"As the Twentieth century draws to a close, no one knows quite what to expect, if anything, of the future. There is a strong need for magic, for a place that is outside of time, for a postponement of reality. For Venice."

Gore Vidal

"[Venice] bruises my soul"
Cimmerian’s Journal, Venice 2010

Surely though, the music is not lost—
The echoes of this night will live in me.
Kira’s Journal, Venice 2013

This city is most meaningful when it is most empty.
Nick’s Journal, Venice 2014

"One who has outlived his life, who has been crushed by it, should not visit Venice; she will be cruel to him as the memory of unfulfilled dreams of early days; but sweet to one whose strength is at its full, who is conscious of happiness; let him bring his bliss under her enchanted skies; and however bright it may be,
Venice will make it more golden with her unfading splendour"

Ivan Turgenev, On The Eve

3 credits
Prof.: Ilaria Serra Email: iserral@fau.edu
Class meeting time and place: Palazzina Briati, B1, T-R/F 11:00-12:20

Course Description

This course offers a large overview of Venetian culture to make students aware of the particular Venetian environment through time and in space. The course includes a survey of Venetian literature (in translation), a selection of suggested films that choose Venice as their physical and emotional set, and a presentation of visual art and crafts that distinguish Venice. It also incorporates several visits to the city’s historical sites that relate to the course content.

Course Objectives

1- This course is purposefully designed for Florida Atlantic University Study Abroad Program in Venice, Italy, and it aims to give students a deep understanding of the town they will inhabit for six weeks of their life. They will acquire a useful knowledge of the city’s past, the city’s cultural production, and its contemporary “consumption”.

2- The course will enhance student’s skills in reading, not only words on paper but also visual material, and concrete signs of the city.

3- It will also give students an opportunity to create their own journal of their unique experience of living in Venice, by stimulating their writing skills and creativity.
Assignments

Journal Responses

- Students are required to keep a journal. The journal should contain notes from class lectures, personal responses to readings and visits, creative production deriving from observation, and homework assignments. It should be your own comment on what you see, and read, in Venice. It is the base for your final project. Some class time can be dedicated to this task, to order your ideas and gather feedback in view of your final project.
- Journal Format: Title (visit or reading) – basic info (author, year, date...) – short summary (main point) – your reflection.
- Write on each theme (reading, class information, in-site observation. I do not want to know what you ate for breakfast or what you did at night, unless it inspired a thoughtful observation or it struck you as special. It is good to intertwine readings and experiences: Today we read Marco Polo’s Travels and I sat under the arch that stood by Marco Polo house in Corte del Milion...).
- Update it every day. Do not let the time pass. It will help you live these weeks mindfully.
- Insert drawings in your journal (a decoration on the Marco Polo’s arch, for example, or the view from his window). By drawing an object or a landscape you create a dialogue with it.
- The purpose of this work is to distill “My Venice” (as Francesco’s Venice) – the Venice that you have lived this summer and that is different from anyone else’s Venice.

Final project

- Photo-essay, “My Venice.” Photographic essay (PP presentation) and short written summary of your presentation.
- Document Venice as it was in these six weeks, not the touristic Venice, but your own city, individual and unrepeatable. Describe Venice through your personal itinerary. Your chosen point of view will be the metaphor of your own perception of the city. Choose a theme that strikes you as peculiar from the very first days. Ex. Time in Venice: the same window at different times of day. Work in Venice: follow the way of a facchino (the man who carries merchandise). Animals in Venice: as seen from the eye of the pigeons or through its stone lions. Reflections of Venice: glass, water, windows...
- All these elements should not only be seen only as real, literal, and physical presences but they can also be metaphorically interpreted.
- Try to avoid pictures taken from the Internet. They should be your own. (The best pictures are taken early in the morning. Make it a point to wake up at 5:30 a.m. at least once!).
- Add a signature picture, a self-portrait of you in “your Venice” (like Da Mosto does in his book).
- In the PP you need to incorporate as many quotations from literary Venetian works as you can, relating to your theme.
- How the project (40%) will be graded:
  - 20% depth of thought (superficial or original? Hurried or well well-thought?)
  - 10% research, use of quotations (do not be afraid to go to the libraries or ask me for additional books)
  - 10% quality of pictures (find original details to support your ideas (you can use them metaphorically not only literally) and surprising points of view; avoid stereotypes and postcard views ... which is hard to do in Venice!)

Grading Criteria:
40% Course journal (checked in the third and sixth week) + Paragraph/abstract/summary of your project (you will work on it during the six weeks)
20% Two exams (one essay question)
30% Final presentation
20% Class (active) participation and field trips

**Participation:** Missed classes without medical reason will affect the final grade.

**Students with Disabilities:** In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require special accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) located in Boca Raton –SU 122 (561-297-3880), in Davie, MOD I (954-236-1222), in Jupiter –SR 117 (561-799-8585), or at the Treasure Coast –CO 128 (772-873-3305) and follow all OSD procedures.

**Academic Integrity:** Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the University mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the University community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high values on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see [http://wise.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf](http://wise.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf)

**Required Readings:**


- Course package (available in BB).
WEEKLY CALENDAR
Dates can slightly change, but you are expected to know your readings before class.

1st week (May 16-20)

**Origin of Venice: Travelers, Merchants and Saints**

Monday: Historical Introduction  
*Francesco’s Venice* pp. 12-70

Tuesday: Marin Sanudo, *Praise of Venice*  
Reading the city of Venice: nizioeti, patere, lions and crests

Thursday:  
*Documentary History* extracts  
*Arti che van per via*  

Visit Torcello (after class)

Friday: The history of Venice in the Correr Museum  
Works and Days on San Marco’s arch

**Exercise:** find your month on the Byzantine arch of the months and zodiac signs in the main doorway of San Marco Basilica. Take a picture and/or draw it. Details such as this one should be used in your final presentations.

Start your final project: abstract (1 paragraph) is due on Monday

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2nd week (May 23-26)  
**Visible and Invisible City**

Monday: Visit Saint Mark square: God, the Doge and Minerva (Basilica) (at 11:00)  
Read Francesco’s Venice: pp. 102-162  

Treasure Hunt in the Correr Museum (M or T evening, on your own)  
1-paragraph abstract of your final project due

Tuesday: Marco Polo, *Il Milione*  
Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

Wednesday: Visit the Doge’s palace

Thursday: EXAM 1 ON THURSDAY  
Ruzante (Angelo Beolco), *The Weasel*

**Exercise:** in search of the Venetian “Capitelli”  
**Exercise** for Advanced students (in Italian): [http://veniceexplorer.net/tradizione/topos/](http://veniceexplorer.net/tradizione/topos/) (nissioeti) toponimi veneziani di Giuseppe Tassini (1887)

**BOAT TOUR OF PALLADIAN VILLAS (PISANI, WIDMAN, MALCONTENTA) ON FRIDAY MAY 27—DAY-LONG EXCURSION**
3rd week (May 30-June 2)  Feminine Venice: Servants, Courtesans, Princesses, and Virgins

Monday  
Read Francesco’s Venice: pp. 165-196  
The Music of Venice  
Venetian music performance: Tuesday evening (tentative date)

Tuesday:  
The Virgin on the Street Corner”  
La Venexiana (Anonymous, 1500)  
Journals due for check on Wednesday

Wednesday:  
Documentary History extracts (on prostitution and morality)  
Veronica Franco vs Maffio Venier  
Due: re-written abstract of your final project

Thursday:  
Moderata Fonte, The Worth of Women  
Arcangela Tarabotti  
Gaspara Stampa  
Maddalena Campiglia


4th week (June 6-9)

Monday:  
Foreigners in Venice  
Read Francesco’s Venice: pp. 199-231  
Documentary History extracts (foreigners)  
Venice, Art and Food: meet author Sally Spector, an American in Venice.

Tuesday:  
(Festa della Repubblica: school is closed)  
(Architecture trip)

Wednesday:  
Eighteen-century Venice: When the kissing had to stop  
Carlo Goldoni: Extract from Goldoni’s Memoires  
The Carriera Sisters  
Walk in Jewish Venice and/or San Lazzaro degli Armeni (afternoon)

Thursday:  
Carlo Goldoni, The Boors  
Visit to Carlo Goldoni’s house and museum (on your own. Closed Wed.)

DAY-TRIP TO THE DOLOMITES ON FRIDAY, JUNE 10th – DAY-LONG EXCURSION  
(The Dolomiti: legends and Myths of Ladini)
5th week (June 13-16)  

Love and Decadence in Venice

Monday:  
Giacomo Casanova: *History of My Life*
Visit Ca’ Rezzonico: *Venice in the XVIII Century* (on your own)

Venice and Its Mountains
Visit of the SQUERO and THEATER with Paola Brolati (afternoon-evening)

Tuesday:  
Visit Casanova’s prison, the *Pionbi*

Wednesday:  
*Venice in 1848*: Arnaldo Fusinato *Venice’s Last Hour*
The Foreign Look: Lord Byron, Reiner Maria Rilke, Ezra Pound
Exercise: Walk in 1848 Venice (hunt)
Probable visit to Greek Venice with Prof. Luigi Robuschi

Thursday:  
**EXAM 2**
Gabriele D’Annunzio, *The Flame*
The Futurist Manifesto (*NY Times*)

Suggested Visit: Palazzo Fortuny, Venetian *decadence*
Suggested Visit: Ca’ Pesaro (Modern Art)

VISIT THE LAGOON AND LAZZARETTO NUOVO THIS THURSDAY, JUNE 16TH

6th week (June 20-23)  

Death and Imagination in Venice

Monday:  
Giuseppe Berto, *Venetian Anonymous*
Diego Valeri’s *Sentimental Guide*
Tiziano Scarpa, from *Venice is a Fish*
Suggested viewing: *Anonimo Veneziano* (E.M. Salerno, 1971)

Tuesday:  
Alda Monico, *Extravagant Saints*
Meet a Venetian Author (Tiziano Scarpa, Alberto Toso Fei, Alda Monico, Filippo Caburlotto, Bruno Rosada, Marina Pellanda…)
or Walk: *Venice in the Resistance 1944-1945* with local historian Dr. Giulio Bobbo

Wednesday:  
*Venice in Film*
Time to work on final projects (if there is time)
Journals Due

Thursday:  
**FINAL PRESENTATIONS OF MY VENICES IN CLASS**