The Italian Program at Queens College Publishes the First Issue of Quaderno Culturale

Quaderno Culturale nasce per dar voce al Programma di Italiano del Queens College (parte del Dipartimento di lingue e letterature europee) e si rivolge ai docenti ed agli studenti di italiano della Tri-State area. Esce due volte l’anno, in corrispondenza dell’inizio del Fall e dello Spring term, ed alcuni suoi articoli vengono scritti in italiano, altri in inglese. Contiene informazioni sui corsi di italiano offerti dal Queens College e dal CUNY Graduate Center, e rubriche sulle prospettive di carriera per chi si laurei in italiano. Presenta inoltre interviste a docenti e ricercatori, e a quegli studenti che hanno utilizzato la laurea in italiano per trovare lavoro. Dà conto infine degli studi e delle pubblicazioni di chi insegna nel programma di italiano e riferisce di eventi a New York che riguardano la lingua e la cultura italiane.

Questo primo numero offre una descrizione del Programma di Italiano a cura della prof.ssa Attar e un’intervista al prof. Haller sull’evoluzione del programma nel tempo. Luisanna Sardu, dottoranda in italiano al CUNY GC e insegnante al QC, presenta alcune possibili carriere per il laureato in italiano, e proprio una studentessa laureatasi in italiano a QC racconta alla prof. ssa Corradi la sua esperienza di insegnante alle medie. Grazie a un contributo della prof. ssa Paulicelli, viene infine tratteggiato un corso di studi molto interessante ed originale, quello in Fashion Studies a livello Master.

Quaderno Culturale, created to publicize the Queens College Italian Program (part of the Department of European Languages and Literatures), is aimed at Italian professors and students in the tri-state area. It is published twice a year at the beginning of the Fall and Spring terms, with articles in both English and Italian. Quaderno Culturale provides information about Italian classes offered by Queens College and the CUNY Graduate Center and about career opportunities for students majoring or minoring in Italian. In addition, it includes interviews with faculty and with former students who have found work after majoring in Italian. Finally, it reports on the research and publication activities of the Italian Program’s faculty and on events across New York City pertaining to Italian language and culture.

This first issue opens with a description of the Italian Program by Prof. Karina F. Attar and an interview with Prof. Hermann W. Haller that traces the program’s development over the years. Luisanna Sardu, an Italian Graduate Teaching Fellow at the GC and instructor at QC, looks at career opportunities for majors of Italian, while Prof. Morena Corradi interviews a Queens College graduate about her experience as a middle school teacher of Italian. Last but not least, Prof. Eugenia Paulicelli discusses “Fashion: History, Theory,” a very interesting and original new track recently launched as part of the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program.
Each semester we offer 14 undergraduate courses ranging from elementary to advanced language classes, as well as courses on literature, culture, and history. Approximately 150+ students enroll in our elementary/intermediate language sequence each academic year. Beginners study the foundations of grammar, read entry-level texts, and engage in a variety of practice activities to gain proficiency in Italian. Second-year students read Italian short stories, learn about Italy’s literature and culture, and write on topics of general and personal interest.

Students who pursue a major or minor in Italian (currently about 25 and 10, respectively) strengthen and broaden their knowledge through required and elective 200- and 300-level courses on advanced grammar, translation, business Italian, and literature and culture across periods and genres. While we teach most of our courses in Italian, we also regularly offer three writing-intensive courses that fulfill college-wide requirements and introduce students to Italian literature, culture, and cinema in English.

As part of the college’s mission for study abroad, we offer students the opportunity to study in Italy in summer-, semester-, and year-long courses. We have a close alliance with the Università per Stranieri in Perugia and also recommend courses at other Italian universities.

Each semester we offer two master’s-level courses on major literary authors and movements, and on the history of the language. At the master’s level, students can pursue an MA in Italian or combine this with a master’s in secondary education—the only program of its kind in the New York City area.

Many of our students are heritage speakers of Italian-American descent. Complete beginners, as well as Italian natives who have more recently relocated to New York City, also often elect an Italian specialization. With a combined Italian major and education minor, or with master’s-level courses, a master’s degree in Italian, many students successfully enter or enhance their teaching career at the elementary, middle, and high-school level.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR FALL 2012 COURSE OFFERINGS INCLUDE:

A writing-intensive course on the Heritage of Italy’s South taught in English by Prof. Gardaphé (from the Calandra Italian-American Institute)

“Da Roma in giù comincia l’Africa,” an Italian statesman once said. So if Africa begins south of Rome, then what does that say about Italians from the south? Christ may have stopped at Eboli, as the great novelist Carlo Levi put it, but the Risorgimento did not. One of the greatest emigrations in the history of the world took place just as Italy was becoming a unified country. Why didn’t the people of southern Italy stay to help organize the country? What happened to send them looking for better lives beyond the seas? These and more questions will be examined in this cultural studies course that will use a variety of resources (history, literature, film, journalism, sociology, and more) to explore the heritage of Italy’s south and its impact on American culture through immigration.

A 200-level Survey of Italian Poetry taught by Prof. Attar

In this class, which is required for Italian majors, we will conduct close readings and discussions of Italian poetry from the 13th to the 20th centuries. Students will be introduced to a variety of approaches to literary analysis and gain a broader understanding of the formal structures of poetry, literary and cultural motifs, as well as the social and historical contexts surrounding each text. Authors will include Dante, Petrarca, Stampa, Tasso, Leopardi, Montale, Ungaretti, and Pasolini.

A Euro course taught in English by Prof. Dolci (visiting from the Università per Stranieri di Perugia)

The course will focus on teaching a foreign language from a theoretical, methodological, and practical perspective. It will prepare students to create their own teaching material and syllabi in order to reach their teaching objectives. We will cover key topics such as the communicative approach, teaching the five skills (listening, reading, speaking, writing, and interacting), and teaching grammar and vocabulary. We will also treat connections and comparisons to U.S. National Standards and European Standards.

To learn more about our program, please visit www.qc.cuny.edu/italian or contact us directly:

Undergraduate advisors:
Prof. Karina F. Attar
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Prof. Hermann Haller
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Sembra che tutto funzionasse egregiamente. Perché allora si decise di rinunciare ad un dipartimento che si occupava specificamente di lingue romanzhe?

Be’, a partire dai tardi anni Ottanta cominciarono a diradarsi gli studenti delle lingue straniere fino allora più studiate: oltre al francese, pure il tedesco ed il russo, che avevano i loro propri dipartimenti. Venne meno anche l’interesse per le lingue scandinave, mentre a partire dagli anni Novanta è lo spagnolo che cominciò a vivere il suo momento di gloria, che dura tuttora. Nel ’96 si prese atto di questi mutamenti e si decise di fondere in un unico dipartimento le lingue romanzhe (tranne lo spagnolo), il russo e il tedesco (più tardi si aggiunsero anche il greco moderno). Nacque così il Department of European Languages and Literatures, mentre contestualmente si inaugurò quello di Hispanic Languages and Literatures. In questi nuovi dipartimenti i temi di studio non sono più solamente quelli riconducibili alla filologia e alla critica dei testi letterari. Nel dipartimento di lingue e letterature europee, per esempio, accanto ai testi si studiano anche i film, e si cerca di favorire un approccio interdisciplinare e comparativo. Ricordo che quando ero Chair del dipartimento—tra il 1999 ed il 2004—iniziammo a proporre in inglese i cosiddetti Euro-Courses, nei quali si cerca tuttora di fornire allo studente un quadro della cultura europea che comprenda l’arte, la letteratura, il cinema e la lingua, anche nei suoi aspetti sociolinguistici.

Mi chiedo se, oltre a conoscere la cultura italiana ed europea attraverso gli Euro-Courses, chi studi italiano al Queens College abbia pure la possibilità di immergersi nella cultura target direttamente. In altre parole, esistono programmi di scambio con università italiane?

Certamente. Già all’epoca del dipartimento di Romance Languages era attivo un programma di Study Abroad che si avvaleva di una convenzione con l’Università di Bologna, verso la quale venivano indirizzati gli studenti di Italiano non solo del Queens College, ma pure di altri atenei americani: Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Cornell, Pennsylvania. Inoltre, sia il rettore dell’Università per Stranieri di Perugia, che quello dell’Università per Stranieri di Siena, già dagli anni Novanta prevedevano borse di studio per studenti di Italiano. Negli ultimi dieci anni abbiamo consolidato il rapporto con Perugia tramite un programma di Study Abroad gestito direttamente dal nostro dipartimento in collaborazione con l’ufficio di Education Abroad. Infine, grazie al John D. Calandra Italian-American Institute, gli studenti che lo desiderino possono seguire un anno accademico in una delle università convenzionate, tra le quali continuano a figurare Siena e Perugia.

Torniamo ai corsi di studi offerti dall’Italian Program. Quali corsi deve seguire uno studente che voglia conseguire un major in Italiano?

Chi desidera aver un major in Italiano deve accumulare a partire dalla classe denominata 204, che completa la parte linguistica di livello intermedio, trentasei crediti. I corsi tra cui scegliere non possono prescindere da classi di grammatica avanzata e da corsi di lingua e cultura, alcuni in italiano, altri in inglese. Nel Department of European Languages and Literatures è proprio l’italiano, insieme al francese, l’unica lingua in cui ci si possa laureare avendo come materia principale, major ap- punto.

E’ poi possibile proseguire gli studi dopo aver conseguito il Bachelor of Arts (BA)?

I Graduate Studies permettono di arrivare alla laurea specialistica di Master of Arts (MA) o di Master of Science (MS). Il primo (MA) prevede dieci corsi (30 crediti) dopo il BA ed è tutto in Italianistica, con esami scritti e orali. Il secondo (MS), che esiste da circa venticinque anni, è invece metà in Italianistica e metà in Didattica, e certifica la capacità di insegnare italiano di chi lo consegua. Questi Master sono il fiore all’occhiello del Queens College, che è uno dei pochi a offrirlo in tutta la Tri-State area. Chi ottiene questi diplomi si dedica poi all’insegnamento nelle scuole, o alla carriera universitaria, o ad altri tipi di carriera, quali quella legale. Voglio anche aggiungere che il Queens College ha la fortuna di avere un gruppo di colleghi del Calandra Institute che si occupano di “italoamericanistica”, come Anthony Tamburri e Fred Gardaphe, con i quali il dipartimento collabora per il nuovo Programma MALS (Master of Liberal Arts) mirato a questo indirizzo di studi. Vi è poi anche la possibilità di proseguire ulteriormente gli studi e di intraprendere un percorso di studio di dottorato in Comparative Literatures al Graduate Center, con la specializzazione in Italianistica, programma del quale sono stato responsabile nel periodo 2004–2011. Ben un quarto degli studenti iscritti si specializza in Italianistica, e alcuni di questi possono accedere al dottorato grazie a delle borse di studio. Il PhD è consorziato col programma di Italianistica della NYU, dove i nostri studenti hanno la possibilità di seguire corsi di collegi di grande valore, quelli ad esempio quelli di filologia dantesca di John Freccero.

Continued on next page.
Il lavoro di un professore universitario è fatto di insegnamento ma anche di ricerca. Vorrei capire come uno studioso di linguistica e letteratura del Suo valore interagisce con il proprio dipartimento per contribuire all' avanzamento dei propri interessi scientifici.

Al di là degli studi che portano alla pubblicazione di articoli, saggi e monografie, un possibile modo di interazione è l'organizzazione di simposi, retrospettive, seminari, e conferenze. All'interno del programma di italiano, un evento assai riuscito fu il simposio su Pasolini organizzato nel 1991. Il tema era la lingua e il dialetto nell'opera letteraria e cinematografica del grande friulano, e gli ospiti furono assai illustri: ricordo tra gli altri Laura Bettì, Tullio De Mauro, Enzo Siciliano. Ci si è stati poi diversi inviti a studiosi di letteratura e di linguistica, e anche di scrittori per eventi singoli o serie di conferenze al Queens College, al Graduate Center, e all'Istituto Italiano di Cultura a Manhattan: tra questi Raffaele Simone, Pietro Trifone, Giorgio Bassani, Sandro Veronesi, Guido Guglielmi, Vittore Branca. Proprio all'Istituto Italiano di Cultura fu organizzata negli anni Novanta la Topics of Italian Linguistics Series. In quell'occasione vennero coinvolti Alberto Sobrero, Camilla Bettoni, Carla Marcato, Francesco Bruni, Marcel Danesi. Al Graduate Center organizzai invece una Lecture Series sostenuta dalla Sonia Raiziss Grop Foundation, che fu gratificata dalla presenza di personalità del calibro di Edgar Radtke, Francesco Sabatini, Riccardo Bruscagli, John Welle, Stefania Giannini, Franco Brevini. Non voglio ora ricordare tutti gli eventi che ho contribuito a creare per il Dipartimento, anche se mi fa piacere menzionarme uno di più recente realizzazione che ha messo in luce un'area di studi che mi sta particolarmente a cuore. Mi riferisco al seminario sull'identità linguistica in Italia, che ha avuto luogo nel 2011 all'Istituto Italiano di Cultura nell'ambito della Settimana della Lingua Italiana.

Professor Haller, la nostra conversazione sta pian piano mettendo in evidenza i Suoi ambiti di ricerca. Potrebbe menzionare quelli a Suo parere più rappresentativi, soffermandosi sulle opere della Sua produzione che hanno trovato maggiore risonanza nella comunità accademica, e ricordare i riconoscimenti ottenuti?

Mi ha sempre interessato coniugare la ricerca linguistica con quella filologica, con particolare attenzione alla dialettologia ed alla traduzione in inglese della tradizione poetica italiana scritta in dialetto. Mi sono occupato di italiano antico ma pure dell'italiano parlato dagli emigranti e di comportamenti linguistici. Sono studi questi ultimi che rientrano in un ambito di ricerca che in contesto anglofono viene denominato Contact Linguistics, e che ora è diventata Migration Linguistics, come parte della sociolinguistica.

Un campo di studi che mi ha dato grandi soddisfazioni è proprio quello della lettura critica, della traduzione e della divulgazione della poesia dialettale italiana. Dopo la pubblicazione di The Hidden Italy, in cui avevo selezionato e tradotto in inglese quattrocento testi appartenenti a dieci dialetti italiani, è accaduto che altri studiosi si siano avvicinati alla letteratura dialettale, approntando ulteriori traduzioni di opere fino allora misconosciute. Quell'opera ebbe una certa risonanza anche al di fuori della comunità accademica. Ricordo con piacere la recensione ad essa dedicata dall'insigne filologo Maria Corti sulle pagine culturali di Repubblica, che si intitolava: "E Deilio Tessa sbarca in America." Nello stesso ambito di ricerca, un'ottima ricezione fu accordata anche a La festa delle lingue, un libro che offre una panoramica d'insieme della letteratura dialettale italiana. Contiene repertori letterari e linguistici che vanno dalla poesia al teatro e alla narrativa delle varie regioni italiane, sistematizzati diacronicamente.

Tra Napoli e New York. Le macchiette italo-americane di Eduardo Migliacio è invece rappresentativo di un altro campo di studi al quale sono rimasto nel corso del tempo fedele, quello dell'identità linguistica dell'emigrante italiano in America, un tema al quale avevo in precedenza dedicato Una lingua perduta e ritrovata.

Sono sempre stato affascinato dalle persone che si fanno ponti linguistici tra la cultura e l'identità linguistica (anche regionale) italiana e quella anglosassone. Un caso straordinario è quello di Giovanni “John” Florio, amico tra gli altri di William Shakespeare. Di questo esempio di doppia identità linguistica e culturale sto curando l'edizione critica del “Vocabolario italiano e inglese” che scrisse alla corte di re Giacomo I.

Non mi ha parlato dei riconoscimenti, dei premi ...

Guardi, le confessioni che questo domanda mi imbarazza un po', anche perché, onestamente, non sono mai andato alla ricerca di riconoscimenti ufficiali. E' capitato però che qualche istituzione mi facesse l'onore di attribuirne: si può trovare queste informazioni nelle mie note biografiche pubblicate sul sito del Dipartimento. Siccome però mi sono sforzato sull'antologia di poesia dialettale The Hidden Italy. N.d.C.), Le dirò che quel libro ha vinto un premio che mi ha particolarmente lusingato: l'International Dino Campana Prize. Come linguista sono invece molto orgoglioso di essere stato nominato, nel 2006, socio corrispondente stra-
Italian Majors on the Job Market

Luisanna Sardu

If you are considering studying Italian or have recently graduated with a major or minor in Italian, you may be asking yourself, as our students often do, “What can I do with a degree in Italian?” Our answer: “You can pursue almost any career!” Studying a foreign language and culture is very rewarding on both a personal and professional level; it broadens our horizons and helps us to develop valuable skills that any prospective employer looks for, including oral, written, and cross-cultural communication skills (even in your native language). It also enhances research skills; sensitivity to diverse cultural viewpoints; interpersonal relationship skills; the intellectual dexterity necessary to adequately articulate and resolve problems; and the ability to evaluate original and translated texts, and to interpret historical ideas in a modern context. With a major or minor in Italian, you can successfully enter a career in teaching, marketing, translation and interpreting, hospitality, fashion, travel, commerce, government, international relations, business, banking, market research, medicine, human resources, journalism, and more.

Useful Links and Resources for Employment and Italian Studies

www.jobsabroad.com/Italy.cfm
over 27,000 opportunities abroad, updated daily

www.bilingual-jobs.com
bilingual jobs for the bilingual in you

www.higheredjobs.com
faculty and administrative positions at colleges and universities

www.cia.gov/careers/opportunities/foreign-languages/index.html
Central Intelligence Agency foreign-language positions

work at the United Nations

www.aaais.info
American Association for Italian Studies

www.aati-online.org
American Association of Teachers of Italian

www.italianamericanstudies.net
Italian American Studies Association

www.atanet.org
American Translators Association: the voice of interpreters and translators

www.mla.org
Modern Language Association
Fabiana Lo Brutto

Born in New York City in 1988, Fabiana grew up speaking two languages at home: Italian, as both her parents were born and raised in Italy, and Spanish, with her Dominican nanny. She studied Spanish throughout high school but often traveled to Italy to visit her grandparents and other relatives, with whom she spoke Italian. Because of her background and her love of traveling, she decided to study Italian in college (it was not offered in her high school). She graduated from Queens College in 2010 with a major in Italian and a minor in secondary education. Since then, Fabiana has been teaching Italian at North Shore Middle School.

How was your overall experience as a student of Italian at QC?

Although I could speak Italian quite fluently when I started, I decided to go back to Italian 111, which is the first semester of elementary Italian, in order to better learn the grammatical foundation and to learn how to write correctly. Then, I followed the sequence of courses.

When did you decide that you wanted to be a teacher?

I have always had a passion for languages, I guess because of my family background. I believe that one must always try to pursue something that he/she likes. It's never a waste of time, even if in the end the individual decides to change paths. He/she will have gained competence in something which can be helpful in other fields. I also love history and literature, and now that I teach, I find that everything I have learned in those subjects is becoming really useful.

What did you enjoy most about your experience as a student of Italian at QC?

It was really fun because most of the classes you take are with the same people, causing you to bond and share experiences with the other students. I became good friends with classmates from a wide variety of majors. The Italian Club, which is organized by the students, is also a great resource. In this club, Italian majors hang out, do various activities, and prepare to march together in the Columbus Day Parade with members of other CUNY Italian programs. We also met just to listen to music, practice the language, etc. Also, you become familiar with the professors over time, and they are really accessible.

How did you start your teaching experience?

Once I finished all of my courses, I completed my student teaching in a high school. I was assigned to work with a very good teacher. I first did my practicum (100 hours), then a semester of teaching divided into six periods: two of conferencing and planning, two of observing, and two of teaching.

How do you become a teacher of Italian in New York State?

You must pass three exams: a general test (LAST) on different subjects; the ATSW on educational philosophy, and finally a specific test on Italian. The third exam focuses on the four skills (listening, writing, reading, speaking) as well as culture and history.

When did you get a job?

While I was student teaching, I was also substituting for a teacher who was on maternity leave. When this teacher notified the school that she was not coming back, the team teacher I was working with asked me if I would be interested in replacing her. I really wanted the job, so I rushed to finish the credits I needed in order to graduate. I took two summer classes and then took the required exams. I went through all of the interviews that were required (with the department, the principal, the chairperson, and the assistant superintendent), and taught a demonstration lesson. I started in September of 2010 and have been working at the middle school teaching sixth, seventh, and eighth grade since then.

How do you like your job?

I love it! Teaching requires a lot of enthusiasm which one must transmit to the students. It is a commitment but a very rewarding one. For me, teaching has been good every day. I get the students the first year of middle school, when they do not speak a word of Italian, and by the end of the eighth grade, they know over 200 words for every topic.

What would you say to a student who would like to study a foreign language such as Italian but who does not want to teach?

I believe that learning a foreign language is such a valuable experience at so many different levels. Above all, learning a language means entering another world and developing another way of looking at things. Also, I believe that learning about the grammar and sentence structure of foreign languages helps you understand your own native language better. This is helpful in order to achieve success when applying for any type of job, since at the interview one often needs to prove a certain level of linguistic competence by writing a paragraph on a given topic on the spot.
Italian Studies and *La Moda*

Eugenia Paulicelli

Fashion, clothing, and textiles have been at the core of human experience, as well as at the core of great economic, political, and cultural transformations—such as the transition from feudalism to capitalism, or the shift from Fordist to post-Fordist economies—and have accompanied colonialism and the struggle for independence from colonial empire, as in the case of India.

Although fashion has a long history, the establishment of fashion as a field of study in the academic environment is fairly recent. Academic interest in fashion as a means of attaining greater understanding of the mechanisms of production and reproduction has been growing over the last decade, as witnessed by the founding of several academic journals as well as by the many scholarly publications that have appeared in the catalogues of some of the most prestigious international presses.

CUNY, Queens College, and the Graduate Center have been at the forefront of these new developments in scholarship with exhibitions (at the Godwin-Ternbach Museum in 2006 and at the James Gallery in 2010), international conferences, lectures, and symposia.

These initiatives have resulted in several publications and culminated in the founding of a new degree program at the CUNY GC. A new track in Fashion: History, Theory, part of the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies (MALS) program, has recently been launched. (For further information, see liberalstudies.gc.cuny.edu/mals-track-description-fashion-studies.) In addition to MALS, the GC also offers a PhD Concentration in Fashion Studies (www.gc.cuny.edu/Academics-Research/PhD-Programs/Degree-Programs/Doctoral-Programs/Interdisciplinary-Concentrations).

The CUNY GC—located on Fifth Avenue in a landmark building, the former B. Altman department store—is the only university in the United States that is not a design or fashion school to offer a master’s degree in liberal studies with a track in fashion. This is a groundbreaking area of specialization that offers the chance to study the phenomenon of fashion from a variety of standpoints and in a unique interdisciplinary framework.

What makes fashion unique, however, if we compare it to other fields of inquiry, is its ability to connect different domains and spaces, such as the private and the public, or the local and the global. Fashion as a system and process of signification cannot be separated from the technologies of self, the body, and modes of production. Clothing is often referred to as our “second skin,” or as Erasmus said: “Clothing is the body of the body.”

Technology in its many forms has always moved the wheel of fashion as an industry and as a symbolic force. From the spinning wheel to techniques of dyeing cloth to the spread of fashion in costume and pattern books in early modernity (the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) to the sewing machine and on to the computer screen, advancements in technology have constantly interacted with shifts in the economy and cultural transformations. With digital technologies, temporal boundaries no longer exist, thanks to the possibility of feeding and filling websites, blogs, and tweets with information.

Any technological revolution, including of course the revolution in digital technology, has a crucial impact on the fashion industry, its modes of production and consumption. Today, environmental practices, sustainability, and textile production have developed fabrics that mimic the skin’s properties and have turned the figure of “second skin” into something more than a metaphor. More important, the fashion industry as a whole has completely embraced digital technology and, in so doing, the entire fashion landscape is rapidly changing, as are our ways of interacting, consuming, etc.

Within this wide and global context the role of *La mod*

Within this wide and global context the role of *La moda* in Italian Studies is particularly crucial. Indeed, fashion has played, and still plays, a key role in the discursive construction of what is now recognized as Italian Style. Perhaps for all the people, especially foreigners, who imagine or have at least once visited Italy, the study of Italian and fashion might seem a quite obvious association. If fashion is linked in the imagination to style, aesthetics, and beauty, no country more than Italy comes immediately to mind. In their complexity and plurality of forms, fashion, Italian identity, and culture are tightly connected. One of the common features of Italian style consists in its ties to beauty, aesthetics, and craftsmanship. Yet Italian fashion and taste are very diversified and nowadays devote ever more attention to efforts toward sustainability as well as new cutting-edge design, color techniques, and textiles. In our new global economy, the reality behind the labels on our garments is constantly being redefined in view of phenomena like migration of labor, expertise exchanges, joint ventures, etc. One such example is the relationship...
between Italy and China, something that requires a much larger space in order to be addressed adequately.

It would be too limiting an approach to think of Italian fashion as confined solely within its national borders. Italian fashion can be best appreciated and studied in a global context and with an eye to its complex process of translation in the peninsula and beyond. This is true not only for our present but also for the past, to which today’s fashion often refers and from which it derives its inspiration. Indeed, it was in sixteenth-century Italy that fashion as a social institution of modernity established itself. It was at this time that a discourse and a semiotic system elaborating rules and codes of civility and behavior were created that shaped the individual, its performance, its perception, and its features, whose influence went far beyond Italy to invest the entirety of Western culture. For Italian Studies, La moda is an incredibly rich academic field that gives its best when studied within a global and interdisciplinary perspective. As we all know, courses that study Italy through film have been staples in many Italian programs across the United States. The same could be done for fashion, starting in early modernity and going on to the present. Indeed, Fashion Studies can make (and has already made) decisive contributions to the development of a multidisciplinary approach that blurs the boundaries that organize and demarcate traditional disciplines. One hopes that the boundaries of disciplines, identities, and nationalities—in view of the regeneration of the humanities and languages brought about by the addition of new lenses—also collapse. La moda is one of these new lenses, and a very productive one.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

SPRING 2013 COURSES

Elementary and Intermediate Italian (multiple sections)
Advanced Grammar
Pirandello’s Theater (taught in Italian)
Representation of Women, Spirituality and Eroticism in Italian Literature (taught in English)
Imagining Bodies: From the Mind to the Text (taught in English, writing-intensive)
Writing the Mediterranean: From Mare Nostrum to the New Frontier (taught in English, writing-intensive)
Italy’s Dialect Culture (MA course taught in Italian)
Italian Style: Film and Fashion (1914–1970s) (MA course taught in Italian)