Course Syllabus

Course Description
This course aims to provide students with a critical knowledge of the main themes regarding Fascist Art and Culture. In an age which precedes the diffusion of mass media, art, architecture, literature, and music played a major role in the growth and the success of “Fascist ideals”. This course gives students a chance to study an important topic, which is usually relegated to minor chapters of monographs and publications regarding Fascism as a whole.

The focus of the course will be on the following main topics:

- The search for a pure Italian style (Art, Architecture, Literature)
  - Simplicity
  - Tradition
  - Rejection of the ornate and the elaborate
- The revival of the Antiquity (Archaeology, Architecture, Sculpture)
  - Monumentality
  - Symmetry
  - Durability
- The growth of the National Ideal (Art and Architecture, Literature, Music, Cinema)
  - Idealism
  - Heroism
  - Duty
- Tradition and Innovation
  - Technology (Photography and Cinema, Communications)
  - Fashion and design (Visual arts, music, dance)
  - Music and dance

The first part of the course will focus on an historical introduction to early 20th century Italy and the growth of the Fascist Ideals. It will present the major expressions of the Fascist propaganda: National Identity, the creation of a tradition, the use of Archaeology, the city of Rome as a “prototype of perfection”, the rejection of foreign styles and cultures, and the birth of a monumental architecture.

The second part of the course will study in detail single places, topics, and individuals related to the success of Fascism or examples of (sometimes hidden) anti-Fascism: the controversial figure of the architect Giuseppe Terragni, the charming and mysterious villa of Curzio Malaparte in Capri, as well as documentaries about modernity and progress in the Fascist Italy.
The major purpose of the course is to provide students with the ability to unveil the hidden layers of ideology, present in any expression of a mass communication, be it totalitarian or democratic.

**Learning Outcomes**

Students will:
- acquire a sophisticated and in-depth understanding of Fascist history, society, and culture
- gain knowledge of the main visual, cultural, and artistic expressions of Fascist propaganda
- be able to analyze different types of documents: paintings, sculptures, architectures, movies.

**Teaching Method**

The course will be structured in:
- Classroom lectures, focused on:
  - historical overview about early 20th century Italy and Europe.
  - history of the Fascist Italy in all its social implications
  - study of peculiar social aspects: sense of belonging, national identity
  - during classroom lectures students will be invited to participate exercising some of the methods proposed by the lecturer: reading texts, learning to identify places and buildings, etc.
- Field visits, focused on:
  - understanding sites and specific buildings as results of social changes
  - interpreting the images on the basis of ideology, politics, and sociology

Any lecture or field visit will always be structured as an interdisciplinary analysis. The major disciplines involved will be: history, art, archaeology, architecture, music, cinema, photography.

**Nature of Assignments**

**Mid-term Test:** The Mid-term test will consist of short questions about the arguments treated during the first part of the course, identification of pictures representing images shown during class lectures or seen during field visits.

**Final Test:** The Final test will propose to the students, as the Mid-term, short questions and identification of pictures from arguments and sites approached during the entire course. Students will also be asked to write a short, analytical essay on some arguments suggested by the lecturer.

**Reflection Paper**

The purpose of writing a reflection paper is to clearly communicate what you have learned through your research. Your research must have a clearly defined question which you set out to answer in your paper, providing the necessary arguments and evidence for your conclusions.

The length of the paper should be at least seven pages. Papers must be typed, written in a clear and cogent style and include documentation of sources of information in proper footnotes.

- Handwritten papers are not accepted
- Late papers may not be accepted.
- If a late final paper is accepted, then one letter grade will be deducted for the first week (or partial week) of delay in handing in the final paper.
- Plagiarism will result in a grade of “F” for the course. Please consult the student handbook for the definition of plagiarism and the policies followed by the Institute in the case of plagiarism.
All papers should have a pertinent bibliography. Websites must be cited as references. More weight and positive evaluation will be given to book references than to internet/website references.

**Assessment Policy**
The final grade for the course will be compounded from the following:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-Term exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>Final exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>Class participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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**Attendance Policy**
Attendance is obligatory and the final grade will reflect absences. Missing three (3) classes will lower the course grade. If a student misses a class, he/she is responsible for obtaining the assignment and any class notes. If there is any problem about any aspect of the course, please contact the instructor to discuss and resolve it. Active participation will be widely appreciated and will be reflected in the student’s final grade. Absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up.
The field trips are considered part of the course, and attendance policy is the same as class lectures. Students are expected to be in class on time. Lateness of more than fifteen minutes will be counted as half an absence.

**Required Readings**
Reader provided by the lecturer

Short selected bibliographies on Fascist Politics and History, Culture and Life, Art and Architecture

**History of Fascism: Political Science and Modern History**


**Fascist Culture and Life**


**Art and Architecture**


**Syllabus**

**Class 1 –**

Introduction to the course: methods, materials, chronological overview

Read pp. 13-31 from Lazzaro

L. Visconti and Tomasi di Lampedusa – *The Leopard*.

The Italian Unification and Art

Read pp. 25-56 from Sabatino

**Class 2 –**

The creation of a primordial purity. The myth of the Italian Middle Ages and Renaissance and the demolition of the Baroque ideals

Read pp. 113-144 from Lazzaro

**FIELD TRIP TO SAN GIMIGNANO**

**Class 3 –**

The Historical fundamentals of a modern city: Rome (1)

Analysis of a monument: the Vittoriano (monumentality)


**A STUDY CASE: THE DUOMO IN ORVIETO**
Class 4 –
The Historical fundamentals of a modern city: Augustus, Mussolini and the Empire

Read pp. 53-65 from Lazzaro

Il foro Mussolini”: sport, art and the myth of Rome

Analysis of a monument: the statues of the Foro Italico (ideal beauty?)


FIELD TRIP TO ORVIETO

Class 5 –
The architectural body: a short reflection on the EUR in Rome

Analysis of a monument: the Colosseo Quadrato (volume)

Assignment: find any element of tradition in a modern building that you know.

Read: The Classicism of the E42: Between Modernity and Tradition, in Assemblage, No. 8 (Feb. 1989), 78-87

The Image of Sport: Riefenstahl’s Olympia
Documentaries in Mussolini’s Italy and Hitler’s Germany

Assignment: write a short essay comparing color to black and white cinema.
Read pp. 86-106 from Mangan

MIDTERM TEST

Class 6 –
Palazzo delle Esposizioni and the Mostra Universale della Romanità: public memory

Primary sources: Readings from the Catalogue of the Exhibit “Mostra Universale della Romanità” (Universal Exhibit of Romanity)

The Istituto Luce: Propaganda and Technology

Primary sources: watch short excerpts from some of the Istituto Luce documentaries and short written analysis in classroom.
FIELD TRIP TO SPOLETO

Class 7 –
Fascism and the Church: St. Peter’s Basilica and City Planning in Fascist Rome


Italian Libya: the restoration of the Roman antiquities and the colonies


Class 8 –
Hitler’s Grand Tour to Italy


Continuity
Postwar Architecture and Urbanism

Read pp. 165-195 from Sabatino

The Ara Pacis Museum and its changes over the 20th century
Class notes
Oral Presentation and review

REFLECTION PAPER DUE

Class 9 –

FINAL TEST