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Fashion, Images, and the City of Milan. A Sociological Perspective on Modern Italian Fashion

PROF. AMBROGIA CEREDA

Area of study:	Fashion and Design
Area Code:	SO/CU302
Method of Instruction:	In-person

Description

Italian fashion is intricately linked to a rich tradition of refined taste, closely associated with the emergence of prêt-à-porter. This evolution has been pivotal in cementing Milan's status as a preeminent fashion capital. Since the 1960s and 70s, the city has garnered international acclaim as a creative hub for many distinguished designers.

This captivating aura is also supported by visual narratives from both traditional and new media, which disseminate and reinforce a shared imaginary and visual culture concerning bodily standards and identity performances in local and global forms.

During the course, we will analyze and discuss various conceptions by examining the origins of the fashion system, which emerged in the mid-nineteenth century and is connected to a significant democratization of consumption. Furthermore, we will investigate how the distinctive attributes of Italian style are intrinsically linked to the opulent lifestyle of courtiers, whose refinement and attention to detail are paramount in shaping the aesthetic principles that continue to influence contemporary fashion worldwide.

Course objectives can be synthesized as follows:

- Recognize and explain the factors that favoured the evolution of fashion as a cultural phenomenon and the emergence of Italian style.
- Apply social theories and concepts to analyze and describe contemporary representations of Italian fashion and taste in a global context.
- Learn about various sociological theories and utilize basic tools of visual research to investigate fashion phenomena.

COURSE CONTENTS

The first part of the course will focus on reconstructing and explaining the cultural, historical, and social factors that influenced the development of Italian fashion. The goal is to provide a socio-historical framework for understanding the key features of the evolution of the Italian aesthetic.



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CATTOLICA
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The second part of the course will explore how images of Italian fashion shape perceptions of bodily appearance through the narratives conveyed in magazines and advertisements. This analysis will highlight the ways in which these visual resources impact people's everyday lives by contributing to build the aura of Italian style and taste.

The final part of the course will examine the phenomenon of Italian fashion in relation to urban lifestyles, with Milan serving as the primary focus for our analysis. We will explore contemporary changes in the fashion field. Additionally, this section may include off-class sessions for ethnographic studies and urban observations.

PREREQUISITES

None

METHOD OF TEACHING

Seminar lectures will be held by employing different sources (slides, documentaries, videos and films), group/class activities will be held as important parts of the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to complete the readings before each class and to take an active part in the discussions. A part of the course will be dedicated to a research project and will be arranged to allow preparation for the fieldwork and the analysis of the material collected. At the end of this module, students will organize their field notes and draw from them topics for class presentation.

CREDITS

6 ECTS

GRADING

Attendance and <u>participation</u>	20% of the final grade
Group/Class activities	20% of the final grade
Midterm exam	30% of the final grade
Final exam	30% of the final grade

COURSE READINGS AND MATERIALS

All materials will be available on Bb

[INTERNATIONAL CURRICULUM POLICIES](#)

INSTRUCTOR BIO

Ambrogia Cereda is lecturer in Sociology of culture. After her a PhD in Sociology and Methodology of Social Research at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore of Milan, she has been teaching in different institutions (EMLUX Master; FIT Milan; Fondazione Fiera Milano, Istituto Marangoni) and she collaborates with ModaCult, Centre for the study of fashion and cultural production.

She has worked on various projects in the field of consumption, design, and fashion-advertisement. Her main research interests are in the sociology of the body, with a special concern for the issues related to body image, gender identity, and emotions.



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Among her publications: “El consumidor de publicidad”, in, L. Flamarique and M. D’Oliveira-Martins (2013)(eds.) *Emociones y estilos de vida. Radiografía de nuestro tiempo*. Biblioteca Nueva; “Mujeres y consumidoras. Un estudio sobre el “trabajo emocional” en las representaciones del la publicidad”. In M. Torregrosa (2018) (ed.). *El consumidor de moda*. Isem; “From mere luxury to unique lifestyle. The transformation of taste in the “Age of Glamour””. In I. Cantista and T. Sabada (2020)(eds.). *Understanding Luxury Fashion. From Emotions to Brand building*. Palgrave McMillan; (with Filippo Gorla) (2021). The Little White Dress as a contemporary manifesto? Not so ordinary story of disobedience. *Clothing Cultures*, 8 (2), 157-170. (2023) Incorporare l’attività sportiva: il caso dell’athleisure tra immagine di sé e neoliberalismo. *Eracle. Journal of Sport and Social Sciences*, 6(1), 4-19.

E-MAIL ADDRESS

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