**Transnationalizing Modern Languages:**

**Mobility, Identity and Translation in Modern Italian Cultures**

See project webpage for access to full project description: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/italian/research/projects/tml>.

**Project Student 1**

Warwick Studentship



Italian



Dr Jennifer Burns

The thesis will examine the construction of the public profiles of figures identified with the British Italian community who have achieved success in the UK in the fields of hospitality, popular culture and entertainment. The notion of 'success' carries significant emotional and psychological weight in the context of migration, for both individual and community, and is rooted in the image of the 'self-made man' who arrives with nothing and achieves a publicly attested prominence which demonstrates a degree of dominion for the 'outsider' over a sector of public life in the destination culture. Both migrant and host communities invest - differently - in such narratives of achievement. The thesis will investigate: the mechanisms through which success is defined and valued, within migrant communities and the broader destination culture; the ways in which it is performed in the public arena; the extent to which public presentation draws upon the cultural background of the successful figure; the cultural impact of such success in the UK and Italy, in terms of modifying notions of 'Italian-ness'. It will focus on a series of case studies of stars and celebrities identified with the British Italian community since WWII, using published works by/about these figures; published/recorded interviews, reviews and articles from national and community- based media; viewing/sales figures and other industry data; personal interviews where appropriate. Examples include: Charles Forte and his son, Rocco (hotels/catering, 1930s-present), Antonio Carluccio, Mary Contini (restaurateurs/food writers, 1980s-present), Lena Zavaroni (child singer/tv star, 1970s), Paolo Nutini (singer/musician, 2000s-present). By tracing the reformulation of notions of the foreign/exotic through these examples occurring in differently inflected historical moments, the thesis will enhance understanding of how the performance of 'Italian-ness' colours constructions of cultural otherness in the public imagination.

This research contributes to the wider project by examining a key instance of the representation and reception of migrant communities in the wider public of the destination country. Celebrities and stars form the popular face of a migrant community, and a detailed examination of how they frame their public persona as such (or choose not to), and of how forces in the reception culture (agents, critics, audience) construct them as 'Italian', will inform and be informed by other research in the project on cultural associations. Given that Italians in Britain have been associated, from the earliest formation of the community (late C18th), with the food and entertainment industries, a study of examples of success in these sectors will develop an understanding of how cultural stereotypes can function as a positive point of identification within the destination culture, whilst also perpetuating forms of exclusion by publicly reproducing expected behaviours. Such an understanding will benefit directly other strands of the wider project, in terms of comparable instances of the public performance of 'Italian-ness' in other contexts, and of comparable mechanisms in the public identification abroad of other cultures, such as Hispanic. Selecting examples across an extended chronological period, this PhD project affords detailed insight into how notions of the foreign/exotic, especially in public performance, persist in the construction of popular success even where the individual celebrity may be of the 4th or 5th generation. As such, this project tracks the work of the CI and supervisor (Burns) into how the relationship with national culture is renegotiated over time in the practices of self- identification of the British Italian community. It contributes to an inquiry central to the 'Transnational Italies' project into how relations with 'home' and 'destination' cultures are perpetually reformulated. Moreover, it does so by offering a distinctive emphasis on the performance and reception of those relations specifically in popular culture, and by using methodologies and theoretical frameworks -analysis of audience and performance, star studies - which extend the range of research methods used and developed by the project. This PhD research will be of sizeable public interest in the UK and Italy, boosting the impact of the wider project through media attention prompted by press releases.

The student will be supported in developing relevant methodological expertise and skills through a series of opportunities. Doctoral training programmes at Warwick offer dedicated sessions on relevant skills, such as interviewing, capturing media information, public dissemination of research. More specifically, the School of Theatre Studies, Performance and Cultural Policy Studies and the Department of Film and Television Studies at Warwick offer extensive postgraduate training provision in relevant methodologies and theories. The student undertaking the project will be strongly encouraged to engage with this training and will be expected to have an interest in performance and visual culture demonstrated at UG/PGT level. The discussions and events of the 'Transnational Italies' project will themselves offer subject-specific training, placing the student into dialogue with researchers whose methodological expertise will enhance this study: Duncan, for example, has worked on representations of Albanian performers in Italy. Principally, the supervisor (Burns) will be the reference point for training as well as guidance on the development of the research itself. She has worked on visual culture and the culture industry within her research on immigration culture in Italy, and has experience of PhD supervision in the areas of cinema and popular cultural history, as well as of literary studies. Through close discussion with the student and monitoring of her/his progress, she will orientate the student towards productive external support as the thesis develops.

**Project Student 2**

St Andrews studentship



School of Modern Languages



Professor Derek Duncan

-Transnational Italian Cinema.  Italian diasporic culture as well as Italian culture has tended to be studied within a national framework. Italian-American Studies for example is a well-established field, and a fairly substantial scholarly literature exists examining Italian migration in specific national contexts, or analysing the representation of Italians in a particular national culture. This PhD thesis will use film production as a way of exploring Italian identity in a transnational frame. As a popular form, film involves both questions of cultural representation and networks of distribution and exhibition. The student will define a project which explores cinematic representations of Italian identity outside Italy in multiple national contexts, and looks at diasporic Italian film production. Films such as Michael Radford's Another Time Another Place (UK, 1983), Sandra Nettetbeck's Bella Martha (Germany, 2001), and Emile Gaudreault's Mambo Italiano (Canada, 2003) are explorations of Italianness which explicitly dramatise the construction of identity in translation for Italians abroad and for the communities in which they live. The work of Italian-born Australian film-maker Giorgio Mangiamele details the transformation of Italian migrants as they adapt to life outside Italy. As an axis of comparison, the thesis may also explore Italian representations of similar phenonena such as Luigi Zampa's Bello, onesto, emigrato Australia sposerebbe compaesana illibata (1971). The thesis will examine Italian identity as it is represented across national boundaries. It will engage with broad issues of cultural translation according to the interests of the student. It may explore explicitly questions of language (subtitling, use of Italian dialogue etc), or focus more broadly on questions of multicultural identity, exchange and adaptation.

The primary research focus of 'Transnational Italies' as a whole is on community associations. This PhD project adds breadth to the project by examining a form of cultural production which is more obviously shared in term of its distribution and consumption. The PhD will extend 'Transnational Italies'' interest in narrative and visual culture to include the commercially produced moving image. By looking at film production in a transnational rather than national context, the thesis will connect the work of 'Transnational Italies' to recent scholarship in Film Studies and the move beyond national histories of cinema. However, it will make a unique contribution to Film Studies through its emphasis on translation. Combining a high level of linguistic expertise with a strong background in cultural criticism, the student will be ideally placed to make an original contribution to Anglophone studies of non-English language cinemas by highlighting processes of cultural translation in its representational and production strategies. The thesis will offer a wider contextual frame for the strategies of self-representation deployed by Italian community associations. In films which deal equally with migrants and the communities around them, the 'contact zone' of cultural encounter is more explicitly referenced, and therefore subject to inquiry.

The student will be supervised by Derek Duncan (St Andrews) who has published extensively on Italian migration cinema. S/he will have access to the expertise of other researchers on the project and will take part in all research events including the Summer School at the Warwick Venice Centre in 2015. There will be the opportunity to present work at Project Workshops, and s/he will assist RA3 in organising project events at St Andrews. The student's professional development will be enhanced through participation at Impact events. Duncan currently supervises 2 students working on Italian colonial/postcolonial topics.

The School of Modern Languages at St Andrews is comprised of 6 departments with expertise ranging from the Middle Ages to the present day. A number of colleagues (for example, Bond, Kefala, Milne) actively research in cognate areas to those the PhD student. The School's new undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in Comparative Literature make it an ideal base for a candidate pursuing research in a transnational frame. The School provides postgraduate students with a structured framework of supervision and annual progress review. The School runs a programme of skills development sessions especially designed to prepare postgraduate students for future careers (http://www.st- andrews.ac.uk/modlangs/prospectivestudents/postgraduate/skillsdevelopment/). This also includes regular teacher training and a programme of observation of permanent staff. Students also benefit from a University organised generic skills programme (http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/capod/gradskillsprogramme/). The School has a number of active research centres which organise programmes of distinguished visiting speakers. The Department of Film Studies at St Andrews will also offer the student a stimulating research environment (http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/filmstudies/research.php). The Italian Department hosts PG-NOISES, the postgraduate network of Italian Studies in Scotland, which offers students the opportunity to present their work and organise research events.