

FS 325 Gender in Italian Cinema from Fascism to Today
IES Abroad Milan

DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of **Italian cinematic history** with a special focus on **gender issues**. The chronological trajectory will outline the transformation of Italian society, the progressive independence of Italian women, the changing relationships between sexes, and the modification of gender roles through film. The course will start with an examination of the social position of women (and men) in Italy during the Fascist regime and the immediate post-WWII period and how this is reflected in film texts. We will then look at the social impact of the so-called *miracolo economico* in the sixties, the influence of technology and politics in the seventies on both the individual and the couple, and conclude with an examination of film texts by contemporary Italian film directors, including Paolo Sorrentino, Ferzàn Ozpetek, Gianni Amelio, Paolo Virzì and Luca Guadagnino.

CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 45

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: Italian (note that all films will be shown in Italian, with Italian subtitles if possible, and that exams, essays, and presentations are in Italian).

PREREQUISITES: none

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

Each unit will consist of two parts:

1. An overview of historical, political, economic, and cultural situations portrayed by the movie.
2. In-class guided vision of one or more parts of films/s. The instructor will introduce each movie from a historical and sociological point of view and will analyse its narrative structure, *mise en scène* and linguistic style through the screening of clips. Students will be expected to join the debate and express their opinion.
3. Copies of DVD or movie files will be available for viewing outside of class hours. We will use the flipped-class method, letting the students watch the film by themselves and dedicate the lesson time to discussions, explanations, analysis and sharing of opinions and feelings

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- **Class participation (15%)**
Active participation in discussions requires completing all readings, film viewings and other homework on time so that you can contribute in a meaningful way.
- **Mid-term exam (25%)**
The midterm exam will be comprised of short-answer questions related to the themes covered during the first half of the course. Questions may relate to specific films or ask students to compare films.
- **Critical summaries of each film, 300 – 500 words, in Italian (25%)**
Students will be asked to watch 10 movies over the course of the semester and to prepare critical summaries in advance of class each week. Students will receive a set of guided questions to cover in their summaries in order to help them prepare for and understand the films, in particular the films' connections to social, political and historical events in Italy. Films must be watched outside of classtime and will be available in the IES Abroad Milan library or via YouTube.
- **Oral presentation (20%)**
Students will give a 10-minute presentation, in Italian, on their final paper, summarizing their analysis of their chosen films.



- **Final paper** (2,000 – 2,500 words, in Italian). Students must apply the skills learned during the course to a **detailed comparative analysis of 1 movie of their choice from the list on a film, director, or specific theme addressed during the course** agreed with the instructor. (20%)

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students are able to:

- Analyze and critique films and film genres within their historical and cultural settings.
- Become aware – from the female perspective - of the most significant historical and cultural trends that have passed through Italy (and Europe) over the last 70 years;
- Retrace - through Italian cinematic history – issues of gender, sexuality, and the role of family;
- Recognize social, economic, political and artistic movements that have affected the history of cinema and certain trends of a certain period.
- Illustrate terminology of critical film studies in the discussion of films
- Identify rhetorical modes of “othering” and the ways they get deployed in American discourses on Italy from the period

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

As a member of our class community, you are expected to be present and on time every day. Attending class has an impact on your learning and academic success. For this reason, the IES Abroad Milan attendance policy allows for the following number of absences, which are intended to be used for physical and mental health reasons:

- THREE (3) absences in each Italian language course,
- TWO (2) absences in each Area Studies course,
- ONE (1) absence in each seminar course or course meeting 1 day a week,
- ZERO (0) absences in each course of individual music instruction.

Every absence beyond this allowance will automatically result in a penalty of 2 percentage points off the final grade. SEVEN (7) absences will result in a failing grade in Italian language and Area Studies courses. FOUR (4) absences will result in a failing grade in seminars or 1-day-a-week courses. Failure to attend a scheduled exam, test, quiz, or presentation will automatically result in an F grade on that assessment.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Students are expected to abide by the **IES Abroad Code of Academic Integrity**. All work submitted by a student for academic credit should constitute the student's own original work. Any work submitted for academic credit may be subject to review by a textual similarity detection service for the detection of plagiarism and AI usage.

CONTENT:

Week	Content	Assignments
Week 1 <i>Session 1</i>	Introduction to Class - Syllabus & Course Overview - Summary of the history of Italy from the Unification (1861) until today. Notes on the birth and development of the cinema industry in Italy. View of silent film clips from the first decades of the 20th century	
<i>Session 2</i>	Film language - Cinema as an industry/business and art form. - Introducing Italian cinema: distinctive features, 'genres', history, and terminology.	Handouts provided by teacher: <i>Sintesi storia d'Italia, Il Fascismo, Il cinema nel regime fascista.</i> (Pgs. 20) Brunetta, Gian Piero, <i>Cent'anni di cinema italiano</i> (vol.1. 'Dal 1945 ai giorni nostri'), Laterza Bari, 2004, Ch.XI-XIV. (pgs.179/235)-
Week 2 <i>Session 1</i>	Italian women in Fascist cinema; the woman under Fascism. - Selected parts of <i>Gli uomini che mascalzoni</i> (1932) by M.Camerini	Handouts provided by teacher: Detailed introduction of the film and the filmmakers (<i>M.Camerini, E.Scola, B.Bertolucci</i>) e degli attori. (Pgs. 15)
<i>Session 2</i>	The loneliness of women and homosexuals under the fascist dictatorship <i>Una giornata particolare</i> (1977) by E.Scola. One day in Roma, May 6, 1938. Two differentlysolitary souls meet. Few hours but very dense and meaningful.	Brunetta, Gian Piero, <i>Il cinema italiano contemporaneo, da "La dolce vita" a "Cento chiodi"</i> , Editori Laterza, 2007: Ettore Scola, p.374-382; p.206-218: B.Bertolucci. Bondanella, Peter. <i>Italia Cinema. From neorealism to the present</i>, Continuum, 2007, Ch.1, (pgs. 1-31).
Week 3 <i>Session 1</i>	Transformation as a life choice <i>Il conformista</i>, di B. Bertolucci, (1970) Masterpiece of Bertolucci the Parmesan director, with a great,ambiguous, fascinating protagonist, who intertwines his story with that of emblematic women in difficult years between prevailing fascism and the collapse of the dictatorship	Handouts provided by teacher: Il neorealismo, Detailed introduction of thefilm and the filmmakers (V. De Sica, G. De Santis).
<i>Session 2</i>	War as violence, especially against the weak and women <i>La ciociara</i> by V. De Sica (1960). Great work by De Sica, adapted from the novel ofthe same name written by Alberto Moravia; there are strong similarities with the episodes of violence against civilians	Bondanella, Peter. <i>Italia Cinema. From neorealism to the present</i> , Continuum, 2007, Ch.2,(pgs. 32-64).

	by the allied troops, perpetrated during the Italian Campaign. Sophia Loren won the Academy Award for Best Actress in a Leading Role.	
Week 4 <i>Session 1</i>	Highlights of neorealism and the centrality of female figures Selected parts of <i>Riso amaro</i> (1948) by De Santis.	Handouts provided by teacher: Detailed introduction of the film and the filmmakers (L. Visconti, M. Antonioni). (Pgs. 25)
<i>Session 2</i>	The social impact of 'il miracolo economico' <i>Rocco e i suoi fratelli</i> (1960) by Luchino Visconti	Brunetta, Gian Piero, <i>Cent'anni di cinema italiano</i> (vol.2. 'Dal 1945 ai giorni nostri'), Laterza Bari, 2004, Ch. IV and VI (pgs.60/128).
Week 5 <i>Session 1</i>	The Sixties and the bourgeois woman. - The notion of <i>auteur</i> cinema. - The woman and the myth of cinema - Select parts of: <i>Ieri, oggi, domani</i>, by Vittorio de Sica (1963)	Handouts provided by teacher: Detailed introduction of the film and the filmmakers (F.Fellini, P.P.Pasolini). (Pgs.18)
<i>Session 2</i>	The Complexity and Neuroses of the Bourgeois Woman during the Economic Boom <i>Deserto rosso</i> , by M. Antonioni (1964) Antonioni's first color film, with a complex and difficult protagonist, unforgettable. Summa of the thought on incommunicability.	Bondanella, Peter. <i>Italia Cinema. From neorealism to the present</i> , Continuum, 2007, Ch.6 – pgs. 196-252 - and 8 – pag.275-317. Brunetta, Gian Piero, <i>Il cinema italiano contemporaneo, da "La dolce vita" a "Cento chiodi"</i> , Editori Laterza, 2007: pgs.196-206 (Pasolini), pgs.313-329 (Fellini) Handouts provided by teacher: Detailed introduction of the film and the filmmakers.
Week 6 <i>Session 1</i>	MIDTERM EXAM	
<i>Session 2</i>	The Stereotypes and Genius of one of the Masters of Italian Cinema: Federico Fellini Introduction to Fellini	Bondanella, Peter. <i>Italia Cinema. From neorealism to the present</i> , Continuum, 2007, Ch.5. Brunetta, Gian Piero, <i>Cent'anni di cinema italiano</i> (vol.2. 'Dal 1945 ai giorni nostri'), Laterza Bari, 2004: Ch.II, pgs.22-38; ch.14 pgs.318-321.

Week 7 <i>Session 1</i>	The Stereotypes and Genius of one of the Masters of Italian Cinema: Federico Fellini - Three lessons and visions of works by one of the greatest directors in the history of cinema - Select parts of Fellini's Films: <i>La Strada</i> ('54), <i>La dolce vita</i> (1960)	Bondanella, Peter. <i>Italia Cinema. From neorealism to the present</i> , Continuum, 2007, Ch.5. Brunetta, Gian Piero, <i>Cent'anni di cinema italiano</i> (vol.2. 'Dal 1945 ai giorni nostri'), Laterza Bari, 2004: Ch.II, pgs.22-38; ch.14 pgs.318-321.
<i>Session 2</i> <i>Evening</i>	Night at the movies!	
Week 8 <i>Session 1</i>	The Patriarchal Legacy of Italian law: the Crime of Honor <i>Divorzio all'italiana</i> , by Pietro Germi, (1961), Sicilia Brilliant comedy about customs and family laws in a Sicily that is only apparently picturesque.	Handouts provided by teacher: Detailed introduction of the film and the filmmakers. (Pgs. 15) Brunetta, Gian Piero, <i>Cent'anni di cinema italiano</i> (vol.2. 'Dal 1945 ai giorni nostri'), Laterza Bari, 2004: Ch. XII/XIII (pgs.260/310).
<i>Session 2</i>	The "discovery" of Queer Communities in Italy at the end of the 20th Century <i>Le fate ignoranti</i> by Ozpetek (2001) Conflicts, cultures, and new gender roles in contemporary Italy	Handouts provided by teacher: Detailed introduction of the film and the filmmakers.
Week 9 <i>Session 1</i>	The Different Follies of Women: Stories of Parallel Victims <i>La pazza gioia</i> , by Paolo Virzì, 2016 Portrait of two women and their different madness: reflection on a very real Italy.	Handouts provided by teacher: Detailed introduction of the film and the filmmaker. (Pgs. 16) Brunetta, Gian Piero, <i>Cent'anni di cinema italiano</i> (vol.2. 'Dal 1945 ai giorni nostri'), Laterza Bari, 2004: Aggiornamento 2004 (pgs.421/452).
<i>Session 2</i>	The Discovery of Love and Passion, Regardless of Sex <i>Chiamami col tuo nome</i> (Call Me by Your Name), by Luca Guadagnino, 2017	Handouts provided by teacher: Detailed introduction of the film and the filmmaker

Week 10 <i>Session 1</i>	<i>Collective viewing of parts of other Guadagnino films and discussion in class</i>	Handouts provided by teacher: Detailed introduction of the film and the filmmaker
<i>Session 2</i>	<i>Discrimination against Homosexuals: an exemplary story</i> <i>Il signore delle formiche</i> , di Gianni Amelio, 2022.	
Week 11 <i>Session 1</i>	Comparative film analysis and contemporary topics	
<i>Session 2</i>	Course Wrap up. Class voting on the best films seen.	
	Final Exam	

REQUIRED READINGS:

Course pack and **handouts prepared by the teacher.**

- Bondanella, Peter. *Italia Cinema. From neorealism to the present*, Continuum, 2007 (selected chapters).
- Brunetta, Gian Piero, *Il cinema italiano contemporaneo, da "La dolce vita" a "Cento chiodi"*, EditoriLaterza, 2007 (selected chapters);
- Brunetta, Gian Piero, *Cent'anni di cinema italiano* (vol.2. 'Dal 1945 ai giorni nostri'), Laterza Bari, 2004 (selected sections).

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Giovanni Grazzini, *Eva dopo Eva. La donna nel cinema italiano dagli anni '60 ad oggi*, Laterza, 1980
- Bordwell, Thompson. *Storia del cinema e dei film*, Il castoro. Milano: 1998. (selected chapters)
- Vito Russo, *Lo schermo velato. L'omosessualità nel cinema*, Dalai Editore, 1999.
- Micciché, Lino. *Cinema italiano degli anni '60 e oltre*. Marsilio, Venezia: 1996. (pp. 37-43, 101-104, 110-113, 333-345.)
- Gianni Rondolino, Dario Tomasi. *Manuale del film, Linguaggio, racconto, analisi*, Utet, 2003

Reviews, analyses and comments on individual films will be shown in the handouts given by the professor.