Interpreting the Past: An Experience of Rome
(HON 455)

Dr. Federico Pacchioni

The myth of Rome has had a lasting and broad impact on Western civilization over the centuries. This course is a study of the cultural themes and artistic patterns that spring from antiquity and have been reinterpreted during the Renaissance, the Romantic period, and modern times, across artistic media and cultural traditions. This course integrates personalized projects with visits to the Eternal City’s most representative museums and archeological sites, an overview of its ancient and contemporary urban landscape, encounters with artists and artisans, and direct experience of the city’s traditions.
Times takes all and gives all... it is the father of truth, its mother is our mind.
— Giordano Bruno

Past things shed light on future ones; the world was always of a kind; what is and will be was at some other time; the same things come back, but under different names and colours; not everybody recognizes them, but only he who is wise and considers them diligently.
— Francesco Guicciardini

The freedom in walking lies in not being anyone; for the walking body has no history, it is just an eddy in the stream of immemorial life.
— Frédéric Grow

Course format
In this travel/study course you will spend two weeks in Rome during the interterm period. Faculty and guides knowledgeable about this city will offer tours, museum visits, and cultural and artistic outings. At the center of this course is a self-designed project that examines a specific aspect of Rome. You will closely coordinate your project with me and take advantage of peer input from Italian university students in Rome.

Rules of the Road
1. No project will be accepted after the day on which it is due.
2. Attendance will be taken at the beginning and the end of all formal group activities. For each missed activity, your final grade will be dropped half a letter grade. Also, students are expected to be ready for any course-related departures at least 5 minutes before the planned departure time. Activities missed because you arrived after the class has departed are treated the same as if you skipped those activities altogether.

Course Materials
Required:
• Students must acquire physical or digital copies of all their research sources before leaving for Italy (see bibliography assignment below)
• Rick Steves, Rome (Avalon Travel: 2018): buy new because it contains a folding map.

Participation Grade
This portion of your grade is based on my observations of the following:
• Participate punctually at all travel class orientation group and individual and pre-departure meetings.
• Respectfully collaborate with your group leader, guides, partners, collaborators, staff (communicating any problem in advance, relating to them from the understanding that they are working with you and not for you, and that this is a rigorous academic experience and not a vacation).
• Constructive support of your classmates’ learning and overall well-being by encouraging their enthusiasm and engagement at all times, and looking out for their best interest during Chapman and non-Chapman events.
• Maintaining an enthusiastic and productive mood during all class excursions and events, even in the face of uncomfortable and challenging conditions.
• Demonstration of openness and the ability to effectively adjust and relate to Rome’s unique social norms, cultural values, cuisine, urban layout, walking community, and climate.
You are encouraged to approach your professor regularly to receive feedback on your ongoing performance.

THE PROJECT’S FOUR PHASES

The course orbits around a central project organized in four phases occurring before, during, and after your stay in Rome:
1. During the last months of the fall semester, you will select a meaningful and feasible focus, develop a proposal packet (including a rationale, maps, and bibliography) in consultation with me.
2. You will then prepare an annotated bibliography before departure that will enable you to make the most of your research time in Rome.
3. During your stay in Rome, you will engage in field research and develop your project idea and method with the support of local university students and me.
4. Upon return, you will have about one week to complete and submit your project.

STEP 1: Choosing a Focus and Assembling the Proposal Packet
(during the fall semester, packet due by December 1)

The project can take one of three main forms: an argumentative essay, a narrative essay, or an artistic project (e.g., video essay, fiction/script, performance, etc.). In consultation me, you will decide the best genre to document and elaborate your research and experience.

Below is a generic list of some of the areas of investigation that your experience in Rome can easily accommodate; however, the list is not comprehensive and is simply meant to stimulate brainstorming. In choosing your focus, you are strongly encouraged to seek your own personal connection and to engage in conversation with me early on. Each of you should seek to explore a topic, issue, or question that relates to a central theme in your professional and/or personal trajectory. By focusing on a project that is relevant to you, the course becomes a powerful opportunity to expand your knowledge, ideas and possibilities. *You can also choose to work in collaboration with a classmate; however, this option must be discussed and approved by me well in advance.

Areas of investigation, some ideas:
1. How does an urban site or structure change function across time? (see list below)
2. How does an urban site or structure change symbolic meaning across time? (see list)
3. How did specific urban sites inspire literary and/or cinematographic works? (see list)
4. How does the myth of the foundation of Rome appear in specific places and architecture in Rome?
5. What can artisanal traditions teach us about the relationship between the past and the present?
6. How do food production practices reflect anthropological conditions and changes across time?
7. What are the constants and/or variables of multiculturalism in Rome down through the ages and today?
8. What is the function of Rome and its myth in the work of artists of yesterday and today? (see list)
9. What are the most effective museum curatorial practices in contemporary Roman museums?
10. How do street art and graffiti reflect contemporary issues and needs?
11. What can Roman sites and buildings tell us about the significance ascribed to legendary beasts and/or plants?
12. What is the intersection between different levels and layers of the city (subterranean city, subway, etc.)?
13. How are powerful women of Rome’s past represented in specific sites and palaces?
14. What traces of the Fascist Regime and/or WWII can be found in today’s Rome?
15. How are traditions passed from one generation to another? What are the potentials and challenges of family traditions in today’s global economy?
16. What are the functions of Rome’s traditional festivities?

Possible topics/sites of exploration:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELIGION</th>
<th>ARTS</th>
<th>MISCELLANEA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Early Christianity</td>
<td>• Railroad stations in Rome</td>
<td>• The music and opera buildings of Rome</td>
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<td>• Church and Power</td>
<td>• Mussolini’ myth</td>
<td>• Curatorial approaches in historical museums</td>
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<td>• Emperors and Popes</td>
<td>• Reuse of historical monuments</td>
<td>• Filmmakers in Rome</td>
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<td>• St. Peter’s Basilica</td>
<td>• The neighborhoods of Rome</td>
<td>• Foreign writers in Rome</td>
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<td>• Baroque Churches of Rome</td>
<td>• Military memorials in Rome</td>
<td>• American film productions in Rome</td>
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<td>• Castel Sant’Angelo</td>
<td>• Markets of Rome</td>
<td>MISCELLANEA</td>
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<td>• SPQR</td>
<td>• Il Monte dei Cocci</td>
<td>• Italy’s Unification</td>
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<td>• Commemorative columns and arches of Rome</td>
<td>• Cemeteries in Rome</td>
<td>• Controversial monuments</td>
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<td>• The Obelisks of Rome</td>
<td>• Public parks in Rome</td>
<td>• WWII</td>
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<td>• The Colosseum</td>
<td>• Governmental buildings in Rome</td>
<td>• Women in ancient Rome</td>
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<td>• Divinities</td>
<td>• The historic Jewish quarters of Rome</td>
<td>• Immigration issues and integration.</td>
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<td>• Roman mythology</td>
<td>• The medieval walls of Rome</td>
<td>• Animals in Rome</td>
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<td>• Sexuality in Ancient Rome</td>
<td>ARTS</td>
<td>• Roman cuisine</td>
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<td>PLACES</td>
<td>• Caravaggio</td>
<td>• Bakeries</td>
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<td>• The piazzas in Rome</td>
<td>• Michelangelo</td>
<td>• Graffiti</td>
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<td>• The bridges of Rome</td>
<td>• Bernini</td>
<td>• Students movement and occupied spaces</td>
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<td>• The Tiber</td>
<td>• Fascist art and architecture</td>
<td>• Private villas</td>
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<td>• Subway systems of Rome</td>
<td>• Italian high fashion in Rome.</td>
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<td>• Botanic gardens of Rome</td>
<td>• Cinecittà</td>
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<td>• Roman streets</td>
<td>• Film locations.</td>
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<td>• Waterworks and fountains in Rome</td>
<td>• Curatorial approaches in art museums</td>
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<td>• Bookstores and libraries in Rome</td>
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The packet: proposal, maps and bibliography
Regardless of your project final format, you will start by putting together a one-page project
Individual conference with professor Pacchioni
During finals week, we will schedule a face-to-face meeting to talk about your proposed project idea, consider possible adjustments, and better prepare for your work while in Rome.

STEP 2: Developing the Annotated Bibliography

You will submit a fully annotated bibliography by the beginning of the program in Rome via email. The Annotated Bibliography should include a brief synopsis of each source and an explanation of why it might be useful for the project. Of course, this is just a tentative list—students will undoubtedly add and delete sources as the project progresses.

STEP 3: Engaging in Research and Development in Rome

During your stay in Rome you will engage in several intercultural workshops involving a few Italian university students.

• The first workshop is a Think Tank, an introduction and brainstorming session focusing on yourself and your project. This group will be made up of one Italian student and a few of your fellow classmates. The purpose of this first meeting is for others in your group to have an opportunity to become familiar with what you are working on and looking for, and to establish a student support network for your research in Rome. For this meeting you need to prepare a short introduction and description of yourself and your project. You will create a communication network to stay in touch with your student support group and Italian student during your stay. Have your best contact information ready to share with the group.

• The second and third workshops will be informal Coffee-Chat-Check-Ins already scheduled for you. During these times, you will come together with your support group and share updates and receive assistance on your ongoing research and project.

• The forth and last meeting is a workshop presentation, a moment at the end of your stay to present your work and receive additional feedback. You will be asked to talk about the process that you have undergone during your research in Rome, any directions that you might have tested, and the evolution of your project up until this point. This will be an opportunity to have a dialogue about your project, try it out, and receive feedback from the entire student group.

* It’s highly recommended beginning to work on a rough draft of the project during the stay in Rome. Beginning the actual writing process at that time can help tremendously in capturing fresh ideas, clarifying aims, and identifying potentials gaps. Your rough draft will be due at the end of your stay.

STEP 4: Completing and submitting the Project

Depending on the nature and genre of your chosen project, you will follow one of the approaches below:
• **An Argumentative Essay:** you will research and support a thesis linked to a chosen Roman issue or theme. This will be an essay of penetrating theoretical import, using methodologies that are comparative, thematic, interdisciplinary or cross-cultural, and pointing to a contribution in the field of cultural studies or related fields. The essay will enter into a dialogue with the scholarly voices selected during the annotated bibliography assignment and additional sources discovered during the trip. **Format:** 12–15 pages plus a works cited page (MLA citation style), double-spaced with one-inch margins, 12-point Times New Roman font.

• **A Narrative:** you will tell your personal story of researching and experiencing a chosen Roman issue or theme. This first person essay, reflective in nature, is characterized by self-awareness of emotional and intellectual and even spiritual responses to experiences and discoveries. These essays are anecdotal, experiential, and personal, allowing you to express yourself in a sincere and, quite often, moving way. The narrative will report your journey through the city as well through the literature chosen during the annotated bibliography assignment, with other voices and sources acting as a sort of travel companions. It is highly recommended to keep a journal for this assignment. **Format:** 20-25 pages, plus the bibliography page (MLA style), double-spaced with one-inch margins, 12-point Times New Roman font.

• **Artistic Project + Reflection Paper:** Students with already strong background and skills in a specific artistic medium (advanced control of the medium’s conventions and techniques) can discuss the possibility of a project documenting and elaborating their research through their artistic medium. This project requires a thorough integration between the research and creative component, where the former supports the latter and the latter fuels the former. The student can choose to work in video or written media (various media are also possible, but you need to ask the professor for specific directions). Furthermore, the final product will be accompanied by a 3-4 pages informal critical reflection paper elaborating on the intellectual ramifications of your creative work vis-à-vis previously and newly selected bibliography. *Submission criteria: Video option:* The final product must be recorded and submitted in CD, DVD, or web transfer. *Written option:* This can be a polished and completed shorter piece of creative writing or the draft of a longer piece.

Upon return, you will have the opportunity to schedule an appointment or conference call with Dr. Pacchioni to discuss any final questions before submitting your project.

**Grading**

- Project: Proposal (e.g., proposal, maps, and bibliography) 10%
- Project: Annotated Bibliography 10%
- Project: 2 Presentations during Intercultural Workshop 10%
- Project: Complete Product (rough and final draft) 50%
- Participation Grade 20%
Learning Objectives

Course Learning Outcomes

• Students will become familiar with the most important sites and neighborhoods of Rome and their function and significance.
• Students will develop their ability to plan and pursue interdisciplinary research in a foreign context, including presenting and discussing their research project to an Italian university student and integrating feedback received into their project.
• Students will develop familiarity with various periods of Roman history, culture, and urban development, as well as with the significance of the myth of Rome in Romantic, Renaissance, and modern times.
• Students will learn about the multiculturalism of ancient and modern Rome as expressed through various artistic forms, artisan traditions, and food practices.
• Students will understand the nuances of the process of preservation and reinterpretation of cultural heritage through contemporary art and artisanal traditions.
• Students will improve their ability to adapt to and live in this European city and, more generally, get the most out of any travel/study activity in another country.

Honors Program Learning Outcomes:

Upon completing a course in the University Honors Program students will have:

a. obtained a starting point for integrative exploration of the development of cultures and intellectual achievements through a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives;

b. sharpened their ability to critically analyze and synthesize a broad range of knowledge through the study of primary texts and through engagement in active learning with fellow students, faculty, and texts (broadly understood);

c. understood how to apply more integrative and interdisciplinary forms of understanding in the advancement of knowledge and in addressing complex challenges shaping the world;

d. developed effective communication skills.
University Policy

Student Code of Conduct and Expulsion. Faculty have the authority to remove a student from their course, which would mean that the student could be sent home, as well as be given a failing grade. If a student's behavior violates the conduct or academic integrity policies of the University, faculty may bring forth charges that could lead to academic probation or expulsion. Faculty is authorized to make this immediate decision. If expelled from the travel course, forfeiture of overseas housing, meals, excursions, transportation and all things related to travel courses might occur. The student is then sent home at their own expense and the additional expense is charged to their Chapman account.

Students with Disabilities. In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services. If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow the proper notification procedure for informing your professor(s). This notification process must occur more than a week before any accommodation can be utilized. Please contact Disability Services at (714) 516-4520 or visit www.chapman.edu/students/student-health-services/disability-services if you have questions regarding this procedure, for more information, or to make an appointment to discuss and/or request potential accommodations based on documentation of your disability. Once formal approval of your need for an accommodation has been granted, you are encouraged to talk with your professor(s) about your accommodation options. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

Chapman University Academic Integrity Policy. Students must be aware that any form of cheating and/or plagiarism (i.e., copying another’s work or failure to appropriately attribute sources) will subject the student in question to a failing grade and possible dismissal from the university. Students who may be confused about Chapman University’s policy regarding academic integrity should immediately consult with the instructor and the Office of the Dean of Students.

Equity and Diversity. Chapman University is committed to ensuring equity and diversity. Students and professors are reminded to show respect at all times as outlined in Chapman’s Harassment and Discrimination Policy: http://tinyurl.com/CUHarassment-Discrimination. Any violations of this policy should be discussed with the professor or the Dean of Students and/or otherwise reported in accordance with this policy.

Useful Info

Emergency Contact
I ask you to store on your cellphone the following "in case of Emergency" numbers. Please list these numbers under the name "ICE" which is the international abbreviation for in case of Emergency.

- Emergency police number (+39) 113 and ambulance (+39) 118.
- Federico Pacchioni (+1 9404355613).
- In case you can’t reach me, call: Carolina Ciampaglia (+39 3493941975) and, during the day, Italiaidea main phone (+39 0669941314).
- Travel Care Italy (+39) 345.6122.582 (http://www.travelcareitaly.com/). This is a service for US students in Italy accepting most insurances and affiliated with the hospital Cristo Re.