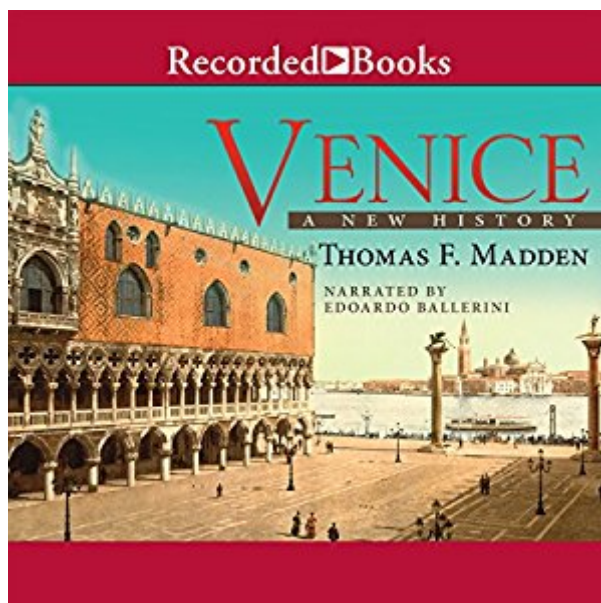


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Venice: A New History



Synopsis

An extraordinary chronicle of Venice, its people, and its grandeur Thomas Madden's majestic, sprawling history of Venice is the first full portrait of the city in English in almost thirty years. Using long-buried archival material and a wealth of newly translated documents, Madden weaves a spellbinding story of a place and its people, tracing an arc from the city's humble origins as a lagoon refuge to its apex as a vast maritime empire and Renaissance epicenter to its rebirth as a modern tourist hub. Madden explores all aspects of Venice's breathtaking achievements: the construction of its unparalleled navy, its role as an economic powerhouse and birthplace of capitalism, its popularization of opera, the stunning architecture of its watery environs, and more. He sets these in the context of the rise and fall of the Byzantine Empire, the endless waves of Crusades to the Holy Land, and the awesome power of Turkish sultans. And perhaps most critically, Madden corrects the stereotype of Shakespeare's money-lending Shylock that has distorted the Venetian character, uncovering instead a much more complex and fascinating story, peopled by men and women whose ingenuity and deep faith profoundly altered the course of civilization.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 16 hours 12 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Recorded Books

Audible.com Release Date: November 27, 2012

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B00AE4DCY8

Best Sellers Rank: #30 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > History > Middle East #31

in Books > History > Middle East > Turkey #53 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > History > World

Customer Reviews

A succinct, vividly-written, and sweeping history of the city on the lagoon, and, moreover, of the Most Serene Republic of Venice that dominated Mediterranean trade for centuries. It's a new history, more compact than the magisterial history of Venice by John Julius Norwich, but goes further by telling the history of Venice from the fall of the Republic in 1798 to Bonaparte, and brings

it up to the present day. This book also tells us of the city's contributions to art, literature, cinema and the Grand Tour -- indeed, its long relationship to world tourism from 1700 on. It's eye-opening in its story, not just of a beautiful city, but of the Most Serene Republic that built it over a millennium, and its unique and separate identity: in a medieval Italy fraught with intramural and dynastic strife, the Republic was remarkably stable and worldly. Highest recommendation.

This is a well-written and quite thorough history of a most unusual place. At times, the author's enthusiasm for Venice tends to prejudice his historical judgement a bit in Venice's favor, but this never leads to very serious misstatements as far as I know.

Great Book, I would say this is one of my favorite history books. I recommend it highly.

Very well written. I wish I had read before my first trip to Vencie.

Read this in preparation for and during a trip to Italy and Venice. Very well written and paced. It lays out the backdrop of Venice's history very well, which is critical because Venice, as a merchant city, functions largely in response to the world around it. I would recommend to any Italian history buff or someone travelling to Venice who wants to understand its past and present more clearly.

I loved this book, which I read before, during, and after a trip to Venice. In addition to serving up appropriate quantities of scholarly detail, the author beautifully conveys the color, romance, and durability of this unique city and its culture. Highly recommended.

So much to know and so much to appreciate! This is a wonderful and clearly written history of this city of "exquisite beauty and slow death". It provides vivid images of Venice as a living entity, always changing through glory, tribulation and survival, and its contribution to many inventions and cultural richness of our modern day life. Definitely recommendable.

The author does a good job of tying events together into a larger narrative, characterizing Venice and its people while remaining mostly neutral as a narrator of facts.

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