



**KENNESAW STATE
UNIVERSITY**

SYLLABUS

College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Department of English

FILM 3230: WORLD CINEMA: ECHOES OF ITALIAN NEOREALISM

FALL 2024



Figure 1. Frontispiece of Chris Heckmann's "What is Italian Neorealism in Film? Defining the Style," *StudioBinder*, November 11, 2019, <https://images.app.goo.gl/WeEYsnxRNSLyn2THA>, showing images from *Voyage to Italy* (Roberto Rossellini, 1953), *La Strada* (Federico Fellini, 1954), and *Bicycle Thieves* (Vittorio De Sica, 1948).

Course Information

Class Meeting Times: This course takes place 100% online. We will not meet in class.

Instructor Information

Name: Dr. Sueyoung Park-Primiano

Email: sparkpri@kennesaw.edu

Office Location: EB116

Office Hours: By appointment

Preferred method of communication: KSU E-mail

I will answer emails to both sparkpri@kennesaw.edu and through the D2L email function. However, responses will generally be faster when sent through the @kennesaw.edu email address. M-Th, you will receive a response within 24 hours, if not faster.

Grades and feedback will be posted within 2 weeks of the due date for major assignments and within 1 week of the due date for participation activities.

I will not discuss grades via email or phone. You must schedule an appointment to speak via Teams or Zoom to discuss grades.

I will not respond to emails sent from non-KSU email addresses. Please use your @students.kennesaw.edu email address.

Course Description

Credit Hours: 3

This course is an introduction to the major works of Italian cinema beginning with the groundbreaking years of Neorealism when the nation rose from the ruins of the Second World War to the present day. The poetics of Neorealism includes a series of films that departed dramatically from the traditions of mainstream cinema (both of Hollywood and of those produced under Fascism (1922–1943)). These 'Neorealist' films and their filmmakers (including Luchino Visconti, Roberto Rossellini, and Vittorio De Sica) were enormously influential around the world and had a lasting impact on film technique and style. The review of this landmark film movement will continue by exploring how Italian cinema sought to break away from the Neorealist traditions to capture the changing realities brought about by the economic miracle of the late 1950s and early 1960s and the political turmoil during the so-called Years of Lead in the 1970s. The “nostalgia narrative” of the 1980s and 1990s will also be examined for their emphasis on the cultural uniqueness of the Italian cinema of the past, as well as the post-modern productions of recent years with contemporary Italy being radically transformed by the phenomenon of migration and the crisis of identity.

Course Materials

Required Texts:

- Leavitt, Charles L. *Italian Neorealism: A Cultural History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020) [e-book available from library catalog: <https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=23a22b26-c4ce-335b-9ad6-9ad8ca606349>]
- Scala, Carmela, ed. *New Trends in Italian Cinema: "New" Neorealism* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013) [e-book available from library catalog: <https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=da509ee2-ba7e-35d3-bf01-b88fef155802>]
- Nowell-Smith, Geoffrey, ed. *The Oxford History of World Cinema* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997). [e-book available from library catalog: https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.kennesaw.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=shib&db=nlebk&AN=287585&site=eds-live&scope=site&custid=ken1&ebv=EB&ppid=pp_Cover]
- All other required readings will be available as PDFs or through links on D2L.
- Streams from the Criterion Channel, Kanopy, or other media services may be required.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

- Demonstrate knowledge of the core production of Neorealism
- Comprehend the ways in which Neorealism constituted an alternative mode of practice to that of mainstream cinema (e.g., Hollywood) and the ways in which it rejected the tenets of the cinema of the Fascist era
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connection between Neorealism and its social and historical context
- Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical notions of realism in the cinema and apply these to the films studied on the course
- Comprehend how and why Neorealism ended in the early 1950s and the ways in which its legacy is reflected in Italian and world cinema
- Apply methods of film criticism to analyze specific films
- Learn to use a specific vocabulary set to discuss international cinema
- Learn the methods that are used to implement and expand the cinematic narrative formula
- Learn to analyze a film in terms of narrative, technique, and style

Course Requirements and Assignments

- Attendance and Class Participation: 5%
- Weekly Film and Reading Discussion: 25%
- Critical Film Analysis: 20%
- Midterm Essay Exam (DUE MONDAY, Oct. 7): 25%
- Final Essay Exam (DUE MONDAY, Dec. 9): 25%

Assignment Policies:

Assignments will be accepted through the designated D2L assignment folder only. Assignments submitted through email will not be accepted.

All assignments are automatically submitted through plagiarism detection software, Turnitin. University academic integrity policies apply.

Method of Evaluation:

Attendance and Class Participation (5%): Prompt and active participation is required and will be reflected in your grade. Your participation grade includes completing the lecture, reading, and screening each week on a timely basis as evidenced in the weekly *Film and Reading Discussions*.

Consistent completion of assignments and engagement with course material will improve the final grade. See “Course Policies” below for more information on online attendance.

Film and Reading Discussions (25%): Each week you are to share your reflection and/or close analysis responding to the weekly questions given out in the lecture or on D2L which will practice your analytical and interpretive skills (and which will also prepare you for the longer essays in the exams). You are expected to answer these questions with reference to the specified readings and film or films. In addition, you are also expected to reply to two of your classmates’ posts once you have posted your own. Reflections and responses are to be posted by Sunday of the week in which they were assigned.

Critical Film Analysis (20%): This assignment consists of 2 parts. In both parts, you will analyze an assigned clip from a selected film (TBD) to be made available during week 3.

1. **Shot-by-shot description:** a shot-by-shot description is a written (bullet-pointed list) account of each shot in a particular scene. It should demonstrate that you understand and can identify the various elements of film form. In other words, you should list all the basic and visual elements you see during a shot (e.g. straight cut, long take, tracking shot, close-up, etc.), without using analytic terms (e.g. boring, confused, slow, etc.). During weeks 4–7, you will create a different part of your description (shot count/narrative description, mise-en-scène; cinematography, sound, editing), until the entire description is complete. The completed and revised shot-by-shot description must be submitted to D2L as a single document and will be checked by Turnitin for originality.
2. **Interpretation/Analysis:** a film analysis is an essay in which you will use the formal elements from your shot-by-shot description to determine what a scene means, metaphorically speaking. You should choose 1–2 overarching themes of the assigned scene and thoroughly explore how those themes are visually presented through film form in the scene; then briefly discuss how the theme(s) in the scene relate to the context of the entire film. For each claim you make (e.g. the scene is about the father-son relationship, Ricci and Bruno, respectively, splintering and the father loses his son’s respect), you should use as many elements of film form to back up your claim as is necessary to create an effective argument. Your essay will be graded on clarity, strength of argument, and originality. Since this is an exercise in interpretation, it is perfectly legitimate to highlight the subjective nature of your argument. However, this does not mean that you should offer opinions/conclusions that are not backed by evidence and argument based in the film. You will lose points for vague, generalized descriptions such as “good,” “interesting,” etc. Instead, your challenge is to find words that do justice to the wealth of visual cues in film and their possible interpretations. You should also NOT focus too much on dialogue to locate meaning in the scene; instead, pay attention to the metaphorical uses of mise-en-scène (setting, costume and make-up, properties (i.e. props), lighting, performance (i.e. acting, blocking)); the cinematographic elements (e.g. extreme long shot, long take), editing (e.g. dissolve, graphic match, parallel/crosscut); and sound (e.g. diegetic/non-diegetic, sound bridge, sound overlap) in visually constructing the themes you highlight in your essay.

Your Interpretation/Analysis must be submitted during weeks 8–10 to D2L to be checked by Turnitin for originality.

Midterm Essay Exam (25%): This is a take-home exam consisting of short answer and essay questions.

Final Essay Exam (25%): Like the midterm exam, it will consist of short answer and essay questions covering all readings, screenings, and lectures since the midterm and up to final week.

Grading Rubric

A = Excellent (= 90–100)

This work is comprehensive and detailed, integrating themes and concepts from discussions, lectures, and readings. Writing is clear, analytical, and organized. Arguments offer specific examples and concisely evaluate evidence. Students who earn this grade are prepared for class, synthesize course materials, and contribute insightfully.

B = Good (= 80–89)

This work is complete and accurate, offering insights at general level of understanding. Writing is clear, uses examples properly and tends toward broad analysis. Classroom participation is consistent and thoughtful.

C = Average (= 70–79)

This work is correct but is largely descriptive, lacking analysis. Writing is vague and at times tangential. Arguments are unorganized, without specific examples or analysis. Classroom participation is inarticulate.

D = Unsatisfactory (= 60–69)

This work is incomplete and evidences little understanding of the readings or discussions. Arguments demonstrate inattention to detail, misunderstanding of course material and overlooks significant themes. Classroom participation is spotty, unprepared, and off topic.

F = Failed (= 59 and below)

This grade indicates a failure to participate and/or incomplete assignments.

Grades will be rounded up if they are $>$ or $= .5$ or above. For example, an 89.6 is an A, but 79.2 is a C.

Course Policies

Enrollment Status Statement – Students are solely responsible for managing their enrollment status in a course; non-attendance does not constitute a withdrawal.

Attendance Policy – This course is 100% online. Therefore, attendance will not be recorded “officially.” Attendance will be determined based on active participation in the online class and completion of assignments.

Extensions and Late Work – Extensions are not permitted on any assignment. All work must be submitted on time except in the case of serious illness, medical emergency, or some other compelling mitigating circumstance. Failure to hand in work on time will result in the deduction of one letter grade per day late, including weekends.

Course Technology and Technical Skills – To be successful in this course, you must have access to a computer equipped with the Internet access, Microsoft Office, and either the Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox browser. Safari and Explorer are not compatible with moving image files, including VoiceThread lectures.

You must also possess basic computer skills including the ability to navigate the Internet using your chosen browser, use basic Microsoft Word and PowerPoint functions, access D2L and your KSU email, and send and receive email using each. For training on [KSUMail](#) and [Office 365](#), please refer to the UITS websites.

Netiquette – All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions, and chats. (See [Netiquette Guidelines](#))

Diversity Statement – Kennesaw State University prides itself on offering a premiere, personalized educational experience for leadership and engagement within a diverse nation and world. This educational experience is achieved through recognition and appreciation of the differing backgrounds and experiences reflected within the University community. We firmly believe that sensitivity to diversity, equity, and global interdependence is central to fostering supportive living, learning, and working environments. A welcoming and inclusive climate is critical to attaining Kennesaw State University's research, scholarship, teaching, and engagement goals. The University will engage our students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders in order to achieve an inclusive and welcoming campus community.

For detailed information, visit the [Division of Inclusive Excellence and Diversity](#) page.

What is Plagiarism? – Academic dishonesty is not allowed in any form. Cheating or plagiarism will result in a failing grade. Plagiarism (quoting, presenting, or paraphrasing someone else's ideas as if they were your own without appropriate footnote and bibliographic citation) is a serious academic offence and will result in a grade of F. Do not submit material found on websites or from online sources as your own – you will receive an F. If you do not know how to properly cite sources in an academic paper, notify me and/or the college librarian. In addition, any identified case of academic dishonesty will immediately be reported to the Dean's office for disciplinary action. If you are unaware or uncertain about how to properly cite a particular source, check out the [RCHSS ODE's Plagiarism Resource](#) for more information.

Turnitin – Students agree that by taking this course all required papers and exams may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers and exams will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such assignments. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Films assigned for this class are part of the course, so treat this as a classroom experience when screening on your own. Turn off cell phones and all other portable electronic devices during lecture time and screenings. Watch and listen attentively without multitasking. These films are penetrating and will require your full attention. Take notes on everything you watch as a way to maintain an active engagement with the films. As the film runs, jot down observations or ideas that occur to you. You are advised to keep a weekly screening journal, which will help you prepare for the exams and essay.

Readings are to be completed by the dates listed on the course schedule. Read with a pen or pencil and annotate the text by identifying points that seem important, cross-reference examples from screenings, and pose questions. Be ready to discuss and ask questions online.

Institutional Policies

University Policies – Federal, BOR, & KSU Course Syllabus Policies

Information contained in the links below constitutes the Federal, BOR, and KSU course syllabus policies. These policies are updated on the Academic Affairs Website annually.

[Federal, BOR, & KSU Policies](#)
[Student Resources](#)

Academic Integrity Statement: Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the [Student Code of Conduct](#), as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Section 5c of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the university's policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to university materials, misrepresentation/ falsification of university records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the Department of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (SCAI), which includes either an "informal" resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct's minimum one semester suspension requirement.

Electronic Communication: The University provides all KSU students with an "official" email account with the address "students.kennesaw.edu" or "Kennesaw.view.usg.edu" (in D2L). As a result of federal laws protecting educational information and other data, this is the sole email account you should use to communicate with your instructor or other University officials.

Additional University Policies:

[Confidentiality and Privacy Statement \(FERPA\)](#)
[University — Student Rights Statement](#)
[Ethics Statement](#)
[Sexual Harassment Statement](#)
[Course Accessibility Statement](#)

KSU Student Resources

Information on help and resources available to Kennesaw State University students can be found on the [KSU Student Resources](#) page.

For assistance with writing the exams, the **Writing Center** offers one-on-one sessions "in any subject, at any level, and at any stage of the writing process." I highly recommend scheduling an appointment with the Center where you can expect help with "topic development, thesis construction, and organization," as well as how to "edit and proofread your work successfully." You can schedule and request feedback on your writing face-to-face or online: https://writingcenter.kennesaw.edu/writing_support/help-writers.php.

The ESL Center is another recommended resource for international and non-native English speaking students that offers in-person and online tutoring and feedback for your writing assignments: <https://uc.kennesaw.edu/academicinitiatives/esl/index.php>.

For **Technical Support**, please contact the Student Help Desk at 470-578-3555 or email them at studenthelpdesk@kennesaw.edu.

Course Schedule

This schedule may be modified during the semester to accommodate student and instructional needs. All the readings are online, and all homework is due at the top of the following class.

MODULE 1 (Aug. 13) – Introduction to the course

- Film
- *Ossessione (Obsession)*, Luchino Visconti, 1942)
- Reading
- Christopher Wagstaff, “Appendix 2: Historical Background for Neorealism” in *Italian Neorealist Cinema: An Aesthetic Approach* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2007), 414–419.
 - Mark Shiel, “Introduction: Describing Neorealism” in *Italian Neorealism: Rebuilding the Cinematic City* (New York: Wallflower, 2006), 1–16.
-

MODULE 2 (Aug. 20) – The Origins of Italian Neorealism

- Film
- *La terra trema (The Earth Trembles)*, Luchino Visconti, 1948)
- Reading
- David Gariff, “*The Earth Trembles: An Introduction to Italian Neorealist Cinema*” in *Italian Neorealism: A Cultural History* (University of Toronto Press, 2020), 3–6.
 - Charles L. Leavitt IV, “What Was Neorealism?” in *Italian Neorealism: A Cultural History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020), 14–48.
-

MODULE 3 (Aug. 27) – The Rossellini War Trilogy

- Film
- *Roma, città aperta (Rome, Open City)*, Roberto Rossellini, 1945)
- Reading
- Pierre Sorlin, *Italian National Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 88–107.
 - Mark Shiel, “*Rome, Open City*,” in *Italian Neorealism: Rebuilding the Cinematic City* (New York: Wallflower, 2006), 46–53.

*****Film Clip for Critical Film Analysis Assigned*****

MODULE 4 (Sept. 3) – Rossellini’s Cinema of Liberation

- Film
- *Paisà (Paisan)*, Roberto Rossellini, 1946), excerpts from *Germania Anno Zero (Germany Year Zero)*, Rossellini, 1948)
- Reading
- André Bazin, “Cinematic Realism and the Italian School of the Liberation,” in Bert Cardullo, ed. *Bazin at Work: Major Essays and Reviews from the Forties and Fifties* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 29–50.
 - Millicent Marcus, “National Identity by Means of Montage in Roberto Rossellini’s *Paisan*” in *After Fellini* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 15–38.
-

MODULE 5 (Sept. 10) – Vittorio De Sica’s Social Conscience

- Film • *Ladri di biciclette* (*Bicycle Thieves*, Vittorio De Sica, 1948), excerpts from *Umberto D* (De Sica, 1952)
- Reading • André Bazin, “*Bicycle Thief*” and “*De Sica: Metteur en Scène*,” *What is Cinema? Vol. 2* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 59–76.
- Millicent Marcus, “*De Sica’s Bicycle Thief: Casting Shadows on the Visionary City*,” in *Italian Film in the Light of Neorealism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 54–75.
- Kristen Thompson, “*Realism in the Cinema: Bicycle Thieves*,” in *Breaking the Glass Armor: Neoformalist Film Analysis* (Princeton: Princeton Review Press, 1988), 197–217.
-

MODULE 6 (Sept. 17) – Commedia All’italiana

- Film • *Divorzio all’italiana* (*Divorce Italian Style*, Pietro Germi, 1961); *I soliti ignoti* (*Big Deal on Madonna Street*, Mario Monicelli, 1958)
- Reading • Maggie Günsberg, “*Commodifying Passions: Gender and Consumerism in Commedia all’italiana*,” in *Italian Cinema: Gender and Genre* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 60–96.
- John David Rhodes, “*Divorzio all’italiana*” in Giorgio Bertellini, ed. *The Cinema of Italy* (London: Wallflower, 2004), 113–121.
-

MODULE 7 (Sept. 24) – Modernity and Its Discontents: The Economic Miracle

- Film • *Rocco e i suoi fratelli* (*Rocco and His Brothers*, Luchino Visconti, 1960)
- Reading • Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, “*Rocco and His Brothers*,” in *Luchino Visconti*. Third ed. (London: British Film Institute, c1967, 2003), 15–31.

******First Part (shot-by-shot description) of Critical Film Analysis Due******

MODULE 8 (Oct. 1) – MIDTERM ESSAY EXAM DUE BY MONDAY, OCTOBER 7

MODULE 9 (Oct. 8) – Modernity and Its Discontents: The Second Vital Crisis

- Film • *La dolce vita* (Federico Fellini, 1959); excerpts from *La Strada* (*The Road*, Fellini, 1954) and *Le notti di Cabiria* (*Nights of Cabiria*, Fellini, 1957)
- Reading • Peter Bondanella, “*La dolce vita: The Art Film Spectacular*,” in *The Films of Federico Fellini* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 65–92.
-

MODULE 10 (Oct. 15) – Modernity and Its Discontents: Interior Neorealism

- Film • *L’avventura* (Michelangelo Antonioni, 1960); excerpt from *L’eclisse* (*The Eclipse*, Antonioni, 1962)
- Reading • P. Adams Sitney, *Vital Crises in Italian Cinema: Iconography, Stylistics, Politics* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995), 207–219.
- Sam Rohdie, *Antonioni* (London: British Film Institute, 1990), 1–6, 114–116.

MODULE 11 (Oct. 22) – Modernity and Its Discontents: Poetic Realism

- Film
- *Accatone* (Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1961); excerpts from *Mamma Roma* (Pasolini, 1962) and *La Ricotta* (Curd Cheese, Pasolini, 1963)
- Reading
- Naomi Greene, “Under the Sign of Rimbaud,” in *Pier Paolo Pasolini: Cinema as Heresy* (NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 3–52.
 - Pasolini, “An Epical-Religious View of the World,” *Film Quarterly*, Summer 1965, 31–45.
 - Pasolini, “The Cinema of Poetry,” *Cahiers du cinéma*, No. 6, 35–43.
-

MODULE 12 (Oct. 29) – Revisiting the Past: Regarding Fascism and Sexual Politics

- Film
- *Travolti da un insolito destino nell’azzurro mare d’agosto* (*Swept Away*, Lina Wertmüller, 1974); excerpts from *Il Conformista* (Bernardo Bertolucci, 1970) and *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* (Vittorio De Sica, 1970)
- Reading
- Millicent Marcus, “Wertmüller’s *Love and Anarchy*: The High Price of Commitment,” in *Italian Film in the Light of Neorealism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 313–338.
 - Tania Modleski, “Wertmüller’s *Women Swept Away* by the Usual Destiny,” *Jump Cut*, no. 10–11 (1976), available at: <https://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/onlinessays/JC10-11folder/SweptAwayModleski.html>
-

MODULE 13 (Nov. 5) – Nostalgia and Transition

- Film
- *Nuovo Cinema Paradiso* (Giuseppe Tornatore, 1988); excerpts from *Ladri di saponette* (*The Icicle Thieves*, Maurizio Nichetti, 1989) and *Caro Diario* (*Dear Diary*, Nanni Moretti, 1993)
- Reading
- Millicent Marcus, “Giuseppe Tornatore’s *Cinema Paradiso* and the Art of Nostalgia,” in *After Fellini: National Cinema in the Postmodern Age* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 199–213.
 - Anne M. White and Davide Morena, “Shifting frames of reference, or what Maurizio Nichetti’s *Ladri di saponette/The Icicle Thief* can tell us about watching films on television,” *New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film* 1(3): 179–190.
 - Millicent Marcus, “*Caro Diario* and the Cinematic Body of Nanni Moretti,” in *After Fellini: National Cinema in the Postmodern Age* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 285–300.
-

MODULE 14 (Nov. 12) – The Post-Modern Take: Rediscovering and Reinventing Fascism

- Film
- *La vita è bella* (*Life is Beautiful*, Roberto Benigni, 1997); excerpt from *Malèna* (Giuseppe Tornatore, 2000)
- Reading
- Lawrence Brown, *Serious Humor: Laughter as Lamentation* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 122–132.
 - Sander Gilman, “Is Life Beautiful? Can the Shoah Be Funny” in *World Cinema and the Ethics of Realism* (New York: Continuum, 2011), 108–121.

MODULE 15 (Nov. 19) – The Post-Modern Take: Traumatic Realism–Immigration/Emigration/Conclusion

- Film • *Gomorra* (Matteo Garrone, 2009); excerpts from (*Nuovomondo* (*Golden Door*, Emanuele Crialese, 2006)
- Reading • Fabrizio Cilento, “Saviano, Garrone,*Gomorra*: Neorealism and Noir in the Land of the Camorra,” *Fast Capitalism*, 8:1 (2011), available at:
https://fastcapitalism.uta.edu/8_1/cilento8_1.html
-

*******FINAL ESSAY EXAM DUE BY MONDAY, DEC 9*******

Other Important Dates:

- August 12 (Mon.): First day of classes
October 18 (Fri.): Mid-term grades due
October 25 (Fri.): Last day to withdraw–Receive a W Grade
December 2 (Mon.): Last day of classes