THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC

CAS HI 260 – Spring 2015
Instructor: Piergabriele Mancuso, Ph.D.
Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 to 11:00

Instructor e-mail: gmancuso@bu.edu
Class schedule: 4 hours per week
Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday, h. 11.00-12.00
Credit value: 4 credits

COURSE OUTLINE

Venice was one of the most important and long-lasting maritime empires and political entities of the Western World. The city was founded around the end of the 7th century under the aegis of the Byzantine empire by groups of *Venetici*, northern Italian populations living in the Veneto and Friuli Venezia-Giulia areas. Venice ruled over several territories, from continental Italy down to the Western coast of the Adriatic sea, Greece, southern Italy and the Middle East. Venice had a very complex and stable government system - an oligarchic Republic led by a Doge (an Italianised term from the Latin *dux*, “leader”) - based on an efficient diplomacy and very strong military structure. At the peak of its power Venice was one of the most important trade centres, a city where different ethnic and religious communities were living together and in peace.

The aim of the course is to outline and analyze the most important phases of Venetian history. Although we will study in detail some of the problems concerning the political and cultural relations between the Venetian Republic and the hosted minorities (particularly the Armenian, the Jewish and the Greek ones), the course is on political and social history.
COURSE OBJECTIVES

The main aim of the course of the course is to provide students with a comprehensive and critical view over Venetian history and the main features of its socio-political and social heritage. In class students will be taught the development of Venice’s major historical events, the main factors that determined its economic and political development in late-antique and early medieval Italy up to the 15th-21th century broader European and world context. Students are warmly invited to comment, add relevant information and exercise critical analysis. Visits are mandatory as they provide crucial in situ information directly related to the course topics. The course will be taught in English. All readings, exams and home assignments will be done in English.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

In order to pass the examination, students will be required to study at least the course pack (dispense) prepared by the instructor, which will be available at a suggested copy shop. Some other texts will be provided in photocopies during the course, including those which are necessary to study in order to prepare the class presentations. Lectures are part of the study load, so please take note of the lectures, for some themes and subjects presented in them are not in the textbooks.

COURSE TEXTBOOKS:


FURTHER READINGS (INCLUDED IN THE COURSE-PACK)

- D. Katz, "Clamber not you up to the casements": On ghetto views and viewing,” in “Jewish History”, Vol. 24, No. 2 (2010), pp. 127-153
- Gherardo Ortalli and Giovanni Scarabello, A short history of Venice, Pacinieditore, 2001-2005 (available also in Italian).

**THE COURSE REQUIRES**

1. Careful reading (with dictionary if necessary) and full comprehension of all the texts included in the syllabus.
2. Active participation in class discussion and answer all the questions about home assignments and homework.
3. To make a class presentation on a topic chosen from a list proposed by the teacher or on a subject proposed by the student and approved by the teacher. Presentation’s topic can include topics of non-historiographical natures such as Venice’s artistic heritage (from music to visual arts and architecture) and socio-cultural tradition (e.g. Venice’s diplomacy; Venice’s culinary tradition, spiritual-religious heritage and language; etc…).
4. A written midterm exam with 20 multiple choices and 2 open questions.
5. A final written exam consisting of 25 multiple choices and 2 open questions on all the topics and subjects studied during the second part of the course.

**COMPONENTS OF THE FINAL GRADE**

1. Attendance and class participation: 15%
2. Midterm written exam: 25% (includes all topics studied and discussed in class in the first part of the course)
3. Class presentation 30%
4. Final written exam: 30% (includes all topics studied and discussed in class during the second part of the course)
**Attendance and class participation:** Students are expected to be punctual, ask questions, express curiosity and participate in discussions. Field trips are part of the curriculum and participation is mandatory.

**Written midterm exam:** Multiple-choice questions plus some open questions referring to the topics and most important historical details discussed in class, from Venice’s birth (ca. 5th-6th century) to the beginning of the Most Serene Republic’s political decadence (1509-1628).

**One class presentation:** During the second part of the semester, students will be required to a class-presentation on a subject or topic approved by the professor. Presentations should not last more than 30 minutes. Use of powerpoints and other similar technological devices and tools are strongly encouraged.

**Final written exam:** final written will include all the topics discussed during the second part of the course, from the beginning of Venice’s socio-economic decadence (1628) to Venice’s inclusion into the United Kingdom of Italy (1866) and Venice’s main contemporary issues (e.g. M.O.S.E. project).

**BU Grade Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Honour</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>83-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>60-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>Below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BU Policies**

**Attendance**

Boston University Padua students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, and field trip required for the class. Students should note that attendance will be taken into account by faculty when determining final grades.

**Plagiarism**

Simply stated, plagiarism is taking another’s work and presenting it as your own. Dictionary definitions of plagiarism frequently include terms such as ‘theft’ or ‘steal’.
Plagiarism is, in fact, intellectual theft. It is one of the most serious forms of academic misconduct. Plagiarism committed by a student will certainly result in course failure and may result in suspension or dismissal. For more details please see Boston University’s Academic Conduct Code: http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/

RELIgIOUS HOLIDAYS
Boston University’s Office of the University Registrar states:
‘The University, in scheduling classes on religious holidays and observances, intends that students observing those traditions be given ample opportunity to make up work. Faculty members who wish to observe religious holidays will arrange for another faculty member to meet their classes or for cancelled classes to be rescheduled.’ See Chapter 151C of the General Laws, Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATIONS
If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at 617-353-3658 to coordinate any reasonable accommodation requests. For more information, please visit: http://www.bu.edu/disability
**CALENDAR**

**FEBRUARY**

**WEEK 1**

3 Tuesday  
Introduction to the course. Study and research methodologies, class participation and grading criteria.

5 Thursday  
**Readings:**  

**WEEK 2**

10 Tuesday  
Rialto and the birth of a city on sea. The creation of an Italian “comune” and its transformation into an elitarian “res-publica”.

12 Thursday  
Republica Serenissima (Most Serene Republic). Trade and war: Venice and the Crusades.  
**Readings:**  

**WEEK 3**

17 Tuesday  
The structures of the Venetian republic: the Doge, the Maggior Consiglio and the hierarchy of power.  
**Readings:**  

19 Thursday  
Venetian pragmatism in a time of holy wars. The fourth crusade and the Venetian conquest of Constantinople (1204).  
**Readings:**  

**WEEK 4**

24 Tuesday  
Perfectioning the elitarian structure: the “Serrata del Maggior Consiglio” and the beginning of the Venetian-Genoese long war (1378). The “Stato da Terra”: the Serenissima in the Italian inland.  
**Readings:**

26 Thursday
The wars against the Turks and the League of Cambrai (1508).
**READINGS:**

27 Friday
1-day programme field trip to Mantua

**MARCH**
**WEEK 5**

3 Tuesday
The peak of the Serenissima and the beginning of the decadence (1517-1628).
**READINGS:**
*N.B. Read Thomas Mann’s *Death in Venice* (text in the course-pack).*

5 Thursday

6 Friday
*N.B. Class Field Trip to Venice. Walk through the main historical sites of Venice and visit to the Jewish Ghetto and the Dogal Palace. Visit to the Museo Navale (Historical Maritime Museum (t.b.c.).

**WEEK 6**

10 Tuesday
*Death in Venice*, selected scenes screening, part 2 - analysis and comments.
**READINGS:**

12 Thursday
The Last Interdict (part I): 1607. Venice’s fight for spiritual freedom.
**READINGS:**
*N.B. PRESENTATION SESSION BEGINS*

**WEEK 7**

17 Tuesday
The crisis of the Venetian trade. The maritime empire and the battle of Lepanto, 1570-1571, between myth and reality.
**READINGS:**

19 Thursday
N. B. MIDTERM WRITTEN EXAM

**WEEK 8**

24 Tuesday
**COURSE WORKSHOP/SEMINAR:** 29 March 1516-2016, commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Venetian Jewish ghetto - The main characteristics of the Venetian Ghetto. The Venetian Ghetto a s a pattern of segregation and inclusion in early modern Italy.
**READINGS:**

### 26 Thursday

**NO CLASS**

### WEEK 9

### 31 Tuesday

**The Last Interdict (part II): Paolo Sarpi’s legacy and the problem of religious freedom in Venice.**

**READINGS:**


### APRIL

### 2 Thursday

**The Treaty of Passarowitz (1718) and the Austrian-Ottoman war and peace agreements.**

**READINGS:**


### WEEK 10

### 6-9 APRIL EASTER BREAK

### 14 April

**Ludovico Manin, the last Doge (1787). Venice under sphere of French influence and PRESENTATION SESSION.**

**READINGS:**


### 16 April

**“The Venetian French Party”**

**READINGS:**


and **class presentation (1 hr.)**

### WEEK 11

### 14 Tuesday

**12 May 1797: the end of the Serenissima Repubblica and PRESENTATION SESSION.**

**READINGS:**

16 Thursday

**Venice, from the French and Austrian dominion to Italian independence 1797-1866.**

**Readings:**


**WEEK 12**

21 Tuesday

**An view on Venetian architecture and art history. The Palladian style and the birth of European and American Neo-Classic culture**

**Readings:**


23 Thursday

**“Post-modern, plastic Venice”: Venice in the age of mass tourist and global knowledge: current issues and future perspectives. The M.O.S.E. system**

**Readings:**


**WEEK 13**

28 Tuesday

**IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE COURSE OF TOPICS ON ITALIAN MUSIC, CAS IT 344.**

Set in Venice. *Venice in the background* [2]: Venice in William Shakespeare’s plays, from *Othello* to *Merchant of Venice*. Analysis of the original text and screening of selected passages from Giuseppe Verdi’s *Otello*. Act I and II

**Readings:**

Stamatov, *Interpretive Activism*, pp. 345-366; Wills, *Verdi’s Shakespeare*, pp. 93-106 and W. Shakespeare’s *Othello* (full text in the copy pack).

30 Thursday

Screening of Giuseppe Verdi’s *Otello*, Act III and plenary discussion.

**MAY**

**WEEK 14**

5 Tuesday

**BU Course Study Period and Make-Up Lesson of 26 March (see above) - Overview and general discussion about the course.**

9 Saturday

1-day programme field trip to Ravenna

**WEEK 15**

14 Thursday

**FINAL EXAM (WRITTEN)**

Piergabriele Mancuso, 2015®
e-mail: gmancuso@bu.edu