



We invite proposals for contributions to the 2019 edition of CHIASMI

**Queering Italian Studies**  
**Pensieri e pratiche italiane di sovversione culturale**

to be held at Harvard University on the 12th and 13th of April 2019.

*Chiasmi* 2019 will welcome papers and practices that rethink identity politics in Italy and in its cultural forms, situated both in the cultural tradition and in the contemporary. It aims to suggest directions for queering Italian Studies while also tracing the tensions and trajectories of Queer Studies in Italy. In bringing together scholars, researchers, activists and artists, whether they be active within or independent from the Academy, we wish to stimulate a debate that, in Italy, remains outside the institutional discourse. Queering, phrased as a verb, was chosen to emphasize a reading approach, rather than an object of research or a fixed intellectual category. Following Carla Freccero's argument that "all textuality, when subjected to close reading, can be said to be queer," (*Queer/Early/Modern*, 5) we encourage approaches that see texts as queer and/or seek to queer texts. Some of the questions that this approach asks and that we are hoping to bring into Italian Studies are: How can queering the intersections of gender, race, ethnicity, ability, class, regional and national identities shed new light on Italy's past and present? What role do these marginalities and differences play in the construction and maintenance of Italy's identity? What forms of oppression and resistance does the social organization of sexuality and discrimination produce in Italy's cultural creations?

Queering Italian Studies is intended here as a radically anti-essentialist performative act which challenges heteronormative critical practices, focusing not only on LGBTQ communities and cultures, but more broadly on overcoming the traditional binarisms inscribed in Italy's historical and cultural identity. The theme of the conference was also conceived as a possible response to the current political and cultural climate in Italy, where the pressure to marginalize and exclude is far from counterbalanced by a critical reflection capable of processing the changes taking place in contemporary society. We hope that the interdisciplinarity of this approach will bring together contributions from multiple areas of research, widening (and not limiting) the field of inquiry to:

- Literature and identity politics rethinking
  - Gender, style and rhetoric in poetry
  - Queering the Italian literary canon
  - Marginalized/forgotten women, trans and queer authors
  
- Feminist, Trans and Queer art as activism: spaces of intervention, subjectivity, and agency
  - Performance, Theater and Dance
  - Visual art and photography
  - Art history: queering the canon
  - Portraits and self-representation of queer identities
  
- Italian as a gendered language
  - Challenges queering the Italian language
  - New approaches in second language teaching
  - Translation and self-translation
  - Pronouns and identity
  
- Queer identities / political discrimination / civil rights
  - Civil rights and gender equality in Italy
  - Gender identity discrimination in the workplace
  - Demonstrations, cultural associations, “*centri sociali*”
  - Italiani? Migrations to, from and within Italy
  
- Queering the gaze / the queer gaze and new media
  - Cinema, tv series, documentaries
  - Comics, graphic novels
  - Social media
  
- Queering critique
  - Italian Thought
  - Italian feminist theory
  - Nomadic theory

Presentations are not to exceed 20 minutes and may be given in either Italian or English. Please send abstracts of no more than **300 words** and a brief bio to [chiasmi2019@gmail.com](mailto:chiasmi2019@gmail.com) by **15 January 2019**. The title of the paper, presenter’s name, affiliation, and e-mail address should appear in the body of the email to which the abstract is attached. No reading of papers *in absentia* is allowed at *Chiasmi*.

The organizing committee of *Chiasmi* 2019,

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(italian version)

Chiasmi 2019 accoglierà interventi e pratiche di sovversione culturale situati sia nella tradizione che nella realtà contemporanea italiana, con l'intento di rilevare le direzioni e le linee di tensione degli studi queer in Italia. Nella cornice tradizionale di Harvard ci proponiamo di creare uno spazio per un dialogo vitale tra studiosi, ricercatori, attivisti e artisti: agenti culturali operanti sia all'interno che all'esterno della realtà accademica, per stimolare un dibattito che in Italia rimane ancora fuori dal discorso istituzionale. Queering, declinato come verbo, è stato consapevolmente scelto per enfatizzare un approccio di lettura, piuttosto che un oggetto di ricerca o una rigida categoria intellettuale. Condividendo le parole di Carla Freccero, che nell'introduzione al suo *Queer/Early/Modern* afferma che "all textuality, when subjected to close reading, can be said to be queer" (5), incoraggiamo interventi capaci di attuare tale potenzialità. Queering inteso dunque come atto performativo radicalmente anti-essenzialista che permetta di scardinare pratiche critiche eteronormative, superando i tradizionali binarismi inscritti nell'identità storica e culturale italiana.

Il tema della conferenza è stato pensato anche come una possibile risposta alla situazione politica e culturale italiana di oggi, in cui le spinte verso la marginalizzazione e l'esclusione non sembrano controbilanciate da una riflessione accademica capace di elaborare criticamente i cambiamenti della società contemporanea. La varietà di discipline e temi che intendiamo accogliere in questa edizione di Chiasmi riflette l'apertura e la trasversalità del pensiero queer:

(vedi sopra)