

Chapter 4. The Contemporary Sicilian-Australian Music Scene in Sydney

4.1. Introduction

To illustrate the presence of Italian/Sicilian folk music in Sydney, I have developed this chapter in nine sections. I shall start by defining which kind of music has been of interest in my Sydney research (4.2); following, I will introduce the Italian record circulation and the Italian song festivals in Sydney (4.3), which are important to understand how the music culture in the Sicilian musical scene has grown and developed. The core of the Chapter will consist of a description of the feste¹ (Feasts) of Protector Saints important to the Sicilian community. I shall start by introducing what a festa is; a description of four feste I attended in Sydney will follow, together with a description and analysis of the types of music which are found in these celebrations and their main exponents (4.4). After having considered the festive context, I shall list and analyse some of the major protagonists in the Sicilian musical scene on occasions which are unrelated to religious practices: clubs frequented or founded by Sicilian emigrants, retirement villages (Scalabrini Villages) and home gatherings (4.5 and 4.6). A section describing and analysing the two Sicilian folkloristic groups which have been active in Sydney in the 1980s and 1990s will follow, as they take part in both feste and other, lay, community events (4.7). An in-depth study of two of the major protagonists of the Italian/Sicilian folk (and also non-folk) scene will follow, granting special attention to their career and their multi-functional roles in the community (4.8). The Chapter will conclude with the analysis of two concerts performed in Italian clubs, where I will comment on the repertoire, the modalities of performance and their influences/ goals (4.9). Paragraph 4.9 will end with some reflections (4.9 c) which will lead us straight to considerations (4.9 d) which will be further developed in Chapter 5. Chapter 5 which will be dedicated to the categorization of the genres of music we have encountered throughout the thesis and the comparison between the music I have observed being practised in Sicily and in Sydney.

¹Italian plural noun for festa.

4.2. Defining Sicilian music

This chapter provides an overview and analysis of material located during my two years of field research in Australia, which allowed me to assess the extent and nature of the musical practices and heritage of Sydney's Sicilian community. In the course of my investigation, I sought to document how music is lived, transmitted or interpreted with regards to its connection to Sicily. While I have found few cases of music that are traditionally Sicilian in genre, there are many cases in which different types of music are used as a vehicle to express Sicilian identity. I have adopted dual criteria in order to classify what constituted interesting research material: firstly either the music has been identified as 'Sicilian' by its player or its public, in which case there is an element of reflexivity in the study, or secondly the music or cultural practice I am considering is identified by me as Sicilian. Often, the significance of cultural practices (such as music) changes in their form but not in their functional substance. In these instances we are witnessing a cultural practice that is alive and capable of renovation while maintaining its distinctive core values as a traditional vernacular practise. Conversely, in the cases in which music is labelled as 'folk' by the community in which it circulates (the reflexive element I had mentioned above), we are often witnessing a tradition that is already 'fixed', and hence redundant as a lived tradition. In my study I have witnessed both cases, types of music and musical practice and perceptions and representations of this. The term folk music, in fact, implies a sense of otherness in regards to what we are.

4.3. Italian record circulation and Italian song festivals

This paragraph's purpose is to analyse Italian record circulation and Italian song festivals both in Sydney and in Australia from the peak years of migration (1950-1972) to date (2007). I believe that both material (in the form of recorded music, i.e. records) and intangible (in the hearts and memories of the migrants, the music which will be sung in the festivals) ways of transporting music from the homeland have shaped the repertoire which has been practised in Australia by the migrant Italian community since its origins. I start this chapter by introducing the kind of music Italians have brought with them in ways other than memory or physical instruments themselves. In conjunction with this, I shall mention how record circulation had a

direct effect on the community from the 1950s to the late 1970s: the creation of several Festival della Canzone Italiana (Italian Song Festival)². I have not considered the study of these festivals central to my thesis, but thought it would be worth mentioning them as they did play an important role in the general Italian music scene in Australia, in which Sicilians have played a great part.

From 1951 to 1978 Antonio D'Ambra³, an Aeolian from Canneto (Lipari), had a great role in the diffusion of Italian popular music into the Italian-Australian community at large. In 1953 he founded Minstrel Records, printing in Australia the matrixes which were sent by the major Italian record companies of the time, Fonit and Cetra. He also disseminated the latest Italian popular hits on sponsored programs on several Australian radio stations, hence trying to keep the Italian-Australian public musically up to date (the radios on which he broadcasted were 2UE, 2SM, 2CH). He was successful, to a certain degree, although the majority of the immigrants, as described, preferred to cherish, in their hearts (and still hear with their ears, over and over again), the tunes they remembered from their infancy in Italy.

Part of the effort of modernizing and updating the Italian-Australian pop music scene has been done by Melbourne-based Italian, Claudio Parente, who has organized the festival *E' nata una Stella* (A Star is Born). Committed to the promotion of Italian-Australian pop singers, presenting original songs in Italian (in the San Remo style) on stage in Sydney and Melbourne⁴, prior to the activity of Claudio Parente and his festivals (held in 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2007), a Festival della Canzone Italiana (Italian Song Festival) had been held in Sydney in the 1970s and 1980s⁵. The availability of Italian music to the immigrant population has shaped its tastes. As we will see, many Australian-born Italian singers have based their career on the

² See Scott-Maxwell (2008) for a retrospective view on Italian Song Festivals in Australia.

³ The father of Sonia D'Ambra, Vice-President of the Association of Aeolians in the World, to whom I referred at the beginning of my research.

⁴ His website: www.claprecords.com.

⁵ The Festival della Canzone Italiana in Australia is still active in Melbourne and has been organized by the members of the Band FDI, Fratelli D' Italia (www.fdi.net.au), Peter Paul Buhne, Tony Buono, Giuseppe Buhne and Eloise Buhne. The Buhne founded V G Italian Enterprises, based in Melbourne, which published a series of CDs compiling the songs presented at the festival. In the discography section I have listed one of such CDs.

reproduction of the repertoire of songs they had access to in their youth, through D'Ambra's import company and other businesses that have imported tunes from Italy in the crucial years of migration.

From interviews with owners of record stores (MAER, in Palermo and Casa del Disco, in Leichhardt), I have also learnt that migrants are the most important customers of Italian Regional and folkloristic music⁶. As we shall see in the case of the folkloristic groups described in this thesis, the founders and artistic directors of these groups have turned to recordings, as well as their own memories of practised folk music, to create their repertoire. Recorded music and radio play an important role in the maintenance and formation of the Italian migrant identity as a whole, and particularly Sicilian identity.

4.4 The feste

4.4.1. General introduction and analysis:

In order to talk about feste in Italy and in Australia, it is necessary to define what a festa is. To introduce the significance of the festa in Catholic Italy, a preliminary explanation of the relationship between faith, time and space is necessary. I shall attempt this mainly utilizing the framework of Bonanzinga (1992). Throughout the centuries, Catholicism has been present in people's everyday lives, influencing the mentality of the people, their psychological patterns and the spheres of science and culture, reaching the wealthy and cultivated as well as the poor and illiterate. The Church, which imposed the forerunner of the modern calendar (Gregorian Calendar, introduced by Pope Gregory the Great), attributed a religious significance to each day of the year. Each day of the year was either dedicated to the specific remembrance of a saint, or was a religious feast. Special periods of prayer and fasting were also included in the days leading up to major festivities such as Christmas and Easter.

Just as the Church had total control over the signification of time, by these means it also had control over space. Each town, city or dwelling, besides being administered

⁶ Either through mail order or, more frequently, in person, when they managed to go back to Italy in person. The most common practice was that relatives of emigrants who remained in the homeland used to purchase the records for them and send them via post.

and protected by earthly guardians (the Church in its human representatives) had its celestial protectors. Every site within Christianity is under the advocacy of a celestial entity, whether it be the Madonna, a Saint, the Cross or the Host. The heavenly protector of the territory is the principal emissary between humanity and God. However, the importance of celestial entities has not always been consistent throughout time in the same site. Some Saints prevail over others in importance and some are forgotten. New saints are made by the Church⁷, acquire special status and a new 'earthly' as well as 'heavenly' influence over a certain territory is increased.

Time and space, as we can see, are completely sacralized, everything on earth having a heavenly purpose and significance, which can be, however, changed at the discretion of the Church. The feste were the confirmation of the authority of this complex system of sacralization of time and space, on a certain day and in a certain place. Through the celebration of the festa, an annual thanksgiving to the Saint is established. The Christianization of the world is reaffirmed and the role of the Church as intermediary between the celestial order and the terrestrial order is acknowledged and celebrated.

Feste are the religious festivals connected to the Christian calendar and in particular to the Roman Catholic faith. They constitute the symbolic and ceremonial backbone of the Italian and Sicilian identity both when performed in their homeland and abroad. Arguably, Catholic rituals comprise 'christianized' versions of a number of practices and rituals which for centuries had been part of a given community. Sicily is no exception. Such religious feasts include Christmas, Easter and innumerable major and minor solemnities connected to Saints, events in the life of Jesus or Mary and days or periods of prayer and fasting⁸. It is within this cultural and historical framework that we must consider the Catholic feste which occur throughout the year within the Italian-Australian community.

⁷ See the webpage of the Vatican Congregation for the causes of Saints:
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/csaints/documents/rc_con_csaints_pro_20051996_en.html .

⁸ Such as the *Quaresima*, a period of forty days coming up to the Holy Easter week.

In a contemporary festa Jesus, Mary and the saints are represented not only in painting, but also in sculpture⁹. In the Catholic faith, particularly since the Baroque period¹⁰, the saints' physical and three-dimensional presence is essential in undertaking the festa. The faithful address and interact with the statue as though it were a medium through which to communicate with the Divine. Since the 1500s, holy effigies have been carried in procession through the streets by the devout on the day consecrated to their cult. The interaction with the divinity is physical and often painful, both morally and physically. The wooden statues¹¹ are traditionally carried on the shoulders on wooden beams by the faithful and the day of the festa is preceded by a period of repentance and expiation of one's sins through prayer and fasting.

The ritual core of the festa is the mass, during which a special sermon honouring and addressing the protector saint of the community is delivered. The community gathers in the church, seeking guidance, protection, favours and forgiveness from the holy figure that is celebrated on the special day. Vows are often made from year to year to the divine being (Saint, Madonna or Christ), as believers promise to lead a more Christian life in exchange for deliverance from suffering and adversity. Because of this personal connection with the divine, days of festivity within the Roman Catholic faith are particularly dramatic, in the literal sense of the word. Vows are rarely taken during major festivities such as Christmas or Easter. Minor festivities, connected to Saints or Mary, are preferred for such practices. Saints, and particular effigies of the Madonna, are thought to possess protective power over the members of a limited community. For example, the Madonna della Milicia is a particular effigy of Mary venerated in Sicily in a sanctuary in the province of Palermo. To seek her favour and protection one must physically go in pilgrimage to the sanctuary and ask the Madonna herself, represented by the figure of the statue. Holy images of the Madonna are also printed (with church permission) on small leaflets and then blessed by a priest, or other ordained members of the church; these images can also become vehicles for intercession as they acquire metaphysical power from the priest's blessing.

⁹ Protestantism, like many other Christian denominations, banishes figurative representations of God, Christ, holy men and women, Saints to various degrees.

¹⁰ Which coincides with the Counter-reformation.

¹¹ *Vare* in Sicilian or *simulacri* in Italian.

Many towns in Italy have a spiritual protector who is invoked for protection and healing. Even at a distance of thousands of kilometres from their physical place of residency as in the case of Australia, the protector's might is still believed to be effective because it is maintained that the particular deity never forgets his faithful 'children', no matter where they are in the world. This bond with the Protector Saint creates a sort of a family, which has its 'board of directors' in the Confraternita (Confraternity) or Comitato (Committee) which organizes the festa.



4.1. The presidents of the Sicilian associations in Sydney, who saluted me in 2006, upon my arrival in Sydney to do my research. Left to right: standing – Sam Strano, President of the Association Palazzolo Acreide, Dominic Arrivolo, President of the Family History Group at Co.As.It. , Cristoforo Garigliano, Joe Politi, President of the Associaion Tre Santi of Silkwood, Felice Merlino, President of the Associazione Isole Eolie, - sitting – Eugenio Casamassima, President of the Associazione Palermitani, Nicholas Len Destro, President of the Associazione Brontesi and President of the Comitato Associazioni Siciliane (Committee of Sicilian Associations), Salvatore 'Sam' Mugavero, President of the Agira Association and editor of *Il Ficodindia*.

4.4.2. The Feste in Sydney:

The Italian cultural identity overall, in Australia, has had its stronghold in the various Committees (Comitati) which organize the feste of their Patron Saints. During the feste of Patron Saints all cultural practices (food, language, music, faith, family and

social order and conventions) are re-enacted and kept alive in Australia on that particular occasion.

Unlike in Italy, within the Australia context, Sicilian, and, in general, Italian musical culture and dance is kept alive mainly through the association of entertainment with feste of Protector Saints. Italian migration to Australia was often supervised and patronized by the Italian Catholic Church, which still today holds a position of power within the Italian migrant community¹². If it were not for the comitati and confraternite dedicated to the organization and realization of feste dedicated to their Protector Saints, much of the Italian language, culture and music would have disappeared within the first years of migration to Australia. Religion, profoundly engrained in the lifestyle and belief system of most communities from where the migrants originated, was to be a vehicle for the culture, as a whole, to survive. The strong framework of Catholic faith/traditionalism/conservativism in which music is kept in Australia is absent in Italy, where music traditions are more 'permeable' to external influences: politics, media, fashion and cultural revivals. This is a significant difference, considering the conditions in which musical traditions are preserved in Italy, sometimes linked to the cult of Saints, but mostly not.

¹² It is a significant fact that still today the only bilingual (Italian–English) newspaper available in Sydney, *La Fiamma*, was founded in 1946 by Father Giuseppe La Rosa, appointed chaplain of the Italian-born community, and was directed by Capuchin Friars until 1971. Also, as mentioned, the main organization and community of assistance for the Italian-speaking elderly is provided until to this day by the Scalabrinian Fathers.



4.2. Our Lady Queen of Peace, in Gladesville. A major centre of worship and social life for the Aeolian immigrant community in Sydney and premises of the Confraternita della Madonna del Terzito, from Salina (Aeolian Islands). This church hosts the much venerated statue of the Madonna del Terzito, brought from Sicily.

The cult of Saints is certainly an important and long-standing tradition in Italy; in Australia, it has become the main bonding event for most of the Italian immigrant communities, upon the preservation of which depend all other traditions. The feste, besides being responsible for the preservation of ritual and functional musical practices (as illustrated above), are also catalysts for performers and songwriters during the entertainment part of the feste. Examples of this can be found at the Festa della Madonna dei Poveri di Seminara (where I witnessed the presentation of a CD dedicated to the Madonna by Andy Ciccone and I Giovanotti and the performance of the song ‘Madonna mia Immacolata’, by Kathy Commisso). As said, the Calabrian and Sicilian feste are almost interchangeable as far as artists’ performances are concerned. Folk songwriter and composer Carmine Savino¹³ is another example of pan-southern folk music which fits into Calabrian and Sicilian festivals alike.

¹³ Who is originally from the town of Faeto, in the province of Foggia, in the Apulia region, in southern Italy.

It is important here to stress that this function of rejuvenation and confirmation of the values and practises of the community through the festa, is maintained throughout the process of transplantation to Australia. The festa seems to be an inveterate social tool for the conservation of a healthy, flourishing and well-ordered community. It was a milestone and a catalyst for social order and cultural preservation in rural Italy, in the localities where the migrants came from; it remains so in Australia. We can hence conclude, in this regard, that the Sicilian and, in general, Italian migrant identity in Australia is characterized by its direct descent from social practices which were in use in rural Italy. The central role of the festa in social organization each year is a social mechanism and order that descends directly from rural communities, where the Church still holds a central role in people's lives and regulates society.

The saints' festivals are the context and the vehicle for the majority of traditional Sicilian customs in current use, not only in a musical sense, but also in a broader way. Drawing on the four feste I have observed both in Italy and Australia, I shall examine the genres of music performed in them, give some background information and discuss the differences between Australian versions and the musical traditions performed in Italy. The musical practices I have examined here are prayers and rosaries, Choir music, Banda music, singers and orchestras.

The Sicilian communities that settled in Australia and specifically in Sydney were mostly from small villages, whose inhabitants were devoted to the cult of a particular saint or protective entity (such as the various forms of the Madonna). The devotion to their protector is often practised with particular intensity by these immigrants because of the difficulties they underwent. The demand for help, protection and strength is everlasting, and economic success, happiness and health are often perceived as blessings (*grazie*) from the Protector, rather than being solely due to personal effort. Consequently, the practice of a more or less intense devotion to the protector will influence the level of success in the individual life of each devout.

It is difficult to speak of feste in general, without referring to a special case, because each festa has its own peculiarities. A major distinction should be made, for example, between the days that honour typically Roman Catholic Saints or the Madonna, and the generally Christian festivities of Christmas and Easter. For the purpose of this

thesis I will consider the feste dedicated to Patron (or Protector) Saints. As all feste, they have a fixed general structure. The Mass opens the celebration day, with a special sermon dedicated to the Saint, the procession with the blessed statue of the Saint (originally brought over from Italy) follows, accompanied by the Banda. During the procession the rosary is recited. The procession ends with the blessing of the priest and salutation by the authorities present, after which the entertainment component begins.

Sicilians celebrate many feste throughout the year in their homeland. In Sydney the number is, not unexpectedly, reduced. There are two major feste of the Sicilian community in Sydney: San Bartolomeo, Protettore delle Isole Eolie (The Festival of Saint Bartholomew, Protector of the Aeolian Islands) and Sant'Antonio da Padova, Protettore di Poggioreale (Saint Anthony from Padua, Protector of Poggioreale). These two feste are the most important because of the number of people originating from the Aeolian Islands and Poggioreale. Other smaller Sicilian communities also celebrate their festa, such as San Filippo, from Agira, and San Sabastiano, from Cerami, two agricultural towns in the centre of Sicily.

This thesis examines the 2006 and 2007 Sydney Festa di San Bartolomeo Protettore delle Isole Eolie, together with a comparative study of the 2007 Festa di Sant'Antonio Protettore di Poggioreale, which I attended both in Sydney (28 January) and in Poggioreale (13 June), in Sicily. Even though not strictly Sicilian, in the music examination section of this chapter, I also analyse the Festa della Madonna dei Poveri di Seminara (the Feast of Our Lady of the Poor of Seminara), a Calabrian Patron Saint festa that featured performances by Sicilian folk musicians.

4.4.3. San Bartolomeo, Protettore delle Isole Eolie:

The Festa di San Bartolomeo is celebrated in Sydney on the second Sunday of February, which fell on 12 February in 2006 and on 11 February in 2007. Interviews with Lipari musicians Bartoluzzo Ruggiero and Antonino Sciacchitano (see Chapter 1) established that San Bartolomeo is traditionally celebrated four times during the year. The principal festivity for the Saint in Lipari is on the 24 August, when he is celebrated by all, while on the other occasions he is celebrated by the peasants (5th March), by the fishermen (13 February) and by people affected by earthquakes (16

November). The Australian celebration, therefore, corresponds to the Festa di San Bartolomeo of the fishermen. This change of date for the principal celebration in Australia occurred for two reasons: firstly, the majority of the Aeolians who emigrated to Australia were originally fishermen; secondly, the main festivity of San Bartolomeo in Lipari is celebrated at the end of August, full summer in the northern hemisphere. To maintain the tradition of celebrating the main festivity of the Saint in full summer, the date has been shifted.

The festa is organized by the committee of the Confraternita di San Bartolomeo and a number of Italian-Australian businesses sponsored the event, the program of which is published in *La Fiamma*, the Sydney-based Italian-Australian newspaper. The choice of the location to celebrate the festa, Five Dock Park (the traditional location where this Festa takes place), is significant. Five Dock, once a fishing area, is now mainly a residential suburb at the centre of the inner western suburbs, which are densely inhabited by Italian immigrants. Considering its proximity to the Catholic parish of All Hallows, Five Dock Park has been chosen as the 'heart' of Italian Sydney. Socially, the Festa di San Bartolomeo is significant as it not only brings together the Aeolians of Sydney (led by the Confraternita di San Bartolomeo and by the Confraternita della Madonna del Terzito¹⁴), but also many Southern Italians who are members of, or are associated with, religious confraternities.

¹⁴ Another confraternity 'exported' from the Aeolian Islands which is devoted to the cult of a particular Madonna, originally from the island of Salina. This confraternity has its headquarters in the Catholic parish of Our Lady Queen of Peace (which corresponds to the Madonna del Terzito), of Gladesville. The members of this confraternity were present at the Festa di San Bartolomeo and were allowed to wear their drapes, differently from other confraternities present, as a privilege from being fellow Aeolians. The organizing body of the Festa, though, remains strictly the Confraternita di San Bartolomeo Martire (Confraternity of Saint Bartholomew the Martyr). The Confraternita della Madonna del Terzito organizes and directs its own Festa in which the Aeolians participate. San Bartolomeo, though, enjoys a higher status among Aeolians as Patron Saint of all the Aeolian Islands, while the Madonna del Terzito is venerated principally by islanders from Salina, where she originates from.



4.3. The statue of San Bartolomeo at the 2006 Festa in Five Dock Park under the stage, with a number of personalities. Left to right: members of the Banda Giuseppe Verdi (seated), MP Angela D'Amore (with red hair and white jacket, standing), the Mayor of Lipari, Mariano Bruno, centre of photo, wearing the Italian flag, Felice Merlino (right and behind him, with red ribbon), journalist Antonio Brundu, standing, last on right (photo Garigliano, 2006).



4.4. Festa di San Bartolomeo 2006, in Five dock Park. Members of both the Confraternities of San Bartolomeo (wearing red ribbons) and of la Madonna del Terzito (wearing blue ribbons) with the banner of the Confraternita della Madonna del Terzito. The stage on which the bands and singers will perform and where the mass will be celebrated, in the open air, in the background (photo Garigliano, 2006).

a. The 2006 Sydney celebration:

Examining the program of the 2006 Festival Eoliano, which was held on 12 February, we can observe its division into two sections: *programma religioso* (the religious program) and *programma di intrattenimento* (the entertainment program).

The *programma religioso* started at 2:30 pm with the procession of the statue of San Bartolomeo around Five Dock Park accompanied by the Banda Giuseppe Verdi. This was followed by the Mass celebrated by Bishop Anthony Fisher and by the Five Dock parish priest, Father Atanasio Gonelli. The Mass was a sung version, with the participation of the Coro Eoliano di Sydney (Sydney Aeolian Choir), directed by Pia Maiorana, singing in Italian. At the procession, the Brothers of the Aeolian confraternities wore their coloured and embroidered robes and carried their banners on long flagpoles. Members of other Sicilian and Calabrian confraternities, dressed in normal clothing, also carried their banners. The procession in itself is a display of the social order which is established and renewed every year. The proximity to the statue

of San Bartolomeo during the procession, which is richly adorned with lilies and other flowers for the occasion¹⁵, is considered a privilege and is indicative of the status of the individuals within the community. A visual hierarchy with its apex in the closeness to the statue reflects the social hierarchy within the community.



4.5. The statue of San Bartolomeo in procession, escorted by Italian Carabinieri, through the streets of Five Dock. In the centre, between the two front carriers of the statue, with black sun glasses, is Tony Maniaci, President of the Confraternita di San Bartolomeo (photo Garigliano, 2006).

The Mayor of Lipari was also present especially to attend the festa, and was positioned right at the front of the Saint during the procession. The Brothers of the San Bartolomeo Confraternity led the procession; after the statue came the Banda Giuseppe Verdi, followed by the members of other confraternities with their banners, followed by all other members of the community. Most persons in the procession recited the rosary in Italian in antiphony. Father Atanasio Gonelli, walking outside the line, recited the call with the aid of a megaphone.

During the procession, Father Atanasio Gonelli called the rosary. The rosary was recited in Italian and the voices of women were the most prominent in the responsive recitation of the faithful. The prayers recited were those of Ave Maria (Hail Mary)

¹⁵ The lily is believed to be the flower symbolizing martyrdom (S. Bartholomew was an early Christian martyr who was skinned alive).

and Padre Nostro (Our Father), initially intoned by Padre Atanasio, then by the faithful.

It is important to understand the significance of this procession, which is a bonding ritual for the people who take part. The performance of the procession is a ritual of rejuvenation and maintenance of the 'body' of the Aeolian and Southern Italian community. It is an affirmation of the existence and wellbeing of the community through precise ritual sounds, movements, colours and geographical disposition in space.



4.6. Festa di San Bartolomeo 2006, the Mayor of Lipari, Mariano Bruno, marches close to the statue, through the streets of Five Dock (photo Garigliano, 2006).

The *programma di intrattenimento* started at 5 pm with a concert by the Banda Musicale Giuseppe Verdi, followed by a performance of the Domremy College Brass Band and by the Italian-Australian singers, all of whom were accompanied by the Nick Bavarelli orchestra. These singers were aged between 16 and their early 40s and comprised: Davide Iacono, Ashlei Lai, Gaetano Bonfante, Enzo Piazza (a Calabrian-Australian comedian), Antonella (she has no Surname in her stage name), Michael Vaiasinni (who is 16 years old, the young mascot of the festival) and an Elvis Presley

impersonator (who performed a show called *Elvis Leaves his Mark*). As twilight fell, a stage equipped with the latest technological devices and effects contrasted with the rather traditional unfolding of the festa in the preceding hours, as the MC Tony Maniaci, Head of the Confraternity of San Bartolomeo, started to present the entertainment part of the evening, which opened with the performance of the Coro Eoliano, directed by Pia Maiorana, followed by the Domremy College Band.



4.7. Festa di San Bartolomeo 2006. The Banda Giuseppe Verdi opens the celebrations with a seated performance in Five Dock Park (photo Garigliano, 2006).

The Domremy College Band, a modern brass band from a local Five Dock Catholic College, presented a repertoire of modern pieces, which had little to do with Italy (or tradition). Its presence was justified mostly by the fact that most children of Aeolian descent attend Domremy College and their inclusion represents an attempt to include younger generations in the festa. They played in school uniform and were presented by the college Principal, Vicky Lavorato, herself of Italian (specifically, Calabrian) background.

Domremy College Band's performance was followed by those of a lineup of Italian-Australian singers, accompanied by Nick Bavarelli e il suo complesso (Nick Bavarelli's ensemble). Bavarelli is of Calabrian background and his ensemble comprised modern, electric instruments (played by five members, all dressed in

black): guitar, lead guitar, bass, drum kit, and keyboard (played by Bavarelli). The first singer was Davide Iacono, followed by Ashlei Lai, Gaetano Bonfante, Enzo Piazza, Antonella, Michael Vaiasinni and the Elvis impersonator. The age of the performers ranged between 16 years old Michael Vaiasinni to 'Elvis', presumably in his 30s. The genres of songs played by this line-up of singers varied greatly: there were international pop-rock hits such as Tina Turner's 'Simply the best'¹⁶, the only non-Italian song performed in the Festival Eoliano, and Opera arias such as 'Con te partiro' ' (popularised by Andrea Bocelli), sung by Michael Vaiasinni. The repertoire also included folk songs such as 'Calabrisella' sung by Bonfante and 'Calabria Mia' sung by Antonella and also included the latest Italian pop-rock songs by Adriano Celentano sung by Davide Iacono. There were hits from the 1950s and 1960s hits such as 'Marina' and 'Tintarella di luna', sung by Antonella, and Calabrian cabaret in a hybrid Calabrese dialect-Italian-English fusion language by Enzo Piazza.

b. The 2007 Sydney celebration:



4.8. Festa di San Bartolomeo 2007, entertainment. MC Tony Maniaci (shoulder view) thanks singer George Vumbaca at the end of his performance. With them on stage are (left to right) Gino Pengue (on guitar), Nick Bavarelli (seated on drum kit) and another unidentified bass player (photo Garigliano, 2007).

¹⁶ There is an 'australian connection' of Tina Turner, as her songs were the sound track to the Australian film *Mad Max beyond thunderdome*.

The Festa di San Bartolomeo 2007 was celebrated on Sunday 11 February, as usual in Five Dock Park. As for the preceding Festa, the MC was Cavaliere (Knight of Italian Republic, an honorary title) and Australian Order of Merit holder Tony (Antonio) Maniaci, President of the Confraternita di San Bartolomeo. As in 2006, the Mass was celebrated by Bishop Anthony Fisher, Father Atanasio Gonelli (who recited the rosary in the procession), Father Bob Hayes (Parish Priest of Five Dock) and Father Maurizio Pettenà, another Italian-Australian priest. As for the preceding occasion, a long list of sponsors supported the festa and the names of the proprietors of the businesses ranged from Perna and Mezzapica (Italian) to O'Hare, Gallagher and Murphy (unmistakably Irish). The entertainment was provided by five singers, George Vumbaca, Deanna Vitagliani, Patricio Rodriguez (a Mexican), Antonella and Michael Vaiasinni, all of whom were accompanied by the Nick Bavarelli Orchestra. The Banda Giuseppe Verdi, as well as accompanying the procession, also delivered a seated performance.



4.9. Festa di San Bartolomeo 2007, a devotee and brother of the Confraternita guarding the statue of the Saint, on which a scarf pinned with money offerings displays the devotion of the faithful. The banner of the Confraternita di San Bartolomeo (red) is positioned next to the statue. (photo Garigliano, 2007).



4.10. Festa di San Bartolomeo 2005, Michael Vaiasinni, the youngest of the singers on stage, at the end of his performance of 'Con te partirò' of Andrea Bocelli (photo Garigliano, 2006).

4.4.4. Sant'Antonio da Padova, Protettore di Poggioreale:

As Chapter 3 provided information on the cultural background of the Aeolian Islands, I will now provide the necessary information on the culture of the Poggioreale emigrants to Australia. My sources of information on the Poggiorealese community were both publications¹⁷ and interviews with Peter and Giovanni Maniscalco. Peter Maniscalco is the current President of the Associazione Sant'Antonio da Padova, lives in Sydney and is Giovanni's nephew. Giovanni lives in Poggioreale, Sicily, the town of which he was Mayor during the devastating 1968 earthquake. His first term of office was from 1964 to 1968 and he was subsequently re-elected for another three terms of office. Poggioreale is located in inland western Sicily, approximately half of way between the north and the south coast, within the Province of Palermo. Founded in 1642, when Sicily was part of the Spanish Kingdom of Philip the Fourth, the town developed as an agricultural settlement, a function which it maintained until 1968, the year in which the inner-west region of Sicily was hit by an earthquake. As I mentioned in the first Chapter, the 1968 earthquake led many people to emigrate from

¹⁷ Mainly: Maniscalco, G (2004) *Le due Poggioreale*, Palermo, Ila Palma. I interviewed Giovanni Maniscalco in Poggioreale on 13/06/07 and Peter Maniscalco, Giovanni's nephew, in Silverwater (Sydney) on 16/04/07.

Italy, especially to Australia and Giovanni Maniscalco informed me that from the Second World War to 1970, about 200 families left the town.



4.11. View of Old Poggioreale as it appears today, in ruin (photo Garigliano, 2007).

The relative isolation of Poggioreale in inland Sicily, and its 300 year old history as an agricultural town, have led the Poggiorealesi (the inhabitants, or former inhabitants) to become deeply attached to the land, to their traditions and to the peasant life. After 1968, two decades of displacement and disorientation followed, when people had the choice between living in military tent camps (which were soon replaced by containers and self-built shacks) or emigrating. By the mid-eighties a new town was built and available, just a few kilometers from the old town. Government-appointed civil engineers deliberated that it was not safe to rebuild on the quake-hit area, nor economically viable. The new town developed at a time when population was on the rise, due to the business of its own reconstruction. After the reconstruction finished in the early 1990s, the unemployment common to most of Sicily was the new reason for exodus. It left the new Poggioreale as a modern, but sadly deserted, place. The current population is 1700 inhabitants, while the new town was constructed to hold up to 5000 people.



4.12. Sant'Antonio's Chapel, in the centre of New Poggioreale, where the statue of the saint will be lodged and prayed to, at the end of the festa (photo Garigliano, 2007).

Emigration to Australia rose after the 1968 earthquake, but was not a new practice for the Poggiorealesi. This is confirmed by the fact that Poggiorealesi constitute the third largest Regional group within the Italian migrant population, preceded only by the Calabrians and the Aeolians. They started to emigrate to Australia in the late 1800s, following the example of Giorgio Catalano (nicknamed 'pistuneddu' – 'little piston', in Sicilian dialect – for his determination), who arrived in Sydney in 1880. Since the turn of the 20th C, emigration has increased constantly (as seen in Chapter 1), following the trend common to most depressed Sicilian and Italian locations.

The peculiarity in Poggioreale has been that emigration has been directed predominantly towards Australia since its early stages and that, by 1968, Poggiorealesi could rely on a solid 'colony' in Australia for help, refuge and support. The Poggiorealesi in Sydney formed their first organized and legalized association in 1969, in the name of Sant'Antonio da Padova, Protettore di Poggioreale (Saint Anthony from Padua, Protector of Poggioreale). A Confraternity of S. Antonio existed in Poggioreale until 1960, after which it was transformed into a Comitato

(committee). The association's main purpose was to disseminate spiritual and material assistance among the *paesani* (people from the same *paese* – town), particularly if aged. One of the first concerns of the Associazione was the creation of a nursing home to take care of the elderly of the community. Starting in 1978, and after several changes of premises, a nursing home dedicated to Sant'Antonio was built in Ryde, in Sydney's inner-western suburbs, and opened in 2005. Unified by this association and purpose, the Poggiorealesi in Australia were still wanting to celebrate their Protector, so the festa was instituted on 28 January. This date is not the traditional one in which the festa is celebrated, which is 13 June, but rather renders homage to the day the statue of Sant'Antonio landed on Australian soil. The statue arrived on 14 January 1972, so the festa is celebrated on the second Sunday of January.

a. The 2007 Sydney celebration:

I attended the Festa di Sant'Antonio on 28 January 2007 in the Holy Cross College Church, grounds and Auditorium in Ryde. The festa featured Paolo Rajo as MC, considered one of the key 'voices' of Italian Australia as he is one of the main announcers of Rete Italia, the only all-Italian radio station in Australia. The structure of the Festa di Sant'Antonio is similar to that of the Festa di San Bartolomeo. The Mass and procession were celebrated by Bishop Anthony Fisher; the Mass was sung and accompanied by the Choir of the Marconi Club (Sydney's largest Italian club). The entertainment program of the evening included the singers Adam Scicluna (who is Maltese), Antonella, John St Peeters¹⁸, a trio of one male and two female singers named Generation X and a comic male duo named The Alisons. All were accompanied by the Nick Bavarelli Orchestra and the Banda Giuseppe Verdi accompanied the procession as well as delivering a seated concert. The rosaries, recited in Sicilian Poggiorealese dialect during the procession, were a notable feature. Two types of prayers were recited, a *Rosario di Sant'Antonio* (Saint Anthony Rosary) and the *preghiera* (prayer). Both of these were recited by a group of women following the Saint while holding rosary beads in their hands. The rosary was sung in procession, while the prayer was chanted at the end of the procession, in front of the statue. The full text of the chants is included in Appendix (e), while for an analysis of

¹⁸ St Peeters – with two 'ee's – is not a misspelling, but the result of the dubious, and maybe even self-ironic, translation of the Italian Surname Sanpietro.

folk prayers, please refer to the Music of the Feste paragraph (prayers and rosaries section).



4.13. Festa di Sant'Antonio 2007, in Sydney. Devotees gather around the statue and brothers sell images of the saint, which have been blessed by the Church (photo Garigliano, 2007).

I found the performance of John St Peeters of particular interest and emblematic of the way Sicilian and Calabrian-Australians perceive their identity. St Peeters' performance was dense of references to his father, who migrated to Australia, making evident the ways in which musical traditions are transmitted. Conscious of the clichés that have come into existence about Sicilian/Calabrian music, St Peeters delivered many tunes with irony and also tried to slip a few 'new' tunes in. His repertoire opened with a medley of 'Funiculì Funiculà', 'C' é la luna nmezzu mari', followed by 'Livin' la vida loca' by Ricky Martin¹⁹ and 'Rosa bianca' by Sergio Endrigo. Then he moves onto a traditional Calabrian tarantella and the impersonation of his father requesting it to him; he also performs the 'standard' 'Calabrisella', with great self-irony, inviting all the public to join in the chorus. As homage to the Sicilian

¹⁹ As mentioned, Latin-American music is acceptable in an Italian music performance, as the two cultures are perceived complementarily.

community he performs solo The Godfather theme, by Nino Rota (adopted as a sort of an ‘anthem’ by the Sicilian community).

b. The 2007 Sicilian celebration:



4.14. Former Mayor Giovanni Maniscalco and I in his house in New Poggioreale. In the background, a front page of the Giornale di Sicilia which recites *Sono con voi*, I am with you, the message of solidarity of Pope John Paul II gave to the Poggiorealesi at the moment the earthquake struck, in 1968 (photo Garigliano, 2007).

On 13 June 2007 I had the opportunity of meeting Mr Giovanni Maniscalco, the former Mayor of Poggioreale, in his hometown, on the day of the Festa di Sant'Antonio (13 June)²⁰. Giovanni was re-elected four times as Mayor of Poggioreale, of which three terms were consecutive (the maximum number of re-elections allowed by Italian law). Giovanni is 72 years old and has been to Australia five times in his life: in 1985, 1990, 1991, 1997 and 2005. His family is related to

²⁰ I was assisted by my mother in this part of my Sicilian research.

Teresa Todaro Restifa, who is a prominent member of the Sant'Antonio da Padova Association in Sydney²¹.



4.15. Festa di Sant'Antonio 2007 in New Poggioreale. The end of the nocturnal procession with the arrival of the Banda di Salemi. The city is lit with coloured light bulb decorations and the devotees are holding candles, representing faith (photo Garigliano, 2007).

The festa I witnessed in Poggioreale was different in many ways from what I witnessed in Ryde. In contrast to the daytime festa di S. Antonio in Sydney, it was a nocturnal festa which ended with fireworks (ignited at midnight). Its duration was of six to seven hours, including the mass. In Sicily, it is one of the many feste celebrated throughout the year, of little importance to people other than the Poggiorealesi themselves (unlike in Sydney, where it represents and unites not only all Sicilians but Calabrians as well). The festa is not publicized in newspapers and is solely a religious festivity. The significance which the two feste have is thereby very different in Italy and in Australia. In Sydney, as we have said, Sant'Antonio is one of the most important feste in the Italian-Australian community. This importance for Italians,

²¹ The meeting with Giovanni took place at the local Pizzeria, after which he accompanied us for part of the procession of the Saint. We met with Giovanni also the day after, when he invited us to his home, in the centre of new Poggioreale, and gave me abundant material and information, after which he took us for a guided visit of the old town, telling us about the bygone life and culture of which he delivered a detailed and vivid account.

however, is barely noticeable in the multicultural metropolis of Sydney, where it is just one of the many multicultural festivals, of little relevance to people who are not first generation Italian rural immigrants. In Italy, Sant'Antonio is the most important bonding experience for the community of Poggioreale: the town stops for the festival once a year. As there is no entertainment program, in comparison to the Sydney festivity, it would appear to be a rather sober event. The whole procession is much longer than the one in Holy Cross College and its route takes it through the main streets of the modern town, embracing all the neighbourhoods. At least 80% of the population of the town takes part in the festa and the procession is accompanied by the Banda from Salemi, a nearby town. Until 1960, Poggioreale had its own Banda. After that year, members were so few that they joined Bandas from nearby towns. One of the most interesting aspects in the festa in Sicily were the chants sung during the procession, some of which I had heard, in shortened version, in Australia. All were in dialect. The origin of these chants can be retraced to the 19th C, the years during which the first Sicilian folklorists transcribed chants and rosaries in Sicilian dialect²². Unlike the festa in Ryde, in Poggioreale most people (and not just a deputised chorus group) recite the chants to the Saint by memory. The Banda's music opens and leads the procession. The music performed by the Banda was as previously described²³. The festa itself started around 5 pm, with the Mass in the Cathedral in the new town, where the statue was contained. The procession started at about 6:30 and finished at 10:30. Afterwards there was a pause and the fireworks were from 11:30 until midnight, fired from the summit of the town.

²² On prayers in Sicilian dialect see Giacobello (2000) and Garofalo (1990), mentioned in 4.5.1.

²³ A notable fact was that G. Maniscalco was the author of one of the marches the Banda performed, called 'Tira dritto' (go straight).



4.16. The statue of Sant'Antonio at the end of the procession, in its Chapel. The faithful, by candle light, are invoking and praising the Saint, while touching its feet and robe (photo Garigliano, 2007).

4.4.5. Madonna dei Poveri di Seminara:

An example of how Sicilian and Calabrian traditions merged in Australia is made evident in the Festa of the Madonna dei Poveri di Seminara (Our Lady of the Poor, Patron Saint of Seminara). I attended this festa on 19 August 2007 at the Marconi Club, in Bossley Park.

Seminara, in Italy, is a town in the heart of the Aspromonte (a mountain range in the southern part of Calabria) whose current population is 3352. Previous ethnomusicological research, conducted by Italian ethnomusicologist Goffredo Plastino in 1993²⁴, established that Seminara, due to its geographical isolation and remoteness from mainstream industrialized Italy, still holds well-preserved musical traditions, in particular in the instance of the Festa della Madonna dei Poveri, for which pilgrims (including many traditional musicians) gather from many of the neighbouring towns and from the southern part of Calabria. Goffredo Plastino recorded procession rhythms by a fanfare percussion group and chants and

²⁴ Plastino, Goffredo (recordings and liner notes by) (1993) *Musiques des fetes en Calabre*, Paris, Auvidis-Inedit.

invocations by two women of the festa which took place on 14 August 1992, so it was pertinent to ascertain if any of these traditions had been exported to Sydney.



4.17. Director of the Sydney-based Gruppo Folkloristico Siciliano, Nadia Finocchiaro, and I in a humorous shot, at the entry of her house, in Haberfield. The costumes, which are made by her, are used in pantomimes which she often interpolates in her musical shows. These costumes are used for a bride and groom (photo Garigliano, 2007).

I was invited to attend the festa by Nadia Finocchiaro, the artistic director of the only Sicilian Folk group currently operating in Sydney. The festa was held in the grounds of the Marconi club, which *La Fiamma* advertised as Marconi Plaza. I attended the mass, which was held under a large blue tent in a sports field, under incessant rain. The statue of the Madonna was also protected by the tent and the mass was accompanied by the women's choir of the Coro Italiano di Our Lady of Mount Carmel from the Suburb of Mount Pritchard. Religious songs were mostly the customary prayers, arranged by Maria Tripodi, the Choir's artistic director. In this regard there was no correspondence with the vocal practice of the home communities, either in style or repertoire. What was unusual was the performance of two songs in Latin at the end of the Mass, arguably connected to the specific cult of the Madonna dei Poveri. The Mass was followed by the refreshments and preparation for the entertainment, all undercover because of the rain. The procession which was

scheduled wasn't undertaken because of the rain. During the refreshments there was an announcement of a CD about the story connected to the Madonna dei Poveri, by a band of a Calabrian-Australian folk singer/songwriter, Andy Ciccone and his group I Giovanotti, from Sydney. The entertainment segment of the evening was presented by Paolo Rajo, radio announcer from Rete Italia. The first performance of the evening was by the Bondi/Waverley Brass Band, who were deputising for the Banda Giuseppe Verdi, which was otherwise engaged. It performed a seated set of tunes on a small stage under the tent, next to the statue of the Madonna. Its repertoire consisted of dance tunes (marches, foxtrots, paso doble and other), Italian Opera arias and terminated with the Italian and Australian national anthems. After the Banda, the Joe Macrì Band came on stage, an electrified band consisting of five members led by Macrì on the keyboards. Joe Macrì's Band accompanied a series of musicians and dancers for the rest of the program. The first artist to enter was an Elvis impersonator, wearing a mask and dressed in the full Elvis costume. Elvis impersonators are a recurrent theme in many Italian-Australian feste. Next came a Calabrian man called Ross Cossoletto, who played and sang together with his son Joe and his nephew Michael, temporarily ousting the Joe Macrì Band. The songs they played were Calabrian/Sicilian folk 'standards': 'Marina', 'Vola Colomba', the English version of 'O Sole Mio' (Italian-American), 'The Godfather' (theme), Stornelli (Calabrian improvised rhymes), 'Ave Maria'. The Cossolettos were followed by a single-man act, the Calabrian singer George Vumbaca, accompanied by the Joe Macrì Band and also performing other Calabrian/Sicilian folk music standards: 'That's Amore' (Dean Martin), 'La luna nmezzu mari' (also with words in English), 'Funiculì funiculà' (in English), 'My way', 'Calabria mia'. The performance of another solo-singer accompanied by the Macrì followed, that of 12 year old Tony Sergi, who sang a song by U2. Finally, the Sicilian Folk Music band of Nadia Finocchiaro came onstage, comprised by Finocchiaro, Albina Fabro, Frank Musumeci and Kathy Commisso.

The repertoire of the folk group was more interesting than the 'standards' sung so far, comprising songs drawn from a folkloristic repertoire from 1960s/1970s LP productions, numbers included 'Ciuri, ciuri', 'Vitti na crozza', 'Calabrisella', 'Stornelli calabresi' (originally written by Otello Profazio), 'O surdato innamorato' (a 'standard' Neapolitan folk song), 'Alla vigna', sung by Nadia Finocchiaro, 'Madonna mia bella Immacolata' (My beautiful Immaculate Madonna – a religious folk song),

and ‘Stornelli calabresi’ (written by Sicilian-Australian Andy Ciccone) sung by Kathy Commisso and ‘Donne Italiane’, an Italian pop song, sung by both Nadia and Kathy. These songs of the Gruppo Folk Siciliano were interpolated with a performance by Dominic Commisso, Kathy’s son, who also performed an Elvis replica act (in costume and performing one of his songs) as well as by a couple of instrumental medleys to which a group of female dancers (about 15 and aged between 15 and 22) in Sicilian costume danced. The Joe Macrì set, with all these performers, was followed by a première performance of two young Calabrian-Australian girls, Brigitte and Rachel, who sang Italian pop songs on playback music. These performances were followed by the final act of Sicilian-Australian solo accordionist extraordinaire Ross Maio. Ross Maio played, among others, the following songs: A fugue by JS Bach, followed by ‘Jesu bleibet meine freude’ (JS Bach), ‘Il Carnevale di Venezia’, ‘La Danza’ (Rossini) and an instrumental from ‘La Vedova Allegra’ (Rossini), ‘La Cumparsita’ (Carlos Gardel), Celebre mazurka variata (Migliavacca), Fantasia di tarantella (Maio), Turiddu’s Birthday Party (Maio), an instrumental from Guglielmo Tell (Rossini).



4.18. Gruppo Folkloristico Siciliano of Nadia Finocchiaro in its current line up. From left to right – Front: Kathy Commisso, Frank Musumeci, Albina Fabro, Nadia Finocchiaro, Pina Musumeci – back – Tony Vadalà and Joe Vadalà (photo Garigliano, 2007).

As we can see, considering the repertoire of the whole festa, there is a high degree of miscegenation of Italian, Calabrian and Sicilian music in the Sicilian and Calabrian feste. Songs from different regional provenance are intermingled in varying proportions, depending on the occasion. Sometimes Calabrian songs are Sicilianized (as Calabria Mia), other times (as in the festa della Madonna dei Poveri), Sicilian songs are adopted and performed in Calabrian contexts. Ross Maio's repertoire is also a good example of how immigrant Italians (and in particular, Sicilians) self-portray their identity, with national, regional and local Italian musical traditions, ranging from Opera, to pop music to folk. In Chapter 5, I will expand on this way of self-representation, the genres involved and the reasons why this mixture of genres has come into being.



4.19. The same group as photo 4.18. The photo was taken backstage at Club Marconi in the occasion of the Sicilia Day (see paragraph 4.9.1.) (photo Garigliano, 2007).

4.5. Music of the feste

On the general importance and role of music in the feste, I have written in the introductory paragraph to the feste, at the beginning of this Chapter. I shall now analyse the different genres which are discernible.

4.5.1. Prayers and rosaries:

On vernacular prayers and rosaries in Sicily I would like to report what Garofalo states, reassuming the fundamentals about these practices, with particular reference to one 19th C vernacular religious narrative called the *Viaggiu Dulurusu* (translating in ‘The Painful Journey’, referring to Mary and Joseph’s journey with baby Jesus, escaping King Herod’s order to kill Jewish males). His comments on this religious narrative are also relevant to folk prayers, in explaining how these originated and were diffused among the population and why:

The composition of the Viaggiu Dulurusu is to be considered in the context of the proliferation of texts in dialect on religious themes which in the 18th century had been encouraged by the Church, both directly and indirectly. The aim of the religious institutions was to strengthen its cultural hegemony among the folk. The production of vernacular literature had the function of enhancing the diffusion of the Church’s message, translating it into a language which was easily intelligible for the lower classes (author’s translation).

An important article (also in Italian) on vernacular prayers and religious texts, fundamental for the understanding of these in Sicily, has been written by Giuseppe Giacobello (Buttitta, Perricone, 2000), *Pregchiere popolari e ricerca etnografica in Sicilia: 1857-1953* (Folk prayers and ethnographic research in Sicily: 1857-1953), where he also includes in this bibliography an overview of all major studies in the field (among the most important historical studies, we find the contributions of Bonomo 1953, Bronzini 1974, Tedeschi 1928, Toschi 1953 and 1943).



4.20. Women praying the rosary and reciting prayers in Italian in Giuseppina Galluzzo's home shrine, in Ryde (photo Garigliano, 2007).

In the feste of San Bartolomeo and Sant'Antonio, described above, we can see that rosaries are an important part of the musical tradition. 'Padre Nostro' and 'Ave Maria' (which form the Italian Rosary) were recited at the Festa di San Bartolomeo procession, while at the festa di Sant'Antonio, rosaries in Sicilian, dedicated to Sant'Antonio were recited. If we were to carry out an ethnomusicology study on Italian subregional cultures in Italy, we would consider as a matter of interest the Sicilian rosaries solely. Since our study, instead, aims at analysing this regional Italian subculture, which itself subsists inside another subculture (the Italian-Australian community), an anthropological analysis of the Italian rosary, made up of Ave Maria and Padre Nostro (Hail Mary and Our Father) is also appropriate. The most significant aspect of the rosaries, was that the groups of women who prayed (both in dialect and Italian in the two feste), were part of a larger group who, outside the festa, met to pray regularly. On 6 February 2007 I had the opportunity to witness a private rosary prayer session in the home of Mrs Giuseppina Galluzzo, in Ryde. The group was mostly made up of women of Sicilian and Calabrian background. This is an interesting fact in itself, as women-only prayer meetings is a practice maintained in Italy only in the smallest, rural communities. The fact that these meetings are held in Sydney is quite

remarkable, as once more it confirms the dictum of the periphery, by which traditions are better maintained far from the centre where they originated.



4.21. Giuseppina Galluzzo, standing, holding a bag for offering (photo Garigliano, 2007).



4.22. Women holding count of prayers with rosary beads, deep in a trance which lasted five hours (photo Garigliano, 2007).

4.5.2. Choir music:

In the span of time I conducted my research I recorded and documented the activity of seven choirs singing in Italian in Sydney:

- Italian choir of the Marconi Club, in Bossley Park, both male and female
- Coro Eoliano (Aeolian Choir) (directed by Pia Maiorana), in the Five Dock and City of Canada Bay area, both male and female
- Italian Choir of St Brigid's, of Marrickville
- Italian Choir of St Fiacre, Leichhardt
- Italian Choir of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, from Mount Pritchard/Bonnyrigg
- Choir of the Abruzzesi – migrants from the Abruzzo Region – Association of NSW



4.23. Festa di San Bartolomeo 2007, Five Dock Park: The Coro di Pia Maiorana on stage, upon which banners of the Confraternities have been leaned, accompany the Mass in Italian (photo Garigliano, 2007).

All the above-mentioned choirs have in common the fact that they are composed by amateur Italian immigrants who came to Sydney between the 1950s and the first years of the 1970s. Each of the choirs has a different composition in terms of regional background. Pia Maiorana's Choir is made up mostly of Aeolian and Sicilian immigrants. The Marconi choir has a mixed composition of migrants both from north, south and central Italy, as does the choir of St Fiacre, while Mount Carmel Choir is mostly composed of Calabrian immigrants. The Abruzzesi Choir has a mixed composition of people from Abruzzo and Alpine Italy.

I consider the presence of choir music within religious celebrations of the Italian-Australian community in Sydney significant as it plays an important role in bringing migrants together, maintaining a general level of awareness of the group's cultural background through music. Although generally not vernacular, the Italian religious chants sung by the choirs differ from what in Italy would be considered common (standard modern Italian Catholic church chants), becoming a transplanted musical tradition, in the Australian context. Out of the seven choirs I have mentioned, I have

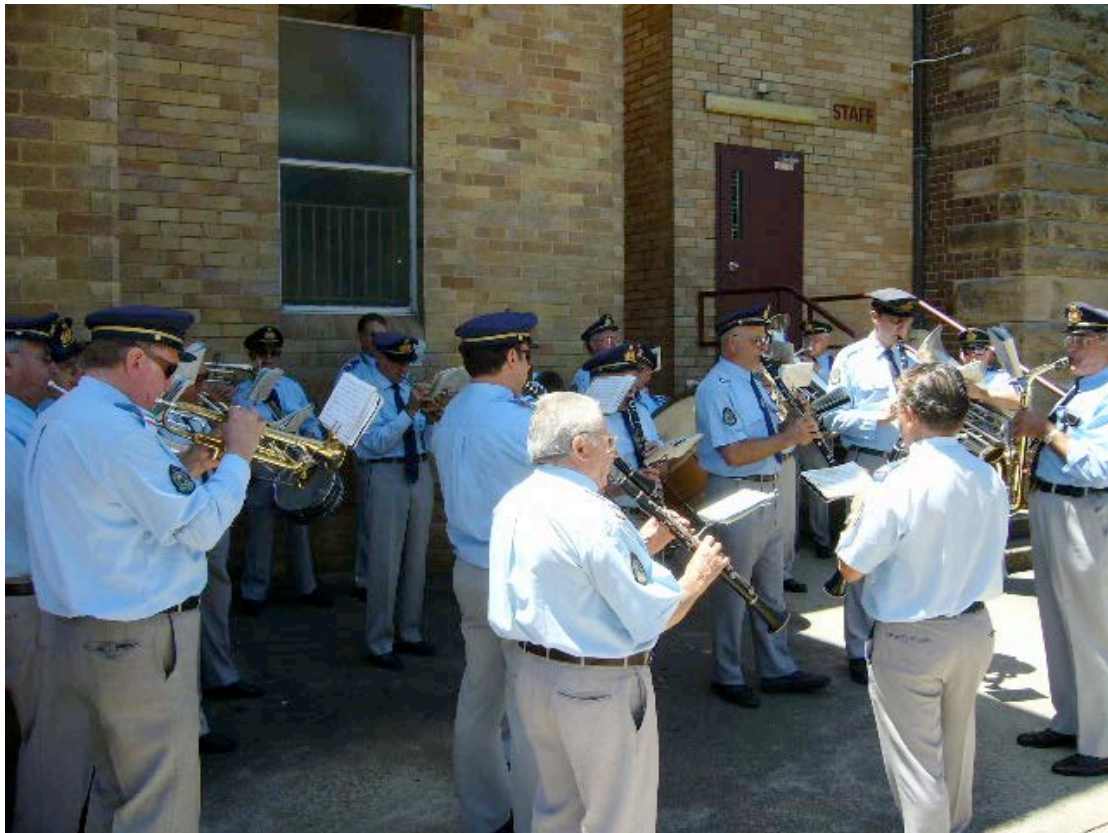
witnessed the performance of the Italian Choir of the Marconi Club, the Aeolian Choir (twice), Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the remainder either I have heard on CD (Coro Dell'Associazione Abruzzesi del NSW), have heard they are operating from interviewees (notably, Sylvia Granturco) or have read about them in *La Fiamma*. Differently from the repertoire of the other choirs, that of the Coro dell' Associazione Abruzzesi del NSW is all material of ethnomusicological interest as it is made up of folk songs. The choir, in fact, performs only at social gatherings and within the entertainment part of the feste. The repertoire of the choir is also of the folkloristic kind, i.e. rearranged folk tunes. Songs are in dialect and orchestrated by the choir's director and arranger, Giuseppe Falconio, who received formal musical training in Abruzzo, Italy. The Choir counts 26 people when complete and is comprised mainly of migrants from Abruzzo, with a few exceptions. The Coro also includes an accordion player, Sandro Martino, of Sicilian background. The two religious hymns in Latin to the Madonna dei Poveri di Seminara, which I mentioned earlier in this Chapter, would constitute an interesting item of study and are a stimulus to engage in the examination of the repertoire of the other choirs which I had not had the chance yet to interview or listen to.

As my study has had a wide scope, further investigations would be necessary to record in a precise and complete way the repertoire of the choirs I have observed: Pia Maiorana's Coro Eoliano, the Choir of the Marconi Club and that of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. As far as observed and on the basis of the information I have gathered in the interviews, their repertoire is mainly aimed at accompanying the mass and thus consists of the Italian standard mass chants, 'Padre Nostro', 'Santo Santo Santo', 'Alleluia' and others. All three choirs, however, seemed to perform other religious hymns than those strictly necessary to accompany the canonical Mass. The identification of precise names and origin of these, however, requires further, accurate investigation.

4.5.3. Banda Music:

A Banda is an ensemble of brass, reed and percussion instruments, originating, in its earlier forms, from the age of the Comuni (Comunes) in Italy, in the 14th C. The modern Banda dates from the period of the Italian Union (1860). The original

function of the Banda was military, for the accompaniment of troops (similarly to the Scottish Pipes and Drums Bands in the British Army).



4.24. Festa di Sant'Antonio 2007. The Banda Giuseppe Verdi plays outside of the Church of the Holy Cross, in Ryde (photo Garigliano, 2007).

In Sydney I have witnessed the performances of the Banda Giuseppe Verdi, an ensemble that has been operating since the early 1960s and has been serving the Italian community ever since. I interviewed both the current President of the Banda, Raffaele Scarano, its director, Salvatore di Prima and one of the players, Ferdinando Screnci. The Banda was founded in 1964 by two Calabrians, Mr Fusca and Domenico Macrì and its members have been mainly Calabrian to this day, with some exceptions. The Banda comprised up to 45 players in the years immediately following its formation; it nowadays comprises 25, sometimes more. The composition of the Banda is traditional (as in Italy) and is made up of two first clarinets, two second clarinets, two euphoniums, two bass tubas, one tenor flugelhorn, one contralto flugelhorn, four trumpets (two first, two second trumpets), one tenor sax, three contralto sax and the bass drum, clash cymbals and snare drum. More than half of the members of the Banda are the original members, who have been playing for the last 40 years. There

have been very few additions to the original formation in the years, which is a matter of concern for Scarano and Di Prima and the members. Over the years, some members of the Banda have died of old age and there are feeble hopes that the new generations would take up playing in the Banda.



4.25. The Banda playing in the same place. In the background, the confraternities, with their banners, enter the church (photo Garigliano, 2007).

Overall, the Banda has had an incredibly busy life within the Italian community in Sydney, being the only Italian marching band present. Many of the members of the Banda played in Italy in their home town before coming to Australia. Scarano informed me on the history of the Banda: after Fusca and Macrì, who lasted only a few years after the formation of the Banda, Vignozzi's direction followed, for just a few years, in the 60s. From mid-sixties to all the seventies, Farabetta followed. In the eighties and nineties a Maltese bandmaster followed, Charles Baldacchino. He was followed by an Australian bandmaster, Greg McKay, who directed until 2004. From 2005 to date Salvatore Di Prima, a Sicilian, has been the bandmaster.

The existence of the Banda throughout many years has been made possible because of the very significant presence of the Calabrian community, the largest subregional group within the Italian migrant population in Australia. Calabrians, like Sicilians, have formed associations in Sydney, based on their town of origin, in which the cult of the Patron Saint has been central. Through the interviews with Scarano and Di Prima I realized that the Banda works nearly every week, all year round. The average is two or three feste per month. In some months the Banda has less work, such as May, and there are instances in which the Banda is engaged for two events on the same day. Scarano and Di Prima could name at least 30 Calabrian feste in which the Banda has been performing consistently since its formation.

The repertoire of the Banda is mainly made up of marches, some religious hymns (some of which are orchestrations of Catholic chants), patriotic songs (national anthems and songs such as 'Il Piave', an Italian First World War song), the bulk of which were written by Italian composers between the mid-19th C and the first half of the 20th C. Salvatore Di Prima added a certain number of new pieces, mainly tunes that he orchestrated, with the purpose of adding to the repertoire tunes towards which the public would be more responsive. This new 'libretto' added by Di Prima contains 28 orchestrations of songs popular in Italy from the 1930s to 1950s, Neapolitan songs from the Festival di Piedigrotta era, instrumentals from well-known Italian operas and military tunes. Dr Aline Scott-Maxwell from Monash University has conducted studies and published on what appears to be the only other currently active Banda in Australia, the 'Vincenzo Bellini' of Melbourne²⁵.

4.5.4. Singers and orchestras:

In my experience, in the long term, since the establishment of the community, the performance of singers and orchestras constitutes a central topic in the examination of Sicilian and, in general, Italian emigrant music in Sydney. Indeed it can be considered as a genre in itself. I shall commence by examining the orchestras and then proceed to examine the singers.

²⁵ Scott-Maxwell, A (2007) *Melbourne's Banda Bellini: Localisation of a Transplanted Italian Tradition*, Victorian Historical Journal, v 78 n2, November.



4.26. An old insert of La Fiamma (1985), announcing the Festa di Sant'Antonio, Protettore di Poggioreale, in Sydney. In that occasion, Giovanni Maniscalco honoured the occasion with his presence and John St Peeters (just as in 2007!) was the star entertainer (photo Garigliano, 2007).

The orchestras I had occasion to see perform in Sydney are those of Nick Bavarelli, Tony Vadalà and Joe Macrì. These three orchestras have common characteristics. They are comprised of five elements, including: keyboards, electric bass, rhythm guitar, solo guitar and drum set. A particular case, which could be included in this category, is the duo Tony Di Marti/Tony Gagliano (on which I will expand in 4.6.1.). All of the above ensembles are formed by second generation immigrants in Sydney either from Calabria or Sicily. To be more precise: Calabrians – Nick Bavarelli and Joe Macrì, Sicilians – Tony Vadalà. In the duo, Tony Di Marti is Calabrian and Tony Gagliano is Sicilian.

Excluding the duo Di Marti/Gagliano, the three orchestras essentially have the function of providing the music for a number of acts (songs) which have become like Italian-Australian (and also Calabrian-Australian and Sicilian-Australian) 'standards', sung both at the Patron Saints Festivals and in the clubs and retirement villages (mainly Scalabrini) by single singers, duos or trios.



4.27. Tony Vadalà and his keyboard, with which he accompanies most Sicilian and Calabrian singers in Sydney, dressed in Sicilian costume (photo Garigliano, 2007).

In the description of the feste, I have listed a number of singers who performed with the Nick Bavarelli and Joe Macrì Orchestras. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, their repertoire is much influenced by Italian Bel Canto (as Minstrel Records has sold numerous operatic music records), Italian pop songs and folkloristic songs. The American crooner style has also been much adopted by the male singers, due to the important part that Italians played in the creation of this style, in the USA. Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra, along with Elvis Presley, are very popular icons in Italian music festivals around Sydney. Italian-American tradition, which is largely Sicilian-American, has been inherited by the Italian-Australians, the latter performing the anglicized versions of Neapolitan classics such as ‘Funiculì funiculà’ or ‘O sole mio’. Finally, the folkloristic bands’ sound and repertoire have been influential among Sicilian-Australian musicians, such as John St Peeters. Overall, singers have constructed a totally Australian idea of what Italian is and/or should be. The

components above-mentioned constituting the Italian repertoire (Sicilian, when it is opportune) are tied to the time and experiences of the migrants who have come to Australia. They do not constitute a clinically distinguishable corpus of ‘pure’ music from the various Regions²⁶ of Italy, as a research hypothesis for music of migrants often postulates. The idea that distance from the source of the culture and in certain cases elision (due to distance) preserves tradition is only partly verifiable in Australia. Actually, Australian-Italians (and Sicilians) have mostly rebuilt with fantasy work what they would like to see as Italian tradition. The Italian tradition they want to present is made up of a selection of heterogeneous songs and music, chosen due to their association with the personal lives of the immigrants. Part of these are: the history of migration to America and its icons, the music they remember hearing played on the radio and by their community when they left, only minimally folk tunes, for those who were exposed to them (in the case of Sicilians, not many). The other components are made up of reconstruction of a greater Italian identity, including Opera and songs from other Regions than those of the performer’s origin. Further comments on the repertoire of the cantanti (Italian singers, intended as continuators of the tradition of Bal Canto) are included in 4.6.6. “I cantanti”, while a detailed description of the Italian-American/Italian-Australian connection is included in 4.9. “Analysis of 2 concerts”.

4.6. Music in clubs and description of the Sicilian-Australian musical repertoire

The centres of maintenance of Italian and Sicilian identities in Australia have been the associations and clubs which the emigrants from various Regions of Italy, and sometimes different cities or towns in the same Region, have created. In Chapter 2, I have listed the clubs and associations that are heirs to the previous Società di Mutuo Soccorso (Mutual Help Societies), which the emigrants constituted in the early stages of their presence in Australia.

²⁶ As in Charter 1 (note 1), I here – and in the successive pages – capitalize Regions as it refers to official administrative subdivisions of Italy.



4.28. The Compagnia Gaetano and Emanuele Macrì, Sicilian puppeteers, on their provisional stage at the Italian Forum, in Leichhardt, 'the heart' of the Sydney Italian community (photo Garigliano, 2007).

The Sicilian clubs found in Australia today were mostly founded, or re-founded, since the Second World War. During the war, nearly every Italian association was closed down because they were regarded as a potential logistic base for 'enemy aliens' and their subversive activities (Ekne, Martinuzzi, Rando, Cappello, 2005). Immediately prior to the Second World War, the clubs were well established and were home to a booming community of Sicilian-Australians. Modelled on the Società di Mutuo Soccorso, the pre-war clubs were very much oriented to maintaining mutual material support for fellow Italian immigrants. After the Second World War, the character of these associations changed: they became more like social clubs, as the Italian-Australian population had gone beyond the stage of need of the primary necessities. All the same, some institutions, such as the COASIT, which were founded with the precise mission of assisting the Italian community, have endured in their work and purpose to present.



4.29. A Sicilian-Australian family attends a Sicilian function (paragraph 4.9.1.) at the Marconi Club (photo Garigliano, 2007).

Besides benefiting from the help of their kinfolk, the immigrants were supported and assisted by the Church, in particular by the Scalabrinian Fathers, who created community centres and nursing homes especially for elderly Italians. Today, the five Scalabrini Villages (communities of older people) in NSW are: in Austral, Allambie Heights, Bexley, Chipping Norton and Griffith.



4.30. Gaetano and Emanuele Macrì (wearing black shirts) showing their hand-painted panels of the Sicilian *Opéra dei pupi* (Puppets Opera) in the Italian Forum, in occasion of the 2006 Norton Street Festival (photo Garigliano, 2006).

None of the current Sicilian clubs have headquarters buildings, unlike some other Regional Italian associations (Associazione Napoletana, for Neapolitans, Fogolar

Furlan-Veneto Club, for Venetians and people from Friuli Venezia Giulia). The networking between the Sicilian associations is made possible through meetings in venues at convenient distance for the members of the Board. Last year, reunions of the various associations' heads were held in the Gladesville RSL Club on the first Monday of each month. News regarding the activities of the Sicilian associations circulates via mail, in *La Fiamma* and in *Il Ficodindia* (respectively Italian-Australian and Sicilian-Australian newspapers), and via email, by mailing list of *Il Ficodindia*, which is also an e-newspaper.



4.31. Gran finale with collective tarantella dance at the Marconi Club of Sicilia Day (4.9.1.) (photo Garigliano, 2007).

Both the Sicilian Clubs and the Scalabrini Villages have been venues for concerts and performances by professional, semi-professional and amateur musicians. Annual functions and concerts, however, are held in other clubs and function centres, such as Castel D' Oro Mediterranean House function rooms, both in Five Dock, the first of which was founded by an Aeolian Islander. The Italian Forum in Leichhardt, a reconstruction of an Italian piazza and venue for Italian shopping, food and cultural events, also has recently been a venue for Sicilian events. The Marconi Club in Bossley Park, in Sydney's western suburbs, originally a soccer club, nowadays a

major entertainment and leisure centre, hosts occasional Sicilian artists, functions and performances. Last, but not least, one of the most active protagonists within the network of social clubs and institutions providing backing and support for Sicilian performers is the Five Dock Learning Centre, on the Great North Road, in the suburb of Five Dock. This institution delivers a number of services to the Italian-Australian Community including: Italian language tuition, screening of Italian cinema, conferences on Italian and Italian regional (including Sicilian) culture, organized trips to Italy (including Sicily), and Italian musical events. The centre was founded by Giuseppe (Joe) Di Giacomo, native of San Fele, Basilicata, who successfully runs the activities of the centre with his wife, Donna. This section aims to present information on the activity of single musicians or groups performing both in a professional way and as amateur entertainers for the Sicilian and broader Italian community, in Sydney.

4.6.1. Tony Di Marti and Tony Gagliano:



4.32. Petersham RSL. Italian Duo Tony Di Marti and Tony Gagliano, in Sicilian/Calabrian costume, are due to perform. Petersham hosts a high population of Italian (Sicilian) descent and is close to Leichhardt (photo Garigliano, 2007).

On 10/02/2007 I attended their show following an invitation by Nadia Finocchiaro, who is a friend of both musicians. Tony Di Marti and Tony Gagliano are respectively singer and keyboard player, the former, a Calabrian (from Casignana, in the Province of Cosenza), and the latter Sicilian (from Leonforte, in the Province of Enna). The Duo has produced 8 CDs and has a website (www.italianduo.com.au), and many of their songs and performances are viewable on the YouTube channels of the Calabrian-Australian band named Calabria Mia based in Melbourne (YouTube username – calabriamiaband) and of a Calabrian folksinger based in Canada, Vinz De Rosa (username – VinzDerosa). They perform at times in Sicilian costume, at other times dressed plainly, a ballroom repertoire of folkloristic songs from Calabria and Sicily as well as a number of Italian pop tunes from the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. Their repertoire exceeds 170 songs, all of which they play by memory. Tony Gagliano also plays the accordion, but in the interview told me that the keyboard is much more functional (adapted) for performance in a large reception hall and for a large audience. Unlike the Gruppo Folk Siciliano of Nadia Finocchiaro, the Duo does not attend Feste of Saints or for free. Both musicians played in Italy before coming for Australia and they practise their musicianship as a full-time, paid, job. Their choice of the repertoire has been studied carefully, they have researched what kind of entertainment was palatable to Sicilian and Calabrian-Australians. For this reason, perhaps, out of all musicians I have encountered, the two Tonys are the most consciously emigrant. They played in Italy and are conscious of the fact that the tastes of Sicilian and Calabrian migrants in Australia are retro, nostalgic and that, unlike in the home country, they like to dance tarantella (although in recent decades there has been a tarantella revival in Italy, as explained below).

Tarantella in Italy was only sporadically danced, at the times when the migrants left to Australia. It is nowadays thriving because of the Pizzica craze²⁷, but in those times, it wasn't fashionable at all. The tarantella migrants dance in Australia is most probably more authentic than that danced by young people in Italy today, which has been revived and 'purified' selectively by the work of ethnomusicologists. Throughout my research, browsing the pages of *La Fiamma*, there were recurrent notices of feste of Patron Saints of Southern Italian towns and cities in whose honour a gara di tarantella

²⁷ On which, see Pino Gala's article online, at <http://www.taranta.it/pizzica.html>.

would be held, generally at one of the Scalabrini villages throughout the greater Sydney region. Gara di tarantella means tarantella competition, and by this term, two types of competition can be intended: that among the players of the tarantella or that among the dancers (to the music of only one set of musicians). At the Festa della Madonna di Viggiano (which I also mention in 4.7.1.) I had the opportunity to assist in a gara of the second type, where the best solo dancer of tarantella was given a prize. This gara included dancers from different Regions of Southern Italy; hence the styles of dancing were different. It was also a milieu where different styles had the opportunity to influence each other, a phenomenon which would not occur in Italy. One of the most positive aspects of the gara di tarantella is that children, as well as adults and elderly people, are involved in the competition, hence giving a chance to the dance to survive.

According to information given to me by veteran feste MC and radio announcer Paolo Rajo (mentioned in 4.4.4.), similarly to tarantella, a gara di marranzano also occurs in Sydney. This is a competition of jew's harp players, mainly held among members of the Sicilian community. The gara is also announced through La Fiamma, as well as on Rete Italia, where Rajo works.

4.6.2. Luigi Di Pino:

Luigi Di Pino is a young (in his early 40s) *cantastorie* from the town of Riposto, in the province of Catania. He has travelled to Australia every year, from 2002 to 2005. In Sydney he has performed in the following locations: 22 October 2004 at Burwood RSL, 26 February 2005 at the Hills Centre of Castle Hill, 2 April 2005 at the Club Marconi. Riposto has had a notable tradition as regard to *cantastorie*; it has been home to Orazio Strano, one of Sicily's most famous *cantastorie*, whose son and niece live in Sydney. Luigi Di Pino is the editor of a webzine *Il Cantastorie*, surveying the activity of all Italian *cantastorie* (www.luigidipino.it) and with Sicilian *cantastorie* and ethnomusicologist Mauro Geraci (Palermitan, but residing in Rome – his website www.maurogeraci.it) he is one of the leading proponents of the contemporary *cantastorie* scene in Italy and a voice for this tradition in the world. Both Luigi Di Pino and Mauro Geraci, together with Leonardo Strano (covered in the next paragraph), have participated and are active supporters of the Trofeo Turiddu Bella (www.cstb.it), a Sicilian vernacular poetry competition open to *cantastorie*.



4.33. Luigi Di Pino's Australian tour photos as they were published on *Il Ficodindia* (photo is courtesy of *Il Ficodindia* and scanned by Garigliano, 2007)



4.34. Salvatore Graturco, 77, Sylvia Granturco's (CAS secretary) father, remembers, as a child in Riposto, Orazio Strano's performances and still listens to and sings to his cassette: *Turiddu Giulianu re di li briganti* (Turiddu Giulianu king of the outlaws) (photo Garigliano, 2006).

4.6.3. Sam Strano and his daughters:

Sam (Salvatore) Strano is one of the sons of the well-known Sicilian cantastorie Orazio Strano (1904-1981), from Riposto (Prov. Catania), considered with Ciccio Busacca, from Paternò (Prov. Catania), as one of the most important and well-known Sicilian cantastorie of the last century and of whom Luigi Di Pino considers himself heir. A homonymous Sam Strano, President of the Associazione Palazzolo Acreide²⁸ and part of the CAS, and Sylvia Granturco provided me with the following information I am reporting on him. The information is not complete, however, I judged interesting to include these details for heuristic reasons. Sam Strano (the cantastorie's son) migrated to Australia in his early to mid 20s, initially attempting to be a professional cantastorie within the Italian/Sicilian communities of Sydney and Melbourne. Unfortunately, he did not succeed in making a living out of the tradition he endeavoured to continue, so he soon after opted for factory work. Sam Strano has two daughters, both of whom play guitar and have studied at the Sydney

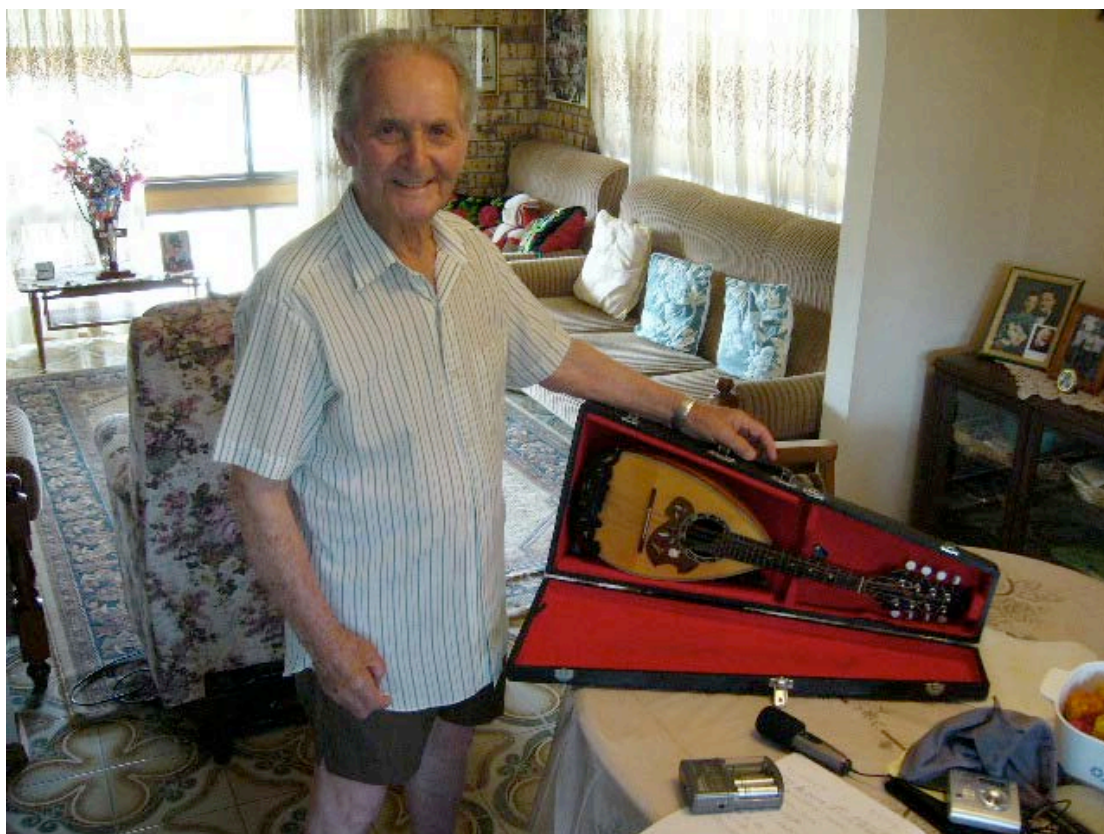
²⁸ Palazzolo Acreide is in the province of Siracusa. Among other things, it is the hometown of Antonino Uccello, one of the ethnomusicologists I mention in Chapter 2.

Conservatorium. It is unknown to me, at this stage, whether Sam Strano still plays music in private, and if he does, if he still retains some of the songs and stories from his father. It is also unknown to me, whether Sam's daughters have any sense of their grandfather's art or whether they carry on any heritage. Further investigation would be necessary to ascertain which heritage has remained in this branch of the family in Australia, if any. An interesting reference on Orazio Strano (in Italian) and testimony by one of his sons, Leonardo, is contained in an article/interview in the journal *Nuove Effemeridi* n. 11²⁹. In the same article we find references to Salvatore Strano (Sam) living in Australia (at the time of the interview with Leonardo, it was already 1990), where Leonardo says that Salvatore helped his father sell the recordings they produced.

4.6.4. Vernacular musicians: Mario Coppolino, Mariano Triforo and Joe Castellana:

In Chapter 3 I introduce the notion of *musica popolaesca*, in referring to a certain repertoire and in particular to that played by Sciacchitano, Cipriano, Iacono and Ruggiero. Now, in presenting the music played by Coppolino, Triforo and Castellana we are much in presence of a similar type of music.

²⁹ See Bibliography for full details.



4.35. Mariano Triforo, in Old Toongabbie, shows his mandolin which he played for decades with Mario Coppolino to entertain the Sicilian community of the western suburbs (Parramatta area) (photo Garigliano, 2007).

Coppolino, Triforo and Castellana are what I call ‘vernacular musicians’, meaning music players who do not play folkloristic music, rather, they play by ear the music which is requested, liked and needed in their community. Before I proceed in describing them singularly and in detail, I will anticipate their communalities: they are all three from Sicily, they are all here non-music-literate and all three migrated to Australia in the 1950s. I had heard of Coppolino long before I left for Australia, while I was starting my research in Italy; unfortunately he died in 2007, before I had a chance to meet him, most probably when he was in his 80s. Coppolino was an accordion player and used to play in a duo with Triforo. Both native of the same town in Sicily, Santa Lucia del Mela (Province of Messina), they used to play mainly for community gatherings within the Italian/Sicilian community living in their area of Sydney, Parramatta. Mariano Triforo and Mario Coppolino both live (in the case of Coppolino, lived) in the suburb of Old Toongabbie. I had first heard of Coppolino through Sam Mugavero, President of the Agira Association, a Sicilian Association based in Sydney. Sylvia Granturco, a personal acquaintance of Coppolino, presented me a list of songs Coppolino had written down as he had heard of my research, while

I was still in Italy. This list contained, to the best of his memory, the songs he used to play and that he was well acquainted with. The repertoire is of extreme interest and constitutes perhaps the most significant collection in my study, comprising songs which range from the 1800s Santa Lucia to the Italian pop songs of the group Le Piccole Ore (1940s). I list the songs below, in the order Coppolino listed them. I reported the entirety of the repertoire in Appendix f. I have interpreted some of the titles, where his handwriting was illegible, to the best of my abilities. I have also retraced the author/s and the singer who, at the time, brought the songs to vast popularity. The repertoire is made up of 26 songs, which can be categorized in a few genres:

- Hispanic songs – e.g. ‘La Cumparista’, written by Argentinian Carlos Gardel, Cielito lindo, written by Mexican Quirino Mendoza or the Mexican Cucurrcucù Paloma, written by Mendez
- Neapolitan songs – e.g. ‘Torna a Surriento’ and ‘Santa Lucia’
- Italian pop songs from the 1950s and 1960s – e.g. ‘La Torre di Pisa’ (popularised by Gino Latilla) and ‘I Pompieri di Viggiù’ (popularised by Clara Iaione), ‘La Spagnola’ (popularised by Gigliola Cinquetti), ‘Vola Colomba’ (popularised by Claudio Villa)
- Italian pop songs from the 1920s-50s – ‘Non ti scordare di me’ (popularized by Beniamino Gigli), ‘La Romanina’ (popularise by Luciano Tajoli), ‘Piemontesina’ (popularised by Claudio Villa), ‘Bella piccinina’ (popularised by Carlo Buti)
- Opera – e.g. theme from *La Vedova Allegra* (by Franz Léhar), ‘La donna é mobile’ (from Verdi’s *Rigoletto*)
- Airs played by mandolin and guitar orchestras in the 1920s and 1930s – ‘Mazurka Variata’ (by Augusto Migliavacca)
- Classical repertoire – ‘The Blue Danube’ waltz (by Johann Strauss)
- Folkloristic songs/Alpine – ‘La mula de Parenzo’ (Alpine), ‘Calabrisella’ (Calabrian folk)
- Songs which are not retraceable due to lack of correct data

The most interesting fact of this repertoire is that most songs have been long-time forgotten in Italy. This is because most of the songs Coppolino and Triforo played are

not traditional, but a range of popular music from Italy from the last 150 years. The only internet sites where I found information on the repertoire of the songs are a website by Italian migrants in Brasil (<http://italiasempre.com> – accessed 7/11/08) and the website of the Museum of Italian Song (Museo della Canzone Italiana – www.museodellacanzone.it – accessed 7/11/08). Some of the songs from the 1950s and 1960s are also available to view on YouTube, where one can find original footage from the beginning of TV broadcasting to the present.

The last musician who is relevant to this discussion is Joe (Giuseppe) Castellana, a zupolo (straight cane flute) player. Castellana was born in Montallegro, in the province of Agrigento, 76 years ago and raised in the pastoral tradition. In the traditional context, zupoli were made from cane (*Arundo Donax*) by shepherds grazing their cattle, ‘on the spot’, and used either to entertain oneself when alone, roaming the pastures, or in festive occasions, when it is used to perform dance music, often accompanied by tamburello (the Sicilian tambourine), another pastoral instrument.



4.36. Giuseppe 'Joe' Castellana in his full 'regalia', in Brisbane: dressed in Sicilian costume, he wears a garland of zuponi, holding in his left hand the cardboard suitcase with which he disembarked in Australia in 1957, in his right hand the machete with which he started cutting cane in Queensland, in 1958 (photo courtesy of Francesca Alderisi – RAI International).

He migrated to Australia in 1958 (aged 26) and was initially employed as a cane cutter in Queensland (Home Hill). As soon as it was financially viable, he settled in Brisbane and started to play and popularise the zuponi and its music, both in the local Italian feste and in schools, where he held workshops, teaching the construction and the music on the zuponi. Over the years, he has also produced a series of recordings of his music³⁰, performing both famous Sicilian and southern Italian folkloristic tunes

³⁰ Castellana's recordings (exception made from those of his music by ethnomusicologists) are very hard to find, as most of his music is self-produced or published by small, local labels. He is also featured in compilations. Here are some:

The tracks – *St Valentine – Io ti sempre amore* – in the Album – *Tragouthia* (VV.AA.) – shelf location: INTERNATIONAL DP-364

The track – *Rumba in Italiana* – in the Album: *Raw Fusion: A compilation of culturally inspired musician and their music* – Label: Kalakuta Records KR1001CD – shelf location: AUSTRALIA DP-303.

and his own compositions³¹. Castellana's compositions on the zufolo are mainly on the model of the dance tunes still popular in Sicilian Feste a ballo, or festini (dance parties), which are: waltz, polka, mazurka, foxtrot, beguine, cha cha cha, bolero and tango. Joe Castellana performs in a traditional Sicilian costume and has produced an impressive amount of zufoli, ranging from very plain to elaborately carved and painted ones. As part of his costume, he wears a garland of zufoli. Throughout the years, he has become a well-known local artist and has attracted the attention of several ethnomusicologists³², who have interviewed him and recorded his music. He has been interviewed several times on RAI International programs dedicated to Italians in the world as well as on the SBS Italian program and on Rete Italia. He has taken part in many Italian feste celebrating Patron Saints and Italianness, including the festa della Repubblica (Italian National Day) on 2 June, celebrated every year in Sydney in Darling Harbour (Tumbalong Park). Throughout the years he has collaborated with a number of musicians, mostly of Italian descent and most notably the Sicilian folkloristic groups of Nadia Finocchiaro and Gabriella Pavone.

4.6.5. Granturco Sisters and the Coro dell'Associazione Abbruzzesi del NSW:

Throughout my research I have mentioned my contact with Sylvia Granturco, the President of the CAS, Coordinamento Associazioni Siciliane (Sicilian Associations Network). Mrs Granturco facilitated my contact with Mario Coppolino and Mariano Triforo and provided me with information on the Gruppo Folklorico Eoliano of Gabriella Pavone La Greca. Sylvia's two daughters, Amelia and Dominique, were part of that group. It was in Gabriella Pavone's Group that the Granturco Sisters became interested in Sicilian music. Both Dominique and Amelia took up playing the

CD – *The magic zufolo* – Virgo Seven Records VRSL- 002

Performers: Joe Castellana – flute, John Jurss – drum, Simon Mesaric – accordion.

Cassette and CD – Joe Castellana – *King of the zufolo* – *Italo Australian Folklor* (folklor is spelt without final 'e'), Instrumental RPM-1992 – photo: Joe Castellana (with zufoli) and Domenico Taraborelli (fisarmonica) – 1996.

³¹ For a full album description and the track list of *The magic zufolo* and *King of zufolo* see Appendix (g).

³² Michael Atherton recorded in 1996 *Australian made, Australian played*, where tracks from Castellana are featured (recording available at the NLA <http://www.musicaustralia.org/> – accessed 25/11/08), while Rob and Olya Willis interviewed Castellana and recorded his music, producing an audio document, issued in 2002, also available at the NLA (<http://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/2231912>). On this last recording Castellana is also featured as jew's harp player and zampogna player.

accordion, first with Sandro Martino and successively with Elisabeth Jones, who established the Accordion Society of Australia (ASA, www.accordions.com/asa). The Granturco sisters are in their late teens³³ and have performed a number of concerts for now seven to eight years. Amelia was “highly commended” in her category at the 2006 championship of the Accordion Society of New Zealand and came first at the 2006 International Pacific Piano Accordion championship (17 years and under category, at the time). I have recorded the Granturco sisters on two occasions during my research; they perform an eclectic repertoire for the accordion, ranging from folkloristic Italian to French accordion classics to Argentinian tango and even Opera arias (such as Bizet’s Carmen).

The significant factor about the Granturco sisters in my study is that they have maintained, in their repertoire, a number of Sicilian folk tunes and songs which they used to dance to, as children, in Gabriella Pavone’s group³⁴. Amelia’s involvement with folk music has, however, continued, through her performance with the Coro dell’Associazione Abbruzzesi del NSW, on several occasions, in 2007. Generally it is Sandro Martino who performs with the choir.

4.6.6. ‘I cantanti’: Peter Ciani, Tony Pantano and Rick Danieli:

Peter Ciani is an Italian-Australia singer of Sicilian/Calabrian background (born in La Gala, in the Province of Messina) who has been operating in Sydney since 1963. A good analytical synopsis of his work has been provided by Scott-Maxwell (2002) while his biography and complete discography are available to all on his website www.peterciani.com. In the recordings section we can find excellent examples of how Italian-Australian musical identity is constructed in the ways discussed in this thesis. Addressing the Sicilian/Australian and generally Italian immigrant community, he presents a repertoire made up of songs of his own composition, based on the stylistic models of Italian popular music in vogue among the migrating generations to Australia and some folkloristic songs. To exemplify his repertoire, I have reported in Appendix h the track list of his DVD, produced in 2006, *Cantando anche all’italiana*

³³ Amelia, the elder, turned 18 in 2008 and her sister Dominique, is two or three years younger.

³⁴ I have included a commentary on the entire list of songs the group performed, some of which Amelia still performs with the ASA, in the 4.7.2. regarding Gabriella Pavone’s folk group. The list is available in Appendix l.

– *An evening with Peter Ciani*. Following, is an excerpt from Scott-Maxwell (2002) which sums up Ciani's artistry concisely:

Ciani is probably the best-known Italian-Australia singer of the past three or more decades. He has been a highly successful recording artist who has released nearly 50 singles and over 30 albums, some of them when he was signed to EMI, and he has built a bi-national career in Australia and Italy. In June 2001, a feature in Sydney's Italian-language newspaper, La Fiamma, celebrated 40 years of his career and described him as "an artist astride two cultures". Another Italian-Australian newspaper has referred to him as "the Frank Sinatra of Australia". Unlike Sinatra, however, he is also a prolific songwriter and lyricist who has composed and written the lyrics for over 300 songs and recorded more than 200 of them. Amongst his songs is This Beautiful Australia (1992), which he submitted to Rick Birch for use in the opening ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Olympics. In 2000 his patriotic song, La Bella Italia, took first prize at the fourth Festival Tricolore della Canzone Italiana, an international Italian song festival held in Reggio Emilia in honour of the Italian flag. His first band in Australia was called Los Amigos and tapped the then popularity of Latin-American music as type of exotica, while one of his recent song-writing and singing ventures is in the realm of country-pop (p. 34).

Scott-Maxwell shows in his article how Ciani has woven in his original way the different styles of canzone, Bel Canto, Canzone D'Autore and Country Pop, juggling throughout his career the issues of ethnicity, authenticity and identity. Scott-Maxwell also highlights how Ciani's position, in 'Negotiating difference' (2002) has put him in a somewhat ambiguous cultural space, as she puts it: "the 'pop *canzone*' tradition of Italian culture that Ciani epitomises is not an acceptable representative of multicultural Australia". "His music does not sound Italian enough" and "multiculturalism sets the boundaries of Italian music to include *canto popolare* (Italian traditional music) and its revival or heritage forms but to exclude more mainstream popular culture forms such as *canzone*".

Peter Ciani was also Antonio D'Ambra's salesman for Minstrel Records, from 1953 to 1978, an activity which helped him stay up to date with the music in vogue in Italy during that period. It gave him prime exposure to the Italian pop music industry.

Ciani can be considered as the prime example and the prototype of the Italian-Australian singer. Other singers of Sicilian background are comparable to him in style, for example Tony Pantano and Rick Danieli. These singers, though, do not perform original songs as Ciani has and have not produced recordings; they limit themselves to perform covers of what they perceive as iconic Italian and Sicilian music, performing a repertoire which is a cocktail of Neapolitan, Italian-American and Regional folkloristic songs. Pantano and Danieli are employed in the entertainment and feste circuit of the Calabrian and Sicilian migrant communities of Sydney and Melbourne. Unlike Ciani, who has produced a vast discography and has been interviewed and performed on both Italian and Australian national television, they are local artists. This is not meant in the pejorative sense; artists of local stature fulfil the essential role of keeping the scene alive. Rick Danieli, as well as Tony Pantano, often sings accompanied by and in combination with the Joe Macrì Orchestra, Tony Di Marti and Tony Gagliano and with the Gruppo Folkloristico Siciliano of Nadia Finocchiaro (covered in the next paragraph).

4.7. Sicilian folk music groups

While in the third chapter of this thesis I have provided an introduction to Sicilian and Italian Regional Folkloristic Groups, the purpose of the present paragraph is to analyse the activity and history of the two Sicilian folk groups that have been active in Sydney. As I will explain here further, the two are interconnected. Information about Nadia Finocchiaro's group has already been given when presenting the Festa della Madonna dei Poveri di Seminara in 4.4.5. and another description of one of their performances will be included in 4.8 – Case analysis of two concerts. References to Gabriella Pavone's Gruppo Folklorico Eoliano are present in Chapter 3 – Field Research in Sicily – as Pavone still maintains strong connections with her relatives in Sicily and the Aeolian community, at home and abroad.

4.7.1. Gruppo Folkloristico Siciliano of Nadia Finocchiaro:

The activity of Sicilian folkloristic groups in Sydney started from the initiative of Nadia Finocchiaro, art name of Rosa Lo Pizzo, born in 1930 and in Sydney since 1957. Born and raised in Buccheri, a small town within the Province of Siracusa, in southeast Sicily, since her childhood she has been passionate about singing, particularly in Sicilian, commencing her practice and learning in a peasant environment. For example, she remembers learning her first songs picking olives with her mother and other women employed in such work. The repertoire she learnt as a child was what she heard on the radio at the time and which other women were singing. She chose her art name, referring to a singer she had heard on the radio during those years, named Maria Finocchiaro and of whom she learnt the first folkloristic song she would perform in Australia, many years later, 'La Vigna', the vine, a song about love and courtship during the grape harvesting season in Sicily.

It took 30 years of living in Australia before her love for singing folkloristic Sicilian songs would lead her to set up a folkloristic act in Sydney, in 1986, thanks to the suggestion of a music group manager, talent scout and MC operating in the Italian immigrant feste circuit, Franco Paci. Since 1986, the group has always been active to date, performing at the historical (closed since the 1990s) APIA club of Leichhardt, at Italian song festivals (in the first years of their careers), feste of Patron Saints, Italian national day festivities, at the Marconi Club and in Australian multicultural festivals. Finocchiaro draws much of the repertoire of songs which her group represents on stage from the Sicilian folkloristic music LPs, 45 rpms and cassettes she brought with her from Sicily in 1957, as well as from the Italian pop songs which are popular among the community.

Finocchiaro's group is mainly devoted to song, dance and pantomime, and performs in Sicilian costumes and a number of other costumes (Calabrian, Country Western and others especially made for the occasion), designed and tailored over many years by Nadia Finocchiaro. Finocchiaro's group on stage involves the public and is surrounded by a rich apparatus of paraphernalia. Sicilian hand-painted carts (*carretto Siciliano*) are featured as background, as are displays of flags and fresh flowers; the group often descends from the stage and invites the public to dance; distribution of

Sicilian food (oranges, bread, cheese and sweets) is often done as a show's grand finale.

The fixed members of the group comprise: Nadia Finocchiaro, Frank Musumeci, Albina Fabro, Kathy Commisso and Rosetta Bombaci. Former members who are no longer present but have played a substantial role in the formation are Vera Bruno (now dead), Pina Musumeci (Frank's wife), John Musumeci (Frank's son), Emma Modica, Maria Scuderi and musicians Angelo Testa (tambourine and jews harp), Sandro Martino (accordion) and Nino Catalano (saxophone) – who were the original accompanying musicians of the group until 1990. In 1990 Gabriella La Greca (nee Pavone) joined the group and, after six months of participation in the group, she quit, and formed her own group, taking with her the three musicians (for full details on Gabriella Pavone's group, please read the next paragraph). Emma Modica as well, after Gabriella La Greca's departure, quit the group and formed another Sicilian folk group, which did not have much following (she managed to stage only two shows).

After the 1990 departure of the original trio of accompanying musicians, Nadia's group has collaborated with a number of orchestras of the type I have described in 4.4 (Music of the feste – Singers and orchestras) who provided them with the music they were putting to life with their choreography and stage apparatus: in the first years and sporadically Joe Casali e I Vagabondi, Jack Patané and Ron Guerino, and more consistently throughout the group's life, Tony Vadalà's and Joe Macri's Ensembles. The group also has had, both past and present, acts presenting children dancing in Sicilian costume, who also dance following choreographies and movements instructed by Finocchiaro. Occasional musicians who have performed with the group have been Tony Di Marti and Tony Gagliano (of whom I have written), guitarist Natale Rosina, Sicilian singer and accordion player Tonino Emmi, Australian-Sicilian folksingers and crooners Rick Danieli and Jai Pirelli, Italian popstar Pupo and Australian-Calabrian folksinger and crooner Andy Ciccone (of whom I have written in describing the Festa della Madonna dei Poveri di Seminara). Nadia Finocchiaro's group also occasionally recruits adult and old age guest dancers, as in a show which she performed at the Scalabrini Village of Austral on 11 March 2007, at the Festa della Madonna di Viggiano, where she set up a performance group and show called I nonni,

the grandparents. The repertoire was made up of folkloristic songs familiar to most of the Italian immigrant population.



4.37. Nadia Finocchiaro (first from left) and Kathy Commisso (centre) sing at the Sicilia Day at the Marconi Club, on a stage adorned with real and fictitious oranges (photo Garigliano, 2007).

One of the shows Nadia Finocchiaro's group performed regularly for years (in the 1990s) at the Marconi Club was the Festa della Primavera (Spring Festival), where the carretto Siciliano was included, including a live horse operating it. The primavera Siciliana show illustrated a traditional Sicilian wedding, where the bride (Nadia) was transported on the cart to the future husband (Frank). The Sicilian cart is the property of a Sicilian migrant, Joe Tripolone and apparently is the only authentic one in existence in Australia. It was transported dismantled and reassembled in Australia. Joe Tripolone himself has participated in Nadia Finocchiaro's shows, dressed in Sicilian costume, with another Sicilian gentlemen also in costume, Joe Sgroi, both playing the tambourine on the carretto.

Other shows of Nadia have included live pantomimes of Sicilian folkloristic songs 'U sciccareddu' (The donkey, also known as 'U ciucciu', in Calabrian), 'La vigna', 'La

Sicilia é chista ccà', 'Mamma Cicciu mi tocca', 'L'amore Siciliano', and Calabrian 'Calabria Amara', 'Calabria mia', 'Madonna mia della montagna', for all of which she tailored costumes. She also performed and pantomimed with costumes non-folkloristic Italian popular songs such as 'La Domenica andando alla messa' by popstar Gigliola Cinquetti and 'La Spagnola' also by Cinquetti.

4.7.2. Gruppo Folklorico Eoliano of Gabriella Pavone:

Gabriella La Greca (née Pavone) founded and directed a Sicilian folkloristic group, focused on representing folklore from the Aeolian Islands, which was active from 1990 to 1998. This group has had two names: in the first two to three years, Gruppo Culturale Eoliano, in the remaining years, Gruppo Folklorico Eoliano. In the early years, as Gruppo Cultural Eoliano, Pavone employed the group in costume also to promote the tourist industry and the culinary traditions of the Aeolian Islands. Later, as Gruppo Folklorico Eoliano, it excluded such activities and focused solely on music and dance spectacles.



4.38. Gabriella Pavone La Greca in her home, showing the photos documenting eight years of activity of the group of which she was artistic director and choreographer: the Gruppo Folklorico Eoliano (photo Garigliano, 2008).

Although the origins of her Gruppo Folklorico Eoliano are tied to Nadia Finocchiaro's group, Gabriella Pavone as well had an exposure to Sicilian folkloristic music since her childhood and was raised in a family where informal practice of music was part of everyday life, both at work and at home. The 11th of 12 brothers and sisters, her family hails from Canneto, Lipari, where they traditionally fished and worked at the pumice quarry, two very hard and risky activities. She remembers her cousin, Bartolo Raffaele, calling the tarantella, her cousin Bartoluzzo Ruggiero (of whom I have written, in 3.2.5.b.), accordion player Ciccio Amato (whose son is also an accomplished player based in Melbourne). Several of her brothers and sisters were accomplished accordion and *friscaletto* (Sicilian cane flute) players. One of the most significant episodes in Pavone's youth was the making of the two films, *Vulcano* and *Stromboli*, in 1950. Music and celebration in the islands, surrounding the two film crews and cast, was continuous and was an occasion, for many young Aeolians, to be exposed to the wider world. It was then that she understood the value and uniqueness of her Aeolian heritage. The impact in terms of cultural self-awareness that the coming of the two film crews to the islands had on Aeolians has been profound and long-lasting. Pavone migrated to Australia aged 21, in 1961, after marrying. In Australia she worked as a cook both at the University of Technology Sydney and at Sydney University. Before starting the folk group, she held some cooking classes on traditional Sicilian recipes, introducing the propagation and presentation of the culture of her homeland.

Unlike Finocchiaro's group, Gabriella Pavone's group was mainly comprised of children from the Aeolian community. The folk group was born under the auspices of the Associazione Isole Eolie, in particular, under the supervision and management of Ross Maniaci, Joe Ficarra and Roberto Cincotta, with the aim to familiarise the younger generations with the language and culture of the islands. The total number of the children who sang and danced in the group was 25, ranging from the age of six to 17, plus Pavone and the above-mentioned accompanying trio: Catalano, Testa and Martino. The group performed in Sicilian costume, of her design. The repertoire of the group, which I reported in its entirety in Appendix (I)³⁵, was made up of a total of 16 well-known Sicilian folkloristic songs, four Calabrian, two Roman, one from

³⁵ I retrieved the repertoire from Sylvia Granturco, who still had the practice book of her younger daughter, Dominique, from the times when she practised with the Gruppo Folklorico Eoliano.

Puglia/Molise, five Neapolitan, one from Puglia, five from Salvatore Biviano's repertoire (of whom I wrote in Chapter 3), three from Abruzzo, two by Bartoluzzo Ruggiero, one Alpine, one from Florence, one from Gigliola Cinquetti (*La Domenica andando alla messa*, the same which Finocchiaro performed). As we can see there is a predominance of Sicilian folk, but some folklore songs from other Regions are included, along with some Italian pop songs.

It is remarkable that Gabriella has included in her repertoire songs written by contemporary Aeolian folk singers/ songwriters, Bartoluzzo Ruggiero and Salvatore Biviano's *Momenti Eoliani*. This, being due to the group's focus on the Aeolian Islands. Contact with the Aeolian Islands' folkloristic group *I Cantori Popolari delle Isole Eolie* (of whom I have written in Chapter 3) has also proved important in Gabriella's formation of the group, as she consulted with Nino Alessandro on choreographies and costumes. In fact, it is from the *Cantori Popolari* that Gabriella took the idea of incorporating songs by Ruggiero and Biviano, which had already been authorized to be played by others (*I Cantori*). Gabriella La Greca also used to include in her shows recitation of poetry in Sicilian, written both by her and by other vernacular writers. I have included in Appendix (g) the text of her poem *Jurnata n' Sicilia*.

Out of the group came some talents: tenor Gaetano Bonfante, now 29, the son of a Sydney Aeolian Islander fruit shop keeper, who became a successful singer and is now established in the international operatic circuit, and Lucia Tummillio, Gabriella's niece, now in her late teens, who performed for the Pope's visit to Sydney, during the World Youth Day visit, on Palm Sunday 2008.

4.8. Two case studies: Ross Maio and Gino Pengue

Examining the case studies of Ross Maio and Gino Pengue will enable us to grasp a section of the whole Sicilian-Australian, and more extensively Italian-Australian, musical panorama of Sydney.

4.8.1. Ross Maio:

Born in 1949 in Giardini Naxos (in the Province of Messina), in Sicily, Ross Maio³⁶ arrived in Australia aged five, living the first six years near Innisfail, in far north Queensland. At 12 he moved to Sydney. By the time he was ten he was already playing the accordion, a gift by his mother shipped from Italy. He has learnt the accordion from family tradition and perfected it under different private tutors. His father was a harmonica player and a marranzano player (Jews harp), while his great uncle played the organetto (Italian four bass accordion). His father and great uncle and those who played in Queensland learnt most of their tunes from 78 records from the 1920s and 1930s. He says that some of the earliest models for his father's generation of canecutters in Queensland were the turn of the last century recordings produced in the USA, of those whom he calls 'the great accordionists'. In Castelfidardo (in the Marche Region, in central Italy) there is a museum of the accordion where the recordings of 'the great accordionists' are kept. Ross Maio told me that Melbourne ethnomusicologist John Whiteoak³⁷ had already written on the early Italian folk musicians in Australia, and in particular about accordionists Lou and Enzo (Lou's son) Toppiano and on accordionist Peter Piccini³⁸. His earliest public performances (paid) he remembers being in Griffith, where his father was a seasonal worker (who picked grapes). At the age of 19 he enrolled at the conservatorium, where he took piano lessons for the following three years under Isador Goodman and Nia De Mestre. From 1968 to 1973 he took private lessons in musicianship and music theory. From his father he learnt the tunes 'Il bosco ingiallito', 'La biondina in gondoleta' and 'Firenze sogna'. In those years he also remembers learning and hearing Scottish music, forms of music called Gipsy Taps (which, he thinks, have nothing to do with gipsy music), Pride of Erin (which, he says, sounds like a waltz) and a Canadian two-step (which sounds like a march). He also remembers playing a song called Katiusha, which in Italy is known as 'Fischia il vento' (he didn't know that), a Russian war song adopted by the Italian left wing partisans during the Italian civil war, after the American 'liberation' in 1945. In far north Queensland, where his father was a canecutter, together with other Italian migrants, his teacher was Lou

³⁶ See www.rossmaio.com.

³⁷ See Whiteoak (2007 and 2008) for a list of publications on Italians (including the afore-mentioned) performing 'continental', 'gipsy' and South American music.

³⁸ For more information on Piccini, see: <http://www.users.bigpond.com/piccini>.

Pensini senior, whose son, Lou Pensini junior, is still an accordionist in the Italian community theretoday. When he moved to Sydney, from the age of 13 to 18 he studied the accordion under the guidance of Enzo Toppano.

Since his earliest years he has taken part in traditional Italian festivals of the different Regional communities in Sydney, connected to the cult of different Patron Saints. From 1992 to 2002 he served as a musician on cruise ships, an occupation he is still practising today (soon he will be employed on a Japanese cruise ship). Since 1997 he has appeared on Australian television (the latest appearance being two years ago on The Morning Show, on Channel 9, on the day of the Festa della Repubblica [2 June]), on the Australian SBS radio for the launch of his CD (*The Squeezer – Cocktails at Oasis 3*), has produced themes for various commercials, performed concerts in prestigious venues such as the Sydney Opera House and for occasions such as the visit of the Prince and Princess of Kent, in 1979/80 with Tommy Tycho (Australian-Hungarian piano player/conductor and music arranger for Channel 7). In 1995 and 1996 he participated in the New Zealand Federation of Accordionists National Competition, both in Auckland and Christchurch, and was accompanying musician for the great Scottish Tenor Kenneth McKellar in his tour of Victoria. He has won the 20th Mo³⁹ award (1995) for 'best variety instrumentalist', the 1998 Australian Club Entertainment Award and the 2004 Instrumental Act of the Year award. His music has also been featured in the film *The hijacking of the Achille Lauro*, a Canadian film produced in Australia, in which he played with Gino Pengue. He has performed for charities such as Amnesty International, Handicapped Children, Victor Chang Foundation, the Rotary, the Little Sisters of The Poor, the Red Cross and, needless to say, the Scalabrini Village. In the last four to five years he has performed regularly in schools with Nadia, doing an Italian show. For years he performed a show called Viva la fisarmonica (see his website) with a woman called Robyn Pitt-Owen, a singer. He worked with Pitt-Owen from 1968 to 1982 internationally and won 2 awards with her. From 1977 to 1982 he was employed practically every week at the Conca D'Oro Function Centre, where with Pitt-Owen, he performed for two weddings a week (at times). He also performed at the old Apia Club, which as the Castel D' Oro, belongs to Filippo Navarra, who now has re-baptized it Le Montage. With Pitt-Owen he

³⁹ <http://www.moawards.org.au/winners%201995.htm> Mo was an Australian comedian of Jewish-Dutch background <http://www.moawards.org.au> .

performed a set called Giro d'Italia (Italian tour), where all Regions of Italy were represented in music. From 1982 onwards he has mostly worked solo. The musician with whom he has collaborated the most, after Pitt-Owen, has been Gino Pengue.

In my research, I have documented Ross Maio's performances especially within the Italian clubs and feste environments. Since 2005 I have documented Maio's performance in A taste of Sicily, a performance including film projections and music, where he was included in a group with Nadia Piave, Emilio Lomonaco and Gino Pengue. The act was performed at the Art Gallery of NSW and sponsored by the Five Dock Learning Centre, under the direction of Joe Di Giacomo, an Italian immigrant originally from San Fele, in Basilicata, in southern Italy. The program of the show was comprised of several traditional Sicilian songs and some original compositions by singer and songwriter Emilio Lomonaco, who one year later, produced a CD together with guitarist Gino Pengue entitled *Sicilian Echoes*. The group, comprised of Lomonaco, Pengue and Maio, was called Musicantis. A taste of Sicily, in its first edition in 2005, was such a success that Joe Di Giacomo decided to repeat the concert for five other editions around clubs in Sydney, always maintaining the original line-up of musicians. The clubs in which the successive editions were performed have been the Five Dock RSL and the Burwood RSL. As well as the performance of this show, I have documented Maio's participation in Nadia Piave's shows. Some of these, performed throughout 2006-2007, are: Sedotta e Abbandonata, Pane amore e...musica, Tangos, tantrums and tarantellas, and Arabica! On 27 November 2008 Nadia Piave released a CD called *Rose* where Maio and Pengue are the accompanying musicians. Besides performing Italian (and Sicilian) folk music, Maio has performed with many other artists, always in the field of dinner-dance and entertainment. For example, he has performed with the Elsley Continental Ensemble⁴⁰, a string ensemble which caters for dinner-dances, weddings and chamber concerts, led by Polish violinist Evan Elsley.

4.8.2. Gino Pengue:

Gino Pengue was born in Australia to parents from Benevento, in the province of Avellino, near Naples. From the age of ten, he started playing guitar, graduating from

⁴⁰ See www.elseleyensembles.com.au/index.html.

the Sydney Conservatorium, and then started to play an active role in the Sydney live music scene. He combines work as concert guitarist with private tutoring. Pengue has always had a taste for traditional Italian melodies, accompanying both Nadia Piave and Ross Maio, and with them forming a trio which has performed many shows together in the last 20 years. Like Maio, Pengue has been divided between stage performances in RSL clubs and bars and participation in Italian traditional feste. About ten years ago he began performing with singer Manuela Salvagni, initially as a duo, and now an ensemble, Incanto Italiano (Italian Charm)⁴¹, which performs weekly at the Five Dock Learning Centre⁴², an institution dedicated to the study and promotion of the Italian language and culture in Sydney. For the last ten years he has been performing in the nine member-strong band Marsala⁴³ at the Woollahra Hotel each Thursday of the week, mixing music from the Balkans, Africa, France, Italy, the USA and South America. He is part of various ensembles that support acts at traditional Sicilian and Calabrian Patron Saints Festivals around Sydney, including the Joe Macri ensemble, the Nick Bavarelli Ensemble, the Tony Vadalà ensemble and with Sydney crooner-style singers such as Rick Danieli (who is Sicilian) and others. As well as having participated in most of Nadia Piave's Italian traditional music based shows, as mentioned above, Pengue was part of Emilio Lomonaco's Musicantis – who produced the CD *Sicilian Echoes* – and worked as a session musician with traditional Italian musicians from overseas such as Alessandra Belloni (in 2006) and the Sardinian traditional band Iskelio, directed by Sandro Fresi. Outside the Italian immigrant musical context, Pengue has been playing guitar in ensembles accompanying singers of the Armenian diaspora in Australia. He told me that, much as in the Italian-Australian scene, Armenians have singers and orchestras at their festivals, performing a mixture of pop, retro and folk music. The musical recipe for nostalgic remembrance of home seems to be similar across the different migrant communities.

⁴¹ See www.fivedocklearningcentre.com.au/Pages/Incanto/IncantoItalianoFrameset.htm .

⁴² See www.fivedocklearningcentre.com.au .

⁴³ See www.marsala.com.au .

4.9. Analysis of two concerts

To end my excursion into the Italian-Australian musical universe, I want to describe and analyse in detail two concerts performed by some of the artists I have described in the previous chapters: Gruppo Folkloristico Siciliano of Nadia Finocchiaro at the Sicilia Day at the Marconi Club and 'Pane Amore e...musica', by Nadia Piave and Glenn Amer, at the Club Five Dock. Introducing 'Pane, amore e...musica' I shall also provide a brief introduction to Glenn Amer and Nadia Piave, to familiarize the reader with their musical background. Both Nadia Piave and Glenn Amer can be considered musicians who are poly-functional, dipping into different styles, from Broadway to opera, to folk music, eclectic in the same measure as Pengue and Maio, only in different areas.

4.9.1. 9 September 2007 – Sicilia Day at the Marconi Club:

The Marconi Club, born as an Italian Soccer team club in Bossley Park, in Sydney's far western suburbs, is the city's most long-standing Italian Club established in 1958 (in 2008, it celebrated its 50th anniversary). Originally oriented only around one ethnic community (the Italians) it nowadays hosts shows by performers of many communities (in particular the Latino community); nevertheless, Italian events still are regularly staged. Throughout 2007 the Marconi Club hosted a series of performances which were illustrative of various singing and dance traditions in Italy. Sicilia Day, along with Calabria Day, Napoli Day and Roma Day, were some of the initiatives. Nadia Finocchiaro's group staged both Sicilia Day and Calabria Day. The Gruppo Folk Siciliano this time was not performing for a particular saint, but represented a Region of Italy and the emigrants from that Region. Tony and Joe Vadalà, on keyboards and drum kit, accompanied the same group of dancers and singers that performed at the Madonna dei Poveri festival. The repertoire consisted mostly of folkloristic songs. They wore costumes and they distributed real oranges, as tokens and symbols of Sicily, from large baskets at the end of the performance. The most interesting aspect of this performance was the participation of the public, unlike other performances at the feste. At the end of the program, which lasted about one and

a half hours, most people were dancing tarantella⁴⁴. The event was held during the day and the entry ticket entitled the holder to an Italian lunch consisting of a plate of pasta, a glass of red wine and cannoli (a Sicilian sweet made of fried sweet dough and sweetened ricotta). The venue was a large room (hosting about 300 people) with a stage and no windows, so the conditions were just the same as if it were nighttime.



4.39. Strenuous in her efforts to maintain the memories Sicilian of home alive. At Sicilia Day at Marconi Club, Nadia Finocchiaro distributes real oranges to the public from stage, from a basket adorned with almond flowers (both oranges and almond flowers are emblems of Sicily, in many songs).

4.9.2. 31 August 2007 – ‘Pane amore e...musica’ at Club Five Dock:

I retain this concert’s analysis as important for the understanding of the way Italian-Australians represent their identity musically. To give a complete picture, although I have made some references to Nadia Piave in the paragraphs analysing the work of Maio and Pengue, I start with a brief introduction to Piave and Amer.

⁴⁴ Regarding the tarantella dancing in Australia, refer to the next paragraphs on Tony Di Marti and Tony Gagliano, and on the Gara di tarantella e marranzano.



4.40. Between Broadway, Italian Bel Canto, classics and folklore, the flyer advertising Piave and Amer's concert – 'Pane, amore e... musica'.

a. Nadia Piave:

Nadia Piave was introduced to songs, both in English and Italian at a very young age, by her Irish-Australian mother and Italian father (from Modena), who owned the Guido's Beach House café in Bondi Beach. She started studying singing at 13 and at 16 started performing in a folk duo, playing songs by Leonard Cohen, Robert Johnsons and Bob Dylan in Sydney's late-night acoustic music clubs, including the Journey's End, The Roxy at Taylor Square and at Guido's Beach House café. In her 20s she was drawn to the music of Italy and Europe. She trained in Sydney and Italy (Siena, Perugia, Urbino, Milan) where she performed extensively in repertoire ranging from Monteverdi to Mozart, Bellini to Bernstein and Stravinsky to Straythorn. Nadia has a Master of Performance from Sydney University, her thesis focusing on the singing actresses of the English 17th C Restoration. Her extroverted approach to performance has made her a much admired interpreter of the theatrical "mad" songs of the English Baroque. She has been an active participant in Early Music master classes in Sydney and in Italy. She performs with Sydney's finest

baroque ensembles and with lutenist Tommie Andersson and flautist Matthew Ridley as the 16th C specialist group Trio Bassano. Piave has performed 19th and 20th C English and French art repertoire with pianist Sally Whitwell as duo *Une fois seule* and as the Buggers Opera for Mardi Gras; with Paul Myers she performs German Kabarett and Lieder; with Italian pianist Mauro Colombis she performs the songs of Nino Rota, Paolo Conte and Astor Piazzolla. Nadia also performs with harpist Jacinta Dennet as duo Bliss!, guitarist Gino Pengue and accordionist Ross Maio as the Nadia Piave Trio, with flautist Jane Cavanagh as Three Colours and with pianist and singer Glenn Amer as the Opera/Comedy duo *Così Fun Tutti Frutti*!

Piave teaches at the Sydney Conservatorium Open Academy program and High School, the Sydney Philharmonia Adult Music Education program, the Macquarie Community College, the North Sydney Community Choir plus schools and community groups. She is passionate about her teaching as she is in her performing.

In March 2008 Piave was named the National Italian-Australian Woman of the Year and in November her debut CD *Rose* (www.vitamin.net.au) is released, in which she performs Italian and French songs ranging from the Baroque period to contemporary.

b. Glenn Amer:

I am introducing Glenn Amer as he has been involved in the performance of Italian-Australian music with Nadia Piave for a number of years, although not from an Italian heritage. Glenn Amer⁴⁵ is a well-known pianist, singer, orchestra conductor and organist. He was born in Sydney in 1974, studied at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music between 1986 and 1993, his main disciplines being piano and singing studies, also including clarinet, composition and horn. From 1997 to 2004 he was on staff at the Australian Institute of Music in Sydney as both a voice teacher and vocal coach; concurrently he was a guest coach for the National Academy of Music (based in Melbourne).

Amer's repertoire encompasses a wide-ranging variety of styles, and he is equally at home playing a major Bach organ work or a popular song by Burt Bacharach.

⁴⁵ See www.glennamer.com.

He has been compared to Liberace for his piano style and repertoire and to Mario Lanza and Robert Goulet for singing.

For many years, Amer was the exclusive accompanist to soprano Rita Hunter CBE and dramatic tenor Horst Hoffmann. Amer also regularly appears in concert with Yvonne Kenny and David Hobson as well as many other equally renowned singers. In 1997 he performed in concert for the Australian Prime Minister, the Hon. John Howard, at the Wrest Point Casino in Hobart, Tasmania.

Amer was accompanying musician of the Three Irish Tenors and released a CD with Sony with them, in 2004 he released a CD entitled *A Personal Collection*, while his latest CD is entitled *Sincerely Yours*.

Amer toured Australia and New Zealand extensively throughout his career, both as a solo artist and as an accompanying musician. In 2007 he has toured many countries of the Asia-Pacific Region; in 2008 he has continued to perform in the same region and also expanding to the Americas. In 2009, Glenn will make his first appearances to Tonga, Bermuda, the Azores, Lisbon, Seville, Barcelona, Sorrento and Sicily.

He has recorded extensively over the years for 2MBS-FM and the ABC and has been seen on all the free to air television stations, as well as major appearances on TV Suisse, Tokyo TV and various NZ television stations.

c. Repertoire analysis:

The concert 'Pane, amore e...musica' under the artistic direction of Nadia Piave and Glenn Amer, together with musicians Ross Maio and Gino Pengue, took place at the Club Five Dock, in the suburb of Five Dock in Sydney, on 31 August 2007, presenting songs both in Italian and in English.

The audience was largely Italian-Australian, mostly Italian-born and aged between 40 and 80. The concert was publicised via the local Sydney media (SBS radio and *La Fiamma* newspaper) and promoted by the Five Dock Learning Centre, an institution created by Italian immigrants, but open to all, dedicated to the teaching of the Italian language and the promotion of Italian culture.

The title of the show is a reference to one of the films of the ‘Golden Age’ of Italian cinema, *Pane, amore e fantasia* (Bread, love and dreams, 1953) by Luigi Comencini, when Rome was known as ‘Hollywood sul Tevere’ (Hollywood on the Tiber).

In the Appendix (m) I report the entire repertoire, producing two tables (M.1. and M.2.).

Table M.1. lists the musicians who performed the songs that evening, the title of the song, the original author of the song, the original year of publication of the song, the original song performer/s and the genre. I have listed some songs as pertaining to several genres.

Table M.2. shows which genres of songs mostly make up their repertoire in descending order. These categories may at time apply singularly to one song or may be overlapping in other songs.

We are considering a heterogeneous collection of songs, popular both in the homeland and in Australia – arguably two very distinct communities. It represents an exemplary case of Italian/Sicilian music in an Italian Club. This collection is formed by a multitude of songs written within the range of a century, from 1860 to 1970, when Italy was at the peak of its migratory experience.

Part of this collection of songs is a *canzoniere* (collection of songs) about migration, many of which were popularised by the ‘original’ three great Italian tenors: Beniamino Gigli, Bruno Caruso and Tito Schipa. An important percentage of the music migrants still remember and perform was that which the early national music industry (the gramophone⁴⁶ and radio⁴⁷ were in their infancy) contributed in disseminating through radio, phonograph (see note 40) and vinyl records.

⁴⁶ Thomas Edison’s ‘talking machine’, or phonograph, launching the wax cylinder record, was invented in 1877, while Emile Berliner’s gramophone, launching the vinyl record, was invented in 1887. Polyphon, the first Italian record company, was founded in Naples in 1901.

⁴⁷ State radio was established in Italy (in 1924), but there were only 1 million sets to a population of 44 million by 1939. People crowded into cafés or public squares to listen to radio broadcasts over public

The Neapolitan singing tradition and music production from this century counts dozens of songs about migration, one of the earliest being ‘Addio mia bella Napoli’ (1917), from the homonymous film, while another classic, ‘Torna a Surriento’, was written in 1902.

To these songs we have to add a corpus of miscellaneous songs which do not have any particular common thread, besides the fact of having been within a certain period of time (the afore-mentioned century).

Some of the songs or airs come from popular Italian Operas (La Traviata, La Cavalleria Rusticana), while others are *musica popolaresca* (music which was written on the models of traditional style but for the record industry), such as the Sicilian ‘L’acidduzzu di me cummari’ (my godmother’s little bird).

Some are simply pop tunes widely spread through radio (‘Marina’ by Rocco Granata, ‘Caruso’ by Lucio Dalla, ‘La Domenica andando alla messa’ by Gigliola Cinquetti). These songs have in common the fact that they remained popular in the Italian pastoral, peasant and fishing communities as well as among the emigrants, who came from those communities.

Interesting coincidences happened within my investigations when I discovered that, for example, the song ‘Terra Straniera’ or ‘Arrivederci Roma’ were played by both Giovanni Iacono, an artisan-musician on Lipari, and by Nadia Piave and her band, the daughter of an Italian migrant to Australia. These pop songs from the early decades of last century are still remembered and practised by communities who live in a time warp, for different reasons: rural Italians such as Iacono, due to their physical and cultural isolation from mainstream modern Italy – children of migrants such as Piave practise and remember because their sense of identity is tied to the music their ancestors were familiar with at the time they left the country.

It is impossible to consider the musical heritage of the Sicilian-Australian community without taking into account the influence of Italian-American migrants. Italian-

address systems (info source: Google books – Macdonald, Hamish (1999) *Mussolini and Italian Fascism*, Nelson Thornes).

American culture has flourished since the mid 19th C in most American major cities, producing a new, distinct culture from that of the homeland. A population of Southern Italian origin prevailed in the USA, so the derived culture which formed there was heavily influenced by the customs of peasant and seafaring peoples of the south. Italian operatic tradition was very popular among early migrants to the USA, who idolized Bruno Caruso, Beniamino Gigli and other great tenors. This created a sensibility in which folk music, outside of its original, peasant and isolated context, merged with Italian operatic tradition. Opera became ‘folklorized’, the domain of the people of peasant and fisher folk extraction.

This new Italian-American musical sensibility (ennobling local folk music practices and popularizing the operatic tradition), blended with the American homegrown music styles (such as jazz) and gave rise to music forms such as the crooner-style singing, common to Italian-Americans (such as Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin) and Anglo-Celtic Americans (such as Bing Crosby).

An entire ‘school’ of Italian-American music was born, with a distinctive style and distinctive authors and interpreters (e.g. [adding to the afore mentioned] Perry Como, Mario Lanza, Louis Prima, Lou Monte, Al Martino, Connie Francis, Rosemary Clooney, Sophia Loren, Tony Bennett to mention a few). The Italian-Australian community adopted this music wholesale and these authors as their cultural patrimony, feeling connected in sensibility and also historically to the Italian-American community. Examples of Italian-American songs, both in Italian and in English, are included in table M.1.; for example ‘Gelosia’, a classic which crossed the oceans, made popular by Connie Francis in the 1960s and by Adriano Celentano in the 1980s, but also the songs and figure of Mario Lanza, ‘Il tango delle rose’ (the tango of roses), popularised by Italian and Australian singers alike (Mario Battaini; Gigliola Cinquetti; Connie Francis; Jeff Krebs; Nilla Pizzi; Frank Sinatra; Carlo Buti), ‘Mambo Italiano’ (Rosemary Clooney [1954], Dean Martin, Sophia Loren [1960] in the film *It started in Naples*), ‘Souvenir D’Italie’, written by Perry Como and performed by both Como and Connie Francis.

Chapter 5. Categorization of Genres and Comparison

This chapter will map and categorize the findings of my research by pointing out similarities and differences between Sicilian musical practices in Italy and those in Australia. I have categorized the genres of music practiced or present in the consciousness of the Italian-Australian community into five types and I identify musicians who fit in the 5 categories of music practices both in Italy and Australia. I then analyse the significance of these categories in Italy and Australia. Having assessed these different levels, I provide an explanation for these differences and identify a cultural profile of the Sicilian-Australian community.

5.1. Enunciation of categories

All of the material concerning my research can be grouped into five principal categories, fitting musicians and practises found both in Italy and in Australia:

- Ritual and functional musical practices
- Vernacular musicians
- Folkloristic groups
- ‘Italian identity music’, which I sub-divided into – Italian-American, the ‘canzoniere’, Naples (influence), Folkloristic creative, Interregional mixture
- Folk revival musicians

5.1.1. Ritual and functional musical practices:

These are the musical practices which are tied to cult practices, such as the Banda as accompaniment to the procession of the Saint, rosary recitations and even the practise of silence during the procession. Over all, I have observed that these musical practises have remained relatively intact, although slightly weakened due to the ageing population of migrants and the progressive isolation from their source (due to the end of migratory movements from Italy to Australia in the mid-1970s).

The feste considered in this study are: two celebrations of the Festa di San Bartolomeo in Australia; the Italian and the Australian version of the Festa di Sant’Antonio; and the Festa della Madonna dei Poveri di Seminara. Summing up parallels and differences in the feste:

- a) Italian feste involve the whole town (or village or city)/Australian feste involve only the Italian community in part of the city
- b) Australian feste (observed) involve much longer/extensive entertainment sections
- c) Italian feste are much more conservative
- d) Australian feste are also conservative, but within the traditional styles created by migrants
- e) Rosaries and prayers are used much more extensively in Italy¹
- f) In Italy, Bandas continue to flourish while in Australia they are in decline²

To this, I add further extensive details on some of the genres I have considered:

5.1.2. Vernacular musicians:

These musicians typically have little consciousness of what folklore or folkloristic music is, as they have not had access to the cultural spheres in which these terms have been created and understood (bourgeois). These musicians often know that they just play music for their community: tunes the community seems to appreciate and which seem appropriate. Musicians in this category include Bartoluzzo Ruggiero, Giovanni Iacono, Antonino Cipriano and Antonino Sciacchitano, Mario Coppolino and Mariano Triforo. The last three performed for the Sicilian and wider community in Australia, as well as for their local, Aeolian fellow sub-community.

¹ On vernacular prayers and rosaries in Sicily Garofalo states, reassuming the fundamentals about these practices, with particular reference to one 19th C vernacular religious narrative named the *Viaggiu Dulurusu* ('The Strifeful Journey', referring to Mary and Joseph's journey with baby Jesus, escaping King Herod's order to kill Jewish males):

The composition of the Viaggiu dulurusu is to be considered in the context of the proliferation of texts in dialect on religious themes, which in the 18th C had been encouraged by the Church, both directly and indirectly. The aim of the religious institutions was to strengthen their cultural hegemony among the folk. The production of vernacular literature had the function of enhancing the diffusion of the Church's message, translating it into a language that was easily intelligible to the lower classes (author's translation).

An important article (also in Italian) on vernacular prayers and religious texts, fundamental to the understanding of these in Sicily, has been written by Giuseppe Giacobello (Buttitta, Perricone, 2000), *Pregchiere popolari e ricerca etnografica in Sicilia: 1857-1953* (Folk prayers and ethnographic research in Sicily: 1857-1953), where he also includes in this bibliography an overview of all major studies in the field (among the most important historical studies, we find the contributions of Bonomo 1953, Bronzini 1974, Tedeschi 1928, Toschi 1953 and 1943).

² Of Banda music I have written to a certain extent in Chapters 3 and 4, and a valid reference for Bandas in Sicily is Pennino, Politi and Guggino's triple LP with booklet, *Bande Musicali di Sicilia* (Palermo, Folkstudio, 1989).

The repertoire that all these musicians play is almost entirely constituted by *musica popolaresca*. Melodies from the *Canzone Napoletana* abound in Bartoluzzo's repertoire as well as in Iacono's. In contrast, Coppolino, Triforo, Cipriano, Sciacchitano play songs and music of more recent origin, but which have also been written by specific authors and recorded. *L' acidduzzu di me cummari*, the tune Sciacchitano knows best, was originally released by Rosa Balistreri on 45 rpm vinyl in 1968³. It is therefore somewhat of a paradox that the elder musicians (Cipriano, Sciacchitano, Coppolino and Triforo) are playing more recent tunes. This is mostly due to two factors: Iacono and Ruggiero, despite their generational difference, are both mandolin players and both are from the barbers/artisans/stringed instruments players 'caste'⁴. Being from this background, and being mandolinists, Iacono and Ruggiero are inclined to connect to the tradition of the *Canzone Napoletana*, eventually even writing the tunes in tablature: Sciacchitano, Cipriano, Coppolino and Triforo, on the other side, are from a more oral tradition/rural background. In this second type of musical practice, in which the musicians do not write any notation, exposure to many performances of the music to be learned is necessary. In pre-recorded music days, this was the mechanism through which all folk music was learnt and transmitted. Since the radio and recorded music developed, the learning of music by folk musicians has much depended on listening to radio, vinyl or tapes, on which *musica popolaresca* was heard. In the case of Cipriano and Sciacchitano, their means of learning has been mainly via radio exposure. Last but not least, musically, the impact of returning migrants upon the local population has been that of strengthening traditions as opposed to modernizing tendencies, typical of the folk in areas where migration has been less important. Overall, both artisan/urban and peasant folk musicians have in common the fact that (with the exception of the use tablature) they have learnt tunes by ear, mostly from the radio and for the purpose of entertaining

³ Under the name *Rusidda a Licatisa e la sua chitarra* for Tauro Record (then re-released, many years later [1997], by Palermitan record label Teatro del Sole). For details on Sicilian folk song icon Rosa Balistreri and her early production, please refer to the websites www.balistrerirosa.it , www.rosabalistreri.it and to the Archivio di Stato (Italian State Archive) of Rome, www.dds.it at the page <http://www.dds.it/catalogo/schedadoc.php?doc=64986&prog=0> .

⁴ On the music of barbers/artisans please refer to Bonanzinga 1995 (CD). Ruggiero was barber and Iacono, allegedly, butcher. The main difference between the two categories is that Iacono/Ruggiero have inherited urban folk traditions, while Sciacchitano/Cipriano have inherited rural traditions in music making.

their local community in festive occasions (as revealed through their interviews, their musicianship was very much community oriented).

5.1.3. Folkloristic groups:

The presence of Cala Bukutu, Cantori Popolari delle Isole Eolie, Gruppo Folk Siciliano and Gruppo Culturale Eoliano (aka Gruppo Folklorico Eoliano) both in Italy and Australia testifies how much this type of representation (or self-representation) of folklore is popular and ingrained among immigrants in Australia and the bourgeoisie in Sicily. Folkloristic groups are the first attempt of the folk (or former folk, to be more precise) to stage a form of self-representation. As discussed in Chapter 2, folkloristic groups came into existence at a moment when the folk is seen as something that has nearly disappeared, due to new historical/economic/social conditions. So the ex-folk members stage a representation of something which ‘was’. Something recreated, but which does not reflect the present situation (otherwise, there would be no need to stage a show).

Folkloristic groups are the lowest form of conscious self-representation the folk (henceforth meaning, the urban working classes) have used. The folk, as soon as it is not so anymore, adopts the most archaic self-portrayal available, as the ideology and poetics of folk groups are pseudo-scientific and go back to the days when ethnology was a sport of the gentry and/or the landowners. We are, hence, in a situation where people belonging to the lower and higher extremities of the social ladder, share the same cultural representation (the idyllicized, patronising version of the folk).

5.1.4. ‘Italian identity music’:

This category comprises four sub-sections: Italian-American, the ‘canzoniere’, Naples, Folkloristic creative. After an explanation of these categories I also include a section on interregional mixture (traditional songs from different Regions of Italy played by the groups/artists I mentioned in Australia).

a. Italian-American:

As noted in Chapter 4, Sicilian-Australians, and, more widely, Italian-Australians, have had a historical and cultural connection with the earlier Sicilian/Italian American immigrants. As noted, Sicilian-Americans have formed their own culture and musical

language, mixing rural oral tradition music with genres they found in the New World. As noted (4.9.2.c.), the process of Italian migration to the USA, especially from Naples, has been an inspiration in itself for the creation of songs in Italian and by Italians, which has become the heritage of both Italians in Italy and Italian communities in the world. It is important here to stress that the Sicilian/Italian-American musical heritage, meaning by this term both songs written in the USA by Italian-Americans and in Italy about migration to the States, is a heritage that belongs both to the communities residing within and outside Italy. Italian songs about migration (inspired by the process of migration itself) became patrimony of the migrants and Italians in Italy because of their subject, wide circulation and extraordinary performers: the songs written by Italian-Americans became iconic for all other migrant communities in the world because of the immense popularity they enjoyed, the media coverage and the leading role the USA and its cultural icons have developed in the world since Italian migration first started there (mid-19th C).

b. The ‘canzoniere’:

In the analysis of Nadia Piave/Glenn Amer’s repertoire in Chapter 4, as well as in the repertoire of nearly all other musicians described and listed in 4.4, we have seen how not only music from rural Italy is the heritage of the migrant repertoire, but also music from the radio and television era, from the 1920s to the 1970s. Music which has been composed, words which were written and broadcasted became oral tradition in a relatively short time. This, probably due to the fact that radio and television were not widely in use and people of the folk were still accustomed to producing their own music, live. Hence, along with songs on migration and coming from the Americas, migrating Italians incorporated into their oral tradition a significative corpus of popular music. This corpus of popular music, practised as oral tradition all over Italy from the second to the fifth decade of last century, has remained patrimony of the migrant communities, which have brought those songs abroad, maintaining them in new contexts.

Once the migration mechanism starts, a flux of information, culture and indeed, music, is generated between the place of origin and that of destination. More than this, if the migrants from the same locality have settled in several countries, interconnected fluxes are established to and from the places of origin and the places migrants left for.

Within these interconnected fluxes, the same songs are often reshuffled, back and forth, for decades, between the place of origin of the migrants and the various destinations where they decided to migrate. Often, the economic and livelihood conditions in the city/town of origin have been very slow to evolve, especially within the rural milieu from where the migrants left. Most disadvantaged areas in Italy, even after the ‘economic miracle’, have remained so. This creates a situation in which there is a discrepancy between the livelihood of the migrants in the new land and the lifestyle in their hometown/city. Often Italian-Americans or Italian-Australians, despite their material wealth/status/education gained in the new country, have maintained the cultural heritage of their forefathers. We can hence conclude that, in this particular instance, popular music has been folklorized and preserved, both in Italy and in the Italian derivate communities in the world, within the circular flows (or recycling) created between the two communities.

c. Naples (influence):

It is interesting to note the incidence of Neapolitan tunes in the different categories of musicians studied. As mentioned, Neapolitan music is very popular among the folk (meaning working class) in all Southern Italy and has risen to the status of being representative of Italian folk music on a global scale. As mentioned, Neapolitan music has had different levels of practice, from grassroots style to Opera. The ubiquity of the Neapolitan music traditions is due to its broad range. We find Neapolitan tunes played by Ruggiero and Iacono, on their mandolins, in Italy, as well as by the many singers (crooners) in the Italian-Australian Feste for the Saints. The influence of Neapolitan music is pervasive in most southern-Italian entertainment.

d. Folkloristic creative:

We now come to a category of musicians I have termed folkloristic creative: the Merlino Brothers, Momenti Eoliani, Legenda Meligunis and Sciara Ranni. Musicians comprising this category profess to perform folk music, yet they neither identify with a stylized (stereotyped) folkloristic Sicilian music (5.1.3.) nor with the politically informed Folk Revival style of music, concerned with social change and in folk ennoblement (5.1.5.). These interpreters can be considered independent folk artists, self-made and without the backing support of either the left-wing intelligentsia or of the tourist industry. Their music’s reason for being is ideologically (politically)

disengaged artistic expression, avoiding the over-emphasis of either the positives (as the folkloristic groups) or the negatives (as sometimes the socially engaged Folk revival groups) of the ‘typical Sicilian folk’. It is worthwhile mentioning the impact which the films *Vulcano* (Dieterle, 1950) and *Stromboli Terra di Dio* (Rossellini, 1950), filmed in the islands in the immediate second postwar years had on the local population. It made local fishermen and peasants aware of the fact that their lifestyle had something special about it, at least in the eyes of the city-dwelling foreigners. The visit of the two film crews started a self-perpetuating trend among the locals, who threw themselves into entertainment and into tourism, rejoicing in their newly found exotic image and trying to create events which would engage the local population as well as attract tourists. Although stemming from families in which music was practised, the Merlino brothers, Momenti Eoliani, Legenda Meligunis and Sciara Ranni have largely reinterpreted, and in some cases reinvented, the musical tradition of their land. The imagery of the Aeolian Islands as an archetypal paradise, a land of legends, endowed with natural wonders, warm people and culinary specialities, all themes which are recurrent in these groups’ songs – is the creation of a foreign imagination.

Emigration as well as returning migrants have also contributed to the idyllicization of the Islands, as we can see in Momenti Eoliani’s album *Australia Ottava Isola delle Eolie* (Australia – the Eighth Aeolian Island) and in certain songs by Angelo Merlino (such as *Erikoides*, in which he sings: “son partito, son ritornato, Isola mia, per star con te”, I have left, I have come back, my Island, to be with you).

Traditionally, the songs on the islands were not about the islands themselves as entities, as they were the only reality the inhabitants knew, but usually about love (see Bonanzinga CD, 1996 and Lizio-Bruno and Mango, 1987), as well as there being probably rhythmic chants used for traditional tuna-fishing and cries connected to traditional sword-fishing (by spearing from a long boat).

It is interesting that, as far as documented, the folkloristic creative musicians have not taken up the theme of love. Songs for courtship were soon surpassed by modern pop

songs learnt from the radio and TV and, with some exceptions⁵, the islands themselves became the subject of songs. Momenti Eoliani and the Merlino brothers had direct experience of the transition from an archaic style of life to a modern one and of migration. This brought them to mythicise the Aeolian Islands of the past. Legenda Meligunis and Sciara Ranni, although part of a younger generation, who hadn't lived the change, continued this narrative of remembrance and mythicization. There is hence a patronage of three generations of musicians going from Bartoluzzo Ruggiero, to the Merlino brothers and Salvatore Biviano and his Momenti Eoliani to Legenda Meligunis and Sciara Ranni. It is to be mentioned that the Biviano family had music practitioners well before Salvatore Biviano started his Momenti Eoliani; his father used to be a serenader, just as was Bartoluzzo Ruggiero up until the early 1960s.

Musicians of this category, although embracing a new theme and style (instead of singing about love for courtship purposes they sing for the community and about the Islands) seem to continue to produce music with the same spirit and for the same audience as their forefathers, although expanded to expatriate communities in the world (as in the case of Benito Merlino, who published CDs for the French label Buda Musique). It is one of the most interesting and prolific genres as, being motivated by personal creativity (and not spectacle-oriented as the folk groups, or ideologically addressed, as the left-wing influenced musicians), it represents with a certain degree of accuracy and truthfulness, the emotions and ways of being/feeling of the Islanders (rather than of agendas imposed upon them).

e. Interregional mixture:

In Australia, we also witness a phenomenon of intermingling of different Italian Regional music traditions, together with the adoption of elected pan-Italian songs (such as 'Bella Ciao' and 'Volare'). Examples of this mixture within the Sicilian context can be seen in the performance by Sicilians (such as Ross Maio) of pieces such as 'Reginella Campagnola' (Abruzzese) or 'Calabrisella' (Calabria); but looking at the repertoire of the Gruppo Folklorico Eoliano, we could cite 'Quant'e' bello lo primm'ammore' (Puglia – Molise), 'Funiculi funicula'' (Naples, together

⁵ Second category, vernacular musicians.

with all the other Neapolitan songs), ‘‘Na gita a li Castelli’ (Roman) and ‘Quel mazzolin di fiori’ (Alpine). We witness a merging of different Regional repertoires, due to the exiguity of the repertoire from single Regions (each Regional community narrows down its repertoire to a body of limited ‘standard’ songs) and because of the ageing of the community (members of different Regional Italian communities decrease numerically, hence when music shows are staged, the address becomes more and more to a general ‘Italian’ public rather than to fellow *paesani*⁶). The merging of different Regional traditions into one, generalized, Italianness, is not only within music, but also in a broader cultural sense. This process increases dramatically with each generation: while first generation migrants (post-war) struggled in Australia to find some reference points (also musical) that would represent Sicily (as opposed to their particular town or city, which often has its own singing/musical traditions), third generation Sicilian-Australians would culturally identify as Italians (no longer as Sicilians in particular), adopting a cultural profile generally identifiable as Italian. There definitely is an expansion in cultural horizons of the Sicilian (and more generally, Italian) Australian migrants when they establish themselves in Australia, not only in negotiating with Australian Anglo-Celtic culture, but also in rethinking and exploring their own Italianness/Sicilianness. I have often observed that second or third generation Italian musicians in Australia (such as Nadia Piave, Gino Pengue and Ross Maio) have a far deeper and more conscious knowledge of their cultural heritage (Regional cultural heritage) than their parents or grandparents. First generation migrants struggle culturally in migration and often remain with a sense of unease and displacement that lasts their lifetime. First generation migrants often do not feel cultural communality with fellow Italian immigrants from other Regions (with some exceptions, such as the Sicilians and Calabrians).

5.1.5. Folk revival musicians:

By this definition I include Muratori, Corsaro, Palamara and Di Pino, within this category as musicians who are typical products of the intellectual left-wing influenced take on the folklore of the 1960s called Folk Revival.

⁶ Paesano = person from the same region or town.

Muratori, Palamara and Corsaro, all in their 50s and 60s, are all from bourgeois families, have had access to secondary level education (at least) and have learnt folk music from recordings (few, at the times they were in their twenties, when they started to play music) and from research in the field, recording and researching authentic folklore, music practised by peasant musicians. All three have had more or less direct and intense contacts with ethnomusicologists. Overall, these three folksingers have developed their skills in a cultural and political climate where the Italian Left Wing poetics of the ‘authentic’ and ‘uncontaminated’ folk were predominant, in which Italian Regional cultures were seen as a true expression of people who culturally (and heroically) resisted the globalised, capitalistic entertainment industry, its values and styles, most of which are imported from the USA. The type of folk singer the Left Wing advocated ideally had to be the spontaneous, ‘wise’ and genuine expression of the people, better if overtly criticizing either the old establishment (the landlords, in pre-industrial and agricultural [in most cases Feudal] Italy) or the new (the factory owners/industrialists in modern Italy). Generally, post-war Italy’s *intelligenza* (intellectual class) has been dominated by Marxist and left wing personalities, developing Italy’s distinctive Social Policy, which endorses and develops workers’ rights together with the acceptance of a responsible and socially aware capitalism. Luigi Di Pino, slightly differently from the three described above, ideally aligns himself to the *cantastorie*, the traditional minstrels of Southern Italy, as described in Chapter 4.

The Folk Revival originated in the USA and spread throughout the West, advocating causes such as pacifism, civil rights and an equitable benefit from the primary and industrial resources⁷. Italian folk revival artists and ethnomusicologists also overtly made reference to Marxist ideologies and theories, which have had many influential advocates and spokespersons in Italy, from the post-war years until the late 1970s. The most credible contribution to the preservation of musical folklore in Italy since the post-war years has been provided by the circle of left-wing politicians, trade unions leaders and personalities in the world of culture (both in music and in other arts) who have taken to heart, with great scientific rigour, the cultural heritage of the

⁷ For references to American Folk Revival, its motivations, its protagonists and its aims and ideals, please refer to the website of the Foundation for Cultural Equity, established by American pioneering Ethnomusicologist Alan Lomax (1915-2002), <http://www.culturalequity.org/ace/index.html>.

folk, intended in a Marxist way⁸. It has been in the unfolding of this cultural climate that figures such as Muratori, Corsaro, Palamara and Di Pino have come into being, giving voice to the Marxist poetics of the art of the spontaneous and uncontaminated folk⁹.

5.2. Self-awareness: an explanation of elements

Considering the different categories described above, for the purpose of analysis, I have put them into a diagram, in which I make several observations about their nature. I have named the diagram Self-Awareness, as the music categories are positioned in an order of increasing awareness, from low to high. I will explain what is meant by Self-Awareness and make a series of observations based on these different degrees of Self-Awareness. After having explained this map and expanded on the critical thoughts we can gather from it, I shall proceed with further analysis derived from these thoughts.

⁸ For references to Italian Ethnomusicology, its ideals and protagonists, refer to the website of the Istituto Ernesto de Martino, <http://www.iedm.it/> established by Gianni Bosio and named after one of the founders of Italian Ethnomusicology, together with Diego Carpitella (who worked with Alan Lomax in his 1950 expeditions in Italy).

⁹ The ideas of spontaneous and uncontaminated folk were initially formulated by Johann Gottfried Herder, in the late 18th C, welcomed and developed by British Cecil Sharp in the late 19th C, and these concepts have been popular throughout the western world ever since. McKay in the late 20th C has been one of the first ethnomusicologists to challenge these concepts in *The Quest of the Folk* (1994), a treatise on the work of Canadian Ethnomusicologist Helen Creighton (1899-1989).

HIGH SELF AWARENESS

ITALY		AUSTRALIA			
			Social Status	Scholarly/ Cultural level	Political creed
Time	Present	FOLK REVIVAL	MUSICIANS	NON-FOLK / EX-FOLK – BOURGEOIS / EMIGRANTS	LEFT WING
	NAPLES	ITALIAN Italian-American/ Folkloristic	IDENTITY MUSIC Canzoniere / Creative	MEDIUM	RIGHT WING / CONSERVATIVE
	FOLKLORISTIC		GROUPS	LOW	
	NAPLES	VERNACULAR	MUSIC	FOLK	LORE
Past		RITUAL	TRADITIONS		

NO SELF AWARENESS

5.1. Self-awareness map

To understand the tabulation of these different levels of awareness, we need to consider the different ways table 5.1. I will list the and explain them singularly, so for a full understanding of table 5.1. it will be necessary not only to read what I mean by each element, but also to recognise how these different elements are interrelated.

The categories refer to musicians included in my study (residing either in Italy or in Australia). After an explanation of the table, I discuss the similarities and differences in the way musicians pertain to these categories.

5.2.1. Self awareness/non-self awareness:

In this diagram (5.1), I characterize the degree to which the people comprised in each category are familiar with the concept of folk music. As we can see, ritual traditions and vernacular music are the lowest, gradually rising to folk music which has resulted from ethnomusicological research (Folk Revival musicians). As mentioned, musical traditions connected to ritual are seldom perceived as music performances; rather, they are regarded as part of a belief system. They are cultural practices and as such will not be subject to the changing fashions of entertainment. Vernacular musicians and folkloristic musicians, instead, are aware of the fact of playing folk music as entertainment. This awareness has its toll in terms of authenticity of the music, as vernacular musicians have often played music which they have in fact been learnt from the radio (as we have seen in the case of Ruggiero, Iacono, Cipriano and Sciacchitano, 3.2.5.f.), while the components of folkloristic groups are often simply staging not traditional music, but artificially crafted spectacles, fruit of the taste and agendas of particular choreographers and folklorists (as explained in 3.2.1. and 3.2.5.c.). Among musicians whom I categorized playing the diverse genres which I branded under the name of ‘Italian identity music’ (5.1.4.), the awareness of what they are playing, and their choice of the repertoire, is far greater. Musicians playing what I call folkloristic creative music (5.1.4.d.) or the ‘canzoniere’ (5.1.4.b.) definitely have insights on what tradition is, what is innovation, and start to have critical discretion over the ways tradition is interpreted. Folk Revival musicians (5.1.5.), out of all categories, are the only ones who decide consciously, often from personal ethnomusicology studies, the music they are going to play and the way they are going to play it. Their choice of repertoire and style is often backed my scholarly

research which have either conducted themselves, or was conducted by scholars with whom they are at an even cultural level.

5.2.2. Time:

On the left of the diagram I have included a time chart. The diagram, in fact, is intended to be read in a time perspective. We move from categories like ritual and vernacular music (which have been practised for centuries and which are still practised) to Folk Revival, which is the most modern interpretation of folklore (as we have said, paradoxically, not played by people of the folk). Although the progression from ritual to revival does follow time, it is also to be noted that the entries and development of new practices do not replace the former; rather, the latter are ongoing, contemporaneously. All categories of music in table 5.1. are, in fact, now in regular use.

5.2.3. Political creed:

In the diagram I have indicated practitioners of three categories out of four as holding a right-wing/conservative outlook, while the folk revivalists, have a left wing outlook. As discussed, Folk Revival musicians are generally from a mid to high bourgeois extraction and the music they perform is often the result of the activity of collection, study and preservation by ethnomusicologists, who in Italy, almost without exception, profess a left-wing political affiliation. Music practitioners of the other categories described, contrarily, often profess a conservative political affiliation. It is important to emphasize that I am referring specifically to the musicians and artists presented in my thesis, not to the Italian scene at large, which is quite multifaceted and has changed profile several times throughout history. In this particular study, the political affiliations are as I have indicated, and this situation reflects the status in the spectrum of Italians I have examined: migrants from Sicily and Southern Italy who left for Australia between 1945 and 1973.

5.2.4. Naples (influence):

In 5.1.4.c. I discussed the influence and importance of Neapolitan music, in its different forms, in the creation and maintenance of Italian and Sicilian identity in

Australia. In this graph, I show in which ambits the influence of Neapolitan music is present.

5.2.5. Influence of ritual traditions:

I have coloured in light blue four sections out of five in the table to highlight the use and nature of music traditions attached to ritual practices. As said in the introduction to this Chapter, the various categories, although reflecting a historical evolution of the use of folk music (which becomes more and more formalized), don't invalidate the previous forms and categories. For instance, as we have seen in the Festa di Sant'Antonio 2007, (Chapter 4), the coexistence of archaic rosaries to the Saint before John St Peeters' performance of 'Livin' La Vida Loca' is possible.

As long as the social and cultural strata in which the particular genre is nurtured and in which a genre flourished still subsists, the old practises will persist along with newer interpretations of folk music. A particular case is ritual traditions, such as prayer, rosaries or, for instance, Banda music, which are performed mainly by all categories except the Folk Revival musicians. This is mainly due to the fact that practitioners of all the categories except the Folk Revival musicians are religious and of right wing (or at least, centrist) political persuasion. Folk revivalists would also, in some cases, endorse and perform music forms associated with ritual, but in a very detached way (i.e. not necessarily believing in their actual function). This is because of the general aversion of left-wing ideologies to religion. However, parallel to this aversion to practices and doctrines promulgated by the Church, since the late 1960s there has been an interest in heterodox or folk Catholic practices among the left-wing intellectuals' counter-culture, which had often been the object of study of left-wing ethnomusicologists. We could hence generally maintain that musical practices connected to cults and practices officially sanctioned by the Catholic Church are mainly heritage elements of the practitioners of all categories except the Folk Revival musicians, while the Folk Music revivalists either maintain an overtly hostile attitude towards faith, or are engaged in the promotion of heterodox folk Catholicism¹⁰.

¹⁰ As an example of this case, we could cite Luigi Di Pino's song on the Madonna stopping the lava on Mount Etna (performed at the Burwood RSL).

5.3. Levels, parallels and differences:

5.3.1. Levels:

Having explained the awareness map, I must add that, although the musicians performing the different categories of music listed above exist in both Italy and Australia, they are present in these areas, in quite different proportions.

5.3.2. Parallels:

Musical traditions connected to ritual are important in the communities I observed both in Italy and in Australia. However, this is due to particular social, economic and, ultimately, cultural conditions of the people studied. Most migrants to Australia who have been the subject of this thesis came from a peasant or working class background, from a time when Italy was evolving from being an agricultural country to an industrial and post-industrial country. This signifies that, even though the immigrants and their descendants have climbed the social ladder, economically and culturally, as Australians, their Italian background culture and heritage remains deeply connected to its original state at the time of their departure from Italy.

5.3.3. Differences:

It must be understood that, even if representatives of the genres are present in Italy and Australia, they are important in Australia, in the community, while in Italy they are a minimal part of the Italian national scene. All of the music genres and musical practices I have talked about in this thesis are marginal genres in Italy, not visible or seen with the same point of view as in Australia. For instance, music connected to rituals, such as Banda music, rosaries and prayers, are practised in Italy only by a minority of the population nowadays. Music of the 'canzoniere' (Italian Songbook) is mostly performed for tourists; Italian-American songs would generally be regarded as old-fashioned and would be listened to by a minority of people with special interest in them. Folkloristic groups in Italy are mainly set up and employed for the tourism industry. Musicians of the category Folk Revival, by contrast, are not a minor phenomenon in Italy; it is a movement that has been promoted by the Left Wing since the early 1960s.

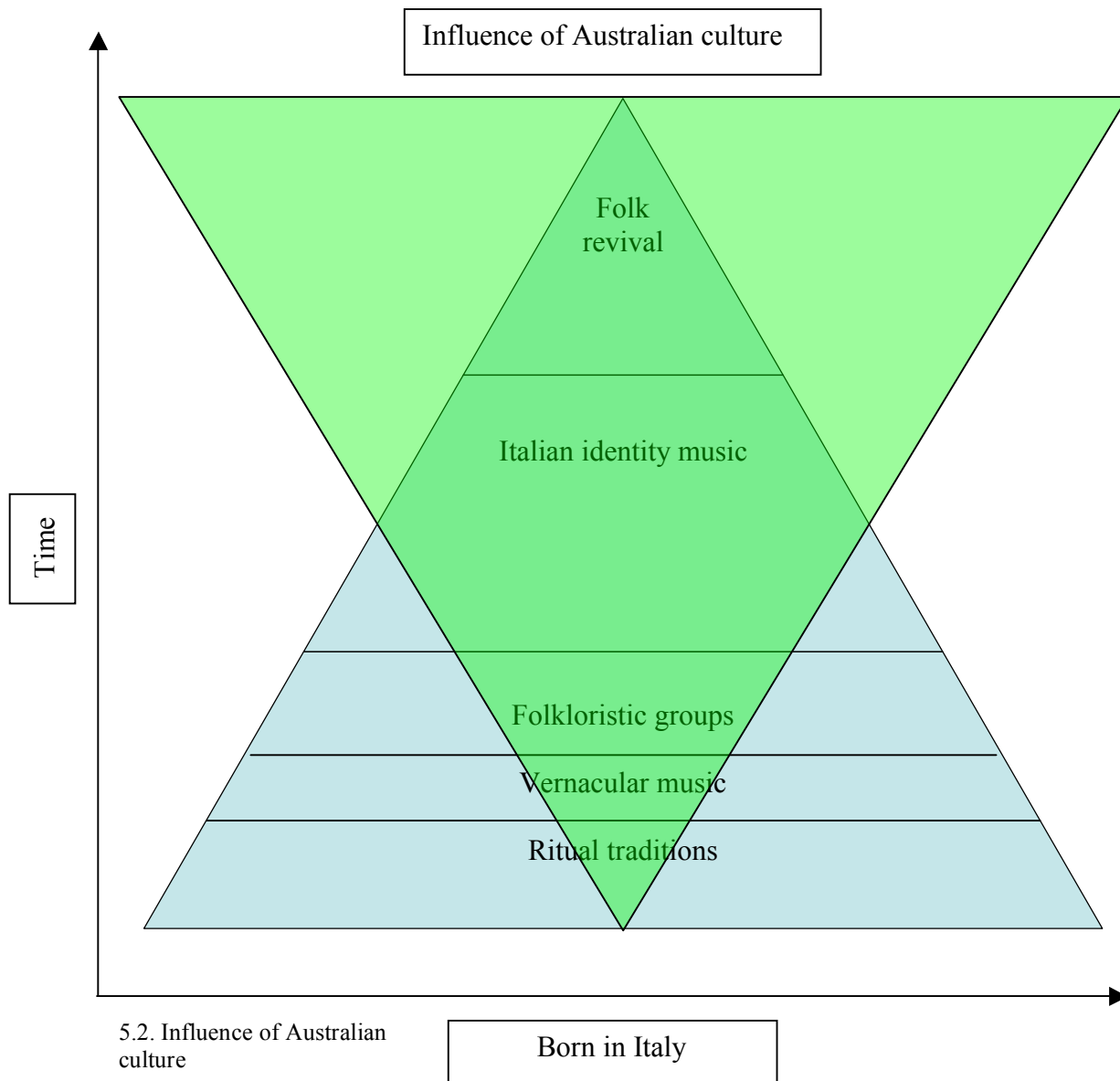
5.4. The influence of Australian culture:

I have summarized the relationships between the categories described above and the adoptive Australian society in the diagram below. This shows the relationships displaying to which extent the Italian-born population is familiar with the categories (horizontal line) and the time in which these categories of music have appeared and have been practised in the history of Italian migration (vertical line).

The diagram shows that ritual traditions are the first and most popular (widely practised) among the migrants. As we have seen in previous chapters, confraternities celebrating Protector Saints were established just a few years after the first, considerable migration fluxes started (1903 for the Aeolians and 1969 for the Poggiorealesi). Shortly thereafter comes the music these people brought with them (as in musical skills) from the town or village: vernacular music. Differently from traditions connected to ritual, which still are active and are visible in today's scene, vernacular musicians were many at the times of mass migration but are very few nowadays. Folkloristic groups were a limited phenomenon which involved a moderate number of people already after the peak of the migration period (the late 1980s and the 1990s), when the Italian and Sicilian communities were starting to age. What I called 'Italian identity music' has been the main category of music, all along (from the first migrants to today), which has remained intact, solid and even unchanged. Out of all the genres I have classified, it is the most 'resistant' to change and time. As discussed in previous chapters, it is not a traditional music in the proper ethnomusicological sense, but it has acquired a traditional quality due to its identity function. Lastly, we have folk revival musicians, such as Musicantis, the various "Taste of Sicily" troupes and the other shows presented by Piave, Pengue and Maio, presenting southern Italian traditional and art music. These shows are relatively recent (since the 1990s) and attract a small audience of older Italian immigrants with some cultural awareness. It is significant that they are performed by children of immigrants (Piave, Pengue and Maio) and that most of the public would attend events of an elevated cultural calibre, often sponsored by the Italian Institute of Culture.

In the diagram, the first blue triangle indicates not only a progression in time of the genres, but also the quantity of people involved in each genre, from a large number of Italian-born performing the genres at the bottom of the triangle at the beginning of

migration to a small number of Italian-born, in the present, listening to and performing the genres at the top of the triangle. The green, inverse triangle represents the fact that the influence of Australian culture increases among the Italian/Sicilian population in time and also the fact that, with the passing of time, peasant-based forms of music and culture (the first two levels) fall into disuse, while the development towards different and 'higher' forms of music, progressively more refined and self-aware, becomes prevalent.



6. Conclusions

6.1. Contextual analysis of Sicilian-Australian music data collected

Historically, as noted many times throughout this thesis, Sicilian post Second World War migration to Australia (along with New Zealand and Canada) is the last link of a chain of a mass migratory movement to the USA and to South American countries. Migration to the latter started 80 years before the post-Second World War exodus to Australian shores, for the same reasons as Sicilian migration to the USA (poverty and war-stricken conditions) and South America and from the same, remote and under-developed regions of Italy. I have found in undertaking this study that there is a substantial difference between the early migrants to the Americas and those to Australia; the latter left inheriting the coping experience which they had learnt, either directly or indirectly¹, from the Italian-American emigrant experience.

With time, cultural and political changes had occurred, the cultural deriving from the political. In particular, referring to Italian migration to countries of Anglo-Celtic culture, the USA had passed from a firmly racist and opportunistic treatment of migrants (Naturalization Act) to the idea of Melting Pot, or Cultural Pluralism, conceived in intellectual circles in the 1910s and 1920s and which came into vast popularity and was actualized in the 1930s to 1940s. This had a profound effect on the treatment of migrants also in Australia, whereby, although racist attitudes and the White Australia Policy were still prevalent, their decline started and came to a final extinction in the 1970s, when Australia's Multicultural Policy became official.

This coming of age of a non-racist policy of inclusion of non-Anglo-Celtic people had a significant effect on the way Italians integrated into society and in the formation of a distinctive Italian/Australian identity.

Prior to the Melting Pot in the USA (1940s) and Multiculturalism in Australia (1970s) outright racism and segregation, fostered the development of micro-cultures in the host Anglo-Celtic societies (USA, Canada and Australia) on one side; on the other it forced Italian immigrants to refute, hide, mask and forget their heritage, anglicizing as much as possible and in the shortest time possible.

¹ Many families who migrated to Australia had already been to the Americas or had heard of it through the accounts of relatives.

The maturing of a multicultural ‘tolerance’ of Italians in Australia made the transition much softer. The migrants were no longer forced into a cultural ghetto or expected to anglicize.

This ‘softness’ came into place in Australia progressively, in the years the migrants started to come en masse (from the 1940s to the 1970s). First generation migrants still had some motivation to hold onto their culture, for reasons connected to their age and also the fact that their departure had been often a traumatic and unwanted change. But they were no longer compelled to conform in such a confronting way as previous migrants to the USA. The tension to either conform or, on the other side, create a protected, micro-society in which to survive, was much lessened in Australia. The children of most post-war migrants grew up in an Australia that was progressively accepting of Italians, no longer in a patronizing and opportunistic way. Each successive generation progressively had the opportunity to climb the social ladder in a way that for their ancestor-migrants would have been inconceivable.

6.2. Cultural and social consequences of Australian foreign policies

The lack of pressure and of the feeling of difference, put in place by official multiculturalism, implemented by Al Grassby’s definitive end of the White Australia policy in 1973, introduced a dimension that is only very recent in history. Sicilian-Australians adopted and utilized a transitory identity, to arrive to be part of mainstream multicultural Australia society within the time-lapse of one, maximum two generations. This brings us to one of the most interesting realizations in this thesis: the fact that multiculturalism, through allowing migrants to maintain and live with their customs and appearance, brought peoples of non-Anglo-Celtic background to assimilate the values of “white Australia” in the most effective way. As Jon Stratton (1999) suggests:

Far from challenging the hegemonic position of white cultural and political power in Australia, official multiculturalism has entrenched it. Multiculturalism has been a strategic response of Australia to its need to “populate or perish”, in which whiteness was a category which has been changed throughout history, at the end including all Europeans (northern, southern and eastern), “white”

Levantine (such as Lebanese, Syrians and Persians) and Slavs. When multiculturalism came into place, migrants to Australia were allowed to maintain their “colour”, but required to abide to a “whiteness” which was no longer of skin, but a set of White Anglo-Celtic and Protestant values which ultimately had been the dominating aristocracy of the nation and whose leadership has always been unchallenged (p.163).

I subscribe to these views, having observed that the Australian allowance to maintain background ethnicity (e.g. in the feste or in concerts celebrating heritage), far from constituting a barrier towards Anglicization, is the safety valve which can make assimilation possible. If the Italians were not able to remember their past and identity through religion and music, they would not be able to take distances from it and evolve. As often remarked throughout this research, most of the performances of the generations of considered Sicilian-Australians are exercises in remembrance: they propose little or no ideas for future evolution. The music performed in the feste and other gatherings, either public or private, is a mere exercise in memory of the tunes which the migrants were familiar with at the moment of their departure to Australia. It is necessary to know and represent regularly ‘what the community used to be’, through performances, feste and spectacles, for cultural assimilation and social change to occur. Representation equals exorcising the past, and the trauma of migration, to move on.

From cultural assimilation an enhanced social inclusion resulting from Multiculturalism, follow stronger possibilities for social affirmation. Upon my arrival in Australia, and realizing that an important cultural and social shift had occurred for the migrants, my initial mission to find musical relics from the old world in Sydney evolved, giving space to a research trying to recognize the ways in which the culture and musical traditions of the community have evolved.

The realization that I was facing a different kind of social structure, the Australian middle class, incorporating multicultural elements, has made me see that it is futile to try and find the vestiges of a culture attached to the Italian social order (remnants of music tied to agricultural and rural life and practices). Marxist models of analysis of culture, involving the subdivision of society in classes with corresponding, separate

cultures seemed non-applicable and pointless; methodologies and issues proper to cultural studies, and in particular diaspora studies, multicultural studies and globalization studies seemed much more appropriate to undertake the new task which I have concluded is worthwhile pursuing: analysing cultural change through music. Here utilizing these new outlooks, I describe the processes which shaped the change in the music.

6.3. Processes which shaped the Sicilian-Australian musical heritage

The music found within the Sicilian-Australian community is the product of four types of processes: depletion, diffusion, syncretism and fetishisation. These four types of processes are interrelated:

6.3.1. Depletion:

The reconstructed music/cultural identity (subject to syncretism and fetishisation) in Australia has been crystallized, in form and language, by the first generation post Second World War migrants to Australia. Due to its conservativeness, it has little chance of survival: it fades away after a couple of generations, as the younger generations can not interpret/share the world of their parents and grandparents.

6.3.2. Diffusion:

In the course of my field investigation, I have remarked that the Sicilian specificity of the music is hard to maintain. It tends to merge with the other traditions of other sub-regional Italian migrant groups (i.e. Calabrians, Abruzzesi, Romans, Neapolitans and northerners).

6.3.3. Syncretism and fetishisation:

The music which has a role as an emblem of Sicilian/Italian identity in Australia is not a heritage from Italy, but rather a reconstructed form, crafted in Australia. Syncretism, i.e. the mixture of two originally distinct forms into a new, lasting form is one of such reconstructed forms.

I have distinguished syncretism of two types:

- Italian-Australian music, in which the influence of the music of other Italian migrant communities in the world is evident
- The mixture of Italian-Australian music with the traditions of other migrant communities in Australia.

Of the first type, the influence of the Italian-American music and imagery is overwhelming², of the second type are the influences of Latin American music³ a partial integration of music and people from the Maltese-Australian community in the scene⁴, the long-term collaborations of Gino Pengue with musicians from the Armenian scene and of Ross Maio with Polish musicians (Elsley Ensemble).

Fetishisation, on the other hand, is the ‘purist’ tendency to preserve a folklore, founded on two arbitrary premises: academic reconstruction, in the case of the Folk-Revival musicians; and standardization for spectacle purposes in the case of Folkloristic Groups. Although the premises from which folkloristic groups and Folk Revival groups operate are different, and the performance is carried out by, and directed to, completely different people, ultimately they aim at the same result: staging a ‘purified’ version of their ethnic music and image (as we have analysed, deeply different from reality).

These four processes operate in different measures, but often contemporaneously, in every single musician I have considered in this thesis. I believe that these processes are also true for music traditions of other migrant communities in Sydney. The overall usefulness of this thesis aims to be that of realizing which is the process of cultural change and through which patterns it occurs.

² As widely described in Chapter 5.

³ Mexican entertainer Patricio Rodriguez at the *Festa di Sant’Antonio*, the many “Spanish” songs performed by the musicians mentioned in this thesis.

⁴ The integration of Maltese musicians in the Banda G Verdi and its sporadic appearance in Maltese Festivals, but also the singer Adam Scicluna and Carmen Parente.

6.4. The future

Realizing that with a shift of the subject of study (the Sicilian immigrant community) to another social order (the Australian, mainly characterised by the middle class), the models of analysis (Marxist) and the aims I had set off to begin my study were no longer sustainable or interesting (finding musical relics) has been the most interesting finding in the thesis process. This study has been an effort not only to study two different peoples of the same origin, though living on opposite sides of the world; but also an to merge different methods of study applicable in Italy and in Australia. I consider the confrontation of methods and their evolution which occurred in this thesis a strength rather than a weakness. My hope is that also learning of the struggle of the scholar who endeavours to study the processes which a migrant community undergoes, can be of heuristic use in similar diaspora studies. The present study has targeted the cultural and class shift of a migrant community and the influences involved therein; for future scholars it endeavours to be a foundation on which to question the evolution of this musical heritage in the third (and forthcoming) generations of Sicilian-Australians.