

ITALIAN STUDIES

82-90 Wall Street, 203.432.0595

<http://italian.yale.edu>

M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair

Jane Tylus

Director of Graduate Studies

Millicent Marcus (82-90 Wall St., Rm. 426, 203.432.0599)

Professors Millicent Marcus, Giuseppe Mazzotta, Jane Tylus

Assistant Professor Christiana Purdy Moudarres

Lecturer Serena Bassi

Senior Lectors I Michael Farina, Anna Iacovella

Lectors Simona Lorenzini, Deborah Pellegrino

Affiliated Faculty Paola Bertucci (*History of Science & Medicine*), Howard Bloch (*French*), Jessica Brantley (*English*), Francesco Casetti (*Film & Media Studies*), Virginia Jewiss (*Humanities*), Jacqueline Jung (*History of Art*), Laurence Kanter (*Yale Art Gallery*), Gundula Kreuzer (*Music*), Jessica Peritz (*Music*), David Quint (*English; Comparative Literature*), Ayesha Ramachandran (*Comparative Literature*), Ellen Rosand (*Emerita; Music*), Pierre Saint-Amand (*French*), Christophe Schuwey (*French*), Gary Tomlinson (*Music*)

Visiting faculty from other universities are regularly invited to teach courses in the department.

FIELDS OF STUDY

The Italian Studies department brings together several disciplines for the study of the Italian language and its literature. Although the primary emphasis is on a knowledge of the subject throughout the major historical periods, the department welcomes applicants who seek to integrate their interests in Italian with wider methodological concerns and discourses, such as history, rhetoric and critical theories, comparison with other literatures, the figurative arts, religious and philosophical studies, medieval, Renaissance, and modern studies, and the contemporary state of Italian writing. Interdepartmental work is therefore encouraged and students are accordingly given considerable freedom in planning their individual curriculum, once they have acquired a broad general knowledge of the field through course work and supplementary independent study.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

The department recognizes that good preparation in Italian literature is unusual at the college level and so suggests that students begin as soon as possible to acquire a broad general knowledge of the field through outside reading. Candidates must demonstrate a reading knowledge of a second Romance language, Latin, and a non-Romance language. (German is recommended). Students are reminded that it is difficult to schedule beginning language courses in addition to a normal graduate program and are therefore advised to acquire proficiency in the languages required for the doctoral program before matriculation. Reading knowledge of Latin may be acquired during the course of the first year. The Latin examination must be passed, usually before the beginning of the third term of study, and all language requirements must be fulfilled before the Ph.D. qualifying examination.

Students are required to take two years of course work (as a rule sixteen courses), including two graduate-level term courses outside the Italian department. After consultation with the director of graduate studies (DGS), students who join the graduate program with an M.A. in hand may have up to four courses waived. Students who have had little or no experience in Italy are generally urged to do some work abroad during the course of their graduate program. At the end of the first and second years, students' progress is analyzed in an evaluative colloquium. The comprehensive qualifying examination must take place during the third year of residence. It is designed to demonstrate the student's mastery of the language and acquaintance with the literature. The examination, which is both written and oral, will be devised in consultation with members of the department. In the term following the qualifying examination, the student will discuss, in a session with the departmental faculty, a prospectus describing the subject and aims of the dissertation. Students are admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. upon completion of all predissertation requirements, including the prospectus. Admission to candidacy normally occurs by the end of the sixth term.

Teaching is considered to be an important component of the doctoral program in Italian Studies. Students will be appointed as teaching fellows in the third and fourth years of study. Guidance in teaching is provided by the faculty of the department and specifically by the director of language instruction.

COMBINED PH.D. PROGRAMS

Italian and Film and Media Studies

The Department of Italian Studies also offers, in conjunction with the Film and Media Studies Program, a combined Ph.D. in Italian and Film and Media Studies. For further details, see Film and Media Studies. Applicants to the combined program must indicate on their application that they are applying both to Film and Media Studies and to Italian Studies. All documentation within the application should include this information.

Italian and Renaissance Studies

The Department of Italian Studies also offers, in conjunction with the Renaissance Studies Program, a combined Ph.D. in Italian and Renaissance Studies. For further details, see Renaissance Studies.

MASTER'S DEGREES

Only candidates for the Ph.D. degree will be admitted to the program, but the department will, upon request, offer the M.A. and the M.Phil. degrees to students who have completed the general Graduate School requirements for those degrees (see Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations).

Program materials are available upon request to the Director of Graduate Studies, Italian Studies, Yale University, PO Box 208311, New Haven CT 06520-8311.

COURSES

ITAL 530a, Dante in Translation Simona Lorenzini

A critical reading of Dante's *Divine Comedy* and selections from the minor works, with an attempt to place Dante's work in the intellectual and social context of the late Middle Ages by relating literature to philosophical, theological, and political concerns.

ITAL 577b / MDVL 577b, Women in the Middle Ages Christiana Purdy Moudarres

Medieval understandings of womanhood examined through analysis of writings by and/or about women, from antiquity through the Middle Ages. Introduction to the premodern Western canon and assessment of the role that women played in its construction.

ITAL 610b, USA: Travelers, Immigrants, Exiles from Italy (1920–2001) Giuseppe Mazzotta

The course focuses on the experiences of Italian travelers to North America. Its goal is to promote a critical historical consciousness of the social, political, and cultural reality of the Italian presence in the United States from the end of the First World War to the beginning of the twenty-first century. Students engage with a variety of media: from letters and diaries to memoirs and unpublished documents, from novels and poems to music and films. Through close readings and literary analyses, the course considers the historical and cultural context of each source, eliciting reflections in at least three key areas: national identity, transcultural encounters, and the relevance of the arts for travelers, migrants, and exiles.

ITAL 653b, Baroque Epics Giuseppe Mazzotta

A study in some detail of two outstanding epics of the Italian Baroque period (Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* and Marino's *Adone*). The course stresses such issues as the clash between Christians and Muslims, the continuity of the epic tradition, the retrieval of the language of the lyric, the rethinking of baroque arts and sciences, such as perspectivism, new geographical and astronomical theories, encyclopedism, and contemporary aesthetics of music and art. Guiding idea is the examination of the specific ways in which the two poets represent history, theology, and politics in their texts and, along the way, articulate a theory of modernity.

ITAL 691a or b, Directed Reading Millicent Marcus

ITAL 783a / FILM 779a, Italian Film Ecologies: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow Millicent Marcus

Landscape and the natural environment have never occupied "background" status in Italian film. Given the spectacular visual presence of its terrain – thanks to the relative proximity of mountain chains and the long seacoast – and given the pivotal importance of farming and pasturage in this traditionally agrarian economy, the synergy between the human and natural worlds has played a prominent role in Italian filmmaking since the very inception of the industry. Most recently, two developments have pushed this issue to the forefront of scholarly attention: the advent of ecocriticism, which found one of its earliest and most influential champions in Serenella Iovino, and the establishment of regional film commissions, grassroots production centers that sponsored cinematic works attuned to the specificity of "the local." The course includes study of films that predate our current environmental consciousness, as well as recent films that foreground it in narrative terms. In the case of the older films, which have already attracted a great deal of critical commentary over time, we work to shift our interpretive frame in an "eco-friendly" direction (even when the films' characters are hardly friends of the environment). Among the films considered are *Le quattro volte*, *Il vento fa il suo giro*, *L'uomo che verrà*, *Gomorra*, *L'albero degli zoccoli*, *Riso amaro*, *Red Desert*, *Christ Stopped at Eboli*, and *Il ladro di bambini*. We screen one film a week and devote our seminars to close analysis of the works in question.

ITAL 888b / CPLT 807b / FREN 888b, The Novel of Historical Event: The Nineteenth Century and Beyond Jane Tylus

The seminar moves from the traditional idea of the historical novel to other, often more experimental versions of fictions that engage historical events: war, revolution, plague, genocide. We consider how individual lives intersect with and are changed by historical events, and the extent to which individuals are able to understand how history impacts their lives. Is the course of history controllable or even understandable to its participants and bystanders? Does historical knowledge always arrive too late? Primary texts include Manzoni,

I Promessi Sposi; Balzac, *Le Colonel Chabert*; Flaubert, *L'Education sentimentale*; Verga, *Novelle*; Tomasi di Lampedusa, *Il Gattopardo*; Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!*; Modiano, *Dora Bruder*. There are also readings in the history and theory of the novel, as well as works contextualizing issues of nationalism in the nineteenth century. They include essays/chapters by Georg Lukács, Nelson Moe, Roberto Dainotto, Edward Said, Franco Moretti, Peter Brooks, and others. Prerequisite: reading knowledge of French and/or Italian.

ITAL 946a / CPLT 658a / ENGL 699a / MDVL 946a, Early Modern Ecologies: Representing Peasants, Animals, Labor, Land Jane Tylus

To what extent does writing about the land and depicting landscapes in early modern Europe reflect a new interest in engaging the boundaries between the human and nonhuman? What does it show about the commitment of artists and intellectuals to representing cultures and environments not necessarily their own? And how did writers and artists seek to legitimize their intellectual labors by invoking images of agricultural work? Since antiquity, artists have often chosen to make the countryside and its human and nonhuman denizens symbols of other things: leisure, song, exile, patriotism, erotic sensibilities, anti-urbanism. Early Christianity in turn embraced the desert—and the countryside—as a space for spirituality. We explore these origins and turn to the early modern period, when such interests exploded into poems, novels, plays, and paintings—a period that coincided with new world discoveries and new possibilities for “golden ages” abroad. We read works by Virgil, St. Jerome, Petrarch, Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton, Tasso, Seamus Heaney, and others, and take at least one trip to a local gallery (in New Haven or New York). Finally, we explore recent work in ecocriticism and environmental studies in order to grapple with ancient and early modern understandings of the natural world.

ITAL 999a, Preparing for Doctoral Exams and Prospectus Writing Jane Tylus

The aim of this seminar is to give third-year students the opportunity to work together on the three projects that will occupy them throughout Year 3: the oral comprehensive exam (for early November), the written exam on the three topics lists (for March–April), and the writing of the prospectus, to be defended in September of Year 4. Weekly meetings are run and coordinated by a faculty member in Italian, generally the graduate adviser. Each week of the first nine weeks is devoted to a specific topic on the comprehensive lists requested by the students themselves. Students are in conversation with each other, with the presiding faculty member, and with an additional guest lecturer who is an expert in the areas under discussion. Following the ninth week, there is a dry run of the oral exam. The remaining four weeks are devoted to discussing the composition of the topics lists and to the writing of the prospectus. Informal meetings may continue through the spring to discuss these issues as well. Prerequisite: completion of all other graduate course work (15 credits).