



ITALIANISTICA DEBRECENIENSIS

— XXVI. —



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Sul frontespizio: Cognitione delle cose
"...la cognition delle cose s'acquista per mezo de l'attenta lettione de' libri,
il che è un dominio dell'anima"
(Cesare Ripa: Iconologia)

ITALIANISTICA DEBRECENIENSIS

———— XXVI. ————

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Indice

PAOLO ORRÙ: Premessa	6
----------------------------	---

Lingue, letterature, persone in movimento e in contatto

GIULIANA PIAS: Testimoniare “un altro tempo all’interno del nostro tempo”. <i>Tutto il miele è finito</i> di Carlo Levi	10
---	----

DANIELA BOMBARA: “Brume nordiche” sullo Stretto. Le radici settentrionali del Romanticismo siciliano	28
--	----

LAURA LUPO: Tra descrizione e rievocazione: fantasticherie di un ritorno al Sud nelle novelle di Giovanni Verga	47
---	----

MARZIA CARIA: «Non so scrivere inglese, a momenti neppure italiano... datemi una “giobba” qualsiasi»: gli emigrati italiani nel teatro di Nino Randazzo	56
---	----

FLORA SHABAJ: Contatti linguistici e culturali tra le due sponde dell’Adriatico. L’italiano degli scrittori di origine albanese	69
---	----

RUBEN BENATTI: Adolescenti nelle scuole secondarie di secondo grado: identità, lingue e lingue ereditarie. Il caso delle province di Biella e Vercelli	87
--	----

DÉNES MÁTYÁS: From Italy to the USA: Cleveland Italians, Their Heritage and Traditions	110
--	-----

Articoli

GLORIA CAMESASCA: «E io sono in quel numero, benché disutile sia»: l’amicizia tra Lapo Mazzei e Francesco Datini	120
--	-----

FABIO SCETTI, FEDERICA SALAMINO: Il progetto VVV: lessicografia, informatica e social network al servizio della promozione linguistica	136
--	-----

Recensioni

SIMONE GIUSTI, NATASCIA TONELLI: Comunità di pratiche letterarie. Il valore d’uso della letteratura e il suo insegnamento, Torino, Loescher, 2021 (Carmelo Tramontana)	152
--	-----

From Italy to the USA: Cleveland Italians, Their Heritage and Traditions

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Abstract: One would be hard-pressed to deny the influence Italians have had on the United States of America and on the very fabric of American cultural life. Not only are metropolises like New York City and Chicago with their populations in the millions home to significant Italian communities and neighborhoods but so are cities with several hundred thousand inhabitants like Boston, Baltimore, Syracuse, St. Louis, or Cleveland. The present paper intends to focus on Italians in Cleveland, Ohio, that undoubtedly constitute an organic and significant part of the city's population. It aims to offer an insight into the formation of the Italian neighborhoods, from the first waves of Italian immigrants in the 19th century, and the opportunities of second-, third-, or nth-generation Italians to tend to their common Italian roots as well as to preserve their customs and traditions from the old country through a wide array of Italian cultural events, the city's Italian community hubs and memorial sites, or the local Italian-American media.

Keywords: Italian emigration; Cleveland; Italian-Americans; heritage; Italian culture

1. Introduction

One would be hard-pressed to deny the influence Italians have had on the United States of America and on the very fabric of American cultural life. At the same time, it should not cause any trouble to list some of the myriad Italian contributions to the world of cuisine or to call to mind movies with Italian-American characters, set perhaps in Italian communities or neighborhoods. Nor would it be problematic to remember the many famous American actors, singers, and athletes with (at least a bit of) Italian blood in their veins. Not only are metropolises like New York City and Chicago, with their populations in the millions, home to significant Italian communities and neighborhoods but so are cities with several hundred thousand inhabitants like Boston, Baltimore, Syracuse, St. Louis, or Cleveland.

The present paper intends to focus on Italians in Cleveland, located on the shores of Lake Erie, that undoubtedly constitute an organic and significant part of the city's population. It aims to offer an insight into the formation of the Italian neighborhoods, from the first waves of Italian immigrants in the 19th century, and the opportunities of second-, third-, or nth-generation Italians to tend to their common Italian roots as well as to preserve their customs and traditions from the



old country through a wide array of Italian cultural events, the city's Italian community hubs and memorial sites, or the local Italian-American media.

2. From the first immigrants to Italian neighborhoods

The first Italians in Cleveland settled there as early as the mid-19th century, but it was only between 1870 and 1920 that Italian immigrants began arriving in greater numbers both in the city and in the U.S. in general – tens of thousands of them in the former, millions in the latter – and not just from regions in Southern Italy, such as Campania and Sicily.¹ Many from the first waves of Italian immigrants took up manual labor working on bridge and railroad construction or digging sewers, became factory workers or tailors in the garment industry, or secured jobs in the manufacturing industry. Quite a few of them found employment as physicians, dentists, or lawyers, while many worked as barbers, cooks, bricklayers, or even stonemasons,² like one of the most famous Italians in Cleveland, Joseph (or Giuseppe) Carabelli (1850-1911) from Lombardy (Porto Ceresio), who even pursued a career as a politician. Having immigrated to New York City in 1870, Carabelli moved to Cleveland in 1880, where he founded the Lakeview Granite and Monumental Works. The majority of the monuments and sculptures in the beautiful and historic Lakeview Cemetery in the immediate vicinity of the still-existing Italian district in Cleveland represent brilliant pieces of craftsmanship by Carabelli and his talented Italian workers.³

¹ G. P. Veronesi, *Italian-Americans & Their Communities of Cleveland*, Cleveland OH, Cleveland State University, 1977, pp. 168-75, and p. 180. (Digitized version of the volume edited by the Cleveland Memory Project, a collaborative effort of the Special Collections Department, the Digital Production Unit, and the Collections & Resource Management & Systems Divisions at the Michael Schwartz Library, Cleveland State University, available at <https://pressbooks.ulib.csuohio.edu/italian-americans-and-their-communities-of-cleveland/>.) For a brief overview of Italian migration patterns, see: D. Del Boca and A. Venturini, *Italian Migration*, Bonn, IZA Discussion Paper, 2003, available at www.cestim.it/argomenti/07emigrazione/07emigrazione_it-emigration.pdf, accessed January 7, 2021. For a general overview of the history of Italian emigration to other countries, among which to the U.S., see: *Emigrazione e storia d'Italia*, ed. by M. Sanfilippo, Cosenza, Pellegrini, 2003; *Storia dell'emigrazione italiana*, 2 vols., *Partenze e Arrivi*, ed. by P. Bevilacqua, A. De Clementi and E. Franzina, Roma, Donzelli, 2009; M. Pretelli, *L'emigrazione italiana negli Stati Uniti*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2011.

² C. Ferroni, *Italians*, in *The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, 2nd edition, ed. by D. D. Van Tassel and J. J. Grabowski, Bloomington IN, Indiana University Press in association with Case Western Reserve University and the Western Reserve Historical Society, 1996; digitized, regularly updated and extended version of the volume (*The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History. A joint effort by Case Western Reserve University and the Western Reserve Historical Society*) available at <https://case.edu/ech/>; Ferroni's article available at <https://case.edu/ech/articles/i/italians>, accessed January 7, 2021. On Italians in Cleveland, see also: C. Ferroni, *The Italians in Cleveland: A Study in Assimilation*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Kent OH, Kent State University, 1969.

³ On Carabelli, see: Veronesi, *Italian-Americans*, cit., pp. 198-201; *Carabelli, Joseph*, in *The Encyclopedia*, cit., <https://case.edu/ech/articles/c/carabelli-joseph>, accessed January 7, 2021. On the company, see: J. Graham, *Johns-Carabelli Company*, in *The Encyclopedia*, cit., <https://case.edu/ech/articles/j/johns-carabelli-company>, accessed January 7, 2021; M. Sharaba, *Little Italy*, in *Cleveland Historical*, a project (and free mobile app) developed by the Center for Public History + Digital Humanities at Cleveland State University, available at <https://clevelandhistorical.org/>; Sharaba's article available at <https://clevelandhistorical.org/items/show/35>, accessed January 7,

Six or seven Italian neighborhoods emerged on Cleveland's East and West Sides from the second half of the 19th century up to the first decades of the 20th century.⁴ Many of these neighborhoods had a population that was over 93-96% Italian-born or at least of Italian descent.⁵ The most significant ones were Big Italy on the East Side, nearest to Downtown, and Little Italy (which was the longest-lasting one, too) on the same side, while Collinwood and other neighborhoods also saw high numbers of Italian inhabitants through the decades. With Italians having moved further east from Big Italy from as early as the 1920s and 1930s (the ethnic composition of the population grew increasingly mixed, the community showed signs of decline, and housing conditions were more favorable in more remote parts of the city),⁶ now it is mainly Gallucci's, purveyor of imported Italian gourmet foods on Euclid Avenue at East 66th Street, that reminds us of this area's Italian past.

Little Italy, situated at the junction of red brick-paved Murray Hill Road and busy Mayfield Road as well as some nearby streets, has remained a lively Italian neighborhood since 1885 with its restaurants, cafés and bakeries, galleries, arts and crafts stores, and gift shops. Although the Italian character of the eateries may sometimes only be symbolic today, during the daytime, the wide selection of coffees and pastries at bakeries like Presti's and Corbo's, including *cannolis* and *babàs*, attracts a steady flow of visitors. The characteristically Italian atmosphere of the neighborhood is enhanced by the colorful murals on Mayfield Road which depict the history of Italian-Americans (*Storia del Popolo Italo-Americano*), by statues of the Virgin Mary in the front yards, and by the Christopher Columbus statue at the entrance to Tony Brush Park, named for the 1943 Golden Glove champion boxer from Little Italy Anthony Brescia.⁷

3. Italian community hubs, cultural events, festivals, and other festivities

From the very beginning, Cleveland's Italians have held on to their origins. However, unlike other ethnic groups (for example, the Slovaks, Poles, and Hungarians), they have rather done so on a regional level than on a national one, clinging more

2021. See also: M. J. Morton, *Cleveland's Lake View Cemetery*, Charleston SC – Chicago IL – Portsmouth NH – San Francisco CA, Arcadia Publishing, 2004, p. 68.

⁴Ferroni, *Italians*.

⁵ See, for example, what Veronesi writes about Little Italy: «In 1911 it was estimated that 96% of the population of this neighborhood was Italian-born and another 2% were of Italian parents», *Italian-Americans*, cit., p. 198; or what *The Encyclopedia* says about Big Italy: «By 1900 this formerly Jewish area was 93% Sicilian», *Big Italy*, in *The Encyclopedia*, cit., <https://case.edu/ech/articles/b/big-italy>, accessed January 7, 2021.

⁶ Veronesi, *Italian-Americans*, cit., p. 196.

⁷ See S. Mitchell, *Cleveland's Little Italy*, Charleston SC-Chicago IL-Portsmouth NH-San Francisco CA, Arcadia Publishing, 2008, p. 92. On Little Italy, see also: *Little Italy*, in *The Encyclopedia*, cit., <https://case.edu/ech/articles/l/little-italy>, accessed January 7, 2021; Sharaba, *Little Italy*.

to their native towns or villages and mainly preserving their family customs and traditions from the old country.⁸ Nonetheless, they have also placed emphasis on tending to their common Italian roots, which had two major centers in the Little Italy neighborhood. Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church was founded to promote religious and community life in 1892, and Alta (Settlement) House grew out of the nursery and kindergarten set up by Carabelli in 1895. Rebuilt with the support of oil magnate John D. Rockefeller (1839-1937) (who was incidentally a friend of Carabelli's), Alta House was inaugurated and named after Rockefeller's daughter in 1900.⁹ Nurturing common roots remains important, though the ethnic composition of the population has become greatly mixed. There are two main reasons for this. First, the area is close to Case Western Reserve University, so students rent apartments in the neighborhood in large numbers; second, many people of Italian descent have moved to suburban areas over the years as «the suburbs were more attractive to both the descendants of immigrants and new immigrants».¹⁰

There is also a school operating in Little Italy (in the Alta House building), not exclusively for Italian-Americans, of course: the Cleveland Montessori School, an independent private school following in the footsteps of educational reformer Maria Montessori. Besides that, the Montessori High School was just a few blocks away, already outside Little Italy but still in the University Circle neighborhood – in 2018, this school had to cease its one-decade long operations though due to low enrollment numbers and financial difficulties.

With roots in the Italian past, apart from Holy Rosary in Little Italy, various other Cleveland churches and parishes have formed hubs for religious and community life. For example, Holy Redeemer Catholic Church on Kipling Avenue on the East Side (in Collinwood), St. Rocco Parish on Fulton Road on the West Side, and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish on Detroit Avenue on the same side with an Italian-language mass every Sunday.¹¹ In fact, churches and other religious organizations (mostly Catholic and some Protestant ones as well)¹² have played an

⁸ Ferroni, *Italians*, cit., <https://case.edu/ech/articles/i/italians>: «Cleveland's Italians lacked any sense of national identity. Italy for them was the village from which they came. What the Italians brought to Cleveland were the traditions, values, patron saints, and dialects from the villages they represented. Their affinities and affiliations were largely with their paesani (fellow villagers)».

⁹ See the articles *Alta House*, and *Holy Rosary*, in *Encyclopedia*, cit., <https://case.edu/ech/articles/a/alta-house> and <https://case.edu/ech/articles/h/holy-rosary>, accessed January 7, 2021.

¹⁰ Ferroni, *Italians*, cit., <https://case.edu/ech/articles/i/italians>.

¹¹ On Italian churches, see: Ferroni, *Italians*, cit., <https://case.edu/ech/articles/i/italians>.

¹² Veronesi, *Italian-Americans*, cit., p. 211: «Although the majority of Cleveland's Italians are Roman Catholic, several Protestant churches have attracted numbers of Italians to their congregations». On the relationship of Italian migrants, their Catholicism, and the (Roman) Catholic Church, see: M. Sanfilippo, *Breve storia del cattolicesimo degli emigranti*, in *Cristiani d'Italia. Chiese, società, stato*, ed. by A. Melloni, Roma, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, 2011, pp. 987-99, available at <https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/breve-storia-del->

important role not only as religious, but also as social and cultural centers, and «were so important in each area's development».¹³

The Italian collection at the Cleveland Museum of Art also deserves attention with its treasure trove of paintings and sculptures by such renowned Italian artists as Fra Angelico, Filippo Lippi, Andrea Mantegna, Sandro Botticelli, Francesco Botticini, Andrea del Sarto, Caravaggio, Guido Reni, Massimiliano Soldani, Francesco Trevisani, Amedeo Modigliani, and many others.¹⁴ Mention must also be made of International Cleveland Community Day. Organized at the Museum annually, typically at the beginning of October, the event features a host of Cleveland groups and organizations, including the Italian Cultural Garden Foundation information desk.¹⁵

The Italian Cultural Garden is another important community hub and memorial site. Established to preserve Italian identity, it is situated amid the city's other national gardens. The two-level park, «symbol of the contribution of Italian culture to American democracy»,¹⁶ opened its doors in the fall of 1930. The Renaissance-style fountain was modeled after the *fontana* at the Villa Medici in Rome. Further features of the upper level are «a block of stone hewn from the side of Monte Grappa in northern Italy, in honor of the many northern Ohio members of the 332nd Regiment of Infantry, who fought on Italian soil in 1918», as well as «a tablet recalling the late General Balbo's flight from Rome to Chicago in 1933».¹⁷ Apart from these, visitors will also marvel at a bust of Virgil, a Dante sculpture, and (on the lower level) reliefs of Petrarch, Giotto, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Giuseppe Verdi, and Guglielmo Marconi. But the Italian Cultural Garden provides a venue for numerous cultural events as well. The most popular is probably the

cattolicesimo-degli-emigranti_%28Cristiani-d%27Italia%29/, accessed January 7, 2021. On the role of religion for immigrant groups in the U.S., see: C. Hirschman, *The Role of Religion in the Origins and Adaptation of Immigrant Groups in the United States*, «International Migration Review», 38 (3) 2004, pp. 1206-33. (In Hirschman, on the particular case of «American Italians show[ing] little interest or enthusiasm in Catholic practice», or the so-called «Italian problem», see pp. 1217-8).

¹³ Veronesi, *Italian-Americans*, cit., p. 202: «In each of these communities certain landmarks served the community as social, religious and cultural centers. Usually these were the Italian churches which were so important in each area's development. Although in Italy local parishes received small support from the parishioners, in America the ethnic church became the center of the community's life. Even if these religious institutions were not always supported financially by their Italian members their importance can not be overstated».

¹⁴ It is possible to search the Museum's collection on its website: <https://www.clevelandart.org/art/collection/search>, accessed January 7, 2021.

¹⁵ On International Cleveland Community Day, see, e.g.: <https://www.thisiscleveland.com/events/international-cleveland-community-day>, accessed January 7, 2021.

¹⁶ C. Lederer, *Their Paths Are Peace. The Story of Cleveland's Cultural Gardens*, Cleveland OH, Cleveland Cultural Garden Federation, 1954, p. 73.

¹⁷ Ivi, cit., p. 72. On the Italian Cultural Garden, apart from Lederer, see: The Cleveland Historical Team, *Italian Cultural Garden*, in *Cleveland Historical*, cit., <https://clevelandhistorical.org/items/show/115>, accessed January 7, 2021, and the Italian Cultural Garden's description at the Cleveland Cultural Gardens Federation's website: <https://www.clevelandculturalgardens.org/gardens/italian-garden/>, accessed January 7, 2021.

Opera in the Italian Garden, held annually at the end of July. The Italian Republic Day celebrations have also taken place in the garden several times already. In addition, Italians regularly participate in One World Day here. Since the mid-1940s, the event has been celebrated at the Cleveland Cultural Gardens every August with the motto “Peace through Mutual Understanding”. The varied program includes a parade of flags, performances, and exhibits as well as a citizenship ceremony.¹⁸

On top of these well-known annual activities, there are still various other Italian cultural events regularly organized in Cleveland. One of the largest-scale ones in Little Italy is the Feast of the Assumption on August 15 (the Italian *Ferragosto*), which commemorates the death of the Virgin Mary and her being received into heaven. It is actually not a one-day event but a series of celebrations. The main streets in the neighborhood are closed to traffic. Street vendors offer traditional Italian foods, drinks, and all sorts of other goods. Thousands of visitors stroll the streets, taking delight in the hospitality of the restaurants and taverns until dawn. The most solemn part of the feast is the traditional procession, in which a statue of the Virgin Mary is carried aloft through the neighborhood.¹⁹

Another key event for Italian-Americans is the Columbus Day Parade. Complete with marching bands and floats, the parade takes place on Columbus Day, the second Monday of October, to celebrate Genoa-born Christopher Columbus, symbol of Italian-American identity, and his landing on the shores of the New World on October 12, 1492.²⁰ But this is not the only important day for Italian-Americans in October. In fact, October is Italian-American Heritage and Culture Month throughout the United States. Though it varies from state to state, the month features festivals and other events that celebrate Italian-Americans, their achievements, and their contribution to American culture.²¹

¹⁸ On One World Day, see: P. A. Shakarian, *Cleveland Cultural Gardens*, in *Encyclopedia*, cit., <https://case.edu/ech/articles/c/cleveland-cultural-gardens>, accessed January 7, 2021.

¹⁹ On the Feast of the Assumption, see: M. Sharaba, *The Feast of the Assumption*, in *Cleveland Historical*, cit., <https://clevelandhistorical.org/items/show/377>, accessed January 7, 2021.

²⁰ It must be mentioned that in recent years critiques of the figure of Columbus as the product of an ideological discourse and his commemoration as the celebration of the colonization of Native Americans have become increasingly prevalent. Various states and cities have chosen not to observe Columbus Day as a national holiday and to replace it with Indigenous Peoples’ Day, or to rename it Italian-American Heritage Day and celebrate both on the same day. In Cleveland, the City Council voted to recognize Indigenous Peoples’ Day on a separate date (August 9). On these issues, see: K. N. Anastasi, *Columbus Day & Consequences: Re-examining Italian American Commemorations, Historic Anxieties, and (Some of) the Narratives They Silence*, «Tapestries: Interwoven voices of local and global identities», 4 (1) 2015, available at <https://digitalcommons.maclester.edu/tapestries/vol4/iss1/18>, accessed January 7, 2021; M. C. Michaud, *The Italians in America, from Transculturation to Identity Renegotiation*, «Diasporas», 19 2011, pp. 41-51, available at <http://journals.openedition.org/diasporas/1788>, accessed January 7, 2021; E. C. Caldwell, *Challenging Columbus Day*, «JSTOR Daily», October 12, 2015, available at <https://daily.jstor.org/challenging-columbus-day/>, accessed January 7, 2021; Council of the City of Cleveland, *Resolution No. 605-2019*, July 24, 2019, available at <https://cityofcleveland.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7710389&GUID=049AA97D-E81F-4EAD-8AF8-9514A00A27CC>, accessed January 7, 2021.

²¹ See, in this regard, the following Presidential Proclamations: G. Bush, *Proclamation 6045—Italian-American*

Cleveland offers several programs related to Italian movies as well. The annual *Cleveland Italian Film Festival* (with screening locations at Cedar Lee Theatre, Capitol Theatre, and Atlas Cinemas Eastgate 10) dates back over a decade. Week after week, it showcases Academy-, David di Donatello-, and other award-winning Italian films every Thursday from mid-September to mid-October. Another festival with some of the latest Italian films (*Italian Film Festival USA of Cleveland*) is also held annually, in April, usually with Case Western Reserve University and Cuyahoga Community College–Metropolitan Campus as its venues. Also, every year since 1977, a range of Italian movies has been shown at the *Cleveland International Film Festival* (CIFF), the largest and most prestigious cinematic event in Ohio.²²

4. Heritage language, Italian media, and IFL study possibilities

Italian (ethnic) identity is constructed and shaped by various factors, among which heritage language knowledge is certainly an important one. However, Italian-Americans with no or limited knowledge of Italian can also connect to their origins and be proud of their *italianità*.²³ While first-generation immigrants' active use of Italian (standard, dialectal, popular) and of local or regional dialects gets more and more affected by the everyday contact with English and starts to decline with the second generation, Italian-Americans may easily experience a complete linguistic shift to English by the third or fourth generation, characterized by «symbolic uses of individual Italian words and expressions» that «can [still] index the speaker's allegiance to Italian identity».²⁴ Also, the number of people who declare Italian

Heritage and Culture Month, 1989, online by G. Peters and J. T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, available at <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/268114>; G. Bush, *Proclamation 6218—Italian-American Heritage and Culture Month, 1990*, online by G. Peters and J. T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, available at <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/268399>; W. J. Clinton, *Proclamation 6723—Italian-American Heritage and Culture Month, 1994*, online by G. Peters and J. T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, available at <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/217673>; B. Obama, *Proclamation 8585—Italian American Heritage and Culture Month, 2010*, online by G. Peters and J. T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, available at <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/289269>; all Proclamations accessed January 7, 2021.

²² For the various film festivals, see: Italian Film Festival USA of Cleveland, <http://www.italianfilmfests.org/>; Cleveland Italian Film Festival, <https://www.facebook.com/CLEVELAND-ITALIAN-FILM-FESTIVAL-113260022028374/>; Cleveland International Film Festival, <https://www.clevelandfilm.org/>; all websites accessed January 7, 2021.

²³ On these issues, see: A. De Fina, *Language and identities in US communities of Italian origin*, «Forum Italicum», 48 (2) 2014, pp. 253-67, available at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0014585814529227>, accessed January 7, 2021; K. P. Alessandria, M. A. Kopacz, G. Goodkin, C. Valerio and H. Lappi, *Italian American Ethnic Identity Persistence: A Qualitative Study*, «Identity: an International Journal of Theory and Research», 16 (4) 2016, pp. 282-98, available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15283488.2016.1229610>, accessed January 7, 2021; M. Vedovelli, *Storia linguistica dell'emigrazione italiana nel mondo*, Roma, Carocci, 2011.

²⁴ De Fina, *Language and identities*, cit., pp. 253, 256. See also: S. Machetti, *America del Nord*, in *Storia linguistica dell'emigrazione*, cit., pp. 387-428.

ancestry is, of course, much higher than the number of those speaking Italian.²⁵ Furthermore, recent generations seem to show «an increasing interest in the Italian language», and thus «third generation Italian-Americans are enrolling in language courses and employing creative ways to manipulate their limited Italian repertoire for socially meaningful purposes».²⁶

So it is not unusual for second-, third-, or nth-generation Italians not to speak their heritage language as well as their ancestors did. Still, mention must be made of the local Italian media. Earlier, in the first half of the 20th century, there were several Italian newspapers published in Cleveland (for example, *La Voce del Popolo Italiano*, *La Stampa*, and *L'Araldo*).²⁷ Today, *La Gazzetta Italiana*, which was launched in 1992, is published monthly for Italian-Americans in the area, partly in Italian and mostly in English. The newspaper, which also has an online version, brings out news from Italy and Italian-American news from Ohio alike. Readers can pick up a great deal of valuable information about recipes, cultural history, and many other topics of interest. In addition to print media, those interested in Italian and Italian-American news and Italian culture, language, and – especially – music can enjoy Italian- and English-language radio. For example, WRUW-FM 91.1 broadcasts *Radio Italia* from 6 to 8 p.m. every Saturday. *Memories from Italy* is also on the air on John Carroll University Radio WJCU-FM 88.7 on Sundays. Both can be heard live on the internet as well.²⁸

In terms of direct contacts with the Italian language and culture, apart from the local media, mention must be made of higher education institutions in Cleveland and nearby areas offering study programs and/or language courses as well as classes (in part or in whole) on Italian history and culture.²⁹

²⁵ As De Fina writes in *Language and identities*, cit., p. 255: «nowadays, of the 17 million people who declare Italian ancestry only about one million (or even less according to American Community Survey statistics for 2006) speak Italian».

²⁶ A. De Fina and L. Fellin, *Italian in the USA*, in *Language Diversity in the USA*, ed. by K. Potowski, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 195-205.

²⁷ Ferroni, *Italians*, cit., <https://case.edu/ech/articles/i/italians>.

²⁸ On the Italian media in Cleveland, see: *La Gazzetta Italiana*, <https://www.lagazzettaitaliana.com/>; *Radio Italia*, <https://wruw.org/show/radio-italia-of-cleveland/>; *Memories from Italy*, <http://www.wjcu.org/programs/2021spring/info/6>; all websites accessed January 7, 2021.

²⁹ Italian courses at higher education institutions in the Cleveland area: Case Western Reserve University, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures: <http://dml.case.edu/undergraduate/italian/>; Cleveland State University, Department of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures: <https://www.csuohio.edu/class/world-languages/world-languages>; Cuyahoga Community College: <http://catalog.tri-c.edu/course-descriptions/ital/>; John Carroll University, Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures, Italian Studies course offerings: <http://sites.jcu.edu/language/pages/italian/>; Kent State University, Department of Modern and Classical Language Studies: <https://www.kent.edu/mcls/programs-italian/>; Oberlin College, French and Italian Department: <http://new.oberlin.edu/arts-and-sciences/departments/french/>; all pages accessed January 7, 2021.

5. Conclusive remarks

There is little doubt that Italians constitute an organic and significant part of the population of Cleveland (although through the decades their way to acceptance and Americanization was a gradual process which was not free from anti-Italian sentiments, prejudice, negative reputation, stereotypes, and societal discrimination).³⁰ This is also demonstrated by the following facts: there is an Honorary Consul of Italy serving in the city (Ezio Listati, appointed on July 22, 2020);³¹ since 2009, Cleveland and Vicenza have been sister cities; and, in addition to all the annual local activities, Cleveland hosts a range of other events, including concerts, exhibits, and book tours. Besides all that, there is also a Facebook group *Italiani a Cleveland* (Italians in Cleveland) with several hundred members. Another fun fact is that Frank G. Jackson, Mayor of Cleveland, boasts Italian ancestors, too, on his mother's side.

As former Honorary Consul of Italy Serena Scaiola said in an interview in 2014, according to data from the U.S. Census of 2010, there are about 770,000 Americans of Italian descent in Ohio with about 5% of the Greater Cleveland population being able to trace their origins back to Italy.³² There is currently a host of Italian companies operating in Ohio, in the city, and in the surrounding area. Most of the new generations of Italians, the intellectual elite, are drawn temporarily or permanently to Cleveland as part of a broader brain drain from other parts of the world. Among the thousands of Italians that have relocated over the past decades, there is a significant number of researchers, businesspeople, company owners, physicians, artists, and musicians.³³ Thanks to the vibrant heritage and traditions of both the "old" and "new" Italians, the city's Italian community hubs and memorial sites, the local Italian-American media, and the wide array of Italian cultural events no doubt all still lend a remarkably unique feel to the life and culture of Cleveland.

³⁰ See the valuable Senior Honors Thesis of Isabel Robertson: I. Robertson, *Abuse to Acceptance: Cleveland's Italian Community from 1880-1920*, Senior Honors Thesis, Evanston IL, Northwestern University, 2017, available at https://arch.library.northwestern.edu/concern/generic_works/rn301147n?locale=en, accessed January 7, 2021; as well as *Chapter 6: Anti-Italian Sentiment in America* in Veronesi, *Italian Americans*, cit., pp. 120-60. For some general works on anti-Italian prejudice in the U.S., see: P. Salvetti, *Corda e sapone. Storie di linciaggi degli italiani negli Stati Uniti*, Roma, Donzelli, 2003; *Anti-Italianism. Essays on a Prejudice*, ed. by W. Connell and F. Gardaphé, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

³¹ For the Appointment Decree, see: *Gazzetta Ufficiale*, n. 190 of July 30, 2020, available at <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it>, accessed January 7, 2021.

³² See: U. Mucci, *We the Italians. Cinquanta interviste sull'Italia negli USA. Gli italiani d'America si raccontano*, Roma, Armando, 2016, p. 198. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates shows the following numbers: about 705,000 Americans of Italian ancestry in Ohio (6% of the population) and 195,000 in the Cleveland-Elyria Metropolitan Area (9,5% of the population). Data can be explored at <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>, accessed January 7, 2021.

³³ Mucci, *ibid.*