

Northwestern University Library Collection Development Policy Statement

Italian Literature by Jeffrey Garrett August 7, 1999

I. Brief overview of the collection

A. History of the collection

Northwestern University Library has cultivated its collections in the field of Italian literature and language since its founding in the 1850s, with serious collecting in Italian literary studies commencing in the 1870s. From the beginning, works not only in Italian and English have been collected, but also in other western European languages, especially French and German. The library also systematically acquired printed catalogs of European and the larger East Coast collections of Italian studies (Harvard, Columbia, Cornell) in the 1890s. Italian collection landmarks include the decision of the library administration to collect assiduously in early 20th century intellectual movements, a policy that has resulted in a strong collection of the Italian Novecento, especially the works of Italian Futurists such as F. Marinetti and the generation of Italian writers between the two world wars, including R. Bacchelli, G. A. Borghese, among many others.

B. Broad subject areas emphasized or de-emphasized

The library supports faculty research and teaching through targeted acquisitions, both of new materials and retrospectively. Canonical writers, from Dante, Ariosto, and Machiavelli to the most famous Italian modernists, e.g. Calvino and Pasolini, and postmodernists, e.g. Eco and Sciascia, are emphasized independently of current faculty or student interest. In addition, 20th century Italian literary theory, beginning with Croce, is actively collected. Regional and dialectal literature tends by contrast to be neglected, as are both diachronic and synchronic Italian language studies. Italian linguistics is not a focus at Northwestern and literature in this area is collected only minimally.

C. Collection locations

The main body of the Italian literature collection is in Northwestern's Main Library (5 South), with a few principal primary and secondary works (mainly in English/English-translation) duplicated in the Core Collection (2 North). Other than highly specialized or dated works, all reference literature resides in the Reference Library on the main level. Current journals and Italian newspapers are received in the Periodicals Reading Room. A small collection of Italian children's literature (e.g. works by G. Rodari) resides in the Curriculum Collection (5 North).

II. Purpose or objectives

The Italian literature collections support not only the curricular and research needs and interests of departmental students and faculty, but those of the larger Northwestern community. Additionally, in some few areas, e.g. 20th Century Italian intellectual and literary movements, the library attempts to serve as a resource for our consortial and other national partners as well.

III. Library unit or title of the selector responsible for this collection

Bibliographer for Western Literatures and Languages

IV. Scope of the subject coverage

A. Language

We collect primary (literary) texts first in Italian and, whenever available, in English translation. For the most important writers (e.g. Dante, Manzoni, Montale, Eco), works editions are acquired in other major European languages. Criticism and theory is collected in Italian and English, with important contemporary critical works (e.g. Eco, Agamben) also acquired in other languages, especially French.

B. *Geographical scope*

The entire Italian peninsula, Sicily and Sardinia, and the limited Italian-language publications from the United States and Canada.

C. *Chronological scope*

No restrictions.

D. *Publication dates collected*

No restrictions.

E. *Formats and genres*

1. *Inclusions*

All genres and formats are collected, including microform and electronic sources. Italian e-text collections on CD-ROM are available through the Electronic Reference Center. A number of literary authors, e.g. Boccaccio, are also available on floppy disks at Circulation. (Consult NUCat for details.)

2. *Exclusions*

None.

V. *Acquisitions procedures affecting collection policies*

A. *Standing Orders*

Northwestern Library maintains numerous standing orders to series of relevance to students of Italian literature.

B. *Approval plans and blanket orders*

Since 1995, Northwestern has had a comprehensive approval plan for literature (including modern belles lettres) and literary studies with Casalini libri of Fiesole, Italy. Additionally, a number of other approval plans, including the US academic plan (Yankee Book Peddler) and the UK humanities plan (Lindsay & Howes) provide for selective coverage of works on Italian literature.

C. *Gifts and exchanges*

This is not a significant source of new materials for Italian literature, though appropriate gifts are gratefully accepted.

VI. *Duplication with other NU library units*

Other than the intended duplication in the Core Collection, none.

VII. *Expensive purchases*

Rare in this area.

VIII. *Interdisciplinary collections*

Due to the inherent interdisciplinarity of literary study today, Special Collections, the Music Library, the Mitchell Media Center, and the Art Library all have holdings that are of considerable usefulness to students of Italian literature. The area of Film Studies is especially well developed at Northwestern University Library, making the library's holdings in works by and about major Italian film creators (Visconti, Rossellini, Fellini, Pasolini) rich and varied.

IX. *Purchases with endowed funds*

Significant purchases of Italian materials are made possible by endowments.

X. *Cooperation with other libraries*

A. *Other resources, including local, regional or national libraries*

The proximity of Northwestern University Library to the Newberry Library provides an additional opportunity to rely upon a far greater strength in Renaissance and Baroque literature than we could accumulate by ourselves.

B. *Consortia*

We rely heavily on the Italian literature collections of our partners in the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC).

XI. Policies for purchasing journal article reprints or electronic files on demand

Not as part of our collection work.

XII. Other factor of local importance

None.

XIII. Collection levels

Italian Literature 3F/3F

Italian Literature -- Early to 1400 3F/3F

Italian Literature -- 15th, 16th and 17th Centuries 3F/3F

Italian Literature -- 18th and 19th Centuries 3F/3F

Italian Literature -- 20th Century 3F/3F

Italian Literature -- Women Authors, Women in Literature 3F/3F

Italian Literature -- Folklore and Folk Literature 2F/2F

Italian Language 2F/2F

Italian Dialect 2F/2F