

Research showcase

Work in Italian Studies at Birmingham is organised in three main areas, in each of which there are a number of focal points connected with the on-going research of current members of staff and postgraduate students.

- [Literary studies \(#litararystudies\)](#)
- [Political science \(#politicalscience\)](#)
- [Film theory and cultural theory \(#filmcultural\)](#)

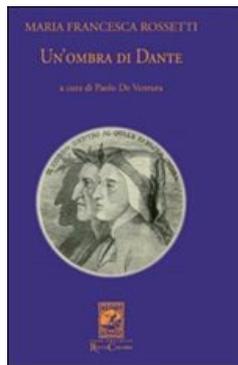
Literary studies

Giacomo Leopardi

Volgarizzamenti in prosa, 1822-1827 (<http://www.marsilioeditori.it/component/marsilio/libro/3171111-volgarizzamenti-in-prosa>)

Critical edition by [Franco D'Intino](#) ([/staff/profiles/italian/dintino-franco.aspx](#)), Marsilio (Venezia), 2012.

This critical edition of Leopardi's prose translations from Greek includes all the works and the fragments translated by Leopardi in his maturity, between 1822 and 1827. A 180-page introduction reconstructs the history of these translations, and sheds light on their importance for Leopardi's literary and philosophical career. The texts, fully annotated, are followed by a 100-page apparatus, which describes the manuscripts and records all the variant readings.



Maria Francesca Rossetti

Un'ombra di Dante (<http://www.editricecarabba.it/store/#!/~/product/id=14076673>)

Edited by [Paolo De Ventura](#) ([/staff/profiles/italian/de-ventura-paolo.aspx](#)), Carabba (Lanciano), 2011.

This is the Italian translation and commented edition of the first ever *companion* to Dante studies, published in 1871 by a very special outsider in the Victorian *milieu*, Maria Rossetti, soon to become an Anglican nun, eldest daughter of the exile Gabriele, sister of Dante Gabriel and Christina. Hailed by James Russel Lowell as "by far the best comment that has appeared in English," *A Shadow of Dante* presented the English-speaking world with the treasure of knowledge and the cult for the Florentine poet that so much, and in so different ways, characterised the Rossetti circle.

Lingua e diritto (<http://www.lededizioni.com/catalogo.html>)

Edited by [Jacqueline Visconti](#) ([/staff/profiles/italian/visconti-jacqueline.aspx](#)), LED, 2010.

This volume collects a series of contributions by experts and world-leaders in the field of studies on Language and Law.



Current Trends in Diachronic Semantics and Pragmatics

(<http://www.emeraldinsight.com/products/books/series.htm?id=1750-368X>)

Edited by Maj-Britt Mosegaard Hansen and [Jacqueline Visconti](#) ([/staff/profiles/italian/visconti-jacqueline.aspx](#)), Emerald (Bingley), 2009.

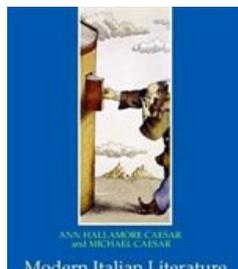
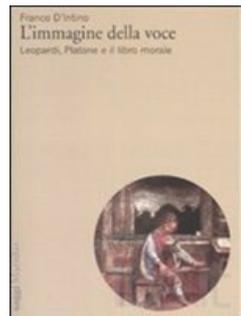
This edited book forms an important and updated contribution to the main issues related to the question of the role of pragmatics in semantic change.

The focus of this volume is on semantic and pragmatic change, its causes and mechanisms. The papers gathered here offer both theoretical proposals of more general scope and in-depth studies of language-specific cases of meaning change in particular notional domains.

L'immagine della voce (<http://www.marsilioeditori.it/component/marsilio/libro/3179719-immagine-della-voce>)

[Franco D'Intino](#) ([/staff/profiles/italian/dintino-franco.aspx](#)), Marsilio (Venezia), 2009.

The object of this essay is not simply Leopardi's prose masterwork, the *Operette morali*, but, more in general, the project - elaborated by Leopardi in 1823 after his reading of Plato - of a moral book in a disenchanted modern world. Using a Nietzschean word this project could be described as 'untimely'. Leopardi meditated throughout his life on the impossible task of reactivating, in the early nineteenth century, the three main moral genres of antiquity: oratory, tragedy and epos. With the *Operette morali* he finds a new literary and philosophical form that embodies a creative response to this challenge.



Modern Italian Literature (<http://www.polity.co.uk/book.asp?ref=9780745627991>)

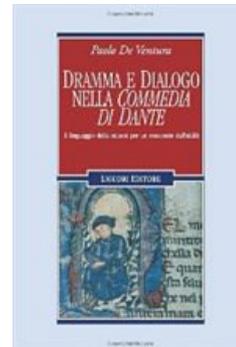
Ann Hallamre Caesar and [Michael Caesar](#) ([/staff/profiles/italian/caesar-michael.aspx](#)), Cambridge, Polity, 2007.

This authoritative and vividly written book brings readers into the heart of Italian literary culture from the 1690s to the present. It probes the work of major authors in their broad cultural context, traces the history of audiences and publishers, explores the shifting relationship between public and private, assesses the impact of significant historical trends and events on creative processes, and establishes the continuities as well as the discontinuities of the Italian literary tradition.

Dramma e dialogo nella *Commedia di Dante*: Il linguaggio della mimesi per un resoconto dall'aldilà (<http://www.liguori.it/schedanew.asp?isbn=3980>)

Paolo De Ventura ([/staff/profiles/italian/de-ventura-paolo.aspx](http://staff/profiles/italian/de-ventura-paolo.aspx)), Liguori (Napoli), 2007.

The notion of drama and the traditional connotation of realism and vividness associated with Dante's poem is discussed in the light of the medieval context of text transmission, and tested against the linguistic tools of pragmatic linguistics, in a monograph that proposes a more medieval, and performative, title for Dante's *Comedy*.



Women and the Making of Poetry in Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* (http://www.troubador.co.uk/book_info.asp?bookid=401)

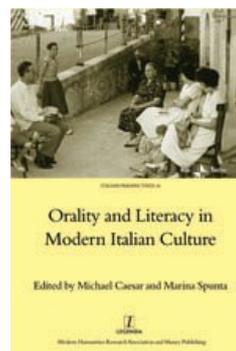
Ita Mac Carthy ([/staff/profiles/italian/mac-carthy-ita.aspx](http://staff/profiles/italian/mac-carthy-ita.aspx)), Troubador, 2007.

This book breaks new ground in tackling the poem's double-edged treatment of the subject (since conflicting views of women represent one of its characteristic features), as it reads the poem both on the level of thematics and poetics. In devising an approach that examines the so-called ideology of the *Furioso* in light of its rhetorical practises, it allows a more complex understanding of Ariosto's contribution to the Renaissance debate about women to emerge.

Orality and Literacy in Modern Italian Culture (<http://www.legendabooks.com/titles/isbn/1904350739.html>)

Edited by **Michael Caesar** ([/staff/profiles/italian/caesar-michael.aspx](http://staff/profiles/italian/caesar-michael.aspx)) and Marina Spunta, Oxford, Legenda, 2006.

In our highly literate culture, orality is all-pervasive. Different kinds of media and performance - theatre, film, television, story-telling, structured play - make us ask what is the relation between improvisation and premeditation, between transcription and textualization, between rehearsal, recollection and re-narration. The challenge of writing down what is spoken is partly technical, but also political and philosophical.



The Expression of the Inexpressible in Eugenio Montale's Poetry (<http://ukcatalogue.oup.com/product/9780199248988.do>)

Clodagh Brook ([/staff/profiles/italian/brook-clodagh.aspx](http://staff/profiles/italian/brook-clodagh.aspx)), Oxford University Press, 2002.

Locating one of the greatest Italian poets of the 20th century, Eugenio Montale, firmly within European Modernism, this book examines the struggle with language that is central to his work. In its unravelling of the inexpressibility paradox, the book offers a new reading of Montale's early verse, and reveals how through his poetry, metapoetic comments, and his journalistic writing, Montale gives us insights into both his poetics and the whole process of expression.

Political science

Populists in Power (<http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415600972>)

By **Daniele Albertazzi** ([/staff/profiles/italian/albertazzi-daniele.aspx](http://staff/profiles/italian/albertazzi-daniele.aspx)) and Duncan McDonnell

The main area of sustained populist growth in recent decades has been Western Europe, where populist parties have not only endured longer than expected, but have increasingly begun to enter government. Focusing on three high-profile cases in Italy and Switzerland – the Popolo della Libertà (PDL), Lega Nord (LN) and Schweizerische Volkspartei (SVP) – *Populists in Power* is the first in-depth comparative study to examine whether these parties are indeed doomed to failure in office as many commentators have claimed.

Politica in Italia. I fatti dell'anno e le interpretazioni. Edizione 2012 (http://www.mulino.it/edizioni/volumi/scheda_volume.php?vista=scheda&ISBNART=24014)

Edited by Anna Bosco and Duncan McDonnell, Il Mulino, 2012

This volume examines and analyzes events in Italy during 2011: a year which saw the fall of the Berlusconi government amidst a severe financial crisis and its replacement by a cabinet of unelected technocratic ministers, led by Mario Monti. As the chapters by key scholars from Italy, Ireland, the UK, France and Canada show, in reality, even before the financial crisis struck in the summer of 2011, the most dynamic actors in Italian politics were those outside the main parties.



Resisting the Tide: Cultures of Opposition under Berlusconi (2001-06) (<http://www.continuumbooks.com/Books/detail.aspx?BookID=125748>)

Edited by **Daniele Albertazzi** ([/staff/profiles/italian/albertazzi-daniele.aspx](http://staff/profiles/italian/albertazzi-daniele.aspx)), **Clodagh Brook** ([/staff/profiles/italian/brook-clodagh.aspx](http://staff/profiles/italian/brook-clodagh.aspx)), **Charlotte Ross** ([/staff/profiles/italian/ross-charlotte.aspx](http://staff/profiles/italian/ross-charlotte.aspx)) and Nina Rothenberg, Continuum (New York), 2009.

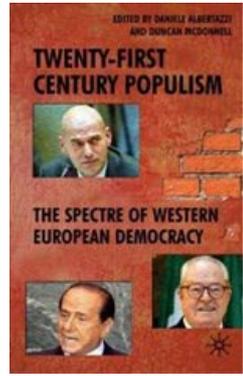
Focussing on his term as Prime Minister from 2001-06, this scholarly volume provides the first assessment of how the neo-conservative values attributed to Berlusconi were contested and resisted by a variety of groups, social/minority movements, intellectuals and media practitioners.



Twenty-First Century Populism (<http://us.macmillan.com/twentyfirstcenturypopulism/DanieleAlbertazzi>)

Edited by **Daniele Albertazzi** ([/staff/profiles/italian/albertazzi-daniele.aspx](http://staff/profiles/italian/albertazzi-daniele.aspx)) and Duncan McDonnell, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Over the last decade, the main area of sustained populist growth has been Western Europe, with populist movements reaching new heights in countries such as France, Italy, Austria and the Netherlands. *Twenty-First Century Populism* analyses this phenomenon by looking at the conditions facilitating the emergence and success of populism in specific national contexts and then examining why populism has flourished or floundered in those countries.



Special issue of Modern Italy: 'Berlusconi's Impact and Legacy', Vol 20 No. 1, May 2015 (<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cmit20/20/1>)

Edited by **Daniele Albertazzi** ([/staff/profiles/italian/albertazzi-daniele.aspx](http://staff/profiles/italian/albertazzi-daniele.aspx)) and James Newell

Partially based on the international conference 'Silvio Berlusconi and Post-modern Politics' that was hosted by the University of Birmingham in December 2012 (with support from the UK Political Studies Association), the issue offers in-depth analysis of Silvio Berlusconi's impact and legacy on Italian politics and society.

Special Issue of Party Politics: 'Outsider Parties', Vol 17 No. 4, July 2011 (<http://ppq.sagepub.com/content/17/4.toc>)

Edited by Duncan McDonnell and James Newell

This special issue discusses parties in Europe which – due to their ideology, rhetoric and stances on government participation – have gone through periods of not being available for coalition government participation, before then 'coming in from the cold' and entering government. Following an introduction by the editors, it features articles examining the governing experiences of 'outsider parties' such as the Lega Nord, Rifondazione Comunista, and the Austrian Freedom Party, along with other regionalist and radical parties across Europe.

Special issue of Modern Italy: 'Italy under Berlusconi', Vol 10 No. 1, May 2005 (<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cmit20/10/1>)

Edited by **Daniele Albertazzi** ([/staff/profiles/italian/albertazzi-daniele.aspx](http://staff/profiles/italian/albertazzi-daniele.aspx)) and Duncan McDonnell

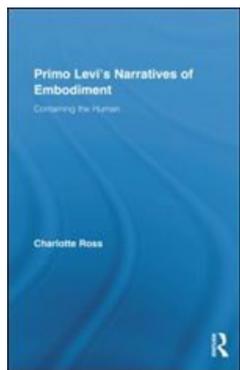
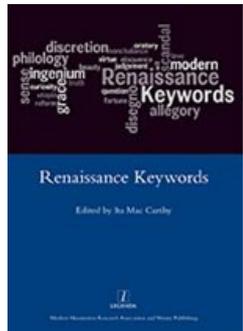
Silvio Berlusconi and his governments have attracted a lot of attention from scholars both inside and outside Italy since he 'took to the stage' in 1993. The main reason for this is his populist brand of politics and position as Italy's richest man, media mogul and winner of three general elections. This special issue of *Modern Italy* looks at Italian political and economic life under the second Berlusconi government, by bringing together scholars from Italy, Canada and the UK.

Film theory and cultural theory

Renaissance Keywords (<http://www.legendabooks.com/titles/isbn/9781907975295.html>)

Edited by **Ita Mac Carthy** ([/staff/profiles/italian/mac-carthy-ita.aspx](http://staff/profiles/italian/mac-carthy-ita.aspx)), Oxford, Legenda, 2013.

Certain words played a crucial role in the making of the European Renaissance, and still recur today in our shifting understanding of it. Discretion and grace, to take two examples studied here, express how individuals thought about themselves, each other and their experience of the world, yet they are as hard to define as they are ever-present in Renaissance discourse. In this collection of essays, scholars from across the Humanities offer new interpretations of these and other 'keywords', and investigate the vocabulary that not only accompanied, but also produced, the cultural transformations that made the Renaissance so distinctive.



Primo Levi's Narrative of Embodiment: Containing the Human (<http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415880411/>)

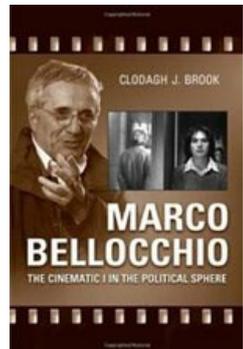
Charlotte Ross ([/staff/profiles/italian/ross-charlotte.aspx](http://staff/profiles/italian/ross-charlotte.aspx)), Routledge (New York), 2011.

This innovative reading of Primo Levi's work offers the first sustained analysis in English of his representations of bodies and embodiment. Discussion spans the range of Levi's works - from testimony to journalism, from essays to science fiction stories - identifying and tracing multiple narratives of embodiment and disembodiment across his oeuvre. These narratives range from the abject, disembodied condition of prisoners in Auschwitz, to posthuman or cyborg individuals, whose bodies merge with technological devices.

Marco Bellocchio: The Cinematic I in the Political Sphere

(<http://www.utppublishing.com/Marco-Bellocchio-The-Cinematic-I-in-the-Political-Sphere.html>)

Clodagh Brook ([/staff/profiles/italian/brook-clodagh.aspx](http://staff/profiles/italian/brook-clodagh.aspx)), University of Toronto Press, 2010.

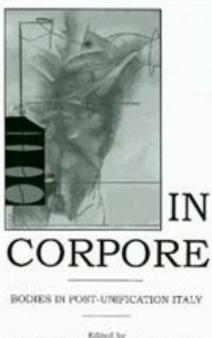


Marco Bellocchio is one of Italy's most important and prolific directors, with a career spanning five decades. In this book, Clodagh J. Brook explores the boundaries between the public and the private, the political and the personal, and the collective and the individual as they appear in Bellocchio's films. Including work on psychoanalysis, politics, film production, autobiography, and the relationship between film tradition and contemporary culture, Marco Bellocchio touches on fundamental issues in film analysis.

In Corpore: Bodies in Post-Unification Italy (<http://inside.fdu.edu/fdupress/07110502.html>)

Edited by Loredana Polezzi and **Charlotte Ross** ([/staff/profiles/italian/ross-charlotte.aspx](http://staff/profiles/italian/ross-charlotte.aspx)), Fairleigh Dickinson University Press (Madison NJ), 2007.

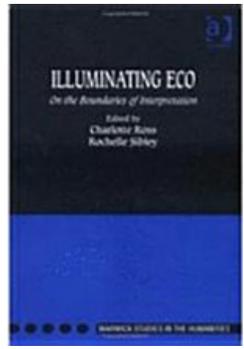
In Corpore collects essays devoted to the critical exploration of the presence and impact of bodies in recent and contemporary Italian cultural production, in the light of current developments in thinking about bodies and their locations within cultures.



[Illuminating Eco: On the Boundaries of Interpretation \(http://www.ashgate.com/isbn/9780754636809\)](http://www.ashgate.com/isbn/9780754636809)

Edited by **[Charlotte Ross \(/staff/profiles/italian/ross-charlotte.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/italian/ross-charlotte.aspx)** and Rochelle Sibley, Ashgate (Aldershot), 2004.

This text covers the range of British scholarship on the prolific literary and theoretical work of Umberto Eco. With essays by scholars such as Michael Caesar and David Robey, the volume provides an overview of current research being carried out by a new generation of academics. In addition, it provides an opportunity to view the interaction between Eco's fiction and his theoretical texts and suggests future avenues of research.



[Special issue of Italian Studies: Gender and Sexuality in Contemporary Italian Culture: representations and critical debates, Vol. 65 No. 2, July 2010 \(http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/maney/its/latest\)](http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/maney/its/latest)

Edited by **[Charlotte Ross \(/staff/profiles/italian/ross-charlotte.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/italian/ross-charlotte.aspx)** and Susanna Scarparo.

Over the past few decades, the fields of gender and sexuality studies have developed significantly. As a result, new definitions of and critical approaches to gender and sexuality have impacted on current debates in Italian studies as an international field. This special issue of Italian Studies brings together articles by researchers based both within and outside Italy, whose work focuses on questions of gender and sexuality in late twentieth-century and contemporary Italian culture and cultural texts.

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