



**Italian Literature II:
Contemporary Italian literature. Italo Calvino
LIT 102**

Instructor: Claudia Marulo

Office Hours: on appointment

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Course Description

The Italian literary tradition is rich and complex, and for this course the discussion is limited to a specific historic period, in order to delve into the characteristics without running the risk of spreading our attention across too broad a subject. The choice is oriented on the most recent period because it is closest to the contemporary sensitivity, in order to make the cultural comparison more direct.

The object of the course is to introduce and familiarize the students with the main Italian authors of the second half of the twentieth century and to refine their reading tools through the study of texts.

The general introduction of the author (life, works, historical context, stylistic characteristics) will be followed by the reading and deepened analysis of the texts in order to detect specific vocabulary, syntactic constructions, narrative characteristics, linguistic level, supporting themes, etc.

Naturally, the reading will be guided, but it will be up to the student to do outside research on the writer that will be discussed now and then as a class presentation in order to develop the ability to gather and process information written in Italian.

Most of the texts will be short stories, but excerpts from novels will also be considered. For some of these, there are film adaptations that, if the context so permits, will be suggested to the students.

Moreover, ample space will be left for the discussion and the suggestions of the students who may take an interest in specific authors or subjects. This course is interactive and open, and the authors mentioned here are only indicative of the path that we will follow.

As all work will be done together in class, the final exam will consist of a paper (written and presented orally) on an author and a text of the student's choice.

Prerequisites

None.

Course Hours

The course meets twice a week for 3 hours/ week. Total contact hours: 45. Suggested Credits: 3

Student Learning Expectations

An understanding of the work of the main Italian authors and of the most important themes and stylistic characteristics. The development of the ability to analyze and critique literary works.

Course Outline

Week by week description

- Week I* Introduction to the class; Satiric literature: teacher's presentation of Benni, reading of excerpts from the collection "L'ultima lacrima", students' presentations.
- Week II* Fantastic literature: teacher's presentation of Buzzati, reading of excerpts from the collection "Sessanta racconti", students' presentations.
- Week III* Postmodern literature, two examples: teacher's presentation of Calvino, reading of excerpts from the novel "Se una notte d'inverno un viaggiatore", students' presentations.
- Week IV* Calvino, reading of excerpts from the collection "Palomar", students' presentations.
- Week V* Literature and cinema: teacher's presentation of Baricco, reading of excerpts from the play "Novecento", students' presentations, projection and discussion of "Novecento" by Tornatore.
- Week VI* Neorealism 1: teacher's presentation of Moravia, reading of excerpts from the collection "Nuovi racconti romani", students' presentations.
- Week VII* Neorealism 2: teacher's presentation of Pavese, reading of excerpts from the novel "La casa in collina", students' presentations.
- Week VIII* Children literature: teacher's presentation of Rodari, reading of excerpts from the collection "Il libro degli errori", students' presentations.
- Week IX* Poetry: teacher's presentation of general aspects of Italian poetry, reading of excerpts from a selection of poems, students' presentations.
- Week X* Female literature: an example: teacher's presentation of Ginzburg, reading of excerpts from the collection "Le piccole virtù", students' presentations.
- Week XI* Accounts of witnesses: teacher's presentation of Primo Levi, reading of excerpts from the novel "Se questo è un uomo", students' presentations.
- Week XII* Exam Week. Individual presentation of an author/work at choice.



Evaluation method

Participation	40 %
Individual Presentation	20 %
Final Essay	20 %

Attendance mandatory

Students are expected to attend all lectures and excursions and actively participate in classroom discussions. Only one absence per course is allowed during the duration of the program. All other absences are considered unexcused. Each unexcused absence will incur an academic penalty of 10% off the overall grade of the course missed. Roll is taken and 3 tardies count as an unexcused absence. A student having more than 3 unexcused absences will earn an "F" in his/her course work and if he/she accumulates such absences in more than one course, will be dismissed from the program.

Excursions

N/A

Bibliography

- Balboni P. and Cadorna M., *Storia e testi di letteratura italiana per stranieri*, Guerra, Perugia, 2002
- Bondanella P. and Ciccarelli A., *The Cambridge companion to the Italian novel*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003
- Bondanella P. and Conaway J., *Dictionary of italian literature*, Greenwood Press, Westport, 1996
- Brand P. and Pertile L., *The Cambridge history of Italian literature*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996