



## Lingue Migranti: a Dialectic on the Languages of Italy

Maya Paula (April 20, 2013)



To anyone who does not know Italian, the language exists as an abstract fusion of a romantic ideal of the standard Tuscan dialect and stereotypical ideas of southern Italy and Italian-Americans that derive from representations in pop culture. The objective of the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute's three-day conference is to provide a complete look at every aspect the Italian language



puzzle and its many divergent influences.

April 25th, the day when Italians celebrate the anniversary of their liberation from the German Nazis and the Fascist regimes, holds yet another sense of interest for Italian Americans in New York. [The John D. Calandra Italian American Institute](#) [2] has scheduled their annual conference, “**Lingue Migranti: The Global Languages of Italy and the Diaspora**” to start on the Italian national holiday and extend to the 27th of April.

Aside from Italy’s history surrounding both World Wars I and II, the country has had a turbulent timeline, its map having been rearranged through a myriad of appropriations and separations. Italy as it exists today has only been around for approximately 152 years, though its extensive cultural foundations stem to antiquity. While the country remains segmented into twenty distinct provinces, the stark division between them is owed to the dialects, which animate each region.

Following Italy’s unification, inhabitants speaking dialects ranging from Neapolitan to Venetian were expected to learn the Tuscan dialect, as it became the official language of the state. The Calandra Institute aims not only to focus on the polemics of such an imposition, especially when viewed in context of the mass emigration from Italy to the United States, but also to inspire conversation from the perspective of Italian American literature, minority groups in Italy and the Italian language today, as it operates in Italy and abroad.

The first full day of the conference, Friday April 26th, will feature speakers concerned with expressing views on topics ranging **from Italian dialects in the theatrical sphere, whether this means performances in dialect or representations of Italians immigrant culture on stage, to Judeo-Italian culture of the Mediterranean**. The conference’s afternoon session will feature an examination of minority groups and their languages as they appear in Italy, this including the Griko and Albanian cultures of central and southern Italy, as well as the German and Cymbrian people.

Friday’s discussions will also cover Italian literature written in dialect, best embodied by writers Luigi Capuana and Massimo Bontempelli, as well as **the art of translating Italian-American authors**. It will conclude with an analysis of the limits imposed on immigrant literature in Italy.

The discussion will continue on Saturday with another full day of thought-provoking topics that take a **more modern approach to the Italian culture and language**. The day will begin by taking a look at the question of authentic vs. inauthentic representations in Guido culture, moving further to the evolution of linguistic practices and identities, especially in Italian-American youth. The following panel will address Postcolonial languages and language in general as a “means of resistance” to colonization.

Additionally, speakers will approach **the idea of dialects in everyday conversation, as well as consider the ways in which the Italian language is regarded abroad**. Attendees may find the “Italian Language in Argentina” seminar especially interesting in light of Argentinian Pope Francis I’s Italian heritage. The evening will conclude with an entertaining discussion of the language in lyric form, as well as the diffusion of dialect into Italian music.



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**ANNUAL CONFERENCE (the full program itinerary)**  
**Lingue Migranti**  
**The Global Languages of Italy and the Diaspora**  
**April 26-27, 2013**

John D. Calandra Italian American Institute

Queens College, City University of New York

25 West 43rd Street, 17th floor, (between 5th and 6th Avenues), Manhattan

Program Subject to Change

**THURSDAY EVENING.** 6:00 pm will act as a welcoming reception to encourage opening comments and discussion.

The conference will be conducted in English.

**FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2013**

9:00-9:30 am

Coffee and Pastries

9:30-10:45 am

Conference Room

Dialect and Performance

Chair: Anthony Julian Tamburri, John D. Calandra Italian American Institute

Multiple Dialects on the Italian Stage: Commedia Techniques in Vergilio Verucci's *Li diversi linguaggi*

Stefano Boselli, Independent Scholar

Performing the Sicilian: Angelo Musco in Nino Martoglio's *L'aria del continente*

Janice Capuana, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY



Staging Immigration: The Dramatic Dialect of Cocoliche

Elisa Legon, Baruch College, CUNY

11:00 am-12:15 pm

Conference Room

Judeo-Italian in the Circum-Mediterranean

Chair: Siân Gibby, John D. Calandra Italian American Institute

Italian Varieties in Mediterranean Areas during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

Fabrizio Franceschini, Università di Pisa

The Italian/Italophone Jewish Trauma of "Forced Repatriation": The Case of Victor Magiar

Rosario Pollicino, University of Connecticut

"Submerged" Italian in Tunis: Italian and Its Dialects as Heritage Language

Alessandro Orfano, Università di Pisa

La Galleria

Language and Literature

Chair: Rosangela Briscece, John D. Calandra Italian American Institute

Language, Class, and Politics: The Use of Sicilian and Italian by Luigi Capuana in Gli "americani" di Ràbbato, 'Ntrrugatoriu, and 'U Cavaleri Pidagna

Santi Buscemi, Middlesex County College

Theorizing Migration: Realismo magico and Massimo Bontempelli's Giro del sole

Amelia Moser, Italian Poetry Review

12:15-1:30 pm

Lunch on your own

1:30-2:45 pm



Conference Room

Minority Languages in Italy

Chair: Peter G. Vellon, Queens College, CUNY

Examining Current Griko Identity through Oral Tradition, Folklore, and Cultural Manifestations

Angelyn Balodimas-Bartolomei, North Park University

Albanian Linguistic and Cultural Islands in Central and Southern Italy

Vincenzo Bollettino, Montclair State University

German as a Minority Language in Italy with Special Emphasis on Cymbrian/Zimbrisch/Cimbro

Ermenegildo Bidese, Università degli Studi di Trento, and James R. Dow, Iowa State University

La Galleria

[In]Translation

Chair: Fred Gardaphé, Queens College, CUNY

John Fante Was Not an Outlier

Mary-Faith Cerasoli, Mercy College

Ties That Bind: Translation and the Development of an Intergenerational Literary Tradition

Gil Fagiani, Italian American Writers Association

3-4:45 pm

Conference Room

Immigrant Literature in Italy

Chair: Teresa Fiore, Montclair State University

The Limits of the Italian Language for Immigrants' Acceptance into Italian Society: Amara Lakhous's *Scontro di civiltà per un ascensore a piazza Vittorio*

Elizabeth Venditto, University of Minnesota



The Language In-Between: The Interplay of Albanian and Italian in Gëzim Hajdari's Poetry

Anita Pinzi, Graduate Center, CUNY

Amara Lakhous's Clash of Civilizations over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio and Defining Italian Identity in a Globalized Italy

Grace Russo Bullaro, Lehman College, CUNY

Folktale, Legend, and the Novel in the Works of Ornella Vorpsi

Viktor Berberi, University of Minnesota

**SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2013**

9:30-10:45 am

Conference Room

Language and Evolving Italian-American Identities

Chair: Donna M. Chirico, York College, CUNY

Authenticity and Inauthenticity in Italian-American Cultural Manifestations: Youth Reactions to Guido Culture

Jefferson Triozzi and Anna De Fina, Georgetown University

The New Wave of Italians: Linguistic Practices and Attitudes

Luciana Fellin, Duke University

Evolving Linguistic Identities among Second-Generation Italian-American Youths

Hermann W. Haller, Queens College/Graduate Center, CUNY

11 am-12:15 pm

Conference Room

Postcolonial Languages

Chair: George de Stefano, Independent Scholar

Language as a Means of Resistance in Gabriella Ghermandi's Regina di fiori e di perle



Melina Masterson, University of Connecticut

Re-Embracing Italian National and Linguistic Identity in Africa

Annemarie Tamis-Nasello, Fashion Institute of Technology, SUNY

"Tripoli era dolce, per gli italiani": Postcolonial Italian Writers in Tripoli and Benghazi

Daniele Comberiati, Université Libre de Bruxelles

La Galleria

Dialects in Everyday Communication in Italy

Chair: Robert Oppedisano, Editor

Narrative and Argumentative Discourse between Dialect and Italian: An Analysis of the "Linguistic Atlas of Sicily" Corpus

Giuseppe Paternostro, Università degli Studi di Palermo

Performing Eloquence in Public: The Interplay of Veneto Dialect and Standard Italian

Sabina Perrino, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Dialect in Peer Interaction in a Sicilian Elementary School

Anna De Fina, Georgetown University

12:15-1:30 pm

Lunch on your own

1:30-2:45 pm

Conference Room

Keynote

Is Italian a Global Language? Evidence from the History to the Near Future

Stefania Giannini, Senate of the Republic, Italy

3:00-4:15 pm



Conference Room

Italian Abroad

Chair: Nancy C. Carnevale, Montclair State University

Lingua Esule: The Risorgimento Exiles and the Teaching of Italian in the United States

Stefano Luconi, Università degli Studi di Padova

The Italian Language in Argentina: From Nostalgia to Practical Opportunities for the Future

Luciana Zollo, Independent Scholar

Is Italian on the Move in Toronto?

Naomi Nagy, University of Toronto

La Galleria

Everyday Use

Chair: Roberto Dolci, L'Università per Stranieri di Perugia

Linguistic Sustainability: A Look into the Venetian Dialect and Its Importance to Cultural and Regional Identity

Carmeline Morris, Goucher College

Blended Mind and Voice: Use of Italian and English-Hybridization, Italianization, Local Accents, Regional Dialects

Jane McCall Politi, Independent Scholar

Gender Assignment and the Italo-Romance Mass/Count Distinction: Perspective from Language Contact

Anna L. Moro, McMaster University

4:30-6:00 pm

Conference Room

The Language of Music

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Chair: Joseph Sciorra, John D. Calandra Italian American Institute

"You Must Always Protect the Dialects": Regional Languages and Contemporary Southern Italian Music

George de Stefano, Independent Scholar

Sing, Wop, Sing: Reading Songs as a Political Nomadic Voice, from Almamegretta to Raiz

William Anselmi, University of Alberta, and Lise Hogan, Independent Scholar

"Non si capiscono le parole": When Italian Lyrics Deal with Italian Audiences in Subsonica's Music

Simona Martini, Università degli Studi, Milan

The Intersection of Languages and Cultures in Roberta Torre's

Tano da Morire

Francesca de Lucia, Independent Scholar  
Free and open to the public.

You will need to show a photo ID to the building's concierge.

All presentations are held at the Calandra Institute.

John D. Calandra Italian American Institute

25 West 43rd Street, 17th floor, (Between 5th and 6th Avenues)  
New York, New York 10036

RSVP (encouraged but not required) by calling [\(212\) 642-2094](tel:2126422094) [3].

Please note that seating is limited and we cannot reserve seats.

For further information see our Web site at [www.qc.edu/calandra](http://www.qc.edu/calandra) [4].



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**Links**

[1] <http://iitaly.org/files/linguemig1366470229jpg>

[2] <http://qcpages.qc.edu/calandra/>

[3] tel:%28212%29%20642-2094

[4] <http://www.qc.edu/calandra>