

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURG, ROME PROGRAM
ITAL 1089: ITALY TODAY
Modern Italian History and Society through Cinema and Literature

Instructors:

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Course goals and description

The aim of this series of meetings is to provide students with the means to better understand Italian history and culture in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and at the same time to offer a critical consideration of the country. The course is divided into four main sections. The first two sections will be taught by Prof. Paolo Bultrini. and the second two by Prof. Filippo Graziani.

1. Rome in literature

This section is intended to stimulate a vision of the city of Rome as a place not just for art and tourism, but also as a personal and emotional space. Through the images and words of great Italian artists and writers, students will be encouraged to develop a creative and intimate relationship with the city. This section includes reading of literary texts from P. P. Pasolini, F. Fellini and M. Lodoli. Students will also watch scenes from films set in Rome. Also included is a writing laboratory in a Roman neighborhood where students will explore the city trying to put in action the visual and literary inputs provided in the first lessons.

2. Italian emigration and immigration.

In this section of the course, students will learn about the history of Italian emigration and the relatively new phenomenon of immigration in Italy. In class we will discuss literary texts such as movies from director E. Crialese, on this topic. There will be a focus on the Italian legislation on refugees that includes also a visit to the *Centro Astalli* dedicated to the rights of refugees.

3. Italy from Fascism to the present day

Through written texts, the viewing of some historical documentaries and a visit to the Historical Museum of the Liberation (the headquarters of Nazi SS during World War II), students will be given a grounding in modern and contemporary Italian History.

The postwar period with the reconstruction and the economic boom of the 60s, political terrorism and the 1980s are essential in order to understand the cultural changes taking place in modern Italy. These changes include separatist tensions, the fight against corruption, the gradual conquest of new civil liberties and growing environmental awareness.

4. Mafia

At the end of this round of lessons students will have an understanding of past and present mafia organizations in Italy, beyond the stereotypes and fictional representations in films and TV series. The lessons will use written texts and films such as “I cento passi” by Marco Tullio Giordana, and there will be a visit to *Libera* association, the voluntary organization dedicated to working with the assets seized from the mafia.

Each section of the course will include:

- Screenings of films, or film clips, and of historical documentaries
- Readings from literary texts
- Reading of articles from Italian magazines and newspapers
- Field research
- Site visits to relevant places

The lessons will be based on selections from the following texts:

- Italo Calvino, *Difficult Loves*, Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd, 1984
- Elena Ferrante, *My brilliant Friend*, Europa Editions, 2012
- Elena Ferrante, *Those Who Leave and Those Who Stay*, Europa Editions, 2014
- Paul Ginsborg, *A history of Contemporary Italy 1943-1980*, Penguin Books, UK, 1990
- Paul Ginsborg, *Italy and its Discontent 1980-2001*, Penguin Books, UK, 2001
- Amara Lakhous, *Clash of Civilizations over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio*, Europa Editions 2008
- M. Lodoli, *The innocents*, Quartet Books Limited, 1994
- Salvatore Lupo, Antony Shugaar, *History of the Mafia*, Columbia University Press, 2010
- Melania Mazzucco, *Vita: A Novel*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005
- Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Roman Poems*, City Lights 2001
- J. D. Rhodes, *Stupendous miserable city. Pasolini's Rome*, The university of Minnesota, 2007
- Roberto Saviano, *Gomorrah: Italy's other Mafia*, Paperback 2011
- Leonardo Sciascia, *The Day of the Owl*, Granta Books, 2014

Films that will be screened during the course:

- *Open City (Roma città aperta, 1945)* by R. Rossellini
- *Paisan (Paisà, 1946)* by R. Rossellini
- *Bicycle Thieves (Ladri di biciclette, 1948)* by V. De Sica
- *La Dolce Vita* (1960) by Federico Fellini
- *Accattone* (1960) by Pier Paolo Pasolini
- *A Difficult Life (Una vita difficile, 1961)* by Dino Risi
- *Love Meetings* (1964) by Pier Paolo Pasolini.
- *A Special Day (Una giornata particolare, 1977)* by Ettore Scola
- *Great Beauty* (2013) by Paolo Sorrentino
- *One Hundred Steps (I cento passi, 2000)* by Marco Tullio Giordana
- *The Caiman (Il caimano, 2006)* by Nanni Moretti
- *Golden Door (Nuovo mondo, 2006)* by Emanuele Crialese
- *Gomorrah* (2008) by Matteo Garrone
- *Terraferma* (2011) by Emanuele Crialese
- *My Way: The Rise and Fall of Silvio Berlusconi* (2016) by Antongiulio Panizzi

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Course methodology and classroom procedures

Students are expected to complete the reading assignments **before** each class, in preparation for in-class activities and discussions. The instructor will introduce students to the various periods/subjects which the course is intended to encompass. In order to encourage and facilitate everyone's participation, students will often be asked to break up in smaller groups of 5 or 6, and work together. Students are required to participate actively in the development of the academic program through personal research, debates and field investigations.

Grading

Students will be asked to complete weekly reading assignments, participate in classroom discussions and engage in 2 oral presentations on a given topic. In addition, students will have to write a personal reflective paper and take a written test dealing with the material covered in the modules.

Final grades will be determined on the basis of the students' performance in the written test and paper, on the oral presentations, as well as on the level and quality of their participation. Absences for which no documentation of a health or family-related emergency is produced, nor any (reasonable) explanation is offered, are considered unexcused.

Grading scale

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|--------|-------|--------|
| A+ 98% | A 93% | A- 90% |
| B+ 88% | B 83% | B- 80% |
| C+ 78% | C 73% | C- 70% |
| D+ 68% | D 63% | D- 60% |

Assessment and grading

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| Attendance, participation | 20% |
| Paper (2) | 40% |
| Oral Presentation (2) | 40% |

Exams dates:

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| Oral Presentation 1: | Thursday May the 31 st |
| Paper 1: | due for Wednesday June the 6 th |
| Paper 2: | due for Wednesday June the 13 th |
| Oral Presentation 2: | Thursday June 21 st |

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious ethical matter and an infraction of University Policy. Students should familiarize themselves with both the University Policy on Academic Integrity (available at <http://www.as.pitt.edu/fac/policies/academic-integrity>) and the Department of French and Italian Plagiarism Policy

(<http://www.frenchanditalian.pitt.edu/undergraduate/plagiarism.php>). Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

1. Use of human or online translators (i.e. Google Translate)
2. Unauthorized editorial help (asking a friend in an upper level course for help)
3. Unattributed use of an author's ideas (theft of intellectual property)
4. Unattributed use of an author's words (lack of proper citation)

Any student who plagiarizes will be immediately reported to the Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Studies and charged with matters of Academic Integrity. Sanctions for first-time violations typically result in a '0' or an 'F' for the assignment. Second violations may result in an 'F' for the course and expulsion from the University.

Attendance

Unexcused absences will result in a lowered grade for class attendance/participation and for homework. Late homework is not acceptable except in case of excused absence. An excused absence is an absence due to documented medical problems or family or personal emergencies; you must contact or see your instructor as quickly as possible in these cases, or have someone contact the department on your behalf.

Cell phone and laptop policy

All cell phones and other electronic communication devices are to be turned to the *off* setting during class. Laptops are to be used for note taking only.

Class schedule

Classes run from 14:15 to 16:45 p.m.

1. Rome in literature

| Day | In Class | Assignments for the next class |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Tue May 15 th | <u>Introduction to the course section</u> Forma Urbis –Introduction to the city The city as a character <u>Reading</u> Fellini's Rome <u>Film screening and discussion</u> <i>Accattone</i> by P.P. Pasolini and <i>La Dolce Vita</i> by F. Fellini (excerpts) | Readings: - <i>The lament of the Excavator</i> by P.P. Pasolini, Pier Paolo Pasolini: Poems. New York, Noonday Press, 1996. - <i>Stupendous miserable city. Pasolini's Rome</i> by J. D. Rhodes (chapter 4, pp. 75-86), Minneapolis, The university of Minnesota, 2007 <i>The Innocents</i> (excerpts) by Marco Lodoli, London, Quartet Books Limited, 1994 |
| Wed May 16 th | <u>Analysis and discussion</u> <i>The lament of the Excavator</i> . The city as a mosaic <u>Film screening and discussion</u> <i>La grande Bellezza</i> by P. Sorrentino (excerpts) <u>Reading</u> <i>The Innocents</i> (excerpts) by Marco Lodoli, London, Quartet Books Limited, 1994 | Readings: - <i>Guy Debord and psychogeography</i> |
| Thu May 17 th | The Art of getting lost: Introduction to Psychogeography Laboratory (outdoor) <i>Experiencing Rome</i> . | Written assignment: - <i>Diary of Rome</i> Readings: - <i>Vita</i> , by M. Mazzucco, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005 pp 20-21 - <i>A brief history of Italian emigration</i> (handouts) |

2. Italian emigration and immigration.

| Day | In Class | Assignments for next class |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Tue May 22 nd | <u>Introduction to Italian emigration</u> <u>Film screening and discussion</u> <i>Nuovo Mondo</i> by E. Crialesi (excerpts) <u>Reading and discussion</u> <i>Vita</i> , by M. Mazzucco, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005 pp 20-21 | Readings: - <i>An Introduction to Clash of Civilizations over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio</i> by M. Newton, wordswithoutborders.org - <i>Clash of Civilizations over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio</i> , by A. Lakhous (excerpts), New York, Europa Editions, 2008 |
| Wed May 23 ^d | Immigration in Italy today. Italian laws on immigration <u>Reading and discussion</u> <i>Clash of Civilizations over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio</i> , by A. Lakhous (excerpts), New York, Europa Editions, 2008 | Written assignment: - <i>Vita: pages of a diary</i> . Readings: - <i>The Centro Astalli</i> (handouts) |

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| Thu May 24 th | <u>Film screening and discussion</u> Terraferma by E.Crialesi (excerpts) Italian legislation on refugees The Jesuit Refugee Service/Italia Presentation of The Centro Astalli Guest Enrico Casacchia | Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Welcoming the Unwanted: Italy's Response to the Immigration Phenomenon and European Union Involvement</i>, by Jennifer M. Pacella, 25 Geo. Immigr. L.J. 341 (2011), pp345-350 - <i>Asylum seekers and migrants in Italy: are the new migration rules consistent with integration programmes?</i>, by Filippo Strati, ESPN Flash Report 2017/16 Research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Find information about the home country of the refugee we will meet at the Centro Astalli, and prepare an interview. |
| Wed May 30 th | Site visit at The Centro Astalli – Presentation of the Center and meeting with a refugee hosted in the Centro. | <u>Paper 1 due for Wednesday June 6th</u> <i>Another life: Memories of a migration</i> |
| Thu May 31 st | <u>Oral Presentation</u> <i>Discovering the city: A Roman neighborhood</i> | Readings: Excerpt from Paul Ginzburg, <i>A History of contemporary Italy 1943-1980</i> , Penguin Books, UK, 1990: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Politics and War, pp. 10-17; – The republic and the End of the Grand Coalition, pp. 98-112 Excerpts from Italo Calvino, <i>Difficult Loves</i> , Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd, 1984 |

3. Italy from Fascism to present day

| Day | In class | Assignments for next class: |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Mon June 4 th | <u>Fascism, postwar and reconstruction.</u> <u>Film screening and discussion</u> Excerpts from the following films: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>A Special Day</i> (1978) by E. Scola – <i>Open City</i> (1945) by R. Rossellini – <i>Bicycle Thieves</i> (1948) by V. De Sica – <i>A Difficult Life</i> (1961) by D. Risi <u>Reading and discussion:</u> Excerpts from Italo Calvino, <i>Difficult Loves</i> , Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd, 1984 | Readings for Thursday June the 7th: Excerpt from Paul Ginzburg, <i>A History of contemporary Italy 1943-1980</i> , Penguin Books, UK, 1990: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The “Economic Miracle”, pp. 212-216; – Changes in Class Structure, pp.235-247 |
| Wed June 6 th | Site visit to the Historical Museum of the Liberation or to The Mausoleum of the Ardeatine Caves <u>The years of the great change</u> | Readings: Excerpt from Paul Ginzburg, <i>A History of contemporary Italy 1943-1980</i> , Penguin Books, UK, 1990: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The “Economic Miracle”, pp. 212-216; – Changes in Class Structure, pp.235-247 Excerpts from Elena Ferrante, <i>My brilliant Friend</i> , Europa Editions, 2012 |

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| Thu June 7 th | <p>The economic boom and the Italian socio-cultural transformation from the 1960s to the 1980s</p> <p><u>Film Screening and discussion:</u> Excerpts from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>La Dolce Vita</i> (1960) by F.Fellini – <i>Love Meetings</i> (1964) by Pier Paolo Pasolini. <p><u>Reading and discussion:</u> Excerpts from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Elena Ferrante, <i>My brilliant Friend</i>, Europa Editions, 2012 | <p>Readings: P. Ginzborg, <i>Silvio Berlusconi: television, power and patrimony</i>, Verso 2005, pp. 32-38; pp. 53-56; pp. 107-115</p> <p>Paper 2 due for Wednesday June 13th</p> |
| Mon June 11 th | <p>The Berlusconi phenomenon and the rise of the Northern League</p> <p><u>Film Screening and discussion:</u> Excerpts from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>The Caiman</i> (2006) by N. Moretti – <i>My Way: The Rise and Fall of Silvio Berlusconi</i> (2016) by A. Panizzi | <p>Readings: Excerpt from Paul Ginzborg, <i>Italy and its Discontent 1980-2001</i>, Penguin Books, UK, 2001:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Mafia and the State, pp. 195-212; <p>Excerpts from Leonardo Sciascia, <i>The Day of the Owl</i>, Granta Books, 2014</p> <p>Paper 2 due.</p> |

4. Mafia

| Day | In Class | Assignments for next class: |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| Wed June 13 th | <p><u>Analysis and discussion of Sicilian society and of the historical origins of the mafia</u></p> <p><u>Film Screening and discussion</u> Excerpts from the film <i>I cento Passi</i> (2000) by Marco Tullio Giordana</p> <p><u>Reading and discussion</u> Excerpts from Leonardo Sciascia, <i>The Day of the Owl</i>, Granta Books, 2014</p> | <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - R. Saviano, <i>Striking Back Against the Mob</i>, The Washington Post, June 29, 2008 - R. Saviano, <i>Boom times for organized crime</i>, International Herald Tribune, August 28, 2012 - R. Saviano, <i>My life under armed guard</i>, <i>The Guardian</i>, January 14, 2015 - <i>Libera</i> Pamphlet <p>Excerpt from Roberto Saviano, <i>Gomorra: Italy's other Mafia</i>, Paperback, 2011</p> |
| Thu June 14 th | <p>The modern mafia and other mafias</p> <p><u>Film Screening and discussion</u> Excerpts from the film <i>Gomorra</i> (2008) by M. Gomorra and the first episode of the TV series <i>Gomorra</i> (2014) by S. Sollima</p> <p><u>Reading and discussion</u> Excerpt from Roberto Saviano, <i>Gomorra: Italy's other Mafia</i>, Paperback, 2011</p> <p>Group preparation of questions for the meeting with the LIBERA association.</p> | |
| Mon June 18 th | Site visit to Associazione Libera, interviews with volunteers. | |
| Thu June 21 st | <u>Discussion on the visit to Associazione Libera</u> <u>Oral presentation</u> | |

