

## CAS LI 355 ITALIAN MIGRANT LITERATURE

Prof. Laura Lenci, Ph.D.

**Office Hours:** Two hours per week (TBD) or by appointment  
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**Class Meets:** 2 hours, twice a week, Bu Padua Academic Center  
**Credits:** 4  
**Hub Units:** 1+2+1

### Course description

How much has Italy changed in the last thirty years? While at the end of the Nineteenth Century and the first half of the Twentieth Century, Italy was a country of emigration, recent history shows that it has become the country of destination for many people. This change concerns diverse aspects of life at various levels: social, anthropological, economic, but also linguistic and cultural.

The course introduces students to different aspects of Italian migrant literature (e.g. history, style, topics) from its appearing in the late Eighties to today. For example, students will learn that Italian migrant literature is mostly characterized by a significant presence of women, or that this literature is written by non-Italian native speakers or plurilingual authors. By reading and analyzing the works proposed in the course, students will see that, despite political and legal issues, all migrant writers find in the language their citizenship and legitimation, as well as the way to express themselves. In addition to this, students will experience that the aesthetic use of the language serves as a neutral mediator between identity and otherness, tolerance and intolerance, testimony and fiction.

During the course, students will approach literary works written by authors with different intercultural backgrounds, and will approach literature as a privileged point of observation. By reading, analyzing and discussing the diverse texts and excerpts included in the course, they will have the opportunity to understand the countless possibilities of the language in representing different points of view, and its role as an instrument of inclusion.

During the course, students will learn the different use of *genres* (short stories and novels), tropes (metaphors, similes, allegories), subjective or multi-prospective voices, the coexistence of Italian and non-Italian languages, the use of dialects, slangs, and neologisms. Thanks to class discussions and written and oral assignments, students will experience and develop an intercultural and an aesthetic competence based on the observation and the appreciation of a original use of Italian language in the works examined.

### Prerequisites

- No previous knowledge of Italian literature is required. The course is entirely taught in Italian. CAS LI 212 Fourth Semester Italian is the only requirement.
- Students will need to have successfully completed a First-Year Writing Seminar (e.g., CAS WR 120) prior to enrolling in this course.

### Hub Learning Outcomes and Course-Specific Learning Objectives

This course satisfies the following requirements for the BU Hub:

*Aesthetic Exploration - Hub Learning Outcomes*

1. *Students will demonstrate knowledge and appreciation of notable works in literature and/or the arts, including the cultural contexts in which those works were created, and be able to identify their ongoing significance and relevance.*
2. *Students will demonstrate the reasoning skills and vocabulary necessary to interpret a work of art (literature, music, visual arts, etc.)*
3. *Students will produce evaluative, analytical, or creative works that demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics—such as genres, modes, styles, and cultural history— of at least one literary or artistic medium.*

In order to meet the above Hub learning outcomes, by the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Show knowledge and recognize value of notable authors and works of Italian literature written by non-native writers. Students are able to relate these literary works to the socio-cultural and historical context in which Italian migrant literature is rooted (e.g. the beginning of the migration phenomenon in the Eighties, the role of women, changes of social landscape) and as part of broader literary movements (e.g. Postcolonial, Postmodernism). Themes and motifs addressed in class (e.g. the concept of identity, otherness, the representation of the migrant) and identified in selected literary works, stimulate students to draw comparisons with other literary and cultural traditions they know, including their own.
2. Students are presented with key critical questions for interpreting texts of migrant literature and literature in general, they recognize figurative language and use appropriate terminology (e.g. *genre*, characters, voice, plot, metaphor) that is necessary to understand and analyze literary texts in Italian. They express appropriate literary considerations with regard to the narrative of migration.
3. Draw from ideas and knowledge acquired to conduct creative and personal literary analysis of texts, demonstrated in the form of oral presentations, a final project, and written essays.

#### *Writing-Intensive - Hub Learning Outcomes*

1. *Students will be able to craft responsible, considered, and well-structured written arguments, using media and modes of expression appropriate to the situation.*
2. *Students will be able to read with understanding, engagement, appreciation, and critical judgment.*
3. *Students will be able to write clearly and coherently in a range of genres and styles, integrating graphic and multimedia elements as appropriate.*

In order to meet the above Hub learning outcomes, by the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Improve their writing ability and communicative skills in Italian by means of assignments such as class presentations, written response papers and a final analytical paper that require them to organize and formulate ideas and interpretation of texts in a well-structured format and using the terminology of literary criticism. Both the instructor and peers will provide students with feedback on their work; students will be asked to re-write essays, when necessary, so as to improve the quality of their work.
2. Show understanding and appreciation of course readings and literary criticism by engaging with close readings, participating in interactive lectures, and by discussing about different theories and perspectives on texts. Students will be exposed to different approaches to literary texts, such as Postcolonial, Post-structuralist, and Cultural Studies theories.
3. Through a variety of course assignments, students will show the ability to use with competence the specific terminology and styles they have studied. They will, for example, write brief reflective response papers, an interview, a final paper, as well as synthetic and effective slides for oral presentations.

## Global Citizenship & Intercultural Literacy - Hub Learning Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate, through comparative analysis, an understanding of global diversity as expressed in at least two different languages, cultures, religions, political systems, or societies.
2. Students will demonstrate detailed understanding of at least two cultural contexts through foreign language or culture study at BU, participation in a language or culture living-learning community at BU, or study abroad. This will involve reflection on the challenges and pleasures students discover in orienting themselves in new and unfamiliar cultures.

In order to meet the above Hub learning outcomes, by the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Understand the intrinsic complexity and variety of Italian migrant literature in a broad European context by means of reference to literary movements (e.g. Postcolonial and Migrant Literature), historical events, and to the literary canon (e.g. national, European, world canon) that are relevant to various European literary traditions. Themes and motifs addressed in class and identified in selected literary works, as well as guest lectures, stimulate students to draw comparisons with other literary traditions they know, including their own.
2. Improve understanding of cultural diversity and become more interculturally competent as they gain knowledge in Italian language, literature and culture through the reading of texts, class discussion, on-site classes, and analytical and reflective assignments that encourage them to open up to different point of views.

### Program learning outcomes

Bu Global Programs/study abroad learning outcomes for BU Padova Italian and European Studies Program and Padua Internship program

<https://www.bu.edu/provost/planning/program-learning-outcomes-assessment/27362-2/#globallo>

### Learning Outcomes for IESP Program

- Develop new perspectives on one's own culture and an ability to think critically about one's own values and beliefs.
- Demonstrate increased proficiency in Italian language from elementary to low-intermediate level.
- Demonstrate knowledge of Italian culture with respect to three of the following areas: history, politics, economics, religion, literature, film and the arts.
- Develop an awareness of cultural difference and an understanding of culture's role in shaping beliefs and practices.

### Learning Outcomes for PIP Program

- Students begin to understand local work culture, workplace dynamics, professional expectations, and cultural values that shape them.
- Students develop knowledge of skills appropriate to the field of the internship placement, including professional and inter-cultural communication, through written, verbal, and nonverbal means.
- Students refine and clarify professional and career goals through analytical reflection on their internship experience and research project.

## Instructional Format, Course Pedagogy, and Approach to Learning

The course is based on an active learning approach through which students will be able to learn and discuss concepts related to literature (e.g. canon, national vs. world literature, Eurocentrism, identity and otherness, hybridism, etc.) and to apply them in the text analysis.

Lessons are a limited part of the instructional methodology and aim to give students historical, political and literary contextualization, introduce or recall concepts and theories taken from disciplines relevant to exercise text interpretation such as anthropology (Lévi-Strauss' concept of identity or Marc Auge's *non-lieux*); psychoanalysis (Freud's concept of estrangement or Lacan's mirror stage); philosophy (Derrida's theories on the language). Through lessons and note taking, students have the opportunity to gain the vocabulary needed to analyze and discuss literary texts in class.

The first part of each lesson is devoted to a lecture held by the instructor or to a discussion on the readings in the form of individual questions, oral presentations, application cards, oral peer review, while the second part of the lesson is instead devoted to text analysis in the form of group/class discussion, or to the introduction of new authors and concepts.

As a part of class preparation, students must read literary texts and criticism in advance, so that they are able to actively contribute to the class discussion where they practice text interpretation through a close reading approach and show to be able to make references to the criticism related to the subject in order to back up their interpretation. This approach will facilitate students in the understanding and appreciation of the aesthetic and linguistic development of Italian migrant literature, the evolution of the *genre* from autobiographical chronicles to more sophisticated narratives (short tales and novels), the transformation of topics properly concerning the migration (displacement, tragic journeys, idealization of the home country, etc.) to literary topics (love, travel, death, food, etc.), and the development of the language.

Notes from class are crucial for the students to practice Italian, learn the vocabulary of literature and organize ideas and concepts in a foreign language, develop the command of and ability to apply the material discussed in both in-class lectures and homework.

All written assignments will be edited and returned to students for a second editing, when necessary. This method aims for the students to improve their writing skills, appropriately use literary vocabulary and concepts, develop the ability to write on subjects of literature, and prepare for the midterm exam and final paper.

During the course the students will read an entire book, on which they will prepare their final oral project. A specific lesson and some other class sessions during the semester will be devoted to the discussion of Lakhous' novel to facilitate the students while reading the book, and to the analysis of the structure of the radio program from which the final project takes inspiration. The final project aims for the students to develop the ability to select and organize relevant information based on a list of reliable sources provided on Blackboard by the professor and related to an author, his/her works, poetics, writing style, to formulate academic interpretations that also consider the interpretations of other scholars.

Finally, guest lecturers and lessons on-site will represent an additional opportunity to broaden knowledge and meanings with regard to Italian and European culture and literature.

### **Assignments and Grading**

Attendance, class participation	10%
1 class presentation	10%
midterm exam	15%
1 4-page response paper	10%
1 4-page written interview	10%
final oral project "Gettoni"	20%
final paper	25%

### **Attendance and participation** (*Aesthetic Exploration, Writing Intensive*)

The course is thought for students to be subjects of the learning process. Therefore, students are not only expected to be in class and present at all course activities (on-site classes and guest lectures included), but also actively involved in discussions and in preparation of questions for meetings with guest speakers and the rest of the class.

Students are responsible for reading (with a dictionary) all the course materials before each class appointment, and are expected to take notes in class and during on-site classes. Short questions or specific assignments (short surveys or filling tables) are used at the beginning to summarize the key points of the day's or previous lesson.

### **1 Class presentations** (*Aesthetic Exploration, Global Citizenship & Intercultural Literacy*)

Each student will have one oral presentations that require the preparation of a PowerPoint.

Students will introduce an author included in the course, on whom the lesson is focused. The presentation must include:

a short biography of the author;

the description of the poetics and topics of his/her works and some quotations from the works;

analysis of stylistic and linguistic strategies used (and examples) and explication of the purposes of the chosen examples;

references to the criticism on the author presented (available on the Blackboard site of the course or in the course pack);

personal comment/interpretation by the student.

In addition to displaying knowledge of the literary works and criticism, students will be evaluated also on the appropriate use of the specific terminology of literary criticism.

The calendar of oral presentations will be prepared in class during the first week of lesson. Students will receive individual feedback on their class presentation.

### **Midterm written exam** (*Aesthetic Exploration, Writing Intensive, Global Citizenship & Intercultural Literacy*)

Students will be engaged in the analysis of two excerpts of texts studied during the first part of the course and discussed in class. Students will have to provide answers in Italian and will be allowed to use dictionaries available at the BU Padova Academic Center.

Students will show to be able to contextualize the literary work (author, short story/novel title, short synthesis of the plot), conduct a linguistic and stylistic analysis, individuate narrative voice, linguistic registers, tropes, verbal tenses, sentence length, sentence rhythm and shortly explain the reasons behind these choices.

The use of computers is not permitted unless otherwise stated by ODS. The evaluation will be based on content, textual cohesion and coherence, lexical appropriateness, and critical ability.

The midterm exam will take place during week 6.

### **1 Response paper** (*Aesthetic Exploration, Writing Intensive, Global Citizenship & Intercultural Literacy*)

Students will be engaged in writing a response paper in Italian (4 pages, Times New Roman or Garamond 12, double spaced, margins 2cm) in which they will discuss and critically synthesize topics and questions analyzed in class with relation to Igiaba Scego works and the narrative of identity.

By preparing the response paper students will review the content of the literary works and criticism examined, but will also produce personal reflections.

Students will receive individual feedback on each response paper. Re-writing a paper to improve writing skills with regard to quality of content and form is possible, and at time encouraged, by the professor. This must be an option that the professor approves of.

Response paper due: end of week 4, via email to the instructor within 11:00pm

### **1 Written interview** (*Aesthetic Exploration, Writing Intensive, Global Citizenship & Intercultural Literacy*)

Students will approach the specific genre of the literary interview through which they will show to be able to organize contents and explain concepts related to Helena Janeczek's *Le rondini di Montecassino*. In particular they will synthesize the complex poetics of the author that intertwine with the values of history and memory, today and make references to the novel analyzed during the course. The interview (4 pages, in Italian, Times New Roman or Garamond 12, double spaced, margins 2cm) will be written in Italian and through this assignment students will review the content of the literary works and criticism examined, but will also produce personal reflections making comparison with the external reality as a practice of global citizenship.

Students will receive individual feedback on each response paper. Re-writing a paper to improve writing skills with regard to quality of content and form is possible, and at time encouraged by the professor. This must be an option that the professor approves of.

Interview due: end of week 8, via email to the instructor within 11:00pm

**Final paper** (*Aesthetic Exploration, Writing Intensive, Global Citizenship & Intercultural Literacy*)

Each student will write a final research paper (7 pages, in Italian, Times New Roman or Garamond 12, double spaced, margins 2cm) on a topic discussed with and approved by the instructor of the course. For quotations rules, bibliography and footnotes please follow the MLA guidelines.

Students are encouraged to use the library resources of the University of Padua and online materials in JStor or other official library databases, but reliable and relevant bibliography related to the topic chosen is available on the Blackboard site of the course and, depending on the topic, individually provided by the instructor.

Students will adopt one or more of the literary approaches studied and will be reflecting on cultural elements related to the Italian/European and their own tradition.

Students will have individual meetings to discuss with the professor the topic of the paper. The students will write a detailed outline, inclusive of a bibliography.

A paper draft and bibliography are due on week 9 of the course, so that the professor can make recommendations, suggest further readings, and make comments on language and style. The draft will not be graded and is meant to provide students with helpful comments.

Final paper due: via email to the instructor within 11:00pm of the day assignment is due.

**Final oral project “Gettoni”** (*Aesthetic Exploration, Global Citizenship & Intercultural Literacy*)

For the final project, students will work in groups of two.

During the semester all students will independently read in its entirety Amara Lakhous' *Scontro di civiltà per un ascensore a Piazza Vittorio*. The final project, called “Gettoni” like the radio program run by the Italian public radio RADIO 3, will be based on the novel read.

Students will produce five radio episodes following the original structure.

audio episodes: nr. 5

audio format: m4a (students can use Rec Voice Recorder, available for free on App Store), mp3.ki

language: Italian

duration of each episode: 3 minutes (not less, not more)

subject: Amara Lakhous and his novel *Scontro di civiltà per un ascensore a Piazza Vittorio*. Connections and references to authors, topics and works studied during the course will be appreciated

pattern: students will follow the pattern of the Radio3 radio-program called “Gettoni di Letteratura. Piccole storie di grandi scrittori” and reproduce the same structure of the radio episodes. Before starting the final project, please consult: <https://www.raiplayradio.it/programmi/gettoni/archivio/puntate/Mark-Twain-af2a4500-9846-4fd1-9cbd-105340ba0480>

Through this project, students develop the abilities to:

select and organize relevant information on a new author, works, poetics, writing styles (all material available on Blackboard in the folder called DOSSIER LAKHOUS);

formulate interpretations that also consider the point of view of other scholars;

express themselves in Italian with an original voice

Final project due: via email to the instructor within 11:00pm of the day assignment is due.

**Resources/Support/How To Succeed In This Course**

Office hours: twice a week at scheduled time. Office hours can be also used to tutor students with some difficulties in class, willing to know more on a certain subject or to improve their writing skills in Italian.

Please contact professor via email if you need an appointment, [lencilau@bu.edu](mailto:lencilau@bu.edu)

## **Class and University Policies**

### **Examinations**

All academic commitments must be completed before you leave the site; no incompletes are permitted. Students who do not complete a course on time will be given an F. Students are required to sit their examinations on the dates, at the times, and in the same classroom as the other students in their class. If a student is ill or has another extenuating circumstance which causes the student to be absent from a scheduled examination, he/she must provide appropriate documentation and receive approval from the Director.

### **Attendance**

Students should note that attendance will be taken into account by faculty. Boston University Padua students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, on-site class, internship work appointment, and activity required for the class as indicated in the syllabus. Any student with irregular class attendance may have his/her final grade penalized.

### **Absences**

Unjustified absences from class, and any class related activity, will affect the students' participation grade, which will be lowered by one letter grade for each absence.

### **Absence for Religious Reasons**

According to Chapter 151C of the General Laws, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, any student in an educational or vocational training institution, other than a religious or denominational educational or vocational training institution, who is unable, because of his or her religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day, shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study, or work requirement that may have been missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examinations or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said students such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to students because of their availing themselves of the provisions of this section. Students who have questions about practicing their religion while abroad should contact Boston University Study Abroad.

### **Lateness**

Students arriving more than 10 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as late. Being late three times is equivalent to missing one class.

### **Late Assignments**

Students are expected to turn in all course assignments on time as stated in each course syllabus. Late assignments will not be accepted and missed assignments will automatically be awarded an F. Please note that all coursework must be completed by the end of the program.

### **Plagiarism**

Simply stated, plagiarism is taking another's work and presenting it as you own. Definitions of plagiarism frequently include terms such as 'theft' or 'steal'. Plagiarism is, in fact, intellectual theft. It is one of the most serious forms of academic misconduct. Plagiarism committed by a student will certainly result in course failure and may result in suspension or dismissal. For more details please see Boston University's Code of Student Responsibilities: <http://www.bu.edu/lifebook/universitypolicies/policies-code.html>

### **Disability accommodations**

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at 617-353- 3658 to coordinate any reasonable accommodation requests. For more information, please visit: <http://www.bu.edu/disability>

### **Interruption of program or early departure**

Only in serious cases – mostly related to medical emergencies – the Director will allow a student to take a significant break during the program or to leave before its official conclusion. Official written approval must be received by the Director.

### **Academic Advice**

The Director and Assistant Academic Director serve as the head of the faculty and as academic advisors. The Director/Assistant Academic Director is available on an appointment basis to assist students with academic issues. For academic advice regarding students' home institutions' policies and transfer credit information, non-Boston students should also contact their school's academic advisors.

### **Tutorials**

BU faculty are available by appointment for students who may need support in the learning process. We strongly encourage you to take advantage of this resource. Students in the past found it very useful to succeed. Students who receive a C on a test must seek support from faculty.

### **Course Materials and Readings (Required)**

- Amara Lakhous, *Scontro di civiltà per un ascensore a Piazza Vittorio*, Roma, Edizioni e/o, 2006 (any edition in Italian, to purchase on-line)
- a reader with literary works and excerpts analyzed in class, and some criticism (to be purchased at the local copyshop)
- videos and links to relevant websites, the biographies of the authors, the Dossier Lakhous (that include articles and essay on the author, interviews and talks held by the author), Daniele Comberiati's writings on Italian-Albanian Literature are available on the Blackboard site of the course.

- Reader contains extracts from the following narrative works:

All these books are under reserve for this course and can be found in the BU Padua library.

#### *Narrative works*

Carmine Abate, *L'idolo lontano lontano*, in *Il muro dei muri*, Milano, Mondadori, 2006.

Carmine Abate, *Prima la vita*, in *Vivere per addizione*, Milano, Mondadori, 2010.

Kossi Komla-Ebri, *Imbrazzismi. Quotidiani imbarazzi in bianco e nero*, Milano, Edizioni dell'Arco, 2002. (excerpts)

Igiaba Scego, *La mia casa è dove sono*, Milano, Rizzoli, 2010. (excerpts)

Igiaba Scego, *Dismatria*, in *Pecore nere*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2005.

Igiaba Scego, *Salsicce*, in *Pecore nere*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2005 (excerpts)

Helga Schneider, *Il rogo di Berlino*, Milano, Adelphi, 1995. (excerpts)

Helena Janeczek, *Le rondini di Montecassino*, Milano, Guanda, 2010. (first chapter)

Giorgio Pressburger, *Il tempio*, in *Storie dell'Ottavo Distretto*, Milano, Marietti, 1986. Now Torino, Einaudi, 1986, 2001.

Giorgio Pressburger, *Le nostre pietre*, in *L'orologio di Monaco*, Torino, Einaudi, 2003.

Ornela Vorpsi, *Il paese dove non si muore mai*, Torino, Einaudi, 2005.

Ornela Vorpsi, *La mano che non mordi*, Torino, Einaudi, 2007.

- Literary Criticism on migrant Italian literature (some of them in the reader and some of them on the Blackboard site of the course):



The list of critical readings below is subject to modifications and additions

- Giorgio Agamben, *Quel che resta di Auschwitz*, Milano, Bollati Boringhieri, 1998.
- Marc Augé, *Non places. Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, Verso Books, 1995 (Ital. transl. *Nonluoghi*, trad. it. Dominique Rolland, Milano, eleuthera, 1993)
- AA.VV., *Scrittori italiani di origine ebrea ieri e oggi: un approccio generazionale*, Utrecht, University Library Utrecht, 2007
- Emma Bond, "Verde di migrazione". *L'estetica perturbante dello straniamento ne la mano che non morde di Ornella Vorpsi*, in «Italties», 14/2010, pp. 441-425 (<http://italies.revues.org/3360?lang=it>)
- Daniele Comberinati, *Scrivere nella lingua dell'altro*, Peter Lang, 2010. (on Blackboard)
- Daniele Comberitati, *La quarta sponda*, Roma, Caravan ed., 2011. (on Blackboard)
- Giuseppina Commare, *La letteratura migrante come fattore di integrazione europea*, in *I quaderni europei*, Catania, Università di Catania, 2008.
- Roberto Derobertis, *Insorgenze letterarie nella disseminazione delle migrazioni*, in *Scritture migranti*, Università di Bologna, 2007 ([www.scritturemigranti.it](http://www.scritturemigranti.it))
- Jacques Derrida, *The Monolingualism of the other*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1998 (Ital. trans. *Il monolinguismo dell'altro*, Milano, Raffaello Cortina, 2004).
- Paola Ellero, *Letteratura migrante in Italia*, in *Lingua Nostra, e Oltre*, Università di Padova, 2010. ([www.maldura.unipd.it/masters/italianoL2/Lingua\\_nostra\\_e\\_oltre](http://www.maldura.unipd.it/masters/italianoL2/Lingua_nostra_e_oltre))
- Julia Kristeva, *Stranieri a noi stessi*, intr. Adelina Galeotti, Roma, Donzelli, 2014
- Philip Lejeune, *On Autobiography*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1989 (Ital. trans. *Il patto autobiografico*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1986).
- Giulia Molinarolo, *Per una nuova critica della letteratura italiana della migrazione: questioni aperte*, in «Cosmo. Rivista del Centro Studi Arti della Modernità», Università di Torino, n. 6, 2016. (<https://www.ojs.unito.it/index.php/COSMO/article/view/1370>)
- Tzvetan Todorov, *L'uomo spaesato. I percorsi dell'appartenenza*, Roma, Donzelli, 1996.
- Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, New York, Random House, 1993 (Ital. trans. *Cultura e imperialismo*, Roma, Gamberetti, 1998).
- Hayden White, *Historical Text as Literary Artifact*, in *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins UP, 1978 (Ital. trans. *Forme di storia. Dalla realtà alla finzione*, Roma, Carocci, 2006).

- Documentaries/films (available in the BU Padova library)

*Scontro di civiltà per un ascensore a Piazza Vittorio*, Isotta Toso, 2010

*Vergine giurata*, Laura Bispuri, 2014

*Io sono Li*, Andrea Segre, 2011

*Labas*, Guido Lombardi, 2011

*The Terminal*, Steven Spielberg, 2004

- On-line magazines

[www.elghibli.org](http://www.elghibli.org)

[www.scritturemigranti.it](http://www.scritturemigranti.it)

[www.eksetra.net](http://www.eksetra.net)

[www.letteranza.org](http://www.letteranza.org)

<http://collettivoalma.wordpress.com> (blog founded in January 2011 by and for Italian migrant writers)

<http://e-revues.pum.univ-tlse2.fr/sdx2/lineaeditoriale/theme.xsp?theme=Scritture%20italiane%20della%20migrazione>

[www.storiemigranti.org](http://www.storiemigranti.org)

- Video excerpts

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGBoagpQoVM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGBoagpQoVM) (lakhous, scontro di civiltà)

<http://youtuberepeat.org/?videoId=gzk5HfFVL38> (lakhous)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILPVNu-TeVc> (abate)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Vi4-m4Pwh0&feature=youtu.be> (abate, vivere per addizione)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YHFo\\_6zq8MU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YHFo_6zq8MU) (kossi komla-ebri)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDTzfNOwMrE> (kossi komla-ebri)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4v4dVL7M9ZE&feature=youtu.be> (helga Schneider)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKCQqX5gwH0> (helena janeczek)

- Literary criticism, literary and narratology terms posted on the course Blackboard site.

## Schedule of Classes and Assignments

### Lesson 1

Introduction to the course and explanation of syllabus; the Italian canon vs. European/World canon; Calvino, *Eufemia* (journey/travel as a metaphor)

Home readings: Giulia Molinarolo, *Per una nuova critica della letteratura italiana della migrazione: questioni aperte* (short excursus on migrant Italian literature from a historical and theoretical perspective)

### Lesson 2

The concept of barbarian and its conceptual slip during the centuries. Analysis of ancient and modern concept of citizenship; the person of the migrant: representation and self-representation. In class analysis and discussion of Carmine Abate's tale *Prima la vita*

Home readings and short assignment: Carmine Abate, *Prima la vita*, pp. 129-137 and complete the related reading chart briefly describing the structure of the story telling, individuating the narrating voice, making some examples of the languages used, name the most relevant topics of the tale.

### Lesson 3

Todorov's concept of transculturation and progressive transformation of Europe: from literature on the foreigner to literature written by foreigners.

Comparison between Carmine Abate's *Prima la vita* and Igiaba Scego's *Salsicce* (excerpts): the complex representation of identity through the observation and analysis of stylistics and linguistics strategies employed by the two authors.

Home readings: Tzvetan Todorov, *L'uomo spaesato. I percorsi dell'appartenenza*; Igiaba Scego, *Salsicce* (excerpts)

### Lesson 4

Short overview of Italian history across Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries: from a country of emigration to a place of immigration. Homesickness, sense of loss, abandon, the fracture between the generation of the fathers and children as recurrent topics in migrant literature works.

Carmine Abate's tale *L'idolo lontano lontano*.

Home readings: Carmine Abate, *L'idolo lontano lontano*

### Lesson 5

Review exercise (true/false + class discussion)

Short travel through Italian migrant literature (the 3 phases).

A first-generation author: Kossi Komla-Ebri. Reading and analysis in class of an interview with Kossi-Komla Ebri about the concept of *Orality* with respect to the Italian-African literature.

Home readings: Kossi Komla Ebri, *Orality*

### Lesson 6

Class oral discussion: analysis and comment on Komla-Ebri's short stories that students have prepared at home.

Stylistic analysis of Komla-Ebri's short stories. This class will focus on specific aspects of literature such as genre (short story/parable), function of dialect and neologisms, the metaphor.

Home readings: Komla-Ebri, *Imbarazzismi* – students select and read 2 short stories and will prepare to refer in class on their content and discuss with relation to what learned in the previous class.

### Lesson 7

Class discussion about the concept of “identity”. Philosophical and anthropological perspective in order for the student to approach the archetype of “otherness” represented in the novel *Robinson Crusoe*. Some topics discussed with the class as a whole are: acceptance vs. rejection, the question of recognizing of citizenship and belonging to a group, when otherness becomes identity, literature as a way to integration.

The second-generation writers: Igiaba Scego's short story *Dismatria* and the representation of the self as a woman and as writer in Italian.

Home readings: Igiaba Scego, *Dismatria*. Read again: excerpts from *Salsicce*.

### Lesson 8

**Guest lecture** on the role of food and migration in the Italian society.

Igiaba Scego vs. Amara Lakhous' *Scontro di civiltà* (chapters 1 and 2) and comparison with John Fante's *My Dog Stupid* (scene of the family meal)/Pietro di Donato's *Christ in concrete* (scene of the banquet)

Home readings: Readings available on Blackboard. Readings include the literary texts cited and a couple of articles provided by the guest lecturer.

**Report paper due** on Sunday of this week, within 11:00pm submitted by email to [lencilau@bu.edu](mailto:lencilau@bu.edu)

### Lesson 9

The first part of this lesson will focus on Amara Lakhous's *Scontro di civiltà per un ascensore a Piazza*: plurilingualism, use of irony, peculiar relationship of the author with the Italian and Arabic languages and cultures, the genre of the detective-story, etc.

The second part of this lesson is specifically devoted to the final project “Gettoni”.

Home readings: Suzanne Ruta, *Humor is an Instrument of Combat*

### Lesson 10

The concept of space, place and non-place as theorized by Marc Augé: the role of non-places in literature and in migrant literature. Lakhous's *Scontro di civiltà* (chapter 8) and Scego's *La mia casa è dove sono* (map excerpt).

Home readings: Fiorangelo Buonanno, *Percorsi urbani nella letteratura di migrazione italiana*; Marc Augé, *Non-luoghi* (excerpts); Lakhous's *Scontro di civiltà* (chapter 8) and Scego's *La mia casa è dove sono* (map excerpt)

### Lesson 11

Literature of witness and writing as a therapy.  
Helga Schneider, *Il rogo di Berlino*

Home readings: Helga Schneider, *Il rogo di Berlino* (first ten pages: prologue I, prologue II, excerpts from the first chapter); Francesco Ardolino, *Helga Schneider: la ferita aperta della scrittura*.

### Lesson 12

Midterm exam

### Lesson 13

Literature of witness: Helena Janeczek, *Le rondini di Montecassino*; the witness; memory e history; history and identity. Writing is sharing the building of History

Home readings: Helena Janeczek, *What went wrong?* in *minima&moralia.com* (<http://www.minimaetmoralia.it/wp/what-went-wrong/>) (excerpts, see highlighted parts on blackboard); Helena Janeczek, *Le rondini di Montecassino* (prologue)

### Lesson 14

Literature as history or history as fiction?  
Helena Janeczek, *Le rondini di Montecassino*.

Home readings: Hayden White, *The historical text as literary artifacts*, in *Tropics of Discourse*; Helena Janeczek, *Le rondini di Montecassino* (chapter 1)

### Lesson 15

**Guest lecture** on Italian-Albanian literature, introduction, genres, topics and writers.  
The case of Ornella Vorpsi, *Il paese dove non si muore mai*

Home readings: Ornella Vorpsi, *Il paese dove non si muore mai* (first fifteen pages) and readings provided by the guest lecturer.

### Lesson 16

Women-writing-body in Ornella Vorpsi's *La mano che non mordi* and confrontation with Igiaba Scego's representation of the body in *La mia casa è dove sono*.

Home readings: Emma Bond, "Verde di migrazione". *L'estetica perturbante dello straniamento ne la mano che non mordi di Ornella Vorpsi* (<http://italies.revues.org/3360?lang=it>); Ornella Vorpsi's *La mano che non mordi* (excerpts)

**Written interview due** on Sunday of this week, within 11:00pm submitted by email to [lencilau@bu.edu](mailto:lencilau@bu.edu)

**Week 8: day trip to Trieste**, setting of many literary works and meeting point of writers and poets during the Nineteenth Century. Students will experience the town as a crossing place among cultures, identities and languages.

### Lesson 17

Borderline authors: Giorgio Pressburger. The history of literature and the arts as a map to design a proper role and identity as writer, man and intellectual. The sense of history and destiny.

Giorgio Pressburger, *Il tempio* vs. Luigi Menghello, *I piccoli maestri*

In preparation to Wednesday on-site class, short introduction to the idea of “stolpersteine”

Home readings: Giorgio Pressburger, *Il tempio*

### Lesson 18

*On-site lesson* at the Jewish Museum of Padua and walk through the “Stolpersteine” places in town with guide, to observe and reflect on Giorgio Pressburger’s short stories.

Home readings: Giorgio Pressburger, *Le nostre pietre* (some excerpts of this short story will be read and commented during the on-site lesson)

[Final paper draft \(detailed outline and bibliography\) due](#) on Sunday of this week, within 11:00pm submitted by email to [lencilau@bu.edu](mailto:lencilau@bu.edu)

### Lesson 19

Giorgio Pressburger, *Le nostre pietre*.

After class: [3:00-5:00pm: individual meeting and discussion of final paper draft \(sign up\)](#)

### Lesson 20

Publishing houses, prizes, magazines + review

The dignity of the non-native writer: the question of the cultural and linguistic enrichment.

Carmine Abate, *Vivere per addizione* as the conclusion of the course.

Student’s observations.

### Week of final exams

[Final project “Gettoni” due](#)

[Final paper due](#)