

**RL175**  
**INVENTING MODERN**  
**LITERATURE:**  
**DANTE, PETRARCH AND BOCCACCIO**  
**SPRING 2012**

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During the period from 1265, Dante's date of birth, to 1375, when Boccaccio died, one civilization ended and another began. Dante is the last great voice of Medieval Italy. Boccaccio links the medieval way of life to the age of humanism, and Petrarch, torn by unresolved inner conflicts, stands as the first "modern man". Excerpts from Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Boccaccio's *Decameron*, and Petrarch's *Canzoniere* will be read. All writing assignments, class discussions and readings are in English.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

Dante – *Inferno* - Focus (Tom Simone trans)  
Boccaccio – *Decameron* – Penguin  
Petrarch – *Selections from the Canzoniere* -- Oxford

**GRADING PROCEDURE**

Papers: 4 @ 100 points: 400 points  
Quizzes: 10 @ 20 points: 200 points  
Classroom Participation: 200 points  
Final Exam : 200 points

**PAPERS**

There will be four papers due during the semester: two on Dante and one each on Petrarch and Boccaccio. These papers are to be typed double space from 3-4 pages and will be in response to posted questions on the Blackboard Vista course. You will not need to do outside research to complete the papers: the responses should come directly from the readings and class discussions and

presentations as well.

### **QUIZZES**

In order to ensure that students are keeping up with the reading assignments, there will be a quiz at the beginning of each class. These short, multiple-choice quizzes will be based on the content of that class' reading assignment. At the end of the semester, two quiz scores can be dropped.

### **PARTICIPATION**

This portion of the grade is partially attendance and partially preparation. In order to participate in class and to complete assignments, it is imperative that students keep up with the reading. Discussion topics to be covered in class will be published on Blackboard Vista at least four days before the class.

### **FINAL EXAM**

The Final Exam will be held in class on the last day of class (May 5). It will consist of two parts: short identifications and essay questions. The essay questions will be posted in advance.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

1. January 19: Introduction to the course.
2. January 26: Dante: Introduction and Cantos 1-4; **Quiz 1**
3. February 2: Dante Cantos 5-10; **Quiz 2**
4. February 9: Dante Cantos 11-16; **Quiz 3**
5. February 16: Dante Cantos 17-22; **Quiz 4; Paper 1 due**
6. February 23: Dante Cantos 23-28; **Quiz 5**

7. March 1: Dante Cantos 29-34; **Quiz 6**

*March 8: Spring Break: no class*

8. March 15: Petrarch; **Quiz 7; Paper 2 due**

9. March 22: Petrarch; **Quiz 8**

10. March 29: Boccaccio; **Quiz 9; Paper 3 due**

*April 5: Holy Thursday: no class*

11. April 12: Boccaccio; **Quiz 10**

12. April 19: Boccaccio; **Quiz 11**

13. April 26: Boccaccio; **Quiz 12; Paper 4 due**

14. May 3: **Final Exam**

### **On-line Sources**

All assignments for the class can be completed using the required texts. The following are sources for those students interested further research.

#### **History of medieval Italy.**

<http://www.arcaini.com/ITALY/ItalyHistory/ItalyHistory.html>

<http://italy1.com/history/>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Italy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Italy)

[http://workmall.com/wfb2001/italy/italy\\_history\\_index.html](http://workmall.com/wfb2001/italy/italy_history_index.html)

#### **History of Italian Literature**

<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?histor>

[yid=ac89](#)

[http://www.virtualitalia.com/language/literature\\_history1.shtml](http://www.virtualitalia.com/language/literature_history1.shtml)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian\\_literature](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_literature)

### **For Dante**

<http://www.online-literature.com/dante/> biography and forum

<http://www.gradesaver.com/classicnotes/titles/inferno/> Student guide to Inferno

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dante\\_Alighieri](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dante_Alighieri) wikipedia entry

<http://wisdomportal.com/Dante/DanteResources.html> Dante

resources on the Internet

### **for Petrarch**

<http://petrarch.petersadlon.com/links.html> Petrarch on the Web

<http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/petrarca.htm> biography and links

### **for Boccaccio**

[http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian\\_Studies/dweb/dweb.shtml](http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/dweb/dweb.shtml) everything you need