



Nazzareno Mazzini

FS340

THE CINEMA OF MILAN: AN OVERVIEW FROM POST-WORLD WAR II UNTIL TODAY

IES Abroad Milan Syllabus

DESCRIPTION:

The well-known Italian quote states: *They make movies in Rome, but they make T.V. in Milan*. While Milan is considered Italy's economical & financial capital, it is not considered the capital of cinema; however, it must be noted that more than just secondary productions have been made in Milan.

The course provides a general overview of Milan's cinematic history, emphasizing Milanese movies where contemporary Milanese directors and actors play an important role. Topics covered in the course include Milanese film masterpieces (Visconti, Antonioni, ...); "cop" movies and the Milanese gangs of the 1960s and 1970s; from the *Milano cupa* (gloomy) to the *Milano da bere* movies, which examine Milan during the 1980s; Milanese directors, including Nichetti, Salvatores, Soldini; and contemporary movies (Guadagnino, Di Stefano). In addition, the course aims to focus on particular moments of Italian history, as well as on typical features of Milanese cinema. Films introduce students to the social, economic, political and artistic aspects that outline the history and culture of the capital of Lombardy. And that's a very special way **to improve the Italian language**.

CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 45

INSTRUCTOR: Nazzareno Mazzini, nazzarenomazzini3@gmail.com

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: Italian. All films are shown in Italian versions, with Italian subtitles. Exams, presentations, and required course work are all completed in Italian.

PREREQUISITES: No previous background in film studies is required. This course is intended for Intermediate and Advanced Italian students, enrolled in IES Abroad Milan courses IT302, IT351, IT403.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

The professor will adjust the level of the course on students' average background and interests. Lessons provide two parts: 1) an overview of historical, political, economic, cultural situation described 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 analyze its narrative structure, *mise en scène* and linguistic style through the screening of clips (or of the entire film when possible). Students will be strongly invited to join the debate and express their opinion. Copies movie files will circulate for further viewing outside the teaching hours.

Two field studies exploring locations where selected movies were filmed an evening at the movie Theater to watch an Italian movie.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Class engagement (10%);
- mid-term exam (20%);
- written comments to each film viewed and discussion in class, *an 2-3 page written essay on a every single film viewed* (25%);
- final paper - *an 8-10 page written essay on a film, chosen in a specific list* (25%);
- oral presentation: *one oral presentation required of all students about the topic of final paper* (20%).

Course Engagement

Active and thoughtful participation in class that demonstrates the student's preparedness for class and engagement with material.

Midterm Exam

Short answer and essay questions, conducted in-class. The 2 short answer questions will ask students to explain concepts or historical trends discussed in the first half of the semester and to illustrate them with examples drawn from texts studied.

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Homework

Short comments to each film viewed. *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.*

Final Paper

An 8-10 page written essay on a film, chosen from a specific list.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

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

- identify the most significant historical, cultural and social aspects of Italy from 1945 to now and how these characteristics are represented in the most relevant works of Italian cinema;
- become aware – from the woman's point of view - of the most significant historical and cultural routes that have passed through Italy (and Europe) over the last 70 years;
- retracing - through Italian cinema history - about homosexuality, homophobia and the deep changes in family patterns and sexuality
- recognize social, economic, political and artistic movements that have affected the history of Cinema and certain trends of a certain period.

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

- Identify the most significant historical, cultural and social characteristics in Milan from 1945 to the present day and how these characteristics were unique to Milanese films;
- Recognize social, economic, political and artistic movements and the effect these movements had on movies filmed during those specific times.

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 the 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 seminar 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.

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:

SESSION	Content	Assignments
Week 1 Session 1	Introducing Italian cinema <ul style="list-style-type: none"> History of Italy from <i>Unità</i> (1861). Italy after World War II and neo-realism. Film language. Cinema as an industry/business and art form. Introducing Italian cinema: distinctive features, 'genres', history, and terminology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
Session 2	What it is to be Milanese <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Characteristic features of Milan, from maps to history, from typical dishes to dialect, from music to theatre, from traditions to flaws; film passages, first Milanese films, and different tastings of Films on Milan, as <i>Inferno</i> (1911) and <i>Totò, Peppino e ... la malafemmina</i> (1955). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handouts provided by teacher
Week 2 Session 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Gli uomini che mascazzoni</i>, by Mario Camerini, 1932 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will be asked 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.
Session 4	Film discussion and introduction to <i>Miracolo a Milano</i> , by Vittorio De Sica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bondanella, Peter. <i>Italia Cinema. From neorealism to the present</i>, Continuum, 2007, Ch.1

Week 3 Session 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Film discussion and introduction to <i>Cronaca di un amore</i> di Michelangelo Antonioni, 1950 	
Session 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Cronaca di un amore</i> di Michelangelo Antonioni, 1950 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 4 Session 7	Film discussion and introduction to <i>Rocco e i suoi fratelli</i> , by Luchino Visconti (1960)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written articulated commentary on the film
Session 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Rocco e i suoi fratelli</i>, by Luchino Visconti (1960) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brunetta, Gian Piero, <i>Cent'anni di cinema italiano</i> (vol.2. 'Dal 1945 ai giorni nostri'), Laterza Bari, 2004
Week 5 Session 9	Film discussion and introduction to the seventies: from detective films (poliziotteschi) to the so-called <i>years of lead</i> (gli anni di piombo). Episode <i>Anna</i> , from <i>Ieri, oggi, domani</i> , by Vittorio De Sica (1963)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written articulated commentary on the film
Session 10	<i>Sbatti il mostro in prima pagina</i> , by Marco Bellocchio (1972) <i>Milano calibro 9</i> , by Fernando Di Leo (1972) (selected parts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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).
Week 6 Session 11	Introduction to Maurizio Nichetti <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Ratataplan</i> (1979). His beginnings, his mime activity, his theatre in Milan. <i>Ho fatto splash</i> (1980), <i>Ladri di saponette</i> (1989), <i>Volere volare</i> (1991), 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handouts provided by teacher: Detailed introduction of the film and the filmmakers
Session 12	MIDTERM	
Week 7 Session 13	Film discussion and introduction to Silvio Soldini	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written articulated commentary on the film
Session 14	Silvio Soldini <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Un'anima divisa in due</i> (1993) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handouts provided by teacher: Detailed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Pane e tulipani</i> (2000), <i>Il comandante e la cicogna</i> (2012)) 	introduction of the film and the filmmakers
Week 8 Session 15	Film discussion and introduction to Gabriele Salvatores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Written articulated commentary on the film</i>
Session 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gabriele Salvatores: <i>Nirvana</i> (1997) ▪ <i>Happy family</i> (2010) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bondanella, Peter. <i>Italia Cinema. From neorealism to the present</i>, Continuum, 2007, Ch.12
Week 9 Session 17	Film discussion and introduction to contemporary movies. Luca Guadagnino e Paolo Virzì.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Handouts provided by teacher: Detailed introduction of the film and the filmmakers
Session 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Luca Guadagnino, <i>io sono l'amore</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Handouts provided by teacher: Detailed introduction of the film and the filmmakers
Week 10 Session 19	Film discussion and introduction to Paolo Virzì.	
Week 11 Session 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paolo Virzì, <i>Il capitale umano</i>, 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Written articulated commentary on the film</i>
Session 21	Film discussion. And the last film: <i>L'ultima notte d'Amore</i> , by Andrea Di Stefano, 2023.	
Week 12 Session 22	Discussion on the last film. Final contest and final discussion..	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Written articulated commentary on the film</i>
Finals Week	Final Exam TBD	

REQUIRED READINGS:

Course pack and **handouts prepared by the teacher** (mandatory) include selected chapters of Nazzareno Mazzini, *La nebbia non c'è più, Passeggiata lungo i film di Milano*, Mimesis Edizioni, 2015.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Brunetta, Gian Piero. *Guida alla storia del cinema italiano*. PBE Einaudi: 2003 (selected chapters);

- “Cent'anni di cinema italiano” (vol.2. 'Dal 1945 ai giorni nostri'), Laterza Bari, 2004 (selected sections).
- Bordwell, Thompson. *Storia del cinema e dei film*, Il castoro. Milano: 1998.
- Martini, Giulio. *I luoghi del cinema*. Cinecittà Holding/Touring Club Italiano: 2005.
- Micciché, Lino. *Cinema italiano degli anni '60 e oltre*. Marsilio, Venezia : 1996. (pp. 37-43, 101-104, 110-113, 333-345.)
- Pasculli, Ettore. *Milano cinema prodigio*. Canal & i Nodi, Milano: 1998.
- Palazzini e Raimondi, *Milano films 1896-2009*, Frilli Editori, 2009.
- AA.VV., *Milano, si gira!*, Gremese Editore, 2012.
- Alberto Crespi, *Storia d'Italia in 15 film*, Economica Laterza, 2020.

INSTRUCTOR BIO:

Nazzareno Mazzini teaches History of Cinema, Mass Media Theory, Critical analysis of television series, Graphics and Video Design at the IED (Istituto Europeo di Design), in Milan. He also runs an audio-video production studio (www.calabiana.it) of graphics, web design, advertising, photography and audio-visual services. He graduated in Theoretical Philosophy at the Università degli Studi di Milano, and he later studied at the post-graduate School of Social Communications at the Università Cattolica Del Sacro Cuore. In 2015 he wrote a successful book on Milanese cinema, *La nebbia non c'è più, Passeggiata lungo i film di Milano*, Edizioni Mimesis, 2015 and in 2020 for Ledizioni, *Keepwatching: a small guide to television series*. He has always lived and worked in Milan.