

Primo Levi and the Literature of the Holocaust
Prof. Nancy Harrowitz
CAS IT 340

This course will discuss the work of Primo Levi, one of the most important figures within Holocaust studies today. We will also read works by other prominent Italian authors, including Giorgio Bassani and Giuliana Tedeschi, in order to understand the postwar literary context in which Levi wrote. There will be trips to commemorative sites, including a visit to the site of the former ghetto in Venice. Our studies will include films on Levi and a film based on Bassani's novel, "The Garden of the Finzi Contini."

Course Requirements:

Short paper (20%), oral report (10%), final exam (40%), participation (30%).

Texts:

Primo Levi, excerpts from *Se questo é un uomo*
Essays from Levi, *I sommersi e i salvati*
Giorgio Bassani, excerpts from *Il giardino dei Finzi-Contini*
Bassani, "Una lapide in Via Mazzini" photocopy
Excerpts from Giuliana Tedeschi
Excerpts from Doris Bergen, *War and Genocide*

Films:

"Il giardino dei Finzi Contini"
"Primo"
Documentaries on Primo Levi

Week 1:

Introduction to the course; Primo Levi
Readings: Primo Levi, *Se questo é un uomo*, preface, chapt. 1, 2
Preface, *I sommersi e i salvati*
Historical context: Doris Bergen, preface, chpt. 1

Week 2:

Primo Levi, *Se questo é un uomo, I sommersi e i salvati*

Bergen

Film: "Primo"

Excursion to Jewish historical sites in Padova

Week 3:

Finish *Se questo é un uomo*; finish Bergen

Giorgio Bassani, "Una lapide in Via Mazzini"

Excursion to Jewish historical sites in Padova

Week 4:

Giorgio Bassani, "Il giardino dei Finzi-Contini"

I sommersi e i salvati

Excursion to the site of the former ghettos in Venice

Short paper

Week 5:

Giuliana Tedeschi, excerpts

Film, "Il giardino dei Finzi-Contini"

I sommersi e i salvati

Week 6:

I sommersi e i salvati

Film: "Levi at Auschwitz"

Esame