Fernanda Pivano’s *Viaggio americano*, a portrait of American literature

By Ilaria Verunelli

There are travels that only exceptional minds can engage. They use the engines of passion and imagination. They connect through the power of tireless mastery. They require an indomitable courage. Fernanda Pivano’s “Viaggio americano,” American travel, is a “sort of portrait” of American literature. It is also about falling in love with heroes such as Ernest Hemingway, Herman Melville, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Jack Kerouac. Pivano’s life spans two centuries, in between a July and an August (1917-2009); it also spans two countries, Italy and the United States, which her artistic gesture of translation and divulga- tion bridged expertly.

She was a translator and a writer, a journalist and a literary critic. When she was asked to select a collection of some of her articles about American literature for *Bompiani*, a prominent Italian publishing house, she was faced by more than 1,500 stories she had written since 1945. “Viaggio americano,” first published in 1997, is the result of this selection. You can read the book in its sequence or jump where your interest rests and thus, have the sharp impression of the brush strokes of this American portrait. In an article written for *Corriere della Sera*, an Italian newspaper, on March 30, 1989 she celebrates Malcolm Cowley a few days after his death as a “giant of American literature.” To her, he was a teacher of literary criticism in his method of “making an author come out from the context of his books and connecting him to the context of his/her society and his/her life,” though never being “anecdotal.”

Pivano personally met many of her American heroes later in life. Her first trip to the United States was not until 1956. Cowley autographed her 1944 “The Portable Hemingway”: “Inscribed to Nanda, this now out of print and I hope valuable book, Dec., 16 ’57” on one of “the most precious books that I [saved] among the dearest of my heart.” Pivano later met and became friends with them, then automatically you become friends with these authors and you accept them, then automatically you become friends with them. Thanks to her work many Italian authors and the public at large became friends with American literature.
The Houston Italian Festival's 42 for 42 Fundraising Campaign kicked off in March with a letter to all members and friends of the Italian Cultural & Community Center. After cancelling the festival, the members of our community listed below decided to let the Center keep their donations. We thank all of them for their support. The ICCC wouldn't be what it is today without you.

Stephen Aiosi  
Kathy Albert  
Dee and Jim Avioli  
Nick and Margie Bacile  
Brad and Gayla Baker  
Margaret and John Bannon  
Barbara Barcelona  
Gloria Fossati Borreca  
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Nancy and Bill Brown  
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Roy and Dominique Varner  
Mr. and Mrs. William Walters/Pam and Bob Walters  
Julie and John Mastroianni  
Anna Caflisch

Houston Italian Festival sponsors become donors - We thank you!

We would also like to thank our initial festival sponsors as they decided to turn their sponsorships into donations to help our Center during these challenging times. We thank you for your generosity.

Brenda and Michael Benigno - Umbria Regional Flag  
Livia Bornigia and Carl Scott - Marche Regional Flag  
Nancy and Bill Brown - Artichoke Booth  
Controlled Air Service - Artichoke Booth  
Paul and Linda Coselli Family - Toscana Regional Flag  
Cusimano Architect - Main Wine Booth  
Joseph D'Addesio, MD - First Aid Station  
Daughters of Italian Heritage - Meatball Sandwich Booth  
Dettling Funeral Home - Molise Regional Flag  
DiPuma Printing and Promotional Products Co. - Bocce Ball Tournament  
Wayne Duddleston Foundation in Honor of Margie DiPuma - Lazio Regional Flag  
Louis Ditta Family in Memory of Carl Ditta - Emilia Romagna Regional Flag  
Greg and Terri Ebel - Piedmonte Regional Flag  
The Furlan and Echeverria Families - Veneto Regional Flag  
The Greco Family - Green Bean Booth  
Hughes Watters, Askanae LLP - East Ticket Booth  
ICCC Board and Executive Director - Volunteer Check In  
ICCC Board and Executive Director - Grounds Italy in America - General Banner  
Ray and Maureen Miller in memory of Josephine Colangelo - Abruzzo Regional Flag  
Pelletizer Knives Inc - La Piccola Cucina  
Marita and Angelo Parrish - Sardegna Regional Flag  
Clint and Joanna Porche - Sicilia Regional Flag  
Claudia and Stephen Sims - Friuli Venezia Giulia Regional Flag  
Troiani Law Firm - Puglia Regional Flag  
Unite Club - Sausage Booth  
Thann Dauterive and Urs Rathgeb - Valle D'Aosta Regional Flag  
Giorgio Caflisch, Texas Wine School - Wine Tasting Events  
Frost Bank - Arts & Crafts Children Information Booth  
Joseph D'Addesio, MD - Campania Regional Flag  
Carolyn Panebianco - Sound and Lights

We have $500-sponsorships still available that could be turned into donations for the Center. Your donation will be featured for the rest of the year on La Voce and also turned into a Facebook post as a thank you. Please email info@iccchouston.com or accounting@iccchouston.com if you are interested.

Basilicata Regional Flag  
Calabria Regional Flag  
Liguria Regional Flag  
Cannoli Booth  
Children's Tarantella  
Italian Travelers Movies  
Italian Market  
I Madonnari Art  
Pasta Dish  
Pasta Eating  
Grape Stomping  
Technology Permits
new iccc members

Benvenuti! The ICCC wishes to welcome the following new members and invites them to stay fully engaged with all of the wonderful programs and events that the ICCC has to offer. For more information about becoming a member and joining the ICCC family, click here or contact Alessandra Pistone, Business Director, at 713-524-4222 ext. 6 or at accounting@iccchouston.com.

Mr. Basil Angelo
Mrs. Blakely Grimm and Mr. Filippo Muscolino
Mr. Christopher Massanova
Mr. and Mrs. Jorge Micolich
Ms. Mary Ann Miller
Ms. Christina Pesoli
Ms. Toni Southerlan
Mr. Jack Varcados and Family

A special thanks to longtime ICCC member Mrs. Kathryn Kase for signing up for a lifetime membership!

All’ICCC (At the ICCC)

Very Dear Friends,

Around this time last year, we were super busy organizing our beloved Festa Italiana! There was so much to cook, clean, organize, and plan.

Unfortunately, as you know, this year we have been forced to cancel the event entirely, along with our other beautiful events held around the city of Houston. But we have to look ahead and start planning our next Festival with an optimistic attitude and a big desire to do more and better.

What’s happening in the meantime inside of our nice house on Milford Street? Well, we are quiet, but still working very hard. Online classes are a big success and students are still signing up. Some even from out of town! Like never before, our amazing teachers are putting a big effort into their job, teaching remotely but with a loving spirit and deep preparation. We are really lucky to have such a wonderful group of instructors.

We couldn’t celebrate Ferragosto in the Italian style, but we kept our tradition by showing a fun comedy film on August 19th. For us, it was the reopening date. The turnout was small, but the crowd was nevertheless very enthusiastic and pleased with the movie we showed, “Ma Cosa Ci Cice il Cervello” (“Don’t Stop Me Now”).

Our Executive Director Erika Myers is busy planning a new calendar full of events that we hope you will all be able to enjoy soon. Check our website regularly to be sure you won’t miss anything.

Hope to see you very soon.

Stay healthy and stay tuned and in touch with us.

Con affetto,
Monica Ercolani

La voce italiana

Published six times a year (January, March, May, July, September and November) by the Italian Cultural & Community Center (ICCC) of Houston.

1101 Milford Street,
Houston, Texas 77006

La Voce Italiana is a benefit to ICCC members and followers. La Voce Italiana can be found at www.iccchouston.com/news/la-voce/

For more information, please call 713-524-4222 ext. 4 or email marketing@iccchouston.com.

2020 ICCC Board of Directors

Officers
Monica Ercolani  President
John M. Carrabella  1st Vice President
Sandra Celli Harris  2nd Vice President
Raluca Dalea  Treasurer
Bernard Marino  Secretary
Margret Norton  Assistant Secretary
Livia Bornigia  Past President

Board of Directors

Thann Rae Dauterive
Gary DeSerio
Sheila Echols-Smesny
Tracy Lalasz
Mary Milloy
ICCC Board Nominations Sought

October 1, 2020 Deadline...

The Italian Cultural & Community Center is seeking candidates to fill five upcoming vacancies on the Board of Directors. The election will be held at the annual meeting of members on December 3, 2020. Each term lasts three years.

We welcome strategic thinkers who understand “the big picture” and who can translate ideas into actions in order to fulfill ICCC’s mission to advance, celebrate, and preserve Italian culture and heritage for everyone.

Candidates must have the following qualities: integrity, independence, confidence, corporate manners, courage, and commitment. The overarching responsibilities of Board members are governance, fundraising, and public relations. Board members do not have to be of Italian descent, but must have a passion for Italian culture.

Because we are a working board, all Board members are expected to “do their share” to keep ICCC advancing.

The qualifications for Board members as listed in the ICCC Bylaws are:

Good standing with dues current; legal resident of US; no closer than third cousin to any other board member; pass a background check; no convictions for felony, Class A or B misdemeanor, crime of moral turpitude, or declared to be of unsound mind by order of a court.

ICCC is a multi-faceted organization that is in ascendency, growing by leaps and bounds, in scope and influence. It is more critical than ever for ICCC to have leaders capable of carrying forward our strategic plan with a vision to continue as the destination for all things Italian for all Houstonians. If you’ve got what it takes to become a valued member of the ICCC leadership team, please submit your application to:

Nominating Committee ICCC,
1101 Milford,
Houston, TX, 77006

The deadline is October 1, 2020.


Refer questions to Ray Miller, ICCC Executive Director Emeritus at info@iccchouston.com or call 713-524-4222 Ext 3.

Humanities Texas Relief Grant

By ICCC Team

The Italian Cultural & Community Center in Houston, TX is the recipient of a Humanities Texas Relief Grant.

This summer, Humanities Texas awarded over $1.1 million to 198 Texas nonprofits that suffered losses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Recipients include museums, libraries, preservation organizations and heritage and cultural centers, among many others. These organizations offer historical and cultural programs that have significant impact within their communities. Humanities Texas aims to help these organizations remain vital in this difficult time. With the impact of Covid-19 in 2020, the ICCC has had to change the traditional way of hosting programs and events. The grant proceeds have been used to offset new costs related to moving the Italian language school to an online platform, streaming of movies and lectures, and adding new safety and cleaning products that prevent the spread of Covid-19.

Funding for these grants has been provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act economic stabilization plan.

Humanities Texas, based in Austin, Texas, is the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) as part of the 2020 Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020.
Support the ICCC for FREE with your favorite Loyalty cards

The Italian Cultural & Community Center relies on all of you, our community, to continue to thrive and bring the quality programs you have come to expect. Please consider helping us by participating in one of the four easy donation programs listed below.

**Become an active donor today and help your home away from home!**

Your enrollment and support of the Kroger Community Rewards program will help the ICCC earn dollars to better achieve its mission to advance, celebrate and preserve Italian culture and heritage. The **ICCC non-profit number is 80408**. Both new and current participants must enroll in the program every year, as required by the program. All supporters must have a registered Kroger Plus card account online to be able to link their card to the ICCC. Do you use your phone number at the register? Call 1-800-576-4377 and select option 3 to get your Kroger Plus card number. If you do not have a Kroger Plus card, they are available at the customer service desk at any Kroger. Register online at: [www.KrogerCommunityRewards.com](http://www.KrogerCommunityRewards.com).

Every time an enrolled ICCC participant shops at Kroger using his or her Kroger Plus card, the ICCC will begin accumulating rewards. In addition, once a household member enrolls his or her card, all linked Kroger Plus cards within that household will begin earning funds for the ICCC.

Please don’t forget to enroll in some of the other programs that also help the ICCC earn extra dollars.

**AmazonSmile** is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization, the ICCC, every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com), Amazon will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to your favorite charitable organization. Whether you currently have an Amazon account or are opening a new account, visit AmazonSmile, follow the directions, and please make sure to select Italian Cultural & Community Center of Houston as your designated charity.

**Randall’s Good Neighbor** is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization (ICCC) every time you shop, at no cost to you. Every time an enrolled ICCC participant shops at Randall’s using his/her Remarkable card, the ICCC will begin accumulating rewards. Visit today the Randall’s customer service desk and ask to have your Remarkable card set up with the ICCC Charity code #3114, or call 1-877-723-3929 and give them the Charity code to add to existing cards.

Gift matching programs double the value of your donation. Please don’t wait to take advantage of your company’s gift matching program. If you work for many of the oil and gas companies and literally hundreds of other companies, don’t miss out on this terrific opportunity to have your donation count twice as much. This works for membership payments also. Please check with your employer if they offer a matching program, it only takes mere moments to sign up for these programs. Please don’t wait.

Everyone at the ICCC thanks you for your continued support of our organization.

See you soon!
ICCC clubs and organizations

Italy in America Association (IIAA)
By Betty Donellan | Len Trombetta, president

The Board held a virtual Zoom meeting in August to discuss our plans for the rest of the year.

We decided to only charge half price for new memberships, and to charge current members half price next year when dues are renewed in January.

We decided to donate a contribution for Festa Italiana to the ICCC.

Our Board has been busy this summer planning future events remotely as well as in person when safe.

We are having a Zoom meeting for members in September with Phil Cimo presenting “The Italian Migration into Texas: Italian Immigrants becoming Italian-Texans.” If possible, we will have a Happy Hour or our Ferragosto dinner on September 24th at Nick’s place in honor and in remembrance of Domenica Rinchiuso. This is a popular event annually and one we don’t want to miss.

We also hope to be able to host a Happy Hour in October in lieu of our meeting and, of course, all future meetings are contingent on the ICCC’s schedule.

Please click HERE to visit the ICCC website to find more information about IIAA and join us!

Stay safe!

Daughters of Italian Heritage
By Deborah Graustein | Jeannie Trapolino, president

Thanks to all the members, we are keeping the group communication flowing by continuing with our Zoom meetings. Recording is a tremendously useful feature in Zoom, for it allows us to share with members unable to attend.

Bylaws are reviewed every three years. In August, we voted on the newly revised bylaws.

We have had interesting and informative speakers join us. We are thankful for what our nonprofits add to our community. In July, we had Mikela Fox, from Casa de Esperanza-House of Hope for Children. They strive to break the cycle of child abuse and neglect for at-risk infants, children, and their families by providing comprehensive residential and family support programs. In August, we had Marcia Chaney from Santa Maria Hostel, one of Texas’ largest multisite residential and outpatient substance use disorder treatment centers for women, and one of very few to offer a full continuum of services for women who are pregnant or parenting.

While the Houston Italian Festival was canceled for 2020 due to COVID-19, DoIH continues to support the Italian Cultural and Community Center.

Happy Birthday and Happy Anniversary Daughters for July & August!!

July Birthdays: Jamie Russo (21st), Fran Danna (24th), Patsy Schillaci (25th), Paulette Janak (27th)
July Anniversaries: Gladys + Ross Salvaggio (1st), Joanna + Clint Porche (28th)

August Birthdays: Mary Ann Cirincione (3rd), Gloria Montalbano (6th), Christina Nance (6th), Cappie Tavary (19), Jennifer Bonacci (20th), Gladys Salvaggio (21st), Michelle Belco (28th)

August Anniversaries: Paulette + Jerry Janak (11th), Linda + Bernard Marino (22nd)

We pray for miraculous healing of COVID-19. We pray for a cure, a stop to the spread, healing those who have COVID-19, and protection for those who have been exposed to it.

During the pandemic, meetings are held online via Zoom. We welcome newcomers. You can join us on Zoom or call-in from any phone. Contact Anna Messner (info below) to receive an invite. We meet on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm. When we can meet face to face again, meetings will resume at the Italian Cultural & Community Center at 1101 Milford Street (in the museum district), and we guarantee dinner and an opportunity to make some wonderful new friendships.

Thank you, and stay safe.

Contact Anna Messer: anna4ever29@att.net or visit our website www.ciaodiva.org.
Italian Language Classes - Full Schedule

A1S1 - Italian for Beginners
Whether you want to learn Italian to go on vacation, for work or study, or simply to learn a new language, this Italian for beginners class will help you discover one of the world's most beautiful languages.

**Wednesdays - September 9 to October 21, 2020**
4:00 to 6:00 p.m. | Click [HERE](#) to register
$202.50 ICCC members - $225 non-members

**Wednesdays - October 14 to November 25, 2020**
6:30 to 8:30 p.m. | Click [HERE](#) to register
$202.50 ICCC members - $225 non-members

Italian for Kids (6-10) - Beginners
Do you want your kids to start speaking Italian this school year? We got you covered! Come learn the basics of reading and writing in Italian, preliminary grammar, Italian culture, geography, history, and regions.

**Saturdays - September 12 to October 17, 2020**
3:00 to 4:00 p.m. | Click [HERE](#) to register
$90 ICCC members - $100 non-members

Italian for Teens - Beginners
Is your teen interested in picking up a new language this school year? Is he/she planning on joining a study-abroad program later on? Then have them join our Italian classes! They will learn the beauty of the Italian language and culture.

**Fridays - October 2 to November 6, 2020**
4:00 to 5:00 p.m. | Click [HERE](#) to register
$90 ICCC members - $100 non-members

Private Italian lessons
Online private (one student - teacher) and semi private (two students - teacher) tutoring classes are available, and are scheduled according to the needs and the schedule of the students. At the start of the course the teacher and the student discuss and agree on the program and the number of hours needed to reach the student's target.

Call 713-524-4222 ext. 2 or email [school@iccchouston.com](mailto:school@iccchouston.com) for more information on private lessons.
The health and safety of our members, visitors, and staff are our top priority. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and follow the guidelines issued by CDC, the Houston Health Department, as well as local, state and federal authorities. Note that the movie listed below might be canceled if an executive order issued by the City of Houston prohibits gatherings. If the event proceeds, we will make sure to welcome you safely. Click [HERE](#) to see the precautions our Center is taking to avoid the spread of the virus.

### Italian for Beginners - A1S1 (online class)
Whether you want to learn Italian to go on vacation, work or study, or simply to learn a new language, this Italian for beginners class will help you discover one of the world's most beautiful languages.

Time: every Wednesday from September 9 to October 21 - 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. | Price: $202.50 for Members and $225 for Non-Members | Place: Online

### Italian for Kids (6-10) - Beginners (online class)
Do you want your kids to start speaking Italian this school year? We got you covered! Come learn the basics of reading and writing in Italian, preliminary grammar, Italian culture, geography, history, and regions.

Time: every Saturday from September 12 to October 17 - 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. | Price: $90 for Members and $100 for Non-Members | Place: Online

### 2020 Contemporary Italian Film Series
Join us in 2020 for our Contemporary Italian Film Series, recent releases from Italy screened in Italian with English subtitles, all premiering in Texas.

We will be screening "Il Campione" (The Champion). Tickets on sale online and at the door (cash will not be accepted). Doors open at 6:45 p.m.

Plot: Christian Ferro is The Champion a very young and talented, yet undisciplined soccer star. After his latest screw up the president of the soccer club assigns Valerio Fioretti, a shy and lonely professor dealing with economic problems to tutor Christian. They clash with each other at first, but soon develop a deep relationship that will help both of them grow and change.

Time: September 16th - 7:00 p.m. | Price: $10 for Members and $15 for Non-Members | Place: ICCC Houston
## OCTOBER 2020

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### Italian for Teens - Beginners (online class)
Is your teen interested in picking up a new language this school year? Is he/she planning on joining a study-abroad program later on? Then have them join our Italian classes! They will learn the beauty of the Italian language and culture.

**Time:** every Friday from October 2 to November 6 - 4:00 to 5:00 p.m | **Price:** $90 for Members and $100 for Non-Members | **Place:** Online

### 2020 Contemporary Italian Film Series
We will be screening "Il Bene Mio" (My Own Good.) The movie will be shown in its original Italian with English subtitles. Tickets on sale online and at the door (cash will not be accepted). Doors open at 6:45 p.m.

**Plot:** The small Italian village Provvidenza was destroyed by an earthquake. Several people died. The rest of the community sets up a new village nearby. However, Elia refuses to leave his old house.

**Time:** October 7th - 7:00 p.m. | **Price:** $10 for Members and $15 for Non-Members | **Place:** ICCC Houston

### Italian for Beginners - A1S1 (online class)
Whether you want to learn Italian to go on vacation, work or study, or simply to learn a new language, this Italian for beginners class will help you discover one of the world's most beautiful languages.

**Time:** every Wednesday from October 14 to November 25 - 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. | **Price:** $202.50 for Members and $225 for Non-Members | **Place:** Online

### 2020 Contemporary Italian Film Series
We will be screening "Un Giorno All'Imprevviso" (If Life Gives You Lemons). The movie will be shown in its original Italian with English subtitles. Tickets on sale online and at the door (cash will not be accepted). Doors open at 6:45 p.m.

**Plot:** "If Life Gives You Lemons" doesn't deliver sunny optimism, however, but a tart slice of life. It follows 16-year-old Antonio through a tumultuous year, navigating obstacles he’s not yet equipped to face. His mother has emotional troubles, and seems to be getting worse. Meanwhile a social worker hovers in the background, eager to remove Antonio, who remains devoted to this damaged woman. So far, the teen’s been able to keep the do-gooders at bay. But there are huge changes looming in his life all arriving with new demands on his time, and new questions. Can he still give his mother the attention she needs? Can she now give him the freedom he deserves? And is the scout who wants to sign him to the team a genuine mentor, or just another undependable adult to distrust and dismiss?

**Time:** October 28th - 7:00 p.m. | **Price:** $10 for Members and $15 for Non-Members | **Place:** ICCC Houston

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The health and safety of our members, visitors, and staff are our top priority. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and follow the guidelines issued by CDC, the Houston Health Department, as well as local, state and federal authorities. Note that the movie listed below might be canceled if an executive order issued by the City of Houston prohibits gatherings. If the event proceeds, we will make sure to welcome you safely. Click [HERE](#) to see the precautions our Center is taking to avoid the spread of the virus.
Sardinia’s case for language diversity
By Bianca Sue Brown | Italics Magazine

Driving around the island of Sardinia, you’ll see names and places that resemble Italian language only from a distance. You’ll first subconsciously translate definite articles: il becomes su and la becomes sa. Next you might wonder if u’s have overtaken o’s because nostro is nostru and vostro is bostru. But as the official language of the island is Italian, proper nouns might be the closest you get to catching the cadence of Sardinian dialects.

Beyond glitzy beachfronts in the north, and jaw-dropping coastlines of cliffs, those inclined towards linguistic discovery may also find their paradise in Sardinia — the land of the closest living relative to Vulgar Latin. Sardinian is a distinct language autonomous from Italian, but the two are often grouped together because among the Romance languages, Italian has been the second-most conservative language in retaining Latin influence.

As overseas tourism has dropped this summer, there are stretches of days for me without overhearing snatches of English. Proportionally fewer tourists and more locals is increased opportunity to observe interactions that negotiate the space between Sardinian and Italian. These events might be preferring a calculator or representing numbers with fingers for a roadside vendor, or shifting the verb to the end of a sentence, a construction not common in Italian. In fact, Sardinian is considered unintelligible to Italian speakers, with an acoustic impression that is closer to Spanish.

And although Italian and Sardinian are grouped together by their respective proximity to Latin, Italian is linguistically closer to Romance languages such as French — where Italian speakers might survive by substituting French vocabulary into their own grammar. Such a strategy is less successful with Sardinian, with its many unique syntactic forms.

Forms that yet retain the imprint of history, geography, and policy. It was only in 1997 when the regional government declared Sardinia’s languages as five: 1) Sardinian, 2) Algherese, 3) Tabarchin, 4) Sassarese, and 5) Gallurese. Of these five languages, Sassarese and Gallurese are considered transitional languages between Sardinian and Corsican; Algherese is of Catalan origin; Tabarchin belongs to the Ligurian language system; and Sardinian is itself composed of dialects, the most prominent being Campidanese spoken in the south and Logudorese in the central-northern areas. Campidanese tends to have more Catalan loanwords, and Logudorese has more Spanish lexical influence.

"With over one million speakers, Sardinian represents the largest legally-recogized minority language group in Italy. But Sardinian does not yet have a standardized form."

And it was only in 1999 when Sardinian gained minority language status in Italy (Law 482/1999). For the first time in Italian history, minority languages (11 other languages also gained official status) could be the medium of instruction in primary and secondary schools, adopted for spoken and written use in public administration, and encouraged for use in broadcasting and publications. With over one million speakers, Sardinian represents the largest legally-recogized minority language group in Italy.

Armed with the official stamp of approval, Sardinian had the legal wherewithal to have a place in society. But the task at hand soon became, well, how do we standardize Sardinian? And then, should we standardize Sardinian?

What is Sardinian as an existential question revealed the fundamental barrier to the idea of protecting minority languages — what had been useful as an inclusive abstraction, laboring to protect a historic culture with its values and ways of thinking, becomes exclusionary and inherently anti-protectorist as those dialects considered ‘lesser’ and arguably more minoritized fall away in favor of the form of the language imbued with relative power.

The Catch-22 of minority language protection is particularly relevant in the Sardinian context. Heterogeneity arising from geographical and historical contact events has given Sardinian its value as a cultural concept; to flatten differences and impose standardization to a language system that has traditionally embraced fragmentation could be antithetical to the ultimate motivation.

Beyond the island, how has Sardinian shown up as a cultural concept? Perhaps the most well-known example would be the Italian version of The Simpsons, where Groundskeeper Willie trades a Scottish background for a Sardinian one, arguably satirizing the shepherding, rustic lifestyle more effectively than the stereotype illustrated in the American context. The beauty of The Simpsons, argues researcher Chiara Ferrari, is its ability to indigenize the script in each international adaptation.

Prioritizing local interpretations recognized on global scales can be a parallel for further indigenizing local dialects protected on a national level. We might start by reframing the question from "Do you speak the Sardinian dialect" to "Do you speak a Sardinian language?" The opportunity to spend extended time on the island this year afforded by smartworking and a downtick in travel may carry the imperative to expand my understanding of a region too-often regarded as a monolithic whole.
In cucina con gli italiani

Risotto asparagi e limone (Asparagus risotto with lemon)

Recipe by Paola Bacchia

Ingredients
4 servings
1 and 1/2 cups Carnaroli or Vialone nano rice
2 bunches asparagus, trimmed into 5cm/2 inch pieces (keep tips and woody ends separate)
4 cups good quality vegetable or chicken stock
1 small onion, finely diced
1/2 cup dry white wine
1 clove garlic, crushed
olive oil
1/4 cup unsalted butter, diced
handful fresh parsley leaves
1/2 cup grated parmigiano
1 teaspoon lemon zest

Preparation
Bring the stock to boil in a large pot and drop in the washed woody asparagus ends. Cover and keep at a low simmer. In a medium sized saucepan, heat up a good glug of olive oil and add the onion, cooking on low heat, stirring occasionally until it is translucent (about 8 minutes). Add the garlic and cook until it is fragrant. Add the wine and stir, cooking until it has evaporated. Now add the rice and stir, making sure it is well covered by the oil and garlic. Once the rice has warmed through (2-3 minutes), add a ladle of stock (leaving the woody asparagus ends in the stock), stirring occasionally and making sure the rice does not stick to the bottom of the pan. Add another ladle full of stock, allowing it to be absorbed by the rice and stirring occasionally. Repeat until you have used about 2/3 of the stock (approximately 10 minutes). Now add the asparagus pieces (reserving the tips) to the risotto with the next addition of stock, stir well and allow the stock to absorb. The asparagus tips should be added in the last few minutes of cooking (the last or second last addition of liquid) so they remain quite firm. The rice takes around 18 minutes to cook and should be still slightly firm in the centre when ready. By this time you should have used most or all of your stock (top up with boiling water if you run out). Stir in the butter, allowing it to melt, then stir in half the parsley leaves and the parmigiano and adjust for salt and pepper to taste. Cover and allow to rest for a minute. Serve on warmed plates, scattering on the lemon zest, the rest of the parsley and extra parmigiano.

Pair it with:
Fantastic, underrated Vermentino wine
By Madeline Puckette on www.winefolly.com

Vermentino (“vur-men-teeno”) is a light-bodied white wine that grows mostly in Italy on the island of Sardinia. What’s exciting about Vermentino is it can be deliciously complex in taste in similar style to Sauvignon Blanc. Because Vermentino is so unknown, you can find high quality wines for a great value. Let’s delve into the details of Vermentino wine and what to look for and from where. If you love Sauvignon Blanc then Vermentino is your friend. Despite the typical light-bodied character of Vermentino, it’s actually quite complex to taste. This is because Vermentino has higher levels of phenols which contribute to its subtle bitterness on the finish—a taste often described as green almond. A glass of classic Sardinia Vermentino will offer up lively aromas of pear, white peach, lime and pink grapefruit with subtle notes of crushed rocks and citrus zest. On the palate, Vermentino is almost always dry and somewhat oily with flavors of grapefruit and citrus, with a crushed rocky minerality and saltiness. On the finish, it can be a bit snappy with bitterness similar to the taste of grapefruit pith or, if it’s on the riper side, fresh almond.
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