

## ITAL 400 - ITALIAN CINEMA

# ITALY ON THE MOVE IN THE MOVIES

### From Italians as Migrants to Italy as Migrant Epicenter

Italian 400, Catalog N. TBA

Class: Mon and Wed, 3 - 4 + Screenings TBD

Location: TBA

Prof.: Julianne VanWagenen

Office hours: Wed 9-11 and by appt

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## **DESCRIPTION:**

This course seeks to introduce students to an important new trend in Italian film: the new Italian cinema of migration. Director, Andrea Segre, and his collaborative documentary-film effort, ZALAB, will provide an important backbone to the course, as Segre and his team have for the past ten years been on the artistic forefront of migration documentation and cinematic effort. However, the course goes back in time to first take a look at Italians-as-migrants and how Italians themselves perceived the migrant experience at both an individual and national level. The course will then change perspective to look at the migrant as 'other' in Italy to understand how Italians, particularly beginning in the 1990s, experienced migration in their country.

We will look at questions of migrant labor, cultural and physical difference, the question of language, and 'Italianness' (or lack thereof), to see the touristic concept of 'Destination Italy' turned on its head, as this cinema reveals a largely unseen traveler to Italy and the highly non-touristic experience they find at the end of their long journey.

This course will at once introduce students to essential Italian directors, such as Luchino Visconti, Matteo Garrone, Marco Tullio Giordana, and award-winning films such as *Lamerica*; and at the same time it will shed light on lesser-known films and documentaries, so as to ask the important question: *What makes certain films about Italy less desirable than others?* At stake is Italy's very cultural patrimony, which is the backbone of its economy, through tourism, as well as the lives of migrants making their ways to Italian shores by the thousands.

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## **FILMS SCREENED:**

*Rocco e i suoi fratelli*, Visconti (1960)  
*Nuovomondo*, Crialese (2006)  
*Blaxploitalian*, Kuwornu (2017)  
*Pummarò*, Placido (1990)  
*Lamerica*, Amelio (1994)  
*Terra di mezzo*, Garrone (1996)  
*Quando sei nato non puoi più nasconderti*, Tullio Giordana (2005)  
*Terraferma*, Crialese (2011)  
*Il villaggio di cartone*, Olmi (2011)  
*Io sono Li*, Segre (2011)  
*Mare chiuso*, Segre (2012)  
*La prima neve*, Segre (2013)  
*L'ordine delle cose*, Segre (2017)

## **CRITICAL READINGS:**

*Marvelous Bodies: Italy's New Migrant Cinema*, Vetri (2017) [selections]  
"The Representation of Migrants in Italian Cinema, from the Stereotypes to the Socio-Political Mission of Present-Day Film Directors." Colella, Francesca (2017)

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## **DOCUMENTARIES FOR PRESENTATIONS:**

*Il nuovo Sud dell'Italia*, Esposito, 2010 (75 min)  
*Il sangue verde*, ZALAB, 2010 (57 min)  
*Come un uomo sulla terra*, ZALAB, 2008 (60 min)  
*Carmine - Voce di un quartiere*, ZALAB, 2007 (23 min)  
*Dio era un musicista*, ZALAB, 2004 (60 min)  
*Mare chiuso*, ZALAB, 2012 (60 min)  
*Limbo*, ZALAB, 2014 (56 min)  
*I nostri anni migliori*, ZALAB, 2011 (5 min)

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## **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:**

Regular attendance of class meetings and film screenings, and quality participation are critical to the success of this course. Expected absences should be discussed with the instructor in advance and are limited to 3 total hours per semester.

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

- **Reaction papers:** Every week students will write in the online class-forum. Students will take turns, weekly, either writing a 500-word response (in Italian), or beginning a discussion chain of other students' responses. Students who have not written a response in a given week are expected to write commentary on at least three students' responses in the forum.
- **Oral presentation:** Each student will choose one documentary from the list to prepare an oral presentation that compares and contrasts it to one of the films we watch in the course. The presentations must be at least 10 minutes in length and will be presented without the use of notes. All presentations will take place during the last week of class.
- **Final project:** Students can choose from two options for their final project. They may either write a five-page research paper, in Italian, based on a course theme or film, or they may choose in groups of 2 to 3, to write, memorize, and perform a 10 (2 ppl) -15 (3 ppl) minute 'lost scene' from one of the films we watch in class. Students who choose to perform a scene must also turn in their script as part of their grade.

## **ITALIAN LANGUAGE:**

This class has been designed as an Italian 400 course to develop students' knowledge of Italian culture and Italian language. The majority of class materials, particularly the cultural content, as well as class discussions will be in Italian. However, based on student enrollment, the class may be taught in English, with film subtitles, and the majority of the critical texts are in English. In this case, students who want Italian-language credit for the course must complete reaction papers, presentations, and the final project in Italian.

## **FINAL GRADE:**

- 25% Participation in class discussion (All discussion in Italian)
- 30% Reaction papers and online forum discussion every week (in Italian)
- 25% Oral presentation
- 20% Final project

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## COURSE CALENDAR:

### MODULE 1: ITALIANS AS MIGRANTS

#### Week 1 (August 27 - 31)

- Lecture: Introduction
- In class: Excerpt from *The Godfather, Part II*, Coppola (1974)

#### Week 2 (September 4 - 7) No class Labor Day

- Film screening: *Rocco e i suoi fratelli*, Visconti (1960)
- Lecture on the history of Italian emigration, the 1700s - present day

#### Week 3 (September 10 - 14)

- Film screening: *Nuovomondo*, Crialesi (2006)
- Lecture on stereotypes of Italians in US films and Italians own view of their migrants in film

#### Week 4 (September 17 - 21)

- Film screening: *Blaxploitalian*, Kuwornu (2017)
- Lecture on the problematic status of the Italian 'other', second-generation Italians and the roles they play in films

### MODULE 2: MIGRANTS IN ITALY

#### Week 5 (September 24 - 28)

- Film screening: *Pummarò*, Placido (1990)
- Lecture on the first films to deal with migration to Italy and the beginning of the foreign subaltern as protagonist

#### Week 6 (October 1 - 5)

- Film screening: *Lamerica*, Amelio (1994)
- Lecture on the success of *Lamerica* and the perceived difference, in film, between migrants from eastern Europe and those from Asia, Africa, and South America

#### Week 7 (October 8 - 12)

- Film screening: *Terra di mezzo*, Garrone (1996)
- Lecture on Matteo Garrone and the beginning of his career as a filmmaker as well as his breakthrough film, *Gomorra* (2008)

#### FALL BREAK (October 15 -19)

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## Week 8 (October 22 - 26)

- Film screening: *Quando sei nato non puoi più nasconderti*, Tullio Giordana (2005)
- Lecture on *Quando sei nato*, Marco Tullio Giordana, and the relationship between neorealism, young (innocent) Italian protagonists, and the new Italian cinema of migration

## Week 9 (October 29 - November 2)

- Film screening: *Terraferma*, Crialese (2011)
- Lecture on the changing face of the migrant in southern Italy and the first signs of the so-called 'crisis'

## Week 10 (November 5 - 9)

- Film screening: *Il villaggio di cartone*, Olmi (2011)
- Lecture on Catholicism, nationalism, and 'Italianness' in 21st-century Italy

## MODULE 3: ANDREA SEGRE E IL NUOVO CINEMA ITALIANO DI MIGRAZIONE

## Week 11 (November 12 - 16)

- Film screening: *Io sono Li*, Segre (2011)
- Lecture on Andrea Segre and ZALAB and comparison of *Io sono Li* and *Gomorrah* (2008)
- In class: *Gomorrah* [excerpts]

## Week 12 (November 19 - 20) No class Thanksgiving Break

- Film screening: *Mare chiuso*, Segre (2012)
- Lecture on the 2011 boom of migration films in Italy and trends in the new cinema genre

## Week 13 (November 26 - 30)

- Film screening: *La prima neve*, Segre (2013)
- Lecture on the use of language to represent a 'positive' migrant
- FINAL PRESENTATIONS

## Week 14 (December 3 - 7)

- Film screening: *L'ordine delle cose*, Segre (2017)
- Lecture on the current landscape in Italy: the migrant crisis and migrants in film
- FINAL PRESENTATIONS