C.C.I.C. "PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA"
CENTRO DI CULTURA ITALIANA CASENTINO
Italian Language and Culture School
Via C.Battisti 5 – I-52014 Poppi (AR) – Italia
www.parlital.it - arno@parlital.it - tel. 0575529774 – fax. 0575529559

Seminars on Dante Alighieri in Casentino

"*Il Casentino è presente non solo perché in quella terra Dante si trovò a combattere, ma quei luoghi furono al poeta particolarmente congeniali, tanto che il loro ricordo dura ininterrotto entro tutta la sua opera, fino a farsi vero e proprio paesaggio dell'anima, capace di rispecchiare anche le tonalità più remote del suo sentire. Un piccolo mondo, quello casentinese, capace di essere dolcissimo e brutale quasi allo stesso tempo, e forse questa è la sua verità più intima e duratura. Tutto questo non poté sfuggire alla profonda coscienza dell'Alighieri.*" ("The Casentino valley is present not only because in that land Dante found himself waging war but, for him, it was also particularly congenial. The memories of this valley persist uninterrupted throughout his entire work, until becoming real and true landscapes of the soul, able to reflect even the most remote hues of his sentiments. A small world, that of the Casentino Valley, capable of being sweet and vicious almost at the same time, and maybe this is its most intimate and enduring truth. All this could not escape the deep conscience of Alighieri.") (Mariagrazia Orlandi, *Una Valle Dantesca. Il Casentino nella vita e nelle opere di Dante Alighieri*, Scandicci (Fi), Anscarichae Domus, 2002, p.109).
Casentino is, therefore, incessantly present in the life and the work of Dante Alighieri and Dante Alighieri is constantly present in the history and imagination of Casentino.

Casentino is present in diverse moments of the Supreme Poet's life: the victory of the young warrior, on that eleventh day of June in 1289, when he fought the bloody battle on the Campaldino plain; in the bitter maturity of Dante, those years in which he wandered as an exile and was, for a long time, guest of the nobility of the valley. Dante continued to harbor the desire to return to his beloved Florence, and it was only in 1313, after having lost all reasonable hope, that he headed towards the court of Verona.

Casentino is ever more present in the work of Dante Alighieri, and it could not be otherwise, considering that it was here that nine of the 13 Epistles and as many as 24 cantoes of Purgatory were composed.
If it is true that numerous critics recognize in Casentino the inspirational source of enchanted natural landscapes described in Purgatory and even indicate the morphology of the Casentino Valley as a model of the same physical stucture of Purgatory, undoubtedly, in addition to the illusions and evocations, precise and effective citations of particular places of Casentino appear throughout the Divine Comedy.
"*Il Casentino per Dante era un luogo ben determinato geograficamente, tanto che attraverso i numerosi riferimenti espliciti e anche impliciti a questa terra, presenti in tutte le opere dell'Alighieri, si può tentare di ricostruire la configurazione che la valle aveva ai suoi occhi: è una sorta di carta mentale, che fissa i suoi punti di orientamento in località arroccate, magari periferiche ma certamente suggestive e, soprattutto, inconfondibili.*" ("For Dante, Casentino was geographically a special place. So much so that by means of the numerous explicit and implicit references to this land, present in all the works of Alighieri, one may attempt to reconstruct the configuration of the valley through his eyes. It is a kind of mental map, which fixes the points of orientation in localities clinging to rocks, possibly marginal, but absolutely evocative and, above all, unmistakable.") (Mariagrazia Orlandi, *Una Valle Dantesca. Il Casentino nella vita e nelle opere di Dante Alighieri*, Scandicci (Fi), Anscarichae Domus, 2002, p.13). The references could make up an ideal Dantesque journey: from the castle of Romena and *Fonte Branda* where the events of the counterfeiter Maestro Adamo take place (Inferno, Canto XXX, vv. 49-90); to *Pratovecchio* with Guido Guerra VI, uncle of the count Guido Selvatico (Inferno, Canto XVI, vv. 34-39); to the *Campaldino* plain and *Pratomagno;* along the *Archiano* river, where Dante sets the epic of Buonconte da Montefeltro, killed in the battle of 1289 (Purgatorio, Canto V, vv. 85-129); and then back up to the castle of *Porciano*, over to the *Arno* river and to Mount *Falterona*, when Dante speaks to Guido del Duca (Purgatorio, Canto XIV, vv. 16-54); and finally, the spiritual encounters in Casentino at the Sanctuary of *La Verna* and *Sasso Spicco* with Saint Francis (Paradiso, Canto XI, vv. 106-108) and at the Monastery of *Camaldoli* with San Romualdo (Paradiso, Canto XXII, vv. 46-51).

The historically confirmed presence of Dante in Casentino has been mentioned. We can only add that even today Dante's presence is felt in the Castles of Poppi and Romena, in Pratovecchio and Porciano.
Dante is found in the symbols that the people of the valley have placed in his memory. Stele and monuments erected over time are testimony that Dante has, with his work, made an indeleble mark over the centuries.
Still today, studies on Dante's Casentino experience are very much in vogue. For this reason, Casentino has been declared the Dantesque Literary Park by the Ippolito Nievo Foundation.

With the proud awareness of the close ties which exist between the Casentino territory and Dante Alighieri, the C.C.I.C has organized a study seminar entitled "**Dante Alighieri in Casentino: moments of Dante's human, political and artistic experience**".
The participants in the Seminar may, through the readings of significant parts of the Divine Comedy, see with "Dante's eyes" villages, castles and landscapes which have remained quite unchanged, even intact, such as the austere forest enshrined inside the borders of the National Park of the Casentino Forests.

Study Seminars

In Poppi, the C.C.I.C. "Piero della Francesca" - Centro di Cultura Italiana Casentino has organized a one-week Study Seminar entitled **"Dante Alighieri in Casentino: moments of Dante's human, political and artistic experience**".
The seminar, aimed at non-specialists, has an historic nature. The objective of the course is to provide the participants with a thorough interpretation of Dante's work, starting with the analysis of the literary elements and clarifying their relationship to the artistic and political events of the time regarding the Poet's Casentino experience.
The program foresees four sessions, the conference "Casentino in the life and works of Dante Alighieri", four sessions of reading and interpretation of the Divine Comedy, guided tours to the Dantesque places in Casentino.
The seminar is open to 15 participants for every session. It is reserved for those with a sufficient knowledge of Italian to follow a conference, ask questions and intervene in a discussion, and read texts of medium difficulty. At the end of each meeting, thirty minutes will be dedicated to linguistic assistance, in order to clarify any difficulty with vocabulary.

The C.C.I.C. will supply a detailed programme, study material and a precise bibliography to the registered participants of the seminar.

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Program of the seminar

Sunday
Afternoon: Arrival in Poppi
Evening: Welcome dinner

Monday
Morning:
- Seminar session
- Break
- Reading and interpretation of the Divine Comedy
- Linguistic consultation

Afternoon:
- Visit to the Poppi Castle
- Visit to the Campaldino plain with readings from the Divine Comedy

Tuesday
Morning:
- Seminar session
- Break
- Reading and interpretation of the Divine Comedy
- Linguistic consultation

Lunch: In a typical Casentino restaurant
Afternoon:
- Visit to the Monastery of Camaldoli with readings from the Divine Comedy
- Visit to the Sacred Hermitage of Camaldoli

Wednesday
Morning:
- Visit to the Sanctuary of La Verna
- Visit to the Sasso Spicco of La Verna with readings from the Divine Comedy

Lunch: In a typical Casentino restaurant

Thursday
Morning:
- Seminar session
- Break
- Reading and interpretation of the Divine Comedy
- Linguistic consultation

Lunch: In a typical Casentino restaurant
Afternoon:
- Visit to Stia
- Visit to the Castel of Porciano with readings from the Divine Comedy

Friday
Morning:
- Seminar session
- Break
- Reading and interpretation of the Divine Comedy
- Linguistic consultation

Afternoon:
- Visit to Castel San Niccolò
- Visit to Romena and Fonte Branda with readings from the Divine Comedy

Saturday
Afternoon: Conference "Casentino in the life and works of Dante Alighieri"
Evening: Farewell dinner

Sunday
Morning: Departure

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Price of seminar

398,00 Euro.

The price includes:	The seminar sessions and linguistic assistance, the readings and interpretation of the Divine Comedy, the conference, the guided tours, the welcome and farewell dinners, the lunches on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.
The price does NOT include:	Entrance to the castles, museums and churches; transportation for the visits, meals not specifically included in the entry "*the price includes*", lodging and anything else not expressly included in the entry "*the price includes*".

Accomodations

During the stay in Poppi, the guests of the C.C.I.C. have the possibility of choosing among a vast range of accomodations, in the historic center or in the immediate vicinity.
The participants may stay with an Italian family, lodge in a single or double room in an apartment of 2-3 rooms to be shared with other students, occupy an entire apartment alone or with friends and family, stay in a farm house in the beautiful Casentino countryside or in one of the hotels located in Poppi.
The secretary at the C.C.I.C. will supply, upon request, information, lists and prices of the rooms, available apartments, farm houses and hotels where it is possible to stay, and will take care of any reservations.

Upon arrival, the participants will receive a list of the restaurants in Casentino, one of the most renowned valleys in Tuscany in terms of traditional cuisine, typical dishes and geniune ingredients.

Registration

- The registration deadline is 15 days before the starting date of the chosen seminar.
- Registration deposit of **Euro 200,00** (please note that we can only accept payments made in EURO and NOT in EURO equivalent; please ask your financial institution for assistance) to be paid by bank transfer "without expenses for the recipient"
  To account number: 2685.31 (ABI 1030 and CAB 71582.1)
  Monte dei Paschi di Siena, Ponte a Poppi (AR)
  Swift code: PASC IT MM
  IBAN: IT 46 I 01030 71582 000000268531
  Any additional bank expense must be reimbursed by the participant.
  Kindly indicate in the payment details the name of the participant and the chosen seminar.
- Complete the registration form and send it with a copy of the registration deposit receipt to the secretary of the C.C.I.C. via fax to the following number: ++39 0575 529559.
  The secretary will confirm your registration in a timely manner.
- In the event of cancellation up to three (3) weeks before the beginning of the course, 2/3 (two-thirds) of the deposit will be reimbursed. After this time, the entire deposit will be forfeited.
- The seminars will take place only if the minimum number of 4 participants is reached. In case of annulment of the seminar, the registration deposit will be returned in full to the registered participants.

Information

For information and registration, it is possible to contact the secretary at the school:
tel. ++39 0575 529774
fax ++39 0575 529559
mail: arno@parlital.it