

RADIO ITALIA:

A History of Postwar Italy through Literature & Music, 1947-1985



Professor:	Julianne VanWagenen
Course Hours:	3:00-4:20 M/W
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ITAL 482:	Radio Italia: A History of Italy through Literature & Music, 1947-1985

COURSE SUMMARY

This is a multimedia course that charts Italian sociopolitical history from the early second postwar period through the mid 1980s. Students will be submerged into the cultural climate through the music and they will follow an intriguingly parallel literary trajectory through the reading of two important Italo Calvino works: his neorealist *Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno* (1954) and his proto-postmodern structural literary experiment, *Le città invisibili* (1972). The text linking the two Calvino's is Hugo Pratt's seminal graphic novel *Una ballata del mare salato*, which paves the way for a reorientation of the traditional Italian hero and for an emphasis on abstraction of thought rather than sociopolitical *impegno*. This is a trend that will become clear across the course, and which we will see manifested in the literature, music, and culture writ large.

Students will be introduced (1) to economic miracle of the 1950s and 60s through the music of festival di Sanremo; (2) to the partisan resistance and resistance to the mainstream music industry through the music of the *Cantacronache* and *la scuola genovese*; (3) to the 1968 student and feminist movements as chronicled by their popular chants, and the various goals of those movements as revealed through the music; (4) to the years of sociopolitical strife in the 1970s, from *gli anni di piombo* to the *radio libere* movement, and the great Italian cantautori, such as Giovanna Marini; and (5) to the retreat from social issues that can be seen across media and genre as early as the 1960s, and, particularly, in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Each week, students will listen to and analyze three relevant songs, and in addition, across the semester, they will watch four films, read two novels, one graphic novel, and a set of short essays and articles that will help them contextualize the cultural productions. Through class discussions, essays,

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and radio broadcast presentations—all in Italian—students will engage with the material both spontaneously together and rigorously on their own, through spoken and written language, and thus, the environment will provide near-full immersion for language-learners, while building a crucial foundation in popular, musical, and literary culture that will serve them well as a basis for both friendly conversations in Italy and academic pursuits.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Become familiar with people, topics, and events from the second half of the last century, which are central in the contemporary Italian imagination
- Read two of Italo Calvino's most important works and study the evolution of Italian (and Occidental) culture from the postwar period to the mid 1970s through a close reading of these novels and an analysis of their similarities and differences
- Learn to analyze across media, as a graphic novel forms the conceptual link in this course between two canonical literary texts
- Consider the impact of popular music on the countercultural generation of the 1960s and 70s in Italy and the U.S. and consider, in turn, the relevance and possible impact of contemporary musical artists
- Contextualize contemporary Italy in the events of its past, from the end of the fascist period to the years leading up to Berlusconi's rise
- Develop arguments in classroom discussions and papers to enhance analytical and critical interpretive skills.
- Enrich, collaborate, and share knowledge about hegemonic culture, counterculture, and other ideas discussed in class.

LANGUAGE:

This class has been designed to be taught in Italian as an Italian 482 course to develop students' knowledge of Italian literature, music, and culture. All course materials—songs, novels, graphic novel, and (nearly all) secondary literature—will be in Italian. Students must complete essays, presentations, and the midterm exam, as well as all class discussions, in Italian.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

Music

Songs will be provided for you in your COURSE READER and online, all listening can be done online via Youtube. In class, whenever possible, we will listen to original versions on vinyl with a portable turntable.

Readings

Texts to be purchased before start of class:

Calvino, Italo. *Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno* (Torino: Einaudi, 1954 [2000])
———. *Le città invisibili* (Torino: Einaudi, [1972] 1992)
Pratt, Hugo, *Una ballata del mare salato* (Milano: Rizzoli, [1968] 2012)

Short readings will be provided in your course reader or as handouts in class:

Bravo, Anna, "Politiche del femminismo" in *A Colpi Di Cuore: Storie Del Sessantotto* (Roma: GLF editori Laterza, 2008)

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Calvino, Italo, "Avventura di due sposi" in *I racconti* (Torino: Einaudi, 1976)
De André, Fabrizio, "Sono canzonette - È grottesco trasformarle in una dramma" in *Corriere Mercantile*, 1-4 febbraio 1968
Alessia Ricciardi, "Lightness" in *After La Dolce Vita: A Cultural Prehistory of Berlusconi's Italy* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2012)
Straniero, M.L., et al., "Introduzione," in *Le canzoni della cattiva coscienza* (Milano: Bompiani, 1964)

Films

Io bacio... tu baci (Piero Vivarelli, 1961)
Cantacronache. 1958-1962: politica e protesta in musica (Michele Bentini, 2011)
Vogliamo anche le rose [estratti] (Alina Marazzi, 2008)
Lavorare con lentezza (Guido Chiesa, 2004)
Leone and Peckinpah [estratti]

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

20% Active Participation and preparation
30% Essays (Three 3-page essays, in Italian)
25% Radio Broadcast Presentations (Three presentations, in Italian)
25% Final Essay (5-page, in Italian)

1. Participation (in-class discussions, group work, readings, quizzes)

Regular attendance of class meetings and film screenings, and quality participation are critical to the success of this course. Expected absences should be discussed with the instructor in advance and are limited to 3 total hours per semester.

2. Essays

- Each paper should have the specified length, typed in 12-pt. Times New Roman font, and have one-inch margins
- Include your name and the title of your paper at the top of the first page
- All papers must have titles
- You should number pages
- Spell check and proofread adequately
- Be sure that you cite all secondary material and present bibliographical information according to either the guidelines of either the Modern Language Association or Chicago Manual of Style
- You must list all material cited, even if you are only using the required text
- There will be information distributed in class for the papers

3. Radio Broadcast Presentations

Students will be assigned three presentations throughout the semester. The first two of these presentations will not be performed in front of the class, rather, they will be due as videos via media upload to the course website. The first two will be individual presentations in which students develop a radio personality and radio show based on class materials: songs, other cultural media, and historical context. The final presentation will be a group podcast in which two to three radio personalities come together for one show in which the hosts discuss contemporary topics and introduce, analyze, and play their song list for the day. Each individual presentation should be 6-8 minutes, the final presentation should last 20 minutes (plus the time for the songs). The final presentation will be recorded as a podcast or played on live radio depending on the resources available on campus.

4. Final Paper

The final paper will be written in Italian and it will investigate a course theme that is of interest to the student. Students must begin to think about and develop their theme during the first week after midterms and they should meet with me at least twice between week 10 and week 14, to discuss and elaborate their interest.

COURSE CALENDAR

READINGS ARE TO BE COMPLETED FOR THE DAY/WEEK THEY ARE ASSIGNED. YOU MUST BRING TO CLASS THE CURRENT READING. Assignments are listed under the day for which they are to be completed.

FILM SCREENINGS will be available to watch on your own via the course website. ALL LYRICS will be available in the course reader and all songs are available online. Whenever possible, we will listen to original songs in class on vinyl with a portable turntable.

WEEK 1

- Monday, January 7 *Introduction to course and theme "La storia attraverso la musica"*
- In class, "Nel blu dipinto di blu" (Domenico Modugno, 1958)
 - In class, Canzone e storia d'Italia: dal Dopoguerra agli anni di piombo
- Wednesday, January 9 *Introduction to Italo Calvino, WWII, and i partigiani*
- Musica:
- "Festival" (Francesco De Gregori, 1976)
 - "La locomotiva" (Francesco Guccini, 1972)
- Lettura:
- Italo Calvino, *Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno* (Torino: Einaudi, 1954), pp. 1-27.

MODULE 1: IL FESTIVAL DI SANREMO NEGLI ANNI '50 E '60

WEEK 2

- Monday, January 14 *Introduction to il Festival di Sanremo*
- Musica:
- "Grazie dei fiori" (Nilla Pizzi, 1951)
 - "Tutte le mamme" (Giorgio Consolini, 1954)
 - "Aprite le finestre" (Franca Raimondi, 1956)

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- Wednesday, January 15 *Lecture on il miracolo economico and discussion of Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno through p. 55*
- Musica:
- “Addio, Addio” (Claudio Villa, 1962)
 - “Non pensare a me” (Claudio Villa, (1967)
 - “Chi non lavora non fa l’amore” (Adriano Celentano, 1970)
- Lettura:
- Italo Calvino, *Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno* (Torino: Einaudi, 1954), pp. 27-55.

WEEK 3

- Monday, January 21 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY, NO CLASS
- Wednesday, January 23 *Lecture on rock and roll and the tension of interpretation of ‘America’ in Io bacio... tu bacio*
- Film:
- *Io bacio... tu baci* (Piero Vivarelli, 1961)
- Lettura:
- Italo Calvino, *Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno* (Torino: Einaudi, 1954), pp. 55-83.

MODULE 2: CANTACRONACHE & LA SCUOLA GENOVESE

WEEK 4

- Monday, January 28 *Introduction to the Cantacronache and discussion of Michele Straniero’s interpretation of the canzonetti of Sanremo*
- Musica:
- “Il ratto della chitarra” (Cantacronache, 1960)
 - “Partigiano sconosciuto” (Cantacronache, 1959)
- Lettura:
- M.L. Straniero et al., “Introduzione,” in *Le canzoni della cattiva coscienza* (5 pagine, in Course Reader)

DUE IN CLASS: Essay 1

- Wednesday, January 30 *Lecture on Calvino’s work with the Cantacronache and discussion of Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno through p. 111*
- Musica:
- “Canzone triste” (Cantacronache and Italo Calvino, 1958)
- Lettura:
- “L’avventura di due sposi,” Italo Calvino (3 pagine, in Course Reader); also LISTEN TO A READING HERE
 - Italo Calvino, *Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno* (Torino: Einaudi, 1954), pp. 84–111.

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WEEK 5

- Monday, February 4 *Lecture on the lasting legacy of the Cantacronache in Italian music today and discussion of documentary*
Film:
- *Cantacronache. 1958-1962: politica e protesta in musica*
- Wednesday, February 6 *Lecture on Sanremo 1967, and discussion of Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno through p. 139*
Lettura:
- Italo Calvino, *Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno* (Torino: Einaudi, 1954), pp. 112-139.

WEEK 6

- Monday, February 11 *Introduction to la scuola genovese and lecture on Fabrizio De André's reporting of the 1968 Sanremo*
Musica:
- "S'i' fosse foco" (Fabrizio De André, 1968)
- "Li vidi tornare" / "Ciao amore ciao" (Luigi Tenco, 1967)
- "Il soldato di Napoleone" (Sergio Endrigo, 1962)
Lettura:
- Fabrizio De André, "Sono canzonette - È grottesco trasformarle in una dramma" in *Corriere Mercantile*, 1-4 febbraio 1968.
- Wednesday, February 13 *Lecture on the legacy of la scuola genovese and discussion of the conclusion of Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno*
Lettura:
- Italo Calvino, *Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno* (Torino: Einaudi, 1954), pp. 140-167.
Presentazione:
- *Introduciamo le personalità DJ*

**MODULE 3: - 1968 -
UTOPIA, PUNIZIONE & IL MOVIMENTO FEMMINISTA**

WEEK 7

- Monday, February 18 NO CLASS, PRESIDENTS DAY
DUE AT 1PM VIA EMAIL: Essay 2

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Wednesday, February 20 *Introduction to 1968 in Italy and the Italian student movements, lecture on Guccini and his utopian vision*

Musica:

- "Contessa" (Paolo Pietrangeli, 1966)
- "Dio è morto" (Francesco Guccini, 1967)
- "L'isola non trovata" (Francesco Guccini, 1970)

Lettura:

- Hugo Pratt, *Una ballata del mare salato*, 1st half

WEEK 8

Monday, February 25 *Lecture on Fabrizio De André and his music's focus on revolution through justice-system reforms, introduction to Giorgio Gaber*

- *In class, [estratti] Parole e canzoni, Giorgio Gaber*

Musica:

- "Ballata degli impiccati" (Fabrizio De André, 1968)
- "Il testamento di Tito" (Fabrizio De André, 1970)
- "La libertà" (Giorgio Gaber, 1972)

Lettura:

- Hugo Pratt, *Una ballata del mare salato*, 2nd half

Wednesday, February 27 *Introduction to the Italian feminist movement, discussion of Alina Marazzi's film*

Musica:

- "Storia di una cosa" (Movimento femminista romano, 1970)
- "Abortire" (Movimento femminista romano, 1973)
- "Tango della femminista" (Movimento femminista romano, 1973)

Film:

- [estratti] *Vogliamo anche le rose* (Alina Marazzi, 2008)

WEEK 9

Monday, March 4 *Lecture on feminist politics in Italy and the Anna Bravo reading*

Musica:

- "La canzone di Marinella" (Three interpretations: Mina, 1967; Fabrizio De André, 1968; Mov. femminista romano, 1971)

Lettura:

- Anna Bravo: "Una femminilizzazione della politica?" pp. 111-114; "Come rendere (quasi) invisibile una donna" pp. 114-115; "Strade per il femminismo" pp. 119-122; "I movimenti omosessuali" pp. 126-133

Wednesday, March 6 **IN CLASS: MIDTERM**

SPRING BREAK: March 10 -17

MODULE 4: LE RADIO LIBERE E GLI ANNI DI PIOMBO

WEEK 10

Monday, March 18 *Introduction to gli anni di piombo, la strage di Piazza Fontana, and lecture on Giovanna Marini and De André's chronicles of violence and resistance*

Musica:

- "Canzone di maggio," (De André, 1973)
- "I treni per Reggio Calabria", (Marini, 1975)
- "L'avvelenata" (Guccini, 1976)

Wednesday, March 20 *Introduction to Calvino's transition from neorealism towards the postmodern and discussion of Le città invisibili through the first 11 cities*

Lettura:

- Italo Calvino, *Le città invisibili*: "Le città e la memoria 1 - Diomira" through "Le città e la memoria 5. - Maurilia"

WEEK 11

Monday, March 25 *Introduction to the cantautori that come after the first wave, lecture on Venditti's and De Gregori's more personal themes*

Musica:

- Bomba o non bomba, (Antonello Venditti, 1978)
- Viva l'Italia, (Francesco De Gregori 1979)

Wednesday, March 27 *Lecture on the kidnappings of De André, Dori Ghezzi, the kidnapping and death of Aldo Moro and la strage di Bologna, discussion of Le città invisibili through the 22nd city*

Lettura:

- Italo Calvino, *Le città invisibili*: "Le città e il desiderio 4 - Fedora" through "Le città sottili 4 - Sofronia"

Presentazioni:

- 'Introduciamo il programma radiofonico'

WEEK 12

Monday, April 1 *Intro to le radio libere movement, discussion of its immediate significance as related in Lorrai article, discussion of Radio Alice and film*

Musica:

- "Mio fratello è figlio unico" (Rino Gaetano, 1977)

Lettura:

- "1976: Nascono le radio libere," Marcello Lorrai (4 pagine, in Course Reader)

Film:

- *Lavorare con lentezza* (Guido Chiesa, 2004)

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Wednesday, April 3 *Lecture on the legacy of the Radio libere movement and discussion of Le città invisibili through the 33rd city*

Lettura:

- Italo Calvino, *Le città invisibili*: “Le città e gli scambi 3 - Eutropia” through “Le città e il nome 3 - Pirra”

MODULE 5: I CANTAUTORI ITALIANI E GLI STATI UNITI

WEEK 13

Monday, April 8 *Lecture on Bob Dylan's influence on the first generation of cantautori in Italy and discussion of inspiration and translations*

Musica:

- “La risposta (è caduta nel vento)” (Luigi Tenco, 1964)
- “The Answer is Blowin’ in the Wind” (Bob Dylan, 1963)
- “Talkin’ Milano” (Francesco Guccini, 1966)
- “Talkin’ New York” (Bob Dylan, 1962)

DUE IN CLASS: Essay 3

Wednesday, April 10 *Lecture on Dylan's and the cantautori's retreat to the West and what impact it may have had on revolutionary youths, discussion of Le città invisibili through the 44th city*

- In class, [estratti] Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid, *Pat Peckinpah*, 1974.
- Intervista a De André “Sono un piccolo borghese” in *L'unita*, 20 gennaio 1978. In *De André Talk*. (3, pagine, in *Course Reader*)

Musica:

- “Avventura a Durango” (Fabrizio De André, 1978)
- “Romance in Durango” (Bob Dylan, 1976)

Lettura:

- Italo Calvino, *Le città invisibili*: “Le città e i morti 2 - Adelma” through “Le città continue 2 - Trude”

WEEK 14

Monday, April 15 *Lecture on Guccini's and De Gregori's nostalgic take on Cowboy heroism; final discussion of Calvino's novel as a possible retreat*

Musica:

- “Bufalo Bill” (Francesco De Gregori, 1976)
- “Amerigo” (Francesco Guccini, 1978)
- “Piccola città” (Francesco Guccini, [1972] 1984)
- “I cowboy” (Francesco De Gregori, 1985)

Lettura:

- Italo Calvino, *Le città invisibili*: “Le città nascoste 1 - Olinda” through “Le città nascoste 5 - Berenice” and final *cornice*
- Alessia Ricciardi, “Lightness” in *After La Dolce Vita*, pp. 81-124

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- Wednesday, April 17 *Introduction to the conflating image of gun-slinger/guitar singer in cowboys like Sergio Leone's Harmonica*
- In class, [estratti] C'era una volta il West. *Sergio Leone, 1968.*

CONCLUSIONE

WEEK 15

- Monday, April 22 *Retrospective via Giorgio Gaber's 2001 La mia generazione ha perso*
- In class, [estratti] Parole e canzoni, *Giorgio Gaber*
- Musica:
- "Destra - Sinistra" (Giorgio Gaber, 2001)
 - "Il conformista" (Giorgio Gaber, 2001)
 - "Qualcuno era comunista" (Giorgio Gaber, 2001)
- Wednesday, April 24 I podcast finali:
- 'In onda: Ultra Mixed Tape 2018-19'

FINAL ESSAY DUE VIA EMAIL BY FRIDAY, APRIL 26