

# Welleslitalia! 2019 - 2020

## *A Special Message to Our Students and Alumnae*

During these challenging times, the Department of Italian Studies' Faculty and Staff are committed to keeping a strong connection with our community of students and alumnae. For this reason, we have put together this edition of our newsletter with the hope that you will enjoy knowing what our small but very active department has been up to during the 2019-2020 academic year. We trust that this newsletter finds you, your family and friends well and safe.

*Italian Studies Department Faculty and Staff*



*Top: Melania Notarrigo, Sergio Parussa, Laura Ingallinella  
Bottom: Jael Matos, David Ward, Flavia Laviosa, Daniela Bartalesi-Graf*

*Don't forget to follow us on Facebook at Wellesley College Italian Studies & Cultural Society.  
If you'd like to be featured in our next edition under "Alumnae Spotlight",  
please send an email to Jael Matos at [jmatos@wellesley.edu](mailto:jmatos@wellesley.edu).*

# Faculty/Staff Updates

In the summer of 2019 **Daniela Bartalesi-Graf** was in Bologna and Palermo, Italy, to shoot some video interviews for her online courses at Wellesley and on edX. In Palermo, she interviewed a doctor and a social worker who welcome newly arrived immigrants from North Africa, and in Bologna she interviewed members and workers of Arvaia, an organic farming cooperative (see photo of Daniela interviewing Lorenzo, a farmer from Arvaia). It was inspiring to see so many people, young and old alike, dedicated to the betterment of Italian communities and to projects of social engagement.

During the academic year, besides teaching and helping the Italian Society organize its various activities, Daniela ran the four online courses she created on edX.org. We have currently more than 100,000 online learners from 184 different countries. There are so many inspiring stories of how online resources have helped those who had no access to traditional classes, particularly during this COVID-19 pandemic. Our online courses were also an invaluable resource for Wellesley students during the remote learning period this spring.

Also during the 2019-2020 academic year, Daniela's collaboration with colleagues at the University of Lisbon, Portugal, resulted in the publication of two articles on self-determined learning in language MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), co-authored with David O'Steen, Director, Research & Instructional Support at Wellesley College.

Daniela and her husband Mike frequently visit their daughters Chiara and Livia who are both living and studying in Canada (Toronto and Vancouver respectively). Here is a photo from one of their recent visits to Toronto. Daniela and Mike hope that soon we pull through this pandemic so they can resume these visits!



Dante is back at Wellesley! This fall, **Laura Ingallinella** joined the department as the Andrew W. Mellon postdoctoral fellow in Italian Studies and English & Creative Writing. Her class on the *Divine Comedy* was a success, and students had a wonderful time decoding this masterpiece of world literature, discussing its ethical challenges, and examining Wellesley's spectacular collection of medieval Italian manuscripts. While in the picture shown here, Dante's Wellesley bust is sporting his usual severe frown, we wager that he was thrilled to be in such good company and to have his work constantly interrogated for meaning, appreciation, and significance. In the spring, Laura taught a new course in the English department. This course, entitled "The Global Middle Ages," was another huge success and brought the students a taste of the diversity and interconnectedness of the medieval world—as well as the dazzling beauty and depth of literature produced in England and Iran, Ethiopia and Japan, Iceland and Morocco between the years 1000 and 1500.

During this academic year, Laura—a Romance philologist by training, who specializes in medieval Italian and French literature—has also been busy with several research projects. Her study of an unedited fifteenth-century collection of saints' lives in Italian will soon

appear in an edited collection; this manuscript is now preserved in Harvard's Houghton Library. Another article of hers, containing the critical edition of a medieval Sicilian version of Jacobus de Voragine's *Golden Legend*, will appear in this year's issue of the peer-reviewed journal *Bollettino del Centro di studi filologici e linguistici siciliani*. Laura also made exciting discoveries in hidden manuscript collections in the Boston area. She identified a manuscript fragment containing a legal treatise in medieval French among the Appleton family papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society; the discovery has been published on the institution's website ("Notes from the Odd Shelf: A Medieval French Legal Treatise Found in the Appleton Family Papers," with Agnieszka Rec). Laura is currently working on another, much more interesting finding from the same collection—she can't divulge much about it yet, but it is a very famous medieval French romance that had readers swooning for centuries. She is also working on an article on Dante's Piccarda Donati and the Franciscan tradition, and on her first book, the critical edition of a collection of saints' lives translated from French by a Florentine businessman who was arrested for embezzlement in Geneva after he completed his work. Medieval people lived very interesting lives.

Besides teaching and working on her research, Laura has enjoyed pursuing her favorite hobbies—reading, watching tv shows, cooking *manicaretti*, and acting. With her theater troupe ImproNati, she brought Luigi Pirandello's *La giara* to the stage in November 2019. Her character, a strong-willed peasant woman named Gna Tana, is not someone to be trifled with. Her favorite tv shows this year were the adaptation of Neil Gaiman's *Good Omens*, one of her all-time favorite books, and the last season of *The Good Place*—a treat to anyone who loves Dante's design of the afterlife and wants to ponder on the big questions of life with a touch of *commedia*.

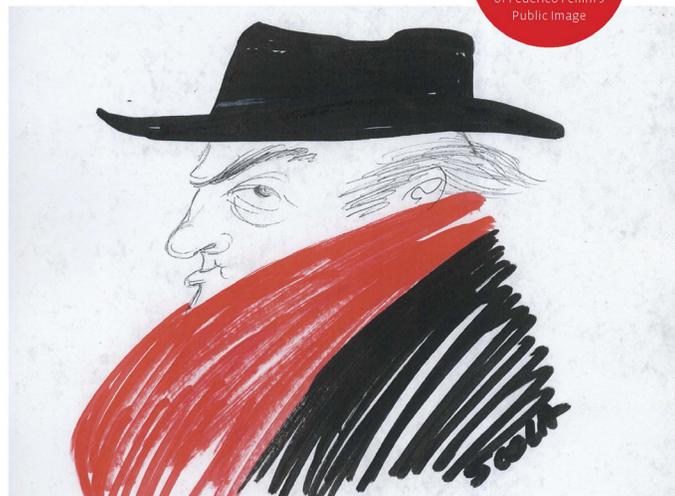


Film Studies

# Journal of Italian Cinema & Media Studies

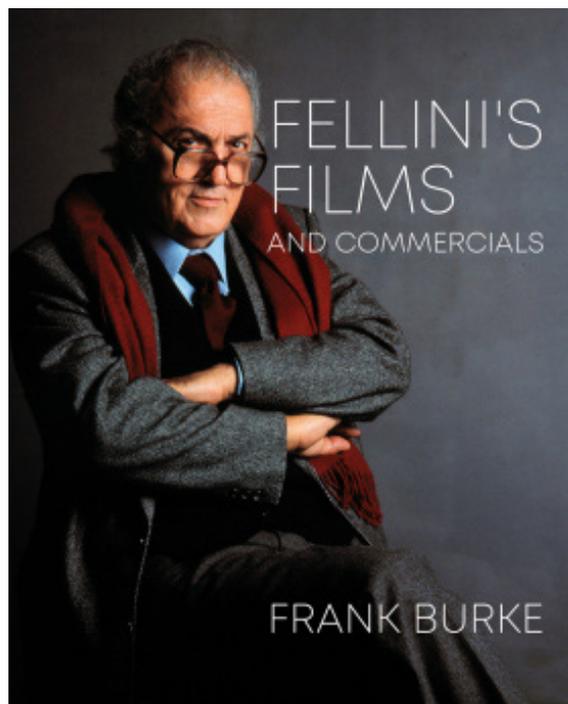
Volume 9 Number 1

**Special Issue**  
With a Hat and a Red Scarf: The Construction of Federico Fellini's Public Image

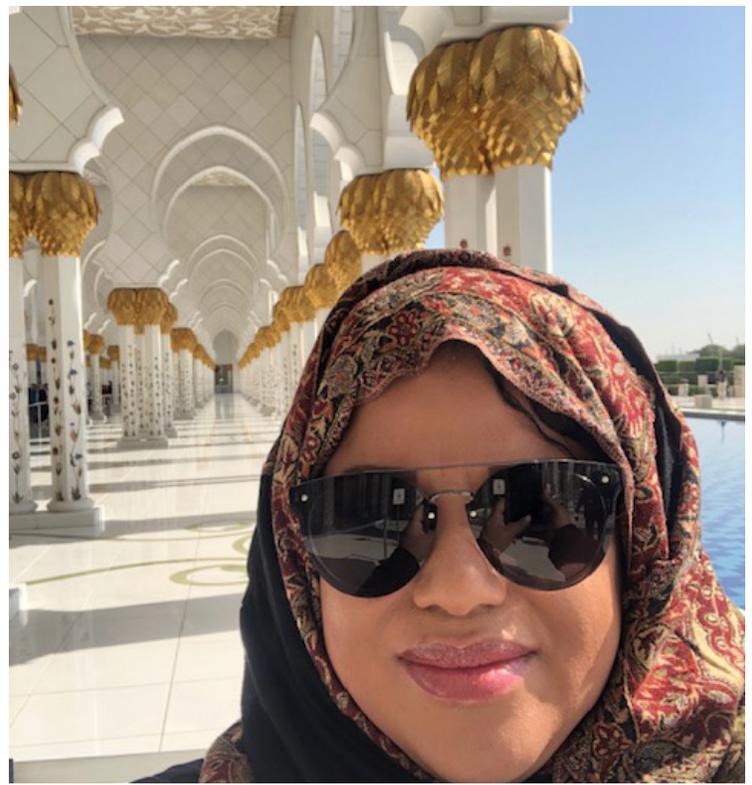


intellect Journals ISSN 2047-7368

In celebration of Italian filmmaker Federico Fellini's centennial (1920-2020), **Flavia Laviosa**, founder and Editor of the book series *Trajectories of Italian Cinema and Media*, and of the *Journal of Italian Cinema and Media Studies*, both published by Intellect, is pleased to announce the publication of the first book of the series: *Fellini's Films and Commercials* by Frank Burke and the special issue of the journal: *With A Hat and A Red Scarf: The Construction of Federico Fellini's Public Image*.



This Academic Year was a busy one for **Jael Matos**. Both Italian Studies and Spanish Departments had many events planned for the Fall semester. But as always, she was up for the challenge! In coordination with Flavia Laviosa, she planned the Italian Film Festival, which brought in filmmakers and producers all the way from Italy. They also invited author Edoardo Albinati, to talk about his new book, *The Catholic School* and a theatre performance from the *commedia* group Pazzi Lazzi. She was able to take some much-needed time away before the start of the Spring semester to travel with her sister Mara, to Dubai. Dubai was not on her list of potential places to travel, but a deal of a lifetime came up and she just had to jump on it. It was a short trip, but full of exciting activities and things to see like Sheikh Zayed Mosque, where she was able to dress and look like the locals, take in the view at the top of the Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building, enjoying their diverse cuisine, driving in the sand dunes in the desert, riding a camel and ending the evening with a sunset dinner in the desert. That is where she had her a-ha moment. She couldn't believe that she was in Dubai, the most amazing place she had ever seen. Even though our Spring semester was short due to COVID-19 and the stay-at-home order, we truly enjoyed spending time with our students during this Academic Year. And I always say...."Please keep in touch and don't forget to like us on Facebook!"



For **Sergio Parussa**, the academic year 2019-20 has been a particularly productive and rewarding one.

Thanks to a grant he received from the American Philosophical Association (*Franklin Research Grant*), and a fellowship from the Institute for Advanced Studies at the University of Bologna (*ISA Visiting Fellowship*), as well as to the generous sabbatical leave granted to him by the College, Sergio had the opportunity, the resources, and the time to conduct extensive and fruitful research in Italian literary archives.

The general focus of his research and publication has been the genesis of Giorgio Bassani's *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* - a historical novel centered on the life of the Jewish community of Ferrara during the Fascist period. So far, the research has resulted in the publication of five essays, one newspaper article, and one interview, as well as invitations to present his work in many academic venues. In March of 2019, for instance, the DAMS, or Department of Arts and Media Studies at the University of Bologna, invited Sergio to teach a graduate seminar on the relationship between literary writing and figurative arts in twentieth-century Italian literature; and in May of the same year, the Department of Architecture at the University of Ferrara asked him to join a symposium dedicated to Italian architect Bruno Zevi, in which he gave a lecture on the representation of Ferrara's urban space in both literature and architecture.

Moreover, a video lecture, in Italian, on the genesis of *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*, which was the result of the fruitful archival research he conducted over the past year, is available at the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/543250222457569/videos/1349250421934087/>



Life in **David Ward**'s household at the time of Covid is not unlike nearly every other household in the US. No need to give the details, you know them all too well. David and his wife Eugenia are luckier than most. They are academics and so they are used to working from home. There is one exception: Anna, their daughter, a graduating college senior who, like all of the various classes of 2020, feels cheated out of her special day. They are sorry too. The Class of 2020 has had it rough. For their part, David and Eugenia decided to stage their own Commencement in their back garden on May 17th, all dressed up and with bottles of Prosecco in hand. Anna is on her way to graduate school, a MA at the Wagner Graduate School of Public Service at New York University. But one member of their family—Lucky, their little 12 year old black Cockapoo, is managing to have the time of his life. Never has he seen all three of us at home for such a long time, never has he had the attention he gets every hour of every day (or almost).

# Melania Notarrigo

*Our Language Assistant from the University of Bologna, Italy,  
shares her thoughts and experiences during her year at Wellesley College*

Last August, for the first time in her life, our Italian Language Assistant, **Melania Notarrigo**, travelled to the U.S. She felt excited and scared at the same time, but from the first moment she found a welcoming and kind community ready to support and accept her. Everything was different from what she was used to, and, at the beginning, it was hard to get used to some of the new customs (like having dinner at 6 pm!), but it was just all a question of time!

She soon found out that Wellesley College had so much to offer, from any point of view. She found herself surrounded with amazing individuals, a stunning campus and a challenging (but for the best) educational environment. The classes she took made her grow both academically and personally. The people she met became family to her; everyone at the Italian Studies Department took care of her from day one, she knew she could always count on them. (Of course, the espresso machine was a valuable friend as well!) The Language Assistants' community was also an important part of her experience at Wellesley, they leaned on each other and enjoyed spending time together. The Italian Society played a huge role, they had so much fun during their events (and also ate a lot of carbs!!!) Cooking, playing games, going out in Boston, eating gelato or cannoli, watching movies, having pizza, they certainly enjoyed the year to the fullest.

She also had the opportunity to visit other cities, like New York and New Orleans. They were both stunning in their own way and she felt as if she was in a movie. Those were some of the most light-hearted and happy days she spent in the U.S., being free to explore and learn more about the diverse culture in this country.

She would definitely recommend this experience; it has been life-changing for her in many ways and it has contributed to make her the person she is today. She truly enjoyed her time even when homesickness kicked in, she always felt she could find some peace by walking around Lake Waban during any time of year. The landscape was beautiful and unique. She says "Wellesley College will always have a piece of her heart and she will always cherish the memories she made here".



# Wintersession in Rome 2020

## WINTERSESSION GROUP TESTIMONIAL:

The most valuable feature of this course was, obviously, the fully immersive experience of being in the country about which we were learning. We very much appreciated the integrative aspect of the course, which was demonstrated through assignments to bring in to class various cultural experiences for discussion and practice. Being in the cultural and historical center of Italy, we all felt a much stronger urge to learn Italian and apply it as much as possible than we would at Wellesley, so we believe that the course was extremely valuable as a capstone course for the language requirement and as a jumping-off point for further language study. We also appreciated assignments like watching and presenting on short Italian films and learning about popular Italian music, that we felt were tailored nicely to expose us to cultural topics relevant to today. The frequent presentation and group work assignments were helpful for practicing speaking and pronunciation and definitely improved our ability to speak and think more quickly in Italian.

Being in Rome with Professor Laviosa was an out of this world experience as she guided and advised us, while encouraging us to explore Rome and being supportive and allowing us to evolve/grow as students, Wellesley college siblings, and humans in general. This wintersession trip would not have been half as great as it was without Professor Laviosa's presence and instruction.

*Olivia Adamczyk, Suzanne Barlow, Susan Black, Anna Gefke, Zaria George, Natalie Li, Imogene Johnson, Sierra Orr, Ava Yokanovich, and Hannah Whellan*



# Italian Society Activities



*Top: Trip to Eataly in Boston, Right: Enjoying some gelato, Bottom: Enjoying some dinner at Cedar Lodge*

# Italian Cooking Night



# Cultural Events

## ISABELLA UNMASKED

Pazzi Lazzi ~ Commedia dell'Arte Troupe

October 24, 2019  
5:30pm  
Shakespeare House

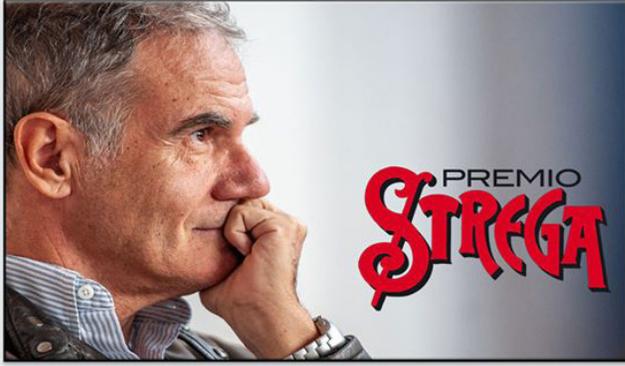
FREE AND OPEN  
TO THE PUBLIC



Photo Credit: Sarah Greco



**Masculinity in Edoardo Albinati's Prize Winning Novel  
"The Catholic School"**



**A conversation (in English)  
with the Author and  
Antony Shugaar, his translator**

**Thursday, October 31st  
Founders 224  
5:30pm**

**Pizza and refreshments  
will be served**



Questions? [dward@wellesley.edu](mailto:dward@wellesley.edu)

Accessibility and Disability Resources: [accessibility@wellesley.edu](mailto:accessibility@wellesley.edu)



*Field trip to see "Tosca", Coolidge Corner Theatre, February 21*



NOVEMBER  
14 THU, 15 FRI,  
16 SAT

THU 11/14 6:30 PM *Asmarina* (2015) by Alan Maglio and Medhin Paolos, followed by a discussion with Medhin Paolos.  
 FRI 11/15 6:30 PM *Una Storia Senza Nome* (2014) | *The Stolen Caravaggio* by Roberto Andò, followed by a discussion with Angelo Pasquini.  
 SAT 11/16 4:30 PM Roundtable discussion with Medhin Paolos, Angelo Pasquini, Antonio Falduto (President of Controluce), and Giorgio Bertellini (University of Michigan). Moderated by David Ward and Flavia Laviosa (Department of Italian Studies).  
 Location: Newhouse Center, Green Hall.  
 SAT 11/16 5:30 PM Reception in Collins Cinema  
 6:30 PM *Sembra Mio Figlio* (2018) | *Just Like My Son* by Costanza Quatriglio (via Skype), followed by discussion with Antonio Falduto.  
 Events are free and open to the public. For accessibility and disability resources, email [accessibility@wellesley.edu](mailto:accessibility@wellesley.edu).

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 THE NELSON LECTURE FUND, THE NEWHOUSE CENTER FOR  
 THE HUMANITIES, DEPARTMENT OF ITALIAN STUDIES, AND  
 CINEMA AND MEDIA STUDIES.



All screenings in COLLINS CINEMA  
 followed by discussions.  
 Details at [wellesley.edu/events](http://wellesley.edu/events).

The second edition of the Italian film festival *Innovations in Contemporary Italian Cinema* was held on November 14-16, 2019. It featured the screening of 3 films selected for their themes of strong interest for our students, faculty and broader academic and general communities in Massachusetts. The films were chosen from those presented at the Cannes Film Festival and at the Venice Film Festival in 2018.

With the financial and organizational support of Eve Zimmerman, Director of The Newhouse Center for the Humanities and funding from the CLCE, the Department of Italian Studies and the Cinema and Media Studies Program we invited several guest, screened three films, and hosted a roundtable on contemporary Italian cinema.

We invited:

- Antonio Falduto, President of the Association Controluce, filmmaker, and screenplay writer
- Angelo Pasquini, screenplay writer of the film *Stolen Caravaggio* (2018)
- Medhin Paolos, director of *Asmarina* (2015)
- Costanza Quatriglio, director of *Just Like my Son* (2018)
- Professor Giorgio Bertellini, University of Michigan.
- Professor David Ward, Eve Zimmerman, and Flavia Laviosa co-organized and hosted this successful three-day event attended by a large number of Wellesley College students and faculty as well as friends from the large community of people interested in Italian culture.



# Alumnae Spotlight

In 2009, **Mariya Chokova** came to Wellesley from her native Bulgaria. She was already an accomplished and enthusiastic language learner. By the time she left high school she was already fluent in English, Spanish, French and Italian (not to mention her native Bulgarian). It was immediately apparent to all of us in the department that Mariya was not just an exceptional language learner, but an exceptional student. We were delighted to have her in our classes. Along the way, she learned Russian and taught herself Portuguese.

We were honored when she chose to major in Italian Studies (along with French). No-one was surprised that she opted for two language majors. Mariya also wrote an excellent honors thesis for us entitled *The Female Condition During Mussolini's and Salazar's Regimes*, in which she examined the writings of two women writers, one Italian, Alba de Céspedes, the other Portuguese, Maria Archer, who both contested the image of women propagated by the Italian and Portuguese regimes. Mariya likes to think of Italian studies at Wellesley as her first American intellectual home. We are proud of that.

In 2013, Mariya entered the PhD program in Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard University. Unsurprisingly, she picked up some new languages--Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian, Turkish and Farsi. Also unsurprisingly, her thesis, entitled "Disobedient Women: Sexual Transgression and the Search for Female Autonomy in the Writings of Renée Vivien, Judith Teixeira and Sibilla Aleramo", which examined non-heteronormative sexuality, was based on the works of three women writers, one Italian, one French, one Portuguese. I am happy to report that on April 22nd, Dr Mariya Chokova successfully defended her dissertation. We wish her all the very best in her future endeavors.



## A special message from our Major...



Vorrei ringraziare tutti i professori e le professoressa nel dipartimento d'Italiano. Ho cominciato studiare l'italiano nel mio primo anno a Wellesley, e ho avuto una meravigliosa esperienza "on campus" ed in Italia grazie a tutti voi. Ho seguito i corsi di Professoressa Grattarola, Professoressa Laviosa, Professore Parussa e Professore Ward, e Professoressa Bartalesi, che ci ha accompagnato a Lecce quando ho studiato in Italia. Anche le language assistants Elena, Beatrice, e Melania mi hanno aiutato a imparare l'italiano ed immergermi nella cultura italiana.

Il mio anno in Italia è stato la esperienza migliore della mia vita, e non la potrò dimenticare mai. Grazie mille per tutte le persone che mi hanno portato a una esperienza così meravigliosa. E' un rimorso che non possiamo celebrare la laurea ed i nostri successi insieme a Wellesley, ma spero che potremmo rivederci fra non troppo tempo a tu per tu.

I would like to thank all the professors in the Department of Italian Studies. I began to study Italian in my first year at Wellesley and have had a wonderful experience both on campus and in Italy thanks to you. I took courses with Professor Grattarola, Professor Laviosa, Professor Parussa, Professor Ward, and Professor Bartalesi-Graf, who led the group to Lecce the year I studied in Italy. Language Assistants Elena, Beatrice and Melania all helped me to learn Italian and immerse myself in Italian culture.

My year in Italy was the best experience of my entire life. I will never forget it. Many, many thanks to all the people who made such a wonderful experience possible for me. I regret not being able to celebrate my degree and achievements with you all at Wellesley, but I hope we will be able to meet up again face-to-face in the not too distant future.

**Kaori Hayashi '20**

# Announcements



The Department of Italian is delighted to announce that the 2020 *Elizabeth Robinson Essay Prize in Italian* has been awarded to Melissa Loza ('20). We send our congratulations to her and wish her the best for her future career.

*Congratulazioni, Melissa!*

## Summer Internships “Abroad”

**Kitchen Film**

*Zaria George '22*

**The Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, Italy**

*Carolyn Johnson '21 & Madison Miller '21*

