

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND
LITERATURES**

Winter 2009

**ITALIAN 2231G/CLC 2291G
The Italian Literary Tradition II: From Romanticism to
Postmodernism (former Italian 231G)**

Instructor

Luca Pocci
Modern Languages and Literatures
University College 357
519-661-2111, x. 86062
lpocci@uwo.ca

Office Hours

Wednesday 10:30-12:30

Classes

Monday 7-8:30 UC 207
Wednesday 7-8:30 UC 207

Mark Breakdown

attendance and participation	20%
2 oral presentations	30%
2 essays (15 pages each)	50%

Course Guidelines

Students are expected to attend all lectures and to complete all required readings before coming to class. Essays must be submitted within the deadline. Late essays will be fined 5% per day.

Course Content and Aims

An introduction to major authors and works in the Italian literary tradition from the early nineteenth-century to the present, this course will focus on novels by Foscolo, Manzoni, Pirandello, and Calvino, short stories by Verga, and on the lyrical poetry of Leopardi. Topics will include the experience of love, the representation of nature and landscape, the contrast between city and country, the question of identity in modernism and postmodernism. Special attention will be given to the relationship between the writers under discussion and the social and political transformations of modern and contemporary Italy. The course is taught in English. All works will be available in English translation.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course the students will have become acquainted with some of the major works of Italian literature from Romanticism to Postmodernism. They are expected to have grasped the way in which the transformation of literary genres, themes, and devices reflects changes in terms of cultural and political values. At the same time they should have acquired a good understanding of the contribution of Italian authors to the evolution of the literary forms (lyric poetry, the modernist and postmodernist novel, the short story) and themes (love, the interplay of nature and landscape, the experience of the city, the notion of self, etc.) which play a central role in the historical period under examination. Students will improve their ability to express themselves on these and other related topics, both orally (through in-class presentations) and in writing (in the form of essays).

Required Texts (available at the University Bookstore)

- Ugo Foscolo, *The Last Letters of Jacopo Ortis*, trans. V. M. Manfredi (Hesperus Classics: 2002)
- Giacomo Leopardi, *Operette Morali: Essays and Dialogues*, trans. G. Cecchetti (University of California Press: 1983).
- Alessandro Manzoni, *The Betrothed*, trans. Bruce Penman (Penguin: 1972)
- Giovanni Verga, *Sicilian Stories: A Dual Language Book (Novelle siciliane)*, trans. S. Appelbaum (Dover Publications: 2002).
- Luigi Pirandello, *The Late Mattia Pascal*, trans. W. Weaver (New York Review of Books: 2004)
- Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, trans. S. Woolf (Simon & Schuster: 1995).
- Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, trans. W. Weaver (Harcourt: 1997).
- Peter Brand & Lino Pertile (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature* (Cambridge University Press: 1999).

COURSE SCHEDULE

January 5

General Introduction

- Ugo Foscolo, *The Last Letters of Jacopo Ortis*.

January 7

READING:

- Ugo Foscolo, *The Last Letters of Jacopo Ortis*
- *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature*: "The Romantic Controversy" (pp. 399-405); "Foscolo" (pp. 412-17).

January 12

READING

- Ugo Foscolo, *The Last Letters of Jacopo Ortis*.

January 14

READING

- Giacomo Leopardi, from *Operette Morali*: "Dialogue Between Nature and a Soul"; "Dialogue Between a Scientist and a Philosopher"; "Dialogue Between Nature and an Icelander".
- *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature*: "Leopardi" (pp. 418-26).

January 19

READING

- Giacomo Leopardi, from *Operette Morali*: "Dialogue Between Plotinus and Porphyry"; "Dialogue Between Tristan and a Friend".

January 21

READING

- Giacomo Leopardi, from *The Canti*: "The Infinite"; "The Evening of the Holiday."

January 26

READING

- Alessandro Manzoni, *The Betrothed*;

· *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature*: “Manzoni and the Novel” (pp. 427-39).

January 28

READING

· Alessandro Manzoni, *The Betrothed*.

February 2

READING

· Alessandro Manzoni, *The Betrothed*.

February 4

READING

· Alessandro Manzoni, *The Betrothed*.

In-class presentations

February 9

In-class presentations

READING

February 11

In-class presentations

February 16-20

Conference Week

February 23

READING

· Giovanni Verga, from *Sicilian Stories*: “Gramigna’s Mistress”; “The She-Wolf”; “Cavalleria Rusticana”;

The Cambridge History of Italian Literature: “Writer and Society in the New Italy” (pp. 459-60); “Naturalism and *Verismo*” (pp. 463-70).

1st ESSAY DUE

February 25

READING

· Giovanni Verga, from *Sicilian Stories*: “Nasty Redhead”; “Liberty”.

March 2

FILM SCREENING

Rocco and his brothers (*Rocco e i suoi fratelli*; directed by Luchino Visconti, 1960); 1st part.

March 4

FILM SCREENING

Rocco and his brothers (*Rocco e i suoi fratelli*; directed by Luchino Visconti, 1960); 2nd part.

March 9

READING

· Luigi Pirandello, *The Late Mattia Pascal*

· *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature*: “Pirandello” (pp. 480-90).

March 11

READING

- Luigi Pirandello, *The Late Mattia Pascal*.

March 16

READING

- Luigi Pirandello, *The Late Mattia Pascal*.

March 18

- Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*

- *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature*: "Primo Levi" (p. 590).

March 23

READING

- Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*.

March 25

READING

- Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

- *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature*: "Calvino" (pp. 594-95).

March 30

- Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*.

April 1

- Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*.

In-class presentations

April 6

In-class presentations

2nd ESSAY DUE

April 8

In-class presentations

Course conclusion

Please note: You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites (or have special permission from your Dean to waive the prerequisite) and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. If you are not eligible for the course, you may be removed from it at any time, and it will be deleted from your record. In addition, you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions can not be appealed.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a major academic offense (see Scholastic Offense Policy in the Western Academic Calendar). Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's **verbatim** or **paraphrased** text in one's own written work without immediate reference. Verbatim text must be surrounded by quotation marks or indented if it is longer than four lines. A reference must follow right after borrowed material (usually the author's name and page number). Without immediate reference to borrowed material, a list of sources at the end of a written assignment does not protect a writer against the possible charge

of plagiarism. The University of Western Ontario uses a plagiarism-checking site called Turnitin.com.

Absenteeism

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

UWO's Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness
(<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>)

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading