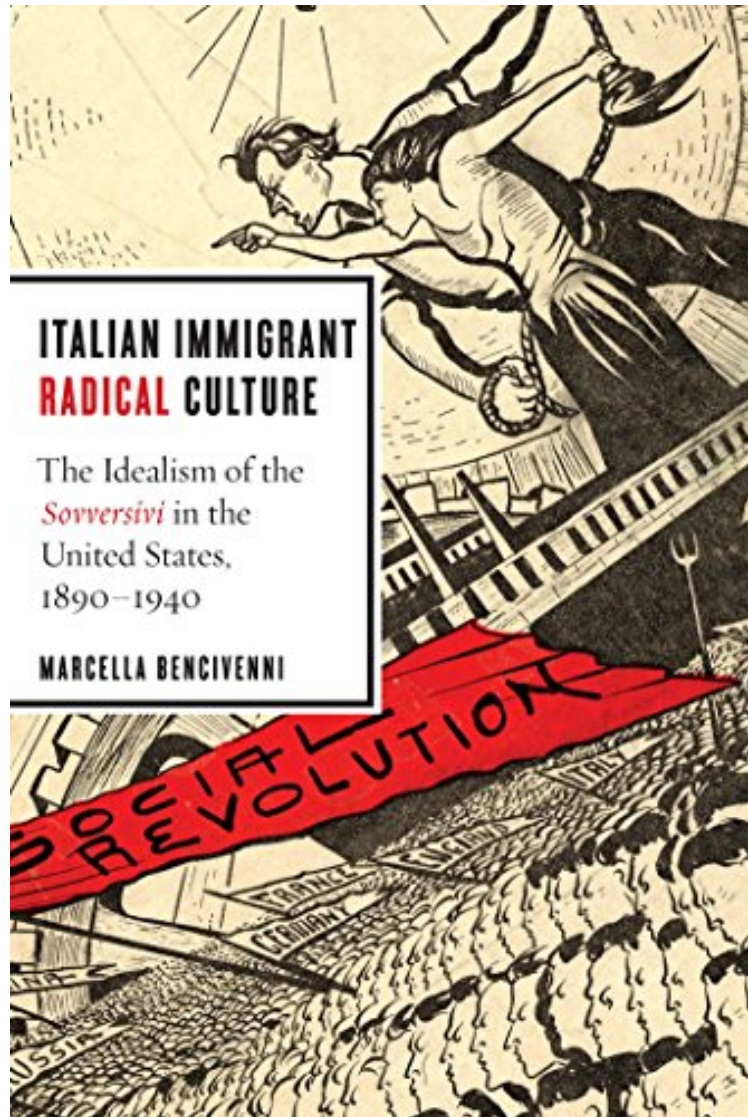


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## Italian Immigrant Radical Culture: The Idealism of the Sovversivi in the United States, 1890-1940

Marcella Bencivenni

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Maligned by modern media and often stereotyped, Italian Americans possess a vibrant, if largely forgotten, radical past. In *Italian Immigrant Radical Culture*, Marcella Bencivenni delves into the history of the *sovversivi*, a transnational generation of social rebels, and offers a fascinating portrait of their political struggle as well as their milieu, beliefs, and artistic creativity in the United States. As early as 1882, the *sovversivi* founded a socialist club in Brooklyn. Radical organizations then multiplied and spread across the country, from large urban cities to smaller industrial mining areas. By 1900, thirty official Italian sections of the Socialist Party along the East Coast and countless independent anarchist and revolutionary circles sprang up throughout the nation. Forming their own alternative press, institutions, and working class organizations, these groups created a vigorous movement and counterculture that constituted a significant part of the American Left until World War II. *Italian Immigrant Radical Culture* compellingly documents the wide spectrum of this oppositional culture and examines the many cultural and artistic forms it took, from newspapers to literature and poetry to theater and visual art. As the first cultural history of Italian American activism, it provides a richer understanding of the Italian immigrant experience while also deepening historical perceptions of radical politics and culture.

"A great book that will benefit well-established scholars, newly minted Ph.D.'s, and graduate students thinking about distinct avenues of research."-Caroline Merithew, *Italian American Italian Immigrant Radical Culture* not only makes an important contribution to the history of the Italian-American left but, more broadly, reminds us of the importance of the cultural and literary dimension of radical politics in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century.-Fraser Ottanelli, Professor of History, University of South Florida A welcome introduction to the poorly understood immigrant *sovversivi*, whose ideological commitments to revolution and emancipation as often found expression in poetry, theater, and the arts as on the picket line and in the radical press.-Donna Gabaccia, University of Minnesota "Anyone interested in the topic will benefit from Bencivenni's deep understanding of her subject, her exhaustive research, and her clear organization and writing."