

DANTEDÌ 2026

An Irish-Italian Cultural Exchange Presented by
the Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Dublin and
the "Beatrice's Irish Voice" Event Series

19th March 2026

Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Dublin

5:00-7:00 pm

TALK

*Italian and Italy in Victorian Ireland's
Cultural Landscape*

Phyllis Gaffney, University College Dublin

*Teaching Dante and his Language: A Personal
Experience Shared with
Francesca, Pia and Piccarda*

Corinna Salvadori Lonergan, Trinity College Dublin

Moderators

Serena Vandi, Trinity College Dublin

& Federica Coluzzi, Centre for Dante Studies in Ireland



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*Italian and Italy in Victorian
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Phyllis Gaffney, University
College Dublin

The engagement of Irish people with Italian language and culture is centuries-old, and Italy has long been viewed as a rich source of cultural capital. This talk will focus on the nineteenth century as a particularly transformative period for Irish education, thanks to the policies on modern language learning emanating from new Victorian universities. Some State policies affecting language study were also significant. These policies had long-lasting consequences.

Although modern languages generally meant French and German, Italian was nevertheless modestly present, unlike Spanish or Portuguese. Women tended to study more modern languages than men, who (for several reasons) needed to study classical languages. Some early women graduates were employed as professors of modern languages in the early twentieth century.

*Teaching Dante and his
Language: A Personal
Experience Shared with
Francesca, Pia and Piccarda*

Corinna Salvadori Lonergan,
Trinity College Dublin

I have been engaged in teaching Dante since 1961, he was very much present in all the Italian Departments in this island, with Piero Calí in Cork, David Nolan and John Barnes in Dublin. Our reading of Dante was text based, in the original, without translation. I hope to illustrate how I am still reading Dante with three female speakers, one from each cantica.

