

**Insoportabile leggerezza
o insopportabile pesantezza?
Uno studio comparativo tra Italo Calvino
e Wang Xiaobo***

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Abstract

Unbearable Lightness or Unbearable Heaviness? A comparative study of Italo Calvino and Wang Xiaobo

Italo Calvino began his career exhibiting a neorealistic style which reflected the melancholy and restlessness of this period in his native Italy. At the same time, Wang Xiaobo witnessed the wounds left by the Chinese Cultural Revolution in his homeland. The poetics of Calvino greatly influenced Wang's work, who describes Calvino as one of his models. Both Calvino and Wang paved their way into the history of contemporary literature as great masters of imagination and irony; both presenting the utopia of an ideal world. The present work illustrates and discusses the relationship between Wang and Calvino, at the same time focussing on a comparative analysis of the uses of the fantastic, the ironic and the utopianistic by the two authors. The article's last section, offering a discussion of the relationship between the categories of the light and the heavy, shows the essential difference between the two

* Questo lavoro è sostenuto da *The National Social Science Fund of China* [Grant No. 18CWW021].

writers. On the whole the article's purpose is to outline the influence of Calvino on a modern writer from China.

Keywords: Calvino; Wang Xiaobo; lightness; heaviness; comparative.