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|  | Monday |  | Tuesday |  | Wednesday |  | Thursday | Friday |
| 8:30/  09:45 | **1**-Presentation by the project coordinator and guidelines for making the final product of the week.  **2**-Welcome from Liceo Classico “Vittorio Emanuele II” headmaster prof. Massimo Leonardo. | 8:30/  13:00 | Group work at school  or  Visit at “Astalli Centre” | 9:30/  12.30 | Workshop at Itastra  We will meet at Itastra at 9.15  Piazza Sant’Antonino, at the end of via Maqueda on the right. | 8:00 | Trip to Agrigento  Visit to the Temples and Luigi Pirandello’s birthplace | **1**-International student groups work on the final product of the week (writing a piece of poetry)  **2**-Teachers’ meeting  Evaluation of the mobility |
| 09:45/  11:00 | **3**-Students: international classes.  - Each student presents a poem in his/her own original language with an accompanying English translation explaining why the poem has been chosen  - Italian students summarize the plot of *“I Malavoglia”* by Giovanni Verga in English without finishing the story.  How would you continue the story?  **4**-Teachers’ meeting: development of lesson plans on how the influence of migration and literature could be implemented and published on the website. |
| 11:00-11:15 | Break | 13:00/  14:15 | Lunch Break | 11:00-11:15 |  | 13:00  14:00 | Lunch at the Kolymbethra Gardens | Break |
| 11:15-13:00  13:00 – 14.00 | **5**-In international groups students share the information on migration and settlement and how this has influenced their culture also through the medium of literature and literary products.  **6**-Examination of differences and similarities  **7**- Plan the final product of the week (the writing of a piece of poetry which celebrates the European idea)  **8-**Tour of the school, secondary building and main building facing the Cathedral, **Spazio Flaccovio** (Flaccovio’s corner included in ***“Le Vie dei Tesori’s tour”***). | 14.30/  15.30 | Teachers and students  Afternoon  14:30/15:00 Visit at the Count Federico Palace.  Meeting point school main building | 12:30-14:15  14.30  16.30 | Lunch  Tour of **Palermo’s historic centre** (**Unesco site**) guided by prof. Terri Montesanto and some of her students. *The tour will focus on Norman and Baroque influences.* | 18:00 | Arrival in Palermo | **3**- Completion and presentation, of the week results. Judging and prizes.  **4**- Food fair    **5**-Final speech and delivery of attendance certificates  **6**-Farewell  **20:00 – Only for teachers. Dinner at Roberta’s place** |
| 14:00 -  Afternoon | **Free afternoon**  **10**-Students with their host families.  **20:00 – Only for teachers. Dinner at “Moltivolti”** |

**Themes:** Migration, language and literature

**First day:** International classes. Divide the 40 students into 5 groups of 8 students with 4 Italian host students in each group.

**Giovanni Verga. “I Malavoglia”.**

***I Malavoglia*** (Italian pronunciation: [[i malaˈvɔʎʎa]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:IPA/Italian)) is the best known [novel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Novel) by [Giovanni Verga](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giovanni_Verga). It was first printed in 1881. An English edition, ***The House by the Medlar-Tree*** (1890), translated by Mary A. Craig, was published in the [Continental Classics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Continental_Classics) series.

This work belongs to the [*Ciclo dei vinti*](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ciclo_dei_vinti&action=edit&redlink=1), together with [*Mastro-don Gesualdo*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mastro-don_Gesualdo), [*La Duchessa di Leyra*](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=La_Duchessa_di_Leyra&action=edit&redlink=1), *L'Onorevole Scipioni* and *L'uomo di lusso*, works which deal with the problem of social and economical advancement. *La Duchessa de Leyra* remained only a draft, while the last two novels planned for the *Ciclo*, *L'Onorevole Scipioni* and *L'Uomo di Lusso*, were not even started.

*I Malavoglia* deals with a family of [fishermen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fisherman) who work and live in [Aci Trezza](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aci_Trezza), a small [Sicilian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicily) village near [Catania](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catania). The novel possesses a choral aspect, and depicts characters united by the same culture, but divided by ancient rivalries.

Verga adopts the impersonality technique, reproducing some features of the [dialect](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dialect) and adapting himself to the point of view of the characters. In doing so, he renounces the customary mediation of the [narrator](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narrator).

A film, based on the story of *I Malavoglia*, [*La Terra Trema*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Terra_Trema) (*English: The Earth Trembles*), was directed by [Luchino Visconti](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luchino_Visconti) in 1948. In the book by Silvia Iannello *Le immagini e le parole dei Malavoglia* (Sovera, Roma, 2008) the author selects some passages of the Verga novel *I Malavoglia*, adds original comments and Acitrezza's photographic images, and devotes a chapter to the origins, remarks and frames taken from the film *La terra trema*.

**Summary**

In the village of Aci Trezza in the Province of Catania lives the Toscano family, who, although extremely hardworking, has been nicknamed (for [antiphrasis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antiphrasis)) the *Malavoglia* (The Reluctant Ones). The head of the family is Padron Ntoni, a widower, who lives at the house by the [medlar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medlar) tree with his son Bastian (called Bastianazzo, despite his being anything but tall), and the wife of the latter called Maria (nicknamed Maruzza la Longa). Bastian has five children: Ntoni, Luca, Filomena (Mena), Alessio (called Alessi) and Rosalia (Lia). The main source of income is *la Provvidenza* (the Providence), which is a small fishing boat. In 1863, Ntoni, the eldest of the children, leaves for the military service. To try to make up for the loss of income which his absence will cause, Padron Ntoni attempts a business venture and buys a large amount of [lupins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lupin). The load is entrusted to his son Bastianazzo, the plan being to sell them in [Riposto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riposto) to make a profit. However, Bastianazzo and the merchandise are tragically lost during a storm. Following this misfortune, the family finds themselves with a triple misfortune: the debt caused by the lupins which were bought on credit, the Providence to repair, and the loss of Bastianazzo, an important and loved member of the family. Having finished his military service, Ntoni returns to the laborious life of his family very reluctantly, having seen the riches and splendour outside his small village, and does not represent any support to the already precarious economic situation of his family.

The family’s misfortunes are far from over. Luca, one of Padron Ntoni’s grandsons, dies at the [battle of Lissa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Lissa_(1866)), which leads to the breaking off of the betrothal of Mena to Brasi Cipolla. The debt from the lupin venture causes the family to lose their beloved “Casa del Nespolo” – the house by the medlar tree, and gradually the reputation of the family worsens until they reach humiliating levels of poverty. A further wreck of the Providence leaves Padron Ntoni near death, although fortunately he manages to recover. Later Maruzza, his daughter-in-law, dies of [cholera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cholera). The firstborn, Ntoni, decides to go away from the village to seek his fortune, only to return destitute. He loses any desire to work, turning to alcoholism and idleness. The departure of Ntoni had forced the family to sell the Providence to get the money needed to get back the Casa del Nespolo, which had never been forgotten.

The mistress of the [osteria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osteria), Santuzza, who is already coveted by the sharkish Don Michele, becomes infatuated with Ntoni, serving him for free in the tavern. The conduct of Ntoni and the lamentations of her father convince her to turn her emotions from him, and to return to Don Michele. This leads to a brawl between the two; a brawl that results in the stabbing of Don Michele in the chest by Ntoni during an anti-smuggling raid. Ntoni ends up in prison. At his trial, after hearing rumours about a relationship between Don Michele and his granddaughter Lia, Padron Ntoni passes out and falls to the ground. Now old, his conversation is disjointed and he recites his proverbs without much awareness of what is going on. Lia, the younger sister, becomes the victim of vicious village gossip, runs away and becomes a prostitute. Mena, because of the shameful situation of her sister, feels that she cannot marry Alfio, even though they love each other, and instead remains at home to care for Alessi and Nunziata’s children. Alessi, the youngest of the brothers, has remained a fisherman and with hard work manages to rebuild the family fortunes to the point at which they can repurchase the house by the medlar tree. Having bought the house, what is left of the family visits the hospital where the old Padron Ntoni is being kept, to inform him of the good news and to announce his imminent return home. It is the last moment of happiness for the old man, who dies on the day he was to return. Even his desire to die in the house where was born is never granted. When Ntoni is released from prison and comes back to the village, he realises that he cannot stay because of all that he has done. He has excluded himself from his family by systematically denouncing their values.

**Giovanni Verga - Life and career**

The first son of Giovanni Battista Catalano Verga and Caterina Di Mauro, Verga was born into a prosperous family of [Catania](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catania) in Sicily. He began writing in his teens, producing the largely unpublished, but currently quite famous, [historical novel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Historical_novel) *Amore e Patria* (*Love and Country*); then, although nominally studying [law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law) at the [University of Catania](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Catania), he used money his father had given him to publish his *I carbonari della montagna* (*The Carbonari of the Mountain*) in 1861 and 1862. This was followed by *Sulle lagune* (*On the Lagoons*) in 1863.

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ritratto_penna_e_acq._verga.jpg)

Portrait of Verga, by [Antonino Gandolfo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonino_Gandolfo).

Meanwhile, Verga had been serving in the [Catania National Guard](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Catania_National_Guard&action=edit&redlink=1) (1860–64), after which he travelled to [Florence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florence) several times, settling there in 1869.

He moved to [Milan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milan) in 1872, where he developed his new approach, characterized by the use of [dialogue](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dialogue) to develop character, which resulted in his most significant works. In 1880 his story collection *Vita dei campi* (*Life in the Fields*), including *"Fantasticheria"* ("Daydreaming"), *"*[*La lupa*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Lupa_(story))*"* ("The She-wolf"), *"*[*Jeli il pastore*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeli_il_pastore)*"* ("Jeli the Shepherd"), *"Pentolaccia"* ("The Plaything"), and [*Rosso Malpelo*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosso_Malpelo), most of which were about rural Sicily, came out. It also included *"Cavalleria rusticana"* ("Rustic Chivalry"), which he adapted for the [theatre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theatre) and later formed the basis for several opera [librettos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libretto) including [Mascagni](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pietro_Mascagni)'s [*Cavalleria rusticana*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cavalleria_rusticana) and [Gastaldon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stanislao_Gastaldon)'s [*Mala Pasqua!*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mala_Pasqua!). Verga's short story, *"Malaria"*, was one of the first literary depictions of the disease malaria.

He then embarked on a projected series of five novels, but only completed two, [*I Malavoglia*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Malavoglia) and [*Mastro-don Gesualdo*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mastro-don_Gesualdo) (1889), the second of which was the last major work of his literary career. Both are widely recognized as masterpieces.

In 1894 Verga moved back to Catania, to the house in which he had lived as a child. In 1920 he was appointed Senator of the Kingdom *(Senatore del Regno)* for life *(ad vitam)*. He died of a cerebral [thrombosis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thrombosis) in 1922.

The [Teatro Verga](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teatro_Verga) in Catania is named after him. His house in *via Sant'Anna* is now a museum, the *Casa-Museo Giovanni Verga*.

He was an atheist.

## Palazzo Conte Federico

Palermo is a very intimate and secret city, hiding many of its beauties. Walking in the historic centre full of contrasts, you come across beautiful squares and opulent restored buildings and in other very decadent and crumbling ones.To fully understand what the beautiful mansions only suggest with their facades one must enter them.You will be received by the owners, children of the ‘Leopards’, aristocrats and modern entrepreneurs at the same time.   
  
**Brief History**  
  
Palazzo Conte Federico is one of the oldest buildings in Palermo, built on Punic-Roman city walls which originally surrounded ancient Panormus.  
  
The tower on the south side of the palace is one of the few remaining parts of the old city wall.  
It dates back to the 12th century and is Arabic-Norman origin. Above the double-arched Norman windows can be seen the coat of arms of the imperial family of the Hohenstaufen, of the kingdom of Aragonia and the city of Palermo.  
  
**The Palazzo**  
  
In the course of the centuries Count Federico's palace has undergone several reconstructions. Because of this you can observe various architectural styles: High painted ceilings from the 14th century, baroque ceiling frescoes by Vito D'Anna and Gaspare Serenario, various sculptures and Marabitti's lion fountain from the 17th century as well as the grand stairway with the interior walls done by Marvuglia.  
Count Federico's family, which can be followed back to the Staufen Emperor Friedrich II, has been living in this palace for centuries.

**The Visit**   
   
Count and Countess Federico will receive their guests personally

**A DATE WITH A SICILIAN COUNTESS**

Dusk is approaching as we walk through the higgledy-piggledy knot of narrow, stony backstreets in Palermo's Centro Storico. The still-warm air of the Sicilian capital is infused with tolling church bells, wheezing Vespa engines and children laughing and kicking a football around. Laundry flaps from apartment balconies and on one street corner, a group of young Africans mingle by a banner promoting the plight of refugees arriving in Sicily by boat, seeking safe haven.

The Mediterranean's biggest island has been cultivated, over three millennia, by a succession of immigrants and invaders, from Phoenicians and Greeks to Moors and Aragonese, and, of course, the Italians, who annexed Sicily into their newly-unified kingdom just over 150 years ago. With this cosmopolitan mash-up in mind, it's not surprising to learn that our host for the next few hours is originally from overseas, too.

Tall, lean and glamorous, with long blonde hair and bronzed skin, Countess Alwine is waiting for us at the top of the sweeping red marble staircase of Palazzo Conte Federico, one of the abundant palazzi (palatial buildings) clustered amid the lanes, avenues and squares of Palermo's old quarter. Born in Austria, to a "fairly normal" background, the countess was wooed and wed by Count Alessandro Federico, a Palermitan descendant of Frederick II, who, in the 13th century, was King of Sicily and Holy Roman Emperor. Scores of Palermo's religious and aristocratic palazzi were destroyed in World War II bombing, and many that did survive were later revived as flats, galleries or hotels, including Grand Hotel Piazza Borsa (our base for the first half of our nine-day Collette Splendid Sicilia tour).

The count's palace has been the family home, however, since the 16th century. Constructed above a section of Palermo's ancient Punic-Roman city walls, it's attached to an Arab-Norman defence tower built in the Middle Ages. Still oozing a medieval feel – there are even suits of knights' armour on display – the dimly-lit tower room is among the flamboyantly-decorated spaces we're shown on a guided tour of a palace, which was restyled over the centuries, inspired by architectural fashions, and lovingly restored by Alwine and Alessandro, who live here with their two grown-up sons.

We're led through a series of rooms and halls variously adorned with Murano glass chandeliers, ceiling frescoes and Arab-esque lampshades, cabinets of antiques, busts and ceramics, colourful fabric sofas and armchairs, walls laced in silk, weapons and family portraits, and floors carpeted with exotic rugs, mosaics of Sicilian villages and landmarks and the coat of arms of the House of Hohenstaufen, the count's family, which derived from a dynasty of German kings. Also here is a grand piano that the composer, Richard Wagner, played on a trip to Palermo in 1882, plus scores of medals and trophies, some won by the countess for her swimming endeavours; others by the count, a vintage car aficionado, for his motor racing (we'd passed one of his classic Italian cars after entering the palace through its leafy interior courtyard).

As fascinating as the countess' anecdotes are, regarding the building's history and eclectic decor, what our group really wants to know is: how did she meet her husband? The story goes that Alwine, a trained soprano, who grew up in Salzburg, the city of Mozart, was invited to perform at a waltz ball at the Austrian embassy in Rome. Alessandro, attending as a guest, was reportedly smitten. "A little later I moved to Taipei to study Chinese, and he found me there," explains Alwine. "He fell on his knee and proposed, with the family engagement ring. He claimed he would jump into the river if I said 'no'.

“I didn't speak any Italian then, so I didn't know how to say 'no' anyway!”

**Read more:**[**http://www.traveller.com.au/palazzo-conte-federico-sicily-a-date-with-a-sicilian-countess-h186pu#ixzz5k5Bwr0Yr**](http://www.traveller.com.au/palazzo-conte-federico-sicily-a-date-with-a-sicilian-countess-h186pu#ixzz5k5Bwr0Yr) **Follow us:**[**@TravellerAU on Twitter**](http://ec.tynt.com/b/rw?id=dRHFhuE2ur5AZ4rkHcnlKl&u=TravellerAU)**|**[**TravellerAU on Facebook**](http://ec.tynt.com/b/rf?id=dRHFhuE2ur5AZ4rkHcnlKl&u=TravellerAU)