

Manhood, Allegories of Violence,” Pine does not try to explain what a *sceneggiata* is. He describes one by recounting a car accident. A car hits a Vespa in one of the major Neapolitan squares, Piazza Plebiscito (and here, as almost on every page, Pine takes a chance to delve into the history of the city, even if briefly, by explaining why the Piazza is called “plebiscite”). The Vespa’s driver addresses the car owner in the worst of Neapolitan epithets that attacks directly his manhood. What follows is a riot among the family members and friends of the two who show up on the scene a few minutes later. While reading all this, we never forget that we are looking at a specific Neapolitan subculture related to the social classes that Pine has defined for us previously. The reader knows that she cannot equate what she reads with the city tout court, Pine does not allow for it; and yet, that same reader knows that what she is getting in this clear presentation is Naples as it is.

This book is intellectually thick, historically detailed, and theoretically sound: “[. . .] it stages a melodrama of contact. Contact is an affective-aesthetic happening [. . .] contact summons multiple senses including kinesthesia, intuition, and the sympathetic sense, opening you up to being affected” (17). Contact is the key and the keyword to Neapolitan culture. Pine’s book grasps all its implications. It establishes a way to understand Naples well beyond its neo-melodic scene.

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***Learn Sicilian/ Mparamu lu Sicilianu: A Comprehensive, Interactive Course*** by *Gaetano Cipolla*. Mineola, N.Y. Legas Sicilian Studies Vol. XXV, 2013. 336pp.

This impressive book is not only an Introduction to the Sicilian language—phonetics, grammar, idioms, dialogues, and literary extracts—but also a store of cultural and historical information about the island and its people. Cipolla begins with the sounds of Sicilian, reinforced by a DVD included in the book, and takes the reader through vocabulary and writing and reading exercises appropriate to a variety of situations. He includes anecdotes and stories, comic and serious poems, references to and quotes from contemporary authors writing in Sicilian, and a wealth of information about Sicilian customs, traditions, local legends and folkways.

Sicily, like the rest of Italy, has seen a shrinking of dialect use in the face of increasing use of standard Italian, although most Sicilians understand the dialect perfectly and most still can speak it in the appropriate circumstances. Here enters a most intriguing socio-linguistic phenomenon: Sicilians tend to speak standard Italian in public, even when encountering fellow Sicilians, and to reserve dialect speech for people they know well, like family members

and friends. Hence in a situation such as dining in public, it is expected that the customer and the waiter speak Italian (unless they happen to already be friends), even though both consider Sicilian their mother tongue. Cipolla cites the interesting anecdote of taking a visiting Sicilian-American acquaintance to dine in a restaurant, and the man, noting the lack of a pepper shaker along with the salt on the table, spoke instinctively in dialect and asked the waiter for *spezzi* instead of the Italian word *pepe*. The waiter naturally understood and brought the pepper, but his first reaction was to be startled to be addressed in dialect, in public, by someone he didn't know.

The reader who works through the chapters of this book with all their exercises will learn a lot of Sicilian, and the underlying premise seems to be that while a total beginner can use this volume to learn Sicilian, there is a large potential audience of Italian-Americans who retain vestiges of Sicilian from their childhood and might wish to acquire more of the language they once spoke or used to hear spoken by parents or grandparents. For such purposes, this book is the perfect tool.

A reader might also imagine using this book to prepare for a trip to Sicily, but since the dialect is not spoken between strangers, the visitor would find few opportunities for using this newly acquired linguistic tool. The ideal occasion would be reconnection and dialogue with relatives, if one is lucky enough to have them there.

Linguistically trained readers will notice two inaccuracies: what is called the Latin root *adm-* (p. 30) is not a true root but merely a phonetic cluster; and the relation between Latin *ut* and Messinese *mi* and Italian *affinchè* (p. 252) is described in language that implies etymological derivation ("remnant") rather than simple historical replacement.

This book stands as a beautiful monument to a language and culture increasingly at risk of attrition. The material is obviously dear to the author's heart, and he has created a monument worthy of his devotion.

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*The Lady of the Wheel (La Ruotaia)* by Angelo F. Coniglio. Mineola, NY: Legas, 2012. 84pp.

Among Giuseppe Pitrè's collection of Sicilian folklore is this proverb: "*Lu munnu è rota, firria e vota*." The world is a wheel that turns and returns. This proverb captures the spirit of *The Lady of the Wheel*. Set in nineteenth-century Sicily, Coniglio's novella chronicles the lives of sulfur miners in Racalmuto, a town in the province of Agrigento. Racalmuto's native son Leonardo Sciascia might have praised the book's austere beauty and dry wit. He also might have admired the way it balances the influence of two opposite nineteenth-century Italian writers. Like Giovanni Verga, Coniglio presents