ITAL40270 - Italian Women's Writing Through the 20th Century: An Alternative Canon

This module problematises the definition of women's writing and seeks to locate the term with reference to its historical and cultural context. Core novels by Aleramo, Deledda, Banti, Morante, Maraini, Sanvitale, Ramondino, Loy and Capriolo will be analysed in detail. The novels will also be placed within the broad context of each author's output. Close readings of the texts, with an eye to themes and stylistic features of particular importance, will take place in lectures and tutorials. Feminist theory, especially in its Italian dimension, will also be drawn on for the purposes of textual analysis.

What will I learn?

On completion of this module, students should be able to: recognize the place of these works in their historical and cultural context; demonstrate a critical understanding of women's writing; present ideas orally and engage in discussion; write a critical essay appropriate to a post-graduate student of Italian literature, taking due account of a wide variety of critical sources.

Indicative seminar topics:
Course outline:
Session 1: Overview of reading list; introduction to notions of canonicity; Italian feminist theory and practice
Session 2: Aleramo: Una donna as feminist novel, as autobiographical fiction?
Session 3: Deledda: Sardinia □ tradition and modernity; images of flight and rebellion
Session 4: Banti: the historical novel and the self as artist
Session 5: Ginzburg: politics and family
Session 6: Morante: the historical novel and abjection
Session 7: Sanvitale: mothers, daughters and maternity
Session 8: Ramondino: post-modernism and the fantastic
Session 9: Maraini: the historical novel and the representation of self
Session 10: Capriolo: post-modernism and the fantastic
Session 11: Loy: Speaking of the self and of history
Session 12: Overview: back to canonicity and to Italian feminist theory

How will I learn?

Student Effort Hours:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Effort Type</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar (or Webinar)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specified Learning Activities</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous Student Learning</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Am I eligible to take this module?

Students should have Italian language to BA standard or equivalent. Texts will be read in Italian (and not all are available in translation).

How will I be assessed?
### Assessment Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Open Book</th>
<th>Component Exam</th>
<th>Must Pass Component</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Test: Seen commentary</td>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Graded</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay: Essay of at least 3,000 words on at least two authors studied during the module</td>
<td>Coursework (End of Trimester)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Graded</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation: 2 class presentations on selected authors</td>
<td>Varies over the Trimester</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Graded</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Carry forward of passed components**: Yes

### What happens if I fail?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result In</th>
<th>Terminal Exam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Assessment feedback

- Feedback individually to students, post-assessment
- Group/class feedback, post-assessment

### Reading List

**Core texts:**
- Sibilla Aleramo, Una donna (1906)
- Grazia Deledda, Cosima (1937)
- Anna Banti, Artemisia (1947)
- Natalia Ginzburg, Lessico famigliare (1963)
- Elsa Morante, La storia (1974)
- Francesca Sarntivale, Madre e figlia (1980)
- Fabrizia Ramondino, Atlhéopolis (1981)
- Dacia Maraini, La lunga vita di Marianna Ucria (1990)
- Paola Capriolo, Il doppio regno (1991)
- Rosetta Loy, La parola ebreo (1997)

**Critical reading:**
- ITAL 40270 Reading list:
  - General reading:
    - E. Abel, Writing and Sexual Difference (1982) 809 &SLC 809
    - S.L. Aricò, Contemporary Women Writers in Italy: A Modern Renaissance (1990) 850.9 ARI
    - Z.G. Baranski & S.W. Vinall, Women and Italy: Essays on Gender, Culture and History (1991) GEN305.40945 BAR
    - C. Belsey, Critical Approaches in Bloomsbury Guide to Women s Literature, ed. C. Buck R809 BLO
C. Della Coletta, Plotting the Past: Metamorphoses of Historical Narrative in Modern Italian Fiction (1996)  
U. Fanning, Italy in Bloomsbury Guide (see above) & 220 entries in alphabetical order  
N de Giovanni, Carta di donna: narratrici italiane del novecento (1996)  
A. Giorgio, Writing Mothers and Daughters in Western Europe: Renegotiating the Mother in Western European Narratives by Women (2002)  
A. Giorgio & J. Waters, Women’s Writing in Western Europe: Gender, Generation & Legacy (2007)  
C. Heilbrun, Reinventing Womanhood (1979)  
D. Hipkins, Contemporary Italian Women Writers & Traces of the Fantastic: The Creation of Literary Space (2007)  
M.O. Marotti, Italian Women Writers from the Renaissance to the Present (1996)  
B. Merry, Women in Modern Italian Literature (1990)  
P. Morris, Literature and Feminism (1993)  
A Testaferrari, Donna: Women in Italian Culture (1989)  
On Aleramo:  
U. Fanning, Sibilla Aleramo’s Una donna: A case study in women’s autobiographical fiction, The Italianist, 19, 1999  
S. Wood, Gender and Autobiography: The double vision of Sibilla Aleramo, The Italianist, 14, 1994  
On Deledda:  
A. Dolfi, Grazia Deledda  
M. Miccinesi, Grazia Deledda (1975)  
On Banti:  
E. Biagini, Anna Banti (1978)  
On Ginzburg:  
N. Ginzburg, Mai devi domandarmi (1971)  
N. Ginzburg, È difficile parlare di sé (1999)  
L. Marchionne Picchione, Natalia Ginzburg (1978)  
On Morante:  
G. Bernabei, Come leggere La Storia di Elsa Morante (1991)  
On Sanvitale:  
U. Fanning, Mother in the text, mothering the text: Francesca Sanvitale & Fabrizia Ramondino, The Italianist, 14, 1994  
On Ramondino:  
See above essay, and essays in general collections  
On Maraini:  
U. Fanning, Some Fragments of Daughterly Discourse: The Return to the Mother in Dacia Maraini’s La lunga vita di Marianna Ucrìa and La nave per Kobe in Recent Italian Fiction ed. R. Bertoni (2005)  
B. Merry, Dacia Maraini and the Written Dream of Women in Italian Literature (1997)  
On Capriolo:  
R. Scott, Self and Other in the Fiction of Paola Capriolo (1993)  
On Loy:  
Essays in collections
When is this module offered?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Autumn</th>
<th>Offering 1</th>
<th>Week(s) - Autumn: All Weeks</th>
<th>Mon 14:00 - 15:50</th>
</tr>
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