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## Representing the Republic in Seventeenth-Century Venice

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### Abstract

*Allegorical representations and personifications of Venice, designed to perpetuate and update the myth of Venice, occupy a prominent place in seventeenth-century publishing. Editorial vignettes, frontispieces and engravings promote an image of the Republic anchored in the tradition and myth of the foundation of the city, but attentive to the evolution of the historical situation. As in the past, this image is polysemic and combines mainly the figures of Justice and the Virgin. A new dimensi-*

on opens up in the context of the wars against the Ottoman Empire that occupy the second half of the century. A particularly significant example to document this historical evolution is the church of Santa Maria della Salute which, born as a votive Marian temple during the plague of 1630, is transformed into a monument dedicated to the war. On the lantern of the church's dome, the figure of the Virgin takes on the appearance of a supreme commander of the navy.

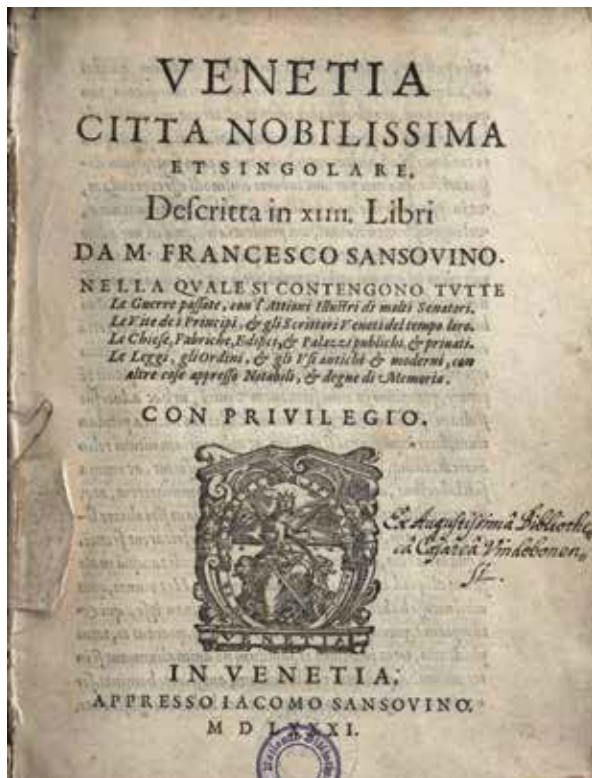
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The Venetian society of the 17<sup>th</sup> century was extremely dynamic and faced a great number of important challenges. Although the *Seicento* is clearly part of the long phase of decadence of Venice (both in its commercial activities and international politics), recent historical analyses no longer describe it as a homogeneous moment of decline and place greater emphasis on its positive and dynamic aspects, such as (and especially): the consolidation of the political and territorial sovereignty in the *Stato da Terra*, the mainland or *Terraferma*, or the independence from the hegemony of other European powers, namely Spain and France. Furthermore, despite its many losses in the Eastern Mediterranean during the long conflict with the Ottoman Empire, Venice also knew moments of great hope and trust in the future. Due to the military successes of Francesco Morosini in the Morean War, the last two decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century were actually marked by a great enthusiasm that is somehow reminiscent of the climate after the battle of Lepanto in 1571, an episode so celebrated as a moment of collective memory that it was not even overshadowed by the defeat against Selim and the loss of Cyprus in 1573.<sup>1</sup>

Venice never had to endure humiliating practices, unlike Genoa for instance (whose doge was forced to kneel before Louis XIV), and occupied a strong position in the European

diplomatic hierarchy. This was undoubtedly an important reason to strengthen the relationship and the degree of identification between the ruling class and the state, while also promoting an organic image of the Republic among the “Venetian Commonwealth”, foreigners and visitors.

What kind of resources and instruments did the Venetian Republic develop to promote its image of the Serenissima? How did the State use private patronage for public purposes and what kind of media were used to link the private and the public sectors? These are some of the questions that one should address when trying to define the mechanisms adopted by the Republic to demonstrate vitality and wealth and to reconcile its past and present. The purpose of Venetian historiography<sup>2</sup> was to preserve and foment the myth of Venice and to reaffirm the superiority of the ideology of the “*stato libero*” (free state) with its mixed constitution.<sup>3</sup> This image had been codified since Gasparo Contarini's *La Repubblica e i magistrati di Vinetia* (1544 for the Italian edition)<sup>4</sup> and Paolo Paruta's *Della perfezione della vita politica* (1579), where particular attention is paid to the obligation of Venetian patricians to serve the state by taking up positions in the state offices. Significantly, the latter text dates from after the victorious battle of Lepanto (1571) and the loss of Cyprus, and became a model for many other ideological manifestos



1. Francesco Sansovino, *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare* (...), 1580, title page

Francesco Sansovino, *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare* (...), 1580., naslovnica



2. Palazzo ducale, Venice, tondo with the allegorical representation of Venice

Duždeva palača, Venecija, tondo s alegorijskim prikazom Venecije

of the early *Seicento*. Besides the concept of freedom, Paolo Paruta repeatedly suggests an analogy between Venice and the Virgin. The notion of “virginity” partially overlaps with the idea of freedom, insofar as it suggests that, thanks to Venice’s particular geographic situation, it has never been invaded. However, this analogy also reminds us that the mythical foundation of the city took place under the protection of the Virgin Mary, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March 421, on the day of the Annunciation.<sup>5</sup> In the Venetian calendar, the year originally started on that day. The political writings of the 16<sup>th</sup> century were immediately confirmed by a historiography that included matters of art and architecture in the depiction of the state and the city. The first edition of Francesco Sansovino’s *Delle cose notabili* (...) dates from 1561. The book aims to demonstrate how the physical qualities of the city mirror the features of the Republican state and in particular its political system, ceremonies, major historical events and above all public, private and ecclesiastic art and architecture. In his introduction, the author states that the historical writings do not contemplate the uses and customs or the physical and material aspects of the city as the “theatre of the world” and that his aim is to fill this gap.<sup>6</sup> It is clear that this text, as well as the many that would follow, is addressed to an audience of foreigners.

Francesco Sansovino’s *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare*, a kind of guidebook published in 1581, also echoes the political writings mentioned above, and transposes them into the fields of art, architecture, and urbanism. Sansovino’s book

is well known and I will not go into greater detail about it. Let me just mention a passage on private palaces in order to illustrate how Sansovino creates the perfect correspondence between architecture and the political system.

“Non è città in Europa, che habbia più Palazzi & di gran circuito: così sul Canal Grande come fra terra, di Venetia, I quali noi chiamiamo case per modestia, non havendo nome di Palazzo, altro che quello del Doge. Et certo che se si discorre per le Città principali d’Italia, come è Roma, Napoli, Milano, Genova, Fiorenza, Bologna, Padova, Verona e Pavia, non si troverà che habbiano più di Quattro o sei casamenti per una, che meritino titolo di Palazzi. Ma in questa se ne contano poco meno di cento et tutti, così antichi come moderni, magnifici et grandi, così nella compositura, come negli ornamenti, ne partimenti, et nei luoghi utili per habitare.”<sup>7</sup>

These “hundred palaces” are the visual expressions of their owners and of the wealthy republican system as well as of the harmony between the two. In 1602, Doglioni conveyed the same idea in *Le cose notabili et maravigliose della città di Venetia*, cleverly structured as a dialogue between a foreigner and a Venetian who claims “quasi la maggior parte delle case di Venetia son come palazzi.”<sup>8</sup> His book was such a success that it was updated and republished numerous times in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The numerical consistency of the patrician class, which according to Sansovino and Doglioni is reflected in residential architecture to the point of becoming a fundamental element in the reading





3. Giulio Strozzi, *La Venetia edificata* (...), 1624, title page  
 Giulio Strozzi, *La Venetia edificata* (...), 1624., naslovnica



4. Francesco Sansovino – Giustiniano Martinioni, *Venetia città nobilissima e singolare* (...), 1663, frontispiece  
 Francesco Sansovino – Giustiniano Martinioni, *Venetia città nobilissima e singolare* (...), 1663., frontispis



5. Giovanni Francesco Tomasini, *Annales canonicorum secularium S. Georgii in Alga*, Udine, 1642, frontispiece by Giovanni Giorgi  
 Giovanni Francesco Tomasini, *Annales canonicorum secularium S. Georgii in Alga*, Udine, 1642., frontispis Giovannija Giorgija



6. Giovanni Cottunio, *Commentarii lucidissimi in octo libros Aristotelis De Physico* (...), Padua, 1648, title page by Giovanni Giorgi  
 Giovanni Cottunio, *Commentarii lucidissimi in octo libros Aristotelis De Physico* (...), Padova, 1648., naslovnica Giovannija Giorgija





7. Giovanni Giorgi after Giacomo Torelli, stage setting for the opera *Bellerofonte*, 1642  
*Giovanni Giorgi prema Giacomu Torelliju, scenografija za operu Bellerofonte*, 1642.



8. Santa Maria della Salute, Venice, inscription on the floor at the center of the church  
*Santa Maria della Salute, Venecija, natpis na podu u središtu crkve*

of urban space, is also a condition for the maintenance and very survival of the free and virgin Republic. “Ma i poli del governo sono stati il numero de’ Patrizi, e la loro Concordia [...] onde quanto sono i patrizi, tanti sono i Sacerdoti della Libertà.”<sup>9</sup> The senator Battista Nani used these words in 1645, when arguing in favour of admitting new families into the patrician ruling class. The reopening of the *Libro d’oro* was discussed when, since the beginning of the Cretan War against the Ottomans, Venice had to come to terms with its financial and demographic crisis.<sup>10</sup> In light of Sansovino’s discourse, the word “patrician” could be replaced with the word “palace” or “house”, that is to say “Ca’”, the Venetian word for “casa”. Sansovino’s book was republished, with new additions and corrections, several times during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The most famous editions are those by Giovanni Stringa

from 1604 and by Giustiniano Martinioni from 1663. Many other guidebooks, more synthetic in character, but with the same basic outline, were also published. Besides Doglioni’s aforementioned *Le cose notabili*, other instances include *Il ritratto di Venezia* by Domenico Martinelli or the *Cronaca veneta sacra e profana* by Pietro Antonio Pacifico (1697). In all these publications individual achievements are seen as part of a choral celebration of the Republic.

Sansovino’s title page features an editorial vignette with an allegorical representation of Venice. This allegory dates back to the Middle Ages and, more precisely, to a sculpture from around 1350, attributed to Filippo Calendario, placed on the façade of the Doge’s Palace overlooking the *Piazzetta*.<sup>11</sup> The sculpture represents a crowned female figure sitting on a throne (the throne of Salomon with the two lions). Her



9. Commemorative medal for the foundation of Santa Maria della Salute, recto, 1631  
*Komemorativna medalja povodom početka gradnje crkve Santa Maria della Salute, recto, 1631.*



10. Commemorative medal for the foundation of Santa Maria della Salute, verso, 1631  
*Komemorativna medalja povodom početka gradnje crkve Santa Maria della Salute, verso, 1631.*



11. Santa Maria della Salute, Venice, lantern  
*Santa Maria della Salute, Venecija, lanterna*

attributes are a scroll and a sword. Historians have often underlined that the figure not only refers to Justice but also to the Virgin Mary,<sup>12</sup> as do many other allegorical representations of Venice from the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, such as the one by Jacobello da Fiore (1421),<sup>13</sup> where the central figure is flanked by the archangels Gabriel and Michael, or that of Bartolomeo Bon at the top of the Porta della Carta, the entrance to the Doge's Palace (1443).<sup>14</sup> The mid-15<sup>th</sup>-century medal of the doge Francesco Foscari, the first in a long series of ducal medals, also makes an explicit reference to the tondo from the Doge's palace: it features a crowned Venezia Magna holding a sword and an escutcheon and sitting on the Salomonic throne.<sup>15</sup>

David Rosand has underlined the polysomic character of the allegories of Venice.<sup>16</sup> It can be verified in a horizontal chronological line as well as in a vertical order that considers historical and political evolution. Before we continue, it is therefore important to stress, following Paruta, that we do not have to do with a Justice that also bears aspects of the Virgin, but that the figure of Mary is of equal centrality. The examples from the earlier 17<sup>th</sup> century emphasise either one or the other. In order to underline the relevance of the city's founding history, the vignette on the title page of Doglioni's programmatic *Venetia trionfante et sempre libera*, from 1613,



12. Jacopo Piccini after Francesco Zucchi, frontispiece of the *Historia delle cose successe dal principio della guerra (...)* by Giovanni Pietro Contarini, Venice, 1645

*Jacopo Piccini prema Franciscu Zucchiju, frontispis knjige Historia delle cose successe dal principio della guerra (...)* Giovanninja Pietra Contarinija, Venecija, 1645.

features a map of Venice surrounded by the scene of the Annunciation. The complexity of the iconography emerges when we consider that in his text Doglioni also introduces an analogy between Venice and Venus.<sup>17</sup> The title pages of the 1621 and 1624 editions of Giulio Strozzi's heroic poem *Venezia edificata* present slight differences in the representation of the central figure.<sup>18</sup> While the first is clearly a Venice-Justice, the second is much more ambiguous and shows a young woman sitting nonchalantly on the back of the lion.

The allegorical representation of Venice also occupies the title pages of the aforementioned editions by Stringa and Martinioni of Sansovino's *Venetia città nobilissima*. However, the two editions are slightly different: whereas in Sansovino the image in the vignette is in line with the tondo from the Doge's Palace, in Martinioni's female allegory of Venice as Justice, the crown is replaced with the *corno ducale*, the typical hat of the doges. The use of the matrix of a ducal Venice seems to have become increasingly popular by the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In 1642, for Tomasini's history of S. Giorgio in Alga, the engraver Giovanni Giorgi proposed a frontispiece showing Venice and Faith travelling in a shell pulled





13. Frontispiece of Vincenzo Coronelli's *Corso geografico universale*, Venice, 1692

*Frontispis knjige Vincenza Coronellija Corso geografico universale, Venecija, 1692.*



14. Frontispiece of Vincenzo Coronelli's *Memorie istoriografiche de' Regni della Morea, Negroponte e littorali fin'a Salonichi*, Venice, 1686

*Frontispis knjige Vincenza Coronellija Memorie istoriografiche de' Regni della Morea, Negroponte e littorali fin'a Salonichi, Venecija, 1686.*

by tritons,<sup>19</sup> while the frontispiece of Giorgi for Giovanni Cottunio's philosophical *Commentarii* on Aristotle's *Physics*<sup>20</sup> shows figures emerging from the sea and offering their goods to Venice, while a unicorn, a rather unusual Venetian iconography, illustrates the theme of virginity.<sup>21</sup>

Giovanni Giorgi is also the author of the engravings that document the stage settings by Giacomo Torelli for the opera *Bellerofonte*, performed in 1642 at the Teatro Novissimo.

The opera opens in the port of the city of Patara with the song of Innocenza who, banned from the city, calls on Astrea, the goddess of Justice, to drive away the fraud, vice and tyranny from Patara. Justice appears in the sky sitting on a cloud and promises the goddess the triumph of the virtue of Bellerophon. From the sea Neptune appears and invites Innocence not to despair, because in a short time a city will rise from the waters thanks to which there will be another Golden Age and the goddess can reign by making his virtue triumph. At the nod of the god, the city of Venice, with a view of the Piazzetta, appears from the waves. The astonishing physical appearance of the city is accompanied by a text by Vincenzo Nolfi, written probably in the orbit of the *Accademia degli Incogniti*, which decants the glory of Venice: "Città sopra qualunque il mondo ammira / Saggia, ricca e gentile, / son delle tue grandezze un'ombra vile / Sparta, Atene e Stagira. / Quindi vedranno i secoli futuri / Correrà i lidi tuoi gonfio di lume / Per tributarti il Ciel converso in fiume".<sup>22</sup> Public theatres are generally places predestined for the celebration of the Republic,<sup>23</sup> but the Venice-Justice staged by Torelli represents a solution of particular and unrepeatable impact.<sup>24</sup>

Nevertheless, even if it seems that by focussing on the ducal image of Venice the iconography becomes 'simpler' and loses its primordial depth and ambiguity, another highly relevant context reaffirms the importance and centrality of the Virgin. In the middle of the floor of the church of S. Maria della Salute, a crown of roses carries the inscription "Unde origo inde salus" ("whence the origin thence the salvation"). The

motto first appeared on the *osella* (medal) of the doge Nicolò Contarini, created in 1631 when the first stone of the votive church was laid down.<sup>25</sup> Significantly, the day chosen for that ceremony was the 25<sup>th</sup> of March.

One side of the medal shows a church with the image of the Virgin with Child and the old doge Nicolò Contarini kneeling in front of them. The representation of a kneeling doge is quite usual, but the unusual feature of this representation is that the doge is bareheaded, with the *corno ducale* lying in front of him as a sign of his devotion to the Virgin. The image refers perfectly to the ceremony on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October 1630 when, during the plague, the doge had vowed in front of the Senate to build the church. The other side of the medal features the Piazzetta and the Annunciation, framed by the motto "Unde origo inde salus". The medal aims to reaffirm the connection between Venice and the Virgin through the re-enactment of the mythical origins of the city. This reaffirmation occurs in the context of the plague and a political thought that defends the neutrality of Venice and that recognises, in a return to the origins, the condition for the city's salvation.<sup>26</sup> Many years later, probably just before the consecration of the church in 1687 (i.e. in a new historical context), the benevolent and merciful protective figure of Mary took on different or additional meanings. On the lantern of the dome of S. Maria della Salute, the Virgin assumes the appearance of a *capitano generale da mar* (commander of the navy), holding the traditional baton of command.<sup>27</sup> The sculpture marks a turning point in the meaning of the church. Conceived as a votive church during the plague of 1630, throughout the long history of its building it took on new features that reflected the evolving historical situation. The high altar features not only Venice asking for the intercession of the Virgin for liberation from the plague,<sup>28</sup> assisted by Saint Mark and the blessed Lorenzo Giustiniani, but also an icon of the Virgin *Mesopotantissa*. The holy image was 'saved' from the Ottomans in Candia and arrived in Venice



15. Nicolò Bambini, *Allegory of Venice*, Palazzo Pesaro, Venice, 1682  
Nicolò Bambini, Alegorija Venecije, Palača Pesaro, Venecija, 1682.

in February 1670. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of November, on the day of the holy day of the Madonna della Salute, the icon was installed on the altar. Therefore, in a kind of narrative sequence, the high altar reflects the negative conclusion of the Cretan War in 1669, while the sculpture at the top of the lantern refers to the fortunate campaigns that Francesco Morosini, the donor of the icon, was conducting in Morea at the time.

The military conflict against the Turks was of course extensively featured in Venetian historiography. At the very beginning of the war, in 1645, Stefano Combi published a new edition of Giovanni Pietro Contarini's *Historia* from 1572.<sup>29</sup> The volume's frontispiece features an engraving by Jacopo Piccini based on a drawing by Francesco Ruschi. Both the image and the inscriptions strongly emphasise the role of the Virgin as protector of the Republic. Venice is represented sitting on clouds beside the Immacolata while the lion of Saint Mark mauls a dragon, the symbol of the Ottoman Empire. Although the military aspect of the *Venezia ducale* predominates on the frontispiece of Coronelli's



16. Andrea Celesti, *Allegory of Venice and the Four Continents*, Trieste, Museo Civico del Castello di San Giusto

Andrea Celesti, Alegorija Venecije i četiri kontinenta, Trst, Museo Civico del Castello di San Giusto

*Corso di geografia universale* from 1692, some details refer not only to the obligatory theme of religion in the context of the Turkish wars,<sup>30</sup> but also to Marian iconography. Like on a stage, against the background of military positions and a battlefield, female figures arm the personification of Venice, while putti present symbols of faith. One foot of the figure of Venice stands on a crescent moon; it can refer to both the Immacolata and the Turkish moon. A few years earlier, perhaps in 1686, an unknown designer had prepared for Coronelli a ducal and triumphant Venice with the government stick in her hand, sitting on a floating throne in the shape of a shell pulled by four seahorses led by Neptune. Without the depiction of a setting different from that of the sea in which the mutilated bodies of Turkish enemies sink and free from explicit iconographic elements related to the support of faith, this image, certainly prepared as an introduction to a collection of maps of the conquered lands, is the highest expression of the claim of dominion over the sea.<sup>31</sup>

To conclude, it is worth mentioning that in the context of the Turkish wars the reference to the "Venezia figurata" also assumes importance for the family celebration and in the iconographic choices of the decoration of the palaces. A well-known example is the ceiling by Nicolò Bambini and Andrea Brustolon in a lateral room of the main hall of Ca' Pesaro, dated 1682, which combines the dynastic celebration, expressed through the medium of painting, with references to the war against the 'infidels' carved in wood.<sup>32</sup> While Andrea Celesti's project for a ceiling in Palazzo Erizzo, probably from around 1680, is all based on the narration of the heroic deeds and torture of Paolo Erizzo,<sup>33</sup> a painting also attributed to Celesti, which can be placed in the same chronological context and comes from the same palace, celebrates the Republic of Venice.<sup>34</sup> Here, surrounded by the personifications of the continents, sovereign Venice ideally extends its dominion. The personification of Venice is depicted with the ducal symbols, but on the clasp of its robe is a representation of the Annunciation.



## Notes

\* This paper is an extended and elaborated version of work presented at the conference *The Power of Media. Patronage, Representation and Propaganda in Early Modern Period (1450–1800) between the Mediterranean and Central Europe* (Split, June 13–15, 2018).

1 For the collective memory linked to the battle of Lepanto see: ANASTASIA STOURAITI, *Costruendo un luogo della memoria: Lepanto*, in: *Storia di Venezia – Rivista*, 1 (2003), 65–88. The most recent contributions on Francesco Morosini, issued from the expositions that were organized in honour of his 400<sup>th</sup> birthday, are collected in: *Francesco Morosini (1619–1694): Uomo, il doge, il condottiero*, Rome, 2019.

2 The function of official historiographer of the Republic was first established in 1487 when the Council of Ten nominated Marcan-tonio Sabellico for the position.

3 The literature on the myth of Venice is very rich. Consider above all: GINA FASOLI, *Nascita di un mito*, in: *Studi storici in onore di Gioacchino Volpe*, vol. 1, Florence, 1958, 445–479; FRANCO GAETA, *Alcune considerazioni sul mito di Venezia*, in: *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 23 (1961), 58–75; IDEM, *Venezia da “stato misto” ad “aristocrazia esemplare”*, in: *Storia della Cultura Veneta*, vol. 4/II: *Il Seicento*, (eds.) Girolamo Arnaldi, Manlio Pastore Stocchi, Vicenza, 1984, 437–494; IDEM, *Storiografia, coscienza nazionale e politica culturale nella Venezia del Rinascimento*, in: *Storia della Cultura Veneta*, vol. III/I: *Dal Primo Quattrocento al Concilio di Trento*, (eds.) Girolamo Arnaldi, Manlio Pastore Stocchi, Vicenza, 1980, 11–12; GINO BENZONI, *Venezia ossia il mito modulato*, in: *Studi Veneziani*, 19 (1990), 15–33; IDEM, *Venezia: tra mito e realtà*, in: *Studi Veneziani*, 45 (2003), 15–26; ELISABETH CROUZET PAVAN, *Venezia trionfante. Gli orizzonti di un mito*, Torino, 2001, 205–256. See also: *Storici e politici veneti del Cinquecento e del Seicento*, (eds.) Gino Benzoni, Tiziano Zanato, Milan – Naples, 1982, especially the introduction, XV–XCVIII; DAVID ROBEY – JOHN LAW, *The Venetian Myth and The Republica Veneta of Pier Paolo Vergerio*, in: *Rinascimento*, ser. II, 15 (1975), 3–59; ANDRÉ JEAN-MARC LOECHEL, *Le rappresentazioni della comunità*, in: *Storia di Venezia: Dalle origini alla caduta della Serenissima*, vol. IV: *Il Rinascimento politica e cultura*, (eds.) Alberto Tenenti, Ugo Tucci, Rome, 1996, 603–721; *Il mito di Venezia, una città tra realtà e rappresentazione*, (ed.) Peter Schreiner, Rome – Venice, 2006.

4 Contarini was not a historiographer of the Republic.

5 MARIN SANUDO, *De origine, situ et magistratibus urbis venetae ovvero La Città di Venezia (1493–1530)*, (ed.) Anna Caracciolo Aricò, Milan, 1980, 12–13.

6 FRANCESCO SANSOVINO, *Delle cose notabili che sono in Venetia (...)*, Venice 1561, 2: “Vivendo io in così illustre, & chiara Città come è questa, laqual senza alcun dubbio si puo chiamar il Theatro del mondo, & l’occhio d’Italia, ho più volte cercato di trovar s’alcuno avesse scritto quelle particolarità che diletano gli ingegni vaghi di cose nuove, & che piacciono a coloro che vanno vedendo i costumi de Principi, & delle Rep. Et messomi a leggere il Sabellico, il Bembo, il Giustiniano, & molti altri che hanno scritto altamente le Historie di questa Rep. Immortalissima, non trovando io nelle loro scritte le predette particolarità, mi nacque

un’ardentissimo desiderio di far che le genti lontane, e che vivono per le altre Città, gustassero quel ch’io andava cercando (...).”

7 “No city has so many palaces as Venice. However, in sign of modesty we call them houses, because only the one of the Doge is named Palace. Indeed, walking through the most important Italian cities, as Milan, Genoa, Rome, Florence, Pavia, Bologna (and so on), one will discover not more than four or six buildings that merit the title Palazzo. But here [in Venice] we will count nearly a hundred (.)”; FRANCESCO SANSOVINO, *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare*, Venice, 1581, 139.

8 GIOVANNI NICOLÒ DOGLIONI, *Le cose notabili et meravigliose della città di Venetia*, Venice, 1603, 68.

9 “The poles of government are the patricians and their Concordia (...) therefore as many are the patricians as many are the ‘priests’ of freedom”. Cf. ROBERTO SABBADINO, *Lacquistò della tradizione. Tradizione aristocratica e nuova nobiltà a Venezia*, Udine, 1995.

10 Between 1646 and 1718, 118 families entered into the ranks of the Venetian nobility. For the phenomenon of aggregations see: ROBERTO SABBADINO (note 9); DORIT RAINES, *Strategie d’ascesa sociale e giochi di potere a Venezia nel Seicento: le aggregazioni alla nobiltà*, in: *Studi veneziani*, n.s., 51 (2006), 279–317.

11 As Andrea Lerner has recently shown, the formal qualities of the tondo go back to imperial bulls, in particular to that of Ludwig the Bavarian. See: ANDREA LERMER, *Besiegelung des Rathauses*, in: *Die Bildlichkeit korporativer Siegel im Mittelalter: Kunstgeschichte und Geschichte im Gespräch*, (eds.) Markus Spaeth, Saskia Hennig von Lange, Vienna – Cologne – Weimar, 2009, 131–144.

12 See: WOLFGANG WOLTERS, *La scultura gotica veneziana (1300–1460)*, Venice, 1976, vol. 1, 46; DAVID ROSAND, “Venezia figurata”. The Iconography of a Myth, in: *Interpretazioni veneziane. Studi di storia dell’arte in onore di Michelangelo Muraro*, (ed.) David Rosand, Venice, 1984, 177–196.

13 The painting was conceived in 1421 for the hall of the Giudici del Proprio in the Ducal Palace. It is now at the Gallerie dell’Accademia.

14 ANDREA LERMER (note 11), 141–142.

15 GIOVANNI GORINI, *I dogi e le medaglie*, in: *Il serenissimo doge*, (ed.) Umberto Franzoi, Treviso, 1986, 308–327.

16 DAVID ROSAND (note 12), 1984.

17 GIOVANNI NICOLÒ DOGLIONI, *Venetia trionfante et libera*, Venice, 1613, anonymous poem at the beginning of the book: “Aut Venus à Venetis sibi fecit amabile nomen, / Aut Veneti Veneris nomen, et omen habent. / Orta maris spuma fertur Venus, et Venetorum / Si videas urbem, creditur orta mari. / Iuppiter est illi genitor, sed Mars pater huic est; / Mulciberi coniux illa, sed ista maris. / Complet amore sui Venus omnia; qui Venetam urbem /



Non amat, hunc nunquam debet amare Venus.” See also: MONICA CENTANNI, Venezia/Venusia nata dalle acque, in: *Lezioni Marciane 2013–2014. Venezia prima di Venezia. Archeologia e mito, alle origini di un'identità*, (eds.) Maddalena Bassani, Marco Molin, Rome, 2015, 77–110. The reference to Venus already appears in the narration of the mythical foundation of Venice. Sanudo specifies in fact that “Venezia fo comenzata a edificar (...) del 421, adi 25 Marzo in zorno di Venere cerca l'hora di nona ascendendo, come nella figura astrologica apar, gradi 25 del segno del Cancro. Nel qual zorno *ut divinae testantur litterae* fu formato il primo homo Adam nel principio del mondo per le mano di Dio; ancora in ditto zorno la verzene Maria fo annunciata dall'angelo Cabriel, et *etiam* il fiol de Dio, Christo Giesù nel suo immacolato ventre *miraculose* introe, et secondo l'opinione theologica fo in quel medesimo zorno da Zudei crucefisso”.

18

ULRICH PFISTERER (ed.), *Giulio Strozzi: La Venetia edificata ... Poema eroico (Venedig 1624). Das 11. Kapitel zur Personifikation der 'Kunst' und zur Galleria del Cielo*, FONTES E-Quellen und Dokumente zur Kunst 1350–1750, 2008. See: <[https://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/artdok/449/1/Pfisterer\\_Fontes10.pdf](https://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/artdok/449/1/Pfisterer_Fontes10.pdf)> (20 October 2019).

19

GIOVANNI FRANCESCO TOMASINI, *Annales canonicorum secularium S. Georgii in Alga*, Udine, 1642; See: STEFANIA COCCHIARA, *Il libro illustrato veneziano del Seicento*, Saonara, 2010, 48.

20

GIOVANNI COTTUNIO, *Commentarii lucidissimi in octo libros Aristotelis De Physico (...)*, Padua, 1648. STEFANIA COCCHIARA (note 19), 62.

21

The inkhorn also appears in a coloured drawing that opens a volume with maps of cities and regions of the Morea, dated 1684–1697. Here the personification of Venice with the *cornio ducale* sits in a shell accompanied by the lion, with book and sword, and the inkhorn. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, It. VII, 94 (=10051).

22

“City wise, rich, and noble over any the world admires, Sparta, Athens and Stagira are but modest shadow of your greatness. Henceforth the ages to come will see Heaven, swollen with light, rush to your shores as a river to pay you tribute.” ELLEN ROSAND, Opera, in: *Seventeenth-Century Venice: the Creation of a Genre*, Berkeley – Los Angeles – Oxford, 1990, 134–136.

23

GIOVANNI MORELLI, La musica, in: *Storia di Venezia. Dalle origini alla caduta della Serenissima*, vol. VII: *La Venezia barocca*, (eds.) Gino Benzoni, Gaetano Cozzi, Rome, 2007, 239–305.

24

EUGENE JOHNSON, Jacopo Sansovino, Giacomo Torelli, and the Theatricality of the Piazzetta in Venice, in: *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 59/4 (Dec. 2000), 436–453.

25

MARTINA FRANK, *Baldassare Longhena*, Venice, 2004, 54–56.

26

MASSIMO GEMIN, *La chiesa di S. Maria della Salute e la cabala di Paolo Sarpi*, Abano Terme, 1982, 51–52.

27

Even during the Turkish wars of the sixteenth century, military aspects were incorporated into the image of Maria-Venezia. Cf.

GIORGIO TAGLIAFERRO, Il mito ripensato: trasformazioni della retorica figurativa pubblica tra Lepanto e l'Interdetto, in: *Celebrazione e autocritica. La Serenissima e la ricerca dell'identità veneziana nel tardo Cinquecento*, (ed.) Benjamin Paul, Rome, 2014, 193–231, for the painting by Domenico Tintoretto in the Sala dell'Avogaria in the Ducal Palace.

28

GIORGIO TAGLIAFERRO (note 27), 231; for the painting by Domenico Tintoretto from 1631 in the church of San Francesco della Vigna, where the personification of Venice asks the intercession of the Virgin for liberation from the plague. For the high altar of the church of the Salute see the recent publication: MAICHOL CLEMENTE, *White Marble and the Black Death*, Venice 2019. For an analyses of the reuse of sacred objects brought from Candia after the defeat: MARTINA FRANK, Sacri oggetti e la guerra, in: *La “splendida” Venezia di Francesco Morosini (1619–1694): cerimoniali, arti, cultura*, Venice, forthcoming.

29

GIOVANNI PIETRO CONTARINI – STEFANO COMBI, *Historia delle cose successe dal principio della guerra mossa da Selim Ottomano a' Venetiani, fino al di della gran giornata vittoriosa contra Turchi*, Venice, 1645. For the frontispiece see: STEFANIA COCCHIARA (note 19), 57.

30

ANASTASIA STOURAITI, Propaganda figurata: geometrie di dominio e ideologie veneziane nelle carte di Vincenzo Coronelli, in: *Studi veneziani*, 44 (2002), 137.

31

ANASTASIA STOURAITI (note 30), 135; GIULIANA MAZZI, Architetture e città, in: *Un intellettuale europeo e il suo universo: Vincenzo Coronelli (1650–1718)*, (ed.) M. G. Tavoni, Bologna, 1999, 168. For the representation of Venice and Faith sitting on a floating throne in the form of a shell from 1642, see note 19.

32

ROBERTO RADASSAO, Niccolò Bambini “pittore pronto spedito ed universale”, in: *Saggi e Memorie di Storia dell'arte*, 22 (1998), 155.

33

For the drawing of Celesti in the collections of the Louvre and the lost decoration of the palace: GIORGIO FOSSALUZZA, Da Andrea Celesti ad Antonio Arrigoni: disegni, precisazioni e proposte, in: *Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti*, 32 (2008), 167–224. The central field represents the martyrdom of Paolo Erizzo in 1469, the abandonment of the Negroponte fortress and the condemnation of Erizzo by Sultan Mohammed II appear laterally, while the fields of the outer circle feature representations of the virtues. The glorification of the 15<sup>th</sup> century hero was complemented by quotations from the more recent history of the Turkish Wars, in particular Niccolò Erizzo's participation in the capture of Navarino in 1686.

34

The painting is now in the Civico Museo del Castello di San Giusto in Trieste, see: GIORGIO FOSSALUZZA (note 33), 175. The author also discuss two drawings with allegorical representations of Venice from around 1679 by Celesti, linked to the dissertation of the Franciscan friar Sisto da Alfianello, where the ducal Venice on a shell like a throne is surrounded by the virtues, and Celesti's lost 1694 painting from the “Broletto” in Brescia, which basically represented the same feature.

## Sažetak

Martina Frank

## Predstavljanje Republike u Veneciji 17. stoljeća

Iako je *Seicento* očito dio dugotrajne faze dekadencije Venecije (kako u gospodarskim aktivnostima tako i u međunarodnoj politici), nedavne povijesne analize više ga ne opisuju kao homogeni trenutak opadanja, snažnije ističući njegove pozitivne i dinamičke aspekte. Štoviše, unatoč brojnim gubitcima u istočnom Sredozemlju tijekom dugog sukoba s Osmanskim carstvom, Venecija je proživljavala trenutke velike nade i vjere u budućnost. Zbog vojnih uspjeha Francesca Morosinija u Morejskom ratu, posljednja dva desetljeća 17. stoljeća zapravo su bila označena velikim entuzijazmom koji je na stanovit način evocirao raspoloženje nakon bitke kod Lepanta 1571. godine. Alegorijski prikazi Venecije iz 17. stoljeća zadržavaju višeznačni karakter srednjovjekovnih i cinquecenteskinih personifikacija, prilagođen promijenjenim povijesnim okolnostima. Ako koncept slobode dominira u tekstovima, vizualna se personifikacija usredotočuje na koncepte nevinosti i pravde. Pojam nevinosti djelomično se preklapa s idejom o slobodi, sve dok sugerira da, zahvaljujući specifičnoj geografskoj situaciji, Venecija nikada nije bila okupirana. Međutim, ta nas analogija također podsjeća da se mitski nastanak Venecije dogodio pod zaštitom Djevice Marije, točnije 25. ožujka 421. godine, na dan Navještenja Marijina. U kontekstu pojave kuge 1630., Djevica se također reafirmira kao važna i središnja figura. Na sredini poda crkve Santa Maria della Salute, kruna od ruža nosi natpis *Unde Origo Inde Salus*. Moto se prvi put pojavio na medalji dužda Nicolò Contarinija iz 1631. godine, kada je postavljen

prvi kamen te zavjetne crkve. Znakovito, dan izabran za tu ceremoniju bio je 25. ožujka. Na jednoj strani medalje prikazana je crkva pred kojom kleči dužd Nicolò Contarini, a na drugoj Piazzetta Sv. Marka s prizorom Navještenja, uokvirene motom VNDE ORIGO INDE SALVS. Prikazi na medalji nastoje učvrstiti vezu između Venecije i Djevice podsjećajući na mitske predaje o postanku grada. Mnogo godina kasnije, vjerojatno neposredno prije posvećenja crkve 1687. te u kontekstu turskih ratova, dobronamjerna i milosrdna zaštitnička figura Marije preuzela je različita ili dodatna značenja. Na lanterni kupole crkve Santa Maria della Salute, Djevica poprima izgled zapovjednice mornarice (*Capitana generale da Mar*), držeći u desnoj ruci tradicionalnu zapovjedničku palicu. Vojni sukob s Turcima bio je opsežno zastupljen u mletačkoj historiografiji i ikonografiji. Na glavnom oltaru crkve Santa Maria della Salute je ikona *Bogorodice s Djetetom* donesena iz Kandije (Herakliona), a novo izdanje djela *Historia* (1572.) Giovannija Pietra Contarinija, iz 1645. godine, sadrži bakrorez Jacopa Piccinija prema crtežu Francesca Ruschija koji snažno naglašava ulogu Djevice kao zaštitnice Republike. Također, na naslovnici Coronellijeva djela *Corso di Geografia universale* iz 1692. godine, neki se detalji ne odnose samo na obveznu vjersku tematiku u kontekstu turskih ratova, već i na marijansku ikonografiju.

*Ključne riječi:* Venecija, mit, alegorija



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