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V



Urban Identities  
in Northern Italy  
(800-1100 ca.)

edited by  
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BREPOLS

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*Introduzione*

L'edizione degli Atti del Convegno Internazionale “Le identità urbane in Italia settentrionale (secoli IX-XI)”, tenuto a Padova dal 17 al 19 ottobre 2013, rappresenta l'ultima fase e il compimento del Progetto di Ateneo finanziato dall'Università di Padova intitolato “Le identità urbane nell'Italia nord orientale (secoli IX-XI)” (a.a. 2012/2013), il cui gruppo di ricerca comprendeva Cristina La Rocca, Nicoletta Giové e Piero Majocchi del Dipartimento di Storia dell'Università degli Studi di Padova, Stefano Gasparri dell'Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia, Francesco Borri dell'Institut für Mittelalterforschung dell'Accademia austriaca delle Scienze (Vienna) e Laura Pani dell'Università degli Studi di Udine.

Il progetto intendeva riflettere sulle caratteristiche complessive delle realtà urbane del regno Italico, sotto il profilo culturale, politico, ma anche testuale, dal momento che l'analisi del fenomeno cittadino in Italia settentrionale tra IX e XI secolo non è ancora stata effettuata con un approccio multidisciplinare volto a delinearne le eventuali specificità e le caratteristiche distintive, sia rispetto al passato post romano ma anche rispetto al successivo periodo comunale. L'analisi del periodo carolingio e post carolingio – un periodo oggetto di recente di moltissime ricerche internazionali sotto il profilo culturale, testuale, ideologico – rendeva infatti possibile cercare di affrontare questa fase della storia urbana in Italia come fase a sé stante, facendo costante riferimento alle profonde innovazioni e angolature di ricerca affrontate dalla medievistica europea nell'ultimo ventennio. Se il fenomeno urbano in Italia, come ha anche di recente sottolineato Chris Wickham<sup>1</sup>, resta uno dei temi sui quali la storiografia italiana si è impegnata tradizionalmente con maggiore passione, è infatti da osservare che tali lavori erano volti a confrontarsi – esplicitamente

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<sup>1</sup> Wickham, *Reflections: forty years of "Archeologia Medievale"*; per una bibliografia sull'argomento Majocchi, *Le città europee*.

o solo implicitamente – con il tradizionale tema della continuità o discontinuità delle strutture politiche e sociali carolingie rispetto ai secoli precedenti e, d'altro canto, che i lavori dedicati ai centri urbani nel basso medioevo tendevano a soffermarsi invece sulle dinamiche politiche e socio-economiche che portarono nel corso del secolo XII alla nascita delle istituzioni comunali. In entrambe le prospettive, allora, il periodo compreso tra il IX e l'XI secolo appariva abitualmente articolato o come momento di definitivo venir meno delle caratteristiche monumentali di età classica, oppure come momento embrionale 'pre-comunale'. Un alternarsi di venir meno e di anticipazioni che, di per sé, nulla dice delle caratteristiche specifiche del fenomeno urbano in età carolingia e post-carolingia<sup>2</sup>.

In particolare, il progetto intendeva affrontare l'analisi comparativa delle identità e delle istituzioni urbane in Italia nord orientale, a Venezia e in Istria e Dalmazia nel periodo compreso tra IX e XI secolo, vale a dire in una zona cruciale dell'Italia settentrionale che manifestò precocemente la sua capacità di esprimere un'aristocrazia regionale, sia un panorama urbano in vivace cambiamento e articolazione rispetto alla struttura tardo romana, sia infine una struttura culturale aperta e mobile, data la sua posizione di frontiera. La ricerca prendeva inizialmente in esame l'area nord orientale del regno italico, ovvero la regione storica della Austria longobarda, poi divenuta la Marca friulana e veronese e corrispondente alle attuali regioni del Veneto e del Friuli Venezia Giulia. La peculiarità dei suoi sviluppi politici e sociali tra IX e XI secolo nell'ambito del regno italico era infatti intuibile in diversi momenti chiave della storia dell'Italia altomedievale: per esempio l'iniziale contrapposizione con la dominazione carolingia da parte del duca del Friuli Rotgaudo nel 776, la successiva costituzione, nel corso del IX secolo della Marca friulana, che fungeva da area di frontiera dell'impero carolingio con l'impero degli Avari, e infine l'ascesa al trono del regno italico nell'888 del marchese del Friuli Berengario I, che mantenne nella Marca friulana e veronese la base territoriale del suo dominio e il supporto aristocratico per la sua carriera politica.

A tali peculiarità di carattere politico e istituzionale si aggiungono le caratteristiche di area di frontiera con le regioni dell'Istria e Dalmazia, vale a dire con un'area che, a partire del IX secolo, vide un'intensa complicazione della geografia umana e l'emersione

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<sup>2</sup> Come ebbe tempo fa a notare Sergi, *Le città come luoghi di continuità*.



nelle fonti scritte di diverse identità etniche e statali, delineando un panorama molto stimolante di indagine che meritava di essere esaminato attraverso i modelli dei *Cultural transfer*: le aree di frontiera e di confine come territori privilegiati di scambio informale, di interazione di uomini e di donne, di oggetti e di idee tra aree istituzionalmente diverse. In tale quadro si colloca infine il peculiare sviluppo di Venezia, evidenziando le interrelazioni socio-economiche e culturali tra la città lagunare e gli altri centri urbani della Marca, dell'Adriatico e del regno italico.

Il presente volume si pone allora in un orizzonte comparativo, allargando la propria visuale all'intera area del regno italico in Italia settentrionale, per valutare non solo le peculiarità dell'area oggetto di studio, ma anche delle linee comuni di tendenza: l'allargamento della loro specificità (organizzative, sociali, economiche) dalle strutture centrali del regno.

Il campo di indagine oggetto della ricerca è focalizzato sull'identità urbana, intesa come la percezione che avevano di se stessi e della propria comunità gli abitanti delle città e contemporaneamente la visione dall'esterno delle peculiarità urbane dell'Italia settentrionale. Per individuarne i caratteri nei diversi aspetti, sono state affrontate tematiche di ricerca differenti e tra loro complementari: le strutture istituzionali locali (ufficiali pubblici, vescovi, assemblee urbane) delineandone i rapporti con il potere centrale; le strutture e le trasformazioni dell'aristocrazia; l'organizzazione militare delle milizie cittadine; lo sviluppo urbano e le trasformazioni della topografia della città (cattedrali, mura urbane, palazzi pubblici); lo sviluppo di un'ideologia civica che costituisce il nucleo fondativo della successiva affermazione delle istituzioni comunali; gli scambi culturali reciproci tra le città del regno, che possono materializzarsi anche in virtù dell'elaborazione di strutture grafiche e codicologiche comuni che caratterizzano i prodotti scrittori di differenti centri grafici.

Un altro obiettivo che il convegno si proponeva era infine quello di comparare i risultati delle ricerche sulle realtà transalpine di età carolingia e post-carolingia con la realtà italiana, ponendone in rilievo gli andamenti comuni, ma anche le specifiche peculiarità.

È d'obbligo infine rilevare la distanza d'impianto e di impostazione della ricerca sulle città tra IX e XI secolo rispetto a quella dei secoli immediatamente antecedenti e successivi: il problema non è infatti soltanto quello di capire se quelle che sono chiamate nelle fonti *civitates* o *urbes* fossero veramente città nel senso politico,

economico oppure demografico – come nel dibattito degli anni '80 sul passaggio dall'antichità all'alto medioevo – ma piuttosto di comprendere gli attori del fenomeno urbano attraverso le fonti da essi prodotte, chiedendosi in maniera specifica quale fosse il loro pubblico e la loro funzione e soprattutto quanto la rimodulazione del passato antico delle città – fissandone protagonisti e gesta, nomi, edifici – avesse avuto un peso nel determinare e fissare personaggi fondatori, luoghi di irradiazione e di influenza contrastante. L'approccio nei confronti del passato è volto a definire le linee di una tradizione, si dimostra molto rilevante nel contesto carolingio e post carolingio che tende a presentare un linguaggio modellato dall'uniformità, improntato com'è all'ideologia della *unanimitas* e della *concordia*, e a celare attraverso di esso non solo le differenze, ma anche i progetti di inglobamento e di proiezione all'esterno. Questo aspetto, che compare in molti dei saggi che qui si presentano, tende parallelamente a svaloriizzare gli ambiti ritenuti estranei o nemici, utilizzando un vocabolario che contrappone la civiltà del mondo carolingio con gli ambiti a esso confinanti, ma non ancora inglobati all'interno della comunicazione politica, come mostrano bene i lavori di Francesco Borri e di Maddalena Betti.

Un ultimo aspetto che differenzia la ricerca sul tema urbano di età carolingia e post carolingia è senza dubbio il minore interesse dimostrato dall'archeologia per questo periodo, che si caratterizza per la vistosa discrepanza tra l'impegno dichiarato dai Carolingi nel miglioramento delle strutture materiali della vita stessa delle città (strade, ponti, mura urbane ed edifici ecclesiastici) e la loro apparente invisibilità. Il coinvolgimento degli archeologi nelle nostre riflessioni si presentava pertanto oltremodo necessario, per stimolare le loro sensibilità in un percorso di ricerca comune e volto, allo stesso tempo, a definire la peculiarità dello sguardo archeologico in un momento in cui le fonti scritte aumentano, i punti di vista si moltiplicano, ma nel suo complesso tendono a esprimersi con un vocabolario codificato e uniforme.

L'auspicio degli organizzatori di questo Convegno è di aver posto le basi per un confronto meno sporadico sulle realtà urbane dell'età carolingia e post carolingia in Italia e di aver stimolato la partecipazione di molti studiosi a una discussione comune. Li ringraziamo tutti per il loro impegno e i risultati da loro presentati.

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SAURO GELICHI

Venice in the early middle ages. The material structures and society of ‘civitas apud rivoaltum’ between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries

*Secunda vero Venecia est illa, quam apud insulas scimus, que Adriaticimaris collecta sinu, interfluentibus undis, positione mirabili, multitudine populi feliciter habitant*

(Giovanni diacono, *Ist. Ven.* I, 1)

1. *The time frame of the story*

According to Giovanni diacono, it was around the year 810-11 when the Venetians decided to establish the seat of the Duchy on the island of Rivoalto and elected a man named Agnello as Duke, who in turn built the palace that was still in existence at the time of the Giovanni diacono<sup>1</sup>. This act, that established Rivoalto as the last and definitive seat of the Duchy, played a decidedly important role in the foundation of Venice (also because of the ideological significance that the *palatium* held in Giovanni’s narrative)<sup>2</sup> and it is where I will start our reflections. However, the aim here is not to discuss the different forms and the moments in history when the lagoon’s settlements were developed (referred to, for the sake of brevity, as the problem of Venice’s ‘origins’), which in turn lead to the establishment of the dukedom; instead, I will spend some time addressing the first two centuries that ensued the ‘foundation’ of Venice.

I will end my analysis in the moment in which the above cited *Istoria Veneticorum* was drafted, between the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> and the start of the 11<sup>th</sup> century<sup>3</sup>. It is well known that this text, in addition to

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<sup>1</sup> *Istoria Veneticorum* II, 29, pp. 113-15: “apud Rivoaltensem insulam Venetici communi decreto ducatus sedem habere maluerunt et ad hunc honorem quendam virum, Agnellum nomine, qui palatii hucusque immanenti fuerat fabricator, sublimarunt”.

<sup>2</sup> Berto, *Il vocabolario*, pp. 202-3.

<sup>3</sup> Explicit references stipulating the author are missing in the text. The most accredited hypothesis attributes a certain Giovanni diacono as the author,

being ‘the oldest product of Venetian historiography’<sup>4</sup>, is also the place where all the stereotypes were described that in the centuries to come would be used to define the city’s identity: stereotypes with a potent attractive force, strong enough to permeate, but also condition, the (extremely) numerous interpretations of the history of Venice’s origins; a history almost without written sources, and for this reason<sup>5</sup> has been susceptible, over the years, to manipulation and to being toned down. But it is not only due to the lack of documentation that we turn to and use (as far as is possible) archaeological data. This category of historical source, which does not only reflect society, but tends also to construct it<sup>6</sup>, also provides the interesting opportunity to analyse the ways through which the ideology of a community is represented in material form; this is a very useful process to observe, especially in a phase that saw the foundation of a city.

## 2. *The time-frames and perception of the city’s foundation*

Giovanni diacono is not explicit, as we might expect him to be, about the period in which Venice was founded; in fact, he reports two moments in time in relation to its foundation. The first period is mentioned above and coincides with the transfer of the ducal seat to Rivoalto (810-11) and the construction of the *Palatium*. The second, on the other hand, dates to the time of Duke Pietro Tribuno (-911)<sup>7</sup>, to whom the text explicitly attributes building activity («*edificare cepit*»): it is here that Giovanni diacono, for the first and last time in the *Istoria*, refers to the settlement in question as a *civitas* («*civitas apud rivoaltum*»)<sup>8</sup>. The building activity was the result of a collective effort (Pietro Tribuno built the city with his subjects: «*cum suis*») and it involved the construction of a wall that would have stretched from the canal located near a place named as ‘the

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identifiable, but with some uncertainty, with the Giovanni who acted as ambassador under the rule of Duke Pietro II Orseolo (991-1008) (Berto, *Introduzione*, p. 7).

<sup>4</sup> Once again, Berto, *Introduzione*, p. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Gasparri, «Venezia fra i secoli VIII e IX», p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Gilchrist, *Gender and Material Culture*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>7</sup> *Istoria Veneticorum*, III, 39: pp. 150-1: “Circa hec vero tempora dominus Petrus dux una cum suis civitatem apud Rivoaltum edificare cepit anno sui ducatus nono...”.

<sup>8</sup> Cessi, *Venezia*, p. 305.

Castle' («*a capite rivuli de Castello*») as far as the church of S. Maria di Zobenigo<sup>9</sup> (fig. 1, see Picture Section).

Thus, Giovanni seems to distinguish between the moment that saw the transfer of the *palatium* to Rivoalto from that in which a city rose up around it; i.e. he seems to have appreciation for that that we might define today (with perception and a modern viewpoint) as 'a process'<sup>10</sup>.

To substantiate his interpretation further, before writing about the founding action of Pietro Tribuno, Giovanni diacono described another series of initiatives, which were explicitly directed at transforming the still wild spaces around Rivoalto. Indeed, the historian writes that at the time of Giovanni, son of Duke Orso (881-887), certain men had received permission to reclaim swampland and build houses towards the east<sup>11</sup>, and that the island of Dorsoduro (to the south of the *Palatium*, beyond the Canal Grande), still in the same period, would have been made habitable on his orders<sup>12</sup>.

As is well known, archaeological evidence in Venice has not yet been able to provide a solid basis from which to reconstruct the initial phases

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<sup>9</sup> Various hypotheses exist regarding the development of this wall, summarised in fig. 1. In addition, an extremely large iron chain was placed across the canal at the level of the church of S. Maria di Zobenigo, attached at one end to the outside of these city walls and, at the other, to the side of the church of S. Gregorio. The following text (to which we will return later) is from the *Istoria Veneticorum*, III, 39, pp. 150-1: «Predictæ vero civitatis murus a capite rivuli de Castello usque ad ecclesiam sanctę Marię, que de Iubiniaco dicitur, estendebatur». The church of Santa Maria di Zobenico is also known Santa Maria del Giglio (of the Lillie); the name refers to the family that according to the chronicles contributed to its construction (Franzoi, Di Stefano, *Le chiese di Venezia*, pp. 326-8). According to Giovanni diacono the Church was destroyed by a fire around the start of the second half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century (*Istoria Veneticorum*, IV, 12, pp. 162-3; Cessi, *Venezia*, p. 331).

<sup>10</sup> As McCormick does when, in relation to Venice, he underscores how "the 'origins' is a process, not a single point of time", although he was then careful to specify that this process was extremely fast ("at Venice the tempo of growth and the geographic structures of trade probably changed quickly, even within a space of decades"): McCormick, «Where do trading towns come from?», p. 42.

<sup>11</sup> *Istoria Veneticorum*, III, 27, pp. 144-5: "Temporibus cuius in Rivoalto etiam paludes cultandi homines licenciam habuerunt et domos edificandi contra orientem".

<sup>12</sup> Cessi, *Venezia*, pp. 283-4.

of the city's history<sup>13</sup>. A series of finds, however, seem to demonstrate that the small islands around Rivoalto were inhabited before the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Furthermore, in the few excavation reports published to date, reference is often made, at least in relation to these very early phases, to the occurrence of land reclamation and shore containment structures, in a way that is highly, and obviously, similar to that reported in Giovanni's chronicles<sup>14</sup>. The only very well known sequence, that of the Ca' Vendramin Calergi excavation, also demonstrates how even in sites far from the location where the *Palatium* would be built, a stable settlement comprising wooden houses was developed, dating back to at least the 8<sup>th</sup> century<sup>15</sup>.

In the same manner, excavations on the most peripheral island of the plexus that makes up current day Venice, namely Olivolo, now known as San Pietro di Castello, have revealed traces of a very ancient settlement, with a sequence that starts in the 5<sup>th</sup> and continues until at least the 7<sup>th</sup> century<sup>16</sup>. It is in this moment that the sequence is characterised by the construction of an important building from its brick foundations, attributable, almost certainly, "to a building of particular importance"<sup>17</sup>, and where three Byzantine seals have been found dating to the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries and a tremissis gold coin of Emperor Eraclio<sup>18</sup>. All this provides further proof of how the choice to build a new episcopal seat here over the course of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, i.e. that of Olivolo<sup>19</sup>, was not accidental.

<sup>13</sup> This issue was first addressed in: Gelichi, «Venezia tra archeologia e storia»; and then continued and discussed in further detail in Gelichi, «L'archeologia nella laguna veneziana»; Gelichi, «The future of Venice's Past».

<sup>14</sup> Bortoletto, «*De canalibus, rivis, piscinisque*», (including preceding bibliography and citation of cases, unpublished, of the Malibrán theater excavations and those of the old cinema named 'San Marco').

<sup>15</sup> Gobbo, «Lo scavo d'emergenza», pp. 43-4 (proposed to date between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries).

<sup>16</sup> For details about the excavations on San Pietro di Castello see: Tuzzato, «Venezia»; *Idem*, «Le strutture lignee altomedievali»; S. Tuzzato *et al.*, «San Pietro di Castello a Venezia».

<sup>17</sup> Tuzzato, «Venezia», p. 99.

<sup>18</sup> Asolati, Crisafulli, *Ritrovamenti monetali di età romana nel Veneto*, pp. 235-40; Callegher, «Sceaux byzantine et vénetiens», nn. 1-3, pp. 413-15.

<sup>19</sup> The bishopric of Olivolo, according to Giovanni diacono, was established in 775-776 (*Istoria Veneticorum*, II, 19, pp. 104-5). See Cessi, *Venezia Ducale*, p. 119, nota 3.



In substance, the ‘process’ that Giovanni perceived surely had more distant origins. Nevertheless, while these sparse lines of evidence attest to the existence of stable settlements, which were also institutionally significant (see the case of Olivolo), they do not legitimise the idea that an inhabited area existed that already expressed a well characterised social identity; and, above all, no elements have yet been identified that support the hypothesis that an intentional and shared project to organise the space had existed. Neither can the attempt to backdate the chronology of many Venetian churches to the 8<sup>th</sup> century on the basis of weak written evidence<sup>20</sup> be held up – as scholars have tried to demonstrate on more than one occasion<sup>21</sup>. The written sources, in substance, try to transmit the idea of a tight relationship between the growth of the community and the ecclesiastical structures, highlighted by the general late chronology attributed to many parish churches: thus, more than a ‘boom in the foundation of churches’, it would seem that it witnessed a ‘celebratory boom’. Thus, it remains more convincing that it was only during the 9<sup>th</sup> century that a diversified group of inhabited areas around Rivoalto slowly came under the control of the *Palatium*, to be led finally towards unity<sup>22</sup>, giving the duchy not only a stable place to reside, but also a city that could materially represent him.

### 3. *A city that is different but that wants to appear the same*

So what was this city like? The only serious attempt to draw a map of *Civitas Rivoalti* (or the settlement that preceded it) was made by an American archaeologist<sup>23</sup>. By bringing together the historical-topographic data available with the results obtained from a series of probes (i.e. punctiform analyses of the stratifications of archaeological deposits), Ammerman drew up the plan of a settlement that did not differ so much the current day plan of Venice, with less space (obviously) dedicated to dry land: in substance, a group of small islands, most numerous in the vicinity of Rivoalto, faced on to a canal, a *Canal Grande* wider than the present day one (fig. 2, see Picture Section).

<sup>20</sup> McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy*, pp. 529-31; Ammerman, «Venice before the Grand Canal», pp. 141-58.

<sup>21</sup> Gelichi, «Venezia», p. 173; see also Baudo, *Stato degli studi*.

<sup>22</sup> In essence from Schulz, «Urbanism in Medieval Venice».

<sup>23</sup> Ammerman, «Venice».

Furthermore, Ammerman hypothesised, on the basis of distribution of churches, a different role of the *Canal Grande* that would not have formed the central axis of the inhabited area at that time, as it does today. This hypothesis is convincing, although less-so are the dates attributed to this city plan that were based on the chronology of the churches, as discussed above. However, we might assume that this reconstruction is valid for the 9<sup>th</sup> century (but less so for the 8<sup>th</sup>). Furthermore, the fact that the *Canal Grande* was indeed wider than its present width could explain the reason why the Particiaci chose this location for their seat of power (i.e. the *Palatium*): an area close to the point in which the canal becomes wider, forming an almost port-like lay-out (i.e. the *Canal Grande* essentially having the form of a canal harbour).

Putting aside the problem of its chronology, there is no doubt over the perception that this settlement was built in a unique location, in an environment and in a geographical space that was far from ideal for founding a city (or, at least, a city in the traditional sense of the word). Not surprisingly, we might add that this is one of the reasons why Venice is considered unique in the world.

Of course, other cases of cities in the ancient world are known that existed near or within lagoons. The nearby town of Altino (for which the term ‘amphibious city’ was coined) traversed by canals, is another valid example<sup>24</sup>; and, remaining in territories not far from our own, even the capital of the Western Roman Empire, i.e. Ravenna, was founded in a very similar setting. Nevertheless, even these cases do not compare in the least to the context that lead to the creation of Rivoalto during the course of the 9<sup>th</sup> century: a context that is perhaps more similar to the villages of piledwellings on Inle Lake in Burma than to a city of the ancient world (please allow me this rather daring comparison).

This aspect of uniqueness (that offers the opportunity to create another paradigm to accompany the mythography of the origins, that of its ‘wild origins’)<sup>25</sup> should be combined with our knowledge about the absence of a noble pedigree. Despite all the years of effort to find a sign of Roman origins in the lagoon, Venice is not a Roman city. Thus, it would not seem to be by chance that Giovanni diacono is careful to

<sup>24</sup> For further details about Altino (and, in particular, its urban configuration) see: Ninfo, Fontana, Mozzi, Ferrarese, «The Map of Altinum», p. 577; Tirelli (ed.), *Altino antica*; and Cresci Marrone, Tirelli (eds.), *Altino dal cielo*.

<sup>25</sup> Ortalli, «Torcello e la genesi di Venezia», p. 26.

associate, to the founding action of Pietro tribune (*'edificare cepit'*), the construction of a wall to which the chain was attached that closed the *Canal Grande*: summarising in a kind of synecdoche (a *pars pro toto*) the essence of being a city.

We must immediately say that no material evidence of this 'wall' (that we would otherwise not know what to call) exists, despite the various 'archaeological objects' that have been accredited to it over the years (like the wall discovered in 1822 in *Olivolo*)<sup>26</sup> in the absence of any particular convincing discourse. Moreover, its existence, if I am not mistaken, is only referred to in this one passage by Giovanni diacono, and with which we can reconstruct its arrangement. An arrangement that, frankly, leaves some doubt about its actual capacity to defend, especially if one thinks that this construction was generally associated with the necessity to protect the city from attacks by the Hungarians. The combination of these two facts, however, are not due to Giovanni diacono, who cites two episodes, i.e. the pillaging by the Hungarians and their (failed) attempt to enter Malamocco and Rivoalto<sup>27</sup>, and the construction of the wall (vd. *supra*), in two different passages (and years). It is no surprise that some of the scholars who seem to welcome the combination of these facts also point out how Duke Pietro, in a Placito made in February of the year 900, conceded basic tax exemptions (for example, to the Abbot of the Monastery of Santo Stefano di Altino), although he had not (yet?) made the decision to construct structures to defend the duchy<sup>28</sup>.

In conclusion, the wall and the iron chain along the *Canal Grande*, in a brazen reference to the Constantinopolitan model<sup>29</sup>, would seem to be more strongly impregnated with ideology than an efficient fortification system intended to defend the growing city. Giovanni diacono seems to suggest that a city only comes into being when it has city walls. At this point, their existence and their actual extension becomes a fact of secondary importance. They are significant because, together with other episodes (like the theft of the relics of Saint Mark in Alessandria in 828,

<sup>26</sup> Casoni, «Sulla destinazione di un'antichissima opera murale».

<sup>27</sup> *Istoria Veneticoum*, III, 37, pp. 148-9.

<sup>28</sup> Settia, *Castelli e villaggi*, p. 127.

<sup>29</sup> Baratta, *Costantinopoli effigiata e descritta*, p. 568; Djurić, *Il crepuscolo di Bisanzio*, p. 195.

under Giustiniano Particiaco)<sup>30</sup> their function is to affirm or confirm a new statute, making a city new and different to a 'normal' city.

4. *A city like any other but that wants to be different*

On other occasions we have discussed how 'Romanity' and 'Byzantinity'<sup>31</sup> constitute the two main paradigms with which Venetian archaeology has been compared. In reality, we are referring to two different versions of the same interpretive model, developed (often in a manner that is not unbiased) using the same narrative historical sources. Romanity (associated with the urban myth of the origin of Venice) seems to have superseded the fantastical and weak juxtaposition of Venice's origin with the Trojans (who supposedly stopped here before their hero Aeneas reached Rome) or to the Romans themselves (three Paduan Consuls are said to have founded Venice in 421 A.D. on the day of the feast of the *Annunciation*) by means of the migration theory – the transfer of the (Roman) population from the mainland to the lagoon's islands as a result of Barbarian invasions. The Byzantine paradigm, on the other hand, is intended as the natural progression of the rapport between the Byzantines and the Venetian inhabitants over time, which would have been strengthened by both the political and economic associations that the city had with the Byzantines from the start and maintained throughout the best part of the Empire's history.

Rightly so, these paradigms have been redimensioned over recent years, for example via a new critical interpretation of the written documentation<sup>32</sup>, and have had a decisive influence upon the archaeological sources: on the one hand, some archaeologists has shifted towards the search for Roman origins of the city, on the premise that the lagoon had been intensely and densely populated during the Early Imperial Period with what Leciejewicz calls 'permanent settlements'<sup>33</sup>, to the other extreme with the daring hypothesis that

<sup>30</sup> *Istoria Veneticorum* II, 39, pp. 118-19.

<sup>31</sup> Gelichi, «Paesaggio e insediamenti», pp. 163-79.

<sup>32</sup> See the comments made by Gasparri regarding some of the ancient institutions of Venice, such as the Assembly: S. Gasparri, «Venezia fra l'Italia bizantina».

<sup>33</sup> For further information about the concept of permanent settlements used by Leciejewicz in relation the lagoon, see Leciejewicz (ed.), *Torcello*; Leciejewicz, «Italian-Polish researches».

the lagoon did not even exist in that period, or at least to a much lesser extent<sup>34</sup>. On the other hand, all evidence belonging to the later periods has been written off with the label of being 'Byzantine'. A third paradigm has also been proposed, as eluded to above: that of Venice's 'wild origins'. Geographically isolated, Venice appears to be a precious mix of antiquity (Roman and Byzantine) and distinctiveness (the result of isolation and self-referral), with embarrassing repercussions on the interpretation of material data<sup>35</sup>. In substance, everything seems to be directed at highlighting the uniqueness of the origins of Venice and, of consequence, its society, rather than its analogy to other contemporary cities, and by this we are referring to the full insertion of its elite (although we could also say, more generally, of its *populus*) within the Italic society of the Early Medieval Period – the behaviours and the attitudes of which can also be investigated through the analysis of material evidence. Indeed, we will attempt to do so here using the following examples.

The first example looks at residential constructions. A short time ago, I had the opportunity to observe how, in one of the very few (published) examples of Early Medieval houses excavated in the lagoon (Ca' Vendramin Calergi, built in wood), it was easy to identify similarities with constructions on the mainland dating to the same period<sup>36</sup>, and thus how the features that recall those of the traditional lagoon 'casoni' (huts for fishermen), brought to Ca' Vendramin Calergi by its builders, are as misleading as they are relevant, because they imply an element of self-referral that can only be explained by itself<sup>37</sup> (figs. 3-4, see Picture Section).

A second example regards glazed ceramics. In the 9th-10th centuries, Constantinople was the production centre of a certain type of ceramic,

<sup>34</sup> The most significant contributor remains Dorigo, *Venezia*.

<sup>35</sup> Gelichi, «The future».

<sup>36</sup> Gelichi, «L'archeologia nella laguna»; for further information about this type of building work see: Gelichi, Librenti, «Edilizia abitativa»; Santangeli Valenzani, *Edilizia residenziale*, pp. 33-48.

<sup>37</sup> Gobbo, «Lo scavo d'emergenza», pp. 43-5; see also, Bortoletto, «Tecniche e materiali», pp. 210-12. This sustains that the house discovered in the excavation of Ca' Vendramin Calergi exhausts our knowledge about the housing types used in the lagoon. For example, we know absolutely nothing about the residences of the elite and the building (dating to the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century?) excavated in the vicinity of the church of San Pietro di Castello; the function of which however is anything but certain, and built using different techniques (Tuzzato, «Venezia»).

i.e. single-fire on white or light-coloured earthenware (known as “Glazed White Ware’: GWW)<sup>38</sup> mainly associated with urban use or at least with the elite. This type of Constantinopalian pottery is very rare in the lagoon, and what has been found seems to date to later periods (i.e. the 11th and 12th centuries)<sup>39</sup>. This does not mean, however, that the Venetian elite did not share a taste for glazed pottery, since single-fired ceramics produced in the north-east of Italy (and perhaps even the lagoon itself)<sup>40</sup> do appear in the lagoon sequences for the same period (and up until the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries) (fig. 5, see Picture Section). This variety of monochrome glaze is only indirectly associated with Byzantium, since it seems that their presumed ‘Byzantinian’ style was only obtained through the experience of contemporary productions originating from Rome and Lazio, which reflected Byzantine productions more explicitly, both in relation to their technical characteristics and the repertoire of morphologies and decorations. What is more, the diffusion of these glazed ceramics involved another specific zone (beyond the lagoon): Ravenna and the lands of the former Exarchate. Thus, a distant, yet undeniable, connection can be made between Venice and the Byzantine world, within another political and cultural context, of which Venice, not by coincidence, has left other traces of (as we will see below).

##### 5. *Monasteries, burials and the elite*

Another sector where it is possible to analyse the modalities of the elite’s self-representation regards their relationship with the monastic foundations, on the one hand, and with funeral rituals, on the other.

As regards their relationship with monasticism, it can be defined according to modalities how it recalls of elite on the mainland, with the exception of a slight difference in their chronologies. However, the lagoon in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, when this phenomenon was present,

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<sup>38</sup> For further information about GWW see Vroom, *Byzantine to Modern Pottery*, pp. 72-7. On GWW in Venice see also D’Amico, «Glazed White Ware in the Italian peninsula», p. 230.

<sup>39</sup> Gobbo, «Le ceramiche della prima fase medievale», pp. 108-10 (nn. 17-20).

<sup>40</sup> For an up-to-date review on single-fired pottery in the Venetian lagoon see: Paroli *et al.*, «La ceramica invetriata altomedievale in Italia», pp. 485-6, figs. 1, 6-7. For other examples discovered more recently see: Gobbo, «Le ceramiche», pp. 98-102.

was far from unpopulated, with particularly vivacious economic and population dynamics, within which the local elite acted and who used the monasteries as instruments through which to assert power and control resources<sup>41</sup>.

If we take a look at the role of gender in the lagoon monasteries, a scheme emerges that is common across northern Italy. Male communities appeared in places that were often distant from the true political heart of a settlement, and were essentially temporary, while the female communities are founded in urban areas, close to the seat of government, and they are entrusted with receiving and managing women coming from the most powerful local aristocratic families.

Early monasticism within the lagoon was also characterised by its strong relationship with the urban centre of Rivoalto and with the emerging ducal families. This explains better the location of some of these monasteries, like the one devoted to Sant'Ilario e Benedetto di Gambarare, which was also very famous because it was connected to the Particiaci family, an important ducal family. The early monastic community, originally located in a different area, transferred to this location (on the border with the southern lagoon) thanks to donations made by the Particiaci family. In brief, their gifts were made in order to secure the Particiaci family's interests in land ownership, and most probably in commerce too, already well-established in the area<sup>42</sup>.

The monasteries were also locations (although not the only places) chosen by the lagoon's aristocracy for their own burial. Sepulture within a monastery occurred for the political figures of the highest level, such as, for example, the dukes. Indeed, the *Istoria Veneticorum* reports the sepulture of Duke Orso, who died in 881, in the Convent of San Zaccaria<sup>43</sup>. The Particiaci, on the other hand (a famous testament by

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<sup>41</sup> For a recent review on the monasteries of the lagoon during the Early Medieval Period see: Gelichi, Moine, «Peregrinazioni in sconfinati deserti»; for a review of the Venetian monasteries on the islands of Castello, Torcello and Lido, see also: Agazzi, «Monasteri veneziani».

<sup>42</sup> For details about the monastery, see: Marzemin, *Le abbazie veneziane*. The location of the monastery is well known thanks to excavations carried out during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Archaeological investigations were resumed in recent years: for a preview of their results, see: Calaon, Ferri, «Il monastero dei Dogi. Ss. Ilario e Benedetto»; Calaon, Ferri, Bagato, «Ss. Ilario e Benedetto (IX secolo)»; see also Gelichi, Moine, «Peregrinazioni», pp. 138-40.

<sup>43</sup> *Istoria Veneticorum*, III, 27, pp. 142-5.

whom is preserved), choose the Monastery of Sant' Ilario e Benedetto di Gambarare <sup>44</sup> as their burial location, and to which they were closely associated, as we have seen. This relationship between the monasteries and their founders seems to be anything but unique in Italy in the Early Medieval Period <sup>45</sup>. Questions remain, however, such as, how were these burials performed? and what do we know about them?

Unfortunately, none of the first ducal tombs have survived (the first that we know about is the sarcophagus of Jacopo and Lorenzo Tiepolo, dating to the end of the latter half of the XIII century, now located opposite the Church of SS Giovanni e Paolo) <sup>46</sup> (fig. 6, see Picture Section). Even the most recent excavations, within the area of the Monastery of Sant' Ilario e Benedetto, have only revealed evidence of anonymous tombs made in brick and that date to more recent periods to the one we are interested in here (fig. 7, see Picture Section). Nevertheless, very old material originating from this monastery can help us to form an idea. Indeed, several sarcophagi (and tombstones) have been obtained from the area around this monastery that, if not of the dukes or of members of their families (we cannot be certain because two sarcophagi are without inscriptions and the third is endowed with an inscription that is not perfectly legible) <sup>47</sup>, are most likely referable to members of the local elite (figs. 8-9-10, see Picture Section).

This leads us to a very interesting category of funeral monuments, which appear to be fairly widespread across the lagoon and the neighbouring areas in the Early Middle Ages <sup>48</sup>. In addition to the Monastery of Sant' Ilario e

<sup>44</sup> For details about the testament see: Cessi, *Documenti relativi*, I, doc. 44, pp. 71-5 and II, doc. 53, pp. 94-9.

<sup>45</sup> A phenomenon that also protracted into the Late Medieval Period, and not only in Italy: Gilchrist, Sloane, *Requiem*, pp. 61-2.

<sup>46</sup> Pincus, *The Tombs*.

<sup>47</sup> Polacco, *Sculture*, n. 10, p. 25, n. 11, p. 26, n. 12, p. 27 and also n. 22, p. 36, n. 24, p. 38 (two tombstones), n. 25, p. 39 (perhaps a portion of the front of the sarcophagus with inscription, fragmented).

<sup>48</sup> The following paper is dedicated to this category of artifacts: Agazzi, «Sarcofagi altomedievali». Agazzi indicates the presence of at least 39 examples belonging to this category, of which 19 still show commemorative inscriptions (*ibidem*, footnote 2): even if many of these sarcophagi are discussed and illustrated, the article does not publish the detailed list. According to Agazzi, a kind of continuity exists in the use of sarcophagi. One of the most antique (from the 6<sup>th</sup> century) is that found on the Island of Grado (*ibidem* p. 565); from the Monastery of



Benedetto, already discussed, various monuments have been found on the island of Murano<sup>49</sup>, mostly from around the area of the church of Santa Maria e Donato<sup>50</sup>; from Venice itself<sup>51</sup>, from the Ammiana district<sup>52</sup>; at least two from Cittanova<sup>53</sup> and three or four from Jesolo<sup>54</sup>.

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Sant'Ilario e Benedetto (8<sup>th</sup> century) several slabs have been found (which would have covered burial tombs below ground: *ibid.* figs. 1-2; above Polacco - *Sculture*, n. 22 and 24); sarcophagi from Jesolo, Venice itself (sarcophagus of *Bonellus*), Murano etc., have also been discovered, some of which contain iconographies that show great resemblance to Friulian sculpture from the same period; and also, once again, a dense group dating to the 9<sup>th</sup> century. The problem, however, is that the chronology of these sarcophagi is only based on stylistic evaluation.

<sup>49</sup> Vecchi, *Sculture tardo-antiche*, n. 114, pp. 75-6, anepigraphic monuments (a sarcophagus discovered in the mid 1970s during the restoration of the apse in the right hand nave; n. 123, p. 80, anepigraphic monuments (the facade of a sarcophagus discovered during restoration work during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: according to Vecchi "they were found in the zone of the antique cemetery adjacent to the church"); n. 147, p. 100, anepigraphic monuments (exhibited in the Murano Glass Museum, but discovered during work in the cathedral during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century); n. 148, p. 101 (exhibited in the Glass Museum, but originating, as for the previous case, from restorations made in the 19<sup>th</sup> century), without decoration, but with an epigraph cut into the border of the coffin lid (it reports Vecchi's interpretation of the epigraph to be: + HIC REQUIESCE VITALES ET PETRUS); n. 149, p. 101, anepigraphic monuments (originating and exhibited as indicated above, n. 147); n. 152, p. 103, anepigraphic monuments (exhibited in the Murano Glass Museum and discovered during the restoration of the basilica during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in particular during excavations to uncover the foundations of the new vestry, along the north side of the church, in association with two skeletons); n. 171, p. 114, anepigraphic monuments without decorations, in fragments (origin and conservation as indicated above, n. 14); n. 180, p. 118, fragment, with the remains of an epigraph (conserved in the assigned room of the Museo della Canonica).

<sup>50</sup> For more details about the church see: Ramelli, *Murano medievale*, pp. 33-43.

<sup>51</sup> Agazzi, «Sarcofagi», pp. 565 and 568.

<sup>52</sup> A missing example: Dorigo, *Venezia*, p. 666; Polacco, *Sculture*, n. 61; *Torcello Museo*, n. 23, p. 31.

<sup>53</sup> Dorigo, *Venezie sepolte*, p. 136, fig. 140 and p. 84, figs. 99-100 .

<sup>54</sup> One of which, with all probability, reused in the Cathedral (Dorigo, *Venezie*, p. 85, fig. 101; Cuscito, *L'impianto paleocristiano*, pp. 73-7); a second is conserved in Rovigo in the courtyard of the Convento dei Cappuccini (Dorigo, *Venezie*, p. 85, fig. 102); and, finally, another two (a coffin and a lid) were discovered in excavations made in the 1950s around the monastery of San Mauro (Dorigo, *Venezie*, pp. 157-60) but currently missing.

The use of sarcophagi constitutes a funeral practice that seems to jump from the world of Late Antiquity to that of the Early Medieval Period in various regions of the Italian peninsula, with perhaps just some exceptions of continuity. Once again, however the phenomenon is not exclusive to the lagoon. Furthermore, it seems that the use of sarcophagi became more intense from the start from the 9<sup>th</sup> century (or perhaps the 8<sup>th</sup>?), when the use of funeral and commemorative epigraphs became common place. Even if the great majority of sarcophagi discovered are no longer *in situ*<sup>55</sup>, it is probable that they were visible, considering the fact that they were decorated.

It seems to me very probably that the prototypes of these sarcophagi from the lagoon area can be traced to a group of sarcophagi of archbishops from the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century present in the Basilica of Saint Apollinaris in Classe in Ravenna (which, themselves, constitute one of the above-cited re-elaborated models from the Late Roman Period, an issue that will not be addressed here). In particular, I am referring to that of Archbishop Giovanni (778-785)<sup>56</sup> (fig. 11, see Picture Section) and to that of Archbishop Grazioso (786-789) (fig. 12, see Picture Section)<sup>57</sup>. Prototypes from which another significant series of sarcophagi descend (still in Ravenna), mostly anepigraphic (fig. 13, see Picture Section) or nevertheless referring to people who did not belong to the clergy (for example, the sarcophagus of Gregorio and of his wife Maria) (fig. 14, see Picture Section), generally date to the next century (i.e. the 9<sup>th</sup> century) on the basis of decorative

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<sup>55</sup> Of the very few examples of sarcophagi still *in situ*, the sarcophagus discovered in the 1950s during the excavation of the Monastery of San Mauro in Jesolo stands out (for details of the excavations, and the relative documentation, see: Dorigo, *Venezie*, pp. 157-61). From a plan of the excavations made in 1954 (*ibid.* fig. 180) (fig. 16, see Picture Section) the location of the sarcophagus is clearly indicated, i.e. in the north-west corner of a rectangular room located to the south and overlooking what has been interpreted to be a cloister. A photograph taken at that time (fig. 17, see Picture Section) confirms this position (*ibid.* fig. 179), but the floor level is not clear (and thus whether the sarcophagus was visible or not). A number of sarcophagi, found within the Episcopal complex of Parenzo, still seem to be in their original locations. One sarcophagus is positioned against the wall of the apse of the so-called pre-euphrasian church, and rests directly on its mosaic floor (fig. 18, see Picture Section).

<sup>56</sup> Valenti Zucchini, Bucci, “*Corpus*”, n. 60, p. 58.

<sup>57</sup> Valenti Zucchini, Bucci, “*Corpus*”, n. 61, pp. 58-9.

motifs<sup>58</sup>; contemporaneously, a pair of sarcophagi conserved in the nearby town of Comacchio, and one of which, of a certain *Stefanus*, declares to be (but it is not very clear to read) *humilis presbyter* (fig. 15, see Picture Section), which may refer to a Bishop of the same name established in the written sources to be from around the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century (circa 873)<sup>59</sup>.

The phenomenon of the medieval sarcophagi in the Adriatic area is very interesting, although it has been the subject of little study, except in relation to aspects of exquisitely decorative character<sup>60</sup>. It is generally considered that the production of sarcophagi ceased around the start of the 7<sup>th</sup> century with the closure of the Istrian-Dalmatian quarry; from which the examples known about to date seem to originate (at least as the source of primary material)<sup>61</sup>. In fact, various examples are known that are not other than reused antique sarcophagi, in which only the epigraphic aspects of the monuments are re-worked; such examples include: the sarcophagus of Duke Marino and of his son Agnello of Rimini (dating to the 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> centuries)<sup>62</sup>; a sarcophagus conserved in the Basilica of SS Maria and Donato on Murano<sup>63</sup>; the Roman sarcophagus on the island of Torcello, reused

<sup>58</sup> Valenti Zucchini, Bucci, “*Corpus*”, nn. 62-67, pp. 59-60. A very recent hypothesis even asserts that some of these sarcophagi from Ravenna actually originated from the Venice lagoon and not vice versa – also considering the “recurrent use of Istrian limestone” (Triger, *Scultura e pittura*, p. 135). For further details about this topic, see all 5 chapters of this volume (*ibidem* pp. 15-148): for a summary of the sarcophagi iconographic themes and, more generally, of Early Medieval sculpture within the lagoon area.

<sup>59</sup> For details about the sarcophagus of *Stefanus*, see Patitucci Uggeri, «Il sarcofago»; Porta, «Comacchio»; Porta, «Evergetismo ecclesiastico». For details about the other probable sarcophagi of this man from Comacchio, see: Gelichi, Calaon, «Comacchio»: figs. 5-7. To these sarcophagi, we could also add, still within the Ferrara district, that of the so-called S. Leo in the Church of the High Priest of Voghenza: Porta, «Evergetismo», pp. 434-6.

<sup>60</sup> This was essentially the approach taken in the essay by Agazzi («Sarcofagi») dedicated, as we have seen, to the territories of the Venetian Dogado (the Duchy of Venice).

<sup>61</sup> D’Angela, «Produzione e commercio di sarcofagi».

<sup>62</sup> A. Turchini (ed.), *Rimini medievale*, pp. 99-103, n. I.4.3.

<sup>63</sup> Vecchi, *Sculture*, n. 116, pp. 76-7 (sarcophagus reworked at the centre of the epigraph, and reused as paving slabs in the Church).

with the addition of an inscription attributed to the Bishop Domenico V Candiano, who died in 959<sup>64</sup>; and finally, the sarcophagus of the presumed Duke Branimir at Biskupija, located in Tenin in Croatia<sup>65</sup>. In many other cases, comprising many of those examined here, we cannot be certain that the sarcophagi were indeed reworked. There is no direct evidence to suggest that the Istrian-Dalmatian quarry was ever reopened in this period, but we might propose the hypothesis that this was indeed the case, especially considering the relationship between Venice and Istria that, from this moment in time onwards, became increasingly stronger.

Once again, however, it seems that the lagoon's aristocracy moved forwards as one in relation to the forms of representation that characterised the societies from the north of the peninsular in the same period (in so far as that the Dukes still received the privileges that had their origins rooted in the Byzantine world, providing evidence of a relationship that intended to remain strong, at least at the political level). Naturally, the concept of Italic society also runs the risk of becoming a stereotype if we are unable to describe it in its particularities. Indeed, the modalities linked to funeral rituals seem to reveal evidence of this distinctiveness, since solutions are selected from generalised behaviours that betray specific stereotypical relationships that may be political, economical or commercial in nature (interpretable from the circulation of sarcophagi), as well as ideological (the use of sarcophagi, for a start; the use of specific decorative elements, and the adoption of a specific formulae in the epigraphs –not discussed here): aspects that unit certain territories into a homogeneous group (the Venice lagoon, Ravenna and the Istria-Dalmatian area) and seem to exclude others<sup>66</sup>.

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<sup>64</sup> Conton, *Torcello*, p. 71.

<sup>65</sup> Milošević, «Il sarcofago del duca Branimir».

<sup>66</sup> It would be interesting to follow the distribution of this type of sarcophagus to the south of Ravenna and, beyond Venice, along the northernmost coastline of the Adriatic Sea up to Istria and Dalmatia. This is a topic that cannot be completed in just a few lines. However, we can provide some indications. For example, to date, this type of sarcophagus has not been frequently documented to the south of Rimini (at least according to the studies made by Gabrielli, *I sarcofagi paleocristiani*) or to the north, with the exception of the Venice lagoon, in the territories of Friuli (*ex inf.* Cuscito). As we have seen, they reappear along the Istrian coast (Parenzo) and have been documented moving down southwards again, in Zadar for example

## 6. Venice – a city like any other

I would like to conclude this paper by underlining how the material sources, although few in number and, above all, bad produced, seem to offer a series of encouraging perspectives for analysis with regard to the definition of the physical space, the construction and but also ideological space of Venice's origins: one must simply resist the seductive lure of the buildings on the waterfront and look instead, with curiosity and focus, free of any prejudice, to the archives contained within the earth. By doing so, perhaps we will realise how Venice, uncharacteristically, is a city that is much more normal than one might think at first glance, even when the choices that have steered its evolution might seem unique or when the solutions it has adopted are far from those we are used to considering as 'normal'. In this intentional (and perhaps emphasised) attempt to 'normalise' our perception of this 'city on water', we are nevertheless left bewildered by those who, at the start of the last century, truly desired to 'normalise' Venice: envisaging a grand merchant harbour on the Canal Grande (to the joy of all the ship owners), the filling in of the canals to allow trains and trolleybuses to run and substituting the certainly not very salubrious lagoon air with the smoke from chimney stacks (fig. 19, see Picture Section)<sup>67</sup>.

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(Petricioli, «Sculpture», pp. 76-7, figs. 5-6) and in Trau, in the church of S. Maria della Piazza (a private chapel rebuilt over the course of the 8<sup>th</sup> century; for further details see: Rapanić, «Sancta Maria de Platea»).

<sup>67</sup> Marinetti, *Venezia Futurista* Milano, Poligrafia italiana, no date (although 1910) Sheet dimensions 337 x 145 mm., printed signature by Marinetti: "Noi ripudiamo l'antica Venezia estenuata e sfatta da voluttà secolari, che noi pure amammo e possedemmo in un gran sogno nostalgico. Ripudiamo la Venezia dei forestieri, mercato di antiquari falsificatori, calamita dello snobismo e dell'imbecillità universali, letto sfondato da carovane di amanti, semicupio ingemmato per cortigiane cosmopolite, cloaca massima del passatismo. Noi vogliamo guarire e cicatrizzare questa città putrescente, piaga magnifica di passato. Noi vogliamo rianimare e nobilitare il popolo veneziano, decaduto dalla sua antica grandezza, morfinizzato da una vigliaccheria stomachevole ed avvilita dall'abitudine dei suoi piccoli commerci loschi. Noi vogliamo preparare la nascita di una Venezia industriale e militare che possa rovinare il mare Adriatico, gran lago Italiano. Affrettiamoci a colmare i piccoli canali puzzolenti con le macerie dei vecchi palazzi crollanti e lebbrosi. Bruciamo le gondole, poltrone a dondolo per cretini, e innalziamo fino al cielo l'imponente geometria dei ponti metallici e degli opifici chiomati di fumo, per abolire le curve cascanti delle vecchie architetture".

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6.

**Photo Plates**



SAURO GELICHI

Venice in the early middle ages. The material structures and society of 'civitas apud rivoaltum' between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries

PICTURES

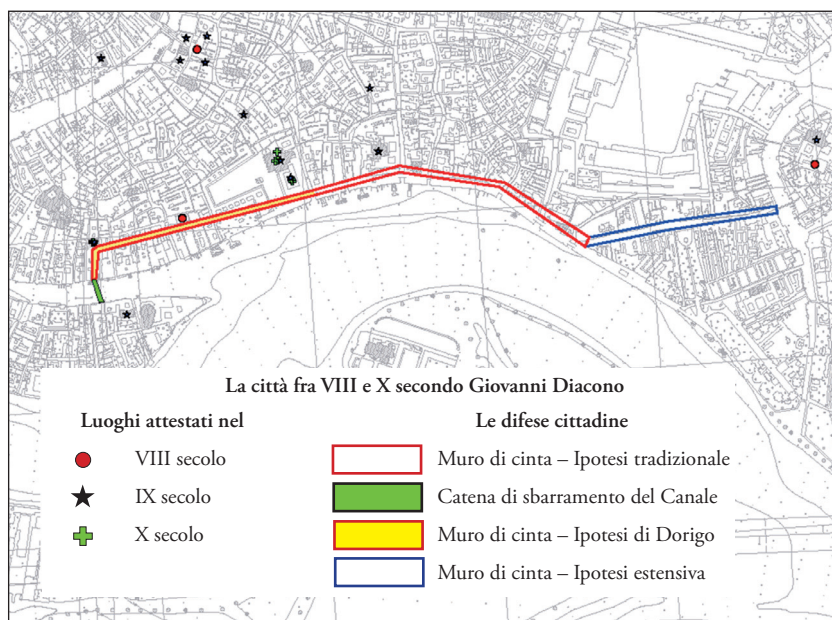


Fig. 1. The location of the city walls of Venice according to Giovanni diacono.



Fig. 2. Venice in the 8<sup>th</sup> century according to Ammerman [«Venice», cit.].



Fig. 3. Venice, Ca' Vendamin Calergi. Location of the archaeological excavation and photo of the early medieval house [by Fozzati, *Ca' Vendramin*, cit., fig. at p. 62].

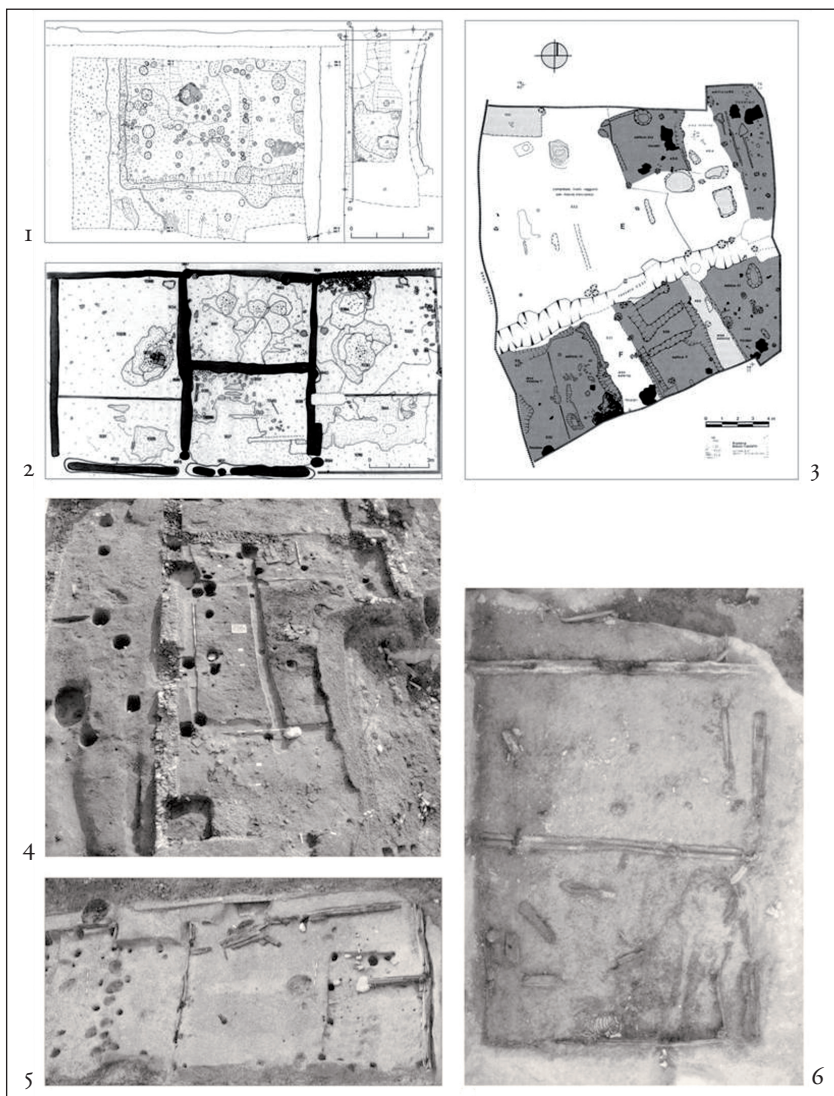


Fig. 4. Comparing houses. 1. Venice, Ca' Vendramin Calergi (plan of the wooden house, 9<sup>th</sup> century) [by Gobbo, «Lo scavo» cit., fig. at p. 44]. 2. House in a 10<sup>th</sup> century village near Sant'Agata Bolognese [drawing of Mauro Librenti]. 3. Piadena (MN), wooden house in a *castrum* of 10<sup>th</sup> century [drawing by Gianpietro Brogiolo]. 4. Concordia Sagittaria, piazza Cardinal Costantini. Wooden houses [photo by L. Villa, in *Concordia. Tremila anni di storia*, Concordia Sagittaria, p. 306, fig. 2]. 5. Fidenza. Wooden early medieval houses in the town [by M. Catarsi, *Archeologia a Fidenza: le case in legno di via Bacchini*, Bologna, 2003].



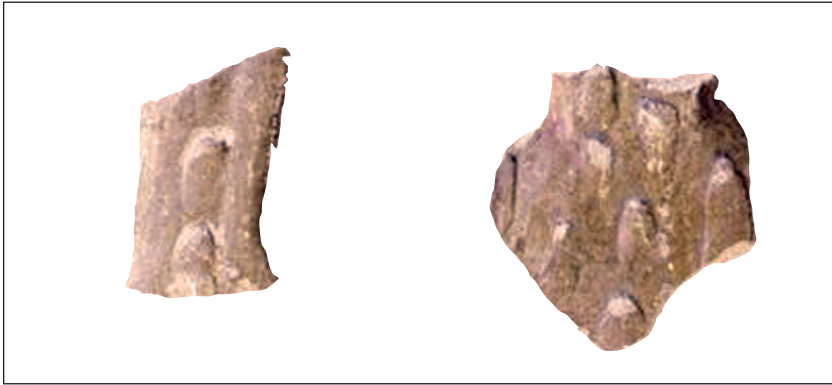


Fig. 5. Single-firing pottery with glaze from Ca' Vendramin Calergi (9<sup>th</sup> century) [by Gobbo, «Le ceramiche», cit., nn. 18-19, p. 101].



Fig. 6. Venice, Church of SS Giovanni e Paolo. Sarcophagus of Jacopo and Lorenzo Tiepolo [by Pincus 2000].



Fig. 7. Mira, Monastery of SS Ilario and Benedetto, graves from the excavation [photo by Laboratory of Medieval Archaeology, University Ca' Foscari, Venice].



Fig. 8. Venice, Archaeological Museum. Sarcophagus from Monastery of SS Ilario and Benedetto [by Polacco 1976].



Fig. 9. Venice, Archaeological Museum. Sarcophagus  
from Monastery of SS Ilario and Benedetto [by Polacco 1976].



Fig. 10. Venice, Archaeological Museum. Sarcophagus from Monastery of SS Ilario and Benedetto [by Polacco 1976].



Fig. 11. Ravenna, Saint Apollinaris in Classe. Sarcophagus of Archbishop Giovanni (778-785) [by G. Valenti Zucchini, M. Bucci 1968, fig. 60a].



Fig. 12. Ravenna, Saint Apollinaris in Classe. Sarcophagus of Archbishop Grazioso (786-789) [by G. Valenti Zucchini, M. Bucci 1968, fig. 61a].



Fig. 13. Ravenna, Museo Nazionale, sarcophagus  
[by G. Valenti Zucchini, M. Bucci 1968, fig. 65].

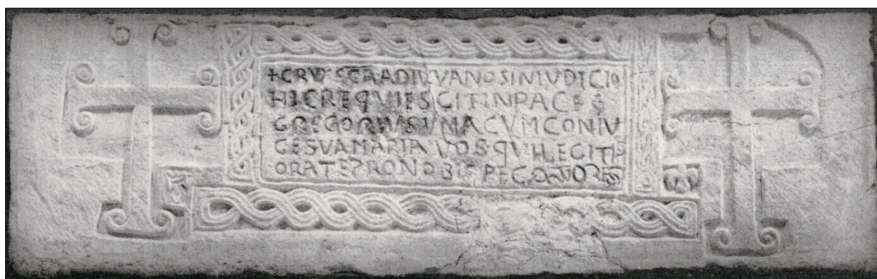


Fig. 14. Ravenna, Museo Arcivescovile, sarcophagus of Gregorio  
and of his wife Maria [by G. Valenti Zucchini, M. Bucci 1968, fig. 62].



Fig. 15. Comacchio (FE). Cathedral.  
Sarcophagus of Stefanus (presbyter[?]) [photo by author].



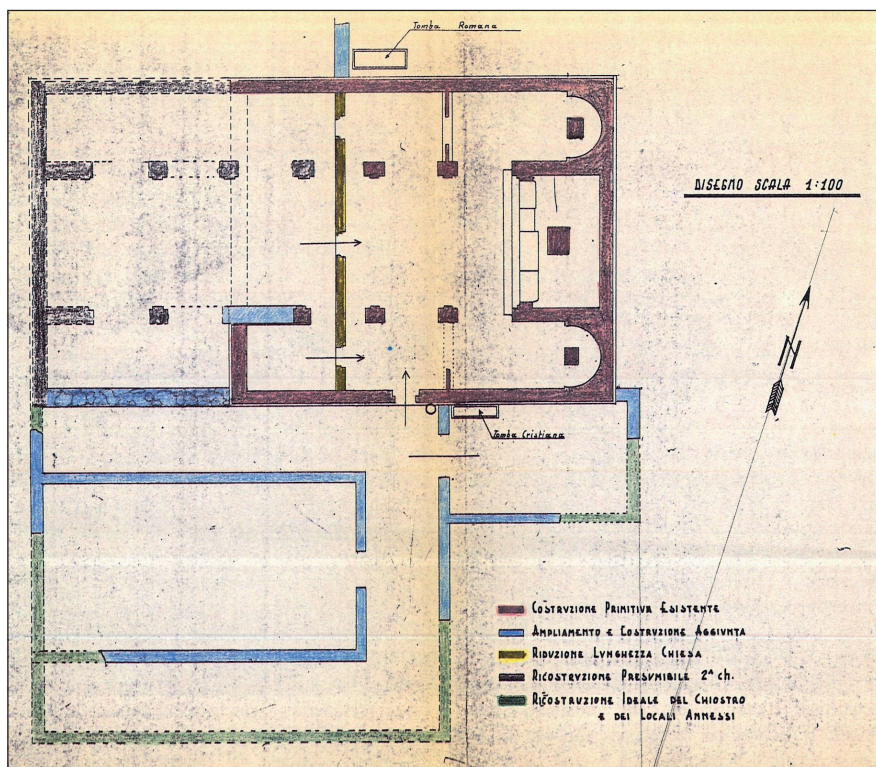


Fig. 16. Jesolo, monastery of S. Mauro.  
Plan of the excavation [by Dorigo 1994, fig. 180].



Fig. 17. Jesolo, monastery of S. Mauro.  
Photo of the excavation [by Dorigo 1994, fig. 179].



Fig. 18. Parenzo, the so-called pre-euphrasian church.  
Sarcophagus in situ [photo by author].

# Venezia Futurista

*Caro Collega,*

Vogliate lasciare da parte ogni preconconcetto intorno al Futurismo e rispondermi, vi prego, nel vostro giornale o per lettera, se approvate il nostro gesto più recente:

Il giorno 27 aprile, i pittori futuristi Boccioni, Bonzagni, Carrà e Russolo, e i poeti futuristi Marinetti, Armando Mazza e Aldo Palazzeschi, recatisi a Venezia, salirono sulla Torre dell'Orologio, e di là, fra i voli tumultuosi dei colombi spaventati, lanciarono sull'agitazione e sullo stupore urlante della densa folla che gremiva la Piazza San Marco, centomila manifesti, in italiano e in francese, così concepiti:

**« Noi ripudiamo l'antica Venezia, ostenuata e sfatta da voluttà secolari, che noi pure amammo e possedemmo in un gran sogno nostalgico.**

**« Ripudiamo la Venezia dei forestieri, mercato di antiquari falsificatori, calamita dello snobismo e dell'imbecillità universali, letto sfondato da carovane di amanti, semicupio ingemmato per cortigiane cosmopolite.**

**« Noi futuristi vogliamo guarire questa tediosa città ammalata. Siano colmati i suoi più fetidi canali con le macerie dei suoi palazzi lebbrosi; la rigida geometria dei ponti metallici e degli opifici chiomati di fumo abolisca le curve cascanti delle vecchie architetture, e la divina Luce Elettrica liberi finalmente Venezia dal suo venale chiaro di luna da camera ammobigliata. »**

**I PITTORI FUTURISTI:**  
**U. Boccioni - A. Bonzagni**  
**G. D. Carrà - L. Russolo**  
**G. Severini, ecc.**

**I POETI FUTURISTI:**  
**F. T. Marinetti - Paolo Buzzi**  
**A. Palazzeschi - E. Cavacchioli**  
**Armando Mazza - Libero Altomare**  
**Luciano Folgore - G. Carrieri, ecc.**

Alle otto di sera, i Futuristi mettevano di nuovo in subbuglio l'intera città, con innumerevoli getti di loro manifesti in mezzo alla folla adunata in Piazza San Marco a udire la musica cittadina.

Se voi non approverete questo nostro atto, dovremo annoverarvi nella grande mandra dei Passatisti d'Italia, fortunatamente destinata ad essere sopraffatta dal nostro dilagare vittorioso.

Ringraziandovi anticipatamente della risposta, vi saluto.

**F. T. MARINETTI**  
 Direttore di "POESIA",  
 Via Senato 2 - MILANO

Fig. 19. F.T. Marinetti, *Venezia Futurista*, Milano, Poligrafia italiana.