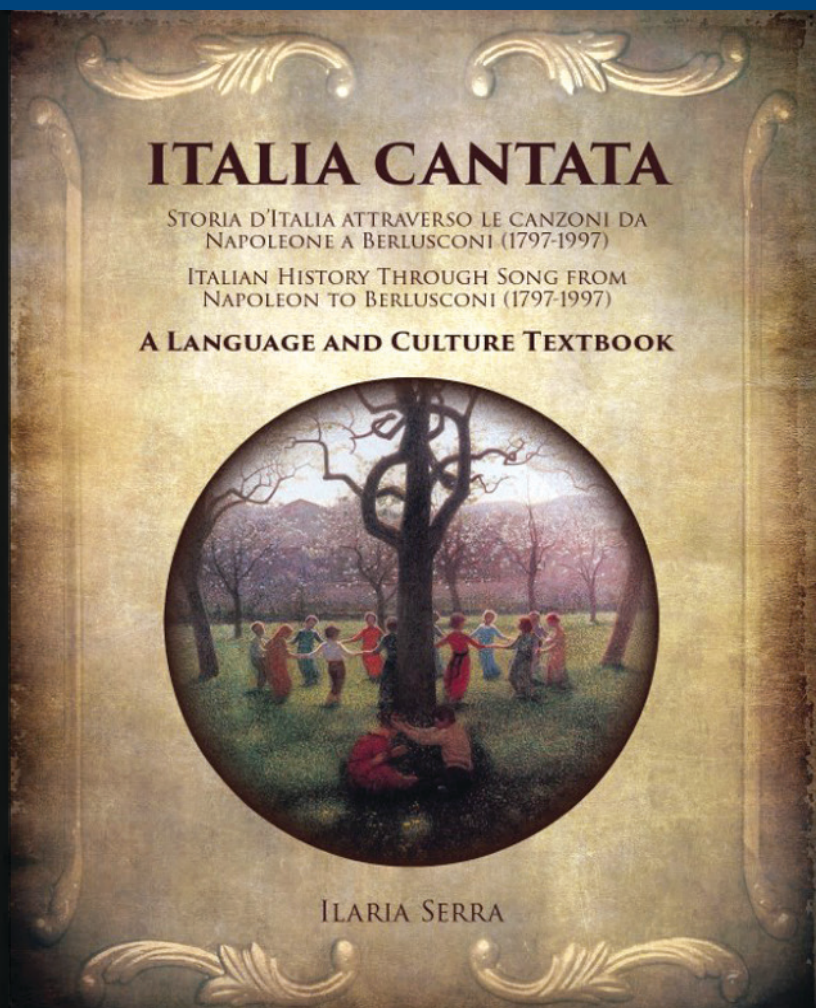


## ABOUT THE BOOK:



Ilaria Serra, Professor of Italian and Comparative Studies reading Dante's *Divine Comedy* and cover of *Italia cantata*

## ILARIA SERRA PUBLISHES ITALIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE TEXTBOOK

THE VOLUME IS AN  
ITALIAN LANGUAGE  
AND CULTURE  
TEXTBOOK FOR  
INTERMEDIATE  
TO ADVANCED  
STUDENTS

Ilaria Serra, Professor of Italian and Comparative Studies, recently published *Italia cantata: Storia d'Italia attraverso le canzoni da Napoleone a Berlusconi, 1797-1997* (New York: Linus Learning, 2021). The volume is an Italian language and culture textbook for intermediate to advanced students.

"I noticed that there was a lack of advanced Italian textbooks that had high-level cultural content, but that were also accessible for our type of students. Either they were interesting but too hard, or easy but too simplistic. I proposed a mid-way solution. Besides the songs, the book includes historical primary sources, such as photos, documents and speeches, in small bits. Everything is then transformed into a didactic activity with grammar-focused review and exercises."

(continued)



Ilaria Serra and her students' perform for the XXI Week of Italian Language in the World, 2021, with tenor Carlos De Antonis (on Youtube).

The book is complete with QR codes that bring the reader/listener to the songs. *Italia cantata* stems from the class "Italy in Lyrics" (ITT3600) that Professor Serra designed. Taught in English, this class will be offered in Spring 2023. Serra proposed this novel approach in her article "Teaching Italy through Its Music: The Meaning of Music in Italian Cultural History," published in the professional journal, *Italica*, in 2011. Since then she has completed a full-length manuscript on the same topic, in English, titled *Andante. Two Centuries of Italian History in Music and Lyrics*.

Professor Serra believes in the lightness that songs provide to language teaching. In the past semesters, she created the FAU Italian Choir with students of Italian language and Ph.D. student Barbara Salani. Since 2019, they have performed in two live concerts and two virtual choirs. According to Serra, "singing Italian songs gives much more than language practice. It enlarges vocabulary and offers a way to observe grammar in practice. It promotes easy memorization, and it allows students to sink deep into the heart of Italian culture, as music is inextricable from it."

Professor Serra was born in Venice, Italy. She earned her Ph.D. in Comparative Studies at FAU. Her research weaves Italian American Studies into Italian Studies more broadly. Her main areas of focus include Italian cinema, Italian literature, Italian history through popular song, and the history of Italian immigration to the United States. She co-leads the FAU Study Abroad Program in Venice, Italy where she also teaches the course Venice and Its Reflections. She has received FAU's highest scholarly honor twice: Scholar of the Year Award at the Assistant Professor Rank (2012); and Scholar of the Year Award at the Associate Professor Rank (2020). Professor Serra also sings with the Schola Cantorum of Florida.

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