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The Nature and Impact of Italian Culture upon Galveston Island

Valentine J. Belfiglio
THE NATURE AND IMPACT OF ITALIAN CULTURE
UPON GALVESTON ISLAND

by Valentine J. Belfiglio

Through the act of adaptation to the dominant cultural norms of Galveston Island, Texas, Italian immigrants who migrated there before 1920 were able to prosper. This paper will examine the process of Italian immigration, resettlement, and community formation there. It will explore cultural and institutional factors which help to define the personal identity and group consciousness of Italian-Galvestonians, and also investigate the impact of Italian heritage upon the society of Galveston. This paper will not focus upon the large Italian colony in Dickinson, Texas, or its origins, as this group requires a special study of its own. Nor will it include a discussion of the notorious Italian families who controlled gambling on the Island in the 1940s and 1950s, as this topic also requires a special study.

Galveston, the Ellis Island of the West, attracted people from all parts of Italy because of economic opportunities to be found there in processing and shipping cotton, sulfur, rice, and flour, and in shipbuilding, fishing, and port-related activities. It is difficult to determine exactly when Italians began settling within Galveston County. Census records prior to 1890 list no Italians living there. However, directories for the City of Galveston for 1856-1857 and 1859-1860, mention several persons with Italian surnames. A few examples include: J. Arto, who owned a restaurant and ice-cream saloon on 23rd Street, between Avenue C and Market Street; F.L. Barziza, who practiced law on the corner of Strand and 22nd streets; P.J. Barziza, who lived on the corner of 12th Street and Avenue F; and H. Monsanto, who sold tobacco and other smoking supplies on the corner of Avenue F and 24th Street.

The evidence for an early Italian presence in Galveston County is strengthened by manuscript censuses and tombstone inscriptions. The Census schedule for Galveston County, enumerated on June 9, 1880, a manuscript which is different from the U.S. Census, shows several persons of Italian birth living there before May 31, 1880. Two examples are L. Papanai, who owned a grocery store and who lived at 256 Mechanic Street, and G. Martinelli, who lived next door. Several Italians are buried at Old City Cemetery, which is located at 40th and K avenues. For instance, Louis G. Alberti was born in 1852 and died in 1915; Elizabeth Cobolini was born on May 28, 1859, and died on January 12, 1916; and A. Tuttoilmondo was born on November 1, 1860, and died on January 22, 1894. Certificates of marriage stored in the Galveston County courthouse also show that Italians were living in the county before 1890. For example, Pietro Nocenti married Maria Pellegrini on November 19, 1872; John Rizzina married

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Valentine J. Belfiglio teaches in the Department of History and Government at Texas Woman's University, Denton.
Antonia Falco on April 13, 1875; and Francesco Saccaro married Antonnia Sigari on January 31, 1871.

At the turn of the century, Italians were well established in Galveston. Table I gives the number of foreign-born Italians resident in Galveston County between 1870 and 1920. The table indicates an increase every decade between 1880 and 1920, and shows that the sharpest climb in the Italian population occurred between 1900 and 1910. In 1910 more than two percent of the total population of the county were foreign-born Italians. Most southern Italian immigrants were poorly educated *pescatori* (fishermen), *contadini* (peasant farmers), or *giornalieri* (day laborers), who belonged to the Roman Catholic Church. Northern Italian immigrants were generally *uomini d'affari* (businessmen), who were Roman Catholics or Waldensians.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Number of Italians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>15,290</td>
<td>none listed*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>24,121</td>
<td>none listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>31,476</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>44,116</td>
<td>560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>44,479</td>
<td>1,030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>53,150</td>
<td>1,065</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Galveston County was created in 1838 and organized in 1839. The U.S. Censuses for 1840-1860 also make no mention of Italians living within the County.

**Sources:**

A Columbus Day celebration held in 1912 drew nearly two hundred people, including several local governmental officials. Among them were Mayor Lewis Fisher; the Italian consular agent, Clement Nicolini; Commissioner M.E. Shay; and Judge George H. Mann. This celebration shows the presence of an Italian ethnic consciousness. Grand Marshall C. Taranta, and G. Cassara, president of an organization called the Star of Italy, arranged for the celebration. Festivities included a parade, flag
ceremony, a concert, games, and speeches. Many of these events took place at Woollams Lake picnic grounds. During his speech, Mayor Fisher made a comparison between the courage of Christopher Columbus and the mettle of Italian immigrants.

Many Italians prospered. Table II indicates the kinds and numbers of common businesses owned by Italians in Galveston in 1906. Incredibly, they owned fifty percent of all retail grocery stores, twenty-five percent of all confectionary and fruit stores, and twenty-five percent of all shoe shops. There are two reasons why Italians were successful in commerce in Galveston. First, many northern Italians were businessmen who came to Texas for the explicit purpose of establishing capitalistic enterprises. Second, most of the immigrants had spent a few years in other parts of Texas or the United States before coming to Galveston and they possessed language and business skills superior to those of newly arrived immigrants. Also, they were already partially acculturated and adapted to their new environment in America before coming to Galveston. Their primary purpose for moving to the United States was to improve their lifestyle and make their fortune.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE II. Major Occupations of Italian Galvestonians: 1906.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of Business Establishments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Grocery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confectionary &amp; Fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoe-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Number of Italian-Owned Businesses</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail Grocery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confectionary &amp; Fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoe-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94 (50%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Galveston City Directory for 1906. Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas.

Most of the southern Italians who migrated to Galveston came from three provinces in Sicily. Fishermen from Acitrezza and Acicastello within the province of Catania were among them. Peasant farmers from the provinces of Palermo and Agrigento also moved to Galveston. Some of the villages they emigrated from include: Cefalu, Piana Dei Greci, Mezzoiuso, Monreale and Corleone. A majority of the northern Italians who emigrated to Galveston were from the provinces of Lucca or Livorno (Tuscany), although some of them came from the province of Asti (Piedmont). Migrants traveled overland and boarded ships at Palermo or Genoa. Most sailed to New Orleans or New York, and some landed at ports in Philadelphia, Baltimore, or Boston. Some sailed directly from Europe to
Galveston. Manifests of aliens who arrived at Galveston between 1896 and 1920 contain the names of many Italians. For example, a manifest dated December 6, 1898, mentions Albina De Ponto, a saw miller from Belluno, Italy. He sailed aboard the ship, *Ellen Rickmers*, from Bremen with $10 in his pocket.\(^1\)

Research by Patrick B. Mullen (1974) indicates that the Sicilian fishermen who moved to Galveston followed a set pattern. According to Mullen, "... most of them came to Florida to fish and stayed there until a big general migration of fishermen to Texas ... One man was a leader in the move to Galveston ... He then began to bring friends and relatives from Florida and Italy into Texas which explains the fact that so many Italians in Galveston are from the same village in Sicily."\(^1\) Mullen profiled the immigrants as men of "limited education ... Catholic ... Their friends seemed to be mainly people with the same ethnic background, but there were no complete separation geographically or socially from the rest of the community ... They do have a few magic beliefs ... which were an important part of the fishermen’s life in their Sicilian village."\(^1\) Sicilians who entered the United States at the port of New Orleans generally arrived in Texas by ship or train after sojourns in Louisiana, where they worked in the sugarcane fields. Italians who lived in the eastern part of the United States before coming to Texas found work in mines, railroad construction, the garment industry, and in positions requiring few special skills.

Giuseppe Grasso and Luigi Cobolini offer contrasting examples of the early Italian settlers of Galveston Island. Grasso was born in 1883 in the small seacoast village of Acicastello in eastern Sicily. The village is located on the side of a hill and is dominated by the ruins of an ancient Norman castle which was built in 1458. The village occupies 5.34 square miles, and its population in 1921 was 4,829.\(^1\) Most of the villagers grow fruits and vegetables for their own use, and many of them fish for sardines and anchovies in the sea.\(^1\)

When he was a young man, Grasso sailed to Florida, but he stayed there for only a short time. He went to New York and worked on a merchant ship, and in 1906 he voyaged to Galveston aboard a small steamer. He worked there as a fisherman and as a longshoreman. After he had saved some money, Grasso returned to Sicily to marry Carmelina, his childhood sweetheart. The couple settled in Galveston and eventually they had two sons, Joseph and John. Grasso began a fishing business with a single small boat, but he later became the owner of one of the largest and most successful fish dealerships in the city. Grasso was well known in Galveston. He was an active member of the Catholic Church and of several social organizations.\(^1\)

The *Galveston Community Book* (1945), edited by Arthur H. Cawston, contains a picture of Giuseppe Grasso.\(^1\) It shows a medium-built man in his early fifties who is dressed handsomely in a dark, three-piece pinstripe, with a matching tie. He looks self-confident, stalwart, and
well-adapted to his American environment. Cawston wrote that Grasso "... was a valued citizen of Galveston during his entire period of residence there. He was always ready to further any progressive movement and to do his part in civic affairs."\textsuperscript{19} Grasso lived in Galveston until his death in 1936.

In contrast, Luigi (Louis) Cobolini, came to Texas from the cosmopolitan, northern Italian city of Trieste. The population of the city in 1880 was 144,844. The Encyclopaedia Britannica (1888), states that "The town population is very heterogenous, but the Italian element exceeds all the rest."\textsuperscript{20} Luigi was born into a prominent family on December 13, 1845. His brother, Biaggio, was an admiral in the Italian navy, and his other brother, Nicolo, was a well-known professor and author. Luigi fought with the forces of Giuseppe Garibaldi for the unification of Italy. In 1867, Garibaldi with his volunteers made an attempt to seize Rome, but the French army stopped him. Luigi Cobolini fled Italy and arrived at Galveston on August 17, 1867, to become a fruit and fish peddler.

Within a few years Cobolini became a leader of the dock workers at Galveston. He bought the fishing schooner, Henry Williams, eventually acquired a fleet of ships, and became one of the most successful businessmen in the fishing industry in Galveston. Cobolini was an early advocate of a deep-water port for Galveston, and he worked unceasingly for that project until engineers completed it. He married Elizabeth Grupe on April 30, 1881, and the couple had two sons. After twenty-six years in Galveston, Cobolini moved to Rockport. He was responsible for the port development of coastal cities such as Rockport, Corpus Christi, and Brownsville. An entry in the South Texas edition of The Standard Blue Book of the United States of America, states "His unselfishness, his devotion to the progressive principles and causes which he espoused, his optimism which would never admit defeat, all are indelibly impressed upon the memories of those with whom he came into close contact."\textsuperscript{21} Cobolini died on February 27, 1928 in Brownsville.\textsuperscript{22}

Five basics formed the backbone of Italian-Galvestonian culture: membership in the Catholic or Presbyterian Church; a belief in the importance of the family; familiarity with the social context within which Italian food is prepared, served, and eaten; the Italian language press; and benevolent-fraternal organizations.

A majority of the Sicilians who moved to Galveston were devout Catholics. They participated in the sacraments, Mass, and in Church-sponsored activities. Fishermen from Acitrezza and Acicastello attended the Sacred Heart Church, built in 1884 and located at 1302 Broadway. Italians placed a replica of a statue of St. John the Baptist, the patron saint of Acitrezza, in a prominent place in the Sacred Heart Church.\textsuperscript{23} On the Feast of St. John, which is held every June 24th, descendants of the Italian fishermen and their families come to the Sacred Heart Church for special devotions. Other Sicilians attended St. Mary's Cathedral, which
was built in 1847, and is located at Avenue F and 21st Street.

Many Sicilians immigrants believed in magic, and the folk tales of these people abound with wizards, witches, and spells. To ward off the effects of a person suspected of having the mal'occhio (evil eye), some Italians wore amulets, including cornicelli (little horns). The Catholic Church in Galveston was influenced strongly by Irish traditions, and was predominately Irish in its leadership. The Irish stood firm on Church doctrines and institutions, and were steadfast in their loyalty to the clergy. Italian pragmatism, individualism, and superstitions were contrary to these principles. Tuscans, Piedmontese, and other northern Italians attended St. Mary's Cathedral, or St. Patrick's Catholic Church, which was built around 1870, and is located at 3420 K Street.

Many Italian Protestants attended the Presbyterian Church. The first Italian Waldensians from Tuscany began arriving in Galveston around 1890. They had no minister so they worshipped under the guidance of lay leaders. Waldensians are a religious group who practice poverty and obedience to the Sermon on the Mount. Mrs. Artemesia Marchesi was a Waldensian who moved to Galveston in 1891. She was the daughter of Maria Regini, of Livorno, Tuscany. Mrs. Marchesi became an active missionary and preacher of the Valdese Presbyterian Church of Galveston, which was formed in May 1921. Services at the Church were bilingual, and most Italians attended services held in the Italian language. A few examples of other Italian Protestants who settled in Galveston before 1920, include Mrs. Z. Giusti, Mrs. T. Benetti, Mrs. Ant. Papi, Mrs. M. Ranieri, Mrs. Joe Sitra, Kate Martelli, and Gilda Micheletti. The Valdese Presbyterian Church was dissolved in September 1943 and its members joined the First Presbyterian Church of Galveston.

The second important component of Italian-Galvestonian culture was a belief in the importance of the family. The family was the fundamental and all-important unit of village society in Italy at the turn of the century. It determined social standards, types of labor, and restricted other activities. To be without family was truly non-being. The family customarily included spouses, children, grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, and compari (godparents). All placed the welfare of the family above their personal ambitions. Interviews with scores of third generation Italian Galvestonians confirms the fact that the family unit was very important to the original Italian immigrants. Italians were especially dependent upon their extended families to provide for individual needs because there was no concentrated ethnic community in the city from which they could draw for mutual support. Families were scattered throughout the city. But family units were very strong, and divorce was virtually unknown.

A complex system of rules governed the relationship of family members. The father was the head of the family, and no one in his household would make a major decisions without his permission. The
mother was the center of the family, and her authority was also greatly respected. She often took charge of her husband's earnings and those of her unmarried children. Daughters-in-law were generally obedient and submissive to their mother-in-law. Also, the mother made most of the decisions in the everyday affairs of the family. Marital discord was never discussed with neighbors, as husbands and wives would tolerate no interference with their personal relationships. Family loyalty was a cardinal virtue.

The third important component of Italian-Galvestonian culture was familiarity with the social context within which Italian food is prepared, served, and eaten. To the contadini, food was the symbol of life, of all that was good and nourishing. Plentiful food in the kitchen was a sign of family well being. Women bore the primary responsibility for serving meals. Whenever possible, families ate their meals together. Dinners, especially Sunday and holiday dinners, were important gatherings reserved for the family, although compari and special friends were sometimes invited to attend. Intimate conversations invariably occurred at the dinner table. Some of the more common staples of Sicilian families were meatballs, sausages, chicken, fish, cheeses, olives, pasta, eggs, breads, pizza, and a wide assortment of fruits, pastries, vegetables, ices, wines, and nuts.

The Feast of St. Joseph, held on March 19th of every year in the homes of several Sicilian Texans, featured family, religion, and food. A host prepared an altar in honor of St. Joseph, the patron saint of carpenters, cartmakers, unwed mothers, and orphans. During the family-oriented celebration, children played the roles of Mary, Jesus, St. Joseph, and other important saints. The Feast began with a novena, prayers, the reciting of the Rosary, and hymns. An elaborate feast followed.

Each region of Italy specializes in different foods. Tuscans and other Northern Italians generally eat more rice than Sicilians do. Also, Northerners use butter as the main cooking fat, whereas Sicilians use olive oil for most of their cooking. In addition, Sicilian food is ordinarily more heavily seasoned. Some of the more common staples of early Tuscan families in Texas included beef, fish, game poultry, salame, gnocchi, green noodles, beans, rice and other vegetables, chestnuts, fruits, breads, pastries, and wines.

A fourth important pillar supporting the Italian communities of Galveston was the Italian language press. Between September 8, 1906 and December 27, 1913, A.A. Fernandez Torre published the weekly Il Messaggero Italiano (The Italian Messenger), at 2003 Market Street. Another Italian Newspaper, L'America, had transferred to Galveston from Chicago in August 1906, but the two newspapers were consolidated in January 1907. At the time, it was the only Italian language newspaper published in Texas. Local news items stressed family reunions, church activities, festivals featuring Italian foods, and meetings of benevolent-fraternal organizations. Regular columns included "Telegrammi" (telegrams); "Eco
d'Italia" (echoes of Italy); "Varietà" (variety); "Scintille Telegrafiche" (telegraphic sparks); "Cronaca Cittadina" (urban news); "A Spizzico" (bits and pieces); "In Cucina" (in the kitchen); "Nota Comica" (comic notes); and "Scienza Popolare" (popular science). Torre wrote that the purpose of the newspaper was to "furnish major news items on happenings in Italy, the United States, and Texas which are of special interest to the Italian community."

The fifth pillar supporting the Italian communities of Galveston was the benevolent-fraternal organization. The oldest Italian mutual aid society in Galveston County with a charter on file with the Office of the Secretary of State was the Società Italiana Meridionale di Mutuo Soccorso. This organization received its charter on August 17, 1909. Its directors were Gioacchino Cassara, Rosario Vassallo, Filippo Liberto, Giacomo Mancuso, Francesco Torregrossa, Michele Megna, Joe N. Arena, and Pietro Fria. The charter of the organization states that "This Association is formed for Benevolent and Charitable purposes." Research by Leonard Moss (1983), demonstrates that there were no equivalent organizations of this kind in most Italian villages at the turn of the century. According to Moss, "most Italian immigrants to America came without the experience of 'joining.'"

On January 27, 1911, the Directors of the organization changed its name to the Società Italiana Meridionale di Mutuo Soccorso Stella D'Italia. Benevolent-fraternal organizations, like the Società Italiana, were founded to facilitate affiliations and social contacts among people of common cultural ties. Members felt a "consciousness of kind" which allowed them to confront the stress associated with moving to a new environment more easily. In Italy, the family was the major unit of social interaction. The Società Italiana was an extension and adaptation of an important custom known as comparaggio, through which carefully selected outsiders became part of a kind of extended family. Italians had learned the original version of this custom in their native villages.

The official U.S. Census for 1980 shows 3,049 persons of Italian ancestry living in Galveston County, which hosted a total population that year of 195,738. What are third and fourth-generation Italian Galvestonians like today? These people generally maintain an abiding belief in the importance of the family as a social unit. However, through education, occupational achievements, residential mobility, and intermarriage, traditional ethnic values often have been discarded or substantially changed. Except for members of the older generation, and new arrivals from Italy, the Italian language largely has fallen into disuse. An Italian language newspaper has not been published in Galveston since 1913. However, third-generation Italian Galvestonians retain some knowledge of Italian terms and phrases. The benevolent-fraternal organization has given way to the social club in the form of the San Giovanni Italian-American Association. This group is strongly associated with the Catholic Church, and
What has been the impact of the Italian heritage upon the society of Galveston? Italian Americans have contributed significantly to the growth and vitality of four Christian churches, including the First Presbyterian Church, the Sacred Heart Church, St. Patrick's Catholic Church, and St. Mary's Cathedral. These churches in turn, have been influenced by the Italian heritage, most obviously manifested by their participation in Italian traditional religious practices such as the Feast of St. Joseph and the Feast of St. John.

Perhaps the greatest impact of Italians upon the society of Galveston Island is the introduction of popular Italian foods and wines. Immigrants brought their food customs with them. Italian families still serve traditional Italian dinners on Sunday afternoons. Italian restaurants abound in Galveston, imported Italian foods appear on the shelves of major supermarkets, and Italian wines are on sale at many liquor stores and restaurants.

There is an ancient Sicilian proverb which states, "Chi lascia la via vecchia per la nuova, sa quel che perde e non sa quel che trova" (Whoever forsakes the old way for the new knows what he is losing but not what he will find). In the case of the Italians of Galveston, things have worked out for the best.

\[\text{NOTES}\]

1A. De Lono, Directory of the City of Galveston for 1856-1857. (Galveston, 1856).

2W & D Richardson, Directory of the City of Galveston for 1859-1860. (Galveston, 1859).

3Galveston County, Schedule I, Inhabitants in Galveston, enumerated on June 9, 1880, Page 25, Supervisor's District No. 5, Enumeration District No. 62, on file in the Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas.

3Galveston County, General Index to Marriage Licenses (1838-1899), Husband, pp. 171, 195, 201; Book E, pp. 10, 263, 632.


4Waldenses is a Christian sect that arose about 1170 in southern France and in the 1500s joined the Reformation movement. These Italian Protestants began arriving at Galveston from the region of Tuscany around 1890. At first, they had no minister and worshipped under the guidance of lay leaders. Many of their descendants have become Presbyterians. Consult-Archives of the First Presbyterian Church, 19th and Church streets, Galveston, Texas.


5Galveston Daily News, October 14, 1912, p. 10.


7Pete Urbani, private interview held at 2127 Broadway, Galveston, Texas, April 1, 1985; Dorothy Wolter (Micheletti), private interview held at the Sacred Heart Music Room, 14th and Broadway, February 22, 1986; National Archives, Judicial, Fiscal, and Social Branch, Civil Archives Division, Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at Galveston, Texas, Annual Report of the Commission of Immigration, Public Documents T21.1 (1900-1903); C7.1
(1904-1906); Commerce and Labor Department, Immigration Bulletin, Public Document C7.8 (1906-1920); M1359 (1896-1948).

11Alfio A. Tropea, private interview held at 3000 Heron Drive, February 8, 1986; Jimmy Arolfo, private interview held at 5500 Teal Drive, February 22, 1986; Francesco Incaprerà, Sr., private interview held at 2217 Avenue P, February 22, 1986; Charles J. Tambrella, private interview held at 25th and Church streets, February 22, 1986; Maurizio B. Antonelli, Hon. Vice Consul of Italy, private interview held at 2202 Mechanic Street, February 22, 1986; Joe Maceo, private interview held at 6618 Fairway, February 21, 1986.

12Norddeutscher Lloyd, Bremen, Steamship Company, List or Manifest of Alien Immigrants for the Commissioner of Immigration, No. 162, December 6, 1898, on file in the Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas.


14The author visited the village of Acì Castello during the summer of 1985.

15The University of Texas at San Antonio, Institute of Texan Cultures. The Italian Texans (San Antonio, Texas, 1973), p. 25.


17Cawston, Galveston Community Book, p. 216.


21Sacred Heart Book Committee, Sacred Heart Church Centennial, 1884-1984, Galveston, Texas, p. 87. The Rev. Bartholomaei Rolando was one of the earliest Italians to come to Galveston. He was born in Bordighera, near Genoa, in 1812. Rolando sailed to America in 1834, and he worked as assistant to the Rev. John M. Odin, the priest who later became the first bishop of Galveston, a diocese which included all of Texas at that time. Father Rolando died at Galveston on October 11, 1847. In his honor a memorial tablet was placed on the wall to the right of the altar at St. Mary’s Cathedral. For Father Rolando-John Cannady, A History of Saint Mary’s Cathedral, Galveston, Texas (Galveston, undated), p. 8.

22Thomas F. Crane’s book, entitled Italian Popular Tales (New York, 1885), contains several Sicilian folk tales.


24Mrs. Mary Mezzino, private interview held at 6920 Lasker Drive, Galveston, Texas, May 15, 1985; The Galveston Daily News, March 8, 1975, p. 7; The University of Texas at San Antonio, The Italian Texans, p. 28.

25Colletta per accomodare la Chiesa Italiana Battista, Archives of the First Presbyterian Church, 19th and Church streets, Galveston, Texas.

26Culetta per accomodare la Chiesa Italiana Battista.

The Galveston-based Italian newspaper, *Il Messaggero Italiano*, is available on microfilm at the University of Texas at Austin, Eugene C. Barker Texas History Center, Austin, Texas.

Texas, Office of the Secretary of State, Statutory Filings Division, Corporation Section, Charter of the Società Italiana Meridionale di Mutuo Soccorso, charter no. 20649, Austin, Texas, August 17, 1909, p. 2.

Charter, p. 2.


Moss, "Family and Community . . .," p. 12.

Charter of the Società Italiana Meridionale di Mutuo Soccorso, p. 5.

For a discussion of the custom known as comparaggio or comparatico, as it was practiced in Sicily during the nineteenth century, consult Richard Gambino, *Blood of My Blood*. (New York, 1975), pp. 3-41.