

Fall 2018
GESM120g
Seminar in
Humanistic Inquiry

ITALIAN
CULTURES
OF DISSENT

Tues & Thurs 11:00-12:20
 Waite Phillips Hall 205



Luciano Fabro, *Overtured Italy*. 1968.

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 Taper Hall (THH) 155J.

Office hours: Tues, 1:30PM-2:30PM, Thurs, 9:30AM-10:30AM, and by appointment

How have Italian intellectuals and artists challenged the status quo? Why has the production of culture—literature, political philosophy, film and artistic experimentation—been so important to these figures as they contested the religious, social and political orders of their day? The course will take an interdisciplinary approach to Italian culture through the analysis of representations of dissent from the late Renaissance to the present, engaging with figures such as the heretical friar Giordano Bruno, the Enlightenment jurist Cesare Beccaria, the political philosopher Antonio Gramsci, the avant-garde movements of Futurism and Arte Povera, not to mention recent anti-mafia writing and film.

Critical thinking, close reading and precise writing will be the mainstays of this course, as students compare and contrast how different notions and manifestations of dissent are conditioned by their historical moment, contingent socio-cultural forces, and stylistic and aesthetic continuities and ruptures.

GE-G. CITIZENSHIP IN A DIVERSE WORLD

Courses in this category enhance understanding of citizenship and moral agency within the context of today's increasingly global society, exploring differences and similarities across diverse communities and cultures. Courses can cover a diverse range of issues, such as

political, legal, ethical, or cultural aspects of US society in a global context, or the ways in which other societies and cultures construct what it means to be a citizen and a moral agent. Courses in this category can also draw upon various disciplinary perspectives or methods, such as political, social or economic analyses, moral philosophy and social justice, cultural studies, and critical theory. However, all courses must confront questions of social responsibility and citizenship in the context of differing political, social, legal, or economic institutions during the present global era.

Learning objectives

Upon completion of their Citizenship in a Diverse World course, students should be able to:

- Identify social, political, economic, and/or cultural forces that bear on human experience in the U.S. and around the world.
- Identify and critically analyze the causes and/or consequences of the forces listed above.
- Articulate a definition of globalization/globalism and offer a critical analysis of its impact on human life in the U.S. and around the world.
- Articulate a definition of citizenship and offer a critical analysis of its accessibility and importance as it varies in both U.S. and global senses.
- Offer informed contributions to debates about how to improve the quality of life in the U.S. and around the world.

Readings and films: Students are required to buy Christopher Duggan's *A Concise History of Italy* (Cambridge University Press, 2014). All other readings will be available in the course reader also available at the bookstore. Films will be available on a variety of different platforms.

In addition, weekly reading guides will be posted to Blackboard on Thursday afternoons to help structure your reading for the following week. It is your responsibility to regularly consult Blackboard to make sure that you are aware of assignments, and any changes to the syllabus.

Keys to success in this course:

- take **NOTES** during lectures; do not rely solely on PowerPoint presentations. They are not the whole story and are not intended to be used as sole means of preparing for assessments.
- be an **ACTIVE READER**: read the writings in the course reader with a pencil or pen in your hand; get in the practice of marking up your texts and inserting comment in the margins.
- to that end, **YOU MUST BRING YOUR READINGS TO CLASS** in hard copy.
- ask **QUESTIONS** in the last 20 minutes of class.
- ATTEND REGULARLY**; more than 2 unexcused absences will result in a partial final grade reduction, (A to A-, etc.)

Course Assessment	
three page essay due at the end of the fourth week	15%

four page essay due at the end of the eighth week	20%
seven to eight page final research essay	30%
bi-weekly quizzes	20%
class participation	15%

Grading scale

A 94-100	A- 90-93.9	B+ 87-89.9	B 83-86.9	B- 80-82.9	C+ 77-79.9
C 73-76.9	C- 70-72.9	D+ 67-69.9	D 60-66.9	F 59.9 and below	

Participation: regular attendance is expected and thoughtful participation is encouraged. A student's participation grade will depend on fulfilling the following criteria:

- (1) Demonstration of class preparedness; bringing all assigned readings to class and sharing your knowledge of the text(s) with your peers
- (2) willingness to converse, share ideas, and engage in civil debate. Simply being physically present in the room will not be acceptable. When in class you should demonstrate an understanding of the reading material (or be ready to pose some thoughtful questions about it), and be prepared to offer comments or a point of view about the issues being addressed;
- (3) Frequent and consistent contributions to classroom discussions, listening attentively to others and responding with comments that contribute to the entire discussion;
- (4) Evidence of critical reading skills that move beyond summary into analysis of the text(s) and other readings.

Biweekly reading quizzes: these short quizzes, around 20-25 minutes in length, will ensure that all students have done the readings; memorized key literary, cultural and historical terms; attended class; and paid attention and thought about the material. Generally, quizzes will occur at the beginning of the Thursday class and cover the readings for the preceding two weeks and associated lectures. Quiz grades will be posted on Blackboard and quizzes returned in class.

Three page essay due at the end of the fourth week: the first essay you will write will be a close reading of one passage (no more than a page or two) from Bruno or Beccaria. You will analyze the representation of dissent in the passage, and reflect, using textual examples, on how this representation is conditioned by its historical moment, contingent socio-cultural forces, and stylistic and aesthetic continuities and ruptures. More detailed guidelines will be distributed in the second week of the course. *Nota bene: All late essays in this course will be deducted half a grade point (3 points on 0-100 scale) for every day it is late.*

Four page essay due at the end of the eighth week: this second piece will be comparative in nature. You will respond to one of three prompts that ask you to compare two different texts or films.

Final research essay: this essay, 7-8 pages long, is a bit more open-ended, but must, like the two preceding essays, contain an argument. It can analyze a maximum of three works, and

one of these can be one that we have not not studied in class. For this last work, you will be required to write an abstract and annotated bibliography in week 12, and the first four pages by the end of week 14.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University StandardsL <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the Department of Public Safety <http://capsnet.usc.edu/departments/departments-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Course schedule

WHAT IS DISSENT? HOW IS IT REPRESENTED?

Week 1

8/21 Introduction to the course: "What is Dissent?"¹

8/23 Representations of dissent: In-class laboratory

Marco Tullio Giordana, *One Hundred Steps* (2000)

NEW EPISTEMOLOGIES IN THE RENAISSANCE: THE CASE OF GIORDANO BRUNO:

Week 2

8/28 Giordano Bruno, *The Ash Wednesday Supper* (1584)
Gosselin and Lerner, Editor's Introduction "The Background..." (pp. 15-27, 34-40), Preface and Prefatory Epistle, pp. 60-78 (including all notes)

8/30 Giordano Bruno, *The Ash Wednesday Supper*. First Dialogue.

Biweekly reading quiz in class

Week 3

9/4 Giordano Bruno, *The Ash Wednesday Supper*. Second Dialogue.

18TH CENTURY ITALY: THE MILAN ENLIGHTENMENT

9/6 Cesare Beccaria, *On Crimes and Punishments* (1764), pp. 1-25
A Concise History of Italy, pp. 75-86

Week 4

9/11 Cesare Beccaria, *On Crimes and Punishments*, pp. 29-31, 39-44, 48-49, 63-75, 103-113

A RADICAL THOUGHT? THE DREAM OF MAKING ITALY IN THE 19TH CENTURY

9/13 *Noi credevamo* (dir. Mario Martone, 2010)
A Concise History of Italy, pp. 87-117

¹ Your homework for every lecture is to prepare the readings/viewing ("homework") listed during the next class.

Quiz in class

9/14 Essay 1—a three page close reading of one text—due at 5pm via Blackboard.

Week 5

9/18 *Noi credevamo* (dir. Mario Martone, 2010)
Manifesto of Young Italy
A Concise History of Italy, pp. 118-159

9/20 Futurist Manifesto (1909)
A Concise History of Italy, pp.173-197

BREAKING WITH THE PAST: ITALIAN FUTURISM

Week 6

9/25 Selected works of Futurist painting and sculpture
“Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto” (1910)

9/27 Selections from *The Futurist Cookbook*,
Architectural works by Antonio Sant’Elia

Quiz in class

Week 7

10/2 Giovanni Gentile, *Manifesto of Fascist Intellectuals* (1925)
Benedetto Croce, *Manifesto of the Anti-Fascist Intellectuals* (1925)
A Concise History of Italy, pp. 197-216

10/4 Writing workshop
**Make sure you bring a clean copy of essay 1 to class as well as your graded copy with instructor’s comments.

THE LEFTIST INTELLECTUAL IN THE AGE OF FASCISM

Week 8

10/9 Antonio Gramsci, “*The Formation of Intellectuals*,” “*The Different Position of Urban and Rural-type Intellectuals*,” *Prison Notebooks (1929-1935)*
A Concise History of Italy, pp. 216-234

10/11 The Italian rapper Amir Issa will visit OSU and our class today!

Quiz in class

10/12 Essay 2—a four page comparative analysis—due at 5pm via Blackboard.

Week 9

10/16 Antonio Gramsci, “The Moderates and the Intellectuals,” “The Function of Piedmont,” “The Concept of Passive Revolution,” “Spontaneity and Conscious Leadership,” “Subversive,” *Prison Notebooks*

10/18 Primo Levi, “Gold,” *The Periodic Table* (1975)
Luchino Visconti, *Obsession* (1943)
A Concise History of Italy, pp. 234-246

POSTWAR AVANT-GARDE AESTHETICS AND THE CRITIQUE OF MASS CULTURE

Week 11

10/23 Arte Povera (art movement)
Selection of *Arte Povera* artworks (available in PowerPoint on Canvas)
Selection of works by Luciano Fabro, Jannis Kounellis, Mario Merz.
Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, “Survey,” *Arte Povera*.
A Concise History of Italy, pp. 257-271

10/25 Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Anger* (1963)
“Pier Paolo Pasolini”, *Encyclopedia of Italian Literary Studies*
A Concise History of Italy, pp. 272-288

RADICAL CRITIQUE & LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN THE SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES

Week 12

10/30 Nanni Balestrini, selections from *We Want Everything* (1971)

11/1 Pier Paolo Pasolini, “The ‘Discourse’ of Hair,” “State Massacres: A Novel,” “Coitus, Abortion, the False Tolerance of Power, The Conformism of the Progressives”

Quiz in class

11/2 Final Research Essay: abstract and annotated bibliography due by 5pm on Blackboard

Week 13

- 11/6 Silvere Lotringer & Christian Marazzi, "The Return of Politics" (1981)
Footage of Palasport Convention
Jonathan Mullins "What Remains of the Italian Left of the 1970s?" (2013)
- 11/8 Luisa Passerini, Selections from *Autobiography of a Generation: Italy 1968*

DENOUNCING CORRUPTION: THE MAFIA AND STATE INSTITUTIONS

Week 14

- 11/13 Elio Petri, *Investigation of a Citizen Above Suspicion* (1970)
Pier Paolo Pasolini, "State Massacres: A Novel," *Corsair Writings* (1974)
*review notes from your viewing of *One Hundred Steps* (2000)
A Concise History of Italy, pp. 283-306
- 11/15 Matteo Garrone, *Gomorrah* (2008)
Roberto Saviano, selections from *Gomorrah* (book, 2006)
- Quiz in class
- 11/16 Final research essay: first four pages due by 5pm on Blackboard

Week 15

- 11/20 Cristian Ceresoli and Silvia Gallerani, *The Shit* (2011)

Week 16

- 11/27 Writing workshop
- 11/29 Review of and reflection on course themes

Final research essay due Friday, 12/7, at 5pm via Blackboard.