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Open City – Lessons in Writing from Postwar Italian Fiction in Translation

The fiction written in Italy and published in the decade after the end of World War II and the fall of Mussolini is some of the most well-known and influential writing translated and available in America. We will read from a selection of these works and address the techniques each writer brings to bear. Lyrical realism, the fictional style Italy is best known for, and America’s favorite also, will be at the center of these conversations, as well as how these writers wrote about their country as it faced war, the police state, Fascism, complicity, rebellion and reconstruction. We will focus on Giorgio Bassani, Natalia Ginzburg, Alberto Moravia, and Cesar Pavese.

Text for Class, in order of the reading schedule--students should come prepared to discuss the first half of the Natalia Ginzburg, through pg 112.

*The City and the House*, by Natalia Ginzburg
*Garden of the Fitzi-Continis*, by Giorgio Bassani
*The Moon and the Bonfires*, by Cesare Pavese
*Agostino*, by Alberto Moravia