

CHAPTER ONE: A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Venetian state developed first as an overseas colonial empire and only later became a continental power, maintaining a strong vocation for international trade virtually until the last days of the *Serenissima*. Trade and shipping were openly acknowledged as the pillars of Venice's might and wealth, and trade included Persia as well as lands which were connected to Persia, to a various degree and extent, by a number of historical, political, economic, cultural and linguistic ties. The Venetian merchants residing in Persia at any given time must have been always less numerous than those living in Byzantine Constantinople, the Ottoman Empire, or the Black Sea basin and the Crimea at the heyday of Venetian power, but their presence was not a negligible one. Thus, it is not surprising that a steady flow of information on Persia arrived to Venice, and that much of this information was produced or at least conveyed by traders. At an iconographic level, the inhabitants of Persia and of the lands surrounding it were (and still are) represented in the very political, ceremonial and symbolic heart of Venice, the Palazzo Ducale (which was the seat of the nominal head of the State, the Doge, as well as that of many government bodies, including those which were the expression of the paramount role of Venetian nobility and through which the nobility actually ruled the Republic, namely, the *Maggior Consiglio* and the *Senato*) and the adjacent Basilica di S. Marco (which was the private chapel of the Doge). The sculpted heads of a Persian, a Turk, a Tatar and a Goth (presumably, a reference to those still living in the Crimea in the Middle Ages) embellish the capital of the fourteenth column of the portico of the façade of Palazzo Ducale, each of them identified by captions and distinguished from the others by a different headgear. Inside S. Marco, the mosaics on the wall of one of the domes represent Elamites, Medes and Parthians among other peoples of the ancient Near East. Starting with the 15th century, however, the Venetian empire overseas was growingly threatened by the rising power of the Ottomans, who wrested from Venice most of its possessions in the Balkan Peninsula and the Greek Archipel through a cycle of wars waged periodically between 1423 and 1669. The necessity of trading and of defending trade was the force that shaped the Venetian attitude towards the Ottomans as well as Venetian interest in Persia, and the very image of the latter country. Yet it has been noted that “la tradition véni-

tienne n'encourage pas à la spéculation théorique" in the realm of political philosophy¹: this was true not only in regard to the Ottoman Empire but, as I will show, for the Venetian attitude towards Persia as well.

Here I mention the name of Marco Polo (1254–1324) only as a tribute to tradition and commonplace. However, I will not deal with his life and travels at least for two reasons: in order not to delve in the *mare magnum* of Polo's studies (with the related issue of the accuracy and nature of the information provided by Marco), and because of the chronological limits imposed on this contribution by the general topic of the conference where it was originally presented². However, it is quite obvious that Venetian merchants visited Persia and the surrounding lands before and after Marco Polo. A sign of Venetian familiarity with Persia is perhaps to be seen in the outstanding contemporary of Marco Polo, the historian Marino Sanudo Torsello (or the Elder, ca. 1270–after 1343) and his somewhat ambitious but not necessarily absurd project of crippling the economy of Mamluk Egypt with the help of the Mongol rulers of Iran³. As of today, there is no scholarly consensus as to whether Venetian traders entered the Black Sea before 1204 or not, although the former seems quite unlikely a possibility⁴. The fall of Constantinople to the IV Crusade opened up the Straits, but Venetian interest for and commercial activities in the Black Sea remained relatively limited until the second half of the 13th century⁵. The negative consequences of the fall of the Latin empire of Constantinople (1261), which entailed the exclusion of Venetian shipping and trading from the Black Sea to the advantage of the Genoese, were soon offset by a favourable Byzantine-Venetian treaty in 1265 and, above all, by the Mongol conquest, which created new conditions for trade⁶.

¹ VALENSI 1987, 19.

² For an updated bibliographical survey, cf. BERNARDINI 2008, to which one may add the very recent JACOBY 2006, 193–218. On the written notes probably taken by the Polos during their travels, cf. for instance POLO 2003, XII–XIII.

³ SANUTUS 1972, V–XIV, 22–23; SCHMIEDER 1994, 117–120.

⁴ So Prof. David Jacoby (personal communication, 23 June 2004), whom I would like to thank for his kindness. For instance, MARTIN 1978, 113–116 suggests that Venetians may have been present in the Black Sea before 1204, but the evidence he offers is not fully convincing.

⁵ NYSTAZOPOULOU PÉLÉKIDIS 1973, 548–560.

⁶ *Ibidem*, 550–553; MARTIN 1978, 121–122; TUCCI 1987, 308, 311–312; JACOBY 2004, 130–132, 136. I would like to thank Prof. Jacoby for providing me with a copy of this recent article of his.

Venetian merchants reached Trebizond during the last quarter of the same century, but they were granted the first economic concessions and trading privileges only in 1319, after which the Venetians were allowed to create their own colony⁷. According to Nystazopoulou Pélékidis, “entre l’empire grec de Trébizonde et l’Etat mongol des Ilkhans il y avait une parfaite entente, allant jusqu’à l’unité des poids et des mesures, pour favoriser le transit et faciliter le passage des voyageurs et des marchandises”⁸. The part of the previous statement concerning weights and linear measures seems to be contradicted by the so-called *Tarifa*, a handbook for trade (*manuale di mercatura*) composed between the second half of the 14th and the first half of the 15th century which establishes a correspondence between the weights and linear measures in use in Trabzon and those in Tabriz⁹: however the *Tarifa* is admittedly a later text and may reflect conditions which had changed in the meantime¹⁰. Be it as it may, the two cities were connected by a very important commercial route, and the Venetian Senate repeatedly stated the necessity “de tenir ouverts les *itineraria Trapesunde*”, that is, the road leading to Tabriz¹¹. Venice was visited by a Mongol envoy perhaps in 1307¹², and in its turn it sent envoys to the Ilkhanid court at least in 1286, in 1320 and in 1326 or 1327¹³. In 1320, the Republic negotiated a commercial treaty known under the name of *Pactum Taurisii* with the Ilkhanid Abu Sa’id (1316–1335)¹⁴,

⁷ NYSTAZOPOULOU PÉLÉKIDIS 1973, 561–565; THIRIET 1978, 42, 46–47; TUCCI 1987, 312. Venetian merchant galleys visited Trebizond until 1452, that is, until the very eve of the fall of Constantinople and of Trebizond itself to the Ottomans: cf. THIRIET 1978, 52–53. For a more comprehensive treatment of the relations between the two States, cf. KARPOV 1986, 29–69 and 71–139. The Venetian settlement at Trebizond was headed by an ambassador carrying the title of *Bailo*: for a list of *Baili* between 1320 and 1454, cf. NYSTAZOPOULOU PÉLÉKIDIS 1973, 577–579; KARPOV 1986, 269–270 (more complete than the previous one).

⁸ NYSTAZOPOULOU PÉLÉKIDIS 1973, 561.

⁹ TARIFA 1925, 18.

¹⁰ Indeed PAVIOT 1997, 72 agrees with Nystazopoulou Pélékidis on the point of the identity of the weights and measures between Tabriz and Trabzon (both scholars basing their statements on the 14th-century PEGOLOTTI 1936).

¹¹ NYSTAZOPOULOU PÉLÉKIDIS 1973, 565. On the Trebizond-Tabriz road, cf. also PAVIOT 1997, 72–74.

¹² IDEM, 74–75; cf. also SCHMIEDER 1994, 334. The letter carried by the Mongol envoy, dated “beginning of November 1306” and granting privileges to the Venetian traders, was written in the name of “Zuci Soldani”, which must correspond to the Ilkhanid Oljāyatu (1304–1317): cf. THOMAS 1880–99, vol. I, 47.

¹³ PAVIOT 1997, 75–76. Cf. also BERCHET 1865, 90.

¹⁴ The text of the *Pactum Taurisii* is in THOMAS 1880–99, vol. I, 173–176.

and in 1324 we find a Venetian consul in Tabriz¹⁵. Indeed, the journeys to Persia and India have been described as the “natural continuation” of those to the Levant, which saw thousands of Venetians engaging in business every year¹⁶. The collapse of the Ilkhanids and the subsequent end of the *Pax Mongolica* did not mean the end of Venetian commerce with Persia, despite the prohibition by the Venetian Senate on 17 December 1338 to trade in the Ilkhanid Empire¹⁷. As early as 1344, the new Venetian ambassador (*Bailo*) at Constantinople was instructed to make contact with the ambassadors “of Tabriz”, who were said to be then in “Romania” in order to deal with the Genoese, and try to arrange favourable trade conditions for the Venetian merchants¹⁸. Most probably in 1370, the Jalayirid ruler, Šeyx Oveys Xān (1356–1374, “Sichuaischam” in the Italian translation of the document) sent a letter to the Venetian *Bailo* at Trabzon, exhorting the local Venetian merchants to come and trade in Tabriz “as in the times of ‘Bonsaich’” (that is, Abu Sa‘id)¹⁹. In 1372 or 1373 Šeyx Oveys Xān wrote again to the *Bailo*, announcing the punishment of certain brigands who had robbed some Venetian traders and declaring the roads safe for commercial traffic again²⁰. In 1381 Pantaleone Barbo, the new Venetian ambassador to the Emperor of Constantinople, was ordered to send a messenger to the Emperor of Trebizond begging him to inform the merchants of Tabriz that they should visit the city *ad tempus consuetum* because the Venetian galleys were about to arrive after a lull imposed by the war²¹. Another diplomatic mission to Trebizond and Tabriz (by now in the hands of Timur, 1370–1405) was sent in 1392²². A mixed Venetian-Genoese embassy visited Timur at Sivas in 1400 with the aim of safeguarding Italian trade interests in the Black Sea basin²³.

¹⁵ TUCCI 1987, 311; PAVIOT 1997, 75–76.

¹⁶ PETECH 1962, 560; TUCCI 1987, 307–308.

¹⁷ PAVIOT 1997, 77; cf. also PETECH 1962, 568–569.

¹⁸ THOMAS 1880–99, vol. I, 276–277.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, vol. II, 158: the name of the envoy was “Jrassaga Asaul”. The answer of the *Bailo* is *ibidem*, 158–159.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, vol. II, 163. On these contacts between Šeyx Oveys Xān and the Republic of Venice, cf. also PETECH 1962, 569–570; SCHMIEDER 1994, 167.

²¹ THOMAS 1880–99, vol. II, 183. The war mentioned in the document is the War of Chioggia (1379–1381) between Venice and an international alliance of which Genoa and Padua were the most important members.

²² BERNARDINI 2005, 207.

²³ *Ibidem*, n. 29 p. 206 and 208.

Business or official documents, as well as documents of a personal nature such as letters and last wills help shedding light on the lives and activities of some of these merchants, and on the itineraries they followed. The flow of Venetian traders travelling to Persia and the surrounding lands was perhaps not large but relatively steady, despite the political upheavals in the region. Thus we know the names of Venetian traders active not only at Tabriz in 1263²⁴, 1324²⁵ and 1332–34²⁶, at the court of Arġun (1284–1291) in the years 1287–1289²⁷ and at Urgenč in 1362²⁸, but also at Astrachan⁷ in 1389 and Soltāniye in 1399²⁹. In 1338, six Venetians travelled to Dowlatābād in the Sultanate of Delhi via Constantinople-Tana (present-day Azov)-Astrachan⁷-Saray-Urgenč-Termez-Ġazni³⁰. Other two died at Šamāxi in 1390 and in 1391, where they had arrived most probably in the company of at least a third Venetian merchant³¹. Shortly after 1400, two Venice-based entrepreneurs from Lucca sent one of their partners to Persia (via Constantinople and Trebizond) in order to sell silk textiles³². Sometimes in the 15th century, Dragone Zeno visited Bašra and Persia, perhaps in the company of his son Caterino, the future ambassador to Uzun Ḥasan Āq Qoyunlu³³. In 1539 Michele Membré met a Greek and a Venetian living in Mingrelia during his journey to Persia³⁴. Abel Pinçon mentioned “three or four Venetians” who were travelling together with him and his

²⁴ CECCHETTI 1883, 161–165; STUSSI 1962, 23–37. For the exact dating of the document, cf. *ibidem*, n. 2 p. 24. The origin of another trader present at Tabriz in 1291 is debated (Genoese or Venetian): cf. PETECH 1962, 553.

²⁵ PAVIOT 1997, 75–76 (but cf. also 77).

²⁶ *Ibidem*, 78–79.

²⁷ PETECH 1962, 562 (three Venetian traders-interpreters); TUCCI 1987, 310 (Venetian traders). Cf. also LOPEZ 1955, 51 (republished with the same title in BRANCA 1979, vol. I, 368); PAVIOT 1997, 74.

²⁸ LOPEZ 1955, 52–53 (reprinted in BRANCA 1979, vol. I, 369); cf. also PETECH 1962, 559; TUCCI 1987, 309.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, 309.

³⁰ LOPEZ 1955, 53–62, 64–82 (edition of a document concerning the journey) (reprinted in BRANCA 1979, vol. I, 369–374, 375–385). Cf. also PETECH 1962, 559; TUCCI 1987, 319–321. Two of the six partners died *en route*.

³¹ The group included most probably more than three merchants, but we do not know it for certain. On this enterprise, cf. TZAVARA 2000, 201–202, 205, 225–228 (inventory of the goods left in Šamāxi by the two deceased merchants); TZAVARA 2004, 19–35.

³² JACOBY 2004, 142.

³³ ZENO 1978–88, 150; cf. also CONCINA 1994, 28–29.

³⁴ MEMBRÉ 1969, 15–16; MEMBRÉ 1993, 13–14. Another Greek subject of Venice was living in Mingrelia in 1563: cf. LUCA 2003, 164.

party of English adventurers towards Persia in 1598³⁵. In 1616, a certain Andrea Alessandri was travelling to Persia as the guide of Pietro della Valle, who described him as “pratico dei paesi e delle lingue”: unfortunately, we do not know whether he was a relative of the 16th-century Venetian envoy to Šāh Ṭahmāsp I (1524–1576), Vincenzo degli Alessandri³⁶. An act of a Venetian notary dated 1639 informs us that Alessandro Studendoli had been in Sind at an unspecified time of his professional career³⁷: he is none other than the Studendoli mentioned by Pietro della Valle, the trader whose shop in the caravanseraï of Lale Beyg near the Meydān-e Naqš-e Jahān was visited by Šāh ‘Abbās I (1587–1629) and the Mughal ambassador Xān-e ‘Ālam in 1619. The Shah took much pride in showing to his guest the goods brought by Studendoli to Eṣfahān (goods that della Valle described wholesale as paintings, mirrors and “similar curious objects from Christendom”)³⁸. Some Venetians even became involved – or entangled – with different roles and under different circumstances in the political life of the lands they visited. Indeed, besides the traders there was another group, which can be labelled as that of the “adventurers” and often overlapped with the former, since many of its members were (or had been at a certain point of their life) merchants. The most famous case is probably that of the favourite of Šāh ‘Abbās I, Giacomo Fava and of the trader, Santo Fonte

³⁵ ROSS 1933, 138–139. It is not clear if the Lodovico Gallo mentioned in BERCHET 1865, 74 was Venetian. I had no access to the issue of the *Spettatore* (Florence 1857) where his travel account was published, which is probably the same text as BMC, ms. *Wucovich–Lazzari*, 21/3 (dated 1561, *non vidi*).

³⁶ DELLA VALLE 1843, vol. I, 351, 443. Della Valle states that four other unnamed Venetian traders were travelling with him in the same caravan and that a likewise unnamed “Venetian spice merchant” (*droghier veneziano*) left Bagdād before him in 1616 bound for Eṣfahān and then India: cf. *ibidem*, 353 and 408–409 respectively. On Vincenzo degli Alessandri, see *infra*, *passim*. A certain Angelo Alessandri served as the embassy secretary under several *Baili* at the Ottoman Porte and in 1637 was himself the author of a description of the Ottoman Empire: cf. PEDANI-FABRIS 1996, 637–683. Further research might try to ascertain whether these individuals bearing the same or very similar family names belonged to one and the same family.

³⁷ Venezia, Archivio di Stato (hereafter: ASV), *Atti Pietro Bracchi* 185.d.812 (29 May 1639, fols. not numbered).

³⁸ DELLA VALLE 1843, vol. II, 26. Alessandro is most probably the same “signor Studendoli” to whom, in the same year, the Venetian vice-consul at Aleppo, Alvise Corner was sending letters addressed to della Valle out of security reasons. At the same time, a friend of della Valle’s, the Scots Strachan, was living in Studendoli’s house in Bagdād: cf. Rome, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, *Archivio della Valle – del Bufalo*, n. 51 (Luigi Cornaro [Alvise Corner] to Pietro della Valle, Aleppo, 19 May 1619). On the caravanseraï of Lale Beyg, cf. BLAKE 1999, 122–123.

who (according to de Gouvea) convinced the Shah to invade and annex Lār in 1601³⁹. Some returned to Venice, like the *comito* who was press-ganged (together with other fellow countrymen) into the Ottoman fleet sent against Diu in 1538 or Giovanni Battista Flaminio, a trader, former renegade and former soldier in the Safavid army who was denounced to the Inquisition in 1627 as a crypto-Muslim⁴⁰. Quite full of adventures must have been the life of the trader Giovanni da Valle who, in 1428, “with permission of the ruler of Darband and invited by him” fitted a ship (*fusta*) out together with other Venetians and started raiding the commercial ships coming from Astarābād. After this spell as a corsair on the Caspian Sea, Giovanni da Valle also went back to Italy and, at the time of his death, he owned a ship on the Lake of Garda⁴¹. Some were less lucky and never saw their motherland again. The Venetian Bonifacio de Molinis (who clearly belonged to the noble Molin family) was one of the commanders of the Frankish mercenaries in Seljuk service at the battle of Kōsedağ (1243), where he found his death⁴². Interestingly enough, de Molinis may have been also a trader⁴³. The Florentine Piero Strozzi, who fought in the Portuguese army which conquered Goa in 1510, mentioned the numerous Venetian and Genoese renegades present in the ranks of the defenders: these renegades were slain during the storming of the city along with their Muslim-born

³⁹ DE GOUVEA 1611, fol. 20b (quoted in FLOOR 2006, n. 33 p. 202) calls Fava *grande valido do Rey, & muyto poderoso*. I would like to thank Dr. Rui Loureiro, who most kindly checked the accuracy of the quotation from de Gouvea’s memoirs for me. Cf. also DELLA VALLE 1628, 19–23. Giacomo Fava will appear again in this book, *infra*. In 1602, a Venetian trader was close enough to Šāh ‘Abbās I to present him with a copy of the *Introducción del simbolo de la fé*, written by the Spanish Dominican Luis de Granada: cf. SIMPSON 2005, 146. A book on the virtues of the Catholic faith may have been seen as a present fitting a ruler who favoured the Christians by somebody who had become himself a Christian, as the converted Jewish merchant, Angelo Gradenigo: cf. ROTA, *forthc.*, n. 32.

⁴⁰ COMITO 1978–88, 463–495; ASV, *S. Uffizio*, buste 72 and 85 (fols. not numbered). The trial of Flaminio (as well as that of Teodoro Persico, see *infra*, in which he was involved as a witness) was the subject of ROTA 2004. In 1580, the Venetian governors of Crete questioned the Cypriot renegade Alvise di Dimitri, who had served in the Ottoman army during the early phases of the Ottoman–Safavid war of 1578–1590: cf. PAPPALARDO 2007, 156–157.

⁴¹ In 1437 Giovanni da Valle joined Giosafat Barbaro and other five Venetian traders in the excavation of what appears to be a *kurgan*, located in the vicinity of Tana. For both episodes, cf. BARBARO 1978–88, 488. The unnamed “ruler of Darband” must have been the Širvānšāh Xalilo’llāh I (1417–1462): cf. BARTHOLD – BOSWORTH 1997, 489.

⁴² BOMBACI 1978, 360. Cf. also RICHARD 1952, 173.

⁴³ According to *ibidem*, n. 33 p. 173: the French scholar implies that de Molinis survived the battle, which of course contradicts the opinion offered by Bombaci (cf. *supra*, n. 42).

comrades-in-arms⁴⁴. It appears quite clearly that the Venetian mercenaries serving in the Muslim lands around Persia (or in Persia itself) may well have functioned as a channel of information for their fellow citizens after, and perhaps even before, returning home.

CHAPTER TWO: MERCHANTS AS INFORMANTS

As far as “full-time traders” are concerned, of course they seldom (if ever) operated alone but were rather part of a network made of colleagues, business partners, political protectors and families (the last three often coinciding with each other). In other words, Venetian merchants left somebody at home whom they remained in touch with, despite the long geographical distances involved. Many of those who remained in Venice had a vested interest in the trader’s activities, and the latter kept them informed on his business and the territories he visited: certainly it was not by chance that one of the privileges accorded by the *Pactum Taurisii* was “la liberté d’envoi de courriers”⁴⁵. For instance, the last will of Pietro Vioni, written in Tabriz in 1263, provides the names of a number of his partners in Venice, who had entrusted to him goods to be sold in Persia, as well as with the names of several “Franks” living in Tabriz at the time⁴⁶. From another source, we know that Pietro’s father, Vitale had also interests in the Levant, and especially in Anatolia (“Turchia”)⁴⁷. Nicolò de’ Conti, the author of a well-known travelogue, journeyed extensively in the East between 1414 and 1438, although he touched only Hormoz and Gombroon (present-day Bandar ‘Abbās) on Persian territory: nonetheless, and quite interestingly, he claimed knowledge of the Persian language⁴⁸. Of another Venetian, Bonavito d’Alban, we only know that he

⁴⁴ SUBRAHMANYAM 1990, 5–6. In 1505 four Venetian gun founders “reached Malabar in the Arab ships from the Red Sea”: cf. BOXER 1966, 158.

⁴⁵ PAVIOT 1997, 75.

⁴⁶ CECCHETTI 1883, 163–165; STUSSI 1962, 27–30.

⁴⁷ CECCHETTI 1883, 162. Not devoid of interest is the fact that Caterina Vilioni and her brother Antonio (both children of Domenico Vilioni) were buried in Yang-chou (China) in 1342 and 1344 respectively: cf. PETECH 1962, 557; RACHEWILTZ 1997, 40. Yang-chou is the city where Marco Polo claimed he had served as a Mongol governor.

⁴⁸ ORSATTI 1993, 220–221. Cf. also SURDICH 1983, 457–460. However, cf. the doubts expressed by PIEMONTESE 1995, 167. Hormoz was visited in the second half of the 16th century by other two Venetian traders, Cesare Federici and Gasparo Balbi. On them, cf. TUCCI 1963, 365–367; TUCCI 1995, 616–620. Their travelogues were published in PINTO 1962, 1–68 (Federici) and 69–233 (Balbi). A portrait of Gasparo Balbi in Burmese dress is in GREVEMBROCH 1981, vol. III, no. 58. The presence of Venetian traders at Hormoz in

reached India from Cairo and spent 22 years there: he moved to Lisbon in 1504, where he received a pension from the King of Portugal⁴⁹. In 1606, a certain Gerolamo Bontempelli died in Bašra: he came from the same village as and was perhaps a distant relative of Bartolomeo Bontempelli (ca. 1538–1616), although probably not one of his partners in business⁵⁰. The latter's name does not probably tell much to the students of Iran, but he was one of the wealthiest Venetian merchants of the second half of the 16th century, with very widespread interests⁵¹. For instance, we know that, probably in 1598, he sent Giacomo Fava, the son of his procurator Bartolomeo, on a commercial venture to India: Fava was to act in the name of a society including, besides Bontempelli, the influential Flemish trader Carlo Helman, also based in Venice. He was travelling with a “colleague”, Giovanni Battista de

1606 is mentioned for instance by the Portuguese traveller Nicolau da Orta: cf. AUBIN 1969, 212.

⁴⁹ CA' MASSER 1845, 18–19.

⁵⁰ CORAZZOL 1994, 788. Cf. also DEVOS – BRULEZ 1986, 32.

⁵¹ Such interests centred on his haberdashery shop (*merceria*) located in the very heart of Venice, between the Rialto bridge and St. Mark's square, and ranged from the monopoly on the quicksilver mines of Idrija in present-day Slovenia (which were farmed to him by the Archduke of Austria between 1594 and 1606) to lending money to the Venetian government and above all to the Duke of Mantua. The connection with the court of Mantua is especially interesting, since Bontempelli was not only probably the main private banker on behalf of the Duke (lending to him the much-needed cash for costly purchases on the Venetian market), but regularly supported and advised the ambassador of the Duke in his commercial dealings. He was also one of the main (if not the main) purveyor of precious items for the Duke, providing him with objects of all sorts including precious cloth, gems, black heron feathers, rare animals and flowers, selling them directly or acting as a middleman. On Bartolomeo's activities, cf. CORAZZOL 1994, 780, 786–787; SOGLIANI 2002, 57–59 and *Index*; SERMIDI 2003, 17–22 and *Index*. Cf. also TUCCI 1970, 426–427. GREVEMBROCH 1981, vol. III, no. 60 has a portrait of Bartolomeo. The Flemish Grevembroch painted his illustrations in the 1750s: however, a contemporary portrait of both Bartolomeo and his brother Grazioso can still be seen in the church of S. Salvador, very close to their shop: it is published in CORAZZOL 1994, 781. In 1612 Grazioso Bontempelli offered a “Persian carpet” woven in silk, gold and silver and carrying the “coat of arms of a German baron” to the ambassador of the Duke of Mantua in Venice: cf. SERMIDI 2003, 535. I will leave it to art historians to determine whether a carpet produced in Persia is meant here, or rather a carpet produced in Europe in Persian style: however, in this regard I would like to mention SPUHLER 1968 (*non vidi*). I owe this reference to Dr. Markus Ritter, whom I would like to thank. It is however interesting to remark that in 1601 the King of Poland, Zygmunt III (1587–1632) sent the trader Sefer Muratowicz to Persia with the task of (among other things) having carpets woven with the coats of arms of Poland and of the Wasa family: cf. SZUPPE 1986, 82–83, 93–94.

Luca, and it is interesting to note that the two hired a certain Angelo de Fedrici, who is described as “most knowledgeable about India”⁵². At the present state of our knowledge, one may only wonder whether Fedrici was the same person as the unnamed agent of Carlo Helman’s heirs, who spent 22 years “uninterruptedly” in India and who in 1608 was on his way to Mantua in order to inform the Duke, Vincenzo I (1587-1612) on the situation there since, after such a long time, he was “like a native”⁵³. One may also wonder whether Angelo was a relative of Cesare Federici (1521–1601): however, none of Cesare’s known closest male relatives (three brothers and four nephews) seem to have borne the name Angelo⁵⁴. Cesare Federici was mentioned in a letter written by Guglielmo Helman, Carlo’s brother, and dated 27 August 1583⁵⁵: also Gasparo Balbi operated as an agent of Guglielmo Helman between 1590 and 1598 (a period during which he made a second journey to the East Indies⁵⁶), and Balbi and Cesare Federici knew each other⁵⁷.

As we have seen above, Giacomo Fava was at the court of the Shah around 1601. He was certainly in Eşfahān in 1606⁵⁸, and in 1609 we find him virtually held as a prisoner there as a pawn for the afore-mentioned Angelo Gradenigo (who had been ordered by Šāh ‘Abbās I to sell a certain amount of silk in Venice and then had squandered the capital) but still in contact with Bartolomeo Bontempelli⁵⁹. Given the socio-economic standing

⁵² BRULEZ 1965a, 342 and n. 1 p. 342: in summer 1600, when Bontempelli and his partners Helman and Lorenzo Contarini finally reached an agreement on Giacomo Fava’s salary, the latter was still in India. Cf. also CORAZZOL 1994, 787.

⁵³ SERMIDI 2003, 458 and 459, no. 905 n. 4.

⁵⁴ PINTO 1962, XXII; TUCCI 1995, 618–619; ASV, *Testamenti*, busta 533, no. 329 (two wills made by Cesare and dated 4 April 1590 and 4 December 1599).

⁵⁵ TUCCI 1995, 620.

⁵⁶ BRULEZ 1965a, 89, 89–90, 233, 273–274. Balbi was still alive and still in business relations with the Helmans in 1606: cf. DEVOS – BRULEZ 1986, 45–46. This document mentions Balbi together with Giacomo Fava and Domenico Pantaleo (on the latter, see *infra*).

⁵⁷ TUCCI 1963, 365; TUCCI 1995, 620.

⁵⁸ DEVOS – BRULEZ 1986, 45–46.

⁵⁹ BERCHET 1865, 204. Fava’s letter to Bontempelli was carried to Venice by the agent of the Shah, the Armenian trader Xwāje Šafar, whose father was the broker (*sensale*) of the Venetian consulate at Aleppo, and Giacomo Fava was in direct contact also with Giovanni Francesco Sagredo, the Venetian consul in the Syrian city: cf. *ibidem*, 201–202. In both cases Berchet reads “Nava” instead of Fava, but cf. ASV, *Collegio, Esposizioni principi, filza* 18, 22 January and 30 January 1609 *more veneto* (i. e., 1610) (fols. not numbered). On Fava cf. *supra*, n. 39, and on Sagredo cf. *infra*, n. 145. Of course, reconstructing the personal and professional networks of individual merchants known to have visited Persia

and the rigorous business strategies (both well-known to modern students of Venetian economic and social life) of the latter, who was described in 1606 (the same year of the death in Baṣra of his less famous and less rich namesake Gerolamo) as the man “who, in a certain sense, owns all these ships coming here from Constantinople”⁶⁰, one may assume that he fully exploited his sources of information. We may as well assume that he was not the only one to think and operate in such a way: trade was vital to the wealth and prosperity of Venice, and the Venetians (the traders *in primis*) were well aware of that. This, for instance, must have been the case of the Helman “family firm”, the scale of whose activities was probably comparable to Bontempelli’s. In the same year 1608, when their agent in India was travelling to Mantua, the Helmans had other three agents who travelled regularly between Aleppo, Goa, Hormoz and Baḡdād⁶¹. One of them was certainly Domenico Pantaleo. On 24 September 1603 he left Venice for a business journey “in the Levant” (sent by Carlo Helman) and returned to the city on 4 July 1606⁶²: his contract with Helman specified that he was to sell jewels and not to travel beyond Goa⁶³. On 4 September 1606, Pantaleo engaged himself to make another three-year journey on behalf of Helman’s heirs, along the route Aleppo-Hormoz-Goa⁶⁴. Pantaleo’s *giovane* (assistant, or *jonge handelsdienaar* in the Flemish translation of the Italian term) around 1606 was Alvisè del Parente, who decades later (1627) was mentioned by Šāh ‘Abbās I in the letter in which he invited Alvisè Sagredo to come and trade in Persia⁶⁵. Quite worth remarking is the fact that, when the Venetian

or its immediately surrounding lands helps us to imagine how the information they brought back spread through Venetian society.

⁶⁰ By the ambassador of the Duke of Mantua: cf. SERMIDI 2003, 428.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, 458. A document of 23 July 1608 mentions a “Fernandus Crom” who was to oversee from Goa the business of Carlo Helman’s heirs *aux Indes, en Perse, en Syrie et dans tous les pays d’Orient*: cf. DEVOS – BRULEZ 1986, 172.

⁶² *Ibidem*, 44. Although this document speaks only of “Levant”, Pantaleo must have spent at least some time in Persia between 1603 and 1606: cf. BRULEZ 1965b, 17–20.

⁶³ BRULEZ 1965a, 471–472 (abridged French translation of the contract), 623–626 (full Italian text of the same).

⁶⁴ DEVOS – BRULEZ 1986, 44–45. From this contract it appears clearly that Pantaleo was supposed to remain in close epistolary contact with his partners in Venice. On 14 September of the same year, Giovanni Leonardo Salet of Antwerp engaged himself with the Helman heirs for a two-year journey “to Hormoz or Goa”: cf. *ibidem*, 49. He was supposed to leave Venice on the same ship carrying Pantaleo.

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, 44; BRULEZ 1965b, 1, 20; BERCHET 1865, 257–258. According to the letter of the Shah published by Berchet, Alvisè Parente (who apparently was not based in Persia at the

trader-envoy Domenico de Santis reached Eşfahān (end of 1647 or beginning of 1648), he met Pietro Pantaleo⁶⁶, clearly a relative of Domenico Pantaleo's. Also Pietro della Valle was in contact with a Pietro Pantaleo, then based in Baġdād⁶⁷: whether the two Pietros were one and the same person it is not clear but it appears perfectly possible, perhaps even probable. By the time de Santis arrived in Persia, the Pantaleos had apparently become a "Perso-Venetian" family, settling down in the country for good⁶⁸. Domenico Pantaleo was the godfather of the Catholic priest, Ferdinando Gioerida (d. 1654), a nephew of Sitti Maani (Pietro della Valle's first wife), who briefly served the *Serenissima* as a diplomatic envoy to Persia in the late 1640s⁶⁹. Pending further research, we can only try to imagine what an asset (in terms of logistical support as well as a source of information) people like the Pantaleos, who had "gone native" to some extent, may have been for travellers, missionaries, diplomats and traders as well as for governments. In the Mongol period "la diplomatie de l'Occident ne pouvait se passer de la coopération d'obscurs marchands"⁷⁰, a statement which holds true for the Safavid age as well.

Of course, Oriental (and, in our case, Persian) merchants visiting Venice would also represent a most helpful source of information. Some Persians were on the same ship with which Pietro della Valle left Venice in 1614 to start his famous journey⁷¹. An especially remarkable episode, for the historical and cultural importance of some of the participants, is the dinner which took place at Murano sometime in the 16th century and which saw the pres-

time) had informed Sagredo of the military victories of the Shah. From the same letter it appears also that Alvise Sagredo was in epistolary contact with the prior of the Carmelite monastery at Eşfahān, Father Giovanni Taddeo di S. Eliseo.

⁶⁶ ASV, *Collegio, Relazioni*, busta 25, fascicolo Q, no. 1, fol. 5b; RICHARD 1995, vol. I, n. 14 p. 139.

⁶⁷ Rome, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, *Archivio della Valle - del Bufalo*, no. 188, fols. 24a (23 December 1616), 24b (2 January 1617) and 40a (3 and 4 June 1621).

⁶⁸ References to several members of the Pantaleo family are in RICHARD 1995, vol. I, 138–139.

⁶⁹ CARMELITES 1939, vol. I, 344 and 388; RICHARD 1995, vol. I, n. 12 p. 138 and n. 14 p. 139; ROTA 2002, 582–583.

⁷⁰ PETECH 1962, 550. Jean Richard's study of Raphaël du Mans (RICHARD 1995) showed very well the importance of his activity as a missionary, an interpreter and an informant with a deep, first-hand knowledge of Persia. The networks of colleagues, friends and patrons surrounding Giovanni Battista Flaminio and Teodoro Persico are dealt with in ROTA 2004.

⁷¹ DELLA VALLE 1843, vol. I, 1.

ence, among others, of Michele Membré, Giovanni Battista Ramusio and a certain Ḥājjī Moḥammad of Ṭabas “in Gilān”⁷². In 1600, the Heads of the Council of Ten authorized Bernardin Lippomano to visit the Safavid envoy, Asad Beyg in order to learn about the situation in Persia before sending his grandson or nephew (*nipote*) there, presumably to trade⁷³. Asad Beyg carried letters of Šāh ‘Abbās I for the Doge, but he was a trader himself and was charged with buying luxury goods for the Safavid court and the Shah⁷⁴. Persian traders were allotted lodging in the *Fondaco dei Turchi* separated from that of the Ottoman merchants in 1662⁷⁵, and they forged their own networks

⁷² BRAGANTINI 1987, 143; FABRIS 1989, 15. I would like to thank Maria Pia Pedani for providing me with a copy of the latter article. PIEMONTESE 1987-88, 641 has already pointed to the existence of a “vast and interdisciplinary network of Orientalist interests” made of “travellers, informants, committers, collectors, learned men, scientists, publishers and printers”. On Ramusio (1485–1557), the secretary of the Council of Ten since 1533 and the editor of the first and the third volume of the *Navigazioni et Viaggi* in 1550 and 1556, cf. MILANESI 1978–1988, XI–XXXVI. The birthplace of Ḥājjī Moḥammad must have been the so-called Ṭabas-e Gilaki, located not in Gilān but in Quhestān (itself a region of Xorāsān): cf. for instance LE STRANGE 1966, 359–360. Of course, he was not the first Persian merchant to visit Venice. For instance, THOMAS 1880–99, vol. I, 223 mentions the trader Ḥājjī Soleymān “Taibi” of Tabriz, son of “Aldola (‘Alā’ o’d-dowle ?) Taibi”, who in 1332 wrote a note in *littera Persarum* later translated by his interpreter “Auachum Calamacinum” (i. e., *kalāmčī*, “the interpreter”): witnesses were Moḥammad (“Maome”), son of Šeyx Qoṭbo’d-din (“Secho Cotbadin”) and Ḥājjī ‘Ali. On this episode, cf. also IBIDEM, 222; PAVIOT 1997, 76–77. A short work entitled *Fantasia composta in laude de Venesia* (Venice: Eredi Francesco Rampazetto, 1582) mentions the Persians too among the foreign peoples which, like flowers, embellish the “garden” of Venice. Cesare Vecellio’s *De gli habitati antichi, et moderni di diverse parti del mondo* (Venice, 1590) and its enlarged edition of 1598 contain several portraits of Persian men and women (but, interestingly, not of merchants): cf. VECELLIO 1859–60, vol. II, nos. 460–468.

⁷³ ASV, *Capi del Consiglio dei Dieci, Licenze di visitare ambasciatori e personaggi esteri*, registro 2, fascicolo 1574–1608, 12 June 1600 (fols. not numbered).

⁷⁴ BERCHET 1865, 43–44, 192–195; BERCHET 1866a, 14. Berchet always misread his name as “Efet beg”, but it is interesting to note that the Venetian secretaries of the time faithfully recorded what must have been the Safavid envoy’s Turkic pronunciation of his own name, that is, “Eset”: cf. for instance ASV, *Secreta, Documenti persiani*, busta 1, no. 5 (the document is published in BERCHET 1865, 195). Cf. also ROTA 2002, 582. GREVEMBROCH 1981, vol. II, no. 122 has a portrait of “Esembergh”, a Persian ambassador who visited Venice in 1603 (clearly a conflation of Asad Beyg and Faṭḥi Beyg, who actually arrived in that year): interestingly, the portrait is dedicated to Count Diodato Seriman, a member of the prominent Šehrimanian family which had moved to Europe from New Julfa in the late 17th century.

⁷⁵ BENZONI 1985, 82. Not far from the *Fondaco dei Turchi* and the Rialto Bridge was the so-called *Fondaco dei Persiani*, a building which was demolished in 1908 and on which very

of personal and business relations. For instance, in 1579–80 the trader Xwāje Moḥammad was chosen as a Safavid envoy to Venice because he had previously visited the city, where he had been freed thanks to the efforts of Vincenzo degli Alessandri after being captured as a “Turk” by a Venetian ship during the War of Cyprus (1570–1573). Xwāje Moḥammad was singled out as a likely envoy through Xwāje Ḥabibo’llāh, who had been several times to Venice, had met degli Alessandri in Persia and knew the whole story⁷⁶. It is interesting to remark that, at the time of the inception of the mission, both merchants lived in Tabriz and that many traders from the same city are mentioned by 16th–17th century Venetian documentary sources. The creation of such networks was made easier by the fact that residence in the *Fondaco dei Turchi* was not strictly enforced (neither on the Persians⁷⁷ nor on the “Turks”). For instance, on 15 July 1690 a Persian named “Morla Nariaf” (Mollā Najaf ?) died in the parish of S. Maria Formosa (i. e., quite far from

little documentary evidence survives: cf. DEMOLITION 1908, 221–222. I owe this bibliographical reference to Edward Faridany, whom I would like to thank. Modern scholars suppose that the *Fondaco dei Persiani* was not a state-run institution like the two *fondaci* hosting Turkish and German merchants, but rather a private building traditionally used by Persian traders. The register of the transactions made between the years 1592 and 1604 by a member of that special group of brokers (the so-called *senseri dei Turchi*) who were authorized by the Venetian government to deal with “Turkish” (that is, mostly Ottoman and Persian) merchants thanks to their knowledge of the Oriental languages (usually of Turkish) mentions five Persian traders: cf. VERCELLIN 1979, 246, 250, 263–264 (Ḥājjī Ḥasan, “Chogia Purchiali”, Ḥasan, Moḥammad Čalabi, Ḥājjī Yusof). To them one can add that Xwāje ‘Ali Tabrizi who travelled to Persia at the same time as Vincenzo degli Alessandri in 1570: cf. BERCHE 1865, 29–30, 34–37, 158–160; ROTA 2002, 582. ASV, *Dispacci consoli, Aleppo*, filza 1, no. 1 (Girolamo Morosini, 28 December 1613, fols. not numbered) mentions a Xwāje Solṭān, “who was in Venice on other occasions and would like to go back there again”. He is clearly the same as the “Coggiā Sultan” who had goods on a boat shipwrecked off Rhodes in 1617: cf. DEVOS – BRULEZ 1986, 610. The same document mentions two other Muslim traders, whose geographical origin remains unspecified. More Persian merchants are named in two documents dated respectively 1613 and (probably) 1619: cf. ASV, *Secreta, Documenti persiani*, busta 1, nos. 23 and 29 (fols. not numbered). The importance of the Muslim Persian merchants for the Safavid trade is usually outshone by the Armenians’, but the role they played was certainly not negligible: cf. MATTHEE 2000, 249–254 in particular.

⁷⁶ BERCHE 1865, 183–185; ROTA 2002, 582.

⁷⁷ When the Venetian government tried to force the Persian traders to stay at the *Fondaco* during the War of Candia (1644–1669), they refused to comply: cf. PRETO 1975, n. 53 p. 138.

the *Fondaco*, by Venetian standards) at the age of 86⁷⁸: one may probably assume that the deceased, owing to his ripe old age and the state of war between the *Serenissima* and the Porte which had begun in 1684, had already been living for several years in Venice. In 1624, the traders Ḥājji Moḥammad b. “Cazi” of Tabriz, Bābā ‘Ali b. Qalandar of Eṣfahān, Mirzā ‘Ali b. “Arvis” Moḥammad and Moḥammad “Dei” b. Ḥājji Ṣalāḥ “Dei” of Tabriz, were heard by the Inquisition as witnesses in the trial of Teodoro Dandolo: they spoke in Turkic (*turcica lingua*) and were allowed to take an oath in a way which is indicated as both *more suo* and, more specifically, *more turcarum*⁷⁹. Undoubtedly this is a very minor episode of Persian-Venetian relations, but it is also one which is quite telling about the then prevailing *Zeitgeist*. A document dated 1664 mentions the traders Agustin Persian and Stefano Giorgiano (“the Georgian”), both involved in a complex legal litigation among Armenians⁸⁰.

Likewise, the role of the Armenians as potential informants (with their diaspora communities and vast trade networks) should not be underestimated⁸¹. The first commercial treaty between the Republic of Venice and the

⁷⁸ LUCCHETTA 1997, 142. “Morla Nariaf” was indicated as “turco persiano” (that is, a Persian of Muslim faith: see *infra*, n. 129) and, talking about international networks, his burial was taken care of by a certain “Marcorà Armeno” (i. e., Markar the Armenian).

⁷⁹ ASV, *Santo Uffizio*, busta 72 (fols. not numbered). The interpreter was the secretary of the Senate, Francesco Scaramelli. Teodoro Dandolo or, as he was usually indicated, Teodoro Persico (i. e., “the Persian”) was quite an interesting figure himself. A native of Boxārā, he became a Christian in Aleppo or in Venice and eventually settled down in the latter city, where he was enrolled among the *senseri dei Turchi*. In 1618, 1620 and 1623 he was accused by rivals within the profession of being a bad Christian, being a crypto-Muslim and holding several heretical views. His trial was dealt with in ROTA 2004. In 1649, a Persian named “Deuvan” helped the runaway slave “Assolomamuto” of Rhodes in his attempt to escape from Italy via Venice: cf. ASV, *Santo Uffizio*, busta 105 (fols. not numbered).

⁸⁰ ASV, *Avogaria di Comun, Civile, 210, Documenti armeni*, no. 2, fols. 1b, 3b–4a, 36a–36b (on Stefano) and 8a, 10a–10b (on Agustin). The fact that the latter bore a Christian name but was not indicated as Armenian makes me think that he may have been a converted Muslim Persian, or perhaps a Nestorian Christian. On the Nestorians in Safavid Persia, cf. KHANBAGHI 2006, 131–133. Stefano knew both Armenian and Italian, and translated a document from the former language into the latter.

⁸¹ AUBIN 1995, 257–258 identified the Armenian bishop of Cyprus, David as one of the informants of Donato da Lezze, the “editor” of Angiolello’s *Historia turchesca*; cf. also ANGIOLELLO 1978–88, 404; *infra*, n. 114. Da Lezze (who spent part of his career in Cyprus) displayed a strong interest in the feats of Šāh Esmā’il I (and perhaps in things Persian in general), a circumstance which the bishop did not fail to stress in his letters: cf.

Armenian kingdom of Cilicia dates back to 1201, and the *Serenissima* had its own permanent representative there (*Bailo*) since the 1260s⁸². Connected as it was by a regular sea route to Venice, the Cilician port of Ayas (It. Lajazzo) was also the first stage of another land route leading to Tabriz⁸³. As early as 1253, a member of a prominent Venetian noble family donated to the Armenians the property of a house where they were already living (probably since long), and which therefore became to all effect and purpose “the Armenian house” (*domus Arminorum*) – that is, the centre of the life of the Armenian community in Venice⁸⁴. In a letter dated 1514, Donato da Lezze informed the *segretario ducale*, Giovan Giacomo Caroldo on the commercial importance of Baṣra on the basis of the reports by “trustworthy Armenians”⁸⁵, pre-

SCARCIA AMORETTI 1979, vol. I, 215, 313, 321. One may certainly concur with Aubin that “les curiosités persanes de Donado da Lezze, prolongées bien au-delà de sa présence en Orient, mériteraient une étude”: cf. AUBIN 1995, n. 44 p. 258. Da Lezze had family relations with the branch of the Zen family to which Dragone, Caterino, Pietro and Nicolò belonged, according to CONCINA 1994, 14, 102. One century later, the Royal trader and envoy of Šāh ‘Abbās I, Xwāje Šafar was the son of the broker (*senser*) of the Venetian consulate at Aleppo: cf. BERCHE 1865, 202. The consul at the time was Giovanni Francesco Sagredo: cf. *infra*, n. 145.

⁸² ORTALLI 2004, 28–29 and 34–35 respectively. The economic importance of Armenian Cilicia to Venice grew considerably during the 13th and 14th centuries: cf. *ibidem*, 31–38. Unfortunately, Venetian representatives in the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia seem to have left few traces in the surviving historical sources. For instance, the only “*Bailo* in Armenia” recorded in Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, ms. *It. VII.198(8383)*, fol. 255a is Zorzi Dolfin, who was in charge in 1310.

⁸³ THIRIET 1978, 42; PAVIOT 1997, 71–73.

⁸⁴ ORTALLI 2004, 24–25. On the still existing house-hostel and the adjacent Armenian church of Santa Croce, cf. GIANIGHIAN 2004, 70–73. Many have written (and from many points of view) on the Armenian presence in Venice, which adds a further touch of exoticism to the already cosmopolitan history of the city. For instance, HERMET – COGNI RATTI DI DESIO 1993 contains interesting details especially on the presence of individual Armenians in the city, but has to be taken *cum grano salis*: the unbridled Armenophile enthusiasm of the authors may often induce the unaware reader to think that the *Serenissima* (as well as the Byzantine Empire) was essentially an Armenian creation. Much more reliable and scholarly-minded is ZEKIYAN – FERRARI 2004. Especially relevant to the present essay are ORTALLI 2004, 21–40; GIANIGHIAN 2004, 59–73; HERZIG 2004, 141–164. However, the classic work on the subject as well as a goldmine of information remains ALIŠAN 1896, together with its partial Italian translation, ALIŠAN 1893. According to MATTHEE 2000, 238 Ališan counted the names of approximately 2,500 Julfa merchants in 17th-century Venetian archival documents.

⁸⁵ BERCHE 1865, 274. Da Lezze may have relied again on the help of the above-mentioned bishop David, who also had recourse to the information reported by Armenian travellers

sumably traders. As far as the Julfans (who will play a very important role during the Safavid period after their deportation to Eşfahān) are concerned, Edmund Herzig stated that “the earliest Venetian notarial reference” to a Julfa trader is dated 1570⁸⁶. Yet in 1571, Vincenzo degli Alessandri met some Armenian traders from Julfa at Qazvin. They questioned him about their own agents in Venice, and degli Alessandri replied that they had left the city before him, a circumstance pointing to the existence of contacts between the two cities before 1570⁸⁷ (which is hardly surprising, given the commercial importance of both).

To sum up, there can be no doubt about the importance of Venetian traders (Venetians and Orientals alike) as a source of information on Persia. The knowledge they produced was certainly available to the ruling class, since many merchants were part of it by birth: in the Republic of Venice all the political power was concentrated in the hands of the nobility and, until at least the end of the 15th century, trade was seen as an essential part of the education and training of a young patrician in view of his future career in the service of the State⁸⁸. Unlike what happened elsewhere in Europe, such an

on occasions: cf. SCARCIA AMORETTI 1979, vol. I, 215. The *segretario ducale* was in charge of the chancellery of the Doge. On Caroldo (1480 or earlier–1538), who was also an able diplomat and a historian, cf. CARILE 1977, 514–517; NEERFELD 2006, 102–103. In 1503 he was in Constantinople as the secretary to ambassador (and future Doge) Andrea Gritti (cf. CARILE 1977, 514), and in the city he heard about the initial military campaigns of Šāh Esmā’il I (cf. SCARCIA AMORETTI 1979, vol. I, 64, but also 62–63).

⁸⁶ HERZIG 2004, 155.

⁸⁷ BERCHET 1865, 31. It is interesting to remark that, on 6 October 1583 and 13 April 1584, the Venetian consul at Aleppo made gifts to a certain “Mercevelin chiefalino”, a word which is probably to be read “chiolfalino”, that is, Julfan: cf. ASV, *Capi del Consiglio dei Dieci, Lettere di Rettori e di altre cariche*, busta 255, no. 6 (fols. not numbered). On the Armenians of Julfa and Aleppo, cf. VAN DEN OUDENRIJN 1936, 192–193 and 197. It was likewise in Aleppo around 1603 that the Venetian trader Angelo Dario took an interest in the difficult plight of the Catholic Armenian community of Naxjavān: cf. *ibidem*, 201–202. Armenian and other foreign traders were certainly a familiar presence in Venice. GREVEMBROCH 1981 includes the portraits of two Armenian merchants (vol. III, nos. 52 and 53), of one trader from Karaman (vol. III, no. 55) and of one Armenian street peddler (vol. IV, no. 67, under the title *Acutezza persiana*, that is, “Persian acuteness”). The first portrait is dedicated to the “Persian trader” (actually an Armenian) “Steffano Giracus”, the second to the priest Floriano Bocalari, who “for long years taught many many Armenian merchants how to read and write in Italian”, and the third to Giorgio Rizzi (also known as “Carracas”), a broker in the jewel business and an interpreter for the Persian language in Venice. The three paintings are published also in GIANIGHIAN 2004, 81–82.

⁸⁸ On this point, cf. for instance BENZONI 1985, 70.

activity was not at all seen as harmful for the reputation of a nobleman. Even when, at a later epoch, the aristocracy abandoned its active role and ceased to travel overseas for the sake of trade, the latter was still openly acknowledged as of being of primary importance for the prosperity and the very survival of the Venetian state, and we have limited but clear evidence of merchants being in direct contact with members of the political and intellectual elite of the Republic. Moreover, the role of the traders (commoners and patricians alike) as informants of the Venetian government (and of the Venetian historians too) is well known⁸⁹. As Ugo Tucci remarked in relation to the 14th century, it must not have been difficult for traders, who also often filled official posts, to compile accounts or handbooks which did not require the accomplished elegance of literary works but rather had to serve the aims of colleagues and fellow-countrymen. If they did not, it was most likely because the most sensitive part of the information they possessed was supposed to remain within closed business and governmental circles and not to be placed at the disposal of a learned readership or – worse – of commercial rivals⁹⁰. Tucci's observations apparently hold true for the following centuries as well. When Nicolò de' Conti met the Spanish traveller Pero Tafur in Egypt in 1436, he convinced him to abandon his plan to travel towards India: ostensibly he did it for the sake of the health of Tafur's body and soul, but we cannot rule out other and more mundane reasons⁹¹. However, the fact that Venetian merchants did not write travelogues or handbooks (at least, not as many as modern scholars would like to have) does not mean that they did not write at all. They produced plenty of letters and other documents, a certain amount of which still survives (scattered in the archives of Venice and other cities) and awaits thorough investigation.

⁸⁹ NEERFELD 2006, 157–160. On the importance of traders for the gathering of political and military information, and the kind of information they could supply, cf. also FLEET 2000, 99–112.

⁹⁰ TUCCI 1987, 317. Also PETECH 1962, 551–552 commented on the reticence of Venetian and Genoese business documents. Analogous considerations have been made concerning the place and role of Venice in the field of early “Ottoman studies”. Venice, which was in an ideal position to gather information on the Turks, was too well-informed on them to feel the need to produce a specific literature on the topic: cf. YÉRASIMOS 1988, 20–21. The French scholar identified four different layers within Venetian knowledge of the Ottomans: three written (political and confidential, learned vulgarization, informal) and one oral: cf. *ibidem*, 20 and 38–39. On Venetian trade handbooks, cf. LANE 1967, XLVII–LVIII.

⁹¹ TAFUR 1926, 84–86.

They must have produced itineraries as well. Berchet mentioned an itinerary “from Aleppo to Tabriz” of 1496⁹². In 1673 the Armenian fathers Azaria of Ġahowk and Antonis Nazaros of Aprakownik’ wrote (or, more probably, dictated) another one from Venice to Eşfahān both via Vienna-Moscow-Astrachan’-Darband and via Spalato-Constantinople-Erevan⁹³: the information they reported was not exactly new, but nonetheless it was duly recorded, a sign that the traditional interest for updated information had not abated in the Republic (especially at a time when a new war between Safavids and Ottomans seemed to loom on the horizon). From itineraries to maps the step may be short: however, cartography is a *mare* even wider than the studies on Marco Polo, and therefore I will limit myself to the mention of a few names and facts, in order to show what connections could arise between traders and other people with first-hand experience of the Middle East on the one side, and cartographers, men of letters and members of the ruling class on the other. Fra Mauro (before 1409–1459) produced a planisphere for the King of Portugal Afonso V (1439–1481), now lost but of which a deservedly famous and much studied copy survives. What interests us most here is his belief that “however authoritative they might be, Classical writers did not have the knowledge that is available to the Moderns”, and therefore the wisdom of the former had to be supplemented with the experience of the latter⁹⁴. Fra Mauro mentioned his use of oral sources (not necessarily all Venetian), which unfortunately cannot be identified today⁹⁵. Ptolemy played an important role in the work of Fra Mauro, although his information was not accepted uncritically by the Venetian cartographer. However, probably the Ptolemaic tradition was still strong enough to suppress the potential influence of an anonymous Venetian world map published around 1485, which has been described as including “the most precise European depiction of the Caspian Sea before the early-eighteenth century”⁹⁶ and whose author, therefore, must have been able to avail himself of informants with a very precise knowledge of the region⁹⁷. Later, Giacomo Gastaldi (?–1566) produced “the first transitional

⁹² BERCHET 1866a, 45. Unfortunately the shelf mark mentioned by Berchet does not exist anymore.

⁹³ BERCHET 1865, 293–294. Documents of similar nature are *ibidem*, 248–252, 273–274.

⁹⁴ FALCHETTA 2006, 52–57 (quotation from 54).

⁹⁵ *Ibidem*, 2006, 33, 59. On Fra Mauro’s sources in general, cf. *ibidem*, 33–69; EDSON 2007, 151–164. On the sources available to the cartographers in general, cf. *ibidem*, 90–113.

⁹⁶ BRANCAFORTE 2003, 157.

⁹⁷ For instance, in his letter to Caroldo (cf. *supra*, n. 85), Donato da Lezze mentioned the shipping of Indian spices from Baku to Astrachan’ as a well-known practice in the times

map, replacing the Ptolemaic tradition of mapmaking with the Post-Renaissance and Baroque discipline” in 1559⁹⁸. He worked in close contact with Ramusio (in particular on the latter’s *Navigazioni et viaggi*) and at least on one occasion with Membré⁹⁹. Of course, the versatile Membré could not be absent from the Venetian geographical scene: another, less known contribution of his to the local knowledge of Persia is a recently discovered list of Persian and Ottoman place names, the origin and purpose of which still remain enigmatic¹⁰⁰. However, in the second half of the 16th century Italy (and Venice with it) “passed the torch of cartography, that it was carrying forward for about a century, to the Low Countries”¹⁰¹, a development that mirrors closely (as far as the Republic is concerned) the rapid Venetian loss of ground in the Levant trade to the advantage of the “northern” (Dutch, English and French) merchants after the War of Cyprus (1570–1573), as well as the parallel decline of Venice as a political and military factor in Europe and the Mediterranean basin.

CHAPTER THREE: VENETIAN PERSOPHILIA AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

The other field which caused a lasting and solid Venetian interest for Persia was international politics, namely (in the period we are concerned with) the necessity to find an Eastern ally against the Ottoman Empire¹⁰². That this interest was over time heavily influenced by the Ottoman presence is clearly shown by a few dates and circumstances. As early as 24 July 1394, the Senate suggested to the Byzantine Emperor “de tenir ferme, Bayezid se trouvant maintenant aux prises avec *Zamberlanus*”¹⁰³. However, in the following year Timur looted and destroyed the Venetian colony of Tana, an action which

before the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople: cf. BERCHET 1865, 273–274. Cf. also the episode of the Venetian corsair Giovanni da Valle (cf. *supra*, n. 41).

⁹⁸ ALAI 2005, 49 (quotation) and 56–58 (map on 57); cf. also 135–136. Gastaldi produced Ptolemaic maps as well, one of which has been called “the first modern map of Persia”: cf. *ibidem*, 37–38. On Gastaldi’s life and activity, cf. BUSOLINI 1999, 529–532.

⁹⁹ *Ibidem*, 530.

¹⁰⁰ BELLINGERI 2003, 15–36. Some years earlier, Membré was involved in the attempt at producing a heart-shaped planisphere, perhaps to be sold at Constantinople. For a bibliography on this episode, cf. *ibidem*, n. 2 pp. 15–16.

¹⁰¹ ALAI 2005, 56.

¹⁰² Here also we find a parallel with Venetian (and European) interest in the Ottomans, seen of course as dangerous enemies: cf. YERASIMOS 1988, 19–20, 23, 25.

¹⁰³ THIRIET 1978, n. 3 p. 49. This is the earliest known mention of Timur in Western European written sources according to KNOBLER 1995, 342.

was hardly likely to endear him to the Venetian government¹⁰⁴. Thus, in 1403 we see the Ottoman Süleyman Çelebi (1403–1410) declaring his readiness to supply his allies (among which we find Venice, Genoa and the Emperor of Constantinople) with ships and sailors in case of an attack by Timur against the latter¹⁰⁵. In the aftermath of the battle of Ankara (1402), the Senate's main concern was clearly the protection of the Venetian economic interests in the region (certainly not giving the *coup de grâce* to an Ottoman state which was in tatters and did not seem to represent a threat any longer), and therefore it adopted a wait-and-see attitude in relation to the new conquerors. On the other hand, there are hints that the *Pax timuridica* which followed Timur's victory at Ankara favoured a resurgence of the Venetian trade in the Black Sea basin¹⁰⁶. In any case, Timur's quick withdrawal from Anatolia spared the Venetian government the necessity to develop a *Timuridenpolitik*. However, the international political situation was changing quickly. Already a few years later, under Mehmed I (1403–1421), the Ottomans became a threat to Venetian interests in the Levant and in 1430, the closing year of the war for Thessalonica (which had begun in 1423), the Senate communicated to the commander of the Venetian forces that a son of Timur had attacked or was about to attack the Ottomans from the rear, which should induce them to sign a peace agreement favourable to Venice. There is no evidence of contacts between the Venetian Senate and Šāhrokh (1405–1447)¹⁰⁷, who was on the Timurid throne at that time, but the Senate was clearly counting on a Persian intervention in the war, albeit one which was independent from any Venetian initiative. This is, to my knowledge, the first time that Venetian sources mention Persia in connection with the opening of a “second front” against the Ottomans¹⁰⁸.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. for instance SKRŽINSKAJA 1968, 16–17; NYSTAZOPOULOU PÉLÉKIDIS 1973, 570–571; PUBBLICI 2005, 479.

¹⁰⁵ THOMAS 1880–99, vol. II, 291; DENNIS 1967, 72–88; SCHMIEDER 1994, 184–186; MELVILLE-JONES 2002, 3–6.

¹⁰⁶ PETECH 1962, 570; THIRIET 1978, 50–51.

¹⁰⁷ SCHMIEDER 1994, 195; MELVILLE-JONES 2002, 231–232.

¹⁰⁸ Although cf. *supra*, n. 103. In 1402, on the eve of the battle of Ankara, the Venetian Senate sent ships in order to prevent an Ottoman withdrawal to Europe: cf. SCHMIEDER 1994, 184; FLEET 2000, 110–111. This move too was not coordinated with Timur. On other instances of Venetian interest for the movements of Timur's forces, cf. *ibidem*, 105–106.

In 1430, however, the Ottoman threat was still a relatively recent phenomenon. The subsequent war of 1463–1479 against Mehmed II (1444–1446 and 1451–1481) was quite a different affair, and we can see that the interest of the Venetian politicians for Persia grew proportionally with the intensity of the new danger. Indeed, the century starting with the 1460s represents what can be conveniently described as the golden age of Veneto-Persian diplomatic relations and, above all, of Venetian writing about Persia. Between 1463 and 1474, five envoys (namely, Lazzaro Querini, Caterino Zeno, Giosafat Barbaro, Paolo Ognibene and Ambrogio Contarini) were sent to the court of Uzun Ḥasan Āq Qoyunlu (1453–1478)¹⁰⁹. Although all of them reported to the Senate at the end of the mission, only Barbaro, Contarini and Zeno left accounts of their travels (which is probably telling about the Venetian mentality of the time)¹¹⁰. Even so, and despite their different value as historical sources, they represent a corpus of works on Persia which has no parallels in the European literature of the time¹¹¹. The relevance of Persian political events to Venetian political life is only further confirmed by the fact that Šāh Esmā'il I (1501–1524) was mentioned in the diaries of Marin Sanudo for the first time in an entry dated 27 December 1501 (that is, not long after his conquest of Tabriz in the summer of the same year), and that the first “monographic” Western account of the founder of the Safavid dynasty was penned by Giovanni Battista Rota between 1504 and 1508¹¹². Another important travel account is that of the so-called Anonymous Trader

¹⁰⁹ Persian-Venetian diplomatic contacts of this period are dealt with by several old but still valuable essays: cf. in particular BERCHET 1865, 2–22, 102–153; MINORSKY 1933; VON PALOMBINI 1968, 13–30; SCARCIA 1974, 419–438. Caterino Zeno was supposedly portrayed in the painting “La Comunione degli Apostoli”, currently located at Urbino: cf. PIEMONTESE 2004, 556. Here I take the chance to amend a previous mistake of mine. It has been recently demonstrated that Giovanni Dario was never in Persia and that an 18th-century clerical error misled Berchet (who mentioned this journey) and then many historians who later followed him (for instance, VON PALOMBINI 1968, 30; ROTA 2002, 580): cf. TIEPOLO 2002, 302.

¹¹⁰ BARBARO 1978–88, 481–574; CONTARINI 1978–88, 577–634; ZENO 1978–88, 139–186. Nicolò Zeno, who actually penned the narration of his ancestor’s journeys (first published in 1558) on the basis of the letters written by Caterino to the Senate, mentioned a printed edition of Caterino’s travels which he could not find and which seems to have disappeared without leaving any trace: cf. *ibidem*, 145.

¹¹¹ GABRIEL 1952, 42–51.

¹¹² SCARCIA AMORETTI 1979, vol. I, 3–4; JODOGNE 1980, 215–234.

who travelled to Persia between 1501 and 1510¹¹³. Giovanni Maria Angiolello wrote a life of Uzun Ḥasan which was later republished in an augmented edition, covering the reign of Šāh Esmāʿil I¹¹⁴. It was in Venice that in 1538 the Greek Teodoro Spandugnino composed his “Life of Esmāʿil and Ṭahmāsp”¹¹⁵. In the 16th century, Michele Membré and Vincenzo degli Alessandri travelled to Persia in the hope of enlisting the Safavid help against the Ottomans (in 1539–40 and 1571–72, respectively), and both left valuable travelogues¹¹⁶. Another Venetian subject, Giovanni Tommaso Minadoi, was the author of an important history of the Ottoman-Safavid war of 1578–90¹¹⁷.

All of these works (as well as others which were composed in the same period) have in common the feature of stemming not from what we could call a “scholarly interest” for Persia *per se*, but from two incidental factors: first the value of Persia as a trading partner and, above all, as a potential ally against the Ottomans, and secondly the personal acquaintance of the authors with the Levant in general, or with Persia in particular, or with both. So, for instance, Contarini and Barbaro were or had been traders¹¹⁸. Degli Alessandri was one of the first *giovani della lingua* (the aspirant

¹¹³ MERCANTE 1978–88, 421–479. Cf. also AUBIN 1995, 254–259. The French scholar thought he could identify the Anonymous Trader with a merchant named Francesco Romano: cf. *ibidem*, 258–259. PEROCO 2006, 15–59 published the part of the manuscript of the *Viaggio* of the Anonymous Trader not included in Ramusio’s edition (*ibidem*, 46–54), but refrained from trying to identify its author.

¹¹⁴ ANGIOLELLO 1978–88, 357–420. The later additions to Angiolello’s original work were not based on his eyewitness experience but largely on the account of the Anonymous Trader: cf. AUBIN 1995, 254–259; *supra*, n. 81. PIEMONTESE 1987a, 31–32, states that the second part of Angiolello’s work (the one dealing with the period after the death of Uzun Ḥasan) “remain[s] to be verified critically”: cf. *ibidem*, 32.

¹¹⁵ SPANDUGNINO 1969, 143–173.

¹¹⁶ MEMBRÉ 1969, 1–65; MEMBRÉ 1993, 3–57; ALESSANDRI 1844, 103–127; BERCHET 1865, 30–37, 163–167 (Alessandri’s letters to the Senate from Cracow), 167–182 (the final report). A sign of the standing enjoyed by degli Alessandri is perhaps his 16th-century bust, the current whereabouts of which as well as the circumstances of its production are unfortunately unknown: cf. VERCELLIN 1975, 67–70.

¹¹⁷ MINADOI 1587. This and the following editions (some of which are enlarged and updated) are listed in PIEMONTESE 1982, vol. I, 313–315. A mention at least should be made here of the texts on Persia and its surrounding regions which were composed abroad (both in Europe and in the other Italian states) and were eagerly sought in Venice, a subject which unfortunately cannot be dealt with *hic et nunc*.

¹¹⁸ PIEMONTESE 1989a, 758; BERTOTTI 1993, 220. On the two envoys, cf. also ALMAGIÀ 1964, 106–109; MILANESI 1983, 97–100.

dragomans studying the Ottoman language at the school located in the house of the Venetian ambassador at Constantinople)¹¹⁹. Zeno, besides being an experienced merchant as well, had already travelled in the Middle East and had married a niece of Uzun Ḥasan's wife¹²⁰. Spandugnano had a personal interest in the history of the East and was helped in his work by a Persian learned man (a *mola*, in his words) from Ardabil, the son of a veteran of the campaigns of Šāh Esmā'il, whom he had met in Venice (or at least so he claimed)¹²¹. The political significance of these works is apparent: they are to inform their readers on the state of Persia (especially if they are composed by diplomatic envoys after returning from their missions), or to reassure them about the conditions of the country and the virtues of its rulers (as in the case of Spandugnano's work). Indeed, it is not by chance that another important source of information on Safavid Persia is represented by the accounts of the Venetian ambassadors in Constantinople and consuls in Aleppo. Although dealing mainly with the Ottoman Empire and

¹¹⁹ BERENGO 1960, 174; PIEMONTESE 1985, 825; LUCCHETTA 1989a, 23–24.

¹²⁰ Indeed, one is left to wonder whether any kind of information about Persia reached Venice thanks to this third “incidental factor” brought about by both trade and politics, that is, the family relations existing between the Āq Qoyunlu ruler (and Šāh Esmā'il I) and several families of the Venetian aristocracy. On such relations, cf. ZENO 1978–88, 148, 150–151; BERCHET 1865, 1–2. Certainly, the Venetian Senate intended to put pressure on Uzun Ḥasan through his wife Theodora: cf. *ibidem*, 6, 110; ZENO 1978–88, 150–152. The Anonymous Trader met two daughters of Theodora's in Aleppo: cf. MERCANTE 1978–88, 456–457. Another niece of Theodora's (that is, a sister of Caterino Zeno's wife) was the mother of Caterina Cornaro (1473–1489), the last Queen of Cyprus: cf. ZENO 1978–88, 148. The island provided a useful base for several Venetian initiatives aimed to Persia both before and after it was annexed by Venice in 1489, and Caterina was a second cousin of Šāh Esmā'il I and a second cousin thrice removed of Šāh 'Abbās I. According to CONCINA 1994, 31–32, the Venetian aristocracy remained aware of such family relations “at least until the mid–16th century” (cf. also *ibidem*, 70). In the light of Concina's words, it is interesting to remark that one of the paintings the Safavid merchant and envoy Faṭḥi Beyg carried away from Venice in 1603 was a “Queen of Cyprus”: cf. SIMPSON 2005, 147. It would therefore seem that the above-mentioned awareness was still alive in the early 17th century, but unfortunately we are not informed on the circumstances of the choice of the painting. Pietro Zeno, the Venetian consul at Damascus who was arrested by the Mamluk authorities in 1510 on account of his contacts with Šāh Esmā'il I, was the son of Caterino and therefore another second cousin of the Shah. The diarist Marin Sanudo, to whom we owe so much information on the early Safavids, was the nephew of another former consul at Damascus (Benetto Sanudo) and was related by marriage to the Zeno family: cf. CONCINA 1994, 69. On the life, works and political career of Sanudo (1466–1536), cf. at least NEERFELD 2006, 27–46.

¹²¹ SPANDUGNINO 1969, 143 and 144, 164.

Syria respectively, they often include a section on Persia which typically focuses on the personality of the ruling Shah, the armed forces of the country and the state of its relations with the Ottomans. Then, it is probably not casual that William Shakespeare mentioned the “Sophy” in his *Merchant of Venice* (act II, scene I, line 27): that is, it was not just a further touch of exoticism added to an already exotic setting, but also a sort of implicit acknowledgment that, at that time (ca. 1596–98), Venice was one of the best places in Europe where to collect information on the current situation in Persia¹²². After all, Safavid rulers were a recurring presence in Venetian political life since the inception of the dynasty until the closing years of the 17th century¹²³.

The mainly political role that Persia had in the eyes of the Venetian writers and readers of the period influenced their image of the Persians as well. Owing to the Venetian rhetoric about the role of Venice as the “bulwark of Christendom” (*antemurale della Cristianità*), the “Turks” were consistently depicted as barbarous, cruel, treacherous, without culture and not interested in it¹²⁴. As a consequence, the “Persians” (that is, the hoped-for allies of Venice and the other Christian states against the Ottomans) were instead supposed to be loyal, gallant, learned and the lovers of culture and arts. The “Persians” were braver than the “Turks”, who feared them and prevailed in the open field (if they prevailed at all) only thanks to their superior military

¹²² PONTE 1977, 6. The connection between the international political situation and the availability of oral and written information on Persia in Venice was remarked in BRAGANTINI 1987, 135–139.

¹²³ For instance, an official historiographer of the Republic wrote that the joy felt in Venice for the reconquest of Bergamo (a key fortress and city, vital to the control of Lombardy) during the War of the League of Cambrai was marred by the news of the battle of Čālderān, “frightful for the whole Christendom”: cf. BARBARO 1844, 1060. More than one century later, the issue of the military campaign led by Sultan Murad IV (1623–1640) to retake Baġdād from the Safavids was of vital importance to Venetian decision-making when the Republic found itself on the brink of a war with the Porte in the years 1638–39: cf. ROTA 2007, 207–225. It would be interesting also to know which circumstances led the Venetian aristocrat, Francesco Contarini (alive in 1514) to being nicknamed “Sophi”: cf. PEDANI 1994, 83.

¹²⁴ Venetian views of the Turks are well summarized in PRETO 1975, 232–243. Cf. also SOYKUT 2001, *passim*.

technology and the sheer force of numbers¹²⁵. The “Turks” hated nobility and destroyed it wherever they found it, while the “Persians” loved it and held it in the highest esteem¹²⁶. The “Turks” were a people of most obscure origin, while the “Persians” were the heirs to the Achaemenids, who were of course well-known to Venetian intellectuals and learned men deeply grounded in the classic literary tradition¹²⁷. The respective forms of govern-

¹²⁵ Cf. for instance BERCHET 1866b, 62 (Andrea Navagero, 1578) and 71 (Pietro Michiel, 1584). The Persians are “real gentlemen” (in the early 16th-century sense of the word) according to SPANDUGNINO 1969, 167–168.

¹²⁶ So Lorenzo Bernardo in 1590, who equated the political structure of Germany (where the Emperor was recognized as the supreme ruler by the local princes) with that of Persia: cf. PEDANI-FABRIS 1996, 359–360. “In Persia li è una infinità de signor che hanno feudi possessi da suoi progenitori da 1500 anni in qua, e succedono al feudo il primo genito, perchè le antigue costituzioni loro così vogliono”: cf. SPANDUGNINO 1969, 167. VECELLIO 1859–60, vol. II, no. 463 provides the portrait of a “Persian nobleman”: according to its caption, the Persians “greatly love virtues and hold nobility in great esteem”. Much later, in 1673, the dragoman of the Senate, Fortis reported (seemingly on the basis of what he had been told by the Armenian friars Azaria of Ğahowk and Antonis Nazaros of Aprakownik’) that, unlike what happened in the Ottoman Empire, Safavid provincial governors received “fiefs” (*feudi*) by the ruler in which they were succeeded by their descendants: cf. BERCHET 1865, 237. In VINCENZO MARIA 1678, 112 we read that the Shah of Persia “apprezza la nobiltà; perciò tutto il Regno è ripartito à diversi Kam, che vuol dire Principi, ò Signori di Provincie, li figli de’ quali succedono nel medesimo posto”: Father Vincenzo Maria’s information was second-hand and inaccurate, but it must have contributed to perpetuate a vision of Persia which was influenced both by classic sources and the international political situation of the time. The notion of the Turks as the destroyers of the aristocracy was of course particularly hateful to a patrician class such as the one which ruled the Republic of Venice. The classical essay on the contrast between Ottoman despotism and Venetian *buon governo* is VALENSI 1987.

¹²⁷ On the Venetian notions of the origin of the Turks, cf. PRETO 1975, 13–22. Especially in the 15th century, in Venice as well as elsewhere in Italy and Europe, the words “Turco” (Turk) and “Teucro” (Teucrian, a term used as a synonym for Trojan by Virgil) were often confused and used as synonymous on the basis of their outward similarity. The misunderstanding was made easier by the circumstance that, by the time, Asia Minor was firmly in Ottoman hands. This somewhat allowed to link the Turks to classic history and to see their takeover of the Eastern Roman Empire as a sort of late *revanche* on the Greeks, and not as the final and inexplicable victory of unknown barbarians on a state which was the embodiment of civilization itself: on the origins of this misunderstanding, cf. RUNCIMAN 1972, 344–348; cf. also SPENCER 1952, 330–333. Of course, the Trojans were the mythical ancestors of the Romans according to the *Aeneid* of Virgil and, interestingly enough, also the Venetians had legends of origin which ascribed the foundation of the city to the Trojans (just as the Paduans, the mortal enemies of Venice, had): cf. MUIR 1981, 66–69. A list of European cities and dynasties claiming Trojan

ment of the Safavids and the Ottomans were illustrated and compared by Giovanni Botero. Although he was not a Venetian by birth nor working in Venice, I think it is worth quoting the two passages in full, given Botero's place in the history of European political thought and the fact that they mirror very well the Venetian (and Italian) attitude of the time towards Persia:

Il gouerno di queste genti [the Persians] ha più del regio, e del politico, che si usi tra i Maomettani: anzi non è tra loro altra parte, oue fiorisca più questa sorte di gouerno. Perche tutti gli altri quasi estirpano la nobiltà, e si vagliono dell'opera de gli schiavi, ammazzano i loro fratelli, ò gli acciecano: ma tra Persiani la nobiltà è in molta stima: e li Re trattano i loro fratelli humanamente, e tengono sotto di se molti Prencipi di gran possanza, e facultà: il che non comportano nell'Imperio loro gli Ottomani. Fanno professione di cavalleria, e di gentilezza: si diletmano di musica, e di belle lettere: attendono alla poesia, e

ancestors is *ibidem*, 68. On 15th- and early 16th-century Humanistic literature on the Turks, cf. PERTUSI 1970, 465–552; HÖFERT 2003. Occasionally Venetian sources mention and praise the discipline of the Ottoman armies comparing it to the martial virtues of the ancient Romans, whose true continuators therefore the Ottomans appear to be (unlike the Christians and their undisciplined and quarrelsome troops). Of course, such daring comparisons usually served political, ideological or moralistic aims: cf. for instance VALENSI 1987, 59–70 in particular; YÉRASIMOS 1988, 27–31. According to other Renaissance authors, the Turks were the descendants of the Scythians (who were clearly less prestigious than the Trojans as ancestors, since they also had a place within the familiar frame of classic culture thanks to Herodotus but only as the archetypal barbarians) or came from a region of Asia called Turkestan. Nicolò Zeno, the editor of Caterino's travels, made an explicit parallel between the cases of Darius and his “mother” Atossa on one side and of Šāh Esmā'il I and his mother Marta on the other (although claiming explicitly no genealogical continuity between the two dynasties): cf. ZENO 1978–88, 145. Of course, Atossa was the wife and not the mother of Darius: cf. SCHMITT 1989a, 13–14. However, in this case historical exactitude matters less than the perception of Persia as a country whose social and political institutions virtually did not change over the centuries. The later factor coupled with the habit (as well as the necessity) to have recourse to the information provided by Classical authors in order to understand the events taking place in the Orient explains why SANSOVINO 1582, 111 (quoted in BELLINGERI 2005, 119) described Timur as “Parthian”. Likewise, it is interesting to remark that according to the ZENO 1978–88, 144 some held Jahānšāh Qarā Qoyunlu (1438–1467) to be a descendant of the “great sultan of the Parthians”. Nicolò Zeno considered these rumours as an attempt to present Venice's ally, Uzun Ḥasan as a usurper of the rights of the “royal family of Persia”. Referring to Venetian writers on the Ottoman Empire, VALENSI 1987, 61 mentions what she calls their “vision archéologique” of the Empire. However, in her explanation of the possible reasons for this “vision”, Valensi precisely failed to take into consideration the fact that the vacuum created by the lack of exact and updated information needed be filled, as well as the weight (mentioned above) carried by classical literature in the education of the Venetian and European observers of the Ottomans (and of Persia).

vi riescono nella lingua loro eccellentemente. È anche in gran conto apo loro l'Astrologia: cose tutte disprezzate da i Turchi. Fioriscono anche nella Persia la mercantia, e l'arti manuali assai. E in conclusione hanno molto più del polito, e del gentile, che i Turchi [...] Il gouerno de gli Ottomani è affatto dispotico: perche il Gran Turco è in tal modo padrone d'ogni cosa compresa entro i confini del suo dominio, che gli habitanti si chiamano suoi schiavi, non che sudditi: e niuno è padrone di se stesso, non che della casa: oue egli habita, ò del terreno, ch'egli coltiua, eccetto alcune casate, che furono premiate, e priuilegiate da Maometto II in Constantinopoli. e non è nissuno personaggio cosi grande, che sia sicuro della vita sua, non che dello stato, nel quale egli si troua, se non per la gratia del gran Signore. Egli poi si mantiene in questo dominio cosi assoluto con due mezi, cioè co'l torre affatto l'arme a i sudditi suoi, e co'l metter ogni cosa in mano di renegati, tolti per uia di decima da gli stati suoi nella loro fanciullezza¹²⁸.

Indeed, several traits that are ascribed to either polity as a positive or negative feature could apply also to the other. Finally, in Italian parlance of the 16th and 17th centuries “Turk” was synonymous with “Muslim”¹²⁹. The “Persians” of course were known to be Muslim as well, but somehow sympathetic with and friendly to the Christians¹³⁰. According to this wisdom, the Persians too lived outside the pale of real civilization (which coincided with Christendom and its political antecedent, the Roman Empire), but they were “the least barbarous among the barbarians”, to the point that, at times, they were not

¹²⁸ BOTERO 1595, 208 [b] and 223 [a]. Contradictory statements can be found also when Persia alone is concerned. Giacomo Soranzo, who went twice to Constantinople as ambassador to the Sultan, wrote in 1576 that the manner of government of the Shah of Persia is “very similar” (*assai simile*) to the Sultan’s, whereas in 1584 he wrote that it is “completely different” (*del tutto dissimile*): cf. PEDANI-FABRIS 1996, 213 and 291. The discrepancy is more apparent than real, because in fact Soranzo focused each time just on one specific feature of the Safavid and Ottoman political systems (that is, on the subdivision of the two states into provinces in the first case, and on the habit of the Shah to appear very often in public, unlike the Sultan, in the second), and he based his conclusions on them. However, it is reasonable to assume that such clear-cut statements, coupled with a lack of detailed information on the country, cannot have helped the Venetian readers to form a precise and consistent image of Persia.

¹²⁹ CRUSCA 1691, 1736, quoted in RICCI 2002, 8. As a consequence, Venetian sources sometimes mention the Persians as “Turchi persiani”, i. e., Persians of Muslim religion (as in the case of the above mentioned “Morla Nariaf”, or of the retainers of the Safavid merchant and envoy Fathî Beyg in 1603): cf. BOSCHINI 1664, 11. For the meaning of “Turk” as “foreign”, “cruel”, “wicked” and so on, cf. PRETO 1975, 117–120.

¹³⁰ Cf. for instance CONTARINI 1978–88, 600. Interestingly, the same Contarini reported that he and his companions had been insulted and threatened as Christians by the inhabitants of Tabriz, whom he called *turchi* and not *azami* or *persiani*: cf. *ibidem*, 596–597. For him, indeed, Persia proper began after Tabriz, which was rather located in Armenia: cf. *ibidem*, 594 and 598.

reckoned as barbarous at all¹³¹. Therefore, in a Europe that still remembered the fabulous Prester John and the legends about a deliverer from the East¹³², a mixture of classical reminiscences and lack of precise information (the former being used to make up for the latter), political propaganda and wishful thinking could even produce images of Šāh Esmā'īl I as the new Alexander the Great¹³³. I found only two Venetian exceptions to this basic paradigm in the domain of high literature. Between 1517 and (perhaps) 1521, an unknown Italian poet composed an epic poem (8,000 verses) in the style of the Italian Renaissance celebrating the conquest *manu militari* of the Ottoman throne by Selim I (1512–1520) and his subsequent triumphs over Šāh Esmā'īl I and the Mamluk Sultans Qānṣawh al-Ġawrī II (1501–1516) and Ṭūmān Bay II (1516)¹³⁴. In 1639, the Venetian Andrea Valier celebrated the conquest of

¹³¹ BENZONI 1985, 74. The question of the “double standard” used by Venetian writers and statesmen towards the Ottoman Empire and Persia seems to be the focus of BELLINGERI 2005, 111–123. The article is unfortunately written in the unnecessarily convoluted style typical of some present-day Venetian-based scholars, which makes the point of the author somehow difficult to grasp.

¹³² The myth of Prester John lasted long in Europe, and it probably faded out completely only when political reality (that is, the beginning of the withdrawal of the Ottomans from Eastern Europe) made the hope in a Christian ally who could attack the Ottomans from the rear superfluous. A purported exchange of letters between Prester John and Šāh Soleymān (1666–1694) is mentioned in MATTHEE 1998, 163–164. By that time, the seat of Prester John was supposed to be Ethiopia.

¹³³ BRUMMETT 1996, 331–359. OLIVIERI 2003, 197–207 did not use Brummett’s essay, although he also made the similar contention that the figure of Šāh Esmā'īl I was construed in Venice within the cultural frame of the time and in accordance with political contingency. In spite of the title of his article, Olivieri dealt mostly with Venetian relations with the Egyptian Mamluks and the Safavids: however, he seems to be unaware of the relevant scholarly literature, and of contemporary sources besides the *Diarii* of Marin Sanudo. On one occasion he seems to believe that the Mamluk Sultan and the Safavid Shah were one and the same person, or at least that the two titles were close enough to be used interchangeably (cf. *ibidem*, 201). On a popular Venetian poem composed in honour of Uzun Ḥasan in 1477 (that is, after his defeat at the battle of Baškent), in which the Āq Qoyunlu ruler is not equalled to Alexander but appears nonetheless as the mightiest ally of Venice and even converts to Christianity, cf. MEDIN 1927–28, 799–814. On Uzun Ḥasan as a candidate to the role of new Alexander (although in Rome and not in Venice), cf. however PIEMONTESE 1991, 191–203.

¹³⁴ LIPPI 2001, 49–88. The poem is incomplete, lacking the beginning and, perhaps, the conclusion: cf. *ibidem*, 53–54. Its text was published in LIPPI 2004, 17–106; LIPPI 2005, 37–118; LIPPI 2006, 35–91; LIPPI 2007, 7–61. The idea of celebrating an Ottoman sultan in verses was not new: for a poem (partially) in praise of Mehmed II, cf. FILELFO 1978. On the role of Uzun Ḥasan in this poem, cf. PIEMONTESE 2004, 555. However, the

Bagdād by Murad IV in a much shorter poem (only fourteen verses)¹³⁵. Given the lack of information on its author, it is difficult to assess the aim of the former work: arguably, if it is not a mere exercise in style, it might conceal a Venetian attempt to curry favour either with Selim I after his reshuffling of the Middle Eastern political scene, or with his successor Süleyman after his accession¹³⁶. As for Valier's poem, it is apparently aimed at scolding Christendom, which at that time was torn by the Thirty Years' War and fighting over supremacy in Europe, mindless of the Ottoman threat. Once more, it is interesting to note the use of images taken from ancient history: with his victory, Murad IV has humbled the pride of the "Parthians" and avenged the "restless shadows of Crassus"¹³⁷. The rise of Šāh Esmā'il did not only bring about the hope of finding a new Oriental ally against the Ottomans. For a while, the confused news about the egalitarianism of the Safavid movement and the prodigality of the Shah (percolating to the West at a time of great social and cultural turmoil) nurtured hopes among the lower strata of society in

anonymous poet hails the triumphs of Selim I on an important commercial partner of the Republic as Egypt and on a former military ally as Persia.

¹³⁵ Venezia, Biblioteca del Civico Museo Correr, ms. *P. D. 330-c*, fol. 46b.

¹³⁶ The author of the poem was certainly from Northern Italy and very probably from Veneto, and the manuscript is currently located at Treviso: cf. LIPPI 2001, 52, 56–58 and 77. As for the question of the dedicatee, Selim would seem the most natural choice since he is the protagonist of the poem. Indeed, this is the opinion of Lippi: cf. *ibidem*, 55 (also 62 and 88). However, the prevision that prince Süleyman would inherit "all the virtues of his father", accomplish great deeds and bring about a new Golden Age (cf. *ibidem*, n. 22 p. 62, 64 and above all 71–74) sounds quite as a prophecy *a posteriori*, and it would have been somewhat inappropriate had Selim I been still alive. This would mean that the poem was in fact dedicated to the Magnificent himself and not to Selim I, apparently in order to captivate the favour of the new sultan and almost certainly before he started his own career as a conqueror. If this is the case, the poem must have been completed in the first months of 1521 at the latest (Belgrade, the first conquest of Süleyman, having been taken on 29 August 1521). One ought to recall that, upon his accession to the throne, Süleyman was considered a quiet prince and a lover of arts, which would have made him the perfect recipient of such a present. Even after 1521, the Venetians (or, at least, members of the Venetian aristocracy) could go to great lengths to please Süleyman, as the episode of the precious helmet-royal crown produced in 1532 for the Ottoman Sultan shows: cf. CONCINA 1994, 57–76. An iconographic counterpart to the poem in honour of Selim I could be the painting of the battle of Čalderān still existing in a palace of Palermo: cf. GALLETTI 2005, 23–53; GALLETTI 2007, 65–86. Pending a definitive interpretation of the meaning of the painting, I believe that what is ostensibly a celebration of Selim I's victory might actually be a tribute to Persian bravery.

¹³⁷ Venezia, Biblioteca del Civico Museo Correr, ms. *P. D. 330-c*, fol. 46b, vv. 12 and 13 respectively.

both Florence and Venice that the “revolutionary” Sophi would soon free them from their condition of political subordination and economic exploitation – hopes which were of course at odds with those of the ruling elites. If there are hints that some Venetian aristocrats vaguely worried about the possible arrival of Šāh Esmā‘il to Italy, a Florentine Carnival song (dating probably to 1503) presents the coming of the Sofi as certain: soon he would redistribute riches, giving to those who have less. The title of the song, *Canzona del carro de’ macinati* (“Song of the wagon of the ground people”) authorizes no doubts about the mood of its anonymous authors¹³⁸. Once more, a segment of a Western society was reading Persia through the lenses of its own wishes and hopes,

¹³⁸ PONTE 1977, 5–19 (8–9 and 14–15 in particular). The “ground people” are of course the poor, subject to the millstone (*macina*) of misery. The song got a burlesque reply, possibly dated 1504, also mentioning the Sofi: *ibidem*, 17–18. It is interesting to observe that the anonymous author of the so-called *Dialogue of the Venetian fishermen*, written on the eve of the battle of Lepanto (1571), portrayed the Ottoman Sultan as the liberator of the fishermen oppressed by aristocratic tyranny and the instrument of God’s wrath: cf. PRETO 1975, 268. In one of his writings, Leonardo da Vinci mentioned a mysterious prophet preaching in western Armenia: cf. PONTE 1977, 5–6, 18–19. Leonardo’s description seems to have been the starting point for a legend concerning his journey to Armenia, purportedly on behalf of the Mamluk Sultan Qā’itbay (1468–1496). Recently a new version of the legend has been proposed, according to which Leonardo met Šāh Esmā‘il I. Their encounter allegedly originated the embassy of a certain Ḥoseyn ‘Ali (or ‘Ali) Beyg, whose meeting with the Doge was portrayed in a painting: cf. HERMET – COGNI RATTI DI DESIO 1993, 67–70. Clearly, the authors conflated three different historical episodes, namely, the arrival to Venice of a Safavid ambassador in 1509, the embassy of Ḥoseyn ‘Ali Beyg Bayāt and Anthony Sherley (who were not admitted into the city) and the picture entitled “Un’ambasceria persiana offre in dono stoffe al Doge Marino Grimani”, still existing in the Palazzo Ducale and representing the embassy of Faṭḥi Beyg of 1603. On the circumstances in which the latter painting was painted, cf. ROTA, *forthc*. For a recent (albeit very concise) survey of Venetian-Safavid diplomatic relations, cf. ROTA 2002, 580–587. Leonardo certainly displayed a certain amount of interest for the Levant, as his description of the mysterious prophet shows. He also sent the project for a bridge on the Golden Horn to Bayezid II (1481–1512). The stereotype of the lack of culture of the Turks was indeed a political tool rather than revealed truth, and Ottoman sultans could make suitable patrons when the conditions arose, as in the famous episode of Mehmed II and Gentile Bellini. Similarly, and in spite of official propaganda and religious difference, not only the Sofi but even the Ottoman Sultan could appear as a suitable ruler to popular classes oppressed by misery. That such an appeal was far from being merely theoretical is demonstrated by the phenomenon of the “voluntary” renegades, who emigrated in large numbers to the Ottoman Empire in search of better fortune especially during the 16th and 17th centuries.

thus creating an *ad hoc* image either of the country, of its culture or (as in this specific case) of its ruler.

The Venetian attitude towards the Ottomans is often labelled as “ambiguous”, if not outright treacherous to an otherwise largely fictitious common cause of the Christian powers against the “Turks”. Actually, it was not ambiguous at all. It was rather very clear and consistent, informed as it was by a dogged determination to exploit any chance to protect the Venetian trade and possessions in the Levant from the ever present Ottoman threat, without jeopardizing the rich commercial relations existing between the two states. All this was absolutely clear to all the European governments of the time, and the recurrent and mutual accusations of scarce commitment to the cause of Christendom or connivance with the “Turks” (with the related *topoi* of the “bulwark of Christendom” vs the “concubine of the Turk”) were usually just tools of propaganda which were employed when the political situation required it and were laid to rest when it did not. What may have been ambiguous, in my opinion, is the Venetian attitude towards Persia, which does not seem to have been considered as an independent entity deserving attention in its own right, but as a sort of projection of Venetian fears and hopes related to the Ottoman Empire. Especially as far as literature and science are concerned, the Persians were supposed to possess them mainly because they were seen as antithetic to the “Turks”, who were notoriously illiterate barbarians. Indeed, Nicolò Zeno could write in 1558 that

quante eccellenti cose si averebbono da scriver di quelli re, se tra lor vi fosse, come la polizia de’ costumi e valor dell’armi, anco una esquisita letteratura che, raccogliendo i fatti loro, li comendasse alla memoria di posterì. Né di niun’altra cosa s’hanno da doler i re di Levante, se non che tra loro non vi fioriscono gli studii né la politezza delle lettere¹³⁹.

While the descriptions of the Ottoman Empire provided by the Venetian ambassadors at the Porte are based on established narrative patterns, the travel accounts written by diplomatic envoys to Persia are much more dependant on the skills and acuteness of the author as an observer: in other words, on his interest in what he saw and his ability to describe it¹⁴⁰. The very existence of such accounts seems to have depended on the willingness of the individual authors to put their experiences into writing. Indeed, only

¹³⁹ ZENO 1978–88, 171; cf. also 144.

¹⁴⁰ In a similar way, Venetian travelogues in Persia during the Renaissance are freer from the literary conventions and norms of Humanistic writing than their counterparts in the Ottoman Empire: cf. YÉRASIMOS 1988, 21–22.

two of the five Venetian envoys to the Āq Qoyunlu court left a narration of their journeys (three if we count the supposedly lost printed edition of Caterino Zeno's travels). Rota, who was not a state official, claimed that he would have paid more attention to the history of Šāh Esmā'il had he known that such a subject would meet the interest of the Doge¹⁴¹. As a consequence, and in a way analogous to the sources stemming from the trading milieu, the works penned by diplomats confront modern scholars with their own peculiar problems. The least one can say is that they were not written with an eye to serving as a source to future Iranologists. Venetian subjects (especially if they belonged to the ruling aristocratic class) usually firmly held that the Republic of Venice represented the most perfect and wisest form of government. Analogously, Venetian achievements in terms of material wealth, political power, arts and culture were generally considered as outstanding and peerless, as well as the Republic's contribution to the Christian cause. In their turn, the might and wealth of the *Serenissima* constituted manifest evidence of the superiority of its institutions and of the virtues of its men. Thus Nicolò Zeno could openly state that Venetian institutions were superior to those of Rome during the Republican period and Giosafat Barbaro, at the very beginning of his work, reminded his readers that the current knowledge of the inhabited world had been vastly increased by Venetian merchants and sailors (among whom himself)¹⁴². Such a sense of tradition and pride in one's own culture could not but heavily influence Venetian observers of the Muslim East, for instance, concerning the choice of what to report to their readers and what not¹⁴³. Remarking his lack of interest for many aspects of Iranian life (including the Āq Qoyunlu court), Aubin wrote that

on chercherait en vain, d'ailleurs, sous la plume de Barbaro, discrète et mesurée, l'expression polémique de son sens de la supériorité occidentale, et de son antipathie pour le monde islamique¹⁴⁴.

¹⁴¹ JODOGNE 1980, 225. Of course, this statement can simply be an *excusatio* for presenting a very slim work such as the "Vita".

¹⁴² ZENO 1978–88, 149; BARBARO 1978–88, 485.

¹⁴³ See the analysis of Barbaro's attitudes towards Persia and the Persians in AUBIN 1985, 79–81. In fairness to Barbaro and his colleagues, one should however remember that the Venetians held similar feelings of superiority towards their fellow Christian states as well (feelings which were perhaps mitigated but not effaced by the common religion), and that self-centred attitudes of this kind were the rule in Europe at the time.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, 81.

Indeed, Barbaro needed not elaborate on the point of “Western superiority”, since the respective value of the two cultures was manifestly clear to all his readers, who shared or were supposed to share his point of view: however brave, polite, friendly to the Christians and politically helpful the Persians could be, they could not compare with the Christian heirs of the Roman Empire. Much the less they could compare with the Venetians, the most distinguished among these heirs. Furthermore, the written travel accounts were supplemented orally. Official envoys must have communicated the most sensitive and updated news to the Senate soon after their return (an oral exposition of the results of the mission was mandatory under the law) and then informed a number of private persons, ranging from people who were simply curious about remote Oriental lands to individuals with specific interests¹⁴⁵. It is perhaps likely that information on such “light” subjects as arts or literature (if they were ever collected) were conveyed to this last category of people and in private form. After the War of Cyprus (1570–1573) and above all during the 17th century the Venetian political interest for Persia clearly decreased¹⁴⁶. The number of envoys may have not been lower than in the previous century, but they were chosen in a less accurate way and their contribution to the knowledge of Persia was inferior to that of their predecessors. Above all, and unlike other European countries, in Venice Persia did not become a fashionable place to travel to, and through the whole century we find only two Venetian “tour-

¹⁴⁵ A letter to Galileo (dated Venice, 18 August 1612) in which Giovanni Francesco Sagredo briefly described an exchange of gifts with Šāh ‘Abbās I was published in GALILEI 1901, 378–380. Sagredo had been the Venetian consul at Aleppo between 1607 and 1610. He was the author of two accounts of Syria and the local trade (completed in 1611 and 1612): cf. BERCHET 1866b, 130–156. It is not clear whether a third report, exclusively devoted to Persia and Šāh ‘Abbās and to which Sagredo himself hinted at, is today lost or simply was never penned: cf. *ibidem*, 138–139. For more references to Sagredo, who was the “general procurator” of the Shah in Venice since 1611, and his nephew Alvisè, who tried in vain to reach Persia in 1629–30, cf. ROTA 2002, 582. The letter does not contain any major piece of information, but it is interesting as it shows how men with a first-hand experience of the Orient could act as informants in a most informal way, and also that seemingly trivial details were deemed worthy of the attention of men as Galileo (Sagredo complained that the Shah had not yet reciprocated a costly present) when they regarded people of the stature of Šāh ‘Abbās. I would like to thank Dr. Stefano Trovato of the Biblioteca Marciana for providing me with the text of the letter. On Giovanni Francesco Sagredo (1573 or 1574–1620) and his close friendship with Galileo, cf. COZZI 1979, *passim*. Given Sagredo’s scholarly interests (among other things, for magnetism, optics and thermometers) and his habit to make his own instruments (cf. *IBIDEM*, 157, 198–199), the “dearest things” sent to the Shah might have consisted of some of these devices.

¹⁴⁶ ROTA 2002, 582–584.

ists” to Persia, Ambrogio Bembo (1652–1705) and Angelo Legrenzi (1643–1708), who travelled there in 1674 and 1678 respectively, spending less than one year each in the country. The latter however had clearly a stronger interest for India, and the impact of the former on Venetian culture can be gauged by the fact that his travel account remained unpublished and survived in only two complete manuscript copies, one of which seems to be now lost¹⁴⁷. As for the memoirs of another remarkable traveller, adventurer and author, Nicolò Manuzzi (rather than Manucci, as his name is usually spelt, 1638–1717)¹⁴⁸, who lived in India between 1656 and 1717 (perhaps spending about one year in Persia in 1654–55), they were originally written in Portuguese, Italian and French and were never edited scholarly or fully printed in Italy. A complete 18th century Italian translation, commissioned by the Venetian Senate, exists only in manuscript form¹⁴⁹.

¹⁴⁷ LEGRENZI 1705. On Bembo, cf. WELCH 2003, 97–121 (cf. n. 2 p. 98 on the manuscripts of his travel account). Cf. also TUCCI 1966, 101–102; MANDELLI 2005, 308–310. LUCCHETTA 1976–86, 232–236 (on Bembo), 236–240 (on Legrenzi) and GROSSATO 1994, 103–133 (on Legrenzi) summarize rather than analyze the works of the two travellers.

¹⁴⁸ On the correct spelling of the name, cf. FALCHETTA 1986, vol. I, n. 1 p. 55.

¹⁴⁹ Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, mss. *It.VI.134(8299)* and *It.VI.135(5772)* (“longer original redaction” of Manuzzi’s memoirs) and *It.Z.45(4803–4804)* (Italian translation by Stefano Neves Cardeiraz and his two sons); Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, ms. *Phillips 1945, I–III* (“shorter original redaction”); MANUCCI 1907–08; MANUCCI 1963 (partial Italian translation, *non vidi*). On the life of Manuzzi and his work (including the complex questions related to the existence of different “original versions” of his memoirs), cf. FALCHETTA 1986, 17–37 and 38–53. Cf. also BREDI 1984, 373–395. About the pages on Manuzzi written by LUCCHETTA 1976–86, 240–247 and GROSSATO 1994, 93–102 one can simply repeat what said *supra*, n. 147. Of course, it is impossible to agree with VAN DER CRUYSSÉ 2002, 347, when he claims that “on exagère à peine lorsqu’on range Manucci parmi les voyageurs français du Grand Siècle”, evidently on the sole fact that he dictated part of his memoirs in French. In fact *on exagère beaucoup*, since the polyglot but perhaps illiterate Manucci dictated his memoirs in the language which was more familiar to the secretary he was employing at that specific time. Manucci certainly considered himself Venetian: suffice it to say that, after a first version of his work was plagiarized by the French Jesuit Catrou, he addressed himself for redress to the Doge of Venice and not to the King of France. Two portraits of Manuzzi in Mughal dress can be seen in MANUCCI 1907–08, vol. I, 16 and 66. The portrait in GREVEMBROCH 1981, vol. II, no. 157 (which is reproduced in MANUCCI 1907–08, vol. I, 202–203) is based on the latter painting. I would like to thank Dr. Piero Falchetta of the Biblioteca Marciana for his kind and detailed explanation of the intricacies of the studies on Manuzzi.

Of course, it would be probably excessive to state that nobody was interested in Persian culture in Venice. Prof. Piemontese pointed to the importance of the *Peregrinaggio di tre giovani figliuoli del re di Serendippo*, a sort of translation of the *Hašt behešt* of Amir Xosrow Dehlavi which was published in Venice in 1557, as well as to the necessity of new research on the question of 16th-century Italian Orientalism¹⁵⁰. The *Peregrinaggio* certainly marks an important point in the history of Persian culture in Europe, being “il primo testo letterario persiano adattato in una lingua europea nell’età moderna”¹⁵¹. However, it seems to me that one work, or even a few more works if we could ever find them, although important is not much when compared to the relative easiness with which the Venetian learned public could have acquired Oriental manuscripts (in Persian or other languages) for the sake of translation or collection. Today, the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice holds 46 Persian manuscripts, certainly not a large number¹⁵². One of them is the so-called *Codex Cumanicus*, a most important Latin-Persian-Cuman dictionary penned around 1330 in the Crimea, back to the time when the Black Sea was still an Italian

¹⁵⁰ PIEMONTESE 1987b, 185–221; BRAGANTINI 1987, 127–150; PIEMONTESE 2003a, 27 and n. 46 pp. 27–28. Interestingly enough, Membré was in contact with Giuseppe Tramezzino, the nephew of the printer who published the *Peregrinaggio*: cf. BRAGANTINI 1987, 140–141, 144–148. Numerous tragedies, dramas, operas, fables and tales published in Venice and set in Persia (from the Median through the Afsharid period) are listed in PIEMONTESE 1982, vol. II, 803–840, 846–849, 852–854. A close scrutiny of this production (which of course was not limited to Venice but was common to the rest of Italy and Europe) could perhaps shed some light on the authors’ sources of information and on their attitude towards and “perception” of Persia. An attempt in this direction is PIEMONTESE 1993, 1–34. According to Prof. Piemontese, Venice was the only city where musical dramas of Persian subject were performed during the years 1640–1660, and the Venetian production alone accounts for more than one-third of the overall Italian production of such operas: cf. *ibidem*, 1–2. The author sees a possible connection between the virtual end of the genre in 1741 and the end of the Safavids in 1736: cf. *ibidem*, 2–3. At the same time, it is worth remarking that the Venetian repertoire of the time was exclusively inspired (more or less faithfully) by the Classic sources, rejecting any reference to the contemporary Persian domestic situation or to the Safavid-Ottoman conflict: cf. *ibidem*, 3–4. Finally, as far as Venetian literature is concerned, one should at least mention Carlo Goldoni’s “Persian trilogy”: *La sposa persiana* of 1757, the *Ircana in Julfa* of 1758 and the *Ircana in Ispaan* of 1760. According to PIEMONTESE 2003a, 30 Goldoni based his works on French rather than Italian sources.

¹⁵¹ PIEMONTESE 1987b, 221.

¹⁵² PIEMONTESE 1989b, 319–355. The collection includes nonetheless several important items: cf. *ibidem*, 320.

lake¹⁵³. Eight manuscripts belonged to the Albanian İbrahim Efendi, an Ottoman official who was secretly baptised in Belgrade around 1671, fled to Venice in 1690 (where he became known as Abramo Albanese) and in 1693 became a Dominican friar with the name of Paolo Antonino Affendi¹⁵⁴. Since five of these manuscripts are or include dictionaries or grammars, and since in 1692 İbrahim/Abramo became a teacher of Oriental languages in the city, it is tempting to suppose that he gathered these “tools of the trade” having in view his defection to Christendom and his new life in Venice¹⁵⁵. Thirty-four manuscripts belonged to Giacomo Nani (1725–1797), a prominent collector of the

¹⁵³ PIEMONTESE 1989b, 342–343. The commercial centres of the Black Sea basin did not host only audacious traders but men of culture as well. For instance, in 1328 the Dominicans created schools of Oriental languages at Pera and Caffa (both Genoese strongholds), and in the latter city in 1341 Šim’un b. Yusof b. Ebrāhim at-Tabrizi copied a Persian translation of the Gospel (today known as *Bodleian 1835*) for a certain Xwāje Amir b. Sahmo’d-dowle b. Širāne of Tbilisi: cf. PIEMONTESE 2003b, 719 and 721. Here I will not deal with the question of the contribution made by the missionaries to the Venetian knowledge of Persia. It is however certain that, in the Middle Ages, the city provided an excellent point of departure for the Dominican and Franciscan friars who were sent *ad Tartaros*. In August 1299, for instance, a group of Dominicans left Venice with the financial support of the Senate: cf. PEDANI 1987–88, 612 (with further bibliography). On the Dominicans as a channel of transmission of reciprocal information between Europe and Persia, cf. PIEMONTESE 2003b, 707–729. One may also remark that the two largest churches in Venice belonged to two missionary orders, the Dominicans (SS. Giovanni e Paolo) and to the Franciscans (Chiesa dei Frari). The importance of the *Codex Cumanicus* originated a large specialist scholarly literature: here I would like to mention two of the latest contributions, that is, VÁSÁRY 2005, 105–124 and PIEMONTESE 2005, 183–198.

¹⁵⁴ PIEMONTESE 1989b, 319. For an autobiographical statement by the then Abramo, cf. LUCCHETTA 1987–88, 495, 497.

¹⁵⁵ İbrahim/Abramo’s petition to the Doge, whereby he asked to be hired as a teacher of Turkish, Persian and Arabic, vaguely suggests that he had such a proposal in mind since he arrived in Venice, but that he postponed it until he became more familiar with the Italian language: cf. LUCCHETTA 1987–88, 495, 497–498. According to Lucchetta, his full name sounded İbrahim Ahmed, but from the published text of his petition (15 April 1692) it appears rather as İbrahim b. Ahmed (*Ibrahim Dachmet*): *ibidem*, 495 and 497. However, the decree of the Senate which hired him as teacher of Turkish, Persian and Arabic (3 May 1692) called him “İbraim Achemet”: cf. CECCHETTI 1868, 1126. Piemontese mentioned him as “İbrāhīm” in PIEMONTESE 1989b, 319. On these eight manuscripts, cf. *ibidem*, 335 (*Pandnāme* of ‘Aṭṭār), 335–336 (*Golestān* of Sa’di), 339 (*Monša’āt-e Jāmi* and an anthology of poems, mostly by Jāmi), 344 (miscellaneous codex: *Nešābo’š-šebyan* of Abu Naşr Farāhi, *Tohfato’l-hādiye* of Moḥammad b. al-Ḥājji Elyās, *Ketāb-e ḥamd u sanā*), 344–345 (*Selko’l-javāher* of ‘Abdo’r-Raḥmān b. ‘Abdo’r-Raḥmān al-Anguri), 346–347 (*Jāme’o’l-fārsi*), 347–348 (*Baḥro’l-garāyeb* of Ḥalimi), 348 (*Loḡat-e Ne’matollāh* of Ne’matollāh b. Aḥmad Mobārak ar-Rumi).

second half of the 18th century: again, it is not a high number, considering that Nani spent several years in the Levant, travelling or serving in various capacities. What seems to be a fundamental lack of interest in that kind of objects (Giacomo's elder brother Bernardo, the founder of the family art collection which went under the name of Museo Naniano and his committer, was mainly interested in Greek antiquities) was probably compounded by the fact that the main advisor to Giacomo Nani in his later years was Simone Assemani (1752–1821), a Maronite Lebanese by origin¹⁵⁶. In the surviving correspondence between Nani and Assemani (96 letters exchanged between 1786 and 1797) only one Persian manuscript is mentioned¹⁵⁷.

However, one may note that the last decades of the 17th century and the first ones of the 18th marked not only the rising of a less biased Venetian attitude towards the Ottomans¹⁵⁸, but also a further decline of interest in Persia. On the political side, during the last Venetian-Ottoman conflict (the War of Morea, 1715–18) no envoy was sent to the Safavid court in search for allies¹⁵⁹. Once the fog of war subsided in 1718, it became clear that the international political context had dramatically changed: Habsburg (and in a

¹⁵⁶ On Nani and his activity as collector, cf. NANI MOCENIGO 1917, 397–398, 406–407, 576–582; DEL NEGRO 1971, 115–147 (in particular 120–121); PIEMONTESE 1989b, 319–320. On Assemani, who taught Oriental languages first at the Seminario of Padua (since 1786) and then at the University of the same city (1807), cf. LEVI DELLA VIDA 1962, 440–441; CONTADINI 1989, 209–245. Concerning the possibility to buy Persian manuscripts in the Ottoman Empire, one may note that Girolamo Vecchietti purchased the oldest known copy of Ferdowsi's *Šāhnāme* in Cairo and not in Persia: cf. for instance PIEMONTESE 1987c, 101.

¹⁵⁷ Assemani mentioned “a Persian codex full of figures”: cf. Venezia, Biblioteca del Civico Museo Correr, *Epistolario Moschini, Simeone Assemani a Giacomo Nani*, no. 2 (Padua, 29 January 1786). The letters exchanged by Nani and Assemani are in Venezia, Biblioteca del Civico Museo Correr, *Epistolario Moschini, Simeone Assemani a Giacomo Nani* and *Epistolario Moschini, Giacomo Nani a Simeone Assemani*. The Biblioteca Civica at Padua holds four manuscripts (*C. M. 126 I*, *C. M. 126 II*, *C. M. 155* and *C. M. 270*) containing 279 letters written by Giacomo to Bernardo between 1741 and 1761. Although a very summary perusal of *C. M. 126 I* did not yield any useful data, an accurate exam of the whole correspondence might provide information on the accession of Persian manuscripts to the Nani collection. The collection of the Museo Naniano included also an essay of Girolamo Vecchietti on the life of his brother Giovambattista, who travelled twice to Persia: cf. INVERNIZZI 2003, 477.

¹⁵⁸ PRETO 1975, 340–351, 378–392, 442–450, 525–533.

¹⁵⁹ So BERCHET 1865, 55. Indeed, almost 140 years later I could not find traces of such contacts during my research at the Archivio di Stato.

certain measure Russian) expansionism had become a reality and a threat which the Porte but also (albeit of course to a lesser extent) the Republic had to reckon with. Changing international politics coupled with the rise of Enlightenment favoured more peaceful relations with the Ottoman Empire but also put a definitive end to any attempt at establishing an alliance with Persia. Once more, political realities influenced culture, in our case the perception of and the interest for a Muslim state: this is indirectly confirmed by the fact that the inhabitants of the Barbary Coast (who still threatened Venetian shipping and with whom the Republic was technically still at war at the time of its end) were, unlike the Turks, still considered “barbarous” in the 18th century¹⁶⁰. In 1727, former *Bailo* Francesco Gritti wrote that, after the Ottoman conquest of Baġdād in 1638, the Persians had fallen into such “idleness” (*ozio*), that it had extinguished all their previous bravery together with all their credit among the Christian powers as possible allies. Gritti added that, as a consequence of this state of things, for some time (*da qualche tempo*) the *Baili* had been providing information on Persia only because it shared a border with the Ottoman Empire¹⁶¹. Indeed, the tradition of the *Baili* reporting on Persian affairs came virtually to an end with the conflicts of 1644–1669 (War of Candia), 1684–1699 (War of the Holy League) and 1715–1718 (War of Morea), when no diplomatic representative of the Republic was posted in Constantinople. In the 18th century, Francesco Gritti’s exposé of the conditions of Persia after the Afghan conquest is quite long and, from this point of view, rather exceptional, but it actually deals more with Ottoman and Russian manoeuvring than with the Afghans themselves or Šāh Ṭahmāsp II (1722–1732). Gritti’s predecessors and successors devote to Persia only a few pages of their reports, when they touch the subject at all¹⁶². Yet, and quite curiously, Gritti’s words are reminiscent of ear-

¹⁶⁰ PRETO 1975, 393–405.

¹⁶¹ PEDANI-FABRIS 1996, 923.

¹⁶² For Gritti’s account of Persia, cf. *ibidem*, 923–930. For the reports of his colleagues, cf. *ibidem*, *passim*. Cf. also *supra*, n. 150 for Prof. Piemontese’s remarks on a possible link between the fall of the Safavids in 1736 and the virtual end of the production of musical dramas of Persian subject a few years later. At this moment it is not clear what degree of attention drew in Venice the meteoric rise and fall of Nāder Šāh Afšār (1736–1747), since the reports of the *Baili* posted in Constantinople between his appointment as commander-in-chief of the Safavid forces (1726) and his death (1747) are mostly unpublished (with the exceptions of the reports by Gritti in 1727 and Giovanni Donà in 1746), and may have never been actually written: cf. PEDANI 2002, 49–51. For the time being, in order to understand what image of Nāder Šāh the *Baili* conveyed to the Senate one will have to rely on their dispatches.

lier reports on Šāh Esmā‘il I when he called the first Afghan ruler of Persia, Maḥmud (1722–1725), “prencipe giovane [...] con non altro titolo che di riformatore delli scandali della religione di Maometto, ch’egli professava nella sua purità”¹⁶³.

CHAPTER FOUR: ON THE TEACHING OF THE PERSIAN LANGUAGE IN VENICE

In the domain of culture, this weakening of political interest had quite clear repercussions, in my opinion, among other things on the history of the teaching of Oriental languages in Venice. As we know, the Venetian Senate decreed the creation of a school for interpreters (whose students, the future *dragomanni*, were called *giovani della lingua*) in Constantinople, located at the Venetian embassy, only in 1551¹⁶⁴, that is, almost one century after the Ottoman conquest of the city: a circumstance which is quite telling about Venetian mentality of the time. Another telling fact is that the first to suggest the creation of a school for the Turkish language in Venice (it is not clear whether Persian was to be included in the *curriculum* or not) was one anonymous Turkish teacher (*hoca*, or *coza* in the Italian form of the word) of the school of the embassy in 1577: in this way, the training of the future dragomans could have started at a much younger age, close to their families and in a much safer environment than Constantinople¹⁶⁵. This proposal, in spite of the obvious advantages it offered, was not implemented, as were not the others which followed in the years 1627 and 1676¹⁶⁶. According to a famous definition, the dragoman was

¹⁶³ PEDANI-FABRIS 1996, 924.

¹⁶⁴ The actual teaching started only two years later: cf. LUCCHETTA 1989, 19–20, 37–38. A dragoman is portrayed in GREVEMBROCH 1981, vol. II, no. 147.

¹⁶⁵ LUCCHETTA 1989, 24–25. The *hoca* must have been aware of the difficulty of teaching Ottoman to students completely ignorant of the language. On the other hand, the fact that he was fluent in Italian makes him stand out as an exception among his colleagues (the *Baili* consistently complained about the inability of the *hocas* to communicate with their students until the latter had acquired at least some working knowledge of Ottoman) and points to an unusual interest towards Western and Italian culture, or perhaps to a Western ethnic origin. One cannot rule out the possibility that the proposal was motivated not only by sound professional considerations but also by the desire of the *hoca* to leave Constantinople and live in Venice.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, 29–30 and 36.

la lingua che parla, l'orecchio che ascolta, l'occhio che vede, la mano che dona, l'anima che agisce¹⁶⁷

and, as a consequence, no doubt existed on the necessity of having well-trained and politically loyal interpreters-translators. The Venetians also shared the common notion of Persian as a “beautiful” language, and were aware that the knowledge of Persian was essential for a perfect mastery of Ottoman Turkish¹⁶⁸. Giacomo Soranzo wrote in 1576 that Persian was different from Turkish and was considered “more elegant”: for this reason, those “Turks” who wanted to speak elegantly used “more and more Persian words every day”¹⁶⁹. The former *Bailo* at the Porte, Giovan Battista Donà claimed in 1688 that the “Turkish language” was like “the local language” (*la Prouinciale*) in Italy, meaning presumably something between dialect and the local variant of Italian. Persian lent beauty and grace to Turkish just as Tuscan did to Italian¹⁷⁰. One century later, the other great Venetian historian of Ottoman literature, Giambattista Toderini confirmed that

¹⁶⁷ So Carlo Ruzzini in 1706: cf. PEDANI-FABRIS 1996, 821 (also quoted in LUCCHETTA 1984, 22 and 56). Ruzzini went on saying that “the ambassador or the *Bailo* may of course lay the foundation of a negotiation, but the building thereof is their [the dragomans’] work”.

¹⁶⁸ Concerning the beauty of the Persian language, Giovan Battista Raimondi (ca. 1536-1614), director of the Stamperia Orientale Medicea in Rome and “greatest Italian Orientalist of the 16th century”, stated that everybody ought to have learned Persian “perfectly” because those who had the most exquisite taste concerning foreign languages agreed on it being the most beautiful, elegant and expressive tongue in the world: cf. PIEMONTESE 1987-88, 642. However, the same Raimondi wrote on another occasion that Arabic was “more universal” than any other idiom and even more useful than Latin for the study of sciences, adding that the Turks and the Persians did not consider anybody a learned man if he did not master Arabic, the latter being “the mother and the *maestra*” of their own languages: cf. IBIDEM, 648-649. It may be noticed in passing that the same notion of the importance of the Persian language for the knowledge of Ottoman Turkish was held on the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea in the little Republic of Ragusa, Venice’s long-time rival whose institutions were often modelled after those of the *Serenissima*: cf. MIOVIĆ-PERIĆ 2001, 84. I would like to thank Dr. Luca Furlan for providing me with a copy of this most interesting article. The history of the dragomans of Ragusa, on account of the key political and economic role played by their State, certainly deserves to be investigated more thoroughly. The first Persian traders appeared in Ragusa as early as 1522: cf. CARTER 1972, 380 (cf. also ns. 81 and 82 p. 402).

¹⁶⁹ PEDANI-FABRIS 1996, 214.

¹⁷⁰ DONÀ 1688, 6–7 and, for a similar statement, 88–89. Similar considerations are made concerning Ottoman poetry: *ibidem*, 125–126. In particular, Donà stated that “there is an infinite number of books of poetry, mostly in Persian”: *ibidem*, 126.

i dotti Turchi non solo l'Arabo, ma apprendono ancora il Persiano, come gentile linguaggio e di polita letteratura¹⁷¹.

Of course, and for centuries, at any given time there must have been in Venice a certain number of individuals who could speak Persian. They were traders, adventurers, former renegades who had learned the language in a practical way (let alone Persians and Persian-speaking Orientals living in the city)¹⁷². For instance, the so-called Anonymous Trader claimed he knew “very well” Persian, Arabic and Turkic, besides the Greek of Trebizond¹⁷³. However, one may wonder how these more or less self-taught speakers conceived the languages of the Muslim Middle East: for at least many of them, Persian must have been simply the language of the inhabitants of Persia, who were so named after their country and irrespective of their ethnic origin.

¹⁷¹ TODERINI 1787, vol. I, 203. As the most prominent Persian poets, Toderini mentioned Jāmi, “Seich” the *principe della Lirica*, Anvari, the “Homeric poet” Ferdowsi, Rudaki, Daqiqi, “Esdschede” (‘Asjadī of Marv ?), “Enseri Terraehi”, “Emmar” (probably ‘Omar Xayyām: cf. RICHARD 1980, 299), “Schid-id-din” and Hāfēz of Šīrāz, “the Persian Athens”: cf. TODERINI 1787, vol. I, 203. He added that the Ottoman schools (*accademie*) were never as flourishing as the Arabic and Persian ones: cf. IBIDEM, vol. II, 1.

¹⁷² PETECH 1962, 562 mentions three Venetian “interpreters for the King of the Tatars” (probably three traders) at Tabriz around 1288. The above mentioned Giovanni Battista Flaminio was said to know Turkish, Persian and “a bit” of Arabic, which he had learnt during his travels in the Middle East: cf. ASV, *Cinque Savi alla mercanzia*, I serie, registro 143, fol. 87b (31 March 1611). Very often, people who had learnt a language in the East (typically Turkish) sought employment as *senser*, as even a very summary perusal of the documents of the *Cinque Savi alla mercanzia* shows: besides the case of Flaminio, cf. for instance *ibidem*, I serie, registro 138, fols. 53a (the former slave Marco Bacco, 18 August 1588) and 121b–122a (the former slave Anzolo Seraffino, a Syrian, 6 July 1590); registro 140, fol. 27b (the former slave Zorzi Farabosco, 28 September 1598); registro 141, fols. 30b–31a (Francesco, born in the Ottoman Empire from a Muslim father and a Christian slave mother, 21 January 1603). PAPADIA-LALA 1999, 283 noted a similar phenomenon, that is, the existence of soldiers teaching the Italian language (mainly if not exclusively the spoken language, as it seems) to members of the local Greek population in Crete’s main city. Presumably this happened not only in Crete but in other non-Italophone garrison cities of the Venetian empire as well.

¹⁷³ MERCANTE 1978–88, 426 and 456–457; PEROCCO 2006, 36–37. Giosafat Barbaro clearly spoke “Tatar” (some form of Turkic, and not “Mongolian” as stated in ORSATTI 2003, 703), which he must have learnt during his years at Tana, to some extent, but in at least two occasions he mentioned interpreters he had taken with himself to Kūčük Moḥammad of the Golden Horde (1435–1465) and to the court of Uzun Ḥasan: cf. BARBARO 1978–88, 503–504, 492 and 531.

Analogously, the Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Sultan were said to be “Turks” and speak “Turkish”. Thus, according to Giovanni Maria Angiolello, the words *baycabexen, nederiadir* (“O figliuol di putana, che mare”) that Uzun Hasan uttered in admiration when he saw the Ottoman camp on the Euphrates, were Persian (and not Turkic, as they clearly are) probably simply because Uzun Hasan, being the ruler of Persia, was supposed to speak in Persian¹⁷⁴. In 1620 Federico Dandolo declared that Teodoro Persico knew very well Turkish and Persian, and the latter language in both its “vulgar” and “Latin” forms (*lingua Persiana volgare et latina*). It is not easy to understand what exactly Dandolo meant with his words¹⁷⁵. “Vulgar Persian” must indicate a spoken Muslim language different from Turkish and Arabic (that is, Modern Persian *tout court*). Since Teodoro was considered an educated man and showed a certain interest for religious matters, he may have studied Arabic as well, and therefore “Latin Persian” may stand for “a written, non-spoken language of the Muslims” (that is Arabic, read but not necessarily spoken by non-Arabs), or perhaps simply for written Persian (if Dandolo supposed it to be entirely different from its spoken form). One may of course wonder how familiar Federico Dandolo was with the languages of the Middle East: having served as vice-consul at Aleppo under his brother Vincenzo, he was probably at least able to recognize Turkish and Arabic when he heard them. Giacomo Nores, who was enslaved at the tender age of one in Cyprus when the island fell to the Ottomans (1570–71), was later ransomed¹⁷⁶ and became Membré’s successor as State dragoman. Nores knew Ottoman, Persian and Arabic¹⁷⁷, which might mean that he received a formal

¹⁷⁴ ANGIOLELLO 1978–88, 380. The same words appear as *hai cabesenne dentider* in ZENO 1978–88, 158. The remark that Uzun Hasan means “great man” in Persian is probably due not to Caterino but to the editor of his memoirs, Nicolò: cf. *ibidem*, 146. A slightly different view of the notion of Turkish and Persian entertained at the time was expressed by ORSATTI 2003, 686–687. On the role of the Persian language in the vast region surrounding present-day Iran (for instance, on the function of Persian as *lingua franca* and sociolect/technolect, which are particularly relevant here), the classic work remains FRAGNER 1999, *passim*.

¹⁷⁵ ASV, *Santo Uffizio*, busta 72 (fols. not numbered). What the authors of this and other analogous observations of linguistic nature (such as those previously mentioned) meant, might perhaps be better understood if seen in the context of the 16th-century European debate on the role of Latin and the vernaculars.

¹⁷⁶ CORAZZOL 1994, 776. Biographies of men like Nores or Membré would be of course extremely useful.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. for instance ASV, *Cinque Savi alla mercanzia*, I serie, registro 145, fol. 75a (1 September 1620). The document states that, by that time, Nores had been serving as State

and thorough Islamic education as he was a slave. Yet he seems to have been almost an exception among Venetian dragomans. For instance, Michele Cernovichio, officially hired as dragoman by the *Bailo* in 1560, knew Turkish, “Slavonic” (*slavo*), Albanian, Arabic and a “little bit of Persian” (*un po’ di persiano*)¹⁷⁸. Marcantonio Borisi was said in 1600 to speak and write in Romanian, Albanian, Greek, “Slavonic”, Persian and Turkish; he was also studying Arabic¹⁷⁹. However, one suspects (in the present absence of more systematic and detailed information) that such impressive catalogues were mainly due to the uncommon abilities of single individuals, and that they were by no means typical for all the interpreters of the Venetian embassy. In fact, Ambrosino Grillo of Pera, who was hired in 1585, spoke “Turkish, Italian and Greek very well” but not Persian: yet, the *Bailo* considered him the most competent among the dragomans then available in Constantinople¹⁸⁰. Two centuries later, only the “most learned” dragomans knew Persian and Arabic¹⁸¹. As for the school for the *giovani della lingua* at the Venetian embassy, the *hocas* in charge of the teaching seem to have enjoyed full discretion concerning methodology and syllabus: in other words, they probably taught what they knew and in the manner they judged fit. Thus, one of the first *giovani* was praised in 1558 for his good command of Turkish and Arabic (no mention of Persian was made), whereas of at least one *hoca* in 1641 it is specified that he had a “most exquisite” knowledge of Arabic, Persian and Turkish¹⁸². Occasionally, single individuals took upon themselves the burden of teaching an Oriental language in Venice to disciples who presuma-

dragoman for 34 years, whereas he was actually appointed in 1588: cf. *ibidem*, registro 140, fol. 48a (31 March 1599).

¹⁷⁸ LUCCHETTA 1989, 22. The case of Cernovichio, who was a secret agent in the service of the Archduke Maximilian (the future Emperor Maximilian II, 1564–1576), illustrates splendidly the risks inherent in hiring foreigners as dragomans, risks which the employment of young Venetians as interpreters was supposed to remove: cf. ŽONTAR 1971; LESURE 1983; RÖMER 2002. Quite noteworthy, he was chosen in 1567 as a messenger to the Šāh Ṭahmāsp I, but eventually the mission was not sent: cf. AUBIN 1980, 64–73.

¹⁷⁹ Girolamo Cappello (1600) in PEDANI-FABRIS 1996, 467; PIPPIDI 1972, 242.

¹⁸⁰ ASV, *Senato, Dispacci degli ambasciatori, Costantinopoli*, filza 21, no. 24, fol. 195a and 195b–196a (Giovanni Francesco Morosini to the Senate, 29 April 1585). In 1580 the Safavid envoy Xwāje Moḥammad Tabrizi brought two letters for the Doge, one in Persian and one in Turkic. Quite curiously, Vincenzo degli Alessandri read and translated only the letter in Turkic, while the envoy himself read the other letter and translated it from Persian into Turkic: cf. BERCHET 1865, 183, 190.

¹⁸¹ LUCCHETTA 1985, 12.

¹⁸² LUCCHETTA 1989, 22 and 32–33 respectively.

bly were to become engaged as traders or find employment as dragomans¹⁸³. However, the government of the Republic failed to create an institutional and stable system of teaching Oriental languages in the capital (including or not Persian), and the repeated attempts at founding such a school between the end of the 17th century and the end of the 18th (1692–99, 1705–08, 1747–51, 1786–92) came to nothing just as analogous chairs started to appear and flourish all over Europe¹⁸⁴. Only the first of these attempts was successful at

¹⁸³ Giuseppe Tramezzino had Membré and an anonymous Armenian as teachers of Turkish (and perhaps of Persian as well ?): cf. BRAGANTINI 1987, 141, 146. In 1618, the Bukharan renegade Teodoro Persico was teaching Turkish to the children of his landlord: cf. ASV, *Santo Uffizio*, busta 72 (fols. not numbered). In the same year, a Muslim Indian slave of the same landlord ran away: cf. PRETO 1975, n. 81 p. 196. On İbrahim/Abramo as a private teacher of Oriental languages, cf. *infra*, n. 186. In 1750–51, the dragoman Giovanni Mascellini (who had been appointed teacher at the school for the aspiring dragomans in 1747 but never had the chance to actually start his work) was teaching Arabic to a grandson, himself a *giovane di lingua*, at home: cf. LUCCHETTA 1984, 51.

¹⁸⁴ These successive attempts and their ultimate failure have been described in minute detail (although not fully analyzed) by Francesca Lucchetta in a number of articles. Cf. (in chronological order of publication) LUCCHETTA 1983, 1–28; LUCCHETTA 1984, 21–61; LUCCHETTA 1985, 1–43; LUCCHETTA 1987–88, 479–498 (only 495–498). Cf. also LUCCHETTA 1989, 19–40, and LUCCHETTA 1991, 89–96. PALUMBO FOSSATI CASA 1997, 109–122 is heavily dependent on Lucchetta's works (a debt which is not adequately acknowledged throughout her article) and therefore adds nothing new to our knowledge of the subject; rather, it contains a number of imprecise or outright wrong statements. At least a mention should be made of the activities of the Seminario Vescovile at Padua, which was indeed located on the territory of the Republic of Venice but, as a religious institution which aimed at teaching missionaries the languages they needed for their work overseas, somehow falls outside the scope of the present essay. The bishop of Padua and real founder of the Seminario, Gregorio (later S. Gregorio) Barbarigo (1625–1697) introduced the teaching of the Greek language “around 1678” and that of other Oriental languages “shortly afterwards”, acting upon a suggestion on the part of Pope Innocenzo XI (1676–1689) and the *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* (whose member Barbarigo had become in that same year 1678): cf. SERENA 1963, vol. I, 161; DANIELE 1961–70, 398. In Barbarigo's lifetime, “between 1685 and 1690” there were courses (*scuola*) of Arabic, Turkish and Persian, and the “first teacher” of the three languages was Timoteo Agnellini (that is, the Armenian Timot'ēos Gaṛnuk), archbishop of Mardin: cf. SERENA 1963, vol. I, n. 1 p. 2, 2–3; vol. II, n. 5 p. 403. Indeed, a list of teachers active at the Seminario and dated 18 December 1684 does not include Agnellini: cf. *ibidem*, vol. II, 486–487. Agnellini (who also oversaw the production of books in Oriental languages at the printing house of the Seminario) claimed he was the author of “about” 12 printed works: cf. *ibidem*, vol. I, 156; BELLINI 1938, 297 records Agnellini's claim but lists only seven works. Among these seven known books we find only one related to the Persian language, that is, PROVERBII 1688, which includes a section on Persian proverbs (14–21, with text in Arabic characters, transcription, Italian and Latin translations) and an Arabic-Persian-Turkish-Italian-

the beginning, to be soon interrupted by the death of the initiator of the project and teacher of Oriental languages, İbrahim Efendi/Abramo Albanese in 1699¹⁸⁵. In the context of these attempts, the attention paid to Persian was generally scanty, with the only possible exception of Abramo himself. As a product of a classical Ottoman education, he must have been fully aware of the place of Persian in Ottoman culture, and indeed he offered himself as a teacher of the three great languages of Islam¹⁸⁶. He also proudly compared the quality of his own teaching to that of the *hocas* hired by the Venetian *Bailo* at Constantinople, who only taught “il puro leggere e scrivere popolare”¹⁸⁷. Otherwise, although hints at the importance of the Persian language surface here and there in the documents produced in the course of these four attempts¹⁸⁸, on the whole the language itself appears to have been considered

Latin glossary (34–55). Agnellini was in contact with other Venetian “Orientalists”, among whom Giovan Battista Donà, who oversaw the publication of a work of similar content, the *RACCOLTA* 1688. It is interesting to remark that Donà reported Agnellini as acknowledging the recent reception of five “Turkish books” (*Libri Turcheschi*), among which the *divāns* of “Ascear” (perhaps a misunderstanding for *divān-e aš‘ār*?) in Arabic, Persian and Turkish and of “Hafez *Cirasi*”: cf. DONÀ 1688, 86–87. On such contacts, cf. SCARPA 2000, 118–120, 122. At an unspecified date the Seminario published a Persian grammar “much shorter than the Arabic grammar of brother Agapito da Val di Fiemme”. Agapito (1653–1687) was a teacher of Arabic at the Seminario, and his grammar must be the *FLORES* 1687: cf. SERENA 1963, vol. I, 162 (without the name of the author of the Persian grammar); FUSSENEGGER 1960, 368. This Persian grammar (for whose publication the year 1687 can be perhaps taken as *terminus post quem*) is apparently the same as the one listed as Anonymous, *Rudimenta Grammaticae Persicae ad usum Seminarii Patavini* (n. p. [Padua], n. d.; *non vidi*) in PIEMONTESE 1982, vol. II, 549. According to Prof. Piemontese, it is a translation of DE DIEU 1639 (the first grammar of the Persian language published in Europe), and he proposed 1690 as the year of publication. Clearly, further investigation on the history of the teaching of the Persian language at Padua would be welcome. On Louis de Dieu and his work, cf. BRUIJN 1996, 397–398.

¹⁸⁵ LUCCHETTA 1987–88, 497.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibidem*, 495 and 497. His sponsor and supporter, Donà officially declared to the Senate that Abramo fully mastered the practice and the theory of the three languages: cf. *ibidem*, 496. On his part, Abramo himself stated that Marcantonio Mamuca (the Imperial State dragoman) and Tommaso Tarsia (the Venetian State dragoman) had entrusted a nephew and a son of theirs respectively to him to be educated in the Oriental languages: cf. *ibidem*, 495 and 498.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibidem*, 495–496, 498.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. for instance LUCCHETTA 1984, 35 (*Bailo* Angelo Emo, 1731); LUCCHETTA 1985, 13 (the so-called “conference of the former *Baili*” of 1786); *ibidem*, 16 (former *Bailo* Andrea Memmo, 1788); *ibidem*, 25 (Andrea Memmo and Francesco Morosini, appointed director of the school, 1791).

less useful and important than Arabic¹⁸⁹. As early as 1670, ambassador Alvise Molin stated that a good dragoman needed to know Arabic, Turkish and Greek¹⁹⁰. Former ambassador Carlo Ruzzini repeated the same concept in 1706¹⁹¹. It must have been, partly at least, as a consequence of such ideas prevailing among influential patricians that the first candidate chosen by the Senate as a potential successor to Abramo as teacher of Oriental languages, Salomone Negri (a Greek from Damascus and Ruzzini's *protégé*), included some Persian books in his syllabus but interestingly claimed no knowledge of Persian. However, he said he possessed Arabic and Hebrew, which were in his own words “radicali et fondamentali” of the Turkish language and without which (in particular without Arabic) the latter could not be taught at all¹⁹². Nonetheless, Negri was manifestly (although rather implicitly, perhaps in order to mask his own shortcomings) aware of the importance of Persian, or at least he became aware of it at a later stage. Not only he studied the language in Constantinople but, in order to explain the inclusion of Persian historical works in his syllabus, he remarked that they allowed “a better understanding of the Turkish language” and that Ottoman historians “often hint” at Persian history¹⁹³. He also held that Persian (and Arabic) added

¹⁸⁹ LUCCHETTA 1991, 94–96.

¹⁹⁰ LUCCHETTA 1989, 35.

¹⁹¹ PEDANI-FABRIS 1996, 821 (also quoted in LUCCHETTA 1984, 23 and 56).

¹⁹² LUCCHETTA 1983, 5 and 21. Interestingly enough, already the author of the first Turkish grammar printed in Europe (Leipzig 1612), Hieronymus Megiser had realized that Turkish and Arabic are not related: cf. HAMILTON – RICHARD 2004, 63–64. Negri boasted knowledge of Turkish as well, but at the same time he admitted that he needed a “brief spell” of four or five months in Constantinople in order to acquire some “terms of the Divan which could only be learnt on the spot”: cf. LUCCHETTA 1983, 5–6, 21–22. Later, he mentioned the “three years” he had spent studying Persian and Turkish, a clear allusion to his stay in Constantinople of 1705–08: cf. *ibidem*, 15. In the light of his words and of his biography before 1705 (cf. *ibidem*, 14–15), Negri appears indeed as having been little familiar with the Porte, Constantinople and most likely also (*pace* Lucchetta) with spoken Ottoman Turkish itself. When the Senate allowed him to go to Constantinople for his “brief spell”, he clearly did his best to improve his knowledge of both Ottoman and Persian. Since the Senate never offered him a viable salary, after three years in the city Negri did not return to Venice but moved to Rome, whence he went to Great Britain, then Halle and finally again Britain, where he died in 1728 or 1729: cf. *ibidem*, 15–17, 28. Negri illustrated his own teaching method in a memorandum addressed to the Senate on 11 May 1706: cf. *ibidem*, 22–24. On Negri's career before and above all after his Venetian experience, cf. DUVERDIER 1994, 8–14, 19. Negri died in 1719 according to *ibidem*, 8.

¹⁹³ LUCCHETTA 1983, 23. The original document presents two columns with the titles of the works (with or without the name of the author, which however appears alone on occasion)

“pompousness” to the language in use at the Ottoman court¹⁹⁴. Last but not least, although he had been officially charged with the teaching of only Turkish and Arabic, he declared his purpose of “instradare li giovani nella cognitione delle tre lingue, araba, turca e persiana”¹⁹⁵. The same cannot be said of Assemani (mentioned above), who taught Oriental languages at the University of Padua and who also considered Persian much less important than Arabic for learning Ottoman. When he submitted an outline of his teaching programme to the Senate, he wrote that, since the Turks used in their spoken and written language “molte voci e talvolta periodi interi arabi” as well as “some” (*qualche*) Persian words,

si crede più opportuno d’iniziare i detti giovani prima di tutto nella lingua araba e poi nella turca e finalmente istruirli negli elementi delle lingua persiana¹⁹⁶.

Assemani, an Arab by origin and a Semitist by profession, also held that the major flaw of the Venetian dragomans was their lack of knowledge of the Arabic language, which was “assolutamente necessaria per bene intendere e correttamente scrivere il turco”¹⁹⁷. At any rate, it is important to re-

in Arabic characters and a Latin translation-explanation of the same: cf. *ibidem*, 10. Among the 22 entries, we find a *Dasturo 'l-loġat* (“glossarium Arabico-Persicum”) of Naṭanzi, *Loġat-e Ḥalimi* (“lexicon Persicum, Turcice et Arabice explicatum”), *Moqaddemato 'l-adab* (“glossarium Arabico-Turcico-Persicum”) of Zamaxšari, *Kanzo 'l-loġat ta 'lif-e Moḥammad b. 'Abdo 'l-Xāleq b. Ma'ruf* (“lexicon Arabico-Persicum”), *Adallato 'l-asmā' lil-Maydānī* (“onomasticon Arabico-Persicum”), *Anvār-e Soheyli* of Ḥoseyn Vā'ez Kāšefi (“de principe formando Persice”), *Golestān* of Sa'di (“rosarium politicum Persice”), *Qešše-ye Timur* (“historia Tamerlani Persice”), *Ḥoseyn al-Vā'ezinā* (“paraphrasis Persica, Turcice explicata, in Alcorano”, that is, perhaps the *Mavāheb-e 'aliye* of Ḥoseyn Vā'ez Kāšefi according to *ibidem*, 27), *Ketāb-e Šāhedī, divān-e Nejāti va divān-e Ḥāfez* (“vocabularium Turcico-Persicum versibus conscriptum, cum duobus poetis Turcis et Persicis”), *Aruž-e Amir Hoseyn* (“de arte metrica Arabice, Turcice, Persice”): cf. *ibidem*, 25–27. However, it is not clear whether these books were actually purchased or not. Among the books Negri left at Halle before moving for the second time and definitively to London, we find a “Historia Bachtja” in Turkish (an Ottoman translation of the Persian *Baxtiyār-nāme* ?), a Persian-Turkish-Arabic dictionary and his own Latin translation of the *Monita Attari*, that is, according to Lucchetta, the *Pandnāme* of 'Aṭṭār: cf. *ibidem*, 17. Negri also knew and appreciated PODESTÀ 1687–1703. The grammar of the Persian language formed the second part of the latter and was published in Vienna in 1691. On it, cf. JEREMIÁS 1995, 71–86.

¹⁹⁴ LUCCHETTA 1983, 23; also quoted in LUCCHETTA 1987–88, 480.

¹⁹⁵ LUCCHETTA 1983, 24.

¹⁹⁶ LUCCHETTA 1985, 41 and 42 respectively.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibidem*, 27 and 42; LUCCHETTA 1987–88, 480–481. However, at least two voices rose to question Assemani's ability to train the aspiring dragomans, on the ground that he was

mark that what is often referred to as “School of Oriental languages” by Lucchetta was usually and consistently indicated by Venetian authorities in their official documents as *scuola turca*¹⁹⁸. In other words, it did not aim at forming Orientalists but rather at training interpreters who could effectively communicate with every level of the Ottoman central government, local administration and population. It was the best way of training the future dragomans that was open to debate, not the purpose of the school.

The creation of such a school (where Persian too should have been taught or not, according to the different opinions) was hindered partly by a clear lack of interest in the issue and partly by a recurrent local phenomenon, that is, the wish of the Venetian government to save money even in fields which appear to us (and appeared to the public opinion of the time too) as vital to the life of the State: in our case, the presence of politically and professionally reliable dragomans, the real channels of communication between the Republic and the Ottoman Empire, which was its main commercial partner and theoretically its most redoubtable political enemy. However, in the 18th century Venice was a sort of living relic of the past: tradition, which always carried much weight in the political life of the *Serenissima*, had ceased to be a source of inspiration and had become a cumbersome burden instead. The Republic could not reform its institutions: much in the same way as it could not revive its military *vis-à-vis* growing external threats after having been a great power, it could not change its attitude towards the teaching of the

used to teach Oriental languages to students who did not have to speak with “Chaldeans or Samaritans”: cf. LUCCHETTA 1985, 33–35. From the same objections it appears that Assemani (who was born in Rome) had no knowledge of spoken Ottoman or of the Turkish which was current among the populace. One cannot avoid comparing the cultural and mental horizon of the Albanian Ottoman İbrahim/Abramo (and of the Syrian Greek Negri, also an Ottoman subject by birth) with that of the Arab Maronite Assemani, very much centred on Semitic languages.

¹⁹⁸ In two cases (1747 and 1786) out of four: cf. LUCCHETTA 1984, 61; LUCCHETTA 1985, 39. The process which eventually led to the official appointment in 1705 of Salomone Negri had begun as early as 1699 (the year of the death of Abramo Albanese), when the Senate decreed the creation of a school of Turkish and Arabic language: cf. LUCCHETTA 1983, 3–4 and 7; cf. also DE BERNARDIN 1974, 502. This means that the scope of the activities of the school initiated by Abramo was reduced immediately after his death with the exclusion of Persian. The only exception was then Abramo himself in 1692, who was explicitly ordered to teach Turkish, Persian and Arabic apparently on account of his masterly knowledge of the three languages (and possibly also thanks to the influence of his patron, former *Bailo* Donà): cf. CECCHETTI 1868, 1127.

Oriental languages after having shown the way to other European states¹⁹⁹. Although well aware of the progresses made by the European powers represented in Constantinople in training able dragomans²⁰⁰, the Venetian authorities were clearly incapable (and to some extent even unwilling) to follow their example and adopt their new systems. In other words, it is certainly true that (as Robert Mantran wrote) Colbert's decision to create the *Ecole des Jeunes de langues* in 1669 "n'a rien d'original puisqu'elle s'inspire de l'exemple vénitien en usage depuis plus d'un siècle", but it is also true (as noted by Mantran himself) that the French government was able to study and improve the Venetian model²⁰¹, while on the other hand the Venetian Senate was not able to learn from its own past failures and shortcomings, and from the recent achievements of its rivals. On the other hand, one must reckon with the fact that in the 18th century the *Serenissima* reached the apogee of a centuries-old policy of neutrality in Europe. Its political strategy did not involve aggressive protection of Christian minorities in Muslim lands, the support of missionary activities overseas, the foundation of colonies or colonial outposts, or much the less territorial and economic expansion at the expenses of Muslim states: in other words, at that time the Republic lacked the most immediate reasons to foster the teaching of Oriental languages and Orientalist disciplines, and to go beyond that level of knowledge which had been originated by other reasons in other periods of its history, and which for a long time had been considered sufficient.

Eventually, the abrupt demise of the Republic of Venice in 1797 definitively prevented the birth of Iranian and Oriental studies (in the modern sense of the word) in the *Serenissima* after centuries of mostly empirical (and often successful) approach to the Muslim Middle East in general and Persia in particular.

¹⁹⁹ One may for instance observe how the terms *jeune de langue* in France and *Sprachknabe* in Austria were modelled after the Italian *giovane della lingua*.

²⁰⁰ For instance, the attention of the Senate was drawn on this point at least as early as in 1670 (cf. LUCCHETTA 1989, 34), then in 1705 (cf. LUCCHETTA 1983, 7), 1723 (cf. LUCCHETTA 1984, 29–30), 1726 (*ibidem*, 32), 1744 (*ibidem*, 40–41), 1785 (cf. LUCCHETTA 1985, 8–9), 1786 (*ibidem*, 13), and 1788 (*ibidem*, 16).

²⁰¹ MANTRAN 1997, 105–107.