# History of Criticism and Literary Historiography

Prof. Francesco Rossini

***Text under revision. Not yet approved by academic staff.***

COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course aims to provide an essential framework of the developmental lines of Italian literary historiography, from its prodromes to its eighteenth-century flowering, as well as the main critical schools developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Alternating a presentation of the overall panorama with precise textual analyses, the course aims to examine the different approaches with which, over time, Italian literary texts have been discussed, historicised and canonised, as well as the different hermeneutical techniques through which they have variously been interpreted and decoded.

At the end of the course, students will know the steps that led to the birth and development of the first stories of Italian literature, as well as the main guidelines of Italian literary criticism. Students will be able to analyse critical texts and elaborate autonomous reflections on the main historical, theoretical and methodological issues, appreciating, in particular, the relevance of several interpretative problems specific to the reception given Leopardi's work.

COURSE CONTENT

The course includes two modules, the first being general in nature and the second a single subject:

*1. Introduction to Italian literary historiography up to the eighteenth century and the main nineteenth- and twentieth-century literary-critical currents* (20 hours).

2. *Critical reception given to Giacomo Leopardi in the 19th and 20th centuries* (10 hours).

Students enrolled for the exam a second time (iterant students) are exempted from preparing the first part of the course (general module). Instead, they must: **A)** prepare an intervention to be presented in class during the first 20 hours of the course (topics and schedule of interventions of the *student cycle* will be agreed with the lecturer during the first week of lectures). **B)** Follow the in-depth seminar (15 hours) entitled *Le urgenze contemporanee della critica letteraria [The contemporary urgencies of literary criticism]*.**C)**Follow the second part of the course (single subject) on Leopardian criticism.

READING LIST

1. Lecture notes and a Leopardian criticism handout (put together by the lecturer and made available to students).

2. Giovanni Getto, *Storia delle storie letterarie*, edited by Clara Allasia, Naples, Liguori, 2010.

3. Gino Tellini, *Metodi e protagonisti della critica letteraria*, Florence, Le Monnier, 2010 (or later editions).

4. *Teoria della letteratura. Campi, problemi, strumenti*, edited by Laura Neri and Giuseppe Carrara, Rome, Carocci, 2022.

Students attending the course for the first time will prepare points 1, 2 and 3; iterant students will prepare points 1 and 4, as well as the in-depth seminar materials.

TEACHING METHOD

Frontal lectures. Iterant students will be invited to actively participate in the course, preparing short in-depth papers that they will present to the rest of the class.

There is also an in-depth seminar, compulsory for master's degree students who are undertaking the semester iteratively: the calendar, programme and information around the seminar will be indicated in class and published on the lecturer's Blackboard page.

ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA

The oral exam will take into account the student's knowledge of the contents (60%) and their critical acquisition (20%), as well as their communication and argumentative skills (20%).

Master's degree students who are undertaking the course iteratively are required to precede their final exam with a preparatory interim assessment on the in-depth seminar by way of a preliminary interview.

NOTES AND PREREQUISITES

Students must possess a basic knowledge of the history of Italian literature from the third to the nineteenth century, as well as the profile of Giacomo Leopardi and his production.

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.