



**COURSE OPEN TO ALL INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
ATTENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF TRENTO
A.Y. 2018/2019**

**“Italy for Beginners. An Introduction to Italian Culture”
(6 ECTS)**

**From October 2nd to November 22nd 2018
Every Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6.00 to 8.00 p.m.
at the Department of Humanities, Room 114**

SYLLABUS

1. Introduction

Lecturer's introduction and brief presentation of the course. Reciprocal introduction of the international students attending the course, who will talk about their different origins.

2. Historical overview about Italy

Introduction to the main historical events in Italy from the Roman time to the 19th century.

3. The Unification of Italy and the Building of the Modern State

This lecture will be focused on the so called “Risorgimento” and on the difficult process which led to the creation of the Modern Italian State.

4. Italy after 1945

Overview of the contemporary time with a special focus on the Italian political structure (First and Second Republic, bicameralism, etc.) and post-war society.

5. Travel around Italy

Overview of Italian geography observing Italy from GoogleMaps: main cities, administrative organization (regions, provinces), mountains, level grounds, coasts, lakes and rivers.

6. Geographic and linguistic elements: North, Centre, South.

Introduction to the various dialects and to the different forms of Italian language according to the region. Introduction of the linguistic issue: the delay with which Italian language became a spoken language.

7. Italian art and tradition, yesterday and today

The course will explain through historical references why Italy is one of the countries with more works of art in the world. The most important will be mentioned. Thanks to online resources we will then illustrate data and statistics showing the imbalance between cultural resources and their exploitation. The second part of the lesson will be devoted to the cult of food, an example of popular tradition which has completely changed its status within Italian culture and self-representation (from folk festivals to the spread of slow food, farm-to-table etc.).

8. Fundamentals of Italian Literature. The Novel of the 20th Century (first part)

We will start our itinerary throughout Italian contemporary literature, exploring the 20th-novel.



9. *The Leopard* by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa: reading and comprehension

A general introduction to the novel mentioned in the Bibliography: *The Leopard* by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa.

10. *The Leopard* by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa: reading and comprehension

Reading of passages taken by the novel mentioned in the Bibliography: *The Leopard* by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa.

11. Italians seen from the outside: between truth and stereotype.

Starting with the reference to the so called "commedia all'italiana", we will try to deconstruct the most common stereotypes about Italy. We will also explore the role of the Catholic religion and the structure of the "typical" family (with reference to its dissolution, the de facto couples and the onward establishment of the homosexual family).

12. Italian cinema and national identity

The so called "commedia all'italiana" and the post-war Italian cinema will be the starting point in order to talk about stereotypes and identities on the "Italian type".

13. Television and media in Italy

This lecture will focus on Italian songwriting and Italian television from the '50s to the present, that is a mass culture no longer local

14. What's Made in Italy?

Brief history of the success abroad of the "made in Italy" concept and of the ambiguity of the Italians' self-perception. Showing of scenes from *La Dolce Vita* by Federico Fellini (1960) and then *The Great Beauty* by Paolo Sorrentino (2013).

The second part of the lecture will focus on the evolution of Italian fashion and of Italian football, considered examples of "made in Italy" which is hegemonic both in Italy and abroad.

15. Review

This last session will be left for reviewing the Bibliography and the contents of the previous lectures.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- John Foot, *Modern Italy*, Palgrave MacMillan, 2003.

- *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Italian Culture*, edited by Zygmunt G. Baranski and Rebecca J. West, Cambridge University Press, 2001.

- Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, *The Leopard*.