

PHIL 288: Culture and Civilization

John Felice Rome Center

Spring 2023

Tuesdays & Thursdays | 3:45-5:00pm

Dr. Moreno Rocchi

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Office Hours: Tue./Thu., 2:00-3:00pm (by appointment)

Course Description

This course, divided into five sections, is designed to acquaint the student with some important moments of the Italian philosophical tradition. More precisely, we will take five steps along the path that leads from the Renaissance to the contemporary period, trying to relate each of those steps to the peculiarities of Italy's socio-political history.

The first section of the course is dedicated to Renaissance philosophy. Having addressed those early Renaissance voices that articulate the break with the medieval 'theocentric' view, we will make a comparison between Campanella's utopian project and Machiavelli's political realism, paying special attention to the latter's view on human nature and the interplay between virtue and fortune.

The second section is about two figures who, while both moving from Copernicus' theory, open up two different but equally path-breaking perspectives: Giordano Bruno and his purely immanentistic approach to reality; Galileo Galilei and his philosophical assumptions on the relation between mind and world.

Two crucial historical-philosophical events of the 19th Century will be the subject of the third section: the birth of the philosophical nexus between nation, nationalism and internationalism, and the birth of Catholic Social Thought as a response to the issues posed by modernity.

In the fourth section of the course we will move on to contemporary philosophy by investigating two highly original and influential Italian philosophical responses to the shortcomings of globalization: post-Gramscian theories on the emergence of a new collective subject – the so-called "general intellect" – and Agamben's view on the relation between sovereignty and "bare life".

We will conclude by addressing two contemporary Italian feminist philosophers – Cavarero and Pulcini – who take advantage of their Italian heritage in ways that are different and yet share the same goal, that of giving new hope for a better future by making the female subject re-emerge from the vestiges of history.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of some of the main philosophical theories that have been proposed throughout the history of Italian culture, paying special attention to their socio-political context. More precisely, they should be able to dissect, compare and contrast views on topics such as human nature, the nature of external reality, the nature of political power, the relation between the individual and society, the role of culture and intellectuals in contemporary societies, difference feminism.

This course should also enable students to:

- (a) identify both the specificities and the potentialities of the Italian cultural tradition;
- (b) distinguish alternative paradigms on human nature;
- (c) look for and appreciate the reasons given in support of the different views, to assess the forcefulness of the challenge that each poses for the others, and to determine how they also challenge unexamined presuppositions in our own culture;
- (d) engage in dialogue with great philosophers, paying close attention to their reasons, their concerns, their vision;
- (e) insert their own reflections into the dialogue;
- (f) differentiate among historical and contemporary perspectives with a view to fashioning a more humane and just world;

(g) recognize the premises for a given conclusion or viewpoint, identify unexamined presuppositions, appreciate astute insights, expose vulnerabilities in established positions.

Required Texts/Materials

Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince and The Discourses* (ed. by E.R.P. Vincent, intr. by M. Lerner), New York: Modern Library.
All the other readings will be posted on Sakai.

Attendance Policy

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy. Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student.

- For all classes meeting once a week, students cannot incur more than one unexcused absence.
- For all classes meeting twice a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.
- For all classes meeting three times a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.

This course meets twice a week, thus a total of **two unexcused absences** will be permitted. **Unexcused absences beyond these will result in 1% lowering of the final course grade, for every absence after the “approved limit”.**

If, however, you are ill, do not attend class (your absence will be excused).

Assessment Components

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| • Midterm Exam (in-class test) | 35 % |
| • Final Exam (take-home paper) | 40 % |
| • Participation | 20 % |
| • Reflection paper* | 5 % |

*Students will be required to write a reflection paper (about 3 pages, MLA format) on a topic to be agreed upon with the instructor.

Grading

94-100: A
90-93: A-
87-89: B+
84-86: B
80-83: B-
77-79: C+
74-76: C
70-73: C-
67-69: D+
60-66: D
59 or lower: F

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago’s guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola’s standards here: http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml.

You are responsible to comply with the LUC Student Handbook.

Late or Missed Assignments

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor.

Accessibility Accommodations (with addendum on classroom recording policy)

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center, the first week of classes.

Loyola University provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with Student Accessibility Center (SAC), located in Sullivan Center, Suite 117. Professors receive the accommodation notification from SAC via Accommodate. Students are encouraged to meet with their professor individually in order to discuss their accommodations. All information will remain confidential.

Please note that in this class, software may be used to record class lectures exclusively in order to provide equal access to students with disabilities. Students approved for this accommodation use recordings for their personal study only and recordings may not be shared with other people or used in any way against the faculty member, other lecturers, or students whose classroom comments are recorded as part of the class activity. Recordings are deleted at the end of the semester.

For more information about registering with SAC or questions about accommodations, please contact SAC at 773-508-3700 or SAC@luc.edu.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignment
Tue. 01/17	Introduction to the Course: The Italian Difference	
Thu. 01/19	Introduction to Italian Renaissance Philosophy	Garin, <i>Italian Humanism</i> , excerpt
Tue. 01/24	The Dignity of Man	Selections from Salutati, Alberti, Manetti, Ficino, Pico
Thu. 01/26	Machiavelli: Virtue, Fortune, Opportunity	<i>The Prince</i> , Ch. I, II, III, V, VI, VII
Tue. 01/31	Machiavelli: Morality and Politics	<i>The Prince</i> , Ch. XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX
Thu. 02/02	Machiavelli: Italy's Destiny	<i>The Prince</i> , Ch. XXIV, XXV, XXVI
Tue. 02/07	A Synthesis of Utopian Thought: Campanella	<i>The City of Sun</i> , excerpts
Thu. 02/09	Copernicus's Theory and its Aftermath	PowerPoint presentation on Sakai
Tue. 02/14	Bruno: A Burning Thirst for Knowledge	<i>The Heroic Frenzies</i> , excerpts
Thu. 02/16	On-site visit	
Tue. 02/21	Bruno: The Plan of Immanence	<i>Of the Infinite Universe and Worlds and Cause, Principle, and Unity</i> , excerpts
Thu. 02/23	Galilei: The Book of Nature	Letter to Benedetto Castelli; <i>The Assayer</i> , excerpts



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<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
Tue. 02/28	Review	
Thu. 03/02	Midterm Exam	
SPRING BREAK		
Tue. 03/14	What is a Nation?	Chabod, <i>The Idea of Nation</i> , excerpt + PowerPoint presentation on Sakai
Thu. 03/16	Two Types of Transnational Brotherhood: Mazzini vs. Marx	Marx, <i>Communist Manifesto</i> , excerpts; Mazzini, selections from the letters
Tue. 03/21	Principles of Catholic Social Thought	Pope Leo XIII, <i>Rerum Novarum</i> + Anthology on Sakai
Thu. 03/23	Gramsci: The Philosophy of Praxis and the Role of Intellectuals	Anthology from the <i>Prison Notebooks</i> , part I
Tue. 03/28	Gramsci: The Modern Prince	Anthology from the <i>Prison Notebooks</i> , part II
Thu. 03/30	Movie	
Tue. 04/04	Contemporary Reflections on the "General Intellect"	Lazzarato, «Immaterial Labor»; Berardi, «What does Cognitariat Mean?»
Thu. 04/06	Agamben: Homo Sacer, Zoé and Bios	«Form-of-Life» and «Beyond Human Rights»
Tue. 04/11	Agamben: State of Exception and Permanent Crisis	<i>State of Exception</i> , excerpts
Thu. 04/13	Cavarero: Difference Feminism	«Narrating the Self through the Other»
Tue. 04/18	Pulcini: The Care of the World	«Emotional Subjects. For the Care of the Future»
Thu. 04/20	Study day	
Thu. 04/27 (to be confirmed)	Final exam (= take-home paper deadline)	