

## Dante Alighieri Society in Hong Kong

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THIS IS A  
MONTHLY  
NEWSLETTER  
FROM DANTE  
ALIGHIERI  
SOCIETY IN HONG  
KONG

DANTE ALIGHIERI  
SOCIETY IS AN  
ITALIAN  
CULTURAL  
SOCIETY THAT  
PROMOTES THE  
ITALIAN  
LANGUAGE  
STUDIES AND  
CULTURE  
THROUGHOUT THE  
WORLD.  
WE PROVIDE  
ITALIAN COURSES  
FROM BEGINNER  
TO ADVANCED  
LEVELS TO ADULTS  
AND CHILDREN.  
TO SUIT YOUR  
EXACT NEEDS,  
WE CAN ORGANIZE  
PRIVATE  
ONE-ON-ONE OR  
SMALL GROUP  
LESSONS AND OUR  
TEACHERS CAN  
ALSO TEACH IN  
YOUR COMPANY  
AND TAILOR-MAKE  
A COURSE TO SUIT  
YOUR NEEDS.

By Mr. Federico Castellucci

**O**ne really gets to see places and meet local people in a unique and special way on a motorcycle trip.

On a recent visit to Abruzzo via Bologna - where we picked up four red Ducatis at the factory and headed down the Adriatic coast to spend a week there - I had some of the biggest surprises, eye-openers and realizations of my life - feelings of joy, pride, "belonging", appreciation and humbleness. And this, after visiting Abruzzo many times in the past 40 years.

We stayed at the modest Tre Monti Hotel in Popoli (PE) because it seemed to be in the geographic centre of Abruzzo. It is located just off the autostrada between Rome and Pescara, about 15km west of Scafa. With our baggage and panniers stowed in our hotel rooms, we thought it would be easy and convenient to do day trips into many parts of the region from there.

Besides the normal spectacular Italian roads, riding, views, good food, wine and hospitality, the following are a few of my observations, impressions, unusual experiences and realizations during the trip. To keep my story short and sweet, I will share some of our experiences with you and recommend that you do so on your own if you pay a visit (by motorcycle or any other means of transportation) to this "best-kept-secret" destination.

### Natural Beauty

The spectacular natural beauty and majesty of the Gran Sasso, Maiella, Morrone and the rest of the Abruzzi Apennines are breathtaking. Many a time, we felt like birds flying above the clouds and the tree line on our bikes. The high altitude plains and plateaus with grazing sheep, goats and cattle of the Campo Imperatore and the Maiella are the most beautiful natural pastures that I have seen. No wonder their dairy products and meats are so delicious and healthy.

The variety of contrasting terrain is also stunning. We rode from lush green valleys with creeks, streams and rivers with beautiful clean mountain water, up through glorious fall foliage with colours I've seldom seen elsewhere, into Pine forests and eventually to the arid rocky terrain above the clouds - all within a 20-minute ride! From there we could often see the Adriatic horizon over the clouds or fog. Another 45 minutes down perfect winding roads through Chieti, the ancient capital of Abruzzo, took us to the sunny, manicured Adriatic beaches of Pescara, Francavilla and Ortona.

Mountain, small towns and villages like Roccamorice, Caramanico, San Eufemia, Campo di Giove, Scanno, and even San Valentino and Abbateggio, which we often heard about from my father - all strategically poised on hilltops, mountains or cliffs - are postcard picturesqueness.

(If you are interested to know more about his motorcycling trip, please go to <http://www.ladante.cc/newsletter.html>.)



Above the clouds with the Adriatic horizon in the background this picture was taken close to the summit of the Maiella. Mr Federico Castellucci (on the right) is one of our DA members.

(Photo courtesy of Federico Castellucci)



# I caratteri cinesi, forza di coesione tra tutte le etnie



By Sandro Cagnin - A member of our teaching staff and an expert in Chinese Language and Culture -

**I**l 476 d.C. segna la data ufficiale della caduta dell'Impero Romano, quando Romolo Augustolo viene deposto da Odoacre. La capitale era stata spostata a Ravenna da diversi decenni e l'impero soffriva ormai da tempo le pressioni di tutti i popoli barbari che volevano conquistare la penisola italica. In Cina la caduta degli Han Orientali, sebbene avvenuta oltre due secoli prima, nel 220 d.C., presenta molte similitudini. Fra le cause del suo declino: la debolezza della classe regnante, la decadenza dei costumi, il dilagare della corruzione causa di malcontento e rivolte popolari per citarne solo alcune.

Com'è noto dopo la caduta dell'Impero Romano, l'Europa non sarà più unita sotto un'unico sovrano, se non parzialmente; in ogni caso non raggiungerà più la stessa estensione geografica. La conseguente divisione in molti stati e staterelli che costellarono di guerre i libri di storia fu causata certamente dalle sostanziali diversità tra i popoli europei. Tuttavia sarebbe un errore credere che i popoli residenti in Cina al tempo degli Han appartenessero tutti alla stessa etnia. Gli Xiongnu ad esempio furono un popolo nomade dal quale l'Impero Cinese dovette difendersi con le armi, ma che venne poi inglobato come molte altre etnie.

Un fattore fondamentale che contribuì sicuramente alla disgregazione degli

europei del tempo fu il frazionamento linguistico. Ciò venne favorito dal fatto che il latino fosse una lingua di tipo alfabetico. Le lettere dell'alfabeto latino corrispondendo a un suono piuttosto che a un concetto, permisero lo sviluppo di svariate lingue indipendenti. Questo gettò le basi per la formazione di identità culturali che avrebbero portato al sorgere dei vari stati europei. D'altro canto la lingua cinese per la sua natura non alfabetica, non facilitò questo processo. Permese sì la nascita di lingue e dialetti vari, ma una scrittura unica non portò mai queste lingue ad acquisire caratteristiche identificative per un solo popolo nel distinguersi da un altro.

Per comprendere meglio questo concetto tramite un semplice esempio possiamo pensare ai numeri arabi: essi si scrivono allo stesso modo in quasi tutto il mondo. Pur essendo pronunciati in maniera diversa in greco piuttosto che in danese, rappresentano infatti un concetto associabile al numero nella maggior parte delle culture mondiali. Allo stesso modo un carattere cinese significherà la stessa cosa per tutti i popoli che usano il cinese come lingua scritta, nonostante gli stessi non necessariamente siano in grado di comunicare tra di loro oralmente. Il carattere di donna (女) ad esempio può essere compreso in tutta la Cina, in Giappone e in Corea ferme restando le

forti differenze etniche e linguistiche tra questi popoli.

Il sinologo E. Balazs sosteneva che tra le conseguenze del frazionamento socio-politico europeo vi fosse il riconoscimento dei diritti dei cittadini da parte dei sovrani. In Europa infatti, le rivalità nazionali hanno sempre costretto i governanti ad ascoltare i sudditi, a temere le loro rivolte, a proteggere le fonti di ricchezza. In Cina invece la classe dirigente investita del Mandato Celeste aveva le mani più libere per impartire le decisioni politiche. La continuità storico-culturale del popolo cinese veniva così da una parte giustificata dalla storia, dall'altra propriamente salvaguardata dalla classe egemone.

Senza che se ne rendessero conto, la natura a carattere pittografico della lingua cinese ha fornito ai regnanti un indiscusso vantaggio. Gli imperatori che nel medioevo tentarono di restaurare l'Impero Romano dopo la sua caduta, non poterono mai contare su un elemento coesivo della stessa portata. Il fatto che per loro fosse così difficile imporre la propria lingua nei territori conquistati ebbe certamente un impatto negativo per l'unità degli europei. Al contrario la lingua cinese scritta è stata in grado di tenere insieme popoli etnicamente diversi per millenni ed ancora oggi è per loro un simbolo di identità nazionale. ☰

☞ For the English version, please contact us or ! [click here](http://www.ladante.cc/newsletter.html) ( <http://www.ladante.cc/newsletter.html> ) ! ☰



## Per migliorare il vostro italiano!



Molti di voi si chiedono sempre: "Come posso migliorare il mio italiano fuori dall'aula? Ecco alcuni suggerimenti dai nostri insegnanti.

Many of you might always wonder: "How can I improve my Italian outside of the language classroom?" Here are some suggestions from our teachers.

### Per leggere quotidiani online:

- www.corriere.it
- www.repubblica.it
- www.sole24ore.com
- www.ilmanifesto.it
- www.ilmessaggero.it
- www.unita.it

### Per leggere riviste online:

- www.focus.it
- www.gqitalia.it
- www.quattroruote.it
- www.gentemotori.it
- www.nationalgeographic.it
- www.marieclaire.it

- www.vanityfair.it
- www.grazia.it
- www.oggi.it
- www.vogue.it
- www.donnamoderna.com

# Our Third "Una Serata Italiana con...." is

2013 | Una Serata Italiana con... | FREE

## Emanuele Travagliati



## Mr. Emanuele Travagliati

### "Mosaico: Storia, arte e materia"

"Emanuele Travagliati was born and raised in Verona. He graduated in Political Science from the University of Padova.

After a Master degree in Tourism Management and International Commerce he has worked in Milan with Hilton International first and Hyatt International afterwards. He also worked with Verona Exhibition, *Veronafiere*, and Milan Exhibition Center, *FieraMilano*.

He lived in Shanghai from 2007 to 2011 after an Internationalization Program promoted by the Italian Trade Commission and Udine and Pordenone Chamber of Commerce, developing the Chinese and Asian market for Interna Group, a leading contractor based in Udine for leading worldwide projects such as BMW Welt in Munich and Armani Hotel in Dubai.

After joining SICIS he moved to Hong Kong in November 2012 opening the SICIS Headquarters and Showroom where he is now actually working on Far East markets development"

Dante Alighieri Society in Hong Kong is offering a great series of events called "Una Serata Italiana con... (An Italian Night With...) , held once a month from December 2012 as a free admission event. This represents a great opportunity for members, students and all interested friends to meet famous and fascinating Italians from different walks of life, to listen and speak in Italian and to meet other students or members of our ever expanding Society.

## Prendiamo un Caffè

Dear all,

In January 2013 Dante Alighieri Society organized three conversation workshops "*Prendiamo un caffè*" on Wednesdays from 7 to 9 pm open to all people interested. The three workshops called on all students and friends from level A2, B1 and B2 respectively. It has been a real pleasure for all of us from the staff to see so many people keen on practicing and improving their speaking skills, practicing in a relaxed atmosphere and while having fun. These workshops are aimed at giving you the opportunity to overcome any lack of confidence and speak in Italian as much as possible in an all-Italian environment.

Furthermore, this is great to learn new methods and tricks to improve your speaking ability and dramatically boost your vocabulary knowledge of Italian culture and life-style. The activities included among others discussion, role-plays, conversations in pairs and groups, talk-shows, pretend-party, creative story, guessing about a puzzling image or video without! audio, reproducing missing dialogues and much more.

Considering its success, we will try to organize these conversation sessions in the near future for those who missed it.

*Bravi! Parliamo in italiano!*

*Grazie e a presto!*



"...the above event was very useful and interesting. I strongly hope that it would be organized from time to time." - Hiroe Ambo

# Italian Language Courses, Cultural Events and Workshops in February

## Opera Workshops

### **Il ballo in Maschera**

Date: Wednesday, 20 February 2013 , Time: 19:00 - 21:00  
Fee: \$200 (\$180 for DA Current Students and Members)

### **Aida**

Date: Wednesday, 27 February 2013 , Time: 19:00 - 21:00  
Fee: \$200 (\$180 for DA Current Students and Members)

## Una Serata Italiana con...

### **Emanuele Travagliati**

Date: Thursday, 21 February 2013 , Time: 19:00 - 20:30  
Free Admission ,  
Venue: SICIS Hong Kong Showroom,  
Queen's Cube Building , 235-237 Queen's Road East,  
Wan Chai, Hong Kong

## Book Presentation

In collaboration with the **Italian Women's Association**

### **Nero: An Exemplary Life by Angelo Paratico**

Date: Tuesday, 26 February 2013 , Time : 10:00 - 12:00  
Venue: Dante Alighieri Society in Hong Kong  
Free Admission

## Festa di Carnevale

### **History and traditions of the most popular celebrations of the Carnival in Italy.**

Date: Thursday, 28 February 2013  
Time: 19:00 - 21:00  
Free Admission

Registration: [http://www.ladante.cc/event\\_registration.html](http://www.ladante.cc/event_registration.html)

## New Italian Language Courses

### **Beginner I**

Friday, 19:00 - 21:00, from 22 February to 14 June 2013 (No lessons on 29 March, and 17 May)

### **Intensive A1**

Monday and Thursday , 10:00 - 12:00, from 4 March to 10 June 2013 (No lessons on 1 and 4 April)

### **Beginner III**

Saturday, 10:00 - 13:00 (3 hours), from 26 January to 13 April 2013 (No lessons on 16 February and 30 March)

### **Beginner III**

Wednesday, 19:00 - 21:00, from 2 February to 29 May 2013 (No lessons on 13 February and 1 May)

### **Intermediate III**

Saturday, 10:00 - 13:00 (3 hours), from 2 February to 20 April 2013 (No lessons on 16 February and 30 March)

### **Intensive B2**

Tuesday and Friday, 10:00 - 12:00, from 5 February to 21 May 2013 (No lessons on 12 and 15 February, 29 March and 17 May)

### **Advanced III**

Monday, 19:00 - 21:00, from 25 February to 10 June 2013 (No lesson on 1 April)

OUR STUDENTS, YUKI AND DORIS SENT US POSTCARDS FROM THEIR HOLIDAYS!

**YUKI WROTE FROM SHI CHA HAI (什刹海) AND**

**DORIS WROTE FROM BANGKOK!**

**GRAZIE MILLE!**



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**GRAZIE MILLE!**



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