

SYLLABUS

THE HISTORY OF ITALIAN CINEMA FROM ITS ORIGINS TO THE PRESENT

Instructor: James Douglas

Contact Hrs: 40

Language of Instruction: English

Siena, Italy

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course aims to provide a comprehensive but selective overview and analysis of the landmarks of Italian cinema from its beginnings in the Silent era to current production more than 100 years later. The course examines the ways in which Italian cinema reflects the evolution of modern Italy in terms of the social, political, economic and cultural developments which characterize 20th and 21st century Italian life. It also explores the global significance in Film Studies and in visual culture in general of the uniquely Italian phenomenon of Neo-Realism and the impact this ‘movement’ has had.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Instructional Goals. The course aims to train students to:

- analyze critically the literature in English on Italian cinema and apply a critical approach to students’ own appreciation of the works they view.
- write and speak effectively about the cultural importance of cinema in the context of Italian life.
- demonstrate a competence in the discipline of Cinema Studies which allows them to analyze and discuss the cinematographic elements of movies.
- to develop critical faculties in relation to the aesthetics of cinema.
- to develop an awareness of Italian history and culture through the representations featured in the canon of Italian cinema.
- to relate aspects of cinema to visual culture in general in its manifestations in other art forms such as painting and sculpture and gain a thorough knowledge of concepts and aesthetic theories identified in modern cultural studies.

Student Outcomes. Students who successfully complete this course will:

- have undertaken a broad overview of the critical literature in English on Italian Cinema
- be aware of the cultural importance of cinema in Italy
- have gained some knowledge of the fundamental concepts of cinema studies
- have developed an awareness of Italian history and culture

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

The class meets usually once a week, sometimes twice, for sessions of various lengths during which excerpts of the films included in the course will be screened. For reasons of time, some films that are included in the course program, and therefore also the assignments and exams, will need to be viewed outside of class time. Classes will include screenings, lectures, group discussion of films and required critical texts, and student presentations. A list of Recommended Films will be provided to enhance students' knowledge of Italian cinema.

Required Readings: The required course textbook:

Peter Bondanella, *A History of Italian Cinema*, Continuum, New York, 2009

Further required readings will also come from a course reader found in the course folder on the share drive, which can be accessed from any PC in the student computer room.

Recommended Reading:

Italian Cinema

(highly recommended in bold)

Bayman, Louis (ed.), **Directory of World Cinema: Italy**, Intellect, Bristol, 2011

Bertellini, Giorgio (ed.), **The Cinema Of Italy**, Wallflower Press, London, 2004

Brunetta, Gian Piero, **The History of Italian Cinema: A Guide to Italian Film from its origins to the twenty-first century**, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2007

Buss, Robin, *Italian Films*, B T Batsford Ltd, London, 1989

Celli, Carlo and Marga Cottino-Jones, *A New Guide to Italian Cinema*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2006

Dalle Vacche, Angela, *The Body In The Mirror: Shapes of History in Italian Cinema*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1992

Douglas, James Sholto, Gianni Amelio: 'Through A Glass Darkly'. *Traumatic Realism: The Persistence of History in the Films of the 1990s: Il Ladro Di Bambini, Lamerica And Così* Ridevano, University of Bristol M. Phil. dissertation, 2003

Gieri, Manuela, *Contemporary Italian Filmmaking: Strategies of Subversion: Pirandello, Fellini, Scola and the Directors of the New Generation*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1995

Landy, Marcia, **Italian Film**, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000

Liehm, Mira, **Passion and Defiance: Film in Italy from 1942 to the Present**, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1984

Marcus, Millicent, **After Fellini: National Cinema in the Postmodern Age**, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2002

Marcus, Millicent, *Filmmaking by the Book: Italian Cinema and Literary Adaptation*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1993

Marcus, Millicent, **Italian Film In The Light Of Neorealism**, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1986

Overbey, David (Ed.), *Springtime In Italy: A Reader on Neo-Realism*, Talisman Books, London, 1978

Restivo, Angelo, *The Cinema Of Economic Miracles: Visuality and Modernization in the Italian Art Film*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2002
 Rocchio, Vincent F., *Cinema Of Anxiety: A Psychoanalysis of Italian Neorealism*, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1999
 Shiel, Mark, *Italian Neorealism: Rebuilding the Cinematic City*, Wallflower Short Cuts Series, Wallflower Press, London, 2006
 Sitney, P. Adams, *Vital Crises in Italian Cinema: Iconography, Stylistics, Politics*, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1995
Sorlin, Pierre, *Italian National Cinema 1896-1996*, Routledge, London, 1996
Wagstaff, Christopher, *Italian Neorealist Cinema: An Aesthetic Approach*, University of Toronto press, Toronto, 2007
Wood, Mary P, *Italian Cinema*, Berg, Oxford, 2005

Italian History and Culture

Baranski, Zygmunt G. and Rebecca J. West, (Eds.), *The Cambridge Companion To Modern Italian Culture*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2001
 Clark, Martin, *Modern Italy 1871-1982*, Longman, London, 2008 (Third Edition)
 Ginsborg, Paul, *A History Of Contemporary Italy: Society and Politics 1943-1988*, Penguin, London, 1990
 Ginsborg, Paul, *Italy and Its Discontents 1980-2001*, Penguin, London, 2003

Online Reference & Research Tools:

<http://imdb.com>
http://www.zeroland.co.nz/film_directors.html
<http://www.littlerabbit.com/antonioni.html>
<http://www.federicofellini.it>
<http://www.bfi.org.uk>
<http://www.sensesofcinema.com>
<http://www.davidbordwell.net>
<http://www.mastersofcinema.org>
<http://www.mrqe.com/lookup>

METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)

Forms of Assessment: Reading, class participation, and written work are all required of students. Your grade will be calculated to reflect your class participation and attendance, a presentation paper, a research paper, a midterm exam and a final exam. The content, criteria and specific requirements for each assessment category will be explained in greater detail in class. However, you must complete all grading assessment categories to receive a grade for this course. In addition, your work and behavior in this course must fully conform to the regulations of the Academic Integrity Policy to which you are subject. Your instructor may also require that you hand in an electronic copy of your work.

Class Participation	10%
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Critical Analysis (First Assignment)	25%
Oral Presentation (Second Assignment)	25%
Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	20%

First Assignment: Critical Analysis (25%): A written piece (2000-2500 words) dealing with issues relating to one or more movies covered in the course from a list of titles provided. Evidence of reading, independent research, creative application of a critical approach and awareness of historical contexts will be required. Your analysis should demonstrate an obvious familiarity with the literature on the subject, i.e. evidence that you have read and 'internalised' the relevant issues that the literature has brought to light; an awareness of the thesis and/or approach the writers have applied (e.g. a psychoanalytic approach, Marxist approach, etc); a critical evaluation and discussion of the approach; an application of the knowledge acquired from the reading with evidence of personal critical response and interpretation in application to the topic under discussion; in a broader sense a demonstration of awareness of historical contexts out of which the movies emerge, and possibly a comparative approach regarding other historical and cultural contexts (e.g. parallel trends in American cinema). Excellent analyses would even go beyond the prescriptions of the course to refer to other movies by the same director or by other directors that have a relevance to the discussion - this of course might be limited by the availability and accessibility of these other movies. Another way of pushing your analysis even further is to draw a parallel with other art forms such as painting or sculpture (e.g. Antonioni vs. Picasso), an approach that would display an insight into visual culture in general that reflects 'lateral thinking' and a broad cultural awareness. **Date of submission:** .October 22nd, 2018

Second Assignment: Oral Presentation (25%): The presentation will be of unspecified length but its presentation in seminar must be no more than 20 minutes long. A choice can be made from a list of topics provided, or you can, in consultation with the professor, develop a topic of your own invention. Criteria similar to those for Assignment 1 will be applied. As opposed to the Critical Analysis this assignment should employ a more contextualized approach referring in depth to one aspect of one film or director. The thesis must go beyond a simple presentation of known critical assessments. **Date of submission:** November 26th, 2018

Midterm and Final Exams (20% each): The exams will consist of a choice of one long essay and two short contextual questions covering all aspects of the course.

GRADING SCALE

Grading Scale				
Letter Grade	Numerical Grade Low Range	Numerical Grade High Range	Percentage Range	Quality Points
A+	9.70	10.00	97.0 - 100%	4.00
A	9.40	9.69	94.0 - 96.9%	4.00
A-	9.00	9.39	90.0 - 93.9%	3.70
B+	8.70	8.99	87.0 - 89.9%	3.30
B	8.40	8.69	84.0 - 86.9%	3.00
B-	8.00	8.39	80.0 - 83.9%	2.70
C+	7.70	7.99	77.0 - 79.9%	2.30
C	7.00	7.69	70.0 - 76.9%	2.00

D	6.00	6.99	60.0 – 69.9%	1.00
F	0.00	5.99	0 - 59.9%	0.00
W	Withdrawal			0.00
INC	Incomplete			0.00

COURSE OUTLINE

Beginning with the hugely influential early masterpiece CABIRIA (1914), the course investigates the way that the Fascist era plundered the Classical past and especially the iconography of early silent cinema. The origins of Neo-realism and its flowering in the anti-Fascist period during and immediately after the Second World War are explored. The ways in which cinema sought to break away from the Neo-realist ethos and started taking account of the changing realities brought about by the economic miracle of the late 1950s and early 1960s is explored in the highlights of *Commedia all'italiana* and the Modernist work of Antonioni, Fellini, and Visconti. The rediscovery and re-evaluation of the Fascist past by filmmakers in the 1970s and 1980s, and the progress into the realm of the Post-modern in the 1990s and early 21st century is examined as a continuity but also a transition that embraces the whole of modern Italian history. Finally, the radical transformation of the cultural hegemony of modern Italy is explored in the phenomena of immigration and the crisis of identity as portrayed in the current cinema of Nanni Moretti and Gianni Amelio, and the new emerging directors of recent years.

Session	Topic	Activity	Student Assignment
1 24 September	<p>Introduction. Presentation/Recapitulation of the key concepts of Cinema Studies, ('How to Read a Film') and general overview of Italian Cinema from its beginnings to the present day</p> <p>Early contexts. Examples of (Fascist) 'things to come' in the silent cinema era, focusing on Giovanni Pastrone's CABIRIA (1914), and the popular melodramas of the 1930s (White Telephone films), and Neo-realist precursors of the 1940s, focusing on Mario Camerini's IL SIGNOR MAX (1937) and Alessandro Blasetti's QUATTRO PASSI FRA LE NUVOLE (1942).</p>	<p>Illustrated Lecture & Discussion</p> <p>Quiz</p>	<p>Reading: David Parkinson, British Film Institute http://www.bfi.org.uk/features/cinemaitalia/beginnings_3.html</p> <p>Recommended reading: Sorlin, Ch 1, 2, pp. 16-68 dalle Vacche Ch 1, pp. 18-57 Landy Ch 1, pp. 21-47 Wood Ch 3, pp. 63-81</p>
2 1 October Recommended viewing: LA TERRA TREMA (1948)	<p>The origins of Italian Neo-Realism: Visconti. The reactionary impulse and the influence of American pulp fiction and Hollywood melodrama on Luchino Visconti's OSSESSIONE (1942); and the 'neo-realist documentary' style and the political agenda of his LA TERRA TREMA (1948).</p>	<p>Screening (OSSESSIONE) Lecture & Discussion</p> <p>Quiz</p>	<p>Reading: Course reader- 'What is Neo-Realism?'; Bondanella Ch 1, 2 pp. 1-58</p> <p>Recommended reading: Landy Ch 8, pp. 205-233; Liehm Ch 1, pp. 41-59; Wood Ch 4, pp. 82-109</p>

<p>3 8 October Recommended viewing: PAISA' (1946) and GERMANIA ANNO ZERO (1948)</p>	<p>The Rossellini War Trilogy. Classic Neo-realism: its essence defined; the social, cultural and political context of the 'movement' and subsequent critical writing on it by both theorists and practitioners. Close analysis of Roberto Rossellini's ROMA, CITTA' APERTA (1945), PAISA' (1946), and GERMANIA ANNO ZERO (1948).</p>	<p>Screening (ROMA, CITTA' APERTA), Lecture & Discussion Quiz</p>	<p>Reading: Course reader- 'What is Neo-Realism?'; Bondanella Ch 3, pp. 61-81 Recommended reading: Landy Ch 5, pp. 121-148; Liehm Ch 2, pp. 60-89; Marcus IFLN Part 1, Ch 1, pp. 33-53; Sorlin Ch 3, pp. 69-114; Wood Ch 4, pp. 82-109</p>
<p>4 15 October Recommended viewing: SCIUSCIA' (1946) and UMBERTO D. (1952)</p>	<p>'Post-War' Neo-Realism: Vittorio De Sica's social conscience. Style and substance in Vittorio De Sica's SCIUSCIA' (1946), LADRI DI BICICLETTE (1948) and UMBERTO D. (1952)</p>	<p>Screening (LADRI DI BICICLETTE), Lecture & Discussion Quiz</p>	<p>Reading: Course reader, 'What is Neo-Realism?'; Bondanella Ch 3, pp. 82-93 Recommended reading: Landy Ch 5, pp. 121-148; Liehm Ch 2, pp. 60-89; Marcus IFLN Part 1, Ch 2, pp. 54-75; Sorlin Ch 3, pp. 69-114; Wood Ch 4, pp. 82-109.</p>
<p>5 22 October Recommended viewing: I SOLITI IGNOTI</p>	<p>Commedia all'italiana: Mario Monicelli's I SOLITI IGNOTI (1958) and Pietro Germi's DIVORZIO ALL'ITALIANA (1962)</p>	<p>Screening (DIVORZIO ALL'ITALIANA), Lecture & Discussion Quiz</p>	<p>Reading: Bondanella Ch 7, pp.180-191; Recommended reading: Ed. Bertellini Ch 11, pp. 113-122; Sorlin Ch 4, pp. 115-143; Liehm Ch 8, pp. 181-220; Marcus IFLN Ch 10, pp. 228-244; Landy Ch 8, 11, pp. 205-233, 309-343. Submission of First Assignment</p>
<p>6 5 November Recommended viewing: LA STRADA, LA NOTTE</p>	<p>Modernism: the second vital crisis. 1960, annus mirabilis (1). Crisis! Urban angst, debauchery and personal and social disintegration in Fellini's explosive Roman epic LA DOLCE VITA (1960). Modernism. 1960, annus mirabilis (2). Antonioni's L'AVVENTURA (1960): 'interior Neo-realism'. The primacy of style: '<i>paysage-état-de-l'âme</i>' and <i>temps mort</i>, the importance of framing and composition, narrative ellipses, communication breakdown and social</p>	<p>Screening (LA DOLCE VITA) (L'AVVENTURA) (ROCCO E I SUOI FRATELLI) Lecture & Discussion Quiz Quiz Quiz</p>	<p>Reading: Course reader - 'Antonioni's Modernist Language'; 'What is Modernism?' Bondanella Ch 9, pp. 268-275; 285-292 Recommended reading: Landy Ch 10, pp. 261-308; Liehm Ch 7, pp. 160-180; Sorlin Ch 4, pp. 115-143; Wood Ch 5, pp. 110-135; Sitney Ch 6, pp. 109-143. Reading: Course reader -</p>

	commentary. Modernism. 1960, annus mirabilis (3): The economic miracle. Visconti's ROCCO E I SUOI FRATELLI (1960). Migration and Murder: Social realism and operatic melodrama.		'Melodrama'; Bondanella Ch 9, pp. 259-268. Recommended reading: Liehm Ch 7, pp. 160-180; Ed. Bertellini; Hudson Ch 9, pp. 93-102
7 12 November	MIDTERM EXAM	Course Review and exam guidelines	
8 19 November Recommended viewing: LA NOTTE DI SAN LORENZO	Revisiting the Past 1: Rediscovering and reinventing Fascism. Its impact on public and private lives in Bernardo Bertolucci's IL CONFORMISTA (1970); revealing the brutal truth through storytelling and imagination in the Taviani brothers' LA NOTTE DI SAN LORENZO (1982)	Screening (IL CONFORMISTA) Lecture & Discussion Quiz	Reading: Bondanella Ch 13, pp. 430-438; Ch 8, 229-253 Recommended reading: Ed. Bertellini Ch 17, pp. 173-182; Dalle Vacche Ch 2, 6, pp. 57-92, 180-218; Liehm Ch 10, 12, pp. 249-288, 307-318; Marcus IFLN Ch 13, 16, 285-312, 360-390; Sorlin Ch 4, 115-143
9 21 November Recommended viewing: NUOVO CINEMA PARADISO	Nostalgia and transition. Post-modernism. Giuseppe Tornatore's sentimental retrospection in NUOVO CINEMA PARADISO (1988) and Nanni Moretti's video diary of modern Italian life CARO DIARIO (1993): the age of transition.	Screening (CARO DIARIO) Lecture & Discussion Quiz	Reading: Bondanella Ch 16, pp. 538-542; Ch 16, 520-526 Course reader - 'What is Post-modernism?' Recommended reading: Landy Ch 12, pp. 344-380; Marcus AF Ch 10, 15, pp. 199-213, 285-300; Ed. Bertellini Ch 23, pp. 235-244
10 26 November Recommended viewing: NUOVOMONDO	The Post-modern take: Immigration/Emigration. Traumatic realism. Gianni Amelio's dissection of memory and identity in LAMERICA (1994) and its issues of immigration; post-modern retrospection in Emanuele Crialesi's NUOVOMONDO (2006)	Screening (LAMERICA) Lecture & Discussion Quiz	Reading: James Douglas M.Phil thesis; Bondanella Ch 16, pp. 546-548; Ch 17, 557-566 Recommended reading: Ed. Bertellini Ch 24, pp. 245-254;

			Wood Ch 6, pp. 136-154; imdb.com reviews; MRQE reviews Submission of Second assignment
11 27 November Recommended viewing: REALITY Recommended viewing: LE CONSEQUENZE DELL'AMORE	New directions (1). And the way forward... The Camorra New and old realities in Matteo Garrone's GOMORRA (2008). New directions (2). And the way forward... Critiquing New and Old Social Realities in Paolo Sorrentino's LA GRANDE BELLEZZA (2013). Overview and stock-take.	Screening (GOMORRA) (LA GRANDE BELLEZZA) Lecture & Discussion Student presentations Quiz Quiz	Reading: imdb.com MRQE.com
12 3 December	PRESENTATIONS FINAL EXAM		

Standard citation needs to include: APA