



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

SYLLABUS DEL CORSO

Letteratura Italiana Contemporanea

2223-3-E2001R001

Course title

Calvino in three books

Topics and course structure

A critical approach to literary communication. In particular, the program deals with the main features of literariness and of narrative; the monographic section will focus on one or more patterns of narratives.

The monographic section of this lecture course will focus on Italo Calvino, whose centenary is being celebrated in 2023. The three works included in the programme are representative of different periods of his literary activity: an extensive narration which revisits and rielaborates the patterns of both historical novel and Bildungsroman through the fantastic filter, in a close dialogue with present events (*The Baron in the Trees*, 1957); a book hard to define, which resumes the shape of the collection of stories with a frame narrative, aimed at discussing the future of human society, in a kaleidoscopic series of imaginary places (*The Invisible Cities*, 1972); a hyper-novel composed by ten beginnings of novel, which is altogether a catalogue of reading modes and a tribute to the readers.

Objectives

The main goal is to assure that the students become familiar with the close reading of texts, that includes the ability to understand semantic values, ambiguities, implicit assumptions, and therefore to appreciate both communicative principles and cultural significance. At the same time the teaching programme aims to develop and corroborate reading skills and textual comprehension skills, and expressive proficiency.

Methodologies

Lectures and discussion. Text analysis: linguistic and rhetorical features, narrative modes, cultural patterns. Summarizing exercises.

Online and offline teaching materials

Programme and references for attending students

Institutional module:

- Mario Vargas Llosa, *In Praise of Reading and Fiction*
- H. Porter Abbott, *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*

Monographic module:

- Italo Calvino, *Il barone rampante* (*Baron in the Trees*)
- Italo Calvino, *Le città invisibili* (*Invisible Cities*)
- Italo Calvino, *Se una notte d'inverno un viaggiatore* (*If in a Winter Night a Traveller*)

Critical tools:

- Gli apparati critici dei testi calviniani: segnatamente la *Cronologia* premessa agli *Oscar*, le postfazioni di Cesare Cases al *Barone rampante*, di Pier Paolo Pasolini alle *Città invisibili*, di Giovanni Raboni a *Se una notte d'inverno un viaggiatore*;
- Claudio Milanini, *L'utopia discontinua e altri saggi su Calvino* (Carocci).

Vargas Llosa's text, as well as the video of the Nobel lecture, is available on www.nobelprize.org. The programme includes also some additional texts which will be uploaded on the didactic platform.

Programme and references for non-attending students

No distinction is made between attending and non-attending students.

Assessment methods

Oral test. Evaluation is based on the following factors: pertinence and complexity, text comprehension, familiarity with the literary texts in programme, capacity for argumentation and interpretation, interaction, clarity of exposition, linguistic appropriateness, competence in technical terminology.

Office hours

Student reception by appointment: contact the professor by email (mario.barengi@unimib.it)

Programme validity

Two academic years (until February 2025)

Course tutors and assistants

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION | SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES | RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION | CLIMATE ACTION
