

Italian Graduate Courses – Spring 2013

ROIT 63113 DANTE'S WORLD OF BOOKS T 2:00-5:00

Z. Baranski

"Dante's World of Books" aims to examine the oeuvre and career of, arguably, the most original and influential writer in Western culture from three closely interlinked perspectives. First, the course provides an overview of all Dante's writings, the books he actually produced. Second, it explores his intellectual formation and his attitude towards the literary tradition—the books that were probably present in his 'library'. Third, it will assess the manner in which Dante synthesized his different ideological and poetic interests in order to develop an incisive and powerful assessment and critique of humanity's position in the order of divine creation. In the Middle Ages, the created universe was often metaphorically described as "God's book" or the "book of creation". The course thus attempts to investigate the complex inter-relationship that Dante forged between his books and the 'book' of the Supreme Artist, a popular and highly influential medieval image for God the Creator.

ROIT 63212 HISTORY OF THE BOOK TBA 3:30-6:15

L. Marcozzi

The course will treat the history of the book in Italy, with a particular focus on the transmission and the reception the Italian classics. It will analyze the forms and means of transmission of literary texts in the late middle ages (how a manuscript was assembled, bought, read, etc.), the practice and the metaphors of reading (especially in Petrarch), the diffusion of the masterpieces of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, the changing shape of books in the Renaissance, the innovation of printing and its consequences on Sixteenth Century culture and literature (entertainment poetry, the linguistic debate, problems of authorship, censorship). The period covered comprises mainly the 13th to the 16th Century, from the origins of Italian literature to the Counter-Reformation, but the course will also approach the book history of modern Italy, making use of the holdings of the Department of Special Collections. Students will develop research papers examining the relationship between book history and the development of Italian literary and cultural history. Cross-listed with LIT 73999.