

THE CINEMA OF THE ITALIAN ECONOMIC MIRACLE

BCSP - Fall 2021

Prof. Andrea Ricci (Indiana University)

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HOURS:

Tuesday 5 – 7pm

Thursday 5 – 7pm

Screenings: Thursday 7pm approx.

BCSP classroom

DESCRIPTION: This course aims to offer a broad view of the Italian cinema in its historical passage from the widely recognized Neorealist foundations to the great divide of the revolutionary Sixties, the culmination of its golden age. The modernization of Italian society, political changes, urbanization and the question of Italian identity, as reflected in the cinema of the 1960s, are the main topics of the course.

All of the films covered in this course explore crucial moments in the history of modern Italian society from various sociopolitical points of view. The writers and directors depict through diverse cinematic styles encounters between cultures, religions, social classes and genders.

The films lend themselves to enriching discussions about aesthetics, the evolution of Italian cinema, the influence on and comparison with cinema of other countries, and to cultural analysis of national identity, religion, ethnicity, gender and generational roles.

	Lessons	Screenings (approx. 7-9pm)
1	Tuesday, October 12 Introduction to the course. Italian history after WWII and important dates. Italian identity. Introduction to concepts, such as: <i>realismo</i> , <i>realtà</i> , <i>verismo</i> , <i>verità</i> , <i>verosimiglianza</i> . Contradictory concepts in cinema: Melies vs. Lumiere.	
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2	Thursday, October 14 Italian neorealism: departure or continuity? The three directors: Rossellini – De Sica – Visconti. Three interpretations of an historical moment. Gramsci's legacy confirmed by national culture.	Thursday, October 14 <i>Roberto Rossellini: Roma città aperta</i> (1945)
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3	Tuesday, October 19 Quiz on the readings. Discussion on the films. André Bazin vs. Zavattini. Readings and analysis of excerpts from <i>Che cos'è il cinema</i> by A. Bazin and from writings by C. Zavattini. Italian neorealism that transitions from a moment of innovation to sterile criticism. Examples from <i>La terra trema</i> (Visconti, 1948) and <i>L'uomo della croce</i> (Rossellini, 1942).	
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4	Thursday, October 21 The Fifties. The history. Continuity with the past and signs of modernity. Slow (and fake?) conciliation between two Italy's. Beginning from the family, the melodrama, the comedy, women	Thursday, October 21 <i>Steno e Mario Monicelli: Guardie e ladri</i> (1951)

	as sacrificial victims or traitors of family values. Censorship by the church. Watch parts of <i>Don Camillo</i> (Duvivier, 1952) <i>Domenica d'Agosto</i> (Emmer, 1950) and <i>Pane, amore e fantasia</i> (L.Comencini, 1953)	
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5	Tuesday, October 26 Quiz on the readings. Anthology of cinema during the 1950s and trends. Emerging comedy, melodrama, crime drama: overlapping genres. "Hollywood on the Tiber." Fragments from <i>Umberto D</i> (V. De Sica. 1952)	
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6	Thursday, October 28 Musicals, reviews. Customs. <i>Neorealismo Rosa</i> . End of social Neorealism. The melodrama by Raffaello Matarazzo. History of the 1950s. Watch <i>I figli di nessuno</i> (R.Matarazzo, 1952) and compare with <i>Anna</i> . The classic narrative text.	Thursday, October 28 <i>Alberto Lattuada: Anna</i> (1951)
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7	Tuesday, November 2 Formation of the author. The Italian province, dreams and visions: <i>la fuga</i> , the escape. Fellini accused of "betraying" Italian Neorealism. Film ahead of its time for use of concepts, such as: alienation, comedy, and disguise. Watch <i>La strada</i> (1954) by F.Fellini.	
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8	Thursday, November 4 Formalist theory applied. Moraldo va in città. <i>I Vitelloni</i> as starter of a new trend that will lead to the "Commedia all'italiana". The off-screen, narrator's voice in Fellini as in Scorsese.	Thursday, November 4 <i>Federico Fellini: I Vitelloni</i> (1953)
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9	Tuesday, November 9 Presentations on <i>La strada</i> and <i>I Vitelloni</i> . Discussion on both films.	
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10	Thursday, November 11 The beginning of a new genre: Comedy Italian Style. Regional identities. Socioeconomic roles of the next decades are formed. Tradition vs. revolution in Italy. Socioeconomic data demonstrate big changes. Gender roles remain tied to the past.	Thursday, November 11 <i>Mario Monicelli: I soliti ignoti</i> (1958)
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11	Tuesday, November 16 Quiz on the readings. Discussion on the film. Comedy and (dis)integration of the individual in the new society. Customs, religion, morals, politics suddenly change.	
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12	Thursday, November 18 The huge international success of this film and of Fellini as <i>auteur</i> . <i>La dolce vita</i> as a turning point in cinema and society. Art vs. realism in film. Watch <i>8 ½</i> (1963) by Fellini.	Thursday, November 18 <i>Federico Fellini: La dolce vita</i> (1960)

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13	Tuesday, November 23 Discussion and student presentations on <i>La dolce vita</i> and 8 ½.	
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14	Thursday, November 25 Fellini and Antonioni: two ways to understand cinema and art. Instinct vs. intellectualism. Painting vs. geometry. Symbolic use of space. Differences and ironies in the representation of women. The church and the invasion of public space. Theories on the development of cinema: introduction to Structuralism (R. Barthes) and Applied linguistics in cinema (C. Metz). Comparisons with <i>Rocco e i suoi fratelli</i> (L. Visconti, 1960).	Thursday, November 25 <i>Michelangelo Antonioni: L'Avventura</i> (1960)
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15	Tuesday, November 30 Discussion about the film. Difficulty in the readings. Completion of the trilogy with <i>L'eclisse</i> (1962). Complete dissolution in the relationship between meaning and meaningful. From Antonioni's meaningful unity (mocked by W. Allen) to episodic film, a typical Italian case. From the Decameron to the short stories of Cinecittà. Comedy in small dosages. The major and minor writers and actors. A genre to export. (scenes from <i>Boccaccio '70</i> , 1962 and <i>I mostri</i> , 1963).	
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16	Thursday, December 2 Quiz on the readings. From the <i>Commedia dell'arte</i> to the <i>Commedia all'italiana</i> . Bachtin and the comedic genre. <i>Carnevalizzazione</i> and overturning that brings an unexpected result: insertion in society. The first step towards recognizing monstrous physical characteristics that reflect the morals of the Italian middle class. Watch <i>Signore & Signori</i> (P. Germi, 1966) and/or <i>Il sorpasso</i> (D. Risi, 1962) and orally present analogies and differences with <i>Divorzio all'italiana</i> for next class.	Thursday, December 2 <i>Pietro Germi: Divorzio all'italiana</i> (1961)
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17	Tuesday, December 7 Documentary about the Italian economic boom. "Il sorpasso" as metaphor. Identity and comedy. Broken dreams. The s-boom. Separation of social classes and conflict. The miracle is already ending.	
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18	Thursday, December 9 Introduction to Pasolini: director, comedy writer, journalist, intellectual. Marxism and religion: an unresolved problem. The end of rural life according to the director.	Thursday, December 9 <i>Pier Paolo Pasolini: Mamma Roma</i> (1962)
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19	Tuesday, December 14 Discussion on film. Emergence of new genres: peplum, western, horror, crime story, <i>giallo</i> , mystery, political film. Italian history in the life of an Italian everyman: Alberto Sordi. Fact or fiction? Course conclusions. Fragments from <i>Il Boom</i> by V. De Sica (1963).	
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20	Thursday, December 16 How does the Italian comedy end? Decadence and decline of the Italian cinema. Another mask, but ten years after: Fantozzi. Class discussion about the films and final thoughts.	Final project due
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Required work and form of assessment:

The lectures focus on the films, writers/directors and historical periods, which will be analyzed in class. Students are expected to participate in the discussions. Weekly assignments include readings, screenings and essays. Each class begins with questions to cover and review the assignments. The ability to respond, keep up with the readings, hand in written work on time and actively participate in class is factored into the final grade.

Quizzes, essays, presentations are based on screenings or assigned readings.

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. Only one absence will be tolerated. Additional absences due to illness must be justified by a doctor's note. ½ point will be reduced from the final grade for every other absence. If you cannot attend class, you will be expected to get information from your classmates about readings and assignments and to be prepared for the next class. Unjustified lateness will negatively affect your grade in class participation.

Requirements:

A – Quizzes and weekly written assignments (response papers) or oral presentations based on film screenings and assigned readings.

B – Final project

Final grade:

Participation in class discussion: 20%

Weekly quizzes, response papers and oral presentations: 50%

Final written exam: 30%

Required readings:

Purchase packet at **Copisteria Il Papiro, Via Marsala 38/a.**

Where to find films and books:

The film files are available for you to watch or download from the desktop computers in the BCSP office.

Or:

Videoteca - Cineteca del Comune di Bologna - Via Azzo Gardino, 65 – Bologna. Online catalog:

<http://www.cinetecadibologna.it/archivi/audiovisivi/vhsdvd>

Library/study room - Cineteca del Comune di Bologna - Via Azzo Gardino, 65 – Bologna. **Hours:**

Tuesday-Friday: 2pm-8pm Saturday: 11am-5pm

University library catalog: <http://sol.cib.unibo.it/SebinaOpac/Opac?sysb=>