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HSTR 354.01: Italian Civilization from Dante to Napoleon

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Fall 2015

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HSTR 354 Italian Civilization from Dante to Napoleon

Objectives of the Course

We will survey the main themes of Italian history from Dante to Napoleon, focusing our attention, at the outset, on the reasons for Italy's role as "the first-born among the sons of modern Europe," in Jacob Burckhardt's famous characterization. He thought that Renaissance Italy had been the greatest and most original culture in Western Civilization since Periclean Athens. Then we will turn to an examination of the causes and the process of the country's decline in the early modern period down to the dawn of the nineteenth century. The reasons why countries decline and fall should possess an intrinsic interest for Americans at this crisis-ridden time in our nation's history.

Required Reading

Dante, *The Inferno* (Mentor)
Benvenuto Cellini, *Autobiography* (Penguin)
Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Mentor)
Galileo Galilei, *The Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo* (Doubleday)
Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms* (Penguin)
Giambattista Vico, *On the Study Methods of Our Time* (Cornell)
Carlo Goldoni, *The Venetian Twins/Mirandolina* (Absolute Classics)
Cesare Beccaria, *On Crimes and Punishments* (Bobbs-Merrill)

Examinations and the Paper

Students will write a mid-term examination and a final examination. Both examinations will have mainly an essay format, with some short-answer questions. The mid-term examination will be worth 20 percent of the semester grade, the final examination 40 percent. A ten-page term paper, the subject of which will be determined by each student in consultation with the professor, will be due in class Friday, 6 November. The term paper will be worth 30 percent of the semester grade. Graduate students who are taking the course for graduate credit must write a twenty-page paper in place of the ten-page undergraduate paper. In addition, I will give three unannounced quizzes during the semester. The quizzes will be worth 10 percent of the semester grade.

Required Attendance at the President's Lecture Series

Students will be required to attend one presentation in the President's Lecture Series. On Friday, 18 September, Matt Haimovitz will give a lecture/concert in the Music Recital Hall at 8:00 P.M.: "The Changing Face of Classical Music." An internationally acclaimed cellist, Mr. Haimovitz teaches at McGill University's Schulich School of Music. For students unable to attend the presentation, a film of it will be made available on the Reserve Shelf of the Library.

Lectures and Reading Assignments

Week 1

Monday	31 August	Introduction
Wednesday	2 September	Medieval Italy
Friday	4 September	Dante

Week 2

Monday	7 September	Labor Day holiday
Wednesday	9 September	<i>The Inferno</i> (Discussion)
Friday	11 September	Giotto (Slide Lecture with Music)

Week 3

Monday	14 September	Humanism: Petrarch
Wednesday	16 September	Humanism: Boccaccio
Friday	18 September	The Renaissance: An Overview

Week 4

Monday	21 September	Renaissance Literature
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Wednesday	23 September	The Art of the Renaissance: The <i>Quattrocento</i> (Slide Lecture with Music)
Friday	25 September	The Art of the Renaissance: The <i>Cinquecento</i> (Slide Lecture with Music)
Week 5		
Monday	28 September	The New Man: Castiglione and Cellini
Wednesday	30 September	<i>Autobiography</i> (Discussion)
Friday	2 October	The Invasions of Italy
Week 6		
Monday	5 October	Machiavelli
Wednesday	7 October	<i>The Prince</i> (Discussion)
Friday	9 October	The Borgias as a Symbol of the Italian Renaissance
Week 7		
Monday	12 October	Mannerism (Slide Lecture with Music)
Wednesday	14 October	The Protestant Reformation in Italy
Friday	16 October	The Catholic Counter-Reformation in Italy
Week 8		
Monday	19 October	Review
Wednesday	21 October	Mid-term Examination
Friday	23 October	The Spanish Domination: To the Thirty Years' War
Week 9		
Monday	26 October	<i>The Cheese and the Worms</i> (Discussion)

Wednesday	28 October	Italy in the Thirty Years' War
Friday	30 October	Bernini and Baroque Art in Italy (Slide Lecture with Music)
Week 10		
Monday	2 November	Galileo and Italian Science in the Seventeenth Century
Wednesday	4 November	<i>The Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo</i> (Discussion)
Friday	6 November	Italy in the Eighteenth Century
Week 11		
Monday	9 November	Giambattista Vico, <i>On the Study Methods of Our Time</i> (Discussion)
Wednesday	11 November	Veterans Day holiday
Friday	13 November	Italy and the Grand Tour
Week 12		
Monday	16 November	Giovanni Battista Piranesi (Slide Lecture with Music)
Wednesday	18 November	Venice in the Eighteenth Century
Friday	20 November	Eighteenth-Century Venetian Art (Slide Lecture with Music)
Week 13		
Monday	23 November	Carlo Goldoni, <i>The Venetian Twins, Mirandolina</i>
Wednesday	25 November	Thanksgiving holiday
Friday	27 November	Thanksgiving holiday
Week 14		
Monday	30 November	Italy and the Enlightenment

Wednesday 2 December Cesare Beccaria, *On Crimes and Punishments*

Friday 4 December The French Revolution

Week 15

Monday 7 December Italy and the French Revolution

Wednesday 9 December Napoleone Buonaparte

Friday 11 December Conclusions and Review

Final Examination: 3:20-5:20 Monday, 14 December