



Italian Cultural Lineages (Toronto Italian Studies)

Jonathan White

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In *Italian Cultural Lineages*, Jonathan White seeks answers to the elusive questions: what is Italian culture and what is the Italian identity? By tracing Italian life and art through several themes - viewing and spectatorship, fantasy, passion, justice, reputation, and lifestyles - White offers new ways of perceiving an ancient cultural tradition in the twenty-first century. In doing so, he challenges readers to discern rich poetic seams that bind together his varied subject matter.

Italian Cultural Lineages is primarily concerned with factors that unify Italians, however geographically dispersed they may be. Drawing on extensive archival and historical research, White shows how oftentimes Italian cultural traditions that appear to be extinct are, in fact, enduring - pushed out of the mainstream or submerged at some given point in history, only to re-surface and take on new meanings at a later date. Other, more marginal currents might disrupt and fragment Italian identity, politically and socially. However, White proposes that the challenge to Italy in these new and difficult lessons in tolerance has the potential to produce a much stronger culture, primed to welcome the marginal into an expanded spirit of all that counts as Italian. Ideally suited to course use, and written with great lucidity, *Italian Cultural Lineages* will prove fascinating to students, academics, and general readers alike.

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