotta (festival) in Naples:

   > It is another year, and we find another contest, or maybe the beginning of an annual series of contests in which it is possible to recognize, in its intent and structures, many things in common with existing festivals. It is the year 1892, and Ferdinando Bideri, proprietor of the publishing house bearing his name, with a commitment from the very start until others took up the cause, applied the influence of his organization and, above all, his unshakeable faith in the value of Neapolitan music. He published, among other things, *La tavola rotonda* [The round table], a crusading publication that has left behind evidence about the existence of Neapolitan artistic life over the last two centuries. It is because *La tavola rotonda* decided to advertise its contests for the first time in 1892 that we can confidently use the name of the festival. The announcement of the competition said: "On the occasion of the picturesque feast of Piedigrotta, *La tavola rotonda* announces a contest that will award prizes: the song that is judged to be the best will receive a prize of 200 liras; those that are judged to be only meritorious of publication will appear later, one by one, in our newspaper. In the next issue, we will release the names of the judges and will give additional details. Now that the announcement has been made, innumerable Neapolitan masters will get to work diligently since, on the twenty-fifth of this month and no later, the contest must be closed." Eighty-one songs were entered and appeared under this announcement: "The audition will take place on the 5th, 6th, and 8th of September at Gambrinus, which has constructed an open platform for the seating of the orchestra consisting of sixty members." Don Ferdinando Bideri's contests continued for another twenty years and awarded writers and songs that are still remembered today. Following his example, if not in cooperation with Bideri, there was a great flowering of the same kind of initiatives by other publishers, newspapers, and theatrical enterprises, among whom should be mentioned those of the Circo delle Varietà (Variety Circle), of Eden, and of Eldorado (De Mura 1969, vol. 3: 388). The Festival of Piedigrotta that was conceived by Bideri restored in name the ancient feast tied to the Catholic ritual associated with the Madonna after whom it was named.

7. The American Piedigrotta festivals took on the name of the area or of the theater in which they were held, such as the Harlem Piedigrotta of 1927. At times, the productions were inspired by social and cultural factors specific to the community, such as the famous Piedigrotta of the Immigrants held at the Fifth Avenue Theater in Brooklyn, between the 29th and 30th of September 1926, in which almost all of the singers were immigrants, such as Mafalda, Gilda Mignonette, Carolina, and others less well known. There were few Italian-Americans.
8. *La Follia di New York*, August 29, 1909.
9. Gargano and Cesarini, 29.
10. Gargano and Cesarini construct an informative and concise artistic profile of the Caruso writing that he was curious about everything, able to absorb all that he saw and heard, and disciplined. Caruso remains an example of how much it is possible to benefit from a ferocious determination and, above all, from self-help. This is the exact opposite of the stereotype that pictures the Neapolitan as shiftless, incapable of discipline and hard work. The extraordinary asset of a remarkably large larynx and of a rare balance of vocal organs was enhanced by obstinate and continued labor. The conquest of high notes was slow and arduous. Having achieved a perfect tone and good pitch, he sharpened his breathing technique (every breath became important, and he never lacked a bit of breath in reserve), and he removed all impurities from his voice with merciless self-control. As time went on, thanks especially to the teachings of Ada Giachetti, his wife, he improved his stage presence, being inspired by the naturalism of the Veristic school as well. The other singers weighed down their performances, transforming perplexity into anguish, a smile into a sign, pain into incoherent sighs; instead, Caruso attempted to stay restrained, to remain true to the text and to the music, naturalistically (1990, 41–42).
11. Ybarra (1953, 212).
12. Hamberlin (2011, 49).
13. Jackson (1972, 198).
14. "I remember that in elementary school the teacher insulted me in front of my friends, saying that I was stupid because I did not know how to write or much less to speak correctly in English, but she certainly knew that the reason I did not know the English language was that I was Italian, my family having come from Naples." Interview conducted by the author, New York, June 2003.
15. Russo (2011, 338, 340). Elsewhere, Russo emphasizes that the representation of Italian-Americans changes for the worse when the Italians were perceived to be in America to stay and not to be "birds of passage" (344). For a more general study of the topic of Italy as the cradle of modernity in relation to the paradox of how the country was perceived during the years of immigration, see Casillo and Russo (2011).
16. Bertellini (2010, 185).
17. Bertellini (2004, 49).

18. Bertellini (2010, 7). Southernism indicated a national aesthetic language created on the basis of an alleged closeness to the destitute classes and for this reason enhanced with anthropological authenticity (71). In the concept of southernism were included some reflections apropos of the scientific contributions of Italian positivist anthropologists, among whom were Alfredo Niceforo and Cesare Lombroso, who presented "unimpeachable proof" that southern Italians were a race distinct from and inferior to northern Italians. On this and other aspects of scientific racism in connection with the origins of multiculturalism in America, see also Guglielmo and Salerno (2003, 69ff.).
19. For an annotated bibliography on this subject, see Muscio, 2004.
20. The Italians were considered the least desirable local foreign group. Italians were seen as the Dark People, and the press published unverified accounts of Black Hand criminality that left the impression of universal criminality among Italian immigrants (Mangione and Morreale 1992, 191).
21. Cross (1998, 33).
22. Rieber and Siefert, "Aesthetics, Technology, and the Capitalization of Culture," 417.
23. Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., *American Memory* section: http:/memory.loc.gov/ammem/edhtml/edcyldr.html.
24. *The Scientific American* (May 16, 1896, 311). The patent report follows closely the debate on the two machines that reproduced sound: "The gramophone has the peculiar charm possessed by anything mechanical that faithfully reproduces any of life's actions. If a machine talks, we are apt to regard it as almost human; if it sings, we look upon it as being artistic" (Rieber and Siefert, "Aesthetics, Technology and the Capitalization of Culture," 430).
25. Michael Aspinall writes that the Gramophone Company enjoyed a very rapid expansion, above all after the invention of the gramophone perfected, thanks to a motor with a crank. This improvement was due to Eldrige R. Johnson, who in his small factory in Camden, NJ, (where subsequently the Victor—later called RCA-Victor—factory was built) conducted continuous experiments to improve upon the more basic model of Berliner. The first discs were cut in zinc plates, and the etching was rendered permanent through immersion in acid, after which a matrix was made, all of this because Edison, Tainter, and Bell were holders of patents for wax incisions. Johnson perfected the recording of discs on wax in secret, then invented the process of reproducing multiple matrices from only one original etching; discs of 25 cm diameter (1901) and 30 cm diameter (1903) prolonged the duration of the recording from two minutes to three or even five and proved indispensable to the recording of classical music (Aspinall "Il canto di Caruso" [The singing of Caruso] in Gargano and Cesarini 1984, 215).
26. "When Fred Gaisberg was arranging to record the Russian Imperial Opera stars in 1901, Feodor Chaliapin had demanded what Gaisberg thought was too large a fee. Chaliapin's reply was that Gaisberg should then charge more

for the record, since 'the public will gladly pay … as they realize the absurdity of selling the records of an artist … at the same price as records of variety-hall singers" (Jacques Lowe et al., "The Incredible Music Machine," London: Quartet/Visual Arts Books, 1982, 61, cited in Rieber and Siefert, "Aesthetics, Technology, and the Capitalization of Culture", 436).

27. Northrop Moore (1999, 92).
28. Official data attest to the fact that in 1909 in the United States, 18.6 million cylinders were sold as opposed to 8.5 million discs, and scholars note that the victory of the disc over the cylinder came only in 1912. Indeed, in 1914 the data tell of less than 4 million cylinders versus 23 million records produced not only by Victor but by all of the labels involved in the production of recorded music including Columbia, a company that had been in the market since the end of the nineteenth century. At first it produced cylinders and then discs. Its historical rival from the Berliner company, the Edison National Phonograph Company, had introduced its record player in 1909.
29. The principal inclination of the American cinematographic industry in 1905–1907 was the development of numerous movie houses because until 1905, films were shown in places dedicated to other purposes, for the most part vaudeville halls, theaters, and other meeting places. In general, the first places were in small warehouses that held less than two hundred seats. The entrance fee was usually a nickel, from which the term nickelodeon comes, or a dime if the program lasted from 15 to 60 minutes. Nickelodeons could show their film without stop from late morning to midnight. Cheaper than vaudeville theaters, their entrance fees were also more moderate than those for traveling shows. The expenses for projecting a movie were generally lower, the spectators sitting on benches or wooden chairs. Rarely did newspaper announcements appear before the actual showing; therefore, viewers passed by the theater regularly to learn by chance of the titles of films being shown. These were at times posted outside the theaters for that purpose. At times, a phonograph played music outside the theater to attract the attention of people who were walking by. Music accompanied the film almost always. Sometimes the manager of the hall explained what was happening on the screen, but more frequently the film was accompanied by piano playing or phonograph music. Like the phonograph, the nickelodeon permitted vast audiences, composed substantially of immigrants, to access ready-made entertainment at reasonable prices. Thus, it quickly became available for mass consumption.
30. "In Western European culture, particularly in opera, singers were trained to be both loud enough and articulate enough for the audience to be able to hear and understand the words of libretto. In other words, the same trade-off—fidelity versus volume—that haunted the development of sound recording had also been tackled through compositional and vocal techniques for live performance. Vocal techniques might also be described analogously to the components for sound-recording technology: the breath

supplied the power or energy source, the resonating cavities in the nose, throat, and chest acted like the horn to provide the amplification, and the 'voice box' or vocal chords vibrated to produce the sound waves that were mechanically registered by the recording stylus. Singers' vibrato, or the rapid wavering around the pitch that is used to provide vocal direction and intensity, was especially conducive to the 'etching' of hill and dale for discs or lateral recording for cylinders. With its limited frequency range and need for bright and directed tones, acoustic recording required the sonic extremes—speed, dramatic contrast, and ringing tones—that were also cultivated by vocal training and enhanced by operatic composition and performance practice. The highest male tenor voice, because of the type of harmonics and resonance produced in that range, was best suited to the sound-recording frequencies" (Rieber and Siefert, 430–31).

31. Ibid., 443.
32. Gargano and Cesarini (1984, 83).
33. Hamberlin (2011, 49).
34. Gargano and Cesarini (1984, 83–84).
35. Ibid., 239–40 passim.
36. However, the first record to reach this number of sales was the concert version sung by Alma Gluck of "Old Folks at Home" by Stephen Foster (Vaccaro 1995, 208).
37. It is a type of syncopated popular song in vogue around 1900, in which a Negro speaker is portrayed as a stupid and infantile person, prey to ridiculous superstitions. Musically, it is a close relative of ragtime. The term "coon" derived from "racoon," a disparaging nickname for the Negro, later fell into disuse (Schuller 1999, glossary only in the Italian edition).
38. Siefert in "The Audience at Home," 187, 207 passim.
39. The dates of the recordings mentioned are taken from the catalogue of the RAI Archives of Sound of Neapolitan Song. In turn, these dates were taken from the editions of records found on the market; the date of the recording of "Maria Marì" is from the discography of Gargano and Cesarini.
40. The place and date are found in Vaccaro (1995, 289).
41. I ignore if this is the same Armando Gill mentioned in historical texts about the Italian song as the first national singer or, more probably, an unknown writer who, as often happened at this time, had stolen and exploited the identity of the authentic Gill for his own benefit.
42. Clearly, Francesco Paolo Tosti of America (De Mura 1969, vol. 1: 244).
43. An example could certainly be the aforementioned "Guardanno 'a Luna," published by Izzo in 1904. I venture to hypothesize that the lines were written in Naples while the music could have been completed by De Crescenzo in New York, since the maestro had moved there the year before. I cannot be certain even of this because I don't know how much time had elapsed between the writing of the music and its publication. It is true, however, that the exchange of letters between the musicians and the poets who resided in New York was very active, and even though the lines of a song could

wait some months before being published, once they were set to music there was no reason for the publisher to wait any longer. Therefore, I should not exclude the possibility that the song reached its final form through this process.

44. Vaccaro (1995, 289) provides the titles of six compositions of which Caruso was the author and interpreter, as follows: "Adorables tourments," coauthor Riccardo Barthelemy; "Campane a sera" (Ave Maria), with the music of Vincenzo Billi; "Serenata," with the music of C. A. Bracco; the aforementioned "Tiempo antico" and "Dreams of Long Ago"; and the anthem "Liberty forever."
45. Ibid., 395–96.
46. Nannina, the female protagonist of the three verses is the very one who is exactly what the poet-singer needs: she is a virgin ("l'ammore po' l'avesse canusciuto mmano a me"—"she could have learned love from me"); she stays at home to knit socks ("sape fa 'a cazetta," a dialect expression that is a metaphor for one who renounces social relationships and prefers to conserve her virtue in a secluded domestic life); and she can look after a man and tend to his needs ("voglio una ca se metta dinta 'a casa a fa 'o rraù").
47. Note how the concept is expressed in the third and last verse: "'O cielo è d'aria e d'acqua è fatto 'o mare / chi manca d'aria e d'acqua se ne more / si st' uocchie belle mancano a stu core / dimme tu stessa comm'aggià campà" (The sky is made of air, the sea of water / one who lacks air and water dies / if my heart can't see those beautiful eyes / tell me yourself how I can live").
48. Vaccaro (1995, 396).
49. De Mura (1969, vol. 1: 69).
50. Ibid., vol. 3, 344.
51. *La Follia di New York*, February 11, 1917.
52. Copyright MCMXXI by J. Gioe 2274 Second Avenue, New York. Other variants of the composer's signature are recorded. At times, it appears as that exact surname; at others, without the accent (as in the Library of Congress catalogue in Washington). There was even a J. Gioè Music Company located at 165 East 107th Street, New York. From a list of songs published with the score for voice and piano of "Lettera a mamma'" (Letter to mamma) by Armando Cennerazzo and Giuseppe Gioè in 1924, we learn that the Neapolitan composer was also the author of songs in English, such as "Goddess of my golden dreams," and of music for orchestra and band.
53. L*a Follia di New York*, September 26, 1920.
54. The actor is sometimes given credit, at times under the name Ciannelli, at others as Cianelli; we prefer the first spelling adopted in a few films (George Sherman's *The Lady and the Monster*, USA, 1944) and in the book by Muscio, which remains one of the most detailed studies published in Italy about the Italian-American theater.
55. For a close examination of this theme, see Stazio (1991). It is an in-depth study of the repertoire from a sociological point of view and shows how the modernity of this music is closely related to the formation of a class of professionals of song and of a market for music that from the Neapolitan

prepared to become national, anticipating the very formation of an Italian tradition of this type. The author writes that while previously the dialect song was born from and within a patrimony and a tradition, at the start of the 1880s, the authors of the lyrics and the music, having matured in a world referred to as the "new Italy" and in contact with the world of modern publishing, of newspapers and magazines, in their professional undertakings freely drew from this patrimony, which developed over years of artisan and semi-dilettante experiences and was finally exploited in a complex communicative process. Thus, the publisher and even Ricordi, all the more, responded directly to the demands of the market and attempted to influence it. From this moment on, the song would always be created outside the neighborhood cultural and economic environment, even if the apparatus that produced it tended to functionalize, coordinate, and resocialize some of the forms and modalities. It would be planned and produced with a purpose for the most part economic, and it will come to be imposed on the city where it would encounter, more or less, the culture and demands of consumers in all segments of society (101).

56. This is the same E. A. Mario who recounted the episode in the pamphlet "Piedigrotta fermata facoltativa" (Request stop Piedigrotta) of 1956:

    > Meanwhile, I would never think that I should become a musician, even of Neapolitan songs, a privilege I regarded as restricted to only a few, and among these, first among all, is Salvatore Gambardella. The song of Gambardella was exactly what the Neapolitan song always should have been: pure invention and from invention and searching, discovery. And because of that, he was both great and unique in his grandeur, for he had invented it by finding it at the bottom of his creative soul, with only the assistance of a guitar. But it was actually he who provoked my resentment when I contracted with Bideri. [In 1911, many authors were accepted by Polyphon Musikwerke, the German publishing house that had opened offices in Naples, pledging a stipend to poets and musicians in exchange for a fixed number of songs.] "Don Fernando—said to me condescendingly—can pull Neapolitan songs out of his hat, while you have only *Papucchielle* to offer!" For him Papucchielle were utility songs written as the first numbers in a vaudeville show. I responded two months later, and I was a tiny David against the seasoned Goliath. My song was a polemic and a manifesto, as if to say: "Just like you, even I have something new to say, and all I need is a mandolin!" (Palomba 2001, 75).

57. De Mura (1969, vol. 3: 143). On this subject, see also Geraci (1996, 104–5).

58. Here is an example of this process contained in *L'amore alla Moda* (1759) by Antonio Palumbo with adaptations and additions by Pasquale Mililotti as found in Ferro, Mautone, Nunziata and Di Benedetto, *Libretti d'opera buffa napoletana* [*Librettos of Neapolitan Comic Operas*], ed. Maione 2004, 618–19:

    > Faccia d'argiento mia, faccia d'argiento
    > Si saporita cchiù de cocozzata;

P'ogne feruta tu tiene l'agniento
Si ghianca e rossa comm'a soppressata.
Si mpanutella? Non si spito a biento
Si bella, si gentile e si aggraziata.
Nenna, quann'avarraggio sto contiento
De te vedé co mmico ncrapicciata:
E ncrapicciata e rezza
Ncè grazia, vezzarria, piso e bellezza
E la bellezza, e bia
Ninno tujo sta ccà
Viene viene a ta ta
Palommella à à
Co lo cane ci ci
Va facenno bo bo
E te vo mozzecà
Lasso lo buono juorno a nenna mia.

This is a serenade subdivided into eight hendecasyllabic verses followed by an added *corpus* of particular complexity, a kind of "coda" formed by a pair of couplets of seven-syllable and of eleven-syllable lines rhyming aa/bb, markedly enlarged by the insertion of a sequence of six seven-syllable lines [Ninno tujo … mozzecà] cut off between the seven-syllable line and the hendecasyllabic line of the second couplet, which constitutes a kind of nonsensical nursery rhyme, linked to the octave through the repetition of a word in the last verse.

59. The dawn broke ("quanno schiarava juorno a poco a poco"), then in a sweet breeze and clear air ("nu ventariello doce e 'n 'aria fina"), the sun rose in the sky like fire ("spuntava 'o sole 'ncielo comm' a fuoco"), nature roused itself as leaves blew in the wind and birds sang ("nu fruscio 'e fronne, nu canto d'e aucielle") and greeted humanity (Te salutava 'a tutt' 'e nenne belle"), through music ("E 'a 'nu guaglione 'mmanech' 'e 'ncammise / Sentive chesta voce 'e paravise").
60. Andreoli (2000).
61. The hill of Posillipo appears, another favorite motif in the Neapolitan repertoire ('ncoppo 'a ll'onne, Pusilleco durmeva"), and it is pictured here like someone sleeping. Descriptions of grief follow from a perspective atop the hill, immersed in the silver light of the night ('o manto 'argiento, 'a luna le spanneva"), and the theme of nostalgia arises irresistibly, announcing the birth of the song in exile (e quanno 'e chillo cielo m'arricordo / Me vene all'uocchie 'e lagreme 'nu velo"). It is noteworthy that Caruso inverts the word order with respect to the score as follows: "e quanno m'arricordo 'e chillo cielo." This gives way to a vague popular religious sentiment ("Pare ca veco 'e stelle na curona"), another motif; here the corona of stars corresponds to the iconographic attribute with which many pictures of the Madonna are painted.
62. "Mi noche triste" (My sad nights) is not the first tango song, as many claim. The music, not actually original, already existed under the title "Lita," a

tango uding only instruments by Samuel Castriota (1885–1932). Castriota had revived it from the dance number by the Cuban Angel Sánchez Carreño, the first-prize winner of an entertainment contest in the Magic City concert hall in 1914. Certainly, he had modified the rhythm, transcribing it in 2/4 time. The words of "Mi noche triste" are the work of Pascual Contursi (1888–1932). An ugly, clumsy, and affected text, it opens an inexhaustible vein of misery in a man who has been abandoned by a woman and who weeps over his loneliness (Lao 1996, 125).

63. In the environment of the Italian immigrants, we trace the existence of a very significant piece by the title "Tango rag." "From the moment that the tango achieved its quarter hour of fame," writes the critic in his column Fra le quinte (Behind the scenes) in *La follia di New York* (January 11, 1914):

> There were those who praised and those who condemned it. And among those who showed interest were even kings and emperors as well as the pope who, without ceremony, launched his lightning bolts against it. Maestro Tobia Acciani, whose studio is at 362 Broome Street, did well when deciding to compose the music by the title "Tango rag," with words in English by Leonore Bennett. It is fascinating music that well deserves the success it has attained. The music and words are dedicated to one of the most charming and famous American singers, Miss Edithe Livingston, who has already sung "Tango rag" at several different metropolitan theaters, making it her own and inspiring, therefore, great enthusiasm.

The score is not available, but the piece is worthy of mention because it is presented as a synthesis of two newly born types of music, tango and rag, that were very popular at the beginning of the previous century. Interest in the song was born from the immediacy with which the two American traditions became fused in a nonethnic environment in a phase we can still define as the formation of the respective repertoires.

64. This is a reference to humorous texts by writers such as De Laurentiis, Migliaccio, Amodio, and of the songs interpreted by Caruso, of which I have already spoken, such as " 'A cartulina 'e Napule," sung by Gilda Mignonette.

65. The year 1920 is marked by a new change in the tenor's tone, characterized by a profound darkening. This happened for various reasons, but above all because Caruso sang and traveled too much, overtiring his body as witnessed by the letter addressed to his wife, Dorothy, in which he refers to performing too often at the Metropolitan Opera of New York and to the many rehearsals, galas, recitals, concerts, auditions, and voice exercises he had to endure. Caruso's voice was abused by the demands of his career, and his vocal cords could not stand up to the strain. Moreover, in 1909 he had an emergency operation for a nodule on his vocal cords that caused their shape to change and, therefore, changed his tone. This brought with it a change in the *tessitura*, producing a deeper voice. In addition, this progressive darkening of the voice, linked to the psycho-physiological phenomenon deriving from the fact that, before singing demanding tenor roles, Caruso always scrupulously

observed a taxing exercise regimen indispensable to reaching high notes without fatiguing the larynx. It is called "covering the voice." From an acoustic point of view, this particular mechanism, used by the great Italian tenors of the nineteenth century complements a change in voice as it becomes stronger and in tone as it becomes deeper. Between 1919 and 1920 Caruso's poor health affected his voice. The tenor died on August 2, 1921, from peritonitis caused by pulmonary pleurisy. In the recordings of this period, one hears a considerable deepening of the voice, a slight weakening here and there, a somewhat altered glottal sound. This weakening of the voice resulted from a catarrhal of the larynx and trachea caused by the abuse of tobacco (Caruso smoked a great deal) and in part by the illness that killed him (Mouchon in Vaccaro 1995, 37).

66. Spottswood quotes a version of the song recorded by Fernando Guarnieri in 1925, translated with the English title "Vision of Naples," (1990, vol. 1: 437).
67. Tagg writes (1982, 41) that popular music is conceived for mass distribution to large and socioculturally heterogeneous groups of listeners, often stored and distributed in nonwritten form, only possible in an industrial monetary economy, where it becomes a commodity, and in capitalist societies. For a more detailed discussion on the issue, see also Richard Middleton and Peter Manuel, "Popular Music" in *Grove Music Online*.
68. On the configuration of the popular urban song in the Italian references, see also Agostini and Marconi (2002). On the formative role of the medium, in this case phonograph recordings, in the study of traditions not belonging to European culture, such as popular music and, in particular, the audio-tactile principle, see Caporaletti (2005).
69. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the song repertoire became one of the most effective tools to describe the streets and the most characteristic spaces of the modern cities, places that quickly transformed themselves to the point of appearing unsettling and scary. For a more detailed approach on the topic see Giovanni Vacca.
70. Harvey (1989, 17–18).
71. Merithew, "L'italiano come 'altro': neri, bianchi, e 'medianitá' negli scontri razziali del 1895 in Spring Valley, Illinois [The Italian as Other: Blacks, Whites, and Those in the Middle in the Racial Clashes in Spring Valley, Illinois"] (in Guglielmo and Salerno 2003, 107.)
72. For details on this, see Gambino (1977). Therefore, the lynching episodes against Italian immigrants were not rare, as argued even in the documentary by Michael Di Lauro (2003). On anti-Italian prejudice, see also La Gumina (1973) and on the relations between Italians and African Americans in particular, see Orsi (1992) and the memoir edited by Ashyk, Gardaphè, and Tamburri (1999).
73. Guglielmo and Salerno (2003, 19).
74. De Salvo, "Colore: bianco/Carnagione: scura" [Color: White/Complexion: Dark] in Gugliemo and Salerno (2003, 44).

75. Orsi (1992, 317–18). The revival of the theory of Nativism aroused anxiety in Americans about the dangers represented by the waves of immigrants. In the view of many Americans, the immigrants were physically decrepit, politically dangerous, and genetically inferior. To emphasize the difference and to keep their distance from the poor and ignorant new arrivals, and to mark the boundaries of their world, Americans labeled the immigrants' behavioral patterns and social habits as tribal and savage. To support their views, Americans reverted to the specious science of race. The suppositions on which biological explanations of racial inferiority were built were rooted in the ideas of European racial theorists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries such as François Bernier and Johann Friedrich Blumenbach.
76. Topics relative to the manner in which Italians integrated into the United States, per se, are not within the scope of this study. For sources on such topics, see the bibliography. What is relevant here is that in the years with which we are concerned, music was of social importance as a specific and identifying language of the Italian immigrant.
77. *La Follia di New York*, March 2, 1919.
78. Carles and Comolli (1971, 94–95), nourished by the libertarian and radical philosophy of the sixties, took a position contrary to any form of political mediation and, thus, portrayed the intellectual African American as the first black leader recognized by white leaders from 1876 on. His obstinate conservatism and his inclination to "compromise" are evidence of a definite reformism that would be opposed by W. E. B. Du Bois and, with him, by radical blacks. According to the authors, Washington preached resignation. Work hard, he advised people of color, learn to become skilled tradespeople, obtain training rather than college educations, earn money, become business owners, avoid politics, and you will make American society accept you. Such advice indisputably enabled some blacks to make professional and intellectual progress. However, it also inevitably contributed to the development of an attitude that renounced any radical actions, leaving the field free to the growing racism evident at the end of the nineteenth century.
79. Reoediger, "Du Bois, la razza e gli italiani americani" ["Du Bois, Race, and the Italian-Americans"] in Gugliemo and Salerno (2003, 294). See also Du Bois (1968).
80. Gugliemo, "Nessuna barriera del colore" ["No Color Barrier"] in Guglielmo and Salerno (2003, 46).
81. "Perhaps my attempt to compare racial conditions in southern Europe with racial conditions in the southern United States will seem to some persons a trifle strange and out of place because in the one case the races concerned are both white, while in the other case one is white and one is black. Nevertheless, I am convinced that a careful study of conditions as they exist in southern Europe will throw a great deal of light upon the situation of the races in our southern States. More than that, strange and irrational as racial conflicts often seem, whether in Europe or in America, I suspect that at bottom they are merely the efforts of groups of people to read just their relations under

changing positions. In short, they grow out of the efforts of the people who are at the bottom to lift themselves to a higher stage of existence. If that be so, it seems to me there need be no fear, under a free government, where every man is given opportunity to get an education, where every man is encouraged to develop in himself and bring to the service of the community the best that is in him, that racial difficulties should not finally be adjusted, and white man and black man live, each helping rather than hindering the other (Washington and Park 1984 [1912], 85)."

82. Schuller (1991, 158).
83. Armstrong's admiration for Caruso is well known; he owned a few of the tenor's records, and among these certainly a copy of "Vesti la giubba," the celebrated aria from *Pagliacci* by Leoncavallo Armstrong remembered this record in 1930 when he recorded the famous ragtime piece "Tiger Rag," as noted, as well as an Irish jig and a march by Sousa. Schuller writes that Armstrong touched at least two ethnic groups with this one, throwing in a positive salute to all the rest. (Ibid., 166).
84. "In these days, the publishing house of Doubleday, Page and Co. published a book by Booker T. Washington with the suggestive title *The Man Farthest Down*, whose clear if not openly stated purpose is to demonstrate that the blacks of America, as opposed to the working and agricultural classes of certain parts of Europe, are not as black as widespread opinion portrays them and that the physical, economic, and social conditions, of blacks are, in some respects, superior to those of the lower classes in many European cities. The author is himself black and was a slave. He founded and directs the Tuskegee Institute, where young blacks are educated in the arts and trades. He is considered a god among his race and, although the year before he was involved in a lawsuit brought by a husband who accused him of peeping through the lock of his wife's bedroom (there's no accounting for taste) and later of having made amorous advances to her, he is still considered an educator of strict morals, so much so that Theodore Roosevelt did not hesitate to invite him to breakfast—one-on-one—at the White House, to the disdain of the entire South and the wonder of the rest of the country. It is understood, therefore, that when he speaks and writes of his people, he exalts their virtues and hides their sins. Thus, in addition to soliciting personal affection for himself, he brings fame to the Tuskegee Institute, about which evil gossips insinuated that he found the Lord's vineyard there and, under the semblance of an unctuous altruistic philanthropy, he has conducted his business comfortably and with little trouble. This is precisely the reason he is a unilateral observer, full of prejudices, who in his negrophilia allows himself to escape or to completely ignore the sinister foolishness against which the postulates of science and the voices of deep feeling protest: the silliness or, worse still, the calumny that, for example, is exposed in *The Man Farthest Down*. This should be a book of objective observations taken from trips to Europe that Booker Washington made in summers past; it should be, but it is not. It is, instead, only superficial for anyone who has observed Italy (or rather, the southern provinces). Also, we are not sure

whether it is irritating or distressing because in the frenzy of his comparisons and his findings he comes to proclaim the superiority of the Negroes over the people of Naples and the peasants of Sicily! We abhor this provincialism like the devil—if he exists—abhors the cross; nevertheless, we will not follow Mr. Booker T. Washington in comparing the north Italian and the south Italian because it does not help our issue and our words could be interpreted to mean the reverse of what is really intended. Instead, we take him by the horns with his tedious, hateful studies of the poor in Naples and Sicily, whom he knows only superficially by way of certain external characteristics, picked up indiscriminately, to tell him that he has committed an enormous and solemn error. Even if the worst is believed, the comparison is not valid because even among the worst thieves [Sisca writes thieves from Basso Porto (Lower Harbour)] under the bramble of ignorance and irresponsibility that had accumulated during centuries of civil and religious slavery, there was the flash of natural geniality, a virtuous heartbeat, and the primal material that, by necessity, would produce brave and generous men. The majority of Negroes are only a little more than animals, short on material instincts, of an obtuse mentality, and devoid of any creative light, with a pronounced and incurable tendency toward thievery, laziness, duplicity, and lewdness. They show cowardice before the strong, a bullying arrogance before the weak, as well as complete immorality and legendary ignorance. These are the qualities by which the black race—despised by the very Americans who freed them—should be judged superior to the people of Naples and Palermo! And when the author of *The Man Farthest Down* makes faces at the illiterates of Sicily, we have every right to end this comedy by asking him to look in the mirror of statistics from the federal government, where it is shown that the illiteracy of the blacks ranges between 90 and 100 percent. This is not the first time that this apostle of chocolate-coloured people has kicked our working men, saying, for example, that the blacks are superior to them and should be hired first: this is a blasphemy, and it is at the same time a stupidity, one to which the American contractors do justice by seeking out Italians first among the others for every kind of work, private or public, disdaining black men because they are negligent and inconstant at work, stupid, and immoral. It is not surprising that he repeats now the old Italophobic canards to placate the black race and hoodwink that portion of the white race that takes him seriously. Instead, it is surprising that a writer for *Hearst's Magazine*—Mr. Edwin Markham—attributes to him "first-hand knowledge and terse, fair, free discussion" while even a blind man can see that it all boils down to rehash of stale clichés (June 21, 1914)."

3 The Music of the Immigrant Takes on Mass Appeal

1. Fuller (1997, 7–15 passim).
2. Emelise Aleandri, the major scholar of Italian-American vaudeville theater, writes that the Italian-American theater developed rapidly among the

various Italian social clubs of Little Italy. The Italian mutual aid societies and clubs engaged in close cooperation in activities of mutual benefit, and these contributed to the creation of a very solid chain, which connected all of their enterprises ("Women in the Italian American Theater," in Boyd Caroli, Harney, and Tomasi, eds, 1978, 359).

3. See also Spottswood (1982, 54).
4. Bertellini, "Ethnic Self-Fashioning at the Cafè-Chantant," 42. "After the war (First World War) unique locals called 'cinema-chantants' or cinema-concertos mushroomed in Naples and in other Southern cities. Continuing the variety-show format of the cafè-chantant, the cinema-chantant upgraded the novelty of moving pictures to the main attraction. And because of the growing audience, cinema-chantants could offer the stock of their vernacular entertainments at a surprisingly low price. Soon, the Neapolitan cinema-concerto developed in other areas of the South and thus promoted a metropolitan amusement pattern, a synecdoche of a multiregional Southern and Southernist culture" (Ibid. 47).
5. Bertellini (2010, 176).
6. The question of limited literacy among the immigrants was the center of collective attention following the defeat at the Little Big Horn in 1876. The story, clouded by legend, tells that the only survivor of that historic clash between the Indians and the Americans was a naturalized Italian-American bugler, Giovanni Martino (John Martin). Before attacking the Indian camp of Crazy Horse with his 242 cavalrymen, Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer sent Martini to get reinforcements from the rear-guard column and fearing that the young man, who spoke Italian, would not understand the meaning of the message, thought to put it into writing on a piece of paper. The late arrival of the support troops was attributed for a long time to Martini's lack of familiarity with the English language because in deciphering the message he probably was not able to report the exact position of the Indian encampment, thereby leaving the history of those years to saddle him with the responsibility for the extermination of the Seventh Regiment of cavalry led by Custer. See Nobbio and Riondino (2007) and Mastrandrea (2010).
7. The spatial and temporal distance between the two continents, the lack of continuous contact of the dialect-speaking immigrants with the standard language, had given prominence to an archaic dialect, often the only linguistic register of the immigrants. Outside Italy, this produced an Italian dialect, a form of Italian filled with dialect elements and used as a variant of the Italian language (Haller, "Verso un nuovo italiano: l'esperienza linguistica dell'emigrazione negli Stati Uniti" [Toward a New Italian: The linguistic experience of immigration in the United States"] in Martelli (1998, 233–45).
8. A celebrated comic-sketch artist and comic writer, he was born to a middle-class family in Cava de' Tirreni, Province of Salerno in 1882. At age fifteen, after studying accounting, he decided to follow his father, an official at a

bank in Pennsylvania, to America. From there he moved to New York and dedicated himself exclusively to the theater. He quickly became the most noted exponent of the comic theater in the Italian community, achieving great success in the role of Farfariello, a character in a sketch he wrote and with whom he ended up identifying completely. He returned to Naples several times during the course of his illustrious career, and he died in the American city in 1946. Farfariello has been the object of scholarly analysis by both Americans and Italians. On this subject, see, among others, Aleandri (1999) Haller (2006), Rainero (1998), and Durante (1999).

9. "Oi Farfarìe, 'nficchete llà / 'nficchete, nficche, e falla schiattà" (Hey, Farfariello, stick yourself there / stick yourself, stick, and make her burst" in Durante (2005, 384).
10. See Bertellini (2010, 167–68).
11. For some biographical information, see Fugazzotto (2010, 99–101).
12. For a portrait of Sicilian poetry, see Haller (1999, 304–15).
13. Accardi (2001, 180).
14. It is interesting to note that Nofrio is a character who uses offensive and silly language and is a heavy drinker, a role that is typical of the "vastasate" (in Sicilian, "vastaso" means "rude, foul-mouthed"). Improvisational comedies descended from the tradition of the *Commedia dell'arte,* which had as a protagonist the "vastaso," or servant. These were common among Palermitan sketches of the end of the seventeenth century (Geraci 1996, 97). This would be additional proof of the tenacious permanence of the original culture inside the new expressive canons emerging within the immigrant context.
15. Romeyn (2002, 98).
16. Published in Durante (2005, 386 and 394). "Pascale Passaguaie" was the title of one of the most famous sketches composed by Pasquale Altavilla in Italy in 1843. Altavilla was a prized comic writers and authors of the nineteenth century in Naples. He authored a large number of songs and comedies that took inspiration from everyday events made vivid by a distinct taste for irony and the grotesque. Here, as well as in the case of Nofrio's character, already mentioned, we can trace the cultural persistence of the original country and the new one side by side.
17. In films produced in Hollywood, it was customary to film different European versions of an American movie, a kind of translation and adaptation in a different language, like a kind of visual stock arrangement. This was because the practice of dubbing was not yet common. Characters and plots remained unchanged, but actors, sets, and every type of cultural reference were in keeping with the community and the market at which that particular version of the film was aimed. See Bertellini (2006, 307).
18. The *Grove Dictionary of Jazz* defines stock arrangement as a simplified, strictly practical arrangement in a conventional style, usually commercially available in published form. It is important to specify that a stock arrangement is conceived to function with different structures. The head arrangement is elaborated orally by the musicians during studio rehearsals; its

material consists of riffs positioned in various places with a great deal of space left for the soloists. The lead sheet was a kind of loose sheet serving as a type of script that circulated around Naples; on these sheets the melody, the lyrics, and the harmony of a song were transcribed, often with the latter being signed with initials. The most famous example of a collection of lead sheets is the *Real Book*, which records the most important standards in the jazz repertoire.

19. Borgna (1996, 54) writes that Berardo Cantalamessa adapted himself perfectly to sound recording technology; he was very active between 1895 and 1907. A leading figure at the early *cafè chantant (*cabaret circuit), he distinguished himself by his elegance. He usually wore a red tailcoat over trousers of black satin and was known for his refinement and elegance as well as for his ability to perform; he sang baritone and falsetto, and he knew how to whistle like a virtuoso.
20. Maldacea (1933, 45).
21. Tosches (2004, 452).
22. Greene (2004, xxii).
23. Greene (2004, vi, xviii) writes that medical findings support the view that music is closely connected to the mind. They suggest that musical patterns have a special ability of enduring in listeners' consciousness. A familiar piece has such a profound retentive effect, both conscious and subconscious, that the affected individuals consider it a part of their identity. Psychological and musicological research refers to that property as "music of the brain."
24. Chevan (1997, 236).
25. An interview with the author, New York, winter 2003, published in Frasca (2005).
26. Geraci (1996, 105).
27. At the end of the 1920s, any group that came from the American south was given the name "Dixieland," white or black, especially if the group played music based on a polyphony that was more or less improvised. Today, the term identifies only traditional white jazz polyphony, as noted in Schuller (1999, glossary only in the Italian edition).
28. This is the nickname of a stretch of 28th Street in the area of New York where the major American musical companies were located during the first decades of the twentieth century.
29. Eekhoff, *California Ramblers: 1925–1928*.
30. Haller, "Verso un nuovo italiano" [Toward a New Italian] in Martelli (1998, 233–45; 240).
31. Ibid., 242.
32. Greene (2004, xxii).
33. Bertellini (2010, 137).
34. One of the most famous American composers and among the most important in the history of song and of cinematic and theatrical music, he signed himself as Harry Warren, but his real name was Salvatore Guaragna. He was born in Brooklyn on December 22, 1893, to Antonio and Rachele, Calabrian

immigrants probably from the area of Pollino. Warren turned quickly to composing musical themes for the cinema, securing his position as a great innovator of popular American music along with Jerome Kern, George Gershwin, and Cole Porter. The secret of his success was his ability to mix syncopated rhythms with Italian melodies, assigning primacy to the latter. An important example is "That's Amore," an item first recorded in 1953, which became emblematic of the music of the Italian-American community. Another example is "By the Rivers Sainte Marie" (1931), recorded by Tommy Dorsey and Jimmy Lunceford, then by Nat King Cole. The experience of Warren-Guaragna is indicative of the fact that many artists of Italian origin felt a tacit obligation to Americanize their original names if they wanted to become a part of the exclusive world of the film industry in Hollywood.

35. Spottswood (1990, vol. 1: 320).
36. Durante (2005, 401–8).
37. Aleandri (1999, 22).
38. Durante (2005, 402).
39. Note the distinction that considers Calabrians a people distinct from the Italians.
40. In Italian, one says "femmine" to indicate the feminine gender, while in America they say "uomene," a tortured version of the English word "women," which when pronounced in Italian-American sounds like "uimene," which with the change of the *i* to *o* becomes "uomene," in Italian "uomini," men.
41. "Pane" means "bread" in Italian; in Italian-American slang, it is pronounced almost as if it were the Italian word "pietra," that is, "stone."
42. The film of 1932 was directed by Bruno Valletty and was restored in 2000 with contributions from the Italian telephone company Telecom and sponsored by the Film Foundation of film director Martin Scorsese who has demonstrated great interest in these cinematic repertoire and who created an effective framework dedicated to recovering films born in the Italian-American colony.
43. Bertellini (2006, 308).
44. Muscio (2004, 256).
45. Del Bosco, *Cartoline da Little Italy* ["Postcards from Little Italy"] in *Fonografo italiano* [Italian phonograph].
46. In Mintz, "Digital History," 2003. http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu. The site, dedicated to United States history and updated daily, was born from a collaboration of various universities and institutions dedicated to American history, such as the University of Houston, the Chicago Historical Society, and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. According to the site, many of the millions of immigrants who arrived into the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did so with the intention of returning to their villages in the Old World. Known as birds of passage, many of these eastern and southern European migrants were peasants who had lost their property as a result of the commercialization of agriculture.

They came to America to earn enough money to allow them to return home and purchase a piece of land. Many of these immigrants came to America alone, expecting to rejoin their families in Europe within a few years. From 1907 to 1911, of every hundred Italians who arrived in the United States, 73 returned to the old country. For southern and eastern Europe as a whole, approximately 44 of every 100 who arrived returned home again.

47. Romeyn (2002, 104–5).
48. Umberto Nobile was an aeronautical engineer and explorer, who trained professionally in Naples where he taught at the university for over 30 years. After that he went to Rome to work at the Military Facility for Aeronautical Manufacturing. He was one of the pioneers and one of the most celebrated figures in the history of Italian aeronautics. He became famous for having piloted the airplane that completed the first sighting of the North Pole and, above all, for flying over the Pole in a dirigible in the second half of the 1920s.
49. Italian professional boxer and the World Heavyweight Champion in the 1930s, he was born in Sequals, in the Friuli region, in the northern part of Italy. His exceptional size was evident already at birth, when he weighed 8 kg (17.6 pounds). As an adult he was a little less than 2 m (7 feet) in height; the average size at that time was 1.65 m (5.4 feet) in Italy. He weighed 129 kg (284 pounds) and wore a size 55 shoe (size 18). Poor and giantlike, he initially found work in a circus as a wrestler until he landed in the ring. He was simultaneously an actor, cinematographer, and the protagonist of comics and also the indisputable icon of the Fascist period. He died of cirrhosis of the liver in 1967 at the age of 61.
50. In essence De Laurentiis says that Carnera had always won and that no one could deny his victories. Even if one wanted to discount the punishment he had doled out, the number would still be infinite. However, his opponents envied him very much, not because he was a great fighter but because he was Italian. His name was never mentioned in a positive light in American newspapers. But he got his own satisfaction—De Laurentiis implies—through his incredible strength. "L'Italia al Polo Nord" and "'O pugilatore italiano" are published in *Cartoline* cds I-II in *Fonografo italiano* (ed. Del Bosco).
51. Bertellini (2004, 388).
52. The sketch is "'O store 'e 5 e 10" (The store of 5 and 10); the dialect expression that is referred to is "me ne vaco pe 'o 5 e 10" (I am going to the 5 and 10), in which the two numerals actually indicate five and ten cents. This expression also mentions a store, where everything was sold for no more than ten cents.
53. As opposed to many who dedicated themselves to extemporaneous songs, Canoro was a professional composer. The Musical Archives of the Neapolitan Song contain nine titles by him published on 78 rpm records and performed by the best singers of the first half of the century: Migliaccio, Mignonette, Ria Rosa, Diego Giannini, Giuseppe Milano, and Vittorio Somma. The lyrics

were written by many important authors of the Italian-American context, such as Riccardo Cordiferro and Pasquale Buongiovanni. We don't have much information about them, but something interesting can be found in a column of *La follia di New York*:

> Our friend, Prof. Luigi Canoro, who for several years was the artistic director of the Q.R.S. Music Company, having decided to leave this company, went on to the International Player Roll Company as the director of the Italian Department. The International Player Roll Company, among the oldest and most respected, had its offices and its factory in Brooklyn at 166 Water Street. In the past, this company had manufactured very few rolls of Italian operas and songs. With the arrival of Prof. Canoro, on the other hand, it decided to put many of such recordings on the market, between 40 and 50 new numbers each month, many of which included lyrics by Riccardo Cordiferro. In fact, the company had already chosen to label those "rolls" with the designation *Sublime*. In terms of musical composition and of manufacturing, this title summed up all the best qualifications for assuring the success of the "enterprise" (May 27, 1928).

54. The interview is published in Frasca (2005, 151) (endnote mine).
55. Actor, writer of dramas, songs, poetry, and sketches, he was born in Tufo in the province of Avellino on January 13, 1889. He moved to New York in 1901. Self-taught, he debuted on the American stage with Francesco Ricciardi, the most important exponent of the Italian-American theater during the first half of the twentieth century. In America, he was the lead comic of a company that had already achieved moderate success around the first decade of the twentieth century. His biography mentions a number of collaborations with Nicola Maldacea and Mimì Aguglia, and according to some sources, he debuted even earlier as an author for the cinema at the studios of Vitagraph Company of Fort Lee, New Jersey. In the last phase of his life, he made yearly trips back to Italy in the spring, and he died in New York in 1962 (Durante 2005, 423–24).
56. According to *La follia di New York*:

> On Sunday, October 28, the theater of Armando Cennerazzo, the Biltmore Theater, will have its grand opening on 47th Street between Broadway and Eighth Avenue, and it will continue to be open on every Sunday that follows. The Biltmore is one of the most beautiful gathering places on Broadway. The sets have been entrusted to Mr. Humann, one of the most outstanding American set directors, and there are sets especially constructed and painted for every single play. The performances will be among the grandest that Italian audiences can imagine. The management of the theater by Armando Cennerazzo meets the most rigorous and selective artistic criteria, and it will indubitably offer the best that the field of radio and theater can provide. Whatever requests are made regarding the selection of music, song, or drama will be meticulously examined and considered.

57. He had a very beautiful voice, but he was very self-conscious when he appeared in December 1909 at the Lumiere di Roma concert hall. He had gained confidence by the time he appeared in Naples at the Cimarosa Theater in 1911. In 1913, by now an established singer, he toured Venice, La Spezia, Pisa, and Pescara, performing a melodic repertoire. After about a year, he left for America and returned to Italy in about 1919. Establishing himself in Taranto, he ran a variety theater for six or seven years. He resumed singing at the Alhambra and afterward moved to Rome. It was during this period that he began his activity as a musician with the E. A. Mario publishing house, for which he took part in the Piedigrottas of 1933 and 1934 (De Mura 1969, vol. 2: 27).
58. This is one of the great successes of the pairing of the poet Aniello Califano and the composer Salvatore Gambardella; the score was published by Bideri in 1907.
59. In indicating the number of the recording series of the principal houses, their names are used in abbreviated form, as in Spottswood 1990: Co (Columbia); Vi (Victor); Br (Brunswick); Ok (Okeh).
60. There exists, in fact, a precise melodic and harmonic plan that the song *'a fronna* follows. De Simone explains it saying that the traditional melody usually begins in a higher key (the fifth), followed by the primary rhythm in the third minor key (sometimes major, sometimes minor). It ends on the key note. The intermediate tones are fully embellished by the performer, who improvises whether according to the syllabic scansion of the text or based on the composition of the embellishment. Characteristic of this style is a particular syllabication rich in melodic flourishes and appoggiatura. Another characteristic is the final cadence, where the prolongation of the voice never occurs in the last syllable of the final word. It falls on the syllable that is naturally accented (De Simone 1979, 36–7).
61. Bertellini (2004, 60).
62. "Novelty" is a generic term that from approximately 1900 to 1945 was applied more or less to any music that was considered new, exotic, or in fashion. In a nonmusical sense, the term often refers to merchandise for sale; the plural "novelties" means "chincaglierie" (knick-knacks). Novelty ragtime is a kind of accelerated ragtime, with effects that are sometimes comical, and it is characterized by a lack of true melody and by a certain harmonic modernity (Schuller 1999, glossary only in the Italian edition).
63. The interview is published in Frasca 2005, 152.
64. John Gentile violinist, pianist, and arranger was born in Caserta in 1901. At the age of eleven, he played the violin for 11 liras at a performance at the Esedra Theater in his native city. Still very poor, he reached New York in 1929, where he moved because his mother wanted to rejoin her oldest son and her husband, who had already migrated. With the "diplomino" for violin that he took at the Conservatorio San Pietro in Maiella di Napoli, Gentile began to earn a name as a pianist and arranger as well. By his own

admission, he made contact with Francois Tieri and Vito Genovese, persons tied to the Italian-American underworld. These two procured engagements for him, the benefits he then repaid with work done "in confidence." He worked for a long time as a pianist during the silent-movie era. Later, he wrote music for well-known crooners such as Russ Columbo, and he became the backup pianist for Frank Sinatra's Hoboken Four. He also collaborated on the sound track for the television series *Wonder Woman*. This information was furnished directly to the author by Gentile during a meeting in the spring of 2003.

65. This is the complete text of the recorded version: "Sailors, sailors, row the boat to shore. O sailors / bring the nets to the shore. / Today we're on land and not on sea. / It's the feast of the Madonna of the Catena. / For a day at least we won't die / not even a fishing boat will stay out. / The feast of the Madonna comes only once a year, / the feast of the 'Nzegna. / Tonight we'll enjoy that sulfur water / And we'll throw our troubles out to sea. / Tonight there will be a great feast. / It's our feast. / It's the sailor's feast. / Fishermen, fishermen, the Madonna goes by. The Madonna's going by now / Carried on the shoulders of so many sailors. / A holy beautiful sight on their shoulders. / These sailors have suffered so much at sea. Happy and rich the pastor / Happy and content the worshiper who laughs beneath her hand. / The feast comes only once a year." The refrain follows. (Transcription by the author). The feast of the Madonna della Catena fell at the end of August; it was known specifically as the "'Nzegna," and it marked the passing of the summer season to that of winter. According to what John Gentile recounts, one part of the text had been written in Naples by an aficionado of song. The verses chanced to fall into the hands of Esposito of the Phonotype Company; then they traveled to New York and from there they came to the publisher Rossi, who gave them to Gentile asking him to put them into a song. Gentile rearranged them so as to adapt them to music. The memory of the Feast, which came to an end in 1953, was still very much alive in him, and it wasn't difficult for him to identify with the evocative imagery. After some time, the song made its way back to Italy, but the author of the lyrics did not like the way in which the verses rhymed. However, he had not yet heard the music. When this happened, he completely changed his opinion so much so that he wrote a letter of congratulations and apology to John Gentile.

4 Birds of Passage: The Immigrants Return Home

1. This date of birth is reported in Mazzoletti (2004, 5). De Mura (1969) reports it as 1888.
2. Liperi (1999, 128).
3. Tucker (1945, 157).
4. Schuller (1996, 4–5).

5. "Honey Bunch"—foxtrot (1915); "Honey Bunch"—song (1915); "Someone"—song (1915); "Yo San"—song (1915); "Pretty Polly"—foxtrot (1918) in Geoff Grainger, http://www.grainger.de/music/composer.html.
6. De Mura (1969, vol. 1: 217).
7. A column entitled "I Balli di oggi" (Today's dances) in an issue of *La canzonetta* magazine states that "if you believe that it begins and ends with the tango, you are wrong. Following is a short list: Argentine and Brazilian tango; double Boston; triple Boston; bear dance; Scotch time; one- and two-step; Brazilian maxixe; turkey trot" [7, n. 1–7, January 1914]. In the same issue, "La piccola cronaca del tango" (Tango: News in brief) was introduced. It is a column conceived at the height of the new dance's popularity. The brief article begins with, "The year 1914 is the dawn of the tango"; it sounds like the official moment of the birth of the genre, it sounds very pompous, resonant; what followed is a variety of news about the South American dance.
8. In the same year, other less famous examples were published: "La cauvesouris" [*sic*], i.e, a one-step by Ettore Marsella; "Mandarino," a foxtrot by Ernesto De Risi; "Mondana" (Society) a foxtrot with lyrics by Vincenzo Santangelo and Giovanni Moleti.
9. The original recording of the piece is by Felix Mayol and is dated about 1905; the date of 1910 relates to the recording by Di Landa and is supplied by Liperi (1999, 84).
10. On the topic of maxixe see Abreu (2011) and *Dictionário da Musica Popular Brasileira,* http://www.dicionariompb.com.br/maxixe/dados-artisticos; Ernesto Nazareth website, http://www.ernestonazareth150anos.com.br/posts/index/19.
11. "Oh! that yankiana rag" by E. Ray Goetz and Melville Gideon. Shapiro Music Publishing, New York, 1908.
12. The immediate antecedent of the habanera was the French *contredanse*—derived in turn from the English country dance—a type that took on its American version when it was brought to Latin America. The first place it landed was probably Haiti, in the first half of the eighteenth century. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the *contredanse* established itself in Cuba, where it made its official residence and where it acquired original African elements, completing its identity with the addition of the adjective "habanera," that is, "from Havana," a term by which it was known only outside Cuba. In Cuba it was known simply by the name "dance." Thus transformed, the *contredanse* habanera returned to Europe, and during the second half of the nineteenth century, George Bizet made use of it by placing it in the first act of his opera *Carmen,* a version of *El Arreglito,* a famous habanera of 1840 by the Spaniard Sebastián de Iradier. In this way Bizet reappropriated a century and a half later what had belonged to the French. "'O sole mio" was composed in 1898, and it is not wrong to claim that the idea for this exotic rhythm probably had been in the air before that time, since the first Italian performance of Bizet's opera took place at the Teatro Bellini in Naples years earlier, in 1879.

13. Meri Lao writes that the liberal politics of Domingo Faustino Sarmiento and Juan Bautista Alberdi, who wanted to transform the Argentine capital into a great cultured and refined European city, opened the door, as stated in the constitution of 1853, "to men of the world who would live on the soil of Argentina." But the golden dream of the elite was transformed into a nightmare with the arrival of an anonymous mass of immigrants, the majority of whom were Italian working-age males, who soon tripled the population of the capital. On the other hand, the exodus had been stimulated by the Italian government as a way to relieve social tensions and in hopes of dealing with the balance of payments, with money sent back to relatives who remained on the peninsula. In the United States, the proportion of Italian immigrants was one to six or eight; in Argentina, the proportion was one to two. This situation was unmatched in the world, and it was not incorrect to call it an alluvial migration. Then, the immigrant population started to join the colonial one, and an exogenous element took root (1996, 45).
14. Lunfardo contains terms originating from Andalusian gypsy language, from French argot, from English relating to sports, but more than 80 percent of it is of Italian derivation, above all from the dialects of the peninsula (ibid., 46).
15. This is the chronicle that traces the various stages of the birth and evolution of the tango: from its origins, that is, from the end of the nineteenth century to 1920, which is known as the old guard period; from 1920 to 1950, which is known as the new guard period, or rather the golden age of Argentine tango, which is divided into two strands—the traditional and the evolutionary. From 1950 onward, the modern tango prevailed, which is a type represented by the vanguard and of which Astor Piazzolla is unanimously considered the founder.
16. The term "cocoliche" probably comes from the name of a laborer who emigrated from Calabria, Antonio Cuccoliccio. In 1886 we find a character by the name of Cocoliche in the play *Juan Moreira* by Eduardo Gutiérrez, one of the most important texts of Argentine literature and Spanish-American Romanticism. After becoming popular in the lexicon of the Argentines, the language cocoliche breaks into Argentine literature. In the epic poem *Martin Fierro* (1872) by Jose Hernández, considered the masterpiece of the gaucho genre in Argentina and Uruguay, there is an Italian immigrant who speaks cocoliche, a lively mixture of Castilian and Italian with explicit influences from the Neapolitan. See Annecchiarico (2012, 81–90).
17. The sources for this information about Italians in Argentina are in part papers awaiting publication collected by the author during her participation at a workshop titled "Italian Migration and Urban Music Culture in South America, (Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies, Germany, October 15–16, 2010).
18. On this subject, see the extended research by Mazzoletti (2004 and 2010), which has shed light on the musical context of the first decades of the twentieth century, a period in Italy that has been a topic of many debates.

19. Palomba (2001, 91–2).
20. The research of Anna Maria Siena Chianese remains unique and important in this regard.
21. Siena Chianese (1997, 55).
22. Ibid., 61.
23. A volume of memoirs endorsed by his daughter Bruna Catalano Gaeta provides a brief description of the event:

    > E.A. Mario completed his first voyage to America on the steamship Conte Rosso in hopes of obtaining justice for the Neapolitan writers whose property rights over their compositions had been compromised overseas by schemers and music dealers who, by using talented copyists, appropriated Neapolitan melodies. These copyists listened to the live voices of the immigrants who, hidden in the holds of ships with their few household possessions, gave vent to their own melancholy by singing, thereby sustaining themselves morally as they prepared for the terrible adventure that awaited them. The music, thus transcribed, was then published and made popular in a strange land without seeking the necessary permission from the legitimate owners, including the publishers. E. A. Mario reached America preceded by the success of "Santa Lucia luntana" and of "La leggenda del Piave," but it was very difficult for him to become recognized, not only because speculation had diminished the commercial value of his songs, but also because a renegade Italian by the name of Mario, who lived in New York, had passed himself off as E. A. Mario, the songwriter, and he made everyone believe that this fakery was really a product of what he had endured during the war and that it had inspired him to write that already celebrated song (1989, 65).

24. The most famous compositions for which he authored the music are "Reginella" (Little queen) and "Silenzio cantatore" (Singing silence) with words by Libero Bovio, and "Vieneme 'nzuonno" (Come to me in a dream) with lyrics by Francesco Fiore.
25. See Mura (1969, vol. 1: 303).
26. In *La canzonetta* magazine of January 31, 1920, Lama published a song titled "Tres gentil" (Very nice), which the magazine itself defined as "jazz for the piano," adopting a newly coined term that had begun to spread through America in those years. In reality the element that gave the song a jazz tone was a recurrent figure in syncopation (sixteenth note/eighth note/sixteenth note).

5 Music Is Woman

1. In a sentimental way, as scholar Ann Douglas pointed out, speaking about "feminization" of American mass culture in the nineteenth century referred

to how writers of both sexes underscored popular convictions about women's weaknesses, desires, and proper place in the world.

2. Campbell, "Classical Music and the Politics of Gender in America," 451.
3. Bertellini, "Ethnic Self-Fashioning at the Cafè-Chantant," 64.
4. Adams (2012, 126).
5. Apropos of the Ingenues, see McGee. "The Feminization of Mass Culture and the Novelty of All-Girl Bands: The Case of the Ingenues."
6. Fugazzotto (2009, 59).
7. On this subject, see Tucker (2000) and McGee (2009).
8. Troianelli (1989, 20).
9. Ibid., 122.
10. Brunetta, "Emigranti nel cinema italiano e americano" [Immigrants in Italian and American Cinema] in Bevilacqua, Clementi, and Franzina, eds (2001, 494).
11. Bertellini (2010, 111).
12. De Mura (1969, vol. 2: 210).
13. Mazzoletti (2004, 125).
14. About this question, Basile Green writes that Italian-American writers have consigned the Italian immigrant woman to be a framed role-character: the central position in the family, whether moral, heroic, strong, tragic, weak, or merely pathetic. None of these portrayals, however, has yet emerged as a breathing, life-struggling ethnic presentation. Even non-Italian writers who have created Italian immigrant women in America in their writing have done so from the confines of the subject's place of origin and the limitation of the writer's experience. ("The Italian Immigrant Woman in American Literature" in Boyd Caroli, Harney, and Tomasi eds, 343.
15. Bertellini, "Ethnic Self-Fashioning at the Cafè-Chantant," 65. The expression that gives the title to the chapter echoes the critic James Huneker who wrote in 1905 "Music Is Woman," an article appearing in *Harper's Bazaar* 39 (August), in Campbell, "Classical Music and the Politics of Gender in America," 457.
16. Aleandri, "Women in the Italian-American Theatre of the Nineteenth Century," in Boyd Caroli, Harney, and Tomasi eds, 365–66.
17. Muscio, (2004, 9).
18. Ibid., 327.
19. Writings about Duse are numerous and very varied; I suggest consulting her biography and her theatrical activity in general in Minnucci (2010), Molinari (1985), Schino (1992); Bordeux (2005 [1924]); about her training and the early years of her career, see Orecchia (2007).
20. Muscio (2004, 39).
21. *La Follia di New York*, February 20, 1911.
22. Vecoli, "Negli Stati Uniti" in Bevilacqua, De Clementi, and Franzina eds (2002, 67).
23. See Bencivenni (2011, 19).

24. Fugazzotto (2010, 48–49).
25. "Mimì Aguglia Here to Act in Tragedy," *New York Times*, November 22, 1908.
26. Ibid.
27. In regard to this song, see Fugazzotto (2009, 64) and Leydi (1990, 114).
28. For a more detailed biographical profile of Aguglia see Muscio (2004, 324–38).
29. Aleandri (1999, 86).
30. De Mura (1969, vol. 2: 255).
31. Aleandri (1999, 86) and Sciotti (2007, 9).
32. Viviani (Castellammare di Stabia 1888—Naples 1950) was an actor and comic writer. A contemporary of Eduardo De Filippo. Often compared to Pirandello, he had an unhappy childhood and youth. He struggled to stay alive and to make himself known as an artist. In the first two decades of the 1900s, he worked in night clubs and in variety shows as a comedian and as a reciter of songs, creating a series of characters taken from ordinary Neapolitan life. Just as the First World War was ending in 1918, he performed an act of his own, *'O vico* (The alley), which became a great attraction. At that time, he also established his own theatrical company with his sister Luisella. He became a very skilful playwright, being able to draw out the most subtle implications about Naples and about his own complex humanity. He wrote works of intelligent social awareness and of strong dramatic qualities such as *Festa di Piedigrotta*, *Zingari* (Gypsies), *Piscature* (Fishermen), *La festa di Montevergine, La musica dei ciechi* (The music of the blind), *Fatto 'e cronica* (News item), 'A *Morte 'e Carnevale* (Death of Carneval), *Guappo 'e cartone* (Cardboard tough man), and *Padroni di barche* (Ship owners). He stopped performing in 1939. He was the author of an autobiography *Dalla vita alla scena* (From life to the stage) (1928) and of a collection of lyrical and longer poems *Tavolozza* (Palette) (1929). Viviani's bibliography is varied; examples are Lezza and Scialò (2000); Lezza (1992), Davico Bonino, Lezza, and Scialò (1987), Ricci (1979).
33. Ciaramella (Naples 1887–1961) was an actor, singer, and comedy and song writer. With the sister-in-law of Gilda Mignonette, Silvia Coruzzolo, and with Mimì Maggio, he formed one of the first stage companies. Ciaramella was associated with the Italian-American impresarios Alberto Campobasso and Feliciano Acierno, the latter being the father-in-law of Mignonette. It was with these two that Ciaramella began his successful tours in America. His American activity was quite intense, as proven by a remarkable number of film scripts that he wrote. One of the most significant film scripts produced for the southern immigrant environment was *'O festino o la legge* (The Banquet or the law, also The Law's banquet) in 1932, directed by Bud Pollard. There exists an edition in the Columbia collection, edited by Ciaramella's company (Del Bosco, "Avventure di canzoni in palcoscenico" ["Song Adventures on the Stage"] in Scialò (2002, 135).

34. From an interview with the author, New York, winter 2003. Sciotti has reconstructed some events tied to the Black Hand, which had attacked the singer a number of times because she had refused to pay them "protection" money. The problem was resolved thanks to the intervention of Lucky Luciano, an enemy of Maranzano, the criminal who instigated the aggression against the artist (80).
35. On the topic see Telve (2012).
36. See the Morris E. Dry Collection of the American Music Research Center at Boulder, Colorado.
37. According to Figueroa (1994, 124), the rumba had already spread through jazz at the beginning of the twentieth century. William C. Handy had, in fact, introduced Cuban rhythms into American jazz. Jelly Roll Morton called this tropical influence "the Latin tinge."
38. Topp Fargion, *Out of Cuba, Latin American Music Takes Africa by Storm,* CD.
39. La Capria (1999, 30–31) writes that considering that the existence of the lower class is not a social problem with no solution but an ancient and impenetrable drama, the petit bourgeois sought to tame it as Orpheus tamed the wild beasts, playing a flute in its unique way. Soaking this dialect with good feeling, the petit bourgeois rendered it sweet, obliging, and endearing, and used it (this new transformed dialect) in song and in speech. All that seemed unacceptable in the black Neapolitan undercurrent seemed acceptable and less black through the magical filter of that dialect. Little by little, the lower classes accepted this sweetened dialect, and while they spoke it their natural impulses were mitigated, at least on the outside, held in check by a code of behavior suggested by the words and the sounds of the dialect. And, thus, for example, even today one can see in films this contrast between the dialect and the reality that the dialect is called on to exorcise. Killings and murders, threats of criminal violence, sordid stories of honor and stabbings come, as if complicit with the dialect, immersed in petit bourgeois sentiment where the words "heart" and "mamma" abound.
40. Even the Piedigrotta festival was, in the end, exploited by the regime with the introduction of ideological and propagandistic elements. See Cavallo and Iaccio (1982, 115).
41. "This type of political linguistics is a means to build consensus and to create a national awareness. The dialect came to be prohibited in the public media (cinema, printing, and the national theater) and in education, but at the beginning of 1934 its use started to be tolerated in artistic performances in the dialect theater, whether 'popular' or 'elite,' for example, in Naples. The question of dialect during the Fascist era, therefore, is framed and understood according to various points of view, depending upon whether those points of view relate to education, propaganda, consumerism, media exploitation, ideology, or subject matter" (Klein and Baiano 2000, 375–76).

42. Prato (1995, 349).
43. Bertellini (2010, 258).
44. In De Mura (1969, vol. 1: 116), the singer is identified as De Mattienzo. I adopt the spelling with one *t* because it is used in the record credits and in the bibliographical sources.
45. Sciotti (2007, 47).
46. *La Follia di New York,* November 13, 1910.
47. Estavan (1991, 49).
48. Ibid., 48.
49. Even if not true in all years, at least in the two decades of the 1900s, the songs affected by or exposed to an explicit and a direct influence from foreign repertoires carried a dance rhythm as indicated in the score. In the absence of this element, I hazard the stated hypothesis.
50. The poet was the author of the first version of "'O marenariello" (The young sailor), which was published in 1893 with the title "'O mare e ba'!" (The sea and go!). With words adapted by Gennaro Ottaviano, the song had great success. I quote the refrain: "Vicin'o mare / facimme ammore / a core a core / pe nce spassà. / So'marenare / e tiro a rezza / ma p'allerezza / stong'a murì" (Let's make love near the sea / heart to heart / to amuse ourselves / I'm a sailor / and I pull up nets, / but for happiness / I'm dying").
51. Here the Neapolitan paternity is certain only if Cinquegrana is Pasquale Cinquegrana and Montagna is Alberto Montagna, that is, if we believe that the erroneous transcription from the disc of the authors' initials is attributable to carelessness or illegibility. However, this could be one of the frequent cases of plagiarism or attribution of a song to unknown authors who by using the signatures of famous composers pretended to be them.
52. A successful song among the immigrants, it was written and signed by Salvatore Baratta, a poet and lyricist who collaborated with highly valued composers, such as Nicola Valente and Gaetano Lama and Vincenzo De Crescenzo (De Mura 1969, vol. 1:, 11; Spottswood 1990, vol. 1: 455).
53. Borgna (1996, 99).
54. Anna Maria Martellone has estimated that in the 1930s, about 70 percent of the programs broadcast in the Italian language were taken up by popular songs, overtures, and Italian opera arias (in Martelli 1998, 177).
55. De Mura (1969, vol. 2: 91).
56. Vincenzo De Crescenzo was active primarily in New York, where he had immigrated in 1903 when he was eighteen after having studied composition and piano at the Conservatory of Palermo, to which the family had moved from Naples. A composer and arranger of chamber music and songs, he worked in America with, among others, Beniamino Gigli, Caruso, Tito Schipa, and Eugenio Cibelli. With Gennaro Camerlingo, he coauthored "Guardanno 'a Luna" (1904); "'O surdato" (The soldier) (1899) and "Uocchie celeste" (Blue eyes) with Armando Gill; "Varca sperduta" (Lost boat) (1927) with Pasquale Buongiovanni; and "Tarantella sincera" (1911) with Eduardo Migliaccio (De Mura 1969, vol. 1: 244).

57. Alfredo Bascetta, comic, actor, dramatist, and theatrical impresario, was born in Avellino in 1889. He worked with Elvira Donnarumma at the Trianon Theater in Naples. He was employed in America with Ria Rosa, and he worked in Roberto Ciaramella's company. Thanks to his success, he established residence in New York. In 1925 he founded his own publishing house. He was the writer of comedy sketches and of songs on the theme of immigration, among which are "Lacrime 'e cundannate" (Tears of the condemned) and "E ll'emigrante chiagne!" (The immigrant cries). I do not know the date of his death; however, the blackout to which Rossi refers actually could be the one of 1969 or the one that followed in 1977.
58. His real name was Carlo Della Volpe; he was born in Naples in 1897 and moved to New York with Roberto Ciaramella's drama company when he was very young. A charming singer with typical southern physical attributes/characteristics, he was also a film actor who is remembered for his depiction of Mario, the Neapolitan fiancé of Elena in *Santa Lucia luntana* (1931) by Harold Godsoe, one of the few surviving products of immigrants. The film was made in Fort Lee, New Jersey, with the American title *The Immigrant,* and it was recently restored thanks to the intervention of Martin Scorsese. For a close analysis of the film, see Muscio (2004, 256–57); Bertellini (2006, 309–15).
59. Probably the daughter of a theatrical family, her full name was Mafalda Carta. She debuted with her sister when she was just eight years old and dressed as a music-hall singer. De Mura recalls that in 1926 the singer was employed in America and stayed in New York for about three years. Changing part of her repertoire, which up to that point had been completely Neapolitan, she moved to South America where she performed in Italian and Spanish. She returned to Italy, and in 1948 she formed another company there and later left again for Argentina and Brazil. She returned to Naples permanently in 1959 (De Mura 1969, vol. 2: 227). There are six recordings in her name, of which one, never publicized by Victor, was in English from the original French: "My man" ("Mon homme") by A. Willemetz, Jacques Charles, with music by Maurice Yvain, made in 1929. The interview is published in Frasca (2005, 147–48).
60. Gevinson (1997, 1074).
61. Gildo could be Armando Gildo, a poet who was inspired by the more famous Armando Gill; Libardo is most probably a maestro active in New York, whose name sometimes appears as Libaldi.
62. De Mura (1969, vol. 2: 108–9).
63. De Mura states that she was lost track of in 1913: "She had a very strict mother, who never left her alone for an instant, and when the singer smiled at an admirer, she suffered her mother's wrath. It was this fierce discipline adopted in an unusual environment, such as that of the variety show, that caused irreparable harm; one evening in July 1913, after completing a performance at the Teatro Luciano in Salerno, the young woman disappeared.

Warnings from her mother, allegations, denunciations, searches, all in vain! Some months later, it was learned that she had fled to Brazil in the company of a man she loved. And from then on, there was no news of her" (ibid.).

64. Giuliana Muscio (2004, 260–61) sheds light on a few interesting aspects of the figure of Francesco Pennino apropos of the film *Senza mamma e nnammurata*. The song by the same title, signed by Luigi Donadio and Domenico Ietti, was the sequel to Pennino's song that has already been mentioned and that was licensed by him. "Another adapted film is *Senza mamma e nnammurata* (1938); it shares with *Santa Lucia luntana* a producer (De Vito) and a director (Godsoe), but above all it is taken from the work of Francesco Pennino, a musician, master comic, and grandfather of Francis Ford Coppola. Among the most famous authors of Italian-American dramatic songs, Pennino composed this work as a sequel to *Senza Mamma*, his most famous screen adaptation. The film is a musical drama of the immigrant environment, in which the famous singer Rosina De Stefano performed, as did Catherine Campagnone, the Italian-American winner of the Miss Italia contest in that year (further confirmation of the modernity of exposure operating in this industry).... Pennino made innovations from a musical and structural point of view, above all in the treatment of the song that in the United States became similar to an operatic aria. This contrasted with the Neapolitan tradition, in which the alternation between recitation and singing produced fragmentation. Italian-American dramatization is not, therefore, Neapolitan dramatization portraying itself simply as something made in the United States. Both sing and speak in Neapolitan, but the American version is born from an immigrant experience, its narrative and its voice are adapting the use of the music to the new market."
65. "Primmavera antica" (Old-time spring) (Vi 69704); "Venezia nostra" (Our Venice) a war song (Vi 69876); "Femmena 'e Nola" (Woman from Nola) (Vi 72141); "Oj mà tu saie pecch è (O, mother you know why) and "'O silenzio 'e Napule" (The silence of Naples) (Vi 72118); "Quanno tornano 'e surdate" (When the soldiers come back) (Vi 72211, GV C-601 [C]); "Che m'hanno ditto 'e te" (What they've told me about you) (Vi 72587); "Senza perdono" (Unforgiven), followed by "Senza mamma" (Without mamma) (Vi 68553), "Sicilianella" (Little Sicilian girl) (Vi 68565), "Nun ce 'o dicite 'a mamma" (Don't tell mamma) (Vi 68565).
66. Probably this is the same Guglielmo Ricciardi who was a key personality in the theatrical world of Little Italy along with Antonio Maiori.
67. Bertellini, "Ethnic Self-Fashioning at the Cafè-Chantant," 60.
68. Aleandri (1999, 95) provides an impressionistic judgment of the epoch of the singer, about whom, unfortunately, I possess no information from Italian sources.
69. A song with the same title but attributed to other authors, Scotti-DiCarlo, was recorded by De Laurentiis for Gennett (Ge 4755) in 1921.

6 The Record Labels, the Producers, and the Orchestra Directors

1. Glasser, 135.
2. Anita Pesce reconstructs the method by which foreign companies engaged local artists and explains the way in which Naples became part of the larger panorama of modern consumer music. Above all, local retailers were contracted as representatives; usually the choice fell on the seller of mechanical or electronic products, such as fans, photographic equipment, optical instruments, player pianos and phonographs. In Naples, Gaisberg opted for the Loreto di Antonino brothers, who had a shop in Piazza Borsa, founded in 1898. Usually, it was the local emissaries who contacted the performers and who came to an agreement with them about the manner in which the song was to be performed and about compensation. In Naples, according to Gaisberg, 35 matrices were made with guitar and mandolin accompaniment. When one scans the list, it becomes immediately clear that, along with the songs of successful authors, there are products no longer remembered. At this moment in the history of recording, it seems that in Naples not much attention was paid to the performers or the repertoires chosen; the priority, instead, was on cornering a segment of the market with whatever was available at the moment (2005, 78–80).
3. Interview published in Frasca, "La coscienza sull' altra sponda del 'lago italiano'" (Awareness on the other shore of the 'Italian Lake'), 148–49:

   > When, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Ernesto, the father of Louis Rossi, the owner of the Rossi and Company music store, which was once an important place of musical sales and consumption in New York, decided to move to America, he opened a veritable emporium that sold all types of records, including those of opera singers and, above all, those containing popular Neapolitan songs. At the end of the nineteenth century, even my grandfather, before starting Phonotype, had a book and record store on S. Anna dei Lombardi Street. The gramophone was a great novelty, and many artists were attracted to this new object. They made it clear very quickly that they wanted to record their voices; that is why the first version of Phonotype was born, that is the Società Fonografica Napoletana [Neapolitan Phonograph Company]. Initially, the recordings were made in Germany; then in 1905, they began in Naples, first in the building on Foria Street, and from 1923 on in the one on De Marinis Street, our current headquarters. Rossi also took the same route, more or less, and he began to specialize in the sale of records that he had acquired from us. The transport of records on a steamship from Naples to New York was risky because a majority of the copies arrived at their destination broken to pieces. For this reason, Ernesto, or Ernest as they say in America, began to acquire only the metal matrices from us and produced the records directly in New York. In a short

while, he also started putting under contract in America many artists who had had a contract with us. Thus, over the years, we conducted a real exchange of matrices, which became very important some years ago when, on the occasion of our republication of Phonotype's entire historical catalogue, we requested that Louis furnish us the matrices that we lacked. We must recall that during the Second World War Naples suffered an unexpected bombardment, and a major part of our production was lost. My brother Robert estimated that the material that survived was only 10 percent of the total. Our collaboration with Rossi continued after the death of Ernest with his two sons, Eduardo and Louis, up to the Second World War. Subsequent to that, and in great part due to the natural decay of this repertoire in Italy, however, our working relations have continued to expand. For many years, Louis has come to Naples to record artists who are no longer popular here. For our company and that of Rossi, immigration had an important impact because in America, in New York, in those years the immigrants were for the most part southerners, who identified with the traditional music of Naples no matter what their geographical origins. They bought many records, certainly more than the Italians, and, above all, they went to the theater to hear Neapolitan artists on tour. All of this permitted the spread of our songs. Gilda Mignonette found great success in America. Her fame spread to Italy as well, but only as a reflection of what she had achieved in America. In Italy, she became famous not only because of her voice but also because of the fact that she was from Naples. In short, it was a kind of ricochet, which earned her a great deal.

4. De Mura (1969, vol. 1: 447).
5. Spottswood (1990, 335–37) remembers him as a tenor with a rich corpus of songs of authors famous in the Neapolitan panorama, such as Di Capua, Bovio, and E. A. Mario. Cibelli began to record for Victor in 1916.
6. The information reported here, taken from an unpublished interview with Rita Bullock, the youngest daughter, conducted by the author in June 2003, is countered by the credits on Victor records published in the first half of the twentieth century.
7. "Alfredo Cibelli knew what sold because he would go to the stores and send for his employee. 'What's selling?' 'Listen, the guarachas are selling a lot.' 'We're going to make some guaracha records.' Cibelli was less concerned with the particular songs within a genre, or who owned them, than with fulfilling a quota of the most saleable genres. After an audition of a new group, Cibelli would say, 'Okay, I like this group. I think it's okay. Two weeks from now, come with a danza, with a guaracha, with a vals, with a plena, to record.' It had nothing to do with who the author was. The group leader was in charge of looking for the music. Thus, musicians could cavalierly recycle melodies. Few composers went to publishers to protect their work, which meant that leaders whose talents lay more in organizing groups or in interpreting the

music of others 'borrowed' songs, sometimes giving credit to the composers but often claiming it for themselves and creating a litigious and sometimes violent atmosphere between musicians" (Glasser, 150).

8. The items mentioned, "La rumba delle fragole," performed by Mignonette and "'Mpareme 'a via d' 'a casa mia" by Farfariello are good examples. However, it is worth remembering that a certain number of lyrics of famous Neapolitan songs passed into the American repertoire such as "Maria Marì" by Vincenzo Russo, set to music by Eduardo Di Capua and published in Naples in 1899. By 1905, it had already been published in an English version with the title "Oh, Marie." In this form, it quickly became a model of Italian-American song, moving beyond any ethnic barrier. See Tosches (2004, 78).
9. "For sound narrates and affects an attachment (to a memory, a place, a trace) that elaborates a temporary territory and transitory home in the world. This is to think of the cultural and historical affiliation of music not in the largely static appeal to 'origins,' but rather in the altogether more suggestive, fluid and freer understanding of 'beginnings' that are always haunted by the ghosts of other songs. It is precisely in this key that sounds deterritorialise and reterritorialise cultural landscapes and their inherited histories" (Chambers 2012, 21).
10. Rust (1984, 78). More recently, the story of the first recording of the ODJB had a different outcome than the one Rust reports. The English scholar drew his information from the diary of Nick La Rocca, the band's leader; it remains an accurate, detailed source. On January 30, 1917, according to what La Rocca recalled, the ODJB made a test record that was later destroyed, but not that of the song "Indiana," which Rust speaks about and which instead was postdated to May of that year for reasons having to do with the numbering of matrices. See Baudoin (2005, 44).
11. Rust (1984, 214).
12. For commercial music labels, they identified themselves either as artists tied to the world of jazz or as folk musicians originating form all over the world.
13. For a catalogue of recordings, see *Encyclopedic Discography of Victor Recordings* http://victor.library.ucsb.edu.
14. http://www.collectionscanada.ca/gramophone/index-e.html.
15. Websites and discography are the two principal sources: the most consulted source dedicated to the cinema, the Internet Movie Database and the back cover notes by Jeff Hopkins in *Nat Shilkret and the All-Star Orchestra*, the complete collection of the group's songs from 1926 to 1928, published in 2005 by Vintage Music Production (VMP 0181).
16. *Phonograph Monthly Review*, October 1926.
17. The presence of Eduardo Ciannelli is noted in this film. He was an important exponent of the Italian immigrant theater already mentioned in relation to Caruso.
18. Among these were the above-mentioned Figueroa (1994), Glasser (1995), and Spottswood (1982).

Conclusion

1. Gramsci refutes the assumption circulating among the proletariat adhering to socialist ideology that the Mezzogiorno is the "dead weight" that impedes rapid progress in the development of Italy. He refutes the theory that southerners are biologically inferior, semi-barbarous, or totally barbarous by nature. Gramsci also refutes the notion that the Mezzogiorno's backwardness is not the fault of the capitalistic system or of some other historical cause, but of nature, which has made the southerner lazy, inept, and criminal. This negative image, the theory goes on to argue, is tempered by the appearance, solely on an individual basis, of people of great talent, who are like lonely palms in an arid and sterile desert. In the words of Gramsci, the Socialist Party was, in great measure, the vehicle by which this bourgeois vision of the southern proletariat was advanced and instilled in the northern proletariat. In addition, positivism was used to support this crushing vision of the poor and the oppressed, cloaking itself this time in socialist colors because it claimed to be the science of the proletariat (Gramsci 1949, 30).
2. Fiori (1989, 108–109).
3. Gramsci's interpretation of the southern question has been long debated, and it has been criticized by many observers and historians of southern origins. In more recent times, one of the most interesting objections is the one espoused by Nicola Zitara, a southern theorist with a separatist vision of Italy, who criticized Gramsci's moralistic emphasis and methodology with a fiery argumentative power. Zitara held that the underdevelopment of southern Italy could be explained according to Marxism in terms of the relationship of production and class and that, given the distance between the economic rise of the north and the stagnation of the south, the needs and interests of the northern working class were incompatible with those of the southern proletariat, as opposed to what Gramsci had argued. In conclusion, according to Zitara, it was this divergence of objectives that opened the door to southern immigration (1971).
4. Sorce Keller (2003, 513).
5. See Nettl (2003; 1978b).
6. Gilroy (2003, 37–38).
7. Fabbri (2001, 562).
8. Nettl (2003, 553–54).
9. Hains (2001, 783).
10. Molino (2001, 769).
11. Frith (2001, 964).
12. Nettl (1978b, 123).
13. Bourdieu (1983).
14. Frith (2001, 954); on the subject see more in Levine 1990
15. Robinson (1993).
16. Lomax (1968, 937, 942).

17. Ibid., 928.
18. Ibid., 930.
19. Baroni (2001, 977).
20. Pine and Pepe (online).
21. Pelinski (2001).

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Topical Index

Note: The index is divided into a topical index and a specialized name index listing musicians, performers, and composers of Neapolitan song in New York and Naples from the late 19th century to the beginning of the Second World War. The exceptions are Enrico Caruso and Farfariello (Eduardo Migliaccio), indexed here. Names of songs, films, bands, scholars, and historical figures can be found in the topical index. Cross-references between the topical index and name index are set in bold type.

Name Index