

## Trinàcria by Anthony Di Renzo

Chiara Morucci (September 25, 2012)



The Italian Cultural Foundation of Casa Belvedere promotes the novel of Anthony Di Renzo "Trinàcria: A Tale of Bourbon Sicily." In order to support the release of this novel, there has been created an online fund-raising campaign by Roberto Ragone, a means through which he intends to raise the necessary funds to cover the book's editing, design, printing, promotion, and distribution.



The goal is to raise at least \$5,000 by December 13 and they are close to reaching it!

[The Italian Cultural Foundation of Casa Belvedere](#) [2] is known for promoting the renown Italian and Italian-American heritage by sponsoring and spreading Italian literature, history and arts through exhibits, events and educational programs.

The novel "[Trinàcria: A Tale of Bourbon Sicily](#)" [3] written by [Anthony Di Renzo](#) [4], is one of such project sponsored by Casa Belvedere.

Di Renzo's novel is a historical work. Its title derives from the ancient Greek name for Sicily. Trinàcria refers to the island's triangular shape and the three-legged gorgon on its regional flag. It is also the nickname of the novel's narrator and protagonist, Zita Valanguerra Spinelli (1794-1882), Marchesa of Scalea, whose turbulent life mirrors Sicily's rocky transition from feudalism to capitalism.

The story begins when a Hollywood film crew invades Palermo to shoot an epic about the Italian Revolution. Researching the past, the director visits the city's Capuchin catacombs. Preserved in the catacombs among over eight thousand mummies is Marchesa Spinelli. Dead for eighty years, she remains haunted with memories, and her spirit recalls her complicated relationships with her scientist father; a British wine merchant, whom the Marchesa failed to marry; her patriotic and rebellious granddaughter; and Giacomo Leopardi, the doomed Romantic poet.

"Trinàcria seeks to open debate about Italian identity on both sides of the Atlantic. The novel asks Italians to reconsider the meaning of the Risorgimento, to question the established myths of unification and to recognize how Sicily was sacrificed, exploited, and ultimately decimated to achieve nationhood. This political and economic catastrophe caused the great diaspora at the turn of the twentieth century, in which the island lost a quarter of its population and from which it has never fully recovered" - Di Renzo explains to i-italy.

The author also underlines that the book encourages the descendants of these immigrants to rethink how and why their ancestors washed up on these shores. "The traumatic failures of the Risorgimento continue to affect Southern Italian Americans, especially within the Sicilian American community, even in subtle ways among their more assimilated children and grandchildren. Betrayal and disillusionment explain why many of us can be so insular, continue to suspect all political and educational institutions, and are reluctant to form social and cultural networks, even when they would benefit us. But the novel is as much a commentary on the present as an exploration of the past. Sicily's current financial meltdown, caused equally by internal corruption and outside influence, America's quixotic attempts at nation-building and democratization in the developing world, and the grotesque contradictions of globalization are all reflected in a Sicilian funhouse mirror, much like Villa Palagonia's Sala degli Specchi. As Karl Marx observed (plagiarizing Vico) history always repeats itself: the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce" - told the author.

For the occasion of the promotion of the release of this novel, there has been created an online fund-raising campaign by [Roberto Ragone](#) [5], a means by which he plans to raise the necessary funds to cover the book's editing, design, printing, promotion, and distribution. The goal is to raise at least \$5,000 by December 13. Please consider visiting the page and becoming a part in this wonderful initiative.



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