Fall School in digital humanities 2015

"Venice 1740"



Francesco Guardi, *Veduta del Canal Grande e della Pescheria*, Milano, Pinacoteca di Brera

The *Veduta del Canal Grande e della Pescheria* (Milano, Pinacoteca di Brera) by Fransceco Guardo depicts a specific moment of the Rialto market everyday life. Thanks to Guardi, Canaletto and other great painters of 'vedute', we can still today picture Venice in the XVIIIe century, in that moment of progressive decline of its past splendor. The descriptive richness of the painting can now be matched with other highly dense sources of information, that can be extracted during the digitization the Venice Time Machine project, a ten year research program that aim at reconstructing how Venice was in the past, based on historical sources.

The Digital Humanities Fall School 2015, "Venice 1740", organized as a collaboration between the Ecole polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), the Ca'Foscari university and the State Archives of Venice will focus on the exploration and reconstruction of Venice in the year 1740.

Who lives in Venice at his moment, what was the government structure, what were the most common professions, how was the commercial activity distributed in the city, what were the principal causes of death, these are some of the questions that will be addressed by the Fall School students based on the historical documents and the various reconstruction that can built upon them. This year, the students will work the tools and data of the Venice Time Machine project, analyzing the historical sources that are currently being digitized, annotating them and linking them with one another with new open source powerful software developed in the context of the project.

In archival terms, 1740 is a key date, before the revolution introduced in 1808 by the Napoleonic cadaster. The urban structure of the *ancien regime* Venice can be reconstructed using various data series can be aligned with more recent one. For instance the Catastici, report of Venetian official controlling houses one by one following specific trajectories in the city, can be matched with other fiscal sources to recreate the precisely who was leaving where and what activities were conducted.



*Catastico di Rialto,* 1740, Archivio di Stato di Venezia

The indexes of the administrative and fiscal series serve as a base for extracting the "entities" of the information system of the Venice Time Machine, like persons, institutions, places and their relations. All the entities present in the document and recontextualized historically, are inserted in a Geographical Information System (GIS) capable of reconstructing the Venetian urban physiology in 1740 and producing thematic maps relevant for historical research covering the social, political, urban, economic and artistic dimensions of Venice.

Ludovico Ughi, *Venezia 1729*, Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Miscellanea Mappe 1234.

Thanks to the supervision of the specialists of the Venice State of Archive in Venice, the students of the Fall School will be able to analyze and interpret the original documents, extract relevant data and construct historical interpretations following the lines that will emerge during their research. In addition with the lab activities conducted in the archive, keynote speakers will introduce during the week specific focus on some historical aspect relevant for theme and new frontiers currently being investigated in the digital humanities field.

**Organization**

Isabella di Lenardo
Simon Levis Sullam
Dorit Raines

**Speakers**

Fabio Bortoluzzi; Giovanni Caniato; Isabella di Lenardo; Martina Frank; Frédéric Kaplan; Dorit Raines; Andrea Zannini.

Keynote Speaker:

Sigurdur Gylfi Magnusson (University of Iceland, Reykjavik).


Coordination of the work in the archive: Giovanni Caniato;Fabio Bortoluzzi; Paola Benussi
Coordidation of the work with the information system of the Venice Time Machine:
Isabella di Lenardo; Giovanni Colavizza; Maud Erhmann