

Wellesley College, Fall Semester 2014  
ITAS 104

The Cities of Italy  
Introduction to Italian Studies  
FIRST YEAR SEMINAR

Sergio Parussa



Course Location: Tue & Fri 11:10 – 12:20 in Jewett Arts Center 372

Office hours: Tue 8:30-9:30 & Wed 1:30-2:30

and by appointment in Founders 224 E

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This seminar is dedicated to the representation of Italian cities in Italian literature, art, and cinema from the Middle Ages to the twenty-first century. By presenting cities as spatial narratives, we will introduce students to some of the most important moments in Italian history and will invite them to examine the representation of urban landscape as a privileged vantage point to understand Italian culture. The seminar is designed to introduce students to the field of Italian Studies and to provide them with a solid background in Italian history and culture.

**Texts:**

The following texts are on sale at the Wellesley Bookstore:

Carlo Levi, *Christ Stopped at Eboli* (1945)

Eduardo De Filippo, *Filumena* (1946)

Natalia Ginzburg, *Family Sayings* (1963)

Copies of the primary texts for the course are available at the Clapp Library.

A package of texts related to the course subject will be available on Sakai or will be distributed in class during the semester.

**Requirements:**

This is a CREDIT/NON COURSE. Students will receive either a CR (credit) or NCR (no credit) as their final grade.

Receiving CR (credit) in the course means that all work -- especially the mid-term exam, the final paper, and the in-class oral presentations -- be of above the C- level.

All ASSIGNMENTS will be given letter grades and must be completed and handed in on time.

The MID-TERM EXAM is in class and FINAL PRESENTATIONS are due by the last day of classes on Tuesday, December 9<sup>th</sup>.

ATTENDANCE is mandatory. Each additional absence after three will affect your final grade.



## Course schedule

### WEEK 1

Tue 9/2 Introduction to the course.  
Italy's Three Capitals: Turin, Florence, Rome.

Fri 9/5 The Invisible City  
Reading: Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities* (1972), pp. 5-23.

### WEEK 2

Tue 9/9 The Ideal City: SFORZINDA, URBINO  
Reading: Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, pp. 32-33.

Fri 9/12 The Ideal City: SFORZINDA, URBINO  
Reading: Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, pp. 32-33.

### WEEK 3

Tue 9/16 The Form of the City: ORTE  
Documentary: Pier Paolo Pasolini & Paolo Brunatto, *The Form of the City* (1973).

Fri 9/26 The Form of the City: ORTE  
Documentary: Pier Paolo Pasolini & Paolo Brunatto, *The Form of the City* (1973).

### WEEK 4

Tue 9/23 The City as History Book: FERRARA  
Reading: Giorgio Bassani, *Five Stories of Ferrara* (1956), "A Night in '43", pp. 164-203.

Fri 9/26 Reading: Giorgio Bassani, *Five Stories of Ferrara* (1956), "The Walk Before Supper," pp. 41-73.

### WEEK 5

Tue 9/30 The City as Language: FLORENCE  
Fri 10/3 Guest Lecturer Professor Francesca Southerden will talk about "Poetic and Linguistic Rivalries: Florence's Three Crowns and the Birth of a New Language for Italy."  
Reading: "Boccaccio, *Life of Dante*; Petrarch, *Fam. XXI.15*."

### WEEK 6

Tue 10/7 The Southern City: MATERA  
Reading: Carlo Levi, *Christ Stopped in Eboli- first half* (1945).

Fri 10/10 Guest Lecturer Professor Daniela Bartalesi-Graf will talk about Carlo Levi, *Christ Stopped in Eboli - second half*.  
Reading: Carlo Levi, *Christ Stopped in Eboli- second half* (1945).

**WEEK 7**

Tue 10/14 **Fall Break - No Class Today**  
Fri 10/17 **Mid-Term Exam**

**WEEK 8**

Tue 10/21 The Southern City: NAPLES  
Reading: Peppino De Filippo, *Filumena* (1946).  
Fri 10/24 Film: Vittorio De Sica, *Marriage Italian Style* (1964).

**WEEK 9**

Tue 10/28 **TANNER CONFERENCE - NO CLASS TODAY**  
Fri 10/31 The Southern City: SANA'A  
Documentary: Pier Paolo Pasolini, *The Walls of Sana'a* (1971).

**WEEK 10**

Tue 11/4 The City as Political Lab: TURIN  
Reading: Alexander Stille, Selections from *Benevolence & Betrayal* (1991), pp. 91-165.  
Fri 11/7 Reading: Primo Levi, *The Periodic Table* (1975), "Iron," pp. 37-49.

**WEEK 11**

Tue 11/11 The City as Political Lab: TURIN  
Reading: Natalia Ginzburg, *Family Sayings - first half*, (1963).  
Fri 11/14 The City as Political Lab: TURIN  
Guest Lecturer Professor David Ward will talk about Natalia Ginzburg, *Family Sayings*.  
Reading: Natalia Ginzburg, *Family Sayings - second half*.

**WEEK 12**

Tue 11/18 **Visit to Special Collections.**  
Fri 11/21 The Mediterranean City: CASTEL DEL MONTE  
Guest Lecturer Professor Flavia Laviosa will talk about "Castel del Monte between History and Legend."

**WEEK 13**

Tue 11/25 The Ancient & The Modern City: ROME  
Reading: Pier Paolo Pasolini, Selections from *Le ceneri di Gramsci* (1957).  
Fri 11/28 **THANKSGIVING BREAK 26-29 NOVEMBER - VO CLASS TODAY**

**WEEK 14**

Tue 12/2 **In-class Presentations.**

Fri 12/5      **In-class Presentations.**

**WEEK 15**

Tue 12/9      **In-class Presentations.**