COURSE OPEN TO ALL INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
ATTENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF TRENTO
A.Y. 2019/2020

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

From October 1st to November 26th 2019
Every Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6.00 to 8.00 p.m.
at the Department of Humanities

Tuesday 1st October: 18.00/19.30
Thursday 3rd October: 18.00/19.30
Tuesday 8th October: 18.00/19.30
Thursday 10th October: 18.00/19.30
Tuesday 15th October: 18.00/19.30
Thursday 17th October: 18.00/19.30
Thursday 24th October: 18.00/19.30
Tuesday 29th October: 18.00/19.30
Tuesday 5th November: 18.00/19.30
Thursday 7th November: 18.00/19.30
Tuesday 12th November: 18.00/19.30
Thursday 14th November: 18.00/19.30
Tuesday 19th November: 18.00/19.30
Thursday 21st November: 18.00/19.30
Tuesday 26th November: 18.00/19.30

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

3. The Unification of Italy and the Building of the Modern State
This lecture will be focused on the history of Italy from the so called “Risorgimento” to the Second World War. The second part of the lecture will be focused on the difficult process which led to the creation of the Modern Italian State.

4. The Path to the Nest of Spider by Italo Calvino: reading and comprehension
A general introduction to the novel mentioned in the Bibliography: *The Path to the Nest of Spider* by Italo Calvino.

5. *The Path to the Nest of Spider* by Italo Calvino: reading and comprehension
Reading of passages taken by the novel mentioned in the Bibliography: *The Path to the Nest of Spider* by Italo Calvino.

6. *The Path to the Nest of Spider* by Italo Calvino: reading and comprehension
Reading of passages taken by the novel mentioned in the Bibliography: *The Path to the Nest of Spider* by Italo Calvino.

7. Review and Recap
This session will be left for reviewing the Bibliography and the contents of the previous lectures.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

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. *Made in Italy*, 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”.
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).

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. Italians mad at Food
This lecture 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.).

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


- Italo Calvino, *The Path to the Nest of Spider*. 