# Contemporary History (Undergraduate Degree in Communication and Society)

## Prof. Paolo Colombo; Prof. Gioachino Lanotte

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The first part of the course *(Prof. Paolo Colombo)* is intended to provide tools useful for analysing the changes which took place between the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, focusing specifically on the links between cultural phenomena, social transformations and political events.

Through the historiographical use of the traditional media (books and newspapers, cinema, television, radio and musical media), the second part of this course *(Prof. Gioachino Lanotte)* aims to provide tools useful for analysing the main historical-social transformations of the second half of the 20th century, focusing particularly on the history of Italy from the post-war period to the present day

*Knowledge and understanding:*

At the end of the course, students will have gained knowledge and competences necessary to navigate in the historical development of the contemporary age and to interpret crisis and development factors, connecting them not only to specific events but also to the deeper dynamics that transform mentality, culture and social discourse.

*Ability to apply knowledge and understanding:*

This knowledge should also facilitate students’ access to further history courses in the undergraduatedegree programme and, possibly, to the more specialised ones in the graduate degree programme. This knowledge will enable students to design research projects of higher level; it will also support any form of professional activity that involves the ability to understand the developmental dynamics of human communities, both in the more strictly political forms and in those of the broadly understood social, economic and cultural sphere.

*Autonomy of judgement, communication skills and ability to learn:*

Students will be able to manage historical information and data useful to form autonomous judgement, interpretations and associations with implications of a social, political, economic, juridical, cultural and collective psychology nature. They will be able to communicate both the information and data they have mastered along with the associated problems, to both specialists and non-specialists. They will have developed learning abilities and intellectual coordination of the topics covered in the course, enabling them to undertake further studies with a high degree of autonomy.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Part 1: *“Amid storms of steel”: conflicts and transformations between two centuries.*

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* 19th century innovations.
* The advent of mass society and the groundings of democracy.
* The conditions for the creation of US power.
* The Italian unification.
* The cultural and political conditions of the turn of the century.
* 20th century innovations.
* Totalitarianism.
* The Second World War.

Part 2*: History of the Italian Republic through the media*

– Fascism and war: propaganda;

– The nation “divided”: radio;

– The birth of the Republic and the Reconstruction: cinema;

– Italy and the first “Cold War”: the press;

– The social transformations of the 1950s: songs;

– The Italian “miracle”: television;

– From the “centre-left” to youth protests: magazines, publishing industry, and class communication;

– Musical culture between young people’s identity and political communication in the 1970s;

– The crisis of the “first republic”: fiction;

– Italy today: the Web and History.

***READING LIST***

In addition to lecture notes, exam preparation requires the following:

– To revise the basics of Contemporary History (the 19th and 20th centuries), the following text is advised:

G. Sabbatucci-V. Vidotto, *Il mondo contemporaneo,* Laterza, Rome-Bari, 2019

– To reinforce one’s knowledge of the basic History of Republican Italy, the following text is advised:

G. Vecchio-P. Trionfini, *Storia dell’Italia repubblicana (1946-2018),* Monduzzi, Bologna (latest edition).

**Lesson notes strongly support the readings listed above** and also exonerate attending students from studying one of the four texts below,which is compulsory for non-attending students.

G. Lanotte, *Mussolini e la sua “Orchestra”. Radio e musica nell'Italia fascista,* Prospettiva Editrice, Civitavecchia, 2016.

I. Piazzoni, *Storia delle televisioni in Italia. Dagli esordi alle web tv,* Carocci, Rome, 2014

P. CARUSI - G. Lanotte, *Cantagiro! Storia e musica di un decennio fra tradizione e modernità (1962-1972), Le Monnier, Milan, 2023*.

G. Lanotte, *Il “quarto fronte”. Musica e propaganda radiofonica nell’Italia liberata (1943-1945),* Morlacchi, Perugia, 2012.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will mainly be taught – with no obstructing conditions – through lectures; experts will give talks on special topics and cycles of practical exercises will be carried out. Depending on the number of students attending, there may be individual or group research projects. In the second part of the course, the main instrument of study will be audio-visual sources. There may also be expert speakers from the world of culture and the media. Further support materials may be made available on the course Blackboard page.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students’ learning outcomes are assessed in an oral exam. The oral test may be preceded by a written test immediately preceding, consisting of closed questions (multiple choice). In this case, access to the oral exam will depend on passing the preliminary written test. All the information about it will be communicated in time through the Blackboard and web pages of the lecturer.

Only *attending* students may take a written test at the end of the course, aimed at assessing the knowledge they acquired during the year.

*Assessment criteria:*

Questions will be aimed at ascertaining the candidates’ ability to express themselves dialectically, with accuracy and relevance, as well as their ability to demonstrate mastery of the chronological sequence of events. Assessment will take into consideration the pertinence of answers, appropriate use of specific terminology, reasoning and coherent structuring of argumentation, as well as students’ ability to identify conceptual links and unresolved issues.

Students will be examined - with no obstructing conditions - by a Commission whose President is the Professor holding the chair. The mark is out of 30. A passing mark is equal to or above 18/30. The maximum mark is 30/30. The Commission may decide to award deserving students with a *‘cum laude’*.

Further information or clarifications in this regard will be provided by the lecturer during the course and the answers to the most frequently asked questions are available in the ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ (FAQ) section on the teacher’s webpage.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Although not mandatory, attendance is strongly recommended.

Material useful for attending the course and preparing for the exam will be made available online on the Blackboard page of the course.

Erasmus students who need specific clarifications, after having previously consulted with the Faculty representatives for the Erasmus project, can contact the lecturer by sending a specific email clarifying the nature of their requests.

*Prerequisites*

The course requires a basic preparation on the essential features of 19th-20th century history (as provided by a course of upper secondary studies) together with students’ ability to chronologically navigate among the main political events.

Students are also expected to demonstrate curiosity and intellectual interest in the most recent historical and political events that are the core of this discipline. Therefore, students should, on one hand, behave proactively (strongly recommended) in order to bridge any past gaps in course attendance or thanks to individual study and, on the other hand, to consolidate their own preparation throughout the academic year.

Further information can be found on the lecturer’s webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.