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HOIT400: Constructing a National Identity: History, Culture, Art and Society in 19th Century Italy

Course Syllabus

Fall Semester 2018

Instructor: Antonella Valoroso, Ph.D.

Credits: 4

Contact Hours: 45

Prerequisites: Admission to Honors Course

Class Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Type: Honors

Lab Fee: None

Course Description

The 19th century was fundamental to the formation of a national Italian identity. It was also a century of profound socio-economic changes that both accelerated the process of modernization of the country and produced conflicts that are only still partially resolved today, first among which is the so-called “mezzogiorno” question.

Before Italy became an independent political state, the concept of “patria” lived in the ideas and ideals of thinkers and artists who tried, through cultural debates, philosophical essays, and, above all, artistic creations, to educate the future Italian people. Once the process of political unification was complete, the attention of intellectuals turned to the unresolved and growing social problems. Literature and art thus became instruments of analysis of an increasingly complex reality, in which the tensions between North and South, between city and countryside, and between the actual and the ideal, appeared so large as to rule out any optimistic prediction of a solution to the conflicts.

This course begins by exploring how the culture of the Romantic age re-discovered the “myth” of the country (“patria”) already present in the works of Dante, Petrarch, Machiavelli, and Alfieri. It then turns to examine the creation of a “new” art for a new nation. The readings, in addition to selected passages of the authors cited above, include works of Ugo Foscolo, Alessandro Manzoni, Carlo Collodi, Giovanni Verga, and Tomasi di Lampedusa.

Significant time will also be dedicated to the figurative arts (Hayez, the painting of history, and the Macchiaioli), the theatre of Tommaso Salvini, and to music, with particular attention paid to the operas of Giuseppe Verdi.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- acquire a sufficiently complex and nuanced knowledge of 19th century Italian history
- analyze and interpret important historical events, trends, and movements;
- gain an understanding of and appreciation for 19th century Italian literature, theater, music, and fine arts;
- improve their critical and analytical skills; and
- achieve a deeper understanding of past and present social and political conflicts in Italy.

Course Materials

Readings

Beales, Derek and Eugenio F. Biagini. The Risorgimento and the Unification of Italy, second edition, Harlow, Longman Publishing Book, 2003.

Manzoni, Alessandro. The Betrothed, tr. Bruce Penman, Penguin Classics, 1984

Collodi, Carlo. The Authentic Story of Pinocchio of Tuscany, tr. M.L. Rosenthal, Crystal Publications, 2002

Tomasi di Lampedusa, Giuseppe. The Leopard, tr. Archibald Colquhoun, Everyman's Library, 1991.

Course Reader available at local copy shop. See "Umbra Institute Course Materials - Textbooks and Readers" handout provided in the orientation folder for more information.

Further Readings

Course reserve books available in the Umbra Library.

Assessment

Class Participation and Reading Assignments	20%
Written Compositions	20%
Mid-Term Exam	15%
Research Paper/Project	20%
Oral Presentation	10%
Final Exam	15%

Grading

Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A	93% - 100%	Exceptional
A-	90% - 92%	Excellent
B+	87% - 89%	Superior
B	83% - 86%	
B-	80% - 82%	
C+	77% - 79%	Satisfactory
C	73% - 76%	
C-	70% - 72%	
D+	67% - 69%	Low Pass
D	63% - 66%	
D-	60% - 62%	
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

Course Requirements

Grades are based on class participation and reading assignments, written compositions, midterm exam, research paper/project, oral presentation, and final exam.

Class Participation and Reading Assignments (20%)

Students are expected and strongly encouraged to engage in active participation as a way to enhance and reinforce their learning. It is therefore crucial for students to study the reading materials and come prepared to class. Participation in class means paying attention to the lectures, asking questions, responding to questions when asked by the instructor, and sharing ideas and thoughts on the issues addressed in class with other students.

Written Compositions (20%)

Students will submit nine short compositions (2-3 pages each) on topics presented and analyzed in class. These should include personal thoughts and reflections and will serve two purposes: to stimulate class discussion and to act as a tool to encourage students to think critically, learn the course material, and reinforce their understanding of that material. In these ways, the compositions will also help students prepare for the written exams. Failure to turn in a composition on time will result in a loss of one-half letter grade for each day the composition is late.

Mid-Term Exam (15%)

For the mid-term exam, students will be required to write two short essays, choosing two out of four essay questions assigned by the instructor.

Research Paper/Project (20%)

Each student will work on a research paper (10-12 pages) to be handed before the Finals Week. A number of possible topics will be suggested by the instructor. Students are strongly encouraged to work on topics related to their own specific academic and/or personal interests.

Oral Presentation (10%)

Students will work individually and prepare oral presentations to be discussed with the rest of the class in the second part of the semester. The topics for the oral presentations will be discussed in advance with the instructor and will be based on the critical analysis of one or more original documents (to be chosen among those published in the appendix to the textbook The Risorgimento and the Unification of Italy).

Final Exam (15%)

In the final exam, students will be required to write three short essays answering the three questions assigned by the instructor.

Written Work Guidelines

It is important that students leave sufficient time for DEVISING AN OUTLINE, THE WRITING PROCESS (FIRST DRAFT and REVISIONS), and - equally important - PROOFREADING their work. Reading their own work aloud while someone listens, or asking someone to read their work, are effective means of "quality control". Simply performing a spell-check is not enough to ensure that students' work is well-organized, well-written, and that the argument is stated clearly and supported effectively. **All written work must be double-spaced with 2.54cm (1 inch) margins on all sides and be set in 12 pt. Times New Roman font.**

Attendance Policy

Class attendance is **mandatory**. Students are allowed **two "free" absences**, which do not need to be justified. **It is the students' responsibility to keep them in case of real necessity (sickness or any other unforeseen inconvenience that may prevent students from being in class)**. Each additional absence, unless for a very serious reason, will lower the students' grade by one grade level (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B).

If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours. It is also the policy of the Institute that any student who has eight or more absences automatically fails the class.

Except in the case of medical emergencies, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. **Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason.** Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in.

Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important for student performance in class. Missing a mandatory field trip, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to the professor and Umbra Academic Director in a timely manner, will lower students' final grade by one grade level (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B).

Academic Integrity

All forms of **cheating** (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of

notes) and **plagiarism** (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

Classroom Policy

Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate **respect** for the historical premises that the school occupies. Please note that **cell phones** must be turned off before the beginning of each class. **Computers and other electronic devices** cannot be used during class lectures and discussions.

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

WEEK 1

Mon.,
Sept. 3 *Introduction to the Course. Presentation of the Syllabus.*
The Country's Forefathers: Dante, Petrarch, Machiavelli, Alfieri.

Wed.,
Sept. 5 *Dante's Politics: The "Theory of the Two Suns".*

Readings

Dante, Monarchy, book 3, chapter XV, pp. 1-3 (Reader)

Dante, Purgatory, Canto VI, pp. 80-89 (Reader)

Dante, Purgatory, Canto XVI, pp. 281-286 (Reader)

WEEK 2

Mon.,
Sept. 10 *Petrarch and Machiavelli: The Dream/Myth of an Italian Redemption.*

Readings

F. Petrarch, Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta, poem 128, pp. 1-8 (Reader)

N. Machiavelli, The Prince, Ch. XXVI, pp. 1-4 (Reader)

Work Due

Composition #1 (Dante)

Wed.,
Sept. 12 *Vittorio Alfieri: The 'Free Writer' and the Education of the Future Italian People.*

Readings

V. Alfieri, selected excerpts from Memoirs, in Beales-Biagini, pp. 181-187

V. Alfieri, selected excerpts from Il Misogallo, in Beales-Biagini, pp. 201-203

R. Grew, Culture and Society, 1796-1896, pp. 206-220 (Reader)

WEEK 3

Mon.,
Sept. 17 *The Beginning of the Risorgimento, 1784-1815.*

Readings

Beales-Biagini: Chapter 1, pp. 14-31.

Wed.,
Sept. 19 *Ugo Foscolo and the Creation of an Italian 'Mythography'.*

Readings

U. Foscolo, selected excerpts from Last Letters of Jacopo Ortis, pp. 3-21, 83-98, 107-114 (Reader)

U. Foscolo, Of Tombs, pp. 145-154. (Reader)

Work Due
Composition #2 (Petrarch, Machiavelli, Alfieri)

WEEK 4

Mon.,
Sept. 24

From the Restoration to 1832.

Readings

Alessandro Manzoni, The Betrothed, Chapters 1-8
Beales-Biagini: Chapter 2, pp. 32-49

Wed.,
Sept. 26

Charles Albert, Mazzini, and the Moderates, 1832-46.

Readings

Alessandro Manzoni, The Betrothed, Chapters 9-17
Beales-Biagini: Chapter 3, pp. 51-66

Work Due

Composition #3 (Foscolo)

WEEK 5

Mon.,
Oct. 1

Narrating the Past to Understand the Present.

Readings

Alessandro Manzoni, The Betrothed, Chapters 18-26

Wed.,
Oct. 3

Manzoni's Legacy.

Readings

Alessandro Manzoni, The Betrothed, Chapters 27-38

WEEK 6

Mon.,
Oct. 8

Artistic and Literary Risorgimento and the 'Questione della lingua'.

Readings

Beales-Biagini: Chapter 4, pp. 69-80

Wed.,
Oct. 10

The National Revolution of 1848-49.

Readings

Beales-Biagini: Chapter 5, pp. 83-99

Work Due

Composition #4 (Manzoni)

WEEK 7

Mon.,
Oct. 15

Review.

Wed.,
Oct. 17

MID-TERM EXAM

SEMESTER BREAK

(October 22-26)

WEEK 8

Mon.,
Oct. 29 *History, Myth, and Image in the Risorgimento. The Case of Francesco Hayez.*

Readings

A. Lyttelton, Creating a National Past: History, Myth and Image in the Risorgimento, pp. 27-42 (Reader)

Wed.,
Oct. 31 *The Risorgimento Goes to the Opera (I): Nabucco by Giuseppe Verdi.*

Readings

P. Pietrobelli, "Giuseppe Verdi", pp. 1-3 (Reader)
Selected excerpts from the libretto of Nabucco, pp. 4-5 (Reader)
Beales-Biagini: Chapter 6, pp. 102-113.

Work Due

Composition #5 (Hayez)

WEEK 9

Mon.,
Nov. 5 *The Risorgimento Goes to the Opera (II): Trovatore by Giuseppe Verdi*

Readings

Selected excerpts from the libretto of Trovatore, pp. 6-9 (Reader)

Wed.,
Nov. 7 *The Risorgimento and the Age of the 'Great Actor': Tommaso Salvini.*

Readings

T. Salvini, selected excerpts from Leaves from the Autobiography of Tommaso Salvini, pp. 45-68 (Reader)
Beales-Biagini: Chapter 7, pp. 114-131

Work Due

Composition #6 (Verdi)

WEEK 10

Mon.,
Nov. 12

Women and the Risorgimento. The Case of Adelaide Ristori.

Readings

Beales-Biagini: Chapter 8, pp. 134-147

Work Due

Research Project Outline and Bibliography.

Wed.,
Nov. 14

The New Italy: Conflicts, Compromises, and Projects of Reform.

Readings

C. Collodi, The Authentic Story of Pinocchio of Tuscany. Chapters 1-23

Beales-Biagini: Chapter 9, pp. 150-156

Work Due

Composition #7 (Salvini, Ristori)

WEEK 11

Mon.,
Nov. 19

Pinocchio: A Children Book About Real People.

Readings

C. Collodi, The Authentic Story of Pinocchio of Tuscany. Chapters 24-36

Wed.,
Nov. 21

North-South Tensions and Social Struggle: The 'Questione Meridionale'.

Readings

G. Verga, from Novelle rustiche: Getting to know the King, pp. 146-152, *Freedom*, pp. 208-214 (Reader)

Beales-Biagini: Chapter 9, pp. 156-161

Work Due

Composition #8 (Collodi)

WEEK 12

Mon.,
Nov. 26

Art and Society in the Age of Realism.

Readings

A. Boime, The Art of the Macchia and the Risorgimento: Representing Culture and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Italy, pp. 115-134 (Reader)

Wed.,
Nov. 28

In-Class Oral Presentations.

Work Due

Composition #9 (Verga, Macchiaioli)

WEEK 13

Mon.,
Dec. 3

Perugia and the Risorgimento.

Readings

Selected documents about the Risorgimento in Perugia (Reader)

Wed.,
Dec. 5

Risorgimento Walking Tour.

Work Due

Final Research Project.

WEEK OF FINAL EXAMS AND SPECIAL ACADEMIC EVENTS

Dec.
10-14

The Final Exam and Special Academic Events Calendar will be provided later in the semester.

Selected Bibliography

Ascoli, A.R. and von Henneberg, K. (2001) *Making and remaking Italy: the cultivation of national identity around the Risorgimento*. Oxford: Berg.

Boime, A. (1993) *The art of the Macchia and the Risorgimento: representing culture and nationalism in nineteenth-century Italy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Brown University Digital Project (no date) *Garibaldi and the Risorgimento*. Available at: <http://library.brown.edu/cds/garibaldi/>.

Davis, J. (2000) *Italy in the nineteenth century, 1796-1900*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dickie, J. (1999) *Darkest Italy: the nation and stereotypes of the Mezzogiorno, 1860-1900*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Duggan, C. (1994) *A concise history of Italy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Luzzi, J. (2008) *Romantic Europe and the ghost of Italy*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Modern Italy, vol. 19, 2014: Special issue: The Italian Risorgimento: transnational perspectives

Patriarca, S. (2005) 'Indolence and Regeneration: Tropes and Tensions of Risorgimento Patriotism', *The American Historical Review*. Oxford University Press, 110(2), pp. 380–408. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/531319>.

Riall, L. (1994) *The Italian Risorgimento: state, society, and national unification*. London: Routledge.

Riall, L. (2007) *Garibaldi: invention of a hero*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Sorba, C. (2011). Ernani Hats: Italian Opera as a Repertoire of Political Symbols during the Risorgimento. Oxford Handbooks Online. <https://doi.org/10.1093/OXFORDHB/9780195341867.013.0018>

Stamatov, P. (2002) *Interpretative activism and the political usages of Verdi's operas in the 1840s*, «American sociological review», 3, pp. 345-366.