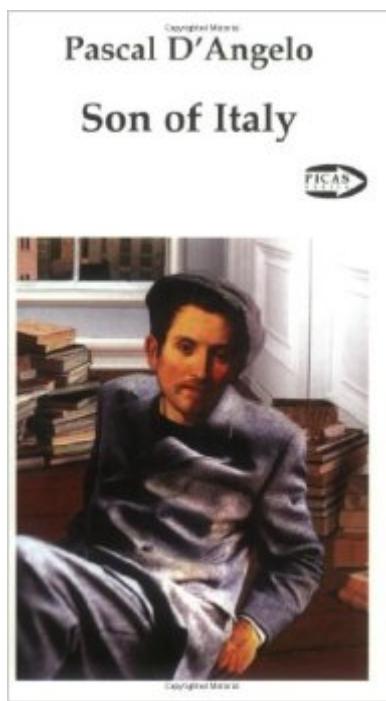


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Son Of Italy (Picas Series 36)



Synopsis

In the original introduction to Pascal D'Angelo's *Son of Italy*, the renowned literary critic Carl Van Doren praised D'Angelo's autobiography as an impassioned story of his enormous struggles against every disadvantage. In his narrative of his fruitless labour as a pick and shovel worker in America, D'Angelo, who immigrated from the Abruzzi region of Italy, describes the harsh, often inhumane working conditions that immigrants had to endure at the beginning of the twentieth century. However, interested in more than just material success in America, D'Angelo quit working as a labourer to become a poet. He began submitting his poetry to some of America's most prestigious literary and cultural journals until he finally succeeded. But in his quest for acceptance, D'Angelo unwittingly exposed the complexities of assimilation. Like the works of many other immigrant writers at the time, D'Angelo's autobiography is a criticism of some of the era's most important social themes. Kenneth Scambray's afterword is an analysis of the complexities of this multifaceted autobiographical voice, which has been read as a simplistic immigrant narrative of struggle and success. This is the first English reprint since its original publication in 1924.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is a memoir of the travels and immigration of Pascal D'Angelo, a poor illiterate young man from Introdacqua in Italy in the late nineteenth century to New York City. It is especially and personally important to me as an Italian American because it reflects very positively and poignantly

on the personal experiences of all my grandparents who came to the United States around the same time as the author. The reader should not be surprised that the author composed such a great memoir despite being an illiterate ditch digger, a manual laborer. Ben Johnston, one of the greatest poets and dramatists of English literature (1572-1637) was a brick layer. However, the reader should be surprised about D'Angelo's great facility in the English language despite his illiteracy and lack of formal education. Such circumstances do not happen often in literature, the other notable exception being Joseph Conrad, an expatriate of Poland who wrote an exceptional novel, Heart of Darkness. Like D'Angelo, Conrad also had to learn English from scratch. I would classify this memoir as required reading for any American of Italian descent. Son of Italy (Picas Series 36)

Son of Italy is near the top of my all time favorite books. D'Angelo tells us of his experiences following immigration to USA. He had a tough time, to say the least, but he pursued his dream when another man might have thrown up his hands and gone home (which is what his father did). D'Angelo's vivid descriptions of the poverty he lived in made my hair stand up. His work life and living conditions were truly horrifying. He describes the worst of a turn of the century immigrant lifestyle. I cannot recommend this book highly enough. The ending is tremendous. D'Angelo reaches his goals and we all benefit from that because he left the legacy of this book.

A truly inspiring, and great read. It gives such a wonderful perspective of immigration to America at the turn of the 20th century.

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