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EUH 4434: Italy during the Renaissance

Time TBA, Place TBA

Fall 2019

Welcome to EUH 4434: Italy during the Renaissance! This semester we will examine the period known as the Renaissance, roughly 1300-1550, as it unfolded in the Italian Peninsula.

Why study Italy *during* the Renaissance?

Products of the Italian Renaissance are widely present and recognized in our society, in advertisements, movies, memes, T-shirts etc. When we encounter images of the Renaissance in these diverse settings, they are divorced from both the society that produced them and the cultural meaning that they carried in that society. In this course, we will study that society in order to understand it on its own terms and, through that understanding, to explore the meaning of those disconnected monuments.

We will approach the subject on three levels. First, we will explore the culture, politics, religion, and economy of the region that is considered the birthplace of this Renaissance. Second, we will explore the intellectual and artistic movements that made the Renaissance. Third, we will reconsider the idea of the Renaissance in the broader historical narrative.

We will also look for the connections between these three levels. Why did Italian society, as a whole, decide to invest so heavily into the production and innovation of art and scholarly material? What members of society were (and were not) included in the Renaissance? And why has 15th and 16th c. Italian art and scholarly activity, as opposed to that of other times and places, loomed so large in history, particularly in the narrative of "Western Civ."?

How will this course help you succeed?

This is a discipline-specific Global Learning course that counts toward your Global Learning graduation requirement.

Studying the relationship between artistic and intellectual production, on the one hand, and the society in which it took place, on the other, helps us to see the broader value of art and scholarship. Specifically, what was the economic cost, what was the meaning, and what were the intended goals of that production for that society. As such, this course teaches us to explore the role of art and scholarship in the societies that produced and preserved it.

This course will also give you the conceptual and practical framework for understanding the role of a small number of elite male intellectuals in shaping the narrative of history.

Finally, this class will help you sharpen your ability to analyze and critically engage sources and refine your abilities to communicate complex ideas in writing and in person.

Course Objectives. By the end of this class, we will:

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- be familiar with the politics, economy, religion, and culture of Italy during this period, with the artistic and intellectual movement of the Renaissance, and with the role of the Renaissance in the historical narrative of Europe and the West..
- understand how and why the unique cultural situation in Italy gave rise to artistic and intellectual production, and what that production meant for different members of the culture that produced it.
- build on skills of historical research and writing while working on a focused project.

Global Learning Objectives. By the end of this class, we will:

- Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interrelatedness of local, regional, inter-regional, and intercultural issues, trends, and systems with regard to the economies and intellectual movements of 15th and 16th c. Italy. (Global Awareness)
- Students will be able to understand and analyze a variety of scholarly perspectives on an issue related to Italy during the Renaissance. (Global Perspective)
- Students will be able to demonstrate willingness to engage in contemporary local, global, international, and intercultural problem solving related to the writing of history. (Global Engagement)

Instructor Information:

Dr. Tovah Bender
tbender@fiu.edu

Office: DM 391C
Office Hours: 11:00-12:00

I am here to help you and happy to answer questions. The best way to reach me is via email. I will reply to all emails within 24 hours unless there are extenuating circumstances. Please note that I do not check Blackboard Messages.

Come to my office. I am often in my office beyond office hours and am happy to meet with students. If you have questions or would like to continue the discussion, please swing by. You can also email me to find a mutually convenient time to meet outside of office hours.

Required Texts:

- Najemy, John, ed. *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance*. Oxford: University of Oxford Press, 2005.
- Goldswaite, Richard. *The Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980.

You are free to purchase the texts at the bookstore or through another venue, or to obtain them from a library. All other readings will be available to you online, through the library website, or Blackboard.

You are responsible for coming to class having read and prepared to discuss the reading listed for that day. Each student MUST have access to a copy of the day's readings in class. A book, a

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printout, a pre-arranged shared copy, or a laptop with access to the electronic copy are all acceptable.

Grade Distribution:

Participation	15%
Monument Presentation	15%
Blog Posts	10%
Research Paper	
Initial Summary	10%
Annotated Bibliography	10%
Final Paper	25%
Rewriting History	15%

Assignments

Participation: Participation is not simply coming to class, although you certainly can't participate if you are not there! Nor is participation only coming prepared, listening attentively or taking notes, while those are also very important. These things alone will earn you a participation grade around 50%.

Participation means contributing to the discussion. This can mean answering a question that I ask but it can also mean asking a question about something that confused you, responding to a comment made by a classmate, actively participating in group work, or bringing up something that particularly interested you. Your comments, questions, and responses to others make all of us better scholars.

Blog Posts: When the drop-add period ends you will be divided into small groups. Each of these groups will have a separate blog on Blackboard in which all group members can post and in which you will be having conversations about the materials amongst yourself.

Ten times during the semester, I will ask you to post a response to a question I post to the blog on the reading. I will post the questions 5-7 days in advance and ask you to make the post by class time.

I will then ask you to make at least two shorter responses by the following class. You do not need to wait until after class to make the shorter posts. These posts should include responses to your peers' posts but can also include additional posts by you to your group blog tying this week's question to reading back to previous conversations that your group had on their blog.

Posts and responses should:

- Address the question or response posed.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the reading and be historically accurate.
- Includes reasoning and evidence.
- Demonstrate critical thought about the reading, moving beyond the obvious or surface meaning and working to pull together different texts that class or across classes.
- Consider the reading in light of what we have previously learned and read in the course.
- Use good writing, including full sentences and correct spelling, and present a single, coherent response that makes logical sense.

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- Responses of “I agree” are not acceptable. That isn’t a conversation. You must say WHY and present new or supporting evidence. Ask a question. Disagree. Offer an alternative interpretation.

Monument Presentation: Posted on Blackboard is a list of Renaissance Italian artistic monuments, including paintings, sculptures buildings, public spaces, etc., each with a date on which that monument will be presented to the class. Each student will select one monument in the first week of class.

You will give a short (5-10 minute) presentation on your monument on the day assigned. The presentation will certainly cover the who-what-where-when of the monument, but also say why this monument is important in relation to the day’s topic and to class discussion more broadly. For this assignment, you will need to consult three sources related to your monument. One may be an encyclopedia article (not Wikipedia but a hard or electronic encyclopedia available through the library); the other two must be scholarly articles, book chapters, or books (while you may make use of course texts for the presentation, these do NOT count toward your three sources). The sources might focus on the monument itself, but they also might be on the artist, the theme of the work etc. This allows you to focus on an aspect that interests you and relates to the day’s topic.

Your grade will be divided evenly between these three elements

- accurately, succinctly, and thoroughly describing the monument (who-what-where-when)
- relating the topic to the day’s topic and to previous discussion
- creating an accurate bibliography to turn in as a hard copy, when you present.

Research Paper:

Initial Summary: Read your text. Write your initial (500-700 word) report with two parts. First: a summary of the text. In this, address what the text says in general; identify the author in terms of social background, occupation, time period; identify the context in terms of the city and political situation. Second: identify the theme you will deal with in your paper and how you will use the text. Point to specific passages or instances in the text that will be helpful and propose a working thesis.

Due Sept. 30

Annotated Bibliography: Assemble a bibliography of scholarly secondary sources. You will be unlikely to find secondary sources (or at least more than one source) specifically on [your theme] in [your text]. Instead, you will need to read a few secondary sources on your text and a larger number of secondary sources on your theme at the time and place that your text was written. Summarize this reading in an eight-item annotated bibliography. Begin the bibliography with a paragraph detailing how you approach your research question; that is, what is the broader question, what is the aspect of the question that will be your focus, and what do you think your thesis might be. Including your working thesis is important! Then include a detailed annotation for each of eight pieces that you have read to this point, including the way that you see that piece fitting into your overall argument. For more on writing an annotated bibliography and examples, see the handout on blackboard.

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Due Oct. 28

Final Paper: Write the paper. Finally, write an 6-8 page paper citing at least 8 scholarly sources. This paper must have a strong thesis. In the process of demonstrating your thesis, the paper should reply heavily on the primary text that you use, while using the secondary texts to interpret it in a historically accurate and historiographically appropriate manner. For more on what I expect in a paper, see the Writing Guidelines handout on blackboard.

Due Nov. 18

For books and themes, see the Research Paper handout on Blackboard.

Rewriting History: One of the major themes of this class is the Renaissance in the narrative of Western Civilization/ European History. Imagine you are the author of a Western Civ textbook. Write an entry for period 1300-1550 in Italy of approximately 1000-1200 words. I will look for:

- A good understanding of the Renaissance, in the nuance as expressed in the course.
- A critical understanding of Western Civilization/ European History.
- This should be clearly written for students at the survey level.

Due Dec 4

Class Policies:

Attendance and Participation: Historians, at any level, cannot work in isolation; we depend on the insights, experience and knowledge of colleagues to help us. In order to achieve this dialogue, you must come to class and do so prepared.

You may have two unexcused absences without repercussions in discussion sections. After that, it will affect your grade. Excused absences will be granted in the event of serious medical issues (with a doctor's note), religious holidays, the death of an immediate family member, military duty, a court date, and participation in some college events. In each of these cases, it is your responsibility to contact me in a timely manner and request that the absence be excused. I reserve the right to require documentation to excuse an absence.

If you are absent for any reason, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate.

Classroom Behavior: Arrive on time and stay until the end of class. Failure to do so will affect your attendance. If you must arrive late or leave early, do so with as little disturbance to others as possible. Please turn all cell phones OFF. If you cannot do this, let us know ahead of time.

In accordance with the Student Code of Standards (Student Handbook, p. 11 and following), you have the right to agree, disagree, challenge, and question the opinions and comments of others, including the instructor. You do not have the right to be disrespectful to anyone else in the classroom or to act in a way that makes others uncomfortable. **Such behavior will not be tolerated.**

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Late Policy: Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned day. The grade on any late written work is automatically reduced by one-third of a letter (B+ becomes a B) for each day the paper is late, including Saturday and Sunday, unless an extension is granted by me. No regular-semester work will be accepted beyond 5pm on the last day of this class.

Scholastic Dishonesty: According to the FIU student handbook (p. 11) “In meeting one of the major objectives of higher education, which is to develop self-reliance, it is expected that students will be responsible for the completion of their own academic work.” Please be aware that academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class. Academic dishonesty includes, but not limited to, plagiarizing (representing someone else’s work as your own), cheating on assignments or examinations, or engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work. It will result in a penalty ranging from a zero on the assignment to failure in the course and reporting to the University. **If you have any questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty or plagiarism, see me.**

Note to Students with Disabilities: If you have or believe you might have a disability-related need for modification or reasonable accommodations in this course, contact the Disability Resources Center (drc.fiu.edu). I am very happy to work with you and with them to accommodate you in the best way possible.

Accommodations: If you foresee any possible problem meeting any of the requirements of this course—including attendance and prompt submission of all assignments—please see your TA or me as soon as possible. **It is much easier on all of us if we address an issue before it becomes a problem.**

I reserve the right to change this syllabus to facilitate better learning.
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Aug 26: Introduction

- Class Discussion: How do we define the renaissance?
- Group Work: Geography of Italy (map activity)

Aug 28: The Renaissance and Western Civ, what’s the relationship?

- Read:
 - Burckhardt, The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy (Part 2: Personality; Part 3: Intro) Available online at http://www.historyofmedren.about.com/od/burckhardt/a/cr1_main.htm
 - Olin, Najamey. Introduction. (1-17)
- Class Discussion: How do we understand Western Civ?
 - How were we taught?
 - What are the problems with the concept and teaching of Western Civ? Who/what/ where is excluded?
 - What role does Italy in the Renaissance play in this?

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The Rise of the Commune

Sept 2: Rise of the Communes

- Read:
 - OHI. Najemy. Governments and Governance. (184-208)
 - Dante Alighieri. The Inferno. Cantos 32-33.
- Class Discussion: What did “republicanism” mean in 14th c. Italy?
 - Who was included?
 - How was republicanism justified?
 - What was republicanism used to justify?
 - How did competition and influence from other cities shape republicanism?

Sept 4: Funding the Renaissance

- Read:
 - OHI. Franceschi The Economy: Work and Wealth (124-145)
 - Dante Alighieri. The Inferno. Canto 17
- Group Work: Industries of Renaissance Italy
Each group will trace the rise, distribution, and status of one 14th c. Italian industry.

Sept 9: Building the Renaissance City

- Read: Building, The Wherewithal to Spend (29-66)
- Class Discussion:
 - How did the environment/geography contribute to the rise of industry/ trade?
 - Why was surplus necessary for the Renaissance?

Sept 11: The Constructed City

- Read: Building, The Reasons for Building (7-115)
- Group Work: Mapping the Renaissance City (I)
Each group will work with the map of one 14th c. Italian city to identify public spaces and buildings and consider the meaning of the placement and use of space.
- Class Discussion: Construction and Civic Competition

Sept 16: The Citizens Shape the City

- Read: Building, The Guild (242-287)
- Class Discussion: The Guild
 - How does a guild benefit members?
 - What is the role of the guild in the city?
 - What is the difference between an artisan and an artist?

Sept 18: Contesting and Ordering the Space

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- Read: Davis, Robert C. "The Geography of Gender in the Renaissance." In *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Judith C. Brown and Robert C. Davis, 150-170. Harlow, England, Longman: 1998.
- Group Activity: Mapping the Renaissance City (II)
Each group will return to their city map to identify private, semi-private, and public spaces and to consider the relationship between public space, the government, and control/status in light of the article.

Social Order: Center and Periphery

Sept 23: The Household and the Patriline

- Read: OHI. Kirshner. *Family and Marriage: A Socio-Legal Perspective* (82-104)
- Group Activity: The Family in Art
Each group will look at one image of the family, considering the message of the image itself and also of its placement within the city.

Sept 25: Marriage and the Family

- Read:
 - Chojnacki, Stanley. "Getting Back the Dowry." in *Women and Men in Renaissance Venice: Twelve Essays on Patrilian Society*, 95-115. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000.
 - David Herlihy, "Foreward," in *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), vii-xiii
- Class Discussion: Dowry and Family
 - Understand and debate the various explanations by scholars of the role of dowry in Florentine family life.
 - Debate how far laws and legal documents of practice can help us understand actual family dynamics.

Sept 30: Sexuality

- Read: Michael Rock. "Gender and Sexual Culture in Renaissance Italy." In *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Judith C. Brown and Robert C. Davis, 150-170. Harlow, England, Longman: 1998. (Moodle)
- Class Discussion: Homosexuality, Marriage, and Masculinity
 - Debate historians' claims that homosexual activity was related to marriage patterns
 - Debate the role of gender (rather than sexuality) in the prominence of homosexual activity in Florence.

Oct 2: Orphan and the Illegitimate

- Read: Richard C. Trexler. "The Foundlings of Florence, 1395-1455." In *The Children of Renaissance Florence: Power and Dependence in Renaissance Florence*, 7-34. Ithaca, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1993.

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- Group Work: Orphans in Art
Each group explores one image from the orphanage of S. M. della Scala in Siena
- Class Discussion: Family and Order
 - Given the importance of Family in ordering society, why were orphans such a concern to the city?
 - How did the presence and care of orphans influence the reputation of the city?

Oct 7: The Urban Poor

- Read: Building, Labor (287-351)
- Class Discussion: Laborers in the Renaissance City?
 - What was the place of urban laborers in a mercantile economy?
 - What was the place of urban laborers in oligarchic republic?
 - Consider the Allegory of Good Gov'n't (Siena)
 - Consider Pironella story in Boccaccio 7/2

Oct 9: Role of the *Popolo* in the State

- Read:
 - OHI. Zorzi. The Popolo (145-164)
 - Niccolo Macchiavelli, on the Ciompi.
- Class Discussion: Labor as a force
 - Could the Ciompi Revolt have succeeded long term?
 - Consider whether or not we can call this as class consciousness

Renaissance Thought and its Implications

Oct 14: Literacy and a Written Culture

- Read: OHI. Black, Education and the Emergence of a Literate Society (18-36)
- Class Discussion: Literacy and Society
 - Why was literacy so important?
 - What would have made it more important here than in the North?
 - Why were there so many universities?
- Class Discussion: Is this a rebirth? Western Civ and 15th c. Italy
 - what classics were "rediscovered"
 - why were people looking to the classics
 - what were the political, religious etc purposes to which they were putting the classics?

Oct 16: Humanism

- Read:
 - OHI: Quillen, Humanism and the Lure of Antiquity (37-58)

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- Vasari's Life of Brunelleschi (read only part 1 and 2, through the building and measurements of the dome), avail at <http://www.efn.org/~acd/vite/VasariBrun.html>lorenzo's little school
- Class Discussion: Humanism in the Renaissance
 - Was this a "rediscovery" or new uses?
 - How well does this match our understanding of humanism in a western civ sense?
- Class Activity: Virtual tour of the Duomo's Dome

Oct 21: Religious Thought and Social Criticism

- Read: Franco Mormando. *The Preacher's Demons: Bernardino of Siena and the Social Underworld of Early Renaissance Italy*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999. (7-41)
- Class Discussion: Was the Renaissance Secular?
 - Was the renaissance as an intellectual mvmt counter to religion?
 - In what ways was humanism, renaissance, used for religion?
 - In what ways were they contradictory?
 - Are these ways new? (wordly concerns etc)

Oct 23: Humanism, Education, and your Annotated Bibliographies

- no readings
- day to work in groups on annotated bibliographies.

Privatization of Power

Oct 28: Waning of Republicanism

- Read:
 - OHI. Kent, *The Power of the Elite: Family, Patronage and the State (165-183)*
 - Building, 13-24
- Class Discussion: Move from republicanism
 - How was the rise of monarchies a reaction against Ciompi and other revolts?
 - Focus on rise of Visconti in Milan, continued (v. elite) republic in Venice, as compared to Florence.

Oct 30: Do not go gently into that good night: Savonarola

- Read: Martines Mauro. *Fire in the City: Savonarola and the Struggle for Renaissance Florence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. Excerpt
- Class Discussion:
 - What about Savonarola caught the popular attention?
 - How was he able to advance his political agenda so far? What preexisting political factors allowed that?
 - How does this relate to the religion and humanism discussion from earlier?

Nov 4: Head and Circuses

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- Read: Edward Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1986. (156-181)
- Group Activity: Civic Rituals
Each group focuses on one civic ritual to analyze how it both allows for and prevents disorder (as described in the text).

Nov 6: Noblewomen as Patrons

- Read
 - William F. Prizer. "Isabella d'Este and Lucrezia Borgia as Patrons of Music in Mantua and Ferrara." *Journal of the American Musicological Society*. 38.1 (1985). 1-33.
 - Baldesar Castiglione. *The Book of the Courtier*, 7-33 (through section 24). Avail at http://books.google.com/books?id=E-gtAAAAYAAJ&dq=castiglione+courtier+text&printsec=frontcover&source=bn&hl=en&ei=uoNfStmOMqTIMrmbgZIH&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=4
- Group Activity: Women Patrons in the Renaissance
Each group considers one female patron, her influence on art, and the circumstances that allowed for it.

Nov 11: No Class – Thanks to our Vets!

Nov 13: Paper Workshop

Nov 18: Papers Due

Nov 20: Spain, France, and the Italian Peninsula

- Read:
 - OHI. Browne, "Rethinking the Renaissance in the aftermath of Italy's Crisis." 246-266.
 - Niccolo Machiavelli. *The Prince*. Chs XXIV-XXVI avail at <http://www.constitution.org/mac/prince00.htm>
- Class Discussion: Invasions
 - Why was the Italian Peninsula subject to invasion by foreign powers in the 1500s?
 - What changed internally?
 - What changed externally?
- Class Discussion: What is Italy?
 - Is the mezzogiorno part of Italy?
 - Why, culturally and historically, does it diverge from the North?

Nov 21: Could Women Have a Renaissance?

- Read:

