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### Civic piety and patriotism

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## Civic Piety and Patriotism: Patrician Humanists and Jews in Venice and its Empire

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### Abstract:

This article focuses on the contribution of anti-Jewish themes to political ideals and reality in the works of two leading Venetian patrician humanists – Ludovico Foscarini (1409-80) and Paolo Morosini (1406-ca.1482). This article demonstrates that their literary attacks on Jews were shaped by classical, patristic, medieval, and humanist texts, and by the experience of service to the state. It also demonstrates that their work contributed to debates about the toleration of Jews in Venetian territory and can be linked to the humanist engagement with Judaism at a critical point for both phenomena in the fifteenth century.

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### 1. Introduction

During the last three decades a number of scholars have argued that the fifteenth century was a critical moment in the development of Italian humanist interest in Jewish history and culture, especially the Hebrew language.<sup>1</sup> A clearer picture of Florentine and Roman studies is now emerging but despite Margaret L. King’s

observation that “[a]nti-Semitism ... formed a conspicuous strain of Venetian piety” and her conclusion that Venetian humanists demonstrated a pronounced piety their discussions of Jewish matters have been little studied.<sup>2</sup> It is the aim of this article to provide evidence for the Venetian humanist interest in Jews and to delineate the ways in which this interest both responded to broader Christian concerns about the presence of Jews and contributed to the elaboration of Venetian civic piety and patriotism. As King amply demonstrated, the mythic elements in Venetian humanist writing about the republic served to affirm its righteousness and demonstrate divine favor toward its selfless, unified, and conservative patrician rulers.<sup>3</sup> Ludovico Foscarini (1409-80) and Paolo Morosini (1406-ca. 1482),<sup>4</sup> two prominent Venetian humanists belonging to this patrician order, not only contributed to this mythic self-fashioning but also crafted writings about the Jews. In this article their work is analysed to show how it reflected broader Christian and humanist concerns, confirmed specifically Venetian values, and drew on their experience of the practical problems of governance at home and in the empire.

Ludovico Foscarini studied canon law at the University of Padua, was elected to the powerful Council of Ten at the precocious age of twenty-eight, and had an extensive career in the mainland empire. Foscarini’s letters contain a number of virulent anti-Jewish comments and while they have received some scholarly attention these views have never been fully explored and contextualized in the light of his public service and broader themes in Venetian humanism, including civic duty and piety.<sup>5</sup> Paolo Morosini also served the state in Venice and its empire in numerous positions and his *Opus de Aeterna Temporalique Christi Generatione in Iudaicae Improbationem Perfidiae Christianaeque Religionis Gloriam Divinis Enuntiationibus Comprobata* was composed in ca. 1464-71, published in both quarto and octavo

formats in Padua in 1473, and survives in over sixty copies. This work has never previously been analysed even though it is an apparently unique Venetian contribution to the anti-Jewish literary tradition and to contemporary debates about the presence of Jews in Christian society.<sup>6</sup>

It makes sense to examine these two figures and their works together since Foscarini and Morosini were not only members of the ruling patrician order in Venice with a strong pious streak but they were also friends and leading members of a generation of patrician humanists born in the fifteenth century, tempered by Venice's war of conquest on the Italian mainland, proud of the republic's heritage, and committed to defend it against those who attacked its imperial aggrandizement and inaction in the face of the Ottoman advance into Christendom.<sup>7</sup> Their texts contrast in form (comprising letters and an encyclopedic treatise running to 155 pages respectively) but they both express a concern to preserve or defend the republic against internal and external enemies and to meet the ideals and political requirements of civic duty on which this defense was founded. The texts can also be understood as expressions of humanist concern about the importance of learning in political and social life as in their classical Latin texts both men reach for ancient exemplars in their presentation of an ethical view of society.

The texts also reveal that discussions about the place of Jews were central to broader patrician and humanist concerns in Venice which revolved around duty and service to the state. This article not only illuminates the place of anti-Judaism in these patrician humanist discussions, hinted at by Margaret L. King thirty years ago, but also indicates their contribution to official decision-making about Jews and provides further evidence for the nature of the "humanist movement", and especially its broadly civic and moral dimensions in the fifteenth century which have recently been

highlighted by Brian Maxson and others.<sup>8</sup> In the face of Jewish faithlessness the Venetian patrician humanists articulated a civic piety which was based on virtues evidently regarded as entirely alien to Jews who formed a problematic presence within Venetian society.

## 2. The Problem of Jews in Renaissance Venice

During the Middle Ages the presence of Jews was a disturbing anomaly for many members of Christendom.<sup>9</sup> Christians generally regarded the Jews as “perfidy”, a faithless people who obstinately refused to accept the light and truth of Jesus Christ the Messiah and indeed bore some responsibility for his death. At best, Jews might be legally and theologically tolerated as the servile descendants of the original recipients of the written law, the former bearers of the Old Testament, and an unbelieving “remnant” that would inspire Christian efforts until they were converted at the end of days.<sup>10</sup> At worst, Jews were believed to be the diabolically-inspired enemies of all Christians who worked to cause them harm, for example, by uttering curses contained in rabbinical texts, attacking the Host, or, as the blood libel outlined, by killing Christian children and consuming their blood in religious rituals.<sup>11</sup> Members of the mendicant orders responding to such popular fears and supported by decrees of the church councils, preached to, and engaged in debates with Jews in the hope of their conversion. Mendicant preachers also helped to direct hostility toward the Jewish presence in and around towns where they were often obliged to act as moneylenders as a result of their restricted employment opportunities.<sup>12</sup>

The legal status and treatment of Jews in Italy was by no means topographically or chronologically uniform.<sup>13</sup> During the Renaissance Jews did not

experience greater assimilation, they were just as sharply excluded from full membership of society, and indeed saw some reversals in their fortune.<sup>14</sup> The middle of the fifteenth century was an important moment in this history since papal protection of this “remnant” was mitigated by a succession of papal bulls reaffirming prohibitions against Christian contact with Jews and other restrictive measures.<sup>15</sup> The effects of this “general reversal of papal policy toward Jews” have been traced throughout the Italian peninsula, notably in Florence and within the mainland empire (*terraferma*) of Venice.<sup>16</sup>

In Venetian territory, where prosperous urban centers and strong trading links offered economic opportunities, the position of Jews varied between the city, the mainland empire, and the maritime empire (*stato da mar*).<sup>17</sup> Under the terms of a succession of temporary charters or *condotte* Venice began to admit Jews to the city to lend money to Christians at interest in the wake of the Fourth Genoese War, the War of Chioggia (1378-81). However, an improvement in the economic situation led to the expulsion of Jews from the city in 1397 and in 1402 all Jews (except those on legal business) were permitted only fifteen days’ residence in the city every four months. Decrees were issued limiting contact between Christians and Jews and enforcing distinguishing signs on all Jews, even those who were allowed to stay in Venice and act as doctors. Jewish religious activities in the city were also restricted and although in 1464 Venice allowed up to ten Jews to praise God with psalms and prayers in rented houses it was not until a few years after the ghetto was set up in 1516 that synagogues were built in the city.<sup>18</sup>

Like their metropolitan counterparts, the Jews who inhabited the mainland empire were also reliant on special privileges, local agreements or *condotte* which stigmatized them, regulated their contacts with Christians, and restricted their

occupations, largely to moneylending or second-hand clothes dealing. Like Venice these communities could revoke local agreements with Jews and expel them following appeals to higher courts and other bodies. During the second half of the century councils in the cities of the mainland empire, often at the urging of mendicant preachers, also attempted to circumvent the supposedly pernicious influence of Jews on the poor by setting up Christian lending banks known as *monte di pietà*. One striking symptom, or cause, of their marginalization in these areas was the spread of the blood libel from German lands, notably neighbouring Trent, with accusations of ritual murder made at Portobuffolè, near Treviso (in 1480), Vicenza (1486), and possibly in nearby Marostica (ca. 1486).<sup>19</sup>

Jews formed more ancient and permanent communities in parts of the Venetian maritime empire, especially on the island of Crete (acquired in 1204-18) where they built a number of synagogues, engaged in a broad range of occupations, and exercised communal government under the watchful eye of the Venetian duke and his councillors.<sup>20</sup> Like the Jews of the mainland empire, those who inhabited the maritime empire were subject to local laws and Venetian decrees and could also have recourse to courts of appeal in the metropole. In these judgments and more generally in its treatment of Jews throughout the empire Venice sought pragmatically to maintain its economic priorities and to balance these with the pursuit of internal peace and stability by controlling Jewish activities and restricting their contact with Christians. Accordingly, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the Venetian authorities attempted to demarcate and limit the extent of the Jewish property and living space on Crete, especially in the main town of Candia, by physical and legal means.<sup>21</sup> Venetian legislation prohibited Jews from owning property outside of their Jewish quarter and also imposed the distinguishing and stigmatizing yellow badge.<sup>22</sup>

In sum, Jews were unable to gain any measure of citizenship by means of permanent residence in the city of Venice itself. Moreover, as direct subjects of the republic the limited forms of local citizenship granted to them in the empire were weakened by exemption from local taxes and by the imposition of direct fiscal demands by Venice. Finally, as *perfidii* within Christian society they were treated with general suspicion and were regarded as far from *fedeli nostri* or loyal subjects of Venice.<sup>23</sup> Around the middle of the fifteenth century Jews in the Venetian mainland empire also experienced a widespread degradation in their legal and social conditions.<sup>24</sup> In 1442 the local council, Venetian *podestà* (rector) and *provveditori* (commissioners) of Treviso, which was a major center for Jews in the *terraferma* during the first half of the century, decided by to ban for fifteen years all *condotte* which allowed Jews to act as bankers and moneylenders.<sup>25</sup> In Vicenza from 1443-45 the activities of bankers declined and second-hand clothes dealers were faced with greater restrictions on their activities, while in nearby Feltre a key *condotta* was not renewed and they largely disappeared from the records after 1447.<sup>26</sup> In the same year in Verona the authorities agreed to expel Jewish moneylenders from the city and displace them to other parts of the region.<sup>27</sup> In 1446 in Padua, another major center for the Jewish population, the local authorities, including the archbishop, debated the question of Jewish moneylending in the city and in 1455 decided to ban moneylenders.<sup>28</sup>

Reinhold Mueller has suggested that, in addition to papal pronouncements and mendicant preaching, both the ecclesiastical personnel and patrician rectors who came from the city of Venice to its empire played a key role in debates about the toleration of Jews and attempts to reconcile the salvation of the soul with the salvation of the economy.<sup>29</sup> Foscarini and Morosini can certainly be linked directly to these

discussions and their writings reveal the broad parameters of debates in Venice and its empire about the presence of Jews. An examination of their work can therefore demonstrate how Venetian patricians were among those Italian humanists now combating the perceived Jewish threat with their pens on the basis of the investigation of ancient sources, the adaptation of classical philosophical ideas to local and contemporary concerns, and even by means of direct knowledge of the Hebrew language.

### 3. Humanists and Jews in Renaissance Italy

The fifteenth century was a key moment in the history of humanist attitudes towards Jews in Renaissance Italy. As Daniel Stein Kokin has recently observed, for the first time humanists not only engaged directly with Hebrew texts but also began to appropriate them, “in effect challenging Jewish ‘ownership’ over its own tradition.”<sup>30</sup> Humanists increasingly participated in civic and courtly disputations with Jews over key points of belief, and they not only read the extensive medieval anti-Jewish literature as an aid to their conversionary activities, but they also studied the Hebrew language as a way of gaining access to supposedly Christian truths in Hebrew scripture, rebutting Jewish claims, and promoting the superiority of Christian wisdom and religion.<sup>31</sup>

For example, the Hebrew studies of Ambrogio Traversari (1386-1439) originated in his desire for a reform and renewal of the Church by means of a return to its earliest, uncorrupted state – the “Renaissance nostalgia” ascribed to later northern European humanist scholars of Hebrew by Jerome Friedman.<sup>32</sup> Hebrew formed a part of Traversari’s studies at a time when he had just been appointed general of the

Camaldolese order of hermits, was living in Rome, and planning an active campaign to restore the order to a more holy state.<sup>33</sup> The study of Hebrew and the translation of patristic texts which eloquently spoke against the Jews may therefore be understood as a part of a broader desire to restore wisdom and eloquence and to use those forces to persuade his fellow monks and priests to begin the urgent work of renewing the spirit and body of the Church, as well as to spread the faith and counter heresy in a way enjoined upon him by Pope Martin V (r. 1417-31).<sup>34</sup>

In a similar fashion, the Florentine Giannozzo Manetti (1396-1459) began to learn Hebrew in order to provide a new translation of the Bible which would both confound Jews, who obstinately refused to accept the Christian truths contained there, and provide a more eloquent and correct reading for Christian use.<sup>35</sup> Manetti also drew on patristic authorities, notably Jerome (ca. 347-420) and Eusebius of Caesarea (260/65-339/40), in a work directed against the Jews and outlining the history of the world before and after the incarnation of Christ. Here he distinguished the pious and naturally reasonable early Hebrews from their irrational and inferior Jewish successors.<sup>36</sup> This work may be understood in the context of Manetti's broader humanist cultural aims and his search for patronage at the papal court after he left Florence.<sup>37</sup> Manetti's work seems to have formed a part of Pope Nicholas V's (r. 1447-55) program to emphasize the unity and majesty of the Church and the ethical superiority of Christianity over other faiths, while affirming a papal temporal power modeled on Old Testament examples including Solomon and David.<sup>38</sup>

Humanist engagement with the Jewish tradition was encouraged by the desire to recover ancient and prestigious texts which they believed adumbrated Christian tenets and brought philosophy and theology into closer harmony. For example, the Florentine priest-philosopher Marsilio Ficino (1433-99) sought to reunite philosophy

and religion in his *De Christiana Religione* (1474), a work which appeared in both Italian and Latin and included a number of chapters attacking supposed Talmudic distortions by the faithless Jews and providing enumerations of Old Testament or Sybilline prefigurations of Christ's incarnation and passion by which he intended to prove the divinity of Christ, the Trinity, and of course the superiority of Christianity as the "true religion".<sup>39</sup>

The work of these Florentine and Roman humanists came to the attention of their Venetian counterparts by various means. For example, in November 1479 Ficino sent a copy of his *De Christiana Religione* to the Venetian humanist Antonio Vinciguerra (ca. 1440/46-1502).<sup>40</sup> Vinciguerra seems to have added a range of marginal annotations throughout the book in which he either summarized the contents of the adjacent printed text ("Superstitiones Iudeorum", "Talmut deliramenta"),<sup>41</sup> or added testimonies from the Old Testament prophets which he took to refer to Christ.<sup>42</sup> In 1448-49, when he was serving as Florentine legate in Venice, Giannozzo Manetti engaged in philosophical and theological discussions with two patrician humanists Lauro Querini (ca. 1420-ca. 1475/9) and Pietro Tommasi (1375/80-1458). On this mission Manetti also composed a dialogue on the lifespan of man in which he cited Hebrew manuscript sources.<sup>43</sup> This topic had been addressed by the Hellenized Jew Flavius Josephus (37-ca. 100) in his *Jewish Antiquities* and there was certainly some Venetian interest in the work of this authority by the middle of the century.<sup>44</sup>

Recent research has also revealed that Venetian patrician humanists were themselves engaging the appropriation of Hebrew texts and Jewish learning for Christian purposes. The Venetian patrician humanist Marco Lippomano (ca. 1390-ca. 1446), who was known to Manetti and in correspondence with Traversari, was proficient in Hebrew, sought out Hebrew works and engaged in an epistolary debate

in Hebrew with the Jew Crescas Meir during 1420-22.<sup>45</sup> In the course of this exchange Lippomano (who was then acting as *podestà* in Belluno) requested works of philosophy, mathematics, and the natural sciences. Lippomano's desire for magical works was rebuffed and he subsequently accused his correspondent of deceit, attacked the supposed anthropomorphism of the Talmud, and asserted that the wisest Jews had converted, stating in Hebrew: "It is well known to me that faith and knowledge have long deserted the Jews. Therefore I did not take your words at their face value and I weighed you in the scale for the Jews."<sup>46</sup>

As Lippomano's scathing remarks suggest religious piety, including anti-Jewish sentiment, played a significant role in patrician-dominated Venetian humanism of the fifteenth century.<sup>47</sup> For example, Francesco Barbaro (1390-1454), the preeminent patrician humanist of the first half of the century, encouraged the preaching of mendicant friars including Bernardino da Siena (1380-1444), Alberto Berdini da Sarteano (1385-1450), and Giovanni da Capestrano (1386-1456), and acted as lay patron for the Carthusian monastery of Sant'Andrea del Lido, founded with the support of Bernardino of Siena.<sup>48</sup> Both preachers and monastery attracted the attentions of the most prominent patrician humanists in the city, including Ludovico Foscarini, and were also the source for a number of anti-Jewish texts.<sup>49</sup>

Margaret L. King has suggested that the high social profile and relatively parochial nature of Venetian humanism also ensured that the more challenging, elevating, or even satiric aspects of humanist studies explored elsewhere in Italy, notably in Florence, were absent or relatively marginalized in Venice. The demands of duty to the state and the need to affirm Venetian myths of harmony and stability meant that Venetian patrician humanists usually appealed to Aristotelian and Christian hierarchies and sought to merge ideal structures seamlessly with Venetian

realities. This may have discouraged reflections on the dignity of man or the possibility of change and encouraged a defensive and mythic response to critiques of Venetian lineage, society, or political arrangements. More often than not the individual's needs were subordinated to an overarching vision of the corporate body in a form of *unanimitas* that supposedly reflected the natural order.<sup>50</sup> Patrician humanist writing about Jews ought to be understood in the context of this broader patrician humanist defense of Venetian values which was tested and refined in the face of the growing existential threat of Islam.

#### 4. Ludovico Foscarini and Paolo Morosini: Patrician Humanists in Defense of Christendom

As Seth Parry has recently argued, the Venetian ideal of patriotic patrician *unanimitas* was placed under considerable strain around the middle of the fifteenth century over the question of Venetian policy toward the Ottomans. He suggests that patrician humanists including Ludovico Foscarini and Paolo Morosini were strongly in favor of war against the Ottomans and eloquently supported plans for a pan-European crusade in which Venice would play a key role. This response to the westwards advance of the Ottomans, dramatically marked by the fall of Constantinople in 1453, was shaped by their strong piety and by a humanist reverence for classical Greece which now formed part of the Venetian maritime empire and stood between civilized Christendom and the “faithless” Turks.

Foscarini, Morosini, and other humanists were therefore uneasy about the Veneto-Ottoman peace treaty concluded in 1454 and unhappy with the failure of the Council of Mantua (1459-60) to reach agreement over a crusade. As patricians of

Venice these humanists were often deeply involved in diplomatic negotiations. For example, Foscarini represented Venice at Mantua and was sent to Pope Pius II (r. 1458-64) in 1463-64 to discuss another projected crusade, while Morosini went to Poland and Bohemia in 1463-64 to promote the same crusade. Foscarini's letters reveal how he was caught between his personal desire for a strong and united Christian response to the Turks and a Venetian Senate reluctant to commit to hostilities unless it was in their commercial and imperial interests to do so. Venetian motives in peace and in war (when it finally broke out with the Turks in 1463) were always regarded with suspicion by other states.<sup>51</sup> Pope Pius II, who admired Foscarini's eloquence at Mantua, bitterly remarked of the Venetians on that occasion: "With their lips they favoured a crusade against the Turks but in their hearts they condemned it."<sup>52</sup>

The letters and public declamations of Venetian patrician humanists sought to dispel these suspicions by asserting that the republic's history was marked by the care with which Venetians protected the liberty of Italy and defended religion against internal and external threats. For example, writing after ca. 1467 Morosini highlighted the ways in which Venice had acted selflessly to defend the church, especially in 1172-78 when the doge had reputedly reconciled the pope and emperor, and had more recently agreed to wage holy war against the Turks.<sup>53</sup> Foscarini, stung by the criticism of Venice he heard at Mantua, addressed letters both to Morosini and another correspondent in which he deplored the bloodshed and cruelty of the Turkish assault on Constantinople, attacked Turkish superstition and idolatry, and wrote about the need for the secular princes of Europe to unite against the Turkish threat and retake Constantinople.<sup>54</sup> Foscarini also had a view to reinforcing the high-minded sense that Venice only went to war for the sake of religion and in defense of the faith, and he

made some effort to encourage the humanist Flavio Biondo (1392-1463) to write a history of Venice that would exalt its men and institutions and inspire their descendants. He advised this humanist to write of the “best, strongest, and wisest” men and in the first place to mention those “who departed from this life into sanctity and are owed greater glory than gilded shrines.”<sup>55</sup>

As Gianni Zippel argued in his study of Ludovico Foscari’s embassy to Genoa in 1449-50 this attempted harmonization of sacred and secular concerns marked the careers of Venetian humanist patricians around the middle of the fifteenth century to the extent that their political outlook was imbued with a missionary zeal that seemed to arise from meditation on the example of St Paul.<sup>56</sup> This may be going too far, but Foscari’s letters and other writings certainly reveal him to be a pious man with a veneration for good laws and virtuous political behavior, while at the same time deeply hostile to the spread of vice and discord. To a correspondent who suggested that deceit might be employed to aid the state he invoked the wisdom of both Cicero (“it is not possible to separate the honest from the useful”) and St Ambrose (ca. 340-97) to the effect that no action which endangered the soul was useful to men.<sup>57</sup> In the Senate Foscari deplored the greed and cruelty shown by troops in Venetian service against the Sforza of Milan, prayed that the people of the *terraferma* might be spared, and encouraged one man embedded with the troops led by the *condottiero* Jacopo Piccinino (1423-65) to complete a commentary on the war that might provide instruction in the most correct form of military discipline.<sup>58</sup>

Venetian humanist writing of this kind could easily be dismissed as a cynical justification of the expansionist policies and self-interested diplomacy of Doge Francesco Foscari (r. 1423-57).<sup>59</sup> However, the comments of Morosini and Foscari about the urgent need to unite, strengthen and defend Christendom against a

perfidious, superstitious and bestial external enemy do seem to reflect their personal piety, especially as it is revealed in their writings about an equally dangerous threat supposedly preying on Christian weakness: Jews. Just as the external Islamic threat prompted a strong articulation of the need for a crusade which was often expressed in the course of diplomatic duties, so the internal Jewish threat led Foscarini and Morosini to sharpen their humanist rhetorical tools to combat the Jewish enemy they detected at home and abroad in the course of active service.<sup>60</sup>

##### 5. Lodovico Foscarini's "perpetual war" on the Jews

Besides undertaking sensitive diplomatic missions Ludovico Foscarini also served extensively in Venice's mainland and maritime empires and both his piety and his humanist studies again found expression in the course of these public duties.<sup>61</sup> For example, while serving as the rector in Feltre in 1439-40 Foscarini made a paraphrastic translation of the martyrdom of the local patrons Victor and Corona. In this case not only did he append to the work his compilation of municipal laws but he also embellished the martyrs' tomb with marble columns, gilding, and friezes.<sup>62</sup> Foscarini asserted that Christian martyrs merited more attention than pagan authors and his devotion to Victor and Corona was persistent for he was invoking their aid over a decade later.<sup>63</sup> Similarly, after Foscarini served as castellan of Modon in 1442 one grateful subject claimed that he had not only strengthened and repaired the walls of this key Venetian fortress and port in the Aegean, but had also ensured just rule with his legal expertise and knowledge of philosophy, and had created popular harmony in the manner of the emperors Constantine I (r. 324-37), Theodore I (r. 1205-21/22), and Thomas (Palaiologos?) (1409-65) with an almost paternal humanity

and love for the people under his sway.<sup>64</sup> As *podestà* in Verona during 1450-51 he engaged in debates about the responsibility for original sin with the local humanist Isotta Nogarola (1418-66), and on his return to the city in 1456 as captain welcomed the leisure the post afforded him to pursue his scholarly interests.<sup>65</sup> Finally, struggling to suppress vicious behavior and civil discord as lieutenant in the Friuli during 1461-62 he turned for relief to more elevated disputes with the most erudite men about points of learning, and especially history. A stream of classical texts by Herodotus (ca. 484-ca. 425 BCE), Thucydides (ca. 460-ca. 400 BCE), and Appian of Alexandria (ca. 95-ca. 165), as well as works by patristic authors, was requested from the superb library of Guarnerio d'Artegna (ca. 1410-66) in San Daniele del Friuli.<sup>66</sup>

Foscarini expressed his piety and learning, and drew on his experiences in the service of Venice forcefully in a letter about the Jews written in ca. 1451-52 (when he was serving in Verona) to a fellow patrician Antonio Gradenigo, then acting as Venetian representative or syndic for the Levant. In this letter Foscarini discussed Gradenigo's reports of his investigation of the supposed Jewish ritual crucifixion of lambs on the island of Crete and to news of the Jewish defacement of images of saints on a Christian house which they had bought there.<sup>67</sup> In responding to these alarming reports from Crete Foscarini invoked many conventional anti-Jewish images. For example, he attacked the Jews as "dogs" who had crucified Christ, lived in darkness, and never tired of causing harm to Christians. He then quickly pivoted to the Jews' supposed thirst for Christian blood, by alleging that they had crucified a Christian slave, before finally launching into a litany of incidents which to his mind both proved Jewish perfidy and underlined Venetian piety and probity.

The Cretan incident to which Foscarini was responding has hitherto been reconstructed in a partial or somewhat confused fashion due the poor or fragmentary

state of the archival material.<sup>68</sup> The main facts of the case can now be more clearly established with reference to contemporary sources. On 3 February 1451 the doge wrote to the duke of Crete and his captain noting that the syndic Antonio Gradenigo had informed the Venetian council (or rather court) of the Forty (*Quarantia*) that the Jews of Candia were suspected of crucifying a lamb (*agnello*) on Good Friday, an act “in extremo obrobrio dela religione christiana” (since this was a blasphemous reference to the lamb of God, Jesus Christ). Around this time the doge encouraged Jews and Christians to provide further details of this matter, and he offered a reward of 2000 gold ducats to informants.<sup>69</sup> The syndics proceeded to examine many witnesses about the “publica fama” of this Jewish ritual sacrifice and among those named by a female convert was Abbas del Medigo, son of Moses, who was supposed to have crucified a lamb in his house at night.<sup>70</sup> On 17 November 1451, following a decision in the Senate, the doge ordered the imprisonment of Moses del Medigo, with his sons Abbas and Moses, together with nine others, until they could be shipped to Venice. At the same time he ordered the syndics to bring the star witness in liberty to the city.<sup>71</sup>

It seems that two of the Jews brought to Venice died as a result of torture there, but in July 1452 most of the others were absolved by the Great Council and returned to Crete.<sup>72</sup> However, Abbas del Medigo was accused of attempting to bribe an official and then condemned to a further year in prison for placing his urinal beneath the crucifix in his cell and for using blasphemous words against the Virgin Mary and Christ.<sup>73</sup> His case was not considered by the Great Council until May 1454 when it attempted to expedite a decision by lowering the quorum necessary for executing justice.<sup>74</sup> Accordingly, the Great Council met on 7 June, condemned another

councillor for falling prey to Jewish bribery, and, as the doge wrote to the duke of Crete on 18 July, absolved Abbas son of Moses “[i]nculpatus di crucifixione agni.”<sup>75</sup>

A combination of circumstances, ranging from personal animosity to long-term religious and political tensions on Crete can help to explain the origins of this murky affair. In the first place, Antonio Gradenigo was evidently a determined adversary, proud of his office, and highly suspicious of Jews.<sup>76</sup> For example, he was accused of fraudulent and malicious actions as syndic, was well known to the Venetian authorities for unjustly detaining Cretan Jews and Christians, and for slandering and threatening his enemies.<sup>77</sup> He also had something of a history with Abbas and Moses del Medigo. In 1448 Abbas del Medigo of Candia had been arrested for various misdeeds and following a report by Gradenigo and his fellow syndic, as well the *provveditori*, he was convicted, condemned to one year in prison, fined 2000 *lire* and sentenced to perpetual exile (later reduced to five years) from Crete and all Venetian territories in the Levant. At the same time it was agreed that Moses del Medigo, son of Abbas, would remain imprisoned with one other Jew.<sup>78</sup> The nature of these misdeeds is suggested by the demand made by the Venetian authorities in December 1448 to both Abbas and Moses del Medigo, present before the Forty in Venice, and to six absent Jews (four of whom also featured in the ducal order for arrest of November 1451) to sell or face the confiscation of property which they had acquired outside of the limits of the Jewish quarter in the town of Rettimo on Crete in contravention of prohibitions on Jews in the Levant holding immovable goods outside these areas. Therefore, it seems as if Abbas and Moses were held in Venice during 1448-49 (with the former in exile from the island until 1453) and were vulnerable to new and damaging charges. Gradenigo, who encountered a comparable case of Jewish property fraud elsewhere on the island and discovered that the Jews in question

fictively sold the properties, may have found the rumors of blasphemous crucifixions in Candia too good an opportunity to miss as he worked to put the Jews, and especially the wealthy Del Medigo family, in their place.<sup>79</sup>

The Cretan affair also highlights political and religious tensions played out in regional and international arenas. In the first place, it demonstrates the importance of the legal system and Venetian representatives in channeling or institutionalizing conflict in the Venetian empire, especially in Crete where the judicial network was “thickest.”<sup>80</sup> Local disputes might be referred up to the rector, or to the duke of Crete’s court and then directed to Venetian appeal courts like the Forty, or by what was called *intromissione* to powerful bodies like the Senate and Great Council. In fact, during this period Cretan cases predominated among the appeals to Venice originating in the maritime empire. This fact is highly suggestive of the nature of Crete’s colonized society for Veneto-Cretan citizens maintained strong ties with Venice, often through marriage, they controlled the local judiciary, and were familiar with Venetian law and institutions.<sup>81</sup>

The case is also suggestive of the religious and ethnic tensions among Venetian officials, Veneto-Cretans, Greek Orthodox, and Jewish groups which local institutions and appellate structures usually contained or stabilized.<sup>82</sup> Jews in the Venetian colonies were subject to vestimentary regulations, discriminatory taxation, and were required to reside within a specific neighbourhood. However, they could also take part in lucrative overseas trade, and unlike other non-Latin populations were permitted to set up their own communal organisations and institutions, which the oligarchy of wealthy Jewish families on Crete could employ to intervene with Venetian officers.<sup>83</sup> These inequalities had led to Greek resentment toward Jews as a specially favored group from the thirteenth century onwards.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, the years

around 1450 were especially difficult ones for Greeks since Venetian support for the union of Latin Christian and Greek Orthodox churches at the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1437-39) and a preference for pro-union clergy stoked up the resentment of Greek orthodox clergy who in 1451-52 saw their candidate for *protopapas* (archbishop) on the island displaced and accused of heresy.<sup>85</sup> The conspiracy of Sifi Vlastos and other Greeks against Venetian rule revealed these divisions with some violence in 1453-54 and again in 1460-62.<sup>86</sup>

Tensions on the island were also exacerbated by the fact that both Veneto-Cretans and Greeks often relied upon Jewish moneylenders to meet demands for ordinary and extraordinary payments to cover the expenses of war in Italy and in the Aegean.<sup>87</sup> The conflict between Jewish creditors and debtors, some of whom could not return to the island while their debt was outstanding, flared up in 1415-20 and again in 1449 when Venice was obliged to send officials to the island to try to arrange agreements between feudatory nobles and Jews to settle the matter.<sup>88</sup> It was also observed by the Venetians that some rich Jews were attempting to evade the required extraordinary contributions to Venice by claiming to be doctors.<sup>89</sup> Therefore, the recourse to a variant of the blood libel, which had been known on the island in the previous century, was symptomatic of long-standing tensions and suspicions between different religious and ethnic groups.<sup>90</sup> At the same time, the ultimate dismissal of the case against the Cretan Jews underlines the strength of the appellate system and indicates the more pragmatic side of official Venetian treatment of Jews in its territories.

The anti-Jewish sentiments Foscarini expressed in his letter to Gradenigo were probably informed by mendicant preaching and medieval anti-Jewish literature.<sup>91</sup> They were also shaped by the contents of Foscarini's copy of John Chrysostom's (ca.

349-407) homilies *Adversus Iudaeos* (translated by Ambrogio Traversari in 1423-24) with their attribution to the Jews of Christ's crucifixion and sacrifices of sheep and rams, and their characterization of the Jews as dogs now living in the shadows and admitting no light.<sup>92</sup> He probably also had in mind some infamous cases of the blood libel that had occurred in northern Europe during the previous two centuries.<sup>93</sup>

However, what is especially notable in the context of this article is that in this letter Foscarini also appealed to the traditional patrician humanist narratives about Venice's role in the defence of Christianity and revealed the consonance of spiritual and secular concerns, especially in relation to the governance of the empire. Specifically, he was prompted to recall, or invoke episodes connected with his own service throughout the empire: as *podestà* and captain in Feltre, lieutenant in the Friuli (in 1439), castellan at Modon, and *podestà* in Vicenza (1446-47).<sup>94</sup>

Foscarini's views were presented as part of the discourse about Venetian religious and political strength which was employed in relation to the defense of Italy and Christendom against the Turks. Foscarini explained to Gradenigo that having brought this "impious sacrifice" (*sacrilega ymolatione*) to light nobody could doubt or deny that the most wicked Jews everywhere sacrificed lambs and wished to bring harm to Christians, just as they had crucified Christ. In support of his views on the Jewish desire to re-enact the crucifixion Foscarini alleged that in Pontus (which until 1461 lay within the Byzantine Greek empire of Trebizond) the Jews crucified a Christian slave bought from pirates and then sought refuge from justice with the Turks. Foscarini presented this case as a particular affront and cause for despair since it had taken place in Christian territory, and he noted that Venice had borne the banner of Christ against the infidel for five hundred years, and had often supported the tottering Church, for example by acting as a "port and refuge" for popes fleeing

their enemies.<sup>95</sup> Therefore, in Venetian jurisdiction it was not injurious or uncalled for to attack such a wickedness which damaged humanity, neglected power, and violated divine majesty. In sum, those who committed such crime in a state should be dealt with, and in this case ought to have been executed.

In fact, the state, or rather the Senate, did move against the Jews who had removed saintly images from a formerly Christian house and Foscarini recorded with satisfaction that it had absolved all decrees (presumably permitting the sale or Jewish occupation), had recommended the restitution of the house to faithful Christians, had ordered the building of a church, and had prohibited with grave censure the house being ceded to Jews in the future. The assertion of authority over Jews in this way differs from cases elsewhere in Venetian territory including Treviso, where in 1439 a Jew who had removed Christian images was reprimanded by the ecclesiastical authority of the inquisition. The Cretan action is much more in line with analogous cases elsewhere in Italy, notably in Mantua, where Jews who had removed Christian images, even with ecclesiastical approval, were condemned by the prince in 1495 and a church built over the site in question.<sup>96</sup>

Foscarini also noted in his letter that Gradenigo was unable to put his case to the Venetian Senate directly. However, it was not with dialectical arguments and conjectures but with the example of a “divine miracle” that Foscarini felt he could change minds about the matter. Foscarini recounted a miracle that had come to his attention (presumably when he was lieutenant in the Friuli) during a council against the Jews at Udine and had led him to declare “perpetual war” on the Jews. On this occasion a poor man of faith testified that Jews bought lambs for crucifixion and following investigation Foscarini discovered a certain Iausco who had sold a lamb to a Jew for these purposes. The day after this sale, which happened to be the day of the

Lord's Passion, Iausco's entire flock of sheep was devoured by a wolf. The following year Iausco tried to protect his sheep, but on the day of the summer solstice wolves burrowed into his barn and killed his flock. In the third year Iausco and all of his family involved in the sale died of plague. That the Jews were even more dangerous than wolves and that they endangered the Christian flock, as Chrysostom had reminded his audience, hardly needed spelling out more clearly.<sup>97</sup>

Foscarini went on to muse that patience was rather a sort of madness among those who would allow their enemies to turn to such perversions and to allow synagogues to stand where boys learnt such dogmas, blasphemed against God and where, as Chrysostom alleged, demons congregated.<sup>98</sup> Jewish clapping, choirs and music could be seen and heard in Christian cities on Easter Sunday; the Jews issued perverted readings of the prophets against Christians or interpreted holy scripture in the worst possible way; and unlike the Roman king Numa Pompilius (r. 715-673 BCE), who had called for the Sybilline books to be burnt to eradicate superstition, princes now conceded Christian houses to Jews and permitted the construction of synagogues.<sup>99</sup> Such actions, Foscarini argued, fomented pernicious doctrines, overturned the faith, and gave birth to the oppressors of morals. Christians hated idols and did not tolerate the temples of other gods, and the magical arts were prohibited, but Jews who opposed Christian law were allowed to blaspheme. In contrast, Foscarini asserted that he acted with the consent of the Senate (and presumably during his time as *podestà* in Vicenza) to expel Jews from the town of Marostica since their synagogue stood near the public square and their "curses" (*maledicta*) were audible.<sup>100</sup> Foscarini then concluded his letter by invoking the saints he had encountered as rector in Feltre many years previously, asserting that the martyrs Victor and Corona would come to Gradenigo's aid in the course of his pious work.<sup>101</sup>

More prosaically and inaccurately he also claimed that “for you the support of the Senate will not be lacking.”<sup>102</sup>

Foscarini’s employment of anti-Jewish piety in defense of civic values, is suggested by further contextual evidence from the *terraferma* and indicated in one more surviving letter written within a decade of the Cretan incident.<sup>103</sup> In this letter Foscarini praised the newly elected doge, either Pasquale Malipiero (r. 1457-62) or Cristoforo Moro (r. 1462-71), and exhorted him to follow the examples of Numa Pompilius (once again), who converted Rome from superstition, and the “most holy” Doge Antonio Venier (r. 1382-1400) and to issue a decree against the presence of Jewish doctors in the city. Foscarini had heard a recent report of a Jewish doctor taunting patrician matrons about the Christian belief in the Host. In addition, Fantino Dandolo (1379-1459), bishop of Padua (and a former archbishop of Crete), had passed on to Foscarini news of a certain Rabbi Moses who had allegedly killed 1500 Christians with his medical skills. Foscarini therefore described Jewish doctors as harmful to the bodies and souls of Christians, alleged that the Talmud obliged Jews to harm Christians at Easter and called on canon law to come to the aid of Venetian laws. Christians, he said, were putting themselves in harm’s way by consulting Jewish doctors and for the sake of their souls they should turn to the prophets, apostles, and martyrs. He held up as an example Ermolao Donà (ca. 1390-1450) who chose to suffer from his wounds rather than be treated by a Jewish doctor.<sup>104</sup> Foscarini wished to voice his concerns about the presence of Jewish doctors in the city in the Senate. While there is no evidence that he did so, his fears were certainly shared by others including the Paduan College of Physicians which asserted that the Talmud instructed doctors to harm Christian patients, and by the Church, which suspected that Jewish doctors obstructed access to the sacraments.<sup>105</sup>

## 6. Paolo Morosini's "divine declarations" of the Divinity of Christ

Ludovico Foscarini's outraged reflections on the dangers of tolerating Jews in Christian society were recorded just as debates about the presence of Jews in Venice and the Veneto intensified.<sup>106</sup> The hardening of attitudes can be related to Pope Eugenius IV's (r. 1431-47) bull *Dudum ad nostram* (1442), which forbade Christian contact with Jews, and can be linked to mendicant preaching against the toleration of Jewish moneylenders and in favor of the new *monte di pietà* or Christian bank which lent money to Christians at no interest.<sup>107</sup> In the course of the fifteenth century the citizens of the empire in need of usurious services not only consulted their bishops and sought assurances from Rome that the presence of Jews would not lead to excommunication but also established a *monte di pietà*.<sup>108</sup>

The somewhat confused legal and theological situation prompted action at the highest level in Venice. In 1463 Doge Moro was moved by the Council of Ten to request a judgment about the presence of Jews in Venetian territory from Cardinal Bessarion (1403-72), the papal legate who was then preaching in the city in support of a crusade against the Turks. Following three close votes of the Ten it was eventually agreed to promulgate the cardinal's letter stating that Jews ought to be allowed to reside undisturbed in Venetian territory according to local agreements and that they should be permitted to have contact with Christians. Bessarion hoped that such contact would lead to Jewish conversions. The Council of Ten probably hoped to stabilize the relationship between Christians and Jews in its territories by lifting the threat of excommunication from subject cities for harboring Jewish bankers and mitigating the threats and violence against Jews.<sup>109</sup>

However, it is clear that the patricians of the Ten were sharply divided on the matter, that for the Church the Jewish presence remained an “unresolved question”, while for lay governors it entailed an array of conflicting legal advice.<sup>110</sup> Venetian territory became a veritable “crossroads of anti-Jewish disputes in the fifteenth century” as members of the law faculty at the University of Padua attempted to untangle the traditions of canon and civil law on the matter.<sup>111</sup> For example, Giovanni Francesco Pavini (ca. 1424-84) wrote an influential set of *consilia* objecting to papal toleration of Jewish moneylenders. He presented the Jews as a “constant danger” and claimed that they were blasphemers of Christ and true “slaves” (*servi*) and consequently ought to be stripped of the usual legal protection.<sup>112</sup> A number of Paduan jurists shared Pavini’s view of the dangers of Jewish moneylending and Christian contact with Jews. For example, Alessandro Nievo’s (1417-84) work on the status of contracts with Jews forbade lending.<sup>113</sup> He wrote in explicit opposition to the tradition of jurist Bartolus de Saxoferrato (1313-57) (represented by the contemporary jurist Angelo di Castro)<sup>114</sup> by which interaction or *commercium* between Jews and Christians was considered licit. Nievo expressed disgust at the tolerant opinions of his fellow legal experts and affirmed that the Jews sinned in acting as usurers and that the Church had every right to censure them.<sup>115</sup>

Paolo Morosini, the friend and confidant both to legally-trained Ludovico Foscarini and to Cardinal Bessarion, was probably aware of these debates.<sup>116</sup> Morosini’s *Opus de Aeterna Temporalique Christi Generatione in Iudaicae Improbationem Perfidiae Christianaeque Religionis Gloriam Divinis Enuntiationibus Comprobata*, composed during 1464-71, contains echoes of these discussions which may relate to his election to the Council of Ten in 1464 just as it was debating Cardinal Bessarion’s judgment on the Jews. It’s not clear whether Morosini accepted

the post but the following year he served as *podestà* in Treviso and there protected the interests of debtors who had raised money on pawns.<sup>117</sup>

Internal textual evidence also suggests that the book can be related to Morosini's role in 1463-64 and again in 1471 in promoting a crusade and defending Venice at a time when the republic was accused of failing to respond to the Turkish threat.<sup>118</sup> Morosini addressed his work to the Venetian Pope Paul II (r. 1464-71) whose adoption of the name of the Jewish convert Saul of Tarsus was signaled in the opening line. Morosini not only praised Pope Paul's piety and humanity but expressed the hope that he would emulate his uncle Pope Eugenius IV's diligence with the infidels and raise up the sinking Christians and support the wretched faithful. Morosini asserted that Hungary and all faithful nations prostrate before the enemy of the cross now rejoiced that Heaven had sent such a defender of the faith. He claimed that their spirit and hope were now daily reinvigorated and that they hoped to return to the banner of the cross and drive the enemy back to its proper borders for the sake of Christian peace.<sup>119</sup>

However, at the heart of Morosini's "gift" to the pope, the product of "no small labor from sacred texts", was his demonstration of what the Jews obstinately denied: that Jesus Christ was God and the son of God. As he explained in the first, eleven-page, section, it was from this plurality of divine persons and from Christ's passion and death that the remission of infinite human sins could flow. In this tightly constructed, if unoriginal, exposition of Aristotelian-Thomist metaphysics and Christian articles of faith Morosini moved from a statement about the qualities of God as prime mover to the creation of man as flesh and soul, the causes of all things, and the acts of will by which man sought his highest end. Morosini presented a deterministic system ordered by God from eternity in which the effects of his

reprobation and merits of grace were felt by man, culminating in the incarnation and the hope this offered for the redemption of the penitent faithful.<sup>120</sup>

The second, larger, section of the book provided an array of Old Testament proofs of the truth of Christ's divinity and the triune nature of God. Morosini attacked the Jews for denying divine plurality, noting that the Old Testament made this plain, and he confounded Jewish assertions that God was merely made up of three properties: divine wisdom, goodness, and power. Morosini claimed that the Jews had "perverted the words of the living God" (citing Jer. 23:36) and argued that the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, and notably the opening lines of the book of Genesis, contained Christian mysteries. Morosini noted here that the word for God used in the Hebrew text was "heloym" (*Elohim*), and since many plural masculine nouns in Hebrew take the -im ending he asserted that a plurality of divinity was contained within this noun usually, but not always, used in a grammatically singular sense in scripture. Morosini also observed that the divine plurality was further signified by the use of *Elohim* with the Tetragrammaton, the symbol of pure divine essence, and he cited Old Testament passages which reflected this meaning of YHVH as well as the triune nature of divine essence.<sup>121</sup> Finally, he searched the Old Testament to show how a number of words conjugated in plural form might be used with nouns or pronouns in singular, as for example in the passage: "Trahe me post te curremus ..." ("Draw me, we will run after thee ...", Song of Solomon, 1:4), before giving examples of Old Testament texts which supposedly foreshadowed Christ.<sup>122</sup>

Morosini's knowledge of the Old Testament prefigurations of Christ was forcefully indicated in the third and longest section of the book, which comprised an encyclopedic assembly of prefigurations of the life, passion, resurrection, ascension, and second coming of Christ prefaced by a discussion of the reasonable basis for

grasping the truth of the incarnation and an attack on the Jews for failing to accept the import of the miracles which they themselves had witnessed.<sup>123</sup> Here, as in previous sections, Morosini invoked “Chaldean” (Hebrew or Syriac) scripture and refuted Hebrew glosses, including the opinion of “Rabi Salomon”, or Solomon ben Isaac of Troyes or Rashi (1040-1105) the medieval commentator on the Bible and Babylonian Talmud.<sup>124</sup> Morosini’s range of sources was restricted to those found in the Old Testament except in a penultimate section where he introduced Sybilline prophecies described by the early Christian apologist Lactantius (ca. 250-ca. 325) and others by means of which pagans turned away from demons and idols toward the faith, and the faithlessness of the Jews was once again proven.<sup>125</sup> The “evidence of the ancients” (*testimonio priscorum*) derived from Lactantius also included Hermes Trismegistus who in the fifteenth century was reputed to be an ancient Egyptian high-priest in possession of wisdom of both philosophical and religious value.<sup>126</sup> In his concluding remarks Morosini turned from strictly textual matters to an assertion that the truth of Christianity was signified by the destruction of the cult of idols, the global success of the message a poor man like Jesus Christ, the evidence of miracles, and the conversion of princes. All of this, he concluded in the nearest approach to a revelation of personal fervor, underscored the obstinacy of the Jews who refused to accept the truth.<sup>127</sup>

Morosini’s work offers a case study in the way that broader Christian concerns about Jewish faithlessness and denial of the Trinity could be presented with a Venetian patrician humanist accent. In the first place, the bulk of his book drew heavily on established medieval authorities for its polemical firepower. Morosini may have read Petrus Alfonsi’s *Dialogus contra Iudaeos* (ca. 1109), which existed in a large number of manuscripts.<sup>128</sup> He may also have known the *Pugio Fidei contra*

*Mauros et Iudaeos* (ca. 1280) written by the convert Ramón Martí, which demonstrated a thorough knowledge of rabbinical material and by plucking “pearls” from the Jewish “dungheap” showed how the Trinity and other Christian tenets could be proven on the basis of Hebrew texts.<sup>129</sup>

Morosini was most obviously indebted to the work of Nicholas of Lyra (ca. 1270-1349) whose *Quaestio de Adventu Christi* (ca. 1309) contained much of the same material cited by Martí, focused on Hebrew readings to elucidate matters like the Trinity, and was widely read by medieval writers and Italian humanists.<sup>130</sup> This debt is most clear in the second section of Morosini’s book where the discussion of *Elohim*, the order of Old Testament proofs and wording of the explications, and the references to Chaldean translations, “Rabbi Salomon”, and Hebrew glosses all closely followed that of Nicholas.<sup>131</sup> Morosini was generally much less concerned than Nicholas or other medieval writers on the subject about the history of the Jews and their terrible qualities (although he attacked their obstinacy) than with Christ’s divinity and its sacramental implications.<sup>132</sup>

Morosini’s contribution to debates about the presence of Jews in Venice and the Veneto not only struck at the ethical and theological heart of the matter for all Christians concerned to understand and ensure salvation but also did so in a way best calculated to appeal to fellow patricians, especially humanists. Venetian humanists were notably willing to tackle philosophical and theological questions including the Trinity, and during the fifteenth century typically adhered to an expansive Aristotleian-Thomist metaphysical hierarchical vision of the universe to which society should conform and within which individual passions would be subordinated to the communal ideal and the iron rule of law.<sup>133</sup> Although markedly conservative in outlook and expressed in a drily Aristotelian fashion inculcated in the Rialto school of

philosophy in Venice or at the University of Padua, this “pyramid of crystal abstractions” was also open to encyclopedic elaboration and systematization of the sort exhibited by Morosini, but also by humanists beyond Venice such as Marsilio Ficino.<sup>134</sup>

Morosini’s work also contributed to contemporary debates about Jews taking place beyond the confines of Venice. In September 1476 Prince-Bishop Hinderbach of Trent (1418-86) wrote to thank Morosini for the “little book or treatise” in which the Catholic faith was confirmed and “Jewish perfidy” was execrated on the authority of the concordance of Old and New Testaments. In the same letter he went on to promote the miracles associated with Simon of Trent, the boy supposedly martyred by the Jews of the city.<sup>135</sup> As Hinderbach wrote, the Franciscan preacher Fra Michele (da Carcano) (1427-84) of Milan had been preaching in Trent and when the friar arrived in Venice he would be able to confirm the veracity of the miracles to Morosini, and to the people and Senate of the city.<sup>136</sup>

Hinderbach had good reason to seize on Morosini’s work – he was frustrated by the fact that Pope Sixtus IV (r. 1471-84) had commissioned an inquiry into the conduct of the trial of the Jews in Trent and the cult developing around Simon’s body and relics displayed in a local church. Moreover, in April 1475 the Venetian Doge Pietro Mocenigo (r. 1474-76) had written to his rectors about the violent actions and threats made against Jews travelling through Venetian territory provoked by the sanguinary tales from Trent and inflamed by the sermons of certain preachers, notably Franciscans. The doge ordered his rectors to protect the Jews from this violence and to move against the hostile preachers. During the subsequent two years similar admonitions were issued, with additional injunctions against the spread of texts and images related to the Tridentine incident.<sup>137</sup> Hinderbach hoped to reverse both papal

and Venetian policies with regard to the spread of the cult of Simon, and whatever the official line it is evident that a number of Venetian patricians supported him in this endeavor.<sup>138</sup>

A sense that the moral health of the city depended on the exercise of Christian, humanist, and civic virtues that denied a place for Jews is also evident from a public inscription in Vicenza recording that among the good works of Antonio Bernardo (ca. 1430-ca. 1504), the Venetian *podestà* (who had taught civil law at Padua) was the expulsion of the Jews from the city and the establishment of a *monte di pietà* in 1486.<sup>139</sup> Antonio Bernardo was a persistent enemy of Jews: in 1492 he aided the Franciscan preacher Bernardino da Feltre (1439-94) in his work ejecting a Jewish moneylender and erecting a Christian bank in Padua, and in September 1500 at a meeting of the Council of Ten in Venice he once again spoke against the Jews and called for them to be chased out of the world.<sup>140</sup> It is also likely that feelings in Vicenza were stirred up by the supposed death of another child at the hands of the Jews in neighbouring Marostica.<sup>141</sup> The publications of the local suffragan bishop the Venetian Pietro Bruto (ca. 1430-91) outlined the blood libel, asserted that Christ was the Messiah on the basis of a similar range of scriptural and medieval authorities employed by Morosini, but also linked the expulsion of Jews from the city with the Platonic virtues of good government.<sup>142</sup>

## 7. Conclusion

Public service and civic piety in Renaissance Venice were supported with newly translated or edited ancient texts, humanist panegyrics, and appeals to classicized virtues. As the leading Venetian patrician humanist Francesco Barbaro pointed out to

Antonio Gradenigo in a letter consoling him for the attacks of jealous enemies just as he started as syndic for the Levant in 1446: “You have been a patron and defender of the law ... for Cicero called this ‘the foundation of our liberty, the fountain-head of justice. Within the law are reposed the mind and heart, the judgement and the conviction of the state [*civitas*]. The state [*civitas*] without law would be like the human body without mind – unable to employ the parts which are to it as sinews, blood, and limbs. The magistrates who administer the law, the jurors who interpret it – all of us in short – obey the law to the end that we may be free.’”<sup>143</sup>

This article has shown that public service and civic piety were also well served by the rhetorical devices of the medieval anti-Jewish literary tradition. Traversari, Manetti, and Ficino explored Hebrew and the works of the patristic authorities in order to burnish this religious and intellectual crusade, or to strengthen papal power. In a similar fashion, patrician humanist engagement with Judaism in Venice was driven by the desire to defend Christendom, to strengthen and promote the glory of Venetian piety and other civic virtues, and to contribute to debates about the presence of Jews in the mainland and maritime empires. In his letters Ludovico Foscarini invoked traditional tropes about Jewish perfidy and evil and proudly recorded his involvement in the expulsion of Jews from Marostica and the saving of a church from Jewish clutches. Paolo Morosini, like Foscarini, drew on medieval texts, such as the work of Nicholas of Lyra, and added classical examples to support and embellish his rhetorical stance. Like them, Bernardo and other Venetian patrician governors viewed the conversion or expulsion of the Jews as the usual, or better part of their governance in the provinces and as a part of Venice’s role in the strengthening of a threatened Christendom.<sup>144</sup>

By ca. 1420 humanists in Venice and elsewhere were beginning to search more deeply and diligently into ancient and Hebrew sources for material useful for the renewal of Christianity and clarification of philosophical truths. However, while Paolo Morosini's Christocentric emphasis and his citation of the Sybilline oracles may point in some respects towards the humanist "incarnationist theology" identified by Charles Dempsey in his study of the Sibyls,<sup>145</sup> neither his work nor that of his fellow Venetian patrician humanists amounts to an especially coherent or original vision of *prisca theologia* comparable to that forming around Ficino or indeed Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-94), although it is worth noting that a copy of Morosini's book was in the latter's library.<sup>146</sup> In the sixteenth century Venice would play a part in the struggle to bring religion and philosophy into greater harmony with reference to the *prisca theologi*, but during the period with which this article has been concerned Venetian patrician humanists found little of value in Hebrew sources, mystical or not.<sup>147</sup>

Instead, the larger importance of the examples provided here lies in the way that they may be seen to embody something of the flexible and socially inflected *virtù*-osity recently suggested by Guido Ruggiero,<sup>148</sup> and as evidence for Christopher Celenza's argument that the mid-fifteenth century was a crucial moment for humanism, when the energy and invention, the "freedom of thought" and "true culture of disputation" of one generation gave way to a more institutionalized and elite world of scholarship.<sup>149</sup> Neither intellectual or social outsiders, the Venetian patrician humanists employed their classicized rhetoric and references, legal knowledge and pious belief in miracles, not to question established institutions and forms of thought but ultimately to strengthen civic morality, promote Venice, and defend Christendom.

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<sup>1</sup> Kokin, 2006; Garin, 1996; Fioravanti, 1987; Fubini; Ruderman, 1988.

<sup>2</sup> King, 1986, 230. The exceptions are Kokin, 2014; Busi and Campanini; Lowry.

<sup>3</sup> King, 1986, 161-92.

<sup>4</sup> On Foscari see *ibid.*, 374-77; *Degli Agostini*, 1:45-107. On Morosini see King, 1986, 412-13; *Degli Agostini*, 2:179-88. See also Kohl, Mozzato, and O'Connell.

<sup>5</sup> Foscari's letters exist in a fifteenth-century scribal copy: Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (hereafter ÖNB), MS Lat. 441, fols. 11<sup>r</sup>-395<sup>v</sup>, and in an eighteenth-century copy in the Bibl. Com., Treviso, MS 85 (not consulted). A microfilm of the former manuscript is available in the Ilardi Microfilm Collection of Renaissance Diplomatic Documents ca. 1450-ca. 1500, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University, reel 1733 (not consulted). See also Picotti, 1909; Gardenal.

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<sup>6</sup> Morosini's work is briefly cited in King, 1986, 413, where it is mistakenly asserted that it was the first book published in Padua. In the sixteenth century it was suggested that the Venetian patrician humanist Lauro Querini had written the (now lost) *Castigationes Haebrorum, Introductio ad Linguam Sanctam, and De Mysterio Numerorum*: Sansovino, 246.

<sup>7</sup> King, 1986, 225-31.

<sup>8</sup> Maxson, especially 1-17; Baker and Maxson.

<sup>9</sup> Limor. On the sense of a Jewish "anomaly" in Italian society see Bonfil, 1.

<sup>10</sup> Frederikson. In ca. 1426-43 Fantino Vallarosso, the Venetian patrician humanist archbishop of Candia (Crete), stated that Jews would convert at Doomsday: Dandolo, fol. 16<sup>r</sup>. On the question of the authorship of this latter text see Peri, 57-62, 66-67. On Vallarosso see King, 1986, 440-41.

<sup>11</sup> For a fifteenth-century assertion that an ancient council of Jews had met and agreed to harm Christians with conspiracies and curses see Bowd and Cullington, 142, 143.

<sup>12</sup> In general see Simonsohn, 1996; Cohen; Chazan. On Jews and moneylending see Luzzati, 1996; Todeschini. Note three rare surviving texts of sermons explicitly delivered "ad iudaeos" by the Dominican (and former inquisitor of Bologna) Lodovico Tosi da Pisa in Chio during Easter Week of 1441, in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Canonici misc. 8, fols. 141<sup>r</sup>-56<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> Simonsohn, 1996.

<sup>14</sup> For a revision of generally optimistic views about the assimilation of Italian Jews during the Renaissance (eg. Shulvass, 1973) see Bonfil. On the challenges of writing a history of Jews in the early modern era see Ruderman, 2010, esp. 1-21.

<sup>15</sup> Simonsohn, 1991; Gow and Griffiths, especially 293-301, where key roles in this change of policy are assigned to Pope Eugenius IV and the Council of Basel.

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- <sup>16</sup> Mueller, 2005, 16-20; Varanini, 2005, 142-45; Gow and Griffiths (quotation at 300).
- <sup>17</sup> Mueller, 2005; Jacoby 1977; idem, 1989.
- <sup>18</sup> Mueller, 1975; Ravid 1987; idem, 2001.
- <sup>19</sup> On the case of Simon of Trent and its repercussions see Esposito and Quaglioni; Hsia, 1992; Treue; Bowd and Cullington.
- <sup>20</sup> Jacoby, 2010; Ankori; Starr.
- <sup>21</sup> Georgopoulou, 1996; eadem, 2001, 192-210.
- <sup>22</sup> Ravid, 1987; idem, 2001.
- <sup>23</sup> Mueller, 2005, 15; Arbel, 2010, 285. On the limited nature of citizenship for Jews in Florentine territories see Gow and Griffiths, especially 290-93.
- <sup>24</sup> For a contemporary Jewish view of this persecution see Shulvass, 1949.
- <sup>25</sup> Möschter, 2005; eadem, 2010.
- <sup>26</sup> Scuro; Melchiorre, 2005; idem, 2011.
- <sup>27</sup> The Senate voted seventy-five to eight in favor of the proposal to expel Jews: Archivio di Stato di Venezia (hereafter ASV), Senato, Terra, reg. 2, fols. 21<sup>v</sup>-22<sup>f</sup> (12 February 1447). See Rovigo; Varanini, 1987; idem, 2005.
- <sup>28</sup> Mueller, 2005, 17.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-23.
- <sup>30</sup> Kokin, 2006, 115.
- <sup>31</sup> Garin; Abulafia; Fioravanti, 1987; Ruderman, 1981, ch. 5.
- <sup>32</sup> Friedman. On Traversari's Hebrew studies see Stinger, 51-52, 131-33, 144-45, 151, 175; Dini-Traversari, document no.4.
- <sup>33</sup> Stinger, 121-22.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

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<sup>35</sup> For his defence of this work see Manetti. On his Hebrew studies see *ibid.*, 195nn3, 6; Da Bisticci, 1:64-65, 485, 486, 504, 534-35; 2:524-25, 557-58, 605-06, 612; Kokin, 2006, 171-225; Dröge, 1992; and *idem*, 1987.

<sup>36</sup> Fioravanti; Fubini, 288-96; and De Petris.

<sup>37</sup> As emphasised by Kokin, 2006, 171-225.

<sup>38</sup> Ettliger.

<sup>39</sup> Ficino, ca. 1474-75, chs. 24-25, 27-33 (quotation at sig. [a2<sup>r</sup>]); *idem*, 1575, 1:9, 11, 12, 15, 17, 30-46, 47, 51-53, 77. On Ficino's desire to unite religion and philosophy in this work see Edelheit, 205-78.

<sup>40</sup> Kristeller, 1996, 250, 252-53, 253n42. The annotated copy of Ficino, ca. 1474-75, with an autograph letter (at fol. 2<sup>v</sup>) from Ficino to Vinciguerra dated at Florence on 10 November 1479 is in Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS XIII.G.40. For a variant of this letter see Ficino, 1975-2013, 4:57. On Vinciguerra see King, 1986, 443-44.

<sup>41</sup> Ficino, ca. 1474-75, ch. 8.

<sup>42</sup> Zechariah 13: 1; Isaiah 2: 20; 64: 1; 45: 8: *ibid.*, ch. 27.

<sup>43</sup> Florence, Bibl. Laurenziana MS Plut. 90, sup. 29, fols. 4<sup>v</sup>, 26<sup>r</sup>, 29<sup>v</sup>; Cagni, 294-95; Manetti, 2014, 41, 44-45. On Tommasi see King, 1986, 434-36. Foscarini was in correspondence with Tommasi: ÖNV, MS Lat. 441, fols. 71r-77r. On Querini see King, 1986, 419-21; Krautter et al. Querini's authorship of the (unlocated) *Castigationes Haebrorum, Introductio ad Linguam Sanctam*, and *De Mysterio Numerorum* is averred in Sansovino, 246.

<sup>44</sup> In 1452 patrician humanist Francesco Diedo (ca. 1435-1484) borrowed a copy of Flavius Josephus' *The Jewish War* from the Venetian patrician Girolamo Molin Cecchetti, 162. In 1454 he borrowed Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Moses*: *ibid.*, 162-63. On Diedo see King, 1986, 361-62. A Latin *Life of Moses* was borrowed by "Marcus

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Aurelius” (probably the Venetian secretary Marco Aurelio) on 20 May 1458:

Cecchetti, 165. On Aurelio see King, 1986, 315-16. On a vernacular version of *Jewish Antiquities* (ca. 1450) see Chiappini, 304-06.

<sup>45</sup> Busi and Campanini; Kokin, 2014; Dröge, 1992; Filelfo, 26; Biondo, 101. On Lippomano see King, 1986, 389-90.

<sup>46</sup> Busi and Campanini, 175 (quotation, translation very slightly amended for better English expression). Compare the disparaging remarks made by the humanist Poggio Bracciolini about his convert Hebrew teacher in a letter of 1416: Bracciolini, 1984, 1:128; idem, 1974, 24-25.

<sup>47</sup> King, 1986, 31-37, 230.

<sup>48</sup> Barbaro, 214-16, 352, 598-99 (to Francesco, Carthusian monk), 703-04 (to Giovanni da Capestrano), 711-12 (to idem). On Barbaro see King, 1986, 323-25.

<sup>49</sup> On Sant’Andrea del Lido see Lowry. For anti-Jewish remarks see Anon. [the Carthusian prior Francesco Trevisan?], [c5<sup>r</sup>], [c5<sup>r-v</sup>], [c6<sup>r</sup>], [e3<sup>r-v</sup>], [f1<sup>r</sup>]. Foscarini’s letters to Francesco [Trevisan?], Carthusian, are in ÖNV, MS Lat. 441, fols. 37<sup>v</sup>-39<sup>r</sup>, 57<sup>r</sup>-58<sup>v</sup>, 110<sup>v</sup>-111<sup>v</sup> (identified as prior of Sant’Andrea), 133<sup>r</sup>-35<sup>v</sup>, 166<sup>v</sup>-67<sup>v</sup>, 176<sup>r</sup>-79<sup>r</sup>, 194<sup>r</sup>-96<sup>r</sup>, 243<sup>v</sup>-50<sup>r</sup>. Foscarini praised Giovanni da Capestrano: ÖNV, MS Lat. 441, fol. 82<sup>r</sup>. Foscarini was in correspondence with the doctor and humanist Pietro Tommasi who was close to Bernardino da Siena: ÖNV, MS Lat. 441, fols. 71r-77r.

<sup>50</sup> King, 1986, 92-205.

<sup>51</sup> Parry, 1:189-95, 198-202, 228-44, 287-89; 2:313-32, 354-63, 372-85, 490-98, 521-42, 613-21.

<sup>52</sup> Pius II, 2:151 (book 3, chapter 35, paragraph 4). See also *ibid.*, 151-57 (3.35.4-8); 135-37 (3.31.2-3) on Foscarini’s “brilliant speech” and the papal response.

<sup>53</sup> Parry, 2:521-42; King, 1986, 132-40, especially 138.

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<sup>54</sup> ÖNV, MS Lat. 441, fols. 15<sup>r</sup>-19<sup>v</sup>, 55<sup>r</sup>-57<sup>r</sup>, 71<sup>r</sup>-77<sup>r</sup>. See also Parry, 2:372-85, 490-98; Kourniakos, 35-44; and Picotti, 1912, 181-217, with texts of Foscarini's letters from Mantua at *ibid.*, 444-46, 457-60, 471, 480-81.

<sup>55</sup> Quoted in Gaeta, 40. On Foscarini's desire for a history of Venice see *ibid.*, 30-45; Gilbert.

<sup>56</sup> Zippel, especially 215-25.

<sup>57</sup> Degli Agostini, 1:57 (citing each writer's *De officiis*).

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 63, 74.

<sup>59</sup> For example, Gaeta, 35.

<sup>60</sup> On Manetti's view of the Turks and its relationship to his humanist appropriation of Hebrew see Kokin, 2006, 213-17.

<sup>61</sup> On patrician humanism and service in the empire see Maglaque; Fortini Brown; King, 1994, 44-47, 97. Compare Connell for a Florentine case.

<sup>62</sup> Varanini, 2006, LX-LXIII, LXXXVII-LXXXVIII; Degli Agostini, 1:49, 103-04.

<sup>63</sup> King, 1986, 35, 35n174; Frazier, 217, 387-88; ÖNV, MS Lat. 441, fol. 272<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>64</sup> Venice, Biblioteca Marciana (hereafter BMV), MS Lat. XI, 141 (3942), fols. 1<sup>r</sup>-4<sup>v</sup> (my foliation).

<sup>65</sup> Nogarola, 114-58; Parry, 2:355, 357.

<sup>66</sup> Degli Agostini, 1:72-77; Gaeta, 30-45; Casarsa, d'Angelo, and Scalon, 107-21.

<sup>67</sup> Foscarini to Gradenigo, ca. 1451-52: ÖNV, MS Lat. 441, fols. 269<sup>v</sup>-72<sup>v</sup>, printed, with some amendments, in Corner, 2:384-89.

<sup>68</sup> Jacoby, 2010, 273-75; Gardenal, 261-63; Starr, 65-66; Porges, 24-25. Toaff, 50-57 provides the fullest account based on key documents (many transcribed at *ibid.*, 258-62nn11-28) but he does not cite the relevant material in ASV, Duca di Candia (hereafter DC). Moreover, he suggests that the accusation of crucifixion of lambs may

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have had some foundation in Jewish practices: Toaff, 51. Partly as a result of such claims Toaff's book has been very heavily criticized by scholars: Loriga.

<sup>69</sup> ASV, DC, Ducale e Lettere Ricevute, b. 2, filza 21, fol. 14r. A ducal letter dated 12 August 1451 noting the refusal of "Salamon Judeus" to come to Venice is in *ibid.*, fol. 22<sup>v</sup>. The offer of a reward is in a document dating to ca. 1450-52 printed in Corner, 2:382-83; Noiret, 425n1. Unfortunately, I have been unable to consult ASV, DC, Missive e Responsive, b. 8.

<sup>70</sup> ASV, Avogaria di Comun (hereafter AC), Raspe, reg. 3650, II, fols. 9<sup>v</sup>-10<sup>r</sup> (7 June 1454).

<sup>71</sup> ASV, DC, Ducale e Lettere Ricevute, b. 2, filza 21, fol. 56<sup>v</sup>. The letter arrived in Crete on 27 January 1452. The other Jews to be detained were Samaria Alchane, his son Salamone, Lazzaro, a relation (*genere*) of Sabathei Casani, Miotha del Medigo (son of Moses), Moses del Medigo (son of Samaria), Iochana de Iocuda, Abbas (son of Samaria), and Salamone de Gunito.

<sup>72</sup> Porges, 24. Elia Capsali, who is the sole source for this information and provides precise voting figures and some details corroborated by contemporary sources, was related to one of the accused and may have seen relevant documents in Padua in ca. 1508: Toaff, 56. Whilst in prison the Jews' prayers offended a Christian who shared their cell and he asked to be moved to another prison: *ibid.*, 53-54.

<sup>73</sup> Toaff, 54-55.

<sup>74</sup> ASV, Maggior Consiglio (hereafter MC), Deliberazioni, reg. 22, fol. 195<sup>r</sup> (5 May 1454).

<sup>75</sup> ASV, AC, Raspe, reg. 3650, I, fol. 74<sup>r</sup> (14 July 1453), and II, fols. 9<sup>v</sup>-10<sup>r</sup> (7 June 1454); ASV, DC, Ducale e Lettere Ricevute, b. 2, filza 22, fol. 37<sup>r</sup>, with a list of

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expenses. See also the ducal letter dated 2 August 1454 in *ibid.*, fol. 38<sup>r</sup>, and Porges, 25.

<sup>76</sup> In 1448 the councillors of the *signoria* authorised Gradenigo's letters "in forma ducali" in recognition of the fact that the importance of his office gave him this prerogative: Thiriet, 1966-71, 2:184, no. 1428 (5 August 1448).

<sup>77</sup> ASV, AC, Raspe, reg. 3649, II, fol. 91<sup>v</sup> (18 November 1448); Noiret, 420-21 (27 October 1448); O'Connell, 137. On 5 September 1451 the Greater Council decided to direct Gradenigo's cases to the Forty or to the Senate to avoid "tedium" in the council: ASV, MC, Deliberazioni, reg. 22, fol. 184<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>78</sup> Decisions of the Great Council on 12 January, 19 April 1448: ASV, MC, Deliberazioni, reg. 22, fols. 168<sup>v</sup>, 169<sup>v</sup>; Thiriet, 1966-71, 2:183, 190-91, nos. 1425 (19 April 1448) and 1455 (18 November 1450).

<sup>79</sup> Jacoby, 1972, 86, 93-95. The absent Jews were: Liacus, Alchanas, Salmarias del Medego, Jeremias Capsali, Salamon del Gemito, and Lazarus quondam Leonis. See also the ducal letters, prompted by decisions of the Forty on matters brought by Gradenigo, on Jews in Bonifacio and Castel Novo exceeding their privileges to detriment of poor Christians, problems with Jewish houses in Castel Novo, and the need for the Jews in question to sell their properties, dated 19 September, 3, 29 December 1450, 20 August, 20 October 1451, 11 February, 3 November 1453: ASV, DC, Ducale e Lettere Ricevute, b. 2, filza 21, fols. 5<sup>r-v</sup>, 13<sup>r</sup>, 13<sup>v</sup>, 19<sup>v</sup>-20<sup>r</sup>, 49<sup>v</sup>, 54<sup>v</sup>; filza 22, fols. 11<sup>v</sup>, 12<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>80</sup> O'Connell, 76. See also Viggiano, 1998b.

<sup>81</sup> O'Connell, 84-87.

<sup>82</sup> Jacoby, 2010; *idem*, 1989; Papadia-Lala, 2004; *eadem*, 2001. See also McKee.

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<sup>83</sup> Jacoby, 2010; idem, 1989, 41, 48-49; Artom and Cassuto, especially 40-41 (for some cases dating to ca. 1450-51).

<sup>84</sup> Jacoby, 2010, 257.

<sup>85</sup> Viggiano, 1998a.

<sup>86</sup> O'Connell, 104-07; Manoussacas, 89-156 (documents); Jacoby, 1972.

<sup>87</sup> Venice authorized the Cretan government to resort to Jewish moneylenders to raise funds on a number of occasions: for example, Thiriet, 1959-61, 3:142, no.2761 (27 December 1447).

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 2:139, no.1594 (14 November 1415); 146-48, nos.1626, 1627 (21, 29 August 1416); 164, no.1694 (28 May 1418); 166, no.1700 (18 June 1418); 184, no.1788 (9 August 1420); ibid., 3:151, no.2804 (5 June 1449); 153-54, no.2813 (15 October 1449); Noiret, 239-42, 245-57, 274-76, 424.

<sup>89</sup> Thiriet, 1959-61, 3:89, no.2555 (5 September 1441); Noiret, 399.

<sup>90</sup> Jacoby, 2010, 273-74.

<sup>91</sup> Foscarini's teacher Paolo Nicoletti Veneto (ca. 1368-1428/29) wrote a treatise in the typical medieval *Adversus Iudaeos* tradition drawing on the Old Testament and the work of Nicholas of Lyra, among others: BMV, MS Lat. VI, 124a (2598), fol. 34<sup>v</sup> (citation of Nicholas of Lyra); Gothein.

<sup>92</sup> “[O]rationes nostras Johannis Chrisostomi contra Judeos ad te mitto.” Foscarini to Guarnerius Artemensis, undated: ÖNV, MS Lat. 441, fol. 231<sup>r</sup>; Chrysostom, 1862, cols. 845, 879-80 (*Adversus Iudaeos orationes* homily 1, section 2; 4.6).

<sup>93</sup> Hsia, 1988.

<sup>94</sup> It is also worth noting in this context that Foscarini's father Antonio was elected rector in Rettimo in 1437: Kohl, Mozzato, and O'Connell.

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<sup>95</sup> “Qui pluries quam decies septies labentem ecclesiam nostris humeris substulimus, titubantem erreximus et prope periclitantem servavimus, qui pontifici ceterisque fugientibus crudellissimorum hostium furores, portus et ara fuimus.” ÖNV, MS Lat. 441, fol. 270<sup>r</sup>. Foscarini here plays on the double meaning of “ara” as a refuge or an altar.

<sup>96</sup> ÖNV, MS Lat. 441, fols. 269<sup>v</sup>-72<sup>v</sup>; Corner, 2:384-89. On Treviso see Möschter, 161-62. On Jewish “iconoclasm” and princely authority see Luzzati, 1983.

<sup>97</sup> Chrysostom, 1862, col. 871 (*Adversus Judaeos orationes* 4.1).

<sup>98</sup> Chrysostom, 1862, col. 861 (*Adversus Judaeos orationes* 2.3).

<sup>99</sup> On synagogues in Crete see: Artom and Cassuto, 40; Ankori, 21-32; Iliadou, 487; Georgopoulou, 1996, 484.

<sup>100</sup> Mueller has suggested that the incident to which Foscarini refers here took place in 1458 when he was one of the *avogadori di comun*: Mueller, 2005, 22-23. If this is the case it suggests a later date for Foscarini’s letter to Gradenigo or, more likely, an interpolation made at the time of scribal transcription.

<sup>101</sup> The Jewish *condotta* in Feltre was not renewed in 1439 and it has been very plausibly suggested that Foscarini may have had a part in this decision: Melchiorre, 2011, 68-71.

<sup>102</sup> ÖNV, MS Lat. 441, fol. 272<sup>r-v</sup>; Corner, 2:388.

<sup>103</sup> Foscarini was *podestà* in Verona in 1450-51 when it was decided to add to the civic statutes a new requirement that Jews wear a distinguishing sign: Castaldini, 50.

<sup>104</sup> ÖNV, MS Lat. 441, fols. 243<sup>v</sup>-250<sup>r</sup>; Gardenal, 256-61. Foscarini praised Venier as a marvellous example of a pious leader in a letter to the Carthusian Francesco (Trevisan?): ÖNV, MS Lat. 441, fols. 194<sup>r</sup>-196<sup>r</sup>. It was in 1397, during the reign of Doge Venier, that the charter of the Jewish moneylenders in Venice was cancelled:

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Mueller, 1975. On the position of Jewish doctors in Venice see Jacoby, 1977, 175-76, 202-03. On Dandolo see King, 1986, 357-59.

<sup>105</sup> Ioly Zorattini, 560-64. In 1434 the Council of Basel decreed that Jews could not enter the medical profession: Gow and Griffiths, 297.

<sup>106</sup> Quaglioni, 1996.

<sup>107</sup> Preachers could make direct interventions in the legal battles: Quaglioni, 1996, 663-64; *idem*, 1989.

<sup>108</sup> Mueller, 2005, 16-17; Pullan, 445, 459, 460, 464-65, 467-68, 474.

<sup>109</sup> Uwe, Jütte and Mueller; Kourniakos, 200-08. The decision was communicated to rectors throughout the empire. For example, note Archivio di Stato, Brescia (hereafter ASB), Archivio Storico Civico, MS 1525, 23 February 1463 [m.v.=1464], fol. 23<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>110</sup> “[U]n problema irrisolto.” Parente, 523; Quaglioni, 1996, especially 651.

<sup>111</sup> “Il Veneto come crocevia delle dispute anti giudaiche nel secolo XV.” Quaglioni, 1996, 659 (section title).

<sup>112</sup> Pavini quoted in Stow, 257. See also Quaglioni, 1987; *idem*, 1986.

<sup>113</sup> Nievo.

<sup>114</sup> A tradition mentioned by the patrician Marin Sanudo in a debate about the presence of Jews in Venice at the time of the presentation of their *capitoli* in 1519: Sanudo, 28:63.

<sup>115</sup> Quaglioni, 1986, 262-64; *idem*, 1996, 661-65. Nievo’s *consilia* may be related to the preaching in favour of the *monte* in Padua in 1469 by the Franciscan Michele da Carcano (who also aided the Venetian patrician humanist Ermolao Barbaro establish one in Perugia in 1462): Angiolini; Rusconi.

<sup>116</sup> Around one-third of the ninety-two fifteenth-century patrician humanists profiled in King, 1986, 315-449, received some legal training (usually at Padua).

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- <sup>117</sup> Ibid., 1986, 412; Mueller, 2005, 23; Degli Agostini, 2:181.
- <sup>118</sup> King, 1986, 132-40.
- <sup>119</sup> Morosini, sigs. [a1<sup>r</sup>-a3<sup>r</sup>].
- <sup>120</sup> Ibid., sigs. [a3<sup>r</sup>-a8<sup>v</sup>]. Morosini returned to the topic of fate and the freedom of the will in a treatise written ca. 1476 and now in Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. Lat. 13157 (not consulted). Margaret King summarizes his position here as follows: “Free will did exist, he maintained, but it only operated in accord with the direction indicated by providence – a Venetian solution, indeed, that both affirms orthodoxy while upholding free will and constrains the individual by denying its effectiveness.” King, 1986, 230 (quotation), 413.
- <sup>121</sup> Morosini, sigs. [a8<sup>v</sup>-b1<sup>r</sup>].
- <sup>122</sup> Ibid., sigs. [b1<sup>r</sup>-c1<sup>r</sup>].
- <sup>123</sup> Ibid., sigs. [c1<sup>r</sup>-c4<sup>v</sup>] (introduction), [c4<sup>v</sup>-i4<sup>r</sup>] (where the lengthiest array of proofs is “De execratione iudeorum.”)
- <sup>124</sup> Ibid., sigs. [b2<sup>v</sup>, b3<sup>r-v</sup>, b4<sup>r</sup>]. On Christian engagement with the Talmud see Parente, especially 541-71.
- <sup>125</sup> Morosini, sigs. [i4<sup>r</sup>-k3<sup>r</sup>]. Morosini may have consulted Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, 1.6.
- <sup>126</sup> Morosini, sigs. [i5<sup>v</sup>, i6<sup>r</sup>].
- <sup>127</sup> Ibid., sigs. [k3<sup>r</sup>-k6<sup>r</sup>].
- <sup>128</sup> Petrus Alfonsi; Tolan, 95-131, 182-98 (list of manuscripts). There is a fourteenth-century copy of this work originating at the congregation of Santa Giustina, Padua, and used at the abbey of San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice, which was bound in Padua at the end of the fifteenth century and contains the personal marks “P” and “M”: Boese, 9, citing Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, MS Ham. 21 (not consulted).

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<sup>129</sup> Martí quoted in Cohen, 137. This work formed the basis for the *Victoria Porcheti adversus Impios Hebraeos* (ca. 1303; printed in 1520) by the Carthusian Porchetus de Silvaticis and in this form it was known to at least two fifteenth-century Italians:

Fioravanti, 1980; ÖNV, MS Lat. 1285 (not consulted).

<sup>130</sup> One manuscript is dated at Padua in 1477 and includes the Prophecies of the Ten Sibyls and *Sibylla Erithrea Babilonica*: Copeland Klepper, 139. Much of the material in Nicholas of Lyra's *Quaestio* was also found scattered through his more widely read *Postilla litteralis super Bibliam* (1322-32): Copeland Klepper, 1-12.

<sup>131</sup> Compare Morosini, sigs. [a8<sup>v</sup>-b5<sup>r</sup>] and Nicholas of Lyra, sigs. [a5<sup>r</sup>-b6<sup>r</sup>]. See also Copeland Klepper, 82-108.

<sup>132</sup> On the “perfidy” of the Jews see Paulus de Sancta Maria [Paul of Burgos].

<sup>133</sup> King, 1986, 164-66, 174-92.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

<sup>135</sup> On this case see Esposito and Quaglioni; Hsia, 1992; Treue.

<sup>136</sup> Hinderbach to Morosini, Trent, 13 September 1476: Treue, 120, 120n49; Corner, 2:95-96 (quotation at 95); Bonelli, 218-19n (quotation at 218n).

<sup>137</sup> Ducal letters of 1475-77 in ASB, Cancelleria Pretoria, atti, reg. 18, fols. 19<sup>v</sup>, 32<sup>v</sup>-33<sup>r</sup>, 46<sup>v</sup>-47<sup>r</sup>; *ibid.*, reg. 19, fols. 16<sup>r</sup>, 16<sup>v</sup>, 64<sup>v</sup>-65<sup>r</sup>, 143<sup>v</sup>, 143<sup>v</sup>-44<sup>r</sup>, 144<sup>r</sup>-44<sup>v</sup>, 241<sup>r</sup>. On the diffusion of images of Simon of Trent see Katz, 119-57.

<sup>138</sup> Hinderbach to Raffaele Zovenzoni, Trent, 1 October 1475: AST, ASP, capsula 69, no. 10, fols. 5<sup>v</sup>-6<sup>r</sup>. Francesco Tron, “with many other Venetian nobles”, was described as supporting the cult of Simon in Venice: Michele Carcano to Hinderbach, Trent, 6 November 1476: Sevesi, 396. Giovanni Calfurnio dedicated his account of the death of Simon of Trent to Tron in ca. 1475-80: Calfurnio, sigs. a5<sup>r</sup>, a5<sup>v</sup>; Bowd and Cullington, 101, 103.

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<sup>139</sup> Degli Agostini, 1:501. See also Nardello, 1977-78, 94-95, 127; King, 1986, 339.

<sup>140</sup> Sanudo, 3:808; Caravale; Wadding, 15:7-9.

<sup>141</sup> Bruto, 1489, sig. s<sup>r</sup> (where it is assigned to nearby Bassano); Degli Agostini, 1:500.

On this incident see Nardello, 1972.

<sup>142</sup> Bruto, 1477; idem, 1489. These works are noted in a letter from Barnaba Celsano to Bruto dated 27 December 1481 in Athanasius, sig. a2<sup>v</sup>. A vernacular translation of Bruto, 1489, made in 1499 by Fra Gregorio da Genova, of the Benedictine monastery of Padolirone, is in Mantua, Bibl. Com., 62 (A.II.31). A fifteenth-century manuscript copy of Bruto, 1489, for Abbot Raphael de Mercatellis is in Holkham Hall, Norfolk, MS 168 (not consulted): Derolez, 234-36, no. 43. The work's influence is also mentioned in Fini, fols. aiii<sup>v</sup>, cii<sup>r</sup>. On Bruto see King, 1986, 343-44.

<sup>143</sup> Barbaro to Gradenigo, San Vigilio, 12 August 1446: Barbaro, 470-71 (quoting Cicero, 379 (*Pro Cluentio* 53.146) at 470). Gradenigo was syndic by 21 September 1446: Thiriet, 1966-71, 3:134-35 no.2731. The Veronese Lateran Canon Matteo Bosso offered consoling words and anti-Jewish remarks to Gradenigo around a decade later: Bosso, sig. m<sup>r</sup>-v (letter no.27). Note also the dedication to Gradenigo by the Veronese humanist Paolo Maffei (d. 1452) of his *De Exhortatione Iustitiae*: Kristeller, 1963-91, 2:10, 117.

<sup>144</sup> On humanism, Venetian governors and the conversion of Jews see Bowd.

<sup>145</sup> Dempsey, 131.

<sup>146</sup> Kibre, 164, no.326. See also Pico della Mirandola, 1998; idem, 2012.

<sup>147</sup> Delph.

<sup>148</sup> Ruggiero.

<sup>149</sup> Celenza, 100.