Medieval and Humanistic Philology

Prof. Carla Maria Monti

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

Module 1

The course aims to introduce students to the knowledge of Humanism through the tools of literature, philology, and history of culture, by specifically focussing on the preponderant production in Latin language (the texts will always be provided with a translation or will be translated). The course will also cover the essential contribution of classical and Patristic sources, whose knowledge is renewed by Humanism through the development of new literary genres, and the contribution of the philological method in the way texts are approached. By the end of the course, students will be able to recognise Petrarch and Boccaccio as initiators of the humanistic movement through the examination of their remarkable works in Latin, and recognise Dante’s different approach to classical heritage. They will also be aware of the revival of the Latin and Greek classics and the renewal of literary genres during this period, and of the cultural profile of the main literary men of the 15th century, as promoters of a movement that has permanently shaped Western culture.

Module A

Around 1335, on the front endpaper of a codex containing works by Cassiodorus and Augustine, Petrarch wrote three prayers of his invention, one very long, one short, which would become his daily prayer, and one very short. Some prayers composed by him are also found in his letters, others are attributed to him with a different degree of reliability by the manuscript tradition. In 1347 he composed for himself seven *Psalms*, in imitation of the seven Davidic psalms that tradition selected in antiquity for penitential purposes. This was a great challenge not only of a spiritual but also of a literary nature: the Psalms are in fact structured according to quite different poetic rules from those of the classical tradition. Petrarch's prayers and Psalms reveal his profoundly spiritual and religious character, which is also reflected in many of his other works, and in particular in *De vita solitaria* and *De otio religioso*, and even in the intimate space of the footnotes to his manuscripts, where he writes: “*Attende et ad Cristum refer*”.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Module 1

Dante and the classics. The recovery of the classics and their echoes in Humanistic literature. Petrarch’s and Humanistic collections of works. The birth of philological awareness and terminology. Theory and practice of imitation. A brief overview of ecdotics applied to Latin medieval and humanistic texts. In particular, students will analyse some passages from works by Petrarch, Boccaccio, Bruni, Bracciolini, and Valla on the recovery of the classics and fathers, on the damage caused by copyists, and the relationship with books and imitation.

Module A

Petrarch and prayer.

***READING LIST***

For Module 1

G. Billanovich, *Petrarca e il Ventoso*, “Italia medioevale e umanistica”, 9 (1966), pp. 389-401 (reprinted in idem, *Petrarca e il primo umanesimo*, Antenore, Padua, 1996, pp. 168-84).

L. Battaglia Ricci, *Giovanni Boccaccio*, in *Storia della letteratura italiana*, II. *Il Trecento*, Salerno Editrice, Rome 1995, p. 727-877, p. 733-742 (biography); 750-755 (the first works); 830-844 (the Latin production); 844-857 (last works and the Dantesque production); 857-868 (Boccaccio as a precursor to Humanism).

C.M. Monti, *Boccaccio e Petrarca,* in *Boccaccio autore e copista*, edited by T. De Robertis - C.M. Monti - M. Petoletti - G. Tanturli - S. Zamponi, Mandragora, Florence 2013, pp. 33-40.

G. Cappelli, *L’Umanesimo italiano da Petrarca a Valla*, Carocci, Rome, 2018 (“Aulamagna” series). Questioning will focus particularly on the figures of F. Petrarch, C. Salutati, L. Bruni, P. Bracciolini, Biondo Flavio, L.B. Alberti, L. Valla and on chapters: III *L’introduzione dello studio del greco* and IV *La nuova educazione*.

L.D. Reynolds - N.G.Wilson, *Copisti e filologi,* Antenore, Rome-Padua 2016 (Revised and extended 4th edition): chap. IV, Il Rinascimento, pp. 115-54.

M. Berté-M. Petoletti, *La filologia medievale e umanistica,* Il Mulino, Bologna, 2017 (sections specifically dedicated to humanistic philology, and the Texts: 7-10 and 12).

\*The essays by Billanovich, Battaglia Ricci, Monti and Reynolds will also be made available as handouts.

For Module A

Francesco Petrarca, *Psalmi penitentiales. Orationes*, a cura di D. Coppini, Firenze, Le Lettere, 2010.

C.M. Monti, *Petrarca e la preghiera*, in *La preghiera nella Letteratura italiana*, diretto da M. Ballarini, a cura di S. Brambilla-P. Frare-G. Langella, Milano, ITL, 2023, i.c.s.

V. Fera, *Petrarca e la poetica dell’‘incultum’*, «Studi medievali e umanistici», 10 (2012), pp. 9-87.

C.M. Monti, *Le epistole milanesi del Petrarca al priore della Certosa Jean Birel*, in *Petrarca e la Lombardia*, a cura di G. Frasso-G. Velli-M. Vitale, Roma-Padova, Antenore, 2005, pp. 265-295.

C.M. Monti, *Petrarca maestro di spiritualità. La Senile X 1 per la monacazione di Sagremor de Pommiers*, in *Nel cantiere degli umanisti. Per Mariangela Regoliosi*, a cura di L. Bertolini-D. Coppini-C. Marsico, Firenze, Edizioni Polistampa, 2014, , pp. 925-951.

G. Pozzi, *Petrarca, i Padri e soprattutto la Bibbia*, «Studi petrarcheschi», n.s., VI (1989), pp. 125-169.

M. Baglio, *«Attende et ad Cristum refer». Bibbia e auctores sui codici classici di Petrarca*, in, *L’antiche e le moderne carte. Studi in memoria di Giuseppe Billanovich*, a cura di A. Manfredi – C.M. Monti, Roma-Padova, Antenore, 2007, pp. 41-86.

E. Fumagalli, *Petrarca e la Bibbia*, in *La Bibbia nella letteratura italiana*. V. *Dal Medioevo al Rinascimento*, Brescia, Morcelliana, 2013, pp. 271-304.

\*Most of the reading list will also be made available as handouts.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Module 1

Lectures and seminars for in-depth study.

Module A

Lectures, seminars for in-depth study and individual tasks.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Module 1

The exam will be entirely oral in format, and focus on assessing students’ knowledge of Italian humanism based on the reading list provided, lecture content and passages read in class.

Module A

The assessment is structured as follows: 1. A written assignment on a topic explained during the course, approved by the lecturer and to be completed before the oral assessment. 2. An oral assessment, in which students will be tested on their knowledge of the subject and use of the philological methodology, also through the translation and commentary of a text analysed during the course.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Module 1: knowledge of Latin is not a prerequisite for this course, since all the texts analysed in class will be supported by their Italian translation.

Module A: knowledge of Latin is a prerequisite for this course.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.