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A HISTORY OF ITALIAN-AMERICAN THEATRE: 1900 TO 1905

City University of New York

Ph.D. 1984

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A HISTORY OF ITALIAN-AMERICAN THEATRE: 1900 to 1905

by

EMELISE ALEANDRI

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Faculty in Theatre in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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1983

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Theatre in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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A History of Italian-American Theatre: 1900 to 1905

INTRODUCTION

An Italian-American amateur actor hesitates before the entrance to a shop in Little Italy at the turn of the century. It is a day in the life of a skillful, practiced ticket vendor of the Italian-American theatre. To disguise the distress he feels at performing the onerous task that awaits him inside the shop, he puts on a mask of confidence, tinged slightly with arrogance. Summoning up his glib tongue, the actor enters the shop and before the shopkeeper knows what has happened, the actor fires away at him a familiar reprise:

Buongiorno. Come sta? La famiglia sta bene? Lei e' un mecenate, lei e' un benefattore della colonia. Io non so cosa faccia il governo italiano, dorme? Ma quando lo faremo cavaliere? Vuole un biglietto per una recita che si dara' il mese entrante: "La cieca di Sorrento"? Spettacoloso dramma.¹

With the unsuspecting, this spiel is almost always successful in selling a ticket, but this particular shopowner has been through this game before and is quick to respond, when he learns that the performance is scheduled for a Thursday evening: "Oh! guarda un po', proprio giovedi

¹"Good Morning. How are you? Is your family well? You are a patron of the arts, you are a benefactor of the community. I don't know, what's the Italian government doing, sleeping? Whenever are they going to make you a cavaliere? Would you like a ticket for a show we are performing next month: 'The blind woman of Sorrento?' Spectacular drama." All quotations from Italian or English have been reproduced exactly as they appear in the original source, including misspelled words and other typographical or grammatical errors. Farfariello [Eduardo Migliaccio], "Il mio rivale . . . Rinaldo di Montalbano." Corriere d'America (March 18, 1923), p. 6.

che aspetto visite. Vi pare, con tutto il cuore!"¹ But the actor is even quicker and has purposely misinformed the storekeeper: "Mi sono sbagliato, e' di venerdi."² The storekeeper, stunned, mumbles, "Oh! Venerdi . . . vedro' . . ."³ Tricked, and now the reluctant buyer of the ticket, the shopowner spits back: "Come siete seccanti voi altri teatristi!"⁴

This anecdote is only one example of many colorful stories describing how the artists of the Italian-American theatre at the turn of the century had to resort to their wits to keep themselves and the theatre alive. This continuing history of a vital ethnic theatre is preceded by our earlier study cataloguing its first, amateur phase. In it we established how the waves of Italian immigrants pouring into this country from the 1880's on created a social need for entertainment and communal gathering, part of which was satisfied by newly formed amateur theatre groups and cafes or nightclubs, which were professional. Frequently, theatrical productions served to benefit community interests and concerns. During the 19th century a great variety of dramatic forms and entertainments were essayed on the stages of the Italian-American theatre. Italian and European writers were introduced to immigrant audiences, many of whom had never before experienced the theatre or the classics of literature. The Italian-American experience also furnished the subject matter for original plays written by Italian immigrant

¹"Oh! Wait a minute, that's the very Thursday I am expecting company. I'm really sorry, with all my heart!" Ibid.

²"I made a mistake, it's Friday." Ibid.

³"Oh! Friday I see . . ." Ibid.

⁴"How annoying you theatre people are!" Ibid.

playwrights. In general the 19th century phase of the Italian-American theatre represents a breaking of ground for the more ambitious endeavours of the 20th century.

The first several years of the new century are this study's concern, specifically the years including 1900 to 1905. Several reasons dictated this time segment. First, it is the next in order chronologically; secondly, it is a period which provides a great deal of documented material to examine; third, it is a time of enormous amateur and professional activity; and finally, the major personalities and families which dominated the Italian-American theatre throughout its existence begin to operate professionally during these few years. All these reasons contrive to limit this already lengthy study to a relatively short period so as to better examine the early professional phase of a theatre which would continue for the next four or five decades.

This survey of theatre experience among Italian immigrants in New York City between 1900 and 1905 has been prepared by applying traditional historical research methods combined with personal interviews. Examination into the general areas of Italian immigration, Italian-American history and the Italian-American experience began in books, journal articles and archives. The Municipal Reference and Research Center of the City of New York is an excellent source for statistical studies, old New York City official maps and early books and journals dealing with the immigrant experience. The Brooklyn Public Library is also valuable in these areas. The Center for Migration Studies on Staten Island is both an archive and publisher specializing in Italian-American history. This source is most valuable for its store of books and publications by authors currently involved in writing on the Italian-American experience. The Immigration History Research Center at

the University of Minnesota is, as its name implies, a repository for materials of all kinds on the topic of immigration and has an excellent Italian collection.

Further exploration in this general subject area was carried on by attendance and/or participation at a number of historical conferences. The researcher was a guest lecturer on the Italian-American theatre at conferences sponsored by the Organization of American Historians, the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, the American Italian Historical Association (of which the researcher is a member), and the Theatre Research Institute at Ohio State University. The writer also represented the Italian Actor's Union at a recent conference on the image of Italian-Americans in the media, sponsored by the Commission for Social Justice, Order Sons of Italy in America and the National Italian American Foundation. Other conferences and colloquia were attended at St. John's University and the Casa Italiana at Columbia University. Many of the proceedings of these events were subsequently published into journals by the Center for Migration Studies and are valuable collections of work currently carried on by contemporary scholars and historians.

The next step -- focusing on the limited topic of Italian-American theatre in New York City from 1900 to 1905 -- was more difficult, since no systematic attempt to document and chronicle this history had taken place before this. In attempting to reconstruct the day to day activity of the theatre for the six year span, we found the microfilm collection of Italian language newspapers at the New York Public Library Newspaper Annex to be the most conclusive. The microfilm record of L'Araldo Italiano and Il Telegrafo, despite their incompleteness, typographical errors, torn pages, misspellings, and illegible entries, nevertheless remain the best arbiters of a particular individual's whereabouts and

activities on a specific date. Also the pages of the Italian dailies were more specific than any other sources with respect to the details of a given performance (i.e., dates, places, actors, authors, playtitles, theatres, ticket distribution points) as well as clues regarding the social, community and business roles pursued by individuals in this study. The handful of additional articles by contemporaries or later commentators rarely included such detailed information and sometimes contradicted one another on various points. Further confusion, presented by the fuzzy memory of a writer or performer as he wrote his memoirs, could many times be clarified by consulting the newspaper record.

This is not to say that such articles or memoirs have no value. On the contrary, what they may lack in precise detail, they more than make up for by their perceptions into the human side of the Italian immigrant theatre. The anecdotes and apocrypha afforded by these sources give, as no list of actors or playtitles can, however accurate they may be, a sense of the emotions and psychology of these immigrant theatre practitioners. The same comment can be made regarding personal interviews. While it was exciting, insightful and inspiring to meet and converse with the descendants of important personalities in this history, the accuracy of dates and places and performances had always to be verified elsewhere.

Equal in value but different in content are the collections of the Immigration History Research Center. This archive houses the personal papers of several key figures in this study. The Eduardo Migliaccio, Alessandro Sisca and Rocco De Russo collections are of inestimable value to this survey. Their contents include such useful documents as: sheet music, lyric sheets, manuscripts (some handwritten), clippings from

otherwise unavailable newspapers, memoirs, memos, playbills, programs, pictures, addressbooks, contracts, personal and business correspondence, notebooks, magazines, and other assorted published books, plays and materials.

The fortuitous combination of the newspaper records and the personal papers collections, plus several additional articles and readings already noted, has permitted this reconstruction of the major events and minor incidents that shaped the history of the Italian immigrant theatre during the six year span of this study.

By far the professionals outnumbered the amateurs during this time with respect to both performers and performances. But whether amateur or professional, the theatre continued to serve the same functions: entertaining its audiences, educating them to the best literatures of Europe, raising money for worthy causes, perpetuating Italian culture and providing a forum for socializing with other members of the immigrant community. First, we follow the fortunes of those companies that originated in the 19th century to see how, if at all, they fared in the new century. Then we introduce those new impresarios and troupes that only begin to appear from 1900 to 1905. The period produced the major forces that shaped the theatre in the ensuing decades: the Maioris, the Minciottis, the Cunicos, Francesco Ricciardi, Guglielmo Ricciardi, the Giglios and the Migliaccios. Many professional liasons, marriages and business partnerships took place between these major families, creating a strong theatrical fabric in later years. With the exception of Francesco Ricciardi, all seven of these families eventually became linked through marriage and a family gathering today would include descendents of each name. More often than not, children in these families started their careers early and continued the family theatrical

tradition for as long as there was a theatre to nourish them.

Financial problems were an ever-present worry for these young companies. Groups appear and, with equal facility, disappear. The more stable theatre companies tried everything to "make a go" of business: they would flourish one year, only to have a lean year following and so might go on the road to try new audiences, sometimes returning poorer than when they left; they would move to smaller or bigger theatres in the hopes of juggling finances to better advantage; they would change their fare, from the classics to comedy and vaudeville, or vice versa; nightclubs would as easily change ownership, renovate, bring in stars from Italy. Successful or unsuccessful as these attempts might have been, efforts to create theatre were constantly being made and constituted an enormous output of energy during this six year period. The names of the personalities involved in the theatre in one way or another during this limited time number in the thousands.

It was a time of great immigration. The figures for these six years exceed the figures for the entire two decades of the last century. In 1900, 100,000 new Italian immigrants entered this country;¹ in 1901, 87,249; in 1902, an average yearly figure places the number entering at approximately 224,649;² in 1903, 230,000 new Italians arrived;³ in 1904,

¹Tommaso Sassone, "Italy's Criminals in the United States," Current History, vol. 15 (October 1921), pp. 23-31 as cited in Salvatore J. LaGumina, ed., Wop!: A Documentary History of Anti-Italian Discrimination in the United States (San Francisco: Straight Arrow Books, 1973), p. 142.

²Robert F. Foerster, The Italian Emigration of our Times (New York: Russell & Russell, 1919), p. 15.

³Robert De C. Ward, "The Immigration Problem," Charities (February 6, 1904), pp. 138-48 as cited in LaGumina, p. 142.

575,000¹ (On one day alone, January 1, 1904, 700 Italians passed through Ellis Island.²); finally, in 1905 the yearly average figure places the number at 616,000.³ While 20 to 30 percent of these migrants returned to Italy, having come here only to work, the greater part settled here permanently because living conditions in Italy were so difficult. In 1901 a census taken by the Italian Chamber of Commerce estimated the population of Italy at 294 persons per square mile.⁴ Overpopulation and an unstable economy prompted such large scale emigration.

Arriving here, immigrants chose for the most part to settle in the larger cities on the Eastern seaboard. Resident Italians in New York State in 1900 numbered 272,572 and almost doubled their number by 1903 to 486,175.⁵ Since so many new entries were unskilled laborers, illiterate in English if not in formal Italian (many spoke only a regional dialect), the industrial East was an inevitable attraction. The greatest concentration of Italians continued to be in New York City. The 1900 census showed that 225,026 Italians lived within New York City's boundaries alone.⁶

The average immigrant was a male, ex-agricultural worker from the

¹From Reports of the Immigration Commission, vol. 41: Statements and Recommendations Submitted by Societies and Organizations Interested in the Subject of Immigration (1911), (61st Congress, 3rd sess., Document no. 764), pp. 15-20 as cited in LaGumina, p. 162.

²Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 5 (January 5, 1904), p. 2.

³Lawrence Frank Pisaní, The Italians in America: A Social Study and History (New York: Exposition Press, 1957), p. 5.

⁴John Horace Mariano, The Italian Contribution to American Democracy (Boston: The Christopher Publishing House, 1921), p. 6.

⁵Ibid.

⁶George Enrico Pozzetta, The Italians of New York City, 1890-1914 (unpublished dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1971), p. 170.

south of Italy, unskilled, uneducated and unattached, discriminated against by the mainstream of American society, and often exploited as a laborer, sometimes even by his own countrymen. Either he was unmarried or had a family in Italy which he came here to support. The 20 or 30 percent that returned to Italy seasonally had no desire to assimilate themselves into their new surroundings, even had they been welcome to do so. They retained their regional speech, their social and religious customs, their eating habits, etc. and congregated in communities that allowed them some free expression. Hence, the Little Italy's of America.

All these factors contributed to creating an original theatrical expression: the Italian-American immigrant theatre of New York City. Its audiences were the displaced men and women of Italy, and they were hungry for entertainment, recognition, a support system and social intercourse, all emotional needs which the theatres and the nightclubs helped to satisfy. They heard the plays of their homeland and other European theatres spoken, if not in Italian, then translated into their own Neapolitan and Sicilian dialects. They heard the familiar operatic arias and duets, known by most Italians, in their local bistros. Audiences created their own stars, their own playwrights. Among them, Eduardo Migliaccio, known as Farfariello, made the Italian-American immigrant the hero of his dramatic creations, and Riccardo Cordiferro, the pen name of Alessandro Sisca, the journalist and political activist, concerned himself in his plays and philosophical writings with the social conditions of the Italian immigrant.

Not all immigrants were uneducated. Many intellectuals also emigrated from Italy where they had been professors, writers or theatrical artists. The theatre for them was a natural attraction,

outnumbered though they were by their working class countrymen and women. The theatre provided them with a forum for literary and artistic expression. The women in the theatre also enjoyed a freedom and an outlet for creativity that was not shared or available to their female counterparts who played out their lives in the more traditional domestic roles. Several women became writers, directors, entrepreneurs in their own right, as well as popular actresses and singers.

All in all, the active years from 1900 to 1905 represent a major transition for this ethnic theatre. In 1900, the theatre had just begun to emerge from its predominantly amateur phase. By 1905, the Italian-American theatre had become firmly rooted in its professional phase, in which it continued until its decline. The first sign of this transition comes with the gradual disappearance of the most prolific and best known amateur group of the 19th century, Il Circolo Filodrammatico Italo-Americano.

CHAPTER I

19th CENTURY COMPANIES WHICH CONTINUED INTO THE 20th CENTURY

Il Circolo Filodrammatico Italo-Americano

The first Italian-American repertory company in New York City, the Circolo Filodrammatico Italo-Americano, showed the greatest activity of any other 19th century group but they barely appear in 20th century New York. This group, decidedly amateur throughout its history, performed regularly from 1878 through 1896. On Monday, November 26, 1900, the production of Nerone (Nero) by the Italian playwright Pietro Cossa, is the only recorded instance to bring this group into the 20th century, although the Brooklyn Eagle lists them as a social club located at 88½ Mulberry Street in 1902.¹ The production of Nerone took place at the reliable old Germania Assembly Rooms located at 291-293 Bowery, the company's customary home. Produced by General Virgilio Frascherelli together with the Colonia Minima (an Italian social organization), this production appears to be the type of social event that characterized this circolo's activities throughout the 19th century, except that the customary "gran ballo" or community dancing that followed the performance was missing. This custom died a slow death, at least in New York, during the 20th century. The professional theatre companies tended to

¹ Actually the Eagle listed the address at 80½ Mulberry Street, but this was an error. The Brooklyn Daily Eagle Almanac: A Book of Information, General of the World, and Special of New York City and Long Island (New York: Press of Brooklyn Eagle Book and Job Department, 1902) p. 209.

eliminate it sooner than the amateur companies, who eventually followed suit. But the custom still thrived among groups outside New York City: In New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, wherever amateur groups sprouted up in abundance.

Although the Circolo Filodrammatico Italo-Americano no longer functioned as a group in the 20th century, a great number of its members affiliated with other companies, both amateur and professional, in and outside of New York City, as either actors or directors, and sometimes as theatrical entrepreneurs who actually formed their own companies. Among these figures were some noted professionals -- Papa Giuseppe Zaccone, Francesco Ricciardi, Maestro Carmine Sanna and Paolo Cremonesi.

Papa Giuseppe Zaccone operated his own group, Il Circolo Metropolitan Drammatico e Musicale, as early as 1895 to 1897, probably on an amateur basis, but performed professionally with Antonio Maiori and Guglielmo Ricciardi in the 19th and 20th centuries. Francesco Ricciardi started his own company in 1889, possibly on an amateur basis, but the 20th century found him a fully established professional impresario. Maestro Carmine Sanna became head of La Societa' Musicale Pietro Mascagni in 1901 and 1902.¹ He lived at 147 Mott Street.²

Paolo Cremonesi was another hardworking and productive entrepreneur. He was a comedic and dramatic actor with Il Circolo Filodrammatico Italo-Americano in 1890, and also performed with a group in West Hoboken, known as La Scintilla in 1891. By 1892, he was a director with the company, which continued to operate into the 20th century and was known, by 1905, as La Compagnia Drammatica Italiana

¹ Ibid.; and 1901, p. 240.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno II, N. 1 (January 2, 1895), p. 8.

Paolo Cremonesi. As a director, he mounted both comedies and dramas, frequently in the Milanese and Piedmontese dialects, and sometimes in French, a practice probably demonstrating his origins in Northern Italy. In addition to his directing and acting work in New Jersey, Paolo Cremonesi continued to act with New York troupes into the 20th century: with the Antonio Maiori Company, with Il Circolo Filodrammatico Alessandro Salvini, and with the Company of Gennaro Ragazzino.

Entrepreneurs like Paolo Cremonesi served a very important purpose, and probably without realizing it. Since Cremonesi was employed as a silk worker in Paterson, New Jersey, his base of operations remained in New Jersey. But as the record indicates, he also made guest appearances with major New York Italian-American theatre companies. He maintained unbroken ties with his early New York connections and as a result his New Jersey company enjoyed the benefits of the services of both actors and a director from the New York stage. More importantly, Cremonesi introduced a major New York Italian-American playwright to his New Jersey audiences, namely Riccardo Cordiferro, who will be considered more fully below. On Saturday, January 19, 1901 Cremonesi produced Cordiferro's La Vittima (The Victim) a drama in 3 acts. Mrs. Renata Brunorini, Mrs. Eleonora Paoli, Riccardo Bencetti and Mario Niccolini¹ from New York all acted in Cremonesi's New Jersey company for whom Bencetti also directed a production of Patria (Fatherland) a drama by Victorien Sardou on September 26, 1903.²

In this fashion, Paolo Cremonesi brought New York theatre to what was then a more rural New Jersey. This pattern of participation was

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 16 (January 18, 1901), p. 5.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 268 (September 25, 1903), p. 3.

repeated by other men and women like Cremonesi (many of whom were alumni of the Circolo Filodrammatico Italo-Americano) until the Italian-American theatre moved up and down the East coast, from Vermont to Florida, to Chicago in the Mid-West and eventually and inevitably to California, all by the year 1905.

Besides feeding many directors (Cremonesi, Malzone, Benzoni, Zumbo, Ricciardi, Zaccone, Bencetti) into the mainstream of Italian immigrant theatre, this Circolo also made a significant contribution to its development by presenting Italian-American playwrights. Among them, the actor Rocco Metelli had his drama in four acts, Chiara, la Condannata (Chiara, the Woman Condemned to Death), staged at Turn Hall Theatre on October 8, 1887. The recipient of this special benefit performance was Chiara Cignarale, an Italian-American anti-heroine, accused of murdering her husband in collusion with her lover, D'Andrea. Though her lover had been acquitted, Chiara was convicted and imprisoned on October 26, 1886. New York's Governor Hill commuted her death sentence to life imprisonment in response to the many petitions sent on her behalf. Rocco Metelli's play was instrumental in publicizing the woman's plight. On Friday, January 5, 1900, Ms. Cignarale was released from prison and with thanks to her many benefactors, among whom must certainly be included Rocco Metelli and Il Circolo Filodrammatico Italo-Americano, she departed immediately for Italy where she was reunited with her daughter Rosa.¹ So ends this final chapter in the saga of Chiara Cignarale.

So too ends this brief and final chapter in the history of Il Circolo Filodrammatico Italo-Americano, the first and most prolific

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 5 (January 6, 1900), p. 1.

company of the 19th century, not to mention the longest running of any company so far, whether amateur or professional. In retrospect, for an amateur company to remain together from 1878 through 1902, performing largely benefits, seems no small accomplishment. By 1905 no company had yet broken this record.

Although the Circolo ceased to exist as an organized group after 1902, it contributed a second generation of theatre workers into amateur and professional companies both in and outside New York City. The arms of this first, seminal amateur theatre company reach out into most of the major companies of both 19th and 20th centuries. Of course, many of the members of the Circolo disappeared completely from our history in the 20th century. Still other names, though absent from production rosters, crop up nevertheless in the columns of the Italian daily newspapers for reasons other than theatrical. This is not at all surprising since the group was amateur and its members only part time volunteers who earned their livelihood at other professions and occupations.

Among these amateur volunteers was Fausto D. Malzone, a native of Castellabate, Italy,¹ who operated a bank, travel agency and wine shop at 88½ Mulberry Street, the last known headquarters of the Circolo.² Except for maintaining a mailing address for the Circolo, Malzone was otherwise inactive in the theatre of the 20th century. Dr. R. Guidone, a pharmacist who sold "Guidone's Wonderful Elixir," moved to St. Louis, Missouri, but returned with his wife to New York City in August 1900 and

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno II, N.20 (March 9, 1895), p. 4.

² Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 1902, p. 209.

took up residence at 419 West 114th Street.¹ Mr. A. Franchi ran a liquor store at 185 Spring Street.²

Cavaliere Eduardo Benzoni was Secretary of La Societa' G.P. Riva at 147 Bleecker Street.³ Angelo Tassinari died March 14, 1903 at 10:30 p.m. after a painful illness. His funeral was held Wednesday, March 18, 1903 at 2 p.m. at the Bacigalupo Funeral Home at 208-10 Spring Street.⁴ Giuseppe Carbone owned a barbershop at 183 Sullivan Street.⁵

Maestro Luigi Conterno appeared in the newspapers one day unfortunately because he had been mugged. The report explained how he had been attacked by two Blacks, who after asking him the time, grabbed him by the throat and dragged him into a yard on 24th Street between 6th and 7th Avenues, where they robbed him of \$9.00.⁶

Mr. F. L. Frugone, manager and treasurer of the Italian daily newspaper Il Bolletino della Sera, was the defendant in a libel suit brought against him by the attorney Giovanni Vicario. The reasons for the accusation were not disclosed but the case went before Judge Pool at the City Magistrates Court on Thursday, April 2, 1903, only to be adjourned to Thursday, April 23 when Mr. Frugone was found guilty and bail set at \$500.00 pending the Grand Jury hearing. The outcome of the action and the nature of the libel unfortunately remain a mystery.⁷

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 201 (August 19, 1900), p. 5.

² L'Araldo Italiano Anno VIII, N. 86 (April 10, 1901), p. 7.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 204 (August 25, 1901) p. 2.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 75 (March 16, 1903), p. 5.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 60 (February 29, 1904), p. 3.

⁶ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 337 (December 3, 1903), p.2.

⁷ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 86 (March 27, 1903), p. 1; N. 98 (April 8, 1903), p. 2; N. 127 (May 7, 1903), p. 1.

In early May 1903, the maestro and attorney, Cavaliere Carlo Brizzi, died after a brief illness at his home in Newark, New Jersey. He was survived by his wife and family.¹ He had earned his Doctor of Law degree from the University of Bologna and was a practicing attorney in that city but was drawn to music. He studied counterpoint at Bologna's Conservatorio and received the diploma of Maestro Compositore (Master of Composition). He composed music for concerts, churches and the theatre in Bologna. He wrote a melodrama, L'Avaro (The Miser) which premiered at Bologna's Comunale Theatre and toured principal Italian cities. He enjoyed membership in various Philharmonic Academies and was awarded the Cross of the Crown of Italy by the Minister of Public Education.² He became associated musically with Il Circolo Filodrammatico Italo-Americano in 1891 and other companies as well.

The attrition of its members by death and relocation to other cities was not the only factor in the disappearance of Il Circolo Filodrammatico Italo-Americano from the New York Theatre scene. It is not too difficult to speculate as to the other reasons. By the turn of the century, the Italian-American theatre-going audience had become more — sophisticated, having been exposed for two decades to both amateur and professional companies. An ample number of professional companies performed a diverse repertoire on a regular basis -- almost every evening by 1904. After the theatre, or in lieu of the theatre, the Italian immigrant could go to a local, neighborhood *caffe* concerto or music hall, which provided the opportunity for hearing the popular singers and comedians of the day, as well as a place to drink and dance.

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 130 (May 11, 1903), p. 1.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 132 (May 12, 1903), p. 2.

When the Circolo Filodrammatico first started, their theatrical evenings provided an outlet for all these needs: theatre, music, song, wine, comedians, gran ballo at the evening's end.

What we see during this period of 1900 to 1905 is a trend toward specialization of these social functions. The professional theatre companies tended to specialize in playmaking or, if they were associated with a music hall or *caffe concerto*, in comedy sketches with variety shows. Certain music halls had only variety or vaudeville type entertainment. To be sure, amateur companies continued to reappear regularly, and performed benefits or commemorated special events but by and large they did not enjoy the long-term existence such as that demonstrated by the Circolo Filodrammatico Italo-Americano. Instead we see this pattern of combined social and theatrical activity repeated in the areas outside New York City as the Italian-American communities increased in size and provided audiences for their own local amateur groups and for visiting Italian-American professional companies from New York City.

La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica of Guglielmo Ricciardi

The first 19th century company to operate professionally was started by Guglielmo Ricciardi and Francesco Saverio Savarese in South Brooklyn in 1889. By the year 1900, the company, run solely by Ricciardi, was firmly entrenched in Manhattan, where Ricciardi resided, and operated essentially out of that borough, with several instances of performances outside the borough and outside the state. But before considering the group's 20th century activities, it would be well here to clarify a number of unanswered questions and ambiguities from our 19th century study regarding Ricciardi and his theatrical endeavours.

Formerly we depended heavily on Ricciardi's memoirs for information about him and his company. But, as we have already noted, his Ricciardiana, published in 1951 when Ricciardi was already in his eighties, contained many discrepancies of time and fact. During the course of this research a number of these errors can be corrected with the help of additional findings, and some new errors have been uncovered.

We can now pinpoint the exact date of the grand opening of Union Hall at 40-42 Union Street, Brooklyn. The theatre was built for Ricciardi and his company by Don Antonio Sessa, the banker, who was also President of La Societa' Torquato Tasso, located at 40 Union Street also.¹ The theatre opened Saturday, January 12, 1895, and the event is significant because Union Hall was the first theatre built for the Italian-American stage. This production of La fata de Natale (The Christmas Fairy) also represents another first in that the popular actress Mrs. Giuseppina Menghini-Neigre was credited with musical direction,² the first time an Italian-American woman has done so thus far in this history.

We also were surprised to discover that a month later, on Monday, February 11, 1895, Ricciardi teamed up with Pasquale Rapone under the name La Compagnia Comica R. Rapone e G. Ricciardi to stage a performance of Mettiteve a fa l'ammore co me (Come on and make love to me).³ One would think that this merger of these two successful actor/director/managers would make for a longlasting company. The newspaper ads do not

¹ Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 1902, p. 209.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno II, N. 4 (January 12, 1895), p. 4.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno II, N. 11 (February 6, 1895), p. 4.

support this. Instead what we see two months later is that Ricciardi and Antonio Maiori teamed up to form La Compagnia Comico Drammatica A. Maiori e G. Ricciardi, with productions of Nannina and Ha perz'a capa (He lost his head) on Monday, April 1, 1895.¹ Again a single newspaper ad links these two major names in the company title and no later references follow, but we now know that the relationship between Ricciardi and Rapone and Maiori was a lot more complex than these two innocent notices reveal.

Fortunately, in an article for Atlantica magazine in 1935, Ricciardi shed no small amount of light on the collaboration of these three important figures in this history, and why it went no further than it did. Ricciardi offers this version of their initial meeting:

One day I was sipping coffee in a little cafe at Broome and Mulberry Streets when I was introduced (rather we introduced ourselves) to Antonio Maiori, a coreographic (sic) dancer and pantomimist who had just come from Sicily. We became very close friends. I gave him a room in my apartment, and night after night, sometimes until sunrise, we would discuss our plans for a triumphant tour of the United States. The proprietor of the cafe, one Ronca, heard of our project and he introduced us to two other sons of Italy in distress, both actors, and, without losing a single day, we formed the Italian Dramatic Company. One of the members ²was the father of Ermete Zacconi, the greatest actor of the stage.

This incident took place at the Pasquale Ronca & Brothers Caffè, 385 Broome Street. The father of Ermete Zacconi noted above was Papa Giuseppe Zacconi, the well known actor of the Maiori Company who also directed Il Circolo Metropolitano Drammatico e Musicale on Monday, March

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno II, N. 26 (March 30, 1895), p.4.

² William Ricciardi, "An Actor Tells a Story," Atlantica: The American Digest of Italian Life and Culture, Vol. 17, No. 5 (May 1935), pp. 134-35.

4, 1895.¹ The fourth actor was undoubtedly Pasquale Rapone, whom Ricciardi later identified as the other member of the company. In the available over 19th century newspaper notices, the company was generally identified as the Maiori-Rapone Company. The company performed a benefit in Ricciardi's honor on Wednesday, May 2, 1894² and listed him as a vocalist on Sunday, December 2, 1894,³ but there was no other indication that he functioned as part of a triumvirate when he wrote his memoirs in later years. In the entirety of the Ricciardiana he never once mentioned his association with Maiori or Rapone. But in the Atlantica article he explains in more detail how the company worked together:

We played in such cities as New York, Philadelphia, Newark, New Haven, Bridgeport and Providence, but with not a bit of luck. There were times when there was nothing but empty chairs, when we did not know where our next meal was coming from.

In Providence I went in to an Italian grocery store to hang up one of our posters in the window.

One of our tricks those days was to order samples of lithographic posters from the leading houses in the country and then use them to advertise our plays. One day we arrived in a little town in Connecticut and there awaiting our arrival was a large package in the office of the Fargo Company. It had been sent by the National Printing Corporation of Chicago. We opened it, and what a surprise! The corporation had made a mistake. The posters were evidently intended for a circus. They showed pictures of lions, bears, tigers, monkeys and giraffes. What were we to do with them? "Let us use them," I said, "let us print the name of our company under the pictures and distribute them."⁴

Ricciardi's narrative reveals, not only the extent of the little company's travels in the East and the degree of their resulting

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno II, N. 18 (March 2, 1895), p. 4.

² George C. Odell, Annals of the New York Stage, Vol. XV (New York: Columbia University Press, 1927), p. 656.

³ Il Progresso Italo-Americano, Anno XV, N. 275 (December 4, 1894), p. 2.

⁴ Ricciardi, pp. 134-35.

indigence, but also Ricciardi's characteristic penchant for taking control and responsibility for company matters, or at least reporting that he had such control, by his consistent use of the first person in this and other discussions on the formation of theatre companies. In any event, the narrative continues and illustrates how the use of the circus posters backfired in pennywise/poundfoolish fashion:

That night we rented a hall, and at about seven o'clock, I saw some villagers coming to see the show. "Let them in," I said to my man who was officiating as door manager for the evening. "No," he thundered back, "they must learn to come here on time." One by one others arrived. There were about fifty or sixty in all, but they could not get into the theatre for it was against the door manager's orders. While these faithful patrons were waiting patiently for the opening of the doors, the village fire bell began to ring. There were frantic shouts of "Fire! Fire!" and before we knew it they had all started to run in the direction of the fire. The door manager, gesticulating wildly, began shouting at the top of his voice: "Come back, come back, the show is starting!" But no one seemed to care a darn about the show. One man said: "Animals are nothing new to us, especially when they happen to be Italian. We see them every day right at home. We'd rather see the fire." There was no show that night.¹

Although Ricciardi neglects to identify which of the male members of the company -- Zacconi, Maiori or Rapone -- was the man officiating as door manager, he has certainly painted the picture here of a rigid and impractical thinker. Perhaps as he recalled this incident, some forty years after the night in question, he remembered it this way so as to lay the blame for the evening's fiasco (and by extension the company's demise) at the feet of his former colleague. What does come through to us from this narrative is that there was disagreement at the top and certainly that they were inexperienced as to how to capitalize on a small town immigrant population unaccustomed to theatre behavior. What filters down through all this is that the company was not successful, in

¹ Ibid., p. 135.

spite of or because of this seemingly powerful triumvirate. This very possibly serves to illustrate that there were too many leaders and not enough followers for the company to succeed in this road venture. Indeed Ricciardi explains further: "For months we strolled through New York and Connecticut, like men lost in a great desert, always in need of ninety cents to make a dollar."¹ If the company's insolvency were not enough to terminate their joint activity, the following incident reported by Ricciardi struck the final and determinate blow at the shaky partnership formed by these major impresarios:

One night Maiori and Rapone, another member of the Company, both dancers and pantomimists, agreed to revive an old pantomime, "Love in the Garden." The characters were Harlequin, Pierrot, Pantalone and Columbine, played by Maiori, Rapone, Ricciardi and and the beautiful Neapolitan girl, who was Mrs. Ricciardi. The love scene between Columbine and Pierrot was so natural and realistic that next day they ran away with each other, leaving the poor Pantalone to himself. At times I think that the great Leoncavallo must have taken the idea of his opera from that disheartening experience of mine. The only reason I did not kill Pierrot is because I have always believed in happy endings. After that I took the next boat for Naples and tried my best to forget.²

Truthfully, the story so closely resembles the plot of Pagliacci that its staging might very well be the result his theatrical memory creating a piece of Ricciardi apocrypha. But the inexorable fact remains that Concetta Arcamone, "the beautiful Neapolitan girl" noted above whom Ricciardi taught to sing and dance and who already was the mother of his child, jilted Ricciardi for Maiori. The incident explains away a number of questions: not only the reason for the company's dissolution of its original organization, but also why neither Arcamone nor Maiori ever worked even briefly with Ricciardi again.

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

The anecdote also reveals the real cause behind Ricciardi's sudden departure for Sorrento in 1895. He mysteriously commented: "Una vicenda amorosa venne a turbare la mia giovane vita."¹ (An unhappy love affair came to disturb my young life.) Not once in the entire length of his book of memoirs does Ricciardi explain that this "sad love affair" was actually the breakup of his marriage to Concetta Arcamone. Ricciardi never even indicated that he had been married at this time of his life, perhaps out of a sense of loyalty to his second wife, Adelaide Triber, who remained with him throughout his long life, and who was certainly alive as he wrote his memoirs. Exactly when he married Concetta is still ambiguous. We can place the event somewhere between May 27, 1892, when Concetta was billed as "Miss Concettina Arcamone"² and August 3, 1892 when she is first referred to as "Mrs. Concettina Ricciardi."³ The exact date of her marriage to Antonio Maiori is uncertain but her first billing as "Mrs. Maiori Arcamone" was as late as July 24, 1902⁴ although it is highly unlikely that they waited that long to legally marry. Prior to this date her maiden name was used consistently, and after this date as either Maiori or Arcamone.

Ricciardi's memoirs had put him in Sorrento from March 1893 to 1896 but these additional references to his partnership with Rapone and

¹ Ricciardi had erroneously placed his return in 1893. Guglielmo Ricciardi, Ricciardiana: Raccolta di Scritti, Racconti, Memorie, ecc. del veterano attore e scrittore Guglielmo Ricciardi (New York: Eloquent Press Corp., 1955), p. 19.

² Il Progresso Italo-Americano, Anno XII, N. 125 (May 27, 1892), p. 2.

³ Il Progresso Italo-Americano, Anno XIII, N. 181 (August 3, 1892), p.2.

⁴ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 208 (July 27, 1902), p. 2.

Maiori now refute these dates. Instead we can place the Sorrento visit in the gap between Ricciardi's collaboration with Maiori and Rapone after April 1, 1895 and his return to New York in 1897:

It was at this time that I was called back to America with an offer of eighteen dollars a week and a contract for six months at the "El Dorado" as the new place was known. The desire to see my child, also Columbine's child, made me come back. It was 1897, and it was the last time I saw Italy.

If Ricciardi's memoirs are correct, (he states he received this offer in 1896) and if, as he notes above, he left soon after in 1897, that would place him back in New York, entertaining at the El Dorado nightclub for approximately the first six months of 1897. Oddly enough the Cafe El-dorado, as it was alternately known, was located in the basement of 24 Spring Street, just underneath Antonio Maiori's Teatro Italiano and the Maiori family living quarters. Rapone also lived at the same address, and although Rapone and Maiori continued their partnership, Ricciardi never worked with either of them again. The company was unsuccessful when the three acted together, but it is true that each was more successful with his own independent company. Maiori and Rapone worked together successfully for awhile but early in the 20th century they too saw a parting of the ways and continued to produce independently.

With this supplementary material on Ricciardi's early years in New York City, with a keener understanding of his association with several other major theatre artists in this history, and with the correction of a few inadvertent errors on his part, this survey can proceed with the 20th Century labors of Ricciardi and his Compagnia Comico-Drammatica. His work in the *caffe concerto* of Little Italy, such as the El Dorado, la Villa di Sorrento, and the Salone Margherita, carried him over into

¹ Ricciardi, "An Actor Tells a Story," p. 135.

the new century. In the caffè atmosphere, he performed essentially as a concert hall comedian, singing comic skits and songs, enacting the character sketches known as macchiette, which he had brought back from Naples. Sometimes he would also include more developed dramas. In the early part of 1900 he acted in more ambitious productions in larger theatres. The first of these took place at the Germania Assembly Rooms on Monday, March 12, 1900 with a performance of Otello, o il Moro di Venezia (Othello, or the Moor of Venice). The "drama", as it was billed,¹ starred the newspaper distributor and amateur actor, Edoardo Avella, who made his first and final appearance on New York's Italian-American stage with this show.

Ricciardi recalled how Eduardo Avella, an ambitious young man who sold the Italian newspaper Il Bollettino della Sera by day, also nurtured an almost insane passion for the theatre. Evenings would find him sitting near the stage of the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III, hobnobbing with the variety artists who entertained there. On the night of March 12th, finally realizing his dream, he acted the title role in Othello. "Fu un serataone," (It was a night to remember) Ricciardi remarked,² without explaining why. Fortunately, the contemporary journalist Hutchins Hapgood describes the events which took place that evening as they were reported to him by Pasquale Romano, one of Antonio Maiori's ushers:

Unconscious fun plays a considerable part in the performances ... Between the acts an anarchistic newspaper is sometimes distributed by the ushers, one of whom is an amateur actor, who,

¹ Ricciardi had erroneously placed this performance at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III, located at 109 Mulberry Street. L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 42 (February 18, 1900), p. 17.

² Ibid.

in company with other amateurs, played Othello not long ago at the Germania Assembly Rooms on the Bowery. Pasquale Romano, another usher, possessing a sense of humour and a great admiration for Shakespeare, "whose work," he says, "will never die," saw the performance and . . . described how the Italians of the quarter had made a holiday of this particular production of Othello. At the end of the fourth act they sent to Othello what seemed a bunch of flowers done up in tissue-paper. But when Othello took it in his hands the paper dropped off and revealed a cabbage. He was applauded so wildly that the last act was not played, and Desdemona did not die.

This was an amateur enterprise and the company was billed as the "Dilettanti Filodrammatici" (amateur actors).

Two weeks later, on Monday, March 26, 1900, Ricciardi again acted in yet another amateur show at Prospect Hall in Brooklyn, his old stomping grounds. The "magnificent dramatic and musical production", as it was billed, served as a benefit for the blind young Italian boy, Giovanni Attanasio and was produced by Miss Luisa Esposito. Another female milestone, this event provides the first instance of an Italian-American female producer, although one edition of L'Araldo called her "Luigi." There is no evidence that she shared in any profits since this was a benefit. She was assisted financially by the promoter Guido Comero and by a group of patrons rewarded for their participation with the following titles for the evening's event: Special patron and patroness: Giuseppe Catanzaro, Mrs. Catanzaro; Patrons: Frank Arena, Dr. De Yoanna, Dr. E. J. Morthon; Patronesses: Mrs. De Yoanna, Mrs. Morton (sic), Mrs. Arena.²

Guglielmo seems to have graciously lent his services for this

¹Hutchins Hapgood, "The Foreign Stage in New York: III The Italian Theatre," The Bookman, Vol. XI, (August 1900) p. 551.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 53 (March 3, 1900), p. 8; N. 72 (March 25, 1900), p. 5; N. 77 (March 31, 1900), p. 5.

benefit, there being no indication that he helped produce or direct. Miss Esposito was never noted in conjunction with theatre work again but Ricciardi succeeded in reorganizing a professional company of actors, many of whom were former colleagues, under the old title of La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica.

He installed his company in the Grand Eden Theatre, constructed by the building contractors Messrs. D. Karp and F. Hill,¹ two German Jews who were regular customers of la Villa di Sorrento and had enjoyed seeing Ricciardi's performances there although they understood neither Italian nor the Neapolitan dialect. After the show one night, they invited Ricciardi to have a drink at their table, where the following conversation took place:

-- Ma perche' rimanere in una sala cosi modesta? Perche' non ti costruisci un teatro vero e proprio?

-- Un teatro? E' il mio sogno. Ma dove sono i quattrini per costruirlo?

-- A questo penseremo noi. In pochi mesi il teatro sara' eretto e tu potrai acquistarlo o prenderlo in fitto a tua scelta. Ci Accontenteremo del rimborso delle spese.²

No doubt this conversation took place in English and this version represents Ricciardi's recollection of the occasion to the newspaper reporter. Ricciardi happily accepted the offer and was impressed with their confidence and trust in his abilities. They finally agreed on a

¹In Ricciardi's memory, "Hill" became "Dill." Taking his cue from Ricciardi, Falbo repeats the same mistake. Falbo, "Figure e Scene del Teatro Popolare Italiano a New York," Il Progresso Italo-Americano, (May 24, 1942), p. 55.

²-- But why do you stay in such a plain theatre? Why don't you build a good and proper theatre?

-- A theatre? That's my dream. But where is the money to build it?

-- We'll take care of that. In a few months the theatre will be built and you can buy it or rent it as you wish. We'll be happy if our expenses are reimbursed." Ibid.

lease. Ricciardi acted as manager and director of the theatre, essentially a *caffe concerto* with a stage. In the lobby of the theatre were hung two paintings by the Marchese Achille Di Landri, one of Ricciardi and the other of King Umberto I of Italy. After his assassination in July 1900, the women patrons of the theatre would kneel in prayer before the good king's image. One day they were joined by a passing Irishman, driver of a horse drawn wagon, who removed his hat and added his prayers.¹

The theatre sat at least 70 people² and was described by the Araldo reporter as an "elegantissimo ritrovo" (a very elegant retreat).³ The Grand Opening celebration of the Grand Eden took place on July 19, 1900.⁴ Known alternately as Ricciardi's Grand Eden, the Grand Eden Caffe', and the generic Teatro Italiano, the building was located on a corner at 2157 First Avenue between 111th and 112th Streets in Italian Harlem.⁵

Ricciardi and his company continued to put on plays, skits, and vocal concerts in Italian and English until December 22, 1900 when the advertisements for the Grand Eden stopped, not to reappear again until May of 1902. We know he sang duets with Caruso at the house of Don Angelo Legniti, the banker, on New Year's Eve, Monday, December 31,

¹ Ibid.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 173 (July 21, 1900), p. 4.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 86 (August 4, 1900), p. 5.

⁴ Ricciardi incorrectly placed the opening on a night in April 1899. L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 173 (July 21, 1900), p. 4.

⁵ This corrects Ricciardi's inaccurate "2137 First Avenue."

1900.¹ Legniti, a lawyer and notary public, ran his Banca Legniti at 69 Mulberry Street.² No other indication of any performances in the cafes or theatres remains to describe Ricciardi's presence on the Italian-American theatre scene in 1900. This period represents Ricciardi's transition into the American theatre, and he is assisted in his ambitions by Alessandro Salvini, the son of Tommaso Salvini, the famous Italian tragedian who, together with Edwin Booth, thrilled American audiences with their bilingual Othello.

The elder Salvini, on one of his American tours, brought along his son Alessandro and deposited him at Yale in the hopes that he would give up his theatrical ambitions and pursue a career in business, all this according to Ricciardi.³ Tommaso Salvini having returned to Italy, the young Alessandro continued to indulge in theatrical events in college, which activities came to the attention of two enterprising producers, the Rosenberg brothers. Seeing gold in the name "Salvini" they convinced Alessandro to play the part of D'Artagnan in The Three Musketeers of Alexandre Dumas. He debuted in Brooklyn's Park Theatre, with his father Tommaso in attendance, this having been shrewdly arranged by the Rosenbergs, and the young Salvini became a successful matinee idol.

Alessandro was an Italian-American who acted but there is no evidence that he ever performed on the Italian-American stage. He seems to have relegated his art to the American stages and audiences. However, he is credited with co-authorship or adaptation of Luigi Gualtieri's Galileo Galilei o I Misteri della Inquisizione di Spagna

¹ Ricciardi, Ricciardiana, pp. 39-40.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 59 (February 28, 1903), p. 3.

³ Ibid., p. 107.

(Galileo Galilei or The Mysteries of the Spanish Inquisition), performed by numerous groups. A major New York company was named after him, Il Circolo Filodrammatico Alessandro Salvini, directed by the Salerno Brothers,¹ about whom more will be said later.

Alessandro Salvini may not have acted for his compatriots in Little Italy but he certainly made a success of portraying the romantic heroes of melodramas and European works with which most Italian immigrants were by now familiar: Don Cesare di Bazan; Ruy Blas; Zamor; Cavalleria Rusticana; Francesca da Rimini. So much so that Guglielmo Ricciardi, still acting down at the Germania Assembly Rooms on the Bowery, had heard many speak of Salvini, and anxious to see for himself, caught a matinee performance at the Broadway Theatre on Fifth Avenue, one afternoon in 1900.² The experience proved to be one of those inspirational turning points in a young man's life, and Ricciardi's life was irrevocably turned in another direction.

Salvini's performance that afternoon impressed Ricciardi so strongly for a number of reasons. First, the calibre of Salvini's acting prompted Ricciardi to pronounce: "L'America ebbe il piu' grande attore romantico del secolo in lingua inglese."³ Such a statement is hard to take seriously as an estimate of Salvini's acting but certainly it attests to the great awe Ricciardi felt for the actor's performance. Secondly, "Era Italiano."⁴ What moved Ricciardi even more was that fact

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 317 (November 12, 1904), p. 2; and L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 307 (November 1, 1904), p. 3.

² Ricciardi, Ricciardiana, p. 107.

³ "America has the century's greatest romantic actor in the English language." Ibid., p. 105.

⁴ Ibid.

that Salvini was an Italian, acting out the famous romantic roles with which he was also familiar, but in English for English-speaking audiences. Ricciardi, at this point in his life, spoke little or no English. Third, it was apparent from Salvini's audiences that he had become the darling of the famous "400", especially the affluent wives who flocked to the matinees.¹ Fourth, although Ricciardi doesn't actually say this himself, the business manager in Ricciardi undoubtedly must have become aware of the financial possibilities of working in the American theatre as opposed to the meagre returns afforded by the struggling little immigrant theatres of Little Italy.

What makes Ricciardi's consciousness-raising so singular is not simply that the experience changed his life but that he is the only one so far in this history to do so and one of the very few ever who will make a successful transition out of the confines of Italian-American theatre into the mainstream of American theatre and film. No doubt other Italian-speaking actors had witnessed Salvini's success since that is how Ricciardi heard about him in the first place. But no one appears to have been so effectively moved to action.

Ricciardi attended more of Salvini's performances and wanted very much to meet him personally. Ricciardi was friendly with the attorney Mr. G. Civalari, who ran a small banking business on Mulberry Street where Ricciardi used to visit occasionally and the two friends would swap jokes. Civalari represented both elder and younger Salvinis in their legal affairs in the United States, and hearing from Ricciardi that he wanted to meet Alessandro, provided a letter of introduction. So one fine morning, Ricciardi went up to the Union Square Hotel at 23rd

¹ Ibid., p. 106.

Street¹ where Salvini resided, and his memoirs are generous with the details of the momentous meeting which changed the course of his life.

Equipped with Civolari's letter, Ricciardi was admitted to Salvini's room and as it was only ten in the morning Salvini, still abed, welcomed him cordially nevertheless with, "Favorite" (loosely, darling or dear one), and looked the visitor over from head to toe with lively and expressive eyes. Ricciardi admired his style, manners and Italian education and was struck by the romantic figure he cut even still lying in bed. The two men chatted over coffee for over an hour about Italy and the Italians, and Ricciardi remembered how their conversation gave him the feeling of being uplifted out of his commonplace existence. Salvini, on the other hand, wanted to hear all about life in Little Italy.

Ricciardi explained that he too was a theatre artist but that the theatre scene among the Italians of New York did not promise much of a future for him, and being thus discouraged he too wished to try acting on the American stage. Salvini smiled encouragingly and explained that if Ricciardi had a better command of the English language he would be able to make him part of his company but Salvini was afraid his accent would be inappropriate for the repertoire of plays. Nevertheless, Salvini optimistically advised him, "Studiate! Studiate!" (Study! Study!) and promised Ricciardi that when his facility with English improved he would recommend him to Ralph Delmore, president of the Actor's Union. Salvini was certain that Delmore, actually Raffaele Donnarumma from Salerno, would help Ricciardi secure employment in some

¹Ibid.

theatre company.¹

Armed with this advice and a pass for more of Salvini's performances at the Broadway Theatre, Ricciardi left the Union Square Hotel that day with renewed determination. Some time after he approached Donnarumma at the Actors' Union offices located near the Empire Theatre on Broadway. Donnarumma was pleasant and helpful and several days later signed Ricciardi to play the role of the Sicilian miner, Pietro Randazza, in the melodrama The Great White Diamond, written by the producer Walter Fessler. The part of the Sicilian, the villain, was a principal role and seemed made to order for Ricciardi until Fessler handed him the manuscript and Ricciardi saw he had to memorize 50 pages of dialogue, and all in English.

At this point Ricciardi had second thoughts about accepting; his mastery of English was still insufficient, although his reading ability was much better because of his study of Latin in the seminary. He had doubts about his ability to go into rehearsal but summoning up his favorite Latin proverb, "Audaces fortuna juvat, timidosque repellit," he decided to take the plunge onto the American theatre scene. Fortunately, he was seeing a German-American girl, Adelaide Triber, who spoke native American English and helped him memorize the 50 pages of his role.² She later became the second Mrs. Ricciardi.

The company rehearsed in New York in a hall on 29th Street and debuted in Washington, D.C. on Labor Day, Monday, September 2, 1901 at the Academy of Music. For the next two seasons he toured the East in

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

the melodrama, to Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut.¹ After the 1901/1902 season, Ricciardi returned to New York and the Grand Eden Theatre. It is very possible that the Grand Eden had been closed all this time. A notice appeared in L'Araldo advertising the reopening of the theatre on Thursday, May 1, 1902 under the new ownership of M. K. Reussen and with Guglielmo Ricciardi as managing director.²

The ads for the Grand Eden appear regularly from May 1 through July 25, 1902, which marks Ricciardi's last association with this theatre. Clemente Giglio then brought Pulcinella farces and marionette shows there. The Grand Eden later became known as Verga's Music Hall by December 2, 1902, with a company of entertainers,³ but we have no other record of theatrical activity there, only a notice of a political meeting for October 29, 1903.⁴

Ricciardi left the Grand Eden, of course, to resume his role in The Great White Diamond during the 1902/1903 season. At the close of the season, Ricciardi found himself in Pittsburgh where he was invited to direct and star in a production of Il Conte de Montecristo (The Count of Montecristo) by Alexandre Dumas for the local drama group, Il Circolo Vittorio Alfieri on Wednesday, April 1, 1903. Some days later he also starred in a production of Il Cardinal Richelieu (Cardinal Richelieu) at the Bijou, financed by American millionaires from Pittsburgh, the Araldo reported.⁵ American financing might indicate that this production was

¹ Ibid., p. 109.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 116 (April 26, 1902), p. 2.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 323 (November 19, 1902), p. 2.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 302 (October 29, 1903), p. 2.

⁵ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 92 (April 2, 1903), p. 2; and Ricciardi, Ricciardiana, p. 110.

performed in English but the newspaper is unclear on this point.

The summer found Ricciardi back in New York. He formed another company under the name La Compagnia William Ricciardi, which debuted at Ferrando's Hall Tuesday, August 25, 1903.¹ Note the Americanization of Ricciardi's name, now that he had established himself in the American theatre. At Ferrando's Music Hall, he produced spectacles and vaudevilles six nights a week until Monday, September 28, 1903,² after which time he joined the company of the American actress Grace George in the production of Victorien Sardou's Let's Get a Divorce! with which he toured the United States and Canada. After this, a long string of American plays consumed his professional life, eventually bringing him to London and the attention of George Bernard Shaw, and to Hollywood where he made a number of films.

Ricciardi made a few irregular guest appearances again on the Italian-American stage but no longer as a way to make a living, and only when he found himself in New York City between shows. One such performance played on Monday, December 28, 1903, at Majestic Hall, 115-25 East 125th Street. He played the protagonist in a six-act drama of his own authorship, Marta ovverro i Drammi dell' Emigrazione (Martha or the Dramas of Emigration).³

Ricciardi was absent from the immigrant theatre scene until Sunday, May 28, 1905 when he appeared as Pietro the Vintner with Il Circolo Filodrammatico Alessandro Salvini at the Manhattan Lyceum, 66-68 East 4th Street, in the premiere of the spectacular historical drama in

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 236 (August 25, 1903), p. 1.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 271 (September 28, 1903), p. 1.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 359 (December 25, 1903), p. 2.

four acts and nine scene changes, Fabio Romano o La Vendetta (Fabio Romano or The Revenge), adapted by Ricciardi himself from the novel by Maria Corelli.¹

On Sunday, August 27, 1905, Ricciardi sang duets in the musical comedy skit I due compari (The two countrymen) with the company of Giovanni De Rosalia at the New Star Casino, 105-115 East 107th Street.² He briefly re-emerged for two performances (on Sunday, November 26, 1905 and on a night after November 30, 1905) in which he acted with unidentified companies.³

Clearly then, the period 1900 - 1905 represents a transition stage for Guglielmo Ricciardi, the first professional Italian-American entrepreneur and performer. He began the century briefly as an amateur again, successfully organized a professional troupe, and finally crossed over into American theatre and film, while making sporadic appearances with the Italians.

Financial information on Ricciardi's operations is minimal. Nothing indicates that he and his Italian-speaking entourage ever toured with their repertory to other parts of the country during this period in the 20th century as he had done in the 19th with Maiori and Rapone. But he would hire out his company for special events sponsored by some of the Mutual Benefit Societies. One evening, the company had been engaged by La Societa' Operaia Sant'Antonio di Padova (The St. Anthony of Padua Labor Association) for a performance at Tammany Hall on 14th Street.

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 121 (May 3, 1905), p. 3; N. 135 (May 19, 1905), p. 3; and N. 216 (August 25, 1905), p. 3.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 216 (August 25, 1905), p. 3.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 332 (November 30, 1905), p. 3.

The crowded hall was decorated with banners, flags, lights, plants with tricolor tassels attached.

In order to assure a large audience the Association promised the prize of a silver cup to the organization that attended with the largest number of members and their band. At the time the bands associated with different Italian social clubs wore the pseudo-military uniforms which were adopted as the official attire of the club. The members and the band wore the uniforms at parades and festivals, and this served to attract more additions to the organization. Various associations accepted the St. Anthony invitation to attend Ricciardi's performance, among them the Ex Carabinieri Italiani.

During the performance, while Ricciardi and the actress Elisa Perna performed the duet, "Fra Bisanzio," a blare of trumpets announced the arrival of the Ex Carabinieri Italiani in full dress. Their chief wore a cape of velvet and silver while the rank and file wore a black uniform with plenty of silver braids, the traditional cocked hat with feathers and a sword at their side. The performance stopped as the audience applauded the entrance of the Ex Carabinieri. But quite a few in the audience, believing the uniforms to be authentic, left immediately in a panic. Apparently they had left Italy illegally without passports and assumed that the Carabinieri had come from Italy to arrest them. The show had to be held up for half an hour before calm was restored.¹

Ricciardi's early production in March 1900 advertised the following admission prices: Monday, March 13, 1900, "posti distinti" 50

¹Falbo, p. 55.

cents, "posti numerati" 35 cents,¹ Monday, March 26, 1900 couples 50 cents, ladies 25 cents.² The latter was a benefit performance for the blind Italian youth Giovanni Attanasio, the accounting for which was released to L'Araldo by one of the promoters, Guido Comero:

Expenses:	hall rental	40.00
	badges	9.10
	printing	31.25
	flowers	12.50
	raffle	8.00
	artists	17.00
	dinner	13.50
	lettering	10.65
	entertainment	5.50
	decorations	3.00
	music	27.50
Total		<u>182.00</u>

Box office receipts:		
	patrons	35.00
	ticket sales	223.00
	raffle	51.00
	sale of flowers	21.60
	advertising	75.50
	sale of raffle objects	2.95
Total		<u>409.25</u>

Net receipts \$227.25 deposited in the Banca Sessa, 40 Union Street, Brooklyn.³

This detailed accounting indicates that the artists, meaning actors, scene designers, musicians, were paid for their labors. When Ricciardi's play Marta was produced at Majestic Hall on December 28, 1903 the admission prices were broken down as follows: gallery 25 cents, orchestra 50 cents, reserved seats \$1.00, boxes \$5.00.⁴

¹"posti distinti" (reserved seats); "posti numerati" (numbered seats". L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 42 (February 18, 1900), p. 17.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 72 (March 25, 1900), p. 5.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 82 (April 6, 1900), p. 5.

⁴Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 359 (December 25, 1903), p. 2.

But no payroll record remains for this performance. Nor are there any fiscal accounts available for Ricciardi's undertakings at the Grand Eden or Ferrando's Music Hall, but the financial arrangements of *caffe concerto* enterprises have already been established: the proprietors made their profits on food and drink; no admission was charged but a drink minimum was enforced. Performers were paid.

Whenever Ricciardi organized his own group of actors, he invariably directed them himself. (A complete list of all the actors and singers who performed with La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica is included in Appendix III.) A few details serve to shed some light on the lives of these performers. Francesco Vela had his own company and will be discussed more fully below. Mrs. Tina Scotti was the former prima donna of the Compagnia d'Operette Scognamillo in Italy, and the sister of the baritone Adolfo Scotti,¹ who sang in the *caffe concertos* of Little Italy and performed with the Maiori company.

Mrs. Renata Scarlati Brunorini of Newark, New Jersey, was the daughter of the Italian actor, Antonio Brunorini.² She was also the first Italian-American woman playwright in our history. Mrs. Maria Prete resided at 229 East 11th Street.³ Francesco De Felice specialized in character sketches of Western cowboys.⁴ Eduardo De Pascale, the impressionist and singer, also performed at the Teatro Garibaldi in Cleveland.⁵

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 204 (August 23, 1900), p. 5.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 352 (December 18, 1903), p. 3.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 147 (June 2, 1905), p. 3.

⁴ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (May 10, 1942), p. 55.

⁵ *Ibid.*, (September 20, 1942), p. 9.

Mrs. Beatrice Acerbi was also an actress with the Maiori-Rapone troupe and she acted in that company's premiere of Riccardo Cordiferro's L'Onore Perduto. Her interpretation of the part of an old woman earned this review from the reporter, Giulio De Giuli:

Non era nella sua parte, truccata da vecchia, mentre essa e' nello splendore di tutta la sua giovinezza. La Signora Acerbi, che si professa dilettante, possiede molte buone qualita', che alcune artiste le dovrebbero invidiare, essa studia, ed ha la facilita' di adattarsi bene a qualunque parte. Cosi' come in famiglia e' buona sposa e buona cuoca, distinta sarta e lavannara, e chi lo sa se l'amico Campanella non mi fara' di lei, un giorno una bella e buona mamma? questo e' il buon augurio.

This commentary provokes a number of thoughts about the "lives" of these Italian actresses. First, the custom was sometimes for the actress to be billed under her maiden name prefixed by the title denoting her marital status. As in this case, Mrs. Acerbi was in everyday life actually Mrs. Campanella, but was billed as Mrs. Acerbi. Next, she is described as an "amateur" and also as a "distinguished seamstress." Since the record of her performances is thinner than many another actress in this history, it is possible that she worked as a dressmaker in the factories of the city's garment industry, as did so many other Italian women immigrants from Little Italy. De Giuli praised her remarkable versatility but is clearly disappointed in her characterization of an older woman, and devotes more space to extolling her real

¹"She was miscast, made up like an old woman, while she is in the full splendor of youth. Mrs. Acerbi, who acknowledges that she is an amateur, possesses many good qualities that any professional should envy, she studies, and has the facility of being able to adapt herself to any role. Just as in her family life, she is a good wife, a good cook, a distinguished seamstress and laundress, and who knows, but that our friend Campanella won't one day make her a beautiful and fine mother? this is our fond hope." Giulio de Giuli, "La Premiere dell'Onore Perduto," La Lanterna Magica, (1901). University of Minnesota, Immigration History Research Center, Alessandro Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

life housewifely roles than her stage roles. Finally, he urges her on, not to bigger and better stage roles, but to motherhood. Whether or not she followed this advice, she appeared only once more in this history, playing the same role in the same play produced by the Circolo Filodrammatico Eleonora Duse on Monday, December 28, 1903.¹

A contemporary described Gina Pozzi, revealing that she and her husband Giuseppe also worked in San Francisco. Gina also performed with a company in Philadelphia, La Compagnia Granese Calabrese. Toto' Lanza praised her in this way:

E' anche Lei del numero uno, di quelli che gettarono la prima pietra all'edificio per il culto del Teatro italiano in America.

Ha diviso col suo "Pippo" i giorni tristi della lotta da New York a S. Francisco e da San Francisco a New York, sorretta sempre, malgrado le contrarieta', dalla fede incrollabile nel suo sogno d'arte.

E' attrice pregiata e di grande utilita'.²

"Pippo" was the nickname of her husband, Giuseppe Pozzi, also profiled here:

E' il piu vecchio della famiglia dell'arte in America e forse uno dei pionieri.

Nella sua oramai logora persona, v'e' tutta una vita di dolori e di disinganni, agitata a pro' del Teatro.

E, non pertanto, non sa staccarsene, continua ad essere un attore come pochi ce ne sono, attivo e disciplinato,

¹ La Sedia Elettrica (December 13, 1903), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

² "She too is the first of those who cast the first building blocks for the cult of the Italian Theatre in America.

She shared with her "Pippo" the unhappy days of struggling between New York and S. Francisco and from San Francisco to New York, supported always, despite adversity, by her unshakeable faith in her artistic dream.

She is an esteemed actress and has great ability." Toto' Lanza, ed., Strenna "Miluccia" (New York: Societa' Libreria Italiana, 1917), p. 12.

sempre quello di prima, poeta sempre, ma attore coscienzioso.¹

From these descriptions, the Pozzis appear to have been struggling but determined artists.

Gaetano Santoro was a director with La Societa' Italiana di Mutuo Soccorso, a minor amateur company also discussed much later in this survey. For a time he helped manage Antonio Maiori's company.

Ester(also known as Esterina)Cunico was married to the actor and director Silvio Minciotti, with whom she formed a professional company. The Cunico-Minciotti enterprise will be discussed in great detail later in this history. Mrs. Margherita Rua Prete was married to the magician Professor G. Prete, who also ran his own magic company. Enrico Ricciardi was the son of Guglielmo Ricciardi.

Edoardo De Pascale was noted for his interpretation of the mask of Pulcinella, for his singing of duets, for his macchiette, and for his acting in comedies and dramas. He also performed at the Teatro Garibaldi in Cleveland.² By 1942 he had retired and was living in Chicago.³

Edoardo Avella moved to Philadelphia where on Wednesday, September 26, 1906 he played Don Pasquale in Cordiferro's L'Onore Perduto at Verdi

¹"He is the oldest in the family of art in America and perhaps one of the pioneers.

In his by now worn out body, there is an entire life of grief and disillusionment, stirred up because of the Theatre.

And, nevertheless, he doesn't tire of it, he continues to be an actor like few others, active and disciplined, always as before, always a poet, but a conscientious actor." Ibid.

²Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (September 20, 1942), p. 9.

³Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (July 12, 1942), p. 55.

Hall.¹ Years later he became manager of the Cinematografo Italiano on Christian St.²

In order to understand the dynamics of the artistic relationship between Ricciardi and his company of actors and actresses, we have included here a first hand, eyewitness account by the observant reporter for L'Araldo Italiano of Ricciardi directing his actors backstage during a performance of Santarella (The Hypocrite) by Scarpetta at the New Star Casino on Sunday, November 26, 1905. The reporter described the scene at the theatre that night, remarking that it was like having a party in your own home. The low admission price of 50 cents per couple had succeeded in filling the house and the crowd was smoking, chattering and dancing. During the performance, the cries of some cranky baby mixed in with Ricciardi's comic delivery and the boisterous laughter of his audience.³

Through all this confusion, the Araldo reporter realized that if he remained in the orchestra he would be able to understand absolutely nothing of what was being said onstage, so he went backstage at intermission and watched the second act of Santarella from the wings. Upon seeing the reporter, Ricciardi welcomed him with open arms and regrettably explained that he couldn't offer him any pastry since there was so little and the three or four women in his troupe were famished. Then Ricciardi advised:

-- Aggie pazienza -- diceva Ricciardi -- ca' non si puo' andare innanzi.

Il reporter gli disse che egli preferiva fumare e Ricciardi

¹ La Voce del Popolo (September 25 and 27, 1906); Vesuvio (September 27, 1906), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

² Ricciardi, Ricciardina, p. 60.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 330 (November 28, 1905), p. 3.

si allontanano' per cercare la signorina Esther Cunico la quale, giungendo dalla parte opposta insieme alla sorella, si sfogo' dicendo -- Guardi, mi tocca fare due parti, la madre Superiora e la prima donna. E' mai possibile, mio Dio!

-- Ricciardi, da lontano: -- Ma vene o non vene. Cheste so cose e' pazzi.

(Il pubblico) Fuori! Fuori!

Ricciardi -- Siete pronti? siete pronti? Iammo su, fuori

. . .

De Felice -- Aspeta che fai ca manca tutto.

La sig.na Cunico -- Ed io quando debbo uscire?

-- Ricciardi, sbuffando -- E l'impresario, l'impresario addo' sta'?

L'impresario -- Pienza a sta' buono ca i a' parta mia 'a saccio.

Finalmente il telone va su e si tratta di fare il pubblico che applaude Arturo Maletti. Ricciardi si trova ad essere quasi solo e si sfiata e vocia in tutti i modi. Ad un certo punto visto il reporter dell'Araldo, gli dice -- Grida anche tu, fatt'asci l'anema.

Ricciardi -- Entri il tenente (guardandosi intorno) tene' tene' addove e' iuto? Si l'ancappo.

Il tenente finisce di salutare un amico e si precipita sul palcoscenico.

Ricciardi a Defelice -- Tu sei provveduto del revolver.

De Felice (estraendo la rivoltella e mettendogliela sotto il muso) 'O vi cca'.

Ricciardi (allontanandosi) -- Nun pazziammo cu ste cose E' scarico?

-- Gia' scarico! E poi io come sparo?

Intanto Ricciardi si ricorda che ad un certo punto sulla scena deve comparire anche un delegato di pubblica sicurezza a cui nessuno ha mai pensato.

-- Chi vo fa 'o delegato? grida Ricciardi

-- E come facimmo? Ma come non ci avete pensato?

Disperato prende di petto un'altra volta il reporter dell'Araldo e gli dice

-- Fammi stu favore, fallo tu il delegato.

Il reporter gli risponde che egli, grazie a dio, ha ancora le facolta' mentali in discreto ordine e non ha nessuna intenzione di dare agli alienisti una infondata prova della sua pazzia. Ricciardi si dispera, gira, esce, ritorna, esce nuovamente e alla fine rientra rimorchendosi un signore il quale non ha ne' cappello, ne' bastone. Ricciardi toglie a viva forza il cappello al Reporter e lo da' all'improvvisato delegato.

Come dio vuole si arriva alla scena finale. Ricciardi, dimentico di tutto, si sfiata intorno a Santarella facendo ridere convulsamente il pubblico; il maggiore si fa trattenere dall'impresario e la prima donna si morde le mani chiedendo vendetta. Ruit ora il maggiore spara, il servo gli rovescia addosso gelati e paste e Ricciardi cade per rompersi il naso.

Quando cala il sipario Ricciardi rientrando zoppicando fra le quinte dice:

-- Altro che naso! mi son rotto una gamba! Non avrei potuto

cadere con piu' naturalezza!¹

Spontaneous, haphazard, improvisational, unpredictable, inventive, impulsive -- all these words describe not only Ricciardi's lively directing style but the usual modus operandi of the Italian immigrant theatre. Unorganized as first it may seem, the improvisational technique has kept the Italian theatre together for centuries, since the time of the Commedia dell'Arte. Since the actors above were professionals, with the exception of the hastily conscripted policeman, we can assume that their "professional" behavior was similar to many another backstage scene in the wings of Little Italy's theatres.

The "professors" or maestros who conducted the bands and little orchestras that accompanied musical plays, vaudeville entertainments in the music halls, filled the intermissions between acts of dramas for Ricciardi and his company and supplied the student musicians and performers for additional entertainment were: Maestro Professore Alberto Rosati, Professor Duffy, and Maestro Vincenzo Gaudiosi. Maestro Gaetano Merola later became conductor and manager of the San Francisco Opera Co.² Musicians included Mr. Lopez, guitarist and Miss Piettruccio, mandolinist but we are certain that more instrumentation was usually the case especially in the *caffe concerto* and music halls.

Guglielmo Ricciardi and La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica presented to Italian-American audiences mostly imported European writers during the 20th century period we are surveying: the Italians, Cavaliere. Uff. Eduardo Scarpetta, Cavaliere Federico Stella, Crescenzo Di Majo, Francesco Mastriani, Teobaldo Cicconi, and Stefano Interdonato; the

¹ A complete translation is included in Appendix IV, A. Ibid.

² Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (May 24, 1942), p. 55.

Frenchman Alexandre Dumas, pere and the English William Shakespeare. The only identifiable Italian-American playwright produced by this company was Guglielmo Ricciardi himself: an untitled "brilliant farce" on Monday, March 12, 1900;¹ Marta ovvero i Drammi dell'Emigrazione (Martha or the dramas of Emigration) drama in six acts. Act I takes place aboard the steamship "Roma" of the Fabre Line. Other acts take place in New York. Another act takes place in the dining room of the Matese Restaurant. It was performed Monday, December 28, 1903;² Fabio Romano o La Vendetta (Fabio Romano or The Revenge) spectacular historical drama in four acts and nine scene changes, adapted by Ricciardi from the novel of the same name by Maria Corelli, received its premiere under the direction of the Salerno Brothers with Il Circolo Filodrammatico Alessandro Salvini on Sunday, May 28, 1905.³

Unfortunately neither of these scripts have come to light to illustrate Ricciardi's style or method of play construction. The latter is clearly a revenge melodrama, but an adaption of a work not original with Ricciardi. The former drama, Marta, is much more intriguing because it reflects Ricciardi's attempt to grapple with the immigrant undergoing the process of assimilation. Many of the locations were in New York City. The Matese Restaurant was actually located at 196-98 Grand Street in the heart of Little Italy. But his handling of the play

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 54 (March 4, 1900), p. 5; and N. 60 (March 11, 1900), p. 5.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 359 (December 25, 1903), p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 121 (May 3, 1905), p. 3; N. 135 (May 19, 1905), p. 3; and L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 113 (April 23, 1905), p.3.

remains a mystery.

Fortunately several anecdotes describe some of Ricciardi's techniques. He explained earlier his habit of using sample posters from printing houses to advertise his own productions by adding his own company's name and date of performance. Sometimes the poster design would show a passionate scene or the beautiful legs of the female singers. Ricciardi's trick, and that of other capocomici of the period, was to insert into the comedy or drama a long kissing scene or to have the leading lady or soubrette show enough leg so as not to disappoint the audience and to approximate the scene promised by the surrogate theatre posters. Otherwise, the more vocal audience members could be counted upon to make their displeasure known.¹

Necessity as the mother of invention also accounts for another dramatic technique hurriedly learned by Ricciardi at the Villa di Sorrento. In 1897 and 1898, the playwright and prompter of Ricciardi's company, Edoardo Pecoraro, would write sensational melodramas based on the stories of crimes of passion written in the daily Italian-American newspaper, Il Bollettino della Sera by its editor, Bernardino Ciambelli. The drama in three acts mounted this one particular Saturday evening at the turn of the century was La tragedia di Bartolomeo Capasso (The tragedy of Bartolomeo Capasso), having been rehearsed once the Friday night before. Capasso was a popular cafe proprietor on Mulberry Street who had been murdered by Peppino Naso.²

The show went up at 8:00 p.m. and after each act curtain, was applauded enthusiastically by the full house of the Villa di Sorrento.

¹ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (May 10, 1942), p. 5S.

² Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (May 3, 1942), p. 5S.

During the intermission, as Maestro Gaetano Merola entertained on the piano, the caffè owner Fabio D'Alessio came backstage to tell Ricciardi: "Te lo avevo detto io che il "drammone locale" avrebbe fatto piu presa delle canzonette sul mio pubblico."¹ The owner was exhuberant not so much for the play's artistic success as for the fact that the patrons had remained and were still buying drinks. When the third act curtain went down at 10:30 p.m., a frenzied D'Alessio rushed backstage to complain to Ricciardi:

F come? La sala e ricolma, la gente continua a bere in letizia. E lo spettacolo finisce con insolito anticipo? Ma non₂e possibile. Bisogna recitare almeno fino a mezzanotte.²

When Ricciardi explained that the play was over, D'Alessio shouted angrily, "That make no difference. Make some more acts. Go on quick!"³ So the capocomico, at a loss for what to do, having no other scripts with him and knowing full well that he could not just repeat the drama that had just been played, did the only thing that a good administrator can do: he called a staff conference. Edoardo Pecoraro suggested a bold remedy:

Aggiungiamo un altro atto. Facciamo il processo all' uccisore di Capasso. Bisogna andare avanti improvvisando e . . . come₄ viene viene. Basta fissare le linee dell' atto da inscenare.⁴

¹"I told you that a local drama would go over better than folk songs with my customers." Ibid.

²"What's going on? The house is full, the customers are happy and drinking. And the show stops so suddenly without warning? You can't do this. You must keep playing until midnight." Ibid.

³Ricciardi, "An Actor Tells a Story," p. 135.

⁴"Let's add another act. We'll put Capasso's killer on trial. We'll have to go ahead and improvise and whatever happens happens. We just won't write out all the lines for the act before we stage it." Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (May 3, 1942), p. 5S.

The roles were hastily allocated: Ettore Mainardi as the judge; Adolfo Scotti, the murderer; Elisa Venezia, the widow; Edoardo Cinnerella, the arresting officer; Achille Di Landri, the defense attorney; Giovanni Lombardi as the principal witness for the prosecution. As Ricciardi and Pecoraro prompted the performers with the important lines, the audience listened attentively to the trial, sometimes interrupting with comments, getting angry or emotional as the case warranted.

When the curtain finally fell on the scene where the murderer is sentenced to death, the time was only 11:10 p.m., which caused D'Alessio to go backstage again screaming, "Troppo presto, troppo presto." (Too soon, too soon.), and begging for another hour of performance because the crowd had stayed and was still buying drinks. Another conference resulted in the decision to improvise a fifth ~~act~~⁷, on which Ricciardi and Pecoraro again collaborated. The extra act would consist of two scenes: the funeral of the murdered man, and the last hours of the condemned man. During the funeral scene, the audience was visibly moved by an eloquent funeral oration for the cafe owner who was so brutally slaughtered. The last scene took place on death row where the man condemned to die in the electric chair, played by Adolfo Scotti, won the forgiveness of the audience by reciting the "mea culpa" and throwing in as much as he could remember of the mournful monologue written by the Italian ~~writer~~⁸ writer Silvio Pellico. The drama closed with the condemned man's final confession.¹

By this time it was midnight at the Villa di Sorrento and the house was still full of customers, D'Alessio was ecstatic over the

¹ Ibid.

night's receipts and the weary actors were rewarded with freely flowing drinks on the house. Ricciardi and Pecoraro had learned from this experience what to anticipate for the evenings that followed and made sure that the show, including intermissions, lasted from 8:00 p.m. to midnight.¹ No doubt it was this facility for hastily improvising plays that led Riccardo Cordiferro, the editor of the Italian-American newspaper, La Follia, to proclaiming Ricciardi the "deus ex machina of the Italian music halls in New York."²

Another improvisational technique lay in Ricciardi's ability to capitalize on the special talents of one of his actors, in particular. Professor Ettore Mainardi, a well educated Milanese gentleman, had come to America to give lectures. As a member of the Compagnia Comico-Drammatica at the Grand Eden, Ricciardi knew how to put to good use Mainardi's special traits: a flawless Italian diction, a clear memory and a gift for improvisation. Whenever the play being produced appeared to be going poorly with the audience, Ricciardi would elbow Mainardi, who would interpolate into his role, especially at the end of an act, some intense patriotic or sentimental or humanitarian oration which he would terminate when the audience burst into wild applause.³

If the subject matter dealt with an errant son, Mainardi would stick in a sermon about how crime doesn't pay, about the unhappiness of the dishonored family, about the bitter tears shed by the boy's unfortunate mother. If an actor playing a criminal in a popular drama blasphemed, Mainardi was ready with a condemnation of the sin which

¹ Ibid.

² Ricciardi, "An Actor Tells a Story," p. 135.

³ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (May 24, 1942), p. 55.

represented an offense to religion, and extended a final warning as to the damnation awaiting unrepentant sinners. If the dramatic action was located on the Gulf of Naples or on a street in Palermo or Milan, and the audience response was cold, Mainardi was again ready to conjure up poetically the charms of the Neapolitan sky or the generosity of the Lombards and all Italians. He would eloquently extol the memory of the dear ones who remained on the other side of the Atlantic and express the hope that springs eternal in the heart of all immigrants, especially the women, to return to Italy with enough money to buy some land, build a little house and enjoy the benefits of their hard labors in America. Inevitably, this rhetoric would produce tears, handkerchiefs, and intense, prolonged applause at the final curtain.¹ By 1910 Mainardi was directing his own company, La Compagnia Drammatica Teatro del Popolo.²

These anecdotes serve to illuminate at least a few elements of the dramatic structure of Ricciardi, the playwright. He strove above all to cater to the tastes of the immigrant population that made up his audiences, especially by creating recognizable scenes that took place in the very restaurants, cafes, and streets of Little Italy itself. He was frequently constrained to stretch his dramas into more episodic structure to accommodate a haphazard use of theatre posters, to prolong an evening's entertainment or to save a poor play from complete rejection. The genre of his work fits into the mold of the revenge melodrama or the bourgeois drama of family life, replete with a philosophy in

¹ Ibid.

² M. Vincenzi, clipping, (September 1910) Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

which heroes and villains existed and where evil was punished and good triumphed and justice was served.

Since there is so little mention of plays actually written by Ricciardi, even by the impresario himself, we get the impression that he may have been more adept at fixing, and patching and generally adapting works in the manner we have described, than in creating original full length dramas of his own. Had he created a large body of dramatic literature, he would most certainly have found space to discuss it.

He worked in the Italian-American theatre during the period 1900 to 1905 essentially as a concert hall artist and impresario but he and La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica produced many theatre pieces on the concert hall stages of Little Italy, most of them Italian and European writers, but also including the Italian-American playwright Edoardo Pecoraro at least in the 19th century and Guglielmo Ricciardi himself. The anonymous work La Bella di Mulberry Street¹ (The Belle of Mulberry Street) was undoubtedly of Italian-American authorship.

Ricciardi would probably have produced more of Pecoraro's plays, had the latter stayed in New York City. In 1900 he was reported editing the weekly La Sentinella in Calumet, Michigan.² On Thursday, April 9, 1903 he attended a performance of his play Giuseppe Musolino at the Teatro Apollo in San Francisco.³ He interpreted the title role of the same play in Los Angeles on Sunday, August 2 for the Societa Garibaldina, which also put on his four act drama Maria Barbera a few

¹ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (May 24, 1942), p. 5S.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 137 (June 9, 1900), p. 5.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 99 (April 9, 1903), p. 3.

weeks later on Sunday, August 23.¹

Pecoraro's play, Giuseppe Musolino, was based on a real life contemporary bandit in Calabria, Italy. On February 10, 1901, L'Araldo Italiano began publishing the serialized version of Alfonso D'Elia's novel, Il Brigante Musolino ovvero Il Bandito Cavalleresco del Nuovo Secolo² (The Bandit Musolino or The Chivalrous Outlaw of the New Century). After Musolino's capture, L'Araldo also chronicled his sensational trial and sentencing in the Italian courts during March and April of 1902. Readers were treated to descriptions of courtroom events, such as the outlaw's testimony that his actions were inspired by God; the court doctor's decision that Musolino was sane;³ and the bandit's physical attack on a female witness as she identified him during the proceedings.⁴

Several productions of Musolino-inspired plays were mounted on the East coast. Although Francesco Vela's productions on Sunday, February 10 and Thursday, April 11, 1901 were based on D'Elia's novel,⁵ and the parody, Il Brigante Musolino con Pulcinella, bandito per necessita (The Bandit Musolino with Pulcinella, outlaw by necessity) was probably the work of Francesco Ricciardi, several anonymous productions may very well have been Pecoraro's adaptation. Musolino e le sue vendette (Musolino and his revenge) was produced by I Soci della Marineria Italiana (The

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 271 (September 28, 1903), p. 3.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 36 (February 10, 1901), p. 1.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 65 (March 6, 1902), p. 1.; and N. 108 (April 18, 1902), p.2.

⁴ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 113 (April 23, 1902), p. 1.

⁵ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 86 (April 10, 1901), p. 6.

Members of the Italian Naval Organization) at the Teatro Poli in New Haven, Connecticut on Thursday, May 29 and Sunday, June 29, 1902;¹ and Il Bandito Musolino (The Outlaw Musolino), with Mr. G. Natoli as Musolino's defense lawyer, was seen at Mr. Pierro's Hall in Hoboken, New Jersey on Sunday, October 25, 1903.²

Pecoraro's plays were often done on New York's Italian-American stage but he never returned to New York City. Ricciardi, involved as he was in the American theatre by 1905, would not have been available to continue their collaboration anyway.

Ricciardi is a colorful and unique character in this history, as unique as the Pulcinella nose that earned him the nickname, "Nasone" (Big Nose).³ He was a resourceful, ambitious, imaginative, and in many ways pioneering director, actor, manager and playwright. From 1900 to 1905, he produced for the coffee concerto audiences a wide variety of entertainments: dramas, farces, comedies, melodramas and historical spectacles, vaudeville acts including duets, balladeers, monologues, operatic selections, vocal concerts, impressionists and comedians, and Neapolitan folk songs and macchiette (character sketches). But by far the most significant thing Ricciardi did with respect to the Italian-American theatre was to leave it. In going on to the greener pastures of the American theatre and cinema, he revealed an awareness of the confines of the immigrant milieu in which he worked. Perhaps he was not alone in this awareness. Perhaps his colleagues, the other major

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 179 (June 28, 1902), p. 2.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 304 (October 31, 1903), p. 3.

³ Salvatore Abbamonte, "Nei Primordi del Teatro Coloniale," La Follia, (February 11, 1940), p. 5. Excerpted from the author's unpublished autobiography, La Mia Vita.

entrepreneurs in this history, also shared in this realization. If so, they were silent on the point and did not take steps toward any transition, at least not thus far in this history. Ricciardi's insight, joined by his great admiration for Alessandro Salvini and the encouragement of his German-American girlfriend, who taught him English and later became his second wife, all contrived to give him the necessary impetus into the more successful arena.

Ricciardi never completely abandoned the Italian-American theatre. During this period he returned to perform and produce during his time off from his touring, and he remained a fan throughout his life, always recalling the work, the successes and even the failures of his early pioneering years with undisguised affection.

La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Italiana Antonio Maiori

After Ricciardi's unhappy departure for Italy in 1895, Maiori and Rapone continued to work together under the title La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Italiana di Antonio Maiori e Pasquale Rapone until July 16, 1903 when for unknown reasons Rapone started producing independently under the title La Compagnia Comico Drammatica Pasquale Rapone. Therefore, any consideration of Maiori's work until July 16, 1903 necessarily includes Rapone but it is generally understood that Maiori was in charge of the production and direction of the major plays, while the farces and comic afterpieces were the special work of Rapone. Rapone's independent enterprises with his own company will be discussed below.

During the period 1900-1905, Antonio Maiori was by far the most prolific producer-director in the Italian-American theatre. His record was equaled only by the number of productions at Ferrando's Music Hall, but the latter represents a different arena, that of the *caffe concerto*,

and had several directors mounting the kind of plays which were the sole responsibility of Antonio Maiori.

The Maiori-Rapone Company began the 20th century where we had left them in the 19th, at the Teatro Italiano, 24 Spring Street, located beneath their residence. The duo remained at the theatre until September when they were joined for a brief time by Francesco Vela, who would later form his own company. Their venture with Vela was limited to several performances of the four act drama, L'Assassinio di Re Umberto (The Assassination of King Umberto), prompted no doubt by the actual demise of Umberto I of Italy on July 29, 1900. The first performance of the anonymous play took place on a night before September 27 at the Teatro Italiano, followed by another at the Manhattan Lyceum, located at 66-68 East 4th Street (old Turn Hall) on the night of Monday, October 1. Next Vela, Maiori and Rapone took this same production to Hoboken on Thursday, October 18 and to Newark on Monday, October 29.¹ This appears to be the end of Vela's association with Maiori, although he appeared with the independent Rapone company later on. We suspect that the three men got together to capitalize on the timely interest in the subject-matter that audiences might have had. The drama may very well have been written by Maiori and Vela in collaboration but no one is credited with authorship in any of the newspaper notices, and it doesn't seem likely that the text came from Italy, given the short time between the actual assassination and the first production.

The trip to Newark is the first of many that Maiori and his

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 234 (September 27, 1900), p. 5; N. 233 (September 26, 1900), p. 5; and N. 236 (September 29, 1900), p. 5.

company will make during the following years. On one such occasion, the box office receipts were slim, as was usually the case. The following anecdote reveals how Maiori robbed Peter to pay Paul in order to make ends meet. It was the first night in a series of variety shows Maiori had contracted for in Newark. With him were the actors Edoardo Cinnirella, Mr. Ascetta and Mr. Perrone. The take at the box office that night had amounted to only twelve dollars. So Maiori called Edoardo Cinnirella into his room and counted twelve dollar bills into Cinnirella's hand. After the actor thanked him, Maiori explained:

-- Vedi, la recita e' andata male, cattivo tempo, teatro quasi vuoto. Se pago te non prendono la paga gli altri. E Ascetta me ha detto che ha la moglie malata e ha bisogno urgente di moneta. Se non ti spiace pago oggi Ascetta. Saldero il tuo conto con l'introito di domani. Permetti?
 -- Giorno prima, giorno dopo non ha importanza per me . . . E poi... per un collega in bisogno... chi puo' negare un tal favore?

So Cinnirella returned the twelve dollars to Maiori, who promptly made a similar proposal to Ascetta:

-- Sai, se pago te, non posso pagare gli altri. E so che Perrone ha una minaccia di sfratto dalla casa.... Permetti che stasera paghi lui prima? Tu avrai cio' che ti spetta domani. . . .
 -- Aiutare un collega e' un dovere e un piacere...

A similar dialogue took place between Maiori and Perrone: "-- Se pago

¹-- Look, the show didn't go well, this is a bad time, the theatre was almost empty. If I pay you the others won't get paid. And Ascetta told me that his wife is sick and he urgently needs money. If you don't mind I'll pay Ascetta today. I'll pay what I owe you with what comes in tomorrow. OK?

-- One day or the other makes no difference to me. . . And besides... for a colleague in need... Who could refuse such a favor?" Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 21, 1942), p. 5S.

²-- You know, if I pay you, I can't pay the others. And I know that Perrone is being threatened with eviction from his home.... Is it all right if tonight I pay him first? You will get what's coming to you tomorrow

-- To help out a colleague is a duty and a pleasure...." Ibid.

te... Cinicella (sic) ha la moglie in grave stato. Ha bisogno di medici e medicine... Diamogli la precedenza. Puoi aspettare fino a domani?"¹

Perrone, of course, happily agreed to help out his fellow actor, and so Maiori managed to keep the receipts for himself this time. On the return trip to New York, the actors were discussing the outcome of the show:

-- Dopo tutto . . . ho rinunciato alla paga con piacere. E spero che tua moglie migliori...

-- E io spero che il padron di casa te lasci nella casa....

-- E io mi auguro che tuo figlio guarisca presto...

The truth came out but the actors, after protesting, laughed about how Maiori had fooled them. Since they liked Maiori, they continued to act in his troupe because they knew he would pay them when the box office receipts were better.³

On Wednesday, February 20, 1901, Riccardo Cordiferro (pen name for Alessandro Sisca), poet, journalist and editor of La Follia, produced and directed in association with the Maiori-Rapone company, at Majestic Hall, located at 115-125 East 125th Street, the premiere of Cordiferro's well known social drama in four acts, L'Onore Perduto (Lost Honor).⁴

Although the financial arrangements were undisclosed, the performance, it will be noted, served as a benefit for the author. Cordiferro produced several more showings of this best known of his dramas, in

¹-- If I pay you... Cinicella's (sic) wife has a serious condition. She needs doctors and medicine... Let him be first. Can you wait until tomorrow?" Ibid.

²-- After all . . . I refused my salary with pleasure. And I hope that your wife gets better...
 -- And I hope that your landlord lets you remain in your home....
 -- And I pray that your son gets well soon..." Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴De Giuli, loc. cit.

cooperation with the Maiori-Rapone troupe: on Monday, November 25, 1901 at the Manhattan Lyceum;¹ on Wednesday, April 23, 1902 at Concordia Hall in Waterbury, Connecticut;² on Sunday, June 7, 1903 and Tuesday, June 16, 1903 at Catholic Institute Hall in Newark, New Jersey.³ These are the only reported instances of Cordiferro's work with Maiori, in the 20th century.

After February 1901, notices of performances are lacking until Monday, July 8 through Sunday, July 14, 1901 when Maiori and Rapone produced "attractive spectacles" at the East New York Music Hall in Brooklyn. Owned by Pasquale Buonora, the theatre was also known as the Congress Music Hall, located at 166-72 Stone Avenue at Highland Boulevard and Pacific Street. They charged as admission 10 to 15 cents.⁴

During the time span between July 1901 and April 1902 Maiori and Rapone occupied the Liberty Theatre,⁵ 234 West 42nd Street, although the exact dates of performances, the length of the stay or financial arrangements are unknown.

The next year was an exciting one for Maiori, as he moved in and out of several Bowery theatres. While Guglielmo Ricciardi was unique in that he was the first to emerge from the Italian-American theatre to perform for American audiences, Maiori, on the other hand, enjoyed the singular distinction of bringing large American audiences to the

¹Il Corriere di Harlem, Anno III, N. 21 (n.d.), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

²Democrat, (n.d.), clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 164 (June 13, 1903), p. 1.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 161 (July 6, 1901), p. 2.

⁵L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 146 (May 26, 1902), p. 2.

Italian-American theatre, at least to his theatre. There are several versions of the story of Maiori's discovery by New York's affluent social elite, such as this one, written many years after the fact (in 1927) by the journalist for The American Mercury, Giuseppe Cautela:

At the Windsor, Maiori gave a drama concocted out of the life of Benvenuto Cellini. It had a stirring scene: the casting of the statue. Cellini was surrounded by his pupils, who, fired by the genius of the master, gave a tremendous movement and action to the scene. The shouts of approval burst through the vestibule doors of the theatre and were heard by an American reporter who happened to be passing by. This was in the days when reporters could not stay away from the Bowery. He went into the theatre; the next day he revealed to the American public that there was an Italian theatre in the Bowery. The then famous Four Hundred ordered their coachmen to take them down to see Maiori.

Actually, this romantic version is not exactly accurate. An artist, not a reporter, was instrumental in bringing Maiori to the attention of influential people. Also, the performance of Benevenuto Cellini, the biographical drama by Paolo Meurice which took place on Monday, April 21, 1902 at the Windsor Theatre, 43-47 Bowery at Grand Street,² (H. Heine was its lessee and manager)³ was not so much the cause as the result of American assistance. The program was produced under the auspices of a committee of American patrons headed by a Mr. Taylor.⁴ How all this came about is reported more accurately by the anonymous journalist for the New York Herald in an article entitled, "Salvini of the Bowery is Society's Protege", written in the midst of the Maiori "phenomenon:"

¹Giuseppe Cautela, "The Italian Theatre in New York," The American Mercury, (1927), p. 107.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 106 (April 16, 1902), p. 2.

³Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 1899, p. 372 and 1905, p. 12.

⁴Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 28, 1942), p. 5S.

Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, Jr. has a new role.

It is nothing less than the discovery, training and developing of a new lion. Not an African monarch with a shaggy mane and terrible claws, but a drawing room lion.

He is Antonio Maiori, an Italian actor, and Mrs. Havemeyer and her friends say he is the greatest tragedian in the world.

. one day William Sartin, the artist, who has a larger acquaintance in Bohemia than perhaps any one else in New York, heard of him, and just for a diversion and a "lark" got up a party of society folk to go down in the slums and see his find.

In the party was Mrs. Havemeyer, and like all the others, she was delighted at the young Italian's genius.

In the course of a few days she arranged for him to give a reading at her home, and after it was over she and Mr. Havemeyer and a number of their friends agreed to supply the finances necessary to hire a Broadway theatre for a short run, and so to give Maiori a chance.¹

The patronizing reference to Maiori as a caged attraction is more accurate than it is polite. For about a year, going down to the Bowery to see Maiori perform Shakespeare was the novelty of the uptown elite:

A splendid example of the quality of Maiori's art was shown when Mrs. Havemeyer and some sixty or seventy of her friends went to see Maiori perform for the first time.

The play was a seven act drama, given with wretched scenery and costumes and a very poor supporting company, beside being played in Italian, a language which not more than one in twenty of the party understood, probably, yet the genius of this poor Italian held them so thoroughly that they sat breathless until after one o'clock in the plain Bowery theatre.

Among the party on that occasion were Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hunt, Mr. and Mrs. J. Wells Champney, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin M. Blashfield, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Shields Clark, Mr. and Mrs. John Eldeskin, J. Alden² Weir and W. Marion Crawford, the son of the famous novelist.

Although it is not hinted what kind of "training" Mrs. Havemeyer had to give to the Italian actor, she was at least helpful in "developing" audiences for him and in raising outright financial support, hence the Benvenuto Cellini production.

¹Owen Kildare, "Salvini of the Bowery is Society's Protege," New York Herald, Fifth Section (August 31, 1902), p. 9.

²Ibid.

The transition in his fortune is a startling one. Up to a couple of months ago he had never had command of more than couple of hundred dollars. Now he can command ten thousand.

Two months ago he was hopeless of the future. Now it looks to him so roseate that he can hardly wait for the¹ theatrical season to come and bring him into his glory.

The word "hopeless" used above is less an assessment of Maiori's state of mind than it is the writer's assessment of what he saw to be the state of the Italian theatre with its "wretched scenery and costumes." None of the Italian newspapers ever reported his despondency, if it at all existed.

While awaiting the promise of the new theatrical season, Maiori and Rapone contined producing in the Bowery. From June 1 through June 15, the company remained at the Windsor Theatre, renamed the People's Theatre. The proceeds from performances from June 1 through June 8 went in part to benefit colonial institutions and endeavors,² "colonial" meaning, of course, Little Italy. Perhaps Maiori was attempting to filter into the community some of the good fortune he experienced from outside it. Tickets at 25 cents, 50 cents, 75 cents and \$1.00 were available in advance from Antonio Maiori, where he then resided on the first floor at 190 Grand Street. Costumes for the performances of June 8 through 15 were supplied by J.P. Adler and Company.³ J.P. was none other than the Yiddish Theatre's Jacob Adler, himself. The details of the financial arrangements for the use of the costumes are not known, but it is not uncommon during this period for the Yiddish and Italian theatre companies to share the use of theatres on alternating schedules,

¹ Ibid.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 146 (May 26, 1902), p. 2.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 157 (June 6, 1902), p. 2.

and quite possibly the reciprocal use of costumes and/or sets. It is interesting to note that the "wretched scenery" perceived by the New York Herald observer is described only a few months later by the Italian L'Araldo as "rich."¹ Possibly, Maiori's new found success with a more affluent audience has provided him with the means for better scenery and costumes.

The company appears to have been inactive, at least in New York City, for the summer of 1902. They performed at least once at Turn Hall in Waterbury, Connecticut on July 24. Writing in August, the New York Herald reporter described how Maiori appeared to Americans during this period:

Maiori is as swarthy as the usual run of Italians, and, unlike the majority of his countrymen, he has not good teeth. He is about five feet nine inches tall and very heavily built, although he has not an ounce of superfluous flesh on him.

His eyes are small and sunk rather more deeply than usual in his head, but there is nevertheless, the fire of passion smouldering in them, which can be seen in flashes as he talks.

His nose recedes a little at the bridge, but his forehead is broad, though rather low. His best point is his jaw, which is heavy and massive -- the bulldog jaw -- denotes the man of indomitable spirit and courage.

Wrapped in Shakespearian Study.

His whole heart and soul are wrapped up in his work. He spends his leisure in studying and rehearsing. There is no actor today who has a larger repertoire than he. He has the complete works of Shakespeare by heart. Nearly all of Sardou's dramas he can rehearse without looking at a prompt book, and he knows not only one role, but all roles.

Although Maiori is apparently as "hard" as an athlete in training, he said that he takes no exercise² beyond a little walk. His whole time is devoted to study.

Shakespeare and Sardou made up only a part of the large repertory of the Maiori-Rapone company, which began the new fall theatrical season

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 160 (June 9, 1902), p. 2.

² Kildare, p. 9.

at the People's Theatre, 201 Bowery at Spring Street, with three performances on September 8 and 23, and October 6. After this rather brief stay, they moved to Miner's Theatre, managed by E. D. Miner. The theatre held 1,930 seats¹ and was located at 165-169 Bowery. On November 2 and 9, tickets were priced at 15 cents, 25 cents, 35 cents, and 50 cents.² The glorious new season for which Maiori had allegedly been hoping had arrived, and the small number of performances in the Bowery theatres may be accounted for by the fact that he was engaged in giving

a course of dramatic readings, in Italian of course, at the houses of a number of Mrs. Havemeyer's set, and a series of private performances in the theatres which a number of the richest of New Yorkers have had built in their homes.³

American interest in and support for Maiori led finally to the long-awaited rental of an uptown theatre so that he could be presented to a wider public. The program was produced under the patronage of affluent New Yorkers for a week in March 1903 at the Carnegie Lyceum, 57 Street at 7th Avenue. Tickets sold at \$1.50 for the front of the orchestra, \$1.00 for the back, \$1.50 for the first two rows of the balcony, \$1.00 for the back rows, and boxes went for \$2.00. One could buy them at Maiori's on Grand Street or from William Sartain at 152 West 57th Street.⁴ Sartain, it will be remembered, was the artist who had originally brought Mrs. Havemeyer to see Maiori in the Bowery. The week-long program included the night of Saturday, March 14, the only

¹ Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 1905, p. 12.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 311 (November 7, 1902), p. 2.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 73 (March 14, 1903), p. 1; L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 55 (February 21, 1903), p. 2; N. 67 (March 8, 1903), p. 2; and Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 28, 1942), p. 5S.

date for which specific plays are certain: Rupe Tarpea (Tarpean Rock), four-act drama by Professor F. Bernardini and Felice bebe (Happy Baby), one act farce in the Neapolitan dialect.¹ While the casting is not noted, the drama undoubtedly starred Antonio Maiori and the farce, Pasquale Rapone.

Throughout this period of Maiori's new found popular success, we can only speculate as to the effect on Rapone. The American press does not mention him in the articles extolling the Maiori genius. We can easily understand the attraction that Maiori reciting Shakespeare might have had for a curious American audience, but slapstick farces in the Neapolitan dialect are another matter. While American audiences might have enjoyed them as an added attraction on the bill, it was clearly Maiori's dramatic performances that garnered the necessary support for the run at the Carnegie Lyceum. For unknown reasons, three months later, on June 16, the two partners worked together for the last time as La Compagnia Maiori e Rapone.² Briefly, they reunited for the weekend of July 2, 3 and 4 in 1904.³ Also, Maiori appeared in a Hamlet produced by Rapone on December 6, 1904⁴ and one of Rapone's farces, Pascariello Polisse, was produced by Maiori on June 2, 1905.⁵ But except for these few instances, the long partnership between the two actors was over.

¹ Ibid.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 164 (June 13, 1903), p. 1; and La Patria, Anno X, N. 21 (May 30, 1903); and N. 24, n.d., Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 184 (July 2, 1904), p. 3; and N. 185 (July 3, 1904), p. 3.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 440 (December 5, 1904), p. 3.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 118 (April 29, 1905), p. 3.

Rapone's ventures with his own company will be taken up later.

Before the split, the company had started producing shows on Thursday, January 15, 1903 at a new location, the Drammatico Nazionale, 138 Bowery,¹ where they remained steadily through at least Sunday, March 6, 1904,² with these few exceptions: the aforementioned week in March 1903 at the Carnegie Lyceum; Monday, April 6, 1903 at the Manhattan Lyceum; several isolated dates at the Windsor Theatre: Sunday, June 7, Thursday, September 3, Sunday, September 6, 1903. At the Windsor, Maiori kept his popular prices down to 15 cents, 25 cents, 35 cents, 50 cents, and 75 cents.³ Also, a few out of town trips took the company away from the Drammatico Nazionale: to Catholic Institute Hall in Newark for the already noted production of Cordiferro's L'Onore Perduto on Sunday, June 7 and Tuesday, June 16, 1903 followed up by another production on Friday, October 2;⁴ and to the New Auditorium in Newark on Friday, September 18th.⁵

Except for these few sporadic sidetrips, the company enjoyed the use of the Drammatico Nazionale for over a year. Maiori's popular and commercial success had finally assured a regular home where the company consistently performed a prodigious amount of theatre, frequently on a daily basis. In fact, Maiori was sure to announce when there would not be a performance, such as when he informed the press that Friday, October 23, 1903 would be dark so that the mise en scene for the follow-

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 15 (January 15, 1903), p. 2.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 65 (March 5, 1904), p. 3.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 142 (May 22, 1903), p. 2.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 275 (October 2, 1903) p. 3.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 261 (September 18, 1903), p. 3.

ing evening's tragedy, Francesco da Rimini by Silvio Pellico, could be set up.¹ This is a time when the theatre was filled every night with spectators.² Sundays usually had two performances, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. The box office opened at 10:00 a.m. Sunday mornings and box seats cost 75 cents. A number of benefits went to other performers, including Maiori himself: to Mr. B. De Vincenzi on October 30; to Mr. G. Di Giuseppe on November 13th; to Mrs. Concetta Maiori on January 15, 1904; and to Antonio Maiori on January 15, 1903, and November 9 and 19, 1903.

The Italian press invariably praised Maiori during this entire period 1900-1905: "Maiori . . . ha intuito artistico, . . . sa impadronersi della situazione, e . . . ha una certa special maniera di porgere, che la rende cara agli italiani . . ."³ This is just one example of the many positive comments on Maiori and his company that appear with annoying frequency throughout these years in Italian dailies, annoying because an unbiased, critical assessment of the company's output, its assets and limitations, its range are all unavailable from this vantage point in the late 20th century. Only very rarely does the Italian press give a negative critique on any of the Italian-American companies, whether amateur or professional, and certainly the Maiori-Rapone organization was a cut above average. Also, it should be remembered, that Maiori, at least during these few years, was

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 295 (October 23, 1903), p. 3.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 317 (November 13, 1903), p. 3.

³ "Maiori . . . has artistic intuition . . . knows how to take command of the situation, and . . . has a certain special style of delivery that is beloved of all italians . . . " L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 15 (January 15, 1904), p. 3.

a faithful and consistent advertiser, frequently and for long stretches, on a daily basis. Although we lack the financial statements for his arrangement with the dailies, this fact should not be overlooked in considering this type of criticism.

The Drammatico Nazionale closed down operations on January 27, 1904 in order to implement repairs and alterations to correspond to the new city fire regulations. These had been prompted by the disastrous fire in a theatre in Chicago which had claimed many lives.¹ Shortly before this, at 11:00 p.m. on January 19, a fire which started in a pharmacy, had spread to the People's Theatre at 199-201 Bowery, nearby.² The Drammatico Nazionale was supposed to reopen in a week but the repairs must have taken longer because Maiori didn't perform again until Saturday, February 20, the date of the advertised re-opening.³ There is no indication that Maiori incurred the expenses for these repairs since they probably fell on whoever owned the theatre. Not long after, on Sunday, March 6, Maiori put on his last shows at the theatre, and for reasons unknown but probably financial, moved in and out of various Bowery theatres for the rest of the season:

Miner's Theatre, 165-169 Bowery at Broome Street, on March 13 and 20, April 10 and 24, and May 1;

the Windsor Theatre, 43-47 Bowery at Grand Street, on March 30;

the Grand Street Theatre, 255 Grand Street at Chrystie Street, on April 17;

the Brooklyn Labor Lyceum Hall, 947-57 Willoughby Avenue at Myrtle Avenue, on May 8;

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 29 (January 29, 1904), p. 3.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 20 (January 20, 1904), p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 51 (February 20, 1904), p. 3.

the Villa Napoli, 196-98 Grand Street, on July 2 and 3; and the Thalia Theatre, 46-48 Bowery, on July 4.

With the move out of the Drammatico Nazionale, Maiori's productions suddenly dwindled to once a week on Sundays. Apparently the financial support from New York's social register had fallen off by this time and the novelty of an Italian performing Shakespeare had worn off. In April, L'Araldo noted that the premiere of La Portatrice di Pane (The Bread Bearer), spectacular drama in six acts and a prologue, adapted from the novel by Saverio Montepin, on Sunday, April 24 at Miner's Theatre, was attended by one thousand spectators.¹ The Italian reporter obviously considered this remarkable enough to make note of it for his readers, but the capacity of Miner's Theatre was 1,930² which made the house little more than half full, or almost half empty, depending on which way one views it. Miner's Theatre and the other Bowery theatres inherited from earlier generations of Americans were larger and more expensive to rent than the smaller, makeshift theatres recycled by the Italians from other existing structures. Such must have been the case with the Drammatico Nazionale, since the address at 138 Bowery does not correspond to any of the well-known Bowery theatres. Probably cheaper to rent, the Drammatico Nazionale was a small and more manageable theatre for Maiori's daily performances. Maps of the period show the building at that address to be smaller than the other Bowery theatres; also the building did not extend through to the street behind it as did the old London, the Thalia, the Atlantic Gardens and the Germania Assembly Rooms. The reasons for Maiori's departure from the Drammatico

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 116 (April 27, 1904), p. 3.

² Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 1905, p. 3.

Nazionale must have been financial as shrinking audiences made the cost of renting even the smaller theatre prohibitive. The only financial note for this period indicates that the performance for Sunday, May 1 of Tristi amori (Sad loves), a premiere of the three-act drama by Giuseppe Giacosa, was a benefit in honor of Antonio Maiori.¹

We can only speculate as to the circumstances surrounding the brief collaboration between Maiori and Rapone for three performances on the July 4th weekend. Did the two actors entertain discussions about reuniting again on a permanent basis? Maiori, as we know, was considerably less productive. Rapone, who had been touring out of town for a time, had racked up only one performance in New York City thus far. The causes and results of their association are intriguing but short lived. Rapone, in September, began a prolific and impressive season, separate and apart from Maiori, and the latter began the new theatrical season first with an isolated performance on Thursday, September 1 at the People's Theatre of La fine di Sodoma (The fall of Sodom), Hennar Suderman's spectacular drama in five acts.²

After this, Maiori embarked on a new venture. On Saturday, September 10, La Compagnia Antonio Maiori debuted at Ferrando's Music Hall (also known as the Cafe Fernando), 184 Sullivan Street in Greenwich Village, and continued there with almost daily performances until Thursday, November 3. Ferrando's Hall was a *caffe concerto* and was owned and managed by Mr. Ferrando in the usual manner, although the exact details of the financial arrangements between Ferrando and Maiori remain a mystery. All we know is that Maiori enjoyed the proceeds of

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 116 (April 27, 1904), p. 3.

²Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 245 (August 31, 1904), p. 2.

two benefits for himself, on October 6 and November 3,¹ his last at that location. Another benefit went to the company member, Miss Guglielmina Balsamo on October 20th.²

Maiori's movement into the *caffe concerto* arena is significant. Except for the two performances he shared with Pasquale Rapone at the Villa Napoli on the preceding July 2 and 3, this represents Maiori's first businesslike venture into an area of entertainment where the emphasis was not on plays alone but on variety shows in combination with dramas and comedies. The ambience of a successful *caffe concerto* depended upon the happy balance of customers drinking, eating and socializing, and balladeers, comedians, character sketches, duets and other variety acts sharing the bill with the full length drama or comedy. Maiori also produced "variety spectacles" as they were billed, probably as a condition to his stay at Ferrando's Hall. Sometimes the variety spectacle is advertised without any prose theatre accompaniment. What is most interesting about Maiori's introduction to the *caffe concerto* milieu is that in later years (c. 1915) he would completely abandon the Italian prose theatre and go into the variety theatre business exclusively.

Maiori's success at Ferrando's Hall is difficult to estimate. Suddenly on November 3, the ads for his productions stopped. Except for one guest appearance with Rapone's company on Tuesday, December 6, 1904, La Compagnia Antonio Maiori did not reappear until Sunday, December 25, 1904 at the London Theatre, 235-37 Bowery at Prince Street, where the

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 280 (October 5, 1904), p. 2; and N. 308 (November 3, 1904), p. 2.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 295 (October 20, 1904), p. 2.

company began a run of Sunday performances that continued regularly until Sunday, May 14, 1905. Since Maiori's whereabouts are not pinpointed during the hiatus in December 1904, it is very possible that he and his troupe were still producing shows at Ferrando's.

Admission prices for performances in December, 1904, January and February, 1905 remained at popular levels; 15 cents, 25 cents, 35 cents, 50 cents, and 75 cents for boxes. The box office opened at 10:00 on Sundays. Usually, the first show went up at 3:00 p.m. and the second at 8:00 p.m. On a few occasions, Maiori and his troupe mounted productions at another theatre on another day of the week. The first of these was the historical and spectacular dramatic work in six acts and 11 scene changes, Quo Vadis, at Webster Hall, 125 East 11th Street between Third and Fourth Avenues (now the home of The Ritz) on Wednesday, February 1st. The special allure of this show were the period sets and costumes and the masked ball afterwards with prizes for the best costumes awarded by a committee of judges.¹

Maiori and his company made another side trip, this time to a *caffe concerto*, the Tavern of Minico Chiantedda on Friday, February 24 for a performance of Mafiusi (Mafia) by Giuseppe Rizzotti. The *caffe* proprietor, Minico Chiantedda himself appeared in the cast.²

What occupied Maiori's major efforts and energies during the months of March, April and May was his fundraising drive for the construction of an Italian theatre. To this end, he staged many benefits at the London and at other theatres, including one in New Jersey. It all began with a long letter from Maiori to L'Araldo, a letter so

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 28 (January 28, 1904), p. 4.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 62 (March 3, 1905), p. 4.

lengthy the paper was unable to print it for lack of space. The daily obliged, however, by summarizing it:

Il noto artista tanto caro al pubblico Antonio Maiori . . . ricorda il progetto da lui sempre vagheggiato quello cioè di avere un teatro italiano ed aggiunge che una rispettabile compagnia Americana si e' offerta di costruire il teatro spendendone' cento venticinquemilla dollari e ricevendo anticipatamente soli \$20,000. - Aggiunge il Maiori che per l'appello rivolto ai suoi connazionali ed amici e' riuscito a raccogliere circa \$10,000 merce' l'emissione di obbligazioni del valore di scudi cinque ognuna rimborsabili in un determinato periodo di tempo ed aventi dritto a titolo di premio a 25 ammissioni gratuite.

Termina il Maiori rivolgendosi ancora una volta a coloro che hanno amore e culto per l'arte perche' diano il loro concorso ad un'opera altamente civile ed assicura' che nei mesi di Marzo e Aprile nei diversi teatri della citta' saranno date delle rappresentazioni al fondo per la erezione del Teatro.

L'insigne artista spera che nel corso di questo anno potra' inaugurarsi il teatro Italiano, e noi plaudendo alla sua iniziativa facciamo voti che presto lo scopo sia raggiunto.¹

Maiori neglected to name the "reputable American company" that bid for the theatre contract. Perhaps it was a contact made through his American fans. The letter does reveal that although Maiori's weekly performance schedules demanded less time, he was expanding his energies in fundraising activities for a theatre which might provide a permanent

¹"The noted artist so beloved of the public Antonio Maiori ... reminds us of the dream he has always cherished, that of having an Italian theatre, and he adds that a reputable American company has offered to construct the theatre at a cost of one hundred twenty five thousand dollars, and collecting only \$20,000 in advance. -- Maiori adds that through the appeal circulated amongst his countrymen and friends he succeeded in collecting about \$10,000 thanks to the issue of bonds valued at 5 dollars, each one reimbursable after a determined period of time and having the right to claim the premium of 25 free admissions.

Maiori finished by addressing himself once again to those who have a love and an appreciation for art because they would be involved in a highly cultural endeavour, and he assures that during the months of March and April in various theatres of the city there will be performances for the building fund for the theatre.

The illustrious artist hopes that in the course of this year he will be able to inaugurate the Italian theatre, and we, applauding his initiative, pray that soon his hopes will be fulfilled." L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 68 (March 9, 1905), p. 3.

home as he had enjoyed at the Drammatico Nazionale. His success in raising the initial \$10,000 and his heartfelt plea for support in L'Araldo were followed by assistance and support from many in the Italian community.

All performances at the London in March, April and May were building fund benefits except for that of Sunday, May 7.¹ The first of these benefits began Sunday, March 12,² followed by an outside production at Webster Hall, sponsored by La Societa di Mutuo Soccorso fra i Sarti Italiani (The Italian Tailors' Mutual Benefit Society), on Wednesday, March 15th. The night's entertainment consisted of the five-act spectacular drama Don Cesare di Bazan by Philippe Francois Pinel Dumanoir and Adolphe Dennery, followed by a "brilliant" farce. A special committee from the Italian Tailors group volunteered their assistance for this night's benefit: Giuseppe Filippone, Antonio Ferrara, Vito Cifaldi, Umberto De Curtis, Francesco Schettini, Nicola Viola, Vincenzo Rimini, Umberto Cupaioli, Tommaso Chimienti, Luciano Sessa, Giuseppe Canzanella, Michelangelo Carbone, Giuseppe Rosa, Pietro Durante and Alfonso Principe.³

Among the above, Antonio Ferrara was the original Ferrara of the Ferrara's caffe and pastry shop at 195 Grand Street that still operates today. He was a very active community member, his name appearing frequently throughout the pages of the Italian dailies in relation to community events and festivals. He also helped produce shows for other theatre companies in this history, as well as Italian opera at the Grand

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 123 (May 4, 1905), p. 3.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 68 (March 9, 1905), p. 3.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 74 (March 15, 1905), p. 3.

theatre in collaboration with Tony Bagarozzi.¹ He was the chairman for the Festival of the Tiro a Segno Nazionale Italiana.² He also served as President of the Italian Barbers Supply and Perfumery Company located at 190 Grand Street, telephone number 0733 R. Spring. The company shipped imported and domestic barbershop supplies C.O.D. to all parts of the United States.³ If Antonio Maiori managed to secure Ferrara's support, it indicates that influential members of Little Italy were behind him in this endeavor.

Another benefit which elicited community support was that of Monday, March 27 when Maiori and La Societa di Mutuo-Soccorso fra i Cittadini Napoletani e della Campania (The Citizens of Naples and Campania Mutual Benefit Society) cooperated in staging a huge Neapolitan Feast. Antonio Maiori and his company staged Il Vagabondo (The Vagabond), a drama in five acts by Matteo Rossi, and Inferno, purgatorio e paradiso (Hell, purgatory and heaven), a "brilliant" farce with Pulcinella. The festival also included a vocal concert by artists of the caffè concertos of Little Italy, community dancing and a lottery, the prizes for which were a man's gold watch, a gold pin and a woman's ring. Antonio Maiori acted as one of the many honorary presidents of the Neapolitan Feast. The executive committee consisted of the President, Mr. G. Mazza; the treasurer, Mr. E. Avallano; the secretary, Mr. G. Donau; and an assistant, Mr. C. Liquori. The committee was augmented by Mr. E. Siccardi and his assistants Mr. N. Casioro and Carmine Nucciarone who helped keep order in the theatre, by Mr. N.

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 122 (May 4, 1905), p. 1.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 213 (August 19, 1905), p. 3.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 248 (September 5, 1903), p. 2.

Rubinacci, another president and by Mr. A. Carino, Mr. M. La Sala, and Mr. G. Albertini, who were in charge of the evening's social events.¹

Maiori and La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica produced a show at Turn Hall in Elizabeth, New Jersey on Tuesday, March 28,² his last out of town trip in 1905. After this series of benefits, there was no more talk of an Italian Theatre, no more benefits for this purpose, no appeals to newspapers, no more fundraising efforts, at least on Maiori's part. It is a pity that the financial statements pertaining to this drive have not come to light but undoubtedly, a few months of benefits was not enough to raise the \$125,000 cost of theatre construction, nor even the \$20,000 down payment. The last benefit to this end was that of Sunday, May 14th at the London at 3 p.m., while the 8 p.m. performance for that date was billed as a benefit in honor of Antonio Maiori.³

After leaving the London, Maiori put on a week of daily performances at the People's Theatre, 199-201 Bowery, from Monday, May 29 to Sunday, June 4. Tickets for the June 2nd benefit for Miss Maria Prete could be purchased from Raffaele Penza at his Hotel del Matese at 198 Grand Street.⁴ Maiori finished the season with a single production of Giulio Cesare (Julius Caesar), William Shakespeare's tragedy, at the Academy of Music, 14th Street between Third and Fourth Avenues at Irving Place, on Tuesday, June 27th. Tickets cost 25 cents, 35 cents, 50

¹Il Telegrafo, Anno V. N. 68 (March 9, 1905), p. 2; and N. 87 (March 28, 1905), p. 4.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 82 (March 23, 1905), p. 5.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 128 (May 11, 1905), p.3.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 130 (May 11, 1905), p. 3.

cents, 75 cents, \$1,00 and \$2,00.¹

The activity of La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Antonio Maiori was very limited during the fall theatrical season of 1905. All but two performances, on Sundays, September 10th and November 19th at the London Theatre, were benefits. The baritone, Emilio Scotti and the actor, Mr. S. Zito shared the benefit on Thursday, August 31 at the Manhattan Lyceum.² On Tuesday, September 26th Maiori produced a benefit for his own brother, the photographer Giuseppe Maiori, whose place of business at 202 Grand Street was badly damaged by fire. To this end, the proprietor of Webster Hall, Ben Sprey, donated the use of the theatre.³

On September 18th an earthquake rocked the region of Calabria in Southern Italy, and to alleviate the sufferings of the victims, a number of efforts were made by the Italian community in New York and outside the city as well, to raise the necessary funds. Antonio Maiori wrote another lengthy letter to L'Araldo which was again summarized by the daily:

L'artista Sig. Antonio Maiori l'indirizzo una lettera che si duole di non poter riprodurre nella sua integrità -- nella quale, rispondendo a coloro i quali lo hanno accusato di nulla aver fatto per associarsi all'attuale movimento in Calabria, dice che ben sapendo qual esito tocchi a spettacoli destinati a tale scopo, Maiori ha messo se' a la sua compagnia a disposizione di un serio ed autorevole comitato che volesse assumersi l'incarico.

Egli dice inoltre di aver iniziato pubbliche colletto nei teatri in cui lavora e di aver messo il vestiario che usa nelle sue rappresentazioni a disposizione dei Circoli filodrammatici che davanno recite pro Calabria.⁴

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 161 (June 19, 1905), p. 3.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 242 (August 31, 1905), p. 3.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 268 (September 26, 1905), p. 5.

⁴ "The artist Mr. Antonio Maiori addressed a letter which it pains us not to be able to reproduce in its entirety -- in it, responding to those who have accused him of doing nothing to join the pro Calabria

This letter was communicated in the October 4 edition of L'Araldo. If the date of the Calabrian earthquake was September 18 and Maiori explains that he took up "collections in the theatres in which he worked," then it is very possible that he produced more shows than we are aware of. The only recorded performance between the date of the earthquake and the date of his letter is the September 26 benefit for his brother, Giuseppe. Whatever his financial situation during this period when Maiori's theatrical activities had noticeably diminished, someone out there expected him to do more than lend costumes, collect donations and announce his availability.

The Ladies Committee for Calabria took Maiori up on his offer to perform and La Compagnia Antonio Maiori put on the one-act comedy by Roberto Bracco, Le Maschere (The Masks) on Monday, November 20 at the Grand Central Palace, 43rd Street and Lexington Avenue. Dr. Marafioti communicated to the press the full roster of entertainers and events of the Grand Benefit Festival for Calabria, which began at 8 p.m., including a Charity Bazaar and Baby Beauty Contest, and dancing until 6 in the morning.¹ This event represents Maiori's last recorded effort in 1905.

movement, he says that knowing well what results are attained from shows dedicated to such a purpose, Maiori has put himself and his company at the disposition of any genuine and authorized committee who would want to assume the expense.

He says, moreover, that he started public collections in the theatre in which he worked and he put the costume collections that he uses in his productions at the disposal of amateur groups who gave performances for Calabria." L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 276 (October 4, 1905), p. 3.

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 311 (November 9, 1905), p. 2.

Before the Calabrian benefit, one other production completes the season, that of a benefit in honor of a Mr. Basilio Iulo at Webster Hall on Wednesday, November 8. What is interesting about this performance is that a young student from Campobasso, Virgilio Di Scenza, helped produce two plays of his own pen. The newspaper notice boasted of an advance sale of 500 tickets, four days before the scheduled performance.¹

So far this survey of Maiori's enterprises has been concerned with his occupation of various theatres, patterns of activity and length of stay, and whatever business and financial details that have come to light regarding the physical production and technical aspects of running his theatres. There follows now a consideration of the artists that made up La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Antonio Maiori.

Invariably Maiori directed the major theatrical piece for any given production, whether that were a drama or a comedy. The only exceptions to this rule occurred when Riccardo Cordiferro produced and directed his own plays in collaboration with Maiori. During his partnership with Pasquale Rapone, the comic farces and afterpieces that accompanied and followed each major play were under Rapone's supervision. After the departure of Rapone in June 1903 no one was ever credited with taking Rapone's place, so we assume Maiori took charge of the farces as well as the plays.

As an actor, Antonio Maiori was the company's star interpreter of Shakespeare's protagonists and the heroes of the major tragedies and melodramas from the French and Italian repertoire. Considering the enormous output of La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Antonio Maiori during this period 1900-1905, it is safe to say that Maiori was the leading

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 306 (November 4, 1905), p. 3.

dramatic actor of the Italian-American stage. No one else in this history essayed such a wide range of roles with such consistency and diligence during this six-year span.

As Guglielmo Ricciardi had admired Alessandro Salvini, Antonio Maiori was instead a disciple of the elder Salvini (Tommaso), whom he tried to imitate in style and choice of material. Maiori even unabashedly billed himself on theatre posters as the "Emulo di Salvini" (Rival of Salvini).¹ We noted earlier how the New York Herald called him "Salvini of the Bowery." Some of his major roles included: Shakespeare's Hamlet and Othello; the Regent, Gloucester in Riccardo Cuor Di Leone ovvero L'esaltazione al Trono di Odoardo V. Re d'Inghilterra; the title roles in La Jena del Cimitero, Nerone by Pietro Cossa, L'Ebreo Errante by Eugene Sue, Mastro Giorgio by Nicola Misasi, Il Vagabondo by Matteo Rossi, La Moglie di Claudio by Alexandre Dumas, fils, Peppe di Brasi detto Malacarne ovvero Cuor di Siciliano by Stefano Interdonato; the protagonist of L'Onore Perduto by Riccardo Cordiferro; Scarpio in La Tosca by Victorien Sardou; Corrado in La Morte Civile by Paolo Giacometti; Selke in Casa Paterna by Hermann Sudermann; the protagonist of Le Due Orfanelle ovvero una pagina dell'archivio segreto by Cavaliere Federico Stella.

Never was there a word of adverse criticism regarding Maiori's direction or acting style in any of the Italian dailies examined, or for that matter from any American journalist, although the Americans were more critical of the rest of his company, where the Italian press was not. Maiori's wife, Concetta Arcamone, frequently played the leading

¹ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 28, 1942), p. 5S.

female roles, though not exclusively. Among these were: Ophelia and Desdemona; the title roles in Fedora by Sardou, La Portatrice di Pane by Saverio Montepin, La Moglie di Claudio; Magda in Casa Paterna, Leonora in L'Onore by Sudermann, Gemma in La Jena del Cimitero, Atta in Nerone, Luisa, the blind girl in Le Due Orfanelle, Ortensia in Il Corsaro Francese O La Signora di San Tropez. In February 1905 Il Telegrafo reported that she had completely recovered from an accident in which she was hurt involving an electric car on Summit Street in Hoboken, New Jersey. With her at the time of the accident was another actor in the company, Vincenzo Pozzi, who was described as on the road to recovery from a fractured collarbone.¹ Pozzi and his wife, Rosa, also acted with other groups. Concetta Arcamone eventually left the theatre to care for her large family.² In 1927, Giuseppe Cautela remarked that she had died a few years earlier.³

Mrs. Renata Scarlati Brunorini of Newark, and a member of Guglielmo Ricciardi's company, was a popular actress, a director and playwright who worked with six other Italian-American theatre ensembles. Her roles with the Maiori group included: Musette in La Boheme by Henry Murger, Gertrude in Hamlet, Marchesa Giulia Traetta in La Jena del Cimitero, Sofia in L'Onore Perduto, Egloga in Nerone, Emma in La Morte Civile, Gilberta in Frou-Frou by E. Meinhac.

Papa Giuseppe Zaccone performed with five other Italian-American groups. His billed roles with Maiori were the Ghost in Hamlet, Traetta

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 41 (February 10, 1905), p. 2.

² Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 28, 1942), p. 55.

³ Cautela, p.107

in La Jena del Cimitero, and Tirrel, Guard in the Tower of London in Riccardo Cuor Di Leone. . . but undoubtedly he played many more roles. He had been an actor in Italy and was 80 years old in 1900. He was the father of Antonio Zaccone, a concert hall artist in New York City. His more famous son was the well known Italian Actor, Ermete Zaccone, with whom he worked and lived for many years. In a 1900 interview, he explained:

"We got along well together," he once said, "until a donna brutta, who had lived with a man without a nose and was otherwise disreputable, came along and took him away from me." So the old man came to New York, and lives on a few dollars a week, while the son is famous, rich and silent as far as his father is concerned.¹

A donna brutta means ugly woman. On Tuesday, December 3, 1901 Zaccone was given a benefit in his honor at the Manhattan Lyceum where he performed in La Famiglia Ebreica ossia la Rivoluzione di Bologna nel 1860. The purpose of the benefit was a trip to Italy for Zaccone so he could take a well earned vacation. He was now 81 years old. The newspaper notice maintained that he still walked the boards of the Italian-American stage and enjoyed success.² In April 1902 he was back in New York City acting but at some point he returned to Italy, where he lived out the remainder of his years.³

Lucio C. Zumbo was an actor, director and scene designer and was connected with five other companies in this survey. With Maiori, he played Polonius. Maiori's brother Giuseppe, the photographer, played an actor in Hamlet, Matteo La Rossa in La Jena del Cimitero, and the Duke

¹Hapgood, p. 553.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 365 (October 31, 1902), p. 2.

³Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (July 12, 1942), p. 55.

of Buckingham in Riccardo Cuor Di Leone . . . Mrs. Rosina Arcamone Balzamo, Concetta Arcamone's sister, performed with Francesco Ricciardi's company, discussed below, and with Maiori played a nurse in Ricciardo Cuor Di Leone and Luciana in La Tosca.

Gaetano Santoro, the manager of the company, played Colometti in La Tosca. The very popular Mrs. Maria Prete, who was known as "the Eleonora Duse of our colonial stage"¹ and also appeared with twelve other companies, played Tosca. Pasquale Rapone, who starred in all the farces and played Pascariello, also interpreted the roles of the grave-digger in Hamlet, Michele in La Jena del Cimitero and the protagonist of Fantasma, before leaving to form his own troupe. Hutchins Hapgood described him in 1900: "He is a queer little man, delightfully ugly, and a spontaneous and felicitous actor also in serious roles."²

Mrs. Luigia Franchi was originally from Rome, Italy.³ Salvatore Melchiorri was a journalist.⁴ He reported on Italian-American theatre in Chicago for L'Araldo.⁵ Achille Fazio lived at 218 East 122 Street.⁶ Ascanio De Rosa moved around among several other theatre companies but in later years became Silvio Minciotti's right hand man. Here he is described by a contemporary:

¹ Abbamonte, "Nei Primordi . . . ," p. 5.

² Hapgood, p. 551.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 90 (March 31, 1903), p. 1.

⁴ Abbamonte, "Nei Primordi," p. 5.

⁵ Salvatore Melchiorri, "Recita," L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII. N. 31 (February 5, 1901), p. 6.

⁶ Addressbook of Riccardo Coriferro, Sisca Collection, Folder 130.

E' in Arte da qualche tempo, di rimbalzo, come suol dirsi, ma dovunque e' stato, sotto qualsiasi impresa e in qualunque combinazione, ha portato sempre invariabilmente il contributo di un'abilita' tutta propria, anche nei generi di lavori piu' disparati. E' cavaliere in tutto e prezioso compagno.

Many, many actors and actresses performed with the Maiori company and are too numerous to list here but are included in Appendix III listing theatre personnel, along with other companies with which they were associated.

Besides Giuseppe Zaccone, Pasquale Rapone and Guglielmo Ricciardi, a number of actors from Maiori's company either were or later became impresarios on their own and formed independent groups: Clemente Giglio began as a child actor with Maiori and Rapone, playing roles of Balilla in I Figli di Nessuno, Benino in La Cantata dei Pastori, and the young boy roles in Il Lupo di Mare and I Figli abbandonati;² Benedetto Colombo and his wife also acted with Maiori; Giovanni De Rosalia played Antonio in Il Corsaro Francese and Father Eusebio in La Tosca; Giovanni Flecchia, Francesco Vela, Paolo Cremonesi; Eduardo Migliaccio started with Maiori in the roles of Marcello in Hamlet and a guard in La Jena del Cimitero, but went on to become a famous concert hall comedian and caricaturist, later also forming his own troupe; Silvio Minciotti, played many roles with Maiori and married a company actress, Esterina Cunico, with whom he formed their own troupe. At the age of 15 he

¹"He has been an Artist for some time, on the rebound, so to speak, but wherever he has been, under whatever direction and in whatever partnership, he has always invariably contributed his own total ability, even in the most disparate works. He is a gentleman always and a valuable friend." Lanza, p. 12.

²Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (July 5, 1942), p. 5S.

became part of the Maiori company.¹ He interpreted Horatio in Hamlet, Carlo in La Jena del Cimitero, Odoardo in Riccardo Cuor Di Leone, Carlo in L'Onore, and Mario Cavaradosci in La Tosca.

Among the Maestri, Professori and musicians who furnished the music for the variety shows, intermissions, dancing and sometimes incidental background music for the plays, were: Pasquale Penza, Alberto G. Rosati and his Marine Band, Prof. Miglionico and his orchestra, Maestro Delnunzio, the mandolinist Mrs. Silvestri, the pianist Maestro Gaetano Merola, the violonist Mr. G. Quintano, and Maestro Ronghi. Pietro Lucchetti, a singing and piano teacher, at 8 Leroy Street, furnished vocal artists.² Salvatore Nunziato was a co-director of La Compagnia Lirica Italo-Americana at Grand and Chrystie Streets.³ Maestra Contessa Gilda Ruta frequently performed at various music halls around town, gave concerts of classical pieces and operatic selections in her home at 168 East 79th Street.⁴ She composed the music for the song, "Te ne ricordi piu'!"⁵

The repertoire of La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Antonio Maiori was the largest in the Italian-American Theatre during 1900-1905, equaled only by that of Ferrando's Hall. Not only did Maiori mount a staggering number of plays, but he introduced audiences to works which could not be seen in any other theatres. European Italian dramatists,

¹Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 28, 1942), p. 55.

²Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 93 (April 1, 1903), p. 1.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 138 (May 18, 1903), p. 2.

⁴Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 72 (March 13, 1903), p. 1; and L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 72 (March 12, 1904), p. 3.

⁵L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 4 (January 12, 1895), p. 1.

of course, were heard more frequently than any other category: Roberto Bracco, Carlo Cantu, Felice Cavalotti, Teabaldo Cicconi, Pietro Cossa, Gabriele D'Annunzio, Carlo Roti, Luigi De Lise, Tommaso Gherardi del Testa, Paolo Ferrari, Cavaliere Giuseppe Giacosa, Stefano Interdonato, Francesco Mastriani, Nicola Misasi, Professor F. Bernardini, M. Cuciniello, Giuseppe De Leo, Silvio Pellico, Marco Praga, Giuseppe Rizzotti, Gerolamo Rovetta, Luigi Gualtieri, Cavaliere Uff. Eduardo Scarpetta, Cavaliere Federico Stella, Rev. Dr. C. Ugone, Giovanni Verga, Libero Pilotti, F. S. Starace, Giacomo Martini, Paolo Meurice, Montecorboli, Saverio Montepin, E. Rossi, Mario Scarpa, and the female writers, Carolina Invernizion and Giovanna Marni.

French playwrights composed the second largest group represented: Philippe Francois Pinel Dumanoir, Alexandre Dumas, pere and fils, Fournier, Meyer, Halevy Meilhac, Victor Hugo, Eugene Cormon, Eugene Grange, D'Aubigny, Adolphe Dennery, Henri Murger, Georges Ohnet, Victorien Sardou, Eugene Sue. From England, of course, William Shakespeare was adapted and presented through five of his memorable works. The German Hermann Sudermann completes the list of European imports.

The emergence of Italian-American playwrights from the milieu of the immigrant theatre is fascinating to watch since these dramatists reflect the society about them in their creative works. Antonio Maiori produced his share of Italian-American writers. In the 19th century he had already staged a few of Edoardo Pecoraro's plays but his work did not surface in the repertory of this company during this period. However, Bernardino Ciambelli, the journalist of Il Bolletino della Sera, whom Maiori produced in the 19th century as well, is represented during these years by his two-act drama, Il Lupo di mare (The seawolf)

presented Wednesday, October 5, 1904,¹ and by Il delitto di Bologna ovvero Murri Bonmartini (The Crime of Bologna or Murri Bonmartini) presented on Sunday, May 14, 1905.² This play was billed as a real life drama. Ciambelli, it will be noted, wrote the daily stories about crimes and murders from which Edoardo Pecoraro would write the immediate dramatizations in Guglielmo Ricciardi's company.

Pasquale Rapone, while the partnership still existed, wrote any number of farces, improvising some as was his style. Only on two occasions did titles appear: Pascariello on Monday, April 6, 1903;³ Pascariello Polisse, a farce written especially for Miss Maria Prete's benefit on Friday, June 2, 1905.⁴ Pascariello was a Southern Italian comic character and Rapone was associated with his creation and interpretation in New York City.

Mr. G. De Vincenzi, who played many roles in this company, including old Heineke in L'Onore, is credited with an untitled "brilliant" farce for Sunday, May 1, 1904.⁵ Giovanni De Rosalia, who will form his own distinguished company, was also credited with an untitled "brilliant" farce for Sunday, February 5, 1905.⁶ Alessandro M. Salvini probably adapted Gualtieri's L'Inquisizione di Spagna (The Spanish Inquisition), done several times by Maiori. Somehow Mario Scarpa's Caino ed Abele (Cain and Abel) found its way into the Maiori

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 280 (October 5, 1904), p. 2.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 128 (May 11, 1905), p. 3.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 94 (April 4, 1903), p. 2.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 118 (April 29, 1905), p. 3.

⁵ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 116 (April 27, 1904), p. 3.

⁶ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 31 (January 31, 1905), p. 3.

repertory. Scarpa was an actor with Pisanelli's San Francisco Company.¹

Virgilio De Scenza, already mentioned, was the young student from Campobasso who wrote and produced two plays staged by Maiori: Meglio povero che ladro (Better to be poor than to be a thief), described as a dramatic skit; and the historical drama in five acts, Delicata Civerra (Delicate Civerra).² Agostino Balletto, who will be remembered from the 19th century as the partner in the Italian printing shop at 178 Park Row with Gardella and F. L. Frugone, had his "brilliant" farce, Il campanello dello speciale (The druggist's bell), mounted Friday, January 15, 1904.³ Frugone, Balletto and Bernardino Ciambelli started the newspaper Il Bollettino della Sera together in 1898. At first it was a small paper, selling for 1 cent a copy with the name Bollettino della guerra (war bulletin) since that was the time of the Spanish-American War. After the war, and because the paper came out in the afternoon, the name was changed to Il Bollettino della Sera, with three editions per week on Monday, Thursday and Saturday. A poem in the Neapolitan dialect always graced the first page. The paper was owned by Frugone and Balletto but Ciambelli as Director provided most of the copy.⁴

The playwright Achille Fazio was an actor, singer and comedian whose sister Lucia married the writer Riccardo Cordiferro. Although Maiori's record does not include Fazio's plays in the notices available,

¹Maxine Seller, "Antonietta Pisanelli Alessandro and the Italian Theatre of San Francisco: Entertainment, Education, and Americanization," Educational Theatre Journal (May 1976), p. 213.

²L' Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 306 (November 4, 1905), p. 3.

³L' Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 15 (January 15, 1904), p. 3.

⁴La Follia, (September 8, 1929), Sisca Collection, Folder 125.

Fazio did perform character sketches which may very well have been his own. He wrote many plays performed by the Italian theatre; the only title available at this point is that of The Stutterer, produced at an unnamed Italian theatre on East 12th Street. He was born in Italy where his father and two brothers were well known graphic artists. Fazio, as a child, had acted in Richard the Third with Richard Mansfield, but this seems to have been the extent of his work in the American theatre. He lived at 309 East 112th Street. He fathered two daughters, Luisa and Olga, who at ages 13 and 10 respectively, themselves became playwrights. Both girls attended P.S. 102 at 113th Street and Second Avenue which in 1921 put on three of Luisa's plays: The Vacation for Elinor in one act, Promotion and the Truant Girl, and a two act sketch, Help the Starving Children. The writer for The Home News described the plot of this last play, which Luisa directed and in which she also portrayed the role of the mother, assisted by her actor father: "It depicts the way in which several young school girls assisted in alleviating the conditions of the starving children of the Old World."¹ The plot has a familiar ring to it and reflects what Luisa must have seen going on in the Italian community--the long tradition of raising money for the poor in Italy.

Luisa was the darling of her famous uncle Cordiferro who nicknamed her "Perzichella" (Little Peach) and wrote many poems about her. The younger sister Olga wrote a one-act comedy entitled Mary, the Dunce:

The scene of the play is laid in a classroom in a public school, showing the exhaustion of the teacher's patience as a result of continual interruptions by a youngster who stutters and the "bad"

¹"East Harlem Has Child Playwrights Aged 10 and 13; Father Was With Mansfield." The Home News (March 6, 1921), Sisca Collection, Folder 97.

boy of the class.¹

It would be wonderful to be able to say that Achille Fazio, a member of the theatrical generation of 1900-1905 had produced in his progeny two talented women playwrights for the Italian-American or even American theatres. But such was not the case, and indeed there are very few Italian-American women playwrights in this history. Perhaps this can be explained in part by The Home News reporter's interview with Achille Fazio:

Although he has encouraged his daughters in their efforts, he feels that they are becoming too enthusiastic over their work, so much so that their mother cannot get them to do any errands or housework. The "playwright fever," he thinks, has gotten into their blood in such a fashion that they are able to think of nothing else.²

Apparent here between the lines is the same old world attitude that exhorted Mrs. Beatrice Acerbi to go home and have children, and that sent Mrs. Concetta Arcamone Maiori into untimely retirement.

Although Antonio Maiori in his extensive theatrical enterprises did not cultivate women playwrights, he does enjoy the distinction of being the chief producer in New York of the best known and most prolific playwright of this era, Riccardo Cordiferro, poet, lyricist, journalist, publisher, editor, satirist, lecturer and political activist. Cordiferro was born Alessandro Sisca on October 27, 1875 in San Pietro in Guarano, in the province of Cosenza. His father, Francisco, was a poet in the Neapolitan dialect. In 1886 he entered the Franciscan seminary San Raffaele a Materdei in Naples, but left the religious life for a career in letters. In Naples he had his early poetry published,

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

assuming the pen name of Riccardo Cordiferro.¹ Although in later years, he briefly used other pseudonyms (Corazon de hierro, Ironheart, Eisenberg, Sandro, Ida Florenza) for political and personal reasons, Cordiferro (which means heart of iron) all but supplanted his real name in the literature and politics of this period.

In 1892 he emigrated to Pittsburgh, living with an uncle for a year, then settling permanently in New York. In January 1893, together with his father and brother, Marziale, he founded the weekly literary newspaper, La Follia at 202 Grand Street. The paper was widely read, not only in New York City, but by the literati of the Italian colonies in the major cities of the East. Through his literary articles and political commentary, usually expounding socialist doctrine, the name of Cordiferro became familiar to any literate Italian from New Jersey to Vermont. Consequently, he was invited out of town frequently to give literary lectures. Because of his intense socialist views, he gave speeches to labor organizations and political rallies, a practice which sometimes landed him in jail. This further endeared him to his admirers, among whom were Italian anarchists. His politics earned him enemies as well as admirers, and threats and persecutions led to his resignation from La Follia's editorial board, although he continued to publish his writings in the paper, and contributed to other publications, La Sedia Elettrica, La Notizia and The Haarlemite, under his various pseudonyms. The weekly paper, La Sedia Elettrica was originally founded by Censerico Granata, and Cordiferro later became its Editor.²

¹ Ario Flamma, ed., Italiani di America (New York: Casa Editrice Cocce Brothers, 1936), p. 91.

² Salvatore Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici della vecchia Colonia Italiana di N.Y., "La Follia" (March 24, 1940), p. 9. Excerpted

A contemporary of Cordiferro, Salvatore Abbamonte, actor, director and playwright, recalls in his memoirs the inspirational effect the famous journalist had on the young artist. Abbamonte also describes the social satire that Cordiferro directed at certain types in the Italian community of New York:

Un filosofo sbandato, (certo Alfonso La Rocca che al paese natio aveva acceso il sigaro con una carta da mille e s'era ridotto in America a fare il giornalista) veniva ogni sabato a portarmi il roseo foglio, ch'io leggevo d'un fiato, assorbendo con la mia mente, la floritura letteraria del giovanissimo poeta, che sembrava esprimere nei versi, melodici ed ispirati, tutta l'angoscia del mio cuore.

E fui preso dalla mania di imitarlo.

Per tramite di quel giornaletto capitai un giorno nel cosiddetto agone intellettuale che si dava convegno in un caffè di Broom Street, i cui tavoli erano sempre attornati da avventori spensierati e dietro cui v'era un tavolo da biliardo in continuo esercizio.

Quivi bazzicavano nuovi arrivati, giovani di belle speranze che si davano l'aria di Professori. Altri si atteggiavano ad Artisti e non mancavano dei bellimbusti che si spacciavano per attori, cantanti o macchiettisti. V'era poi, fra costoro la serie degli scrittori e poeti che, il direttore de "La Follia", pubblicando i loro parti, metteva alla berlina. Altri egli sferzava senza misericordia, annoverandoli tra gli spostati, poiché a sentirli parlare, si passava invero il rischio di incretinire. . .

Follia translates as folly or madness, and in this "giornaletto di battaglia" (fighting newspaper), as Abbamonte called it, Riccardo Cordiferro satirized an exposed humanity's follies. Cordiferro served as an early role model for Abbamonte, who assiduously read the newspaper

from the author's unpublished autobiography, La Mia Vita.

¹"A crazy philosopher, (a certain Alfonso La Rocca who in his home town had lit cigars with a 1000 Lire bill and was reduced, in America, to selling newspapers) came every Saturday to bring me the pink paper, which I read immediately, absorbing with my mind, the young poet's literary effusions, which seemed to express in their melodic and inspired verses all the anguish of my heart.

And I was seized by a mania to imitate him

Because of that newspaper, I happened one day to find myself in a so-called intellectual circle, which used to meet in a caffè on Broome

and admired the 18 year old poet's liberal ideas, rebel songs and poetry.¹ After a shaky start the two men later became friends and colleagues in the socialist cause. Abbamonte became a writer by studying and emulating Cordiferro,² and in the theatre company Abbamonte formed, recited some of the poet's dramatic monologues.

Cordiferro also critiqued and satirized the work of the amateur theatre companies of Little Italy at the turn of the century:

Inoltre, gruppi di dilettanti smaniosi spuntavano come funghi, a delizia del Direttore dell "Follia", che li frustava col "Castigat Ridendo Mores". Ne' egli si asteneva dalla satira mordente nella commedia "Genio incompreso", recitata dal Majori, e dallo scherzo comico "Chi ha la testa di vetro non vada a battaglia di sassi"³ pubblicato sulla "Sedia Elettrica", ...

It is a pity that Cordiferro's early criticism and satirical plays have not come down to us for examination, especially in light of the fact, noted in these pages time and time again, that unbiased, serious reviews of the works of these turn of the century companies is virtually non-existent. If Cordiferro was the erudite and astute observer that

Street, around whose tables were always mindless customers, and behind which was a pool table in constant use. Newly arrived young men with high hopes, who gave themselves airs of Professors, used to frequent the place. Others posed as Artists and there were always dandies who passed themselves off as actors, singers and comedians. Also among these was a group of writers and poets, whose works the editor of "La Follia" published and ridiculed. He lashed out at others without mercy, categorizing them as weirdos because if you listened to them talk, you really ran the risk of becoming stupid. . . " Salvatore Abbamonte, "Nella Colonia Di Quarantacinque Anni Or Sono," La Follia (January 14, 1940), p. 5. Excerpted from Abbamonte's unpublished autobiography, La Mia Vita.

¹ Ibid.

² Abbamonte, "Nei Primordi. . . . , " p. 5.

³ "Furthermore, groups of crazy amateurs sprouted like mushrooms to the delight of the Editor of 'La Follia,' who frustrated them with 'Castigat Redendo Mores.' He indulged in a biting satire about them in the comedy 'The Misunderstood Genius,' performed by Maiori, and in the

Abbamonte claimed, then such critiques would shed more light on the workings of these early groups and provide a better assessment of their labors. The three-act comedy in martellian¹ verse, Chi ha la testa di vetro, non vada a battaglia di sassi translates literally as, "He who has a glass head, doesn't go into a rock fight," or more colloquially, "If you can't take the heat, stay out of the kitchen." If we apply this sentiment to the performances of the Italian-American amateur groups, it probably comments on their tendency at times to undertake productions of plays that were beyond their capabilities. Chi ha la testa . . . was never performed, but was published in 1900² in La Sedia Elettrica.

It is not surprising then to see that when Cordiferro wanted to have his own plays heard, he decided upon the most reputable professional company in existence at the time, the Maiori-Rapone-Ricciardi troupe. Maiori and Company mounted Cordiferro's first plays in the 19th century, Mbruoglie 'e femmene (Feminine Intrigues), a one-act comedy in the Neapolitan dialect, written in 1893³ and staged on Tuesday, May 1, 1894 and the abovenamed Il genio incompreso (The misunderstood genius), a one-act comic skit in verse, on Wednesday, May 2, 1894, both at the Germania Assembly Rooms.⁴ The latter play, Salvatore Abbamonte asserted, was also a satirical treatment of the immigrant theatre companies.

comic skit 'He who has a glass head, doesn't go into a rock fight' published in 'La Sedia Elettrica', . . ." Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," p. 9.

¹ A martellian verse has fourteen lines divided into four stanzas. The rhyme scheme follows the pattern: abab, abab, cde, cde.

² Riccardo Cordiferro's bibliography, Sisca Collection, Folder 1.

³ Theatre program from the Park Palace (Wednesday, October 19, 1938), Sisca Collection, Folder 141.

⁴ Cordiferro bibliography, loc. cit.

The next two works by Cordiferro done by Maiori were dramatic social monologues in verse recited by Salvatore Melchiorri in 1895 at the Adler Theatre: Per la Patria e per l'onore (For the Fatherland and for honor), and Il Pezzente (The Beggar).¹ In the words of Abbamonte, who also interpreted the monologue, Per la Patria, the piece expresses:

lo schianto d'un ribelle . . . (il) gesto furibondo del giovane ribelle che, tornato dall'esilio si rende omicida per vendicare l'onore della sorella, . . . (le) tristi vicende, narrata da una vittima proletaria, la cui Patria non gli aveva risparmiato nemmeno il fratello, morto pugnando da eroe, in guerra.²

Cordiferro maintained that both monologues were performed hundreds of times in New York and other cities in the United States. Giovanni De Rosalia and his company performed Il Pezzente in principal American cities³ but it was also heard in Italy, France and South America.⁴ Salvatore Abbamonte staged both pieces at political meetings in Mr. Bianchi's Bar in West Hoboken, New Jersey in 1900 and 1901;⁵ he staged Per La Patria in West Park, New Jersey on Monday, January 9, 1905⁶ and Il Pezzente in Asbury Park, New Jersey on Monday, October 23, 1905. The author was banqueted by the theatre company at Columbus Park in the garden of Eugenio Renna the following Sunday, October 29.⁷ La Compagnia

¹ Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," p. 9; and Riccardo Cordiferro, Il Pezzente (New York: Cocce Press, n.d.), p. 1.

² Abbamonte, "Nei Primordi," p. 5. "the anguish of a rebel . . . (the) attitude of the raving young rebel who, having returned from exile, becomes a murderer in order to avenge the honor of his sister, . . . (the) misfortunes, narrated by a proletarian victim, whose country didn't even save his brother, a war hero who died in battle."

³ See synopsis in Appendix V. Cordiferro, Il Pezzente, p. 1.

⁴ Cordiferro bibliography, loc. cit.

⁵ Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," p. 9.

⁶ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 6 (January 6, 1905), p. 4.

⁷ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 298 (October 27, 1905), p. 2.

Dilettanti Filodrammatici in Rochester, New York also put on Il Pezzente on Monday, May 29, 1905.¹ In New York City, the monologue was performed by Il Circolo Filodrammatico Eleanora Duse sometime after August 14, 1904.²

Cordiferro followed these short serious pieces with a return to comedy. He produced on September 24, 1896 a one-act satirical comedy in martellian verse, Dio Dollaro (Mammon), at the Germania Assembly Rooms. The play was repeated by the Rochester group on the same bill with Il Pezzente in 1905. The one-act comedy Il matrimonio in trappola (The marriage trap) was produced at the Labor Lyceum in East Boston, Massachusetts on May 26, 1897.³ There is no indication that Maiori was involved in these productions although his participation can not be ruled out in the New York and East Boston dates since they do not conflict with his recorded activities. Also in 1897, Cordiferro wrote a three-act social drama, Da Volontario a disertore (From Volunteer to deserter),⁴ his first attempt at full-length drama but evidence that it received any hearing in a theatre is lacking.

Over the next two years, encompassing 1897 and 1898, Cordiferro's first wife, Annina Belli and their two children, Emilia and Franchino, died. He married Lucia Fazio, sister of the actor Achille Fazio, in October 1899.

A second attempt by Cordiferro to write a full-length three-act

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 142 (May 23, 1905), p. 2.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 232 (August 19, 1904), p. 3.

³Cordiferro bibliography, loc. cit.

⁴Park Palace theatre program, loc. cit.

social drama followed in 1901 with La Vittima (The Victim) but no script remains and only two performances are recorded: one produced by Paolo Cremonesi's company in West Hoboken, New Jersey on January 19, 1901;¹ and another by a committee of admiring Italians in Rochester, New York in September 1905.² No production by the Maiori company is recorded.

Riccardo Cordiferro's third effort at full length playmaking was another social drama in four acts, L'Onore Perduto (Lost Honor), early in 1901. He adapted it from a similarly titled poem he had earlier written.³ This popular play was produced more times than any other play in the Cordiferrian repertory and as late as 1933.⁴ For the five years between 1901 and 1906, Cordiferro's major theatrical activities were taken up with productions of this play alone until he started to produce his new plays in 1906. The popular success of this play, together with his efforts as a journalist/activist, would make the name of Riccardo Cordiferro a household word among Italian-American theatre audiences not only in New York City, but in New York State, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont during the long history of this play. Fortunately, because of its longevity, a script of this play has remained.

With Antonio Maiori, Cordiferro produced five recorded performances, including its premiere on Wednesday, February 20, 1901 at

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 16 (January 18, 1901), p. 5.

² Il Progresso Italo-Americano, (June 4, 1905), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

³ F. S. Stone, "Italian Drama," Brooklyn Citizen (July 24, 1904), clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

⁴ Cordiferro bibliography, loc. cit.

Majestic Hall. Cordiferro incorrectly placed this premiere in 1900¹ when he prepared a bibliography of his works shortly before he died in 1940, but the newspaper clippings prove otherwise. The premiere, billed as a benefit for the author, was a feast of Cordiferrian literature. In addition to Cordiferro's direction of the four-act drama, two of his odes were recited, character sketches performed, and his Neapolitan songs sung. Mrs. Renata Brunorini played the heroine, Sofia Rotini, and Antonio Maiori interpreted one of the male protagonists. Maiori and Cordiferro did four more productions of the play together: at the Manhattan Lyceum on Monday, November 25, 1901; at Concordia Hall in Waterbury, Conn. on Wednesday, April 23, 1902; at Catholic Institute Hall in Newark, New Jersey on Sunday, June 7 and Tuesday, June 16, 1903, tickets for which were purchased at 25 cents, 35 cents and 50 cents from the office of La Patria at 106 Ferry Street or at the theatre.² This represents the final collaboration between the two artists.

L'Onore Perduto was produced by many other companies in and out of town. During the period under discussion, seven such recorded performances take place. Cordiferro attended most performances of his play, even those out of town. He was accustomed to traveling out of

¹ See synopsis in Appendix VI. Ibid.

² Ibid.; clippings, Folder 100; and Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 164 (June 13, 1903), p. 1. One isolated clipping in Folder 100 indicates that a performance took place on Monday, December 2, 1901 in Paterson, New Jersey. No company is credited with its production but following so closely on the heels of Maiori's show of November 25, the company and the production could easily have traveled to Paterson for this single event. The date does not conflict with Maiori's schedule in New York City. But we also know that in Paterson at the time an amateur group in existence called Il Teatro Sociale might also have produced the drama. Luigi Galleani, "Un Nuovo Successo Drammatico," La Questione Sociale (December 7, 1901), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

town on business for La Follia. He would combine such trips with attendance at his plays (some of which he may have produced and directed himself), with speaking engagements, or with participation in local gatherings. (By January 1902, Cordiferro and his second wife Lucia lived on the first floor of 1 East 2 Street in New York City.¹)

The pattern of productions of L'Onore Perduto was frequently to include some of Cordiferro's other works: monologues, songs, lectures, poems or odes, sometimes recited by the famous writer himself. Between acts and at the final curtain there would be calls for the author for frequent bows, flowers would be thrown at him and many times he received telegrams, floral wreaths and crowns. A production of L'Onore Perduto, out of town especially, was usually an event, and Cordiferro its hero, ready when necessary with the appropriate speech. Appended to the notice of a performance of the play in June 1902 by Il Circolo Filodrammatico Eleanora Duse in Providence, Rhode Island, was the following call to action:

(Riccardo Cordiferro, il geniale poeta, appartiene alla schiera dei ribelli, per cui tutti coloro che s'ispirano ai veri sentimenti di libert , si rechino at 300 Atwell's Ave. portando la loro adesione, affinche' sia degnamente accolto dagli italiani di Providence).²

Despite the political overtones of this meeting, the funds from this benefit performance were slated for a monument to Giuseppe Verdi.

Francesco Vela and his New York City based company re-enacted the

¹Letter from Riccardo Cordiferro to Lucy, his wife, dated January 22, 1902. Sisca Collection, Folder 5.

²"(Riccardo Cordiferro, the talented poet, is a member of the band of rebels; all who are instilled with true feelings of liberty should convene at 300 Atwell's Avenue bringing their clubs so that he may be properly welcomed by the Italians of Providence.)" La Liberta, Anno 2, N. 8, n.d. Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

drama at Saint Jean Baptiste Hall in Fall River, Mass. on or about June 15, 1902, with the New York City actress, Mrs. Renata Brunorini in the lead.¹

By 1903 the offices of La Follia had moved to better headquarters at 151 Mott Street; where tickets for Cordiferro's plays could usually be purchased. One production of this play was undertaken by Silvio Minciotti and his company at Venice Hall, 30 Flushing Avenue in Brooklyn on Monday, July 25, 1904.² On Wednesday, March 25, 1905 an unidentified group staged the play at the same location.³

Enrico Sisca, Cordiferro's brother, was also present at the performance of L'Onore Perduto mounted by Il Circolo Istruzione e Diletto (Club for Instructing and Pleasing), at Lyceum Hall in Hoboken, New Jersey on Sunday, May 31, 1903.⁴

Two more productions complete the record for this drama during the period 1900-1905. Both instances had the author in attendance at a full evening's worth of Cordiferriana and both were benefits for the author: the first was produced by Luigi Silvagni, and directed by Carlo Simone of the New York City based Il Circolo Eleonora Duse at the Manhattan Lyceum on Monday, December 28, 1903 with Cordiferro's brother-in-law, Achille Fazio, in the role of Don Pasquale Gioiosi.⁵ The last in this period was staged at Germania Hall in Rochester, New York on Monday,

¹"Un altro trionfo di Riccardo Cordiferro," La Follia, n.d. Sisca Collection, Folder 100; and Cordiferro bibliography, Folder 1.

²Clippings, Sisca Collection, Folder 100; and L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 206 (July 24, 1904), p. 3.

³Cordiferro bibliography, loc. cit.

⁴Clippings, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

⁵Ibid.

May 29, 1905 by a company of amateurs under the auspices of Il Corriere di Rochester. The newspaper cordially welcomed Cordiferro in print on this occasion of his first visit to that city.¹

Although Cordiferro produced and directed these early productions of the drama, Maiori's influence must undoubtedly have been considerable, especially since L'Onore Perduto is an early work of the young playwright who was virtually inexperienced in the genre. Salvatore Abbamonte has left an account of the young Cordiferro as a director. A great admirer of the writer, Abbamonte describes how he searched out Cordiferro to ask for a part in a theatrical evening in Cordiferro's honor, to take place Thursday, September 24, 1896. Abbamonte had sought him at the offices of La Follia, then located on Mott Street, and a young printing press operator had told him that the Editor could be found at the Pompei Restaurant on Mulberry Street, where Abbamonte promptly betook himself to wait for Cordiferro. When finally he arrived, Abbamonte gathered up his courage:

-- Scusi, e' lei il poeta Cordiferro? -- gli chiesi con una certa disinvoltura, accostandomi ov'egli si era seduto ad attendere il cameriere.
 -- Per l'appunto -- mi rispose ammiccandomi con sorpresa.
 -- Ecco in breve -- gli dissi -- il motivo del disturbo. --
 Ammiratore suo fervidissime desidererei recitare la sua Ode all'esimio attore Paolini, nella serata che sara' data in suo onore.
 -- Tanto piacere -- egli assenti' -- Venite stasera a casa mia. Gli artisti vi si riuniranno per le prove.
 -- Non mancherò'.

E nel congedatini si affretto' a darmi si consegnarmi un buon numero di biglietti per la sua serata d'onore che avrei dovuto vendere fra conoscenti.

Non so dire poi a qual culmine fosse giunto il mio entusiasmo nel recarmi fra gli Artisti quella sera in casa del poeta, ...

¹Cordiferro bibliography, loc. cit.; and L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 142 (May 23, 1905), p. 2.

Dopo le prove, ognuno prese commiato, ma io rimasi ancora in un cantuccio, seduto, ad attendere
 -- Ebbene -- indi dissi al poeta che mi sbirciava incuriosito -- non dovro' fare alcuna prova per esibirmi al pubblico?
 -- Non v'e' bisogno, se sapete bene a memoria i versi.
 -- Di cio' poi, non dubiti.
 -- Potro' contare sulla vendita dei biglietti?
 -- Li consideri gia' venduti.
 Ed il suo viso si rassero come il mio lieta speranza.
 Fgli aspirando un lembo di fortuna, io un raggio di gloria.....¹

This haphazard manner of incorporating an inexperienced actor into the evening's program proved a bad choice. Abbamonte suffered an acute attack of stagefright and froze onstage, a memorable debut.² For a variety show, such an occurrence would not be totally disastrous but when nearly four years later Cordiferro wanted to produce and direct a work as important and lengthy as L'Onore Perduto, he would need the experience of an entrepreneur like Maiori.

Maiori and his company staged other literary forms by Riccardo Cordiferro, such as these macchiette or character sketches: Il prominente coloniale (The prominent colonist), Io me 'u fatto monaco (I became a monk), performed by Eduardo Migliaccio, and Il Cavaliere (The Knight), all written in 1898 with music by Maestro Silvestro D'Acunto; I Falsi Monetari (The False Coins) written in 1899 with music by Maestro Prof. Pietro Lucchetti; and Don Vincenzo o Cammorista (Don Vincenzo the Grafters). All three were performed the night of L'Onore Perduto's premiere, along with some of Cordiferro's poems, the "Ode to Maria" and the "Ode to Giuseppe Verdi" written on the occasion of Verdi's death. The company also regularly interpreted the playwright's Neapolitan songs in the Neapolitan dialect, such as, "Nun 'o credere Luci" with music by

¹ Because of its length, a complete translation is included in Appendix IV, B. Abbamonte, "Nella Colonia," p. 5.

² Ibid.

Maestro Tobia Acciani, on Sunday, June 15, 1902;¹ and these songs written in 1897 and made popular by Mrs. Concetta Arcamone Maiori: "Abbrile" with music by Maestro Vincenzo Gaudiosi; and "Nu Riccio 'E Capille" and "Dicitame Chi Site," both musicalized by Maestro Silvestro D'Acunto. Maestro Acciani also wrote the music for the song "Strazio D'O Core" in 1899.²

Other poems, odes, macchiette and songs were done by a variety of Italian-American companies in and outside New York City: the macchiette, Don Vicienzo 'o portugallero (Don Vicienzo the Portuguese) and 'O guappo (The dandy), both with music by Maestro Silvestro D'Acunto and performed by Giovanni Lombardi of Guglielmo Ricciardi's company in 1898; also in 1898 the macchietta, Muglierema m'ha Passato (She Passed as my Wife) and the song "Si 'A Capa Femmene 'E Sta Citta'", both with music by Maestro F.P. Cericola. Also written in 1898, the Neapolitan song "Luntano 'A Te" with music by Maestro Michele Salvati,³ was most probably accompanied by the maestro on the piano at La Villa di Sorrento, where he worked at the time.⁴

In 1902, Cordiferro wrote the macchietta, Il poliziotto italo-americano (The Italian-American detective) with music by Maestro F. Coviello and performed by Aristidi Sigismondi,⁵ who later became the father of popular singer Alan Dale. Aristidi Sigismondi was born September 20, 1886 in Lanciano, in the province of Chieti. He emigrated

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 161 (June 10, 1902), p. 2; and Cordiferro bibliography, loc. cit.

²Cordiferro bibliography, loc. cit.

³Ibid.

⁴Ricciardi, Ricciardiana, pp. 35-36.

⁵Cordiferro bibliography, loc. cit.

to New York City in 1904 where he worked in the Banca Pittelli until 1910. An amateur actor in Italy, he became a professional comedian and macchiettista in New York.¹ A contemporary describes him:

E' un attore comico della varieta' di buona fama, assai simpatico e molto accetto al pubblico.

Quantunque giovane d'anni, Egli si e' spinto innanzi per troppo volere, da se, dedicandosi alla macchietta coloniale con una concezione ammodernita ed uno slancio addirittura meraviglioso. Egli canta come il cuore gli detta, piace, ed e' assai bene quotato.²

After their theatrical collaborations, Cordiferro and Maiori will in the ensuing years go in very different directions, quite possibly because of philosophical differences. Riccardo Cordiferro was a political activist and writer first and a playwright second, or perhaps even third; Antonio Maiori was first and foremost a theatrical impresario and a political activist, hardly, if at all.

In 1905, Cordiferro was requested by Generoso Ristaino to write a sequel to L'Onore Perduto. Another four-act social drama, the work was intitled Giuseppina Terranova Ovvero L'Onore Vendicato (Giuseppina Terranova or Honor Avenged). It premiered under Ristaino's direction at the Villa Penza on May 15, 1906. Eventually the work was translated into the Sicilian dialect by Filippo Catalfo, and into English by Miss Annie Leitch with the title Honor Avenged.³ In 1906 Cordiferro was supposed to be working on a third sequel to the potential trilogy,

¹Flamma, p. 322.

²"He is a comedian of first-rate variety shows, very appealing and well received by the public.

Though young, he has gone ahead by himself through sheer will, dedicating himself to the character sketch in a modern vein and with a truly marvelous enthusiasm. He sings as his heart dictates, he pleases, and he is very well-esteemed." Lanza, p. 26.

³La Follia (May 26, 1918), Sisca Collection, Folder 99.

L'onore conquistato¹ (Honor conquered) but it never materialized and the author neglects to mention it in his bibliography. Giuseppina Terranova was not as successful or as popular as L'Onore Perduto; perhaps for this reason he discontinued work on the project. But he wrote other plays in later years.

Cordiferro continued to write and deliver many lectures on topical issues such as the discourse on Calabria, occasioned by that region's disastrous earthquake, given Monday, October 23, 1905 in Asbury Park, New Jersey;² "Il destino della Russia" (The destiny of Russia) given at Marconi Hall on 114th Street on Tuesday, February 14, 1905;³ and "La donna del passato, la donna d'oggi e la donna dell'avvenire" (The woman of yesterday, the woman of today, and the woman of the future), among many, many others.⁴ He wrote many essays on Italian men of letters, but social issues remained a primary concern and in later years he became active in the Sacco and Vanzetti controversy. He went on composing poetry and songs, some of which were sung by the well-known Eduardo Migliaccio, and still others recorded by Enrico Caruso.⁵

By virtue of his prolific and versatile literary activities, and his great output of plays especially, Riccardo Cordiferro remains the most important playwright to emerge from the Italian-American theatre of the period, if not of the entire history. His large repertory of plays enjoyed wide popularity not only in New York City but in other parts of

¹ F.B., Tempo (November 23, 1906), Sisca Collection, Folder 99.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 298 (October 27, 1905), p. 2.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 47 (February 16, 1905), p. 4.

⁴ Flamma, p. 92.

⁵ Inventory, Sisca Collection.

the country. He also wrote, produced, directed, composed, sang, recited and lectured, even winding up in prison several times for his intense political activity and involvement. Salvatore Abbamonte recalls a poem composed and dedicated to him by Cordiferro:

Fulgido come il Sole e' l'Ideale
che ai figli arride derelitti e gram
de la fatica. O mio compagno d'armi,
o amico mio, cammina!

Cammina e sprezza non curante e altero,
il sogghigno dei vili e degli'imbelli.
Del tanto atteso di' la radiosa,
alba non e' lontana!¹

To the idealism and optimism of this piece, Abbamonte adds this sad footnote:

Ma. . . dopo tanto cammino (sono passati da quel bel tempo lontano la bellezza di 45 anni!) quell'alba non ancora pur troppo e' spuntata! E, nella corsa del tempo, un che quel fulgido ideale dileguo', lasciando disillusi i piu' arditi, compreso Cordiferro, il cantore di "Musa Rossa", che tanto ingegno aveva consacrato a mantenere accesa la fiaccola della Liberta' e che perfino vide il sole a scacchi per il suo grande amore libertario. . .²

These words appeared in La Follia on March 24, 1940. Five months later to the day, on August 24, Alessandro Sisca (alias Riccardo Cordiferro, "the singer of the Red Muse") succumbed to poor health probably brought on by the hardships of the Depression.

¹"Shining like the Sun is the Ideal
that smiles on sons broken and worn out
from their labors. Oh my comrade in arms,
Oh my friend, keep on going!

Keep going and prideful, disdain without care
the sneer of the villains and the ugly people.
The resplendent dawn of a long awaited day
is not far away." Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," p. 9.

²"But. . . after keeping going for a long time (a good 45 years have already passed since those faroff times) that dawn unfortunately has not yet risen! And, in the course of time, even that shining ideal melted away, leaving even the most ardent ones disillusioned, including Cordiferro, the singer of the "Red Muse", who had given so much of his

Antonio Maiori, the giant actor/director/manager of the Italian-American stage during 1900-1905, drifts further and further away from the immigrant community that spawned his most significant work. For awhile he continued his customary enterprises in his usual manner. Then in 1907, he joined with Marcus Lowe of MGM fame to produce his classic repertory in Brooklyn's Royal Theatre, but featuring performers imported from Italy. In 1909 to 1910, Maiori was contracted by Edwin Balkin for a road tour of the United States, in which he performed his Shakespearean repertory as far as California. The tour completed, he remained in Chicago for two years. When finally he returned to New York City, he abandoned the Italian prose theatre and set up a succession of variety theatres, a venture in which he was generally unsuccessful. He returned to Italy for several years in 1919, then c. 1927 returned to New York City,¹ where he modestly finished out his years.² He died in 1938 at the age of seventy.

Considering his later endeavors and peregrinations, Maiori's output during the period 1900-1905 plus a few years that follow, established him as the principal representative of the Italian-American dramatic theatre. Here in the words of a contemporary is an expression of the esteem in which Maiori was held in the community:

Scrivere di lui e' soltanto un omaggio, ma un dovere. Egli e' il generalissimo, e l'anima della famiglia artistica, Egli e' tutto il teatro italiano in America.
La istituzione di un teatro permanente, vaccheggiata fin dal suo arrivo in America, e' il pensiero che domina tutta la sua vita, giacche' nel teatro e per il teatro egli vive, trasfondendo in esso la sua intelligenza e le sue migliori energie.

genius to keep alive the torch of Liberty and who was even imprisoned for his great love of liberty. . ." Ibid.

¹Cautela, p. 109.

²Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 28, 1942), p. 5S.

Egli sente e studia e s'affanna per questo suo ideale, oggi come a venti anni La vita con le sue gioie e i suoi dolori completa la mirabile figura di quest'uomo, sul quale riposano le piu' liete e le piu' sicure speranze del nostro teatro.

While these words, written in 1917, express eloquently the genuine affection felt by the community for the artist, they are completely out of accord with his direction at the moment, for by this time he was managing variety theatres and two years later he left for Italy, his dream for an Italian Theatre long since extinguished. A more accurate assessment comes from the pen of his former collaborator, Riccardo Cordiferro, in a lecture on Ermete Novelli delivered April 27, 1919 on the occasion of the inauguration of Il Circolo Filodrammatico Ermete Novelli:

E, a proposito a teatro, chi degl'italiani di New York non sa con quanto zelo e con quanto entusiasmo l'artista Antonio Maiori, abbia, per anni ed anni, caldeggiata la causa del teatro italiano?

Ma a che son valsi gli sforzi di Antonio Maiori? Che cosa ha egli ottenuto dal suo zelo e dal suo entusiasmo? Nulla! Puo' chiamarsi, anzi, abbastanza fortunato, se un vecchio teatro americano di Bowery, da lui trasformato in teatro italiano, e' da parecchi anni frequentato dai nostri connazionali residenti nei quartieri di Mulberry Street e delle strade vicine.

Non pero' doveva esser quello il teatro vagheggiato per tant'anni da Antonio Maiori!¹

¹"To write about him is not only a homage but a duty. He is the generalissimo, the spirit of the artistic family. He is the entire Italian theatre in America The establishment of a permanent theatre, cherished since his arrival in America, is the thought that dominates his entire life, since he lives in the theatre and for the theatre, transfusing it with his intelligence and his best energies.

He feels and studies and endeavors toward this his ideal, today as when he was twenty years old. . . Life with its joys and sorrows completes the marvelous figure of this man, on whom rests the happiest and most secure hopes for our theatre." Lanza, p. 10.

²"And, with respect to the theatre, who among the Italians in New York know with how much zeal and with how much enthusiasm the artist Antonio Maiori had, for years and years, fostered the cause for an Italian theatre?

In later years, many impresarios will follow in Maiori's footsteps and dream of forming an Italian Theatre in America, a project which will never come to fruition for lack of sufficient support and funds. Antonio Maiori probably never realized that for at least 1900-1905 his theatre was the Italian Theatre.

La Compagnia Comico Drammatica Pasquale Rapone

Pasquale Rapone's independent history traces back to 1893 when he managed his own company, La Compagnia P. Rapone, joined that same year by Antonio Maiori's group, and followed in 1894 by Guglielmo Ricciardi. For one single recorded production, Ricciardi and Rapone worked under the title, La Compagnia Comica P. Rapone and G. Ricciardi on Monday, February 11, 1895. When Ricciardi left his partnership with these two impresarios in that same year, Rapone and Maiori worked together until June 16, 1903, after which time they separated. Here we pick up the thread of Rapone's work in the Italian-American theatre of this period.

La Compagnia Comico Drammatica Pasquale Rapone began independently of Maiori with a production out of town, of the comedy Una commedia per la posta (Comedy through the mail) by Ernesto Rossi, and La tomba (The tomb), a farce on Monday, July 27, 1903 at the Old Italian Church in New Haven, Connecticut. The program was a benefit for Rapone.¹ A month

But what did Antonio Maiori's efforts come to? Nothing! He could call himself fortunate enough, if an old American theatre on the Bowery, transformed by him into an Italian theatre, was for several years frequented by our compatriot residents of the Mulberry Street quarter and nearby streets.

But what was not to be the theatre cherished for so many years by Antonio Maiori!" Riccardo Cordiferro, Ermete Novelli (New York: Manhattan Printing Company, 1919), p. 9.

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 204 (July 23, 1903), p. 3.

later and still out of town, Rapone produced more comedy at Lyceum Hall in East Boston, Massachusetts on Thursday, August 20, using members of his company from New York as well as amateurs from the city of Boston, quite possibly the East Boston Dilettanti which were in existence at that time. The pieces were Per La Posta (Through the mail) by Ernesto Rossi, and the lively farce, Pascariello servo di due padroni¹ (Pascariello servant of two masters).

The next recorded appearance put Rapone in the Talma Theatre in Providence, Rhode Island on Thursday, September 3, as a guest with Il Circolo Filodrammatico Eleonora Duse. Since the bill advertised similar fare to his previous two out of town shows,² he must certainly have directed both productions for the Eleonora Duse group, and probably used their actors again as he had used local talent in Boston, and as he would do again at the same Talma Theatre on or about Saturday, November 28, his next noted appearance. The information, which he himself provided to Il Telegrafo, stipulated that this would be his last performance in Providence,³ which was not the case since he appeared again in that city with the La Lyceum Comedy Company on December 8th, the opening of an unspecified production.⁴

Rapone was again in New York on Tuesday, February 16, 1904 when he performed at the Manhattan Lyceum. A prize of \$15.00 was offered for the best costume at the masked ball which followed the show. Admission prices were still modest: 75 cents for boxes; 50 cents for reserved

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 228 (August 16, 1903), p. 3.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 242 (August 30, 1903), p. 3.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 325 (November 21, 1903), p. 3.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 338 (December 4, 1903), p. 3.

seats and 35 cents for orchestra.¹ After this date Rapone again went out of town with his company, but exactly where is unknown.

In June 1904 a curious notice appeared in L'Araldo announcing that Rapone had just returned to New York City at the request of his many admirers, including Antonio Maiori.² Whatever the reason, as yet to be ascertained, for the Maiori-Rapone split, they reunited briefly to stage three productions together over the Fourth of July weekend, two at the Villa Napoli on Saturday and Sunday, July 2 and 3, and one at the Thalia Theatre on Monday, July 4.³ But the reunion was shortlived and limited to these dates.

Rapone remained inactive for the remainder of the summer, at least according to the Italian dailies in which no notices of his company appear. Perhaps he was preparing for the new Fall season, for it proved to be an intense period of consistent, almost daily activity for his troupe, extending from September 3 through January 30, 1905 and giving Maiori competition. On September 3, Rapone inaugurated the theatre named Follie Drammatiche, formerly known as the Villa Mascolo Concert Hall, at 207 Canal Street. The theatre was owned by Mr. R. Parrella.⁴ Rapone's financial arrangements with the owner were undisclosed but Parrella received a benefit performance on Tuesday, November 29. During this period Rapone's prices were \$1.50 for orchestra seats, \$1.00 in the balcony and \$2.00 per loge; performance time started at 3:30 or 4:00

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 43 (February 12, 1904), p. 3; and L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 45 (February 14, 1904), p. 3.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 171 (June 19, 1904), p. 3.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 184 (July 2, 1904), p. 3; N. 185 (July 3, 1904), p. 3; and N. 171 (June 19, 1904), p. 3.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 248 (September 3, 1904), p. 2.

p.m. Sunday afternoons and 8:00 p.m. Sunday evenings, with weekday performances commencing at 8:30 p.m. The only fiscal information available on Rapone's enterprises at this time pertain to the benefits received by members of his company: Rapone himself, Mrs. Renata Brunorini, Vincenzo Battaglia, Luigi D'Onofrio, Mrs. Giovannina Musti, Gaetano Santoro, Ettore Scarlatti and an unnamed prompter.

Rapone and Company went out of town again for a single performance at the New Auditorium in Newark, New Jersey on Tuesday, October 18, 1904¹ but resumed their daily New York City appearances immediately the following day. On Tuesday, December 6, Antonio Maiori made a guest appearance with the company, performing Hamlet at the Follie Drammatiche.² After the performance of Monday, January 30, 1905, Rapone suspended performances to rehearse new plays, he advised Il Telegrafo.³ But Rapone did not resurface again until Monday, March 6, 1905 at Holy Rosary Hall in New Jersey, interpreting the role of the organist in the famous comedy of Cavaliere Eduardo Scarpetta, Na Santarella (The Hypocrite) directed by Camillo Carelli of Il Circolo Gioventu Italica.⁴

Rapone reopened the Follie Drammatiche on Friday, March 17, 1905, the last notice of any work by the company at this theatre.⁵ This date

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 334 (November 29, 1904), p. 3.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 440 (sic) should be 340 (December 5, 1904), p. 3.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 21 (January 21, 1905), p. 3.

⁴ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 69 (March 10, 1905), p. 4.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 76 (March 17, 1905), p. 3.

marks the virtual cessation of Rapone's theatrical activity in this history, except for two isolated notices of performance. The first takes place Thursday, May 18 at the Manhattan Lyceum, when he directed Sardou's Andreina, a benefit he shared with Miss Maria Prete. Tickets for this show could be purchased from Maria Prete at her home, 229 East 11 Street;¹ from Antonio Martire at 345 Broome Street;² or at the Villa Penza, 198 Grand Street.³ The very last mention of Rapone is his interpretation of the title role in his own farce, Pascariello Polisse with Maiori's company on Friday, June 2 at the People's Theatre.⁴

If Rapone was otherwise active in New York City or out of town, the details elude our sources. His venture in New York at the Follie Drammatiche seems not to have been successful enough to continue. One reason may be that since Rapone's specialty consisted of Neapolitan comedies and farces, the mixed repertory which he attempted was not enough of a draw to compete with Maiori's standard fare. Many of the serious dramas, melodramas and historical plays Rapone essayed were familiar from the Maiori repertory, as were Rapone's actors.

Pasquale Rapone generally directed his own company of actors, even when he diverged into serious plays; no other directors are ever credited except during his work with Maiori. The specific notices that credit him with direction refer to the following productions:

Masaniello on Saturday, October 22, 1904;

Na Santarella (The Hypocrite), comedy by Cav. Eduardo Scarpetta, in

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 119 (April 29, 1905), p. 3.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 121 (May 3, 1905), p. 3.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 128 (May 11, 1905), p. 3.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 118 (April 29, 1905), p. 3.

which he also played the role of the traitor; and Una Macchia di sangue (A Mark of blood), drama in three acts, both plays done Sunday, October 23, 1904;¹

Le catacombe di S. Gennaro dei Poveri (The Catacombs of San Gennaro of the Poor), drama in five acts on Monday, October 24, 1904;² and Andreina by Victorien Sardou on Thursday, May 18, 1905.³

As an actor, Rapone interpreted the role of the traitor in Masaniello, the female role of Mamma Frochard in Le due orfanella (The two orphans) by Cav. Federico Stella, and the Italian stock character with which he became associated, Pascariello. The name means "Little Pasquale" and it is easy to see how Rapone could have adopted such a name for his surrogate stage identity. Two plays featuring the Pascariello character are Italian in origin: Na Matassa Mbrugliata (A Tangled Skein), a comedy in three acts by Cav. Uff. Eduardo Scarpetta; and I Due Pascarielli Simili (The Two Lookalike Pascariellos) by Antonio Petito. Another comedy was Pascariello a Coney Island, ovvero 'O Pic Nic de Sciainature (Pascariello on Coney Island, or The Bees' Picnic) by Gennaro Camerlingo, actor and director of his own company, who will be considered further on.

The Pascariello character derives from the mask of the Italian Commedia dell'Arte known as Pasquariello Trunno, who

belonged undoubtedly to a variety of Captains, acrobats, and dancers in vogue during the sixteenth century. They all wore swords. . . . "Trunno". . . means 'terrible,'. . . He was a tight-rope performer . . . and acted as valet or double for Scaramouche and Scapin, though he had no particular character

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 298 (October 23, 1904), p. 6.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 299 (October 24, 1904), p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 76 (March 17, 1905), p. 3.

of his own. The Pasquariello of the seventeenth century was clad in black velvet, and his costume was sometimes enlivened by red socks.

The above is a description of the traditional conception of the Italian mask. Without the aid of pictures or scripts to recreate Rapone's special interpretation of the mask, it is impossible to say how faithful he was to tradition, especially in light of the remark that the mask had really "no particular character of his own." In that case Rapone might have given his own original stamp to the plays in which Pascariello appeared. (A picture of Rapone as Pascariello shows him in a two-piece jacketed suit with matching cap)² Since only two plays with Pascariello featured actually were written in Italy, anything is possible. Three plays specifically came from Rapone's pen. The rest of the Pascariello plays in the Rapone repertory we suspect may also have been written by him, since he was usually associated with the creation of such farces. He was cited as the author of Pascariello Polisse, Pascariello sensale e matrimonio (Pascariello the marriagebroker) and Pascariello. The following titles remain anonymous: Pascariello Maestro di Ballo (Pascariello the Dance Master), Pascariello pazzo per essere fatto cavaliere (Pascariello crazy because he was made a knight), Pascariello Studente (Pascariello the Student), Pascariello servo di due padroni (Pascariello servant of two masters) which must owe something to Goldoni, Pascariello e Feliciello, scrittori drammatici (Pascariello and Feliciello, dramatic writers) comedy in three acts.

The members of La Compagnia Comico Drammatica Pasquale Rapone are

¹ Pierre Louis Duchartre, The Italian Comedy, trans. by Randolph T. Weaver (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1966), pp. 247-48.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 45 (February 14, 1904), p. 3.

listed in Appendix III. Many of the names are familiar from the companies mentioned earlier and almost half are shared with Maiori. The choreographer, Maestro Riccardo Santelia and his wife Nina had both returned to New York City from a trip to Havana early in 1904 and were singers and dancers.¹ The married duo, Concetta Donigi and Arturo Zacconi performed duets together for this and other New York companies. They reportedly had American and Italian managers, but where else on the American scene they may have appeared has eluded us.² The married couple Margherita Rua and Marcellino Mele also performed duets and Neapolitan songs for this and other companies. Roberto Anselmi was a tenor and Giuseppe Fuggi, a baritone.³ Mrs. Anuma Leotti interpreted the role of Mammina in Na Santarella.⁴ Silvio (also known as Francesco) Minciotti formed his own company with his actress-wife Ester Cunico. With Rapone's company he played the protagonist of La Morte Civile by Paolo Giacometti.⁵ Antonio Martire owned an Italian bookstore at 345 Broome Street.⁶ Rapone's son Michele was still listed as a comic actor, living at 7406 17th Avenue, Brooklyn in the "Artistic Directory" of Il Teatro magazine as late as 1943.⁷ The comic impressionist Francesco

¹Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 43 (February 12, 1904), p. 2.

²Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 113 (April 23, 1903), p. 3.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 43 (February 12, 1904), p. 3.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 69 (March 10, 1905), p. 4.

⁵Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 3 (January 3, 1905), p. 3.

⁶Luigi Pane, ed., Piedigrotta alla Villa Vittorio Emanuele III (New York: Beraglia Press, 1907), p. 23.

⁷"Direttorio Artistico," Il Teatro (April 1943), p. 5.

Amodio resided at 326 Crescent Avenue, Brooklyn.¹

The maestri associated with the Rapone company were Maestro Riccardo Santelia and Maestro Umberto Giordano, who composed the music for the libretto of 'O Vuto A Mala Vista (The Emptiness of the Bad Life) by the Italians, Salvatore Di Giacomo and Goffredo Cagnetti.²

Authors included in Rapone's repertory were the Italians: Prof. F. Bernardini, Ruggiero Leoncavallo, Stefano Interdonato, Luigi Gualtieri, Paolo Giacometti, Luigi Camoletti, Carlo Cantu, Teobaldo Cicconi, Goffredo Cagnetti, Salvatore Di Giacomo, Carlo Roti, Luigi De Lise, Giacomo Martini, E. Minichino, Libero Pilotti, Francesco Mastriani, Nicola Misasi, Silvio Pellico, Giuseppe Rizzotti, Gaspare Mosca, Ernesto Rossi, Rev. Dottore C. Ugone, Cav. Federico Stella, Cav. Uff. Eduardo Scarpetta, Antonio Petito and the novelist Carolina Invernizio, whose novel I Piccoli Martiri (The Little Martyrs) was serialized in Il Telegrafo in 1904 and served as the basis of an adaptation staged by the Rapone troupe; from the French came the plays of Victorien Sardou, D'Aubigny, Adolphe Dennery, Philippe Francois Pinel Dumanoir, Alexandre Dumas, pere, Victor Hugo, Georges Ohnet and Henri Murger; William Shakespeare concludes this list of imported writers.

Among the American playwrights with this company, Pasquale Rapone and Gennaro Camerlingo have already been noted. The American actor, Alessandro M. Salvini, son of Tommaso, shares authorship with the Italian Luigi Gualtieri for Galileo Galilei o I Misteri della Inquisizione di Spagna (Galileo Galilei or The Mysteries of the Spanish Inquisition).

¹ Program notes, Folder 130, Sisca Collection.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 307 (November 1, 1904), p. 2.

We cannot be sure of Rapone's reasons for separating from what was then a very successful Maiori company. If it was to go out of town with a road company the venture was abandoned after a short time. If it was to stage serious dramas as he might not have been able to do with Maiori, the effort, although assiduous for the amount of time he gave to it, proved also to be too difficult to continue. What Rapone was best at was farce and comedy and to the genre he made a substantial contribution, perfecting the character Pascariello from Neapolitan comedy, and even creating comedies in which to play the character. Another contribution we can attribute to Rapone is the export of New York theatrical shows and actors to the "provinces." In his out of town productions he combined some of his company members with local groups, amateur or professional. In this way the out-of-town companies were exposed to the experience and repertory of New York's Italian-American theatre.

La Compagnia Comica-Filodrammatica Napoletana of Francesco Ricciardi

Francesco Ricciardi, "il principe dei pulcinelli"¹ (the prince of Pulcinellas) continued in the 20th century what he had started successfully in the 19th. He and his Compagnia Napoletana specialized in the production of Pulcinella comedies, farces and skits in the Neapolitan dialect, with Ricciardi directing and interpreting the famous masque from the commedia dell'arte. On what appeared to be an amateur or semi-professional basis, Ricciardi operated his 19th century company intermittently from 1889 until March 27, 1895, his last recorded

¹Il Progresso Italo-Americano, Anno XIV, N. 260 (November 5, 1983), p. 3.

performance in the last century. But by the 20th century, the company most assuredly achieved professional stature.

The first notices for this troupe during this period are for benefit performances. On Thursday, February 21, 1901 in the hall adjacent to Mr. F. Pennachio's Bar at 109 Mulberry Street (the address of the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III) Ricciardi produced a benefit in honor of the talented pianist, Mrs. E. Avellino. For 25 cents admission one would have seen Ricciardi enact the role of Pulcinella in a play of his own creation, Nu pulicino dent'a stupa (A helpless chicken). A lottery which followed the performance included gifts, both serious and humorous: a valuable mandolin, a porcelain alarm clock, a ring of guaranteed gold, a pipe, 50 cigars, five kisses in a bag, the necklace of Queen Taitu', a table service for 24 people, a lady's necessary toiletry item, and 50 continuous yards of silk. The newspaper ad describes Ricciardi as manager.¹

Soon after, on Monday, March 11, Ricciardi mounted another benefit, this time to cover the funeral expenses of young Mamie Mogavero, who was brutally murdered on Thursday night, March 7. In spite of the solemnity of the cause, the fare included yet another comedy by Ricciardi, Tanta Mbruglio pe no Matremmonio (All the Intrigues of Matrimony). This time the hall, located at 100 Mulberry Street, had been graciously donated for the occasion and the artists and singers worked for free.²

Thereafter, Ricciardi disappeared from the newspapers until

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 44 (February 20, 1901), p. 5; Falbo also vaguely places Ricciardi at the Caffè Pennachio during this period. Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 5S.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 60 (March 10, 1901), p. 5.

Wednesday, April 9, 1902. He had remodelled the former Villa Giulia at 196-198 Grand Street. Now owner of the *caffe concerto*, he rechristened it the Villa Napoli, charged no admission,¹ and operated it professionally and regularly until Thursday, August 27, 1903. Francesco Ricciardi had an arrangement with the adjacent restaurant of Raffaele Penza, known as the Hotel and Trattoria del Matese. (This, we will recall, was the setting for a play by Guglielmo Ricciardi.) The Hotel was located above both premises, the Villa Napoli and the Trattoria, at 196-198 Grand Street. The *caffe concerto* and the restaurant must have had easy access between the two, which facilitated the passage of wine and liquor internally from one place to the other. This practice landed Raffaele Penza in court one Wednesday: March 4, 1903. He was charged with the selling of wines and liquors without a license.

Ricciardi appeared in court to testify on Penza's behalf. The anonymous Il Telegrafo reporter described the scene in a paragraph entitled, "Pulcinella in Corte!" Ricciardi explained to the judge that alcoholic beverages sold by Penza in his restaurant were furnished by the Villa Napoli because Ricciardi, having paid \$800.00 for a liquor license, could not easily allow such nearby competition. Ricciardi's testimony must have been infused with something of a comic delivery because those present in court were amazed and entertained by his gestures and appearance. The case was adjourned to the following Monday² but the paper mentioned no more of it, so we assume the matter was settled without problems because both Ricciardi and Penza carried on

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 99 (April 9, 1902), p. 2.

²"Pulcinella in Corte," Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 64 (March 5, 1903), p. 1.

business as usual during the ensuing months. As a matter of fact, Ricciardi advertised on April 3 that authentic Gragnano wine was sold at the Villa Napoli.¹ Obviously his liquor license had not been revoked.

During his period at the Villa Napoli, Ricciardi staged performances every evening at 8 p.m., with an extra matinee on Sunday afternoons at 3:30 p.m.² Only two benefits were noted: one for Ricciardi himself on Thursday, April 2, 1903;³ and one for the couple Ranghelli and Dulmont on Thursday, August 27, 1903.⁴

In May 1903, while Francesco Ricciardi and La Compagnia Napoletana were still in residence at the Villa Napoli, a sensational murder was committed in Little Italy. The stabbed and mutilated body of a Mr. Madonia was found by the police in a barrel in the basement of the pastry shop located at 226 Elizabeth Street. There followed an article in the New York Herald entitled, "The Blackmailing Reign of Terror in Little Italy." This expose described the underworld of the Sicilian Mafia and its Neapolitan counterpart, the Camorra, who were allegedly responsible for the murder and for the victimization of the neighborhood's Italian immigrants.⁵

What makes the article fascinating and useful to this study are the pictures included with the article, three among them pertaining to the Villa Napoli. One shows the exterior, looking very much like the three-story brownstone that still exists today under the name Villa

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 93 (April 3, 1903), p. 2.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 94 (April 4, 1903), p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 92 (April 2, 1903), p. 1.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 234 (August 22, 1903), p. 3.

⁵ Stephen Bonsal, "The Blackmailing Reign of Terror in Little Italy," New York Herald (May 10, 1903), p. 3.

Pensa. In this picture, however, the large letters, "VILLA NAPOLI" appear over the second story windows. Another picture provides the mere fragment of a poster advertising the fare for Thursday, April 23, 1903 by the "Compagnia Comico Drammatica diretta da F. Ricciardi." A row of stars surmount the company's name and a hand with index finger extended points to the words, "Grande Serata." The letters visible of the play title are "FRA DIA . . ." The rest is torn off but the title was probably Fra Diavolo. Another picture affords a view of the interior of the Villa Napoli Theatre. The picture shows a small stage, slightly elevated, a fireproofed tin roof of square patterned design, windows on what we take to be the East wall, neatly aligned rows of wooden chairs and a narrow aisle just left of center.¹ From the number of chairs visible, the theatre could probably have accommodated no more than 100 people.

The pictures were not intended to associate the theatre with the underworld but were included with other views of Prince, Mulberry and Elizabeth Streets to show scenes of Little Italy. However, the article did describe how the Camorra made up part of the theatre audience:

His afternoons and evenings, whether on business or pleasure bent, the Cammorrasta passes in the music hall and theatre, of which there are at least four in the downtown colony. He spends money freely, drinks much red wine and from his box throws rich gifts of metallic coin to the delighted actresses.²

As far as we have been able to ascertain there were no boxes at the Villa Napoli, and during this period there were many more than four music halls in Little Italy. But this excerpt does show that the sale

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

of liquor and tipping of the performers were two of the financial aspects of running a music hall, and such was certainly the case at Ricciardi's Villa Napoli.

After the performance of Thursday, August 27, 1904, the ads for the Villa Napoli disappear. How long Ricciardi stayed at the location is uncertain but we recall that Maiori and Rapone were performing there on July 2 and 3, 1904. Then Giovanni De Rosalia and his company performed there almost daily from Wednesday, July 6 through Sunday, November 6, 1904.¹ During this period the proprietor was listed as Gaetano Borriello.²

On January 11, 1905, Il Telegrafo explained that Raffaele Penza, the owner of the next door Trattoria del Matese, had bought the building where there "once was" the Villa Napoli.³ The phrase leads us to believe that performances had ceased for an indefinite period of time.

Several months later Ricciardi's ads reappear in Il Telegrafo, indicating that he had already been producing at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III at 109 Mulberry Street, although the exact date of his debut there is unrecorded. The earliest recorded date of his productions there is Wednesday, May 3, 1905 and he continued into the years well beyond the time limits imposed on this study. We mentioned earlier that Ricciardi had performed a benefit on Thursday, February 21, 1901 at what was then Francesco Pennachio's Bar, also known as the Caffè Concerto Pennachio. Aniello Nappo bought the establishment from

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 188 (July 6, 1904), p. 3; N. 189 (July 7, 1904), p. 3; Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 189 (July 7, 1904), p. 2 through N. 310 (November 5, 1904), p. 2.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 184 (July 2, 1904), p. 3.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 11 (January 11, 1905), p. 3.

Pennachio and on Thursday (Thanksgiving Day), November 24, 1904 celebrated his grand opening and the inauguration of the new *caffe concerto*, La Villa Vittorio Emanuele III. The dramatic company in residence was directed by Gennaro Camerlingo,¹ who continued in that capacity until Monday, February 6, 1905.² Therefore, Francesco Ricciardi must have started mounting his theatrical productions there sometime between February 7 and May 3, 1905.

Ricciardi's financial arrangements with the owner are unknown but Aniello Nappo did receive a benefit the night of Tuesday, May 16.³ Ricciardi, in addition to directing and starring in his productions, also managed the *caffe*. Both Nappo and Ricciardi participated in hiring performers. The general procedure for entertainers unknown to the management was to hire them conditionally for three days and if they were well received by the *caffe* customers, they would be signed to a contract for an extended period of time.⁴

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 329 (November 24, 1904), p. 2. This date represents the first documented account of the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III, naming, grand opening and inauguration, which places the date much later than we had reported in our earlier study. Originally, we had placed the Villa's opening as early as 1892 and its eventual closing at about 1903, depending on reminiscences of Guglielmo Ricciardi and Giuseppe Cautela. The reason for this discrepancy lies in the tendency of writers, such as Guglielmo Ricciardi, Cautela, De Russo, Falbo and others, to associate all activity at this location under the name Villa Vittorio Emanuele. Their memories fail to distinguish, so many decades after its existence, exact dates of ownership and management, or else they tend to group together all their memories under one name; an easy mistake since the performers, musicians and location were similar, regardless of who owned the *caffe* or its name (Villa Vittorio Emanuele III, *Caffe Umberto I*, *Caffe Pennachio*).

² Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 34 (March 3, 1905), p. 3.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 131 (May 15, 1905), p. 3.

⁴ Rocco De Russo, Brani Della Carriera Artistica Dell'Artista Comm. Rocco De Russo. (Warwick, Rhode Island: unpublished manuscript, 1971), p. 1. University of Minnesota, Immigration History Research Center,

Aniello Nappo had emigrated to New York from his native city of Ottajano when he was only 18 years old. His brother was the mayor of that Italian town. He is described here by a contemporary writer, Dr. Luigi Pane:

Il Nappo e' l'uomo popolare; e per quanto non di grande cultura, ne' di grandi studii, purtuttavia col suo naturale ingegno e col suo trattare cordialissimo e sincero oggi va annoverato tra i primi -- se non l'unico -- benefattore di quella gente, che, emigrando in America, non sa ove dar di testa per incominciare a sostenere la vita. Proprietario della Villa Vittorio Emanuele III . . . ha saputo sempre mantenere viva e gaia la nota dell'arte teatrale napoletana,¹ tenendo scritturati elementi, che vanno qui per la maggiore.

This last statement refers to Nappo's custom of hiring newly arrived entertainers from Italy, contracting them in the conditional manner described in the preceding paragraph. One such performer was the actor and singer (later playwright and impresario) Rocco De Russo, who in his memoirs described Nappo as a little man of four and a half feet, very thin, and wearing a long mustache.² The picture included in the "Piedigrotta" souvenir program shows him as a distinguished and finely dressed man, seated with legs crossed in an ornate rattan chair. He holds a white straw hat encircled by a dark ribbon, and wears an unmistakable handlebar moustache.³ De Russo also alleged that he was a

Rocco De Russo Collection, Box 1.

¹"Nappo is a popular man; although not of great learning or attainments, nevertheless, with his natural genius and his cordial and sincere manner today he is numbered among the first -- if not the only -- benefactor of those people, who, emigrating to America, don't know where to turn to begin to earn a livelihood. As proprietor of the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III . . . he has always known how to keep the feeling of Neapolitan theatrical art lively and gay, contracting for the most part, those people that arrive here." Pane, p. 4.

²De Russo, p. 30.

³Pane, p. 4.

ringleader in the criminal underworld.¹

Francesco Ricciardi, when he started his company in the 19th century on an amateur basis, worked as a glovemaker to earn a living,² the trade he had followed in his native Naples.³ It is also very possible that he continued in this occupation even when his theatrical work turned professional, since he generally did not go to the *caffe* until six in the evening. The same actor, Rocco De Russo gives a description of Ricciardi in 1905, when he first went to the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III to ask Ricciardi for a job:

Giunse il signor Ricciardi, che oltre ad essere il manager del posto, era la maschere del Pulcinella di quel teatro. Dopo il cerimonia si comincio' a discutere su la probabilita' d'una scrittura. Francesco Ricciardi, (buonissima maschera) era un uomo pieno di se stesso, cercava darsi delle arie, ma con me la sbagliava diametralmente!.... Poi represse, quasi in sono canzonatorio, a farmi delle domande assurde e poco conclusivo, cercando prendermi in giro. Io, che francamente non sono mai stato un imbecille, capii l'antifona... Quell'uomo credeva avere di fronte un dilettantuccio e non un artista, abbastanza provetto, nell'arte del teatro.⁴

De Russo considered these questions of Ricciardi to be stupid and rather insulting, and summoning up his youthful courage, he stood up quickly and responded in a loud voice:

¹De Russo, p. 35.

²Ricciardi, "An Actor Tells a Story," p. 134.

³Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (September 13, 1942), p. 9.

⁴"Mr. Ricciardi arrived, who besides being the manager of the place, was the mask of Pulcinella of that theatre. After introductions, I began to discuss the possibility of a contract. Francesco Ricciardi (a very good mask) was a man full of himself, who sought to give himself airs, but with me he made a grave mistake!.... Then he replied, almost in a singsong tone, by putting absurd and inconclusive questions to me, trying to make a fool out of me. I, frankly I have never been an imbecile, took the hint... The man thought he had an amateur before him and not a professional, with enough experience, in the theatre world." *Ibid.*

Signor Ricciardi, non credo sia necessario rivolgermi altre domande -- sono in arte dall'eta di sei anni -- I teatri, dove io ho lavorato in Italia, ne avra', certamente, letta la reclame, che io mandai a mio cugino, quindi, se crede scritturarmi mi faccia firmare il contratto, senza perderci in inutili clamori, diversamente la ringrazio lo stesso, e chiudiamo la discussione.

At this point, Aniello Nappo, the owner of the *caffe*, entered. Ricciardi rose to his feet (De Russo remembers) and made the necessary introductions, after which Nappo turned to Ricciardi and told him: "Fate firmare, a questo artista, un contratto condizionale, in modo che se dopo tre giorni il pubblico lo protesta, il contratto viene annullato."² Turning to De Russo, Nappo asked, "Va bene cosi?" (O.K.?), to which the young actor agreed, "Perfettamente." (Perfect.) His salary was \$12.00 weekly.³

The incident reveals that, at least in the hiring of variety show performers, Ricciardi and Nappo shared the responsibility, but in the end it was really Nappo who had the upper hand. Nappo hired De Russo, and Nappo, six months later, fired De Russo. The young actor never got along well with Ricciardi, who he claims was jealous of his success and popularity at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III. For this we have only De Russo's unchallenged word. The entire picture of Ricciardi is the subjective memory of an actor recalling the event 64 years after the

¹"Mr. Ricciardi, I don't believe it's necessary to address any more questions to me -- I have been in the theatre since the age of six -- You have certainly read the notices from the theatres I worked at in Italy, which I sent you through my cousin, therefore, if you intend to hire me, have me sign a contract, without wasting time in useless talk, otherwise I thank you just the same, and let's end the discussion." Ibid.

²"Sign this artist to a conditional contract, so that after three days if the customers don't like him, the contract will be null and void." Ibid.

³Ibid, and p. 35.

fact. In any event, it is certain the antipathy between the two actors exploded into a brawl during a play rehearsal one day, in which De Russo smashed a chair and somehow injured Ricciardi's arm which he could not use for several days. Nappo, apprised of the fight, became angry. De Russo apologized and offered to resign with two weeks notice. Nappo replied that the two weeks were not necessary, that he could leave "Ipsofatto." Contract or no contract, De Russo left quietly, taking with him his belongings from his dressing room at the *caffè*.¹

Generally, Ricciardi directed most productions in this theatre but De Russo remembers a performance of Margherita Pusterla directed by Silvio Minciotti shortly after De Russo's debut at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III in late summer of 1905.²

In those days the *Caffè Ronca*, a pastry and confectionary store rather than a *caffè chantant*, was run by Pasquale T. Ronca and his brother Giovanni. Pasquale Ronca was born June 7, 1866 in Solofra in the province of Avellino. He came to New York City in 1891 and a year later in 1892 was followed by his brother Giovanni, with whom he opened the *Caffè Ronca* in that same year. Much later, c. 1911, Pasquale Ronca became a musical entrepreneur and imported singers from Italy to perform at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.³ But during the years 1900 to 1905 the *Caffè Ronca* was the Sardi's of Little Italy, a gathering place for the theatre and variety artists in the neighborhood, and there, we will remember, Antonio Maiori and Guglielmo Ricciardi first met. It was located at 385 Broome Street on the southeast corner of Mulberry Street.

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid., p. 33.

³ Flamma, p. 289.

Francesco Ricciardi would socialize there on his off hours with other members of the profession: actors, writers, musicians.¹ These are the artists that interest us now, those that performed with La Compagnia Comica-Filodrammatica Napoletana of Francesco Ricciardi.

Without question, the most notable member of the company, more popular even than the capocomico himself, and one of the most popular entertainers of this history throughout his entire life, was the legendary Eduardo Migliaccio, whose stage name was Farfariello.² Migliaccio was born April 15, 1882 at Cava Dei Terreni, in the province of Salerno, Italy. He attended the Istituto di Belle Arti, a technical school in Naples where he studied design and plastic art.³ These skills served him well years later when he embarked on a theatrical career. In Naples he attended the Teatro Nuovo where he observed the Neapolitan macchietista (impressionist), Nicolo Maldacea, who would serve as a model for the comic style Migliaccio later created. Among the Migliaccio personal papers are two books containing the collections of Maldacea's monologues and character sketches.⁴ According to

¹Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (September 20, 1942), p. 9.

²The valuable discovery of the Eduardo Migliaccio papers deposited with the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota has afforded important and hitherto unknown material and has helped to correct certain misinformation about Farfariello. Although we dealt with Migliaccio in our earlier study in the 19th century, in the interest of completeness and continuity we are repeating and reorganizing his story here. Furthermore, Guglielmo Ricciardi had erroneously led us to believe that Migliaccio performed in the 19th century while our research has ascertained that he only began his long and notable career in 1900, and so he most appropriately belongs to this time study.

³Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 55.

⁴Nicola Maldacea, Macchiette e Monologhi (Napoli: Tipografia Editrice Bideri, 1907), Eduardo Migliaccio Collection, Box 11.

Migliaccio's daughter, Alma, the family were millionaires in Naples, living in the Palazzo Migliaccio, and when Migliaccio's father emigrated to America, he brought along 50,000 dollars, which was lost in a fraudulent mine venture. The senior Migliaccio worked at the Banca Sandolo in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, whether as President¹ or as cashier is difficult to say, and was able to secure a position for Eduardo at the bank. So in 1897, Eduardo Migliaccio emigrated from Italy to join his father in Hazleton, Pa., in order to increase the allotment sent to the family that remained behind in Italy.²

Disembarking in New York City, Migliaccio was taken with its size and its many Italian residents, some of whom he knew. He continued on to Hazleton, but with great reluctance. The job that awaited him was that of writing letters to relatives in Italy for the bank's clients, most of them Italian-American laborers and miners, almost all of them illiterate. His father's advice to Eduardo was simple: "Sii gentile con tutti, paziente con tutti. . . E non rimandare a domani cio' che puo' esser fatto oggi."³ Migliaccio was disappointed in the career his father had cut out for him, and disliked this job as secretary to the uneducated, especially since he had to work late hours and on holidays, the times when laborers are generally free. But he applied himself diligently to the task, nevertheless--an effort which failed to win the satisfaction of his customers, one of whom promptly complained to his

¹ My interview with Alma Migliaccio, July 8, 1975.

² Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 55.

³ "Be kind with everyone, patient with everyone . . . And don't put off until tomorrow what can be done today." Ibid.

father: "Ma questo figliolo in che lingua scrive?"¹ (But what language does your son write in?). Educated, young and impatient, Eduardo was offended by what he considered the stupidity of this ignorant laborer. But the senior Migliaccio gently advised his son:

"Tu scrivi bene, molto bene, ma e' preferibile, e' anzi necessario scrivere com'essi vogliono, perche' cosi chi manda e chi riceve la lettera riesce a comprenderne facilmente il testo.² . . Allora scrivi cosi pianamente, semplicemente . . .

This lesson would serve Migliaccio well, not merely for his letter-writing career but more importantly for the unique theatrical genre he would later create in the music halls of New York City. His father's gentle admonition forced Migliaccio to look more closely into the hearts and minds and needs of the Italian laborers that eventually made up his audiences. This sympathetic understanding of the psyche of the Italian immigrant lies at the core of the characterizations Migliaccio created on the stage. Dealing with all types of immigrants on a daily basis also introduced Migliaccio to the variety of real life roles in the Italian community, the very subject matter of the macchietta coloniale (colonial character sketch) which he invented and made famous.

After several weeks at the Banca Sandolo, Migliaccio complained to his father that he was suffocating in his little office and wanted to explore other horizons. So with a few dollars of savings he came to New York City. The banker, Don Pasquale Avallone, whom we have discussed at

¹Ibid.

²"You write well, very well, but it's better, rather it's necessary to write as they wish you to, because this way the one who sends and the one who receives the letter is able to understand the message... So write very gently, simply ..." Ibid.

length with respect to Riccardo Cordiferro's L'Onore Perduto, was a close friend of the family. He employed Migliaccio at the Banca Avallone branch at 74 Mulberry Street, performing the same function he had developed in Hazleton: writing letters for immigrants to their relatives in Italy. The pay was modest but the hours were much improved, free time at night and on holidays.¹ Also, now in New York, he encountered a greater variety of immigrant types and occupations than those found in the mining community of Hazleton, Pa. Undoubtedly, these encounters served to broaden the scope of his understanding of the Italian immigrant community.

Migliaccio took up residence at 57 Kenmare Street and worked at the Banca Avallone throughout this period. (Rocco De Russo remembered that he was still employed there in 1905.²) But his greatly increased leisure time created the opportunity for another career -- the theatre. Riccardo Cordiferro, in his bibliography, noted that his macchietta, Io me 'o fatto monaco (I became a monk) was written in 1898, with music by Maestro Silvestro D'Acunto and sung by Migliaccio.³ Since D'Acunto was associated with Maiori, it is very possible that Migliaccio began with Maiori as early as 1898. But the first recorded notice of Migliaccio's appearance on the Italian-American stage occurs on Thursday, April 26, 1900 with the noted Antonio Maiori Company. Maiori cast him in his production of Hamlet as Marcello, an official,⁴ and as a guard in his

¹ Ibid.

² De Russo, p. 31.

³ Cordiferro bibliography, loc. cit.

⁴ Hapgood, p. 551.

production of La Jena del Cimitero on Monday, April 30, 1900.¹ These performances appear to have been his only attempts at serious dramatic acting.

Instead, Migliaccio's theatrical energies took a different turn. While still in Naples, he had exercised his pleasant singing voice in the parlours of his relatives and friends, singing all the latest Neapolitan hits.² Now in New York City, he had the idea of approaching the director and owner of the local marionette theatre with this proposal: "Prima della rappresentazione di Rinaldo perche' non mettete dei numeri di variet ?"³ Rinaldo di Montalbano is one of the paladin heroes of the Ludovico Ariosto classic, Orlando Furioso, which was dramatized nightly on the marionette stages of the time. Migliaccio recalls this event in an article entitled, "Il mio rivale. . . Rinaldo di Montalbano" (My rival... Rinaldo di Montalbano), but he neglects to identify the theatre.⁴ At the time, three different marionette theatres existed, but the theatre located on Mulberry Street performed specifically in the Neapolitan dialect for Neapolitan audiences⁵ and it was very possibly the director of this enterprise who with some reluctance hired the young singer.

The director's reluctance was justified. First, Migliaccio wanted his act to go on at a certain point in the program; the director had

¹ Ibid., p. 550.

² Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 5S.

³ "Before Rinaldo's performance, why not put on variety numbers?" Farfariello, p. 6.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Cautela, p. 111.

never had any complaints from his marionettes regarding the sequence of acts on the program. Secondly, when Migliaccio appeared before the audience, handsome young man that he was, the spectators barely looked at him. Migliaccio could read in their faces the anticipation for Rinaldo's entrance, which they applauded. When Rinaldo pulled a dirty trick on Gano di Maganza, the crowd showered him with confetti and threw kisses. Even Orlando Furioso had his special fans. Migliaccio's performance could not compete with that of the paladins and Rinaldo won more applause than the young Neapolitan singer.

In the hopes of conquering this dispassionate audience, Migliaccio was taken one night with the misguided idea of performing a skit he had never tried before, called "O Cantastorie" (The Folksinger) by Ferdinando Russo, a funny macchietta which parodied the gestures and attitudes of the paladins of France. It was not the hilarious success Migliaccio had intended. Instead, when he recited the lines:

Ecco Linardo in campo il paladino
 'o paladino 'e Francia 'o cchiu' pussente,
 teneva nu cavallo: Vigliantino,
 ca pe' grammegna se magnav' 'a ggente!¹

an infuriated spectator threw a bottle of soda water at him, which fortunately for Migliaccio, struck the shining bald head of the piano player, who had been totally absorbed in pounding out on the keyboard, with his own special three-fingered artistry, the symphony from William Tell. This episode ended Migliaccio's engagement at the marionette

¹"Here is Linardo the Paladin on the field
 The most powerful paladin of France
 He had a horse named Vigliantino
 That for fodder ate people."
 Farfariello, p. 6.

theatre. "Ma mi vendicaí,"¹ (But I had my revenge) Migliaccio recalls.

Throughout his career, the comedian adopted the habit of being the last to leave the theatre, as he did on this disastrous evening. On his way out he suddenly found himself face to face with his rival, Rinaldo di Montalbano, stiff, shiny and hanging from a steel wire. "Oh! tracotanza, dissi, non temo il tuo vil ferro!"² (Oh! arrogant one, I said, I'm not afraid of your vile sword!) and Migliaccio threw a punch at his shining, armored chest. But the coward did not raise his "durlindana" (the nickname for Rinaldo's sword), which was solidly attached to his powerful wooden hand. Migliaccio removed the piece of steel which supported the weapon and replaced it with a weak piece of wood. Throwing a last scornful look at his enemy, he left the theatre with one assuring thought, "Non si dira' piu' di te: 'Ad ogni colpo un cavalier per terra!'"³ (No longer will they say of you: "With every blow a knight falls to the ground!")

Two days later, he purposely passed by the theatre. The director was sad and had tears in his eyes. Migliaccio asked him:

-- Cosa ha?
 -- Niente, dispiaceri di famiglia. . .
 -- Son dolente, qualche parente forse?
 -- No. . . quell' imbecille di Rinaldo ieri sera a fatto scappare la sciabola di mano! . . .⁴

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ -- What's the matter?
 -- Nothing, family troubles...
 -- Are you in mourning, some relative perhaps?
 -- No... That imbecile of Rinaldo last night dropped his sword!..." Ibid.

The evening before, during a fierce battle, at the first blow "durlindana" fell to the ground. Rinaldo was forced to retreat, and someone in the audience screamed: "E' stato tradito! Infami!"¹ (He was betrayed! Traitors!) but they took out their disappointment on the director.²

By this time it must have been apparent to Migliaccio that the dramatic arena was not where he belonged, as attested to by his short stay with Maioni and his failure with the marionette theatre audiences. The milieu in which Migliaccio would produce his greatest work, create a singular new art form and enjoy enormous popular and artistic success was that of the Italian-American music hall, known as caffe'-concerto, caffe'-cantante, or cafe' chantant after the French. Many have already been mentioned in this history: la Villa Napoli, la Villa Penza, la Villa Giulia, la Villa Vittorio Emanuele III, la Villa Mascolo, il Cafe Eldorado, il Grand Eden, etc., and Migliaccio would perform in almost all of them.

After his day's work at the Banca Avallone, Migliaccio would frequent, among others, the caffe concerto Pennachio at 109 Mulberry Street, established in 1898 as Il Salone Umberto I.³ Having listened to the other singers in Little Italy's music halls, and deciding that his own voice was equal to if not better than what he had heard, Migliaccio thought to himself: "E se mi offrissi per cantare?"⁴ (What if I apply as a singer?) So he approached the owner of the caffe concerto,

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (May 10, 1942), p. 5S.

⁴ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 5S.

Francesco Pennachio, with this request. Pennachio looked him over, and being favorably impressed, replied:

"Caro giovinotto, prova e vedro' che sai fare. Stasera ho un programma fiacco. Il pubblico non e' contento. Lo troverai¹ ben disposto. Fatti subito avanti. E buona fortuna.

Migliaccio ascended the stage just as he was, but he was dressed elegantly. After he had sung three Neapolitan songs, he successfully won the audience's clamorous approval.

Pennachio ran backstage to congratulate him and took him immediately into his office to offer to sign him to a contract of four dollars a week. Migliaccio's initial success was so encouraging that he signed the contract despite the meager amount, hoping that it would increase in time. In this fashion, Migliaccio launched his new career, nightly performing the latest Neapolitan hits in the Caffè Concerto Pennachio. He was haphazardly accompanied in his singing by an accordion, a mandolin and a guitar, since Pennachio could not afford the luxury of a full orchestra.²

Guglielmo Ricciardi remembers seeing one of the early Migliaccio performances:

One day I saw three troubadors playing mandolin and guitar in one of the downtown halls. With them was a youngster in short trousers. He sang Neapolitan comic songs and then passed his hat around for pennies. He was well liked by the laborers who drank beer and laughed over his songs. This boy sang a song that later made him famous. . . His first appearance as a

¹"My dear young man, try it and I'll see what you know how to do. Tonite I have a weak program. The audience isn't satisfied. You'll find them good and ready. Go right ahead now. And good luck." Ibid.

²As we stated earlier, commentators habitually and freely associate the Caffè Concerto Pennachio with the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III. Although the names are sometimes used interchangeably in their collective memory, our information indicates that the Caffè Pennachio did not become known as the Villa until it was bought over by Aniello Nappo and

concert hall artist netted him less than eight dollars.¹

The song that made Migliaccio famous is the song that gave him his stage name of "Farfariello," by which he was popularly and affectionately known throughout his lifelong theatrical career. Our commentators cannot seem to agree on the exact songtitle. The earliest writing, by the American journalist Carl Van Vechten in 1919, called it: "Femmene-Fe, a trifle about women, with a pretty refrain which he sings with a pleasant baritone voice."² In 1935, Guglielmo called it "Farfariello"³ but in his 1955 memoirs described the title as "A morte d'e femmene"⁴ (The death of women), while Italo Falbo, in his 1942 reminiscences, called it "Povere Femmene"⁵ (Poor Women). The "pretty refrain" went as follows: "Oh Farfarie nficchete lla/ Nficchete, nficchete e fallo schiatta."⁶ Migliaccio sang this song every night at Pennachio's bar and because the refrain contained the name "Farfariello" the customers

renamed. It was also known as the Caffè Umberto I during that king's reign and until sometime after his death on July 29, 1900. Ibid.

¹ Ricciardi, "An Actor Tells a Story," p. 135.

² Carl Van Vechten, "A Night with Farfariello: Popular Bowery entertainer who impersonates local Italian types." Theatre Magazine, Vol. XXIX (January 1919), p. 32. We also have manuscript sheet music for the melody. Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

³ Ricciardi, "An Actor Tells a Story," p. 135.

⁴ Ricciardi, Ricciardiana, p. 59.

⁵ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 55.

⁶ "Oh Farfarie, ignore her
Ignore her, ignore her and let burst."
Ricciardi, "An Actor Tells a Story," p. 135. Later Ricciardi remembered a slightly different refrain:

"Oì Farfarie' nficchete lla'
Nficchete, nficche, e falla crepa' . . ."

The translation is basically the same. The word crepa' means "croak" as well as "explode" which is probably a play on the word. Ricciardi, Ricciardiana, p. 59.

would call it out to him when they wished to hear it sung.¹ In this fashion, Migliaccio's stage identity became associated with the name of the character in the song. Thus "Farfariello" became his adopted stage name. The name means "Little Butterfly." In Italian, the word for butterfly is farfalla while farfallone is the word for the kind of man who pursues one woman after another, much as a butterfly flits from flower to flower. The message in the song's refrain, as well as the various titles by which the song is remembered, suggest that the name of "Farfariello" has less to do with insect classification and more to do with male social behavior.

The precise date of Farfariello's debut at the Cafe Pennachio is difficult to determine. But we place it somewhere between his last appearance with Maiori (Monday, April 30, 1900) and his first recorded appearance at the bar on Thursday, February 21, 1901. On that date he was billed as "l'unico macchiettista napoletano in America"² (the only Neapolitan impressionist in America). The billing is slightly inaccurate. Guglielmo Ricciardi, another Neapolitan macchiettista, was also in New York City at this time, although it is possible he was totally absorbed with theatre production at his Grand Eden and no longer noted for his macchiette.

Macchietta is the Italian term for caricature or comic impersonation, usually associated with Naples where it originated and was made famous as a genre by the Neapolitan Nicola Maldacea, whom Migliaccio was able to observe at the Teatro Nuovo in that city.

¹Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 55. Ricciardi translates farfariello as "little devil." Ricciardi, "An Actor Tells a Story," p. 135.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 44 (February 20, 1901), p. 5.

The macchietta is a character sketch. If well done, the character with all its peculiarities is recognized as soon as the comedian appears on the stage. It can be satirical, ironic, tragicomic, or sentimentally ridiculous. As it is done by the majority of the macchiettisti it has usually a double sense, relying upon the spectator to catch a hidden pornographic meaning. The macchietta is mostly written in verse, with spoken passages of prose. The verses are put to music.

The term macchiettista, as the reader must already surmise, refers to the type of comedian who performs such comic impersonations. For Migliaccio to be billed as a Neapolitan macchiettista means that at this point in time (February 21, 1901) he was still performing caricatures from the Neapolitan repertoires of Villani, Gennaro Pasquariello and Nicola Maldacea,² who served as Migliaccio's models. As noted above, among the Migliaccio papers are two books containing collections of Maldacea's monologues and macchiette.³ "Donn'Agnese" (Mrs. Agnese), performed by Migliaccio while at the Caffè Pennachio, is from the Maldacea repertory.⁴

But Migliaccio soon sensed that his Neapolitan impersonations did not succeed in evoking the spontaneous laughter he had witnessed of audiences in Naples. Two reasons accounted for this reponse. First, the allusions to Italian public figures were lost on his laboring class audiences who were in great part uneducated and illiterate. Secondly, although his audiences were mainly Southern Italian, within that classification each region has its own dialect and the Italian grammar in which Migliaccio performed failed to convey the true spirit or sense

¹ Cautela, p. 110.

² Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 5S.

³ Maldacea, loc. cit.

⁴ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 5S.

of his comic routines. He also noticed that his songs, with their universal themes of love, hate, jealousy, passion, invariably went over with success.¹ But his macchiette lacked the proper ingredients for an outstanding response. "He soon found that his audiences showed their wildest delight when he impersonated some local figure."² and thus was born the macchietta coloniale (colonial character sketch), Migliaccio's original creation, which has been called "really the only original form of art that the Italian prose theatre in New York has had,"³ and which earned its creator the titles, "Re dei Macchiettisti"⁴ (King of Impersonators), "il re della macchietta coloniale"⁵ (the king of the colonial character sketch), and "the king of Italian vaudeville entertainers in New York."⁶

Farfariello's macchietta coloniale consisted essentially of social satire derived from the Italian immigrant experience in America, especially New York City's Little Italy.

When the macchietta coloniale of Farfariello first appeared on the stage, it took the Italians by storm. It was a revelation. There they were, just as they saw themselves. They laughed themselves sick. And after they got through laughing it made them think. Farfariello had caught the soul of the immigrant and pathetically expressed it. It was not the usual Neapolitan macchietta, as they had seen it in Italy. It was a

¹ Ibid.

² Van Vechten, p. 34.

³ Cautela, p. 110.

⁴ Van Vechten (who misspells "Rei"), p. 34; and Vincenzo Capparelli, "Nell'Arte e nella Vita," Il Nuovo Vessillo, Anno III (January 25, 1919), Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

⁵ "Al Palace Theatre," Gazzetta Del Massachusetts, Anno 20, N. 31 (July 19, 1916), clipping, Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

⁶ "Italian Comic Opera Co." The Morning Republican (May 12, 1918), clipping, Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

presentation of the tragicomic life they went through every day.¹ Migliaccio's depiction of "every day tragicomic life" so closely resembled the original that he has been compared to Brieux² and his macchiette have been called "fotografie di vita italo-americana"³ (photographs of Italian-American life): "These are not parts which have been written to order for Farfariello; they are people whom he has imagined for himself, whom he knows intimately and whom he compels his audience to recognize."⁴ This intimacy with Italian immigrant life that Migliaccio shared in his creations made his macchiette valuable social documents for the modern social historian:

He put forth a new type of presentation, the character sketches which he based upon his observations of different "types" of his countrymen whom he met here as immigrants. In a sense, it grew out of the very process of immigration. Migliaccio was said to have approached brilliancy in his insight and penetration of the heart of a character. Alternating between the satirical and the tragicomic, with just enough humor to prevent maudlin sentiment, he pictured the bewilderment of the immigrant as he was faced with his many problems in a far country. How well he understood the people he mimed can best be judged by the number of immigrants who flocked to his shows to see themselves in their own situations.⁵

In addition to the entertainment and historical value of these impersonations, one commentator suggests that Migliaccio had a didactic purpose in mind: "The audience realized he was trying to awaken Italians from

¹Cautela, p. 110.

²Robert Allerton Parker, "Farfariello, Most Popular Italian Impersonator, Who Scorns 'Big Time' for Ten-Cent Shows," The New York Press (January 4, 1914), Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

³Il Telegrafo, (August 26, 1913), clipping, Sisca Collection, Box 130.

⁴Edmund Wilson, "Alice Lloyd and Farfariello," The New Republic, Vol. XLIV, N. 568 (October 21, 1925), p. 230.

⁵Pisani, pp. 175-76.

their gullible and simple faith that made them victims of unscrupulous promoters."¹ But no other evidence supports this theory. If Farfariello's macchiette were educational in this way, it was a byproduct of his attempt to make them entertaining and humorous.

Migliaccio's epistolary labors at the Banca Sandolo of Hazleton and at the Banca Avallone of New York had already served him well in his new profession. First, he had encountered individuals from all walks of life in the Italian immigrant community, thus providing him with the subject matter for his macchiette. Secondly, he had learned to "be kind and patient with everyone," as per his father's advice, and this sympathetic understanding underscores all his stage characterizations. Third, and again according to his father's advice to "write so they can easily understand the message," he adopted for his macchiette the newly evolved language of the Italian immigrant population, which we shall call Italo-Americanese.

Farfariello's audiences spoke a jargon all their own. It was neither English, nor Italian, nor even a particular dialect, but a curious and complex mixture of all these elements:

The main reasons for the evolution of this curious speech are very simple. The so-called Italian colony is by no means the homogeneous whole that the untutored outsider believes it to be at first glance. It is, instead, a loosely joined assortment of men and women representing every section of the Italian Peninsula.²

Each province has a dialect peculiar to that section, and that dialect

¹ Joseph A. Tigani, "Italo-American Pens," Italian Heritage Newsletter, Vol. 3, N. 28 (May 1971), p. 4.

² Anthony M. Turano, "The Speech of Little Italy", American Mercury (July 1932) in A Documentary History of the Italian Americans, edited by Wayne Moquin with Charles Van Doren (New York: Praeger Publishers), p. 363.

itself differs from the standard Italian used in government, education, literature, etc.:

The natural consequence is that each Italian immigrant, upon coming to America, regardless of the region of his birth, must resort to as much as he happens to know of standard Italian, as¹ the only feasible means of intra-colonial communication.

If we consider that illiteracy characterized 70% of the Italian peasants and laborers who emigrated here from the poverty-stricken agricultural south of Italy,² then it is easy to understand that the common language among immigrants was hardly "standard" Italian at all:

It may be described, rather, as a Babel of dialects struggling laboriously toward the standard speech

The confusion would be bad enough if it stopped here. But now comes the English language, spoken by the native neighbors of all Italian groups, and demanding representation in the daily oral intercourse of every Italian-American.³

The encounter with Americans, especially in the workplaces of New York City, added even more ingredients to this linguistic soup. The industrial city exposed the immigrant to experiences that might have no recognizable counterpart in the agricultural homeland, thereby necessitating the adoption of new English/American words and phrases into an already mixed up Italian. But this crossover does not take place without phonetic adaptation and italianized spelling. Falbo notes that English words became: "piu o meno storpiato nella pronuncia"⁴ (more or less maimed in pronunciation). No wonder that Pasquale De Biasi called

¹ Ibid.

² Mariano, p. 8.

³ Turano, p. 363.

⁴ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 5S.

New York "la Babele di Manhattan."¹

But Italo-Americanese was not isolated in New York's Little Italy; it was understood and used in Italian Harlem as well as the Lower East Side, in New Jersey as well as Connecticut, in Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Massachusetts or whatever state attracted an Italian-American colony of immigrants.² So in a typical Farfariello macchietta, it was not merely the recognition of a colonial character type that conquered the audience; it was also the humorous use of their personal language, especially when we realize that Migliaccio wrote the lyrics that accompanied his sketches and made excellent use of the new language in his rhyme schemes.

For example, the verses to Iammo a Cunailando (Let's go to Coney Island) were written by Eduardo Migliaccio with music composed by N. Bonsanti. Migliaccio described the macchietta as a "Canzonetta Tarantella" (Tarantella Song). He also emphasized and footnoted the Italo-Americanese adaptations in the lyrics, knowing that they might not be recognizable to everyone:

I

Ne Memi'(2) cu 'sta bella jurnata,
 Tuorne a chiuderte dint' a 'na scioppa?(3)
 Nun da' retta, facinno 'a scappata,
 Doppo fatto ce veveno 'a coppa....
 Iammo, mammeta e' asciutta p' 'a spesa,
 Cu 'a baschetta(4) va attuorno; e papa'
 L'aggio visto -- Memi' sens' offesa --
 A 'o cantone d' 'o stretto(5) a saina'(6).

Te voglio fa a vede' 'o Luna Parco,
 Tutto elettricita'!
 Te voglio fa passa' pe' sotto a n'arco,
 Cu llampe 'a cca' a 'a lla'!
 A vita accussi e' bella!

¹ Pasquale De Biasi, "Prefazione," in Ricciardiana, p. 5.

² Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 5S.

Che dice, viene o no'?
Dint' a 'na barchetella,
Facimo 'o bombalo'.....(8).

II

Tuo fratello 'o sciu'-mecco(9), nun conta:
A chesta ora sta 'mbriaco gia' 'e uisco!(10)
Dint' 'o carro, io me metto 'a 'na ponta,
Tu da n'ata: capimmoce a sisco....
Sotto 'o ponte t'aspetto 'e Bruklino....(11)
Mmiez' 'a folla chi vene a guarda'?
Si 'o guaglione te 'nponta: Tonino(12)
Dalle 'e chente(13), ca 'o vide 'e scappa'.

Te voglio fa magna' 'nu pullastriello:
'O sprinche-cik(14) Memi'!
T' 'o spuzzulie tu sola, bello, bello;
Ma saie po' che voglio i'?
Sultanto 'e ccosce e 'o pietto!
Magnammo... ca t'he' a fa'
'Na panza, ce scummetto,
Ca nun te fido 'e sta'!....

III

Quanno e' lla', si vuo' fa' 'a sciuliarella,
Ce facimmo 'nu sacco 'e risate.
Statt' attienta pero', ncarruzzella,
Specialmente vicino a 'e vutate:
Saglie, scenne; ma nun te fa male....
Quanno arriva -- int' a chillu mumento --
'Nfaccia 'a scesa... che spasso geniale!
Po' fernesce e... te porta cchiu' lento.

Si dint' 'o carusiello vaie a caballo,
Abbade 'e nun cade'!
Te porto a 'o luppo-luppo(15) e pure a 'o
ballo,
Cammine appriesso a mme,
Si mammeta se lagna,
Dincello: Neh, mamma',
Nun ghisteve... 'ncampagna
Vuie pure cu papa'!

Besides the Cunailando of the title, which means "Coney Island,"
Migliaccio also gave translations for the Italianized English words and
phrases in footnotes corresponding to his numbers in the text of the
verses:

(2) Mayme (<u>sic</u>)	(6) Shine
(3) Shop	(7) Luna Park
(4) Basket	(8) Altalena
(5) Street	(9) Shoe maker

(10) Wiskey (<u>sic</u>)	(13) Candy
(11) Brooklyn	(14) Spring-chicken ¹
(12) Tony	(15) Loop the loop ¹

"Mamie"(2) and "Whiskey" are misspelled; Altalena and Loop the loop are Coney Island rides; and sciu'mecco (shoemaker) imitates the New York regional speech pattern of dropping the final "r."

As well as lyrics, Migliaccio wrote the monologues interspersed among the songs, the prose passages that went into the composition of a macchietta. Generally, in the papers that have survived, the music was composed by one of the maestri of the period, although Migliaccio was sometimes credited with writing music as well. He directed and choreographed his own routines:

Rehearsing long hours before a mirror, Migliaccio precisely planned and executed every gesture, dance step, line delivery, vocal inflection. He maintained a workshop at home, where he taught himself the art of wig and mask making. When constructing a mask, he began by carving a potato to serve as a mold for the nose that usually dominated the mask.²

It is possible that he taught himself the art of wig and mask making; we recall that he had attended the technical Institute of Fine Arts in Naples, where he studied design and plastic art. But in Carl Van Vechten's 1919 interview with Migliaccio another version of this story is given:

A practical reason dictated the wig making. He found that for each of his songs he would need a different wig and in the early days the price of wigs exceeded the weight in his purse. So he apprenticed himself to a wig maker and worked diligently at that trade all day,³ while at night he sang in the old-time Bowery concert halls.

¹A complete translation is included in Appendix VII, A. "Piedigrotta Nappo," souvenir lyric sheet (n.d.), p. 2.

²A. Richard Sogliuzzo, "Notes for a History of the Italian-American Theatre of New York," Theatre Survey: The American Journal of Theatre History Vo. XIV, No.2 (November 1973), p. 69. (From Sogliuzzo's interview with Almarinda Migliaccio, Farfariello's daughter.)

³Van Vechten, p. 34.

If this is true, then Migliaccio was a very busy man, indeed. He worked by day at the Banco Avallone and the wig maker's, and at night in the caffes. Somewhere in between he found time to write lyrics and macchiette (and the music that some attribute to him) and to make costumes as well. His daughter Alma remembers how he used to make wigs for her dolls when she was a little girl.¹

Migliaccio was a prolific writer. By 1914 he was reported to have a repertoire of at least 150 macchiette.² (In 1942, Falbo reported this number had reached 300³ and his son Teodorico numbered them at 500.) He might perform half a dozen or more in the space of half an hour:

He devised a method for quick costume changes: the entire costume was constructed as a unit with snaps at the back. In later years, he was assisted by his son, who waited in the wings with wigs, costumes, and props. All was carefully synchronized, so that the costume changes were orchestrated into the entire act. The interlude for the costume change was utilized by the band to begin the musical introduction for the succeeding sketch.⁴

Migliaccio's quick and easy transitions from character to character were part of the appeal of his portrayals. An anonymous Italian reporter saw him slip quickly from old characters to young ones, from men to women:

Dall' aristocratico cilindro al caratteristico berretto siciliano, dalla marsina impeccabile alla giubba dell' operaio, dalla sfarzosa decolte' della chanteuse biricchina alla gonna sdrucita della popolana ciarliera. Egli passa con semplicita' e sistiene i caratteri senza affettatezza ecco tutto.⁵

¹My interview with Almarinda Migliaccio, June 8, 1975.

²Parker, loc. cit.

³Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 55.

⁴Sogliuzzo, p. 69. (From his interview with Teodorico Migliaccio, Farfariello's son and assistant.)

⁵"From the aristocratic top hat to the Sicilian cap, from the impeccable tails to the workingman's garb, from the dazzling decolte' of the teasing chanteuse to the torn skirt of the talkative woman of the

As interesting as are the comments of the American witnesses cited here from time to time, the appreciation of an Italian reveals how painstakingly Migliaccio sought to incorporate small elements and details that brought home to his audiences the idiosyncracies of the characters he developed. Only an Italian in the audience would appreciate the characteristic attire of a special province or the turns of phrase and mannerisms of another. Farfariello achieved specificity through simple observation:

To the Caffè Ronca Farfariello, living only ten feet away, used to pay his first morning visit. Unobtrusively sitting at a corner table, he would sip his black coffee with anisette. Taciturn and never smiling, he would listen patiently to any one of his admirers who approached and spoke to him. Thus he studied the types and characters that some days later had new life on the stage.

Besides being a hangout for the theatrical profession in Little Italy, the Caffè Ronca was an excellent source of raw material for his macchiette.

The following are some reflections on the effects of Migliaccio's costumes and makeup on an eyewitness, the American journalist for The New York Press, Robert Allerton Parker, after he had attended a Farfariello performance as late as 1914, on Arthur Avenue in the Bronx:

How His Costumes Charm

His readiness to use false noses and exaggerated make-up, his costumes that suggest at times the illustrations in children's books, may be qualities that would not be tolerated by the sophisticated American vaudeville audience. But that is precisely one of the charms about the audience to which Farfariello makes his appeal. Up in Arthur avenue (sic) the

people, he passes with ease and plays his characters without affectation, that's the whole thing." Newspaper clipping, scrapbook, Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

¹ Cautela, p. 110.

audience is for a large part made up of children. They crowd down to the front of the stage . . . (illegible) . . . the intimacy between performers and audiences that must have been developed in the old Italian marketplace.

It is this childishness, too, that has kept and will keep Farfariello from becoming indirect or oversubtle in his strokes of caricature.

The real significance of the art of Farfariello lies in its verisimilitude. He has been more interested in depicting the life of the Italian world . . . than merely in "putting something over" to titillate for a few moments the interest of a bored audience.¹

Parker was struck by Farfariello's combination of cartoon exaggeration and realism. His costumes showed that great attention had been paid to detail and to the creation of a theatrical effect. Migliaccio's sister Esterina Grimaldi also used to assist with costume construction and created much of the intricate embroidery that went on some of them.²

As has already been noted, Migliaccio began his tenure at the Caffè Concerto Pennachio somewhere between April 30, 1900 and February 21, 1901, the date he was billed as a Neapolitan macchiettista, which would indicate that he began developing as a macchiettista coloniale sometime after this date. But we know that he developed the macchietta coloniale while still in the employ of Pennachio. One of his earliest sketches was L'impresario di pompe funebri (the funeral director), more popularly referred to as L'Ondertecco (The Undertaker). The word itself is an example of a typical Italo-Americanese distortion of the term "undertaker." Parker saw first hand Farfariello's undertaker routine:

One of his masterpieces of caricature is that of the undertaker, smiling, prosperous, industriously forming friendships when not conducting a funeral, seeing a possible customer in all whose hands he shakes. This portrait, Farfariello tells

¹ Parker, loc. cit.

² My interview with Alma Migliaccio.

you, was taken¹ from life after a study and observation of several weeks.

The real life model for the funeral director in the sketch was Professor Teodoro Palumbo, a Piedmontese formerly of the Italian military, an early pioneer of the Italian colony in New York City. He was tall, with long thick whiskers, almost always dressed in black, and always wearing a pair of eyeglasses but carrying another pair in reserve.²

He had also formerly run a school in Little Italy. As a matter of fact, in our earlier study, we had noted that on Wednesday, November 27, 1889 the students of the Teodoro Palumbo School at 54 Prince Street, had performed two comedies in Italian, the proceeds of which benefitted the fund for the erection of the Monument to Christopher Columbus.³ But now Palumbo had become a well-known undertaker and a capable embalmer, and although he had put schoolteaching aside, he continued as a community benefactor. When he was not occupied at his funeral parlor, he passed his evenings at one or another of the social organizations to which he belonged. Together with Cav. Vito Contessa, he had founded a fraternal society. (We have already mentioned Vito Contessa as a producer of theatrical benefits for community concerns.) Palumbo was also a promoter of the colonial masked ball for Mardi Gras and a faithful organizer of the annual Columbus Day celebration at Columbus Circle. Although people would secretly "knock wood" when they dined with him, nevertheless he was well liked by everyone, for he was truly a good man

¹Parker, loc. cit.

²Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 14, 1942), p. 5S.

³Il Progresso Italo-Americano, Anno X, N. 277 (November 25, 1889), p. 1.

and "un patriota dell'antico stampo"¹ (an old style patriot).

Palumbo did not like attending the theatre because, being a Northern Italian, he did understand the Neapolitan dialect. After Farfariello had first performed L'Ondertecco, some who had been in the audience informed Palumbo:

"-- Farfariello vi prende in giro; Farfariello insolentisse contro di voi; e si e' truccato in modo che tutti possano riconoscere l'ondertecco ch'egli raffigura e ridicoleggia."²

On hearing this report, Palumbo flew into a rage. He had been a friend of Migliaccio's and had always spoken well of him. Why would this young man expose him to the mocking laughter of the customers of the Caffè Pennachio? Palumbo replied to his informers: "Io sono amico di Sullivan. E lo farò arrestare."³ (I am a friend of Sullivan. I'll have him arrested.) Palumbo was referring to Tim Sullivan, the "tammanista" or Tammany Hall district leader who had some power among Italians and who could presumably stop the inflammatory macchietta.⁴ Palumbo then went to the caffè concerto to complain to Pennachio and wait for Farfariello, who, upon showing up for rehearsal, was greeted with an outburst of complaining from Palumbo. But Farfariello calmed him down quickly enough:

-- Siete male informato, caro Professore. Venite stasera a teatro e se troverete qualcosa di offensivo nella macchietta, vi prometto che muterò parole e truccatura.
-- All right!

¹ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 14, 1942), p. 55.

² "Farfariello is making a joke out of you; Farfariello insults you; and he makes himself up so that everyone can recognize the undertaker whom he represents and ridicules." Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Parker, loc. cit.

-- All right!¹

That very night members of the audience were surprised to see Teodoro Palumbo himself seated way up front in the theatre. As soon as Farfariello had been announced, some young men in the theatre yelled, "L'ondertecco! L'ondertecco!" Palumbo's face turned scarlet "come un cocomero" (like a watermelon) while a companion seated beside him urged him to stay calm. Enter Farfariello dressed exactly like undertaker Palumbo. At every joke and every time the customers laughed, eyes were on Palumbo for the "scene" that wasn't on the program. But Palumbo surprised everyone by laughing at the macchietta himself. After all it was an innocent song and his informers had obviously exaggerated. At the end of the show, Palumbo went up on stage to make a public retraction of his harsh words to Migliaccio that morning.² According to Parker, he also "realized the enormous advertising value of Farfariello's characterization."³ The lyrics for L'Ondertecco were as follows:

1

Che ci volete fare, certa gente,
se crede che per fare l'ondertecco
nun nce vuiesse propriamente niente.
'ma dezze uale de mecco big mistecco.

Nel vuole abilita la paisananza,
si nun te faie l'amice, 'un ghiesce a giobba
e te puo' sta cu 'e mmane ncopp' 'a panza,
cu tutto il tuo servizio e 'a megliu robba.

Dint' e barre, cafe', tenite mente,
ch'io a tutte tratte, a tutte dongo 'a mano,

¹"You are misinformed, dear Professor. Come to the theatre tonight and if you find anything offensive in the sketch, I promise you I will change the words and the makeup." Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 14, 1942), p. 55.

²ibid.

³Parker, loc. cit.

pecche'? Pecche' fra tanta canuscente
n'hanna muri sei o sette 'a settimana.

2

Mo gli affari non vanno tanto bene
e grazia stanno tutte quante buoni,
Qualchi festa m'aiuta quanno vene:
disgrazie, risse, muoie indigestioni

Voi dite gagno 'o male, Nossignore,
piuttosto 'e j'addo n'ato che e' mbruglione,
l' ve servo l', con gran decoro e onore,
Io atterro 'a gente con soddisfazione.

Apparata di lusso bella e fatta
e carrosse di lusso pe' 'a famiglia.
Na vedova fu tanto soddisfatta,
che il giorno appresso, mi chiamo p'a figlia.

3

Io appartengo a tutte 'e comitate,
Io songo un pezzo grosso conosciuto.
M'avete visto mai nelle parate?
A pere ed a cavallo nce so' ghiuto.

Io so l'unico, il vero salvatore
degli italiani. E' certo si uno nasce,
si sposa, io 'o porto a' chiesa si uno more
io sono il primo a preparare 'e casce.

Si n'ato fa nu guaio e ghiessein corte,
tengo amicizie e l'aiuto fintanto
che non lo vedo condannato a morte,
doppo m' 'o piglio e 'o porto 'o camposanto.¹

The line that ends the first quatrain of this song gives an example of Italo-Americanese: "'ma dezze uale de mecco big mistecco." This translates as: 'ma (the Italian word for but) dezze (that's) uale (why) de (they) mecco (make a) big mistecco (mistake). Mistecco rhymes with ondertecco, itself a distortion. In the second quatrain, the word giobba is an Italianization of "job."

In the case of the funeral director, Migliaccio's experience with

¹ A complete translation is included in Appendix VII, B. Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 14, 1942), p. 5S.

his real life model ended happily, but he also had encounters that were less than amicable. From time to time Francesco Pennachio would arrange a short tour for his performers, whose transportation expenses he would pay. On tour he also increased their salary by \$5.00 and the performers would be happy to earn the extra money. One Sunday Farfariello and four or five other artists from the *caffe* took the three and a half hour train ride to Mount Vernon, where the *impresario* was ecstatic because his theatre was filled to capacity. Farfariello performed five or six macchiette but the loudest laughter and the most clamorous applause went to Il Presidente della Societa' (The President of the Social Club) also known as Il President-Generale (The President-General). The audience laughed long and hard at this one; the response was astonishing. It looked like this:

Farfariello vi appariva vestito goffamente da generale. Perche . . . a quei tempi molte nostre Societa' di mutuo soccorso avevano adottato per tutti i soci o quanto meno per gli ufficiali della presidenza, divise militari, riproduttori, piu o meno, quelle dell' esercito italiano: granatieri, bersaglieri, carabinieri, cavalleggeri, eccetera.¹

When Migliaccio first created this macchietta, he ordered his costume from Frank De Caro, who specialized in military uniforms for labor organizations. The artist asked him why all the members, rank and file alike, dressed as officers: "Sarebbe meno...scandalosa una semplice divisa di soldato per tutti i soci, lasciando i galloni degli ufficiali ai dirigenti la Societa'."²

¹"Farfariello appeared awkwardly dressed as a general. Because, in those times many of our mutual benefit societies had adopted for all their members or at least for the officers of the board, military uniforms, more or less resembling those of the Italian army: grenadiers, sharpshooters, military police, cavalrymen, etcetera." Ibid.

²"It would be less scandalous to have a plain soldier's uniform for all the members and leave the officers' decorations for the executive directors of the Society." Ibid., pp. 5S-6S.

The tailor replied:

Sarebbe meglio. Ma io so che non c'e' nessuno che si accontenti meno che del grado di capitano. I galloni sul braccio sono una grande irresistibile attrazione per i nostri buoni villici. E chi piu' puo metterne piu e' orgoglioso e felice!¹

De Caro's advertisement promised:

Le Societa' che vogliono fornirsi di buone Bandiere, Gonfaloni, Badges, uniformi militari e qualunque altro accessorio, si dirigano all Ditta

* FRANK DE CARO *

Tel. 3329 Spring. 169-171 Grand Street., New York. Si fanno spedizioni in tutti i punti degli S.U.²

Having finished the performance in Mount Vernon, Farfariello was in his dressing room removing his makeup and costumes when his colleague, Giovanni Lombardi, a singer with the company, came backstage to warn him to quickly flee the premises and to avoid the entrance to the theatre where the theatre owner was waiting for him. Since the company had to pass by the box office to get paid, Farfariello asked why and Lombardi explained:

Perche egli e' presidente di una societa' italo-americana di Mount Vernon e anche egli, per le parate festive, si veste da generale. Quanto ti ha visto in scena in divisa militare e ha ascoltato la macchietta canzonatoria, mi ha fatto chiamare nel suo ufficio accanto al botteghino e con gli occhi luccicanti e iniettati di sangue, mi ha detto:

-- Dice a quel maleducato, che si permette di venirmi a prender per fesso in casa mia, che gli stascio la testa alla fine dello spettacolo, perche' impari a rispettare la gente per bene e la onorata divisa.³

¹"It would be better. But I know that there is no one who is happy with less than the rank of captain. The stripes on the arm are a great and irresistible attraction for our good citizens. And the more he wears, the happier and prouder he is." Ibid., p. 6S.

²"Societies who wish to supply themselves with good Banners, Flags, Badges, military uniforms and whatever additional accessories, should look for the Sign *FRANK DE CARO* Telephone 3329 Spring. 169-171 Grand St., New York. We supply to all point in the U.S." Pane, p. 25.

³"Because he is the president of an Italian-American organization of Mount Vernon, and he too wears a general's uniform in the parades on

With this news, Migliaccio quickly packed his clothes, his brushes, and his wigs into his valise, and assisted by Lombardi and another actor, Ernesto Quadrini, leaped into the courtyard from a side window. He ran to the station and relinquished the money that was due him.

Five years later, the owner of the *caffe* theatre in Mount Vernon was passing through Grand Street when he encountered Migliaccio, whom he stopped abruptly. Migliaccio experienced a fleeting moment of terror until the man good-naturedly shook his hand and told him:

Scappando dalla finestra, mi hai evitato la galera. Perche' ti avrei tracassato il cranio e strappato la lingua. Non ebbi mai un tale accesso di collera in vita mia. Ma poi, ripensandoci, ho finito per convincermi che avevi ragione di burlarti di certo nostre pagliacciate. E da allora, lo sai, io non me so vestuto cchiu da generale.

Farfariello created several macchiette in this vein, another example of which is Il piccolo bottegaio arricchito² (The little store-keeper who became rich) who also marches in parades in a general's uniform. But the most famous in this group is Il Cafone Patrioto (also *Lu Cafone Patriotto*, meaning The Italian Patriot) with lyrics written by Migliaccio and Tony Ferrazano, and music composed by Maestro V.

holidays. When he saw you onstage in a military uniform and heard the sketch sung, he called me into his office next to the box office and with glaring bloodshot eyes he said to me:

-- Tell that ignoramus who has taken the liberty of coming into my house to make fun of me, that I'll break his head after the show, so he'll learn to respect good people and the honorable uniform." Ibid., p. 55.

¹"Escaping through the window, you avoided hell. Because I would have broken your skull and ripped out your tongue. I never had such a fit of anger in all my life. But then, thinking it over again, I ended up being convinced that you were right to make fun of some of our farcical behavior. And since then, you know, I haven't worn my general's uniform anymore." Ibid.

²Luigi Locatelli, clipping from Il Secolo di Milano reproduced in theatre program from Dante Theatre in Chicago dated August 4, 1917. Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

Napolitano.¹ Several eyewitnesses can recreate the effect of this particular portrayal. First, Carl Van Vechten, the American journalist:

the figure of an Italian patriot appears, a large florid person with heavy hair and mustache. Across his chest, over his shoulder, and ending in a sash at his hip, he wears the tricolor of Italy. Farfariello paints the man in action; he is forever marching in parades (the moment when he falls out of step always arouses a hot chill of appreciation in me!); he is forever making speeches at banquets; he is forever shouting, "Viva Italia!" Like all good caricatures this is not only a comment on the thing itself, it is the thing itself. And as this portrait is essentially provincial it thereby passes easily into the universal apprehension. We all know this man in some guise or other.²

Edmund Wilson, another journalist, describes additional elements of this cartoon:

Most charming perhaps of all those I have seen is the stupid but great-spirited fellow who has tried to take out naturalization papers; all went well until it was indicated to him that he was to renounce his Italian citizenship -- which he understood as a repudiation of his Italian birth; he protested indignantly and shouted, "Eviva l'Italia!" -- whereupon they put him out. He is tremendously excited and expresses the emotions which arise in him at the prospect of repudiating Italy -- he enumerates her provinces and peoples, carefully including the Sicilians, who, he explains, are Italians too, and the inhabitants of the little town from which he comes. His voice breaks, he sobs at the thought of the glories he has been invited to betray.³

But an Italian-American journalist is able to relate the effect of this particular sketch on its real life models:

Many Americans remember the sorry spectacle that many Italian immigrants used to make in those times. Still cherishing certain memories of their fatherland, they paraded through the streets of New York as caricatures of the Italian Army. Their honesty remains undisputed; but the result achieved in those uniforms was atrocious. If such well-meaning patriots have ceased parading with their gold laces dragging under their heels and carrying their sabres as so many broomsticks

¹ Sheet music dated November 20, 1913, Migliaccio Collection, Box 5.

² Van Vechten, p. 32.

³ Wilson, p. 230.

on their shoulders, it is due to the castigating macchietta¹ that Farfariello drew of them.

What follows here are the actual lyrics for the song and the prose monologue that ended the macchietta:

Il Cafone Patrioto

Quell'uomo che disprezza la nazione,
della provincia sua e un animale,
peggio del mio compare, un mascalzone,
imbicillo e aci lo fa sape' Pasquale.
Il mio compare, salvo il sangiovanni,
e un grande porco quell'animalone!
Non parla maie, pure si la scanna,
la lingua taliana, quel cafone!

Dice che nell'America,
per lui e un grande scorno,
se parla taliano
per questo qualche giorno
Lo piglio a calci a pacche e
gli do una lezione,
per farlo rispetta
la nostra nazione

Campo' Viva l'Italia!
Managgia! ca si no!

2

Quell'uomo che si fenge mericano
mentre non e', io non lo chiamo uomo
e specialmente poi il taliano
che viene da un paese galantuomo!
Si! galantuomo e lo possiamo dire
noi fortamente anzi stra fortamente
da noi il galantuomo che tu vire
fa il galantuomo sempre onestamente

E truove chi in Italia,
per il punto d'onore,
campa fra fame e stiente
e disperato more!
Sono tutti grand' uominone,
sono tutti di scienza
mentre la maggior parte,
qua so' di sechemenze

¹Cautela, p. 110.

Campo' Viva l'Italia!
Mannaggia . . ca sí no!

3

Io volevo la carta cittadina
per besiness, quella era la ragione
per bía ca la paranza t'arrovina,
quando non puoi votare a li'lezioni
E mi imparaie da compa' Giovanni
le domande e risposte americane.
Ma non me disse lu scannato agame,
ca un cacciavano da l'italiane.

Percio' quando lu giudice
mi fece la domanda:
-- No mor Taliano?! ol aime
No tel mi dis Giovanni.
-- Go anne in no prepera
e no spicco no more
fec'o': Viva l'Italia!
e me cacciamene fore!

4

Vi voglio far sentire quello che ho scritto l'altra sera sul
conto del regno d'Italia che fra pochi giorni lo farò
spubblicare nei piu' grandi romanzi che si sprubbicano in America.
L'Italia!...signori miei...e' una terra taliana piena di tutti
popoli taliani, la quale come fosse: li genovisi, li piemontisi,
senze contare li napulitani, li calavrisi e li siciliani, la
quali sono pure taliani e rumane e tusane che se la fanno nelle
terre taliane e sono pure taliane! e mettiamo ce pure il mio
paese sono di popolo taliano. Nell'Italia ci sta il nostro Re
che e' un grand'uomo taliano, la quale e' pure taliano, e nei sta
il nostro Ducio che nzezna e mpone e chiave pacchere c'a ragione
e nei sta il papa il capo della nostra religione, cattolica
postolica, romantica e nei sono i cardinali ed altri articoli e
sono tutti taliani. Ll'Italia, signori miei parecchi secoli e
bisecoli addietro a noi, era come una pizza che ognuno ne teniva
una fetta, ma era sempre taliano; poi venette l'ebbreza della
battaglia della dipendenza e Garibaldi e Vittorio 'Manuele, che
sarebbe il padre del padre di quello che abbiamo adesso, fecero
un sacco di battaglia e Garibaldi a cavallo al cavallo e con la
sciabbola in mano, se mettette addicer: Va fuori d'Italia! Va
fuori straniero! e ne caccione tutta la gente furostera! Poi
noi e' stata la battaglia che abbiamo fatta per la liberta', la
civilta', pe ll'ate se so' vestute e a nuie nce hanno fatto
spuglia. Ma l'Italia che e' un popolamento glorioso dice:
Damme tiempo ca te spertoso!
Che io vorrebbe tenere la lingua nmocca per parlare, per dire
quello che vorrebbe dire. . . che non saccio io stesso quello
che dico per farmi accapire. . . Che un' infame d'airisce che
dice che Cristoforo Colombo non e' un grand'uomo che l'Italia
non e' una terra d'essere apprezzata perche' l'America l'ha

scoperta un paisano suo di Baveri'. Ma io credo che lui sta umbriaco perche' a quell'epoca non ci stava quella locanna dove se la fa il suo paisano! Compare Giovanni fa schifo all'italiane perche' l'Italia e' la cchiu bella nazione del mondo, pecche' la patria mia non la cognosse ci la meno sono! . . . e chi non e' taliano non me sbatte li mmane!

Viva l'Italia!
e morte a cumpare Giovanne!¹

The immigrant innocently and naively expresses his allegiance to Italy, or rather his composite concept of Italy, and offers his ontological argument for its greatness: "because it's Italian!" For a better appreciation of this caricature's realism and eccentricity, some words deserve clarifying. The cafone of the title means "greenhorn," "country bumpkin" or someone who is socially unsophisticated, but it is generally used in a deprecating, pejorative sense; colloquially, cafone would translate as simply "jerk." The term compare or cumpare in dialect technically refers to one who sponsors, such as a godparent at baptism or a best man at a wedding. Such a person became almost family, like a distant cousin, and by extension countryman. Especially in America, to meet someone from your home town in Italy was to practically meet family. Such a person was called compare. Examples of Italo-Americanese include: business for business, aim for I'm, anne for on, mi for me, dis for this, spicco for speak, airisce for Irish.

A different immigrant reaction to America is found in another early macchietta called 'O Cafone c'a Sciammerica (The Country Bumpkin in a Tuxedo), with lyrics by Migliaccio and Giuseppe Topa and music again by Napolitano:²

¹ A complete translation is included in Appendix VII, C. Eduardo Migliaccio, Il Cafone Patrioto, handwritten original manuscript, Migliaccio Collection, Box 5.

² Dante theatre program, loc. cit.

Mi piace questa terra americana
 perche qua siamo tante quante aguaie
 e il presidente m'hadda da la mana
 a me come la da al frato carnale

Ma che saccio ll'America
 Non tengo cchiu crianza
 ammarcio col principio
 nisciuno e' meglio 'e me

Si tu si noto principe
 o tu si scenziato
 io tengo la sciammeria
 e songo 'o stesso e' n'ato

Dazze bicos, Franci
 Mi laiche dis contri

Si tu t'ammogli nella terra nosta
 passa lu guaio e nun nce faie cchiu nienta,
 quella e quella e' cumpa' cara te costa
 o fosse bbona e fosse malamente

Ma cca' dentro all'America
 si nun tel pare bbona
 scasse lu matremmonio
 e te la vaie a cagna

Dice Misto, no laiche.
 faie na carta mballata
 e quello lesto il sinneco
 te n'apparacchia n'ata

Dazze bicos, Franci¹
 Mi laiche dis contri¹

In this example, the immigrant has happily adapted to the new social freedoms he has discovered in America, bragging that despite his humble background, he too can wear a tuxedo like the rich big shots. A number of examples of the new dialect are present in his speech pattern: dazze bicos, spelled as it sounds phonetically in Italian, stands for "thatsa because" or "that's because." The Italian name Franco has become Americanized to Franci or Frankie. "Mi laiche dis contri" for

¹A complete translation is included in Appendix VII, D. Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 55.

"Me like this country" illustrates the Italian's typical difficulty in pronouncing the voiced theta. Finally, "mister" becomes misto and shows the New York City speech habit of dropping the final r.

Another sketch created during this early period at the Caffè Pennachio was L'imbroglione (The swindler):

Quante volte vedendomi passare,
Vestito bene, dite tutti quanti
Addo' 'e piglia? Che fa? Tenne denaro
Sta sempe linto e pinto e porta 'e guante.

Vesto bene? Per quello che mi costa
Non pago, per me e' tanto naturale.
Voi mi volete di che faccia tosta
Ma no! so' na persona geniale

Aggio vennuto azioni di miniere
stampata si puo' dire con molt'arte
Lotti di terra che era nu piacere
a vederla pittate sopra le carte.

Perche vedeta lo faccio l'imbroglione,
quest'e na professione come un'altra
Io imbroglia a tutte senza fa eccezione
sia n'imbecile o na persona scalta

E 'cca sta ll'arte...Certi che non hanno
costoro dentro qua...dopo l'imbroglia
vanno a ferni... capite dove vanno?¹
e senza niente dentro 'o portafoglio.

The chilling realism of this piece reveals that Eduardo Migliaccio was not blind to the unscrupulous types that went unpunished in their exploitation of the immigrants in Little Italy.

While employed at the Cafe Pennachio, Migliaccio worked with Francesco Ricciardi. It was the start of a long professional relationship which would last throughout this six-year period of our study and even longer. He took part with Ricciardi, and without pay, in the benefit for the murdered girl, Mamie Mogavero on Monday, March 11,

¹ A complete translation is included in Appendix VII, E. Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 14, 1942), p. 55.

1901. There is no record of how long Migliaccio stayed at the Caffè, but it is reported that he then went to work at the Villa Giulia,¹ owned by Domenico Volpe and artistically directed by Nicola Brigante.² Migliaccio would have to have done this sometime between March 14, 1901, when the Villa Giulia reopened after being closed for some time, and before April 9, 1902 when it again reopened under Ricciardi's ownership and under the new name of Villa Napoli. Two of the macchiette developed by Farfariello during 1902 were 'O Capitalista (The Capitalist) with lyrics by himself and music by Maestro F. Gallina;³ and O Scupatore politicante (The sweeper politician) which carried the following refrain: "La politica 'e comme na munnezza./ A vota e gira e' sempe na schifezza. . ."⁴

New Year's Eve 1902 found Migliaccio at a familiar colonial ritual: the annual celebration at the home of the banker Don Angelo Legniti, in which such notables as Enrico Caruso and Guglielmo Ricciardi participated in earlier years. Although they were not present at this event, other familiar figures were there to welcome in 1903 and also to housewarm Legniti's elegant new residence at 325 East 13 Street. These were: Maestra Contessa Gilda Ruta of the Maiori and Guglielmo Ricciardi companies, and her daughter Anna. Both Gilda and Anna appeared in the music halls, as did Legniti's daughter Sofia, Mrs. Maria Tocci, Mrs.

¹ Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," (March 24, 1940), p. 9.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 63 (March 14, 1901), p. 4.

³ Eduardo Migliaccio, 'O Capitalista, sheet music, Migliaccio Collection, Box 7.

⁴ "Politics is like garbage.

No matter how you turn it around, it always stinks..." Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 14, 1942), p. 6S.

Gina Viafora, the baritone Salvatore Nunziato, and Maestro Gaetano Merola, all present. To celebrate the New Year, the guests were treated not only to Migliaccio's songs but also to champagne and a series of discourses on Marconi, electricity and the future of the Italian colony.¹

The next notice we have of Migliaccio is for Thursday, April 2, 1903 when he was working with Francesco Ricciardi's company at the Villa Napoli.² From this date until Thursday, August 27, 1903, Migliaccio performed exclusively with Ricciardi's Compagnia Napoletana. Oddly enough, this date was the last on which either man's name appeared in the papers for quite some time. Migliaccio's creative work during this period included: 'A Cap' e' mbonima (The good natured Boss), with musical arrangement by Maestro Vincenzo Buongiovanni, performed Monday, April 6, 1904;³ on Tuesday, April 14, 1903 he played his stage identity Farfariello in a two-act comedy written and directed by Francesco Ricciardi, Pulcinella candidato democratico con Farfariello impazzito per la tragedia (Pulcinella Democratic candidate with Farfariello crazy about tragedy);⁴ the sheet music for A chi a dice cchiu grossa! (To whoever tells the bigger tale!) is dated April 16, 1903, and Maestro F. Gallina composed the music for Migliaccio's lyrics;⁵ on the same date

¹"Capo d'anno in casa Legniti," L'Araldo Italiano (1903), clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

²Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 92 (April 2, 1903), p. 1.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 96 and 97 (April 6 and April 7, 1903), p. 2.

⁴Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 104 (April 14, 1903), p. 2.

⁵Eduardo Migliaccio, A chi a dice cchiu grossa!, sheet music dated April 16, 1903, Migliaccio Collection, Box 8.

Migliaccio was billed for the vocal concert in which this sketch was probably sung, as well as for creating Farfariello again in the three-act comedy by Francesco Ricciardi, Farfariello trovato d'int'a' na varrile (Farfariello discovered in a barrel);¹ on Saturday, April 18, 1903 Migliaccio was credited with a complete comedy written for the Compagnia Napoletana and Francesco Ricciardi himself, Pulcinella Sindaco di Chicago (Pulcinella Mayor of Chicago).² This is the first recorded instance of Migliaccio as playwright for other than himself; the last note in 1903 reveals that on Thursday, August 27, 1903, Migliaccio performed Peppesciusce!, a musical sketch in the Varese dialect of the Abruzzi region.³

After this date, Farfariello's name is missing from the newspaper ads until Wednesday, July 6, 1904. Since Ricciardi's name also had been missing during this period, it is possible that the two men were working together, even at the Villa Napoli, but for some unknown reason the ads stopped. When Farfariello reappeared on July 6, he was still at the Villa Napoli but the theatre group was La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Giovanni De Rosalia,⁴ with whom he stayed until July 10.⁵ The Sicilian macchietta, Piddu Macca, was acted by Migliaccio but written by De Rosalia and Filippo Dato.⁶

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 106 (April 16, 1903), p. 2.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 108 (April 18, 1903), p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 234 (August 22, 1903), p. 3.

⁴ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 188 (July 6, 1904), p. 3.

⁵ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 192 (July 10, 1904), p. 3; and Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 191 (July 9, 1904), p. 2.

⁶ Dante Theatre program, loc. cit.

The next notice of appearance, although it is long in coming, is a very significant one. On Saturday, December 31, 1904, Farfariello made his debut at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III¹ (formerly known as the Caffè Concerto Pennachio). He will perform here and be associated with this bistro for many years to come. On this particular date La Compagnia Napoletana di Canto e Prosa Gennaro Camerlingo was housed there. Camerlingo and his troupe remained there mounting plays, while Migliaccio contributed his macchiette to the vocal concerts, until Monday, February 6, 1905.² Three weeks earlier, on Saturday, January 14, 1905 Migliaccio had performed in Camerlingo's farce, Pascariello a nu Pic-Nic a Coney Island (Pascariello on a Picnic in Coney Island);³ and on Monday, January 16, 1905 in another Camerlingo farce, Pascariello Mbruglione⁴ (Pascariello the Swindler).

From February 6 on, the papers are silent regarding Migliaccio but we have every reason to assume that he was still at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III regardless of which company was ensconced there. The sheet music for O Signore scaduto in America (The Old Fashioned Gentleman in America), with lyrics by Migliaccio and music by Maestro Prof. Giovanni Leotti, is dated February 20, 1905, so Migliaccio was definitely performing somewhere.⁵ On Wednesday, May 3, Ricciardi's ads reappeared in full force for his productions at the Villa, which included Eduardo

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 2 (January 2, 1905), p. 3.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 34 (February 3, 1905), p. 3.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 14 (January 14, 1905), p. 3.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 16 (January 16, 1905), p. 3.

⁵ Sheet music dated February 20, 1905. Migliaccio Collection, Box 6.

Migliaccio. At this time Migliaccio was earning less than twelve dollars a week there.¹ Both artists remained there for several years beyond our period of study. On Tuesday, May 16, Migliaccio acted the macchietta, 'E pusteggiature 'e Mulberry (The pushcart vendor of Mulberry Street), lyrics by Migliaccio, put to music by Maestro F. Gallina.²

The last date we have for Migliaccio in 1905 is Friday, August 25.³ Sometime after, as Nappo, the owner of the Villa, reported to Rocco De Russo, Migliaccio left New York temporarily for Italy, because he had stomach trouble and hoped to find a good doctor who might cure him. Five months later he returned to New York City and the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III.⁴

Another macchietta of Farfariello's that had its premiere at the Villa was Pasquale Passaguai (Pasquale the Troublemaker), a sketch

delineando l'odissea di un immigrato che vuole ritornare in Italia dopo aver accumulato a furia di dure fatiche un gruzzolo di dollari, che due lestofanti gli portan via con il solito giuoco della valigia e della sostituzione del pacchetto di moneta con un pacchetto di carta straniera.⁵

One evening at the stage door, Migliaccio was approached by two strangers who, first with polite entreaties, then with threats, ordered him not to put on this particular skit again:

¹De Russo, p. 37.

²Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 131 (May 15, 1905), p. 3.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 216 (August 25, 1905), p. 4.

⁴De Russo, pp. 30-34.

⁵"outlining the ordeal of an immigrant who wants to return to Italy after having saved through hard labor a hoard of money, that two swindlers take away from him with the usual trick of the valise and the substitution of the package of money with a package of foreign paper." Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 5S.

-- Ognuno ha da fare il suo mestiere. Voi fate il cantante. E ci leviamo il cappello. Noi siamo, sissignori, due ladri. E lasciateci fare il nostro mestiere senza occuparvi dei fatti nostri.
 -- Ma io non recito e non canto che per fare ridere, per divertire la gente...
 -- E' vero, sissignori. Ma ci combinate "nu guaio!" Ci rovinare il "businisso" capite?
 -- In verita' non capisco...

Then the two crooks explained to him that that very morning on the corner of Mulberry and Grand Streets they spotted an easy mark: an immigrant on the verge of returning to Naples with his savings, which appeared to be a great sum. They were in the midst of pulling the trick of the valise and the substitution of the packages, when the mark suddenly gave them the slip, yelling: "Madoonna santa, questa e' la macchietta di Farfariello, di 'Pasquale Passaguai.' Lasciatemi in pace o chiamo il 'Police': ladri! ladri!"² So the thieves were forced to make a hasty retreat, and now tried to intimidate Farfariello:

Ora che faremo, se voi insistete a far conoscere al "bonno taliano" che deve guardarsi da... noi? Poche parole: o dimenticate quella macchietta o ci obbligherete a usare la forza... E peggio per voi.³

Farfariello, alarmed and frightened, promised to lay to rest the troublesome skit and for several days he stopped putting on the costume

¹"-- Everyone has to ply his own trade. You are a singer. We raise out hats to you. We are, yessirree, two thieves. Let us work at our trade without your meddling in our business.

-- But I only act and sing to amuse people and make them laugh. . .

-- It's true, yessirree. But you bring on trouble. You're ruining business, understand?

-- Really, I don't understand . . ." Ibid., pp. 5S-6S.

²"Holy Mother of God, this is Farfariello's sketch of "Pasquale the Troublemaker." Leave me alone or I'll call the "Police:" thieves! thieves!" Ibid., p. 6S.

³"Now what are we going to do, if you insist on telling the "good Italian" that he has to beware of... us? In other words: either forget that sketch or you'll oblige us to use force... And so much the worse for you..." Ibid.

of the poor worker doomed to be the victim of this own innocence. But public demand obliged him to put it back into his repertoire and he was no longer assailed with menacing threats probably because the gangsters had been thrown into jail and been put out of circulation by this time.¹

The macchiette discussed so far can be associated with particular periods of activity during 1900 to 1905 but their number in no way approaches the great volume of caricatures and sketches created by this truly inimitable artist. A compendium of his best known macchiette can be found in Appendix VI, F.

In the tradition of the *commedia dell'arte*, the caratterista was the stock character who, in his style of dress and speech, represented a region of Italy. Consciously or unconsciously, the character of Farfariello had become New York City's contribution to that acting tradition: the newly arrived immigrant, realistically attired and speaking the regional dialect, Italo-Americanese.

Eduardo Migliaccio's macchiette coloniale were a direct response to the process of Americanization undergone by the Italian immigrant. After he returned from Italy in 1906 to work at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III again, where he worked until at least 1908, he continued to write songs and macchiette that reflected the changes in Italian-American society. He began to develop this art form into longer genres, dramatic scenes, dramatic monologues in verse, one-act and full-length plays, many of them longer adaptations of the macchiette he had earlier created. Some of these are: Charlie, 'O Cumpare 'e spusarizio, 'O Masta 'e festa, 'O Conduttore 'e l'elevate (The Conductor of the

¹ Ibid.

elevated train), and 'O farfariulo. In 1909 and 1910 he contracted to work at Sirignano Hall,¹ formerly the Villa Napoli but also performed in and around the metropolitan area: Brooklyn, the Bronx, Jersey City and Paterson, New Jersey, Providence, Rhode Island, Torrington and Waterbury, Connecticut and Stockton, Massachusetts.

He shared the bill with a performance of L'Onore Perduto and even performed in benefits for Cordiferro and his father, Francisco Sisca.² In 1917 he entered into a contract with the Societa' Libreria Italiana (The Italian Book Company) to publish his macchiette and songs.³ La Follia, the Italian newspaper owned by Riccardo Cordiferro also published Farfariello's macchiette. Cordiferro himself composed a poem in the Neapolitan dialect for Farfariello:

Farfariello! Chi ancora non sapeva
ch'era n'artista -- E' diavulo -- pensava,
ca Farfariello e 'e tiempe 'e 'ngnora vava
'nsieme cu Satanasso a 'o'nfierno steva,

E a' Bosteno, a Chicago, a San Francisco,
parlavano ogne ghiurno 'e Farfariello,
cundicenzo accusai: Pe San Catiello,
si vene ca' stu diavulo sta frisco! --

Ma stu diavulo e' asciuto a l'antrasatte
fora, e' ghiuto luniano e a tutte quante
e bastato 'e senti comm'isso canta,
e cos'e' pazze propeto anno fatte,

-- Chisto -- anno ditto -- 'o diavulo chist'era?
Ma chisto e' 'nvece n'angelo ca 'ncata,
Si Farfariello na macchietta canta,
e' n'artista ca mereta 'a bannera . . . --

¹Contracts dated 1909 and 1910, Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

²Clippings, La Follia, n.d., Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

³Contract dated July 26, 1917, Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

E mo' pe tutt'a merca se dice
 ca Farfariello a 'e tiemp'e 'ngnora vava
 Sulo c'o sciato l'aneme dannava,
 ma mo' isso canta e ognuno 'o benedice!¹

Eventually, Eduardo Migliaccio as Farfariello began to permeate the rest of Italian America. He organized his own operetta company which included many of his family and a repertory of Italian, French and German operettas. Under various titles (The Eduardo Migliaccio Vaudeville Company, La Compagnia di Varieta' Farfariello, The Italian Comic Opera Company) his group went on a two-year tour of the United States. The company's manager Mimi Imperato booked appearances in Philadelphia, Chicago and cities on the California Coast during 1917 and 1918: Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Fresno, San Pedro, Venice, San Francisco, but the company was a financial failure and lasted only three years altogether.²

In 1919 and back in New York he went to work with Concetta Arcamone Maiori,³ and was a member of the judges' panel of the Piedigrotta, the Neapolitan annual song festival and competition.⁴ In 1922 he held the office of "Consigliere" on the Board of Directors of La Lega Musicale Italiana⁵ (The Italian Musical League). He went into partnership with Commendatore Clemente Giglio in 1924 for the purpose of

¹ A complete translation is included in Appendix IV, C. Riccardo Cordiferro, "Una Poesia Per Farfariello," Italia Della Domenica (December 2, 1917), clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

² Cautela, p. 111.

³ Contract dated July 30, 1919, Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

⁴ Letters to Eduardo Migliaccio from Carmelo Amoruso dated July 29 and August 12, 1919; Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

⁵ La Vedetta Artistica, Anno II, N. 1 (April 1922), p. 1.

producing operettas, an enterprise which was not financially successful for Migliaccio.¹ He then wrote and performed comic radio skits on WAAT, the first radio program in the Italian language. In 1936, he toured Italy and King Victor Emanuel III named him a Cavaliere dell'ordine della Corona d'Italia in 1940.

Eduardo Migliaccio died Wednesday, March 27, 1946 and with him died Farfariello, never to be seen again on the Italian-American stage. Other comedians tried to replace him, calling themselves "l'emulo di Farfariello" (the copy of Farfariello), "il piccolo Farfariello" (little Farfariello; this was Sandrino Giglio, son of Clemente Giglio, the director),² and "il secondo Farfariello" (the second Farfariello).³ Like the little tramp of Charlie Chaplin, with whom Farfariello has so often been compared, the inimitable characterizations could not exist outside their creator. The type of entertainment he originated was a sociological phenomenon that can never be repeated in quite the same way. Mass media being what it is today, contemporary ethnic entertainments take on different and modern forms. Even those who inherit Italian culture today would not be able to thoroughly appreciate the humor of the smiling man behind the big noses and funny costumes and crazy wigs who found such an endearing way to make his compatriots, strangers in a strange land, feel at home. The very nature of his art form, though, successful as it was, kept him tied throughout his career to Italian-American communities. Like Maiori and unlike Gulielmo Ricciardi, Migliaccio made no transition into American theatre.

¹ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 14, 1942), p. 6S.

² La Follia, undated clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

³ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 21, 1942), p. 5S.

Eduardo Migliaccio was not the only member of Francesco Ricciardi's Compagnia Napoletana to become a leading impresario and producer. Among the cast lists of this troupe are the names of several major figures already discussed with respect to other companies: Silvio Minciotti, Antonio Ferrara, Renata Brunorini, Papa Giuseppe Zacconi, and Lucio C. Zumbo. Two additional names should be added to this list: Rocco De Russo, already noted briefly, and Mrs. Antonietta Pisanelli Alessandro.

A professional entertainer since childhood, Rocco de Russo was the young actor cited earlier who was fired by Aniello Nappo for injuring Francesco Ricciardi's arm. De Russo was born in Santo Arsenio in the province of Salerno in 1885 and by the age of six he had learned to sing popular songs and accompany himself on a little barrel-organ so well that he performed in the homes of neighbors, at their weddings and festivals, contributing the money he earned to his widowed mother. One day a group of wandering musicians directed by Domenico Boffa passed through Sant' Arsenio, and hearing Rocco perform, invited the little boy to join them in their tour of Italy as a special attraction with their company. After much persuasion and many tears his mother finally consented to let him accompany the musicians,¹ and Rocco De Russo began the life of a traveling performer in the tradition of the Commedia dell'Arte, a tradition to which he was faithful until advanced age forced him to retire.

For several months De Russo remained happily with the Boffa troupe, perched atop a chair or table in the local bar, *caffe* or restaurant of some little town, singing and playing the organ, after

¹De Russo, pp. 1-3.

which he would pass the plate and earn a lot of money. De Russo's older sister, Maria, was an actress with the Compagnia Baccolini, a traveling theatre group directed by her husband Salvatore Baccolini. Upon hearing that her brother was touring with the musicians, Maria insisted that Rocco join the Baccolini troupe. In their company, Rocco's formal education and theatrical training began. His sister instructed him or else some local schoolteacher in little towns along the way would be engaged to give Rocco lessons. His theatrical preparation came from various members of the company.¹

From the company pianist, Giuseppe Pecoraro, he learned new songs and how to play the piano; from the company macchietista, Mario Franchi, he picked up the art of the macchieta; from his brother-in-law he was able to observe the work of the capocomico (manager and director) and the masque of Pulcinella. The company performed once nightly and twice on Sundays. The program format began with a vocal concert, including songs, macchiette and duets, followed by a drama and ending with a Pulcinella farce. For his debut with the company, Rocco sang "Carme' Quanno Te Veco Mme Sbatta 'O Core" (Carmen When I See You My Heart Beats); his first macchieta, 'O Rusecatore; and his first dramatic role, that of the six-year-old little Venturino in Margherita Pusterla, which was taught to him word for word by his sister since Rocco couldn't yet read. He still played the barrel-organ and was billed as "Il Piccolo Grande Artista" (The Great Little Artist). He eventually learned to write songs, music and lyrics, musical comedy skits and comic duets which he performed with his sister.²

¹ Ibid., pp. 3-6.

² Ibid., pp. 5-7.

As he grew older De Russo did not get along well with his brother-in-law and from the ages of 15 through 18 he three times left the company, and only twice was persuaded to return. During the time away from the Compagnia Baccolini, De Russo continued the itinerant theatrical life with the assistance of two agents, Giulio Fabbi and Gaetano Vottis, who secured him longer engagements with various theatre companies: those of Emanuele Morelli, Pepino Novelli, Aniello Balzano, Luigi De Martino, Forni-Petito (Don Davide Petito and Pasquale Forni), Nicola Corelli and Cecchi. De Russo sang, performed macchiette, acted in dramatic roles and undertook for the first time the masque of Pulcinella. He worked with and was able to observe the noted Italian Pulcinella Salvatore De Muto and the macchietttista Nino Taranto. He also worked with several actors that he would later encounter in the music halls of New York City: the couple Amelia and Roberto Flores and Giovanni Riccardo.¹

After a violent argument with his brother-in-law, 18-year-old Rocco De Russo abandoned the Baccolini Company for the third and final time. He then enlisted in the Italian army where he spent the better part of two years, attaining the rank of "Caporal Maggiore" (Corporal Major). His performing was limited to entertaining the captain and his wife with macchiette, jokes and playing the piano. A couple of months after his discharge from the army, De Russo was surprised by a letter from a cousin in New York City, who encouraged him to resume his artistic career and try his fortune in America. He also added that he knew personally the impresario of a local variety theatre, the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III on Mulberry Street and would recommend De Russo to

¹ Ibid., pp. 8-27.

him. De Russo responded almost immediately to his cousin, asking him to make the necessary inquiries about his working at the *caffe concerto* and also sending along press notices of his many performances all over Italy.¹

De Russo's cousin carried out this request and ascertained from the theatre's manager, none other than Francesco Ricciardi, the general procedure for hiring entertainers unknown to America. His cousin wrote back to De Russo explaining that unknowns were usually hired conditionally for three days and if they were well received by the *caffe* audiences, might be signed to a contract for a more extended period of time. Elated by this possibility, De Russo decided immediately to go to America. It was now the spring of 1905.²

De Russo quickly married his sweetheart from Sant'Arsenio and in 19 days crossed the Atlantic on the "*Citta' Di Torino*." Waiting in New York City for the newlyweds were the entire family of De Russo's cousin and a large contingent of the bride's relatives as well. His cousin shared a room in his apartment with the young couple. A week later, De Russo and his cousin went to see Francesco Ricciardi at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III. They had to wait until after 6 p.m. for Ricciardi to appear. The abrasive interview that followed was recorded in full early in this chapter. The upshot of the encounter was that the *caffe* owner Aniello Nappo hired De Russo conditionally, as was the custom, for a fee of \$12.00 weekly. Nappo also explained that he was replacing Eduardo Migliaccio, who had just two weeks prior gone to Italy

¹ Ibid., pp. 25-28.

² Ibid.

in search of a doctor for his stomach ailment.¹

Since our last recorded notice of Migliaccio's appearance is for Friday, August 25, 1905, the signing of De Russo's contract can be placed at approximately September 8, 1905. His debut was scheduled for a week hence in order to arrange for sufficient publicity. The posters read: "Debutto Del Nuovo Macchiettista, Teste' Giunto Dall'Italia" (Debut of the New Impressionist, Just Arrived From Italy).² On the evening of De Russo's debut, he and his cousin arrived at the theatre two hours before the house opened. Half an hour later Maestro F. Gallina arrived and De Russo expected to rehearse his musical numbers with the pianist but Gallina merely glanced at the music and in spite of the singer's protests to the contrary, his numbers went unrehearsed. De Russo was becoming very nervous since he was used to regular rehearsals but by now the other members of the company were starting to arrive at the theatre and Francesco Ricciardi began introducing him as the new macchiettista. He was also assigned a small dressing room and he and his cousin started unpacking his costumes so he could dress and make up for his show.³

As De Russo, dressed and ready to debut on this Friday, September 15, 1905, waited in the wings for his entrance, he heard the orchestra play the introduction to his first number as it had never been played before, but he summoned up his courage anyway and made his entrance onstage, elegantly dressed in tails. He was welcomed with applause from the audience and began his show. That night he performed the following

¹Ibid., pp. 28-30.

²Ibid., p. 31.

³Ibid., p. 32.

macchiette: 'E Permessso (It's All Right); 'O Tressette (The Card Game) and Totonne 'E Quagliarella (Tottonne the Little Quail). For an encore he did A Festa 'O Paese (The Town Festival), which was so well received that he was begged to repeat it. All in all De Russo enjoyed a triumphant debut.¹

As De Russo was removing his makeup back in his dressing room, Aniello Nappo came by to shake his hand and tell him:

"Voi, caro Don Rocco, vi farete vecchio nel mio locale... Il vostro successo e' insuperabile, non ho vistomai il pubblico applaudire l'artista con tanto entusiasmo.... Bravo, bravo davvero."²

Francesco Ricciardi also complimented him, as did the other members of the company, including the dramatic director, Silvio Minciotti, who inquired if De Russo had ever performed in dramatic plays. De Russo then recounted his experience in acting dramatic roles in the company of his brother-in-law, and in the traveling companies in Italy. With that De Russo made his dramatic debut in America in the role of the friar, Buonvicino De Landi, in the drama Margherita Pusterla, the same play in which he had made his dramatic debut as a six-year-old and in which he eventually graduated to the adolescent role of Alpinolo. Directed by Minciotti, De Russo didn't even have to memorize the role; he knew the entire play by this time. He was complimented again on his performance by Minciotti and the other entertainers, including Ricciardi who, De Russo adds, asked him to excuse Ricciardi's lack of faith in his abilities. This was Friday, September 22, 1905.³

¹ Ibid., 32-33.

² "You, my dear Don Rocco, will get old in my place... Your success is insuperable, never have I seen an audience applaud an artist with such enthusiasm.... Bravo, really bravo." Ibid., p. 33.

³ Ibid., pp. 33-34.

In November, De Russo and his wife moved out of his cousin's apartment uptown and rented an apartment in Little Italy to accomodate the expected birth of his son, Umberto in December and to be closer to the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III where he worked.² During his tenure at the *caffè*, De Russo sang duets with Annina Casale, took part in comedies and dramas and performed his macchiette, among them: Sangue Bleu (Blue Blood), 'O Scugnizzo (The Neapolitan Urchin), 'O Sfaticato (The Bum), Il Professore Di Chitarra (The Guitar Teacher), Il Nobile (The Noble), 'O Prevetello (The Little Priest), 'O Zampugnaro (The Piper), La Fila (The Line), I Salamini (The Salamini) and 'O Cantastorie Napulitano³ (The Neapolitan Folksinger). These character sketches were developed by De Russo during his Italian travels and remained essentially Italian in nature. Most probably it was for this reason that De Russo continued at the theatre even after the return of Eduardo Migliaccio in February 1906. The two macchiettisti were so unlike in both style and content that they were able to appear on the same bill together and remained good friends throughout their lives. Such was not the case with Francesco Ricciardi, whom De Russo injured in an argument, resulting in the firing of De Russo by Aniello Nappo and ending forever his appearances at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III.

During the next several years he worked in a number of New York theatres: in Michele Santangelo's Lucania Hall as director and manager of his own company; in Giovanni De Rosalia's company at the Villa Penza; at Letizia Manganaro's Villa Manganaro; and in Enrico Costantini's

¹ Ibid., p. 29 and p. 38.

² Ibid., p. 34.

company at the Teatro Margherita in Brooklyn. Usually he was macchiettista, Pulcinella, singer, duettist, and dramatic actor all rolled in one.¹

On February 7, 1908 De Russo returned to Santo Arsenio at the insistence of his wife who had earlier returned there with their son. Except for evening entertainments at the piano at the homes of friends, De Russo decided to give up the theatre completely. He took the municipal post of "Commandante De Guardie Municipali" (Commander of City Police). He also opened his own hotel and restaurant but after two or three years of this kind of life realized he could not forget the stage:

che l'avevo nel sangue, nel cuore, nella mente! Con tutto cio' credevo poter dimenticare, e abbandonare, completamente, l'idea di ritornare in arte, ma non fu possibile... Era una tarla che continuamente mi logorava il cervello! Ogni qualvolta mi sedevo al piano, a strimpellare qualche canzone, o qualche duetto, che io avevo gia' cantato con mia sorella, e molte altre canzonettiste. . . sulle mie gote comparivano le lagrime, e nasceva in me, una inesplicabile mestizia! Il teatro era, per me, una calamite attraente... indimenticabile!!²

With this nostalgia for the theatre haunting him, De Russo formed an amateur theatre group with local talent and put on dramatic shows in the local community theatre building of the city.

One day the Compagnia Teatrale Martinez-Del Prete, run by a Mr. Martinez and his brother-in-law Mr. Del Prete, came to Sant'Arsenio,

¹ Ibid., pp. 35-37.

² "because I had it in my blood, in my heart, in my mind! . . . With all this I thought I could forget and abandon, completely, the idea of returning to my art, but it wasn't possible... It was a bug gnawing at my brain! Every now and then when I sat at the piano to strum some song, or some duet, that I had sung with my sister, and many other singers, tears would appear on my cheeks, and there arose in me an unexplainable sadness! The theatre was, for me, an attractive magnet... unforgettable!!" Ibid., pp. 38-42.

lodged at De Russo's hotel, received his cooperation in staging their shows at the city theatre, and also invited him to participate in one as actor and macchietista. This led to an offer of a contract for De Russo to join the company, which he accepted, thus resuming the itinerant actor's life, after three years of civil service. He secured bookings through several agents for theatres in various Italian cities. During this time he turned down several requests from Enrico Costantini to return to work in his theatre in Brooklyn (Costantini had twice even sent his wife Concetta Costantini in person.) The first time De Russo declined; the second time, having just recently legally separated from his wife, he accepted and was back in New York City by August 10, 1911.¹

After several New York engagements, De Russo began a traveling career that took him as far west as Chicago and north into Canada. In Utica in 1912 he married another performer, Susi' Fugero, who sang duets with him, but she died in 1917 at the age of 24, after an operation in Chicago. During 1917-1918 he produced a large number of benefit performances for the International Red Cross. Two years after the death of his second wife he remarried while in Pittsburgh to yet another singer, Ria Sampieri, with whom he sang duets. De Russo's travels sometimes brought him back to New York City where he worked with Maiori and to Brooklyn where he worked with Costantini; he purchased a house there in 1921. Ten years later however, he bought another house in Cranston, Rhode Island, near Providence, shifting his headquarters there. In 1933 a committee composed of important names in the theatres -- Clemente Giglio, Eduardo Migliaccio, Giovanni De Rosalia and Antonio Maiori, to name a few -- secured for him from Italy the title of "Commendatore" and

¹ Ibid., pp. 43-53.

De Russo was banqueted by the Italian-American theatre community at a restaurant in Coney Island. In 1956, at age 71, he retired to his home in Cranston.¹

Rocco De Russo was a prolific writer. While still an adolescent with his brother-in-law's company in Italy, he was already writing lyrics and music for songs, duets and macchiette. In 1914, for what was now his own company, La Compagnia Drammatica Musicale Arte Vera (The True Art Musical Drama Company) he continued to create these as well as new forms, dramas, comedies, farces and sceneggiate. A sceneggiata is a musical dramatization of a sentimental song:

It originated in Naples, and its value . . . is purely commercial, not artistic. It has met with quite a success due to its character of sentimentality, based usually on a story of seduction and punishment, and many times of sacrifice and forgiveness by the seduced girl. Its theme, however, is not always tragic, but may be comic, illustrating some aspect of life of the Italian settlement. The starting point of the sceneggiata is taken from a popular song. This song is made to fit the dramatization of a story that will give opportunity to the actors to sing the melody at an appropriate moment during the action. It is no more no less than the exploitation of a popular title . . . The people like it because they hear singing and see dancing, and find an outlet for their emotions.²

De Russo apparently had a great deal of success with the popular art form of the sceneggiata. His ability to adapt songs into little musicals carried over into dramatic adaptations as well. The De Russo personal papers contain an impressive collection of play titles attributed to him. However, on closer inspection, these works, many of them, are actually familiar titles from the Italian repertory adapted and given subtitles by De Russo.³ In his memoirs De Russo gives a clue

¹ Ibid., pp. 54-58.

² Cautela, p. 111.

³ De Russo Collection, Boxes 1, 2 and 3.

to his method: "Avevo, in parte, studiato la psicologia del pubblico, che frequentava i miei spettacoli, la mentalita' degli spettatori, quindi scrivevo i lavori drammatici per il loro comprendonio!"¹ In this way, De Russo seems to have adapted Italian works for his Italian-American audiences, according to their tastes and abilities, not unlike Eduardo Migliaccio before him. Very few of his works were published, nor were his songs recorded but his long and continuous career attests to his success as actor, writer and impresario. After his retirement, La Follia did publish some of his poetry and comic essays.² Rocco De Russo died June 14, 1975.

De Russo's life story is representative of a whole class of itinerant performers, who originally started their American theatrical careers in New York City with one or another of the better known companies and continued their travels into other parts of the North American continent. Sometimes they would use New York City as a place to touch base for additional work or as their permanent residence, returning every summer to the city when the out-of-town theatres generally were closed.³

Like Rocco De Russo, Antonietta Pisanelli also started as an entertainer in New York City with the Francesco Ricciardi company before making her name and fortune out of town. But unlike De Russo she early settled in one area to become the center of Italian-American theatre as

¹"I had, apart from all this, studied the psychology of the audiences, who attended my shows, the mentality of the spectators, so I wrote dramatic works according to their ability to understand." De Russo, p. 67.

²Ibid., p.1.

³Ibid., p. 70.

well as the center of the Italian-American community in San Francisco.

Antonietta Pisanelli was born in Naples in 1869. After emigrating to New York City, she became involved with the early amateur societe filodrammatiche.¹ She became friends with Eduardo Migliaccio and worked together professionally with him. The first notice of a performance for her in New York City is for Monday, March 11, 1901 in Francesco Ricciardi's benefit for the murdered Mamie Mogavero. She and Farfariello both shared the bill, performing duets, while Mrs. Pisanelli also entertained audiences with her Neapolitan folk songs.² Unfortunately for New York's theatre scene she took her talents elsewhere at this point in time, and worked professionally as an actress, singer and dancer on the Italian-American stages of Philadelphia, New Haven and other large cities, including Chicago³ where we find her on Monday, February 23, 1903 with Il Club Eduardo Scarpetta at Scandia Hall, playing Desdemona.⁴ She was still in the midwest on or before Sunday, November 20, 1904, acting in Verga's Cavalleria Rusticana at Margherita Hall in Union, Illinois. The notice for this performance described Pisanelli as the proprietor of Margherita Hall.⁵

At about this time, Antonietta suffered the loss of her mother, and then her husband and youngest child also died. She and her young

¹Professor Seller also notes that Pisanelli helped organize several professional Italian theatres in New York City but none of our research has been able to corroborate this. Seller, p. 208.

²Ibid., p. 214; and L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 60 (March 10, 1901), p. 5.

³Seller, p. 208.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 50 (February 19, 1903), p. 3.

⁵L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 328 (November 23, 1904), p. 4.

son then sought a new life in California. By the spring of 1905 Mrs. Pisanelli had settled in San Francisco and commenced producing professional theatre as of Sunday, April 9, 1905 at Apollo Hall on Pacific Street.¹ Then she turned Berglieri Hall at Stockton and Union Streets into a *caffe concerto* which she ran as actress, director, producer, dancer, singer and manager and which she called the *Circolo Familiare Pisanelli*, San Francisco's first professional Italian-American theatre company.² Her *caffe concerto* served the same social function as those of New York City: a place for meeting, socializing, drinking and entertaining and, as such, "the *Circolo Familiare Pisanelli* became the main social institution of the North Beach Italian community."³ She also brought in companies from the East, Pasquale Rapone and his company, the San Francisco de Cesare Company, Antonio Maiori and his company, and Eduardo Migliaccio and company to this and other theatres she later ran in San Francisco: the Iris, the Beach, the Bijou, the Washington Square, the Liberty, the Teatro Alessandro Eden.⁴ She also toured with her company, billed as "Survivors of the San Francisco Earthquake."⁵

With a second husband and a new name, Signora Alessandro continued to produce theatre until 1925. As the Italian-American theatre began to decline due to the gradual assimilation and Americanization of its

¹ Lawrence Estavan, ed., *The Italian Theatre in San Francisco First Series*, Vol. X (San Francisco: United States Works Progress Administration, 1939), p. 186.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. X, P. 11.

³ Seller, p. 209.

⁴ Estavan, Vol. X, pp. 14-67.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

audience, Antonietta Pisanelli delved into Mexican-American theatre and even Chinese theatre in Chinatown,¹ before retiring completely from theatrical production. As far as we know she never returned to New York City's Italian-American stage.

Besides Mrs. Pisanelli Alessandro, other notable actors and actresses filled the ranks of Francesco Ricciardi's company of performers: The actor Armando Cennerazzo was born January 3, 1889 in Naples and emigrated here with his family while still very young. A self-taught man, he began acting early and eventually acted with many companies, becoming the capocomico of his own troupe.² With Ricciardi, the actor wrote and performed duets and folk songs in the Neapolitan dialect.³ He also became a playwright and dialect poet. He worked at the Cocce Press, 61 Downing Street.⁴ Riccardo Cordiferro doubted the viability of his efforts on behalf of the establishment of an Italian theatre:

"Anima ardente di poeta e di artista, sostiene, con giovanile baldanza, che un teatro italiano dovrebbe essere una istituzione necessaria, indispensabile alla nostra colonia e che gl'italiani dovrebbero far di tutto per renderla un fatto compiuto. . . . Armando Cennerazzo e' un poeta che si pasce di sogni e di chimere."⁵

¹Ibid., p. 45.

²Flamma, p. 79.

³Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," p. 9.

⁴Addressbook belonging to Riccardo Cordiferro, Sisca Collection, Folder 130.

⁵"The ardent spirit of a poet and an artist, he maintains, with youthful boldness, that an Italian theatre should be a necessary, indispensable institution in our community and that the Italians should do everything in order to make it a fait accompli. . . . Armando Cennerazzo is a poet who feeds on dreams and illusions." Cordiferro, Ermete Novelli, pp. 9-10.

Benevento Candeloro was Secretary of the 250 member Societa' Torquato Tasso with offices at 40 Union Street, Brooklyn, Candeloro himself resided at 1 Carroll Street.¹ Giovanni Riccardi is here described by a contemporary:

"O papa' Riccardi, come lo chiamano i compagni, e' il comico napoletano per eccellenza. Nella voce, nel gesto, nell'andamento, e persino nella persona, ha qualche cosa che ricorda i colossi del teatro napoletano, Davide Petito e Pantalena, e non riconoscerlo suonerebbe malafede."²

Needless to say, Riccardi was originally from Naples. The same observer created this profile of Gina Santelia:

Tutta l'anima dei poeti e' nel canto di questa sirena caffe'-concerto che imprime alle canzoni la freschezza e la limpida vivacita' del cielo del suo paese.

Ha nella voce tanto tesoro di passione che, ascoltandola, par di sentire come l'eco d'una musica lontana. Ella sospira, trilla giocosamente, come allodola in primascera, le soavi sentimentalita' di Valente, Buongiovanni, De Luzio, Di Capua, ed altri eletti compositori che traggono le loro ispirazioni musicali alle divine armonie degli angeli -- Ecco perche' Gina Santelia trionfa e procede sicura sulla via della fortuna.³

She eventually became the mother of the film actor Vito Scotti.⁴

¹ Brooklyn Daily Eagle, (1901), p. 240.

² "Papa Riccardi, as his friends call him, is the comedian par excellence. In his voice, in his gesture, in his carriage, and even in his person, he had something which reminds one of the greats of the Neapolitan theatre, Davide Petito and Pantalena, and not to recognize it would be unworthy." Lanza, p. 14.

³ "The whole soul of poetry is in the song of this siren of the caffe concerto, who imparts to her songs the freshness and the clear brightness of the sky of her homeland.

She has in her voice such a treasure of passion that, listening to her, you seem to hear the echo of music from a far away place. She sighs, trills joyfully, like a lark in springtime, the sweet sentimentality of Valente, Buongiovanni, De Luzio, De Capua, and other distinguished composers whose musical genius is allied to the divine harmonies of the angels -- That's why Gina Santelia triumphs and proceeds securely on her way to success." Ibid., p. 22.

⁴ De Russo, p. 55.

Mrs. Concetta Dionigi Zacconi frequently sang duets with her husband Arturo Zacconi, the son of Papa Giuseppe Zacconi. In 1914 Riccardo Cordiferro wrote a sonnet especially for Concetta Zacconi:

All'Artista Signora Concetta Zacconi

Vi promisi un sonetto e -- smemorato! --
non ve l'ho fatto piu', buona signora,
ma a scribacciarlo sono in tempo ancora,
e voi perdonerete il mio peccato.

Volevo dirvi che la Dea che adora
il vostro cuor del Bello innamorato,
e' quell'Arte che il mondo ha soggiogato,
l'Arte di cui l'Italia oggi si onora.

Ma la Dea vostra non l'adorate,
come i falsi devoti i loro Santi,
bensì del vostro amor la circondate.

Ed Ella percio' a voi tutta si dona
e vi da' tutti i suoi piu' arcani incanti
e dei piu' aulenti fior gia' v'incorona.

New York, 5 Maggio 1914.¹

Tony Ferrazzano, the lyricist for several of Migliaccio's macchiette (Il Cafone Patrioto), Lu cafone che ragiona and 'O sunatore 'e Flauto) also became a macchiettista:

"In the Caffè Ronca a pale young man by the name of Ferrazzano begged (Migliaccio) to read his first macchietta. Although it was badly written, Farfariello saw that Ferrazzano had the creative spark. He encouraged him to study, and Ferrazzano became one of his best imitators.²

Ferrazzano and Migliaccio collaborated on many songs and macchiette in later years.

Other well-known figures in Ricciardi's troupe included: Mrs. Rosina Balzano and her sister Concetta Arcamone Maiori; Mr. A. Biava and

¹ A complete translation is included in Appendix IV, D. Sisca Collection, Folder 28.

² Cautela, p. 110.

his wife, Mrs. Tina Scotti and her brother, the baritone Adolfo Scotti; Marcellino Mele and his wife, Mrs. Margherita Mele; Mrs. Elisa Perna and her sister, who billed themselves as "Le Due Siciliane" (The Two Sicilian Girls); Enrico Ricciardi, the son of Guglielmo Ricciardi; Luisa Franchi and her husband Vincenzo. Actors in the Ricciardi company will be found in Appendix III.

Since Francesco Ricciardi did much of his creative work in the arena of the *caffè concerto*, the musical directors proved to be key personnel for the variety shows that invariably were included. In addition to those professori who accompanied Eduardo Migliaccio when he appeared with Ricciardi's company, and who were already noted, Ricciardi used the musical services of Maestro Vincenzo Buongiovanni, Professor G. Petruzzelli, Prof. V. Ursano and Maestro F. Gallina, the pianist who would not rehearse with Rocco De Russo. De Russo creates this picture of Gallina:

Era un Siciliano, un bruno, di circa sei piedi alto, giovanissimo, capelli ricci -- modesto nel vestire, con il cappello che pendeva sul lato sinistro, (come suol dirsi: a ventitre ore!) Infine, sembrava più un uomo di malavita che un pianista! (Il suo nome Gallina) Il signor Ricciardi me lo presentò. Ci stringemmo la mano, e mi chiese le musiche che dovevo usare quella sera. Aprì la valigia, e gli consegnai le musiche, aspettando che si sedesse al pianoforte, per passarselo, e per sapere dove e quando si doveva fermare, per la prosa. Guardo' le musiche, si segno' gli appunti, per le fermate, e restituendomele disse: Va bene. Io, che ero abituato alle prove regolari, rimasi estatico... Meravigliato, e pensai ad una congiura, per protestarmi! Infine, le mie preghiere, di voler provare, col pianoforte, le mie macchiette, non valsero a nulla, il pianista mi ripeteva che non c'era bisogno, e che tutto sarebbe andato bene.

¹"He was a Sicilian, swarthy, about six feet tall, very young, a lot of hair -- conservative in his dress, with his hat worn hanging down over the left side, (as they say: at eleven o'clock!) All in all, he looked more like a gangster than a pianoplayer! (His name was Gallina) Mr. Ricciardi introduced us. We shook hands, and he asked me for the

All did eventually go well, as De Russo happily reminisced, but he also remarked that Gallina played his opening number as De Russo had never heard anyone play it before. Obviously, the Italian-American musical theatre relied upon the improvisational abilities of its musicians in the same way that the Italian-American prose theatre relied on the prompter and/or improvisational skills of its actors and comedians.

The only European playwrights whose works were produced by the Ricciardi company were the Italians Carlo Cantu, Cav. Uff. Eduardo Scarpetta, Villani, Gennaro Pasquariello, and Nicola Maldacea. The Compagnia Napoletana limited its choice of original Italian-American works to those of two New York writers: Eduardo Migliaccio, already thoroughly discussed, and Francesco Ricciardi himself. Ricciardi was no Maiori; he had no desire to mount the plays of the great dramatic, tragic or comic writers of Europe. Even Villani, Pasquariello and Maldacea were represented on Ricciardi's stage through the macchiette performed by Farfariello before he started writing his own. Cantu's Margherita Pusterla was the artistic choice of Silvio Minciotti. Eduardo Scarpetta is an understandable choice; first, he was Neapolitan, as was Ricciardi's company, and secondly, at least one of Scarpetta's plays was a Pulcinella comedy, the very speciality of the Ricciardi company.

music I was to use that evening.

I opened my valise, and I gave him the music, waiting for him to sit at the piano, to try it out, and to know where and when he had to rest, for the prose section. He looked at the music, marked the notes, for the pauses, and returning it to me said: O.K. I, who was accustomed to regular rehearsals, went into shock... I was amazed, and I was trying to think of a way to express myself! Finally, my pleas to rehearse my impersonations with the piano amounted to nothing, the pianist repeatedly told me that it wasn't necessary, and that everything would go well." De Russo, p. 32.

La Compagnia Napoletana concentrated almost exclusively on comedy. The vocal concerts that made up part of a usual evening's entertainment always included either comic songs, comic duets or trios, or De Russo's and Farfariello's musical macchiette. The prose offerings very rarely were dramas. In 1905, when Minciotti joined the company as dramatic director, a drama would sometimes get performed. But invariably, the prose part of the show was a comedy and/or farce, and the farce was without exception a Pulcinella farce or comic skit frequently written and always interpreted by Francesco Ricciardi himself.

The stock character or mask of Pulcinella has been traced back as far as the Atellanae, the satirical farces associated with the ancient Etruscan city of Atella (now called Aversa) in the Roman Campagna. Out of these farces, the sensual mask of Maccus is said to be Pulcinella's earliest ancestor, although other theories place his origins in the district of Crifona in the principality of Salerno,¹ or, as Francesco Ricciardi himself held, in the town of Acerra.² Regardless of Pulcinella's place of origin, at some point in time, before the emergence of the *commedia dell'arte* in the literature of the Renaissance, Pulcinella became associated with the city of Naples and has since been irrevocably and indispensably connected with that city's comic tradition.

From the Atellan stock character of Maccus, known as the mimus albus, or white mime, because he always was costumed in white, Pulcinella inherited his characteristic, loose-fitting white linen shirt as well as a temperament that was:

¹Duchartre, p.214.

²Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (September 13, 1942), p. 9.

quick, witty, impertinent, ironical, and a bit cruel; . . . his hooked nose, his hump, and his long, spindling legs, which gave him the look of a topheavy chicken when he walked. . . the habit of peeping like a frightened chick. . . as well as a tendency to hop about and weary every one but himself. It is this very 'hen-step,' in fact, which gave rise to Pulcinella's name. Maccus was called 'the hen' -- Pullus Gallinaceus, which, developed into Pullicinello or Pulcino, and finally Pulcinella.¹

The Italian words pulcino and gallina both mean chicken or hen and so Pulcinella's Roman name would mean "Gallinaceous Chicken." Falbo traces the name to a Paolo Cinella of Acerra² but neglects to explain the derivation. Yet another theory based on an apochryphal tale attributes this mask to a peasant of Acerra, one Puccio d'Aniello, who joined a traveling band of actors in the sixteenth century. He wore his own native garb, a white linen shirt worn over the pantaloons, as in Acerra.

Whatever the origins of Pulcinella's name and character, the salient features of his appearance and characteristic behavior have remained for centuries, and we assume made their appearance on the Italian-American stage in the interpretation of Ricciardi. In addition to the aspects of this mask noted earlier, Pulcinella in Naples also developed a pot belly and a habit of executing sudden acrobatic tricks; he wore a black, hooknosed half mask and the traditional Neapolitan conical hat of white or black.³ In describing his art to a younger actor, Ricciardi summed up the traits of the mask thus: "Un po di salti, di parole salaci, di buffo-nerie."⁴ (A few somersaults, sa-

¹Duchartre, pp. 208-209.

²Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (July 12, 1942), p. 5S.

³Duchartre, p. 220.

⁴Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (September 13, 1942), p. 9.

lacious words, some buffoonery.) In his desire to encourage the young actor to adopt the mask as his own, Ricciardi certainly was oversimplifying and understating the skill and versatility needed to create Pulcinella. The following is a composite sketch describing the range of personality an actor would have to be able to portray when performing the Neapolitan mask:

As a general rule he appeared as an old bachelor, an eccentric and selfish old curmudgeon strongly inclined to sensual and epicurean gluttony. As he possessed a great deal of wit, and his hump was chockfull of a sense of humour, his chief weapon of defence was to feign stupidity. Being selfcentred and bestial, Pulcinella had no scruples whatever, and because the moral suffering from his physical deformity reacted upon his¹ brain at the expense of his heart, he was exceedingly cruel.

The above description contributes a general psychological profile of Pulcinella, but here in the words of an Italian theatre historian, Silvio D'Amico, are the particularly Neapolitan traits exhibited by the character:

A modo suo, la maschera . . . rappresenta coteste aspirazioni e coteste miserie sotto la specie napoletana, l'unico zanni rimasto tutto bianco, Pulcinella (nome antico che verrebbe da piccolo pulcino: se ne trove già cenno in versi del Trecento). L'ideale di Pulcinella e' il dolce far niente, i suoi sorpiri sono per i maccheroni; Pulcinella si adatta a tutte le parti, compresa quella del ladro, truffatore, mezzano; s'ubbria, si lascia bastonare, alle volte gli capita anche di peggio; in conclusione, e' la confessione comica dell'abbandono popolareasco a tutti gli istinti compresi i peggiori e dei guai che ne seguono, parodia d'una regione che ha dato all'Italia grandi musicisti e grandi filosofi: canta, e prende il mondo con filosofia.²

¹ Ibid., pp. 214-15.

² "In his own way, the mask . . . represents those aspirations and that distress of the Neapolitan kind, the only clown who remained completely white, Pulcinella (ancient name that might derive from little chicken: a hint of it is found earlier in the verses from the thirteenth century). The ideal Pulcinella is a charming good-for-nothing, his hopes are for macaroni; Pulcinella adapts to all the roles, including that of the thief, the swindler, the pimp; he gets drunk, he allows himself to get beat up, sometimes even worse happens to him; in

These are the qualities that Francesco Ricciardi, a Neapolitan himself, was certainly aware of from his Italian cultural background. We look to these traditional interpretations to create a picture of the Pulcinella played by Ricciardi on the boards of the Compagnia Napoletana. In the absence of any scripts to document his exact depiction of the mask, we are unable to say if his Pulcinella was the witty though stupid, cruel though pathetic, deformed and old but acrobatic, unscrupulous but philosophical, gluttonous drunk and singer to boot. What we do have is a picture and some play titles. In the picture, Ricciardi is in Pulcinella garb, the loosefitting white overblouse, the pointed hat and mask.¹ At least his costume adhered to the traditional format.

We can say with certainty that Ricciardi appeared during every evening's entertainment as the Neapolitan mask, if not in a full length comedy, or shorter farce, then at least in some short skit, very possibly an improvised one. Those titles for which Francesco Ricciardi was specifically billed as the playwright are: the comedy in two acts, Nu pulicino dent'a stuppa (A helpless chicken) performed on Thursday, February 21, 1901² (Note that the title contains the word pulicino, the root of Pulcinella; literally the title would mean "chick in the quilting" or "one unable to extricate him or herself;" the phrase is idiomatic); Tanta Mbruoglie pe no Matremmonio (All the Intrigues of

conclusion, he is the comic expression of a vulgar abandon to the worst instincts and of the woes that follow, a parody of a region that has given Italy great musicians and great philosophers: he sings, and he faces the world with philosophy." Silvio D'Amico, Storia Del Teatro Drammatico, V. I (Milano: Aldo Garzanti Editore, 1967), p. 181.

¹Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (July 5, 1942), p. 5S.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 44 (February 20, 1901), p. 5.

Matrimony), a comedy in two acts performed Monday, March 11, 1901,¹ Pulcinella candidato democratico con Farfariello impazzito per la tragedia (Pulcinella democratic candidate with Farfariello crazy about tragedy), a comedy in two acts written and directed by Francesco Ricciardi and performed on Tuesday, April 24, 1903;² Farfariello trovato d'int'a' na varrile (Farfariello discovered in a barrel), a comedy in three acts performed on Thursday, April 16, 1903.³ We suspect that this and the preceding play benefitted from the collaboration of Eduardo Migliaccio in the creation of the role of Farfariello. It is hard to imagine it otherwise since Farfariello's characterization was always so uniquely the work of Migliaccio. In the same fashion, Pulcinella Sindaco di Chicago (Pulcinella Mayor of Chicago), an original comedy written for the Compagnia Napoletana by Eduardo Migliaccio, must undoubtedly have included the collaboration of Ricciardi in the creation of the role of Pulcinella when it was performed on Saturday, April 18, 1903.⁴

The remaining anonymous titles, if not written by Francesco Ricciardi (and we tend to believe they must have been), certainly owed their interpretation and development of the Pulcinella mask to him: Pulcinella Imperatore del Mongol (Pulcinella Emperor of the Mongols) a "laughable" comedy in three acts performed Thursday, April 2, 1903;⁵ Na creature sperduta (A lost creature) "wonderful laughable" comedy

¹ L' Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 60 (March 10, 1901), p. 5.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 104 (April 14, 1903), p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 106 (April 16, 1903), p. 2.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 108 (April 18, 1903), p. 2.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 92 (April 2, 1903), p. 1.

performed Friday, April 3, 1903;¹ Il Brigante Musolino con Pulcinella, bandito per necessita (The Pirate Musolino with Pulcinella, bandit by necessity)"brilliant" comedy performed Monday, April 6, 1903,² Tuesday, April 7, 1903,³ and Wednesday, April 8, 1903;⁴ Pulcinella artista tragico (Pulcinella tragic actor) performed Saturday, April 11, 1903;⁵ and La distruzione dei Cristiani in Cina con pulcinella giapponese per combinazione ed obbligato a combattere con la Russia (The overthrow of the Christians in China with Pulcinella, Japanese by coincidence and obliged to fight with Russia) performed Tuesday, May 16 through Saturday, May 20, 1905.⁶

These few play titles hardly represent the entire repertory of "the Prince of Pulcinellas," as Ricciardi was called. Many, many ads simply announce that Ricciardi would be appearing in the mask or that a farce with Pulcinella would finish up the evening's show. Pulcinella was Ricciardi's specialty and the main attraction of the Compagnia Napoletana. We can only assume that the pieces were his own original creations. Ricciardi was the undisputed master of this mask during this period 1900 to 1905, so that his identity as a performer was inseparable from it. One reporter described him as "l'unica vera maschera del Pulcinella."⁷ (the only true mask of Pulcinella).

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 93 (April 3, 1903), p. 2.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 96 (April 6, 1903), p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 97 (April 4, 1903), p. 2.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 98 (April 8, 1903), p. 2.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 101 (April 11, 1903), p. 2.

⁶ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, Nos. 131-136 (May 15 - 20, 1905), p. 3.

⁷ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 101 (April 11, 1903), p. 2.

What we see in Ricciardi's company, as well as in most of the major companies of this period is a trend toward specialization. Maiori leaned toward the classics; Migliaccio created Farfariello; Rapone embodied Pascariello; and Francesco Ricciardi was the first and foremost transmitter of the Neapolitan Pulcinella tradition to Italian-American immigrant audiences. Ricciardi continued for some years after this period to act, produce and direct his own company. Other Pulcinellas also appeared, though none as famous as he. At one point Ricciardi tried to encourage Michele Viola to put on the mask, and even assisted him with some advice, costumes and engagements. But Viola, after a brief attempt, aspired to the great dramatic roles played by Maiori.¹

La Compagnia Filodrammatica Alessandro Salvini

This group, named interestingly enough after an Italian-American actor performing on the American stage, began its existence sometime around November 17, 1896, because they celebrated their 8th Anniversary on this date in 1904.² Il West End Italian Club was the name under which they celebrated their Second Annual Festival at the West Side Lyceum, Broadway and 52 Street, on Sunday, May 13, 1900, which would indicate that they had celebrated their first annual event at approximately the same time the year before. The leading creative forces behind the group throughout its existence were the Salerno brothers, Michelangelo and Antonio. They began as amateurs but were highly organized: their President was Francesco Iannicelli, their Vice-President, Nicola Attenasio, their Secretary, Michele Balsamo who had

¹ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (September 13, 1942), p. 9.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 307 (November 1, 1904), p. 3.

worked with both Guglielmo and Francesco Ricciardi in the 19th century, their Treasurer, Luca Cuomo. Their Organizational Committee was composed of the following members: Gaetano D'Esposito, Francesco Cacace, Francesco De Nicola, Giovanni Trionfanti, Salvatore Rispoli, and Gaetano Lodato. They even had a Hall Committee, probably in charge of renting and/or supervising the hall in which the company played. It consisted of Antonio De Giorgio, Mr. F.A. Metzler and Mr. P. Iannicelli.¹

At some point in 1900 they adopted the name Il Circolo Alessandro Salvini and joined forces with Il Circolo Gioventu Italiana led by Salvatore Abbamonte, but the Salerno Brothers soon went independent because of a disagreement over which plays to stage. Abbamonte alleges in his autobiography that they had formed a clique within the group with the intention of staging plays in which they themselves could play the leading roles,² for the Salerno brothers were actors as well as directors. Thus Abbamonte and the Salerno brothers went their separate ways.

From Monday, February 4, 1901 until Thursday, January 2, 1902, La Compagnia Filodrammatica Alessandro Salvini staged sporadic performances at the Manhattan Lyceum, according to all indications, still on an amateur basis. Notices of their activities were reported to the press by Luigi Iandosca and Eugenio Manfredonia.³ The production of Ernani il Bandito ossia La Tomba di Carlomagno (Hernani the Bandit or The Tomb of Charlemagne) by Victor Hugo was co-produced by the Salerno brothers and

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 114 (May 13, 1900), p. 5.

² Abbamonte, "Nei Primordi . . .," p. 5.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 90 (April 14, 1901), p. 5.

Charley Raimondi on February 4, 1901. Tickets to this performance cost 50 cents including hatcheck.¹ The performance of Othello on Sunday, November 3 and Tuesday, November 5, 1901 announced splendid period costumes and rich magnificent scenery.² Abbamonte recalled the attractive color posters that appeared in store windows,³ a far cry from the recycled circus posters of Guglielmo Ricciardi's early days. Given the sporadic performance record of this troupe, it would seem that the new scenery and costumes were financed by their large organization. Another clue as to the financial arrangements is the fact that the better known performers received benefits during this period: Giuseppe Zacconi on Tuesday, December 3, 1901⁴ and Miss Maria Prete on Thursday, January 2, 1902.⁵

Their next performance on Monday, April 21, 1902 moved to the Germania Theatre, at 8th Street and 4th Avenue, just before it was destroyed to make way for the new rapid transit system. Tickets cost 25 cents to \$1.00.⁶ Then, the record is silent for the group for almost two years. One night before Sunday, February 28, 1904 the officers held a meeting in a room at Raffaele Penza's Hotel Del Matese, 198 Grand Street, most probably to plan their next production. At this time the officers were: Gaetano C. Naddeo, President, Mr. I. Brina, Vice-

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 30 (February 3, 1901), p. 5.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 263 (October 29, 1901), p. 2; and N. 270 (November 5, 1901), p. 2.

³Abbamonte, "Nei Primordi," p. 5.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 265 (October 31, 1901), p. 2.

⁵L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 3 (January 3, 1902), p. 3.

⁶L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 106 (April 16, 1902), p. 2.

President, Antonio Martire, Treasurer and Ernesto Quadrino, Secretary, with the American, William Parry, manager of the Metropolitan Opera House, appointed as stage manager. Among others present at this meeting were the Salerno brothers, co-directors of the next production, and Antonio Ferrara.¹

The topic for consideration at this meeting was the performance on Monday, April 11, 1904 at the Thalia Theatre of Sardou's Patria (Fatherland), directed by the Salerno brothers, who also acted in the drama which boasted five acts and three scene changes.² Although the significance of this performance escapes us, it must have been an important event for those involved, and for the following reasons: there was much advance planning; a professional stage manager from the American arena was hired; first rate tickets were exceptionally high; considerable advertising was done; and several important figures assisted on the organizational committee, among them Antonio Ferrara, the highly visible community figure; Gaetano C. Naddeo, who acted in Patria and who was the Treasurer of The Italian Barbers Supply And Perfumery Company, of which Ferrara was the President;³ and Antonio Martire and Ernesto Quadrino, who had both had experience with other companies of the period.

Tickets were very expensive for the time: boxes at \$7.50 and \$10.00, orchestra at \$1.00 and 75 cents, balcony at 75 cents and 50 cents, and gallery at 35 cents.⁴ Tickets could be purchased in advance

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 59 (February 28, 1904), p. 3.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 81 (March 21, 1904), p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 248 (September 5, 1903), p. 3.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 81 (March 21, 1904), p. 3.

at Antonio Martire's bookstore at 345 Broome Street, at the residence of the Salerno brothers at 103 Sixth Avenue and at the residence of Luca Cuomo at 2593 Eighth Avenue between 138 and 139 Streets.¹

Considerable time elapsed again before the company's next theatrical event, and to be sure, it was another, well organized, well planned, well advertised event, only this time, the ticket price remained at a reasonable, popular 50 cents. On Thursday, November 17, 1904 La Compagnia Filodrammatica Alessandro Salvini celebrated its eighth anniversary. The Salerno brothers directed and performed in I Misteri dell'Inquisizione di Spagna (The Mysteries of the Spanish Inquisition) a spectacular five-act drama written by Luigi Gualtieri and Alessandro Salvini.² The Officers of the Circolo Alessandro Salvini at this time were: Gaetano C. Naddeo, President, Carlo Di Giuseppe, Treasurer, Vincenzo Senisi, Corresponding Secretary,³ Mr. C. Giannattasio, Financial Secretary, and Mr. D. Cuomo, Roberto Merlo and Mr. A. Gentilella, Curators.⁴ An Executive Committee presided over the evening's production. Its President was Mr. V.A. Montesano; it included committee members Mr. N. Columbro, Mr. L. Columbro, Mr. G. Rangeneschi, owner of the Rangeneschi Restaurant, Mr. G. Paris and Ernestro Quadrino. Cesare Girosi, Mr. G. Savarese and Mr. R. Marasco were Patrons of the Dance Committee, while the officials of the Dance Committee were: Mr. G. D'Amato, President, Mr. N. Marotta, First Vice President, Mr. V. Maiorino, Second Vice President and Honorary Presidents:

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 90 (March 30, 1904), p. 3.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 317 (November 12, 1904), p. 2.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 307 (November 1, 1904), p. 3.

⁴ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 322 (November 17, 1904), p. 3.

Mr. A. Pacconi, Antonio Ferrara, Mr. G. Accomando, Raffaele Penza, Mr. G. Pepe, Mr. L. Martorelli, Mr. E. Volpintesta, Mr. G. Repoli, Mr. G. Altieri, Mr. L. Maiorino, and Mr. N. De Soci. Antonio Rossi and Mr. G. Altieri, Floor Managers, were assisted by Mr. N. Acciani.¹

In the audience, besides the committee members and their wives were: Mr. and Mrs. Francesco Macchi, Mrs. Vergara, Enrico Pollaci, Mr. Artale, Mr. M. Cervello, Count di Porto Longo, Mr. F. Panciatichi, Mr. G. Chavanne, Dr. Perilli and Mr. G. Mazza. The evening's festivities were so successful that Cesare Girosi, a Dance Patron, suggested sending the following telegram to Cavaliere Mario Salvini, currently attending the St. Louis Exposition, who was the brother of Alessandro:

Cav. Mario Salvini

St. Louis, Mo.

Brindiamo sommo tragico italiano dal cui nome il Circolo si
intitola e a suo fratello degno successore del grande maestro
Il Comitato.²

After this spectacular affair, the company did not appear again until Sunday, February 12, 1905 when Mr. V.A. Montesano acted as Chairman for a small feast at the Rangeschi Restaurant, 139 West 10th Street. Some pleasant samples of dramatic art directed by Antonio Salerno concluded the evening, during which speeches were given by Salerno and Pasquale De Biasi, Editor-in-Chief of Il Telegrafo, whose

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 318 (November 13, 1904), p. 6.

²"Cavaliere Mario Salvini

St. Louis, Mo.

Let's cheer for the great Italian tragedian from whom the club takes its
name and for his brother the worthy successor of the great teacher
The Committee."

L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 324 (November 19, 1904), p. 3.

office was located at 88 Centre Street.¹

The next dramatic event took place on Sunday, May 28, 1905 and has already been noted in our discussion of Guglielmo Ricciardi. Ricciardi, directed by the Salerno brothers, acted the role of Pietro the Vintner in Fabio Romano o La Vendetta (Fabio Romano or The Revenge), an original spectacular historical drama in four acts and nine scene changes, adapted by Ricciardi himself from the novel of the same name by the Italian author Maria Corelli. Performed on the stage of the Manhattan Lyceum, this production is the last on record for the Salerno brothers and the Compagnia Alessandro Salvini in this time study. An activities report was given by the members of the organizing committee for this show: Gaetano C. Naddeo, Luca Cuomo and Mr. N. Columbro.²

The Salerno brothers directed and acted in all their productions, a fact which corroborates Abbamonte's allegation. Michelangelo Salerno took the role of Don Jose, Duke of Candia in I Misteri dell'Inquisizione di Spagna and the title role in Fabio Romano o La Vendetta, doubling up on another role in the same play, Count Cesare Olivieri. Antonio Salerno played D. Guritan in I Misteri and Guido Ferrari in Fabio Romano. Miss Maria Prete interpreted the role of Bianca, the daughter of a Florentine nobleman in the Dumas drama, Bianca. The very active Gaetano C. Naddeo shared the role of Filippo II of Spain with Roberto Merlo in I Misteri. Ernesto Quadrino played Saucio in I Misteri and the

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 43 (February 12, 1905), p. 4; and N. 45 (February 14, 1905), p. 3.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 149 (May 30, 1905), p. 3; and N. 113 (April 23, 1905), p. 3; Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 121 (May 3, 1905), p. 3; and N. 143 (May 29, 1905), p. 3.

servant Vincenzo in Fabio Romano. The well known actor and director from Paterson, New Jersey, Paolo Cremonesi played Torquemada in I Misteri. In the same play Mr. G.D. Ruggiero interpreted the role of Don Ramiro, as well as creating Father Bonaventura in Fabio Romano. Many other actresses and actors belonged to this company. Those not already mentioned thus far are listed in Appendix III.

The maestri who functioned as musical directors and orchestra conductors for this company were: Prof. Diodemo Cupo and his orchestra; Prof. Leon Mussof; Prof. Lorenzo Vola and his Alba Band; and Prof. Andrea Camera and his band.

Besides Shakespeare, the playwrights selected for productions from abroad were French: Dumas pere, Victor Hugo and Victorien Sardou. The Italian authors Luigi Gualtieri and Maria Corelli are represented because the American writers Guglielmo Ricciardi and Alessandro Salvini adapted their works. Salvini adapted Gualtieri's I Misteri dell'-Inquisizione di Spagna and Ricciardi adapted Corelli's Fabio Romano o La Vendetta. Truly original dramas from Italian-American pens are lacking in this company's repertory.

The record of the work of the Salerno brothers and La Compagnia Filodrammatica Alessandro Salvini exhibits a regular and consistent pattern of activity. Their output is relatively small and sporadic as compared to other companies of the period but the fact that they managed to stay in existence for nine years, so far, and on an amateur basis, is noteworthy indeed. Their method of operating was to produce grandiose, spectacular historical dramas requiring many scene changes and rich costumes, and many actors. Businessmen and community leaders were enlisted for assistance in the extensive planning and organization that went into each production. Some of them also acted in plays as well.

We suspect that their financial assistance was the most appreciated to pay for the costly scene and costume changes and the frequent advertising that preceded each production. The record of the company may be small but each theatrical event was a gala social event for performers and administrators alike. All this leads us to the conclusion that the company remained an amateur group at least until 1905 when this study ends. Whether or not the group went on to professional status, or for that matter whether they continued to exist even on an amateur basis in the years to come, remains to be seen.

La Compagnia Clemente Giglio

Clemente Giglio was born February 4, 1886 in Naples. His parents were Alessandro and Adele Gravieri Giglio. In 1891 at the age of five, Clemente and his parents emigrated to the United States and settled in New York City, at 246 Elizabeth Street. Don Alessandro Giglio had been a magician-juggler in many theatres in Italy and had come to America in the hopes of following the same profession. Unfortunately, he soon found that his lack of English made it impossible to pursue his craft in American theatres and for American audiences, for a magician must be able to talk to his audience, to distract it and hold it in suspense. Instead, the elder Giglio performed only for Italian-American audiences and earned a few dollars conjuring tricks in the bars, the *caffe* concertos and at community events and picnics. In the hopes of passing his skill on to his son, the elder Giglio incorporated Clemente into his act as the magician's assistant. Clemente would also pass the plate at the end of the show.¹

¹Flamma, p. 173; and Falbo "Figure e Scene," (June 28, 1942), p.5S.

One such show took place at a picnic sponsored by four Italian social organizations in Ulmer Park on a Sunday afternoon sometime between 1891 and 1893. The President of one of the societies announced the entertainment which consisted of Alessandro Giglio and his son, Clemente, who wore a top hat in which were hidden eggs used in the act. The routine went along with this monologue by the elder Giglio:

-- Un po' di silenzio. . .prego. . .state fermi. . . E vi sbalordira' la grande novita' che vi presento. . . Eco qua il bambino Coccia. . . Una meraviglia: l'unico bambino al mondo che fa le uova come una gallina. Osservate! Osservate! Ecco qui un sacchetto vuoto. . . niente di qua, niente di la'. . .

-- E' vuoto. . . e' vuoto! Ebbene, osservate questo cappello a cilindro, e' vuoto anche questo. . . osservate. . . vi passo dentro la mia bacchetta magica per dimostrarvi che non c'e' imbroglio di sorta. . .

-- Ebbene, osservate: metto il sacchetto vuoto nel cappello a cilindro. . . cosi; e poi lo metto sulla testa del bambino Coccia, e vedrete che quando levero' il cappello vi troveremo delle uova freschissime. . . come se fossero uscite proprio ora dalla gallina. . . E nello stesso tempo passo a dimostrarvi la mia grande abilita' nella prestidigitazione. . . Questo fazzoletto apparisce, sparisce. . . . Ecco la mia abilita': ho le dita magiche e. . . guardate qui, guardate! Qui c'e' una moneta. . . uno, due, tre. . . e la moneta non c'e' piu'. Scometto che la moneta e' passata nella saccoccia del signore con la cravatta verde. . .

At this point Giglio approached the Vice-President of one of the societies, who was covered with medals, and found the vanished money in his vest. Great surprise on the part of the audience and applause. But Giglio continued: "-- Vedrete, vedrete, quale potere ha la mia

¹-- A little silence. . . please. . . be still. . . and you will be amazed at the great novelty that I will show you. . . Here is the baby Coccia. . . He's a miracle: the only child in the world that can lay eggs like a hen. Look! Observe! I have here a small empty bag. . . nothing here, nothing there. . .

-- It is empty. . . it's empty! Very well, observe this top hat, this too is empty. . . watch. . . I place my magic wand into it to show you there is no trick of any kind. . .

-- Very well, watch: I put the small empty bag into the tophat. . . like this; and then I put it on the head of baby Coccia, and you see that when I lift the hat we find fresh eggs there. . . as if they had been laid by a hen just now. . . And at the same time I will go

bacchetta magica! Essa al mio comando fa" ¹ Before Giglio could finish his demonstration, the members of the audience quickly put their hands in their pockets to check their money. About a dozen spectators had been the unknowing victims of wandering pickpockets at the picnic that day. Finding their wallets gone, they suddenly accused the magician of thievery, demanding that he return the lost money, throwing wine bottles at him and yelling for the police: "-- Ladro! Ci hai rubato il portafoglio. . . Ridacci il portafoglio, mariuolo! Police! Al ladro! L'a ditte e l'a fatte. . ." ² Alessandro Giglio tried to defend himself: "-- Piano . . . voi vi sbagliate. Per carita', ascoltate: io non potevo trafugare i vostri portafogli. Sono un' artista. . . sono una persona onesta." ³

Fortunately the police arrived before it was too late and took both father and son to the stationhouse for questioning. Little Clemente was still wearing the top hat with the hidden eggs. While Giglio tried to explain to the police sergeant all about the misfortune, the sergeant in turn was captivated by the humorous sight of the little boy with a top hat that reached down to his nose. He stood the child up

on to demonstrate to you my great powers of illusion. . . This handkerchief appears, it disappears. . . . Here is my power: I have magic fingers and. . . look here, watch! Here is some money. . . one, two three. . . and the money is no more. I bet that the money has traveled into the pocket of the gentleman with the green tie. . ." Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 28, 1942), p. 6S.

¹"-- Look, see, what power my magic wand has! At my command it will" Ibid.

²"-- Thief! He stole our wallets. . . Give us back our wallets, swindler! Police! Thief! He said it and he did it. . ." Ibid.

³"-- Calm down . . . you're mistaken. Please, listen to me: I couldn't have stolen your wallets. I am a performer. . . I am an honest person." Ibid.

on his desk and laughed: "-- O.K. for this little actor I am going to send you home. No charge. Siete libero (You're free)."¹ Then the sergeant put a dollar in the hat. The other officers also took up a small collection of about ten dollars for the pair and when they attempted to take the hat off Clemente to put in the money, the eggs fell out and broke, making a mess of the sergeant's desk. From that day forward, Don Alessandro Giglio renounced the profession of magic.²

Although his father tried to teach him his cleverest tricks, Clemente Giglio preferred to study music. On their old piano at home he learned to play and sing all the popular Neapolitan hits, which he performed in the bars, in the stores and at the local festivals, earning money for his performance besides. He was seven years old and it was 1893. Seeing a performance of the Maiori-Rapone Company at the Germania Assembly Rooms, he was irrevocably taken with the idea of becoming an actor in the theatre. The following anecdote recalls Clemente Giglio's unexpected debut with the Maiori-Rapone troupe.³

One winter evening at 8:30 p.m., his mother asleep and his father out supposedly playing cards, Clemente Giglio sneaked down the fire escape to catch a 9 p.m. performance of the Maiori-Rapone company. As the audience waited for the show to begin, Clemente went straight up to the piano and started playing his repertory the best he knew how. The audience was delighted with the seven-year-old child prodigy in their midst and showered him with kisses, applause and money. Hearing the noise Maiori and Rapone also came out to listen. They brought him up on

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (July 5, 1942), p. 5S.

stage and Maiori announced to the audience: "-- Terremo con noi il 'piccolo professore.' Va bene?" The audience replied: "-- Benissimo!"¹ and yelled for an encore. But Clemente feared his father's reaction to his disappearance. Rejecting offers on the part of the performers to accompany him home, he rushed home through the snow covered streets, slipping on the ice several times before finally reaching home. The door was locked and as he stood deciding whether or not to ring the bell, he spotted his father approaching from the corner of Houston Street. Shivering from the cold and from fear, Clemente whispered a quick prayer.

Instead of the expected outburst of anger and possible punishment, Clemente found his father smiling and agreeable because Don Alessandro Giglio had also witnessed the "show" at the Germania Assembly Rooms and had heard Maiori's remark. The next day he himself accompanied his son to see Maiori: "A voi affido mio figlio, tenetelo con voi; egli e' pazzo per il teatro e sono certo che con voi fara' carriera. . ."² Immediately Clemente Giglio began playing children's parts in Maiori's plays. During intermissions, he also sang and performed Neapolitan macchiette, earning twenty dollars a week.

At age eleven in 1897 Clemente Giglio began forming his own company, for which he wrote and directed dramatic skits, sceneggiate (musical skits) and popular songs. In 1900, after the assassination of King Umberto I of Italy at Monza on July 29th, Giglio wrote a play on

¹"-- We'll keep the 'little professor' with us. OK?
-- Wonderful!" Ibid.

²"To you I entrust my son, take him with you; he is crazy about the theatre and I am sure that with you he will make it a career. . ."
Ibid.

the subject, Il Regicidio (The Regicide). It was first performed in a theatre on the East side. The Giglio took his company to Philadelphia¹ and to Paterson, New Jersey to put on performances there. Tickets at fifty cents apiece were sold a month in advance in the local stores.² In Paterson's Little Italy, there existed an anarchist organization known as The Paterson Group, comprised of about 120 members. Their official organ was La Questione Sociale, edited by Enrico Malatesta. One member of the Paterson Group was Gaetano Bresci, Umberto's assassin.³

Thus when the announcement of the performance by Giglio's company was made, some people considered it a piece of anarchist propaganda in defense of the murder; others, namely the anarchist organization, considered it an antagonizing challenge. There were incidents and confrontations and Giglio again found himself in the police station. After explaining that the play was not a propaganda piece, that it was a simple unbiased re-enactment of the historic event, the performance was allowed to go on, but the theatre had more police in attendance than spectators.⁴

By 1902, at the age of sixteen, he was acting with other Italian-American groups, and performing in plays in the Neapolitan dialect, frequently interpreting the mask of Pulcinella. After July 25, 1902, when Guglielmo Ricciardi relinquished the Grand Eden Teatro,

¹The New York Sun, (July 16, 1943), clipping file on Italian Theatre, New York Public Library at Lincoln Center.

²Ibid., and my interview with Sandrino Giglio, May 29, 1971.

³Alex Cornella, "Silk City," I Am (n.d.), p. 39.

⁴Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (July 5, 1942), p. 5S.

Giglio and his company occupied the *caffe*, running a marionette theatre there for a short time, then putting on dramas and farces with Pulcinella interpreted by the impresario himself.¹ By Tuesday, December 2, 1902 the Grand Eden became known as Verga's Music Hall, perhaps with Giglio's occupation of it. The company of Verga's Music Hall put on a benefit at Harlem River Park on that date for the survivors of a disaster in Sicily and for the Sons of Columbus Society; it was produced by Vito Contessa and Rocco M. Marasco.²

On Wednesday, October 7, 1903, Clemente Giglio produced Verga's Cavalleria Rusticana for the first time in English.³ He would sometimes use this practice in later years in order to attract wider audiences as the Italian-American population received fewer and fewer new immigrant arrivals. On Saturday, April 16, 1904 Giglio was starring as Pulcinella again with Professor Prete's Magic Company at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III.⁴

The last note we have for Clemente Giglio in this period is the announcement of his marriage to Gemma Cunico (sister of Maria and Esterina) at 4 p.m. on Thursday, November 9, 1905 at Mount Carmel Church on 115th Street. The reception took place at Rand's Harlem Terrace, 210-12 East 104th Street.⁵ Gemma was also an actress. They eventually had two children, Sandrino and Adelina (her stage name was Perzechella) who would act in the Giglio company as well. Other members of the

¹ Ibid., and Flamma, p. 173.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 323 (November 19, 1902), p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 278 (October 5, 1903), p. 3.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 106 (April 15, 1904), p. 3.

⁵ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 299 (October 28, 1905), p. 3.

company during these early years were Gemma's sisters Esterina and Maria, the Geary sisters, Professor G. Delnunzio and Antonio Fanizza.

Giglio's most ambitious and prolific efforts took place in the decades after 1905. He continued to write, produce, act, direct. He joined with Eduardo Migliaccio in 1924 to produce operettas, unsuccessfully, but became one of the leading impresarios of the Italian-American theatre in the decades before its decline. He occupied an impressive array of theatres in the attempt to attract bigger audiences: the Tony Pastor Theatre, the 14th Street Theatre, the Jolson Theatre (which he rechristened the Venice Theatre or Teatro Venezia), the Nora Bayes Theatre, the Irving Place Theatre and the Ambassador Theatre, among others. He too produced radio plays. He took theatre on the road to other Italian communities, instituting what he called "Il Carro di Tespi" (The Wagon of Thespis). He sponsored Italian Companies for engagements here in the United States, among them those of Mimi Aguglia, Giovanni Grasso. Giuseppe Sterni, and Bazzi-Orlandini. He sponsored benefits for numerous worthy local and international causes and was honored with the title of "Commendatore."¹ He helped secure the same title for Rocco De Russo.²

Giglio's work constitutes a major part of the activity of the Italian-American theatre during its last decades and will be a valuable area to investigate thoroughly. After Clemente Giglio died on July 14, 1943, his son Sandrino continued in the theatrical tradition and became an impresario himself. At one point he was even billed as "il piccolo

¹ Flamma, p. 174.

² De Russo, p. 71.

Farfariello"¹ (little Farfariello).

La Compagnia Drammatica Nicola Brigante and La Villa Giulia

Nicola Brigante and his company began theatrical activity in the 19th century as La Compagnia Partenopea of New York, but they also performed in Philadelphia. The last notice we had for them in the 19th century occurred in 1891 but they became visible again one night after Wednesday, November 21, 1900 as La Compagnia Drammatica Nicola Brigante for the grand opening of the Villa Giulia Concert Hall. The bill advertised good music, an unspecified play and restaurant service by Antonio Ferrara's establishment at 195 Grand Street.² Located at 196-198 Grand Street, the Villa Giulia would later become known as the Villa Napoli, (already discussed with Francesco Ricciardi's company) and even later as the Villa Penza. Sometime between November, 1900 and March, 1901 the Villa Giulia closed for undisclosed reasons but reopened on Thursday, March 14, 1901. At this time the proprietor was noted as Domenico Volpe and Brigante was described as manager.³ It is conceivable that Brigante remained in that capacity for the following year, although this is the last piece of information that we have on him or the company. The Villa Giulia remained known as the Villa Giulia only until April 9, 1902, when Francesco Ricciardi took over as manager and the locale became known as the Villa Napoli.

Performers associated with the Villa Giulia are included in

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno XI, clipping (May 25, 1911), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 278 (November 17, 1900), p. 4.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 63 (March 14, 1901), P. 4.

Appendix III. Among them Francesco Vela became the capocomico of his own troupe and will be discussed at length later in this survey.

Since the Villa Giulia was a concert hall, the fare included variety entertainment and sometimes plays, although the specific plays or playwrights are not given in the ads. However, we do know that both Eduardo Migliaccio and Ettore De Stefano performed macchiette coloniale of their own composing.

Ettore De Stefano, who performed at the Villa Giulia, operated an Italian-American bank certified by the State of New York, where he sold imported and domestic calendars wholesale. His bank was located at 4 Mulberry Street, telephone number 2249 Worth.¹ He wrote poetry, composed music, edited the Rivista Musicale (Musical Review) in which he published some of his own compositions, gave mandolin lessons and in later years, after becoming an attorney, published Una Gazzetta Legale (A Legal Gazette) in which he explained the latest Italian and American laws. In the early days, while still at the bank and the Villa Giulia, he wrote and performed the macchietta coloniale entitled Il Contabile (The Bookkeeper), which lists the troubles of a bank clerk with little mathematical ability who has been recently hired by the banker Angelo Legniti, after working successively in the other Italian-American banks in operation at that time. A portion of the macchietta went like this:

Pati, Guarini, Tocci,
Lordi ed Avallone,
Perera, Delli Paoli,
Alvino, Maccarone,
Colliani, Berardini,
Cuneo ed Acritelli,
Fugazzi, Iozzolino,
E Gallo con Pitelli.
Ingiustizia financo

¹Pane, p. 23.

Zuccaro fece a me.
 Nove e seie quinnece
 Piu' sette ventitre'...¹

The first eight lines list the major Italian-American bankers of the day, many of whose names appeared in the banking ads of Il Progresso, Il Telegrafo, and L'Araldo. The verse ends with the complaint: "Financial imbalance makes squash out of me. Nine and six fifteen plus seven twenty-three..." Among the bankers listed in the macchietta, Pasquale Avallone has already been described in the discussion of L'Onore Perduto. Several of the other bankers frequently and consistently advertised in the Italian dailies, which afford us a closer look at some of their activities.

"Fugazzi," actually Cavaliere Luigi V. Fugazy, was President of the Societa' Italiana di Beneficenza located at 136 West Houston Street. He had founded his Banca Italiana, including public notary and travel agency, in 1870, located at 145 Bleecker Street and eventually, by 1895, relocated next door to 147 Bleecker.² By 1904 he had become "Sub-Corrispondente" to the Banco di Napoli and his bank had relocated once again to 153 Bleecker Street, telephone number 1158 J Spring.³

"Iozzolino," actually Albert M. Yuzzolino, was also a civil and criminal lawyer with offices in Rooms 460-461 at 11 Broadway, telephone number 1263 Broad.⁴ "Guarini" refers to La Banca Guarini & Candela, bank and travel agency located at 21 New Bowery, telephone number 414

¹ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 21, 1942), p. 5S.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno II, N. 9 (January 30, 1895), p. 4; and Anno VIII, N. 160 (July 5, 1901), p. 4.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 86 (March 26, 1904), p. 4.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 76 (March 17, 1903), p. 1.

Orchard. They advertised a trip by sea from New York to Naples in only eleven days.¹ Alessandro Delli Paoli operated his Banca Italiana at 180 Mulberry Street, telephone number 2704 Spring. He also had a branch at 914 South 8th Street in Philadelphia.²

The Banca A. Cuneo, also a notary office and travel agency, was located at 28 Mulberry Street.³ The Banca Pasquale Pati "E Figlio" (And Son) offered a notary public, maritime and railroad passage, as well as postal and telegraph service, at 240 Elizabeth Street, telephone 1437 Spring. The bank also served as a theatre ticket outlet for the Perez-Picciotti Company.⁴ The Banca G. Lordi at 68 Mulberry Street also provided an interpreter, a notary, a jeweler and a goldsmith.⁵ The Banca Pitelli was where the actor Aristide Sigismondi was employed.⁶ The banker Mr. P. Acritelli was a benefit patron or sponsor with La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Napoletana Gennaro Ragazzino.⁷

Nicola Brigante and his troupe are the last of those 19th century companies that, we can say with certainty, made a transition into the 20th century. The rest of the minor 19th century companies not already mentioned thus far, virtually disappear from our history.

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 86 (March 26, 1904), p. 4.

² Pane, p. 11.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 88 (March 28, 1904), p. 4.

⁴ Ibid.; and Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 125 (May 8, 1905), p. 3.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Flamma, p. 322.

⁷ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 323 (November 21, 1905), p. 3.

Minor 19th Century Companies

La Compagnia Filodrammatica Italiana Dante Alighieri enjoyed a very brief existence in 1890 as an amateur company devoted to benefits. A company under the same name appeared briefly in 1901, also performing benefits.¹ Although it is possible that the 19th century company is identical to its 20th century namesake, the 11 year span between notices makes that possibility very unlikely. Furthermore, other companies in the 20th century were inspired by Dante: Il Circolo Filodrammatico Dante Alighieri of New Haven; Il Circolo Filodrammatico Dante Alighieri of Pittsburgh; Il Circolo Filodrammatico Dante Alighieri of Newark and Jersey City; and Il Circolo Italiano Dante Alighieri of Boston.

La Societa Artistica Filodrammatica Carlo Goldoni also failed to continue into the new century. Its founders had been Carlo Neigre and Giuseppina Menghini-Neigre, an Italian husband and wife team who had belonged to an Italian Dramatic Company that had gone bankrupt² in Havana, Cuba. Finding themselves stranded in Havana, the Neigres came across a copy of the New York City Italian-American newspaper L'Eco d'Italia, which gave an exaggerated account of the theatrical successes of Guglielmo Ricciardi's company. In 1892 they came to New York in search of work in the theatre and instead found only Ricciardi's struggling group of amateurs. They joined Ricciardi's company nevertheless,³ and in 1894 formed their own company named after Carlo Goldoni. Although our research uncovered six more performances in 1895,

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 248 (October 13, 1901), p. 2; and N. 250 (October 16, 1901), p. 2.

²Ricciardi, Ricciardiana, pp. 18-19.

³Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (May 10, 1942), p. 5S.

the Neigres shortly thereafter returned to Italy.¹ Two of the company actors were still performing with other companies in the 20th century: Icilio Delicati with the Costantini-Vela company, and Riccardo Bencetti, who directed with Paolo Cremonesi's Societa Filodrammatica Italiana of West Hoboken, New Jersey.

Riccardo Bencetti had also been a director in New York City in 1889 with La Gara Artistica Napoletana, a group which enjoyed a very short life in that year and which also did not last into the new century.

The most active of the 19th century minor amateur groups was known as La Societa Filodrammatica Tommaso Salvini, named after the ferocious 19th century Italian actor. We originally described their activities as lasting from 1800 through 1883 but Salvatore Abbamonte noted that they were performing circa 1896. This is very possible since our source for their performances was limited to Odell, and the files of Il Progresso Italo-Americano are missing after 1894. As active as they may have been, the troupe did not make the transition into the 20th century, although some of the actors who had been with their group were still visible, namely, Pasquale di Lorenzo, Fausto D. Malzone and Lucio C. Zumbo. This group should not be confused with other theatre companies named after the famous Italian actor, such as, Il Circolo Filodrammatico Tommaso Salvini² run by the Salerno brothers of New York City; or Il Circolo Filodrammatico Tommaso Salvini of Pawtucket and Providence,

¹Ricciardi, "An Actor Tells a Story," p. 134. In 1893 another unrelated group, La Compagnia Filodrammatica Carlo Goldoni, was performing in Philadelphia. Il Progresso Italo-Americano, Anno XIV, N. 56 (March 9, 1893), p. 2.

²Usually called "Il Circolo Filodrammatico Alessandro Salvini," this company was once named after Tommaso Salvini, possibly in error.

Rhode Island; or Il Club Filodrammatico Tommaso Salvini of Chicago.

La Compagnia Filodrammatica Galileo Galilei, directed by Francesco Faggiano in the 1890-91 season also pass from the scene but their professor, Cav. Carlo Brizzi continued to conduct in the music hall arena of New York's 20th century. The remaining minor theatre clubs disappear altogether from this continuing history as do their actors and directors: the Lyceum Theatre on 14 Street West of 6th Avenue which gave Italian dramas in 1876; the 8th Street Teatro Italiano managed by Giuseppe Barro in 1890; St. Peter's Dramatic and Musical Society of Brooklyn, directed by Arnold Fransioli in 1886; and Manhattan's I Celebri Lillipuziani of 1891.

This concludes our examination of those Italian-American amateur and professional companies that originated in New York City during the 19th century. What follows here is a consideration of those groups, both amateur and professional, that began their theatrical existence in the 20th century.

CHAPTER II

COMPANIES THAT FORMED AFTER 1900

La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Giovanni De Rosalia

When Maiori left New York City to go on his road tour of the United States in 1909, and later when he shifted energies to the variety theatre business, his successor in the field of dramatic prose theatre, at least for a short time, was Giovanni De Rosalia. His story begins on an unspecified evening at the Villa Mascolo Concert Hall, located at 207 Canal Street between Mulberry and Baxter Streets. Salvatore Abbamonte remembers his performances of Othello, Oreste and La Morte Civile at that location's "miniscule stage."¹ This would place De Rosalia at the Villa Mascolo sometime between its Grand Opening on Saturday, January 31, 1903² and its reopening as Pasquale Rapone's Follia Drammatiche on Saturday, September 3, 1904. Abbamonte also noted that De Rosalia had just recently arrived from Italy. He had been born in Sicily.

During the Villa Mascolo's existence, La Follia published a novel in the Sicilian dialect by Giovanni De Rosalia, Litteriu Trantulia ovvero Lu nobili sfasulatu. (Litteriu Trantulia or The fall of the nobles). On its back cover is an ad for the Villa Mascolo, boasting: "Unico locale spaziosissimo, rinfrescato da 6 grandi finestre e

¹ Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," p. 9.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 31 (January 31, 1903), p. 2.

ventilatori elettrici. Con primo e secondo balcone."¹ The "spacious place" described above actually measured 26'2" for the facade and back walls, while the east wall reached 64' in length and the west wall, 54'7".² The bend in Canal Street accounts for the irregular angle. Besides remembering its tiny stage, Abbamonte recalled that beer was sold at five cents a glass.³ Another ad described the place as a "Lager Beer Saloon and Ristorante," warning that the establishment was an honest place and that police would be called in should there be any disturbance.⁴

Giovanni De Rosalia had been a professional actor with major companies in Italy, one of them La Compagnia Cavaliere Scandurra,⁵ before coming to New York sometime before 1903. He was apparently well educated, had earned the title of Professor and was teaching in the New York City School system in 1904. In one issue of L'Araldo Italiano, the anonymous reporter exhorted the Italian-American readers to learn English as soon as possible in order to succeed in America, pointing out that the Germans who come to this country study English immediately.

¹"The only spacious place, refreshed by 6 large windows and electric fans. With first and second balconies." Giovanni De Rosalia, Litteriu Trantulia ovvero Lu nobili sfasulatu. (New York: Stamperia della Follia, n.d.), back cover. There is no publication date but undoubtedly publication occurred sometime between January 31, 1903 and September 21, 1904 when the Villa Mascolo existed. Also, since one of the ad's selling points was the cooling fans, we hazard a guess that publication must have been either the summer of 1903 or the summer of 1904.

²George W. and Walter S. Bromley, Atlas of the City of New York Manhattan Island from Actual Surveys and Official Plans. (Philadelphia: G.W. Bromley & Co., 1891), Plate 5.

³Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," p. 9.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 31 (January 31, 1903), p. 2.

⁵Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 113 (April 23, 1903), p. 3.

Also, the reporter added, Professor De Rosalia offered his assistance and those Italians wishing to learn better English could come to his school at 227 East 113 Street.¹ He may also have been a journalist.² Perhaps he was the anonymous reporter.

De Rosalia's debut as an actor in New York City was announced for Tuesday, March 31, 1903 with La Compagnia Costantini-Vela at the Drammatico Nazionale Theatre.³ This date is the first specific record of any appearance by him in this country. Since he wrote and performed in the Sicilian dialect, his origins must undoubtedly have been Sicilian. He remained with this group, which performed in Manhattan and Brooklyn, until approximately April 29, 1903,⁴ playing dramatic and comic roles.

At some point after this, De Rosalia started writing, directing and performing independently. He starred as Othello at the Manhattan Lyceum on Thursday, November 12, 1903⁵ and appeared at Ferrando's Music Hall on Saturday, June 11, 1904 when the program also included his adaptation of La Balia (The Wetnurse).⁶ Other than these two instances, his whereabouts and activities during this period are unknown.

But by Wednesday, July 6, 1904 Giovanni De Rosalia had become the impresario and director of his own full-fledged professional theatre

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 227 (August 14, 1904), p. 5.

² The Italian-American opera impresario Alfredo Salmaggi remembered that De Rosalia was a journalist. My interview with Alfredo Salmaggi, April 2, 1971.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 90 (March 31, 1903), p. 1.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 119 (April 29, 1903), p. 2.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 311 (November 7, 1903), p. 3.

⁶ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 163 (June 11, 1904), p. 2.

company, housed at the Villa Napoli,¹ no doubt filling the gap left by Francesco Ricciardi's disappearance from that bistro. La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Giovanni De Rosalia, as it was known, was absent from the Villa Napoli from mid-July until late September, when they returned to the theatre with a schedule of almost daily performances until Sunday, November 6, 1904.² During the summer hiatus, Vittorio Alfieri's Oreste was staged at the Manhattan Lyceum on Thursday, July 28, 1904.³ The proprietor of the Villa Napoli was now Gaetano Borriello⁴ and Angelo Maria held the title of President of the company.⁵

The only hint as to finances is the benefit for Mrs. Elisa Perna on Tuesday, November 1, 1904. The other vocalists on the bill volunteered their talents for this benefit.⁶ Taking his cue from Maiori, De Rosalia also tried two performances on some Sundays, at three and eight p.m., while on other evenings, performances began at 7:30.

On January 11, 1905, Il Telegrafo explained that Raffaele Penza, the owner of the next door Trattoria del Matese, had bought the building where there "once was" the Villa Napoli. This phrase suggests that performances had ceased for some time after the last recorded performance of November 6, 1904. Also, the notice ends with this criticism of the last performances at the Villa Napoli: "Non piu drammi o commedia

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 188 (July 6, 1904), p. 3.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, Nos. 189 to 310 (July 7, 1904 to November 5, 1904), p. 2.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 192 (July 10, 1904), p. 3.

⁴ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 184 (July 2, 1904), p. 3.

⁵ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 188 (July 6, 1904), p. 3.

⁶ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 306 (October 31, 1904), p. 2.

recitati finora così malamente, ma buona musica e buon canto."¹ We assume this slur refers to De Rosalia's tenure at the caffè although his name is not specifically mentioned. Perhaps this was the reason for his leaving the Villa Napoli and why the De Rosalia Company ceased to exist for almost a year.

The next note on De Rosalia's theatrical activity reveals that he had returned to acting and was performing steadily with Antonio Maiori's Company from Sunday, January 8 through Friday, June 2, 1905.² In August, September and October of 1905, De Rosalia was acting and directing with his own company again, this time at the New Star Casino, 105-115 East 107 Street between Lexington Avenue and Fourth Avenue.³ Surprisingly, the company was billed as La Società Filodrammatica Vittorio Alfieri for the single performance of Sunday, October 29, 1905⁴ and oddly enough, a later edition of L'Araldo referred to the troupe for this same evening's program as Il Circolo Filodrammatico Manzoni.⁵ Neither name persisted after this date because, after a single performance on Wednesday, November 29, 1905 at Ferrando's Music Hall,⁶ De Rosalia went into partnership with the Perez-Picciotto Company and

¹"No more dramas or comedies performed so badly as before, but good music and good singing." Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 11 (January 11, 1905), p. 3.

²Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 6 (January 6, 1905), p. 3. to N. 147 (June 2, 1905), p. 3.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 216 (August 25, 1905), p. 3; L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 287 (October 15, 1905), p. 3; and N. 290 (October 18, 1905), p. 3.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 299 (October 28, 1905), p. 3.

⁵L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 302 (October 31, 1905), p. 3.

⁶L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 332 (November 30, 1905), p. 3.

the new group became known as La Nuova Compagnia Filodrammatica De Rosalia-Perez-Picciotto. The first production by the newly merged groups consisted of Giacommetti's La Morte Civile (Civil Death) on Wednesday, December 13, 1905 at Arlington Hall.¹

The story of the Perez-Picciotto theatrical family begins in this country on Tuesday, February 28, 1905 when Mrs. Pia Perez-Picciotto performed in Lo Schiavo di S. Domingo (The Slave of San Domingo), which marked the debut of a new company, La Compagnia Filodrammatici Italiani, at the Music Hall in Scranton, Pennsylvania.² The company name suggests its amateur status but Mrs. Perez-Picciotto had been an acting teacher in Palermo. She was accompanied to America by her sister, Valeria Picciotto, described as "una graziosa svelta ed intelligente ragazza"³ (a gracious, slender and intelligent girl) and by Giuseppe Perez, who, owing to the hyphenation of Pia's name, we take to be her husband.

In the spring of that year, the family moved to New York City⁴ and together with some well-known New York actors, mounted a production on Tuesday, May 16, 1905 at Webster Hall. The program consisted of Felice Cavalotti's Lea, in which all three family members acted, and Così' va il mondo bimba mia (That's how the world is, my child) by Giacinto Gallina, in which the two sisters played the protagonists. Tickets for this production could be purchased at the Banca Pasquale Pati (referred to in the macchietta, Il Contabile), 240 Elizabeth Street and at the

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 345 (December 14, 1905), p. 3.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 65 (March 6, 1905), p. 3.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 125 (May 8, 1905), p. 3.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 132 (May 16, 1905), p. 3.

Scimeca Pharmacy, 164 Elizabeth Street.¹

After one more production, in which Pia interpreted the title role in Dumas films ' La Moglie di Claudio (Claude's wife) on Thursday, June 22, 1905, the Perez-Picciottos joined with Giovanni De Rosalia to form a new company, which produced the aforementioned La Morte Civile on December 13, 1905. The notice for this performance mentions a Mrs. Maria Perez-Piccotto, whom we take to be actually Pia, in the role of Rosalia. Another family member with hyphenated surname suddenly appearing would be hard to justify; also the misspelling of the last name (Piccotto for Picciotto) and the listing of "Miss" Valeria Perez-Piccotto (another suddenly hyphenated version) in the role of Ada suggests that L'Araldo was not up on accurate information regarding this family.

In this particular production of Giacometti's drama, Giuseppe Perez played Abbate and De Rosalia played Corrado. Mr. Affronto was described as "un poco troppo compassato e rigido" (a bit too formal and rigid) in the role of Dr. Palmieri, while Mr. F.P. Ingrassia appeared "mediocre" in the role Fernando.² Ingrassia lived at 167 East 106 Street.³

This date is the last note on De Rosalia or the Picciottos in 1905, although they continued to produce in the ensuing years, at first together, with their merged operations, and later independently.

Giovanni De Rosalia was the only director and the leading actor of

¹Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 125 (May 8, 1905), p. 3; and L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 140 (May 21, 1905), p. 3.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 345 (December 14, 1905), p. 3.

³"Per un Teatro Italiano," Il Progresso Italo-Americano, Anno XXXV, clipping (May 30, 1914), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

his own company. Without a doubt his favorite and most frequent role was that of Othello. He also played the title roles in Vittorio Alfieri's Oreste and in the anonymous Armando il Bastardo (Armando the Bastard); the role of Antonio in Il Corsaro Francese, as well as the role of Father Eusebio in Tosca when produced by Maiori; and Corrado in his own production of La Morte Civile. The reviewer Giovanni Fabbricatore of L'Araldo described his acting as Oreste: "la voce potente . . . gesto franco e sicuro, . . . la dizione simpatica e corettissima, la padronanza assoluta del palcoscenico, . . . Nulla di esagerato."¹

Cast lists are very infrequent for the troupe, but among its performers we can count Miss Cunico and Mrs. Elisa Perna. The latter interpreted the title roles in Giovanna Marni's Maria Giovanna and Emile Zola's Teresa Raquin. De Rosalia was Esterina Cunico's acting teacher. In the variety shows that supplemented his presentations at the Villa Napoli, some familiar names appeared: Mrs. Elisa Perna, Mrs. Lea Della Pierre, Eugenio Rispoli, Amalia and Manolo Spagnuola, the Spanish acrobats, Eduardo Migliaccio, and the couple Roberto and Amelia Flores. Mr. and Mrs. Flores were friends of Rocco De Russo in Italy; they were also Neapolitans as the following profiles note:

AMELIA FLORES

La si puo' definire "l'anima del teatro dialettale" l'artista singolare dallo spinto inesauribile, inimitabile. Quanta grazia, quanta spontaneita' nella sua arte. In lei e' tutta Napoli ridanciana che si manifesta.

¹"the voice is powerful . . . the gesture is direct and certain, . . . the diction is pleasant and very correct, the absolute command of the stage, . . . Nothing is exaggerated." Giovanni Fabbricatore, "L'Artista De Rosalia," L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 290 (October 18, 1905), p. 3. The newspaper incorrectly numbered this edition as 190.

ROBERTO FLORES

E' un attore distintissimo -- adatto si' al comico che al drammatico -- e un compagno prezioso di soda cultura e d'indiscutibile valore. . . . ed e' il beniamino del pubblico.¹

A great number of anonymous plays were mounted by De Rosalia and his company, both serious and comic in nature. Among those playwrights to whom can be attributed specific plays are the Italians: Vittorio Alfieri, Luigi Camoletti, Felice Cavalotti, Carlo Roti, Paolo Giacometti, Stefano Interdonato, Eduardo Scarpetta, Carlo de Dottori, Giovanna Marni and E. Minichino; the French, D'Aubigny and Emile Zola; and William Shakespeare.

Among the Italian-Americans there was, of course, Eduardo Migliaccio (Farfariello), who created his own macchiette while with De Rosalia at the Villa Napoli. However, the Sicilian macchietta, Piddu Macca, although performed by Migliaccio, was actually written by De Rosalia and Filippo Dato.² Giovanni De Rosalia was also a playwright. He adapted the piece entitled La Balia (The Wetnurse) for Ferrando's Hall on Saturday, June 11, 1904;³ his untitled "brilliant" farce was produced by Maiori on Sunday, February 5, 1905. But for his own company during the years of this study, no other pieces were attributed to him;

¹"AMELIA FLORES. You can define her as 'the soul of the dialect theatre' a singular artist with an inexhaustible, inimitable verve. Such grace, such spontaneity in her art. In her all of cheerful Naples is visible. ROBERTO FLORES. He is a most distinguished actor -- adaptable to the comic as well as the dramatic -- a valuable friend of sound learning and indisputable worth and he is the favorite of the public." Lanza, p. 14.

²Dante Theatre program, loc. cit.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 163 (June 11, 1904), p. 2.

⁴Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 31 (January 31, 1905), p. 3.

however, it is possible that some of his plays may be numbered among the anonymous and unattributed titles.

One other playwright with the De Rosalia company should be noted. A Mr. Astigiano was credited with five-act drama Oreste. Since we know that De Rosalia produced the Oreste of Vittorio Alfieri, it would seem that Mr. Astigiano probably wrote an adaptation for De Rosalia, in which he played the title role on Sunday, October 15, 1905.¹

The Perez-Picciotto-De Rosalia merger did not have a long life in the years following 1905 but the Perez-Picciotto clan continued to perform both independently and with other companies. Giuseppe and Pia Perez had a little girl, Ida.² Another family member, Salvatore Picciotto, became active with their troupe,³ as did Papa' Picciotto,⁴ but the "gracious, slender and intelligent" Valeria died in the spring of 1913 in Ibor City near Tampa, Florida. As a matter of fact, the proceeds from a benefit performance of L'Onore Perduto went to pay the expenses for a marble stone in her memory.⁵ As for the rest of the family, notices regarding their theatrical activities continue until at least 1923.

Giovanni De Rosalia teamed up with Paolo Cremonesi in 1907 for an uncertain amount of time and later continued independently to produce serious plays and comedies, including plays by Riccardo Cordiferro, with

¹ Fabbricatore, loc. cit.

² F.M., untitled clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

³ Il Progresso Italo-Americano, Anno XXXIII, clipping, (March 24, 1912), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

⁴ La Follia, (1912), clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

⁵ La Follia, (June 1913), clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

whom he was friendly. The actress Francesca Gaudio became his wife and worked in his company also.

At some point De Rosalia decided to abandon the Italian prose theatre, as did Maiori also, and turn his energies to comedy. We are fortunate to have his own explanation for the shift. One day as he sat with his friend Francesco Ricciardi in the Caffè Ronca, the young actor Michele Viola entered the caffè. Seeing his dejected face, Ricciardi and De Rosalia invited him to join them at their table:

-- Che fai ora? -- domando De Rosalia.

-- Niente, don Giova'.

-- E non farai mai niente se non cambi strada. Vedi anch'io avevo cominciato con i drammi, anzi con le tragedie: Otello, Amleto, Saul. Applausi molti, danari pochi. E ho cambiato suonata. Sono diventato Nofrio, il lepidò scemo, buffissimo Nofrio. Ed è spuntato per me il sole.

So it seems, De Rosalia tired of the lack of financial support from the Italian community for his serious dramatic efforts, and decided to form a Sicilian dialect theatre to cater to the great numbers of Sicilian immigrants in New York City. Nofrio, the half-wit comic character created by De Rosalia, made him very popular and the name became synonymous with De Rosalia's identity, as Farfariello had become identified with Migliaccio. Farfariello was more universally popular and better known than the character of Nofrio, and for good reason. Nofrio, like Pasquale Rapone's Pascariello, Francesco Ricciardi's Pulcinella and Milanini's Meneghino, remained essentially Italian (that is, Sicilian,

¹-- What are you doing now? -- asked De Rosalia.

-- Nothing, don Giova!

-- And you will never do anything if you don't switch course. You see I also had begun with dramas, even with tragedies: Othello, Hamlet, Saul. Great applause, little money. So I changed my tune. I became Nofrio, the wise fool, the clowning Nofrio. And the sun began to shine for me." Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (September 13, 1942), p. 9.

Neapolitan or Milanese as the case may be) caricatures, while Farfariello was the personification of the Italian-American immigrant. This element was the key to the outstanding success of the Farfariello characterization.

Nofrio "was played without a mask, in shabby clothes and a large false nose."¹ A drawing of Nofrio shows him in baggy pants with large checkered pattern, held up by suspenders. His shirt is loose and baggy and white. He has a bushy head of black, curly hair.² De Rosalia at first began by creating monologues for Nofrio to recite³ and eventually he wrote a number of farces in the Sicilian dialect with Nofrio as the central character, interpreted on the stage by De Rosalia himself. Many of them were published, some by Cordiferio's La Follia. Titles include: Nofrio Si Deve Tirare⁴ (Nofrio Has to Shoot), Nofrio Eroe Del 31 Febbraio⁵ (Nofrio Hero of February 31), Nofrio Locandiere⁶ (Nofrio the Innkeeper), Il Duello Di Nofrio⁷ (Nofrio's Duel), Nofrio ai Bagni⁸

¹Sogliuzzo, p. 67.

²Giovanni De Rosalia, Nofrio al Telefono (New York: Italian Book Co., 1918), cover.

³Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 28, 1942), p. 55.

⁴Giovanni De Rosalia, Nofrio Si Deve Tirare (New York: Casa Editrice Biblioteca Siciliana, n.d.)

⁵Giovanni De Rosalia, Nofrio Eroe Del 31 Febbraio (New York: Casa Editrice Biblioteca Siciliana, 1917).

⁶Giovanni De Rosalia, Nofrio Locandiere (New York: Casa Editrice Biblioteca Siciliana, 1917).

⁷Giovanni De Rosalia, Il Duello Di Nofrio (New York: Italian Book Co., 1918).

⁸Giovanni De Rosalia, Nofrio ai Bagni (New York: Italian Book Co., 1918).

(Nofrio at the Baths), Nofrio al Telefono¹ (Nofrio on the Telephone), Nofriu Arriccutu² (Nofrio Gets Rich), and Millionaire Nofrio Marries Beautiful Peaches.³ Giovanni De Rosalia was also a writer of stories and songs, some of which were made into records on the Victor Columbia label.⁴

Like Maiori before him, and like others who would follow, Giovanni De Rosalia became involved in the unsuccessful efforts to establish a permanent Italian Theatre. It had the support and encouragement of Riccardo Cordiferro and was to be called the Teatro Alfieri⁵ but failed to achieve any permanent success. (This venture should not be confused with the Teatro Alfieri in Brooklyn, Il Circolo Vittorio Alfieri of Pittsburgh, Il Circolo Filodrammatico Vittorio Alfieri of Providence or Il Circolo Vittorio Alfieri of Newark.)

The following is a profile of De Rosalia written by a contemporary, Toto' Lanza:

"Nofrio" in Arte

Di fronte alla moltitudine dei comici, Giovanni De Rosalia e' il solo che rappresenti qualche cosa di singolare e di staccato: fisionomia originale, voce potente e armoniosa, e una natura d'artista tutta propria.

Di carattere bonario, ma acutamente compassato. Egli s'e' fatto avanti pian piano, senza posa e senza pretese, superando una grande difficolta', la piu' grande che s'incontra sulla via

¹De Rosalia, Nofrio al Telefono.

²Giovanni De Rosalia, Nofriu Arriccutu (New York: Casa Editrice Biblioteca Siciliana, 1918).

³Cautela, p. 110.

⁴Salmaggi interview.

⁵"Per un Teatro Italiano," loc. cit.

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spinosa dell'arte: non e' stato l'idolo d'un momento e non e'
passato mai di moda!¹

An air of schizophrenia surrounds the memory of Giovanni De Rosalia. On the one hand he was an educated, intelligent teacher, actor, writer and director who appreciated the classic theatre of Italy and Shakespeare. But he was forced, on the other hand, to perform as a clown, in order to survive in the theatre and because of his limited financial and critical success in the dramatic arena. When he acted Nofrio, didn't he really want to be doing Othello, his favorite role and the dramatic role with which most later commentators associate him? He seems to have been pulled in two directions. As such he was a lesser Maiori and his Nofrio, a lesser Farfariello. Giovanni De Rosalia died in February 1935.²

La Compagnia Napoletana di Canto e Prosa G. Camerlingo

The impresario Gennaro Camerlingo is remembered for his activities as director, actor, playwright and macchietista. His output during our time frame is small, since it begins rather late, but ample for the amount of time involved. The Il Progresso journalist, Italo Falbo,

¹"Nofrio' in Art

At the forefront of a multitude of comedians, Giovanni De Rosalia is the only one who exhibits something striking and distinct: original appearance, powerful and harmonious voice, and an artistic nature all his own.

A goodnatured person, but precisely poised, he has advanced himself little by little, without posturing and without pretensions, overcoming a great difficulty, the greatest that is encountered on the thorny path of art: he was not the idol of a moment and he never passed out of style!" Lanza, p. 13.

²Various clippings, Sisca Collection, Folder 16.

associated him with the Caffè Concerto Pennachio, which existed under that title between April 1900 and February of 1901. But these dates appear to be a bit too early as a record of Camerlingo's work for two reasons. First, there is a large gap between 1901 and Monday, July 25, 1904, which is the first recorded event in Camerlingo's career. On that night he played the role of Pasquale in Cordiferro's L'Onore Perduto produced by Silvio Minciotti at the Villa Venezia. Mrs. Camerlingo played the role of the mother, Teresa.¹ It is difficult to believe that none of his appearances were recorded anywhere in our sources, had he been active during this three-or four-year period.

Secondly, Falbo had the habit of freely associating the Caffè Pennachio with the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III, the name by which the caffè was known after Pennachio sold it to Aniello Nappo. Since Gennaro Camerlingo was the first impresario/director connected with the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III, it is possible that Falbo incorrectly remembered him during the earlier period at the Caffè Pennachio. In the meantime, Pennachio had bought another bar further downtown at 75 Mulberry Street by December 30, 1903.²

Gennaro Camerlingo and his company inaugurated the grand opening of the Villa Penza on Thanksgiving Day, November 24, 1904.³ Until at least Monday, February 6, 1905, he remained at the Villa as director and macchiettista, as well as playwright.⁴ Il Telegrafo noted that circa

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 206 (July 24, 1904), p. 3; and clippings, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 364 (December 30, 1903), p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 329 (November 24, 1904), p. 2.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 333 (November 28, 1904), p. 3 to Anno V, N. 34 (February 3, 1905), p. 3.

January 9, 1905, several reporters from American newspapers had attended the vocal concert at the Villa and had written several columns about it in their journals.¹

For a brief period Camerlingo's name disappears from the record until Monday, May 8, 1905 when he appeared as macchiettista in the notices for the Villa Penza.² Although the group in residence there was known simply as "La Compagnia," Camerlingo was not billed as director, nor did any of his former company members make the move with him to the new location. The last date we have for his appearances at the Villa Penza, or for that matter, any other company in this history during this time period, is for Sunday, July 30, 1905.³ So it appears that Camerlingo was a paid solo performer during his stay at the Villa Penza, while his tenure at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III engaged his full theatrical energies.

His financial arrangements at either caffè are unknown although a number of benefits went to company members at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III, among them: A. Celenza and P. Guglielmo on Thursday, December 29, 1904;⁴ Mr. Satriano on Wednesday, January 11, 1905;⁵ Raffaele Solla on Thursday, January 19, 1905;⁶ and the Mele couple on Monday, January 30, 1905.⁷

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 16 (January 16, 1905), p. 3.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 125 (May 6, 1905), p. 3.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 210 (July 30, 1905), p. 3.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 363 (December 29, 1904), p. 3.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 11 (January 11, 1905), p. 3.

⁶ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 19 (January 19, 1905), p. 3.

⁷ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 30 (January 30, 1905), p. 3.

Gennaro Camerlingo was the sole director with his own troupe. Other company members not already mentioned included: the vocalists, the Cardarelli brothers, Giuseppe and Gennarino, the baritone Giovanni Parisotti, Mrs. Maria d'Ischia, Michele Grimaldi, Romolo Smuraglia and Rosina Criscuolo; the baritone Emilio Scotti joined in Italian and Neapolitan duets with Mrs. Teresina Gioia, while Mrs. Margherita Rua frequently teamed with Marcellino Mele in duets; Francesco Roma, known as "Sarchiapone," sang English songs while the macchietista Eduardo Migliaccio sang his original creations. As a matter of fact, Farfariello's debut at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III took place while Camerlingo was director there, on Saturday, December 31, 1904.¹ Migliaccio also starred in two original "brilliant" farces by Gennaro Camerlingo himself: Pascariello a nu Pic-Nic a Coney Island (Pascariello on a Picnic in Coney Island) on Saturday, January 14, 1905² and Pascariello Mbruglione (Pascariello the Swindler) on Monday, January 16, 1905.³ Other actors included the ubiquitous Mrs. Renata Brunorini, Miss Aimee Bernard and the elocutionist from Guglielmo Ricciardi's company, Professor Ettore Mainardi. With Camerlingo, Mainardi played the protagonists in Maledizione Paterna (A Father's Curse) on Monday, December 19, 1904;⁴ in La Morte Civile (Civil Death) on Thursday, January 5, 1905;⁵ and in Rocambole on Monday, February 6,

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 2 (January 2, 1905), p. 3.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 14 (January 14, 1905), p. 3.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 16 (January 16, 1905), p. 3.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 354 (December 19, 1904), p. 3.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 5 (January 5, 1905), p. 3.

1905.¹

The only musical directors associated with Camerlingo were Maestro Luigi Prisco and his orchestra and Maestro Cavaliere E. Sarmiento, who composed the music for the scene with words, 'A vendetta e' Nannina (Nannina's Revenge), written by the Italian-American playwright Mr. G. Cantalupo. Its premiere was Monday, January 30 through Thursday, February 2, 1905.²

In addition to the Pascariello comedies cited above, Camerlingo also wrote: Occhio di Dio (Eye of God) performed Saturday, December 10, 1904 and described as a spectacular drama in five acts;³ two untitled "brilliant" comedies performed Friday, December 23, 1904⁴ and Wednesday, January 18, 1905;⁵ La condanna di Bazzabu' (The condemned woman of Bazzabu') performed in November 1904 and described as a grand operetta;⁶ and an untitled "brilliant" farce performed Friday, January 13, 1905.⁷ The great number of untitled and anonymous plays in Camerlingo's repertory leads us to suspect that he may have written a great many plays which were never credited to him in the ads. The title Pascariello a Coney Island, ovvero 'O Pic Nic de Sciainature (Pascariello on Coney Island, or the Bees' Picnic) is undoubtedly an alternate title for the

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 34 (February 3, 1905), p. 3.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno V, Nos. 30 to 33 (January 30, 1905 to February 2, 1905), p. 3.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 345 (December 10, 1904), p. 3.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 358 (December 23, 1904), p. 2.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 18 (January 18, 1905), p. 3.

⁶ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 335 (November 30, 1904), p. 3.

⁷ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 13 (January 13, 1905), p. 3.

"brilliant" farce noted earlier and was produced by Pasquale Rapone at the Follie Drammatiche on Tuesday, September 6, 1904.¹

Besides Mr. G. Cantalupo, cited earlier, other Italian-American writers produced by Camerlingo included Eduardo Migliaccio, who wrote his own macchiette and the California playwright, Mario Scarpa, author of Caino ed Abile (Cain and Abel) in prologue and two acts, performed Saturday, December 31, 1904 and Monday, January 2, 1905.²

Foreign writers heard on the stage of the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III while Camerlingo directed were limited to Italians: Luigi Camoletti, Paolo Giacometti, Cavaliere Eduardo Scarpetta, Rev. Dr. C. Ugone and Francesco Mastriani.

Gennaro Camerlingo's contribution to Italian-American theatre history thus far is admittedly not overwhelming; however, he does operate late in this study. Also his work is notable in that he was the director/impresario of a famous bistro, the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III, on the night of its inauguration and, perhaps more importantly, on the night of Farfariello's debut. Gennaro Camerlingo was also a bona fide Italian-American playwright whose considerable literary output unfortunately has yet to be recovered from whatever forgotten cellar or attic now contains his personal papers. Camerlingo's activities beyond the years of this study remain to be ascertained.

La Compagnia Costantini-Vela

We can trace Francesco Vela's career on the Italian-American stage

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 251 (September 6, 1904), p. 2.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 2 (January 2, 1905), p. 3.

back to Tuesday, December 1, 1891 when he sang Neapolitan songs with the Circolo Semiserio Partenopeo in a benefit for the Italian Home and Hospital.¹ He most certainly enjoyed only amateur status at this point. By 1893 he was performing as an actor with the Maiori-Rapone troupe at the Germania Assembly Rooms on Monday evenings,² but they were also still amateur at that time. By Monday, March 12, 1900 he was acting with Guglielmo Ricciardi's Company, then still described as amateurs ("Dilettanti Filodrammatici"³ and "Bravi Dilettanti"⁴). The Ricciardi Company was still based in Brooklyn during this period but they also traveled to Manhattan. The first hint as to Francesco Vela's advancement to professional stature comes on Thursday, July 19, 1900, when, again with the Ricciardi Company, he performs in the Grand Opening performance for the Grand Eden in Italian Harlem.⁵

When Italy's King Umberto I was assassinated at Monza on Sunday, July 29, 1900 by Gaetano Besci, an anarchist from Paterson, New Jersey, it occasioned the writing and production of a number of plays on the subject. Francesco Vela teamed up with Maiori and Rapone and together they produced a series of performances of a four-act drama entitled L'Assassinio di Re Umberto (The Assassination of King Umberto). Two performances took place in New York: one, an evening before September 27, 1900 at the Teatro Italiano at 24 Spring Street; the other, on Monday, October 1, 1900 at the Manhattan Lyceum. Two more performances

¹Odell, V. XV, p. 109.

²Abbamonte, "Nella Colonia . . .," p. 5.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 42 (February 18, 1900), p. 17.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 53 (March 3, 1900), p. 8.

⁵L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 173 (July 21, 1900), p. 4.

were produced for New Jersey audiences; in Hoboken on Thursday, October 18 and in Newark on Monday, October 29, 1900.¹ These are the only notices of the existence of this particular dramatic version of the assassination of Umberto I. The anonymous author may very well have been American, considering the brief span of time between the actual assassination and the first production. There would not have been enough time for the play to have been written and produced in Italy, to have gained sufficient attention abroad and then been brought to America. Also, we venture to say even further that since Vela seems to have co-produced with Maiori and Rapone exclusively over the performances of this play, the drama might be of his own authorship. He is credited with several dramatic sketches and a comedy in this history.

By Sunday, February 10, 1901, the ads indicate that Vela was producing alone at the Teatro Italiano,² again. The notices do not mention Maiori although the theatre may still have been in his hands at the time. After a performance of one of his own comedies in Philadelphia in April 1901, a performance praised for its liveliness by a Dr. Calvi of that city, Vela was back again at the Teatro Italiano by Thursday, April 11.³

The next several notices reveal that Vela had left New York City for Providence, Rhode Island, where he had set up a school of drama, called La Scuola Drammatica Vela, and where he was producing amateur productions. On Labor Day, September 2, 1901, Vela directed Cristoforo

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 233 (September 26, 1900), p. 5 and N. 234 (September 27, 1900), p. 5.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 36 (February 10, 1901), p. 1.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 86 (April 10, 1901), p. 6.

Colombo (Christopher Columbus) in a benefit for the Italian Church of Providence. The show was not well received, according to the mysterious critic-correspondant, "G.R.," who reported the following reaction:

l'emozionante dramma di Giacometti Cristoforo Colombo . . . e' riuscito una vera porcheria, data la poca capacita' di chi si e' messo alla testa e si era spacciato per artista di cartello. Mrs. Pierina Antonazzi non ha potuto far sfoggio delle sue qualita' artistiche; ed i suoi filodrammatici, mancanti di una buona direzione, non hanno potuto far quella figura che forse se credevano e che si sentivano nel diritto di credere dopo tanto studio. . . . Certo la colonia . . . di applausi ha giudicato questo "artista" per quel che valeva, ed ha tirato un sospiro di sollievo, quando l'artista ha dichiarato che farebbe stop, (parole testuali) certa di non dover essere piu seccata per l'avvenire.

Considering that negative criticism of Italian-American theatrical efforts is rare, especially if those efforts were put forth for the benefit of the community, the above comments stand out all the more as an indictment of unsatisfactory work. Could it have been that Vela actually received some monetary compensation for his work in teaching the dramatic school and more was expected of him? It seems unusually harsh to condemn a director for working with amateurs and producing an amateur performance, specifically for the benefit of the local church, if he was not paid for his labors. Mrs. Pierina Antoniazza was praised, if not for the final result of her acting, certainly her efforts. She, though a New York City actress, often worked with amateur groups.

¹"The emotional drama by Giacometti, Christopher Columbus, . . . resulted in a real fiasco due to the poor ability of him who placed himself in charge and panned himself off as a famous artist. Mrs. Pierina Antonazzi was not able to show off her artistic qualities and his amateurs, lacking good direction, could not cut as good a figure as they believed and felt they should have after so much hard work. . . . Certainly the community . . . judged this 'artist' for what he was worth with their applause, and drew a great sigh of relief when the artist declared that he would stop, (actual words) certain not to be annoyed in the future." L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 215 (September 7, 1901), p. 2.

Another New York City actress, this one professional, Mrs. Renata Brunorini, acted in Francesco Vela's next production of La Statua di Carne (The Statue of Flesh) at the Providence Opera House on Tuesday, May 27, 1902. The rest of the company were amateurs from Providence.¹ No other notices fill the gap between these two productions, in New York or Providence. It is possible that Vela stayed in Rhode Island for the entire winter. His next production in mid-June of 1902 took place at Saint Jean Baptiste Hall in Fall River, Massachusetts, where, together with Mrs. Brunorini again, Ettore Scarlatti (a New York actor) and Riccardo Cordiferro assisting, L'Onore Perduto was played, again probably using some local amateurs. This time, however, the production was described as "Un altro trionfo di Riccardo Cordiferro"² (Another triumph by Riccardo Cordiferro). It is very possible that Cordiferro, as was his practice, had a hand in producing and/or directing his own play.

For the better part of a year, the record is silent on Francesco Vela until Monday, March 30, 1903 when he became partners with Enrico Costantini in a series of performances at the Drammatico Nazionale, 138 Bowery between Grand and Broome Streets. The joint enterprise, and from all indications a professional one, was called La Compagnia Costantini-Vela.³ The earliest note we have on Enrico Costantini regards his participation as an actor in a production at the Manhattan Lyceum on Tuesday, April 9, 1901. This appears to have been a professional show

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 136 (May 16, 1902), p. 2.

² "Un altro trionfo di Riccardo Cordiferro," La Follia, clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 90 (March 31, 1903), p. 1.

which served as a benefit for the actor, Mr. G. Ruggio, and involved other important actors and actresses, such as Mrs. Pierina Antoniazza, Mrs. Renata Brunorini, Salvatore Mechiorri, Giovanni Flecchia and Icilio Delicati.¹ For almost two years Costantini's name disappears from the record until his association with Francesco Vela.

During the period that the two men worked together, Costantini invariably directed the productions. Performances were given on a regular basis. We know this from the fact that the owner of the theatre notified L'Araldo that performances would be suspended during the Holy Week preceding Easter and would resume on Easter Sunday, April 12, 1903.² Giovanni De Rosalia debuted with the company on Tuesday, March 31, 1903 in the title role of Sandro il Siciliano (Sandro the Sicilian).³ Francesco Vela received a benefit on Thursday, April 23, 1903, the date which marks the end of the Costantini-Vela collaboration.⁴ At this point Costantini made a permanent move to Brooklyn's Italian American theatre arena. On Monday, April 6, 1903, when the company was still performing at the Teatro Italiano-Drammatico Nazionale in Manhattan,⁵ Costantini had directed a production of Cristoforo Colombo (Christopher Columbus) at Palace Hall, 89-93 Grand Street in Brooklyn.⁶ This coincided with the notice of the impending shutdown of the Drammatico Nazionale before Easter. Perhaps Costantini had decided

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno VIII, N. 84 (April 7, 1901), p. 5.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 97 (April 7, 1903), p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 90 (March 31, 1903), p. 1.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 113 (April 23, 1903), p. 3.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 94 (April 4, 1903), p. 2.

⁶ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 98 (April 8, 1903), p. 2.

to move his residence to Brooklyn and herein lies the reason for the shift of his theatrical energies to that borough. Francesco Vela, in the meantime, had ceased productions at the Drammatico Nazionale and his name does not resurface until September.

By April 29, 1903 Costantini received a benefit at the Teatro Alfieri, 55 Union Street, Brooklyn. De Rosalia and Mrs. Brunorini were performing with him.¹ For the next production directed by Costantini, on Wednesday, May 27, 1903, again at Palace Hall, the group was called La Compagnia D. Roma,² the only time this company name appears in this history. At some unknown point after this date, he rented the Teatro Alfieri, renamed it the Teatro Regina Margherita, after Italy's queen mother, and resumed regular productions on what appears to be a professional basis. One night before Thursday, February 11, 1904 the Teatro Margherita was damaged by fire and performances had to be suspended, but they resumed in a few days,³ thus indicating that Costantini was performing regularly by this date. The last performance in 1905 took place Tuesday, November 28, a benefit for Mrs. Maria d'Ischia.⁴ Costantini stayed at the Teatro Margherita for many years after the scope of this study. Rocco De Russo was hired for several engagements over the years by Costantini; De Russo remembers that only about 1920 did Costantini move to another theatre in Brooklyn, close by the Teatro Margherita.⁵ As the record shows, Costantini enjoyed a long and steady theatrical

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 119 (April 29, 1903), p. 2.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 143 (May 23, 1903), p. 1.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 42 (February 11, 1904), p. 2.

⁴ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 326 (November 24, 1905). p. 2.

⁵ De Russo, p. 63.

career in Brooklyn. In this he was assisted by his wife, Concetta Filauri Costantini.

Vela, on the other hand, all but disappears. Except for two performances as an actor with Pasquale Rapone's company, on Saturday, September 3, 1904 for the inauguration of the Follie Drammatiche,¹ and on Saturday, October 22, 1904,² Vela fails to resurface in New York City. Our last note on him is an appearance with the company of Mimi Imperato in Philadelphia on September 17, 1906. He was described as an actor from Philadelphia which would indicate that he had moved there permanently.³

During the period of their activity, whether alone or in concert, Vela and Costantini used no other outside directors, but invariably directed their own shows. The only maestri associated with them were Alberto Rosati and Prof. P. Mercogliano. Regarding Vela's direction, we have already heard opinions pro and con.

Icilio Delicati, a company actor whose story goes back as the 19th century Circolo Filodrammatico Italo-Americano, worked by day as the representative of the Hutwelker Provision Company, purveyor of fine sausage and provisions, located at 11 Broadway, Rooms 400 and 461, telephone 1263 Broad⁴ and at another location at the Wallabout Market, 110-112 West Avenue in Brooklyn.⁵ Delicati, together with Antonio

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 248 (September 3, 1904), p. 2.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 298 (October 23, 1904), p. 6.

³ La Voce del Popolo, clipping (September 1, 1906), Sisca Collection, Folder 99.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 55 (February 24, 1903), p. 4.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 325 (November 21, 1903), p. 3.

Ferrara and Mr. R. Iandosca, produced a benefit on Monday, May 25, 1903 for Miss Maria Prete, whose belongings had been destroyed in a fire at her home, 229 East 11 Street.¹

One actress with the company, Mrs. Luisa Franchi, originally of Rome, was described by the Il Telegrafo reporter as: "una vera artista italiana e non una serva camuffata da prim donna"² (a true Italian artist and not a maid disguised as a leading lady), a comment which assesses not only Mrs. Franchi's talents but those which may have been lacking in some of her contemporaries. Francesco Moracci, another performer, was a writer and the editor of the weekly newspaper La Liberta of Providence.³ Additional actors and actresses not already mentioned who belong to this company are included in Appendix III.

The plays staged by Vela and Costantini were overwhelmingly written by Italians -- Felice Cavalotti, Teobaldo Cicconi, Paolo Giacometti, Leopoldo Marengo and Ferdinando Martini, whose plays based on proverbs make him the Italian Alfred De Musset. The French were represented by Victorien Sardou. Italian-American playwrights were Riccardo Cordiferro, (L'Onore Perduto) and Francesco Vela, himself, who is credited with a spirited little comedy on a colonial topic, and other short comedies and sketches.

In conclusion, the record for this company may be slight, but it represents the start of Enrico Costantini's substantial professional enterprises that were an important part of the Italian-American theatre

¹Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 140 (May 20, 1903), p. 1; and L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 144 (May 24, 1903), p. 3.

²Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 93 -- this should be 91 -- (April 1, 1903), p. 1.

³"Un altro trionfo di Riccardo Cordiferro," loc. cit.

of Brooklyn.

Il Circolo Drammatico Musicale Letterario Gioventu' Italiana

Salvatore Abbamonte's theatrical career got off to a poor, haphazard start. His acting debut was an embarrassing fiasco. One might say that he came to acting by way of the back door. His intent was not so much to become an actor, but to become a playwright. In order to do this, he hoped to put himself into the good graces of a writer whom he admired very much -- Riccardo Cordiferro. When Abbamonte got wind of an evening of theatre planned as a benefit in honor of Cordiferro, he thought he had found a way to the writer's esteem. He would ask to participate in the benefit performance.¹

He began by seeking out Riccardo Cordiferro for an interview. He first tried to find him at his office at La Follia, then located on Mott Street. He encountered only the young printing press operator, then in the midst of printing up the flyers for the benefit, who explained that Cordiferro only visited the office once a week to edit the galleys. He assured Abbamonte, however, that he would find the writer at the Pompei Restaurant on Mulberry Street at about noon. Abbamonte recalls in his memoirs that the Pompei Restaurant was the only genteel and luxurious spot where you could eat well and economically. Immediately he decided to go there for dinner and was advised by the waiter that Cordiferro did not have a set time for coming to the restaurant but that he would probably be in soon enough. Abbamonte ate dinner, digested, lingered over cigarettes and finally the great Cordiferro arrived.²

¹ Abbamonte, "Nella Colonia . . .," p. 5.

² Ibid.

The dialogue that ensued between them has already been quoted verbatim in our treatment of Riccardo Cordiferro above but the meeting resulted in Abbamonte requesting and being granted the opportunity to recite Cordiferro's "Ode to Jacopo Paolini" at the anticipated benefit. The actor, Jacopo Paolini, recently arrived from Italy, would also perform. Rehearsal was set for that evening at Cordiferro's home. Before Abbamonte left the restaurant, Cordiferro made sure to give him a goodly number of tickets to sell among his friends. Abbamonte was ecstatic:

Nulla gli avevo detto del mio dramma, poiche' non entravo piu' nei miei panni al pensiero del debutto ed ero sicuro che il mio successo¹ mi avrebbe messo in ottimi rapporti col tanto temuto critico.

Sure of his eventual success, Abbamonte learned the ode by heart that afternoon, and rehearsed alone on the roof of his house, where, unobserved, he could practice his declamatory style and gestures and give vent to his full artistic expression, while he fantasized about the many flowers and the long applause his audience would bestow on him. Enthusiastically, he set out to Cordiferro's home for the appointed rehearsal.²

Among the actors at the rehearsal that night were Papa Giuseppe Zacconi, Mrs. Giuseppina Menghini-Neigre, Jacopo Paolini. After these actors had rehearsed, said goodnight and left, Abbamonte remained behind to speak to Cordiferro about his own rehearsal. The writer explained that rehearsal was unnecessary if Abbamonte knew the verses by heart, to

¹"I said nothing to him about my play because I was jumping out of my pants at the thought of the debut and I was sure that my success would earn me the good opinion of the formidable critic." Ibid.

²Ibid.

which he promptly agreed. Then Cordiferro inquired about the tickets he had given him earlier and the young actor assured him that he could, without a doubt, count on the tickets being sold. In this last statement, Abbamonte reminisces, Cordiferro saw dollar signs, while Abbamonte dreamed of glory.¹

The benefit took place Thursday, September 24, 1896 and premiered Cordiferro's one-act satirical comedy in martellian verse, Dio Dollaro (Mammon), with Zacconi, Mrs. Neigre and others. Jacopo Paolini recited Cordiferro's monologue, Per la Patria. A macchiettista performed songs, and other well-known singers and comedians from the community donated their talents for Cordiferro's benefit that evening. The hall at the Germania Assembly Rooms was packed.²

Abbamonte had arrived backstage early that evening, when the theatre was still dark. He sat through the show backstage, impatient for his turn to perform, but whenever he tried to ask the stage manager, Ciccillo Miele, about going on, the man avoided him. Miele worked with Cordiferro at La Follia as a journalist and edited the column, "La Cronaca del Vero e del Falso." As the audience applauded the macchiettista then onstage, Abbamonte had serious doubts as to whether he would even get the chance to recite the famous ode which whirled repeatedly around in his brain. Then he saw Cordiferro himself and promptly turned over the receipts from the sale of tickets entrusted to him earlier. Cordiferro thanked the young actor and then reminded Paolini of Abbamonte's debut. Paolini listened to him recite a few verses of the ode and was in the process of flattering him. What

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.; and Cordiferro bibliography, Sisca Collection, Folder 1.

happened next is best related in Abbamonte's own words:

Nel frattempo la voce di Miele mi annunciava:
 -- Fuori scena. . . . Tocca a lei. . . . Su il sipario. . . .
 E prima che avessi ripreso il respiro, mi trovai dinanzi il
 pubblico e mi sembro' di precipitare in una voragine.
 Dovevo cominciare cosi':

"Jacopo mio, quando la notte avvolge
 in un triste silenzio uomini e cose;
 quando del mondo le viltà inaudite
 e le miserie sue nasconde il buio. . ."

e invece rimasi muto, la' impalato, senza poter articolare
 parola.

Da dietro le quinte mi s'incitava ad alzare la voce, dalla
 platea si confondevano applausi e fischi. -- Poi un silenzio
 aspettante la mia parola. Indi un tumulto che mi insordiva. . . .
 In quell'istante il poeta si presento' alla ribalta urlando:
 -- Chiedo venia per la presunzione di questo imbecille!
 E tra il pandemonio calo' il sipario.
 Ma perche' il palco non si sprofondo' per inghiottirmi?
 Mi retrassi, sgattaiolando per una porticina segreta che
 trovai a portata di mano dietro al palcoscenio.
 E vagai sperduto, col cuore infranto.

As heartbroken as this incident left him, Abbamonte was not discouraged
 by his poor first showing.

This was a time when "gruppi di dilettanti smaniosi spuntavano

¹"In the meantime the voice of Miele announced to me:
 -- Get onstage. . . . It's your turn. . . . Open the curtain. . . .
 And before I could catch my breath, I found myself in front of
 the audience and I felt like I was falling into a ditch.
 I was supposed to begin by saying:
 'My Jacopo, when the night envelops men and things in a sad silence;
 when the unheard-of villainies of the world are hidden by the darkness. .
 .' and instead I stood there mute and rooted to the spot, unable to say
 a word.

From the wings they urged me to raise my voice, in the audience
 whistles mingled with the applause. -- Then a silence awaited my words.
 Then a deafening riot. . . .

At that moment the poet came onstage shouting:
 -- I beg you pardon for the presumption of this imbecile.
 And amidst the pandemonium the curtain fell.
 But why didn't the stage open up and swallow me?
 I retreated like a cat through a secret little door that was
 handy backstage.

And with a broken heart, I wandered around like I was lost."
 Abbamonte, "Nella Colonia . . .," p. 5.

come funghi"¹ (groups of eager amateurs sprouted like mushrooms). Abbamonte, too, was quickly consumed by this "filodrammaticomania" (amateur acting mania) and fortunately he has put into words the emotions and state of mind of these early Italian-American actors of the late 19th century:

Sentivo maggiormente accendersi il fuoco delle mie insite ambizioni....

Desideravo, anzi, fermamente volevo, una rivincita alla mia prima disillusione. Associarmi ai filodrammatici non era cosa. Mi reputavo superiore ad essi in abilita' e non avrei accettato di recitare una parte mediocre. Ma chi mi avrebbe dato agio di calcare le scene quale primo attore, anche se avessi dimostrato delle ottime intenzioni?²

Ever since the night when he had suffered the acute of stagefright, he remembered the impression left on him by Paolini's stirring recitation of Cordiferro's Per la Patria, and was certain that he too could perform the stirring monologue in the manner of Paolini. Per la Patria had been published in La Follia, Abbamonte's favorite newspaper, and he learned the many verses of the piece by heart, rehearsing it often from the balcony of his building, as he had earlier practiced the ill-fated ode on the roof. A persistent high regard for the writer Cordiferro motivated Abbamonte's ambition as well:

Forse per la troppo ammirazione che nutrivo per l'Autore (nonostante egli me avesse trattato poco gentilmente sulla ribalta della Germania Assembly Room, in quella sera fatale), assorbivo plasmando nella sua psiche patetica il personaggio.

Sicuro del successo, questa volta, attesi con impazienza

¹Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," p. 9.

²"I felt the fire of my innate ambitions burning more strongly within me....

I wanted, rather, I really desired, to vindicate my first disappointment. To join the amateur groups was nothing. I considered myself superior to them in ability and I would not have agreed to play a minor role. But who would have given me a job as a leading man on the stage, even if I had shown my best intentions?" Abbamonte, "Nei Primordi . . .," p. 5.

l'opportunita' di ripresentarmi al pubblico. E la speranza non fu delusa, . . .

Notice how Abbamonte's feeling for Cordiferro leads him to capitalize "Autore," for it was not only the great writer's poetry and dramatic writings that the actor admired; it was also his liberal views, his leftist politics. In those times, groups of intellectuals and revolutionaries would organize "serate di propaganda sociale"² (evenings of social propaganda), which included lectures, speeches, singing of revolutionary songs and the reciting of poetry or monologues or plays with liberal sentiments. Flyers advertising such events were distributed in Little Italy.

On just such "serata rossa" (red evening), held at the Germania Assembly Rooms, Abbamonte seized his chance. He approached the company of actors with an unexpected request. Still heady from the enthusiastic response to their production of Pietro Gori's Senza Patria, and considering Abbamonte a brother who might be useful in their propaganda, the actors consented to his performance of the stirring monologue:

In un baleno mi tolsi la giacca, il panciotto, il coiletto, la cravatta, ed apparvi in camicia nera che avevo indossato a casa. Attesi qualche istante che mi preparassero la scena: una squallida stanza in soffitta, con un piccolo tavolo ed una sedia.

Si alzo' il sipario in un silenzio incoraggiante, che mi tenne padrone di me stesso, a far scaturire dall'anima in una orale bellezza, lo schianto d'un ribelle. Man mano che mi accaloravo, mantenni l'uditorio in una tensione suggestiva, fino a trasformarsi in tumulto di applausi.

¹"Perhaps because of the excess admiration I felt for the Author (even if he had treated me unkindly at the Germania Assembly Room, on that fatal night), I absorbed the character, molding his pathetic psyche.

Sure of my success, this time, I impatiently awaited the opportunity to appear before an audience. My hope was not in vain." Ibid.

²Ibid.

Ed al gesto furibondo del giovane ribelle il pubblico non si stancava di applaudire e si ripeterono ancora piu insistenti i battimani alla chiusura

Fui molte volte evocato agli onori del proscenio. Si ripetevano le chiamate all'Autore. Ma egli nemmeno sognava che "la presunzione di quell'imbecille" gli avesse suscitato cotanto clamore. I "compagni" si congratularono meco del contributo artistico rispecchiante le loro idee. Avevo insomma trionfato sullo stesso palcoscenico dove, assalito del panico, avevo provata la piu' amara disillusione della mia vita. E quella sera uscii attraverso la folla plaudente, come un eroe in trionfo.¹

This is how Abbamonte remembered his first acting success, some forty odd years after the fact. The reviewer for La Questione Sociale, a subversive weekly then published in Paterson, New Jersey, reported incorrectly that Cordiferro himself had recited his own social monologue. Reading this, Cordiferro set the record straight in an article in La Follia but was unable to give the name of the actual performer because Abbamonte himself kept it secret for the mysterious reason: "per farlo rifulgere a maggiore conquiste"² (to make it shine over greater conquests).

¹"Like lightening I took off my jacket, vest, collar, tie, and appeared in a black shirt I had put on at home. I waited a few minutes so they could set the scene: a desolate room in an attic with an little table and a chair.

The curtain rose on an encouraging silence, which kept me master of myself, so that I could pour forth from my soul in a beautiful voice, the anguish of a rebel. As I got warmed up, I kept the audience tensely excited, until I transformed them into a storm of applause.

And at the figure of the raving young rebel the audience never tired of applauding and they repeated their handclapping even more insistently at the end

I was honored with many curtain calls. There were repeated calls for the Author. But he couldn't even have dreamed that 'the presumption of this imbecile' would have raised such a furor. The 'comrades' congratulated me on an artistic contribution that reflected their ideas. I had finally triumphed on the same stage where, panic-stricken, I had experienced the most bitter disappointment of my life. And that night I went out into the applauding crowd, like a hero in triumph." Ibid.

²Ibid.

What were these "greater conquests" alluded to by Abbamonte? Although his enterprises always appeared to be on an amateur basis, his theatrical energies for the remainder of this period were focused on acting, directing and playwriting. The recitation of Per La Patria had established him, at least in his own mind, as an actor. His next step was to become a director and form his own amateur company:

D'allora, piu' che la mania di scrivere drammi, la febbre per il palcoscenico mi teneva acceso. Ogni dramma che leggevo mi dava l'impulso di poterne essere il protagonista. Fra i tanti d'indole sociale, (poiche' sentivo di essere diventato anch'io un ribelle) scelsi ed accarezzai l'idea di presentarmi in un lavoro in quattro atti "La leva militare" di Luigi Grazioli.

Abbamonte was unsure as to how to go about forming a new company. He decided not to approach the already established amateur theatre clubs because he felt they would think him too bold or become jealous of his undertaking. Instead he searched for new volunteers. A friend introduced him to Giacomo Caiati, a performer who had just recently arrived from Naples. Then he got to know Luigi Menna from Francesco Ricciardi's company. He met other dedicated amateurs: Mr. Del Cioppo, Mr. Bilotti and Roberto Anselmi. Anselmi had had experience with many other companies. He cast Vito Cifaldi, another experienced amateur, as the noble father. Cifaldi, in turn, found a distinguished retired singer to play the noble mother. Finally, Abbamonte cast as leading lady, Miss Maria Prete, the Eleanora Duse of the Italian-American theatre. Abbamonte, of

¹"After that, more than the mania for writing plays, the fever for the stage kept me aflame. Every drama that I read gave me the incentive to be its protagonist. Among the many plays with social themes, (because I also seemed to have become a revolutionary) I chose and nourished the idea of presenting myself in a work of four acts 'The military conscription' by Luigi Grazioli." Ibid.

course, would play the leading role of Giorgio Argenti.¹

With his supporting cast now assured, Abbamonte set about to begin rehearsals and set the date for the opening production of the new group, which was called at this early stage, "Il Circolo Gioventu Italica." With great enthusiasm, he began directing rehearsals in a hall on Mott Street. Posters with Abbamonte's picture and his name in large letters appeared in the stores of Little Italy and announced the show. According to Abbamonte, people fought to buy tickets. The entire membership of the new drama club numbered over thirty and its express purpose was to cultivate dramatic art and music among the immigrant population. The noble scope of the organization received the approbation of the community and the press.²

The first production took place on Saturday, February 24, 1900 at the Manhattan Lyceum. To enrich the program and attract a wider audience, Abbamonte recruited more artistic volunteers: Mauro Zaccardi, a young mandolinist, brought with him a troupe of his students for a musical concert; some singers of Bel Canto were accompanied on the piano by Maestro Gaetano Merola, who had just recently arrived from his town of San Pietro a Majella near Naples; students of Prof. Pavese performed a special fencing demonstration. The enthusiastic crowd, which filled the theatre to capacity, then anxiously awaited the performance of the drama. Abbamonte reports that the show was a tremendous success and that the amateur actors were "superiori all'aspettativa"³ (superior to all expectations). Abbamonte, who had created the role of the

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

protagonist "col sentimento ideale in cui si pasceva l'anima mia"¹ (with the ideal sentiment which filled my soul), received curtain calls, floral tributes and ovations at the end of each act, as is done in opera. After the drama, an orchestra played for the ball that followed.

Backstage and in his dressing room, Abbamonte found himself the center of attention. A crowd of admirers fought to shake his hand:

Ma io ero emozionato, avevo davvero la febbre, appena mi reggevo l'estro felice dell'arduo cimento, mi teneva in orgasmo e a tutti, istupidito,olgevo uno sguardo ed un enigmatico sorriso di generosa compiacenza.

Poi, rinfrancatomi e svestitomi da attore, attraversai la sala, per recarmi nel palco della mia famiglia, e fui salutato da una salve di fragorosi applausi.

Accanto alla mamma che trovai commossa, frenavo a stento le mie lagrime di gioia.

* * *

Divenni² così "qualcosa" anch'io nell' agone artistico coloniale.

Encouraged by this success, Abbamonte soon went to work to enlarge the ranks of Il Circolo Gioventù Italiana, as it was now called. After several meetings the membership grew to fifty and included some distinguished personalities: the actor and journalist Salvatore Melchiorri, who presided over the Dramatic Section; the actor Mariano Domenici, the Salerno brothers; Camillo Carelli, the publisher of La

¹ Ibid.

² "But I was overcome with emotion, I really had a fever, I was barely able to stand the happy inspiration of the arduous experience, I was in ecstasy and I looked at everyone stupidly, with an enigmatic smile of complete satisfaction.

Then refreshed and out of my costume, I crossed the hall, to join my family's box and I was greeted by a volley of loud applause.

By the side of my mother whom I found emotional, I was barely able to hold back my tears of joy.

* * *

In this way, I too became 'a name' in the artistic arena of Little Italy." Ibid.

Gazzetta Coloniale of Jersey City; Roberto Merlo, Desiderio Pilla, Vincenzo Paccone, Nicola Paolella (a young writer and poet who had just recently come from Italy) and other theatre lovers of the Italian colony of the period. The expressed purpose of the organization was to serve as "una istituzione veramente seria, di coltura e propaganda d'italianita' all'estero, oltre lo scopo del diletto."¹ (a truly serious institution for culture and the propagation of Italianism overseas, as well as for the purpose of entertainment). Riccardo Cordiferro, although he did not belong to the organization, was in full agreement with its ideals and became good friends with Abbamonte.

Abbamonte too, for love of the stage, had become a revolutionary. He attended political meetings held by two inseparable subversive propagandists, Mr. Canio and Mr. Radici, in a new theatre space which had appeared in a hall behind Mr. F. Bianchi's Bar in West Hoboken, New Jersey. Here they raised the flaming revolutionary banner. Luigi Zampone of New York had formed a small family theatre company consisting of his wife and his two intelligent daughters Maria and Antonietta. The company joined with Radici and Canio in producing the socialist plays of Felice Cavallotti and Pietro Gori. Zampone invited Abbamonte to recite his tour de force, Per la Patria by Cordiferro, and he also did the dramatic monologue Il Pezzente. For these performances, Abbamonte recalls that he raised a furor and had many ovations. Achille Fazio, also of New York, performed Pulcinella farces and there were recitations and vocal concerts. After the performances, everyone would dance, drink Barbera wine and sing revolutionary songs such as "Bandiera Rossa" (Red Flag) and "L'inno dei Lavoratori" (The Workers' hymn). Bianchi, happy

¹ Ibid.

with the extra business these "red" evenings procured, gave the company free dinner, "che maggiormente c'infiammava lo spirito, facendoci inneggiare esultanti alla prossima resurrezione del genere umano. . ."¹ The company, insensitive to the cold, slightly high, and feeling as if they had been crowned with laurels, would return to the city on the ferry. The Zampone actresses, also inspired by the socialist cause, kept the company in lively spirits, but they would make fun of the actors who tried to court them. Because of Abbamonte's zeal, Riccardo Cordiferro wrote a poem to Abbamonte, urging him on to greater struggles.² It has been quoted above in the discussion on Cordiferro.

The Zampone girls also performed in the next recorded production of *Il Circolo Gioventu Italiana* at the Manhattan Lyceum on Tuesday, October 15, 1901.³ At a meeting of the group on Sunday, June 1, 1902, the company now called itself *Il Circolo Drammatico Musicale Letterario Gioventu' Italiana*. The meeting was held at 131 Thompson Street and decided on a membership drive, financed by an increase in the dues from one to three dollars. Inquiries could be sent to the club's founder, Abbamonte, at his residence at 176 Thompson Street.⁴ This is the last notice we have of this group in Manhattan, probably because the group split up after this time because of continuous friction and jealousies. The Dramatic Section could not agree as to the choice of plays to be presented, according to Abbamonte, because the Salerno brothers had

¹"which greatly enflamed our spirits, causing us to celebrate exultantly the approaching insurrection of the masses." Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," p. 9.

²Ibid.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 250 (October 16, 1901), p. 2.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 155 (June 4, 1902), p. 2.

created their own clique within the group so that they could star in the leading roles. Abbamonte's next actions as president led to the group's final dissolution, at least in New York City. He postponed all meetings indefinitely; then, when he thought it opportune, he convened a special meeting of the membership in the hall of the Hotel Silvestri on Bleecker Street.¹

One of the tasks of the Circolo was to produce a literary review, entitled appropriately Gioventu Italiana, edited by Abbamonte himself. In the course of preparing the material for the journal, he had written a play, Per l'Amore (For Love) which he hoped would please the tastes of those who were fighting for control of the Circolo. To disguise his own authorship and avoid further jealousy in the group, he affixed to it the pseudonym, Nunzio Noemi. He had called the special meeting to propose to the membership that a committee be formed to evaluate the play for production. Somehow the plan was thwarted. Abbamonte does not explain exactly how but it is very likely that his authorship was apparent despite the non de plume, because shortly after, Riccardo Cordiferro wrote a clever article in La Follia, humorously revealing the author's true name. Abbamonte was highly offended, and to distract himself from the incident, left the city for some time. When he returned, "la barca del Circolo, senza nocchiero, era naufragata. Ma piu' salde erano le mie energie per altre battaglie."²

Where he went, Abbamonte does not specify, but it was most probably New Jersey, for that state is the scene of most of his

¹Abbamonte, "Nei Primondi . . . ," p. 5.

²"the ship of the Club, without a navigator, had gone down. But even stronger were my energies for other battles." Ibid.

subsequent theatrical activity. Although the group had dissolved, he was still anxious to continue his work in the theatre:

Il teatro era la mia passione, il mio tormento. Nelle notti insonni, la visione del palcoscenico mi appariva radiosa, come un faro fosforescente. E l'ardore mi spronava a ritentare il cimento.

Maggiormente sentivo lo stimolo, per il cruccio di vedermi isolato da coloro istessi che meco avevo presentato agli onori del proscenio.¹

Still stagestruck, and envious of the amateur groups that proliferated around him, Abbamonte asked himself: "Potevo io, dunque starmene inosservato, nel cruccio e la vanita', a frenare le ali infuocate dell'anima verso l'orizzonte che mi affascinava?"² The answer, of course, to this rhetorical question was no.

In the meantime, Abbamonte learned that vestiges of the "ship" of the Circolo that he thought had gone down, were still afloat. In Jersey City, New Jersey, a member of Abbamonte's group had continued to work towards its ideals. Camillo Carelli, publisher of La Gazzetta Nazionale of Jersey City, had established another amateur theatre group and had even retained most of the original name -- Il Circolo Giovani Italiani. Carelli invited Abbamonte to join the group and, of course, he accepted: "Ivi, . . . cercai di consolidare il mio schietto entusiasmo, tendente al connubio delle ambizioni artistiche."³ So Abbamonte found another

¹"The theatre was my passion, my torment. In sleepless nights, the radiant vision of the stage appeared to me like a phosphorescent lamp. And my ardor spurred me on to attempt the risk again.

I was greatly stimulated by the sorrow of seeing myself isolated from the very people that I myself had introduced to the honors of the stage." Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," p. 9.

²"Could I then continue to hide behind my anger and my vanity, could I deprive the excited wings of my soul of the horizons which fascinated me?" Ibid.

³"Here, . . . I attempted to strengthen my genuine enthusiasm, to consolidate my artistic ambitions." Ibid.

outlet for his theatrical energies. Members of the Circolo included some distinguished names in the Italian community of Jersey City: Dr. Pezze', and the bankers, Giuseppe Cupparo and Mr. Campana. The dramatic section claimed Mr. Donzelli, Ascanio De Rosa, Mr. Amoroso, Vladimiro Scerbo and Antonio Cracovia. Abbamonte claimed that jealousy on the part of some of the members was an obstacle he was able to overcome. The first production Abbamonte participated in was directed by Carelli and served as a benefit for his newspaper. Regarding his performance, Abbamonte says lightly: "E se mi distinsi lo lascio immaginare."¹ (And if I distinguished myself, I'll leave to the imagination.)

The next production on record for this club unfolded Thursday, November 26, 1903 at National Hall, on Sixth Street in Jersey City. They called themselves "Il Circolo dei giovani studiosi Italiani" for a production of Carlo Roti's I due Sergenti (The two Seargents), directed by Carelli² and starring Salvatore Abbamonte as Roberto and Maria Prete of New York in the female lead. In the role of Guglielmo, Carelli had cast an inexperienced young actor. Abbamonte describes an incident that took place onstage during the performance of this drama. It reveals how far he had come as an actor; no longer the stagefrightened young novice, he now sounds like a veteran of the stage, as he refers to the "green" actor:

il quale credeva che con la parta imparata a memoria potesse superare l'arduo cimento. Pero', nonostante la sua buona predisposizione e gli sforzi dell'attrice Maria Prete, invece di progredire, tremava con i nervi e con la voce. E quando, nella scena finale, apparve al cancello, pallido e immoto, lo credetti addirittura smarrito. In un lampo, accorsi in suo aiuto e, presolo di peso sulle braccia, avanzai sul proscenio

¹ Ibid.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 333 (November 19, 1903), p. 3.

gridando: "Guglielmo e' tornato! E' questo il trionfo della vera amicizia!" Il pubblico scoppio' in applausi, chiamandomi ripetute volte alla ribalta. Ma diestro le quinte, l'attore sconfitto insolenti contro di me, asserendo che gli avevo rubato gli applausi. E per poco non ci sfidammo. . .

Abbamonte must have played the above-noted role of Roberto in I Due Sergenti for more than the few appearances on record, for his virtuosity in the role seems to have been a well-established fact. This fact is illustrated by the following incident, which occurred several nights after the November 26th performance in Jersey City.

On this particular evening, Abbamonte was unexpectedly visited at his home in Manhattan by Antonio Tua, "quel marracchione" (that joker), free lance prompter, social dramatist, costumer, propagandizer of liberal ideas and director of his own company. Without explaining a word, Tua insisted that Abbamonte follow him to Brooklyn immediately; the matter was of great urgency. Tua gave no answers to any of Abbamonte's questions until they had reached the stage of a theatre in Brooklyn. Then Tua announced that he desperately needed him to play the role of Roberto in that evening's production of I Due Sergenti in order to save him from artistic disaster. Despite Abbamonte's objections and with the aid of the prompter, Abbamonte was conscripted into the role. Flattering compliments from Tua and the other members of the company

¹"He thought that by learning the part by heart he could accomplish the difficult task. However, despite his good intentions and the efforts of the actress, Maria Prete, instead of improving, his nerves and his voice shook. And when, in the final scene, he appeared at the gate, pale and stiff, I thought he really was lost. In a flash I went to his aid and, taking the burden on my shoulders, I went onstage shouting: 'Guglielmo has returned! This is the triumph of true friendship!' The audience burst into applause, repeatedly calling me for curtain calls. But in the wings, the actor hurled insults at me, claiming that I had stolen the applause from him. And we almost challenged one another to a duel. . ." Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," p. 9.

also helped, we are sure.¹

Abbamonte's theatrical activity for the following year is uncertain. He is absent from New York City notices and he was not listed in the organization in any official capacity when *Il Circolo dei Giovani Studiosi* published its list of officers in January of 1904. At the time, Giulio di Lallo was named as director and the other officers as follows: Camillo Carelli, President; Giuseppe Cupparo, Vice-President; Vladimiro Scerbo, Corresponding Secretary; Vincenzo Marrese, Financial Secretary; Giovanni Antonio d'Elisa, Treasurer; Michelangelo Leone, Inspector; and Enrico Amoro, Councillor.² However, since theatrical notices for this group are also lacking for the time period, it is possible that Abbamonte participated as an actor or director in a freelance capacity.

Abbamonte's name finally reappeared on Monday, October 24, 1904, directing Giacometti's Cristoforo Colombo in Morrow's Hall in Asbury Park, New Jersey.³ All recorded subsequent activity for Abbamonte or his group took place at either this location, or Holy Rosary Hall, Jersey City, or the Lyceum, in Long Branch. Throughout, the company had amateur status. They also performed benefits, such as the performance of Monday, March 6, 1905 which utilized the talents of Pasquale Rapone and other New York City actors, as well as amateur actors from the company there in Jersey City. The proceeds of \$25.00 went to benefit the Holy Rosary Church, which had been transformed into a theatre for

¹ Ibid.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 8 (January 8, 1904), p. 3.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 298 (October 23, 1904), p. 3.

the evening by the parish priest, Rev. Vincenzo Sciolla.¹

For the performance of Monday, October 23, 1905, Riccardo Cordiferro himself was present and delivered a discourse "pro" Calabria. Since Calabria was the scene of a recent earthquake, the speech and show that night were obviously intended to benefit that city.² The next performance, and the last on record for 1905, took place Monday, October 30 and served as a dual benefit for the Calabrian earthquake victims and the Italian Church in West Park, New Jersey. Directed by Abbamonte, the show included the Zampone sisters from New York City as well as amateurs from Asbury Park. A surprise gift rewarded the seller of the greatest number of tickets, which could be bought from the treasurer of the event, Beny Caruso or from the parish priest, Rev. Leone. In addition, a committee of hand picked young women visited the city's residents to distribute programs and sell tickets.³

Directors for the Circolo Giovani Italiani were limited to Salvatore Abbamonte, Camillo Carelli, Giulio di Lallo and quite possibly Riccardo Cordiferro and the Salerno brothers. Abbamonte, although distinctly an amateur, never reveals in the available memoirs, how he supported himself but his remark about his life, "forzata vita di lavoro"⁴ (life of penal servitude), suggests that he might have been a laborer. Carelli, we know, was a journalist and publisher, as was Cordiferro. Other company members can be found in Appendix III.

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 69 (March 10, 1905), p. 4.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 298 (October 27, 1905), p. 5.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 282 (October 10, 1905), p. 7; and N. 285 (October 13, 1905), p. 2.

⁴ Abbamonte, "Nella Colonia . . .," p. 5.

The maestri and professori with the company were Modestino Sessa, who lived at 560 Cookman Avenue in Asbury Park, New Jersey,¹ Gaetano Merola, Mauro Zaccardi and Prof. Masiello, who had arrived from Italy in 1905.

In keeping with the ideals of the Circolo Giovani Italiani, which were to propagate Italian culture in this country, the group performed the plays of only Italian or Italian-American playwrights. The Italians were Luigi Graziolo, Luigi Quartello, Paolo Giacometti, Cavaliere Eduardo Scarpetta, Vincenzo Bellagambi and Carlo Roti, adapting the French of D'Aubigny.

Works by Riccardo Cordiferro, either performed or staged by Abbamonte and/or his group were: the "Ode to Jacopo Paolini;" the monologue Per la Patria; the dramatic monologue Il Pezzente.

Salvatore Abbamonte also gained a reputation as a playwright. However, his playwriting career began as inauspiciously as did his acting career. His first theatrical impulse was for writing, not for acting or directing, and we are fortunate to have his own words to explain the various reasons that stimulated his desire to write:

Nella forzata vita di lavoro, non sapevo dar freno agli entusiasmi d'innata tendenza per l'arte. Sentivo il brivido incessante di emergere da quel mucchio di incolti che, non potevo evitare, e col quale mi vedevo per fatalita' a contatto.

Ed avevo issato sulle vette del pensiero un orifiamma che mi spronava alla lotta, che mi invitava a vincere. E trascinavo attraverso² roghi la mia vita, agli albori della giovinezza, per redimerla.

¹ Cordiferro address book, loc. cit.

² "In my life of penal servitude, I was unable to choke my enthusiasm and my innate leaning toward the arts. I felt the continuous urge to get away from that mass of uncultured people whom I could not avoid and in whose midst I found fate had put me.

And I had hoisted uppermost in my mind a banner that incited me

In other words, what Abbamonte means is that the call to art was so strong that he set himself a goal, and to achieve it, he went through "hell" (roghi means fires). We can also infer that he performed some kind of menial labor for a living and that art was an escape from his daily drudgery. His view of himself as an artist helped lift him from the common people with whom he either worked or lived. At this point Abbamonte began reading Cordiferro's writings in La Follia: "E fui preso dalla mania di imitarlo. Ma erano vani tentativi che me davano agio, se non altro, a pregustare, anche acerbi, i frutti del Parnasso."¹

So, inspired by Cordiferro, Abbamonte wished also to become a writer. Another incentive to write plays came from the late 19th century amateur theatre productions he attended. He noticed their popularity as well as their imperfections:

Del successo finanziario, autori e interpreti andarono superbi.
Ma la Arte, certo, dovette sentirsi non poco offesa.
Forse per questo mi venne il ticchio di tentare a scrivere
pel teatro,² anch'io. E divenni piu' audace, credendo di poterla
vendicare.

Abbamonte no doubt was influenced somewhat by Cordiferro's satirical pieces on the amateur groups of the period, which he enjoyed reading in La Follia.

These various stimuli succeeded in setting Abbamonte's mind to

to struggle, and that invited me to succeed. And then in the dawn of my youth, I dragged my life through fire to achieve it." Abbamonte, "Nella Colonia . . .," p. 5.

¹"And I was seized with the mania of imitating him. But these were useless attempts that gave me, if nothing else, a foretaste, even if unripe, of the fruits of Parnassus. . ." Ibid.

²"Of the financial success, authors and actors were proud. But Art, certainly, must have been offended greatly.

Perhaps because of this the desire to attempt writing for the theatre came even to me. And I became more daring, thinking that I could avenge Art." Ibid.

write a play, and he has left us a description of his methods:

Mi misi all'opera, ritentando di fare omaggio ad un defunto amico che mi aveva suggerito la tela di un fatto storico da lui dipinto.

Per la millesima volta molestai le carte scritte e messe in oblio. Ogni qualvolta le rileggevo, divenivo ardito a riprendere la battaglia. Ricopiavo le scene, colorivo come meglio potevo i dialoghi, ricostruivo le situazioni, per intensificarne la drammaticita' culminante e, tranne la prosa scialba ma che mi appariva sublime, il lavoro teatralmente andava acquistando una certa autorita'.

La mia ambizione percio' cresceva smisurata. Immergevo alle volte, tutta l'anima mia nei personaggi creati. Nelle notti insonni seguivo col pensiero gli avvenimenti cosi' bene svolti, e ne recitavo i passi sentimentali con la predilezione di un competente attore. alla biblioteca di Mulberry Street, . . . assiduamente studiavo, sviluppando le mie attitudini artistiche, . . .

Finally finishing a draft of his play, Abbamonte wanted to take it to Maiori to consider for production. But first he hoped to get an opinion from Cordiferro himself, even if the publisher did criticize ambitious amateurs. Each day on his way to the Mulberry Street Library, with his manuscript in his pocket, he passed Il Caffè degli Artisti, owned by Don Giovannino. Here he hoped to encounter Cordiferro and ask his opinion on his drama. But Cordiferro never went there. Instead, Abbamonte had the ill luck to encounter another journalist, the

¹"I set myself to work, trying to pay homage to a deceased friend who had suggested to me the picture of an historic event that he had painted.

For the thousandth time I got annoyed with the papers I wrote and forgot about them. Every so often when I reread them, I became more confident about taking up the struggle again. I recopied the scenes, I colored the dialogues as best I could, I restructured the plots to intensify the high tragedy and, apart from the weak prose but which seemed sublime to me, the theatrical work was beginning to acquire a certain power.

Thus my ambition grew immeasurably. Sometimes I put all my soul into the characters I created. During sleepless nights I followed in my mind the episodes that had evolved so well, and I recited the sentimental passages with the style of a competent actor. in the library on Mulberry Street, . . . I studied assiduously, developing my artistic sensibilities, . . . " Ibid.

dramatist Edoardo Pecoraro:

E poiche' ivi, con aria di novello Aristarco, il drammaturgo Pecoraro solea sovente portare ai sette cieli la sua "gloria" mi decisi un giorno di presentarmi a lui per un parere sul mio lavoro.

-- Maestro -- gli dissi umilmente -- desiderei un suo giudizio su di un mio dramma. Vorrebbe accordarmi un tale favore?

-- Perche' no? -- E preso il manoscritto si mise a sbirciarlo, fermandosi a qualche pagina con evidente buona intenzione. riconsegnandomi il libro, quasi commiserandomi, sentenzio':

-- Eh, caro mio, ci vuole altro, per comporre un dramma!

Mi senti avvampara il viso come da una fiamma gialla, ma prima che qualcuno intorno si accorgesse della mia mortificazione, mi alzai ed uscii mogio mogio da quel locale, mentre dietro di me sentivo le risate di quel giustiziere, assassino delle mie povere fatiche!

Ma non mi diedi per vinto. Avevo l'istinto, l'intuito, la volonta' che dominavano i miei sensi.

Without Abbamonte's script it is hard to determine if Pecoraro's assessment of his play was fair and accurate. It is true that Abbamonte himself admits to weak prose but, on the other hand, there is evidence that even if the prose had been stronger and more skillful, Pecoraro might still not have taken to the drama. Pecoraro wrote plays himself, but on contemporary topics. Often, he constructed dramas from the newspaper headlines of the day, frequently incorporating events that occurred right in the Italian community. Abbamonte's historical,

¹"And because here, with airs of a new Aristarcus, the dramatist Pecoraro often used to praise his 'glory' to the skies I decided one day to present myself to him for an opinion of my work.

-- Maestro -- I told him humbly -- I would like your opinion on a drama of mine. Would you grant me this favor?

-- Why not? -- And taking the manuscript he began to look it over, stopping at several pages with evident good intentions. returning the book to me, almost with commiseration, he declared:

-- Eh, my dear friend, it takes more than this to write a drama!

I felt my face become enflamed as if burned by a yellow fire, but before anyone around me noticed my shame, I got up and left the place quietly, while behind me I heard the laughter of that executioner, the killer of my poor labors!

But I didn't give up. I had the instinct, the intuition, the will to overcome my feelings." Ibid.

old-fashioned topic would certainly not have appealed to the modern Pecoraro. Also professional jealousy might have entered into his opinion, but, more than likely, this first play of an aspiring writer who worked by day as a laborer could hardly have been stageworthy.

Despite this negative criticism, Abbamonte still hoped to show his play to Cordiferro, who he thought could help his writing even if he too were critical of his work. His search for Cordiferro, as already described, led to Abbamonte's stage debut as an actor, disastrous as it may have been. At that point Abbamonte had not yet shown him the script, nor did he dare after his attack of stagefright. After Abbamonte's formation of Il Circolo Gioventu Italica, the two men formed a lasting friendship. But whether or not Abbamonte ever showed the manuscript to Cordiferro remains a mystery. Abbamonte does admit to the unofficial literary education he received from Cordiferro:

Anzi, ad onor del vero, devo dire che l'intimità acquistata così lui, contribuì. . . ad accrescere la mia passione per le ardue battaglie del Pensiero. Mi recavo spesso a casa sua ed all'ufficio del giornale e, accanto alla scrivania, fumando e seguendo le idee che la penna sua tracciava, ne sorbivo uno spirituale godimento ed imparavo in segreto, a dare forma concreta allo slancio delle mie tendenze letterarie.¹

The next play written by Abbamonte was entitled Per l'Amore. As already explained, he had written the play under the pseudonym Nunzio Noemi for the review Gioventu' Italiana, which was the organ of his drama group. As described by Abbamonte, the subject matter of the play seemed to resemble domestic melodrama:

¹"In fact, to tell the truth, I must say that the intimacy I developed with him, contributed . . . toward increasing my passion for the heated battles of thought. I often went to his house and to the office of the newspaper and, beside his desk, smoking and following the ideas that his pen traced, I absorbed a spiritual pleasure and I learned secretly to give a more concrete form to my inclination for literary endeavors," Abbamonte, "Nel Primordi," p. 5.

Il soggetto me l'aveva ispirato l'amore infelice d'una fanciulla, contrariato dalla perfida matrigna, la quale faceva insinuazioni contro il giovane da lei amato, perche' voleva che sposasse un suo furfante parente. Elaborai le scene in cinque atti, svolgendo l'azione in una citta' d'Italia, con la creazione di vari personaggi nobili.¹

When the play failed in its purpose to unite the splintering theatre group, and when Cordiferro revealed in La Follia the real author, Abbamonte "chiusi quest'altro mio dramma nel cassetto"² (shoved this other drama of mine into a drawer), and nothing more seems to have been done with it.

If either of Abbamonte's first two plays were ever produced, the record is mute on that point. But a one-act drama written and directed by Abbamonte was performed at Morrow's Hall in Asbury Park on Monday, May 1, 1905, and at the Lyceum in Long Branch, New Jersey on a subsequent evening. The work, titled Senza lavoro³ (Unemployed), reveals that the playwright had progressed from distant historical drama and domestic melodrama to drama on a social theme, influenced no doubt by his association with Riccardo Cordiferro.

If Salvatore Abbamonte went on to make his mark as an enduring playwright, actor or director, if he ever went professional, he did not accomplish his goals in New York City. Our guess is that he continued to engage in amateur theatrical activity in New Jersey and became part of the history of Italian-American theatre in that state. In the years

¹"The story had been inspired by a young girl's unhappy love, which was opposed by a treacherous stepmother, who made insinuations about the young man the girl loved, because the stepmother wanted the girl to marry a scoundrel of a relation of hers (the stepmother's). I arranged the scenes into five acts, unfolding the action in a city in Italy, and creating various noble characters." Ibid.

²Ibid.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 123 (May 4, 1905), p. 2.

that follow this study, scant notices show him performing with the Perez-Picciotto company in 1912¹ and organizing an evening in honor of Gabriele D'Annunzio in 1918.² His last known address was in Brooklyn at 1602 41st Street.³ In 1920 he, too, like Maiori, became involved in efforts to establish an Italian National Theatre in New York City, efforts that met similar results to Maiori's. Riccardo Cordiferro, although he sympathized with the idea, was pessimistic as to its fruition, but he nevertheless praised Abbamonte's work in this direction: "I know Abbamonte pretty well. He is earnest, tireless, active and very energetic. He is a man of inexhaustible will power and determination."⁴

Cordiferro also gives us a clue as to just which direction Abbamonte's energies led him in the years after this study:

signor Salvatore Abbamonte, popolarissimo fra gli italiani di New York per molte pubblicazioni di indole letteraria e per non poche iniziative patriottiche, tutte miranti a tener alto in terra straniera il prestigio del nome italiano.⁵

The impression of Abbamonte in this profile is not that of an active man of the theatre but that of a writer and active member of the Italian-American community. Interestingly enough, Cordiferro's reflection of

¹"Fra Le Quinte," La Follia (1912), clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 105.

²La Follia, clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

³Cordiferro address book, loc. cit.

⁴"For the Italian Theatre," The New York Courier (October 1920) Sisca Collection, Folder 124.

⁵"Mr. Salvatore Abbamonte, very popular among the Italians of New York through many publications of a literary nature and because of many patriotic endeavors, all aimed at raising aloft in this foreign land the prestige of what is known as Italian." Riccardo Cordiferro, "Il Teatro Italiano A New York," La Follia (June 10, 1920) Sisca Collection, Folder 124.

the man reveals that more than twenty years after forming his first amateur theatre group, he was still working toward the same ideals he had professed as a young man -- that of promoting Italian culture in America.

II Club Filodrammatico Avanti di Brooklyn

Brooklyn had a thriving theatrical history of its own, although not nearly as extensive as that of Manhattan. Guglielmo Ricciardi had started first in Brooklyn, then moved to Manhattan. Enrico Costantini started in Manhattan, then moved his base of operations to Brooklyn where he stayed permanently for many years. Before Costantini's move, however, there was already a drama group that had begun two weeks of performances on Monday, January 6, 1902 at the Columbia Theatre.¹ Although probably amateurs, they managed a substantial record of performances during 1902 to 1905 and were still active for many years thereafter. They were not fortunate enough during these early years to have a single, permanent home but moved around a great deal to various theatres in Brooklyn and Manhattan. At first they were known simply as La Societa' Filodrammatica Italiana and their next performance took place on Wednesday, February 4, 1903 at Caecilia Hall, 104 Grand Street, Brooklyn,² followed by another one night stand at Winters Hall on Harrison Avenue on Monday, March 23, 1903. The well known Antonio Ferrara of Ferrara's Caffè in Manhattan directed.³

Mr. L. Russo was listed as director and James Liotta as adminis-

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 2 (January 2, 1902), p. 3.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 35 (February 4, 1903), p. 2.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 86 (March 27, 1903), p. 2.

trator of the Company for the performance of Sunday, May 3, 1903 at Arion Hall, Arion Place near Broadway, Brooklyn. Tickets prices were fifty cents.¹ After another Brooklyn showing on Monday, May 25, 1903 at Teutonia Hall at 191 Harrison Avenue,² the troupe performed in New York at the Manhattan Lyceum on Saturday, June 13, 1903,³ followed by a trip to Waterbury, Connecticut on or about September 7, 1903.⁴

By Sunday, September 20, they were back at Arion Hall,⁵ and by Sunday, January 3, 1904 they had decided to adopt the name, Il Club Filodrammatico "Avanti" for a show at Turn Hall, 67-73 Meserole Street, Brooklyn.⁶ Avanti means forward, evidence of an ambitious and enthusiastic attitude, which may be indicative of how the group stayed together for so many years. The next two recorded presentations were again at Arion Hall: on Sunday, May 5, 1904⁷ and Sunday, September 11, 1904.⁸ Ticket prices were 25 cents, 35 cents, 50 cents and 75 cents.⁹

The company returned once again to the Manhattan Lyceum on Thursday, November 3, 1904 to perform a benefit for Mrs. Rosa Di Pietro, organized by a committee of various notable community figures: M. Ferri, L. Colitti, M. Di Diego, F. Filardi, G. Filardi, V. Comarca, G.

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 123 (May 3, 1903), p. 2.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 136 (May 16, 1903), p. 2.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 158 (June 7, 1903), p. 3.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 250 (September 7, 1903), p. 3.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 260 (September 27, 1903), p. 3.

⁶ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 4 (January 4, 1904), p. 3.

⁷ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 133 (May 12, 1904), p. 3.

⁸ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 255 (September 10, 1904), p. 3.

⁹ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 254 (September 11, 1903), p. 1.

(either Giuseppe or Gaspare) Marrone, E. Esposito, E. Pepoli and others. Presidents of the committee were Vincenzo Loscalzo and Antonio Loscalzo; the treasurer was Rocco Loscalzo and secretary, Conte G. Ernesto.¹ The benefit was intended as a fundraiser for the expenses necessary for her release from prison. L'Araldo stated her case: "Per mantenere alto il suo onore ed il decoro della famiglia uccise Michele Rago il quale tento sedurla e fini per minacciarla a mano armata se non cedeva alle sue voglie."² For L'Araldo's coverage of the trial, the artist Giuseppe Stella created caricatures of Mrs. Di Pietro, her interpreter Professor Morossi, her defense attorney Mr. Barra and the court recorder Mr. Goff.³ Admission tickets for the show at first cost only fifty cents but went up to \$1.50.⁴

Back in Brooklyn on Sunday, May 14, 1905, the troupe put on another benefit for Mr. Luca Cascio at the Brooklyn Labor Lyceum Hall located at 947-57 Willoughby Avenue at Myrtle Avenue,⁵ followed in the same month on Sunday, the 28th with another trip to New York's Arlington Hall.⁶ The notice in L'Araldo described the company as "Il noto e conosciutissimo Club Filodrammatico Avanti" (notable and very well known) for their production on Wednesday, August 23, 1905 at the Labor

¹ Ibid.

² "To maintain her honor and the dignity of her family she killed Michele Rago who tried to seduce her and ended by threatening her with a weapon if she would not give in to his demands." L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 287 (October 12, 1904), p. 3.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 353 (December 18, 1904), p. 1.

⁴ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 308 (November 2, 1904), p. 3.

⁵ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 129 (May 10, 1905), p. 2.

⁶ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 138 (May 23, 1905), p. 3.

Lyceum.¹ This indicates that the group had certainly made their mark on the audiences of Manhattan as well as Brooklyn.

Their last recorded performance in 1905 took place one night after November 8 at Grand Central Hall, Leonard and Scholes Streets, Brooklyn. At the time their headquarters were located at 192 Johnson Avenue, Brooklyn.² The group continued in the following years to produce shows consistently, whether amateur or professional has yet to be determined. But by 1915 they went into publishing in addition to their theatrical activities. They were responsible for the third edition in Italian of Pietro Gori's Senza Patria and they advertised an "Estesissimo assortimento di opuscoli di propaganda sovversivo." (Very extensive assortment of pamphlets of subversive propaganda) Prices were 5 cents, 10 cents and 15 cents.³

Directors with the company were Antonio Ferrara and Mr. L. Russo, who also acted in productions. Two brothers were consistently active as actors with the group and their names headed the top of many cast listings. They were Giuseppe and Gaspare Marrone. The group in later years put on at least one of Gaspare's plays⁴ and Riccardo Cordiferro wrote an ode to him:

All'Artista Gaspare Marrone

L'arte e la Liberta', che imperitura
gloria ai secoli dan, canzoni e allori,
irradian la tua via di luce pura,

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 233 (August 22, 1905), p. 3.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 311 (November 9, 1905), p. 4.

³ Pietro Gori, Senza Patria (Brooklyn: Libreria Del Club "Avanti," 1915).

⁴ Lorenzo Sabini, "Brooklyn, N.Y." clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 105.

spargon su di essa aulenti eterni fiori.

E ver la meta tua, senza paura,
anelato tu vai da mille cuori,
con fede ardente ed anima sicura,
sempre arrisa da vividi begliori.

Talvolta ghigna al tuo passar, venate,
la geldra dei pigmei che d'ogni affetto
ride ed ogni virtu' piu' bella assale.

Ma tu, incurante de lo studio abbietto,
fiso lo sguardo al fulgido Ideale,
ti struggi al fuoco che t'avvampa il petto.¹

For Cordiferro to write this ode to Marrone, and the description of the actor that it affords, reveal that Marrone and Cordiferro were comrades in the socialist cause. Some of the plays in the repertory of the group evidence a concern for social issues: works by Cordiferro in later years, and during 1900 to 1905 Dennery's Causa Celebre (Cause Celebre), Hugo's Ruy Blas, and an original three-act social drama, Verso la redenzione! (Towards redemption!). Besides Victor Hugo and Adolphe Dennery, the French writers represented onstage by this company were Emile Zola and Victorien Sardou. The English were represented by Shakespeare and the Italians by Felice Cavallotti, Carlo Cantu, Francesco Mastriani, Prof. F. Bernardini, E. Minichino and Giuseppe Rizzoti.

1

"To the Performer Gaspare Marrone

Art and Liberty, which give immortal
glory, songs and laurels to the centuries,
shed light upon your road to pure truth,
scatter on it eternally sweet smelling flowers.

Your aim is true, fearless,
a thousand hearts yearn for you as you go on,
with burning faith and confident spirit,
always smiled upon by bright sunshine.

Sometimes at your efforts sneers, the vain,
coldness of small people who at every affection
laugh and who attack each beautiful virtue.

But you, indifferent to worthless attention,
fix your gaze on the shining Ideal,

The original three-act social drama Verso la redenzione! was written by two Italian-Americans, Mr. N. Vajana in collaboration with Mr. A. Granata, the violinist. The play was premiered on Sunday, May 28, 1905 at Arlington Hall. Some of the characters in the drama had decidedly Russian names and the presentation included a chorus of Russian young ladies singing hymns in the Russian language.¹

Musical conductors with the Avanti group were: Prof. F. Bertuglia, Prof. Antonio Loscalzo, the pianist Prof. L. Balassone, who wrote the "Elegia per violino," and Prof. P. Mercogliano and his orchestra of 25 musicians from Brooklyn. Actors and actresses not already noted with the Avanti club are included in Appendix III.

Il Club Filodrammatico Avanti made a respectable showing during these first few years of the century. If we consider the number of productions managed by Enrico Costantini in Brooklyn alone, the Avante group exceeds his record, although there are indications that Costantini staged more shows than our records reveal. In any event, the Avanti troupe continued in the years following 1905 to be a viable theatrical entity.

Il Circolo Filodrammatico Eleonora Duse

Thus far we have been investigating those companies, whether amateur or professional, who initiated and sustained a substantial record of production during the years 1900 to 1905. This amateur group, named after the famous Italian tragic actress Eleonora Duse, is the last

you burst with the fire that burns in your soul."
La Follia (May 1917), clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 28.

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 138 (May 23, 1905), p. 3.

in this category to be considered. The troupe announced its debut as "Il Circolo Artistico Eleonora Duse" for the night of Monday, February 5, 1900 at Turn Hall¹ (actually the Manhattan Lyceum). The plays performed that night were directed by Giuseppe Fiaccarini who was described as the group's artistic director, while the President of the Society was Mr. F. Autolini.² About 1895 Fiaccarini had begun his career as an actor with the Circolo Filodrammatico Carlo Goldoni run by Mr. and Mrs. Neigre. Fiaccarini's tenure as artistic director of the Duse group was brief and notorious and limited to the night of the announced debut. Autolini's fate was similar.

For undisclosed reasons, the audience found the doors to Turn Hall closed and the show did not go on. The reviewer for L'Araldo was furious, especially since he had earlier given space in the newspaper announcing the event and exhorted the community to attend. He responded by printing this diatribe addressed to La Societa' Eleonora Duse:

"Di Carnevale, ogni scherzo vale" dice un antico proverbio; ma vi hanno delle trovate di spirito che in fondo in fondo non sappiamo con qual coraggio, con quale autorita', alcuni signori, se le possano permettere Ora noi domandiamo al Presidente della societa' signor F. Autolini e al direttore artistico signor Giuseppe Fiaccarini, se queseto (sic) e' il modo di fare; se propriamente sia questo il miglior modo di comportarsi con tutti quei pochi che ancora serbano qualche illusione colle nostre societa' tilodrammatiche. (sic). . . . ma dato pure che talvolta ragioni intime possano giustificare un rinvio, od anche una dolorosa conflagrazione, pare a noi, che non e' il miglior mezzo d'ingraziarsi la stampa pigliandola a gabbo con tutti i suoi lettori, senza osservare nemmeno i primi e piu' elementary dettami dell'educazione.

Questo con onesto resentimento diciamo alla "Eleonora Duse"³ sperando di vederci in altro occasione piu fortunata e propizia.

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 13 (January 16, 1900), p. 5.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 33 (February 8, 1900), p. 5.

³ "During Carnival time, every joke is forgiven' says an ancient proverb; but there are smart pranks that deep down we don't know how

The reason for the cancelled performance is still an intriguing mystery. The public scouring, dated February 5, resulted in a change of command. By March 11, there was a new President, Mr. Marchesi, who, in announcing the next performance of the group for Thursday, March 15, 1900 at Arlington Hall, 23 Saint Mark's Place, assured the public that there would be no repetition of the previous incident.¹

For over two years after this announcement there are no notices for the company. But the Circolo resurfaced on Thursday, April 2, 1903 at Webster Hall.² For the next two years, the company put on sporadic performances, often directed by the actor Carlo Simone and produced by Luigi Silvagni, also an actor. Silvagni was the popular owner of a large wine and grocery store at 113 Thompson Street. Silvagni produced two benefits: one for Riccardo Cordiferro at the Manhattan Lyceum on Monday, December 28, 1903 which featured L'Onore Perduto directed by Simone, and other sketches by Cordiferro,³ and another benefit for the piano teacher Maestro Alfredo Avelli at the Teatro Drammatico Nazionale

men can find the courage or the authority to pull. . . . Now we ask the President of the society Mister F. Autolini and the artistic director Giuseppe Fiaccarini, if this is the way to do things; if this is really the best way to act with those few who still have some regard for our amateur theatre societies . . . but even if sometimes personal reasons, or even an unfortunate fire, might justify a postponement, it seems to us, that it's not the best way to ingratiate yourself with the press, by pulling its leg and that of all its readers, without observing even the most basic and elementary dictums of education.

This with honest resentment we say to the 'Eleonora Duse' hoping to see them on another more fortunate and propitious occasion." Ibid.

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 60 (March 11, 1900), p. 5.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 91 (April 1, 1903), p. 2.

³ L'Operaio, Anno III, Nos. 12 to 15 (1904), clippings, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

on Friday, February 5, 1904.¹

The group went on the road for one performance on Sunday, August 14, 1904 at Heflich's Hall in West Hoboken where they did several plays, including Cordiferro's Il Pezzente. Sometime after this date, the same bill was repeated at the Amsterdam Opera House, 332-34 West 44th Street between 9th and 10th Avenues.² One last performances which can be attributed to this group took place Thursday, May 4, 1905, a benefit for the Cunico sisters.³

Giuseppe Fiaccarini, although he was not connected with the company, did appear again: as a speaker at a banquet/performance of Il Circolo Filodrammatico Alessandro Salvini (the Salerno brothers' company) on Sunday, February 12, 1905;⁴ and as an actor with La Societa' Veneta "Daniele Manin" on Thursday, March 23, 1905.⁵ Members of the Eleonora Duse company not already noted can be found in Appendix III.

Most of the playwrights produced by the group were imported Italian writers: Felice Cavalotti, Leopoldo Marengo, Davide Chiassone; or French writers: Bailian and Bonte, and Victorien Sardou.

The only Italian-American plays presented came from Mr. F. Verga, an actor, whose untitled farce was presented Thursday, May 4, 1905;⁶ and from the pen of Riccardo Cordiferro: L'Onore Perduto, social drama in four acts; L'avvocato Fiamiferi (The lawyer Fiamiferi), macchietta in

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 35 (February 4, 1904), p. 2.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 232 (August 19, 1904), p. 3.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 120 (April 30, 1905), p. 3.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 43 (February 12, 1905), p. 4.

⁵Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 80 (March 21, 1901), p. 3.

⁶L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 120 (April 30, 1905), p. 3.

dialect; Poveretto (Poor Little Thing), macchietta in dialect; Il Pezzente (The Beggar), monologue in verse.

The maestri with the company were: Prof. Rolando Rossini, Prof. Tobia Acciani, Alfredo Avelli and Maestra Miss Elissena.

All in all we cannot say that the Eleonora Duse group had an overwhelming effect on the Italian-American theatre scene. But they are one of the groups that accomplished a significant number of performances, utilizing both amateurs and professionals, within our time frame. Perhaps the most significant aspect of their contribution is their production of several works by Riccardo Cordiferro. Thus far, there is no evidence of their existence past 1905.

La Compagnia Drammatica Italiana diretta da Silvio Minciotti

This company, led by the actor Silvio Minciotti, is the first of several companies we shall consider which, although born between 1900 and 1905, had a meager output during this time because their most active and fruitful years are the decades subsequent to this study. Silvio Minciotti and his company were performing into the 1940's and on radio. He was very active as an actor during these early years of the century and made his first attempts at directing.

He was born Francesco Minciotti (and later changed his name to Silvio¹) at Citta' di Castello in the province of Perugia on August 31, 1882 and came to New York City with his father in 1896. At the age of fifteen he became part of Giuseppe Zaccone's Circolo Metropolitano Drammatico e Musicale. But a few months later he joined Maiori's Teatro

¹My interview with Rachel Minciotti Maiori on June 22, 1976.

Italiano,¹ where he worked almost exclusively until Sunday, April 24, 1904,² except for one appearance with the company of Francesco Ricciardi for a benefit on Monday, March 11, 1901.³

After April 1904, Minciotti apparently split from Maiori permanently. With the split came Minciotti's adoption of the name Silvio. He was billed as "Silvio Minciotti" for the first time in a production of L'Onore Perduto which served as a benefit for the author Riccardo Cordiferro on Monday, July 25, 1904. Cordiferro claims to have produced all performances of this play, but the director was not credited in the notices. Cordiferro may have directed but so also could have Minciotti, especially since he played the leading role of Alberto. Significantly too, Esterina Cunico, his future wife, played the role of Ida in this production. Minciotti and Cunico had met while both worked for Maiori but this is the first time their names appeared together on the same bill.⁴

All these factors indicate that this event may have been a turning point in Minciotti's career -- separation from Maiori, a new name, working independently with his future wife and artistic partner, and possibly collaborating as a director with Cordiferro. The production, which took place at Villa Venezia (Venice Hall), 30 Flushing Avenue,

¹Ario Flamma disagrees on certain dates regarding Minciotti's early years. He states that Minciotti was born in 1883 and came to the United States in 1897, together with Giuseppe Zaccone. (Flamma, p. 234.) This last date is certainly in error because we know from Salvatore Abbamonte and Guglielmo Ricciardi that Zaccone already belonged to Maiori's company as early as 1893 and 1894. [Italo C. Falbo,] "Profilo di Silvio Minciotti," Il Teatro (April 1943), p. 2.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 116 (April 27, 1904), p. 3.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 60 (March 10, 1901), p. 5.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 206 (July 24, 1904), p. 3.

Brooklyn,¹ was aided by a committee composed of Vincenzo Giovanni Miele, Mr. C. Vuolo, Mr. C. Nardone and Mr. G. Desiderio.²

After Pasquale Rapone left the Maiori Company and returned to New York City from his independent road tour, he inaugurated the opening of the Follie Drammatiche on Saturday, September 3, 1904.³ Silvio Minciotti began his association with Rapone on that date, and acted with his company until Friday, June 2, 1905, again in collaboration with Maiori's company.⁴

In September 1905, Rocco De Russo recalls that Minciotti was the director of the drama company at Francesco Ricciardi's Villa Vittorio Emanuele III.⁵ Sometime between this date and 1906, Minciotti met and became an assistant to the Italian actor, Ermete Novelli, who was performing here on tour. Novelli heard the young actor perform in a theatre on Spring Street and invited him to join the Novelli Company which was about to embark in 1906 on a European tour. He performed with Novelli in France, Germany, Russia, Hungary and Roumania and eventually acted with another Italian company, that of Virgilio Talli. In September, 1909 he returned to New York to join Maiori's company once again, this time to go along on the road tour of the United States arranged by Edwin Balkin, which lasted until 1910. In August 1911 he

¹ Ibid.

² Stone, loc. cit.; and La Follia, clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 248 (September 3, 1904), p. 2.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 118 (April 29, 1905), p. 3; and N. 147 (June 2, 1905), p. 3.

⁵ De Russo, pp. 32-33.

married Ester Cunico.¹

Esterina Cunico was born March 18, 1888 in Torino, Italy and came to New York with her parents in 1894. At the age of 8 she was reciting poetry and monologues at family gatherings and at the festivities of various Italian clubs and societies. By age 9² she was playing children's roles in the company of Guglielmo Ricciardi. In 1901, when Ester was 13 years old, her acting was noticed by the actress, Ms. A. Bertoldo, a member of Eleonora Duse's company, which was on its first American tour. Mr. Bertoldo offered to bring Ester to Italy to study acting and then to present her to La Duse, but the illness of Ester's parents caused her to refuse the offer.³ Her father, Oreste Cunico, was then the Director of the Italian newspaper, La Lanterna Magica.⁴

Instead, Miss Cunico joined the company of Antonio Maiori and began by reciting poems and odes at intermissions.⁵ Eventually she debuted as an actress in 1902 at the Thalia Theatre.⁶ Her sister Maria also acted with the Maiori company, as did Ester's future husband, Silvio Minciotti. Both sisters worked with the Company of Clemente Giglio in 1902⁷ and 1903,⁸ with Il Circolo Eleonora Duse in

¹Falbo, "Profilo di Silvio Minciotti," p. 2.

²Flamma, p. 233. Falbo says she was eight.

³Falbo, "Profilo," p. 2.

⁴De Giuli, loc. cit.

⁵La Lanterna Magica, clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

⁶Flamma, p. 233.

⁷Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," p. 9.

⁸Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 278 (October 5, 1903), p. 3.

1903,¹ 1904,² and 1905,³ and with several other companies in 1905. We have one quote from Ester, on the occasion of the haphazard production of La Santarella by Guglielmo Ricciardi on Sunday, November 26, 1905: "-- Guardi, mi tocca fare due parti, la madre Superiora e la prima donna. E' mai possibile, mio Dio!"⁴ Surely, Ester Cunico must have been a competent actress to accomplish this "impossible" task.

She, too, was part of the American tour that Maiori made in 1909 and 1910. After marrying Silvio Minciotti in 1911, she and her husband went to San Francisco and worked in the Italian-American theatre there until 1914, when they returned to New York. Here Minciotti acted with the Italian company of Mimi Aguglia, which was visiting and doing a tour, and stayed with this group for the next two years. During the years 1917 to 1918 he once again worked with Antonio Maiori at the Royal Theatre. After Maiori went to Italy in 1919, Cunico and Minciotti again went to San Francisco where they both performed with La Compagnia La Moderna. In 1921 together they formed their own company, La Compagnia Cunico-Minciotti, which they continued to run until 1927. In that year they returned to New York again to join Clemente Giglio's Company at the Teatro Venezia, and remained with Giglio until 1934.⁵ (Clemente Giglio married Ester Cunico's sister Gemma.) In 1934, Silvio and Ester

¹Il Reporter, "La replica de 'L'onore perduto,' clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

²Stone, loc. cit.; and L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 232 (August 19, 1904), p. 3.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 120 (April 30, 1905), p. 3.

⁴"-- Look, he makes me play two roles, the Mother Superior and the leading lady. It's impossible, my God!" L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 330 (November 28, 1905), p. 3.

⁵Flamma, pp. 233-34.

re-formed their company for the purpose of playing dramas on the radio, Station WEVD, and created skits and plays in the Barese, Neapolitan and Sicilian dialects. One of these was called Le avventure di Mincuccio 'o Barese (The adventures of Mincuccio of Bari).¹ At that time they lived at 47-53 188th Street, Flushing.² They continued to act in the theatre as well as on the radio, at least until 1943. In that year Minciotti was President of L'Unione Attori Italiani in America³ (Italian Actors' Union).

A description by his contemporary, Toto' Lanza, in 1917 gives us a picture of Minciotti the actor after he had been acting on the stage for twenty years:

Ecco un attore singolare che puo' fare il paio con "Giovanni Grasso" nel genere volitivo. Il pubblico, che suole decretare i successi, a buon diritto lo predilige, he' s'inganna il pubblico quando trattasi di giudicare un artista che deve la propria reputazione alle sole risorse del suo ingegno.

Non e' possibile trovarne un altro che voglia tenacemente al pari di lui, e che possieda allo stesso modo, oltre il dono della bella voce e della parola facile e chiara, il segreto d'insinuarsi nel cuore della moltitudine. Silvio Minciotti e' un comico nato fuori nido; ma la sua recitazione, franca e spigliata, ha un senso di suggestivita' che impone. Non ebbe maestri e non fu schiavo di nessun scuola, ma, obbedendo, soltanto, al naturale⁴ impulso, trovo' la sorgente della grande popolarita' di cui gode.

¹ Falbo, "Profilo . . . ," p. 2.

² Flamma, pp. 233-34.

³ Falbo, "Profilo," p. 2.

⁴ "Here is a singular actor who can match 'Giovanni Grasso' in the matter of determination. The public, which alone decrees the winners, is really right in picking him, nor does the public err when it comes to judging as an artist one who earns his own reputation by the sole resources of his talent.

It's not possible to find another with such a tenacious will like his, and who possesses at the same time, besides the gift of a beautiful voice and clear and easy speech, the secret of endearing himself into the heart of the crowd. Silvio Minciotti is a comedian born out of the nest; but his performance, free and agile, has a feeling of great excitement. He had no masters and was slave to no school, but,

The comment that Minciotti "had no masters and was slave to no school" is compatible with his practice of freelance acting and independence. From this excerpt we see that Minciotti had a fine voice, clear speech and an exciting style, all of which made him very popular.

Other actors, not already mentioned, who acted with him when he began directing were: Mrs. Sofia Ilotti, Gennaro Camerlingo and his wife, Ernesto Quadrino and Rocco De Russo. Minciotti was a friend of Riccardo Cordiferro who in 1935 composed the following poem:

A Silvio Minciotti

Minciotti, son trentacinque anni ormai
che seguo la tua fulgida carriera
d'artista, e che ti ammiro, e tu lo sai,
con stima alta, immutabile, sincera.

L'eletto ingegno tuo sempre apprezzai,
il tuo nobile cuor, l'anima austera,
che' tu appartieni alla gloriosa schiera
dei volenti e dei forti, e onor ti fai.

Ma oggi ai meriti tuoi, tutti brillanti,
un altro se ne aggiunge, amico caro,
per cui ti ammiro con piu' vivo ardore:

ed e' quel che fra tanti artisti e tanti,
tu non sei (caso veramente raro!)
ne' cavaliere, ne' commendatore!¹

obeying only his natural impulse, he found the sources of the great popularity he enjoys." Lanza, p. 11.

1

"To Silvio Minciotti

Minciotti, it has now been thirty-five years
that I am following your shining career
as an artist, and that I admire you, and you know it,
with high, unchanging, sincere esteem.

I have always appreciated your special genius,
your noble heart, your serious nature,
because you belong to the glorious group
of the willing and the strong, and it does you honor.

But today, to your merits, all brilliant,
I add another, dear friend,

Cordiferro refers to the titles of "Cavaliere" and "Commendatore" that were awarded by the Italian government to men of achievement. It is totally in keeping with Cordiferro's philosophy, revolutionary that he was, to scorn the trappings of the nobility that these titles represent. The reasons for Minciotti's popularity with Cordiferro, and the reason for the success of both Silvio and Ester in New York and San Francisco will become apparent no doubt after a study of the years of their most fecund activity.

La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Napoletana Gennaro Ragazzino

This company began late in this period of study, Tuesday, October 25, 1904, but managed in a short time to essay a respectable number of productions. For this first performance, a benefit, the director was noted as Benedetto Vitale.¹ But he is heard from no more. On Monday, February 20, 1905, Gennaro Ragazzino took over as director² permanently, and eventually the group's name incorporated his name. He had worked earlier with the Maiori Company and with the Milanini Company at Ferrando's Hall.

With few exceptions, Arlington Hall at 19-23 St. Mark's Place between 2nd and 3rd Avenues was the Ragazzino company's permanent home. A small number of performances were done at Webster Hall and Sulzer's

for which I admire you with even greater enthusiasm:

and that is that among so very many artists,
you neither (a truly rare event!)
a cavaliere nor a commendatore!"

La Follia, clipping (c. July 26, 1935), Sisca Collection, Folder 35.

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 296 (October 21, 1904), p. 3.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 50 (February 19, 1905), p. 3.

Harlem Casino at 122nd Street and 2nd Avenue. The Casino housed a benefit on Wednesday, July 5, 1905 produced by Vito Contessa, Mr. G. D'Amato and Ettore Minervini.¹

The new fall season opened with a benefit sponsored by Rocco Marasco on Monday, September 4, 1905. Tickets were 35 cents, 50 cents, 75 cents for boxes and \$3.00 for family boxes.² Admission to the benefit for Gennaro Ragazzino himself on Monday, September 18, 1905 cost 50 cents for general admission and \$3.00 for boxes.³ Prices remained the same for the next Ragazzino benefit on Wednesday, October 11, 1905.⁴

The benefit for the well-known actress Maria Prete, which took place at Webster Hall on Monday, November 27, 1905 was a much touted and well publicized affair. For the general admission price of 50 cents, one could see Miss Maria Prete interpret the title role of Celeste, Marengo's five-act seafaring idyll. Ragazzino himself played the role of Papa' Gregorio, assisted by Paolo Cremonesi from New Jersey in the role of Ferdinando. The organizational committee which sponsored the event included an impressive array of community leaders. "Special" patrons, probably so named because of their "special" financial contribution, numbered: Mr. T. P. Sullivan,⁵ James E. March, Mr. G. D'Amato, Cavaliere Uff. Antonio Zucca, the banker Mr. P. Acritelli, the banker Cesare Conti (whose offices were located at 35 Broadway and were con-

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 184 (July 4, 1905), p. 3.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 244 (September 2, 1905), p. 3.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 248 (September 6, 1905), p. 3.

⁴ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 278 (October 6, 1905), p. 3.

⁵ This may very well be Tim Sullivan the "tammanista" or Tammany Hall district leader who had some power among Italians. In the section on Eduardo Migliaccio we noted how the undertaker Teodoro Palumbo threatened to go to Sullivan to have Migliaccio arrested.

nected to the Bank of Naples, with annexes at 772 South 8th Street in Philadelphia and 19 Market Street in Newark), and the undertaker Carlo Bacigalupo, whose business was situated at 26½ Mulberry Street and 210 Spring Street, telephone 684 Franklin. (In July 1903 he had made a trip to Rome especially to attend the funeral of Pope Leo XIII).¹ patrons included: Cavaliere Vito Contessa, Rocco M. Marasco, Dr. P. Felitti, Mr. G.T. Conti, Mr. D. Abbate, Mr. M.A. Rofrano, Antonio Giura and Dr. Scipio Di Dario.² Di Dario worked at the Cocce Press, 61 Downing Street.³ Vito Contessa was designated the special honorary President of La Societa Flavio Gioia⁴ and he also served as President of the Sons of Columbus Legion, located at 2424 2nd Avenue, telephone 1194 Harlem.⁵

The last notice we have for the company in 1905 announced a benefit for the illusionist Alberto Vegliante on Thursday, December 26 again at Arlington Hall.⁶ Considering the number of benefits and the outside sponsors enlisted to mount productions, it appears that Ragazzino's early efforts remained on an amateur basis. But in the years that follow this study, his activities definitely went professional. By 1910 he daily produced dramas at the Teatro Garibaldi, 31-35

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 204 (July 23, 1903), p. 1.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 323 (November 21, 1905), pp. 3 and 8; N. 324 (November 22, 1905), p. 2; and N. 328 (November 26, 1905), p. 4.

³ Notes of Riccardo Cordiferro, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

⁴ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 204 (August 25, 1901), p. 2.

⁵ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 112 (May 11, 1900), p. 5.

⁶ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 357 (December 24, 1905), p. 4.

East 4th Street.¹ The opera impresario, Alfredo Salmaggi, recalled how the roof of the Teatro Garibaldi leaked during rainstorms, earning the nickname "Opera with Umbrellas," in 1923.² This would indicate that he had gone into the opera arena on a local level. Therefore, we know at least that Gennaro Ragazzino continued producing on a professional basis and for an extended period of time after 1905.

Benedetto Vitale and Gennaro Ragazzino were the only directors with the company. Company actors not already noted included: the Pulcinella, Francesco De Cesare, who had just come from Naples in 1905,³ and who would in later years become the capocomico of La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Italiana; family members, Teresina, Carmelina and Giovanni Ragazzino; Giuseppe Battinelli, the florist of 219 Mulberry Street;⁴ Miss Ester Cunico, Miss Barba, Mr. Trombetta, Mr. Cavaliere, the Vitiello brothers, Mr. Modetti, Mr. Russo, Miss E. Rotondo, Miss Annina Zito, Miss Teresina Prete, Mr. A. Bruno and Mr. G. Spingola; plus the tenors, Mr. P. Vitale and Pietro Montalto, and the maestro Prof. Andrea Vitale.

Playwrights produced were mostly Italian: Paolo Giacometti, Leopoldo Marengo, Rev. C. Ugone, Mr. E. Minichino; plus Victorien Sardou and William Shakespeare. Two Italian-American writers were also heard from. On Tuesday, October 10, 1905 La rivoluzione russa (The Russian revolution) was played. It was described as an "original" historical

¹ Cleveland Leader, (December 4, 1910) clipping file, New York Public Library at Lincoln Center.

² Salmaggi interview.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 244 (September 2, 1905), p. 3.

⁴ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 344 (December 13, 1905), p. 3.

drama.¹ This fact, together with the timelines of the topic leads us to assume that the author Pasquale Ilardi was a contemporary Italian-American. On Monday, September 18, 1905, Il segreto della Vecchia (The old woman's secret), a five-act spectacular drama was performed. Its author was Raffaele Veneruso,² the publisher who on Wednesday, October 11, 1905 lectured on the topic, "La donna attraverso i secoli" (Woman through the centuries) at a performance by this same company.³ If either of these Italian-American authors continued to write after this, it would certainly come to light after an investigation into Gennaro Ragazzino's activities beyond 1905.

La Compagnia Mimi Imperato

The first notice for this impresario on Thursday, April 2, 1903, indicated that Mimi Imperato was occupied regularly as both actor and capocomico at the Teatro della Varieta' in Philadelphia. The other notice puts his company at Garrick Hall in the same city on Monday, March 20, 1905. What is intriguing is that all the actors credited are New York City performers: Vincenzo Pozzi, Mrs. Rosina Pozzi and Lea Delapierre. It is possible that Imperato had organized a road company in New York City. The actors were all professionals and the two dates given served as benefits for company members Rosina Pozzi and Lea Delapierre, respectively,⁴ which would support the view of this company

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 279 (October 7, 1905), p. 3.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 248 (September 6, 1905), p. 3.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 278 (October 6, 1905), p. 3.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 94 (April 4, 1903), p. 3; and Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 73 (March 14, 1905), p. 3.

as a professional, moneymaking venture.

Imperato's particular role was that of the modern day Neapolitan mask, Don Felice Sciosciamocca, created by the Neapolitan playwright Cav. Eduardo Scarpetta. However, the 1903 production of an unspecified comedy with this mask does not credit Scarpetta. Furthermore, the 1905 production of the two act comedy, I due gemelli Sciosciamocca (The two Sciosciamocca twins) was written by Mimi Imperato himself. So it is possible that he wrote both plays.¹

On September 17, 1906 he was again in Philadelphia, producing Riccardo Cordiferro's sequel to L'Onore Perduto entitled Giuseppina Terranova ovvero l'onore vendicato (Giuseppina Terranova or honor avenged). One of the actors was Francesco Vela who had moved there by this time but again many of the other actors were professional New York City entertainers: Mrs. Luigia Franchi, Edoardo de Pascale, Mr. Zezza and others unnamed but described as New Yorkers.²

We suspect that a study of the years commencing from 1906 will reveal similar activity on Imperato's part as well as a connection to New York City theatres because by 1914 he had become the company manager of Farfariello's own company and toured with him when Farfariello took the troupe on the road across the United States and to California.

Minor Theatre Companies 1900 to 1905

Many companies enjoyed only a brief existence during this period, some so brief that only one performance can be credited to them. How-

¹ Ibid.

² La Voce del Popolo (September 1, 1906 and September 7, 1906); and Vesuvio (September 7, 1906), clippings, Sisca Collection, Folder 99.

ever, there are so many of this type, which come together with a quick burst of energy and then disappear, that the practice must be considered as part of the overall pattern of theatrical activity of the time. With few exceptions, these groups all appear to be amateur and will be considered according to the following categories: drama groups that appear to come together for the sole purpose of creating theatre; drama groups that appear to exist as an organ of social or political organizations; drama groups associated with religious or educational institutions; and finally, performances which, for lack of information, cannot be credited to any particular theatre company.

Only a few notices describe the career of Professor G. Prete, whose company, La Compagnia Magica del Prof. Prete, spanned all six years of this study. Prete was a professional magician and the husband of the well-known chanteuse Mrs. Margherita Prete who also worked with his company. His first recorded performance was a benefit for the Sons of Columbus Legion at Majestic Hall on Wednesday, April 25, 1900. He billed himself as "The Great Magician" (in English) and his assistant, possibly his daughter, was Miss Maria Prete, the well-known actress of this period. She was billed as "The Mysterious" and it is interesting to note that the future "Eleonora Duse of the Italian-American stage" noted by Abbamonte started her career as a magician's assistant. Admission cost 50 cents including hatcheck.¹

His next performance at the Music Hall, 386 Westminster Street, in Providence, Rhode Island on Thursday, July 19, 1900 was described as:

una grande serata artistica spiritistica . . . l'occasione di poter dare conoscenza coi famosi spiriti Polletti che si sono proposti di spagliare senza remissione alcuna quanti avranno

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 96 (April 22, 1900), p. 5.

il coraggio di farsi rinchiusere nella Camera Diabolica.¹

When Prete performed at Palace Hall in Brooklyn on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, November 17, 18 and 19, 1902, and at Verga's Music Hall (the former Grand Eden) Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, November 20, 21 and 22, 1902, the bill promised "un grandioso spettacolo di prestidigitazione" (a grandiose spectacle of prestidigitation) with Prof. Prete's spirits.²

Prof. Prete enjoyed a benefit at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III on Saturday, April 16, 1904 and his show included "sue evoluzioni spiritistiche, ossia 20 minuti di scienze occulto" (his spiritualistic evolutions, or 20 minutes of occult science) in which he also presented the dance of the skeletons.³ On the road again, Prete's last recorded appearance in 1905 is for Monday, February 20 with Il Club Drammatico Aurora of Buffalo in that city's St. Stephen's Hall.⁴

Prete's musical directors were Maestro Giovanni Pico and Prot. Tramontana. Other performers with this company included some familiar names: Miss Giovannina Aprile, her sister Agnese, the Cunico sisters, Ester and Maria, Clemente Giglio. In the minimal research done thus far for the years after 1905, Prof. Prete's name never materializes but it

¹"a great artistic spiritualistic performance . . . the opportunity to be able to meet the famous Polletti spirits who have offered to reveal themselves without mercy to as many as have the courage to allow themselves to be shut up inside the Diabolical Room." L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 170 (July 19, 1900), p. 8.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 317 (November 13, 1902), p. 2; and N. 322 (November 18, 1902), p. 2.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 106 (April 15, 1904), p. 3.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 55 (February 24, 1905), p. 4.

is quite possible and even probable that he continued creating magic, in or out of town.

Named after the Italian actor, Il Nuovo Circolo Ermete Novelli began performances on Wednesday, May 30, 1900 at West End Hall, 164 Canal Street, with a cast that included both New York City and Boston actors.¹ Oddly enough, the group did not appear again for five years, at least on the record, and when they do, their name has a confident and established ring to it: La Compagnia Filodrammatica Ermete Novelli. On Thursday, March 23, 1905 they performed at the Manhattan Lyceum, and tickets for their performance could be purchased at the Barberia degli Amici, 147 Elizabeth Street. The company's director was Nicola Trapani.² From 1912 to 1914, they worked out of the Boro Park Clubhouse, 50th Street and 13th Avenue in Brooklyn.³ (The company should not be confused with La Compagnia Ermete Novelli, directed by the Italian actor himself, which toured to New York City in January 1905.⁴)

Italian plays were produced, one of them by Ciely Colajanni. The company members included Miss Maria Prete, Mr. G. Nutole, Mr. G. D'Amato, Francesco De Stefano of Boston, Mr. A. Donato of Boston, Mr. R. Zolla, Mr. L. Vanuccini, Mr. E. Pucci and Nino Trapani.

Nino Trapani, no doubt some relation to Nicola Trapani, was also the director of another shortlived company, based in Brooklyn, Il Club Filodrammatico Giovanni Bovio, named after the Italian dramatist. For

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 126 (May 27, 1900), p. 1.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 77 (March 18, 1905), p. 4; N. 78 (March 19, 1905), p. 3; and N. 81 (March 22, 1905), p. 3.

³ Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 1912, p. 252; and 1914, p. 252.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 306 (October 31, 1904), p. 3.

some strange reason, Trapani was also known as Nino Trapani Caracei. The first noted performance took place at Turn Hall in Brooklyn on Sunday, February 28, 1904. The company included cinema after each act of the show, unusual for the time.¹ Trapani reorganized the group (in what way is unclear) and they performed again Monday, January 2, 1905 at the Labor Lyceum Hall² in Brooklyn. Their last notice shows that they had taken a trip to Newark, New Jersey's New Auditorium, Orange Street near Broad, on Thursday, February 16, 1905. The accompanying notice contained this curious request: "Detto circolo proponendosi di compiere una nobile e santa missione domanda fiducioso il valido appoggio degli italiani."³ Although the "holy mission" was not specified, we can only surmise that it may have been a benefit.

Italian plays were presented, one of them by Stefano Interdonato. The musical director, Maestro Cav. Giuseppe Fulcoli, and the artists: Mr. A. Ventimiglia, Salvatore Russo, Mr. S. Saladino, Mr. G. Contessa, Mr. L. Ognibene, Cesare Bufano and Mrs. Alfieri composed the company.

La Compagnia Filodrammatica Giacomo Caiati was directed by Giacomo Caiati, an actor who had performed with Salvatore Abbamonte's company. His co-producers were Vincenzo Franzo and Adolfo Monaco. Their first show was done at the Manhattan Lyceum on Thursday, May 29, 1902.⁴ Three years to the day later their second and last performance went on at Arlington Hall. One inducement to attend was a lottery with expensive

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 56 (February 25, 1904), p. 3.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 341 (December 6, 1904), p. 4.

³"The aforementioned club, resolved to accomplish a noble and holy mission, confidently requests the vigorous support of the Italians." L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 47 (February 16, 1905), p. 4.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 147 (May 27, 1902), p. 2.

prizes: a lady's gold watch, a lady's pin and a man's stickpin.¹ The artistic corps of the company consisted of: Roberto Anselmi, Armando Agnini, Raffaello Bertucci, Mr. R. Fucito, Miss Guglielmina Balsamo, Miss Clarinda Morselli, Cav. Francesco Pagano, Lorenzo Pelligrino, Giuseppe Rotondo, Mr. G. Scielzo and the conductor, Maestro Gaetano Merola. Italian playwrights Ferdinando Martini and Carlo Roti were represented, in addition to the French D'Aubigny.

Abbamonte noted that circa 1900 or 1901, Luigi Zampone had a company which consisted of his family: his wife and two daughters, Antonietta and Maria. All we know of this company is that they produced plays by Pietro Gori and Felice Cavalotti at political meetings held by Mr. Canio and Mr. Radice at Mr. Bianchi's Bar in West Hoboken. But they lived in New York City² and performed with other New York companies.

In connection with Salvatore Abbamonte, we have already mentioned the name of Antonio Tua, who directed his own company in Brooklyn. We briefly summarized an encounter between the two men but here we reproduce in its entirety the dialogue in the anecdote, which gives a dramatic picture of Tua as both director and actor. Abbamonte described him as a joker, free lance prompter, social dramatist, costumer and propagandizer of liberal ideas, in other words, a Renaissance theatre person. On one particular evening sometime after November 26, 1903, he unexpectedly rang Abbamonte's bell, and insisted that he come with Tua immediately. Because of Tua's great excitement and because Abbamonte suspected the reason, he didn't stop to get his hat and cane but fol-

¹Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 101 (May 22, 1905), p. 3. N. 101 should really be N. 137, but was printed this way in error.

²Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," p. 9.

lowed Tua down the stairs, several at a time, to the train station. Tua would not answer Abbamonte's questions:

-- Che mai t'e' successo! -- gli domandai, appena entrati nel treno.
 -- Te lo diro' quando giungiamo -- egli mi rispose, affannoso.
 -- Ti hanno forse impedito qualche comizio rivoluzionario?
 -- Ma no. . . si tratta della mia reputazione d'artista!¹

Tua didn't explain anything until the two actors had reached a theatre in Brooklyn:

-- Mi manca "Roberto" per la rappresentazione di stasera, e tu devi salvarmi da un disastro -- mi disse.
 -- Sei pazzo -- gli risposi; cercando di esimermi dall'improvvisa richiesta e di riavermi dalla sorpresa. . .
 -- Parlo da senno -- insiste' lui, abbozzando un sorriso di compiacenza, per eccitare il mio orgoglio.
 -- Così', su due piedi, senza una prova. . . -- io balbettai.
 -- Ma che prove d'Egitto! Lei² ha bisogno di prove?
 intervenne il suggeritore Odierno.

In this way the prompter and the other members of the cast, all ready and waiting for the curtain to go up, flattered Abbamonte into going on in the role.

Tua me parse la divisa, facendomi appartare dietro un paravento per indossarlo e, sicuro del fatto suo, disparve. Indi me lo vidi a lato, minuscolo sergente quinte, entrambo fieri d'affrontare battaglia. E invero superammo le aspettative nostre e del pubblico.

Nella scena finale Tua desto' un' impressione

¹-- Whatever has happened to you? -- I asked him, as soon as we reached the train station.

-- I'll tell you when we get there -- he answered me, breathlessly.

-- Did they stop you from having some revolutionary meeting maybe?

-- But no . . . it regards my reputation as an artist!" Ibid.

²-- I have no 'Roberto' for tonight's show, and you must save me from disaster -- he told me.

-- You're crazy -- I told him, looking for a way to extricate myself from the unexpected request and to recover from the shock.

-- I'm talking seriously -- he insisted, a smile of satisfaction forming on his lips, in order to awaken my pride.

commoventissima. Egli apparve quasi nudo, bagnato fine alle ossa, con gli occhi fuori delle orbite, la lingua penzolante, strisciato carponi, estenuato dal nuoto e dall'ansia di giungere a tempo per salvare il compagno in ostaggio di morte per lui. . .

-- Bravo! -- gli dissi, a sipario calato, dopo ripetute chiamate agli onori del proscenio.

-- Ma se ora ti prende una polmonite? -- soggiunse Odierno.

-- Tutto. . . tutto per l'Arte, anche la morte -- grido' Tua, facendo scoppiare in una solenne risata tutti i compagni di scena.

Un altro scroscio di applausi, si prolungo' insistente. Egli di nuovo fece alzare il telone ed avanzo' una volta ancora, impavido e conciato in quel modo, a ricevere da solo gli omaggi.

Davvero li meritava. . .

The incident demonstrates that Tua was a resourceful director, not unlike Guglielmo Ricciardi in that respect, and dedicated and naturalistic actor.

This is the only note on Tua before 1906, but his energies continued to be spent in the theatre in the following years. At some point he moved to West Hoboken, New Jersey and in September 1910 he was performing works by Riccardo Cordiferro at the Liberty Theatre on Spring Street

-- Like this, on the spot, without a rehearsal . . . -- I stammered.

-- What do you mean rehearsal? -- interjected the prompter Odierno." Ibid.

¹"Tua gave me the uniform, making me go behind a flat to change into it and, sure of himself, he disappeared. Next I saw him by my side, as a little sergeant, both of us proud of going into battle. And for sure we surpassed our own expectations and those of the audience.

In the final scene, Tua inspired a very emotional response. He appeared almost naked, drenched to the bones, with his eyes out of the sockets, his tongue hanging out, on his hands and knees, exhausted from the swim and from the anxiety of arriving in time to save his friend who was being held hostage for him. . .

-- Bravo! -- I told him, when the curtain fell, after many curtain calls.

-- But what if you catch pneumonia now? -- remarked Odierno.

-- Everything. . . everything for Art, even death -- shouted Tua, making all the cast members laugh heartily.

Another shower of applause, it continued insistently. He again had the curtain raised and went out another time, fearless and dressed in the same way, to receive the applause alone!

Truly he deserved it. . ." Ibid.

in West Hoboken with La Compagnia Drammatica Teatro del Popolo directed by Prof. Ettore Mainardi. Tua had evidently been performing regularly in New Jersey.¹

Benedetto Colombo, who had appeared with the Maiori Company and at Ferrando's Hall, also directed his own company, called La Compagnia Drammatica Italiana B. Colombo. He is first noted on Monday, December 21, 1903 at Arlington Hall² but it was almost two years before he materialized again at Arlington Hall on Thursday, September 14, 1905 in a benefit for himself, in which he played Giorgio Gandi.³ The third and last notice about the company put them back in Arlington Hall on Thursday, October 5, 1905 in a benefit for Colombo and the actress, Mrs. Maria Oliva.⁴ The repertory included the works of Paolo Giacometti, Leopoldo Marengo and Victorien Sardou and their company was composed of Mr. L. La Cagnina and his brother, in addition to Oliva and Colombo, and other unnamed actors, one of whom had just recently arrived from Italy circa October 1905.

In the year 1904, three companies made very brief appearances on the New York theatre scenes. Il Circolo Bellini staged Lazzaro il malandrino (Lazzaro the robber) of unknown authorship on Tuesday, January 5, 1904 at the Teatro Italiano, 138 Bowery.⁵ At the same time the theatre was generally occupied by Maiori. He had either rented or donated the space to them for this one performance.

¹Vincenzi, loc. cit.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 354 (December 20, 1903), p. 3.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 254 (September 12, 1905), p. 3.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 269 (September 27, 1905), p. 3.

⁵Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 5 (January 5, 1904), p. 2.

The 3rd Avenue Family Theatre staged two productions in 1904, on Monday, February 8th and on or about Wednesday, April 20th. Both were Italian dramas of unknown pen.¹ The theatre was managed by M.J. Dixon and sat 1,750. It was located on Third Avenue between 30th and 31st Streets.²

On Saturday, June, 25, 1904 La Filodrammatica Trinacria gave a benefit for the actor Mr. G. Spingola. He and the baritone Mr. I. Terrasi were the only documented performers in the Cavalleria Rusticana of Giovanni Verga and Shakespeare's Hamlet at the Manhattan Lyceum Theatre.³ "Trinacria" was the ancient Roman name for Sicily. The word describes the three-pointed shape of the island. Undoubtedly, this company performed in the Sicilian dialect. Admission was 50 cents.

In 1905 four new companies emerged. Their minimal output does not preclude their continuing after 1905 but that fact has yet to be ascertained. The first of these is La Compagnia Pantalcone, directed by Mr. Chillemi, which produced on Wednesday, March 22, 1905 at Webster Hall, the five-act emotional drama of Davide Chiassone, La sorella del cieco (The sister of the blind man), followed by a monologue and a farce.⁴

On Monday, May 15, 1905 La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Alessandro di Palma, newly formed and directed by di Palma, staged Sardou's Andreina at the Manhattan Lyceum.⁵

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 35 (February 4, 1904), p. 3; and Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 104 (April 13, 1904), p. 3.

²Brooklyn Daily Eagle, (1905), p. 12.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 164 (June 12, 1904), p. 3.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 78 (March 19, 1905), p. 3.

⁵Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 153 (June 9, 1905), p. 3.

Il Circolo Filodrammatico Alessandro Manzoni made two appearances late in the year. Managed by Enrico Pizzutiella and directed by Giuseppe Petrone, the troupe first appeared at the Muller Bronx Casino, 2998 Third Avenue at 154 Street, on Thursday, October 19, 1905 in Sardou's Tosca and a farce.¹ They reappeared on Thursday, December 28, 1905 at Ebling Casino, Fifth Avenue and East 156th Street. Their musical director was Maestro Marcosano.²

Il Circolo Filodrammatico Vallelunga did not yet manage to stage any productions in 1905 but they did form as a group in November 1905 and celebrated their first annual banquet at their headquarters, 211 Avenue A, on November 15, 1905. Wine for the event was supplied by Basilea and Calandra, importers of wines and liqueurs, located at 48 Harrison Street. The philosophy behind the company's existence was formulated thus: "Il Circolo al diletto accoppia il nobile e santo principio di tenere sempre in alto il rispetto e l'amore per la patria lontana coltivandone principalmente il dolce idioma italiano."³ With such a well-stated and well-feted beginning, the group had a good chance of continuing in 1906.

A number of amateur groups were allied with or existed primarily as benevolent organizations, political groups, Italian national groups, or simply social clubs. Mostly all of them can claim only one production each, usually intended as a benefit for some worthy cause or

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 290 (October 18, 1905), p. 3; and N. 296 (October 25, 1905), p. 3.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 355 (December 22, 1905), p. 3.

³ "The amateur Club embraces the noble and holy principle of always holding aloft respect and love for our far off country, especially by cultivating its sweet Italian language." L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 320 (November 18, 1905), p. 3.

for the organization itself. On Thursday, May 10, 1900 La Compagnia Monte Myro produced a benefit for the Societa' Italiana di Beneficenza (Italian Benevolent Institute) at the Manhattan Lyceum. They charged 50 cents to see Felice Cavalotti's La figlia di Jefte (The Daughter of Jephtha) and a variety show accompanied by Prof. V. Rosati's band. Others associated with the group in an artistic capacity were: the violinist Mrs. A.J. Lamberson, Mrs. Maria Tocci-Dramis, Mr. Haslinger, Mr. Leveroni, the virtuoso manadolinist William Carlino, Mr. Guarino, the tenor Mr. C.M. Spigaroli, the dancing master Juliens, a female student of his, and the Perini sisters, dancers. The special patron of the event was the Consul General Cavaliere Giovanni Branchi, while a committee of other patrons was made up of Cav. C. Piva, Cav. G. Cavagnaro, Cav. Uff. Antonio Zucca, Mr. G. B. Morosini, Mr. L. Perera, Cav. Vito Contessa and Mr. F. N. Francolini.¹

Il Circolo Filodrammatico L'Amicizia (amicizia means friendship) charged 25 cents and 40 cents to attend their production of the three act comedy of unknown authorship, Stenterello il Cenciaiuolo di Firenze (Stenterello the Ragamuffin of Florence) at the Germania Assembly Rooms on Monday, February 18, 1901. The cast was made up of Mrs. E. Perani, Mrs. Jole Tonaldi, Mr. O. Franceschini, Mr. P. Cervelli, Mariano Domenici, Mr. N. Dominici, Mr. G. Guarnieri, Mr. C. Franceschini and Mr. L. Vanni.²

La Societa' Volere e Potere (The Will and Power Society) cele-

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 111 (May 10, 1900), p. 5; and N. 113 (May 12, 1900), p. 5.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 39 (February 14, 1901), p. 5.

brated its first dance, presided over by Dr. Clemente Vecchio, at the Manhattan Lyceum on Thursday, April 30, 1903. The emotional drama, Il Cittadino di Gand (The Citizen of Gand) supplemented the entertainment, admission to which cost each couple 50 cents.¹

Maestro G. Delnuzio led the orchestra for the dance which followed the staging of La forza del destino (The power of destiny) by the unconventionally named La Societa' William McKinley on the occasion of their first festival and picnic, Sunday, September 27, 1903, at Ebling's Casino. Mr. F. Provenzano was president of the organization and the chairman of the festival committee was Alfonso Di Giovanni.²

Il Ben Venuti Club (The Welcome Club) enjoyed a dramatic and vocal concert along with Giuseppe Giacosa's one-act verse play Una partita a scacchi (A game of chess) on Tuesday, September 27, 1904 at Grace Chapel, 417 East 13 Street. Their roster of entertainers included the Zampone sisters, Maria and Antonietta, the tenor Salvatore Miceli, the baritone I. Terrasi, the actor and playwright Mr. F. Verga, Mr. Pisciotta and Mr. Hardi. Admission cost 25 cents.³

I Cittadini Caltabellotesi (The Citizens of Caltabello) celebrated their grand annual festival and dance at the Manhattan Lyceum on Monday, February 27, 1905. A committee composed of Roberto Merlo, Francesco Montalbano, Antonio Montalbano and Vito Cefaldi organized the event. The admission charge of 50 cents included two Italian plays of unknown pen, one an American premiere, directed by Francesco Montalbano.⁴

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 118 (April 28, 1903), p. 2.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 260 (September 17, 1903), p. 1.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 274 (September 29, 1904), p. 3; and N. 275 (September 20, 1904), p. 5.

⁴ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 43 (February 12, 1905), p. 4.

La Societa' Veneta "Daniele Manin" (The Daniele Manin Venetian Society) managed two performances. The first, on Sunday, February 19, 1905 at the Amsterdam Opera House, 322-34 West 44 Street, served as a benefit for the Italian Benevolent Institute, located at 165 West Houston Street;¹ the second event was produced by the baritone, Mr. A. Falcier assisted by a festival committee chaired by Mr. G. Gallina and vice-chairman, Mr. R. Casonato. On Thursday, March 23 at Webster Hall, the evening offered a select and varied program of music and dramatic recitation, as well as a grand lottery and dancing.² Secretary for the company was Mr. A. Bianchetti, located at 220-22 Sullivan Street.³ Musicians included Prof. Lao, Maestro Giovanni Leotti and Maestro Pietro Lucchetti. The rest of the artistic personnel included: Alberto La Maida the macchiettista, Mr. Menegas the baritone, Salvatore Miceli the tenor, Ms. De Gloria the soprano, Luisa Franchi and her husband Vincenzo, Mrs. E. Sprignadello, Mr. R. Fucito the tenor, Lucio C. Zumbo and Giuseppe Fiaccherini. Admission to both events cost 25 cents but seats could be reserved for 50 cents.

The last two social clubs to appear in 1905 are notable for their production of the works of Italian-American writers. On Sunday, June 4, 1905, Il Club Gioventu Marinese (The Marinese Youth Club) celebrated its inauguration at the Manhattan Lyceum with a dance, a farce and a four-act spectacular drama written by one of the club's members, Giuseppe Bonomolo. The play's title was Agesilao Milano ovvero L'Onor Vendicato (Agesilao Milano or Honor Avenged) and it told the story of the soldier

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 47 (February 16, 1905), p. 4.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 80 (March 21, 1905), p. 3.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 86 (March 27, 1905), p. 3.

Agesilao Milano, a native of San Benedetto Ullano, who during an inspection on December 18, 1856, attempted to assassinate King Ferdinando II of Naples. He was shot for the attempt.¹ The Telegrafo reviewer favorably noted that the play was "pieno di quei colpi di scena che tanto appassiano gli spettatori."² (full of those coups de theatre which so excite the audience) The reviewer intentionally omitted specifics, unfortunately, because he wished to encourage attendance of the play three days later. Otherwise we might have a better idea of this playwright's techniques. The cast included Mr. C. Monteleone, Mr. G. Lo Giudice, Mr. N. Sapienza, one of the Zampone sisters, Mr. G. Li Castri and the music of Nicolo' Guglina.³

La Filodrammatica dell'Unione Socialista (The Drama Club of the Socialist Union) produced a benefit, in part for the wounded survivors of the earthquake in Calabria and in part for the newspaper Il Proletario, on Saturday, December 23, 1905 at Mannechor Hall, 293-97 East 56 Street. Mr. F. Vezzoli and Mr. E. Scaccabarozzi collaborated on a five-act adaptation of a novel by Emile Zola. The title was Verso la citta' felice (Towards a happy city). Admission to the play and the dance that followed was 50 cents.⁴

A small number of religious and/or educational groups put on performances as benefits or to commemorate religious feasts. Plays were usually on religious themes. The earliest of these was a joint effort

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 101 (May 22, 1905), p. 3, N. 101 should read N. 137 but was printed this way in error.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 146 (June 1, 1905), p. 4.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 158 (June 8, 1905), p. 3.

⁴ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 352 (December 20, 1905), p. 3; and N. 355 (December 22, 1905), p. 3.

of the Salesian Fathers, La Societa' San Luigi Gonzaga and the School of Saint Brigid. One of the Salesians, Rev. Lemoyne wrote the five-act drama Le Pistrine ossia Il Trionfo della Chiesa sul Paganesimo (The Mortars or The Triumph of the Church over Paganism) produced on Monday, February 18, 1901 in the little theatre at the School of Saint Brigid, located at 8th Street and Avenue B. Both the School and La Societa' San Luigi Gonzaga were beneficiaries of the event, which cost 25 cents admission and also promised musical entertainment. The cast was probably made up of students, since none of their names appear elsewhere in this history: Francesco Bassi, F. Ordine, Giuseppe Capozzi, Giuseppe Agazzi, Faustino Squassoni, Pietro Pacotti, Secondino Ciccarelli, Salvatore Ninno, Riccardo De Corpo, Erminio Maglio and others.¹ Admission was reduced to 15 cents for their next production two years later on Sunday, February 8, 1903 in the basement of Saint Brigid's Church. Tickets to La Vita e Passione di Nostro Signore Gesu' Cristo (The Life and Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ) could be purchased from La Societa' San Luigi Gonzaga and from La Societa' Don Giovanni Bosco.² Don Bosco is the patron saint of the Salesian Order.

La Compagnia Filodrammatica Dante Alighieri performed two benefits, on Tuesday, October 15 and Wednesday, October 16, 1901. The programs were performed in the Little Theatre in the Parish of San Gioacchino at 26 Roosevelt Street in Manhattan, and the benefits were earmarked for the Parish and its Monsignor S. E. Scalabrini. The 25 cent admission to the 7:30 p.m. show could be purchased in advance at the offices of the newspaper, L'Italiano in America at 220 Broadway, 217

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 41 (February 16, 1901), p. 5.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 38 (February 7, 1903), p. 2.

Bleecker Street and 315 East 12th Street, as well as at the theatre in the hall of San Gioacchino. The programs included plays on religious themes by one otherwise unidentified playwright, Píoton, and Rev. Lemoyne,¹ the Salesian who may have been associated with the parish.

La Societa' Figli di Maria (The Sons of Mary Societa) of the Church of Our Lady of Pompei at Bleecker and Carmine Streets, staged a benefit for the Church on Tuesday, November 12, 1901 at Farrell Hall, 190 Washington Place at 6th Avenue. The program offered a religious drama in four acts, Santa Augusta V.M. (Saint Augusta Virgin and Martyr) and a farce Le Due Parrucche in Guerra (The Two Hairdressers at War) for an admission of 25 cents.² The same hall, renamed St. Joseph Hall, was the scene of their next production on Tuesday, March 7, 1905. This time, known as Il Circolo Madonna Di Pompei, they staged a secular drama, I due sergenti by Carlo Roti from the French of D'Aubigny. A farce, ballads, music directed by Vincenzo E. Speciale and a fencing match supplemented the drama, for an admission of 25 cents.³

La Societa' Italiana di Mutuo Soccorso (The Italian Mutual Benefit Society) staged a benefit for the feast of San Rocco at San Rocco's Hall on Saturday, July 2, 1904. Gaetano Santoro directed a farce and a five-act drama taken from the French. Both plays are of unknown pen.⁴

La Societa' Grecesa di Mutuo Soccorso (The Greek Mutual Benefit Society) celebrated a two-day festival in honor of San Bartolomeo the

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 248 (October 13, 1901), p. 2; and N. 250 (October 16, 1901), p. 2.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 277 (November 12, 1901), p. 2.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 66 (March 7, 1905), p. 5.

⁴ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 177 (June 25, 1904), p. 5.

Apostle in August 1904. It might at first seem odd that a Greek organization was performing in Italian but the name Bartolomeo gives a clue as to the nature of the society. St. Bartolomeo is a saint revered especially in the Eastern Church. Thus, the adjective "Greek" refers not so much to nationality as to the Greek Orthodox religion, the Eastern sister of the Roman Catholic Church. So it seems a group of Italians following the Eastern rite had congregated under the banner of this society. They began their festival on Wednesday, August 24 at 10 a.m. with an illuminated parade that originated on Morris Avenue between 149th Street and 150th Street in the Bronx. Taking part in the parade, which lasted until noon, was a band of musicians dressed in the uniform of the Italian Bersaglieri and directed by Prof. Domenico Clemente. Another parade commenced at 8 p.m. on Thursday, August 25 at St. Angela's Church at 162nd Street and Morris Avenue and progressed to the society's headquarters at 529 East 149th Street, where that evening at 11 p.m. a sacred drama was played. Luigi Capobianco directed Il martirio di San Bartolomeo Apostolo (The martyrdom of Saint Bartolomeo the Apostle) which represented the story of the saint who was skinned alive in an ancient Armenian city. The orchestra of Prof. Peppino Donatelli accompanied the fireworks display by the pyrotechnic artists, Giuseppe Girone and Davide Anzalone. Officers of the Societa' Grecese were: Mr. A. Lucchesi, President; Mr. A. Gliatta, Vice-President; Mr. R. Norcia, Treasurer; Michelangelo Belluci, Secretary; in addition to "Curatori, Consiglieri, Ufficiali."¹ (Curators, Counsellors, Officials)

A number of performances, events, happenings, activities related to persons in the Italian-American theatre cannot be specifically

¹Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 235 (August 22, 1904), p. 2.

attributed to a particular theatre company. But they have anecdotal interest since they help to round out our picture of the theatre of the times. For instance, A. Mongillo advertised that he sold theatre books and Neapolitan songs at his bookstore at 127 Mulberry Street,¹ so we can assume that some impresarios and Neapolitan singers and musicians were supplied by his store. Another note tells of a meeting of theatre people at Cella Park which took place on an unspecified date sometime before October 27, 1903 and was attended by the actors Rinaldi, Ettore Minervini, Mr. A. Marzorati of the Tiratori organization, L. Lavaggi, P. Campomenoti and Mr. A. Quattrocchi, co-owner of the Dasian Theatrical Emporium at 26 Union Square,² where no doubt some impresarios bought their theatrical supplies.

Cordiferro in his bibliography mentions several performances of his works but fails to attribute them to a specific company. Two such shows played during this time period. His macchietta, Il poliziotto italo-americano (The Italian-American detective), was performed by Aristidi Sigismondi with music by Maestro F. Coviello sometime in 1902. A performance of L'Onore Perduto was staged by an unknown company on Wednesday, March 25, 1903 at Venice Hall in Brooklyn.³ Other unattributed productions include a new drama by the playwright of unknown origin, Sab Bilott. The play's enticing title was La vendetta sul Palcoscenico (Revenge on the Stage) and was performed Thursday, March 26, 1903 at the Manhattan Lyceum, followed by a Pulcinella farce.⁴ A

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 184 (August 20, 1900), p. 4.

²Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 300 (October 27, 1903), p. 3.

³Cordiferro bibliography, loc. cit.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 84 (March 25, 1903), p. 2.

performer named Mommo¹ was supposed to begin a series of "rappresentazioni stupefacenti" (stupefying performances) on Thursday, August 10, 1905 at Webster Hall¹ but becoming suddenly indisposed, had to postpone his opening to Thursday, August 17. He charged 50 cents for reserved seats and 35 cents for the orchestra.²

The details of some performers' lives come to light after some extraordinary or sensational news about them is reported in the press. The Araldo correspondent in Philadelphia reported that sometime before September 3, 1903, Amelia Gabrielli, an actress from New York, was shot with a revolver in that city. She had abandoned her husband and was living with her lover, Roberto Ansolino, in a hotel. The man attempted suicide but somehow Amelia got in the line of fire.³ Sometime shortly before October 27, 1903 Ms. Corona Riccardo, the Neapolitan actress who had been performing at the Manhattan Lyceum, was seriously wounded by a gunshot to the chest. One rumor had it that she was shot by a disappointed admirer who had been following her around for months. Another version of the incident held that two men were arguing outside 143 West 36th Street, when one pulled a revolver and shot. Corona, who was at the window, was accidentally hit.⁴ Maestro Creatore, conductor of the Creatore Band, was arrested in August 1905 for abandoning his wife and children without means of support.⁵ He was the subject of a caricature by the quick change artist and impressionist from Italy, Colombino,

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 220 (August 9, 1905), p. 3.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 222 (August 11, 1905), p. 3.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 246 (September 3, 1902), p. 2.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 300 (October 27, 1903), p. 2.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 209 (August 15, 1905), p. 3.

visiting here for an engagement at the Manhattan Lyceum on Wednesday, July 1, 1903. At the time, Creatore was described as "eccentrico ma valoroso"¹ (eccentric but valiant).

Many companies formed in New York with the intent of going on the road but would frequently find themselves back in New York City, poorer than when they started out. The director of one such troupe, who wished to stay anonymous, related the following incident to Falbo, regarding his experiences on the road. Arriving in New Haven, he and his company went to an Italian-American rooming house where the troupe would lodge and dine. In the hope of ingratiating himself with the proprietress, the capocomico told her:

-- Sapete, donna Mary, quando abbiamo lasciato Bridgeport il padrone della pensione -- che cara persona! -- piangeva. . .
-- Ma a me non mi farete piangere: pecche' cca se paga anticipato!²

On this realistic note, we leave the minor theatre companies of the period and go on to consider the major nightclubs and music halls that were in business during these years.

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 174 (June 23, 1903), p. 1.

² -- You know, Mrs. Mary, when we left Bridgeport the landlord of the rooming house -- what a dear person! -- he cried. . .

-- But you won't make me cry: because here you pay in advance!" Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (July 5, 1942), p. 5S.

CHAPTER III

OTHER THEATRICAL FORMS

La Villa Penza

The *caffè concerto* scene of New York City's Italian community was dominated by three major nightclubs: Ferrando's Music Hall (later known as the Villa Manganaro), the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III (formerly known as the Caffè Concerto Pennachio) and the Villa Penza. The Villa Penza began its night life as the Villa Concert Hall at its grand opening on or about Wednesday, November 21, 1900. Domenico Volpe was the proprietor and the Compagnia Drammatica of Nicola Brigante provided the entertainment. Nicola Brigante acted as director and manager of the Villa. Located at 196 Grand Street, the Villa was able to take advantage of the restaurant service of Antonio Ferrara's Ristorante across the street at 195 Grand Street.¹

In our treatment earlier of La Compagnia Napoletana we described how, by Wednesday, April 9, 1902, Francesco Ricciardi had bought and renovated the *caffè*, now called the Villa Napoli. Ricciardi's own company were the attraction.² Ricciardi used the restaurant service of his next door neighbor, the Hotel and Trattoria del Matese, at 198 Grand St., owned by Raffaele Penza, and also furnished Penza's establishment

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 278 (November 17, 1900), p. 4; and Anno VIII, N. 63 (March 14, 1901), p. 4.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno IX, N. 99 (April 9, 1902), p. 2.

with alcoholic beverages.¹ The *caffè concerto* and the restaurant must have had easy access between the two, which facilitated the passage of wine and liquors internally from one location to the other. The interior of the Villa Napoli included a small, slightly elevated stage, a fireproofed tin roof, windows on one wall and a narrow aisle separating the neat rows of wooden chairs, which accommodated approximately 100 people at most.²

Raffaele Penza had opened the Matese Restaurant in 1898. It had quickly earned a good reputation for respectability and quick service, which, together with Penza's courteous manner, assured the popularity of the restaurant.³ The dining room of the Matese Restaurant became the setting for one of the six acts of Guglielmo Ricciardi's drama Marta ovvero i Drammi dell'Emigrazione (Martha or the Dramas of Emigration) produced at Majestic Hall on Monday, December 28, 1903.⁴ At this date Raffaele Penza was still the owner of the Restaurant, although Francesco Ricciardi no longer owned the Villa Napoli. By July 2 and 3, 1904, when Antonio Maiori and Pasquale Rapone performed at the Villa, Gaetano Borriello was noted as proprietor.⁵ Under Borriello, Giovanni De Rosalia and his company moved into the Villa Napoli as of Wednesday, July 6, 1904. At this time the ads boasted ten electric fans and 32

¹"Pulcinella in Corte," Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 64 (March 5, 1903), p. 1.

²Bonsal, p. 3.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 140 (May 21, 1905), p. 3.

⁴Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 359 (December 25, 1903), p. 2.

⁵L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 184 (July 2, 1904), p. 3.

windows,¹ and free admission.² An oyster bar was situated near the window of the caffè.³ De Rosalia was recorded at the Villa Napoli until Sunday, November 6, 1904.⁴ At some unspecified point after that date, the Villa Napoli closed down.

By January 11, 1905, the enterprising Raffaele Penza bought the building which housed the former Villa Napoli and renovated it as a combination bar and caffè concerto,⁵ with, no doubt, restaurant service by his own convenient next door trattoria. The Grand Opening was celebrated on Saturday, January 14, 1905:

La vecchia "Villa Napoli" e' era irreconoscibile, poiché' il bravo Penza senza badare a spese ha messo tutto a nuovo. Non piu quei palchi indecenti, ne l'ostricaro accanto alla vetrina, ma un locale elegante che puo dar dei punti all' "Atlantic Garden" di Bowery.⁶

Although the exact nature of the internal renovations is unclear, the large concert room at the Villa was opened on Tuesday, January 31, 1905 with a party to which Penza invited the public.⁷ The bistro was re-christened as "La Villa Penza," the same name it bears today (with the slightly altered spelling of Pensa).

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 191 (July 9, 1904), p. 2.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 294 (October 19, 1904), p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 13 (January 13, 1905), p. 3.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 310 (November 5, 1904), p. 2.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 11 (January 11, 1905), p. 3.

⁶ "The old 'Villa Napoli' will be unrecognizable, because the good Mr. Penza has spared no expense to make everything new.

No more of those indecent boxes, or the oyster stand near the window, but an elegant place which could give pointers to the 'Atlantic Garden' on the Bowery." Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 13 (January 13, 1905), p. 3.

⁷ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 31 (January 31, 1905), p. 3.

On Monday, March 13, 1905, Generoso Ristaino was first noted as manager.¹ He received a benefit in his honor on Friday, April 14, organized by a committee of such community notables as Antonio Ferrara, Tony Bacarozy, Mr. E. Vitelli, Mr. E. Garramone, Mr. A. De Nicola, Mr. E. Quatrucci and Mr. L. Tandosa.² (Ferrara and Bacarozi also collaborated on the production of Italian opera at the Grand Theatre.³) It was at this time also that L'Araldo reported how many Americans were beginning to frequent the shows at the Villa Penza.⁴ During this period Ristaino is usually described as the locale's manager but his labors must have also bordered on the creative since Riccardo Cordiferro remembered that Ristaino and his Company produced his Giuseppina Terranova (the sequel to L'Onore Perduto) at the Villa Penza on Tuesday, May 15, 1906.⁵ Other well-known community members helped organize benefits at the Villa Penza: the banker Don Angelo Legniti for Edoardo De Pascale on Thursday, June 15, 1905;⁶ and the banker and former owner of the Villa Napoli, Gaetano Borriello, together with the musical instrument-maker Mr. A. Crauso for a benefit on Tuesday, August 15, 1905. Crauso's ads for his shop at 192 Grand Street appeared often in L'Araldo Italiano; Borriello's banking office was located at 81 Mulberry Street.⁷

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 72 (March 13, 1905), p. 3.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 97 (April 7, 1905), p. 3.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 122 (May 4, 1905), p. 1.

⁴ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 119 (April 29, 1905), p. 3.

⁵ La Follia, clipping (May 26, 1918), Sisca Collection, Folder 99; and Cordiferro bibliography, Folder 1.

⁶ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 165 (June 15, 1905), p. 3.

⁷ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 224 (August 13, 1905), p. 1.

Geographically, the number for the Villa Penza was 196 while the Matese Restaurant, a few paces Eastward, was 198 Grand Street. However, under Penza's ownership, the two locations became easily confused among the commentators. For instance, the Villa Penza's address was often cited as 198 Grand or 196-198 Grand. The Matese Restaurant was a successful enterprise and required Penza's use of the entire building. The telephone number was 641 Spring.¹

Penza was applauded in the press for his management of both the Restaurant and the Caffè:

Il Sig. Penza e' riuscito dove altri hanno incontrato l'insuccesso e se in questo c'e' della fortuna, c'e' pero' in dose massima il merito.

Con l'onesta dei suoi metodi, con la giovialita' del suo carattere, con l'energia e la gentilezza inesauribile il Signor Penza ha circondato se' stesso di innumerevoli simpatie ed amicizie che sono la base piu' solida per qualsiasi intraprese.²

Per questo gli facciamo di cuore le nostre congratulazioni.

The optimistic praise showered on Penza above was shortlived. Sometime between the performance of Giuseppina Terranova in May of 1906 and September of 1907, he stopped operating the Villa Penza Caffè. His success as a restaurateur was not equaled by his entrepreneurial attempts at running a nightclub. By September 9, 1907, the Manhattan Amusement Cinematografo occupied the former Villa Penza address at 196 Grand Street. The movie theatre was owned by Pietro Sirignano, who, together with his wife Carolina, also sold sweets, confections and

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 156 (June 13, 1905), p. 4.

² "Mr. Penza has succeeded where others have met failure and if in this there was luck, there was also a great deal of merit.

By the honesty of methods, by the cheerfulness of his character, by the energy and his inexhaustible gentility, Mister Penza has surrounded himself with innumerable friendships and people who like him, which are the strongest foundation for any enterprise.

For this we extend our heartfelt congratulations." L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 140 (May 21, 1905), p. 3.

Neapolitan ice cream at their Caffè Sirignano, at 387 Broome Street, telephone 3038 Spring.¹ By 1910 the locale at 196 Grand Street was called Sirignano Hall,² and the Villa Penza that stands today is situated at 198 Grand Street, the address of Penza's Matese Restaurant.

Since the Villa Penza operated essentially as a nightclub, the directors in charge of entertainment were generally musical directors, among them Maestro Prof. Raffaele De Luca, who ran a "Scuola di Pianoforte" at 508 Henry Street in Brooklyn, telephone 4185 Franklin.³ At some point he moved to 2026 85th Street in Brooklyn.⁴ De Luca started as musical director with the Villa Penza's Grand Opening in January 1905.⁵ As of Monday, March 13, 1905 Maestro Prof. Giovanni Leotti took over as musical director⁶ and he continued in that capacity until at least Sunday, December 31, 1905,⁷ the day which closes this period of study. He was also responsible for the musical arrangement for Rimorso (Remorse) by Mr. G. Cantalupo, performed Thursday, June 15, 1905⁸ and Sunday, July 2, 1905.⁹

During the Villa Penza's brief existence, a good number of vocal-

¹Pane, p. 22.

²Contract between Pietro Sirignano and Eduardo Migliaccio, dated January 31, 1910, Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 183 (July 1, 1904), p. 1.

⁴Cordiferro address book, loc. cit.

⁵Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 13 (January 13, 1905), p. 3.

⁶Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 72 (March 13, 1905), p. 3.

⁷L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 365 (December 31, 1905), p. 3.

⁸L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 165 (June 15, 1905), p. 3.

⁹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 182 (July 2, 1905), p. 3.

ists contributed to the musical and vocal concerts presented there, many of them familiar names from the *caffe* scene of the period: Mrs. Zuriga De Sanctis-Ingegneros (the soprano who performed opera duets with a variety of partners), the tenors, Salvatore Miceli and Salvatore Benigno, the basso Antonio Oteri, and the baritone, Mr. E. Amaducci; Amaducci and Oteri also performed opera duets together; other duetists, such as Amelia and Roberto Flores; the comedienne Mrs. Teresa Gioia and the baritone Emilio Scotti; the comedienne Mrs. Maria Dulmont and the comedian Alberigo Rangheilli; and Marcellino and Margherita Mele; tenors such as Mr. R. Fucito and Vincenzo Barile; baritones such as Mr. N. Frasca and Salvatore Nunziato; macchiettisti such as Eduardo Perretti, Giustino Verace, Edoardo De Pascale and Gennaro Camerlingo, an impresario in his own right; soubrettes such as Miss May Lester and Miss Madge O'Brien; and other vocalists such as the two Janson Sisters, the basso Antonio Stazione, Miss Elvira Barrelli, the songstress Rosina Criscuolo, Miss Nunzia Franco, the Italian-American songstress Annita Casale and the contralto Mrs. Tina Cimmelli who was also noted for her interpretation of Santuzza in Cavalleria Rusticana.

Dramatic plays were not performed at the Villa Penza; theatrical energies went into the production of musical skits and operatic selections. The single original creation by an Italian-American writer was Rimorso (Remorse) a moving dramatic duet in verse by Mr. G. Cantalupo with musical arrangement by Maestro Giovanni Leotti. A description of the emotions played out in the duet -- love, seduction, paternal curse, revenge, remorse¹ -- reveals the familiar structure of

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 165 (June 15, 1905), p. 3.

melodrama.

Another significant musical event at the Villa Penza was the first recorded celebration of the annual Neapolitan festival of Piedigrotta. The Italian historian Prof. Gocchia found evidence for the origins of the festival in the pagan rites practiced in the Satyricon of Petronius. But the Church of the Piedigrotta, from which the festival takes its name, was built no earlier than 1207 at Naples. Festivals and processions associated with the church are mentioned by both Petrarch and Boccaccio, while two 15th century historians, Leostello and Notar Giacomo, chronicled the large crowds making pilgrimages to the church. The pomp and ceremony associated with the feast seem to have originated around 1616 when the then-current Spanish viceroy initiated the custom of a spectacular procession of his "viceregina" and his entire retinue in carriages toward the sanctuary of the Piedigrotta. The tradition was continued annually by himself and his successors.¹

In Naples, the festival became a great popular feast, with immense crowds of people filling the streets, many people wearing masks in religious procession. Also characteristic of the event was a carriage decorated with shining lanterns, sprigs of myrtle, and filled with musicians. New songs were traditionally written for the occasion and eventually song contests became associated with the Piedigrotta, which always took place in early September.²

Transported to America the festival kept many of the same characteristics when staged by Italian immigrants: colorful parades throughout the streets of Italian neighborhoods, vocal concerts of

¹G. Miranda, "Piedigrotta," in Pane, p. 11.

²Ibid.

songs, duets and choral numbers, and song contests, the winners of which were published in souvenir programs. The event was also celebrated with special galas in the theatres and cafes.¹ The Piedrigrotta which ran in New York City from Thursday, September 7, through Sunday, November 5, 1905 was hosted by the Villa Penza. The ads promised the best musicians, the finest artists, and the singing of sentimental songs by the public.² For the following year's festival in September 1906, Penza and Bacarozy collaborated on a Piedrigrotta staged at Tammany Hall, but the Piedrigrotta of September 9, 1907 was left in the hands of Aniello Nappo at the Villa Vittorio Emanuele III.³

Eventually, Raffaele Penza either sold or rented the Villa Penza nightclub to the Sirignanos but probably retained the restaurant which he may well have renamed Villa Penza, the reason the name remains today. The present owners are, lamentably, unaware of any details of the establishment's early history.

Ferrando's Music Hall

The personality of the Ferrando who ran Ferrando's Music Hall remains a mystery, as does his first name. He was usually referred to simply as "Ferrando." He ran his establishment, a cafe concerto located at 184 Sullivan Street, from at least September 1, 1902 when his ads start appearing in L'Araldo Italiano, until April 22, 1905. Since the first advertisement on record does not specify a grand opening in

¹Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 21, 1942), p. 5S.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, Nos. 249 to 307 (September 7, 1905 to November 5, 1905), p. 3.

³Pane, p. 4.

September of 1902, it is entirely possible that Ferrando was operating his business prior to that date.

He also advertised in Il Telegrafo, and was a friend of a reporter there who favorably reviewed the caffe:

L'amico Ferrando l'ha indovinata! Col suo "savoir faire" e col suo buon senso pratico, ha saputo creare nel magnifico locale, detto Ferrando's Hall . . . un vero centro italiano di spettacoli vari, attraentissimi. . . . Di piu da Ferrando si mangia e si beve bene, quindi vi e di tutto o per passarsela magnificamente.¹

As indicated above, and in a typical manner of caffe concerto operations, Ferrando provided entertainment but also made his profits by selling food and alcohol. Beer went for five cents a glass.²

Also attached to his business and located, we assume, above the restaurant and bar, was the Hotel Genova. In addition to the "magnifico locale" described above, the reporter called the performance space a "grazioso treatro"³ (a gracious or pretty theatre), while Salvatore Abbamonte remembered the stage as "miniscule."⁴

Ferrando was a succesful businessman and his record for this period, with respect to entertainment, is impressive; with the exception of Sundays when he was sometimes closed, hardly a day goes by during this two and a half year segment that some type of performance is not recorded.

¹"Our friend Ferrando has guessed it! With his 'savoir faire' and with his good practical sense, he knew how to create a magnificent place, called Ferrando's Hall . . . a veritable Italian center with varied and spectacular attractions. . . . Furthermore at Ferrando's you eat and drink well, so everything is there to enjoy yourself magnificently." Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 72 (March 13, 1903), p. 1.

²Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," p. 9.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 72 (March 13, 1903), p. 1.

⁴"minuscolo palcoscenici della Ferrando Hall e di Villa Mascolo" (miniscule stages of Ferrando's Hall and the Villa Mascolo). Abbamonte, "Attori e Filodrammatici," p. 9.

So successful was Ferrando that in April of 1905 he sold the business to Letizia Manganaro and moved to Fort Lee, New Jersey, where he bought what became known as "Ferrando's Park Hotel", a hotel with a restaurant, bowling alleys and pool tables, located on the corner of Main Street and Central Avenue.¹ The last we hear of Ferrando, his new restaurant was the location for the banquet of La Societa' Nazionale Dante Alighieri which took place on Sunday, August 13, 1905.²

When Mrs. Managanaro took over the *caffe concerto* from Ferrando, she retained the name "Ferrando's Music Hall" until at least November 1905, and a former stage director at Ferrando's Hall, Mr. V. Mollica, was her manager.³ But by 1906 the name of the locale had been changed to Villa Manganaro after its current owner. Rocco De Russo described her as: "una brava signora . . . che aveva di me una grande stima."⁴ (a fine lady . . . who had great consideration for me.)

Ferrando was a businessman and restaurateur; he was not as far as we have been able to determine involved as a theatrical artist. Generally, someone other than himself took responsibility for the night's performance and there is no indication that he ever directed or performed in any of the productions at his own *caffe*. Initially the fare at Ferrando's Music Hall was limited to variety entertainments with perhaps a *Pulcinella* farce or macchietttista included. The variety shows ran the gamut of vaudeville acts: films and cinematic expositions, trapeze and acrobatic artists, cyclists, magic shows, international singers and

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 113 (April 24, 1905), p. 3.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 224 (August 13, 1905), p. 1.

³ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 324 (November 22, 1905), p. 3.

⁴ De Russo, p. 37.

dancers, as well as the usual potpourri of vocalists performing ballads, duets, opera selections and folk songs. Eventually, full length comedies and dramas found room on the bill, to the point where only plays were being advertised. However, we suspect that some type of vocalizing was still included either before the performance or during intermissions, as was the usual habit.

Ferrando's Hall enjoyed a unique place in the *caffe concerto* arena, a fact which may explain his consistent success during this period. The other music halls and *caffes*, located as they were in the Italian section of East Harlem (Ricciardi's Grand Eden and the Salone Margherita) or in Little Italy of the lower East Side (Villa Napoli, Villa Vittorio Emanuele III, Cafe Eldorado), catered to their predominantly Neapolitan and Sicilian audiences, offering plays in those dialects and the traditional folksongs and ballads of the corresponding regions in Italy. Pulcinella, remember, the star attraction of the Villa Napoli, was a Neapolitan mask. Ferrando's Music Hall by comparison was situated in the Italian section of Greenwich Village, where there was a small concentration of Northern Italians. Thus, the Milanese and Piedmontese dialects were spoken in Ferrando's. This is not to say that Ferrando's became exclusively a Northern Italian enclave; the Sicilian Antonio Maiori also played there, as did the Neapolitan Guglielmo Ricciardi, and other European singers, comedians and actors. As a matter of fact, the flavor of the entertainment at Ferrando's was thoroughly international, at least with respect to the vocal and instrumental concerts and the variety shows. The plays and dramas, however, continued invariably to be performed in Italian, whether Northern or Southern dialects depended on the director in residence at the time. But the national origins of the plays and play-

wrights chosen to be played was culturally very diverse, as were the entertainers who performed in the vaudeville shows.

This special quality is born out by a remark of Giuseppe Cautela's: "The name of this place marked a change: it tried to appeal to the somewhat Americanized element."¹

From Monday, March 2 through Monday, September 28, 1903, the orchestra leader Maestro Vincenzo Gaudiosi took charge of the grand concerts and vaudeville shows. During this period, Mrs. Renata Scarlati Brunorini of Newark directed a production of the eight-act spectacular and emotional drama Il Bravo di Venezia (The Hero of Venice), which enjoyed a run from Monday, August 3 through Monday, August 24, 1903.² Renata Brunorini, already noted as an actress in connection with the Maiori and both Ricciardi companies, has the distinction of being the first Italian-American woman director and playwright, both signal events taking place at Ferrando's Hall. The company was called simply La Compagnia Comica-Drammatica. Mrs. Brunorini's financial arrangements with Ferrando are unknown but she received a benefit in her honor on Thursday, June 2, 1904 with the production of La Traviata o la signora delle Camelie³ (The Woman led astray or the lady of the Camelias), in which she no doubt played the title role. She also performed with many other companies in this history.

From Tuesday, August 25 through Monday, August 28, 1903, La

¹Cautela, p. 106.

²Il Telegrafo, Anno III, Nos. 215 to 236 (August 3, 1903 to August 24, 1903), p. 1.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 154 (June 2, 1904), p. 2.

Compagnia William Ricciardi was in residence and performed untitled "spectacles."¹ Gaudiosi continued to lead the variety shows. His pianist, Professor W. Richter, was listed as stage director from Tuesday, September 29, through Saturday, November 7, 1903. But this refers to the variety shows, as no stage plays were performed, other than short comedy sketches and musical skits.²

An actor and director, Mr. Milanini, became associated with Ferrando's Music Hall from Tuesday, November 24, 1903 through Tuesday, April 5, 1904. If his name were not indicative enough, certainly his performances in the Milanese and Piedmontese dialects reveal his Northern Italian origins. Under his direction and supervision the actors at Ferrando's were called La Compagnia diretta dell'attore Milanini (The Company directed by the actor Milanini). During Milanini's tenure there, full-length plays as well as variety concerts were the usual offerings. The plays represented a variety of European and anonymous authors, but Milanini specialized in farces and comedies featuring the *commedia dell'arte* mask of Meneghino,³ as Ricciardi specialized in Pulcinella and Rapone in Pascariello.

Meneghino was associated with the city of Milan in the same way that Pulcinella was identified with Naples. The mask of Meneghino spoke in the Milanese dialect and functioned in the scenario in this fashion:

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, Nos. 236 to 271 (August 25, 1903 to September 28, 1903), p. 1.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, Nos. 272 to 311 (September 29, 1903 to November 7, 1903), p. 1. N.B. in Nos. 289, 306 and 308 the ad appears on p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, Nos. 328 to 365 (November 24, 1903 to December 31, 1903), p. 2; and Anno IV, Nos. 1 to 96 (January 1, 1904 to April 5, 1904), p. 2. N.B. in N.76 the ad appears on p. 3.

The simpleton would come on stage and go off without the slightest regard for plot or action, making jokes, in . . . dialect, on prominent men or events of the day, taking off one of the actors, and playing the clown in general. This part of lone cavalier was performed by Meneghino in Milan . . . The Italians called these roles caratterista, because they belonged to a particular region, and had nothing to do with the play itself. . . . They were popular types and very variable. . . . They possess all the flavour of their respective localities.¹

The word caratterista in Italian means "character actress" or "character actor," which indicates that the character took on an importance in and of itself without any concern for the needs of the script. Of course, in a *commedia dell'arte* scenario such a role was entirely possible. It also explains why such a role would be peculiar, eccentric, speaking a specific dialect, wearing regional costume and why its success would depend on the "rozze o raffinate bravure di attori, i quali vivono di pretesti e di raffazzonature; non ispira opere d'arte ad autori."²

It is not entirely true that the mask of Meneghino failed to inspire writers. Mr. Milanini staged a number of Meneghino comedies, Meneghino a Venezia (Meneghino in Venice) in two acts by Carlo Goldoni, on Tuesday, February 9, 1904;³ and A monoretata e doie pistolettate, con Felice Sciosciamocca e Meneghino in two acts by Cavaliere Eduardo Scarpetta, staged Wednesday, February 17, Thursday, February 18, Tuesday, February 23, Wednesday, February 24, 1904, and also Friday, December 2, 1904.⁴ The other Meneghino comedies mounted by Milanini

¹ Duchartre, pp. 289-90.

² "rough or refined bravado of actors, who live on appearances and botching up; it doesn't inspire works of art from playwrights." D'Amico, V. II, p. 159.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 40 (February 9, 1904), p. 2.

⁴ The title is difficult to translate, especially since issues of Il Telegrafo could not agree on the spelling of the title. Anno IV, N. 54 (February 23, 1904), p. 2 and N. 55 (February 24, 1904), p. 2, give

remain anonymous, and owing to the need for an expert actor to create such a role, these anonymous plays may very well have been Milanini's own creations:

Meneghino Consegnato per Una Notte (Meneghino Confined to Barracks for One Night), one act farce in the Milanese dialect staged Thursday, November 26 (Thanksgiving), 1903;¹

Meneghino, Servitore Di Due Padroni (Meneghino, Servant of Two Masters), two act farce performed Wednesday, December 9, 1903;²

Meneghino ufficiale per mezz'ora (Meneghino an official for half an hour), one act comedy mounted Saturday, December 12, Monday, December 14, and Tuesday, December 15, 1903;³

La Cena di Don Giovanni con Meneghino servitore disperato (Don Giovanni's Dinner with Meneghino the desperate servant), farce staged Thursday, December 17, 1903;⁴

Meneghino presunto assassino (Meneghino alleged murderer), one act comedy performed Monday, December 21, 1903;⁵

us A monaretata e doie pistolettate . . while N. 48 (February 17, 1904), p. 2 and No. 49 (February 18, 1904), p. 2, give us A maretata e a pistolettata . . Both titles appear to be distorted. "A monoretata" could be either a dialect or typographical distortion of "Omo maretata" meaning "a married man." If so, the title might translate as "A married man and two pistol shots . . .," possibly referring to a shotgun wedding. Another variation occurred in issue N. 337 (December 2, 1904), p. 3: Nu pistuletta e na maritata which translates as "a small pistol and a marriage" leading us again to translate colloquially as "a shotgun wedding."

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 330 (November 26, 1903), p. 2.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 343 (December 9, 1903), p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 346 (December 12, 1903), p. 2; N. 348 (December 14, 1903), p. 2; and N. 349 (December 15, 1903), p. 2.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 351 (December 17, 1903), p. 2.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 355 (December 21, 1903), p. 2.

Meneghino innamorato (Meneghino in love), one-act comedy mounted Saturday, December 26, 1903.¹

At least two more plays, we can be certain, were performed in Northern Italian dialects: Le Disgrazie di un Milanese a Novara (The Misfortunes of a Milanese in Novara), one-act comedy in the Milanese dialect staged Friday, December 11, 1903;² and Osti e non Osti, ovvero El Sindech Bartold (Hosts and non-Hosts, or Mayor Bartold), three-act comedy in the Piedmontese dialect, in which Milanini interpreted the role of Mayor Bartold; it was performed Tuesday, April 5, 1904.³ It was also during Milanini's tenure at Ferrando's that Renata Brunorini's one-act farce, Lo zio di dieci nepoti (The uncle with ten nephews) was produced, making her the first Italian-American woman playwright. The day was Saturday, January 9, 1904.⁴

After April 5, 1904, Milanini's name and activities disappear from our records. For a brief time--Monday, April 11 until Sunday, April 17, 1904--the reigning company at Ferrando's was called La Nuova Compagnia "Citta di Genova."⁵ Mostly dramas were performed by this group and except in noting that Genoa is Northern Italian city, there is little else to designate a character for the group. The company showed up once more in West Hoboken, New Jersey on Saturday, July 2, 1904, when Renata Brunorini directed a production of Sardou's Tosca at Imperial Hall.⁶

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 360 (December 26, 1903), p. 2.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 345 (December 11, 1903), p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 96 (April 5, 1904), p. 2.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 9 (January 9, 1904), p. 2.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, Nos. 102 to 107 (April 11, 1904 to April 16, 1904), p. 2.

⁶ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 182 (June 30, 1904), p. 4.

Very possibly Mrs. Brunorini directed other productions at Ferrando's when the company was in residence, but if so, she was not credited with direction in any of the notices. Nevertheless, as we have already noted, she did direct other shows at Ferrando's.

For the rest of the spring and summer seasons, the ads emphasized the productions of plays at Ferrando's but no specific directors or resident companies were indicated until Saturday, September 10, 1904 when Antonio Maiori's Company debuted. A number of questions remain unanswered regarding Maiori's stay at Ferrando's. What exactly constituted the financial agreement between the two men? Did Maiori rent out Ferrando's for the run? Or did Ferrando book the Maiori company as no other company was in residence at the time? Also, how long exactly did Maiori stay at Ferrando's? The advertisement stop with the issue of Il Telegrafo dated November 3, 1904. However, Maiori's typical repertory of plays continued at Ferrando's, including his usual habit of two Sunday performances, afternoon and evening, until Tuesday, December 6, 1904. Since Maiori's whereabouts, theatrically speaking, are unknown for this time segment, it is very possible that he and his troupe were still producing shows there. But it is very strange that the newspaper ads would neglect to mention him. Also, if the Maiori company was still in residence on the night of Tuesday, December 6, Maiori himself was not at the specific location since he was making a guest appearance with Pasquale Rapone's company on that occasion.

The only hint as to finances during Maiori's association with Ferrando's is that Maiori and at least one other company member, Miss Guglielmina Balsamo, received the proceeds of benefits. Otherwise, our questions remain unanswered.

What is especially significant about Maiori's association with

Ferrando's Hall is the new theatrical arena to which Maiorì had now become introduced, where the emphasis was placed on variety shows as well as dramatic productions. Eventually, by about 1915, Maiorì will abandon the prose theatre and invest exclusively in variety theatres.

By Wednesday, December 7, 1904 variety shows were again emphasized in the advertisements for Ferrando's Hall, although farces and full length plays were still frequently performed. The only director credited from this point until Ferrando's last ad on Saturday, April 22, 1905, is the orchestra conductor, Maestro Prof. Michele A. Salvati, which is not surprising, given the emphasis on variety shows.

After Ferrando's Hall was bought over by Letizia Manganaro in April, the entertainment continued in the same format with the same entertainers, at least in the few ads that Mrs. Manganaro took out. Where Ferrando had been a frequent and consistent advertiser, Mrs. Manganaro took out only three ads from the time she purchased the *caffè* in April 1905 until the end of the year. Also, her ads appeared in L'Araldo Italiano. Perhaps she found her advertising market elsewhere.

With Manganaro's ownership, a former director of Ferrando's, Mr. V. Mollica became her manager and also directed for her. Again, the only hint of any financial arrangements lies in the notices of benefits for Alberto La Maida on Wednesday, November 29¹ and for Eduardo De Pascale on Thursday, November 30, 1905. This is the last on Ferrando's Music Hall in 1905.² By 1906, the *caffè concerto* became known as Villa Manganaro.

Earlier we mentioned the distinctly international atmosphere that

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 332 (November 30, 1905), p. 3.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 324 (November 22, 1905), p. 3.

prevailed at Ferrando's, and the cultural diversity in the choice of plays, as well as the roster of performers. Nowhere in this history do we find such a varied collection of international names as this particular *caffe concerto*. They reveal the cultural resources of the city and hint at an audience less parochial in its interests than the audiences of the *caffe concerto* in other sections of the city. The names of performers are Italian, of course, but also German, Irish, French, Spanish, English or otherwise American. Whether they were first, second or third generation immigrants, whether they had become Americanized and assimilated is the subject of a study outside the scope of this one. But certainly the composition of the staff points out that Ferrando's Hall, artistically speaking, functioned differently, located as it was in a less segregated part of the city. It is also interesting to note that Ferrando's ads are frequently in English.

Duets were a popular attraction at the *caffe*. Cavaliere Giuseppe Abramonte, who belonged to Salvatore Nunziato's Lyric Opera Company,¹ performed duets with Mrs. Marie E. Filippis, who also did duets with her husband, Mr. Filippis; Balzano performed duets with the soprano and actress, Paolina Massini; the operatic vocalist Miss Elfie Bergeval teamed up with Miss Amy Butler, the singing and dancing soubrette; Oscar Bianchi was the frequent musical partner of Mrs. Lea Delapierre, who also performed with Hassr; the Bibbero' and Teste' duet debuted at Ferrando's on Monday, April 3, 1905, having just arrived from Italy where they had performed in *caffes* there, and they also wore special new costumes;² the music skit artists, John and Mrs. Ida Birch worked there

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno X, N. 138 (May 18, 1903), p. 1.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 93 (April 3, 1905), p. 3.

together; as did the European dancer Little Carmencita with the musician Dauser; as did the mezzosoprano Mrs. Tina Cimelli who sang duets from Italian opera with the dramatic tenor Pietro Ferri; Davis and La Centre were also musical comedy skit artists together; De Lisi sang with Mr. M. Tanza; Eduardo De Pascale, the Neapolitan comedian who also interpreted the Pulcinella mask at Ferrando's, sang duets with Mrs. Maria Dulmont, the actress whose most frequent musical partner in the *caffe concerto* arena was the actor Alberigo Ranghelli; Arturo Zacconi and his wife, known theatrically as Miss Concetta Dionigi, specialized in comic duets; the Ettling Sisters were a dancing duo; Roberto and his wife Amelia Flores sang comic duets but were also actors in Othello productions at Ferrando's (They had also been colleagues of Rocco De Russo at the Teatro Carlo III in Naples in 1902);¹ Vincenzo and his wife Luigia Franchi offered duets that were serious as well as comic; Fuller and Roden were another duo, as were the tenor Mr. R. Fucito and Mrs. Teresina Gioia; one of the Fillipson Sisters was a songstress and the other an international dancer; Inez combined with Vieto for exercises in athletics, acrobatics and balance, as did the Mayos, as did Price and Steel, all acrobatic skit artists; Marcellino Melo was the usual partner in comic duets with Mrs. Margarita Rua Prete; Mrs. Elisa Perna combined her voice with Pardini's; Tommaso Salvati sang duets from Italian opera with his brother Maestro Michele A. Salvati, the stage director and orchestra conductor; the Stanfords were comedy sketch artists, as were Steinert and Thomas; the Albery Sisters, the Amberg Sisters, and the Philippescos complete the list of duos, although Paolina Massini joined together with G. Amico and another unnamed person to form a trio on one

¹De Russo, p. 17.

occasion.

Solo performers also offered a great variety of specialty acts: the Neapolitan songstree, Olimpia Adinolfi; tenors, such as Roberto Anselmi and A. Mingiotti; soubrettes: such as Miss May Cameron the dancer; Rosita De Haas the international singer of French; German and Italian songs and also a dancer; Miss Madge O'Brien, Telen Pavonia, Angela Curti, Hazel Plan and Della West who too danced; Mrs. Annita Casale who was billed as an Italian-American songstress; the dance artist Miss Edith Cullum; the acrobatic and trapeze artist, Hippolito Dominguez; vocalists, such as Mabel Herbert, the operatic Henriette Kathony, the baritone balladeer Gaetano Santoro; magicians, such as Giovanni Huber and Mr. Suriani; macchietti, such as Alberto La Maida (who also interpreted the mask of Pulcinella), Eduardo Perretti, Gennaro Pisano, Eduardo De Pascale; novelty artists, such as Pattinatori and Bicycle Frick Rider.

The following entertainers were billed as solo performers but their specialties were never identified: Miss Aimee Bernard, Ada Corbett, E. De Curtis, Mrs. Maria d'Ischia, Valerie Filbert, Mabel Howard, Dolly Iardon, Mr. Lamartini, Mrs. Jarlet Lamartini, Alma Norman, Bonita Pescott, Annie Walters, and Clara Zimmerman. In this grouping, we know that E. De Curtis was a composer who wrote the music for the song "Voce 'e notte!"¹ (Night voices!).

Among the actors and actresses who interpreted dramatic and comic roles on the stage of Ferrando's Music Hall were some well known names: Mrs. Renata Scarlati Brunorini, actress with many other companies and playwright and director at Ferrando's; Giovanni De Rosalia, who starred

¹ Sheet music, Migliaccio Collection, Box 10.

as Othello and Oreste and as the protagonist of La Morte Civile, and Gennaro Ragozzino, impresarios whose companies are chronicled earlier in this history; the actor and scene designer of Guglielmo Ricciardi's company, Marchese Achille Di Landri; Esterina Cunico, who played Desdemona at Ferrando's and later formed a company with her husband, Silvio Minciotti; the Pulcinellas, Eduardo De Pascale and Alberto La Maida.

Other dramatic actors included: Tony Castellano, Mr. B. De Vincenzia, P. Monteleone (who wrote the lyrics for the song "Voce 'e notte!"),¹ Mr. A. D'Errico, Mrs. Maria Dulmont, Amelia and Roberto Flores (who acted in Othello), Prof. Antonio Lanza (who played Iago), Mr. A. Morisani, Alberigo Ranghelli, Ettore Scarlati, and Miss Telda Morisano, an actress from Italy who was visiting here briefly and performed in Il Trionfo d'Amore (The Triumph of Love) by Giuseppe Giacosa on Thursday, August 25, 1904.²

Also in that production was an actor named Benedetto Colombo. Benedetto Colombo was the capocomico of a minor theatre company known as La Compagnia Drammatica Italiana B. Colombo which was discussed earlier in this survey.

So much for dramatic staff at Ferrando's. As regards the technical staff, we know that Aniello Caparro and E. Mingiott served as stagehands while M. Odierno functioned as the prompter. The costumer was never named but the promise of period costumes was frequently announced. The musical staff consisted of the musician Dauser, the orchestra leader Maestro Vincenzo Gaudiosi, the composer E. De Curtis,

¹ Ibid.

² L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 237 (August 24, 1904), p. 3.

the Puckshover Greek Band, the pianist Prof. W. Richter, and Maestro Prof. Michele A. Salvati, orchestra conductor, who composed music for the song "Si Tu!" with lyrics by Gennaro Cantalupo.¹

A grand array of European playwrights were presented on the stage of Ferrando's Hall, but Italian playwrights outnumbered all others and came from all parts of the Italian peninsula: Parmenio Bettoli, Carlo Cantu, F. Castelvechio, Felice Cavalotti, Teobaldo Cicconi, Pietro Cossa, Carlo Roti, Giovanna Marni, Luigi De Lise, F. S. Starace, Paolo Ferrari, Paolo Giacometti, Tommaso Gherardi del Testa, Cavaliere Giuseppe Giacosa, Carlo Goldoni, Luigi Gualtieri, Stefano Interdonato, Leopoldo Marengo, Francesco Mastriani, Giovanni Verga, Cavaliere Uff. Eduardo Scarpetta, Gerolamo Rovetta, Silvio Pellico, Nicola Misasi, Ernesto Rossi, Libero Pilotti, Davide Chiassone, M. Cuciniello, E. Minichino, Montecorboli, and Vittorio Alfieri.

France was represented at Ferrando's by Eugene Cormon, Eugene Grange, D'Aubigny, Adolphe Dennery, Philippe Francois Pinel Dumanoir, Alexandre Dumas pere and fils, Emile Zola, Victor Hugo, Fournier, Meyer, George Ohnet and Victorien Sardou. Shakespeare, the German Frederick Schiller and the unidentifiable Valverde and G. Silvestri were also presented.

The Italian-American playwrights who saw their work played at Ferrando's included Mrs. Renata Scarlati Brunorini of Newark, daughter of the Italian actor Antonio Brunorini. Her one act farce Lo zio di dieci nepoti (The uncle with ten nephews) was produced Saturday, January 9, 1904² and as mentioned above, entitles her to the distinction

¹Pane, p. 34.

²Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 9 (January 9, 1904), p. 2.

of being the first Italian-American woman playwright of record.

Bernardino Ciambelli, the journalist with Il Bolletino della Sera, was represented by his two act drama Il Lupo di mare o la figlia maledetta (The sea wolf or the accursed daughter) staged Thursday, January 14¹ and Saturday, June 4, 1904.²

Mario Scarpa was a San Francisco playwright and actor with Antonietta Pisanelli Alessandro's company.³ Somehow a four-act drama he wrote found its way into the hands of La Nuova Compagnia "Citta di Genova" and was staged on Sunday, April 17, 1904. Its title was I Rautzau ovvero Caino ed Abele⁴ (The Rautzaus or Cain and Abel).

Giovanni De Rocalia, actor, writer and director of his own company, adapted a play entitled La Balia (The Wetnurse) for the program of Saturday, June 11, 1904,⁵ but there is no indication of the original author or work.

If the macchiettisti Eduardo Perretti, Gennaro Pisano and Eduardo De Pascale wrote their own macchiette, then their names should also be included here.

L'Inquisizione di Spagna (The Spanish Inquisition), which we take to be Alessandro Salvini's adaptation of the five-act drama by Luigi Gualtieri, played on Saturday, December 3, Monday, December 5, and

¹ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 14 (January 14, 1904), p. 2.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 156 (June 4, 1904), p. 2.

³ Seller, p. 213.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 107 (April 16, 1904), p. 2.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 163 (June 11, 1904), p. 2.

Tuesday, December 6, 1904.¹ Alessandro Salvini, the son of Tommaso Salvini of Italy, was the American actor so admired by Guglielmo Ricciardi but Salvini never acted on the Italian-American stage.

Alberto La Maida, macchiettista and the company Pulcinella, also might have written his own macchiette but at least it is certain that he wrote an untitled farce that was directed by Mr. V. Mollica on Wednesday, November 29, 1905 when the evening served as a benefit in La Maida's honor.²

One other anonymous play must certainly have been of American origin. The title Il cafone in America (The greenhorn in America) recalls Eduardo Migliaccio's macchietta of a similar name but Migliaccio was neither credited with its authorship nor was he announced as a performer so we can not attribute the comic skit to him. It was staged Wednesday, May 25, 1904.³

Ferrando's Music Hall produced novelty, dramatic or musical programs (or combinations thereof) with more consistency and more frequency than any other enterprise thus far in this history, albeit for a shorter and more concentrated period of time. Not even Maiori can beat this record, although Maiori was undoubtedly the most prolific producer in the dramatic arena, the prose theatre. Ferrando's Hall was atypical of the Italian *caffe concerto* in that the nightclub offered cultural diversity to its audiences. Northern Italians as well as

¹Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 338 (December 3, 1904), p. 3; N. 340 (December 5, 1904), p. 3; N. 341 (December 6, 1904), p. 3. These last two numbers were erroneously printed in the newspaper as 440 and 441, respectively.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 332 (November 30, 1905), p. 3.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 146 (May 25, 1904), p. 2.

Southern Italians could hear their dialects spoken and sung at this *caffe*, and not only Italians, but we suspect other nationalities might have been entertained in this bistro. Ferrando's habit of advertising in English attests to his idea for a wider audience than Italians alone. In this fashion, Ferrando's Music Hall enjoyed a unique place in the Italian-American community. How Letizia Manganaro was able to continue in Ferrando's tradition, and whether she sustained the special character of the *caffe* after she purchased it from Ferrando, will come to light only when the years from 1906 on can be examined.

Minor Music Halls and Nightclubs

Businesses come and go, as was the case with some of the smaller nightclubs, bars, restaurants, music halls and bistros of this period. We are dependent for information concerning their activities on thier advertisements in the newspapers, for the most part. When the advertisements stop appearing, it may be that they went out of business, or stopped offering entertainment, or found some other reason which obviated the need for advertising. From the ample number of operations of this kind, it seems that this was the heyday of the *caffe concerto*. Art and music flourished in some darkened corner of some saloon or restaurant in every Italian section and neighborhood of the city. Several appeared and disappeared in the 19th century: the *Caffe' Cosmopolitan* in 1885, located at 30 West 4 Street; Cesare Stefani's Restaurant, located at 141 Prince Street in 1886; Plavano's Music Hall in Mr. Plavano's Restaurant in 1888, at 13 South William Street and 57 Stone Street; Turn Hall on Chatham Street in 1890;¹ Donna Concetta

¹ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (May 10, 1942), p. 58.

Bergamo's Bar and Restaurant on Grand Street near Mulberry Street from 1894 to 1897; Il Caffè Chantant Eldorado at 24 Spring Street from 1896 to 1897; Il Salone Margherita on 111 Street at First Avenue in 1897; La Villa di Sorrento (also known as Fabio D'Alessio's Concert Hall) at 109 Street and First Avenue in 1897 and 1898;¹ and Il Caffè Concerto of Salvatore Ancino at 2157 First Avenue,² in 1897 or 1898.

All the other nightclubs which originated in the 19th century and continued on into the 20th century have been discussed with those theatre companies in residence there, with the exception of the caffè concerto Il Gatto Nero, otherwise known as Le Chat Noir (The Black Cat). Il Gatto Nero, first opened in 1890 by Mr. Mazzini,³ was located at 551 West Broadway. At some point the caffè closed and changed hands, how many times is uncertain. But a grand reopening was celebrated on Saturday, April 1, 1905, with dancing accompanied by the orchestra directed by Dante Chiavicoli. The new owners were Mr. P. Fornara, Mr. L. Bernasconi and Mr. P. Franchini. Paolo Cremonesi of Paterson, New Jersey attended the opening with his wife. The establishment was described as both hotel and restaurant, telephone, Spring 3308.⁴ The advertisements promised concerts from 6 to 9 p.m., always carried the Gatto Nero logo, a seated black cat, and continued to appear regularly until Friday, July 18, 1905.⁵ The club continued to exist, if not for

¹ Ricciardi, "An Actor . . .," p. 135.

² Ricciardi, Ricciardiana, pp. 37-38.

³ Michael Batterberry and Ariane Batterberry, On The Town In New York from 1776 to the present (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), p. 224.

⁴ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 93 (April 3, 1905), p. 3.

⁵ Il Telegrafo, Anno V, Nos. 95 to 194 (April 5, 1905 to July 28, 1905), p. 4.

Italians, then for Americans in later years. In 1917 it was "a 'typical Greenwich Village dive' with its white-washed brick walls adorned by stenciled black cats, rafted ceiling, permanent aura of smoke, and low prices."¹

Between 1900 and 1905, a number of clubs and restaurants began experimenting with entertainment to attract business. In 1900, four such establishments made this attempt. On Saturday, February 17, 1900, Mr. R. Ventresca reopened his restaurant, the former Ristorante Cavallotti at 210 Thompson Street. The manager of the new restaurant was Mrs. Ida Sarmoria. Ventresca renamed it the Transvaal Restaurant, possibly to express his feeling over the Anglo-Boer War in progress at the time. Francesco Monaco, the baritone, sang ballads and operatic selections to the accompaniment of an orchestra composed of Ignazio Biondi, his two sons Giuseppe and Giovanni, and Nicola Mormanti.² Perhaps the experiment of adding entertainment failed, or perhaps Ventresca only hired the performers to celebrate his reopening, because no notices told of the goings-on at the Transvaal Restaurant.

The Cosmopolitan Hotel and Concert Hall fared somewhat better. Also known as Il Teatro Pozzo, the bistro had the dual address of 90 MacDougall Street and 16 Varick Place between Bleecker Street and Houston Street, a feat impossible today but understandable in a time before the Avenue of the Americas sliced through the heart of Greenwich Village. The owners Max Pozzo and Mr. P. Biasetti, and the manager Mr. R. J. Ramella celebrated the reopening of the *caffe concerto* on Saturday, March 17, 1900, which indicated that it must also have existed

¹Batterberry and Batterberry, p. 224.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 43 (February 20, 1900), p. 5.

earlier. Now capable of seating 500 people, the *caffè* had been completely renovated and enlarged. The concert room had been furnished with a gallery with balconies especially for family groups. Designs by famous artists adorned the concert room as well. The entertainment, for family matinees on Sunday from 2 to 6 p.m. and other evenings from 7:30 to 12 midnight, included vocalists performing opera selections accompanied by an orchestra, and dancing for everybody. The Teatro Pozzo continued in this fashion until at least December 1900, when the ads suddenly stop.¹

The Jefferson Park Saloon celebrated its opening night on Tuesday, May 1, 1900 at 7 p.m. with orchestra music, which was promised for subsequent evenings. Located at 331 East 112 Street and owned by Raffaele Prata and Pasquale Di Pace, it advertised only this once.² Similarly, the Saloon of Michele Sbarra at 356 Broome Street at Elizabeth Street celebrated its grand opening at 8 p.m. on Saturday, June 2, 1900 with orchestra music, and, promising the same entertainment for subsequent evenings, was never seen in the ads again.³

Between Thursday, January 17 and Saturday, March 2, 1901, Il Gran Caffè d'Italia owned by the Gargiulo brothers Giuseppe and Fedele, and located at 188 Grand Street, offered music and Mr. A.S. Dateno and the fencing academy evenings at 8 p.m.⁴ Michele Acierno celebrated the grand opening of his Caffè del Risorgimento, 388 Broome Street at

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 65 (March 17, 1900), p. 5; and N. 288 (November 29, 1900), p. 5.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 103 (May 1, 1900), p. 5.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 131 (June 2, 1900), p. 7.

⁴L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 15 (January 17, 1901), p. 5; and N. 53 (March 2, 1901), p. 5.

Mulberry Street, on Saturday, January 19, 1901 with an orchestra directed by Giovanni Parisotti. The theatre was decorated by Luigi Parascandolo, with elegant furniture designed by the carpenter Vincenzo Tortora.¹

No new openings were advertised for 1902 among the minor night-clubs but the year 1903 saw a few new *caffe concerto* openings in Manhattan. The Carlo Hotel advertised music from Monday, March 2 through Saturday, October 31, 1903. It was located at 38 West 8th Street.² The Italian Gardens at 540 West 21st Street celebrated its grand opening with music from 4 to 7 p.m. on Saturday, April 25, 1903.³ Antonio D'Angelo, a native of Rionero in Vulture in the province of Basilicata, celebrated the grand opening of his new bar with music and dancing for everyone on Saturday, May 9, 1903, and promised the same for Thursday, May 14, 1903.⁴

Shortly before August 22, 1904, Miss Nancy Mendaro, a pretty singer of the "*caffe' chantants*" (*sic*) in the vicinity of Mulberry Street, and the daughter of Bonaventura Mendaro, was attacked on Baxter Street. A rejected suitor, the barber Giuseppe Perrotta of 102 Mott Street, put two gashes in her left cheek with a razor, which sent her to Gouverneur Hospital and left her permanently disfigured.⁵

The *maestri* who conducted the small orchestra in the bars, restau-

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 19 (January 22, 1901), p. 5.

²Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 61 (March 2, 1903), p. 1 to N. 304 (October 31, 1903), p. 1.

³Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 115 (April 25, 1903), p. 2.

⁴Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 132 (May 12, 1903), p. 2.

⁵Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 235 (August 22, 1904), p. 1; and N. 237 (August 24, 1904), p. 1.

rants, caffes and theatres of Little Italy were often music teachers whose orchestras were composed of their own students. They sometimes advertised this fact. Maestro Salvatore Avitabile ran a music school at 323-325 East 16th Street where he taught violin, voice, piano, composition, cello, solfeggio and theatrical art in 1901.¹ In 1903, he directed the orchestra and was co-director of La Compagnia Lirica Italo-Americana with Salvatore Nunziato in the production of opera at the Grand Theatre at Grand and Chrystie Streets.² By 1904, he limited his music instruction to singing, piano, composition and violin at his music school which relocated to 327 East 13th Street. His ad promised that his students would perform at public ceremonies and in musical benefits. Professor S. Traversi sold musical instruments and taught piano, organ, clarinet, violin, mandolin and guitar by the conservatory method daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sundays until 2 p.m. at his residence at 228-232 Bleecker Street on the corner of Carmine Street.³

The borough of Brooklyn had its own nightclub circuit. At least three existed in 1900. The Williamsburg Music Hall, owned by Mr. V. Stanchi and Mr. A. Cerreta celebrated its grand opening on Friday, January 5, 1900 from 7 to 12 midnight. It was located at 15 Whiter Street on the corner of Union Avenue and featured well-known Neapolitan singers and comedians.⁴ The Garibaldi Hotel and Restaurant on Surf Avenue between 15th and 16th Streets on Coney Island offered music by the String and Brass Band evenings in May 1900. Salvatore Nardiello,

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VIII, N. 10 (January 11, 1901), p. 2.

² Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 138 (May 18, 1903), p. 2.

³ Il Telegrafo, Anno IV, N. 307 (November 1, 1904), p. 2.

⁴ E. L. (Il Galoppino), L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 4 (January 5, 1900), p. 7.

the owner, also acted as musical assistant.¹ Pasquale Buonora owned the 300 seat Congress Music Hall (also known as the East New York Music Hall)² at 170-72 Stone Avenue near Highland Boulevard and Pacific Street, which featured "talented artists" evenings in July 1900,³ and the Maiori-Rapone Company during July 1901. William Matthews was listed as manager in 1905.⁴ The New Park Restaurant, located at 14th Street and Surf Avenue on Coney Island, was owned by Mr. A. Santo and Mr. G. Del Vecchio and featured an orchestra in May 1903.⁵ On March 20, 1905 it was reported that Matilde Gallini from Venezuela, a concert hall singer in Brooklyn, who lived at 61 Gates Avenue, took \$5,000 in jewels and \$200 in cash and disappeared. Rumor connected her flight to some adventurous love story.⁶ On this note of mystery we end this investigation into the *caffe concerto* artistic arena.

Il Teatro delle Marionette

In our earlier study, we introduced the story of the Italian marionette theatre, which was not an Italian-American development but a native Italian tradition, imported here in toto by families already occupied in the profession for generations, if not centuries. In New York, they set up little theatres in warehouses, lofts and vacant

¹L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 111 (May 10, 1900), p. 5.

²Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 1905, p. 12.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 170 (July 18, 1900), p. 5.

⁴Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 1905, p. 12.

⁵Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 138 (May 18, 1903), p. 2.

⁶Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 79 (March 20, 1905), p. 4.

stores.¹ If Giuseppe Cautela was correct in remembering that the marionette theatre on Elizabeth Street catered to Sicilian audiences in the Sicilian dialect,² then he refers to the theatre at 258 Elizabeth Street, owned by Mr. G. Rubino and Mr. D. Porrazzo. In early February, 1900 they brought a noted marionettist from Boston, Rocco Vizzari, to direct their theatre and attract more business.³ The Sicilian puppets also performed in benefits, such as the series they staged for the New York Infirmary for Women and Children on Friday and Saturday, April 24 and 25, 1903 and on Friday and Saturday, May 1 and 2, 1903 at Mendelssohn Hall on 40th Street between Broadway and 6 Avenue. Admission was a hefty \$2.00 and \$3.00 since the intended audience was affluent Americans. The director this time was Antonino Parisi.⁴ Parisi was not only adept at manipulating puppets in dueling scenes on the marionette stage; he took up the skill himself. On Monday, May 18, 1903, he faced his opponent Michele Carlucci in a grand fencing tournament that supplemented the theatrical production by Il Circolo Filodrammatico Dante Alighieri at Catholic Institute Hall, 76-78 New Street, Newark, New Jersey.⁵

The Sicilian strain of the marionette tradition was carried on by the arrival in 1919 of Maestro Agrippino Manteo, who emigrated here via

¹Anna Amato, "Sicilian Puppeteers Bring Back a Fading Art." Washington Square News, (December 14, 1977), p. 3.

²Cautela, p. 111.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno VII, N. 31 (February 6, 1900), p. 5.

⁴Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 115 (April 25, 1903), p. 2; L'Araldo Italiano, Anno X, N. 113 (April 23, 1903), p. 3; and N. 116 (April 26, 1903), p. 3.

⁵Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 138 (May 18, 1903), p. 2.

Argentina. He operated his Teatro Dei Pupi in a theatre on Mulberry Street until 1936. His sons and daughter, Papa Michael Manteo, Dominic and Aida, assisted by Michael's grandson and brother-in-law, only give sporadic performances today and struggle to keep the art alive.¹

Another Teatro delle Marionette gave performances on Saturday and Sunday, March 24 and 25, 1900 in a theatre at 9 Spring Street but their Italian background is unclear. Their posters, we know, were printed at the Typografia Telesca e Oriente, 223 Grand Street.²

The Neapolitan branch of the marionette family was represented by a theatre on Mulberry Street in the early part of the century, according to Cautela. In that case, it must certainly have been in this theatre that Eduardo Migliaccio made his unsuccessful first appearances as a Neapolitan macchietista sometime in 1900 or 1901. The entire incident has already been related in the section on Farfariello. For a time, Clemente Giglio also worked with the marionette theatre and, since he was Neapolitan, it would certainly have been in the Neapolitan tradition when he played at the Grand Eden, sometime during the period 1900 to 1902. In 1902, the actor Michele Viola of Chicago and New York, worked in a Neapolitan marionette theatre run by the Vitale brothers in Newark, New Jersey.³ Remo Bufano, born near Naples in 1893, operated a Neapolitan marionette theatre at 28 Mac Dougal Street from 1913 to sometime in the 20's, and wrote several books on the art form. In 1925 he presented Don Quixote at Town Hall with singers from the Metropolitan

¹Roy Huss, "Teatro Dei Pupi." Other Stages (June 3, 1982), p. 2.

²From reproduction of theatre poster in Hapgood, p. 552.

³Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (September 13, 1942), p. 9.

Opera.¹

An Italian marionette theatre of unclear Italian origin also operated in Brooklyn. On Thursday, January 19, 1905, they performed a benefit for the Little Italy Neighborhood House of 28 Sackett Street, in the hall of the Kings County Democratic Club, 120 Schermerhorn Street. The honorary patroness of the event was Baroness Des Planches, wife of an ambassador in Washington. The marionette performance was followed by other attractions: a bazaar of imported Italian products, a tarantella, Neapolitan singers wearing traditional provincial costumes and Mrs. Cecil Campbell, a palm reader from London, all for the substantial admission of \$2.00 per ticket, which could be purchased in advance from Miss Louise Murray of 69 Remsen Street.²

The directors noted during the period 1900 to 1905 in New York were Rocco Vizzari, Antonino Parisi and the unnamed director who made the mistake of hiring Eduardo Migliaccio. Other puppeteers were Clemente Giglio, Mr. G. Rubino and Mr. D. Porrazzo. They were required to memorize long passages from Italian literature and the recitation was accompanied by a piano player.

But the real stars of the marionette theatre were the puppets, who numbered in the hundreds. Marionette plays on religious subjects and dating back to the middle ages in Italy, used more than 3,500 individual marionettes to play out the story of creation and redemption.³ Agrippino Manteo used 500. The puppets were made of wood and Agrippino Manteo designed and made many himself, as did most puppeteering fami-

¹Tigani, p. 2; and Cautela, p. 112.

²Il Telegrafo, Anno V, N. 10 (January 10, 1905), p. 2.

³Pisani, p. 178.

lies. But Manteo fashioned interchangeable heads, legs, arms, etc. to create more characters.¹ In carving the head and facial features, great pains were taken at verisimilitude, "with scrupulous and sometimes exaggerated attention to detail."² The medieval knight marionettes were encased in suits of mail, armour, helmets and vizors made out of copper, brass, light steel or tin. They also wore plumes, and cloaks made of velvet, satin and silk. The heroines were dressed in gowns of rich brocade fabric. A puppet could weight from 70 to over one hundred pounds. In order to manipulate a knight, a marionettist worked the rod attached to his head and sword arm, and the cords which controlled the shield arm and other parts of the body. Some Manteo marionettes have parts almost a century old. In the early days, the cost of constructing a marionette was one hundred dollars.³

The medieval legends surrounding Charlemagne and his knights, the heroic exploits of the Crusaders against Saracen warriors, and courtly romances were the subjects of the plays staged in the little marionette theatres. "In Italy, the tradition of marionette plays on religious subjects dates back to the Middle Ages."⁴ When the subject matter of the plays changed to the more "modern" adventures of the Paladins, many medieval dramatic conventions remained, among them the large cast of characters and the episodic structure. The plays were performed in sequential cycles, or serials. The Manteo version of Ludovico Ariosto's

¹Amato, p. 3.

²Cautela, p. 111.

³Pisani, 178; Amato, p. 3; Hapgood, p. 545; Cautela, p. 112, and Huss, p. 8.

⁴Pisani, p. 178.

Orlando Furioso required a nine-month cycle to complete its course,¹ but one would have to attend a two-hour performance each day for three years to see every episode.² 1,200 performance hours over 18 months was needed to play out The Wars of the Paladins.³ La Chanson de Roland and Torquato Tasso's Gerusalemme Liberata are additional sources for the plays.

The themes that guided the action on the marionette stage were:

romance and elopement, eloquent courtly speeches, bravery in the face of overwhelming odds, furious battles that are an outlet for normal aggression, and male bonding under the banners of loyalty and devotion to duty.⁴

Obligatory conventions and scenes included stylized poses and movements, stock characteristic voices, battle scenes and decapitations. Sound effects for the battles were created by the clash of armour as puppets forcefully collided into one another, by the footstomping of the marionetteers and by the vibrato of the piano. During Migliaccio's brief appearance with the marionettes, the piano player pounded out the symphony from William Tell. Accompanied by the music, the battle scene became a rhythmic, stylized dance. The headrolling was made gory with oozing blood of paint or beet juice.⁵

Besides the palm readers, Neapolitan singers and macchietti, comic farces taken from Giovanni Boccaccio were possible supplements to

¹ Ibid.

² Amato, p. 3.

³ Pisani, p. 178.

⁴ Huss, p. 8.

⁵ Ibid.; and Amato, p. 3.

a marionette show.¹

The Italian marionette theatre suffered the same fate as the Italian-American dramatic theatre: the lack of continuing audiences of new, Italian-speaking immigrants forced both theatres into a decline. Now the marionette theatre is kept alive by performances in English and sporadic productions of the epic legends. Manteo performed at the American Folklore Festival for the Bicentennial in Washington in 1976, at New York University's Winter Theatre Festival in 1977² and at the American Museum of Natural History in 1982.³ The Nicolo Marinettes, directed by Nicholas Coppola in the Sicilian tradition, are the resident troupe at the Smithsonian Puppet Theatre.⁴ Currently, efforts are being made by the Department of Performance Studies at New York University with some assistance from the New York State Council on the Arts to preserve this living cultural heritage.⁵

¹Cautela, p. 111.

²Amato, p. 3.

³Huss, p. 8.

⁴Letter from Nicholas Coppola to Identity magazine (April 1977), p. 4.

⁵Huss, p. 8.

CONCLUSION

This history has sought to reveal every possible instance of theatrical entertainment in the Italian language in New York City's five boroughs during the years 1900 to 1905. In following the fortunes of the many personalities in this story, we have also ventured outside the city limits, up and down the Eastern seaboard to the midwest and inevitably to California. The abundance of theatrical energy spilled out over the city's boundaries with the effect that professional New York City companies were bringing professional theatre experiences to Italian immigrants who lived in rural and suburban areas. Most of our major figures -- Maiori, Rapone, Ricciardi, De Rosalia, De Russo, Migliaccio, Giglio, to name just a few -- made excursions out of town, to reach new audiences and get the most mileage out of their productions.

One effect of this theatrical migration was to inspire the formation of amateur theatrical groups in other cities. During the 19th century several amateur groups existed in New Jersey, Boston, and Philadelphia. In the early 20th century there were over 80 amateur groups scattered throughout small and large cities all over the United States. Perhaps some were even professional, as research into those areas might reveal. But many follow the pattern already established by amateur clubs in New York: they form either for the sole joy of performing theatre, or to raise money for worthwhile social causes, and they are often associated with some religious, fraternal or educational organization. Of course, not all amateur groups outside New York City owed their existence to the example set by traveling professionals. The great numbers of new immigrants alone would have inevitably resulted in the emergence of new theatre clubs. But what is certain is that major

performers from the city came in contact with actors outside and often used them in their productions, thereby creating temporary marriages between companies. This must have had some effect on theatrical production outside the city. Francesco Vela, it will be remembered, actually taught a drama school in Providence, Rhode Island. It is conceivable that New York's ready access to the latest printed scripts, songs and sheet music found their way to other cities via the traveling companies, thereby increasing the repertory of local amateur clubs. In his travels, Riccardo Cordiferro brought scripts of L'Onore Perduto to many places out of town.

The "road" made reporters out of some New York actors and directors. Salvatore Abbamonte sent in information about his activity in Asbury Park to L'Araldo Italiano, as did Salvatore Melchiorri when he performed in Chicago. Riccardo Cordiferro included frequent out of town notices in La Follia. Many of the anonymous notices of productions out of town may have come from the pens of our well-known New York personalities. Furthermore, many local reporters, who may also have been actors and directors, reported to the New York dailies about shows in their towns and about their own local stars. Many, many of these writers were more than happy to include their names and so the list of out-of-town reporters is a long one.

All this reportage goes to show that New York City's Italian-American theatrical consciousness was not a parochial one. It included an awareness and a sharing of the theatrical tradition with other immigrants who no doubt went to the theatres in their respective cities for the same reasons Italian-American New Yorkers did: socializing, entertainment, and a support system in the difficult process of assimilation.

By comparison with out-of-town reporters, and oddly enough, New York journalists were less likely to affix their signatures to theatre notices. Perhaps the reason lay in the fact that the information came to the newspapers by way of press releases from the impresarios themselves, and they, in effect, were the unsigned writers. Luca Cascio and "G.M." (whom we take to be either Gaspare or Giuseppe Marrone) of the Avanti Club in Brooklyn wrote releases to Il Telegrafo and L'Araldo, respectively.

Reviewers actually present in the audience for a particular performance also neglected to sign their names to their reviews, except for the less reticent writers, "Bergerac" of Il Telegrafo, "E.L." also known as "Il Galoppino" (The Messenger) of L'Araldo, and of course Riccardo Cordiferro of La Follia. We know from Salvatore Abbamonte that Cordiferro was a castigating critic of the amateur theatre clubs that flourished at the turn of the century but, unfortunately, he was not as assiduous about saving his theatre reviews as he was about saving and organizing pieces written about his work.

Serious criticism, of which we know Cordiferro was capable, was the exception and not the rule among Italian-American theatre reviewers. The reviews of performances continue for the most part in the patterns established in the 19th century. Glowing reviews appear with annoying frequency, possibly because the reporter hoped to encourage groups who often performed benefits for worthwhile social causes. The attitude is best summed up in a remark made by L'Araldo's Philadelphia correspondent about the efforts of La Compagnia Filodrammatica Silvio Pellico of that city. His comments about their production of Tosca were gentle: "La critica, se critica via sia, la lascio ai critici, cioè agli'

incontentabili."¹ (Criticism, if there should be any criticism, I leave to the critics, that is to say, to those who are difficult to please.) Examples of negative criticism, so valuable because they are so rare, lend a welcome dose of realism to our idea of what a typical night in the theatre might have been like, and these have been included wherever applicable in the text of this history. The more frequent positive responses from reviewers were most fortunate for this survey; had there been sterner critics, they might not have dedicated as much printspace to the activities of theatre groups in and out of town, amateur and professional, well-established and newly-formed.

By 1905 no writer had formally and systematically encoded a poetics or theory of theatre. The nature of the reviews, as described above, makes it impossible to reconstruct a consistent theory, but many other factors contribute to recreating the idea of what critics, audiences and directors expected theatre to be. In the 19th century, the stated aim of the Italian-American theatre was to delight and instruct. These two concepts continue to be important during 1900 to 1905 but to them we can add a third: the concern for social justice.

First and foremost, audiences came to the theatre expecting to be entertained. The hardworking laborers came to the theatre either alone or with families in tow to escape the harsh reality of their lives, to be dazzled by the glamour of the costumes and the beauty of the performers, to be reminded of home by hearing familiar folk songs, ballads and operatic arias, to hear Italian spoken, as well as their own regional dialects, to laugh at the antics of their own regional caratterista from the commedia dell'arte tradition, to be stirred by the patriotic senti-

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XI, N. 284 (October 9, 1904), p. 5.

ments and grandeur of the historical dramas, to be moved by the emotions played out in the melodramas, and to be reassured by the well-ordered universe depicted therein. The average audience, we can safely say, was quite dispassionate, or at best ambivalent, about whether a production was educational or socially relevant.

These concerns instead were voiced by the writers and directors. When Paolo Cremonesi and Giovanni Flecchia formed a company to perform for Hoboken's Italian immigrants, they called the group *Il Circolo Istruzione e Diletto* (The Club for Instruction and Entertainment) and also *Il Circolo Studio e Lavoro* (The Study and Work Club). Salvatore Abbamonte called his group *Il Circolo dei giovani studiosi italiani* (The Club of young studious Italians) whose stated purpose, it will be remembered, was the propagation of Italian culture overseas, as well as entertainment. On Saturday, December 2, 1905 Professor F. R. Lauziers gave a lecture in Italian entitled "*L'Arte drammatica come fattore educativo*" (Dramatic Art as an educational factor) at Grace Chapel. Although the text of the speech has not remained, the speaker's point of view is inherent in the title.

Intentionally or unintentinally, Italian-American theatre did play an educational role in the life of the immigrant. The history, literature and culture of Italy were paraded across the stages of Little Italy. Furthermore, dramatic literature of other European countries was equally accessible and Antonio Maiori introduced Shakespeare to Italian immigrant audiences. The gentle, humorous satire of Eduardo Migliaccio provided another type of education. Farfariello, the character he created, was a caratterista in the tradition of the *commedia dell'arte*, only this character, instead of originating in Naples or Bologna or Calabria or any other Italian region, was a product of New York City's

immigrant community and spoke a curious, new but familiar, regional dialect, Italo-Americanese. Farfariello was the typical newly arrived immigrant, the bewildered greenhorn, trying to make his way in a strange and inhospitable country. Education was an incidental byproduct of Migliaccio's characterizations, or macchiette, which held the mirror up to immigrant foibles and behavior. The macchietta, Pasquale Passaguai showed the immigrant how to avoid being duped by thieves, while his parody of Il Presidente della Societa' cured many community leaders of their habit of wearing pretentious military uniforms. Migliaccio's creations in particular and the immigrant theatre in general helped ease the tensions and anxieties of living in a foreign country, and indirectly helped the immigrant in the process of assimilation.

The task of education was imposed on the theatre by its more educated and literate observers and participants. It was not long before the literati of the day imposed yet another role on the immigrant theatre -- that of propaganda. Salvatore Abbamonte told of "red" evenings of theatre which included radical speakers, revolutionary songs, plays on social topics. He claimed that, for love of the theatre, he too had become a revolutionary. His play, Senza Lavoro (Unemployed), dealt with a contemporary social problem. Theatre groups identified themselves by names reflected their political leanings. New York City had La Filodrammatica dell'Unione Socialista (The Drama Club of the Socialist Union), while Paterson, the home of King Umberto the First's assassin Gaetano Bresci, was also the home of Il Teatro Sociale (The Social Theatre). Il Nuovo Club Democratico Italiano (The New Italian Democratic Club) was located in Washington, D.C. New Haven had La Sezione Socialista Italiana (The Italian Socialist Department) and New Castle, Pa. had Il Circolo Socialista Enrico Ferri (The Enrico Ferri

Socialist Club).

On the Italian-American stages, immigrant audiences were confronted with contemporary social concerns, among them the exploitation of laborers by American bosses and Italian padroni, and the miserable living conditions of crowded tenement slums, corruption and social injustice. At the turn of the century the left wing journalist Riccardo Cordiferro began writing what would become a formidable list of social protest plays. His dramatic monologue Il Pezzente described the plight of the beggar. His drama L'Onore Perduto, encased in the structure of domestic melodrama, examined the dishonesty of some Italian-American bankers and its tragic effects on the newly arrived immigrant. They play also touched, however lightly, on the emancipation of women, and was produced in many Eastern cities to Italian immigrant audiences. Even the regular professional theatres would sometimes put on productions of plays they described as "social dramas."

However significant these plays might have been, however satisfying their enactment may have been to the more educated members of the audience, they never achieved the popularity of the comedies, the variety shows, and the classics of the European theatre. In the theatre at least, Cordiferro was no match for Farfariello, in terms of popularity and exposure. But in the years that follow 1905 the class struggle became more desperate and the voice of reform more insistent, all of which was reflected in the theatre.

In conclusion, then, the progress realized by the Italian-American theatre during the first six years of the 20th century was outstanding. First, the theatre made a notable transition from an essentially amateur status to its predominantly professional phase; secondly, the time saw an enormous output of activity and the participation of thousands of

theatre artists; third, theatre proliferated within Italian-American communities outside New York City, as far as California, partially as a result of traveling professional and amateur companies from New York City; fourth, a distinctly Italian-American language and literature developed; fifth, the theatre was responsible in part for the evolution and celebration of a uniquely Italian-American identity; finally, this new identity contributed, in the characterization of Farfariello, a new caratterista to the tradition of the *commedia dell'arte*. By 1905, despite the vagaries of artistic life, the Italian-American theatre had persistently, obstinately, devotedly and lovingly "arrived."

POSTSCRIPT

New companies were initiated after 1905 and they ought to be the basis for another study at some future point in time. It is relevant to observe at this point in time certain highlights in their activities which we do know occurred. The Italian-American theatre experience of the years 1900 to 1905 prevailed with equal if not greater force throughout the first quarter of the 20th century. Immigration statistics for these years reveal a steady flow of new immigrant arrivals from which emerged eager new audiences. The major impresarios were still actively engaged in production for the better part of these years: Maiori, Francesco Ricciardi, De Rosalia, Cremonesi, Costantini, Migliaccio, Ragazzino, De Russo, the Marrone brothers, Imperato, Minciotti, Cunico, Giglio. Their ranks were enlarged and infused with the energies of new recruits and entrepreneurs, among them: Ilario Papandrea, Alberto Campobasso, Gennaro Cardenia (father of Vincent Cardenia), Francesco De Cesare, Gino Caimi, Giuseppe Sterni, Ettore Mainardi and a host of amateur clubs, as well. The immigrant community

needed a theatre, and the Italian-American theatre needed an immigrant population to exist. Without it, the theatre went into a decline.

The new immigration quota laws of 1924 restricted the annual importation of new Italian immigrants into the United States to a figure not in excess of 2% of the total number of new arrivals in 1890. The Italian-American theatre gradually began to see the effects of the restrictive quotas in their dwindling audiences. Furthermore, as the second and third generations of Italian-Americans became acculturated, they turned to the new and readily available popular forms of entertainment; radio, the movies, and eventually television. Giglio, into the 40's, and Cardenia into the 50's were two of the last few holdouts. Some, like Guglielmo Ricciardi long ago, managed to cross over into American spheres. Ester Cunico, for instance, played Ernest Borgnine's mother in the film Marty, and Vincent Cardenia, who played in the Italian-American Theatre until the 50's, is still highly visible in television and films.

But the Italian-American Theatre is virtually non-existent today. The Italian Actors' Union still exists, conducts annual meetings, and functions minimally as a liaison for visiting Italian professional entertainers. They recently merged with AGVA (American Guild of Variety Artists). Mimi Cecchini, President of the Italian Actors' Union, has lately been involved in efforts to revive Italian language productions but she has received little support. The audiences are not there. Even if large numbers of Italian speaking immigrants were suddenly to materialize, our modern technological age has manufactured other diversions which assure that a popular immigrant theatre is now impossible. If an Italian-American today speaks the lines of an Italian play on a stage somewhere in New York City, he or she is probably a college student

studying the language of his or her grandparents. The Italian-American playwright Mario Fratti, who writes in Italian and English and whose plays are performed all over the world, still stages Italian plays at Hunter College, using as actors his students of Italian, in the tradition started by Lorenzo Da Ponte at Columbia University in 1808.

Around 1951, a retired impresario, advanced in years, was visited by a younger actor. The older actor asked of the younger: "Che se dice? 'O teatro che fa? Chi ce sta mo' 'ncopp' 'e scene?...." (What's new? What's happening in the theatre? Who's up there onstage now?...), to which the younger man replied: "Nessuno."¹ (No one.)

¹De Biasi, p. 7.

APPENDIX I

List of Theatre Companies

Cities have been included for companies outside New York City. Alternate titles have also been included.

1. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Italo-Americano (2/8/1878-1902); Il Circolo Italiano; La Societa Filodrammatica Italiana di New York; La Nota Compagnia Filodrammatica Italiana; I Filodrammatici Italiani
2. La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Italiana dell'artista Guglielmo Ricciardi (11/25/1889-11/30/1905); La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica of Ricciardi and Savarese; Il Circolo Filodrammatico Paolo Ferrari; La Compagnia Filodrammatica of Brooklyn; I Bravi Dilettanti Filodrammatici del Club di President Street; Il Teatro Italiano Ricciardi's Grand Eden Music Hall; La Compagnia William Ricciardi
3. La Comica Compagnia Filodrammatica Napoletana of Francesco Ricciardi (9/15/1889-9/7/1907); La Compagnia Comico Drammatica Italiana Francesco Ricciardi
4. The Antonio Maiori Company (1890-1919); La Nota Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Italiana di Antonio Majori e Pasquale Rapone; The Maiori-Rapone Troupe; Il Teatro Italiano; La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Antonio Maiori
5. La Societa Filodrammatica Tommaso Salvini (12/19/1880-1896); Il Circolo Tommaso Salvini; L'Unione Filodrammatica Italiana Tommaso Salvini
6. La Compagnia Filodrammatica Galileo Galilei (12/4/1890-5/4/1891); Il Teatro Vercelli
7. La Compagnia Drammatica Nicola Brigante (12/2/1890-4/9/1902); La Compagnia Partenopea; Il Circolo Semiserio Partenopeo
8. La Compagnia Filodrammatica Italiana Dante Alighieri (7/7-9/20/1890)
9. La Compagnia Filodrammatica Carlo Goldoni (11/6/1894-3/10/1895); La Societa Artistica Filodrammatica Carlo Goldoni; Italian Dramatic Company
10. La Gara Artistica Napoletana (11/7-12/16/1889)
11. Il Teatro Italiano (12/28-12/30/1890); The Eighth Street Theatre

12. La Compagnia Drammatica Italiana "Stati Uniti" (3/5/1891-2/18/1893; Philadelphia, West Hoboken, Paterson, New York City); La Compagnia Filodrammatica di West Hoboken; La Societa Filodrammatica di Newark, New Jersey; La Compagnia Alessandro Manzoni; La Societa Alessandro Manzoni
13. La Compagnia Drammatica Italiana Paolo Cremonesi (2/1/1891-6/4/1907; West Hoboken, Paterson, Jersey City Heights); La Societa Filodrammatica Italiana La Scintilla di West Hoboken; Il Circolo Filodrammatico Felice Cavallotti di Paterson; La Fourmi Circolo Francese
14. La Compagnia Filodrammatica Vittorio Alfieri (3/19/1891; Philadelphia)
15. Theatre activity not identified with a specific company because of insufficient information (1765-1905)
16. Il Caffè Cosmopolitan (1/1885)
17. George Washington Club (9/5/1893; Boston); Il Club Vittorio Emanuele
18. La Compagnia Drammatica Musicale Arte Vera of Rocco De Russo (1906-1956)
19. La Compagnia Comica P. Rapone and G. Ricciardi (2/11/1895)
20. Il Circolo Metropolitano Drammatico e Musicale (3/4/1895-1897)
21. La Compagnia Comico Drammatica A. Maiori e G. Ricciardi (4/1/1895); The Italian Dramatic Company
22. Il Teatro delle Marionette (2/1900-present); La Compagnia di pupi o marionette of the Vitale Brothers; I Pupi Siciliani; The Manteo Sicilian Marionette Theatre; The Little Marionette Theatre; Il Teatro dei Pupi; The Niccolo Marionettes
23. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Eleonora Duse (2/5/1900-5/4/1905); La Societa Eleonora Duse; Il Circolo Artistico Eleonora Duse
24. Il Columbus Social Club (12/18/1904; New Haven)
25. La Compagnia Monte Myro (5/10/1900); La Troupe Monte Myro
26. La Societa Figli di Maria (11/12/1901-3/7/1905); Il Circolo Madonna Di Pompei
27. La Societa San Luigi Gonzaga (2/18/01-2/8/03); The School of St. Brigid; St. Brigid's Church
28. Il Circolo Filodrammatico L'Amicizia (2/18/01)

29. La Compagnia Filodrammatica Alessandro Salvini (11/17/1897-5/28/05); Il "West End Italian Club"; Il Circolo Filodrammatico Alessandro Salvini
30. La Compagnia Costantini-Vela (2/10/01-11/28/05); Il Teatro Italiano of Spring Street; La Scuola Drammatica Vela; La Compagnia Drammatica Nazionale; Il Teatro Italiano-Drammatico Nazionale; Il Teatro Alfieri; La Compagnia D. Roma; Il Teatro Drammatico R. Margherita
31. La Compagnia Magica del Prof. Prete (4/25/1900-2/20/05); Prete's Great Magic Company
32. La Societa Volere e Potere (4/30/03)
33. The Theodore Palumbo School (11/27/1889)
34. Ferrando's Music Hall (9/1/02-11/22/05); Hotel Genova; La Compagnia diretta dell'attore Milanini; La Nuova Compagnia "Citta di Genova"
35. La Filodrammatica Arte e Diletto (1912)
36. La Societa William McKinley (9/27/03)
37. La Compagnia Napoletana di Canto e Prosa G. Camerlingo (11/24/04-2/6/05); Una Scelta Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Gennaro Camerlingo; La Nota Compagnia di Prosa, Musica, e Canto G. Camerlingo
38. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Vallelunga (11/15/05)
39. Il Club Filodrammatico Giovanni Bovio (2/28/04-2/16/05)
40. St. Peter's Dramatic and Musical Society (1886)
41. La Filodrammatica Trinacria (6/25/04)
42. La Compagnia Drammatica Teatro del Popolo diretta da Prof. Ettore Mainardi (1910)
43. La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Giovanni De Rosalia (11/12/03-1918); La Nuova Compagnia Filodrammatica De Rosalia-Perez-Picciotto; La Societa Filodrammatica Vittorio Alfieri; Il Circolo Filodrammatico Manzoni
44. La Societa Grecese di Mutuo Soccorso (8/24-8/25/04)
45. La Compagnia Comico Drammatica Pasquale Rapone (10/24/1893-5/18/05); La Follie Drammatiche
46. Il Ben Venuti Club (9/27/04)
47. La Compagnia Comico Drammatica Italiana Gennaro Ragazzino (10/25/04-1923); La Compagnia Drammatica Napoletana Gennaro

Ragazzino; Il Teatro Garibaldi

48. Il Noto e Conosciuto Club Filodrammatico Italiano "Avanti" di Brooklyn (1/6/02-1915); La Societa Filodrammatica Italiana; La Compagnia Drammatica Nazionale; La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Italiana; Il Circolo Filodrammatico di Brooklyn
49. La Villa Penza (1/14/05-1906); La Troupe Artistica
50. L'Unione Veneta Daniele Manin (2/19-3/23/05); La Societa Veneta Daniele Manin
51. I Celebri Lillipuziani (8/21/1891)
52. La Compagnia Pantalcone (3/22/05)
53. Il Nuovo Circolo Ermete Novelli (5/30/1900-1916); La Compagnia Filodrammatica Ermete Novelli
54. La Brillante Compagnia Filodrammatica del Collegio Italiano di Troy, New York (4/23-4/29/05; Troy, New York)
55. La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Alessandro di Palma (5/15/05)
56. La Compagnia Filodrammatica Giacomo Calati (5/29/02-5/29/05)
57. Il Club Gioventu Marinese (6/4/05)
58. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Alessandro Manzoni (10/19-12/28/05)
59. La Compagnia Filodrammatici Italiani (2/28/05-1923)
60. The Lyceum Theatre (18/6); The French Opera House
61. La Compagnia Drammatica Italiana B. Colombo (12/20/03-10/5/05)
62. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Felice Cavalotti (11/11/01-12/13/05; Trenton, Hoboken)
63. La Compagnia Filodrammatica Coticelli - Huber (1/1-2/26/1900; Waterbury, Conn.); La Compagnia Eccentrica Filodrammatica
64. Il Circolo Dilettanti Filodrammatici del "Sannio" (1/21/1900-4/2/05; New Haven); Il Circolo Filodrammatico Del Sannio; The Chorus of St. Michael's Church
65. Il Circolo Drammatico San Carlino (1/27/1900-8/7/05; New Haven, Bridgeport; St. Alban's, Vermont); Il Circolo Filodrammatico Follia; Il Circolo Dilettanti Filodrammatici; Il Circolo Filodrammatico San Carlino
66. La Societa Filodrammatica Italiana (1/7/1900-5/23/01; Chicago)
67. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Tommaso Salvini (2/27/1900-4/3/05; Pawtucket, Providence, Rhode Island)

68. Il Teatro Pozzo (3/17-12/2/1900); Cosmopolitan Hotel and Concert Hall
69. Il Teatro Sociale (3/3/1900-12/2/1901; Paterson)
70. Il Club Filodrammatico Tommaso Salvini (4/3-4/16/1900; Chicago)
71. La Congregazione I Luigini (4/5/1900; Waterbury, Conn.)
72. Il Calumet Club Filodrammatico (11/18/1900-6/29/05; Calumet, Mich.); Il Club Filarmonico
73. I Dilettanti Chiusanesi (5/26/1897-5/11/03; Boston); East Boston Dilettanti; I Filodrammatici Italo-Bostoniani
74. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Italiano (12/30/1900-9/7/02; Iron Mountain, Mich.)
75. Il Circolo Vittorio Alfieri (1/24/01-4/2/03; Pittsburgh)
76. Il Circolo Istruzione e Diletto di Hoboken (1/27/01-9/23/05; Hoboken); La Compagnia di Prosa e Canto; I Valentini Filodrammatici Coloniali; Il Club Istruzione e Diletto; Il Circolo Studio e Lavoro
77. Il Circolo Eduardo Scarpetta (2/13/01-11/20/04; Chicago)
78. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Dante Alighieri (2/19/01-12/31/05; New Haven)
79. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Italo-Americano Eleonora Duse (2/23/1900-10/23/05; Providence)
80. La Compagnia Filodrammatica Silvio Pellico (3/13/93-4/11/05; Providence); Il Circolo Filodrammatico Silvio Pellico; La Compagnia Filodrammatica Carlo Goldoni
81. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Dante Alighieri (3/6/02; Pittsburgh)
82. I Soci della Marineria Italiana (5/29-6/29/02; New Haven)
83. Il Club Germanico (5/31/02; South Bethlehem, Pa.)
84. Il Circolo Filodrammatico (1/16/03; Dunmore, Pa.)
85. La Società Filodrammatica (3/14/03; Old Forge, Pa.)
86. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Italiano R. Magnolfi (2/21/03; West Hoboken)
87. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Indipendente (2/27/03; Paterson)
88. La Compagnia Mimi Imperato (4/2/03-9/17/06; Philadelphia, New York City)

89. La Compagnia Gravese (4/11/03-5/29/05; Philadelphia); The Company of Granese Calabrese
90. La Compagnia di Dilettanti Italiani (5/9/03; Bridgeport)
91. Saint Lucy's Young Men (5/14/03; Newark)
92. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Dante Alighieri (5/30/01-5/29/05; Newark, Jersey City); Il Circolo Comico-Drammatico Italiano
93. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Torquato Tasso (5/31/03; New Haven)
94. La Societa Garibaldina (8/2-8/23/03; Los Angeles)
95. Il Jolanda Pleasure Club (8/6/03-11/25/05; Baltimore); Il Circolo Letterario Filodrammatico Italiano di Baltimore; Il Circolo Filodrammatico Felice Cavalotti; Il Circolo Letterario Filodrammatico of Joland Club; Il Circolo Letterario Drammatico
96. Il Circolo Filodrammatico (1/21-2/29/04; Yonkers); La Compagnia Drammatica
97. The Transvaal Restaurant (2/17/1900)
98. Il Club C.B. di Cavour (1/1/04; New Haven)
99. Lorenzo Da Ponte's Italian Department at Columbia University (1808)
100. Il Circolo M. Bozzi (5/7/04; New Haven); Il Circolo Cav. Michele Bozza
101. Federico Pistilli and his company (10/1/04; Passaic, New Jersey)
102. Il Circolo Drammatico Musicale Letterario Gioventu Italiana (2/24/1900-10/30/05; New York City; Asbury Park, Long Branch, Jersey City, N.J.); Il Circolo Filodrammatico Italiano; Il Circolo Gioventu Italica; Il Club Drammatico Italiano; Il Circolo dei Giovani Studiosi Italiani
103. I Dilettanti Filodrammatici of Father Santagata (11/12/04; Raritan, N.J.)
104. Il Nuovo Club Drammatico Italiano (11/15/04; Wash., D.C.)
105. Il Club Drammatico Aurora (2/20/05; Buffalo)
106. Il Club Filodrammatico Il Savoia Dramatic and Musical Circle (2/28/05; Buffalo)
107. Jefferson Park Saloon (5/1/1900)
108. Il Circolo Italiano Dante Alighieri (3/9-4/22/05; Boston); Il Circolo Italo-Americano

109. La Compagnia Dilettanti Filodrammatici (3-9/05; New York City; Rochester); I Filodrammatici di Rochester e di New York
110. The Saloon of Michele Sbarra (6/2/1900)
111. La Compagnia Comico-Drammatica Italiana Francesco di Cesare (1907-1914)
112. La Societa Italiana di Mutuo Soccorso Maria S.S. della Consolazione di Paternopoli (6/12/05; Philadelphia)
113. Il Circolo Vittorio Emanuele III (9/10/05; New Haven)
114. The Catholic Church of San Francesco Saverio (10/12/1892)
115. Il Circolo Filodrammatico di Kensington (3/4-7/23/05; Kensington, Chicago)
116. The Silvio Minciotti Company (7/25/04-1943); La Compagnia Cunico-Minciotti
117. Il Circolo Familiare Pisanelli (4/19/03-1925; San Francisco)
118. Williamsburg Music Hall (1/5/1900)
119. I Dilettanti Filodrammatici Vittorio Emanuele (5/7/1892; Paterson)
120. La Lyceum Comedy Company (12/8/03; Providence)
121. Il Circolo Bellini (1/5/04)
122. I Cittadini Caltabellotesi (2/27/05)
123. La Compagnia Masaniello (2/1900; Waterbury, Conn.)
124. La Sezione Socialista Italiana (9/3/05; New Haven)
125. Il Teatro Poli (9/3/1900-9/17/05; New Haven); Poli's Wonderland Theatre
126. Il Circolo Filodrammatico e Sportivo (12/22/1900; West Hoboken)
127. Il Teatro di Savin Rock (7/25/01; New Haven, Savin Rock)
128. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Filippo Orioles Club (4/6/03-2/26/05; Chicago); I Filodrammatici
129. Il Circolo Letterario, Musicale, Ginnastico (10/19/03; Brunswick, N.J.)
130. Il Corte Cristoforo Colombo N. 91 F.O.A. (11/19/03; Hoboken)
131. Il Circolo Italiano (4/26/04; New Haven)
132. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Italiano (10/2/04; West Tampa, Fla.)

133. Il Circolo Socialista Enrico Ferri (5/12/04-2/4/05; New Castle, Pa.)
134. La Filodrammatica Sociale (12/23/05); La Filodrammatica dell'Unione Socialista
135. La Compagnia Teatrale (7/29-8/10/05; Boundbrook, N.J.); La Compagnia Drammatica del Leone
136. Il Circolo Silvio Pellico (10/13/05; Trenton)
137. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Vittorio Alfieri (12/11/05; Providence)
138. La Sezione Filodrammatica of Club Aurora (3/19/1893; Boston)
139. The Clemente Giglio Company (1897-1943); The Company of Verga's Music Hall
140. La Societa Italiana di Mutuo Soccorso (7/2/04)
141. The Third Avenue Family Theatre (2/8-4/20/04)
142. Il Caffè d'Italia dei Fratelli Gargiulo (1/17-3/2/01)
143. Il Caffè del Risorgimento (1/19/01)
144. La Villa Mascolo Music Hall (1/31/03-9/3/04)
145. The Carlo Hotel (3/2-10/31/03)
146. The Italian Gardens (4/25/03)
147. The Bar of Antonio D'Angelo (5/9-5/14/03)
148. Le Chat Noir (1897-1917); Il Gatto Nero
149. Il Salone Umberto I (1898-1/21/01); Il Salone Umberto Primo; Francesco Pennachio's Caffè Concerto; Il Caffè Concerto Pennachio
150. The Cesare Stefani Restaurant (11/11/1886)
151. Mr. F. Bianchi's Bar (1900-1901; West Hoboken)
152. Il Circolo Vittorio Alfieri (3/14/01; Newark)
153. The New Park Restaurant (5/17/03)
154. Il Circolo Filodrammatico d'Arte Teatrale (5-6/03; Boston)
155. Il Caffè Concerto (5/10/05; Cleveland)
156. La Villa Manganaro (1906)
157. La Compagnia Citta di Napoli (n.d.; Boston, New York City)

158. La Compagnia Luigi Zampone (1900-1901; West Hoboken, New York City)
159. The Company of Antonio Tua (11/26/1903)
160. Plavano's Music Hall (6/7/1888)
161. Donna Concetta Bergamo's Bar and Restaurant (1894-1897)
162. Turn Hall on Chatham Street (1890)
163. Il Salone Margherita (1897)
164. La Villa di Sorrento (1897-1898); Fabio D'Alessio's Concert Hall
165. Garibaldi Hotel and Restaurant (5/10/1900)
166. Congress Music Hall (7/18/1900-1905); East New York Music Hall
167. La Compagnia Filodrammatica Dante Alighieri (10/15-16/01)
168. La Compagnia Drammatica Caimmi (1949); La Compagnia Ronzoni
169. The Alberto Campobasso Company
170. The Gennaro Cardenia Company
171. The Giuseppe Sterni Company (1929-1949); Il Teatro D'Arte
172. Il Circolo Filodrammatico Polimnia (1912-1916)
173. La Filodrammatica Racalmuto (1912-1916)
174. La Filodrammatica Italiana (1913-1914)
175. Il Circolo Educativo Giuseppe Parini (1913-1916)
176. The Eduardo Migliaccio Vaudeville Company (1917-1946); La Compagnia di Varieta' Farfariello; The Italian Comic Opera Company; La Societa' Artistica Varieta
177. Il Caffè Chantant Eldorado (1896-1897); Il Caffè Concerto El Dorado
178. Il Caffè Concerto of Salvatore Ancino (1897-1898)
179. Sirignano Hall (1909-1910)

APPENDIX II

List of Authors and Plays

The asterisk (*) indicates an Italian-American author. Numbers after plays refer to the producing companies listed in Appendix I. Pseudonyms and alternate playtitles are in parentheses.

* Abbamonte, Salvatore (Nunzio Noemi); Per l'Amore - 102; Senza Lavoro - 102

Alfieri, Vittorio: Mirra - 15; Oreste - 1 - 43 - 144

Alighieri, Dante: Il Conte Ugolino - 6

Altavilla, P.: Nu Diavo o Ncuorpo a Pulcinella - 3; 4 Commedie fatte dint 'a una Vota ovvero Na Compagnia de Dilettante bazzute pe recita' e ndusiamate pe l'arrivo de Munzu' Pratella a madamigella Fanni' con Pulcinella finta femmina pe necessita' - 3

Ambrosoli: I Due Fazzoletti - 33; Teresa, la figlia del bandito - 33

* Andreoli, Prof. D.: Il Gondoliere della morte - 54

Anonymous:

A Iine D'O' Munno - 43

A morte d'Antonio 'a Porta 'e Massa - 37

A Nicotra padre Guardiano del convento degli Angeli, e Frate Menechino - 95

A oltraggio segreto segreto vendetto (I due carnefici) - 4

A partenza e o Ritorno e l'Africa - 93

'A Prima Sera D' 'O Matrimonnio - 43

A. Puceriale ('A Pugeriale) - 4 - 45

A Pumarola Mocca o Sinneco - 34

A Ricciutella 'E' Puerto - 43

A Telese - 65

A Young Man's Heart - 4

Adamo ed Eva ai Bagni di Montecatini - 1 - 34

Adelaide Comincio - 4

Adele - 34

Aida - 12 - 34

Alfredo Dreyfus - 76

Ammore 'A Malandrino - 43

Ammore Muorto - 45

Amore Campestre - 4

Amore e Commedia (Pulcinella, l.o attore tragico) - 3 - 4 - 65 - 45

Anna Valentini ossia il delitto di Lodi - 4

(Antonio) Gasperoni ovvero Il principe dei monti - 34 - 45

Arboscelli divelti - 4

Arduino d'Ivrea - 95

Armando il Bastardo - 30 - 34

- Bartolomeo calzolaio ubbriacone - 34
 Beatrice Cenci - 4
 Bianca Cappello - 113
 Bianca e Fernando alla Tomba di Carlo IV Duca D'Agrigento - 39 - 67
 Brescia e Venezia - 45
 Bruno il Filatore - 1 - 34
 Bugia e Verita - 37
 Cane e gatto - 34
 Caporal Simon alla Battaglia di Ulma (Il Vecchio Caporale Simon alla Battaglia d'Ulma) - 2 - 4
 Carcere Preventivo - 34
 Carmine il Capraio - 43
 Casa di Goldini - 15
 Chi chiu n'ave, se ne tene - 37
 Chiodo Scaccia Chiodo - 45
 Cuore di Ciabattino - 37
 Cuore di Operaio - 30
 Cuori Umani - 141
 D. Giovanni D'Alverado con Pulcinella rivale d'uno spadaccino ganimede affettati e duellista per necessita' - 63 - 98 - 75 - 47
 Dall'ombra al Sole - 43
 Danze e funerali (Funerali Canti e Danze) - 10 - 4 - 62
 Dio Non Paga il Sabato - 34
 Disonore ed innocenza ovvero Lumiliazione d'un milionario - 37
 Don Felice Rinte o Spurtone - 3
 Don Peppe a gatta - 43
 * Dopo la Battaglia di San Martino (Il nuovo giobbe) - 34
 Dopo la Tempesta la Calma - 1 - 5
 Dopo una sbornia - 86
 Due donne in pegno al Monte di Pietà - 34
 Due ore dopo la mezzanotte - 2
 Durand Durand ovvero il pizzicagnolo e l'avvocato - 34 - 45 - 43
 E' Femmina o e' Nicola? ossia Pulecenella mbrogliato nfra na Baronessa, na vecchia pazza e un Nicola ca' nnune' Nicola - 3
 E' nepute d'o' Sinnoco - 45
 El Sindeck Bertold (Osti e non Osti) - 34 - 38
 Eleonora di Siviglia (Il Trovatore) - 12 - 39 - 4 - 125 - 45
 Elisabetta Orsini - 2
 Fatalita', ovvero madre adultera e figlia innocente - 34
 Fatemi La Corte - 4 - 34
 Faust ovvero Un Patto Infernale (Fausto) - 4 - 45 - 12
 Felice Bebe - 4
 Felice il Ceremonioso - 4
 Felice Pazzo per essere fatto Cavaliere - 34 - 45
 Femmena ngrata - 47
 Figli abbandonati (I Figli ...) - 4
 Figli di Nessuno (I Figli ...) - 4
 Fondazione della Camorra - 3
 Fra Bisazio - 93
 Fra Diavolo - 3
 Fra Minichino ovvero I tre figli della morte - 43
 Funerali Canti e Danze (Danze e funerali) - 10 - 4 - 62
 Gabriele Il Lampionario (Lampionario) di Porto ovvero (o) Rosa la Pazza - 4 - 47 - 45
 Galop! Galop! - 8

- Gasperoni ovvero Il Principe dei Monti (Antonio Gasperoni ...) - 45
 - 34
 Gelosia - 43
 Genio e sventura (Tommaso Chatterton) - 80
 Giancola il Boia - 43
 Giovanni spaventato da uno spirito che parlo - 43
 Gli Abbandonati - 7
 Gli Amore di D. Achille Pallammocca ovvero Li Guaji di Mastro
 Francisco - 3
 Gli ombrelli nella Gran Via - 3
 Gli Spazzacamini della valle d'Aosta - 115
 Gnesella - 4 - 37
 Gran Muraglia della China - 34 - 30
 Guerra in tempo di pace - 4
 I beati Paoli - 132
 I Briganti di Viterbo ovvero Pulcinella Brigante per necessita',
 assassino per accidente - 92 - 80
 I contrasti colla miseria di due poveri studenti con pulcinella
 servo bastonate per fidelta' - 78
 I delitti della torre di Nesle, ovvero Il bevitore di sangue umano -
 135
 I Due Caratteri Opposti - 167
 I due carnefici ovvero A oltraggio segreto segreto vendetto - 4
 I due ciabattini ossia la Statua di Mercurio - 95 - 34
 I due Ladri - 1
 I Due Pulcinella Simili - 3
 I due sfilenzi moderni, cu na sola camicia - 64
 I Due Sordi (Le deux Sourds) - 1 - 5 - 4 - 23 - 68 - 76
 (I) Figli abbandonati - 4
 (I) Figli di Nessuno - 4
 I Gemelli - 130
 I Lazzari - 2
 I Misteri della Fattoria Allen (Le tre orfanelle) - 3 - 34
 I nuovi amori di pulcinella - 30
 I pazzi per progetto (La moglie pazza, il marito pazzo, il medico
 piu di tutti) - 34
 I pescatori del Rodano - 66
 I Polli in Quarta Generazione - 1
 I Postiglioni del Villagio d'Albi (I postiglioni di Alby, ossia La
 Cisterna Murata) - 5 - 34 - 45
 I sette articoli di un tenente bizzarro - 34
 I Timidi - 1
 I tre figli della morte (Fra Minichino) - 43
 I tre guappe (Li tre ...) - 73 - 65
 I 3 Macellai di Parigi - 45
 Il Bacio - 4
 Il Bastardo - 3
 Il bevitore di sangue umano (I delitti della torre di Nesle) - 135
 Il Biricchino di Parigi - 23 - 65
 Il borsaiolo di Napoli, ovvero il ladro galantuomo - 76
 Il Bravo di Venezia ovvero il Consiglio dei Dieci e le sue iniquita
 - 34 - 15 - 45 - 29
 * Il Brigante Musolino con Pulcinella, bandito per necessita - 3
 * Il cafone in America - 34
 Il camalconte - 76

- Il Campanaro di London - 80
- Il capo della Camorra (Tore e' Criscienzo) - 4
- Il Capolavoro ignoto (Luigi Rolla da Genova) - 34
- Il Cardinal Richelieu - 75
- Il (Un) Casino di Campagna - 12 - 45 - 48 - 135
- Il Cimitero di Val-Suzon ovvero virtu' e delitto - 4 - 34
- Il Cittadino di Gand - 32
- Il Consiglio dei Dieci e le sue iniquita (Il Bravo di Venezia) - 34 - 15 - 45 - 29
- Il Conte Carlo (Mastro Gregorio fabbricatore, finto Conte Carlo; Il Conte Fabbricatore) - 9 - 4 - 37
- Il Conte di San Germano ovvero il Diavolo a (di) Parigi - 119 - 23 - 34 - 65 - 45 - 140 - 92 - 48
- Il Conte Fabbricatore (Il Conte Carlo; Mastro Gregorio fabbricatore, finto Conte Carlo) - 9 - 4 - 37
- Il Corsaro Francese o (ovvero) La signora di San Tropez - 4 - 34
- Il delitto di Bianca - 34
- Il delitto di Lodi (Anna Valentini) - 4
- Il Diavolo a (di) Parigi (Il Conte di San Germano) - 119 - 23 - 34 - 65 - 45 - 140 - 92 - 48
- Il diavolo in cantina - 34
- Il domino rosa - 4
- Il dottore burlato - 63
- Il Fabbro del villaggio - 80
- Il Fabbro del Convento - 4
- Il Fiacre N. 13 - 4 - 45
- Il Figlio del Giustiziato - 6 - 102
- Il Figlio di Miledi (Venti Anni dopo) - 4 - 62
- Il Flauto Magico con Pulcinella Servo Fedele - 1
- Il Fornaio e la Cucitrice - 34
- Il Fuoco al Convento - 5 - 34
- Il Furioso all'isola di San Domingo - 66
- Il giustiziato del di 8 Ottobre 1902 (La Macchia di Sangue) 1 - 12 - 4 - 95 - 34 - 45 - 75
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Dumas pere, Alexandre (Alessandro): Bianca - 29; Caterina Howard - 12; I Tre Moschettieri - 4 - 34 - 45 - 13; Il Conte di Monte Cristo - 12 - 75 - 2 - 4 - 34 - 74 - 101 - 130 - 45; Kean ovvero Genio e Sregolatezza 4 - 9; Una Notte a Firenze ovvero Alessandro e Lorenzina De Medici - 34 - 137 - 71 - 76 - 45 - 29

_____ and Bucamelli, Gustavo: Il Conte de Montecristo ovvero Il Marinaio e lo scienziato (Il Conte dell'Isola Monte-Cristo) - 14

_____ and Hugo, Victor: La Torre di Nesle ovvero Margherita di Borgogna Regina di Francia - 45 - 89 - 34

Dumas fils, Alexandre: La Moglie Di Claudio - 4 - 59; La Traviata o La Signora delle Camelie (Camille) - 9 - 4 - 34 - 49

* Eisenberg (see Riccardo Cordiferro)

* Farfariello (see Eduardo Migliaccio)

* Fazio, Achille: The Stutterer - 15

Ferrari, Paolo: Il Codicillo dello zio Venanzio - 34; Il Duello - 1;
La Figlia Unica - 4; La Medicina di una Ragazza Ammalata - 1

* Florenza, Ida (see Riccardo Cordiferro)

* Flecchia, Giovanni: L'Arresto di De Felice Giuffrida - 12

Forgione, Luigi Maria: I Martiri di Santa Filomena - 112

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Fusinati: Suora Estella Di Carita' ovvero il Conte Albaldo alla
Guerra di Garignano - 3

Gallina, Giacinto: Così va il mondo bimba mia - 59; Giornalista in
imbarazzo - 76

Gatti, Alessandro: dramatic poem - 1

Gazzoletti, L. (Gozzoletti): Cristoforo Colombo - 1; Le Ultime ore di
Cristoforo Colombo - 1

Gherardi del Testa, Tommaso (aka Del Testa, Gherardo): Il Sistema di
Giorgio - 4 - 34

Giacometti, Paolo: Cristoforo Colombo - 30 - 102 - 34 - 45;
Cristoforo Colombo alla scoperta dell'America (del nuovo mondo) - 34; La
Colpa Vendica la Colpa - 1 - 79 - 45 - 102; La Morte Civile ovvero
(ossia) Corrado il Siciliano - 47 - 61 - 37 - 128 - 43 - 59 - 144 - 4 -
45 - 76 - 34 - 12 - 1; La Trovatella di Santa Maria ovvero la notte di
venerdì Santo del 1825 (Una Notte di venerdì santo ovvero La Trovatella
di S. Maria) - 65 - 103 - 47 - 30 - 34 - 152; Luigia Sanfelice - 1 - 43

Giacosa, Cav. Giuseppe: Come le Foglie - 101 - 4; Il Fratello di armi
- 1; Il Trionfo d'Amore - 8 - 4 - 70 - 34; Tristi Amori - 4; Una Partita
a Scacchi - 1 - 4 - 46

Giannini, Giuseppe Sesto: L'Erede del Proscritto - 64

* Giglio, Cav. Clemente: Il Regicidio - 139; La Figlia del Dragone
Rosso - 139; La Monaca Bianca - 139; Sposalizio Fatale - 139

Giotti, Napoleone: Monaldesca ovvero la Vendetta di un Siciliano - 35

Goldoni, Carlo: La Locandiera - 5 - 1 - 9 - 4; Meneghino a Venezia -
34

Gori, Pietro: Il Maggio - 151 - 158; Gli emigranti - 151 - 158; Senza
Patria - 15

* Granata, Mr. A. and (*) Vajana, N.: Verso la redenzione - 48

Grange, Eugene and Cormon, Eugene: La Gerla di papa' Martin ossia il Facchino del Porto - 1 - 2 - 4 - 34 - 76

Graziolo, Luigi: La leva militare - 102

Gualtieri, Luigi(Gualtiere) and (*) Salvini, Alessandro M.: Galileo Galilei ovvero I Misteri della Inquisizione di Spagna (L'Inquisizione di Spagna) - 12 - 13 - 4 - 34 - 79 - 45 - 43 - 29

Halevy-Meilhac, E. (Meinhac): Frou-Frou - 4

Hugo, Victor: Ernani il Bandito ossia La Tomba di Carlomagno - 29; Gioconda ovvero Angelo Malipieri, tiranno di Padova - 34 - 45; Lucrezia Borgia - 4 - 45; Maria Tudor ovvero La Regina d'Inghilterra - 45; Ruy Blas - 48 - 45

_____ and Dumas pere, Alexandre: La Torre di Nesle ovvero Margherita di Borgogna Regina di Francia - 45 - 89

Ibsen, Henrik: Gli Spettri - 9

Illardi, Pasquale: La rivoluzione russa - 47

* Imperato, Mimi: I due gemelli Sciosciamocca - 88

Interdonato, Stefano: Peppe di Brasi detto Mala carne ovvero Cuor di Siciliano (Mala Carne o cuore di siciliano) - 2 - 4 - 39 - 45 - 43

Invernizio, Carolina: I Piccoli Martiri - 45; Il Bacio Di Una Morta - 4; Satanelle o la mano della morta - 4

* Ironheart (see Riccardo Cordiferro)

* La Maida, Alberto (L.A. Maida): macchiette - 34

Laya, Jean-Louis and Bayard, Jean-Francois Alfred: Lo Stordito - 1

Leitch, Annie: Honor Avenged (translation of Giuseppina Terranova ovvero L'Onore Vendicato by Riccardo Cordiferro)

* Lemoyne, Rev.: Le Pistrine ossia Il trionfo della Chiesa sul Paganismo - 27 - 167

Leoncavallo, Ruggiero: Zaza - 45

* Leotti, Maestro Prof. Giovanni (J.): Una festa a Siviglia - 49

* Maida, L.A. (see Alberto La Maida)

Maldacea, Nicola: macchiette - 3

Marenco, Leopoldo (Marengo): Celeste - 1 - 47 - 108; Giorgio Gandi - 10 - 30 - 61 - 34 - 95 - 5 - 35; Gli Sperone d'Oro (Speron d'Oro) - 13;

Marcellina - 23

Marni, Giovanna: Maria Giovanna la donna del popolo, o la famiglia del beone (Maria Giovanna ossia le Due Madre; Povera Giovanna; La Famiglia dell'Ubbriacone) - 1 - 2 - 72 - 43 - 4 - 34

* Martinelli, Mr. and (*) Reale, Riccio: musical comedy skit - 69

Martini, Ferdinando: Chi sa il giuco non l'insegni - 30 - 56; L'uomo propone e la donna dispone - 1

Martini, Giacomo: Sisto V Papa Liberale (Papa Sisto Quinto) - 4 - 45 - 9

Marulli, G.: Lu Retuorno da Buenos Aires - 2

Mastriani, Francesco: I Misteri di Napoli - 2; La ruota maledetta - 37 - 48 ; La Ombre - 45

_____ and De Lise, Luigi: La Cieca di Sorrento - 2 - 4 - 34 - 78 - 45

_____ and Stella, Cav. Federico: La Medea Di Porta Medina - 2

* Mattia, Mr. P.B.: The inventor - 91

* Mazzacane, Mr. P.: Il Pentimento di S. Maria Maddalena ovvero Il Redentore - 65; La Parodia dell Cavalleria Rusticana - 65

* Mazzarella, Domenico: 'O Brigantaggio a Calazzo - 65

Meinhac, E. (see E. Halevy-Meilhac)

* Metelli, Eugenio: Il Bombone piu dolce - 1

* Metelli, Rocco: Chiara, La Condannata a Morte - 1

Meurice, Paolo: Benvenuto Cellini - 4

Meyer and Fournier: Giosue' il Guardacoste - 1 - 4 - 34 - 67

* Migliaccio, Cav. Eduardo (Farfariello): macchiette (see Appendix VII) - 4 - 3 - 43 - 37 - 7 - 149 - 49; Pulcinella Sindaco di Chicago - 3

* Minciotti, Silvio (Francesco): Le avventure di Mincuccio 'o Barese - 116

Minichino, E. (Minichini): Fior d'arancio ovvero la cantatrice di Mergellina - 47 - 43; La pettinatrice di San Giovanni a Carbonara - 47; Le Catacombe di San Gennaro dei Poveri ovvero I Carbonari di Napoli del (nei) 1821 - 48 - 34 - 45

Misasi, Nicola (Misani, Missasi): Mastro Giorgio - 4; Senza Domani ovvero il brigantaggio calabrese (Senza Dimani ovvero il rosso; Il Rosso o Senza Domani) - 4 - 34 - 45

Montecorboli: Riabilitazione ovvero i due Galeotti (gallotti) - 1 - 4 - 34

Montepin, Saverio: La Portatrice di Pane - 4

Monti, Vincenzo: Lo Schiavo Nero all'Assedio di Gerusalemme - 1

Mosca, Gaspare and Rizzotto, Giuseppe: I Mafiusi (Li mafiusi de la vicaria; I Mafiusi alla Vicaria di Palermo) - 48 - 4 - 45

Murger, Henry (aka E. Murge, Henri): La Boheme - 4 - 45

Napolitano, Alfredo: Il marchese di Cadry - 65

* Nazone (see Guglielmo Ricciardi)

* Nofrio (see Giovanni De Rosalia)

* Noemi, Nunzio (see Salvatore Abbamonte)

Ohnet, Georges (Giorgio): Il Padrone delle Ferriere (Le Maitre de Forges) 1 - 4 - 34 - 45 - 49 - 12 - 23

* Pascale, Edoardo (see Edoardo De Pascale)

Pasquariello, Gennaro: macchiette - 3

* Pecoraro, Eduardo: Giuseppe Musolino - 117 - 94; Jack, lo Sventratore - 9; La tragedia di Bartolomeo Capasso - 2; Maria Barbera - 94 - 4; Nannina (Annina Fiore) - 4 - 21

Pellico, Silvio: Eufemio di Messina - 105; Francesca da Rimini - 4 - 12 - 34 - 45 - 35; Le mie prigionie ovvero I Carbonari del 1921 - 4

* Perretti, Eduardo: macchiette - 34 - 49 - 18

Petito, Antonio: D. Felice Sciosciamocca dint o carrettone d' 'e cane - 124; Due Pascarielli simili - 45; La Scomessa tra servi, con Pulcinella maestro di Cappella e Senatore Romano - 3; Pulcinella mulinaro ovvero Pulcinella condannato a morte e protetto dalla fata Serafinetta - 3

Pilotto, Libero (Pilotti): Dall'Ombra al Sole - 4; Il Prete Garibaldina - 34 - 45

Pinel, Francois (see Philippe Dumanoir)

Pioton: Il Satana - 167

* Pisano, Gennaro: macchiette - 34

Plautus, Titus Maccius: Gli Schiavi - 114

Praga, Marco: Alleluja - 4

Quartello, Luigi: Diosippo - 102

- * Rapone, Pasquale: L'appiciche, li luotene e li contraste de li panattere abbacio Puerto con Pulcinella copista ignorante - 45; Pascariello - 4; Pascariello Polisse - 4; Pascariello sensale e matrimonio - 45
- * Reale, Riccio and (*) Martinelli, Mr.: musical comedy skit-69
- * Ricciardi, Francesco (Riccardi): Farfariello trovato d'inta'a' na varrile - 3; L'arrivo di Pulcinella a New York - 3; Nu pulicino dent'a stuppa (Nu pulicino dinto'a stoppa) - 3; Pulcinella - 3; Pulcinella candidato democratico con Farfariello impazzito per la tragedia - 3; Tanta Mbruoglie pe no Matremmonio - 3
- * Ricciardi, Guglielmo (William Richards, Nazone, W. G. Ricciardi): Il Tribunale della Camorra ossia Tradimento per Tradimento - 2; L'Assassinio di Umberto I - 2; Marta ovvero i Drammi dell'Emigrazione - 2; The Executed Man - 2
- * _____ and Corelli, Maria: Fabio Romano o La Vendetta (Fabio Romani ossia ...) - 29

Righetti, Carlo (see Cletto Arrighi)

Rizzotti, Giuseppe and Mosca, Gaspare: I Mafiusi (Li mafiusi de la vicaria; I Mafiusi alla Vicaria di Palermo) - 48 - 4 - 45

- * Romeo, Mr. V.: Pulcinella - 1

Rossi, Ernesto: Una Commedia per la posta - 4 - 30 - 34 - 45

Rossi, Luigi: Ha perz'a capa - 21

Rossi, Matteo: Il Vagabondo - 4

Roti, Carlo (G.) and D'Aubigny: I Due Sergenti al cordone sanitario di Porto Vandre' - 45 - 4 - 159 - 26 - 1 - 2 - 34 - 79 - 95 - 56 - 102 - 43 - 76 - 64

Rovetta, Gerolamo (Rovetti): I disonesti - 34 - 4 - 101; Romanticismo - 4

Russo, Ferdinando: O Cantastorie - 22

- * Salvini, Alessandro M. and Gualtieri, Luigi: Galileo Galilei ovvero I Misteri della Inquisizione di Spagna (L'Inquisizione di Spagna) - 12 - 13 - 4 - 34 - 79 - 45 - 29 - 43
- * Sandro (see Riccardo Cordiferro)

Sardou, Victorien (Vittoriano): Ali Baba - 8; Andreina - 55 - 45; Facciamo Divorzio - 47; Fedora - 1 - 10 - 4 - 30 - 34 - 45; La Tosca -

4 - 23 - 58 - 61 - 48 - 34 - 45; L'Odio - 4; Patria - 29 - 13

* Savarese, Francesco Saverio: Il Figlio dell'Annunziata - 2; Lola - 2; Nicola Trezza - 2; farce in the Neapolitan dialect - 2

* Scaccabarozzi, Mr. E., (*) Vezzoli, Mr. F. and Zola, Emile: Verso la citta' felice - 134

* Scarlati, Renata (see Renata Brunorini)

* Scarpa, Mario: I Rantzau's (Rautzau) ovvero Caino ed Abele - 4 - 37 - 34

Scarpetta, Cav. Uff. Eduardo (Edoardo): Amonoretata e doie pistolettate con Felice; Sciosciamocca e Meneghino (Maretata e Pistuletta; A maretana e a pistolettata ...) - 37 - 34; Il romanzo di un farmacista povero - 45 - 34 - 4 - 2; La Pupa Movibile - 4 - 2; L'amico Scoppettivo - 37; Lo Scarfaliotto - 34; Mettiteve a fa l'ammore co me (Mellitevi 'a fa' ammore cu me) - 19 - 43; Miseria E Nobilta - 4 - 34 - 45 - 2; Na brutta jurnata - 2; Na cova de nammurate - 34; Na Matassa Mbrugliata - 45 - 2; 'Na Santarella (Santarellina) - 2 - 4 - 3 - 34 - 45; N'Amico 'E (De) Core - 4 - 45; Nu Brutto Difetto - 34; Nu Turco Napoletano - 45; Spusarizio, miseria e mazzata tra Pulcinella, nu vecchio arragiuso e D. Felice Sciosciamocca - 3; Vi che m'a' fatto frate me - 37

Schiller, Frederick (Federico): I Masnadieri della Boemia ossia Il Figlio Assassino del Padre - 12 - 4 - 109 - 34 - 62

Scribe, Eugene: Un Matrimonio Impossibile - 1

Shakespeare, William: Amleto Principe di Danimarca - 4 - 41 - 47 - 45 - 43 - 29 - 48; Giulietta e Romeo - 4 - 48; Giulio Cesare - 4; Il Mercante di Venezia - 4 - 64; Othello ossia Il Moro di Venezia - 43 - 2 - 4 - 77 - 34 - 87 - 45 - 133 - 29 - 75 - 144 - 48

Silvestri, G.: play in four acts - 34

* Sirianni, Giovanni: Sulle zolle della Maryland ovvero la commedia del tuo amore - 95

* Sisca, Alessandro (see Riccardo Cordiferro)

Starace, F.S.: Nu (Un) Guaglione e (di) mala vita - 4; Peppeniello (Peppino) 'o sparatore - 34 - 4

Stella, Cav. Federico: Le Due Orfanelle ovvero una pagina dell'archivio segreto - 4 - 45 - 2

_____ and Mastriani, Francesco: La Medea Di Porta Medina - 2

Sudermann, Hermann (Hennar Suderman, E.): Casa Paterna (Magda) - 4; La felicità di un cantuccio - 4; La fine di Sodom - 4; L'Onore - 4

Sue, Eugenio: I Misteri di Parigi - 4; L'Ebreo Errante - 4

- Tasso, Torquato: Gerusalemme liberata - 22
- Tettoni, Luigi: Il delitto di Ronquerolles - 13
- Tognetti, Goffredo (see Goffredo Cognetti)
- * Tua, Antonio: social dramas - 159
- Ugone, Rev. Dottore C.: Part I - Barca di Caronte - 37; Part II - La Cantata dei Pastori ovvero la Nascita del Verbo Umanato (Quaranta Secoli dopo ovvero La Nascita del Verbo Umanato; La cantata dei Pastori ossia Il vero lume fra le ombre; La Nascita del Verbo umanato ovvero La Cantata dei Pastori) - 4 - 47 - 37 - 45; Part III - La Strage degli Innocenti - 37; 40 Secoli prima ossia il Primo peccato (40 Secoli prima ed Adamo ed Eva) - 37
- * Vajana, N. and Granata, A.: Verso la redenzione - 48
- Valverde: La gran Via - 34
- * Vela, Francesco: spirited little comedy on a colonial topic - 30; dramatic sketches - 30
- * Veneruso, Raffaele: Il Segreto della Vecchia - 47
- * Verga, Mr. F.: farce - 23
- Verga, Giovanni: Cavalleria Rusticana - 1 - 4 - 41 - 96 - 77 - 34 - 117 - 76 - 139; La Caccia al Lupo - 4
- * Vezzoli, Mr. F., (*) Scaccabarozzi, Mr. E. and Zola, Emile: Verso la città' felice - 134
- Villani: macchiette - 3
- Wilcox, Ella Wheeler: Caso di Divorzio - 125
- Zola, Emile (Emilio): Teresa Raquin - 48 - 34 - 43;
- _____, (*) Scaccabarozzi, Mr. E. and (*) Vezzoli, Mr. F.: Verso la città' felice - 134

APPENDIX III

List of Theatre Personnel

Numbers after names refer to the producing companies listed in Appendix I. Alternate names and spellings are in parentheses.

Abarno, Maestro Antonio -6
 Abbamonte, Salvatore (Nunzio Noemi) -102-151-1-158-159
 Abbato, Mr. D. -47
 Abramonte, Cav. Giuseppe -30-34
 Accetta, Edgardo R. -49
 Acciani, Mr. N. -29
 Acciani, Prof. Tobia -23-4
 Accomando, Mr. G. -29
 Acerbi, Mrs. Beatrice (Campanella) -2-4-23-16
 Acierno, Michele -143
 Acritelli, Mr. P. -47
 Adamo, Mr. F. -48
 Adinolfi, Mr. A. -2
 Adinolfi, Olimpia -34-3
 Adler, Jakob P. -4
 Affronto, Mrs. -43-59
 Agazzi, Giuseppe -27
 Aggiudicato, G -2
 Agnini, Armando -56
 Albanese, Mr. -33
 Albertini, Mr. G. -4
 Albery Sisters -34
 Alessandri, Mr. A. (D'Alessandri) -4
 Alessandro, Mrs. Antonietta Pisanelli -3-77-117
 Alessio, Mr. G. -1
 Alfieri, Mrs. -39
 Allara Duet -15
 Alloror, Mr. A. -1
 Alonghi, Mr. V. -48
 Alterio -15
 Altieri, Mr. G. -29-3
 Altieri, Mrs. Ita -2
 Altieri, Mrs. Lina (Miss) -3-48
 Altieri, Luigi (Luigia) -2-3
 Altieri, Ms. Marguerita -2
 Alvino, Mr. A. -1
 Alvino, Pietro -13
 Amaducci, Mr. E. -49-4
 Amalia (See Amalia Spagnuolo) -43
 Amato, Alfredo -48
 Amato, Gennaro -15
 Amberg Sisters -34
 Ambrosino, Mr. G. -3

Amedrano, Mr. F. -14
 Amendola, Mr. -73
 Ami, Mrs. (See Ami Brand)
 Amico, G. -34
 Amodio, Francesco (Frank) -45
 Amoro, Enrico 12
 Amoroso, Ore (D.) -1-4-164-102
 Ancino, Salvatore (Angino) -178
 Andreucci, Mr. -4
 Angelone, Pietro (Angelose) -11
 Annela, Carlo -7
 Anselmi, Roberto (Anselmo) -3-34-45-56-4-102-12
 Antoniazza, Mrs. Pierina (Antoniazzi, Antonazzi) -1-30-76-29-102
 Anzalone, Davide -44
 Apicella, Peppino -3-37
 Aprile, Miss Agnese -73-49-7-31
 Aprile, Miss Genoveffa -73-31-7
 Aprile, Miss Giovannina -7-31-73-49
 Aprile, Mr. -7-49
 Aprile, Raffaele -7-73-49
 Arcamone, Mrs. Concetta (Arcomanno, Carcamone, A. Arcamona, Concettina Ricciardi, G. Maiori) -2-3-4-78-65-21-7
 Arcamone, Rosina (See Rosina Balsamo)
 Arcario, Mr. M. -48
 Arcaro, Miss Maria -149-3
 Ardessone, Miss Adele -29
 Ardessone, Miss Maria -29
 Artale, Mr. -29
 Ascetta, Mr. -4
 Asselta, Dr. R. -1
 Astigiano, Oreste -43
 Attanasio, Giovanni -2
 Attanasio, Ms. Marie -2
 Attenasio, Nicola -29
 Autera, Mr. R. -29
 Autolini, Mr. F. -23
 Avallone, Mr. E. -4
 Avallone, Don Pasquale (Pascale) -3-4-37-7
 Avallone, Mr. V. -12
 Avella, Eduardo -2
 Avelli, Maestro Alfredo -23
 Avellino, Mrs. E. -16
 Aversano, Giosue -1-2
 Aversano, Maestro Nick -176
 Aversano, Mr. P. -4
 Avigni, Mario -15
 Avignone, Miss E. -9
 Avignone, Miss M. -9
 Avitabile, Nicola -2
 Avitabile, Maestro Salvatore -15
 Bacarozy, Tony (Bagarozzi, Bagarozzy) -49
 Bacchini, Miss Silvia -8
 Bacigalupi, Alfredo -45
 Bacigalupi, Lina (Baccicalupi) -45-30

Bacigalupo, Carlo -47
 Badolati, Dr. Vincenzo -1-13
 Bagnulo, Mr. -12-73
 Balassone, Prof. L. -48
 Balata, Ricuzzo -4
 Balducci, Ugo -15
 Balletto, Agostino -1-4
 Balletto, G. -1
 Balsamo, Michele (Balzamo, Bolzano) -29-2-3
 Balsamo, Miss Guglielmina (Balzamo) -56-4-48
 Balsamo, Mr. G.C. -29
 Balsamo, Mrs. Rosina Arcamone (Rosa Balzamo, Bolzano) -2-3-4
 Balsamo, Roberto -2
 Balsamo, Rotino -15
 Balzano -34
 Balzarini, Mr. A. (Balzari) -1
 Bara, Enrico -2
 Barano, Miss A. -4
 Barattoni, Mr. C.A. -15
 Barba, Miss -47
 Barbera, Mr. A. -1
 Barensen, Mr. (See F. Mele-Barensen)
 Baretti, V. -4
 Barile, Vincenzo -49-4
 Barlotti, Mr. C. (G. Bariotti) -1
 Barrelli, Miss Elvira -49
 Barro, Giuseppe (Borro) -11
 Barsotti, Mrs. Lina -2
 Bartolotti, Mr. (Bertolotti, Bartoletti) -2-4
 Baruch, Alfredo -2
 Barusci, Enrico (Baruschi, Baruch) -2
 Basilea, Mr. -38
 Bassi, Francesco -27
 Battaglia, Vincenzo -45
 Battagnini, Mrs. M. -2
 Battinelli, Giuseppe -47
 Bellarosa, Vincenzo -1-8
 Belli, Mrs. C. -12
 Bellucci, Michelangelo -44
 Belmonte, Ms. Antonietta -15
 Bencetti, Riccardo -1-9-10-13
 Bencivenga, Prof. A. -73
 Benedetto, Mr. C. -2
 Benigno, Salvatore -49-4
 Benna, Mr. A. -1-2
 Benzoni, Cav. Eduardo -1-76
 Berardini, Don Michele -3-37
 Bergamo, Concetta -161
 Bergere, Miss -48
 Bergeval, Miss Elfie -34
 Bergval, Miss Helen -12
 Berio, Ms. P. -4
 Bernabo'-Panera, Mrs. -4
 Bernard, Miss Aimee (Amy) -37-34

Bernasconi, Mr. L. -148
 Bertini, Mr. B. -1
 Bertucci, Rafinelo -56
 Bertuglia, Prof. F. -48
 Biagi, Mr. E. -30
 Biancanello, Mr. A. -12
 Bianchetti, Mr. A. -50
 Bianchi, Mr. F. -151-158-13
 Bianchi, Oscar -34-144-3-37-7-164
 Biancifiori, Alfredo -1
 Biasetti, Mr. P. -68
 Biava, Mr. A. -2-16-3
 Biava, Mrs. Tina Scotti (See Tina Scotti)
 Bibbero' -34
 Bicchierai, Luigi -1
 Bifulco, Enrico -157
 Bifulco, Luisa -157
 Biggi, Mr. E. -30
 Biggio, Giovanni -1
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 Bilotti, Mr. -102
 Bini, Annetta -1
 Biondi, Giovanni -97
 Biondi, Giuseppe -97
 Biondi, Ignazio -97
 Biraghi, Mr. -4
 Birch, Mrs. Ida -34
 Birch, John -34
 Bizzani, Maestro Antonio -20
 Blanco, Senorita Federica -15
 Bollina, Mr. A. -1
 Bologna, Clemente -11
 Bolognese, Paolo -3
 Bonami, Mrs. -3
 Bonatti, R. -1
 Boncetti, Mr. E. -1
 Bono, S. -1
 Bonomolo, Giuseppe -57
 Bonsanti, N. -176
 Borisi, Mr. E. -12
 Borrelli, Ms. Anna -15
 Borriello, Gaetano (Borrelli, Borelli) -49-43
 Bottini (Bottino) -2
 Brainberg, Prof. Ferdinando -65
 Brancale, John -2
 Branchi, Console Generale, Cav. Giovanni -25
 Brand, Miss Ami (Mrs. Ami) -3
 Brigante, Nicola (Briganti) -7
 Brina, Mr. I. -29
 Brindisi, Dr. Rocco -17
 Brizzi, Cav. Carlo -1-6-62
 Brogi, Mr. O. -17
 Bruno, Mr. A. -47
 Bruno, Mr. R. -17

Bruno, Mrs. Viola -102
 Bruno, Michele -15
 Brunorini, Ms. Adelaide -15
 Brunorini, Mrs. Renata Scarlati (Mr. Brunovini) -2-4-3-30-34-48-102-59-45-37
 Brunorini, Antonio -15
 Bucca -15
 Bueris, F.D. -6
 Bufano, Cesare -39
 Bufano, Remo -22
 Buongiovanni, Maestro Vincenzo (Rongiovanni) -4-3-59
 Buonora, Pasquale -4-166
 Burron, Mr. J. -1
 Burron, Mrs. E. -1
 Burron, Mrs. G. (Buron) -1
 Butler, Miss Amy -34
 Buttafuori, Mr. F. Petruzzelli -3
 Cacace, Francesco -29
 Cadicamo, Prof. G. (Cadiacmo) -2
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APPENDIX IV

Miscellaneous Translations

A. "-- Be patient -- said Ricciardi -- because we can't continue.
 The reporter told him that he preferred to smoke and Ricciardi went away to find Miss Ester Cunico, who entering from the other side with her sister, let off steam saying -- Look, he makes me play two roles, the Mother Superior and the leading lady. It's impossible, my God!

 -- Ricciardi, from far away: -- But are you coming or aren't you. This is enough to drive you crazy.
 (The audience) On with the show! On with the show!

 Ricciardi -- Are you ready? are you all ready? Let's go out, enter . . .

 De Felice -- Wait what are you doing, everything's missing.

 Miss Cunico -- And me when should I enter?

 -- Ricciardi, fuming -- And the impresario, the impresario where is he?

 The impresario -- Worry about yourself because I know my part.

 Finally the curtain went up and the audience applauded Arturo Maletti. Ricciardi found that he was almost all alone and he went hoarse shouting all kinds of things. At a certain point seeing the reporter of L'Araldo, said to him -- You're yelling too, take heart.

 Ricciardi -- Enter the lieutenant (looking around) the lieutenant the lieutenant, where did he go? If I get hold of him.

 The lieutenant finished greeting a friend and rushed onstage.

 Ricciardi to Defelice -- You have the revolver.

 De Felice (drawing the revolver and putting it under his face) Here it is.

 Ricciardi (backing off) -- Let's not fool around with such things Is it empty?

 -- Already empty! And how can I shoot it, then?

 Meanwhile, Ricciardi remembered that at a certain point there had to appear onstage a police officer whom no one had ever thought to get.

 -- Who's going to play the officer? screamed Ricciardi.

 -- What are we going to do? But how come you didn't take care of it?

 Desperate, he looked squarely into the face of the reporter of L'Araldo and said to him

 -- Do me this favor, you play the officer.

 The reporter replied that he, thank God, still had his mental faculties in reasonably good order and he had no intention of giving the psychiatrists unwarranted proof of his insanity. Ricciardi became desperate, turned around, went out, came back, went out again and finally returned dragging in a man who had neither hat nor nightstick. Ricciardi with brisk force pulled off the Reporter's hat and gave it to the improvised officer.

 With God's will, the final scene arrived. Ricciardi, having forgotten everything, was breathing heavily over Santarella making the

audience laugh hysterically; the major fired, the servant spilled ice cream and pastry over him, and Ricciardi fell down and broke his nose.

When the curtain fell Ricciardi came back in from the wings limping and said:

-- Not just the nose! I broke my leg. I couldn't have fallen with more realism!"¹

B. "-- Pardon, are you the poet Cordiferro? -- I asked him with a certain nonchalance, approaching him where he was seated waiting for the waiter.

-- Surely -- he answered looking at me with surprise.

-- Here in short -- I told him -- is the reason for my bothering you. -- I am a very great admirer of yours and I would like to recite your Ode to the great actor Paolini, on the evening of the benefit given in your honor.

-- With great pleasure -- he agreed -- Come to my house tonight. The actors will be there for rehearsal.

-- I won't miss it.

As I was leaving he was quick to give me a good number of tickets for the benefit which I was supposed to sell among my friends.

. . . I cannot describe to what heights my enthusiasm reached when I went that night to join the Actors at the poet's house

After the rehearsal, everybody said goodbye but I remained in a corner sitting and waiting. . . .

-- Well -- I finally said to the poet who watched me with curiosity -- shouldn't I rehearse before I present myself to the public?

-- It's not necessary if you know the verses by heart.

-- Of that, have no doubt.

-- Can I count on you to sell the tickets?

-- Consider them already sold.

And his face was hopeful like mine. He hoping for a bit of fortune, I for a ray of glory. . ."²

C. Translation of "Una Poesia Per Farfariello":

"A Poem For Farfariello"

Farfariello! Whoever didn't know yet
that he was an artist - He's a devil - they thought,
because Farfariello was not known at that time,
that he's in with Satan and he stays down in hell.

And in Boston, in Chicago, in San Francisco,
they gossiped every day about Farfariello,
condemning him in this way: By Saint Cantelmo,
if this devil comes around here he'd better watch out!-

But this devil is sharp like (unclear)
he went out and far away and for everybody

¹ L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 330 (November 28, 1905), p. 3.

² Abbamonte, "Nella Colonia," p. 5.

it was enough to hear how he sang
and they went crazy over him.

- This one - they said - is this the one who was a devil?
But this one instead is an angel who sings,
If Farfariello sings a sketch,
he's an artist who deserves a medal . . . -

And now throughout all America they say
that Farfariello at one time was unknown
and everyone condemned him,
but now if he sings everyone blesses him!"¹

D. Translation of "All'Artista Signora Concetta Zacconi":

"To the Artist Mrs. Concetta Zacconi

I promised you a sonnet and -- scatterbrain! --
I haven't done it yet, dear lady,
but I am still in time to scribble it,
and you will forgive my sin.

I wanted to tell you that the Goddess who adores,
your heart that Beauty loves,
is that Art that the world has subdued,
the Art that today Italy is honored by.

But your Goddess is not adored,
as false worshippers do their saints,
certainly she is enclosed by your love.

And she therefore gives herself to you completely
and gives you all her most secret charms
and the most sweet-smelling flower to crown you of course.

New York, May 5, 1914"²

¹Riccardo Cordiferro, "Una Poesia Per Farfariello," Italia Della Domenica (December 2, 1917), clipping, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

²Riccardo Cordiferro, "All'Artista Signora Concetta Zacconi," Sisca Collection, Folder 28.

APPENDIX V

Synopsis and Analysis of Il Pezzente

Of all the early short works of Riccardo Cordiferro, only one has remained, the widely done Il Pezzente. This social monologue, as the poet himself described it, is not merely a long poetic harangue on some abstract social ideal; it actually contains the seeds and trappings of a potential naturalistic drama. In flashback form, the work contains exchanges of dialogue between vividly described characters, and these little scenes proceed in a linear plot development which prepares for and culminates in the final, conclusive scene. Throughout, Cordiferro indicates moments for dramatic pauses which serve as breaks for transitions between scenes. The summary below should give enough of an understanding of the form and content of the piece to allow for an appreciation of the analysis which follows. The author precedes the monologue with a typically naturalistic stage direction:

(La scene rappresenta la nuda e triste cella d'una prigione, in Italia, epoca presente. L'attore e' pallido, smunto, addolorato, miseramente vestito.)

Un po' di pane! un po' di pane! un solo
 tozzo ne voglio per sfarmarmi . . . Ah! muoio
 consunto da l'inedia. . .

These suppliant phrases begin the monologue as the prisoner recalls how he spoke them to passersby, entreating them with hands extended, and eyes full of tears, only to be rejected with sarcasm, arrogant gestures, and frowning looks of contempt. But no one gave him anything not even a kind word of hope or smile of compassion as he continued to follow people around like a frightened, beaten dog. With hat in hand, he cried:

. . . . Un po' di pane. . . ho fame. . .
 sono digiuno da due giorni, a casa
 i figli miei m'aspettano, sentite
 il mio lamento, o generosi, o buoni
 signori che passate: un po' di pane
 e piu nulla vi chiedo. . . Ah! non mi fate
 tornare a casa con le mani vuote!

¹"(the scene represents the nude and sad cell of a prison, in Italy at the present time. The actor is pale, emaciated, suffering, miserably dressed.)

A bit of bread! a bit of bread! I need only a morsel of it to appease my hunger . . . Ah! I am wasting away and dying of starvation . . ." Cordiferro, Il Pezzente, p. 3.

Se avete un cuore dentro 'l petto e sangue
 d'uomini avete, se credete in Dio,
 se anche voi figli avete, ah! non passate
 indifferenti innanzi a me che sono
 di carne e d'ossa come voi. . . Vi prego,
 datemi un soldo. (pausa)¹

The passersby went on their way hurriedly, wrapped up in their furs without even turning around to say a word. (Another pause is called for here.)

The prisoner now bemoans a cruel world where there are heartless men capable of betraying their own fathers and brothers, and who with their silence say to the needy man:

-- Non venir tra i miei piedi; io ti disprezzo,
 e col disprezzo mio voglio insultarti,
 non voglio darti niente! --²

When a man is held in such contempt by the world, he should respond with an act of rebellion. First, he should slap himself in the face for blushing with shame at having to beg for bread; then he should repeat this slap one thousand times on the mean face of the one who insults his poverty and laughs at his misery. (Another pause is noted.)

After this reaction the beggar dragged himself home, in the falling snow, the chill of death in his blood, numbed with cold, with horror in his heart, his teeth chattering, and his ragged, torn clothes splashed with mud. (Another pause) He thought of his wife and children waiting for him at home. He didn't want to return home without money or bread, and feels he should have robbed, killed or sold himself into slavery for his children's sake. At this point the prisoner returns to the present time and almost steps out of character to speak directly to the audience:

Ditemi voi: che non farebbe un padre
 per amor dei suoi figli? Se anche avesse
 mille vite, egli tutte le darebbe
 ai figli suoi. . . Diventerebbe vile
 per farli buoni e savii e per dar loro₃
 l'alimento de l'anima e del corpo. . .

¹"A bit of bread . . . I'm hungry . . . I haven't eaten for two days, my children await me at home, listen to my plea, oh you generous and good sirs who pass by: a bit of bread and nothing else I ask of you . . . Ah! don't make me go back home with empty hands! If you have a heart in your breast and human blood, if you believe in God, if you too have children, ah! don't pass indifferent by me who is flesh and blood like yourselves . . . I beg you, give me a coin. (pause)." Ibid., p. 4.

²-- "Get out from under my feet; I despise you, and have nothing but contempt for you, I wish to give you nothing! --" Ibid., p. 5.

³"Tell me: what wouldn't a father do for love of his children? Even if he had a thousand lives to live, he would give everything to his

No pain is greater than when a father sees his children wasting away before his eyes and crying out to him, "Babbo, abbiamo fame!"¹ (Daddy, we're hungry!). It is a terrible, cruel pain, a death rattle, a wound that cannot be healed, a cry of maddening anguish.

The prisoner returns to his story: feeling a sense of failure, he continued on his way and encountered a woman carrying a package. She appeared to him to be gentle and kind so he removed his hat and approached her, sobbing:

Ho fame e i figli miei sono digiuni,
vuol che le porti quel fagotto? --
-- Oh! via! --
quella signora mi rispose -- io sono
la Contessa del Giglio e voi, straccione,
vorreste ch'io vi conducessi a lato!. . . --
(pausa)²

This is how the rich spit in the face of poverty. Quietly, the beggar retreated and when he was far enough away, he cursed her, screaming, "Su di te cada l'anatema di Dio!"³ (May the curse of God fall upon you!), but he immediately realized the weakness and futility of calling upon God for any help:

Dio! che vana parola! Oh che follia!
quale triste ironia! Quale menzogna!
Per chi muore di fame e dei gaudenti
soffre l'insulto e si rassegna al fato,
non puo' esservi un Dio!⁴

As the beggar reached his squalid quarters, the nearby churchbells intoned the Ave Maria and suddenly his knees began to tremble and his breath grew short with a premonition of misfortune. (Pause) He knocked twice but no one answered so he forced open the door. (Pause) Surprised and confused he entered the plain, empty room and called out for his wife and children but no one was there. Full of strange thoughts,

children . . . He would degrade himself to make them good and wise and to give them food for the spirit as well as the body." Ibid., p. 6.

¹ Ibid.

² "I'm hungry and my children are hungry, would you like me to carry your packages? --

-- Oh! get away! -- the lady replied to me -- I am the Contessa del Giglio and you, bum, do you want me to push you away . . . (pause)." Ibid., p. 7.

³ Ibid.

⁴ "God! what a useless word! Oh what madness! What sad irony! What a misstatement. For him who dies of hunger and suffers the insults of the decadents and resigns himself to fate, there can be no God!" Ibid.

tired, shattered and numb, he fell into a chair by the window, the fever burning in his brain. He felt almost as if he were dying. The stage direction calls for the next lines to be delivered "forte", loudly:

Avrei voluto nel mio pugno il mondo,
per poterlo atterrare, avrei voluto
essere Dio per un istante solo
per distruggere tutto: uomini e cose. . .
(pausa)¹

Although hunger gnawed at his stomach, the beggar would gladly have gone a thousand days without food to hear that his wife and children had eaten. Looking through the window, he remembered a revolutionary song.

Cordiferro here unabashedly includes a three-part hymn to socialism. Each part of the song is composed of four verses. The song is intended to be recited, not sung, by the prisoner/beggar character. Within the song, a revolutionary speaks in the first person singular. In Part I, the speaker describes how daily he encounters a beggar crying for alms in the name of Mary, mother of Jesus. Angrily, the speaker tells the beggar to go away, that he will give him nothing because he should not be content with just a dry, moldy piece of bread. He advises the beggar to go among the rich, the bourgeois, the decadents, and rob them of their diamonds and shining jewels.

In Part II, the speaker advises him to rob and kill if he must. The beggar must not humble himself to the speaker for they are brothers. If the speaker has money but refuses to share it with the poor man, spending it on women or wine, then the beggar has the right to kill him, too. Else he deserves to be a beggar and to be called a fool, for at one time the beggar had money, but it was taken from him by the police, the church, the bureaucracy, and business.

In Part III, the speaker identifies with the poor who have neither food, nor roof, who suffer, work and still have nothing. But he at least awaits the dawn of a new day, with an undaunted love of liberty in his breast. He has only insults to hurl in the faces of those fools and rogues of the world, who call him a criminal. In the last verse of the song, he unites with all the rejected and the suffering of the world, crying; "Avanti! Avanti! de l'avvenire, o baldi combattenti!"² (Onward! Onward! towards the future, oh gallant warriors!).

A pause punctuates the end of the song and the monologue returns to the picture of the beggar at his window in his empty home. He was awakened from his revolutionary daydream by the forsaken solitary figure of his wife, who weak and hoarse tells him:

Basta;
mille volte la morte io preferisco
a la vergogna, al disonore. . . e' troppo!³

¹"I wanted the world in my fist, to be able to knock it down, I wanted to be God for only an instant in order to destroy everything: men and things . . ." Ibid., pp. 8-9.

²Ibid., p. 11.

³-- Enough! I prefer death a thousand times to shame, to dishonor

She had been wandering the streets for over four hours in vain, begging for bread in the name of God, showing her emaciated children. Their cries of hunger made her go crazy:

Come un leone
 affamato di preda, io sì' ruggivo,
 assetato di sangue e di vendetta. . .
 E volgendomi a un tratto a' miei figliuoli
 -- Aspettatemi, dissi, io torno presto:
 Vado a prender del pane. . . .
 -- Ah! ti ci lasci! --
 mi risposero insieme ad una voce
 i miei figli.
 -- No, no figli, vel giuro,
 soggiunsi, incoraggiandoli. -- Col pane
 a voi ritornerò! . . .

His wife's despair sends the beggar out into the snowy, icy streets again. Far into the night he walks around silently, his heart beating desperately, when he hears the steps of a bundled up passerby hurrying home. The beggar grabs him by the arm and orders him:

(forte)
 -- O la borsa o la vita. . .
 -- Io non vo' darti
 nulla -- il vigliacco mi rispose -- Io sono
 ricco e potente e con un grido solo
 potrei chiamare qui de la mia casa
 servi e guardiani, ma non ho paura
 de le minacce tue. . .

The passerby then draws a pistol and fires at the beggar who, unhurt, attempts to flee. He is chased down by his intended victim and the police, who drag him off to jail, where he now finds himself. (Pause) The flashback over, the prisoner, speaking now in the present tense, concludes that in jail there are no criminals or thieves but the

. . . this is too much!" Ibid.

¹"Like a lion hungry for prey, I roared, thirsty for blood and for revenge . . . And suddenly turning to my children -- Wait for me, I said, I'll be back soon: I am going to get some bread . . .

-- Ah! you are leaving us! -- my children answered me in unison.

-- No, no, children, I swear to you, I'll come back to you, encouraging them. -- I'll return with bread for you! . . ." Ibid., pp. 11-12.

²"(loudly)

-- Your money or your life . . .

-- I won't give you anything -- the mean one answered -- I am rich and powerful and with one yell only I can call out my house servants and guards but I am not afraid of your threats." Ibid., pp. 12-13.

innocent and unfortunate, the generous spirits, the gallant soldiers of a holy war, the apostles of lofty ideals, revolutionaries and fearless strugglers, whose youth, energy and talents are wasting away in jail. The prisoner wants to proclaim this fact to the world. He wants to tell everyone that he has the name of criminal because he has been made one by a cruel and hypocritical world which denied him bread.

At his point the prisoner remembers his children and wife and fears for their fate: that the children may die of hunger, or that his wife might sell her honor in order to feed them. If this were true, he would not want to get out, he would want to die and curse this hateful, grim world, so corrupted with despots and slaves:

E forse, forse me saprei strappare
dal petto il cuore. . . ah, sì, se fosse vero
questo che penso e mi tormenta tanto,
io morirei così. . . come un dannato.
(Si stringe il collo fra le mani e fa l'atto di strozzarsi.)¹

This last stage direction concludes Il Pezzente.

This stirring soliloquy enjoyed immense popularity. Its minimal stage requirements and the monologue form assured that it could be easily done even in non-theatrical situations such as political meetings and socialist gatherings. All such a piece really required was a devout and vocal socialist or anarchist to be effective. Sometimes the soliloquy was even² recited by actresses, such as Mrs. Tecla Savini³ of Rochester, New York and Mrs. Viola Bruno of Asbury Park, New Jersey.

Generally, the monologue shapes up easily as an example of Naturalism. Cordiferro's stage direction requires a bare, unhappy prison cell, immediately establishing the oppressive, gloomy atmosphere so characteristic of naturalistic plays. Within the prisoner's narrative he describes his sad, squalid hovel, with its fragile, unprotective door and its plain bare room. The pavement is icy, the streets sad, silent and dark.

The characters represented are beggars, prisoners, thieves, criminals, hungry children, a woman on the verge of prostitution, a class of low-life which the author sets in evident and open conflict with an upper class of the rich, the bourgeoisie, the church, the state, the nobility, the mercantile class, the police, in other words, the rest of society. In this way Cordiferro places the responsibility for society's problems on society rather than on the individual. The main character emerges from the prisoner/beggar role to become the collective hero of the piece, symbolizing the rest of suffering humanity. Just before his suicide, he identifies and speaks out for all thieves, criminals, and other unfortunates wasting away in prisons, just as the

¹"And perhaps, perhaps I would know how to tear my heart out of my breast . . . ah, yes, if it is true, this thought that torments me so much, I would die like this . . . like a condemned man. (He grabs his neck between his hands and strangles himself.)" Ibid., p. 14.

²L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 142 (May 23, 1905), p. 2.

³L'Araldo Italiano, Anno XII, N. 298 (October 27, 1905), p. 2.

speaker of the revolutionary song rallied all outcasts of society.

The beggar likens himself to a beaten, cowering dog, frightened of his master's kick. The beggar's wife imagines herself a roaring, raging, hungry, bloodthirsty lion. The animal imagery here coincides with the naturalistic penchant for seeing man as part of the lower order of animals in their natural environment, struggling for survival.

Evident here too is the naturalistic disenchantment and disbelief in God and religion. The beggar continually uses such phrases as: "for the love of God" and "if you believe in God" and "in the name of Mary, the mother of Jesus" to touch the hearts of the passersby on the street, but to no avail. The ringing of the church bells intoning the "Ave Maria" fill the beggar with a dreadful premonition of danger, rather than consoling him in his misery. When the beggar calls down the curse of God on the stingy Countess del Giglio, Cordiferro has him immediately realize the futility of placing any faith in God, religion and the conventional moral order. The beggar then inevitably declares his atheism, and by extension, that of Cordiferro: "non puo' esservi un Dio!" (there can be no God!).

The structural use of the beggar's suicide at the end of the monologue provides this work of social protest with the perfect unhappy ending, designed to provoke the audience's desire for social change. This script and others that followed reinforced Cordiferro's role as social critic and reformer.

APPENDIX VI

Synopsis and Analysis of L'Onore Perduto

The text of L'Onore Perduto comes down to us in modern times in the form of an undated, 124 page typescript, almost certainly typed by Riccardo Cordiferro himself. Attributing it to the playwright is supported by the following evidence: first, the same old, erratic typewriter with keys out of line was used by the writer in the typing of the scripts, correspondence and writings; secondly, as the man typed, he revised, thought better of, reconsidered bits of dialogue and stage directions, then changed or eliminated them by overtyping on some, or crossing out others with the .. key on his typewriter. Fortunately, because of those days before whiteout and korectype, the playwright's thinking and rethinking are laid out right on the page for us. Cordiferro would also add manual editing in what is clearly his own, characteristic European handwriting.

Cordiferro was not a professional typist, and the right margin on his typewriter was so fixed that if he could not fit a word on a line, he would x it out and add it on the next line. The script is replete with not only editorial changes but corrections of typographical errors, misspelling, capitalization, punctuation, missing words, layout or form, and grammar. Corrections were made manually or mechanically and a rare few escaped Cordiferro's proofreading.

The manuscript is undated. The author completed the play in 1900, and its premiere took place in 1901 but there is no indication when this version was typed and edited. A 1906 newspaper summary of the drama in La Voce del Popolo of Philadelphia¹ describes an alternate ending from that of the manuscript at our disposal, and again there is no way of telling whether or not our script predates the newspaper version, or how it differs from the version published by Cordiferro in La Follia, something before 1906.² Cordiferro, as publisher, could have had as many copies of this version as he needed, but a newspaper copy of the drama is hardly adapted to the needs of an actor or director so a typescript would be the physical format needed in the theatre. The date of this manuscript, therefore, could fall anywhere between the time of its first composition in 1900 and its last production in 1933.

To understand the synopsis of the play, which will follow, the modern reader will need an explanation of some essential details about the Italian-American immigrant community, details already automatically assumed by a contemporary audience. L'Onore Perduto takes place in the Little Italy of Manhattan's Lower East Side in 1900. To accommodate the increasing immigrant population, a good number of "banks" sprang up on

¹"L'onore perduto alla Verdi Hall," La Voce del Popolo, (September 27, 1906), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

²La Follia, (January 7, 1906), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

the streets of Little Italy. These establishments more closely resembled the check-cashing offices of today than fullfledged banks. A typical banking office also doubled as travel agency, cigar store, employment agency, wine shop or communications center. The owner of such an office was called a "banker." Many of them were honest and entrusted by the illiterate Italian immigrants with money to be sent back home to relatives in Italy, with checks to be cashed, and with letters to be written since the laborers frequently could not write themselves. Don Angelo Legniti and Fausto D. Malzone, whose names have figured in this history, are examples of just such honest bankers.

Many bankers, however, were not honest, especially in the area of employment. It was the general practice for some of these businessmen to engage newly arrived, naive immigrants as laborers on track gangs to work on the railroads. They would pay miserable wages for long hours of work, house them poorly out in the rural work locations, and generally treat them like prisoners on chain gangs. The "boss", as he was known, made his profits from the railroad company for whom he supplied and supervised the labor. The Don Celestino, referred to in this play, is just such a disreputable banker, and Giuseppe Esposito is preparing to become one.

Alberto Rotini, the male protagonist of L'Onore Perduto, has worked as a cashier for the last six months in the banking office of Don Celestino. The heroine of the piece is Rotini's wife, Sofia. Their daughter, Ida, is a child of eight years. Other characters are Teresa, Sofia's mother, who lives with them; Don Pasquale Gioiosi, a friend of the family; Giuseppe Esposito, another acquaintance of Alberto and Sophia from their home town of Naples; and two detectives, one of whom is an Italian-American, and speaks, and another who has no lines.

The play is structured into four acts. The action within each act is continuous, although the author has divided the act into many scenes according to the European system: a new scene for each entrance of a new character. Act I contains 12 scenes, according to this system; Act II has 4 scenes; Act III has 5 and Act IV has 11. One humble, poorly furnished room serves as the set for all four acts.

Act I, Scene 1: Sofina Rotini and her mother are getting ready to go out. Their conversation reveals the family's desperate circumstances since Alberto, Sofia's husband, lost his job and has been unable to get another. Depressed, he rarely goes out of the house. Sofia is sending Teresa to the home of Signora Carmela for a loan of \$20.00 in exchange for a few of Sofia's jewels which have little more than sentimental value. Sofia is going to a factory on Bleecker Street today to secure a job as a seamstress. Sofia goes into the next room to bid goodbye to Alberto while Teresa prays silently, on her knees, to a figure of the Madonna atop a chest of drawers. With Sofia's return the two women exit on their errands. Alberto enters, paces up and down sadly and pensively when a knock is heard at the door.

Scene 2: Don Pasquale Gioiosi, a friend of the family, has come by for a friendly visit. Alberto remarks that he has only two friends left in the world, Pasquale and Giuseppe Esposito. Pasquale appreciates the confidence but asserts that he has always disliked Esposito. Alberto claims that Giuseppe Esposito has defended him against the accusations made about him by Don Celestino, the Mulberry Street banker. Giuseppe had helped Alberto get a job as cashier at Don Celestino's bank but the banker accuses Alberto of the theft of \$100.00 from the safe and now Alberto lives under the threat of arrest. Alberto emotes with

feelings of shame and humiliation at such unwarranted charge, he who has always worked so diligently, always trusted and respected by his superiors when employed by the government in Naples. Pasquale attempts to encourage Alberto and assure him of his esteem and faith. Footsteps are heard at the door.

Scene 3: Alberto admits Giuseppe Esposito, whom he has been expecting. He has come to talk to Alberto, so Pasquale decides to leave, despite Alberto's assurances that he might stay. Pasquale promises to return the next day.

Scene 4: Alberto asks Giuseppe, his old friend from Naples, to intercede for him with Don Celestino and to make the banker aware of his integrity regardless of the poverty in which Alberto now finds himself. Giuseppe replies that he has already done so and even volunteered to replace the stolen cash but the banker refused to have anything further to do with Alberto, stating, "Egli e' un ladro!"¹ (He is a thief!). Alberto then requests Giuseppe to look out for his family should he be arrested and put in jail. He refuses to flee since that would prove him guilty and everyone would then believe the banker. For the banker is held in esteem because he is rich, despite the fact that he has become rich by exploiting Italian laborers. Giuseppe then asks after Sofia. Alberto explains that she has gone in search of work. He lovingly describes her goodness, moral support and quiet suffering in the face of trouble. For Alberto to eat bread bought through Sofia's labors would be as bitter for him as taking poison. Giuseppe wishes he could assist in some way but claims that his business affairs have gone badly. Instead, he will intercede immediately with Don Celestino, his friend, whose banking office is located nearby the Rotini home, on Mulberry Street. He promises to return in 10 minutes. Before leaving, he queries, "Ma chi puo' averseli presi quei maledetti cento dollari?"² (But who could have taken those damned hundred dollars?) The stage direction indicates that he knows.

Scene 5: Sofia returns. She had been waiting outside until Giuseppe's departure since she dislikes the man. Alberto recalls Don Pasquale's similiary aversion but is at a loss to understand why. Sofia is certain that Giuseppe lies when he promises to mediate with the banker. Sofia then happily announces that she will start work Monday as a seamstress and her mother will take care of Ida, their daughter. When Alberto protests, she reasons with him that every good wife should assist in this way when a husband's earning are insufficient for the family's needs. Even if Alberto finds work, the two of them working together would earn more. Her gentle logic relieves Alberto and mutual expressions and reassurances of love follow.

Scene 6: Ida returns from school. A happy domestic scene ensues.

Scene 7: Giuseppe interrupts this family bliss by returning sooner than expected. Alberto suggests that Sofia bring Ida into the next room. Sofia warns him sottovoce not to trust Giuseppe, who has the treasonable face of Judas. Seeing them off, he dismisses her distrust.

¹Riccardo Cordiferro, L'Onore Perduto (unpublished typescript) Sisca Collection, Folder 48, Act I, p. 15.

²*ibid.*, p. 21.

Scene 8: Giuseppe reports the results of his interview with Don Celestino. The banker is willing to destroy the warrant for his arrest if Alberto signs a written request for pardon of the offense. The suggestion sends Alberto into a rage. Giuseppe retorts that he was only trying to help. After all, Alberto has a family to think of. Alberto declares that such a declaration would be moral suicide, that his honor is worth more than his life. Giuseppe, like Pilate, washes his hands of the matter.

Scene 9: Sofia enters. Giuseppe exits hoping that he will have better news tomorrow.

Scene 10: Alberto despairs. Sofia reassures him of her support and fidelity during their troubles.

Scene 11: A tearful scene where Alberto begs his daughter not to believe the calumnies spread about him. He is an honest man who has never harmed anyone.

Scene 12: The entire family in tears, two detectives arrest Alberto who gives himself up quietly and resignedly. End of Act I.

Act II, Scene I: A month later. A bed has been brought out on which Ida, sick with fever for the last two weeks, is sleeping. Sofia, looking over her, bemoans the fact that she has no money for a doctor or medicine or even a cup of broth for the child.

Scene 2: Teresa enters. Sofia sobs with fear that Ida will die. Teresa counsels prayer and trust in God's mercy, which elicits a torrent of recrimination from Sofia against the impassive God who allows her child to die.

Scene 3: Don Pasquale visits the family, and sees Sofia's distress. Financially, times are difficult for him, too. Sofia discloses that Alberto has been kept in the Ludlow Street jail for a month waiting indefinitely for a trial. Pasquale assures her that his betrayer will be tormented by guilt until he dies. Teresa promises that Alberto will avenge himself on his release. Sofia suddenly reveals that the betrayer has succeeded in revenging himself upon Alberto as he had threatened. Pasquale assumes this refers to Giuseppe Esposito and inquires as to the reason. Sofia then recounts the story of Giuseppe's unsuccessful suit of Sofia in Naples. Rejecting him, she married instead his friend, the honest, hardworking Alberto. To forget her Giuseppe went to America and grew rich. Pasquale adds that he got rich by exploiting poor, ignorant Italian laborers. Acting as a "boss", he speculated with their money, abused their good faith and made them work eleven hours a day instead of eight. Sofia points out how it was Giuseppe Esposito who wrote to Alberto in Naples, encouraging him to come seek his fortune in America, the land of money, where the streets are paved with gold. In spite of Sofia's misgivings and warnings, Alberto left his respected position in Naples and the two came to New York City where Giuseppe secured Alberto the cashier's position in the bank of Don Celestino. Because of his assistance, Giuseppe has become familiar and bold with her, propositioning her for her favors, bothering her in the street, especially now that Alberto is in jail.

Sofia's concerns now turn to her sleeping, feverish child. She affirms that a woman's honor is a sacred thing; once lost it cannot be regained. But she understands how a woman might be forced into dishonor in order to feed her children, and for that, Sofia firmly asserts, society has no right to blame her. Teresa and Pasquale try to calm the distraught Sofia, counseling patience. Pasquale offers to call the

nearby doctor for Ida, paying the fee himself. Since he has to attend to business, Teresa goes with him to bring the doctor back.

Scene 4: A knock at the door, Sofia opens it to find Giuseppe Esposito, who brazenly enters, uninvited. She protests his presence in her home and makes repeated demands that he leave, which he ignores, objecting that he has come as a friend of the family. She denounces him as a traitor and confronts him with the responsibility for her husband's arrest. He feebly denies this but adds that if he had been responsible, it would have been to punish her for her pride. After several useless attempts to ingratiate himself by offering her a wallet full of money, after many unheeded demands by Sofia for him to leave, she gets a pistol from the wardrobe and aims it at him: "Uscite! o faccio fuoco!.." ¹ (Get out! or I'll shoot!). Giuseppe retrieves his wallet and exits immediately. End of Act II.

Act III, Scene 1: A month later. Sofia watches over her sleeping child, when Teresa returns from visiting Alberto in the prison hospital. He has become ill in prison, and his recovery will take several more weeks. Sofia resolves to visit him tomorrow since Ida is getting a little better.

Scene 2: Don Pasquale asks permission to enter. The three friends recall Sofia's misadventure with Giuseppe Esposito. Pasquale reveals that Giuseppe has opened his own banking business, has been named honorary president of this or that festival, has been created a Cavaliere of the Crown of Italy, has been praised as a philanthropist in the Italian-American newspapers, which probably have been paid off to do so. Pasquale inquires after Ida, who has improved but Sofia laments that she still has no money to buy her milk. Don Pasquale leaves to see what he can do.

Scene 3: Sofia and Teresa marvel at the man's genuine sincerity and generosity, which Teresa attributes to the power and goodness of God. This remark provokes another bitter renunciation of faith from Sofia.

Scene 4: Don Pasquale returns with a bag of groceries and a bottle of wine, bought with money borrowed from a friend. He donates his remaining last dollar to the family. The postman whistles and Teresa retrieves a letter from Alberto to Sofia, in which he explains the Giuseppe has offered to lend him the \$1500.00 bail money. Giuseppe has told him that Don Celestino now has new evidence against Alberto. It is imperative that Alberto get out of jail as quickly as possible to hire a lawyer. He knows that his health will deteriorate if he is not released soon. He cautions Sofia to cooperate with Giuseppe Esposito when he comes to her to make the necessary arrangements. Sofia faints. Don Pasquale wants to go the store for vinegar to revive her but remembers he has no more money. In the confusion, he knocks over the bag of groceries and the eggs break on the floor. Sofia revives and sends her mother to Signora Carmela again to borrow \$5.00, while Don Pasquale goes out in search of another friend from whom to borrow money to replace the eggs.

Scene 5: A despairing Sofia is frightened by the sudden appearance of Giuseppe Esposito, who enters uninvited, aware that she is alone. He claims he has come to save her husband. In a rage, she

¹ Ibid., Act II, p. 25.

orders him out: "Voi volete salvarlo a prezzo del mio onore!"¹ (You want to save him at the price of my honor!). The two then engage in an argument on the meaning and value of honor. For Giuseppe honor means money. He warns her that her husband will certainly die if forced to stay in jail another week, but she still refuses to surrender herself to him. He turns to leave but she tearfully stops him, reminding him of his former feelings for her and begging his mercy for her husband. He states blatantly his lack of concern for Alberto and recalls her rejection in Naples. He turns to go again. She begs for pity. He refuses. Thoroughly hysterical, she cries out for forgiveness from Alberto, Ida and her mother, and falls to the ground exhausted, while Giuseppe looks on with eyes enflamed with lust. End of Act III.

Act IV, Scene I: A week later. Sofia begins to pray to the Madonna, but stops herself abruptly, realizing its futility. If the Madonna were to be of any help to her, she would have prevented her current plight. The only recourse for Sofia now is death.

Scene 2: Teresa enters and wonders why Sofia is upset when Alberto is due to be released from prison today. Sofia remembers that he should have been freed a week ago but for one reason or another the day kept being postponed. Fortunately, the sheer joy brought by the news of his impending freedom has restored Alberto to health. Teresa marvels at how the formerly despised Giuseppe has after all shown himself to be a sincere and generous friend.

Scene 3: Footsteps are heard outside and Teresa goes out to investigate. Alone, weighed down with her guilt, Sofia decides she can no longer go on performing this horrible comedy. Teresa returns with the news that Pasquale is on his way. Sofia leaves on the pretext of meeting Alberto upon his release. Alone, Teresa prays for Sofia.

Scene 4: Don Pasquale stirs Teresa from her prayer. Both are amazed at Giuseppe Esposito's apparent mending of his ways, like the hero of the novel I promessi sposi, one Innominato, who underwent a similar conversion. Pasquale hopes they are not mistaken, but unleashes a long harangue about crooked bankers, 87 of whom have gone bankrupt and fled to Canada within the last year. Another long speech follows on the injustices of the rich perpetrated against the poor.

Scene 5: Alberto returns home, embraces his mother-in-law and friend, and inquires after Sofia, who they tell him had already gone out to meet him.

Scene 6: Ida enters from the next room. They enjoy a tender family reunion and Alberto again asks for Sofia. Ida goes to look for her mother at the home of their neighbor, Signora Carmela.

Scene 7: While they are talking, Sofia enters the room unnoticed and announces, "Egli e' libero. . . libero finalmente, ed io sono disonorata. . ." ² (He is free. . . free finally, and I am disgraced. . .). She quickly drinks the contents of a flask she has taken out of her apron pocket. Sofia and Alberto embrace and kiss passionately. Then she abruptly pushes him away and bursts into tears, refusing to let him kiss her. He screams for an explanation.

¹ Ibid., Act III, p. 23.

² Ibid., Act IV, p. 15.

Scene 8: Alberto discovers the fallen flask on the floor and realized she has taken poison. Don Pasquale runs out for an ambulance. With much insistence from Alberto, Sofia explains with great effort that her lips are contaminated and the reason: "Sì, io sono disonorata!"¹ (Yes, I am disgraced!). Alberto retreats from her, and feels his world exploding. Teresa weeps. Sofia explains the motivation, not money but Alberto's freedom. Alberto demands the man's name. Sofia begs Teresa to bring Ida so she may see her child before she dies. Alberto repeats his demand. Hearing it is Giuseppe Esposito, he vows revenge. Sofia begs forgiveness of Alberto and Teresa and then dies. Teresa exits sobbing.

Scene 10: Alberto, alone, trembling, convulsed with remorse and anger, expresses love for his wife who was his joy in life. He again promises revenge regardless of the fact that it means certain arrest and death in the electric chair.

Scene 11: Giuseppe Esposito appears at the door. He sees Sofia and assumes she is sleeping. He has passed by briefly to see Alberto and will return for a longer visit when Alberto has had time to rest. As he turns to go, Alberto prevents him from leaving by pouncing on him and grabbing him by the throat. Alberto tells him that his wife sleeps the eternal sleep and that Giuseppe has killed her. Giuseppe feigns innocence. Pinning him against the wall, Alberto confronts him with all he knows. Amidst the husband's screams and recriminations, a desperate struggle ensues. Giuseppe pulls out a knife, opens it with his teeth and thrusts it at Alberto who snatches it from him. Wrestling him to the floor, Alberto pins him down, kneeling on his chest and repeatedly stabbing him with the knife. Giuseppe utters a final, agonizing cry. Alberto stands over him, bloody arm upraised, and cries, "Ah, ora sono sodisfatto! Ho vendicato il mio onore! . . ." ² (Ah, now I am satisfied! I have avenged my honor! . . .). End of the drama.

The alternate finale of this drama, reported by a Philadelphia newspaper in 1906, is less stirring politically but more sentimental:

Poi quando si accorge che Giuseppe e' morto volge il pugnale
contro se' stesso. . . . Ma Ida entra, e l'arma cade di mano
al vendicatore che torna padre. . . .³

Although it is difficult to say which of these endings was the original, and more importantly, which ending was preferred by Cordiferro, the typescript version better serves and punctuates the author's thesis, for L'Onore Perduto is unmistakably a pièce à thèse or problem play or play of social protest. Alberto's final symbolic posture -- the laborer triumphant atop the defeated oppressor, arm aloft bathed in red -- strongly evokes the image of anarchy and revolution. When the play was

¹ Ibid., p. 19.

² Ibid., p. 29.

³ "Then when he realizes that Giuseppe is dead he turns the knife on himself . . . But Ida enters, and the weapon falls from the hand of the avenger who becomes a father again . . ." La Voce del Popolo, (September 27, 1906), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

announced in Providence in June 1902, the reporter of La Liberta was calmly summarizing for his readers the essential events fo the plot but when he reached the point of Giuseppe Esposito's demise, he suddenly and unexpectedly launched into a heated, emotional tirade denouncing the evils perpetrated by the hated bosses:

Certo si e' che il seduttore espio' il suo misfatto, colpito dal braccio vindice del marito offeso, e cosi dovrebbero finire tutti i boss, che vivono del lavoro degli operai, sfruttandoli in mille maniere. Tali esseri abbietti sono le vere sanguisughe sociali. Costoro stipulano il contratto di un lavoro a lauto prezzo, v'impiegano centinaia di persone, per pochi soldi la settimana, e mentre lottano ogni di' con la fame e la miseria, il boss, inforcati gli occhiali, con il cilindro in testa, con i denari iniquamente carpitati, fa il generoso nei lieti ritrovi. Trionfo e pettoruto si pavoneggia nella sua crassa e procace ignoranza, sicuro di essere degnamente rappresentato da un aguzzino da lo sguardo bieco, degno ruffiano del padrone.

This summary formed part of the announcement of the production occasioned by an expected visit to the city by Riccardo Cordiferro, so the reporter's excitement was not prompted by a stirring performance. Perhaps he was able to read from a script borrowed from Il Circolo Filodrammatico Eleonora Duse, which was undoubtedly in rehearsal by this time. The announcement ended with the exhortation, cited earlier, that all who love liberty should turn out to welcome the talented poet upon his arrival in Providence.

We have a clue from Ricciardi's memoirs as to who the real-life, flesh and blood models were for the characters, Don Celestino and Giuseppe Esposito. Although such businessmen could be found in Italian communities everywhere in the United States, and we can assume that Cordiferro had in mind a collective villain, nevertheless he was no doubt familiar with the prototypes of such bankers in the Little Italy of Manhattan's Lower East Side, the locale of L'Onore Perduto. The journalist Pasquale De Biasi, Editor of Il Telegrafo at 144 Leonard Street, in his Preface to Ricciardi's book of memoirs recalls one specific banker of this kind:

L'America -- nei rispetti della gente italiana -- era in piena eta' avallonica. Don Pasquale Avallone, banchista a Mulbery

¹"It's a sure thing that the seducer atoned for his crime, struck by the avenging arm of the wronged husband, and this is the way all bosses should end up, those who live off the labors of working men, exploiting them in a thousand ways. Such dispicable creatures are really social leeches. They draw up work contracts at a rich price, they hire a hundred people for a few cents a week, who struggle every day with hunger and poverty, while the bosses put on their eyeglasses, top hats on their heads, with money unfairly extorted, and play the gallant in places of amusement. Triumphant and conceited, he struts around in his gross and provoking ignorance, certain of being adequately represented by a tyrant with a sinister face, worthy pimp for his boss." La Liberta, Anno 2, N. 8, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

(sic) Street, riceveva in consegna, allo scalo (mandatigli dai vari Jacchel napoletani) frotte di emigranti inebetiti dalla miseria e dallo smarrimento -- e li inoltrava nei lavori sulle "tracks" ferroviarie o nelle viscere della terra, che si rigavano di fogne, di condotti elettrici e di ["] subways". Avallone, nelle sue transazioni con gli immigrati, era spiccio. Diceva: "Sentite, in questo affare uno di noi deve uscire buggerato non sarò io....."¹

In Cordiferro's drama, Giuseppe Esposito served as an example, not only of the disreputable banker type, but also as the go-between mentioned above, the "Neapolitan jackel" who would lure the unsuspecting immigrants to employers such as Celestino or Avallone. It was Giuseppe Esposito who encouraged the protagonist Alberto Rotini to leave Naples; it was also Esposito who secured Alberto the position in Celestino's bank as cashier.

The name of Don Pasquale Avallone, it must be noted, was a prominent feature among the banking advertisements that appeared among the pages of the Italian dailies of the period. Though De Biasi clearly indicts Avallone for his practices in the passage, Il Telegrafo readily accepted his advertisements. Avallone's New York Labor Agency was established in 1887 at 71 Mulberry Street. A theatre program ad in English advertised:

LABORERS SUPPLIED FOR RAILROADS, COALMINES, BRICKYARDS, ETC.
Newly landed Immigrants of any nationality furnished in any number wanted,² -- No fees charged to laborers. -- All languages (sic) spoken.³

He contracted Italian-American laborers at \$1.25 per day to work on the construction of the New York Central Railroad.⁵ Eventually he had offices at 74 Mulberry Street, 94 Bayard Street, 93 Park Street, 181 Bleecker Street and 2239 First Avenue. He advertised such services as: "Biglietti di Passagio" (travel tickets), "Spedizione di danaro" (money orders), "Cambia valute" (money exchange) and "Notaio Pubblico"⁴ (notary public). When the comedian Eduardo Migliaccio first came to New York City, later to take the Italian community by storm as Farfariello, he

¹"America -- with respect to the Italian people -- was at the height of the avallonic age. Don Pasquale Avallone, a banker on Mulberry Street, received on consignment at the docks (sent to him by Neapolitan jackels) throngs of immigrants dazed with hunger and dismay -- and he would send them to work on the railroad tracks or into the bowels of the earth, which were lined with sewers, electrical conduits and subways. Avallone, in his dealings with the immigrants, was shrewd. He would say: 'Listen, in this business one of us two is going to get screwed, it won't be me.....' " De Biasi, p. 5.

²Pane, p. 30.

³Ricciardi, Ricciardiana, p. 177.

⁴Il Telegrafo, Anno III, N. 325 (November 21, 1903), p. 3.

worked at the Banca Avallone.

Even though Cordiferro has used the background of the banking world as the foundation for the social injustice of the play, he did not neglect to punctuate his premise with an appropriate polemic from the mouth of Don Pasquale, when Teresa inquires if he has been taking his money to the bank:

E poi, alla banca? Sarei davvero un bel matto! Se io avessi del denaro, non vorrei mica affidarlo nelle mani d'un banchiere.

TERESA

E perche?

DON PASQUALE

Perche' e' risaputo da tutti, vi sono stati, fra gl'italiani, centinaia di banchieri, anzi, per meglio dire, "banconari" che, insalutati ospiti, chiusero un bel giorno gli sportelli della loro baracca e se la filarono al Canada'. L'esempio, voi sapete meglio di me, e' contagioso. (pausa) Sapete quanti (sic) banchieri italiani sono scappati nello spazio d'un anno? La bellezza di ottantasette! In quanto a me, non c'e' ¹pericolo che io affidi ad un qualsiasi banchiere il mio denaro.

When Pasquale says to Teresa, "you know better than I," he refers to Alberto's brother, who had promised to be the family's host in the new world. When they arrived, they learned that he had committed suicide with an overdose of morphine because the bank to which he had entrusted his life savings of \$4,000.00 had declared bankruptcy and folded.

This protest drama undisputably enjoyed popular success and a long life. The many, many newspaper clippings saved by the playwright in his travels attest to this fact. As for the critical reception to the work, we are dependent for the most part on this same collection of clippings, which contains mostly positive reactions, with a few negative responses only. Is this so because Cordiferro ignored the negative and saved only the positive? Riccardo Cordiferro seems to have been the kind of person who saved everything written about himself. Then again, much of the favorable response to this "red" drama came from newspapers and reviewers who were intensely more interested in the play's political and philosophical content than in Cordiferro's dramaturgy. The titles of newspapers indicate their partisan socialist outlook: Voce del Popolo

¹"What, in the bank? I would be one fine idiot! If I had money, I wouldn't trust it at all into hands of a banker.

TERESA

And why?

DON PASQUALE

Because it has come to be known by everyone, there have been among the Italians, hundreds of bankers, rather, to say it better, "embezzlers" who, leave without notice, close the doors to their ill-established affairs, and run off to Canada. The habit, you know better than I, is contagious. (pause) Do you know how many Italian bankers have fled in

(Voice of the People), Vesuvio (Vesuvius), Lavoro e Commercio (Labor and Commerce), La Lotta (The Struggle), Il Proletario (The Proletarian), Corriere Libertario (Libertarian Courier), La Questione Sociale (The Social Problem), Operaio (Worker), La Riscossa (The Insurrection), La Liberta (The Liberty), Amico del Popolo (Friend of the People), Mazza (Hammer), Il Martello (The Hammer), Giustizia (Justice), and Il Lavoro (Labor). Throughout Cordiferro's playwrighting career, one of his plays would be done sometimes under the auspices of the local newspaper, and, as already noted, in conjunction with a political event or meeting.

With a following like this, Cordiferro, even if he were so inclined, would have great difficulty finding unbiased critical analysis, but a few examples do crop up here and there, nevertheless. One of these is provided by Giulio De Giuli on the occasion of the drama's premiere. In the course of the review, the same journalist who commented on Mrs. Beatrice Acerbi's offstage cooking and sewing abilities, gave Cordiferro the following advice:

. . . a lui, giovane, studioso e intelligente, conviene
affrancarsi dalle viete forme, che hanno fatto cadere il teatro
di Paolo Ferrari per dare vita a quelli d'Illica e dell'Ibsen.

In likening Cordiferro to the neo-romantic Paolo Ferrari (1822-1899), who wrote plays in the 1860's and 1870's, the reviewer most probably refers to the melodramatic trappings of the early realistic period of Italian theatre, il verismo, which translates loosely as realism. Ferrari, as a "realist" was isolated from later naturalistic Italian playwrights because he essentially upheld society's mores, rather than blaming society for social ills. For instance, Ferrari upheld the duel as a social custom, since no better way had evolved to settle disputes, and he also upheld the double standard. Of this Cordiferro is also guilty. The heroine of L'Onore Perduto, although she mentions in passing that society cannot condemn a woman who turns to prostitution to feed her starving children, nevertheless is forced into final suicide for an adultery and a loss of "honor" which must be avenged by her husband. In spite of the play's obvious social thesis hammered home by the frequent speeches in the text on social topics, the plot hinges on the play's title, "Lost Honor." In this way, Cordiferro cannot be called a pure naturalist; perhaps the reviewer caught the anachronism and in this way chastised Cordiferro, pointing out the way to the style of Ibsen and, mysteriously, Illica. The unorthodox punctuation, "d'Illica," leads us to believe that the printer had trouble recognizing the name of Luigi Illica, the well known librettist for some of Puccini's operas. If Illica wrote naturalistic dramas a la Ibsen, he

the space of one year? A cool eighty-seven! As for me, there's no danger that I would trust any of my money with such a banker!" Cordiferro, L'Onore Perduto, Act IV, p. 8.

1. . . for him, young, studious and intelligent, it would be better to free himself of the outmoded forms that made the theatre of Paolo Ferrari fail, only to be replaced by that of Illica and Ibsen." De Giuli, loc. cit.

is generally ignored by most treatments of Italian naturalism, so the reference here is lost. But the reference to Ibsen clearly indicates that Giulio De Giuli found the play slightly old fashioned. De Giuli wrote this review for La Lanterna Magica (The Magic Lantern), a New York City newspaper whose title, at least, does not appear to be revolutionary, which may indicate why the reviewer was more critical.

The reviewer for L'Operaio, on the other hand considered the playwright an innovator:

L'autore para abbia inteso a creare una nuova forma di dramma, quella che dalle fonti del mito scende alle scene della vita reale ed esistente, con tutti i suoi vizii, tutte le sue brutture e tutte le ingiustizie della moderna societa'.

This critic, reporting on the performance of December 28, 1903 in New York City, was obviously not up on his dramatic forms. The newspaper title, The Worker, suggests the paper's socialist leanings and perhaps the anonymous writer's enthusiasm stemmed from other than literary sources. As with the review above, many commentaries are taken with the play's realism, particularly with the fact that the action is set in Little Italy, itself: "L'autore mette a nudo una gran piaga della societa' e specie della nostra vita coloniale."² Writing for the New York City paper Riscossa, the anonymous reporter had seen the same premiere critiqued by Giulio De Giuli. The following reaction is similar for a later production of November 25, 1901. The anonymous reviewer writes for Il Corriere di Harlem: "La produzione ha tratto dal vero i punti piu spiccati della colonia facendone rilevare i bassi fondi che essa possiede."³

While most of the reviews concurred in their appreciation for Cordiferro's attempts at realism, Luigi Galleani, writing for La Questione Sociale of Paterson, New Jersey complained: "nuoce il drama . . . il carattere troppo spiccatamente coloniale . . ."⁴ Although this review of the performance of December 2, 1901 was generally favorable, the reporter attacked the very feature of the play that made it so popular elsewhere. Fourteen years later, the same newspaper still noted

¹"The author seems to have intended to create a new form of drama, one which from the sources of fiction describes scenes of real and existing life, with all its vices and all its ugliness and all the injustices of modern society." L'Operaio, Anno 3, N. 15 (n.d.), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

²"The author uncovers a large sore in society especially in our colonial life." Riscossa, Anno 2, N. 8 (n.d.), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

³"The production has drawn from reality the more conspicuous aspects of the colony, emphasizing the underworld that it contains." Il Corriere di Harlem, Anno 2, N. 21 (n.d.), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

⁴"What damages the drama is its too conspicuously colonial feature." Galleani, loc. cit.

its "terribile verismo"¹ (terrible realism).

In spite of certain melodramatic devices, such as the flask of poison, violent murder, treacherous villains, violent emotions of love, hate, anger, despair, lust, despondency and shame, the struggle to cope with injustice, and polarities of good and evil represented by the poor and the rich, L'Onore Perduto is not a melodrama. There are no disguises, no comedy, no dramatic peripeteia based on recognitions, no innocent heroine rescued in the nick of time by a triumphant hero, no coups de theatre, no complex theatrical machinery, no hidden passages, to name a few differences. But most importantly, there is no providential solution to life's problems and the action of the play is kept simple and the plot uncomplicated in order to allow the playwright to devote his writing to his thesis.

Nor does the work adhere to the framework of truly naturalistic drama. Rather, the plays falls into that larger category which encompasses bourgeois drama, domestic drama, the piece a these, the drama of thought and protest drama. In one area only does Cordiferro align himself with the pure naturalists, that of recourse to religion, God, providence or supernatural forces as a solution to the ills that beset society. When Sofia despairs over her daughter's health, her mother Teresa counsels her not to doubt that her prayers will reach the ears of a great and merciful God. Vexed at her, Sofia angrily retorts:

Dio! Dio! E' meglio non parlarne! Quando la sventura non era ancor penetrata in casa mia, quando non si erano ancora aperte nel mio cuore le profonde e mortali ferite che or mi danno spasimi atroci; quando tutti gli uomini mi sembravano angeli e il mio cammino era cosparso di fiori, credevo anch'io che lassu', sopra il tenue azzurro dei cieli, ci fosse l'onnipotente e benefico Iddio, che voi m'insegnaste a pregare bambina; ma le vicende, le amarezze, le disillusioni della vita, fanno perdere la fede, ed io l'²ho perduta, ed io non credo piu', mamma... io non credo piu'!...

Of course, the conditions for Sofia's return to faith are never met in the course of the play. When Teresa thanks Don Pasquale for his generous gift of groceries, and blesses him with the promise that God will repay him, he too responds, "Vi prego non offedermi con dei ringraziamenti che ritengo inutili." (I beg you, don't assail me with

¹La Questione Sociale, (October 23, 1915), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

²"God! God! It's better not to talk about it! When misfortune has not yet invaded my home, when my heart was not torn by deep and fatal wounds that now give me frightful pangs; when all men seemed to me angels and my path was covered with flowers, I too believed that up above, in the fine blue heavens, there could be an omnipotent and generous God, to whom you taught me to pray as a little girl; but the vicissitudes, the bitterness, the disillusion of life, make one lose faith, and I have lost it, and I don't believe anymore, mamma . . . I don't believe anymore! . . ." Cordiferro, L'Onore Perduto, Act II, p. 6.

thanks that I consider useless.)¹ Cordiferro not only discredits the power of God, but all supernatural forces. Trying to explain away the reasons for the presence of evil men in their midst and in the world, Teresa explains to Sofia:

Satana e' continuamente in vedetta, per guastare, con la sua malvagita', ogni opera bella e perfetta creata del Signore.

SOFIA

Tutte fandonie queste, cara mamma! Vi par, dunque, possibile che un Dio grande e onnipotente, possa diventare lo zimbello d'un genio malefico, di cui egli, volendo, potrebbe sbarazzarsi? E poi, perche' egli ha creato il male, dal momento che gli uomini,² conoscendo unicamente il bene, avrebbero potuto esser felici?

It requires a great stretch of the imagination to believe that a humble and uneducated housewife could be so skilled in the dialects of theology. Clearly, Sofia is the mouthpiece of Riccardo Cordiferro in this scene. Her final denunciation comes in the last act, after she has surrendered to Giuseppe Esposito's demands. Dazed and despondent, she begins to pray to the Madonna, but quickly reminds herself:

No, no, non voglio pregarla la Madonna; non la voglio invocare; perche' mi sono convinta ch'ella e' sorda ai gemiti degli afflitti;³ che la fede e, un'impostura e che la virtu' e' una menzogna.

While Cordiferro shares the religious nihilism of naturalists, he does not dispense entirely with metaphysical values. The plays title and the speeches that characters give on the subjects of honor, justice, riches, honesty, all contrive to create a world view where moral values rank higher than the materialistic values characteristic of many naturalistic dramas. Early in the play, Alberto asserts to Giuseppe Esposito:

¹ Ibid., Act III, p. 12.

² "Satan is continually on the lookout, to ruin with his wickedness, every beautiful and perfect work created by the Lord.

SOFIA

These are all fairy tales, dear mamma! Does it seem possible to you, then that a great and omnipotent God, could become the laughingstock of an evil genius, whom he could get rid of if he wanted? And then, why did he create evil, at a moment when men, knowing only goodness, could have been happy?" Ibid., Act IV, p. 10.

³ "No, no, I won't pray to the Madonna; I will not call upon her; because I am convinced that she is deaf to the laments of the afflicted; that faith is a hoax and that virtue is a lie." Ibid., Act IV, p. 1.

Il mio onore vale piu' di qualunque gioia e piu' della mia stessa vita.

GIUSEPPE

(Sempre con lo stesso persistente sarcasmo)
Vale anche piu' della tua famiglia?

ALBERTO

(Con voce ferma, vibrante, risoluta)
L'onore e' orgoglio, ricchezza, felicità, gloria, religione.
L'onore e' la vita. L'onore e' tutto! Unico ideale dei buoni e degli onesti, esso li accompagna e li guida fino alla tomba.

GIUSEPPE

(Scoppiando in una lunga sonora risata)
Dopo questa definizione che hai data dell'onore, a me non resta che dirti!¹ Fai ciò che credi. Come Pilato, io me ne lavo le mani.

Here, Alberto substitutes the abstract principles of honor for religion and in this prophetic exchange, early in the play, he seals the fate of the three leading characters. But although the value that both Sofia and Alberto place on honor proves catastrophic, nevertheless Cordiferro has Alberto vindicate his honor in the last moment of the play, thereby upholding its importance in life.

The metaphysical question of the play has been solved; the materialistic questions have not been solved, in true naturalistic fashion. What will happen to the exploited Italian laborers? What will happen to little Ida now that her father is certain to be arrested and executed in the electric chair? What will happen to Don Celestino, the corrupt banker? What will happen to the aging mamma Teresa? Riccardo Cordiferro, the social reformer, has left these questions unanswered for the typical reasons of any protest playwright, to have his audience respond in such a way as to effect a change in society's mores, espec-

¹"My honor is worth more than any joy and more than my very life.

GIUSEPPE

(Always with the same persistent sarcasm)
And it is worth more than your family?

ALBERTO

(In a steadfast, vibrant, determined voice)
Honor is pride, riches, happiness, glory religion. Honor is life. Honor is everything! The only ideal of good and honest people, it follows and guides them to the grave.

GIUSEPPE

(Bursting out in a long resonant laugh)
After this definition that you have given of honor, there's nothing left for me to tell you! Do what you believe. Like Pilate, I wash my hands of this." Ibid., Act I, p. 33.

ially toward the poor. In an article that appeared in La Follia, Cordiferro's motives were spelled out clearly. Although the writer's name was not kept intact with the article, certainly Cordiferro, as editor and publisher of the newspaper, must have concurred in its contents:

Cordiferro, con spietata naturalezza mette a nudo tutte le piaghe cancrenose che affliggono la nostra colonia: I banchieri, imbrogliatori i "bosses" dissanguatori, i giornalisti farabutti, i cafoni arricchiti, i prominenti analfabeti, i sedicenti filantropi, tutti questi tipi raffiguranti la codardia e l'abbiezione umana, tutti questi ignobili messeri che infestano la nostra colonia, sono maestrevolmente tratteggiati dalla pungente penna di Cordiferro. . . . Dopotutto, questo dramma egli lo scrisse per far propaganda delle sue idee libertarie lo scrisse per mettere alla berlina quelli che nella nostra colonia hanno voce in capitolo e si atteggiavano, per conseguenza, a moralisti.

Words above like "giornalisti farabutti . . . analfabeti . . . sedicenti filantropi" are straight out of Cordiferro's script. He almost could have written this piece himself.

Since Cordiferro was himself a journalist, it is interesting to hear his estimation of the fourth estate of the period, from the mouth of Don Pasquale:

e gia' tutti i giornali italo-americani hanno incominciato a soffiettarlo e a proclamarlo il piu' gran galantuomo del mondo. Egli, naturalmente, se lo crede, e non si accorge che se i giornali gli fanno delle lodi, e' perche' paga dei dollari sonanti e contanti, giacche' la stampa di questo paese -- perdonatemi l'espressione -- e' come una donna pubblica: chi la paga meglio, e' piu' ben servito.²

In Cordiferro's indictment of "swindling bankers" we have the concrete example of Pasquale Avallone, but in his indictment of the press we have

¹"Cordiferro, with ruthless realism, lays bare all the cancerous sores that afflict our colony: the swindling bankers, the bloodsucking bosses, the scoundrel journalists, the nouveau riche, the illiterate prominent figures, the would-be philanthropists, all those types representing human cowardice and baseness, all those ignoble men who infest our colony, are masterfully treated by the stinging pen of Cordiferro . . . After all, he wrote this drama to propagandize his libertarian ideas, he wrote it to ridicule those in our colony who have a voice in the matter and who pose, as a result, as moralists." La Follia, (January 7, 1906), Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

²"and now all the Italian-American newspapers have started to write puff pieces about him and to proclaim him the greatest and most honorable man in the world. Naturally, if you believe them, and don't perceive that if the newspapers shower praises on him it is because he pays out hard and reliable cash since the press in this country --

no other contemporary corroboration nor do we know exactly which newspapers he refers to as pandering to the interests of the corrupt prominent members of the Italian-American immigrant community of the time.

Throughout the play, Cordiferro is content with pointing his finger at what he perceives as social wrongs, at making his audience think, at describing the forces at work in society, but in only few instances does he offer concrete suggestions. The unhappy ending of L'Onore Perduto and indeed of all problem plays demands of its audience a desire for social change. Whenever possible Cordiferro stops the action to insert long speeches by his characters on such topics as friendship, working women, prostitution, honor, the rich vs. the poor, bankers, the press, and religion. Generally, these speeches state and then elaborate on the problem but lack any suggestions for concrete solutions, except when Don Pasquale advises not to trust bankers or friends until you are sure of their honesty; and when Sofia presents Cordiferro's rather modern attitude toward the wife who works. She comes home and announces to Alberto:

Ti voglio dare una lieta notizia. Ho trovato un posto da sarta, e lunedì incomincerò a lavorare.

ALBERTO

No, e' inutile che tu vada a lavorare. Io spero di occuparmi fra giorni. Ti devi attendere alla casa. Ida, la nostra cara figliuola, ha bisogno delle tue cure e della tua assistenza.

SOFIA

Ida starà con mia madre, la quale potrà anche disbrigare le faccende domestiche.

ALBERTO

Ma tu, Sofia, tu non sei abituata al lavoro. D'altra parte, sei così stanca, così debole... Non posso permettere che tu vada a lavorare.

pardon the expression -- is like a public woman: whoever pays her better, is better serviced." Cordiferro, L'Onore Perduto, Act III, p. 4.

¹"I want to give you some happy news. I have found a job as a seamstress, and Monday I begin work.

ALBERTO

No, it is useless for you to go to work. I hope to get work in a few days. You have to take care of the house. Ida, our dear little daughter, needs your attention and help.

SOFIA

Ida will stay with my mother, who can even manage the household chores.

ALBERTO

But you, Sofia, aren't used to work. Furthermore, you are so tired, so weak. I can't allow you to go to work.

SOFIA

Avro' abbastanza forza per lavorare... E poi, non deve ogni buone e affettuosa moglie esser d'aiuto al marito, quando i guadagni di lui non bastano al sostentamento della famiglia? Io voglio adoperarmi acciocche' non manchi il pane in casa nostra. Se poi anche tu potrai trovar lavoro, tanto meglio: lavoreremo in due e guadagneremo di piu'.

ALBERTO

(L'abbraccia con tenerezza. Poi le da' un bacio sulla fronte)
Buona e santa donna! Come le tue parole mi scendono dolci nel cuore! Nelle tempeste della vita, tu sei la stella che illumina il mio scuro cammino; tu sei la fede che m'infonde ardimento e costanza; tu sei l'angelo custode, che, vigilo e sorridente, mi accompagna dovunque, incoraggiandomi a sperare e a perseverare!

After Alberto has exhausted all the traditional arguments for keeping his wife at home, Sofia's last enlightened and practical statements do not send her husband into a tyrannical fit of rage but he responds instead with a sigh of relief and a prayerful speech of thanks. So in Cordiferro's attitude toward the "woman problem" he upholds the double standard but also a belief in the appropriateness and necessity for the working wife and mother. His attitude toward prostitution is also the liberal, socialist and naturalistic view. Sofia, seeing her child possibly dying and unable to secure the necessary medical help, says:

ma se una donna si da' per fame, se una donna, per dar pane ai suoi figli, si getta fra le braccia del primo che la capita tra i piedi, essa, no, non e' poi tanto colpevole, e la societa' non dovrebbe condannarla,¹ la societa' non dovrebbe arrogarsi il diritto d'insultarla.

SOFIA

I have strength enough to work . . . And then shouldn't every good and affectionate wife be of some help to her husband, when his earnings are not enough for the family's support? I want to contribute so that bread is not lacking in our home. If after you too can find work, so much the better: we will both work and earn that much more.

ALBERTO

(He embraces her tenderly. Then he kisses her on the forehead.)
Good and saintly woman! How sweetly your words touch my heart. Through life's storms you are the star that lights my dark path; you are the faith that instills me with boldness and perseverance; you are my guardian angel, who, watchful and smiling, accompanies me everywhere, encouraging me to hope and to persevere!" Ibid., Act I, pp. 23-25.

¹"But if a woman gives herself for hunger, if a woman, to give bread to her children, throws herself into the arms of the first man who falls at her feet, she, no, is not guilty, then and society should not condemn her, society should not assume the right to revile her." Ibid., Act II, p. 18.

Although in the construction of his drama, Cordiferro did not have Sofia turn to public streetwalking in order to feed her child, (which would be a naturalistic touch) the playwright only allows her the more private sin of an adulterous liaison in order to save her husband, but at a terrible price to herself. Sofia is the familiar erring woman of bourgeois drama.

Although Cordiferro's philosophy has been expounded thoroughly and consistently in the drama, his dramaturgy is at times flawed. He relies heavily on long speeches to get across his thesis. Teresa and Don Pasquale are little more than protactic characters, asking the appropriate questions and make the necessary comments that provoke answers providing exposition. All the action takes place in the Rotini living room, so all offstage events must be narrated in some way. For instance, the opening of the play reveals the family's desperate condition in a scene between Sofia and Teresa which revolves around the borrowing of money from Donna Carmela. The two characters tell each other the details important to an understanding of the action, when a more dramatic method of exposition would have been to bring the neighbor, Signora Carmela, onstage for the transaction with Sofia's jewels. She would have been the perfect sounding board for the family's woes. The scene would have been active and dramatic rather than merely narrative. Cordiferro chooses the narrative route many times in the course of the action, hence more long speeches.

Also, a number of discrepancies and loose ends remain unexplained or unclarified. Why is the bail for a \$100.00 theft set so high at \$1500.00? Its only point is that it seems to make the situation more extreme and to justify Sofia's capitulation. Teresa and Sofia cannot agree on whether Alberto has been in jail for two months or three. Nor can they agree whether Alberto is to be released in the morning or the afternoon. The dialogue is inconsistent. Also inconsistent is the manner in which characters enter the Rotini premises. Sometimes they knock and ask permission to enter, sometimes they signal their entrances with the sound of footsteps approaching, sometimes they appear surprisingly and unexpectedly on the scene. Cordiferro also resorts to the nonrealistic convention of soliloquies. Don Pasquale, at the end of Act I promises to return the next day. A month later in Act II he is still unapprised of Alberto's arrest, even though he is a close friend of the family. Little Ida, ill with fever, sleeps onstage for the duration of Act II. She would have to be comatose to sleep through the hysterical scene between Sofia and Giuseppe Esposito which Sofia ends by drawing the gun and chasing him from the apartment. Only in a stage direction do we get a hint that Giuseppe actually stole the missing \$100.00 and framed Alberto. This piece of information is essential and central to the play's action and we have no idea how it was communicated to the contemporary audience. Whatever happened to Sofia's job as a seamstress? Perhaps our typescript is an early version of the play and these problems were uncovered and solved in production. Perhaps the contemporary audience accepted these discrepancies without question. None of the reviewers picked up on them, at least none that the playwright saved in his collection. Generally, the papers are taken with the play's realism and authenticity:

dramma forte e robusto di pensieri vigorosi, che ha soprattutto
il merito di rimanere nella vita che si vive, di non avere
l'intreccio complesso e fantasioso dei mille drammi che popolano

le scene ed annoiano il pubblico che paga ed ha diritto a non essere corbellato. Perche "L'onore perduto" ha appunto il merito di restare strettamente chiuso nel cerchio della vita, e di esporre, libero di esagerazioni o di pose esagerate, le relazioni con la societa¹ come e' attualmente, come e' specialmente in America.

When commenting on realism, the papers generally refer to the play's content and not its staging, so we have no contemporary witness who might describe, for instance, the style of directing and staging that Antonio Maiori created for the five productions he did of the drama. The stage directions, which are copious, give a sense of the style of production, but written originally by Cordiferro, then possibly amended after rehearsal, they are always a composite of contributions made by actors and directors working together with the playwright, and so in this case we cannot pinpoint their authorship solely to Cordiferro. It is very possible that certain stage directions were the result and not the cause of what was actually seen onstage during performance. Regardless of who was responsible for the stage directions in our typescript, they at least give us a sense of the style of staging and acting of the period.

For some strange reason, all stage directions in Act I of the typescript have been manually underlined, which is not the case with the other acts. Act II has no underlinings. In Act III and IV, a very few directions have been underlined mechanically, but erratically and incompletely, so that no consistent pattern can be determined.

Cordiferro has written much of the play right into the stage directions, so they are important for an understanding of his intent. One expects descriptions of the set, placement of props, ideas on costumes, stage business and blocking, but Cordiferro goes much further with his directions, even so far as stipulating such fine points as sweating brows, bloodshot eyes, sudden paleness and warm tears. He regularly indicates moments for dramatic pauses and created at length those long silent moments of stage activity which sometimes serve as transitions between scenes. The rest of his stage directions fall into the following categories, with striking examples of each type.

Motivation:

ALBERTO

(Scattando, come se sotto i suoi piedi si fosse spalancata un abisso, come se dinanzi ai suoi occhi si fosse squarcito il

¹"... strong and robust drama with vigorous ideas, that has above all the value of staying with life as it is lived, of not having the complicated and fantastic plots like thousands of dramas that crowd the stage and bore the public who pay and have the right not to be made fools of. Because "Lost Honor" has precisely the credit of remaining strictly closed within the sphere of life, and of exposing, free of exaggerations and exaggerated attitudes, an account of society as it really is now, as it is particularly in America." La Voce del Popolo, Sisca Collection, Folder 100.

velo di un mistero, come se un pugnale gli avesse trafitto il cuore a parte a parte.

Attitudes and states of mind:

GIUSEPPE

(Esce guardando sarcasticamente il suo amico. Giunto sotto l'uscio, lo guarda ancora una volta, come per compiangere e deriderlo nel tempo stesso. . .)

Bodily stances or poses:

SOFIA

(Stendendo le braccia verso di lui, per chiedergli ancora una volta pietà, per pregarlo ancora una volta di essere buono e generoso) (Inginocchiandosi dinanzi a Giuseppe, con le mani giunte, in preda al più violento parossismo)

Physical actions or movements:

SOFIA

(Scattando come una molla. Scagliandosi verso di lui, come una belva ferita.)

Gestures:

DON PASQUALE

(Con un grido di sorpresa; mettendo le mani sulla bocca di Alberto, quasi per impedirgli di aggiungere altro)

1

"ALBERTO

(Springing up, as if under his feet an abyss has sprung open, as if before his eyes a veil of mystery had been torn away, as if a dagger had pierced his heart straight through)" Cordiferro, L'Onore Perduto, Act IV, p. 21.

2

"GIUSEPPE

(He leaves looking sarcastically at his friend. Reaching the doorway, he looks at him once more, as if to pity him and ridicule him at the same time.)" Ibid., Act. I, p. 22.

3

"SOFIA

(Extending her arms toward him, to ask him once again for pity, to beg him once again to be kind and generous) . . . (Kneeling before Giuseppe, with her hands joined, overwhelmed by the most violent outburst)" Ibid., Act III, p. 29.

4

"SOFIA

(Bolting up like a spring. Rushing toward him like a wounded, wild beast)" Ibid., Act II, p. 24.

5

"DON PASQUALE

(With a cry of surprise, putting his hands over Alberto's mouth, as if

Vocal quality:

ALBERTO

(Scattando con veemenza e ad alta voce, come per respingere con tutte le forze dell'anima l'indegna proposta.) ¹
(Con voce ferma, vibrante, risoluta)²

Facial expressions:

ALBERTO

(Si alza di nuovo. I suoi occhi lampeggiano di sdegno il suo,3
sogghigno e' atroce e spaventevole come quello d'un demente.)³

Eyes:

(. . . Giuseppe, ch'e' in un angolo della camera, la guarda
trepidamente, e con gli occhi accesi di libidine.)⁴

ALBERTO

(Chinandosi su di lei in atto disperato, con gli occhi fuori
dell'orbite, truce, stravolto, irriconoscibile.)⁵

These are a small sampling of the many similar directions which pervade the action of the play and afford a glimpse of the style of acting and directing that both Riccardo Cordiferro and Antonio Maiori created. Maiori, as we know, was a self-proclaimed disciple of Salvini and by this we assume his grandiose, 19th century broad acting style. The stage directions, with their postures and exaggerated, for modern times, actions and emotions, corroborate this theory.

to prevent him from saying any more)" Ibid., Act I, p. 7.

1

"ALBERTO

(Getting vehemently angry and in a loud voice, as if to repel with all the strength of his soul the unworthy proposal.)" Ibid., p. 30.

2

"ALBERTO

(With a steady, vibrant and determined voice)" Ibid., p. 33.

3

"ALBERTO

(He rises again. His eyes flash with indignation, his sneer is atrocious and frightening like that of a madman.)" Ibid., Act IV, p. 25.

4"(. . . Giuseppe, who is in a corner of the room, watches her anxiously and with eyes enflamed with lust.)" Ibid., Act III, p. 30.

5

"ALBERTO

(Stooping down over her desperately, with his eyes out of their sockets, fierce, convulsed, unrecognizable.)" Ibid., Act IV, p. 20.

APPENDIX VII

Macchiette of FarfarielloA. Translation of Iammo a Cunaillando:

"Let's go to Coney Island

I.

Hey Mamie this is a beautiful day,
 You go and close yourself up in a shop?
 Don't. listen, let's go away,
 Afterwards, we'll have a drink....
 Let's go, your mother went out shopping,
 She's going around with a basket; and your father
 I saw him -- no offense Mamie --
 Standing on the street corner shining shoes.

I want to show you Luna Park,

Everything is electricity!

I want you to walk under the arch,

Full of lamps here and there!

Life is beautiful there!

What do you say, are you coming or not?

In a little boat,

We'll swing.....

II.

Your brother the shoemaker doesn't count:
 Right now he's already drunk on whiskey!
 I'll be waiting in a car on the corner,
 You stay on the other corner: we'll signal each other
 with a whistle....
 I'll wait for you under the Brooklyn Bridge....
 In the middle of the crowd who will see?
 If you run into the little boy: Tony
 Give him some candy, and this way you'll see him disappear.

I want you to eat a little chicken:

A spring chicken Mamie!

You can eat it all by yourself, piece by piece;

But then do you know what I want?

Only the legs and the breast!

Let's eat... because you've got to get

A bellyful, and I bet,

That you won't even be able to stand up!....

III.

When you are there, if you want to be happy,
 We are going to laugh a lot.
 But be careful though, in the car,
 Especially going around the corners:

You go up, you come down; but you won't get hurt....
 When you get there -- at that moment --
 Looking downhill.... what a wonderful feeling!
 Then everything is over... and you ride more slowly.
 If you go on horseback on the carousel,
 Be careful not to fall down!
 I'll take you on the Loop the loop and then to a dance,
 Walk next to me,
 If your mother complains,
 Tell her: Hey, mama,
 When you were in the country ... even you enjoyed
 Being with papa!"¹

This next macchietta further illustrates the characteristic manner in which the Italian adapted the English language. But what is even more revealing is that the very point of the macchietta is the immigrant's consternation over the use of language. Entitled La Lingua 'Taliana, it was created by Migliaccio with music by Raffaele Grauso and lyrics by Tony Ferrazzano:

Che bella cosa la lengua taliana
 chi l'ha criata adda campa cient'anne
 mentre la lengua 'ngrese o americana
 nun la capisco manco si scanne.
 Ma n'ata lengua
 cchiu bella nc' e
 quanno mia moglie
 me nzurta a me....

i.

Sono vent'anni e piu che so' arrivato
 Direttamente qua, dal mio paese
 Anzi vent'uno e nun m'aggiu mparato
 Ancora 'e di' mezza parola inglese.
 Biccosa, mi no llaico lengue storte
 Ca nun so' taliane, e tezzo guai
 Io rimarraggio qua nfino a la morte
 Ma na parola nun m' 'a mparo mai.
 Nun gia che fosse brutta
 La lengua americana;
 Sarra na bella lengua,
 Ma nun e taliana....
 Quanno me fu promessa
 La carta cittadina
 Mi fecero aspettare
 Due anni, e la mattina
 Andai al seti holo, e non la prese
 Biccosa il giorge mi parlava inglese.

¹"Piedigrotta Nappo," souvenir lyric sheet (n.d.), p. 2.

2.

Mia moglie invece, la scannata ncanna
 Mi parla quasi sempre americano
 Quando io la chiamo, dice: "Guario guanne?"
 Ma "Guario guanne" nun e taliano!....
 E essa mme risponne, oh "Iu giachesse!"
 Giachesse? Ma "Giachesse" e pure inglese.
 E dice spesso spesso "Ai brecche iu fesse!"
 Comm' i' nce la rompette a lu paise.
 Io so' che tutta quanta
 L'Italia, sana sana
 Ti parla e ti ragiona
 La lingua italiana.
 Qualunque sia il dialetto
 Che parla l'italiano
 Si tu nun 'o capisce
 Se fa capi cu 'e mmano.
 Ed io per questo con la lingua inglese
 Nun ci cambiasse quella calabrese.

PROSA

E questo stavamo parlando nel basciamento.
 Eravanno tutte taliane e calavrise e questo diceva-
 mo che la lengua napoletana e la cchiu bella!
 Tanto per le belle parole che per la maleparole;
 che poi se vogliamo la lengua 'mericana e una
 lengua taliana struppiata, avutata sotto e ncoppa,
 percio noi diciamo: femmena e cca li femmene
 le chiamano uomene.

E po' la lengua taliana e liscia! Quello ca e
 significa. Pane significa pane, non gia che il pane
 lo chiamate: preta! Io tenevo un pappavallo ca
 parlavo sultanto americano, nun se' vulette mpa-
 ra a parla taliano e io 'o tagliaie 'a capa. Mo ne
 tengo un'altro che parla taliano e io percio 'o
 voglio bene; anze lo chiamo fratello. Pure isso
 quanno me vede se mette allucca: Frate! Frate!
 Poi la lengua taliana l'hanno parlata i piu grandi
 uomene del mondo: Lighieri, Caribaldi, Ciccio
 Cappuccio! Poi li americani se si devono appic-
 cecare, che devono fare a faite, sanno quatto o
 cinque maleparole e basta! Ma nuie ne sapimmo
 migliare....senza contare quelle che sape muglie-
 rema. Percio quando mia moglie, m'abbotta 'e
 maleparole io mi conzolo perche sono frase talia-
 ne e la lengua taliana e liscia! "Piezzo 'e cca!
 Piezzo 'e lla!" E io me sento 'e cunzula! "T'aggia
 fa cca. T'aggia fa lla!" "Aggio ave 'a nutizia che
 t'hanno acciso dint' 'a nu basciamento senza tru-
 va manco nu cunfessore taliano."

Ah! te siente 'e cunzula! perche sono frase
 'taliane e la lengua taliana e liscia. r..

3.

Na sera era passata a mezzanotte
 Quanno mme ritirava, e a nu cantone
 Truvaie mezza dozzina 'e giuvinotte
 Che m'insultarono senza ragione.

Dicendomi parole assai scortese
 In lingua americana, io pensai
 D'intimorirli, e senza parla nglese
 Misi la mano addietro e mi fermai.

Credendo ch'io teneva
 Ouacch'arma, quei birbanti
 Nisciuno cchiu parlaie
 Ed io passai avanti.

M'appena mezza blocca
 Ch'io m'allontanaie
 Mi fecero un pernacchio
 Pero mme conzolaie

Perche conobbi il suono da lontano
 Che quello era un PERNACCHIO ITALIANO!

Translation of La Lingua 'Taliana, above:

"The Italian Language

What a beautiful language Italian is
 he who invented it should live to be 100 years old
 while the English or American language
 I don't understand it not even if you cut my throat
 But another language
 more beautiful doesn't exist
 when my wife
 insults me....

1.

It's been over twenty years since I came
 Directly here, from my country
 Rather twenty-one and I haven't yet learned
 Even half a word of English.

Because, me no like crooked tongues
 Because they are not Italian, and that's why
 I will stay here until I die
 But I will never learn a word of English.

It's not that it's bad
 The American language;
 It could be a beautiful language,
 But it isn't Italian....

When they promised me
 Citizenship papers
 They made me wait
 Two years, and one morning

¹ Eduardo Migliaccio, La Lingua 'Taliana, lyric sheet (n.d.),
 Migliaccio Collection, Box 4.

I went to City Hall, and I didn't get them
Because the judge talked to me in English.

2.

My wife instead, she got the gist of it
She almost always talks American to me
When I call her, she says: "What do you want?"
But "What do you want" isn't Italian!....
And she answers me, oh "You jackass!"
Jackass? But "Jackass" is really English.
And she says very often "I break you face!"
The same way I broke her in the old country.
I know that all over
Italy, very wisely
The Italian language
Talks to you and reasons with you.
Whatever the dialect may be
Whoever talks Italian
If you don't understand him
He makes himself understood with his hands.
And for this reason the English language
Could never become the Calabrese.

Prose

This is what we were talking about in the basement. We were all Italians and Calabrese and someone said that the Neapolitan language was the most beautiful! As much for the beautiful words as for the bad words; and then we agreed that the American language is a deformed Italian language, turned upside down, for example we say: femmena and here the word for femmene is women.

And furthermore the Italian language is smooth! It says what it means. Pane means pane, not what they call pane here: bread! I had a parrot that spoke only American, it didn't want to learn how to speak Italian and I cut off his head. I have another one now that speaks Italian and so I like him; what's more I call him brother. Really when he sees me he starts calling: Brother! Brother! Also the Italian language has been spoken by the greatest men in the world: Alighieri, Garibaldi, Ciccio Cappuccio! Then the Americans, if they want to get sticky, when they have to get into a fight, know four or five curses and that's it! But we know a thousand.... without even counting what my wife knows. So when my wife curses me I console myself because the phrases are Italian and the Italian language is smooth! "A little bit here! A little bit there!" And I hear it and it consoles me! "They do it to you here. They do it to you there!" "I heard the news that they killed you in the basement without even finding you and Italian confessor."

Ah! you hear it and you are consoled! because the phrases are Italian and the Italian language is smooth....

3.

One night it was past midnight
When I was returning home, and on a corner
I met half a dozen young men
Who insulted me for no reason.

Speaking to me with impolite words
 In the American language, I thought
 I would scare them, and without speaking English
 I put my hand behind my back and I stopped.

Thinking that I was holding
 Some kind of weapon, those hoodlums
 Not one of them spoke anymore
 And I went on ahead.

But hardly half a block
 Had I gone
 They razzed me with a Bronx cheer
 But I consoled myself

Because I know the sound from far away
 It's an ITALIAN CHEER!

This skit contains many examples of Italo-Americanese: biccosa' (because), mi no llaico (me no like), tezzo guai (that's why), seti holo (City Hall), giogge (judge), guario guanne (what do you want), iu giachesse (you jackass), ai brecche iu fesse (I break your face), faite (fight), preta (bread) and uomene (women). The immigrant in the skit was especially confused over the terms for bread and women because in Italian preta sounds like the word prete which means "priest" and uomene sounds like uomini which means "men."

B. Translation of L'impresario di pompe funebri or L'Ondertecco:

"The funeral director or The Undertaker

1

What are you going to do? Some people
 think that being an undertaker
 really doesn't take much doing.
 But that's why they make a big mistake.

Common people don't care about ability
 If you know someone, you get the job,
 and you can sit with your hands in your lap,
 with servants and the finest possessions.

In the bars and the cafes, mind you,
 I mingle with everyone, I shake hands with everyone.
 Why? Because out of so many acquaintances
 Six or seven a week die on me.

2

But business isn't going so well
 and thank God, everyone is in good health
 When a feast comes along it helps
 They die from accidents, fights, indigestion.

You say that I profit from misfortune
 Rather than being a swindler
 I serve with great pomp and honor
 I put people in the ground with satisfaction

The trappings of luxury are well prepared
and with a luxurious carriage for the family
A widow was so satisfied
that the next day she offered me her daughter.

3

I belong to all the political groups
I am a very well known figure
Have you even seen me in the parades?
I take part in them either on foot or on horseback.

I am the only true savior
of the Italians. And certainly if someone is born
or gets married, I drive him to church, if someone dies
I am the first to prepare the casket.

If someone gets into trouble and winds up in court,
I have friends and I help him until he's condemned to death
then afterwards I pick him up and
bring him to the cemetery."¹

C. Translation of Il Cafone Patrioto:

"The Italian Patriot

That man who insults the people
of his own country is an animal,
worse than that, my countryman is a scoundrel,
an imbecile and Pasquale introduced me to him.
My countryman, whom I stood up for too
is a big pig that animal!
He doesn't talk, that he doesn't butcher,
the Italian language, that peasant!

He says that in America
for him it's a great disgrace
if he speaks Italian
as for him, some day
I'll throw stones at him and punch him and
give him a lesson
to make him respect
our people

Long live Italy!
Damn it! otherwise!

2

That man who makes like an American
while he isn't I don't call him a man

¹Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 14, 1942), p. 5S.

and especially because an Italian
 who comes from the country is a gentleman!
 Yes! a gentleman and we can say of him
 strongly really strongly
 that as for us a gentleman you see
 always acts honorably like a gentleman.

And you will find in Italy, he who
 for a point of honor,
 struggles between hunger and hardship
 and dies in desperation!
 They are all great men.
 they are all smart
 while the greater part
 here are stupid

Long Live Italy!
 Damn it... otherwise!

3

I wanted citizenship papers
 for business, that was the reason
 because it can ruin you
 when you can't vote in the elections
 And my countryman Giovanni taught me
 the questions and the American answers.
 But he didn't tell me
 that they didn't speak Italian

So when the judge
 asked me the question:
 -- No more Italian?! all the time
 No tell me this, Giovanni.
 -- Go on in and prepare
 and no speak no more
 I gave them: Long Live Italy!
 and they threw me out!

4

I want you to hear what I wrote the other night on the subject of
 the realm of Italy that in a few days I will have published in the
 greatest books that are published in America. Italy... my dear sirs...
 is an Italian land full of all Italian people, here's how they are:
 the Genovese, the Piedmontese, not to mention the Neapolitans, the
 Calabrese, the Sicilians, who are also Italians and Romans and Tuscans
 who if they are on Italian land are really Italian! let's put it this
 way, my country really has Italian people. In Italy there is our King
 who is a great Italian man, and that one is really Italian, and he is
 our leader who teaches and is powerful and punishes and he's right and
 there is the Pope the head of our Catholic apostolic romantic religion
 and there are the cardinals and other things and they are all Italian.
 Italy, my dear sirs, many centuries and centuries before us, was like a
 pizza of which everyone had a slice, but it was always Italian; then
 came the excitement of the war for dependence and Garibaldi and Victor

Emanuel, who was the father of the father of the one we have now, they had a bunch of battles and Garibaldi sitting horseback on a horse and with his sword in hand, began saying: Get out of Italy! Get out strangers! and all the foreign people got out. Then there was the war we fought for liberty for the country and for art (unclear) for which we dressed and then we undressed. But Italy which is a glorious nation says: Give me time and I'll surpass you! Because I want to keep the language in my mouth in order to speak, to say what I want to say... because I myself don't know what I say to make myself understood... Because a damned Irishman who said that Christopher Columbus was not a great man, that Italy is not a great land to be cherished because America was discovered by his countryman from Bavaria. But I think he was drunk because his countryman lived in a place which at that time didn't exist. My countryman Giovanni is ashamed of Italian because Italy is the most beautiful country in the world, and because (unclear) and you who are not Italian, don't applaud me!

Long Live Italy!
and the hell with
countryman Giovanni"¹

D. Translation of 'O Cafone c'a Sciammerica:

"The Country Bumpkin in a Tuxedo

I like this American land
because here we are all equal
and the president has to shake my hand
as he shakes that of his blood brother

But what I like is that in America
I don't have any more upbringing but
I go with the principle that
no one is better than me

You may be a prince
or may be a scientist
I own a tuxedo
and I am born the same as everyone else

That's because, Frankie
Me like this country

If you get married in our country
You get into trouble and you can't do nothing,
that's that and my friend it will cost you dearly
whether she's good or very bad

But here in America
if it doesn't look good
break up the marriage
and let it go to the dogs

¹ Eduardo Migliaccio, Il Cafone Patrioto, handwritten original manuscript, Migliaccio Collection, Box 5.

You say, Mister, no like.
 he puts it in writing
 and that fast the judge
 gets you ready to marry again

That's because, Frankie
 Me like this country"¹

E. Translation of L'imbroglione:

"The swindler

How many times, seeing me pass by
 Dressed well, have you all said
 Where does he get it? What does he do? He's got money
 He's always clean and dandy and carries gloves.

I dress well? for what it costs me
 Not paying is very typical of me.
 You want to say to me, what an arrogant face
 But no! I am a clever person

I sold mining stock
 printed you might say with great art
 land lots that were a pleasure
 to look at on the paper.

Because you see I am a swindler,
 this is a profession like any other
 I swindle everyone without exception
 whether an imbecile or a shrewdy

And here is the art. Some don't have
 this ability in them, after the swindle
 they get caught. . . do you know where they² go?
 and without anything inside their wallets."

What follows here is a compendium of Farfariello's macchiette, including as much first hand description of their contents as has been possible to uncover during the course of this research.

Migliaccio was a successful female impersonator and created many parodies of women and girls: La Regina dei Bootleggers ³(The Queen of the Bootleggers), a prohibition song of his own composing; 'A Nutriccia (also La Bambinaia or wet nurse), lyrics by Migliaccio and music by Maestro Prof. Raffaele De Luca; Scul-gherl (The East Side School Girl),

¹ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 5S.

² Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 14, 1942), p. 5S.

³ Clipping from Gazzetta del Massachusetts, Anno 20, N. 30 (July 22, 1916), in scrapbook, Migliaccio Collectio, Box 1.

lyrics by Migliaccio and music by Filippo Dato.¹ The title is Italo-Americanese:

The little girl from the public school whose attainments to American history are confined to a dubious statement about Washington but who has acquired a large repertoire of jazz² songs which she can, and does, sing from beginning to end;

'A Talianella ("The Wop Girl"), English title and lyrics by Migliaccio and music by L. Lambardello; La Parigina (The French concert-hall singer):

from hair to shoes he is a French concert-hall 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 a new metal. He shrieks his vapid ditty in raucous falsetto; he flicks his spangled skirt; he winks at the orchestra leader and shakes his buttocks; his bosom has become an enormous jelly.⁴

Rosalina;⁵ La Bossa, (The Boss), lyrics by Migliaccio and music by V. Grey.⁶ The title is the feminine form of bosso, itself an Italo-Americanese adaptation of the English word for boss. Spagnolata Napoletana (also La spagnola napoletana,⁷ or the Spanish dancer), lyrics by Migliaccio and music by Napolitano. This skit, like the above La Parigina, parodies entertainers in the music halls and the caffes: "una delle creazioni piu' gaie che abbiano mai allietato il teatro di varieta."⁸ (one of the gayest creations that have⁹ ever gladdened the variety theatre). La Suffragetta (The Suffragette); Rosi Spaghetti:

¹ Eduardo Migliaccio, 'A Nutriccia dated March 9, 1910 and Sculgheri dated December 6, 1912, manuscript sheet music, Migliaccio Collection, Box 8.

² Wilson, p. 230.

³ Eduardo Migliaccio, 'A Talianella, sheet music dated September 1, 1911, Migliaccio Collection, Box 8.

⁴ Van Vechten, p. 32.

⁵ Eduardo Migliaccio, Rosalina, sheet music dated January 8, 1914, Migliaccio Collection, Box 4.

⁶ Eduardo Migliaccio, La Bossa, sheet music dated March 12, 1906, Migliaccio Collection, Box 7.

⁷ Eduardo Migliaccio, Spanolata Napoletana, sheet music dated February 1912, Migliaccio Collection, Box 9.

⁸ Dante Theatre program, loc. cit.

⁹ Clipping from L'Italo-Americano (April 1918), p. 5. in scrapbook,

"il tipo della cafoncella italiana americanizzata" (the type of Italian countrygirl who has become americanized).¹ La comara dello sposalizio coloniale (The colonial maid-of-honor):

Egli si trasforma in un lampo nella comara dello sposalizio coloniale, formosa, appetitosa (da destare la concupiscenza anche a Sant'Antonio) biricchina e linguacciuta anche a danno della coppia degli sposi coloniali.²

Quanno Spusaie Francisco (When I Married Francisco); Donna Vicenza (also Zia Vicenza, Aunt Vicenza): "la venditrice di broccoli a sedici soldi 'u mazzo' -- ma che mazzo! --"³ (the woman who sells broccoli for sixteen cents a bunch -- but what a bunch!--). Donna Rosa La Siciliana (Lady Rosa the Sicilian Woman); Cresy Gherl (Crazy Girl), another Italo-Americanese title; La vedova triste (The mournful widow); The midwife, "a sort of companion picture to that other significant figure of the Italian slums, the undertaker."⁴ La Servotta (The Maid); La Donna Moderna (The Modern Woman); The domineering wife; La Sposa (The Anxious Bride);⁵ The matron:

the barrel-shaped matron who refuses to exchange her native costume for the short skirts of the Americanized women, challenging them to show her any Americanized wife who has produced children in such quantities as she;⁶

The old woman; Margherita.

Another category of macchiette are parodies of the Italian underworld: I. Imbroglione and Pasquale Passaguaie were already noted and pertain to this group: Il Teppista Romano (the Roman Hoodlum); Il borsaiuolo coloniale italo-americano (The Italian-American pickpocket):

giovane "loafer" . . . pimp, ruffiano e ricottaro che da molto da pensare all'educatore della nuova generazione quale candidato

Migliaccio Collection, Box 11.

¹ Clipping, Italian Weekly Newspaper (November 13, 1910), in scrapbook, Migliaccio Collection, Box 11.

² "He suddenly transforms himself into a colonial maid-of-honor, buxom, appetizing (enough to awaken the lust even of Saint Anthony) malicious and gossipy even at the expense of the colonial newlyweds." Clipping, "Farfariello e Compagnia," La Tribuna Italiana, N. XX (August 11, 1917), Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

³ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 21, 1942), p. 5S.

⁴ Parker, loc. cit.

⁵ Sogliuzzo, p. 68.

⁶ Wilson, p. 230.

alla galera e molto da fare alla giustizia.¹

Il Mafioso (The Mafioso).

The Italian-American cafone was the key figure of many of Farfariello's cartoons, the country bumpkin suddenly out of place in an alien and urban society: Il Cafone Patrioto, 'O Cafone c'a Sciammerica and Rosi Spaghetti, already cited belong to this category: Il Cafone furbo (The shrewd country bumpkin) with his million dollar machine;² O figlio d'o cafone che rragiona (also Lu cafone che ragiona, The son of the thinking greenhorn) lyrics by Migliaccio and Tony Ferrazzano and music by Paolo Bolognese. The lyrics follow:

1

Ogge a sta terra qua lu 'mericano
cumanna, e to po' fa' chello che vo';
percio' quanno to vere il taliano,
fosse lu Rre, lu chiamano digo'
Dich'i', cu qua' ragione
nzurtate li taliane?...
Pecche' s'io so' cafone,
tengo li paisane,
ca so' maste de scienza,
de voi professuri,
ca overo te ne fanno,
de tutti li culuri!...
Donca neh compa' Ntuo',
io t'arragiono o no?!... Eh!...

2

Chello che fanno qua li 'miricane
manco li puorce 'o fanno 'a do' venghi'i':
se sciosciano lu naso cu li mmane,
mmiez'a la via... e nuie simmo ghini?!
Cu lu tabacco mmocca,
te fanno culazione!...
'na femmena mbriaca
truvate ogne puntone!...
Si lu facesse Rosa...
io me la magnarria!...
Ma sta razza 'e... putiente
dice ca e' fantasia!...
Di' tu neh compa' Ntuo',
io t'arragiono o no?!... Eh!...

3

La 'mericana pure mmaretata,

¹"young 'loafer' . . . pimp, ruffian and blackmailer who gives the educators of the new generation a lot to think about, who is a candidate for jail, and keeps the legal authorities busy." Clipping, "Farfariello e Compagnia," loc. cit.

²My interview with Alma Migliaccio.

cu ll'ata ggente s'hadda riverti',
 li voite resta fore 'na nuttata...
 ... e lu marito, turzo, va a durmi'
 Po' qua pe' fa l'ammore
 nun nce vo' proprio niente!...
 Appena trase... in casa...
 te fanno gia' parente
 "Avaie? Comin? Sidane!"
 e gia' si d' 'a famiglia:
 'na penta 'e birra a 'o pate,
 e tu pazzie cu 'a figlia
 Donca neh compa' Ntuo'
 io t'arragiono o no? Eh!...

4

Dice, ca siamo figlie 'e maccarune!
 E iloro ca s'abbottano 'e cafe'?!...
 Doppo magnato?... stanno cchiu'diune
 patane, latte chente checche e te.
 S'abbottano 'e patane
 e po te fanno 'nfaccia!...
 Ma songo 'mericane,
 nisciuno ne li caccia!.
 Nuie figlie 'e maccarune?!...
 E allora i 'mericane,
 songo 'na maniata
 de figlie de .. patane
 E' ove' neh compa' Ntuo'
 ma t'arragiono! o no?... Eh!...¹

Translation of O figlio d'o cafone che rragione, above:

"The son of the thinking greenhorn

1

Today in this land here the American man
 is in charge, and he can do anything he wants to you;
 therefore when he sees an Italian,
 even if he were King, they would call him dago
 I say, for what reason
 do you offend Italians?...
 Because though I am a greenhorn,
 I have countrymen,
 who are masters of science,
 your teachers,
 who can make for you,
 anything you can dream of!...

¹The Center for Migration Studies of New York, Inc., Images: A Pictorial History of Italian Americans (New York: Center for Migration Studies and Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, 1981), p. 136.

Therefore my dear friend Tony,
do you think I'm right or not?!... Eh!...

2

What Americans do here
not even pigs do where I come from:
they blow their noses with their hands,
right in the street... and we are ghinnys?!
With tobacco in their mounths,
they eat lunch!...
a drunken woman
you find on any corner!...
If you made it with Rosa...
I would devour her myself!...
But this race is... powerful
they say it's a fantasy!...
What do you say my dear friend Tony,
Do you think I'm right or not?!... Eh!...

3

Also the married American woman,
wants to enjoy herself with other men,
sometimes she too stays out all night long
... and her husband, the dummy, goes to sleep
Then after you make love to her
you don't have to do anything else!...
No sooner you enter... her house...
they treat you like a relative:
"How are you? Come in! Sit down!"
and you already belong to the family:
a pint of beer for the father,
and you can fool around with his daughter
So my dear friend Tony
do you think I'm right or not? Eh!...

4

They say, we are sons of macaroni!
And they fill up their bellies with coffee?!...
After eating?... they eat more than one
potato, milk, candy, cake and tea.
They fill their bellies with potatoes
and then they throw up in your face!...
But I owe the Americans
no one keeps us out!.
We are sons of macaroni?!...
So then the Americans,
are a bunch
of sons of .. potatoes
Is it true my dear friend Tony
but do you think I'm right! or not?... Eh!..."

A few examples of Italo-Americanese crop up in this skit: digo (dago), ghini (ghinny), avaie (how are your), comin (come in), sidane (sit down), chente (candy) and checche (cake). I! Cafone nervoso (The

nervous country bumpkin): "Chi potra' dimenticare l'ampio sentimentalismo, la finezza insuperabile . . ." ¹ (Who can forget the ample sentimentality, the unsurpassable finesse . . .) 'O Sposo Cafone (The Greenhorn Husband); Il cafone arricchito (The Italian-American banker, or the Greenhorn who got rich):

This fellow staggers on to the miniature stage in a half-tipsy condition, as though he were just leaving one of those innumerable Italian banquets. In reality he is an ignorant peasant, but fortune has smiled upon him here, opening a new world of prosperity which has gone to his head quite as much as the wine. ²

arricchito pieno di boria ma fedele alla sua ignoranza e ai suoi spropositi linguistici. ³

Il cafone presidente della Societa' e della festa a Sant'Antonio (The Greenhorn president of the Social Club and of the Saint Anthony Festival): "the man who has got drunk at the festa di San Antonio and attempts to tell about it": ⁴

Infine eccolo quale presidente del comitato della societa' e della festa a Sant'Antonio (sic) nella quale il vanitoso "protonguanguero" coloniale si e' ubbriaco ad onta delle molte insignia; "baggie," bottoni, fascie a coccarde che gli comprono il gonfio petto ed ha sfacciamente rubato e fatto rubare tanto su gli introiti che sulle spese, essendo d'accordo con i fornitori della "regalia" del rinfreaschi, del sigari, della musica, ⁵ degli stampati e con lo sparatore ed i molti altri compari.

Baggie is Italo-Americanese for "badges."

¹ Clipping from L'Italo-Americano, (April 1918), loc. cit.

² Parker, loc. cit.

³ "having become rich, he is full of conceit but faithful to his ignorance and to his linguistic blunders." Clipping, "La Serata Di Farfariello," Il Progresso Italo-Americano (January 19, 1924) in scrapbook, Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

⁴ Parker, loc. cit.

⁵ "Finally there is one in which the president of the committee of the social club and of the feast of Saint Anthony, where the typical conceited colonial showoff got drunk to the disgrace of the many insignias, badges, buttons and sashes, and cockades that cover his inflated chest and he has shamelessly robbed and had people rob the profits and padded the expenses, being in league with those who furnish the refreshments, the cigars, the music, the printing and with the gangsters and many other shady characters." Clipping, "Farfariello e Compagnia," loc. cit.

As well as depicting the Italian immigrant in his American milieu, Migliaccio created several character sketches of Americans who came in contact with the Italian-American community: The judge; La Mogliera Americana (The American Wife); The cop; Un Todesco (The German):

Egli si presento' sulla scena in parruca rossa, fronte intellettuale, occhiali enormi da gufo, mascelle rossastre e portava un abito nero a frack con pancetta un poco all'insu' ... il tutto cosi' bene in armonia -- voce nasale non esclusa -- da presentare la piu' perfetta imitazione di un "todesco" al quale uno non era sicuro se applicare le pedate sulla faccia o in altre parti meno elevate.

Lu Bosso (The Boss); O Cunduttore,² (The Conductor), with lyrics by Migliaccio and music by Napolitano; 'O Store 'e 5 e 10 (The 5 & 10 cents store), lyrics by Migliaccio and music by Napolitano. The song relates how a young Italian spends his money buying things at the five and ten because he likes the well-built girls that work there: "Chiattalella ma quanto te voglio bene." (Chubby girl, how much I like you.) One girl is very reserved and cool toward him but the kindest among them makes a date with him for that evening. They go to a quiet place he knows on Canal Street. The next day he returns to the same store on 14th Street and has to spend a couple of hours shopping. He couldn't make headway with his girl because the boss kept hanging around.

Migliaccio was successful at recreating everyday colonial types but he didn't stop there; he impersonated the stars and performers of the entertainment world as well. La Spagnolata Napoletana and La Parigina have already been cited. Other music hall figures and Metropolitan Opera stars were also parodied, and they came to see themselves in Farfariello's stage shows: Il Vecchio Corista (The Old Chorus Singer); La prima donna (The prima donna); Il Filodrammatico (The Amateur Actor) with his "pose grottesche"⁴ (grotesque postures): "E' quasi piu' di una macchietta, e' addirittura un piccolo bozzetto,

¹"He appeared onstage in a red wig, intellectual forehead, enormous owl-like glasses, reddish cheeks and he wore a black suit with tails with a pot belly raised upwards a little, ... everything blended in including the nasal voice -- to present the perfect imitation of a "kraut" whom one wasn't sure whether to kick in the head or in another less elevated place." Clipping, Gazzetta del Massachusetts (July 22, 1916), loc. cit.

²Eduardo Migliaccio, O Cunduttore, sheet music dated December 30, 1913, Migliaccio Collection, Box 6.

³Eduardo Migliaccio, 'O Store 'e 5 e 10, sheet music and lyric sheet dated June 14, 1912, Migliaccio Collection, Box 4.

⁴Clipping, Il Signor Colono (September 14, 1910), Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

cesellato con un gusto finissimo, pieno di grazia e di comincita'. . ."¹
'O Mastro 'e Festa (The Master of Ceremonies); The opera tenor; The orchestra leader; 'O sunatore 'e Flauto (The Flute Player), performed by Migliaccio with lyrics by Tony Ferrazzano and music by Maestro A. Montalto;² Turiddu, parody of Cavalleria Rusticana, with lyrics by Migliaccio and music by Maestro Giovanni Del Colle;³ Luisa Tetrzzini:

Nella sua "Luisa Tetrzzini" 'e stato di una efficacia straordinaria. Con un acume artistico dei piu' invidiabili ha saputo fare la caricatura dei trilli, dei canti modulati, acuti, passionali della grande attrice, con una comicità ed una vena inesauribile, di buon umore che suscita il riso e che ci fa nel frattempo riflettere e pensare.⁴

But far the most famous in this category and also one of the best known in his entire repertoire was that of his friend, Commendatore Enrico Caruso (also known as Il Divo, The Star). The song that accompanied this sketch was titled "'E lettere 'e Caruso" (Caruso's Letters), written by Migliaccio and Domenico Jetti:⁵

Migliaccio's mask and costume converted the great tenor into a swollen vanity. The sketch was performed in a single spotlight at center stage, the tenor⁶ sitting in his drawing room, quietly fuming over his reviews.

When Caruso heard that Farfariello had caricatured him on the stage, he was anxious to see for himself the newly created macchietta in his image and attended one of Migliaccio's shows. Two eyewitnesses report on what he saw:

¹"It is more than a sketch, it is nothing less than a little scene, chiselled out in very fine taste, full of grace and humor . . ." Dante Theatre program, loc. cit.

²Tony Ferrazzano, 'O sunatore 'e Flauto, lyric sheet dated 1915, Migliaccio Collection, Box 4.

³Souvenir program from 14th Street Theatre dated March 2, 1925, Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

⁴"In his 'Luisa Tetrzzini' he was extraordinarily effective. With the most enviable artistic acumen he knew how to create the caricature of the trills, of the modulated highpitched, temperamental songs of the great actress, with a comicality from an inexhaustible vein, with good humor that provoked laughter and that meanwhile made you reflect and think." Clipping, scrapbook, Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

⁵Eduardo Migliaccio, 'E lettere 'e Caruso, sheet music dated April 6, 1910, Migliaccio Collection, Box 6.

⁶Sogliuzzo, p. 69. His interview with Alma Migliaccio.

Farfariello riuscì a rifare Caruso in modo sorprendente. Lo imitava in tutto. Ogni piccolo gesto portava in sé la preziosità di una percezione completa non solo esteriore ma introspettiva del personaggio imitato. . . . Non è Farfariello e Caruso che legge una lettera. È quello il suo modo di stare seduto, di tenere la mano sollevata, e quello il suo volto, il suo lieve sorriso. . . .

Farfariello lo ritrasse con cordiale spirito caricaturale in una macchietta nella quale il divo dei divi sfogliava la sua posta quotidiana ricca di dichiarazioni iperboliche, di ammirazione, di simpatia, di amore e anche qualche volta di bussate a quattrini di minacce ricattatorie...²

Caruso laughed and applauded this macchietta of himself and after the performance, congratulated Farfariello on the successful resemblance.³ Il Rosso (literally, "The Red Man" but meaning politically "The Socialist") was described as "sovversivo"⁴ (subversive) and one can't help thinking that he had in mind the well known public figure, speaker, journalist and playwright, Riccardo Cordiferro.

As versatile as Migliaccio was in creating cartoons of better known public figures, he will be best known for his depiction of the common man or woman, and his characters give us a picture of the Italian immigrant community that no naturalistic Jacob Riis photograph can. The crusading Riis, for all his genuine concern for slum conditions on the Lower East Side, still remained an outsider while Migliaccio, an insider, was privy to the passions, needs and concerns of his countrymen and women, all of which he exposed on the stage, and fortunately for posterity, on the printed page. In later years, Cordiferro's La Follia printed many of his macchiette. This next listing falls into the category of "little people" who help round out the picture of the society in which Farfariello lived and for whom he performed: The night watchman; Il Signor Colunno (also Colono, meaning "Mr. Colonist"),

¹"Farfariello succeeded in recreating Caruso in an astonishing way. He imitates him in everything. Every little gesture had in it all the fullness of a complete perception not only external but introspective of the personality imitated. . . . It's not Farfariello it's Caruso who reads a letter. And that's his way of sitting, of holding his hand up, and that's his merry smile." Gino Caimi, Casa Serena, television script aired on WZTV, December 2, 1955, p. 5; Migliaccio Collection, Box 11.

²"Farfariello portrays him in a hearty cartoon-like spirit in a sketch in which the star of stars leafed through his daily mail full of hyperbole declarations, of admiration, of appreciation, of love and also sometimes requests for money and threats of blackmail." Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 14, 1942), p. 5S.

³Ibid.

⁴Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 21, 1914), p. 5S.

written in the Sicilian dialect;¹ Il Berseglere (this denotes a branch of the Italian military); O Calandriello, "satira dell'antica emigrazione"² (satire on old time emigration); O Pressatore (The Presser), another word adapted from the English and Italianized; Charlie: "e' un tipo un po' cretino, un po' spiritoso e molto Gross-World Puzzl...oso."³ (he is a type a little foolish, a little witty and very like a cross word puzzle). The rag picker; 'O Bloffo (The Bluffer), another adapted word:

Piu d'uno che me sape, mi domanda:
 Marche', voi state qua?... con meraviglia
 Son venuto nascosto d' 'a famiglia
 a vedere ll'America pur'l.
 Sta terra non puo farmi impressione
 con questi sternaddoni di palazza
 Hanno voglia di fa cose da pazze,
 I miei castelli arrivano piu su ...
 Meza citta' di Napoli e' la mia
 Tisi a quatto ... che spendidi animali.
 Ho cento servi ... Dicon certi tall:
 Hai il bene o le disprezzi! Ch'aggia fa?
 Aggio appiccato sigari,
 cu 'ccarte 'e mille lire
 e ancora te porto abiti
 che si fanno guarda',
 vedete che si appurano,
 Che cca' sengo sbarcato
 mi mandano in Italia
 chesto nun po' manca',
 Cerco na milionaria,
 le offro il mio blasone,
 So per combinazione
 avesse rifiuta'.
 Le dico: Miserabile,
 scrivo a papa', civetta ...
 me compro tutt' 'America ...

 Chi ci ha 'na sigaretta?⁴

Translation of 'O Bloffo, above:

"The Bluffer

More than one who knows me, asks me:

¹ Clipping, Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

² Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 14, 1942), p. 6S.

³ 14th Street Theatre program, loc. cit.

⁴ Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 5S.

Marquis, you're here?... with surprise
 I came secretly away from my family
 to really see America.
 This country doesn't impress me
 with these big buildings with banners
 They want to do things like crazy people,
 My castles are taller ...
 Half the city of Naples is mine
 Standing up on all fours... how splendid these creatures are.
 I have one hundred servants ... Some people talk like this:
 You are wealthy or you despise it? What can he do?

I lit cigars
 with thousands Lire bills
 and I still wear suits
 which everyone admires,
 Be careful if they find out,
 they'll send me back to Italy
 this can't be avoided,
 I am looking for millionairess,
 I offer her my coat of arms,
 I know that if by chance
 I were refused.
 I'll tell her: You wretch,
 I'll write to my father, you flirt ...
 I'll buy all of America ...

Who has a cigarette?"

As opposed to the cafone who welcomes and applauds the new social equality he finds in America, this outmoded aristocrat is still trying to cash in on his old world lineage in a place where he finds such things have little value. Behind the humor in his final request for a cigarette lies the stark realism of his condition. The organ grinder; Colombo e lo Spazzino (Columbus and the Streetcleaner):

Lo spazzino italo-americano sbuffa: Duro lavoro e magri guadagni. E' queste l'America? chiede alla statua di Colombo. E il Grande Esploratore gli spiega che l'America offre ben altre possibilita...

L'elegante napoletano capitato in America (The elegant Neapolitan who finds himself in America): "the Italian aristocrat who has gambled away his estate at home and who now shivers through Mulberry Street in search of a meal."² 'O Spuorto 'E Mulberry Stretto (The Sport of Mulberry Street): spuorto and stretto are both adapted words; lyrics by

¹"The Italian-American street cleaner puffs: Hard work and low wages. Is this America? he asks the statue of Columbus. And the Great Explorer explains to him that America offers plenty of other opportunities..." Falbo, "Figure e Scene," (June 7, 1942), p. 55.

²Parker, loc. cit.

Migliaccio and music by Del Colle;¹ Il Vedovo (Widower), lyrics by Migliaccio and music by Del Colle;² Rispettate la donna (Respect the ladies) with music by Del Colle;³ 'O pate 'e famiglia (The father of the family), lyrics by Migliaccio and music by De Luca; O Ritorno d'o Preve (The Return of the Priest); O Stagnino Ambulante (The Wandering Tinsmith); The Runner; 'O farmaiuolo (The Italian farmer); Il venditore ambulante (The street peddler): "il poveraccio venditore ambulante scarseggiante di quattrini ma ricco di glossa caustica"⁵ (the poor street peddler lacking in money but rich in caustic words). Il Presidente della Camera di Commercio al banchetto (The President of the Chamber of Commerce at the banquet), also Il Reduce dal Banchetto della Camera di Commercio (The Veteran at the Banquet of the Chamber of Commerce); Franceschino a Nuova Yorka (Little Francisco in New York); Nicola a Coney Island (Nicholas in Coney Island): "splendida creazione riprodotte il tipo di un ubriaco che narra le sensazioni provate dopo una gita in automobile a Coney Island."⁶ Palli Pall, with lyrics by Migliaccio and music⁸ by Napolitano; Geni, created by Migliaccio with music by Napolitano; Un vecchio emigrato siciliano (An old Sicilian immigrant): "a rather pathetic sketch of an Italian, returning home after being buffeted unmercifully in the land of the free,"⁹ and more specifically:

un vecchio emigrato siciliano bianco per antico pelo e dal passo malfermo e vacillante, che in America si trova tanto impacciato a disagio e sconcertato quanto un pulcino nella stoppa, e si disgustato di questo "mondo nuovo" da rivolger ad esso spesso e

¹ Eduardo Migliaccio, 'O Spuorto 'E Mulberry Stretto, sheet music (n.d.), Migliaccio Collection, Box 2.

² Eduardo Migliaccio, Il Vedovo, sheet music (n.d.), Migliaccio Collection, Box 2.

³ Eduardo Migliaccio, Rispettate la donna, sheet music (n.d.), Migliaccio Collection, Box 2.

⁴ Eduardo Migliaccio, 'O pate 'e famiglia, sheet music (n.d.), Migliaccio Collection, Box 8.

⁵ Clipping, "La Serata Di Farfariello," loc. cit.

⁶ "a splendid creation recreating the type of drunk who tells of the sensations he experienced after a trip by car to Coney Island." Clipping, L'Italia (December 5, 1917), scrapbook, Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

⁷ Eduardo Migliaccio, Palli Pall, sheet music dated November 12, 1914, Migliaccio Collection, Box 7.

⁸ Eduardo Migliaccio, Geni, sheet music (n.d.), Migliaccio Collection, Box 7.

⁹ Clipping, The Evening Bulletin (June 29, 1920), in scrapbook, Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

volentieri l'invettiva e l'insulto della parola "schifia" nei momenti d'abbattimento morale, di disperazione e di nostalgia pel paesello natio ove ha lasciato la moglie a cui scrive lettere pietose ed affettuoso con tutto l'animo suo siciliano.¹

Coco', sketch in the Sicilian dialect;² The pick-and-shovel man; The fruit dealer; 'O Cumpare 'e spusarizio (also, 'O compare 'e spusalizio or sposalizio, The Best Man); Pasquale Basciamento (also Pascale Bassamento, meaning "Basement Pasquale"; perhaps he was a janitor. An alternate title for this skit was L'Ubbriacone, "The Drunk");

Realistic as a Drunk

He is also an adept in portraying the progress of alcoholism -- realistically enough to satisfy the most ardent adherent of the Brieux cult.

He has sketched the five principal stages of intoxication. In the first stage, Migliaccio explains, the lights have been lit and the birds are beginning to sing. In the second stage the eyesight is slightly impaired, distances become vague, things become futurist in drawing. In the third stage our Italian subject wants to "start something" -- to straighten things out. In the fourth stage there is a general paralysis of the limbs. Farfariello in this stands stupefied in the middle of the stage, swaying interminably back and forth, helplessly staring out at his audience, so realistically intoxicated that all the small boys (with whom he is immensely popular) jeer at him with the cruelty of youth.

The last in this series of alcoholic portraits is the most terrible, the most realistic, depicting as acidly as ³ Forain's pen ever depicted the final stages of alcoholism.

'O Sarto (The Tailor); Pazzy 'o pazzariello (also, Pazzy 'o pazzo, "Crazy Patsy"), lyrics by Migliaccio and music by Russo:

1.

Da che stongo in America
io perdo la ragione.

¹"an old Sicilian immigrant with white hair unsteady and faltering step, who felt so upset and uncomfortable in America and like a helpless creature and so disgusted with this 'new world' that he often shouted at it with pleasure the invective and the insult of the word 'shit' in moments of moral depression, of desperation, of nostalgia for his little native village where he left his wife and to whom he writes pitiful and affectionate letters with all his Sicilian soul." Clipping, "Farfariello e Compagnia, loc. cit.

²"La Compagnia 'Farfariello' Ancora Tra Noi," L'Italo-Americano Di Los Angeles, clipping (n.d.), scrapbook, Migliaccio Collection, Box 1.

³Parker, loc. cit.

nun me fa cchiu' 'mpressione
 qualunqua cosa cchiu'
 Ma chisto e' 'o munno 'a smerza
 ma chesta e' 'a pazzaria,
 i cca', parola mia
 me spasso come a cche'!.

Riro comme 'a nu pazzo
 Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah!
 si veco nu palazzo
 Ah!...
 Ncielo la ferrovia
 Ah!...
 Ma chesta e' 'a pazzaria
 Ah!...

2.

Saccio che a questa terra
 cagna mestiere 'a gente,
 come si fosse niente
 tutto se mette a fa
 Si si, n'accida cane
 te miette a fa 'o duttore
 Si si fravecatore
 faie 'o ncigniere cca'
 E mare chi nc'ancappa
 Ah!...
 Ll'ommo 'e talento zappa
 Ah!...
 E chi adda zappa'
 Ah!...
 Fa 'o prufessore cca

3.

Dicette un'avvocato,
 ca tu nun saie la legge,
 te mannano a la seggia
 sta accorto a nun manca'
 Si dentro qualche carro
 sputasse sulamente
 qualunque presirente
 nun te facesse asci
 E po s'accrasta 'a gente
 Ah!...
 nisciuno dice niente
 Ah!...
 Vide cierta gentaccia
 Ah!...
 Ca tu 'e sputasse nfaccia
 Ah!...

4.

Quanno sposo' Matteo
 na ghella americana,
 invece 'e na taliana

come faceva 'o blof
 'O primmo juorno avette
 nu faite ncopp'o naso,
 Quano fu persuaso
 'e n'ato fatto po!...
 cercaie 'o scioglimento
 Ah! Ah!...
 Denne 'o mantenimento
 Ah!...
 Mo chella cu nu ngrese...
 Ah!...
 E isso pav'e spese
 Ah!...

5.

Come arrivate 'America
 all'uocchie vuoste appare
 mpustate miez' 'o mare
 'a statua 'a liberta'!...
 Segno c'ognuno e' libero!
 Tu faie bona azione,
 Chillo fa 'o mascalzone,
 Puo' fa chello che vuo'!
 Pecche' e' fri contri
 Ah! Ah!...
 Stenno, capisce mi?
 Ah!
 Tu fri contri' 'a me,
 Ah!
 Io fri contri' 'a tte
 Ah! Ah!...

Translation of Pazzy 'o pazzariello or Pazzy 'o pazzo, above:

"Crazy Patsy

1.

Since I have been in America
 I have gone crazy,
 there is nothing that impresses me
 nothing at all
 But this is an upside down world
 But this is a crazy world,
 over here, my word,
 I really enjoy myself!
 I laugh like a madman
 Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!
 If I see a building
 Ha!...

¹ Eduardo Migliaccio, Pazzy 'o pazzo, sheet music (Societa Libreria Italiana, 1919), Migliaccio Collection, Box 7.

The train in the sky
 Ha!...
 But this is a crazy world
 Ha!...

2.

I know that in this country
 people change their trade
 as if it were nothing
 they work at anything
 Yes, if someone kills a dog
 he becomes a doctor
 If he (unclear)
 he's an engineer over here
 Too bad for him who gets caught
 Ha!...
 The man of ability uses a pick
 Ha!...
 And he who used the pick before
 Ha!...
 Works as a professor over here

3.

A lawyer said
 that if you don't know the law,
 they send you to the chair
 be careful not to make mistakes
 If you are on the trolley
 all you have to do is spit
 and whoever is there
 won't let you get out
 (Unclear)
 Ha!...
 nobody says anything
 Ha!...
 I saw some people
 Ha!...
 I felt like spitting in their faces
 Ha!...

4.

When Matteo got married
 to an American girl,
 she was really Italian
 she was bluffing
 On the first day
 he punched her in the nose,
 When he was sure
 he stopped it
 He tried to get an anulment
 Ha! Ha!...
 He gave her alimony
 Ha!...
 But she didn't agree to it...

Ha!...
 And he had to pay all the expenses
 Ha!...

5.

As you arrive in America
 there appears to your eyes
 standing in the middle of the water
 the statue of liberty!...
 This is a sign that everyone is free!
 You do a good deed,
 Another guy is a roughneck,
 He can do whatever he wants!
 Because it's a free country
 Ha! Ha!...
 Understand, you understand me?
 Ha!
 You free country me,
 Ha!
 I'll free country you
 Ha! Ha!..."

Words such as ghella (girl), fri contri (free country), stenne (understand) and blof (bluff) constitute Italo-Americanese adaptations. The Barese Iceman:

But always at the end he is the iceman sooner or later mingled with the bravos are cries of "Iceman! Iceman!," this iceman who sings folksongs of his native land to amuse his customers, who forget their empty ice-boxes while they watch him. 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.¹

¹Van Vechten, p 32.

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