

Fall 2019
ITAL-GA 2310

Dante's Inferno

Prof. Maria Luisa Ardizzone

Tuesdays, 3:30-6:10

Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò, Library (Room 203)



Same as COLIT-GA 2875, ENGL-GA 2270.002 & EURO-GA 1156.001

Text: *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri, Inferno*,. Translated by R. Hollander and J. Hollander, Notes by R. Hollander. New York: Doubleday, 2003

Inferno is the first cantica of the *Divine Comedy*, a very long poem traditionally judged to be one of the most important in Western culture. At the center of the poem is the human being, his condition in the after life and his punishment or reward. Taken literally, the theme is the state of the souls after the death. But allegorically, the true subject is moral life and thus the torments of the sins themselves or the enjoyment of a happy and saintly life. In the *Inferno* Dante represents the passions and vices of the human beings and the punishment that God's justice inflicts upon the sinners. Hell is the place of eternal damnation. The course will provide a fresh approach to the *Inferno* with a focus on the problem of evil as represented in the Poem. We will investigate Dante's dramatization of the ontology of human beings and their inclination to materiality and materialism, which the poet considers the source of evil. The course includes an introduction to Dante's first work, the *Vita Nuova*, and a reading of sections of his treatises: *On Vernacular Speech*, *Convivio*, and *Monarchia*. The requirements of the course are as follows: active class participation, 3 response papers (3 pages), a mid-semester and final oral presentation, and a final paper 20 to 25 pages in length. All readings will be available as photocopies. French or Latin texts will be translated.

The course grade will be broken down as follows: class participation 10%; response papers 15%(x3) ; oral presentation 15%; paper 30%. All paper topics must be discussed with me before active research and writing begins. The course will be conducted in English.

Open to qualified undergraduates with a GPA of 3.5 or higher. Contact elisa.fox@nyu.edu for department consent.