

Curriculum vitae
Elisabetta Merlo
February, 2026

Degrees

1991

PhD in Economic History, Università Bocconi

Thesis Title: Corporazioni. Conflitti e soppressioni a Milano nel XVIII secolo Supervisor: Prof. Carlo Poni

1984

M.A. in Economics and Social Disciplines (110/110 cum laude), Università Bocconi Thesis

Title: La piccola industria a Milano nell'Ottocento

Supervisor: Prof. Aldo De Maddalena

Previous employment positions

Since 2006

Associate Professor of Economic History, Università Bocconi

November 2001 – October 2006

Researcher (Assistant Professor), Università Bocconi

1993 - 1995

Post-doc in Economic History, Università Bocconi

Articles in referred journals

Detecting the Key Role of Family in Explaining Corporate Heritage Use in Family Firms. *Journal of Management and Governance*, 2025, 29 (3): 635-667 (with G. B. Dagnino, G. D'Allura, F. Quarato)

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10997-024-09709-9>

Institutions as Intangible Assets in the Evolution of Italian Fashion, 1950–2000.

Journal of Interdisciplinary History, 2024, 55 (1): 115–137 (with V.

Pinchera). https://doi.org/10.1162/jinh_a_02034

Configuring cultural emerging industries: A comparison of the French and Italian fashion industries. *Business History Review*, 2023, 97(4): 779-807 (with V. Pinchera). <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007680523000880>

Fashion, product innovation, and consumer culture in the late 19th century:

“Alle Città d’Italia” department store in Milan. *Journal of Consumer Culture*,

2021, 21(2): 337-358 (with C.M. Belfanti).
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540519876005>

Making Italian fashion global: brand building and management at Gruppo Finanziario Tessile (1950s–1990s). *Business History*, 2020, 62(1): 42-69 (with M. Perugini).
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00076791.2017.1329299>

Trends in the fashion business: Spain and Italy in comparison, 1973–2013. *Enterprise & Society*, 2020, 21(1): 79-109 (with V. Binda).
<https://doi.org/10.1017/eso.2019.29>

The determinants of the emergence of Turin as the first capital of Italian Fashion Industry (1900–1960). *Fashion Theory*, 2020, 24(3): 325-348 (with M. Perugini).
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1362704X.2020.1732014>

Patenting Fashion: Salvatore Ferragamo Between Craftmanship and Industry. *Investigaciones De Historia Económica - Economic History Research*, 2016, 12 (2): 109-119 (with C.M. Belfanti). [10.1016/j.ihe.2015.07.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ihe.2015.07.010)

Size Revolution. The Industrial Foundations of the Italian Clothing Industry, *Business History*, 2015, 57(6): 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00076791.2014.992336>

The Revival of Fashion Brands Between Marketing and History. The case of the Italian fashion Company Pucci. *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing*, 2015, 7(1): 91-112 (with M. Perugini). <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHRM-02-2013-0007>

When Fashion Met Industry. Biki and Gft (1957-1972). *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 2015, 20 (1): 92-110. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1354571X.2014.973157>

I consumi alimentari in una grande città: Milano 1950-1997. *Ricerche di storia economica e sociale*, 2015, 1 (1-2): 83-108. [10.17426/KPYSQCOJYW](https://doi.org/10.17426/KPYSQCOJYW)

Italian Fashion Business: Achievements and Challenges (1970s–2000s). *Business History*, 2011, 53 (3): 344-362. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00076791.2011.565512>

Family Business and Luxury Business in Italy (1950-2000). *Entreprises et Histoire*, 2007 (46): 112-124 (with A. Colli). <https://dx.doi.org/10.3917/eh.046.0113>

Turning Fashion into Business: The Emergence of Milan as an International Hub. *Business History Review*, 2006, 80 (3): 415-447 (with F. Polese)
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/25097225>

Gli esordi dell'industria chimica in Italia: la Lepetit e la Ledoga (Lepetit Dollfuss Gansser) 1870-1907. *Imprese e storia*, 1999, 20 (2).

I progetti di un mercante svedese. Aspetti e riflessi del tramonto delle corporazioni milanesi (1750-1790). *Società e Storia*, 1994(65): 507-528.

La lavorazione delle pelli a Milano fra Sei e Settecento. Conflitti, strategie, dinamiche, *Quaderni Storici*, 1992, 27 (2): 369-397.

Articles in non referred journals

Fashion and democracy in Europe, 1860-1960. *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica*, 2021(2): 55-68 (with C.M. Belfanti)

L'Archivio storico del Gruppo Finanziario Tessile, *Rassegna degli Archivi di Stato*, XI, 2015 (1-2-3): 304-317

Costruire una capitale della moda. Milano: le premesse ottocentesche, il risveglio degli anni Cinquanta' *Annali di storia dell'impresa*, 2008(19): 49-108 (with F. Polese)

Books

The Italian Fashion System. The Role of Institutions and Institutional Change, 1940s–1980s. London: Palgrave, 2023. (with I. Paris) <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-52375-5>

Lo stile italiano nelle carte. Inventario dell'archivio storico della Camera nazionale della moda italiana (1958-1989). Roma: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 2018 (with N. Trivisano)

Lavazza. Una storia industriale dal 1895. Milano: Mondadori, 2014 (with G. Berta).

Moda italiana. Storia di un'industria dall'Ottocento a oggi. Venezia: Marsilio Editori, 2013

Moda e industria, 1960-1980. Milano: Egea, 2012.

Fontana. Una storia di vita (1952-2005). Milano: Egea, 2006 (with A. Colli).

Le corporazioni, conflitti e soppressioni. Milano tra Sei e Settecento. Milano: Franco Angeli, 1996.

Chapters in books with national or international editor

Industrialization and fashion. Radclyffe-Thomas N. and Radclyffe-Thomas B. (eds.). *The Routledge Companion to Fashion and Business*. London: Routledge, 2026

Fashion: production, commercialization and consumption. Conca Messina S.A. (ed.), *Leading the economic Risorgimento: Lombardy in the 19th century*, London: Routledge, 2022, pp. 178-195.

A brief history of retailing. Castaldo S., Grosso M., Premazzi K. (eds.), *Retail and Channel Marketing*, Elgar Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2020, pp. 94-115.

Le origini industriali del sistema moda italiano. Capalbo, C. (a cura di), *La formazione del sistema moda italiano. Industria, istituzioni, innovazioni e family business*, Roma: Edizioni Nuova Cultura, 2020, pp. 41-62.

Giorgio Armani. *L'impresa italiana*. Vol. 1, *Le storie*, 2020, Roma: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, pp. 686-689.

Camera nazionale della moda italiana (1958-1989). Merlo, E. – Trivisano, N., *Lo stile italiano nelle carte. Inventario dell'archivio storico della Camera nazionale della moda italiana (1958-1989)*, Roma: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 2018

2012 - Il dragone italiano. Giardina, A. (a cura di), *Storia mondiale dell'Italia*. Bari: Laterza, 2017

Italian luxury goods industry on the move: SMEs and global value chains, P.Y. Donzè and R. Fujioka (eds.), *Global Luxury*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017

Le etichette, una fonte per lo studio della contraffazione in prospettiva storica.
C. M. Belfanti (a cura di), *Contraffazione e cambiamento economico. Marche, imprese, consumatori*, 2013, Milano: Egea, pp. 53-70

The Ascendance of the Italian Fashion Brands (1970-2000), L. Segreto, H. Bonin, A. K. Kozminski, C. Manera, M. Pohl (eds.), *European Business and Brand Building*, Brussels: Pieter Lang s.a., 2012: 137-154.

Italy. L. Skov (ed.), *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*, Vol. 8, Berg: London, 2011.

Apprenticeship and Technical Schools in the Formation of IDs. G. Becattini, M. Bellandi, L. De Propris (eds.), *A Handbook of Industrial Districts*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd., 2009, pp. 32-42

Il sistema distributivo italiano in prospettiva storica. S. Castaldo (a cura di), *Retail and Channel Management*, 2008, Milano: Egea, pp. 211-241.

Accessorizing, Italian Style: Creating a Market for Milan's Fashion Merchandise.
R. L. Blaszczyk (ed.), *Producing Fashion: Commerce, Culture, and Consumers*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007 (with F. Polese)

Major research grants

2022 –2025

Progetto di Ricerca: MUSA - Multilayered Urban Sustainability Action (PNRR – M.4, C.2, CUP B43D21011010006, Avviso n. 3277 del 30-12-2021

Spoke 5 – Sustainable Fashion, Luxury, and Design

WP1 Coordinator– Applied research on sustainable practices and innovative technologies (with E. Scarpellini, Università Statale di Milano)

2011-2013

EntER - Centre for Research on Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurs, Università Bocconi
Research project: *“Lavazza: an Industrial Story”*
Coordinator

2010 - 2012

MIUR – Ministero dell’Istruzione, Università, Ricerca *“Counterfeiting and economic change, 19th and 20th centuries”* Principal Investigator of the Università Bocconi Research Team

2010-2011

EntER - Centre for Research on Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurs, Università Bocconi and Infocamere
Research project: *“Entrepreneurship and enterprises in North West Italy, 2000-2010”*
Coordinator

2005-2006

Ricerca di base Università Bocconi
“The Emergence of Milan as International Capital of Fashion in a Long Term Perspective (1900-1960)”
Main investigator

2003 - 2005

MIUR – Ministero dell’Istruzione, Università, Ricerca
“L’economia della moda in Italia: origini, evoluzione e affermazione di un settore di successo (1850-1970)”
Member of the Università Bocconi Research Team

2000

MIUR – Ministero dell’Istruzione, Università, Ricerca
Sviluppo economico e istituzioni intermedie
Member of the research Team, Dipartimento di studi sociali, Università degli Studi di Brescia

1998 – 2000

CNR – Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche
“Sistemi economici locali e dinamiche imprenditoriali in prospettiva storica” Member of the Università Bocconi Research Team

Scientific Committee membership

2016-present

Member of the international research network ACORSO (Appearances, Corps and Societies)

2016-2023

Members of the ACORSO (Appearances, Corps et Sociétés Research Interest
Group: *‘Tailoring for Women: 1750-1930*, scientific advisor Lou Taylor, University of Brighton

2013

Expert advisor to the ESTER – RDC (European School for Training in Economic and Social Historical Research - Research Design Course)

2012

Member of the Faculty Board for the PhD in Economic and Social History. Università di Verona

2009

Member of the Scientific Committee of the joint meeting European Business History Association – Business History Conference *Fashions: Business Practices in Historical Perspective*, Università Bocconi.

2008-2009

Member of the scientific committee of the project *Italian Fashion Archives (20th century)* coordinated by ANAI (National Association of the Italian Archivist)

Member of EBHA (European Business History Association), BHC (Business History Conference), ARISE (Società Italiana degli storici dell'economia)

Editorial membership

Member of the editorial committee of “Cultura, moda e società” (Cultures, Fashion and Society), Pearson - Mondadori Publisher

Member of the Advisory Board of ZoneModa Journal

Main Teaching activities

Since A.Y. 2001 – present

Economic History, Undergraduate class, 6 Cfu. Course director from 2011 to 2015.

2004 – 2023

Channel Marketing (Trade evolution, analysis and planning), Graduate class, 2 Cfu.

2008 – 2014

Understanding Consumer (Consumer Behaviour And Cct), Graduate class, 1 Cfu.

2005 – 2010

Economic History of Fashion, Undergraduate class, 6 Cfu.

Institutional roles

2016-present

Affiliation to ICRIOS – The Invernizzi Center for Research on Innovation, Organization, Strategy, and Entrepreneurship

2013 - 2016

Affiliation to CRIOS – Centre for research on innovation, organization, and strategy, Università Bocconi

2015

Responsabile di progetto di miglioramento qualitativo della didattica, undergraduate course 30067 – Storia Economica

2011 - 2015

Director of the undergraduate course 30067 – Economic History

2009-2013

Member of the managing committee of EntER, Centre for Research on Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurs, Università Bocconi

2006-2008

Member of CORI - Comitato Ricerca, Valutazione, Sviluppo Risorse Umane, Università Bocconi

2006-2010

Member of the Faculty Board for the PhD in Economic and Social History. Università Bocconi

2013

Organizer of the Workshop *L'impatto della contraffazione sulle aziende moda di alta gamma*, Università Bocconi.

2009 - 2010

Organizer of the Seminars “100minuti”, EntER - Centre for Research on Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurs, Università Bocconi.

Non-academic activities

2021-2023

President of the final examination commission of the course “Fashion Archive and Heritage Management”, AFOL-Milano Città Metropolitana

2012 – 2014

MIBACT – Ministero dei Beni Culturali, “*Archivi della Moda del Novecento*”, Scientific Advisor

1998-2000

Responsible for cataloguing the historical archive of the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana

Other useful info

2018: National Scientific Qualification, Full Professor

2016: Teaching Excellence Award, Università Bocconi

2004: Excellence in Research Award, Università Bocconi

Presentations at seminars and conferences (selection):

Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Boston (Ma), USA 4-8 August 2023 (paper *Family Firms Investments in Corporate Heritage: Preliminary Results* with G. M. D'Allura, F. Quarato, G.B. Dagnino)

International Research Meeting in Business & Management, Nice, France, July 6-7, 2023 (paper *Family firms and corporate heritage: What is the link?* With G. M. D'Allura, F. Quarato, G.B. Dagnino)

Sinergie Management Conference, Bari (Italy), June 29-30, 2023, (paper *L'investimento in corporate heritage delle imprese familiari* with G. M. D'Allura, F. Quarato, G.B. Dagnino, M. Perugini)

Università di Pisa & Massachusetts Institute of Technology, "Im/Material Values: Constraints and Opportunities within the Textile and Apparel Marketplace from Historical Perspective," Pisa, 9-10 December 2022 (paper *The Role of Institutions in Configuring the Italian Fashion Industry from the 1950s to the End of the Century* with V. Pinchera)

Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Boston (Ma), USA, 4-8 August , 2023, (paper *Family Firms Investments in Corporate Heritage: Preliminary Results* with

International Research Meeting in Business & Management, 6-7 July 2023, Nice, France

Family firms and corporate heritage: What is the link?

Politecnico di Torino, "Biennale Tecnologia - Tecnologia è Umanità", 10-13 Novembre 2022 (paper *Lavazza. Dal principio al futuro: storia di innovazione e sostenibilità*)

AISPE (Associazione italiana Storici del Pensiero Economico) - SISE (Società Italiana degli Storici dell'Economia) Annual Conference, "Istituzioni e mutamenti economici e sociali. Italia ed Europa nel contesto internazionale in una prospettiva storica", November 4-6, 2021 (paper *Le istituzioni della moda in Italia e Francia dagli anni Cinquanta alla fine del XX secolo*, with V.Pinchera)

LIUC Heritage HUB, "Business History as Business. Exploring Heritage, History, and Money," Castellanza, May 31, 2022, (paper *History as Strategy. Corporate Heritage Investments in Italy (2000-2016)* with M. Perugini)

European Business History Association Annual Conference, "The business history of creativity", Rotterdam, August 29-31, 2019, (paper *History as Strategy. Corporate Heritage Investments in Italy (2000-2016)* with M. Perugini)

European Business History Association Annual Conference, "The firm and the sea: chains, flows and connections", Ancona, September 6-8, 2018, (paper *The emergence of Turin as the Capital of the Italian Fashion*, with M. Perugini)

Convegno della Società italiana degli storici dell'economia, "Il settore agro-alimentare nella storia dell'economia europea", Brescia, September 21-22, 2018. (paper *Le relazioni fra industria e distribuzione in Italia. Il caso Lavazza (1950-2000)*, with M. Perugini)

Fashion Capitals Seminar, "Exploring the Fashion Capital in the Long Twentieth Century", Erasmus University Rotterdam, December 7-8, 2017, (paper *The rise of Turin as capital of the Italian fashion*, with M. Perugini)

European Business History Association Annual Conference, "Transformation in Business and Society: A Historical Approach", Wien, August 25, 2017, (paper *A matter of leadership. The evolution of buyer-supplier relationships in Italy (1950-1990)*, with M. Perugini)

Workshop "Il Sistema Moda Italiano tra tradizione e innovazione: vantaggi competitivi e scenari globali", Roma, 28 Ottobre 2016 (paper *Creatività e innovazione. Il Gruppo finanziario tessile nella storia della moda italiana*)

Colloque international *Faire l'histoire de la mode dans le monde occidental* co-organisé par le CERHIO – UMR CNRS Paris, May 20, 2015 (paper "Est-ce-que la mode est un sujet pour l'histoire économique? La mode et l'économie italienne (XIXe et XXe siècles, with C.M. Belfanti)

Business History Conference Annual Meeting, Sacramento, California, April 10-12, 2008 (paper *Suiting Up for Easy Street: Armani and the Emergence of Milan as the Capital of Ready-to-Wear*)

ICCA/SEBH Conference on "Brand and Image in the History of European Business", Warsaw 2007 (paper *Brand and Image in the History of Italian Fashion Business*)

Association of Business Historians, 2006 Annual Conference, London (paper *The ascendance of the Italian fashion brands, 1970-2000*)

International Economic History Association Congress, Helsinki, August 21-25, 2006 (paper *Advertising and Selling Fashion: Department Stores' Mail Order Catalogs. Milan, 1880-1920*)

European Business History Association, 2005 Annual Conference, Frankfurt, September 1-3 (paper *Advertising and Selling Fashion. The Bocconi Department Stores' Mail Order Catalogs in the 1880s*)

European Business History Association, 2004 Annual Conference, Barcelona, September 16-18 (paper *From Artisan Skills to Production of Services? Brands in the 19th Century History of the Italian Fashion System*)

Business History Conference, Le Creusot (France), June 18-20, 2004 (paper The Emergence of Milan as the Capital of the Italian Fashion Industry, with F. Polese)

Association of Business Historians Annual Conference, University of Reading, June 28-29, 2001 (paper *Brands and the Italian Fashion System in the 19th Century*)

European Business History Association, 2001 Annual Conference, Oslo, (paper: *Knowledge as a Basis for Collective Action: The Case of the Italian Fashion Industry*)