

The Department of French & Italian presents
a PhD Dissertation Defense

Antonio Marvasi

Le discours critique européen dans les revues à l'époque de la crise de l'esprit

12:00 noon, Tuesday, May 13, 2025, on Zoom, in French. <https://iu.zoom.us/j/85829152029>.
For more information, please contact Prof. Nicolas Valazza (nvalazza@iu.edu) or Prof. Oana Panaïté (opanaite@iu.edu).

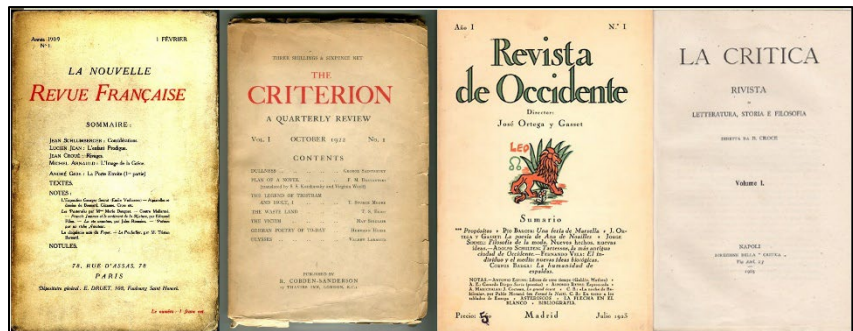
This dissertation examines the evolution of European critical discourse in literary and cultural journals during the interwar period, a time marked by profound ideological and artistic transformations. The study focuses on how intellectuals engaged with the so-called "crisis of the mind," a term coined by Paul Valéry to describe Europe's post-World War I existential and cultural upheaval.

By analyzing key European periodicals such as *La Nouvelle Revue Française* (France), *The Criterion* (UK), *La Critica* (Italy), and *Revista de Occidente* (Spain), this research explores how journals became platforms for intellectual debate, reflecting and shaping modernist thought. The study highlights how the boundaries between literature, politics, and philosophy blurred, leading to the politicization of literary discourse.

One of the dissertation's central themes is the emergence of the European intellectual as a figure navigating between aesthetic and ideological commitments. The analysis traces the impact of thinkers such as Benedetto Croce, José Ortega y Gasset, and T.S. Eliot, who sought to reconcile tradition with modernity while responding to the challenges posed by nationalism, totalitarianism, and the crisis of European identity.

The work also examines the reception of Russian and English literature in the context of the "crisis of the novel," particularly the influence of Dostoevsky and Conrad. This literary crisis, intertwined with the broader cultural debate, reveals a fundamental tension: should literature embrace radical innovation or uphold classical forms?

Ultimately, this dissertation argues that the interwar period witnessed a profound transformation in the role of literary criticism. Journals served not merely as sites of literary production but as arenas for negotiating the intellectual and political dilemmas of modern Europe.



Committee:

Nicolas Valazza, Ph.D. (French and Italian)

Oana Panaïté, Ph.D. (French and Italian, Comparative Literature)

Vincent Bouchard, Ph.D. (French and Italian)

Brett Bowles, Ph.D. (French and Italian)