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CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

SO/CU300 - Reading Milan and Italian Cities: Place-making and Cultural Resources

Prof. SILVIA MAZZUCOTELLI SALICE/PROF. PIETRO CUOMO/PROF. DAVIDE CUMAN

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to introduce students to urban studies and - more broadly - to the interactions and crossovers between culture and the city.

We will examine historical, theoretical, and practical issues regarding: 1) the urban post-industrial turn (the rise of creative industries; the setting up of cultural quarters; the importance of art and culture in place-making); 2) key social transformation/processes taking place in post-industrial cities (gentrification, creolisation, festivalisation, artification etc.); 3) urban cultures (artistic subcultures; creative class, cultural intermediaries and hipsters); 4) creative industries (fashion, design, food, advertising etc.)

To address these topics, a body of literature on creative cities will be surveyed and, in addition to the theoretical contents, the course will envisage sessions of urban observation. Field teaching is, in fact, an integral part in the study of the urban world: it gives students an opportunity to understand the real-world situations and to supplement what they have learnt from the lectures; but it is also a concrete opportunity to develop a new, socially and culturally sensitive, professionalism, able to analyse the forces that drive cities' physical, social and economic change and to identify urban trends in people's lifestyle.

Since we are mostly urban dwellers, special attention will be paid to what we can learn from our experiences in Milan, a place that, as many other post-industrial cities, is facing the challenge of using cultural resources to re-position itself in a culturally and economically more diversified space.

LEARNING GOALS

The learning goals of the course are:

- a. To understand how city development is shaped by culture;
- b. To introduce students to different techniques of urban observation;
- c. To help students identify, understand and explain urban issues;
- d. To deepen knowledge about Milan.

METHOD OF TEACHING

Seminar with group activities and field trips.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS



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Students are expected to:

- a. Regularly attend class sessions and field trips;
- b. Be actively in the learning process: take part in classroom discussions and field trips;
- c. Read the assigned papers before the lectures;
- d. Deliver one group assignments and present it to the class;
- e. Pass a final Test.

Participation and Attendance Policy (a; b; c)

This course is expected to be highly interactive. Students are expected to proactively contribute to class discussion. As a consequence, Students' participation will be assessed in terms of active and meaningful involvement in class discussions and group activities. Note that participation is not merely class attendance, although you must be in class in order to participate! I do take notice of participation in our class discussions. I also recognize that emergencies, illness etc. may cause you to miss the occasional class. If you are unable to attend, it is your responsibility to obtain any notes from your colleagues and communicate with your team members for group assignments outside of class.

Group Assignment (d)

In order foster cooperative learning and in-depth knowledge of the city of Milan, students will be responsible for participating in a group work. Each group will consist of 4-5 students; the final product will be a video that each group will present at the end of the semester.

Final Test (e)

The final test consists of a written exam with six open questions. The six open questions of the written test will be of equal weight, evaluated with a score from 0 (in case of no answer) to 5 (in case of unexceptionable answer). The evaluation is made considering the number of responses, their relevance and completeness, the appropriate use of specific terminology, the clarity of the exposition, the reasoned and coherent structuring of the discourse, the ability to identify conceptual links and open questions.

CREDITS

6 ECTS

GRADING

Students will be evaluated on their class participation, group assignments and in-class presentation, and final test. The final grade for the course will be calculated based on following distribution:

Attendance + class participation	20 % of final grade
Group assignment + class presentation	40 % of final grade
Final Test	40 % of final grade



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COURSE READINGS AND MATERIALS

All readings, guided questions to aid readings and lecture slides will be available on Blackboard (<http://blackboard.unicatt.it>).

INSTRUCTOR BIO

Silvia Mazzucotelli Salice (born February 1981, Italy) is currently Lecturer of Cultural Sociology at the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences, Università Cattolica of Milan. She is also a member of the steering committee of The research centre Modacult. Her studies are primarily concerned with the interplay of art and urbanities. To date she has found public space a rich site for sociological inquiry. She is author of articles and international academic papers on culture and art-led regeneration processes and on the use of art as a tool toward urban regeneration. She has also a sustained interest in the relationship between art worlds and craft worlds. She is member of the Steering Committee of the MA in Communication for Creative Industries.

Pietro Cuomo (born July 1982, Italy), is currently an history and geography teacher in a private school but he is also an experienced populizer: after his PhD thesis regarding the relationship between political power and public space, he devoted himself to the tourism field, working with Art in the City Milano – a local cultural association – creating urban itineraries and art experiences for private groups and companies. He also co-created the first chatbot used in a Museum – the “Chatbot Adventour” for the House Museums of Milan. Moreover, he is involved in divulgation projects like “Storia e Narrazione” (lit. “History and Narrative” a project regarding history based theatrical reading).

Andrea Davide Cuman (born March 1982, Italy), is currently a lecturer on Digital communication and Social media, Adjunct professor in Digital and data storytelling for UCSC and researcher at OssCom. He is also partner of Studiolabo, the communication agency which founded FuoriSalone.it and Brera Design District, where he manages international relationships related to Milan’s design week and designs digital communication formats. After his PhD thesis regarding urban space and mobile media, specifically within the context of Milan’s Design Week, he is primarily concerned by the interplay between digital technologies and urban spaces. He has conducted research on urban festivals and Out Of Home communication, co-authored a documentary titled ‘Milan Design Capital’ on the relation between design and the city and has been guest lecturer for different courses on these topics.

EMAIL ADDRESS

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