

## The Challenge of “Terroni” in English

L.A. (October 25, 2011)



A meeting with the young translator of "Terroni" authored by Pino Aprile. A book that is hard to convey in English, so we asked her how she approached this challenge.

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Talking about a book starting from its translation? Yes we can, especially in the case of “Terroni” by Pino Aprile, a huge editorial event back in Italy. For a while now, the essay, a reconstruction of the wrongs suffered in southern Italy, can be found in American bookstores, edited by [Bordighera Press](#) [3] and translated thanks to the [ILICA foundation](#).

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We have met with Ilaria Marra Rosiglioni the author of its “not-so-easy” English translation. This



young Italian American lives both in the United States and in Italy and works as a translator for the ILICA foundation.

I can say that I am an Italian-American 100%! I have studied in the United States and I have an American mindset. However, I have always wanted to go back to Italy: after all I majored in Italian language and culture and art history. In Rome I feel happy just taking a walk or riding the bus day after day.

### **What did you think when they asked you to translate “Terroni?”**

When I read the back cover and the book’s description I was immediately intrigued. Just like many others before me, I had asked myself questions about the South, especially after having seen Naples and Palermo. As I have roots in southern Italy, I am Neapolitan on one side and Apulian on the other, I felt that I was owed some answers.

### **What were the difficulties in translating it?**

The book had a peculiarly sarcastic tone. Trying to capture this was a real challenge. Translating words is much easier than translating an emotion.

### **Translating is not always enough, sometimes you have to rewrite to explain...**

Way too often when I watch an American TV show with Italian subtitles I ask myself “Who translated that sentence? They have totally missed the meaning of what was said!” Indeed that is the hardest challenge: I have to read and re-read the text to be sure I have understood what has been said. Then I have to write in a way that the reader can understand: this is where a native speaker has a significant advantage. You need to convey the original concept but also mold it so that it is comprehensible and therefore closer to the reader. The translator establishes a connection between the author and the reader: a real bridge.

### **You have Italian and American friends in the USA. Did you ask them to read the book? How do you think they will react?**

The book is now being released in the United States. I definitely recommend it to anyone who has southern roots. I hope it will become a driving force that prompts people to seek further information on the matter.

### **Which book/writer you would really like to translate?**

As far as books are concerned, I have no preference: each author has something to teach me and I welcome every challenge. Maybe I would enjoy translating for a TV show or a movie: there are some crazy gaps that need to be filled. I think I could help out!

### **Will ILICA take care of this in the near future?**

ILICA’s mission is to promote Italian language and culture. Translating is indeed important and we have to do it while looking towards the future.

**Source URL:** <http://ftp.iitaly.org/magazine/article/challenge-terrioni-in-english>

### **Links**

[1] <http://ftp.iitaly.org/files/terrioniny1319572572gif>

[2] <http://www.i-italy.org/node/18523>

[3] <http://www.bordigherapress.org/>

[4] [http://www.ilicait.org/index.php?Itemid=9&option=com\\_content&view=section&la](http://www.ilicait.org/index.php?Itemid=9&option=com_content&view=section&la)



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