



CAS LI 308 VENETIAN LANDSCAPES: A CONTEMPORARY GRAND TOUR

Co-taught by Prof. Elisabetta Convento and Prof. Laura Lenci

Office: BU Padua, Via Dimesse 5 – 35122 Padova (Italy)
Class Meets: 3 hours twice a week @Bu Padua Academic Center
Credits: 4
Hub Units: 1+1 (*GCI and OSC*)

Course description

There are places that inspire visitors and artists. The morphological aspects of the territory; the colors; the human trace on the physical territory; the history, culture and traditions are but some of the elements of a landscape fascination.

The Veneto region, where Padua always played and still plays a lively cultural role, is particularly rich of suggestions and throughout the centuries inspired artists, musicians, writers. Johann W. Goethe, Lord Byron or Henry James wrote beautiful memories of their Italian journey and left us extraordinary depictions of cities like Padua, Venice and Verona surrounded by hills, mountains, lagoon, but also rural landscapes.

Following the path of these famous travelers, the course aims to offer students the opportunity to discover the Veneto region through literary and cultural experiences. By means of on-site lessons, readings and field trips, students are able to recognize the local identity that deepens its roots into the landscape (natural and anthropic), culture (progress and tradition), language (Italian and dialect), history and society. During the course, students will read and discuss extracts from works by Mario Rigoni Stern, Dino Buzzati or Giovanni Comisso to only mention some, and visit places such as the Dolomites, the Veneto countryside, or cities like Padova, Treviso, or Venezia.

In class students practice Italian, learn the vocabulary needed to speak about literature, landscape, Italian language and dialects. By the end of the course students will be able to organize ideas and concepts in a foreign language, develop the command of and ability to express themselves fluently and use a variety of colloquialisms and language structures in oral and written communication.

The course draws from experiential learning and engages students both intellectually and emotionally with field exercises and personal reflections on the local and the global, providing true intercultural learning.

Prerequisites

- No previous knowledge of Italian literature is required. The course is entirely taught in Italian. CAS LI 212 Fourth Semester Italian is the only requirement.

Hub Learning Outcomes and Course-Specific Learning Objectives

This course satisfies the following requirements for the BU Hub:

BU HUB LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COURSE- SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Oral and/or signed communication (OSC) – Hub Learning outcomes

- *Students will be able to craft and deliver responsible, considered, and well-structured oral and/or signed arguments using media and modes of expression appropriate to the situation.*
- *Students will demonstrate an understanding that oral/signed communication is generally interactive, and they should be able to attend and respond thoughtfully to others.*
- *Students will be able to speak/sign effectively in situations ranging from the formal to the extemporaneous and interact comfortably with diverse audiences.*

In order to meet the above Hub Learning outcomes, by the end of the course students will be able to (course specific learning outcomes):

1. Progress measurably in Italian oral proficiency thereby increasing the ability to converse on a wide range of topics pertaining to modern Italy and the Veneto region, fine-tuning their comprehension and developing their awareness of different oral language local habits and peculiar expressions;
2. They will be able to interpret and use a variety of colloquialisms and oral language structures for a more natural verbal interaction;
3. Take active part in oral interaction aware of the social norms behind it, of the non-verbal and para-verbal communication aspects implied in social interactions.

Global citizenship and Intercultural literacy (GCIL) – Hub Learning outcomes

- *Students will demonstrate, through comparative analysis, an understanding of global diversity as expressed in at least two different languages, cultures, religions, political systems, or societies.*
- *Students will demonstrate detailed understanding of at least two cultural contexts through foreign language or culture study at BU, participation in a language or culture living-learning community at BU, or study abroad. This will involve reflection on the challenges and pleasures students discover in orienting themselves in new and unfamiliar cultures.*

In order to meet the above Hub Learning outcomes, by the end of the course students will be able to (course specific learning outcomes):

- Develop intercultural communication and comparison strategies through guided socio-cultural observations followed by class debates with the support of focused in-class practice and analysis of written and audio material;
- Improve interaction tasks through personal experience in Padua and surrounding, and specifically prepared simulations and task-based activities; demonstrate an understanding of the underlying cultural values and develop strategies for critical analysis of Venetian cultural, social and linguistic peculiarities;

Program learning outcomes

Bu Global Programs/study abroad learning outcomes for BU Padova Italian and European Studies Program and Padua Internship program

<https://www.bu.edu/provost/planning/program-learning-outcomes-assessment/27362-2/#globallo>

Learning Outcomes for IESP Program

- Students show knowledge of written and oral Italian at different proficiency levels, from beginner to advanced, including the ability of interaction with locals in real life contexts.
- Students develop knowledge of Italian culture with respect to at least one of the following areas: history, literature, international relations, food policies, and the arts in general.

- Students will gain awareness of different cultural worldviews and behaviors that foster critical thinking, social and communication skills and teamwork, and will be able to use them in cross-cultural contexts. Students end goal will be to incorporate other worldviews into their own and perceive themselves as global citizens.

Learning Outcomes for PIP Program

- Students begin to understand local work culture, workplace dynamics, professional expectations, and cultural values that shape them.
- Students develop knowledge of skills appropriate to the field of the internship placement, including professional and inter-cultural communication, through written, verbal, and nonverbal means.
- Students refine and clarify professional and career goals through analytical reflection on their internship experience and research project.

Instructional Format, Course Pedagogy, and Approach to Learning

The course is based on an active and experiential learning approach through which students will be able to observe, describe and learn and discuss/compare concepts related to the landscape of the Veneto region, culture and language.

Lessons are a limited part of the instructional methodology and aim to give students historical, economic, cultural and literary contextualization. Through lessons and note taking, students have the opportunity to gain knowledge of the essence of the relationship between territory and literature, language and culture, traditions and progress.

Lessons are structured as a discussion on the readings in the form of group questions, oral presentations, application cards, oral peer review. The instructor will also devote time to framing authors and landscapes and to text analysis in the form of class discussion.

As a part of class preparation, students must read the texts in advance, so that they are able to actively contribute to the class discussion where, through a close reading approach, they will have the opportunity to experience the cultural aspects of the Veneto region where they are spending their time abroad. This approach will facilitate students' understanding and appreciation of the aesthetic and linguistic development of the literature, language and territory of the Veneto region. In addition to becoming more interculturally fluent, students will gain knowledge of different styles and *genres* including autobiographical chronicles, narratives (short tales and novels), travel diaries, and others.

Notes from class are crucial for the students to practice Italian, learn the vocabulary needed to speak about literature, landscape, Italian language and dialects. Notes help students to organize ideas and concepts in a foreign language, develop the command of and ability to apply the material discussed in both in-class and on-site lectures, guest lectures, visits and homework.

All written assignments will be edited and returned to students. Students' further editing will be encouraged if not requested at times. This method aims for the students to improve their writing skills, appropriately use vocabulary, develop the ability to write on studied subjects, and prepare for the final project.

The final project aims for the students to be able to select and organize relevant information on authors, works, poetics, writing styles; make aesthetics consideration on places, cultures and languages different from their own; express themselves in Italian with an original voice; mediate between Italian and the U.S. cultures.

On-site lessons and field trips will represent a concrete opportunity to broaden knowledge and meanings with regard to the Italian and Venetian culture, language, landscapes and literature.

Assignments and Grading

Attendance, class participation	10%
1 oral presentation	15%
2 2-page travelogues	30%
Final project: photo-story (images and 2-pages text)	30%
Class oral presentation on final project	15%

Attendance and participation (*Oral and/or signed communication*)

The course is thought for students to be subjects of the learning process. Therefore, students are not only expected to be in class and present at all course activities (on-site classes and guest lectures included), but also actively involved in discussions and in preparation of questions for meetings with guest speakers and the rest of the class.

Students are responsible for reading (with a dictionary) all the course materials before each class appointment, and take notes in class and during on-site classes. Short questions or specific assignments (short surveys or filling tables) are used at the beginning to summarize the key points of the day's or previous lesson.

1 Class presentations (*Oral and/or signed communication, Global Citizenship & Intercultural Literacy*)

Each student will have one oral presentations on a topic discussed with the instructor. The presentation require the preparation of a PowerPoint or Canva.

Students will discuss the type of representation of the Venetian landscape (city, nature, industrial, human) that they have discovered through readings, on-site lessons and field trips.

They will analyze the stylistic and linguistic strategies used (provide examples) and discuss the purposes of the chosen examples;

They will provide a personal comment/interpretation related to the Venetian landscape discussed and the author and his/her writings.

Students will receive individual feedback on their class presentation.

2 2-page Travelogues (*Global Citizenship & Intercultural Literacy*)

Students will be engaged in writing 2 travelogues in Italian (Times New Roman or Garamond 12, double spaced, margins 2cm) in which they will discuss their personal reaction to the explored areas of the Veneto region from a linguistic, spatial and emotional perspective.

By preparing the travelogues students will review the content of the works examined, but will also produce personal reflections.

Information on how to write a travelogue will be provided by instructor and discussed in class. Helpful materials on the blackboard site of the course in folder "Travelogue".

Students will receive individual feedback on each travelogue. Editing and re-writing a travelogue to improve writing skills with regard to quality of content and form is possible, and at time encouraged or requested, by the professor.

Final project: photo-story (*Global Citizenship & Intercultural Literacy*)

Students will approach the Veneto region and its authors by collecting 5-photos related to a writer/text/landscape discussed in class. Students organize photos like an Instagram story. They will associate to each photo a quotation taken from the text analyzed in class and they will add a written comment to highlight the peculiarities of the place/landscape/tradition selected. The written part will be 2 pages long.

Through this activity, students will show to be able to organize contents, cultural elements, and explain concepts related to the region where they are studying abroad. In particular, they will synthesize the poetics of different Venetian styles and authors that intertwine with the history, memory, language,

tradition and landscape of a specific territory, and make references to the works analyzed during the course.

Students will receive individual feedback on their work. Re-writing the written part to improve writing skills with regard to quality of content and form is possible, and at time encouraged by the professor. This must be an option that the professor approves of.

Class oral presentation of photo story

Students present individually in class their photo story project on July 6th. They will use ppt or canva and will speak for about 15 minutes to the class. Q&A will follow.

Resources/Support/How to Succeed in This Course

Office hours: once a week at scheduled time. Office hours can be also used to tutor students with some difficulties in class, willing to know more on a certain subject or to improve their writing skills in Italian. Please contact professor via email if you need an appointment

Class and University Policies

Examinations

All academic commitments must be completed before you leave the site; no incompletes are permitted. Students who do not complete a course on time will be given an F. Students are required to sit their examinations on the dates, at the times, and in the same classroom as the other students in their class. If a student is ill or has another extenuating circumstance which causes the student to be absent from a scheduled examination, he/she must provide appropriate documentation and receive approval from the Director.

Attendance

Students should note that attendance will be taken into account by faculty. Boston University Padua students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, on-site class, internship work appointment, and activity required for the class as indicated in the syllabus. Any student with irregular class attendance may have his/her final grade penalized.

Absences

Unjustified absences from class, and any class related activity, will affect the students' participation grade, which will be lowered by one letter grade for each absence.

Absence for Religious Reasons

According to Chapter 151C of the General Laws, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, any student in an educational or vocational training institution, other than a religious or denominational educational or vocational training institution, who is unable, because of his or her religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day, shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study, or work requirement that may have been missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examinations or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said students such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to students because of their availing themselves of the provisions of this section. Students who have questions about practicing their religion while abroad should contact Boston University Study Abroad.

Lateness

Students arriving more than 10 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as late. Being late three times is equivalent to missing one class.

Late Assignments

Students are expected to turn in all course assignments on time as stated in each course syllabus. Late assignments will not be accepted and missed assignments will automatically be awarded an F. Please note that all coursework must be completed by the end of the program.

Plagiarism

Simply stated, plagiarism is taking another's work and presenting it as you own. 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 Code of Student Responsibilities: <https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/>

Disability 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>

Interruption of program or early departure

Only in serious cases – mostly related to medical emergencies – the Director will allow a student to take a significant break during the program or to leave before its official conclusion. Official written approval must be received by the Director.

Academic Advice

The Director serves as the head of the faculty and as academic advisors. The Director is available on an appointment basis to assist students with academic issues. For academic advice regarding students' home institutions' policies and transfer credit information, non-Boston students should also contact their school's academic advisors.

Tutorials

BU faculty are available by appointment for students who may need support in the learning process. We strongly encourage you to take advantage of this resource. Students in the past found it very useful to succeed. Students who receive a C on a test must seek support from faculty.

Course Materials and Readings (Required)

- a reader with literary/artistic/landscape works and excerpts analyzed in class (to be purchased at the local copyshop)
- videos and links to relevant websites, the biographies of the authors, the Dossier "Once upon a Time in Veneto" (that includes articles, essays, interviews and talks about landscapes) are available on the Blackboard site of the course.
- literary criticism included on the Blackboard site of the course.

- Reader contains extracts from the following narrative works:

All these books are under reserve for this course and can be found in the BU Padua library.

Narrative works

Dino Buzzati, *I misteri d'Italia*, Mondadori, Milano 2002.

Dino Buzzati, *Il segreto del bosco vecchio*, Mondadori, Milano, 2006.

Johann W. Goethe, *Viaggio in Italia (Italienische Reise)*, also available on

https://it.wikisource.org/wiki/Ricordi_di_viaggio_in_Italia_nel_1786-87 (pages on Verona and Padova)

Henry James, *Racconti italiani (Italian Hours)*, Torino, Einaudi, 1991. (pages on Venice)

Goffredo Parise, *Odore d'America*, Milano, Mondadori, 1990.
 Italo Calvino, *Le città invisibili*, Milano, Mondadori, 2002.
 Giovanni Comisso, *Veneto felice*, Milano, Longanesi, 1994.
 Giovanni Comisso, *Gentile Treviso*, <https://www.premiocomisso.it/gentile-treviso-di-giovanni-comisso/>
 Gaia Giovagnoli, *Cos'hai nel sangue*, Roma, Nottetempo, 2022.
 Luigi Meneghello, *Libera nos a Malo*, Milano, Rizzoli, 2007.
 Matteo Righetto, *La pelle dell'orso*, Milano, TEA, 2019.
 Mario Rigoni Stern, *Stagioni*, Torino, Einaudi, 2006.
 Mario Rigoni Stern, *Storia di Tönle. L'anno della vittoria*, Torino, Einaudi, 2014.

Literary Criticism on the Veneto literature included on the Blackboard site of the course in folder "Literary criticism" and will be a resource for students for their class assignments and projects

The list of critical readings below is subject to modifications and additions:

Mario Barenghi, *Le città invisibili*, in *Calvino*, Il Mulino, Bologna 2009, pp. 81-87.
 Patrizia Dalla Rosa, *Lassù... laggiù... Il paesaggio veneto nella pagina di Dino Buzzati*, Venezia, Marsilio, 2013.
 Matteo Giancotti, *Radici e eradicazioni*, in *Luoghi e paesaggi*, Milano, Bompiani, 2013, p. 5-25.
 Nico Naldini, *Vita felice di Giovanni Comisso*, Milano, Bompiani, 1957, p. VII-XX.
 Silvio Perrella, *Introduction to Giuseppe Parise's «Gli americani a Vicenza»*, Milano, Mondadori, 1987.
 Andrea Rigoni ed., *Venezia e le altre*, Padova, Il notes Magico, 2009.
 Luciano Zampese, *La forma dei pensieri. Leggere Luigi Meneghello*, Firenze, Franco Cesati, 2014.
 Andrea Zanzotto, *Mario Rigoni Stern: Storia di Tönle*, in *Scritti sulla letteratura. Aure e disincanti nel Novecento letterario*, Milano, Mondadori, 1994.

- Documentaries/films (available in the BU Padova library)

Ritratti, Luigi Meneghello. Interview with Marco Paolini, by Carlo Mazzacurati (2002) (available on RaiPlay)

La pelle dell'orso, by Marco Segato (2016) (available on RaiPlay)

Bestiario veneto, by Marco Paolini (1998)

- Audio excerpts

Silvio Perrella on Goffredo Parise <https://www.raicultura.it/letteratura/articoli/2019/12/Goffredo-Parise-un-viaggiatore-leggero-7aa23f6f-6bf8-4589-9da9-61b9242b50ef.html>

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

WEEK 1

Lesson 1

Explanation of course material and syllabus details.

Detailed explanation of course assignments and expectations.

Introduction to the course: Venetian literary landscapes.

The "grand tour". 18th century intellectuals and artists educational trips through Southern Europe (Italy and Greece in particular) as a way to broaden horizons and foster aesthetic and historical knowledge.

Focus: Padova and surroundings

Note taking is essential. Students will have time to work independently to collect their reflections in preparation for their assignments.

Lesson 2

Understanding the Veneto region: distance, otherness, and sense of belonging to a territory, language and tradition.

On-site class at the Padua Botanical Garden – Goethe’s palm-tree (pp. 57-58): writing workshop

Students will read the travel reportages of Giovanni Comisso and Goffredo Parise.

Explanation and preparation for writing a travelogue.

WEEK 2

Lesson 3

Giovanni Comisso. The emotional landscape: history, return to childhood and love for diversity.

History and Geography of Treviso. Small town, great beauty.

Focus: Treviso and surroundings

Lesson 4

On-site lesson in Treviso

Note taking is essential. Students will have time to work independently to collect their reflections in preparation for their assignments. Writing workshop.

WEEK 3

Lesson 5

Mountain landscapes and traditions between sacredness of nature and superstition.

Focus: Belluno and surroundings

Guest Speaker, writer Matteo Righetto

In-class view of parts of film *La pelle dell’orso* and discussion (the forest: fairy tales, Walden, Magritte, Rousseau)

Lesson 6

The mysterious landscape of the Euganean Hills between history and imagination.

Focus: Padova and surroundings

On-site lesson at Villa dei Vescovi, Luvigliano the setting of Buzzati’s short story. Note taking is essential.

Students will have time to work independently to collect their reflections in preparation for their assignments.

Class oral presentation

WEEK 4

Lesson 7

The contrast between urban and rural landscape.

Guest Speaker, writer Germana Urbani

Lesson 8 – Wednesday, June 22

On-site lesson at Altopiano di Asiago. Reading walk through Rigoni Stern's Altopiano di Asiago (Vicenza).

Class oral presentation.

Writing workshop.

Students will have the opportunity to appreciate nature and the poetics of Mario Rigoni-Stern while immersed in the landscape where his work was conceived.

Note taking is essential. Students will have time to work independently to collect their reflections in preparation for their assignments.

WEEK 5

Lesson 9

A polymorphic representation of Venice: a city of exchanges.

Focus: Venezia and surroundings

Lesson 10

Waste, pollution and the future of the delicate eco-system of Venice

Focus: Venezia and surroundings

On-site lesson in Venice. Students will follow the path drawn by Calvino and see an off the main route Venice.

Note taking is essential. Students will have time to work independently to collect their reflections in preparation for their assignments.