

The Translator's Voice

A series of readings sponsored by the New England Translators Association

NEGOTIATING MEANING: CO-TRANSLATING ITALIAN WOMAN WRITER ANNA BANTI

by Daria Valentini & Mark Lewis

In this talk, co-translators Daria Valentini and Mark Lewis will describe the process of literary translation in tandem, citing significant excerpts from the novel they published in English, *A Piercing Cry* by Italian author Anna Banti (*Un grido lacerante*, 1985). As a scholar in Italian literature of the twentieth century, Prof. Valentini has focused on Banti as a unique voice on the subject of women and artistic creation. Banti personalizes this theme in the autobiographical novel *A Piercing Cry*, in which the protagonist Agnese mirrors Banti's own life as an art historian, wife, and creative writer. The greatest challenges faced by the translators to effectively render the intimate details and highly personal testimony in English center around the Italian stylistic conventions of sentence-level punctuation.

Daria Valentini is Professor of Italian and Director of the Italian Studies Program at Stonehill College. Her scholarly activity focuses on nineteenth and twentieth century Italian literature with a special emphasis on women's writing and Italian cinema. Her publications have appeared in numerous journals, treating Edmondo DeAmicis, Marinetti's role in Italian Futurism, Gianna Manzini, Anna Banti, and Matilde Serao. She has also co-translated an autobiographical novel by Anna Banti entitled *A Piercing Cry* (*Un grido lacerante*) and has co-edited two volumes of essays, *Italian Women and the City* and *Beyond Artemisia: Female Subjectivity, History, and Culture in Anna Banti*. Her didactic pursuits with McGraw Hill Publishing have led to the publication of a series of eighteen music-based activities in the new 8th edition of *Prego!: An Introduction to Italian*.

Mark Lewis holds his PhD in German and Russian comparative literature from the University of Illinois-at Urbana-Champaign. Together with his wife Daria Valentini, he has co-translated works by Italian woman author Anna Banti into English, and currently teaches a graduate reading skills course for non-linguists at Boston University. At BU he also directs the Geddes Language Center in the College of Arts and Sciences, supporting the uses of interactive media in a variety of instructional settings as well as sponsoring faculty development initiatives for languages faculty involving teaching with technology.

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