Persone e ambienti

Other famous religious events in Sicily include: *il Festino di Santa Rosalia, la Pasqua a Piana degli Albanesi*, *La Festa di Santa Lucia a Siracusa* and *la Processione dei Misteri a Trapani*. You may wish to project additional images from corresponding websites for these or other well-known religious events.

Brainstorming

Circulate in class to help as students as they work in pairs or small groups; there may be several vocabulary words that they initially don't know.

Radiocronaca

As a class, brainstorm three or four possible endings for this sentence: *È il 20 gennaio e oggi si festeggia…; e in questo momento le persone stanno…; e le emozioni in questo paese sono palpabili perché…*

Remind students to show fairness and good taste as they express their views on religion, even if in a fictitious, "theatrical" exercise such as this.

Confronti e riflessioni

Prepare a set of slides with split screens showing other street fairs and processions in Italy (preferably Sicily) and a similar variety of fairs and processions in American cities (or cities in students' other native countries). The images should stimulate students' thinking and help them flesh out their responses.

Arte e architettura

Begin by showing some slides with samples of Islamic and Byzantine architecture outside of Sicily such as the Basilica di San Marco in Venice. Then move on to analyze the examples in the photos and, finally, the information students discovered from their research.

Chiese e castelli

San Giovanni degli Eremiti is one of the highest examples of Norman-Arab architecture in Sicily.

With its red domes and squared volumes, the church resembles more a mosque than a Christian church. Built in the sixth century as a Christian church, San Giovanni was later transformed into a mosque, and was restored again to its original use as a Christian church by the Normans in the eleventh century.

The fountain in the cloister of Monreale, shaped like a stylized palm tree, was clearly inspired by Arabic architecture. The whole complex of Monreale is a combination of Romanesque, Arabic, and Byzantine architecture, and it is a major artistic treasures in Italy.

The name "Zisa" derives from the Arabic word for "splendid." This palace was a summer residence for the Norman kings, built by Arab architects and equipped with devices to fend off summer heat. Among these, a beautiful fountain in the main room where the king received his court.

The Castello della Cuba (from the Arab *Qubba,* meaning "dome") was also a summer residence for the Norman kings and built by Arab architects. Its garden was called *luogo delle delizie* thanks to its refreshing fountains and beautiful landscape. An inscription written in Arabic on a wall of the castle praised the Norman King William II, a Catholic.

Davvero un'isola?

Point out that Trinacria, the ancient name of Sicily, means "three promontories" in Ancient Greek. The enigmatic symbol of Sicily represents a Gorgon head with three bent legs. It is found all over the Mediterranean, for instance, on coins and inscriptions. Since it may have religious meaning of Phoenician origins, the symbol is much older than the Greek colonization of Sicily in the eighth century.

Sicilia araba e musulmana

Students will probably not know about the Arab and Muslim dominations in Sicily. Explain that Sicily has multicultural roots: starting in the eighth century BC, before the arrival of the Roman army in the third century BC, Sicily was one of the most important territories of Magna Grecia.

When the Arabs arrived in the ninth century, Greek and Latin were spoken by most Sicilians. Students will learn more about the Greek roots of Sicilian culture in several grammar exercises that come later in this chapter and in the SAM.

Alla scoperta di …

1. A common dish in western Sicily is couscous, a Northern African staple. Couscous is made with semolina wheat and it is also widely used in the Middle East.

2. The Arabs colonized the Iberian peninsula in the eighth century and controlled it until 1492, when the last Moor governor was expelled from Spain by Ferdinand of Aragon. Islamic culture was essential in Medieval Europe for the transmission of Greek philosophy and for the development of the sciences and the arts. Granada and Cordoba, Spain still preserve two of the best examples of Arabic architecture in Europe: the Alhambras (Granada), the palaces of the sultans, and the Mosque-Cathedral (Cordoba).

Controlla la comprensione

Read and translate the poem in class to make sure students understand its metaphors.

Prima di ascoltare

On the board, create a semantic map with *eroe popolare* at the center. Ask students to write five or six primary traits they associate with this main concept, offering examples to them such as *impresa, coraggio, aiutare gli altri, trasgredire / ribellarsi,* etc. Ask them to work alone or in pairs to come up with as many ideas as they can in a short period of time; then compare and contrast ideas by expanding the main map on the board in interesting ways.

A fine ascolto

In this anecdote, what actually happens is the contrary of what we might expect: a judge is punished instead of punishing the defendant. The humor derives from the surprising result of Giufà's act, which is a social "vendetta". The judge is a symbol of arbitrary power, and many would like to defeat this power without suffering any consequences, just as Giufà manages to do.

Alla corte di Federico II (in the Southwest of Germany)

Begin with images of Federico II and of the poets of the Sicilian School. You can find numerous examples online with searches for *Federico II di Svevia* and *Federico II e i poeti*, etc. To provide additional context, project a map of Europe with the Swabian territory (Southwest of Germany, where the Black Forest lies) highlighted.

Confronti e riflessioni (poesia / canzone)

Jumpstart this activity with a brief example from a love song you like, recent or old. Perhaps play a snippet from your iPod or from YouTube and then highlight just one verse from the lyrics and model columns two and three from the exercise for your students: *Secondo l'autore che ho scelto l'amore è…, etc.*

Open this reading with an exploration of the photos at the top of p. 111 to stimulate students' imaginations about emigration in the early 1900s in comparison with what they know about immigration today.

Stress the involuntary nature of Sicilian migration: it was never a free choice; rather, it was necessary for survival. This factor and the magnitude of the event justify a comparison between Sicilian migration and a diaspora or an exodus. Next focus on some of the causes, such as poverty, lack of democratic processes, economic expansion in North America, and propaganda work by "emigration agents". These were all factors that propelled emigration.

In Maria Messina's quotation, America is compared to a woman of bad morals (**mala femmina**) who lures men away from home.

Alla scoperta di …

La *fuga dei cervelli* is a relatively recent phenomenon. Government cuts in university research funds and lack of job opportunities for graduates have generated a new wave of intellectual emigration from Italy to other European countries or to the United States. Bring students' attention to the differences between this phenomenon and the great migration in Italy between the

nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Mafia: l'ultimo potere occupante

The etymology of "mafia" is still controversial, but one hypothesis is that it derives from the Arabic words for "secret gathering place" or "arrogance".

Students will learn more about Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino in the reading *Francesca Morvillo: una vita blindata* (see introduction to the reading). Libero Grassi was a Sicilian industrialist killed by the mafia in 1991, because he refused to pay for protection and publicly denounced the blackmailing to which he was subjected. Pio La Torre was a trade union organizer killed by the mafia in 1982. This murder motivated the Italian parliament to outlaw mere membership to a mafia organization.

Ask students where they get most of their information about the mafia. Ask: *Da dove derivano le vostre convinzioni sulla mafia*? Students will probably mention films such as *The Godfather* (*Il padrino*) and the TV series *The Sopranos.* Ask their opinions: *Qual è la differenza fra la mafia rappresentata in questi film e la mafia siciliana?*

Alla scoperta di …

Another grassroots organization that fights mafia in Sicily is "Addiopizzo" (literally "farewell to the payoff"). Check their website for all sorts of information about the activities of this organization founded by a group of young people in Palermo.

Ciak!

This activity reflects a real debate in Italy; consider that the President of the Sicilian Parliament, Gianfranco Micciché, complained publicly in 2007: "Che *immagine negativa trasmettiamo subito col nome dell'aeroporto!"*.

La poesia regionale

First, have students consider the title. Ask: *Cosa potrebbe significare* "Cosmogonia"? *Cosa vi aspettate di leggere in questa breve poesia? Quali parole o concetti pensate di incontrare?* Then,

after reading both versions of the poem and working through the exercises, ask for a brief synopsis: *Di cosa parla la poesia? Qual è il significato di questa strana allegoria?*

As always in this section, have fun pronouncing the regional version together and then do dramatic readings for pronunciation and intonation practice with the standard Italian text.

Confronti e riflessioni

3. The encounter between the narrator and the poor Sicilian happens on the boat, a place between the continent and the island, and a symbol of the narrator's state of mind, between two cultures and two places.

Grammatica viva

Use examples from the reading to preview *il trapassato prossimo*, a tense the students will study in this chapter. In addition, highlight *ne* and ask students to guess its meaning, as it is repeated several times at the end of the story: *Nessuno ne vuole* (i.e. *nessuno vuole arance*).

A fine lettura

Point out the paradox of a judge who

must live *de facto* like a criminal, socially isolated to the point of having to move to a prison on an island in order to work safely.

Metonimia

"*Cuore*" is used by Giacomo da Lentini as a *metonimia*, i.e., a concrete noun used to represent something abstract (feelings, love, etc.).

Confronti e riflessioni

Students might not have ample vocabulary to name basic civil rights in Italian such as *la libertà di associazione, la libertà di assemblea, la libertà di religione, la libertà di parola, il diritto alla difesa, il diritto ad un equo processo, il diritto al porto d'armi, il diritto alla privacy,* etc.

Grammatica viva

Use the examples in this (Siebert's) reading to review the many uses of *ci*. This will be a good

preview to the *Ripasso breve* at the end of this chapter.

I pupi siciliani

Mentre leggi

Use this passage to point out that the Italian language generally uses two aspects of the past tense to describe or narrate past events; this allows speakers the flexibility to give different shades of meaning to their narration of personal events. Whereas facts that are emotionally distant from the speaker's present life and thoughts will be related using the *passato remoto*, facts that remain close, emotionally and chronologically, will be described using the *passato prossimo*.

Grammatica viva

Assign this section for self study, and correct the translation exercise 3.60 in class.

Il tema grammaticale: Passato remoto

Lingua in contesto

Have students read this short passage at home, then review together the verbs they found by asking them first, for the infinitive of the verb and, second, for the *passato prossimo* equivalent of the verb. Tell them that the meaning of the verb is the same as the *passato prossimo*, with the context shifted "far back" in time. Review and reinforce the *passato prossimo* as you are presenting *passato remoto*. Encourage students to make flashcards for the irregular verb forms combining them with *passato prossimo* and *imperfetto* forms of the same verb, too. Students can bring these flashcards to class for pair practice. Devote some extra practice to those forms that are similar and could cause confusion, such as *scesi* and *scelsi*, *chiusi* and *chiesi*, *spesi* and *spensi*. Explain that school children in Northern Italy have to learn the *passato remoto* in school, just like students in the United States do, because they rarely hear it in the spoken language. For children from the center and south of Italy, the *passato remoto* is much more familiar, because it is commonly used in the spoken language.

Prepare some slides (one with *lavorare, dovere*, and *capire* set side-by-side, for example) to

facilitate a comparative analysis of the *passato remoto* as a system with some predictable patterns. You can highlight certain morphological similarities among the regular verb families. You can then put *dovere* and *mettere* beside one another and show (or let students discover) that with irregular verbs in the *passato remoto*, the second-person, singular and plural, and first-person plural forms return to the infinitive for their roots and use the same endings as regular verbs do. On yet another slide, explain or guide students to discover that among irregular verbs in the *passato remoto* (for example, put *mettere* and *piangere,* and *venire* side-by-side on a slide), the first-person singular, third-person singular, and third-person plural forms all follow a predictable pattern.

Passato remoto o prossimo?

Point out that both alternatives are grammatically correct, strictly speaking.

Piazza Armerina

You can use this exercise, as well as the one below in *Lingua in contesto*, or exercise 3.72 (on the legend of Colapesce), as mini-cultural readings. You can accompany the exercises with images on slides to furthur stimulate students' interest.

Personaggio misterioso

This activity can also be used as a mini composition.

Colapesce

Go over this exercise carefully making sure that students understand the use of each aspect choice for the past tense. Occasionally ask students to justify their choice of tense.

Parliamo

A quattordici anni io …

Encourage students to be very specific and original and to vary their sentences, if they don't want to be eliminated right away.

Pensando alla storia

Encourage students to think about a series of events and their relative positions on an imaginary timeline (i.e., what happened at a certain point in time and what had already happened prior to that point in time versus what had not happened yet). Point out that in Italian the distinction between the *passato* and the *trapassato* is always made, both in written and in spoken language. Remind students about the grammar examples they have already seen in two readings above (Lettura 2 p. 126 & Lettura 3, p. 130). Have students review this material independently at home, then go over the translation exercise in class.

To continue varying your approach to the correction of translation exercises, in general, consider scrambling up the words of the correct version of each sentence and having students put the words in order in pairs, small groups, etc. Then they can check their individual work against the answers they created from the scramble.

I due percorsi cinematografici Film: *Nuovomondo* di Emanuele Crialese (2006)

Consider watching the opening sequences of the films together as a preview activity to activate students' background knowledge and have them hypothesize about what will follow. Then have students watch the film outside of class. *Nuovomondo* is a film particularly rich in symbolism. Starting with the activity *Cartoline dall'America* below, you will find many themes for in-class discussions. It will be impossible to cover all of them during one class period, however. We recommend that you pick two or three, and ask your students to concentrate on those. If you want to have a more general discussion first, students can prepare descriptions of the two photo stills, *Punti generali di riflessione,* or *Le scene principali* and *Citazioni*.