URBIS GENIO: THE CLASSICIZING OF THE VENETIAN PALACE FACADE IN THE PRE-SANSOVINO PERIOD, 1480-1510

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the facades of eleven palaces built in Venice between 1480 and 1510. Its purpose is to define the nature of Venetian Renaissance palace style prior to the arrival of Sansovino and the Roman Renaissance style in the city, and to show how this earlier style met the needs of the patrician patron.

Although these palaces were praised by Francesco Sansovino in 1581, they have received short shrift by scholars since. This is partly due to lack of sufficient documentation, but the main reason scholars dismiss the palaces is that the architects did not use the Florentine interpretations of antique decorative motifs. The result of this attitude has been that the buildings have never before been analyzed in detail as a group.

The aim of this study is to show that while use of the architectural forms of Roman classicism was a component of the Venetian Renaissance palace style, other traditions, such as the Byzantine, were equally important. The architectural style of these palace facades is truly inventive and expressive. It is an intelligent synthesis of both styles, grafted onto a pre-existing late Gothic format, resulting in facades that were
evocative and meaningful to the Venetians.

In Chapter One, the existing literature on the palaces is reviewed, and the limitations of the predominant methodological approach in providing a viable means of understanding the complex imagery of the new style is discussed. Chapter Two sets up a comparative context for the study of the development of Venetian Renaissance palace style. This is accomplished through an analysis of the evolution of the Renaissance palace style in Florence, detailed observation of the developed Venetian Gothic palace style, and a discussion of influential examples of early Renaissance style in Venice such as the Ca' del Duca and the Ducal Palace. Chapter Three will analyze the first group of Renaissance palace facades, those built from 1480 to 1485. Here, a new architectural style is introduced in a series of diverse and creatively worked facades. Chapter Four discusses how those palaces built from 1495 to 1510 use a new facade form evolved from the experimentation of the earlier group and increase its symbolic potential with sculptural decorations. In Chapter Five the Vendramin-Calergi palace, the best known of the group, will be discussed. It has most often been heralded as the first "real" Renaissance palace in Venice; its facade will be compared and contrasted to those of the other palaces in order to re-insert it into the Venetian palace building context. Chapter Six will lay out the political and cultural conditions of fifteenth and sixteenth century Venice to suggest that palace builders were incorporating the new
stylistic characteristics of important civic structures into their own buildings to contribute to a harmonious public image, reflecting the consonant goals of state and individual.

This thesis is primarily focussing on defining the character of the Venetian Renaissance palace style as it evolves from 1480 to 1510 as a synthesis of antique Roman, Byzantine, and Veneto-Byzantine architectural forms grafted onto a framework perfected in the late Gothic period. As in many architectural monuments of the time, the tone of the architectural and sculptural imagery is generally triumphal; within this theme there are allusions to the virtuous nature of the Venetian patrician patron. It will be suggested that in incorporating Roman and Byzantine imagery into palace facades, the patrons may have been reflecting a current trend in Venetian government propaganda in which its Roman and the Byzantine heritage was being called upon to project a state image of strength and power. This use of imperial imagery, which took on many forms in Venice, both visual and literary, may have been a response to the difficult political and financial situation in which Venetians found themselves at the end of the fifteenth century.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The entire city is constructed of brick, but if their empire continues to flourish, it will soon be of marble, and indeed at the present time palaces of the nobles are veneered with marble and glitter with gold.

(Pius II, Commentarii)

Pope Pius II Piccolomini, writing in 1460, was expressing concern over the physical manifestations of Venice's increasing interest in securing strong territorial and mercantile bases on the Italian mainland, in order to replace those which it was losing to the Turks in the Levant. As an architectural patron of no small measure himself, he knew that palace building and decoration was an important means by which the wealth and power of a state and its nobility was expressed. Pius was familiar with the grandiose palaces begun in the 1450's and 60's in Florence by the Medici, Pitti and Rucellai families, and was aware of the prestige they conferred on their owners.

Pius' words, as well as displaying his political astuteness, were oddly prophetic, for twenty years after his death, Venetian patricians began to commission palaces entirely faced in expensive multi colored stone motifs, reminiscent of the Byzantine tradition. The impact of the richly colored
surfaces was heightened by the fact that these buildings were the first Venetian palaces in which the ogival arches and quatrefoil tracery popular throughout the fifteenth century were replaced by round arches and fluted pilasters inspired by ancient Rome. The result was a group of palaces, built between 1480 and 1510, on which a new decorative vocabulary was being created and employed. This was a very special moment in the history of Venice, as the appearance of the city was being changed dramatically by the renovation of so many palaces. However, these buildings have never been studied as a group, thus, the nature and significance of their contribution to the creation of the Venetian Renaissance style has yet to be brought to light.

The aim of this study is to provide an evaluation of this important phase of Venetian architectural history. To this end, several steps will be involved. An analysis of the existing literature on the palaces will show that traditional architectural historical methodology, with its preference for the Albertian/Vitruvian forms of classical architectural vocabulary, cannot be profitably applied to the Venetian context. With this in mind, the formal qualities of the palaces will be examined, and the nature and significance of the stylistic components discussed. Finally, reasons for the development of this particular type of Venetian palace decoration can be suggested in the light of the historical and cultural context of late fifteenth century Venice, providing a
more sympathetic reading of the buildings, and a better understanding of the Renaissance in Venice.

For many reasons, the palaces of the late Quattrocento and early Cinquecento have not been properly studied. Partly to blame is the lack of documentation. Unlike Florentine palaces, for which construction records and contemporary reactions have survived, most of the primary materials pertaining to Venetian palaces were destroyed in fires in the Ducal palace, in 1480 and 1577. What remains then, are the buildings themselves, most of which have fortunately survived, and a rather scattered legacy of information from secondary sources.¹ The available material is of two major types, guidebooks and more scholarly studies, each of which, although they cannot really be separated, had a different purpose and agenda. Supplementary material exists in the form of visual renditions of the city and the palaces. An accurate idea of the most important palaces being built in the new style can be reached by carefully sifting through a wide variety of material.

The Jacopo de Barbari map, dated circa 1500, is an

¹ It is fortunate, and a credit to the esteem in which these buildings have been held throughout the centuries, that almost all the marble faced palaces have survived, and their exteriors have not been substantially changed. What is certainly missing from the picture of Venice at the end of the fifteenth century, information about those palaces which had painted facades (see figs. 1 & 2). Information about facade frescoes can be found in Lodovico Foscarì, Affreschi esterni a Venezia (Milan: Ulrich Hoeplì, 1938).
important aid in this endeavour (Fig. 3). This amazing bird's eye view, the best of many which followed, depicts virtually every building in the city. The map appears to be quite accurate, quite a feat given the high building density which existed even then. By carefully examining this map we can ascertain which palaces were in existence and can in many cases can identify whether it was a Gothic or a new building, helping to date the palaces. In essence it is a visual record of Venice produced towards the end of the period under consideration in this study, without which much of the work on Venetian Renaissance architecture would be unsubstantiated.  

This very important visual guide to Venice was supplemented by many written ones. Their importance is not to be underestimated. Guidebooks were written to serve visitors to Venice, and though travel was difficult in the fifteenth century, Venice had many tourists. The city's position as a

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3 Interest in Venice's palaces has also been supported through the centuries by a certain amount of visual material. As well as ascertaining continued the popularity of the buildings, it also lets us know that they have not changed substantially. In the eighteenth century, reproductions of some of the palaces appear in collections of drawings and prints which were commissioned or published, such as those of Vincenzo Coronelli who also wrote guidebooks, Carlevaris, or Visentini in the *Admiraanda Urbis Venetae* (commissioned by British Consul Joseph Smith). Many paintings or reproductions of Venice (including the palaces) were meant to be sold to foreigners on the Grand Tour of Europe. While none are photographically accurate, they are nonetheless important documents.
major trade link from the Middle East and Northern Europe meant that there were always merchants present. Mercantile strength also meant that Venice was an important political centre, attracting diplomatic missions from around the world. Since patrician families controlled the commerce and politics in the city, both merchants or diplomats would have needed to know who or what was located where. Guidebooks served to educate people as to the location and nature of the remarkable things in Venice. In doing so they became an instrument of the state's most important propagandistic construct: the ideas and legends which historians have termed the myth of Venice.

The myth, or state construct, as it developed had many components, two of these being its stability and independence, as it had never been invaded. This led Venetians to call their home the Virgin state. As well as likening the state to a virgin, they also claimed that the state had been founded on Annunciation Day, and was under the protection of the Virgin Mary.

Venice became known for its liberal and just government, run by wise patricians. The state was further blessed by its patron saint, the evangelist St. Mark, whose remains lay in the state church, having, according to the Venetians been destined by God to rest in their city. Over many centuries, truth and

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fiction were cleverly intertwined in the myth which, as we know from their comments, had a profound effect on foreigners.5

As well as the political and spiritual nature of the city, the Venetian state construct also dealt with its physical qualities. Edwin Muir explains that the beauty of the city was one of the most important aspects of the myth, especially in the Renaissance, when Platonic philosophy was used to link the Beautiful to the Good.6 Guidebooks, by promoting knowledge and appreciation of the beauties (and by association the goodness) of this blessed and very special city were thus important as material in support of the myth. The guidebooks should be understood as an important means by which information on and interest in the palace has been kept alive throughout the centuries. Palaces were always included in the books because they were an important component of the architectural beauty of the city; thus the buildings have a role in supporting the state. Palace facades provided part of the civic backdrop for the ritual processions which affirmed other aspects of the myth to both native and foreign audiences. Thus the guidebooks, not only kept information about the palaces intact, but gave the buildings a part to play in the promulgation and continuation of the Venetian state construct, on which the city’s survival increasingly grew to depend.

One of the first, and certainly the most important

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5 Ibid., 44-55.

6 Ibid., 15.
guidebooks is that of Francesco Sansovino. He was the son of the well known sculptor and architect Jacopo Sansovino, a Florentine who worked in Rome, but who came to Venice after the Sack in 1527. Jacopo is best known for introducing the Roman High Renaissance style of architecture into Venice with state commissions such as the Biblioteca Marciana and the Zecca or Mint, as well as many private commissions. His son's guidebook, entitled *Venetia. Citta Nobilissima et Singolare* was first published in 1581, with many subsequent editions. It is comprehensive, dealing with each *sestiere* of Venice, and has sections on the history and customs of Venice. Churches, scuole and palaces have their own separate "books" or chapters. Palaces are considered in the ninth book, in which Sansovino argues that the Venetians have the best, and the most palaces of any city in Europe. Sansovino sets up an odd dialectic by saying that the modest Venetians call their residences *case* and only call the Ducal residence a palace, as Norbert Huse and Wolfgang Wolters point out in the section their recent book on Venetian art and architecture. However, 


8 The edition cited here is that of Giustiniano Martinioni published in 1663. Of the many editions of the guidebook, it is one of the best because Martinioni updated the book but kept his additions separate from Sansovino's original text.

after stating this, Sansovino proceeds to use the term "palaces" throughout, so that there is no mistake about the type of residence under discussion. He goes on to explain how the buildings are constructed, by what materials and means, as well as how they are made healthy to live in. Here it is almost as though he was answering to Alberti's criteria for healthy palaces and cities as laid out in *De re aedificatoria*. He dwells on the uniqueness and the comforts of these residences, such as the use of glass windows, and on the richness of the decorations, discussing the gilding used, and the silk banners which were hung from the windows. He alludes to the wealth of the patricians, creating the impression that there is no poverty in the city. Sansovino then proceeds to list, by location and family, the palaces which he considers the most notable. Most are late fifteenth century or sixteenth century buildings, with only the very exceptional pointed arch buildings being included; those with significant interiors or external painted facades.

Almost all of the early Renaissance buildings important to this study are included, and they are for the most part described in terms of glowing praise. For example, Sansovino states that the Palazzo Cappello in Canonica is "tutto incrostato di finissimi marmi, e magnifico, & bello affatto." 10 The tastes of his time come through clearly when he names the four best palaces in Venice. Though three of the

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8 Sansovino, *Venetia*, 385.

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buildings were from later in the sixteenth century, the Palazzo Vendramin-Calergi, was started around 1500 and is thus significant for this discussion. His criteria for inclusion are clearly stated: the architect must follow Vitruvian rules, and the palace must have appropriate stonework decorations, be majestic, and of the right size and cost.  

The Palazzo Vendramin-Calergi receives the most detailed praise of its Corinthian columns, white marble and beautiful fenestration. To Sansovino it belongs to a very special class of buildings, ones which still stand out in Venice. Even though two of his choices are palaces by his father, they were entirely appropriate selections, showing mainstream attitudes. His interest in buildings which use the architectural language of classicism is clear. He mentions but does not rave over Gothic buildings, which he calls "lo stile tedesco." They are ancient as opposed to the modern ones of the classical style. What is

11 P. 387 "E per tanto di sapere che i principalissimi di tutti i Palazzi del Canal grande, sono quattro. (parlo per architettura, per artificio di pietre vive, per magistero, per grandezza di corpo, e di spesa, perciocche questi soli costano oltre a 200. mila ducati,) cioe il Loredano a San Marcuola [the Vendramin-Calergi], il Grimano a San Luca, il Delfino a San Salvadore, e il Cornaro a San Mauritio.Questi larghi per circuito, per altezza, e per ogni altra qualita che si richiede a bene intesi edifici, furono fatti ne tempi nostri, e secondo la dottrina dell' antico Vitruvio, dalle cui regole a gli ottimi Architettori, non e lecito di partirsi."

12 It is interesting that less than a century after the early Cinquecento palaces were built, their architects are unknown to Sansovino; if he had known that Mauro Codussi was the architect of the Vendramin-Calergi palace, he would certainly have said so. Information about architects working before Jacopo Sansovino seems to have been lost very quickly after their deaths.
important to stress here however, is that in his choice of the four best palaces, sheer ostentation is as much a factor as architectural style. Sansovino praises the earlier Renaissance style palaces (those which appeared before his father's arrival in Venice) in the same tones as he does later ones. He does not stress a preference for Roman or Florentine adaptations of classical architectural vocabulary to the exclusion of the native Venetian type (even though he likes buildings to follow Vitruvian rules), as later architectural writers do. Early Renaissance Venetian palaces were quite relevant and "modern" to Sansovino, even though he was writing eighty to one hundred years after the palaces were built. It is important to keep Sansovino's appreciation in mind when considering the writers who follow in the next centuries, because though he starts the trend of judging buildings according to whether or not they follow Vitruvian rules, he does not criticize the early Renaissance palaces that do not follow the canon exactly. The opinions of later scholars on this issue change considerably; they usually mark the arrival of Jacopo Sansovino in Venice as the beginning of the "real" Renaissance in Venetian architectural style.

Francesco Sansovino's work is extremely important not only as a rare contemporary reaction to Venetian Renaissance architecture, but also because it stands as a pattern for guidebooks. Other writers repeat the enthusiasm and patriotism
for Venice that comes through clearly in his writing. They carry down similar information about the palaces which is collated today in the most useful guide written by Giulio Lorenzetti, called *Venezia e il suo estuario*, first published in 1928, and since updated. A combination guide to the art galleries as well as to the architecture, it is indispensable, as almost every building has some mention and documentation, even if it is only a date or a style.

Another type of guidebook, one which deals specifically with palaces, became popular in the nineteenth century. This type shows the continued interest by both residents and tourists in the buildings. The two best examples are Gian Giacopo Fontana’s *Cento Palazzi* of 1865, and Giuseppe Tassini’s *Alcuni Palazzi* of 1879. These books are the best sources of information concerning both the building history and the history of the patron families and subsequent owners. They are exceptionally useful for identifying facade inscriptions or

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13 Some of the most important guidebooks are: Vincenzo Coronelli *Guida sacra e profana* 1708?, G.A. Moschini *Guida per la città di Venezia* 2 vols., 1815; F. Zanotto *Nuovissima guida di Venezia*, 1856; H.A. Douglas, *Venice on Foot* 1904; G. Lorenzetti *Venezia e il suo estuario* 1956; E. Hubala *Venedig in Oberitalien* 1965; M. Muraro *A New Guide to Venice and Her Islands* 1969, T. Pignatti *Venice* 1971. Also useful in this context is G. Tassini *Curiosità Veneziane* 1887 which discusses the history of Venetian street names and districts.

14 Lorenzetti also cross references the guide with all the previous names of palace owners, so one can actually locate the buildings mentioned in earlier sources such as Sansovino.

15 See also T. Okey, *The Old Venetian Palaces and the Old Venetian Folk* (London: 1907).
other elements now difficult to read.

Fontana begins each entry of *Cento Palazzi* with a discussion of the physical appearance of the palace. He appears to have studied the buildings carefully, describing the nature and style of their earliest foundations, as well as the facade details. He calls the palaces of the late Quattrocento and early Cinquecento by the usual term, lombardesque, after the families and derivation of the architects and stonemasons to whom they are attributed. As Fontana says in his description of the Ca' Dario, these buildings have a type of "leggiadria e di eleganza architettonica" which belongs to the beginning of the time of the "risorgimento della buona architettura." As was most common in the nineteenth century, he preferred the architectural style derived from the Greco-Roman traditions to the Gothic style, but what is very interesting is the delight he takes in the nature and variety of the colored marbles and sculptured decorations of the facades. Fontana also includes information about building


17 For example, he continues on about the Ca' Dario: Marmi finissimi ne rivestono il prospetto; nel primo ordine i medaglioni ornamentalii appaiono quasi cammei incastonati in granito, in porfido, in verde antico, e sono ripetuti nell'intermezzo d'ogni ordine con varieta e ricchezza maggiore di ornati. Nobile e il disegno dei cerchi congegnati a mosaico, con ritondi a foggia di piccole nicchie. Nel terzo ordine spiccano poi quadrilateri come intaglio o smalto fiorito, e sotto i davanzali negli angoli del primo ordine risalta l'opera delle incassature di medaglione di stile lombardesco a trafi, che avvicinasi al disegno dei lavori etruschi. Peccato che il poggiuolo con balaustrata di ferro
renovations and interior decorations as they are available to him. He cites well known sources such as Coronelli and Temanza; however the amount of detailed information about the family histories of all the palace owners suggests that he did additional archival work.

Tassini, on the other hand, attempts to be much more scholarly than Fontana, as he footnotes and quotes from a huge variety of sources ranging from Sanudo's diaries and the Venetian family *chronache* to the writings of the more current architectural scholars. This sometimes works to his detriment however, as he never describes or comments on the buildings in his own words. Apart from noting whether they are lombardesque or *archiacuto* (Gothic), he always quotes descriptions from another source. For example, where Fontana describes the Ca' Dario in great detail, Tassini simply states that it is "...ricco nel prospetto di eletti marmi orientali, ma, secondo l'illustre critico Pietro Selvatico, alquanto difettuoso nella forma delle sagome...". To his credit, his entries span a greater range of buildings than do Fontana's, and though sometimes very short, are precise, even including addresses. The large amount of space devoted to the family histories of the various residents of the palaces through the ages, suggests that the palaces were often included for their notoriety or

sconci alquanto il prospetto e manchino ora i lapislazzoli che vi erano sparsi, e completavano la decorazione dei marmi!

current relevance to Venice, rather than for their architectural interest. Despite this, the works are invaluable sources, and this type of work continues to be written today, exemplified by works such as Peter Lauritzen's *Palaces of Venice* which includes some excellent photographs with the entries.

Scholarly and guidebook literature cannot be completely separated from one another, indeed the two are interdependent in many ways, since art and architectural history did not become a formal discipline until the nineteenth century. In both, the attitudes of the writers are bound to larger concepts of architectural theories, the seeds of which were being planted very shortly after these palaces were constructed. Juergen Schulz, in a review of John McAndrew's survey of Venetian Renaissance architecture to be discussed later in this chapter, argues that methodological issues that have long affected the study of European art history have made Venetian architecture a virtually inaccessible subject.  

Schulz explains that two traditional approaches have been employed. One approach was introduced by Giorgio Vasari, whose *Lives of the Artists* was first published in 1550. He primarily wrote about artistic personalities and he was so successful that his method, which involved attaching the right corpus of works of art to the right person, often using a biographical

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style, has been the goal of certain art historians ever since. Although an indispensable source of information about fifteenth and sixteenth century artists, Vasari was a Florentine who generally felt that artists from his own region were the best. He reflected common mid-sixteenth century sentiments in his belief that the arts had developed and peaked under the Greeks and Romans, then had fallen miserably in quality during the Gothic era, only to be revived in his own time and lead to new heights by his favorite artist Michelangelo. This reverence for the classical tradition, with all its problems, would dominate art history for centuries.

The second method, clearly derived from the same belief system held by Vasari and in part promulgated by him, has been a mode of architectural analysis used by those trained in the classical style, such as the Italian and British Neo-classicists and the theorists of the French Beaux Arts school. The standard of judgement for the Renaissance period has been how "archaeologically correct" an architect was in his use of classical form, the standard being the monuments of Augustan Rome, as canonized by writers of architectural treatises like Vitruvius, Alberti or Palladio. Both approaches to art history have been employed in Venetian historiography.

Venice did not receive its "Vasari" until the eighteenth century, when Tommaso Temanza, an architect and teacher at the Venetian Academy published his *Vita dei piu celebri architetti e scultore Veneziani che fiorirono nel secolo decimosesto* in
1778.²⁰ He belonged to a prominent circle of Italian neo-classicists. His early Renaissance section includes lives of the Lombardo family, as well as the life of the writer Fra Francesco Colonna, whose Hypnerotonomachia contains many important classically inspired architectural drawings. However, just as Vasari championed Michelangelo, Temanza does Palladio, and we see that the lives are set up to indicate a progression of knowledge about the use of Augustan classicism (just as Vasari's Lives were set up in terms of copying antique sculpture and achieving realism in painting). His work is valuable because it is the first attempt to create authors for works of early Venetian architecture. He is one of the first sources to base his material on archival research. The extent to which information was lost in the preceding two centuries is only too clear, as the architect we know as Mauro Codussi is only hinted at in the figure of Moro Lombardo, a relative of Pietro. As a specific source of information about palaces, the work is not as useful, as only a few palaces are mentioned. But, Temanza does discuss the facade of the Vendramin Calergi palace at length as he sees it as one of the most important buildings in Venice, for its majesty, symmetry, and elegance of organization. It is compared favorably to the celebrated Florentine palaces of the Medici and the Strozzi families, thus letting the world know when Venetian architecture reaches the

²⁰ Reprinted in Milan, 1966, with a critical introduction and bibliography by Liliana Grassi.
standards set in other centres of Italy. He finishes by saying:

Ci sono dell' altre facciate de palazzi in Venezia di maggior mole di questa, e se vogliamo anche, di piu corretta architettura; ma questa le supera tutte, per una certa gustosa, e saporita, per dir cosi, composizione, che ben si conosce, ma non si puo con parole adeguamente esprimere.\textsuperscript{21}

Temanza has to make sure the reader knows that he can see the classically "incorrect" sections of the facade organization, even though he is willing to overlook this defect. He literally cannot find words to describe the beauty of the facade; his architectural vocabulary, adequate to describe the workings of a building done in "proper" classical form, is lacking when it comes to works in which the architect was not intending to follow those rules precisely.

One of the most influential works on Venetian architecture was written by Temanza's successors in the Academy, Cicognara and Diedo, along with Temanza's student, the architect Selva. It is called \textit{Le fabbriche piu cospicue di Venezia} and was first published in 1815. The work is broad in scope, covering all periods of Venetian architecture, but it concentrates on the architects of the mid sixteenth to seventeenth centuries. These scholars hold ideas similar to

\textsuperscript{21} Tommaso Temanza \textit{Vite dei piu celebri architetti e scultori Veneziani} (Venice: 1778; repr. Milan: Edizioni Labor: 1988, ed. Liliana Grassi), 124. As well as the Vendramin Calergi, Temanza mentions (p.125) the \textit{Palazzi Gradenigo}, the Corner-Spinelli, the Trevisan (Bembo) in the Campo of Santa Maria Formosa.
Temanza's about the history of architecture, and feel that the mature Renaissance style of architecture is the best. The book is made up of detailed architectural drawings of the major monuments of the city, accompanied by a short commentary. The bias of the authors becomes clear not only when the lengths of the entries are compared (Ca' Foscari receives a paragraph and Palladio's buildings all have two pages of detailed commentary), but also when the types of discussion are compared. To their credit, even though they feel that Gothic architecture is basically barbarian, having been heavily influenced by the arab-oriental tradition, they do include the Gothic buildings, since, as they note in the discussion of the Ca' Foscari, these were the forerunners of the Venetian Renaissance style which produced such great architects as Palladio; however the coverage of this period is brief and extremely general.

When discussing the lombardesque palaces of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries the authors go into more detail. In general they find the facades graceful and elegant, though some, like the Trevisan a Santa Maria Formosa have too much ornament, or like the Contarini delle Figure are a little dry. They are quick to pick up on any of the architectural inconsistencies which appear in the buildings, but they feel they should use "indulgenza" and not be too hard

22 It is interesting to note that the very heavily decorated palaces such as the Ca' Dario are not included in the survey, as they fit neither the Gothic nor the Renaissance pattern.
on the architects. For example, they conclude the discussion of the Palazzo Trevisan-Cappello in Canonica with the following:

..il passaggio dal pessimo al perfetto non puo effettuarsi che a gradi, scusar ne dobbiamo il suo autore, che' esser deve uno dei Lombardi o Guglielmo Bergamasco, ed anzi essere a tali autori obbligati di avere i primi scosso il giogo della barbarie, nella quale stavasi involta la bell' arte dell' Architettura.23

To Cicognara, Diedo and Selva, the early Renaissance buildings are worth discussing not as architecturally mature works which satisfied the needs of their patrons, but as sorts of stepping stones between the Gothic and the High Renaissance; they save their superlatives for the latter type.

A thematically similar, but not quite so large and comprehensive study was produced in 1847 by another Academy instructor, Pietro Selvatico, though he was more of a rival than a follower or colleague of the earlier writers. Even though he wrote his survey of Venetian architecture and sculpture as an aesthetic guide, Selvatico is no more sympathetic a viewer of architecture in all its facets than were Cicognara and his associates. For example, works of the medieval period in his opinion, cannot really be called art. He often refers to Temanza and Sansovino as his authorities, and also frequently discusses the merits of the opinions of Cicognara, Diedo and Selva. Selvatico sets up his section on the early Renaissance up differently than the latter authors.

He adopts the style set by Vasari and Temanza, and discusses the works in terms of the architects and sculptors to whom they are attributed. In his analysis of the palaces he is very like his forerunners in finding them elegant, light, yet sumptuous. However, he constantly attacks their objections to small architectural details, but is just as free with his own opinions, which are far more scathing at times, as though he finds many of the palaces in their present state offensive. One example, quoted by Tassini, exists in the segment on the Palazzo Contarini-Polignac (Manzioni). Selvatico shows appreciation for the general facade organization and the stonework, but continues on in a very frank vein:

Cio che appare brutto veramente è il cornicione inferiore con quell' aquile e que' goffi vasi. Si vede l'intenzione di imitare l'antico, ma quanto siasi raggiunto lo scopo, lascio dire a chi sa. Misera cosa pur sono i capitelli composti de basamento e pesano troppo anche i superiori: ma quelle gentili logge del primo e secondo piano compensano con usura codesti sconci.

The problem with this type of analysis is that Selvatico is often cited as an authority on these buildings, and many of the works suffer because they do not conform to the rather artificial set of standards that Selvatico's (and his contemporaries) understanding of the rules of classical architecture imposed upon them. Although some of the historical

24 For example in the discussion of the Palazzo Contarini delle Figure Selvatico says: "Il Diedo, uomo che badava, talvolta di soverchio, alle minuzie piuttosto ch all' effetto delle grandi masse...", 249.

25 Ibid., 252.
data given in the book is extremely useful, the book is in the first instance it is primarily an aesthetic guide of a sort common to the nineteenth century, in which the viewer is taught to look in a very narrow and judgmental sort of manner.

Related attitudes appear in 1867 in the Swiss scholar Jacob Burckhardt's history of Italian Renaissance architecture. He was one of the earliest art historians and his opinions shaped much of the influential German school. Burckhardt finds the Venetian use of ornament incorrect and too weighty, preferring Florentine rustication:

Incrustation inevitably favours the decorative at the expense of the architectonic. The early Renaissance in Venice indeed scarcely deserves the name of architecture...The palaces are saved by the beauty of features inherited from the Gothic period. When these are absent, e.g. in the court of the Doge's Palace, the ostentation is revealed in its full irrationality. The only palazzo with a more scrupulous approach to the antique orders, partly in the form of half-columns--for all its tasteful luxury--simply makes one long for the Florentine school; this is the Palazzo Vendramin Calergi, 1481, by Pietro Lombardo. 26

He has absolutely nothing constructive to say about early Venetian architecture. To him, the Venetian mind set, with its serenity and security (read stagnation) was the root of this unsuccessful early Renaissance style. He concludes his discussion by asking:

Where would modern architecture have ended up, if it had fallen for any length of time into the hands of the Venetian exponents of a fretwork and jewelry aesthetic?

26 This quote, and the one which immediately follows, are from Jacob Burckhardt The Architecture of the Italian Renaissance, trans. James Palmes, rev & ed. Peter Murray (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 49f.
How greatly even in Venice would the buildings of the Florentine Jacopo Sansovino and his School have been missed, through whom the discipline of the High Renaissance was pioneered there. This is an excellent example of the attitude that has dominated much of the writing on Venetian architecture, that the real Renaissance did not occur until someone from Rome and Florence showed the Venetians how architecture ought to be practiced.

From 1851 to 1858, a few years before Burckhardt's work appeared, the Englishman John Ruskin, in distinct opposition to the Neo-classicists, was publishing the *Stones of Venice* which championed the cause of Gothic architecture. The interest in the Gothic, both aesthetically, and as a philosophy of building which gave a new appreciation to the craftsman, was growing in both England and France (where it was taken up by Viollet le Duc). Ruskin, who spent many years in Venice studying the architecture, has interesting things to say about the shift from Gothic to Renaissance architectural styles in Venice, and which phase of Venetian Renaissance architecture he prefers:

There having been three principal styles of architecture in Venice,—the Greek or Byzantine, the Gothic, and the Renaissance, it will be shown...that the Renaissance itself is divided up into three correspondent families; Renaissance engrafted on Byzantine, which is earliest and best; Renaissance engrafted on Gothic which is second, and second best; Renaissance on Renaissance, which is double darkness, and worst of all.27

Ruskin, quite unlike most other architectural writers, actually prefers the Venetian early Renaissance architecture to that of

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the high Renaissance, which he considers frozen and soulless. Ruskin explains that in the "Renaissance engrafted onto Byzantine" phase, multicolored marble wall veil decorations, borrowed from Byzantine churches appear on the palaces. As examples he uses late Quattrocento and early Cinquecento facades such as the Ca' Dario and the Trevisan-Cappello in Canonica. He is one of the first scholars to take interest in the Byzantine aspect of Venetian Renaissance palaces, and it is an important component of these works, one which will be examined in greater detail in this study.

The first study to concentrate specifically on the Renaissance in Venice was Pietro Paoletti's magnum opus, *L'architettura e la scultura del rinascimento in Venezia* published in 1893. He takes the late nineteenth century interest in documentation to the aid of Venetian scholarship and pulls out from the archives all the documents he can find on the Renaissance buildings, and publishes them as part of his study. He recreates the identity of the architect Mauro Codussi, attributing to him the Vendramin-Calergi and the Corner-Spinelli palaces, and to the Lombardo family the other turn of the sixteenth century palaces. However, in comparison to churches and *scuole*, the documentary evidence for palaces is meager; Paoletti's conclusions in this field are for the most part attributions based on stylistic similarities to buildings for which he has documentary evidence. Affected by Selvatico, he discusses the transitional buildings of the first half of
the fifteenth century, showing how the facades become more regularized, creating a path for the Renaissance buildings. Although this work is of utmost importance for the documentary resources examined, and the artistic attribution made, he often relies on the critical judgements of Cicognara et al, when describing buildings. This, however is a small factor considering that Paoletti's documentary discoveries made available the information on the patrons and architect (Mauro Codussi) of some of the most important palaces of the early Renaissance.

Twentieth century scholarship has taken some interesting twists and turns. It is as disjointed as the sources which precede it. Much of the work on palaces is attributional, stemming from Paoletti's research. They are discussed in studies such as that of Luigi Angelini which attempt to identify which works belong to the oeuvre of Mauro Codussi.28

One very important source is Elena Bassi's Palazzi di Venezia, which attempts to document and catalogue the collection of drawings commissioned from Visentini by Consul Joseph Smith and finished c. 1733, called the Admiranda Urbis Venetae.29 Since Smith's main interest was in the buildings that were both architecturally significant (this choice possibly determined by Academy instructor Visentini), and


important in his own day, Bassi's work cannot be expected to be comprehensive. However, as Consul Smith and Visentini found many of the palaces from the 1480 to 1510 period relevant, it becomes an essential work. Bassi's analyses present information on building history listing complete bibliographic sources and reproductions from many sources. Rather than making critical comments about the quality of the architecture, Bassi quotes interesting comments from scholars such as Sansovino and Cicogna. Her own contributions usually takes the form of speculation about original patrons and dating of decorations based on the available sources, and for the most part are intelligent attempts at coming to terms with disparate and difficult material.

Ralph Lieberman's book, *Renaissance Architecture in Venice 1450-1540* also takes the form of a sort of catalogue.30 A brief introductory essay outlines the basic building trends, and then major monuments of all types, (with many of the palaces included) from 1450-1515 are discussed individually. Lieberman's aim is quite different, however, from that of Bassi. Lieberman's type of entry consists primarily of an analysis of the formal elements of the building. The aim of the discussion is to show what types of architectural vocabulary are used and how these elements are manipulated in a way which characterizes them as "Renaissance." In his choice

30 (New York: Abbeville Press, 1982).
of time span and subject matter for the book, he has drawn much from Paoletti. This is especially evident in the selection of palaces discussed, and in the way in which he starts out with later Gothic buildings and explains the "new" elements which are appearing on them, and then discusses, in the buildings which follow, how more and more classical architectural elements are included, and are used in an increasingly sophisticated manner, until the Vendramin-Calergi is reached, which to Lieberman is the apogee of palace building in Italy at the time. His most impressive contribution is a sensitivity to Venetian building traditions and decorative interests, and the way in which these are combined in the development of Renaissance architecture. In both this book, and in an earlier article Lieberman discusses the Byzantine revival apparent in certain Venetian churches.\textsuperscript{31} He does not, however, choose to explore this in terms of the palaces, in which he sees no revival characteristics.

John McAndrew has also discussed Byzantine qualities of churches, and does not investigate this possibility in palaces.\textsuperscript{32} Like Lieberman, in the posthumously published book called \textit{Architecture of the Early Renaissance in Venice}, McAndrew concentrates on formal aspects of the architectural


works discussed. Although McAndrew understands and explains in good detail Venetian building traits and customs, he still wants the buildings to conform to the classical tradition. McAndrew was unable to discuss palaces as a group because they seem too eclectic to him, so the discussion is separated into two parts, entitled "Early Renaissance Palaces" and "Exceptional Palaces." Facades are discussed separately rather than as a common group, and very often, pieces of palaces such as windows or staircases are held up as examples. It is only when McAndrew gets to Mauro Codussi, the architect who is thought to have understood Albertian principles better than any other architect working in Venice, that whole buildings are analyzed with any sympathy. His analysis is deep, sensitive and skillful, but since it is clouded with the author's hidden agenda, to show how advanced the architect's thinking was in terms of his absorption of the rules of Roman classicism, many other aspects of the buildings are not discussed.

McAndrew's book was the subject of a series of fundamentally important reviews which addressed the problems associated with his arguments and methodology, and suggested that more attention should be paid to social and historical context, and thus provided an alternative means by which the palaces could be analysed. There are some works which address

33 (Cambridge, Mass. and London: MIT Press, 1980). Since the book reviews discussed the mistakes which resulted from the posthumous publishing of the work, which have since been corrected in the second edition, in Italian, this issue need not be raised here.
the problem of the classical tradition and do try to keep historical context in mind. However, before discussing these, it is necessary to return briefly to the problem of Vasari and his legacy. The Vasarian tradition, when examined in context, reveals that in Florence, Vasari's method has been a viable and sensible way to begin the study of Renaissance art and architecture, primarily because the Florentines kept copious records of every kind of activity, artistic or otherwise. In Venice, however, this is extremely difficult in terms of painters and almost impossible for architects, since records of commissions were not kept in the same way as in Florence. Also, as Deborah Howard points out, Venetian stonemasons and architects were not accorded the same kind of status they managed to receive in Florence, Venice at this time still adhered to the medieval system of anonymity.34 Also, as has been seen, there were no chroniclers of artists' lives of Vasari's sort until the seventeenth century, and much information was displaced. As Juergen Schulz discusses, this lack of neatly defined chronologies and schools within which to place the works, has made scholars uncomfortable with Venetian architecture.35 In order to move beyond this problem, scholars have to accept that there are documentary limitations, and that this is a problem they cannot correct; it will always be

35 Schulz, Review, 697.
difficult to put works of art in chronological order and to attribute them correctly. Also, there were different working conditions in Venice in comparison to other fifteenth century centres. Thus scholars must often step aside from the customary constructs of architects, their works and their followers. Buildings could be analyzed as a group, rather than by different unidentifiable people, and associated with the historical and cultural circumstances which produced them, in order that they be better understood.

The other methodological issue with which we have been concerned was that the standard of judgement for the Renaissance period has been how "archaeologically correct" an architect was in his use of classical form as it appeared in the monuments of Augustan Rome, and canonized by writers of architectural treatises like Vitruvius, Alberti or Palladio. These ideas have provided the basis for the way all Renaissance architecture has been judged, yet they are criteria to which the buildings were not originally meant to conform. Such architectural standards are difficult to apply to the fifteenth century, because, as Howard Burns has pointed out, at that time only a few architects, such as Alberti (whose De re medificatoria was not even published until 1485), really understood such things as the correct use of the orders, and even to him it was not important.36 In the fifteenth century,

capturing the spirit, rather than the letter of antiquity was the aim of the architect. Brunelleschi, as has been shown, was also often inspired by buildings of the Tuscan Romanesque, such as the eleventh century Baptistery in Florence, which was thought to be a Roman structure. Howard Burns and Howard Saalman even contend that he had also looked to some Veneto-Byzantine structures like the twelfth century San Marco. It is not until the sixteenth century that Bramante and Raphael in Rome start to use the "archaeologically correct" classicism that has been seen as desirable. Thus, given that in the Quattrocento, Florentine architects used classical forms grafted onto indigenous types, it is expecting too much to want the Venetians, who had their own indigenous forms, to copy this method. Just as architecturally correct or "High Renaissance" classicism was not used in Venice in the later part of the fifteenth century neither were its forms used anywhere else.

Howard Burns' work lays out some broad guidelines for consideration, but work has also been done to provide a fuller explanation of the development of Venetian Quattrocento architecture. Helmut Lorenz' article on Venetian palaces discusses some of the Veneto-Byzantine characteristics of the

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37 ibid., 277.

38 As in the so-called House of Raphael in Rome, circa 1510. Even though the piano nobile is articulated in correct Doric form, in its heavily rusticated lower floor with shops the palace still derives from a traditional residential type.
The article only briefly discusses the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century buildings and moves on to concentrate on later structures, but nevertheless, when combined with Ruskin's observations, he provides a useful track of investigation which will be explored to greater depths in this study.

Work has also begun to put the works into the context of the historical and cultural ambient within which they were created. This is the aim of the 1977 book on Mauro Codussi written by Loredana Olivato and Lionello Puppi. Important work is done on the patterns of patronage of the architect, tracing his religious and secular works to the same group of patricians, who were humanists involved with the Camaldolese monastery. The authors also create a picture of these patricians who have a desire to portray Venice as a new world, a new Eden, a perfect society. Classical architecture as set down by Alberti and realized in the works of Mauro Codussi was their means of expressing this ideal. Ralph Lieberman, when reviewing this book sensibly suggests that the authors go too far in suggesting that the patrons taught the architect about Albertian ideas. He also brings up the most important point about the book in that the catalogue, which discusses that available facts about every building which at some time has


been attributed to Codussi (including most of the palaces under consideration here), is in no way related to the text. 41 Thus, these most interesting and provocative ideas have not been put to the test through a careful analysis of the architecture. Since there is a chapter on patrician palaces designed by Codussi, clearly there is some work to be done to make the connections between the new architectural vocabulary that emerged in the late Quattrocento and early Cinquecento and the changing socio-cultural ambient.

This concept has some very important possibilities, and indeed another Italian scholar, Manfredo Tafuri has also hinted at the connection. Although his book, *Venezia e il Rinascimento* 42 deals mostly with the latter part of the sixteenth century, in the opening chapter he traces the appearance of a certain type of imagery connected to humanist ideas and ideals which appears on some of the palaces beginning in late fifteenth century Venice. This creates possibilities for the interpretation of all the imagery on the palaces. In the last part of the thesis, the viability of these author's visions of the aims of the Renaissance Venetian patrician as it may have been expressed in palace decoration will be examined in greater detail.

Before the relationship between historical and cultural


42 (Torino: Giulio Einaudi, 1985).
changes in Renaissance Venice and changes in palace style can be examined, it is necessary to carefully examine and define the formal elements of this group of palaces as a whole. Earlier scholars have, for the most part, looked at the buildings in terms of the architectural goals of the mid sixteenth century architect, and not those of the late fifteenth century architect. To avoid this problem, we have to assume that the architect knew what he was doing, and had certain other goals of expression in mind, and through the formal analysis try to discover those goals.

In order to provide the proper context for the definition and analysis of the new palace style as it emerged in the later Quattrocento and early Cinquecento in Venice, the nature of the mainland Gothic and the Renaissance palace type must first be discussed, followed by that of the Gothic palace in Venice. An understanding of the late Gothic palace type in its most developed form is essential to this study for two reasons. Firstly, the late Gothic type forms the organizational basis for the Renaissance type, and secondly, it can be contrasted to the new type. The differences between the architectural vocabulary and the conceptual organization between the old and new types will thus become much clearer. Then, the characteristics of the earliest examples of Renaissance style, such as the fragmentary Ca' del Duca and the second phase of the Arco Foscari will be discussed with reference to the use of Roman classical architectural vocabulary, as well as the
appearance of new, more substantial forms. The significance of the completed Arco Foscari and the Scala dei Giganti will be discussed, since the comprehensive use of Roman classicizing style and the suggestive iconography of these works was an important catalyst for the introduction of a new decorative style in patrician palaces.

Chapter Three will analyze the first group of Renaissance palaces, those built from circa 1480 to 1495, and will start the process of defining the early Venetian Renaissance palace style. These years are ones of great freedom and experimentation in palace building, resulting in the discovery of a suitable new style. In fact, diversity is one of the main characteristics of this group. There are common decorative trends, however. The palaces are all revetted in Istrian stone and precious marbles, which were very expensive. They use the architectural language of Roman classicism, such as round arches and Roman-like capitals and friezes, though not in an archaeologically correct manner. The broad expanses of superimposed layers of round arched windows make the palaces appear like their Trecento Veneto-Byzantine forerunners. Precious stone ornaments, of a type derived from Byzantine palaces and churches, add to the Byzantine revival effect, making this one of the major themes of the new style. There is also a new sophistication in the way the spatial elements of the facade are manipulated, creating facades in which every element helps to define the whole.
In Chapter Four, which analyzes the palaces built from 1495 to 1510, we start with a basic model which evolved out of the experimentations of the first group. The type is now much easier to define, having solidified somewhat. The model retains the late Gothic tripartite form, the Veneto-Byzantine window plan, and has Roman classical dividing and supporting elements such as pilasters, columns and mouldings. These are beginning to hint at supporting the facade. This later group of palaces is not as diverse as the earlier group. Their individuality appears in the sculptural decorations, which are, like the basic facade plan, a mixture and synthesis of Roman and Byzantine motifs. The motifs often have triumphal or festive themes, and sometimes hint at expressing certain qualities suitable for the patrician owners, such as piety or prudence.

The final chapter will include an analytical comparison between the Vendramin-Calergi palace, the largest and most famous palace of the period, and the buildings of the new type described in the previous chapters. Usually the Vendramin-Calergi palace is admired for its canonical Vitruvian classical vocabulary, my analysis will seek to relocate it within the context from which it grew. In the concluding section of the thesis, the political, historical and cultural contexts which made the choice of dual Byzantine and Roman classical imagery relevant for Venetian patrician palace builders will be discussed. In doing so, I aim to bring out the intelligence
and sophistication of the Venetian architects and patrons of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries in Venice, so that the palace architecture of this period will no longer be seen as a series of unsuccessful attempts to imitate the Vitruvian model.
CHAPTER TWO

PALACES IN FIFTEENTH CENTURY FLORENCE AND VENICE

The Development of the Florentine Palace Type.

Most scholars agree that the Italian Renaissance palace type developed in the mid fifteenth century in Florence and spread from there to other centres of the mainland. The medieval palace type developed from the old Roman insula, a group of buildings with shops on the bottom and residential space above. This was the basic residential unit of the city, and related families lived close together in groups of these homes. Their residential district was identified not by the distinctive architecture of their residences, which for the most part resembled the others of the city, but by their loggias, under which they met each other in peace time, and by their towers into which they crowded themselves in times of

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civil unrest or foreign attack. With the development of a
guild commune type of government in the late thirteenth and
early fourteenth centuries, the towers were ordered cut down in
an attempt to control civil unrest caused by factional
fighting.

While there are no examples of fully extant medieval
towers left in Florence, a good example of a medieval palace
exists in the Trecento Palazzo Davanzati (Fig 4). It is a four
storey building with a loggia on top where the family would
have taken air during the hot summers. This structure, called
a palcho, had an overhanging roof to cast shade down onto the
rest of the building. The palace is on a small site which only
had room for a staircase court rather than a full sized
enclosure. It has a stone exterior with deep channelling
between the bricks. The slightly pointed arched voussoirs
surrounding the windows and doors are the only decoration in
the brickwork, which gives the overall impression of an
impregnable building. The lower storey, with its large arched
openings, would at one time have contained shops. The first
floor, or piano nobile contained the principle living rooms of
the family. The upper storeys would have contained the living
quarters for the servants, as they were less comfortable in mid
winter or mid summer than the storeys below.

With the rise of a wealthy and powerful group of
merchants toward the middle of the fifteenth century, the

2 Goldethwaite, Renaissance Florence, 14.
uniformity which had previously defined the appearance of the city began to disappear, altered forever by the massive and distinctive palaces which were being constructed. Although supposedly a commune, run by the guilds, Florence was now in fact principally controlled by the Medici family and their rivals such as the Strozzi, the Pitti and the Ruccellai. These families challenged the norm and commissioned very large homes. By using the arguments of the humanists, who used Aristotelian concepts of magnificence to show that it was not only fitting, but that it was right for great men to build in such a way, they countered the arguments of the jealous, who claimed public display of wealth in the form of private palaces was sinful.³

The size and ostentation of a private residence became synonymous with the greatness and virtue of the person who commissioned it. The speed with which these concepts of virtuous magnificence spread to other centres of Italy points to their usefulness for patrons of architecture. For example, J.R. Spencer cites a letter dated 1461 from Benedetto Ferrini, architect, to his employer Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, on the subject of the partially built Venetian palace which the latter had just purchased from the Cornaro family:

...a me pare che misser Andrea cornaro havesse uno animo magnanimo perche ha principiato un magnifico & ³

stupentissimo Lavoro quanto per Luy non gli manchava et volere fare un bellisimo edificio..." 4

Here, Cornaro has been credited with a generous spirit for wanting to create a beautiful building.

Both Isabelle Hyman and Richard Goldthwaite point out that the new Florentine domestic palace type was derived from those originally built for government officials such as the Bishop, the Podestà or the Priors. The Palazzo Vecchio, which contained the council halls and the residence of the city Priors is large and squarish, with a spacious internal courtyard and loggia, with a well in case the officials had to lock themselves inside during times of civil strife or foreign attack. Its facade is rusticated to give a forbidding appearance. The string courses mark the storey divisions. The stonework walls are punctuated by long rows of bifurcated pointed arch windows. The building is crowned by a massive projecting crenelated arcade, out of which rises the bell tower. The top portion of the structure adds to the overall impression of an impenetrable fortified castle, which, as the seat of the Republic’s government, it sometimes needed to be.

The development of a new palace type also signalled a change in the living conditions of the wealthiest families.5 They started to isolate themselves from their relatives with


5 Richard Goldthwaite, "Florentine Palace," passim.
whom they had formerly shared their lives. The new residences were primarily single family dwellings, and were organized for the privacy and luxury of the resident. Just as the government of the guild commune was giving way to one of individual power politics, the extended family as a tightly bound group was giving way to the individual dynasty.

One of the most important examples of the new palace type was begun in 1444 by the architect Michelozzo, for the Medici family (Fig. 5). Since, in the fifteenth century, the name of the patron was synonymous with the designer of a building, Cosimo de' Medici had to make sure that his palace made exactly the right kind of personal statement, expressing his great wealth and powerful position in the city, without being too ostentatious. In order to accomplish this, Michelozzo used a combination of three basic design elements: traditional Florentine palace and civic architecture, elements of classical architecture, and Brunelleschian idiom in the design of the courtyard.

The most noticeable difference between this and the earlier palaces is its immense size. It truly dominated the neighborhood in a way that only governmental buildings had previously done. It has many of the same features of the medieval residences: like the Palazzo Davanzati the floors diminish in height from ground level to cornice. Also the most important rooms were on the piano nobile, with lesser family members being relegated to the upper floors. However, there
were no shops in the Medici palace, only a loggia at the corner where Medici banking business was once conducted. It was eventually closed up completely in the sixteenth century by Michelangelo. As in the Palazzo Vecchio, string courses mark the divisions between the storeys. Here too, the immense size of the building is due to the large courtyard. The windows on the facade are in the same two-light style as those on the Palazzo Vecchio and the Podesta, but Michelozzo articulates them a little differently. He uses classically inspired round arches rather than pointed Gothic ones, and alternates Medici roses and palle in the spandrels above the corinthian-like colonettes dividing the twin window arches. These direct references to the seat of Florentine government, capped with Medici symbols would have been noticed by everyone and the connection between Medici power and the Florentine government made.

The use of rustication in the masonry is newly interpreted by Michelozzo in the Palazzo Medici. The rough heavy stone blocks surfacing the exterior of the first floor loggia are used for the first time here. They are an effective metaphor for power and strength in their resemblance to impenetrable fortifications, as seen in Tuscan government palazzi; they may also be read as imitations of Roman walls and gates. The more typical, smoother blocks are used on the piano nobile, and again the Medici palle can be seen wrapped

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around the corners. The top floor is ashlar, so there is an effective transition from rough to smooth surfaces corresponding to the diminishing height of the upper storeys. Like the windows, the stonework would have been recognized as an expensive and extravagant form of construction.

The smoothness of the top floor is contrasted to the jutting *all' antica* cornice, complete with egg and dart mouldings and modillions, another Michelozzo innovation. The purpose of the raking cornice is to shield the floor from sun like the overhanging loggia roofs of earlier palaces, but the classical entablature motifs which are used to key it gracefully back into the plane of the facade, make a strong statement linking the power and glory of ancient Rome to the Medici family. This would have been impressive to those seeing the building in the Quattrocento, and it is unlikely that they would have known that in Roman architecture, a cornice such as this should really be capping a frieze and entablature supported by columns.⁷

Another highly innovative Florentine palace was the Palazzo Rucellai, designed by Alberti and built by Rossellino in 1449 (Fig. 6). It is similar to the Medici palace in that there are three storeys topped by a heavy projecting roof. The windows are also an all'antica version of the twin-light Palazzo Vecchio type. Instead of string courses between the storeys, Alberti inserts a frieze of the Rucellai emblem--the

⁷ Murray, *Renaissance Architecture*, 89.
wind filled sail to complement the coats of arms on the piano nobile and the stemmae over the windows. Unlike the Medici palace, in this palace the facade rustication is uniform on all three floors, consisting of smooth stone blocks with grooved channelling between them.

The main decorative feature of the palace is the use of pilasters applied on all three storeys to create vertical as well as horizontal units of space. Alberti took the pattern for this from the Colosseum in Rome, and although all three stories are articulated in a classical mode with a change of capitals on each level, they do not copy those of the coliseum. Alberti uses the Tuscan on the lower storey, a composite of his own invention on the piano nobile instead of the usual Ionic, and returns to the Corinthian for the top floor. This screen of pilasters would have had an effect different from the effect of the Medici palace, much more classical and less oppressive, though certainly not less amazing. Another all'antica quotation occurs in the diamond pattern on the base of the facade. It is a decorative version of the Roman technique of opus reticulatum, in which pyramids of stone were inserted into wet concrete in order to strengthen it. Here Alberti uses his study of Roman ruins for decorative, but not structural purposes. There is some disagreement among scholars as to whether Alberti was making variations on a system he understood fully, or whether he was just doing his best to imitate it. Whichever the case, it seems that this particular facade design was perhaps too far
removed from Florentine tradition as it was not repeated in Florence. There, versions of the Medici palace rustication combined with intonaco became more popular. It was however influential in other parts of Italy, such as Pienza, where the design appears in the palaces of Pius II's ideal town.

In the fifteenth century in Florence, the courtyard of the family palace took on a new importance. It was a haven or escape from the outside word for the patron, allowing him the luxury of light and fresh air if the palace had to be locked up. A courtyard this size was formerly only the privilege of elected government officials. The courtyard of Alberti's Palazzo Rucellai was never properly finished, but the one in the Medici palace was, in the fifteenth century, one of the most famous aspects of the building. Because it was a more private space, Michelozzo did not restrict himself to tradition as he did on the facade. Here he uses Brunelleschian means to create an elegant atmosphere. He has literally taken the facade of the Florentine Foundling Hospital, with its round arched arcade supported by slender columns, and wrapped it, albeit a little awkwardly, around in a square, and topped it with windows similar to those on the outer facade. The lightness and grace of the resulting interior court strongly contrasts with the forceful and forbidding exterior. The top storey is finished with an open loggia, but unlike the Palazzo Davanzati and other palaces, this one only overlooks the interior world of the palace.
Although the Medici palace courtyard was often used for important ceremonies, Richard Goldthwaite asserts that the creation of a private space for the owner and his family is the overriding theme of the spatial organization of the Renaissance Florentine palace. Although there were many windows in these new residences their purpose was to admit light, not the outside world. Indeed, they would have been covered by oiled cloth or paper, and are really too high up to see out of easily. So, although the new palace type introduced some new living arrangements into the Renaissance palace, it retained much of the isolation of the earlier type. The owner decorated his palace at great expense to make it a luxurious private haven on the interior. The exterior of the palace used a combination of motifs from the Florentine republican government buildings and classical Rome to make a public statement about the power and wealth of the patron.

The Venetian Gothic Palace Type to 1480.

Unlike Florence, whose communal government gave rise to a merchant patriciate in the fifteenth century, Venice had a very stable kind of society. In 1297 the aristocracy was firmly established, with the serrata or closing of the list of aristocratic families. Only those families whose names were written in the so called Libro d'Oro, or register of aristocratic families who were entitled to a seat in the Maggior Consiglio, the main government council. Venice, unlike
Florence had a highly structured society, ruled by the nobility. The resulting society was well ordered and strictly controlled; there was little civil unrest. This, combined with the difficulty of invading the city, made Venice a relatively safe and calm place in which to live. The open and unfortified appearance of the city's architecture, and especially the palaces, is evidence of this security. The patrician class developed a mode of building palaces which reflected the Venetian love of decoration. Possibly due to the existence of a well established wealthy patrician class, palaces were more openly opulent much earlier than those of Florence, though good taste and sumptuary laws kept them within reasonable bounds. Also, the patrician class considered themselves equal to their elected Doge, who was no more than primus inter pares, or "first among equals". This concept of the unified patrician group made Venetians uncomfortable when any one family attempted to build in too ostentatious a manner, even though many did. After all, as Sansovino pointed out, in theory, the Doge's residence was the only one called a palace--the rest of the houses were simply case.

Due to the city's marshy environment, the palace type that developed in Florence and which spread throughout the mainland was unsuitable for use in Venice. Unlike Florence and the other Italian mainland cities, Venice had not been a Roman town, with the insula as the base for its residences. Nor had it been a fortified medieval city with towers and heavily
rusticated buildings; the lagoon area surrounding the city was treacherous enough to make attack unsafe and unlikely. Unlike the mainland, where security concerns over civil strife were a serious threat to the nobles, Venice, with its stable oligarchy and natural fortifications was relatively safe from both internal insurrection and foreign invasion. The terrafirma need for heavily rusticated palaces as symbols of strength and authority was unnecessary, allowing for the use of windows as the main vehicle for decorative and expressive imagery in the Venetian palace.

It is said that the city was begun by peoples escaping the barbarian invasions during the collapse of the Roman Empire. Over the next few hundred years these people, first fishermen, then traders with Constantinople and other centres of the Levant, developed their own methods of creating stable areas for residences in the wet land, by driving piles into the mud and creating foundations out of gravel. Instead of roads, they extended the canal system throughout the city and used it as the main form of transportation. The earliest form of palaces that we are familiar with belong to the Veneto Byzantine type. The best known example is the Fondaco dei Turchi, once a Pesaro family palace, built in the thirteenth century, restored in the nineteenth (Fig. 7). It is a long, two storey building with towers on each end. The lower storey has a water gate, behind which were storerooms for goods. The upper storey had a long hall or sala running parallel to the
windows. One notices immediately its openness and unfortified appearance compared to the Tuscan medieval house type.

While some scholars, such as Deborah Howard, argue that the type, called a casa fondaco was derived from the Arab fondouk or trading house, others, such as James Ackerman and Otto Demus believe that the late Roman villas of the mainland are a more likely source. Demus in fact argues that the colonnade running across the front of the facade of the Fondaco dei Turchi, and other palaces such as the Ca'Loredan and Farsetti (fig. 8) was a conscious derivation from fifth and sixth century palaces with colonnaded porticos and atria, such as that of the palace of Diocletian at Spalato (Fig 9). This is an early example of Venetian visual sophistication and the ability to create the desired effect by coopting imagery from whichever source was suitable.

Just as Florentine palace builders incorporated

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9 Otto Demus, "Renascence", 353. Demus argues that this is part of a trend in thirteenth century Venice in which the decorative language of the late Roman/early Christian empire was cleverly copied in order to give a sense of heritage and history to Venice to which she was not entirely entitled. The Venetians were trying to create the impression that they were the heirs to the empire of Justinian and Constantine in order to create an "apostolic empire of the East" based on their rights to St Mark's relics.
architectural features of their government buildings into their residences to confer a sense of power to their owners, so too did the Venetians look to the Ducal Palace, their seat of government and residence of their elected Doge as the most potent symbol of power in the state. The Ducal Palace was begun in 1340, and was almost finished by 1424, although it was constantly worked on through the next two centuries (fig. 10).

Thus the Ducal Palace, newly completed in a florient Gothic style and influenced by Arab and other architecture, was still a new and potent power symbol for the Venetians at a time when the Florentines were beginning to rethink their form of domestic architecture. The most noticeable feature of the palace is the pointed arch arcade decorated with quatrefoils in circlets, and, as will become apparent in the following discussion of the nature of the Venetian Gothic palace, most residences built or renovated from the 1420's to the 1470's bear this motif.

Palaces of the later Gothic period (roughly from the 1440's to the 1470's) were three or four storeys high, with large central balconies and windows. The water gates, column screens and towers of the Veneto-Byzantine palace type were no longer used. Since canals were the principal transportation thoroughfares of Venice, the main facades of most palaces were on canals. The canal facade door was always the largest and

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10 This can be compared to the Florentine and Sienese Palazzi Communali, which were started around the same time but were finished in only a few decades.
best decorated door of the palace because it was the entrance and exit always used by the patrician residents and their guests who generally travelled by gondola on canal routes. Due to the naturally imposed area limitations of the city, space was always a problem and land costs always high, especially on preferred building sites such as the Grand Canal. Consequently, Venetian palaces tend to be longer than they are wide, with L or sightly C shaped plans in order to accommodate a well and small courtyard in the rear or side of the palace. This arrangement can be seen in the plans of the Ca Foscari and Giustiniani (Fig. 11). The buildings were generally not wide enough to accommodate the large central courtyard that was such a common feature of mainland palaces. This, and the fact that there were generally buildings on both sides of a palace, meant that the windows on the canal facade had to be as large and numerous as possible to let in sufficient light.

These palaces, unlike the Renaissance palaces of Florence, often held many branches of the same family, and sometimes were divided up into separate apartments. People did

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11 There was usually a land entrance at the rear of the palace, but this was generally a service entrance.

12 This is probably why the Trecento palace type, with its giant sala running parallel to the water and long row of columns disappeared. It was probably only economically feasible for most patrician families to build the palaces with small canal frontage and to extend the palace back lengthwise from the water. Several rooms were now placed in the space were the main sala had once been, for more privacy.
not live on the damp ground floor, usually reserved for storage and offices, as Venetian patricians often ran large trading companies. It had a long hall or *androne* running from the front door to the back of the structure, with rooms on either side, and (by the late fifteenth century) an interior stairway (fig. 12). The relatively plain exterior decoration and the small windows reflect the functional nature of this storey. The main decorative feature is the carved stone moulding surrounding the portal. The next storey was generally the *piano nobile*, or main living floor.\(^{13}\) It too had a long hall running the length of the building, called the *portego* or *sala*, with smaller rooms on either side. The *sala* was the main formal reception and living room of the palace, and often widened toward the facade so that it could be centred in front of the main group of windows. The heavy exterior decoration, especially in the stonework of the main *sala* windows reflected the importance of this storey. The top storey was used for sleeping and servants quarters, and its portion of the facade is not quite as ornate as that of the *piano nobile*. Palace facades reflect their internal structures in that there tend to be large blocks of windows (aligned to the main *sala*), flanked on one or both sides by single window groups, depending on the size of the building. The bipartite Ca’ D’Oro, started in 1425

\(^{13}\) In a three storey palace such as the Palazzo dell’Ambasciatore (Fig. 13) the *piano nobile* is above the ground floor, but in a four storey palace like the Ca Foscari (fig. 14) the most important floor is the third storey.
(Fig. 15) and the tripartite Palazzo Pisani Moretta, circa 1455 are good examples of these two types of facade arrangement. This regularized bi or tripartite facade arrangement became a standard feature of Venetian palaces, and continued in use long after Gothic architectural vocabulary ceased to be employed.

A late Gothic building which bears closer inspection is the Palazzo dell'Ambasciatore, built around 1455 (fig. 13). Because its facade is organized and articulated like many palaces of the time, it makes a good example for a general discussion of architectural vocabulary. The unity and coherence of the facade is derived from the careful placement and decoration of the windows and mouldings, their white Istrian stone contrasting sharply with the brick and stucco into which they are set. The facade has a grid-like organizational pattern. It is created by positioning the three groups of windows above one another on each storey, giving a primarily vertical orientation. Moreover, a less emphatic horizontal orientation is created on the facade by the string courses separating the storeys. The main decorative focus of the facade is always its centre, with much simpler window groups framing or flanking the main core.

Verticality is articulated by the elongated shape of the windows. They have tapering pointed arches, topped by flaming vases or fleur de lis and are surrounded by elongated rectangular stucco filled panels outlined in billet moulding, all of which gives them long elegant proportions, contributing
to the sense of verticality. Even in the lower storey, the small squarish windows used are aligned one atop the other, allowing them to be read as another vertical unit the same height as the piano nobile windows. Vertical emphasis is also provided by the white quoining of Istrian stone that demarcates the edges of the facades in one continuous stretch from water to cornice line. Thin twisted pilasters, with plain bases and foliated capitals are located at the intersection of the quoined corners; these delineate the horizontal units of the facade. This twisted pilaster motif is echoed in the rope moulding used as a dividing line between each storey, and again as a window framing device. Along with billet moulding and fleur de lis arch points, it is one of the motifs whose repeated use lends an overall sense of unity to the facade.

Each storey makes a complete horizontal thematic entity, yet, through repetition of moulding motifs and window placement and design, each storey is also visually part of the whole. The lower storey has very simple windows framed simply in the billet and rope moulding motifs that are used more boldly on the windows of the upper storeys. On this storey, the mouldings are condensed into the immediate area of the actual window frame, rather than spread out in the double framing devices that are used in the upper storeys. As in the rest of the facade, the focus is on the centre. Here, the door is made prominent by a huge carved pointed arch tympanum topped by a fleur de lis. The Istrian stone moulding motifs, as would be
expected, match those of the windows. The lower storey is much simpler than the upper storeys, but it is still linked to the whole by the use of decorative motifs, which appear in larger form in the floors above. The lower storey thus functions as a kind of prelude or introduction to the rest of the facade.

The top storey is more elaborate than the basement, but less so than the piano nobile, as it has smaller windows, without tracery. They are visually linked to the main storey below by the use of a cusped intrados picked up from the balcony section arch, and have similar mouldings and capitals. The arches of the four-light central section have slender columns surrounded by plain stucco, and a "frame" of billet mouldings. Even if the top storey windows had tracery, as they occasionally did, the tracery was generally less flamboyant that of the windows of the piano nobile.

In the Palazzo dell'Ambasciatore the piano nobile windows are much larger, making the floriated capitals and the billet and rope mouldings surrounding the windows much more visible. The two sets of flanking single light windows are not cusped on the intrados as are the ones upstairs: thus there is nothing to detract from the main decorative focus of the storey and indeed of the whole facade, the piano nobile.¹⁴

¹⁴ According to Ralph Lieberman the statuary seems to have been added in the 1480's, (perhaps to add a modern touch) and thus is not really relevant to the late Gothic palaces. Lieberman notes that sculpture was not often used on palace facades. In the two examples that come to mind in this period, the putti frieze on the Ca Foscari, and the little shield bearers on the Palazzo Bernardo, both function to display family arms.
In this balcony, the columns of grey stone support cusped pointed arches. Oculi enclosing quatrefoil motifs are fitted into the spandrels of the arched window openings so that visually, they appear to be supported by the columns of the windows. This popular form of tracery is the one derived from the Ducal Palace, and makes its debut on private palaces in the Ca'd'Oro. The motif of rosettes and lions, symbols of Venice as seen on the Palazzo Ducale fitted into the spaces surrounding the oculi (Fig. 16), are repeated here. Since the Ducal Palace was the seat of government, and the most important symbol of power in the state, the patrician residents are clearly connecting themselves to this power, informing the world that they are a part of the Venetian ruling class. If family arms appeared on the facade, as they do in the Palazzo Bernardo and the Ca' Foscari, then the connection between the name of the family and the government it was part of is made even stronger. Thus in a combination of repeated architectural motifs contrasted to a strong central tracery, the late or developed Gothic palace facade presented a clear, and coherent unit, combining of traditional Gothic with politically significant motifs.

This type of facade seems to have been relevant until the late 1470's; around 1480 everything changes. Though some classical motifs had intruded into the Gothic facade

They are early examples of the use of classically inspired devices.
vocabulary, such the putti frieze on the Ca Foscari and the
statuary on the Palazzo Bernardo, the palaces that started to
appear in the 1480's must have been quite startling to the
fifteenth century Venetian audience. The architects of these
buildings retained the same basic room and facade arrangement,
as this was still viable and functional, but it is the
decorative language used to articulate the facades which shows
important changes from that of the late Gothic.

The Renaissance Style in Venice

Although Renaissance architectural style was not a
feature of Venetian palace facades until the 1480's, but new
architectural elements start to appear on other buildings in
the city already by the 1450's. Renaissance architectural
style can be defined as the revival and revitalization of
antique forms; archaeological imitation was not the aim. A
means was sought to give a fresh new look and heightened
significance to their buildings. It is important to note that
Venetians had a multifaceted approach to antiquity and
classical ornament. To them the Roman empire and its
architecture was more than just Rome with its group of
monuments such as triumphal arches, temples, amphitheatres.
This was the Western Roman empire. As valid to them were the
forms of the Eastern Roman Empire, those of the fifth and sixth
centuries which we think of as early Christian and Byzantine.
After all, the Roman empire had continued in Constantinople
until its fall to the Turks in 1453, and following this, the Venetians implied that they were the natural heirs to this empire; its architectural forms were tremendously evocative to Venetians. As discussed above, they had long ago adopted this architectural style as their own in such buildings as San Marco, and the thirteenth century Ca's Loredan, Farsetti, and the Fondaco dei Turchi. Ralph Lieberman sums up the situation nicely:

Around the middle of the 15th century something began to change in Venetian architecture: we find a new awareness of the variety of traditions that could actively be drawn upon, and an unprecedented concern for the creation of a local Venetian style that would be an amalgam of the many elements of the city's architectural heritage.15

A more detailed discussion of the precise forms of Renaissance architectural imagery as they were manifested in Venetian palaces follows in Chapters Three and Four.

There is one palace, or rather palace fragment, dating from the earliest phase of Renaissance architecture which illustrates this point clearly. It is the so called Ca' del Duca, near San Samuele, originally a palace for Andrea Corner (Figs. 17 & 18).18 Started in 1457, this palace would have been a massive building; its foundations now carry two good sized palaces. The visible fragments of the Grand Canal and rio facade are all that was built of the palace before it was

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18 One of the first studies of the building was that of Luca Beltrami, "La 'Ca' del Duca' sul Canal Grande ed altre reminiscenze sforzesche in Venezia", Milan 1900 and 1906.
sold to the Duke of Milan, Francesco Sforza in 1481. There is an extensive base, articulated in long and short rectangular blocks. The base projected at the corner, and it is believed there were to be towers on each end of the structure. The right hand corner of the basement level is above the protruded section. It is decorated in diamante style stonework, the long and short pattern of which corresponds to the alternating length of the bricks on the base. The relief is so high on the sharply cut stonework that it is visible from quite a distance. Two thick columns at the corner of this basement section suggest support for a rather tall structure. A semicircular space for another column on the left of the basement segment, would have marked off the towers from the main facade. All the fragments are worked in Istrian stone, and it appears that this would have been the first palace facade to be completely faced in such a manner. Ralph Lieberman points out that both the decorated stonework on the base and the rustication of the basement level are innovations, never before used in Venice.¹⁷

The appearance of the diamante rustication, reminiscent of fortified castles on the mainland such as the Milanese Castello Sforzesce, was so unusual that many scholars have suggested that the work was carried on according to the design worked out by the Duke of Milan's architects, either Benedetto Ferrini or

Filarete. They cite the design for a "Palazzo nel Palude" which appears in Filarete's *Treatise on Architecture* as the probable plan for the project (fig. 19). The rusticated base indicated in the drawing, combined with the two towers, marked off by prominent columns, corresponds to visible elements of the Ca' del Duca. Also, the water gate and the heavily decorated *piano nobile* balcony arcade are elements common to the Venetian palace type, which both architects would have known from visits to Venice. All these factors have caused scholars to centre authorship for the building in Milan. Implicit in the conclusions scholars have drawn about the design for the Ca' del Duca is the attitude that Venetians were not capable of such innovative architectural thinking at this time. However, the documents pertaining to the sale of the property by the Cornaro family to the Sforza, describe the same structure still visible today. It does not seem that Francesco Sforza had much done to the building before he died in 1466. The section of the bill of sale describing the building as it appeared at the time of the sale is quoted by

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18 Heydenriech and Lotz, in *Architecture in Italy 1400-1600*, (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1974), 86f, argue that Filarete was responsible for the design of the palace, and Benedetto Ferrini was working under his direction "on site" in Venice. John R. Spencer, in his article of 1970 (cited above, this chapter, n. 4) cites evidence that Benedetto Ferrini developed the design for the Duke's palace, and sent the Duke a model of his plan.

19 I have not been able to consult the Luca Beltrami study in which this document is published, but the material is well summarized, and the relevant portions quoted in Debra Pincus, *The Arco Foscari*, (New York: Garland, 1976), 138-141.
Debra Pincus in her dissertation; it is significant enough to bear repeating here:

Item la dicta fazada a do torre da lado, como a la caxa del Marchixo da Farara, le quale torre sone de marmoro a diamante, e la riva fra le do torre con colone grossissime de marmoro.20

The reference to the towers, the columns and the rustication makes it clear that the building is of Venetian and not Milanese design. The architect is most likely Bartolomeo Buon, who had drawn up the plans for Andrea Cornaro’s project.

Heydenriech and Lotz quote a document that says the Duke of Milan wanted to build the palace according to the style of his own area, but that the facade would be in the Venetian manner.21 I think Sforza intended to keep building the facade along the lines laid out in the Cornaro project, and, as Wolters and Huse also suggest, there might be much more of Bartolomeo Buon’s lost plans in Filarete’s ‘Palace in a Marshy Place’ than has hitherto been suggested.22

Buon’s design is innovative in more ways than just using fortress-like rustication on its base. Pincus likens this rustication to a type of reverse Roman opus reticulatum, used not too many years after Alberti placed his version of it on the base of the Palazzo Ruccellai.23 John McAndrew points out

20 Ibid., 140.
21 Heydenreich and Lotz, Architecture in Italy, 86.
22 Wolters and Huse, Venedig, 38.
another reference to the antique in the column bases, which he says follow the correct classical scotia-torus-scotia pattern. The massiveness of the columns themselves is unlike anything on a late Gothic facade; there is a real sense of functionality and substance here, something which Lieberman points to as one of the key differences between Gothic and Renaissance architectural thinking. Furthermore, the two towers suggested in the projecting ends of the base of the facade are likened in the bill of sale to those of the residence of the Marchese of Ferrara, now known as the Fondaco dei Turchi. Huse and Wolters have suggested, quite correctly I think, that this is a first attempt to revive the Veneto Byzantine palace form. In the little we can see of the Ca del Duca, innovations, such as the use of mainland type rustication and classical columns have been combined with a local form, the twin tower palace, to give the structure a sense of 'Venetianness', but with a new look. This is a theme which will be picked up again and developed more fully by the architects of the more mature Renaissance style of the 1480's.

The Ca del Duca does not seem to have affected palaces directly, at least not immediately. However, the monumentality and concern for structure which are features of the base of the

24 John McAndrew, Early Renaissance, 14.
25 Lieberman, Architecture, plate 2.
26 Wolters and Huse, Venedig, 38. (Other ways in which Venice's Byzantine heritage is revived in later palaces will be discussed in Chapter Three).
structure are also visible on monuments which do affect the palaces. Just as the architects of the late Gothic palaces used the quatrefoil motif from the loggia arcade for their piano nobile balconies, they seem to have looked again to the Ducal Palace for their cue to start incorporating new decorative motifs into their own palace facades. Pincus, in her dissertation on the Arco Foscari lays out how, from the 1420’s onwards, the entrance system into the Palace was being changed by the construction of the Porta della Carta and the Arco Foscari. The latter structure had a more independent quality than it does today, and certainly had a more classicizing look than is usually noticed because of the Gothic style crocketing on top with the crowning sculpture. Dr Pincus lays out how, in the 1460’s, in the Moro phase of the Arco, the monument took on the appearance of a Roman twin tower gateway (fig. 20). Bartolomeo Buon, who was working at the Ducal palace uses a similar double column motif, though reduced in scale to the one he used on the Ca del Duca. This phase of the Arco Foscari, with its Roman triumphal monument flavour, could well have been one of the "cues" that started Venetians thinking about new motifs and architectural styles for their own buildings. The most important trigger for the change in domestic architectural style was the construction of the Scala dei Giganti, precipitated by a fire in the north wing of the Ducal Palace in 1482. This staircase, with its monumental marble reliefs in a highly classicizing style, and triumphal
motifs about the state and the office of the Doge, is thought to have been partly in place by 1485 (fig. 21). Coinciding with the completion of the Scala was the addition of the crowning sculpture of the Arco Foscari, which Pincus interprets as an encapsulation of the virtues the Venetians wanted their Doge to exhibit, and the role he was to play in leading a Christian city. At this point, in the 1480’s, the first Renaissance style palaces appear. Venetian patricians seemed very sensitive to appropriate palace imagery, and even if they were aware of Florentine trends in the use of classicism, until antique forms had become incorporated into the architectural vocabulary used to express Venetian state leadership, it was neither relevant nor correct for private citizens to use these forms on a grand scale in their own palaces.

27 Pincus, Arco, Chapter Six.
CHAPTER THREE

THE FIRST RENAISSANCE PALACES IN VENICE: c. 1480-1495

Five palaces, built from 1480 to 1495 in Venice, are still in good condition, and illustrate the earliest manifestations of a new style used in a comprehensive manner. They are the palazzi Contarini-Polignac, Corner-Spinelli, Zorzi a San Severo, Gussoni a San Lio, and the Ca' Dario. Amazing experimentation and creativity in the field of domestic architecture characterizes the years during which these palaces were made. A whole new set of decorative facade motifs, based on forms derived from Roman classical, Byzantine, and the twelfth and thirteenth century Veneto-Byzantine architecture was being worked out. While the basic elements of the new "language" appear in all these palaces, they never seem to be used to the same effect twice, even in works by the same architect. The resulting group of facades have a fascinating diversity essential to the eventual formulation of a new type.

What were the common elements of these new palaces? Firstly, they keep the same basic facade organization of the Gothic palace, which suited the structure and function of the buildings. Thus, the facade still has a strong central focus, with the balconies and doors in vertical alignment. Secondly, the lower storey is decorated more simply than the storeys
above, and has a large doorway opening on to the canal. Thirdly, the piano nobile is the most heavily decorated, with a large central balcony and smaller flanking windows. Finally, the top storey is a more subdued version of the piano nobile below.

The pointed arch windows and quatrefoil tracery, the trademarks of the late Gothic period, disappear entirely, and are replaced by round arches set on capitals derived from the classical orders. The decorative vocabulary of the doors, windows, supporting and separating elements also become inspired by the imagery of ancient Rome. The twisted column, Gothic quoining, fleur de lis topknots, and rope and billet mouldings are no longer seen. They make way for garlanded friezes, flaming vases, fluted pilasters and mouldings. The thick, bushy vegetable relief patterns of the Gothic period are replaced by graceful vines, tendrils, urns, leaves and flowers derived from antiquity, which often appear on balconies and around doors.¹

Another major difference between the late Gothic and first Renaissance buildings is the use of stonework. The Gothic palace typically uses stucco on brick, with windows and door frames in contrasting white Istrian stone, while the Renaissance palace features a facade with a full revetment in various colored marbles, a far more expensive procedure, but

¹ Lieberman, Architecture, plate 25. This type of decoration was brought into Venice by the Lombardo family of sculptors and stonemasons and is often referred to as Lombard style vegetation.
very luxurious. The use of porphyry and serpentine roundels set above and around window arches is revived. These motifs, common to Venetian palaces of the Byzantine and early Gothic years (fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries), were rarely used in late Gothic. In the new facade type windows and balcony openings become less the focus of all the decorative attention, as stone patere and squares (often inspired by Byzantine pavement patterns) are applied to piano nobile and upper storeys between the windows, serving to keep the decorative focus lost by the removal of tracery. Also, with the replacement of pointed arches by superimposed storeys of patere topped round arches, many of these palaces resemble the two storey Veneto-Byzantine type so strongly that in Venetian palaces, unlike those of Florence, Byzantine revival, as well as the use of classical motifs must be identified as a major element of the new style.

Many scholars have suggested that the buildings were given a new rationality and balance by the geometricity of the round arches, squared off pilaster divisions, and applied roundels and squares. However, one of the qualities of the late Gothic palace facades is that even though they are articulated in a different vocabulary, they too are generally well organized and symmetrically arranged, as was discussed in the Palazzo dell Ambasciatore in Chapter Two.

The difference between the Gothic and the Renaissance styles is twofold; it is physical and conceptual. The Gothic
facades, with their spidery twisted colonettes, thin billet mouldings and elongated pointed arches all arranged in rows one above the other give the facades a primarily vertical organization and orientation. Repeated moulding types and arch shapes provide a sense of thematic unity. In the new facades, simpler rounded and square shapes are used, with more substantial pilasters, friezes and framing devices arranged to convey an impression of horizontality. Instead of aspiring upward, the new facades, with their weightier forms, appear firmly rooted to their environment. The new facades have a more sophisticated and complex spatial arrangement incorporated into them, articulated in the new language. The sense of balance and facade unity comes not only from repeating decorative patterns, but also from optical refinements used to make the buildings appear proportionally perfect even if they were not originally so. Thus, although one aspect of the change from Gothic to Renaissance palace facades is concerned with applying new decorative motifs to the old facade arrangement, another equally important is the beginning of a new concept of the facade with an intellectualizing, spatial problem solving approach.

A palace which incorporates rich marbles and new

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2 Although Gothic facades, wherever possible are balanced and orderly in window and door placement, it does not seem to have been considered odd if some elements were out of alignment, as in the Palazzo Bernardo balconies. This does not seem to occur in the later palazzi, where such discrepancies are covered up.
architectural vocabulary onto a facade with essentially late Gothic door and window placement is the Palazzo Contarini-Polignac (Fig. 22). Built around 1485 and located on the most important Venetian waterway, the Grand Canal, the facade is much more colorful than a Gothic palace. It is revetted in gray and yellow veined marbles, accented by Istrian stone pilasters and framing devices. However, the multi-light central balcony and door zones flanked by single windows are easily recognizable from the late Gothic type. The windows create the traditional vertical pattern by their placement one atop the other but now the central zone is separated from the wings by sets of fluted white composite pilasters, which are repeated on the edges in lieu of quoining, giving three clearly demarked areas on each storey, and framing the edges of the building. These pilasters also convey the impression that each storey has weight and is supported to some extent by the storey below; the concept of functional decorative features, an important aspect of classical revival, is being introduced here.

Although the facade is broken into three vertical divisions by the pilasters, the sense of horizontality is very strong in the Palazzo Contarini-Polignac, and is the unifying theme to which most of the decorative elements contribute. The immediately noticeable horizontal elements are the entablatures or frieze-like bands running under each storey. These counter

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3 Issues such as the patron and architect, along with other matters pertaining to the history of each palace are discussed in the checklist of palaces in the appendix.
the vertical pilasters, and are, like the pilasters, articulated in an all'antica vocabulary, creating sort of a classical organizational "grid." The base has a layer of rinceau moulding running just under the window frames. The piano nobile frieze has garlands and eagles, which strike a triumphal note. The entablature above is bordered in fluted cima recta moulding and contains consoles which appear to support the top storey windows. These thick, well defined horizontal divisions are in direct contrast to those of Gothic palaces such as the Ambasciatore which uses only a thin rope moulding to differentiate between storeys.

Similar to Gothic palaces, however, is the simplicity of the lower and upper floors compared to the piano nobile. Here, both storeys are made to appear the same height to provide an equal sized horizontal frame for the taller central storey. The architect has planned the width of the frieze so that the piano nobile, while definitely taller, has the same size flanking windows as the other two storeys, to create the illusion of unity on all floors of the palace. This manipulation of formal elements is quite different from anything seen on a Gothic facade.

The basement level is the least decorated; the pilasters on this level are unfluted, and in keeping with the classical

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4 Lieberman, Architecture, plate 65, mistakenly calls the eagles putti. The eagles and festoons are in the same all'antica veining as the anthemion/palmette devices and the flaming urns which top the arches of the top storey and piano nobile arcades, replacing the topknots and fleur de lis of Gothic buildings.
spirit of a simple order for lower floors, have capitals composed of Ionic volutes joined by single festoons. The windows are plainer than those of the top storey and have no porphyry patere above the arches. All the decorative accent in this storey is saved for the door or water gate. This door has a semicircular arch almost the height of the storey, springing from two doric columns. It is flanked by fluted pilasters, colored stone patere and is topped by a row of elegant egg and dart moulding. The door is grand enough to hint of a triumphal entranceway, yet does not overpower the more important upper storeys. The diagrams and detail (figs. 23-25) of the palace show that there is much beautiful detailing not visible unless one is actually in, or entering the palace. These are good examples of the new all'antica stonework motifs used to satisfy the native Venetian appreciation for highly decorated surfaces.

Because there is no tracery on the piano nobile, the top storey, though not as high as the main storey, is almost identical. This is significant, because it allows a strong horizontal rhythm to develop and resonate in the double rows of high round arched windows which stretch across the facade. The double horizontal thread is further emphasized in the rows of porphyry and golden marble patere running across the tops of the arches. The effect does not seem to be considerably altered by the fact that the upper storey balcony rests above the supporting entablature rather than being incorporated into
it as in the piano nobile frieze.

This use of the wide span of simple arches topped by patere on the facade of the Contarini-Polignac is not simply a function of the new horizontal emphasis, though it serves that end admirably (fig. 26). It is a direct reference to the TRecento Veneto-Byzantine palaces such as the Fondaco dei Turchi, in which long arcades decorated with patere were the principle identifying feature of the type. These are not often used on late Gothic buildings. The main decorative motif on the piano nobile—-the quincunx pattern of serpentine and porphyry marbles—-is also from the Byzantine decorative repertoire, possibly a pavement pattern.\(^5\) Besides the revival of Roman classical motifs, Byzantine and Veneto-Byzantine architectural forms were an important part of the Venetian Renaissance style.

The architect of this palace manipulates the organizational grid of pilasters and friezes to give the impression of a balanced, coherently organized facade. Stone carving, and precious marbles are worked in both Roman and Byzantine motifs to unite two types of classicism. Reference is made to the Veneto-Byzantine early palace type, while the Gothic tripartite facade was not forgotten. The Palazzo Contarini-Polignac, has a facade which melds many different traditions, both native and foreign, and does so in a

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\(^5\) The sources and significance of Byzantine pavement patterns will be dealt with later in chapter in the discussion of the Ca Dario.
sophisticated manner, never before seen in Venice.

The Corner-Spinelli palace of c.1485 to 1490, is also placed on an expensive site, fronting on the Grand Canal (Fig. 27). This palace is similar to the Contarini-Polignac in the architect's manipulation of the spatial elements of the facade elements and in the use of a traditional Gothic tripartite facade format. Added to these features is the use of Tuscan inspired motifs to create a completely different effect than was achieved on the Palazzo Contarini-Polignac.

This building created an architectural problem because it had a large lower storey consisting of a basement and a mezzanine. It was a single decorative unit comprising a little under half the building height; the piano nobile and top storey were much smaller. If Codussi had made each floor of the Corner-Spinelli palace slightly different, as was usually done on Gothic palaces, it would have seemed uncharacteristic, out of balance, and visually confusing, as the bottom storey would have dwarfed the top two. Instead, he chose to submerge the late Gothic facade structure in a strong system of contrasts. The palace has a rusticated basement, above which are two almost identical upper floors, with large traceried windows. The light and almost lacy articulation of the upper storeys is perfectly balanced by the large rusticated basement. The two parts are unified by the fact that the entire facade is

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6 In the Gothic tradition, a basement and a mezzanine are usually treated as a single unit, as in the Palazzo dell'Ambasciatore.
worked in stunning white Istrian stone. Scholars have often commented that the Corner-Spinelli facade is very similar to that of a Florentine early Renaissance palace. They do not explain how the Florentine type has been cleverly reworked for the Venetian environment. This is the first time a rusticated basement had been completed on a palace facade in Venice, as the Ca del Duca remained a tantalizing fragment. Codussi had used similar stonework very successfully on the facade of the church of San Michele in Isola, but in that commission he did not have to combine the rustication with large banks of windows. Unlike the rustication of many Florentine residences such as the Palazzo Medici (discussed in Chapter Two), that of the Palazzo Corner Spinelli is not rough and blocky. It is more suited to Venetian decorative tastes in that it has a distinct pattern made up of long and short stones, deeply channelled between so that they would be visible through the reflection of the water on the facade. Codussi may have been influenced by the long and short stones used on the base of the Ca del Duca, and wondered if they could be adapted for use on a greater scale. The rustication, however foreign to Venetian decorative custom, is still in accord with the Venetian tradition of simply decorated lower storeys.

The fenestration has been derived from Florentine models such as the Palazzo Ruccellai and the Palazzo Medici (fig. 28). The type, as discussed in the previous chapter, consists of twin round arches surrounded by a single round arch, with an
impresa, or family emblem, inserted in the solid spandrel area. Codussi turns it into a Venetian type rather than letting it remain Tuscan. He does so by removing the solid spandrel space and inserting an inverted tear drop. This gives a trilobed tracery effect, and creates a window which is an updated version of the tracery so dear to the Venetian Gothic tradition. The teardrop at the top of the window is even reminiscent of the oculus on a column which contains the quatrefoil tracery on the Ducal and other Gothic palaces, except on the Corner-Spinelli facade there are round rather than pointed arches completing the decorative unit. Codussi retains the Corinthian columns in the window unit that were a part of the transformation from the Gothic to the Renaissance style in Tuscany, as well as in Venice. Thus the window has both recognizable Gothic features and a modern Tuscan appearance.

On a Florentine palace, the twin-light windows are evenly spaced across the palace facade, while the Venetian Gothic, and the newer Contarini-Polignac palaces have, through necessity strong multi opening balcony groups to let light into the main salons, and one or two flanking windows for the subsidiary rooms on each side. For the transposition of the Tuscan twin-light style to work on the Venetian facade type, Codussi had to place the central two windows together, joined by a pier, and have one twin-light window on either side. This only works because the palace is small, and two well spaced single windows
on either side are not necessary. In this way, Codussi is able to keep the traditional tripartite facade arrangement and still use his twin-light Tuscan-Venetian window.

The trilobate clover leaf outline of the window tracery under its framing arch is a unifying motif of the facade. It is worked into the flanking balconies, which are trilobed, a three dimensional reflection of the window shape perpendicular to it. This shape has also been incorporated into the lower storey. Depending upon into which visual grouping one places the windows (the shape of which is a simplified version of those above, with the rectangular frame surrounding a plain round arch) the shape appears twice. If one takes the three windows placed in a triangular fashion to the left and right of the door as a group, it appears there, and again if one looks at the triumphal arch shape of the door and flanking windows as a group. The window placement on this lower section of the palace is an inventive means of including the mezzanine and the ground storey windows in the decorative scheme of the facade; in other buildings they are simply stacked one atop the other.

As in the Palazzo Contarini-Polignac, the horizontal elements of the facade are stressed. There are all'antica garland friezes under the cornice and on the base of the

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7 Pietro Paoletti first identified the distinctive balcony shape as being from the Casa Pigafetta, a Gothic palace in Verona. Ralph Lieberman, Architecture, plate 63, points out that it is a good example of the architect's ability to notice and take interesting architectural motifs from any era and transform it to his own purposes.
facade. They are joined to the composite pilasters which run up the edges of the palace, to provide a frame for the facade in antique motifs.\(^6\) The real horizontal focus is provided by Codussi's innovative treatment of the balconies, a feature completely alien to the closed in Florentine palace facade, but essential to a Venetian building. The architect has changed the traditional balcony placement so that every window has a balcony, something which occurs only rarely in Gothic palaces, such as the Pisani-Moretta of c. 1455. Even more interesting is the integration of the balcony units into the storey demarkation system, which is not done in the late Gothic palace, nor is it carried out completely in the Contarini-Polignac which attaches only the piano nobile balcony to the frieze on either side of it. The Corner-Spinelli creates much more complete horizontal elements by linking each separate balcony unit to the others with moulding strips to the height of the balusters. The horizontal unit is firmly incorporated into the bases of the pilasters at the edge of the facade, uniting both sides of the building with two strong visual sections. In the rhythmic alternation of lacy baluster and

\(^6\) As in the Contarini-Polignac palace, the orders are composites, inspired by antiquity, but not slavish to Vitruvian rules. The lower storey, for example uses a simple flute and volute capital, instead of a Doric or Tuscan, while the upper storeys have more ornate composite capitals. Again, the concept of matching different orders to each storey of the building is antique, though the way it is worked out here is more imaginative. This variation would have been perfectly acceptable to the fifteenth century viewer.
solid moulding units, which corresponds well to the tracery level of the tops of the windows, Codussi has created a very plastic sort of frieze.

The Palazzo Corner-Spinelli does not have as strong a Byzantine element as the Contarini-Polignac palace. Codussi concentrates on reworking the Florentine type, and mainly makes reference (albeit loosely) to the Roman classical repertoire for his pilasters, capitals, mouldings and friezes. However, the presence of porphyry roundels and plaques, which stand in strong contrast to the whiteness of the Istrian stone is enough to suggest Veneto-Byzantine traditions. As well as placing the roundels around the window arches as in Trecento palaces and the Palazzo Contarini-Polignac, Codussi puts groups of marble decorations at the level of the window capitals, to create another level of horizontal focus. This links the sides of the palace to the centre, firmly "rooting" the comparatively open upper portion of the facade.

In the facade of the Corner-Spinelli palace a new style is created through the thoughtful and coherent integration of the Florentine palace type with the late Gothic tripartite model. The architect transforms Florentine form into a suitable Venetian idiom by his treatment of rustication and windows, articulating most of the architectural elements in a style inspired by the antique. He refers to the important Byzantine heritage of Venice in his use of precious marble insets, yet is not closed to foreign Gothic models in his choice of an unusual
balcony shape. Codussi is above all thoroughly modern and innovative in his manipulation of the facade elements to produce a palace exhibiting a new concept of integrated contrasts.

The Palazzo Zorzi, built around 1480 is another important palace of this period, and, like the Palazzo Corner-Spinelli it is usually attributed to Mauro Codussi. In distinction to the palaces discussed up to this point, the Palazzo Zorzi is not on the Grand Canal, but is located near the Campo di Santa Maria Formosa, one of the major campi of the city, where many other important patrician families, such as the Grimani, had their palaces. This area of Venice is on the path from San Marco to the Church of SS Giovanni e Paolo and the Scuola di San Marco, two key sites of patrician patronage.

Codussi’s problem in the palazzo Zorzi was to unite the facades of two already existing palaces in a coherent manner (Figs. 29-31). The four storey palace has the traditional Venetian Gothic tripartite structure, but the broad expanse of the building allowed Codussi to create a palace that is more strongly reminiscent of the heavily arcaded Veneto-Byzantine palaces than any other building of the period. Though Byzantine revival is the overriding theme informing the organization of the facade, Codussi uses crisp, strongly defined decorative features drawn from the Roman classical tradition in the articulation of the arches, capitals and mouldings. This highly geometric vocabulary is combined in
complex rhythms to manipulate and organize all the storeys and the windows so that instead of being lost in the vast length of the palace, each element becomes an integral component in the expression of the whole.

The major difficulty for Codussi in uniting the two palaces with one coherent facade was the fact that room placement was not always going to correspond with the best window placement. This does not seem to have worried the architect, who was intent on providing a well organized facade appearance, rather than expressing room function. As a result, some of the windows in the piano nobile central arcade are blind, and have supporting walls rather than rooms behind them. This shows a completely different attitude toward the facade decoration than existed in earlier periods. Here, form here is more important than function.

Codussi also had to think about giving this facade extra definition, so that it would not flow into the long Gothic palace next to it on the rio. He does this by facing the building in white Istrian stone, which is entirely different from the brownish building next door. The geometric shapes used to organize the facade give the impression of severity, but a close look at the building reveals that as much care was taken in the shaping of the classically inspired mouldings and the carving of the capitals as in the tracery of the Gothic palaces. The facade is in fact ornate, but has cleaner lines than the Gothic buildings, a result of studying Roman
structures. The white stone allows Codussi to get away with a fair amount of visual trickery, because the viewer cannot rely on the strong system of contrasts provided by the formerly used combinations of brick and marble. One has to look very carefully at the building to sort out the reality from the effect. Codussi employs a visual grid in order to make the viewers see only what he wants them to see. The horizontal elements are linked together by a strong system of crisply cut mouldings, joined firmly to the pilaster-like edgings of the palace. The vertical elements, the emphasis of which was vital to balance the structure as well as to express theme, are equally well defined. They are lined up exactly one above the other on all storeys. Without this rhythmic visual structure, the facade would seem an endless stretch of windows and white stone.

The bottom storey is crucial in defining and balancing the facade. The three water doors mark the ends and the centre of the building, and they are linked by two sets of mouldings, one running at the centre level of the doors, and one three quarters of the way down, near the water. The complete simplicity of these doors is perhaps because the main entrance to the palace, as will be discussed below, is on the salizzada facade around the corner, and not on the canal. On the main facade again, the small square windows between the doors are "tied" into the rest of the storey elements by being made to rest on the centrally placed moulding. They are surrounded by
enough white stone or blank wall space to give this storey the sense of stability and solidity necessary to support the rest of the building, which seems a mass of windows.

The placement of the main front door is on the land side of the building. This side door has well worked classicizing mouldings, luxurious marble insets and fluted columns (fig. 32), compared to the simple plinth topped round arches of the rio facade. The choice of the land door for the main entrance makes sense because the large site of the building gives it a fairly long land facade fronting on the salizzada Zorzi, which gives direct access to the Campo di Santa Maria Formosa, the palaces of which all fronted on the piazza. People would have been just as likely to approach the building from this direction as from the canal.

Apart from this ground storey, the only other floor to receive full treatment is the piano nobile, clearly the more elaborate of the two. In this respect the Zorzi palace resembles large Veneto-Byzantine palaces such as the Fondaco dei Turchi, especially since there is such a long central section of windows. Having two smaller stories framing the main floor, suited Codussi’s needs well, as they add to facade unity by reflecting rather than competing with the rhythms of the piano nobile.

The mezzanine floor is conceived as a length of squarish windows framed in fluted pilaster strips and is linked on the top and bottom by strips of horizontal mouldings. Visually it
appears to be a part of the piano nobile, and is essential for working out the Byzantine revival theme. The windows of this level are placed directly below each opening on the piano nobile, matching them in both width and placement. Under the balcony the two stories are almost joined, as the supporting brackets of the balcony virtually run into the pilasters. This close, one to one placement of windows on the two storeys tends to confuse the eye, making them look (except for the balcony) elongated, like late classical or Byzantine column screens. This is in marked contrast to the horizontal sweep of the rest of the facade, and provides a necessary central visual focal point, also the thematic core of the building.

The length of the Palazzo Zorzi is further offset, and the central focus is accentuated by the rhythmic manner in which the piano nobile is organized and decorated. This is managed in terms of a progressive concentration and focus of architectural elements toward the centre of the facade, already marked off by the central water door.

The least intense part of the rhythmic progression toward the facade centre is provided by the three rectangular single flanking windows. These are completely unlike most late Gothic and early Renaissance piano nobile windows, as they lack arches. The windows seem almost stark in comparison to the central section of the piano nobile but this is absolutely necessary so that they do not detract from the central focus. Codussi adds to the Byzantine flavour of the palace by placing
a porphyry roundel above the centre of each window. Since these flanking windows originally had no balconies, and only small consoles or brackets like those of the second window from the edges, the eye would have been drawn easily to the taller and more ornate central zone.

The outer edges of the central arcade have a much more intense rhythm than the flanking windows, as they are articulated by two sets of twin arches, separated by small compound piers. These sets of doubled arches frame the strong central core, an area already demarked below by the middle water door and the twin sets of pilasters of the mezzanine. The central single arch is set up almost like a triumphal arch, flanked by two thick compound piers, the demarcations of which cut into the mouldings above the arch, framing it. The balcony projects at this point, to make something akin to a small benediction or appearance loggia for the patrician patron. This is a new twist to central piano nobile fenestration, using classical language to create a vital centralized focus, rather than just a repetitive loggia. The appearance of height is essential to this central section, as this is how the illusion of the Byzantine double arcade facade is created, but it too is articulated in a Roman vocabulary. This central section is made to seem taller by the use of capitals with crisply carved details. They are set under impost blocks out of which spring the arches (Fig. 33). This formulation is often seen on antique triumphal arches, and is used effectively here for
visual emphasis without tracery. This central section then, is an effective combination of the Veneto-Byzantine palace arcade and Roman triumphal imagery, and is a tremendously important innovation in Venetian palace style.

There is a plain blank wall space above the piano nobile, echoing the space between the ground floor windows and those of the mezzanine, and then the whole building is capped by a small top floor, with square windows which repeat the spacing rhythm of the windows below, but in no way detract from their emphasis. The decorative purpose decoration of this storey is to create a suitable framing device for the piano nobile.

Thus, while the basic tripartite arrangement has been retained in the Palazzo Zorzi a San Severo, very little of the late Gothic conceptual framework remains. Codussi has turned a disadvantage into an advantage by his clever manipulation of facade elements. Instead of each floor being separately defined and articulated, the focus is put entirely on the piano nobile, with its Veneto-Byzantine arcade articulated in a Roman classicizing manner. The complexity of the facade organization is offset by the simple geometric forms and sharp, beautifully worked mouldings inspired by antiquity.

Like the Palazzo Zorzi, the Ca’ Gussoni a San Lio is not on the Grand Canal, nor is it thought to have been built from the ground up, being a refacing of a preexisting facade (figs. 34 & 35). Unlike the Ca’ Zorzi, this building is very narrow and was only two stories high in the fifteenth century. Built
around 1480, and thought to be by Pietro Lombardo it is located on a side canal on the well travelled route between the government centre at San Marco and the commercial centre of Venice at the Rialto. When compared to the Palazzo Zorzi, the broad range of decorative solutions tried out by the architects of these decades becomes evident. The architect of the Gussoni palace had to work with some difficulties of facade irregularity, but unlike the Zorzi, where they are subsumed into the overall rational scheme, those of the Gussoni are not hidden, and a decorative scheme is applied to them. It is a building like the others of its time, entirely faced in Istrian stone and colored marbles, but here, small types of decorative motifs, usually seen in details of balconies and windows or in use in churches, are the main form of decoration. These forms, worked out by the late fifteenth century Lombard stonemasons carry elements of classical motifs and images.

The Ca' Gussoni patron seems to have wanted to update and redecorate his original building, without changing the window arrangement or placement. The facade is basically asymmetrical, like the Ca' d'Oro, with two vertical divisions. The larger grouping is on the right, consisting of a four-light piano nobile and a three opening door and flanking window unit. The subsidiary grouping on the left consists of two single-light windows on the left side of the piano nobile, and two small, square half windows on the ground floor. This is a typical arrangement for an asymmetrical palace. However, due
to the narrowness of the facade, there is no room to separate the two groups, thus the half windows of the lower floor and the right hand single light are flush with the main window groupings, creating a rather cramped effect. There is also not even enough room for a balcony. Another interesting feature of the facade organization is how the canal access passage under the far left hand *piano nobile* window has been incorporated into the facade design. It becomes a decorated archway, complete with carved pilaster and volutes.

The Ca' Gussoni is more interesting for its decoration than for the organization of its facade. As on other palaces of this new type, opulence is suggested by the use of precious marbles for the revetment, and an elegant "modern" touch is given by the rounded arches of the fenestration. However, the architect had to keep in mind the fact that he was decorating a very small facade, one that would never be seen from great distances, as are those on the Grand Canal. There was clearly no room here for the stately central arcades of corinthian columns, or for fluted pilaster dividers. The design is kept to one thematic element; there are not even any of the ubiquitous roundels on this facade. Instead, the smaller Lombard foliage patterns and classical relief motifs which frame the windows and form the balcony decoration on a large palace such as the Contarini-Polignac, and which are only visible upon close inspection of that facade, are used as the main form of decoration of the Ca' Gussoni.
These decorative motifs are associated with early Renaissance architecture because they were used in the later decades of the fifteenth century by the architects and stonemasons of the Lombard school working in Venice. This type of sculptural relief is differentiated from Gothic decorative motifs by the use of different foliage styles, and the incorporation of classical motifs. A comparison between the relief style of the Ca' Gussoni and that of Ca' d'Oro will make the changes clearer (figs. 36 & 37). The carved strips of the Ca' d'Oro are worked in much relief, are more dense, and use an inhabited vine motif common to the Gothic era. Even the window capitals and the balcony balusters have bushy full carved foliage. Relief material is not the same as in the Renaissance palace, nor is it always used in the same manner. As seen on the Ca' Gussoni, the relief work is used in the pilasters framing the windows and doors and in the frieze and base areas. The foliage strips are much flatter and more open. They bear more classically derived foliage motifs, such as palmettes or acanthus leaves and urns, and end in classically inspired capitals with volutes as well as leaves. The arches are decorated with double rows of fluting, and are topped by flaming vases on the piano nobile, and palmettes on the lower storey instead of the fleur de lis or knot motifs used in Gothic facades. The two floors are separated from each other by a frieze like device made up of two continuous strips of moulding linked by small pilaster strips brought down from the
windows of the piano nobile. The base of rose colored Verona marble is richly finished in three rows of carving, rosettes, guilloche and fluting.

The Palazzo Gussoni basically involves that aspect of the new style which deals with its decorative details. The complex facade organizational details and spatial relationships which concerned Codussi in the Palazzo Zorzi or the Palazzo Corner-Spinelli are not called into play in this small but very beautiful palace facade. Rather, the combination of classically derived motifs such as the fluting, pilaster capitals, flaming vases and round arches, with the subdued but rich foliage of the Lombard style, give this facade its new look. There are many elements common to the larger palaces such as round arches, and similar stonework and frame motifs, but, because of its size and site, the effect resembles that of the interior decorative schemes used for tombs and chapels.

The architect has ingeniously adapted all the available source materials to create a suitable facade for his patron, and has contributed to the development of the new style.

The Ca' Dario, built by Giovanni Dario around 1485 with funds given to him by the state for diplomatic service. (Fig 38). Like the Ca' Gussoni it is an asymmetrical palace, and it may even share the same architect, Pietro Lombardo. However, the Ca' Dario is located on the Grand Canal, and in keeping with its prestigious site, is much larger and more ornately decorated than the Ca' Gussoni. Decorative motifs drawn from
both the Roman classical and the Byzantine traditions are important on this facade, but Gothic models, and the continuing Venetian interest in coloristic and sculptural effects strongly affect the building. If one wanted to find a Gothic "source" for the basic form of this work, the Ca d'Oro would be the model. Both facades are organized so that the principle balcony or window groups are massed, one above the other, on the left side of the building. The right side of both facades have a solid portion of decorated wall space, with a single window on the far right.

Even though the window and wall placement is very similar in the two palace facades, the decoration of the Ca' Dario is a new conception. Both buildings are evidence of the Venetian delight in what has been termed "pictorial" effects in architecture. The Ca' D'Oro achieves this by means of varied and ornate tracery patterns in the windows, by the strips of rich sculpted foliage and by the use of heavily worked Gothic mouldings. The Ca' Dario, on the other hand, does so by combining multicolored stonework, Veneto-Byzantine roundel patterns, with the simpler, more classicizing architectural forms that characterize the new style, all worked onto a much narrower and higher space than is occupied by the Ca' D'Oro. The result is a shift in focus away from the windows and onto the wallspace, now also a carrier of meaningful decorative imagery.

The building appears heavily decorated, but the architect
has managed to work everything onto the facade in a balanced and coherent manner. For example, the architectural elements are limited to three: round arches for the window and door shapes, a background field of yellow veined marble with the windows and separating elements in white Istrian stone, and porphyry and serpentine marble roundels for the decoration. There appears to be only one moulding type, fluting, which is used on the horizontal friezes, the archivolts, and to surround the roundels. Some of these elements have already been observed in similar use on other palace facades. The Contarini-Polignac, for example also uses the contrasting combination of yellow veined marble and white Istrian stone for the revetment, as well as some of the decorative devices using roundels. In the Ca' Gussoni, fluting was also used on the archivolts and in horizontal mouldings. These elements, of course work together in a unique way on the Ca' Dario.

The asymmetry of the upper storeys is in part offset by the solidity of the white stone ground floor; the symmetrical placement of the door and flanking windows and large roundels gives the structure a firm base. Istrian stone is also used in thick pilasters to give definition to the sides on the upper stories.

The effect of the three storeys of identical windows is unlike that of Gothic buildings, where the fenestration differs from floor to floor. This side of the building almost resembles a Roman amphitheatre with its tiers of arches. The
rather delicate columns, with their tiny capitals are lengthened and strengthened by being carried down into the storey-separating friezes (as on the Ca' Gussoni), where they alternate with large roundels, linking horizontal with vertical elements.

The right half of the facade holds the main part of the decorative stonework, its rich color provides a balanced contrast to the simple classicism of the opposite side. Along with the large roundels in the friezes, this stonework completely overpowers the more traditional use of roundels around the window arches on all four stories. The three devices, one a simple quincunx design, the others more complex motifs are fashioned from porphyry and serpentine marbles framed in intertwining fluted mouldings. This type of device, as well as the plain porphyry roundels similar to those on the friezes, originate in Byzantine stone pavements and mosaics used in palaces and churches to mark important processional routes and places where imperial ceremonies took place. Emperors stood on such spots in their audience halls, or during coronations. These motifs were revived in twelfth century Rome for similar use in churches, where they were worked by the Cosmati school. In this instance the inspiration may have come from San Marco, or one of the other Veneto-Byzantine

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churches in the islands of Venice. Used on the Ca' Dario, they indicate that a person of note occupies the building. Thus there are elements of Western classical and Byzantine traditions in the same facade, and although there is an exceptionally rich concentration of decoration on a small surface area, it is thoughtfully worked out. The abundance of expensive stonework may have been considered improper, so the patron included an inscription on the lower storey which reads "URBIS GENIO IOANNES DARIUS." In dedicating the palace to the city, he was perhaps hoping to avoid accusations of trying to attain more personal glory than was fitting for a private citizen in the Venetian republic.

The incredible diversity of new architectural language and ornament in these five palaces makes it clear that patrons and architects were trying hard to break the late Gothic mold, and come up with some new solutions to the problems of facade decoration. While facades retained the basic tripartite form of the late Gothic palaces, the architectural language used to articulate the new style facades changed substantially. The most noticeable difference was the shift to round arches and classical vocabulary. Also, the facades were revetted entirely in Istrian stone or precious marbles, adding enormously to the cost of a new palace. Further, Veneto-Byzantine traits such as long, superimposed rows of round arches, more pervasive use of colored roundels, and complex pavements motifs were being incorporated onto facades and were a significant component of
the new style. Removing the tracery from the windows and applying marble decorations to the wall surfaces changed the emphasis, which used to be almost completely centred on the windows, to other parts of the facade. This shift is seen in the facade coherence which is now based on more complex interrelationships of architectural devices such as friezes, mouldings, pilasters and colored stonework than before. Though the new facades appear diverse, they are united by all these factors.

The group which follows; those palaces built from 1495 to 1510, used as their basis the concepts and language used in an experimental way by the architects of the first group. With these principles laid out, it is possible to understand how they were refined and codified in later palaces to form a new tradition as strong as the Gothic had been before.
CHAPTER FOUR

PALACE FACADES FROM 1495 TO 1510: THE CODIFICATION OF THE VENETIAN RENAISSANCE FACADE

The freedom and creativity seen in palace facade decoration from 1480 to 1495, as discussed in Chapter Three made a new fund of decorative options available to patrons and builders. Those responsible for the group of palaces designed from c. 1495 to 1510 retained decorative solutions which presented the clearest synthesis of Veneto-Byzantine and Roman elements. This preference results in facades in which the main architectural elements are arranged similarly, though the decorative details are often varied. Patrons tended to reject asymmetrical or densely polychromed facades such as that of the Ca' Dario and to select square, balanced tripartite facades derived from the late Gothic, as seen in the Palazzo Contarini-Polignac. The focus of the facade stays on the central portion, and the most emphatic decorative elements still appear on the piano nobile. The decorative differences between the stories do appear less distinct in this later group of buildings, partly because most of them continue the costly new trend of complete stone revetments for the facades. In some cases, however, the traditionally underplayed basement level is
actually allowed to have greater emphasis than before as a type of grand entranceway.

The inclusion of both Roman classical and Veneto Byzantine elements is managed through the articulation of the architectural members of the facade rather than through the tripartite facade plan. These aspects of facade decoration which were worked out in the first group of palaces, are standardized in this second group. The round arches of the window/balcony openings, the columns supporting them, and the pilasters dividing the facades into sections and marking the edges all tended to be inspired by the Rome of antiquity. The mouldings are also based on antique models, as was already the case, as we have seen, in the Palazzo Zorzi a San Severo, a palace which seems to have had a significant impact on builders in the 1490's. In the period under investigation, these mouldings are used to great effect in inlaid marble and stone panels as a texture-creating device, a means of satisfying the Venetian love for highly decorated surfaces without distracting the viewer from the main sculptural additions.

Decorative elements often have a functional aspect; a theme which also has been drawn from ancient Roman architecture. The pilasters begin to give the impression that the facade is in some way responsible for supporting the structure. The friezes between stories are cleverly manipulated to make each floor appear to be of equal height. They run in continuous bands from edge to edge creating strong
horizontal accents, so the palaces seem more substantial, and less likely to visually float away.

The Veneto-Byzantine aspect of the facade is evident in the long rows of multi-arched central balconies, superimposed on the two or three upper stories of the buildings. One set of the flanking windows is placed very close to the balcony to further extend the open section. These long balconies recall the facades of Trecento Venetian palaces in which much of the two story facade was dissolved by column screens with stilted arches. Small porphyry roundels around the openings are also a decorative element of this old native architectural style revived by Renaissance architects. The sculptural decorations in precious marbles which began to be an important part of the earlier Renaissance palaces are located between the flanking windows and occasionally on the doors.

The sculptural decorations are derived from either the Byzantine or the Roman repertoire, depending on the patron. Very often, the sculpture seems to have been selected for its symbolic potential, in order suggest that the residents have certain qualities.

Thus, in the discussion of the second group of Renaissance palaces it is important to keep in mind that the basic form and decorative language common to each facade is an intelligent synthesis of Veneto-Byzantine and Roman classicizing elements, worked on a Gothic palace frame. These references, the first suited to the Venetian environment; the
second an indigenous form ultimately derived from early Christian classicizing sources, and the last drawn from pagan antiquity is inherent to every facade analyzed in this chapter. A further layer of meaning is added to this already highly charged basic form by the addition of sculptural decoration, and inlays of expensive and precious colored marbles.

The five best known surviving palaces in the 1495 to 1510 group are the Palazzi Vendramin a San Fosca, the Malipiero-Trevisan in Campo di Santa Maria Formosa, the Trevisan-Cappello in Canonica, the Grimani a San Polo and the Contarini delle Figure. The Vendramin a San Fosca is interesting because of the entire 1480 to 1510 group, it is the only one to have a partial revetment in marble or stone, and has no porphyry or precious marble roundels (Figs. 39-41). Parts of the base, the doors, windows, balconies and mouldings of the palace facade are of Istrian stone, and the rest would have been stucco on brick, though much of the stucco has fallen off. It was the traditional residence of a powerful patrician family well known for their interests in arts and letters, and for political service; its somewhat shabby appearance today belies the fact that when new it would have been a very beautiful palace.

The Vendramin a San Fosca is different from patrician palaces discussed in the previous chapter in that the facade gives onto a *fondamenta* or street running alongside a canal instead of directly onto the water. As was customary for this type of Renaissance palace (e.g. the Palazzo Zorzi a San
Severo), the doors are topped by flat lintels rather than having the round arches used for water doors. The piano nobile window and balcony openings have round arches, to give the storey distinction, but unlike most other palaces, this is not repeated in the upper and lower floors, which have square openings. In this facade, the architect has taken a different element to use as a motif for a unified appearance. The square shapes that are formed as part of the organization of the doors and windows of the ground floor are transposed to the piano nobile to create visual linkage between the two stories. They are edged in ovolo/astagal/fascia mouldings, based on antique types, seen earlier in Venice in the flanking pilaster panels and the lower set of windows of Codussi’s Palazzo Zorzi a San Severo. However, the designer of the Vendramin palace takes this decorative motif, something that was a minor component of the Palazzo Zorzi, and makes it into an important unifying decorative feature, almost like the rope and billet moulding used around all the windows of the late Gothic facades. Not

Paoletti, Puppi and Puppi and others have pointed out the similarities between this palace and Codussi’s Zorzi a San Severo. Although the Vendramin a San Fosca is much smaller, and is not completely bilaterally symmetrical, the two are certainly alike in many ways. Firstly, in the overall organization with the two main stories and the mezzanine top floor, they are similar. Secondly, they are alike in the relative simplicity of the decorative systems, lacking (apart from the central portal of the Vendramin) vegetal decorative motifs on the window mouldings, colored marble wall veil decorations, and garlanded friezes between stories. Finally, the central piano nobile windows of the Vendramin are very closely topped by a flat plinth, as they are on the Zorzi.
only are the windows and square doors surrounded by this moulding, the square spaces between them are defined by it too, creating a very rich zone of stone panelling on the lower storey.

On the piano nobile these panels are used in a more artificial manner, since they are not naturally created by spaces between windows and doors. The panels link the lower with the upper stories, since the window shapes are not repeated as was more common. There are three sets of panels, echoing sets on the lower floor. The top panel extends to just above the height of the spot where the flanking pilaster capital begins, and meets the first panel precisely at the level of the window and balcony capitals. If the small zone between the sets of balusters is included in this set of squares, a unit identical to the door and wall panel unit below is created, an extremely clever unifying trick. The two storeys are further unified by the flanking pilasters, which are identical on both floors, and have detailed capitals, contrasting the simplicity of the panels and providing a good frame for the structure.

The piano nobile mouldings are well placed to create repeated units on two storeys, but look a little odd in their present condition. There is a possibility that the panels of the piano nobile, the mouldings of which are not as distinct as those of the ground floor, perhaps were not meant to stand alone. They may have functioned as frames for frescoes at one
time. Painted decorations were common on the exterior of Venetian palaces, even on Gothic palaces, although only of this decoration have survived (fig. 1). While the fashion during this time seems to have been for marble revetments, painted decorations must be kept in mind as an additional option. Indeed, the placement of the panels is consistent with those on a drawing which depicts Pordenone's sixteenth century decorations of the Palazzo D'Anna. Today, the piano nobile of this palace seems too plain to have belonged to such an important patrician family.

Another fact pointing to the likelihood of painted decorations on the Palazzo Vendramin a San Fosca is that the most ornate section of the palace as it stands today is the ground floor portal. Though Alberti considered portals an extremely important part of a building, it was unusual for a Venetian palace to have the door as its most decorated part. The door is the same size as the piano nobile balcony above, and while entrances do become an increasingly important component of facades during this period, they never overpower the piano nobile to the extent that this one does. The eye is drawn to it immediately because it is surrounded by panels inset with rosette patere and large oculi, with the top and

2 In fact an important palace not far from this one, called the Grimani ai Servi had exterior decorations by Titian or Giorgione.

3 See Erica Tietze-Conrat, "Decorative Paintings of the Renaissance Reconstructed from Drawings," Art Quarterly 3 (1940), 31.
outermost pilaster strips carved in rich relief in a vegetable motif interspersed with bucrania and urns.

There is an element of tradition here; many of the early Byzantine and Gothic palaces had decorative plaques with birds or strange animals on them inset into the facades of their palaces or on small tympanum reliefs over doors, often decorated with inhabited vine motifs. However the context of this type of door decoration is new to domestic architecture; such a large and emphatically carved portal had only been seen on churches before. Within the changing climate of Venetian architecture, that which could have been seen as a grandiose personal statement, suitable only for a public monument, now seems to have been acceptable for a private patrician residence.

Many have admired the relief carving on the Palazzo Vendramin a San Fosca, but Manfredo Tafuri has singled out some interesting images that appear near the top of each of the side pilasters: a triple-head motif and above it on the left, a pelican feeding her young,(Fig. 42) and on the right, the same triple-head motif with a phoenix above it.4

The tricipitium is made up of three male heads at different ages of life, one young on the right, one more mature in the centre, and one bearded and much older on the left. The origins of this motif are ancient. Elizabeth Sears has noted that Aristotle referred to life in terms of the Three Ages of

4 Tafuri, Venezia e il Rinascimento, 19f.
Man, a triadic cycle. In medieval times, the Biblical Three Magi, or Three Wise Men were often depicted as having three different ages. This is because, according to Celtic instructional texts, those seeking God learn that the soberness of old age and the eagerness of youth find perfect balance in the third mature person. It seems that the depiction of Man in three distinct phases of life has long been associated with a form of wisdom.

Related to this is Tafuri's analysis of the tricipitium form as a symbol of Prudence. This follows an interpretation worked out by Erwin Panofsky in his discussion of the top portion of Titian's 1565 Allegory of Prudence, which also includes a triple faced man. Panofsky argues that in the depiction of the three-headed figure of Old Age, Maturity and Youth, Titian was drawing on a well established tradition that associates the Three Ages of Man with the ability to use past experience in the present, without forgetting about the future; a definition of Prudence. He cites many examples of the Christian cardinal virtue Prudence personified as a three-faced, three aged figure, such as in the fourteenth century niello pavement decoration of the Cathedral of Siena, and a relief from the school of Antonio Rossellino. As well as


6 Manfredo Tafuri, Venezia e il Rinascimento, 18-23; Erwin Panofsky, Problems in Titian, mostly Iconographic, (London: 1989, pp. 102-8.)
appearing on the portals of the Palazzo Vendramin a San Fosca, the three-faced allegory of Prudence as identified by Panofsky appears on the Ca' Capello in Canonica, and continues into the sixteenth century in Venice, on Paolo Diedo's medal c. 1507 and various coins.

The pelican was a significant image of devotional Piety and Charity, as she plucked at her breast to feed her young with her own drops of blood. As a sacrificial image, it was often used as a symbol for Christ. Here, it is probably a reference to the piety and charity of the Vendramin family. By the mid quattrocento the pelican was a popular emblem among humanists and clerics in Venice as well as in other parts of Italy. This image often appears on medals, such as those of Vittorino da Feltre, c. 1466, Pius II, c. 1462, and Francesco Malipiero, c. 1523. The pelican also accompanies a personification of Charity on some engraved playing cards associated with the circle of Mantegna, which use the pelican to accompany an image of Charity.

The phoenix is carved on the right side pilaster of the Palazzo Vendramin a San Fosca. The Mantegna-circle Tarocchi cards also depict the phoenix accompanying an image of Hope.7 The phoenix, which, when it dies, bursts into flames and is reborn is also seen as a Christological symbol of resurrection and endurance, hence its attachment to the allegory of the

Virtue of Hope in the cards.

The three images chosen to decorate the entrance-way to the palace, where they would be visible by passers-by as well as those entering the palace, are of the Virtues of Prudence, Charity and Hope, with Prudence, as it appears twice, being the most important of the two. The form chosen for the allegorical representation was not obscure and known only to Venetians, but came from the mainstream Quattrocento humanist figural vocabulary. This suggests that whoever requested that these be included in the all'antica pilaster decoration was in touch with humanist traditions, giving us a clue as to the type of patron who adopted such an innovative doorway decoration for his palace. More importantly, this patrician patron wanted to be publically associated with the Christian Virtues of Hope, Charity and Prudence.

The Palazzo Vendramin a San Fosca is a difficult palace to sum up, since I believe we are missing some of its decorations, which may have been painted into the moulded panels on the piano nobile. From the visible evidence, this palace can be seen to follow the basic plan of the Venetian Renaissance tripartite model, and it is very similar to the Palazzo Zorzi a San Severo in its use of mouldings and treatment of the top mezzanine as a framing device for the piano nobile, even though, unlike the Zorzi it is not completely revetted. One innovative aspect of the facade design is that Roman inspired moulding panels are used as unifying decorative
motifs creating textural interest on the ground and first storeys of the palace. Another unusual feature is the grandiose square portal with its broad pilasters and lintel carved in all'antica relief. The figural groups of the triple faced head, the pelican and the phoenix were probably intended as allegorical representations of the Virtues of Prudence, Charity and Hope, with the intent that these qualities be associated with the Vendramin family, and possibly offset the grandiose the portal.

Unlike the Palazzo Vendramin a San Fosca, the Malipiero-Trevisan Palace, well situated on a canal running along the Southeast corner of the important Campo di Santa Maria Formosa is completely revetted in Istrian stone and precious marbles (Figs. 43 & 44). This palace has an especially rich variety of decorative detail, more subtle than that of the Ca' Dario and Contarini-Polignac of the previous decades, but perhaps chosen because of their symbolic possibilities.

The ground floor of the Malipiero-Trevisan palace gives easy access to both land and water through three facade entrances, and the doors are grouped close together in the centre so as not to upset the symmetry and focus set by the organization of the piano nobile. This enlarged and emphatic portal area is similar in concept to the massive entrance to the Vendramin a San Fosca. But, in this palace the triple door is used to great effect by decorating it as a triumphal arch. The square land door with its bridge over to the piazza is
placed between the two round arched water doors. As on many triple-arch Roman triumphal monuments like the Arch of Constantine, the focus is on the centre opening, though the whole portal section is well decorated (fig. 45). Veneto-Byzantine style green marble roundels are placed on either side of the arches of these doors. In keeping with the spirit of Byzantine and Roman synthesis, there are eagles placed on the carved straps which pass over the keystones of the arches (or lintel of the square door). The arches of Constantine and Trajan have similar devices over the centres of their arches. This is an interesting combination of a long used Veneto-Byzantine motif with Roman motifs to hint at a Venetian triumphal arch entrance. The strongly traditional square land door provides the contrast that is usually seen in a raised central arch of a triumphal monument.

The door unit is flanked by square half size windows which are placed rather high up on the facade, perhaps as a security measure. They are topped by semicircular pediments, in keeping with the theme of round arched windows prevalent on this building. Since this type of pediment was often alternated with triangular ones on Roman structures, it can be seen as a conscious "updating" of late Gothic facades such as the Palazzo dell’ Ambasciatore; a new variation upon an old theme.

Between these windows a new type of decorative motif common to second group palaces, is used. The motif consists of
colored marble plaques, roundels or small sculptural devices suspended from each other by ribbons and bows, as are often seen on ancient Roman sarcophagi. In the example illustrated here, a roundel is suspended below a framed rectangle of a type seen on late Eastern Empire garland sarcophagi, from which the motif was probably derived. Since Venice's ties to the Roman empire had been mainly to the Eastern, Christian empire ruled from Constantinople, it is not surprising that so many of decorative motifs rejuvenated in the late fifteenth century were of an Early Christian or Byzantine nature. The Venetians adapted them to correspond to their own love of rich coloristic effects by encrusting these with precious marbles. The themes introduced in the ground floor are continued in the emphatic piano nobile. The height of the window and balcony openings is extended by the use of impost blocks between the capital and the springing of the arch. There is enough space for these openings to be topped with a capping plinth in the mode of the Palazzi Zorzi and Vendramin, without crowding the storey. The simple yet effective scoring of the arches above the composite columns is contrasted to the delicate laciness of the pierced balusters. The important balcony section is differentiated from the side windows by a rosette motif set with jewel like pieces of colored marble; the windows have a smaller, plainer variation on this theme. Pierced balconies, when used in other palaces, have been interpreted as being Islamic or Byzantine in origin, making another coalition
between imagery of Eastern and Western Roman Empires in one architectural unit.

Unfortunately in the spot where, in the first group of palaces one of the most important decorative features was located, we have an incomplete image. The evocative triangular pediment topped statue niches, to which attention is drawn by the oversize roundels above and below, are empty. Although we have no record of what they were meant to hold, it may have been shield bearing warriors, since there were precedents for this in both late Gothic and early Renaissance facades such as the Palazzo dell' Ambasciatore and the Ca' Capello in Canonica.

The attention paid to detail must certainly have been one of the factors which has kept the palace in the literature from the time of Sansovino. For example, someone about to enter the palace, or standing on the piano nobile balcony would notice that the supporting consoles of the top storey balcony have a green and porphyry lozenge pattern on them which is a simplified version of the baluster decoration above. The division between the floors is marked by a simple frieze of four large roundels with an ellipse in the centre. This ellipse echoes the shape of the window pediment on the ground storey, helping to give the facade unity. The windows of this slightly smaller storey do not have a capping plinth, but the same heavily incised moulding as used below defines them adequately. A smaller and more subtle variation of the large Cosmati type devices from the Ca’s Contarini-Polignac and Dario
is placed between the flanking windows, marking the palace as a residence of important people, as they marked the places where the Byzantine Emperors would stand during ceremonial occasions.

The most interesting decorative motif of the whole palace, however, appears in the frieze under the cornice, and consists of a row of profile heads in medallions, resembling Roman coins, with a Symbol of Christ, the IHS initials in the central medallion. The centre two heads look in at the Monogram, the next two look outward, as though connecting with the outside world and the viewer. It is an unusual and somewhat confusing combination, because the heads look like the Roman profile heads that appear on coins, a reference to Roman antiquity, but they are combined with this symbol of Christ. John Onians, in an article which argues that in the Renaissance the use of pagan artistic motifs had to be tempered with Christian imagery to make it acceptable, offers an interpretation of the scene. He thinks that the monogram is used to offset the classicizing richness of the facade, and to offer the palace to glorify God, rather than the patron. However, since the imagery is a combination of Byzantine, or Christian classicism with pagan Roman motifs, the builder of the palace really need not be apologizing for anything. The meaning may be more esoteric, and the heads may even be meant to represent scholars or philosophers, both Christian and

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pagan, to reflect an interest in Christian humanism. Wendy Stedman Sheard has noted that profile emperor heads were popular decorations for both sacred and secular texts at this time. Nevertheless, the family may indeed not have wanted the extremely potent imperial imagery to have been misinterpreted, and decided to assert their piety, just as the Vendramin may have been doing when they included allegorical Virtues in their all’antica portal.

The combination of Byzantine and Roman motifs appearing in the Palazzo Malipiero-Trevisan allows the patron to emphasize further the synthesis of two powerful Imperial traditions in palace facade decoration. There are richly worked Eastern Empire sarcophagus reliefs set against a triumphal arch type entranceway. The antique-style piano nobile balcony columns on impost blocks are offset by the Byzantine screen balcony. A similar relationship is set up on the top storey with the round arches and the Cosmati-style decorative roundels. The enigmatic coin-like heads in profile are contrasted to the symbol of Christ to assert the true beliefs of the patron. This, combined with the new and old Venetian imagery on this palace makes a very formidable, and clearly well thought out facade.

The four storey Palazzo Trevisan-Cappello in Canonica, located behind the Ducal Palace, is one of the largest palaces

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of the period (Figs. 46 & 47). With its three wide layers of tall, closely set balcony and window openings it truly resembles its Veneto-Byzantine forerunners. Like the other two palaces, it has both land and water entrances on the main facade, with a private bridge. Also like them, it has features reminiscent of the Palazzo Zorzi a San Severo: simple well defined mouldings, deeply set porphyry or verde filled roundels between the windows of the three upper floors, and a return to more traditional roundels surrounding all the arches. The Zorzi is further quoted in that the top part of each storey is divided in two at the level of the springing of the arches by a line of moulding. A variation of a theme hinted at in the Zorzi and developed in the Vendramin a San Fosca is the use of stone panels. In the Trevisan-Cappello this device subtly adds a rich effect to the Istrian stone facade. It occurs in the narrow pilaster panels and in the defined panels between the windows on the two piani nobili above and below the various pieces of inlay or carved work. This is another example of the way in which palaces of the later group are distinguished by the subtle detail and less splashy coloring or relief carving from their earlier neighbors.

The outstanding feature of this palace is the varied use of decorative sculpture and stonework, a different piece for each floor. On the ground floor, on the inside edge of the two outermost water doors are stone panels set with fern or palm-like vegetation bearing the words "Soli Deo" on the left panel
and "Honor et Gloria" on the right. A somewhat similar inscription has already been noted on the Ca Dario, but in this instance, instead of dedicating the rich facade to the glory of the city, this one is dedicated to the glory of God. Like Giovanni Dario, the Trevisan family did not want to be accused of flaunting its wealth and position in an unacceptable way.

On the first piano nobile, in horizontal panels between the windows, the piety and perhaps also the patriotism of the family is further demonstrated. These panels, which so struck John Ruskin that he included them in the *Stones of Venice*, are inlaid with colored stones, birds and animals in a manner which he says is common to decorations in both the Church of the Theotokos (Holy Mother of God) in Constantinople and San Marco in Venice (Fig. 48). This type of imagery appears frequently in the mosaic decoration of Byzantine churches, often interspersed with vines and tendrils. It is often thought to be representing paradise, gained through following

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10 This inscription is identified and discussed by Onians in "Last Judgement," 208; is Timothy 1.17 "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise god, be honour and glory for ever and ever, amen." As with all such inscriptions, this one is placed at the base of the palace, clearly visible to all passers by.

11 John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, (London: Dent, 1907), vol. 1, 327. Ruskin says: "There is also much Byzantine feeling in the treatment of the animals, especially in the two birds of the lower compartment, while the peculiar curves of the cinque cento leafage are visible in the leaves above. The dove, alighted, with the olive branch plucked off, is opposed to the raven with restless expanded wings. Beneath are evidently the two sacrifices of 'every clean fowl and of every clean beast'. The colour is given with green and white marbles, the dove relieved on a ground of greyish green, and all is exquisitely finished
the tenants of the Christian church. In the top portion of this plaque appear the dove holding an olive branch in its beak, and the crow sent out by Noah after the flood. The calf and two birds below, are examples (as Ruskin notes) of the creatures saved by Noah. Read in this way, the figures seem to be representative of the story of Noah which brought about a new beginning for Mankind in an uninhabited almost Edenic world, and a new covenant between God and Man. The Noah story was often used as an Old Testament prefiguration of Christ's sacrifice. The Christian sacrifice is indicated in the group of the two birds between the vase into which water appears to be flowing, located in the lower left section of the panel. In early Christian and Byzantine art, the motif of birds or animals situated between a vessel, into which water is often flowing, or a tree is growing, comes from an ancient tradition of the tree or waters of life being adored by nature. In Christian art it was used to symbolize the Eucharist.12 This panel is in keeping with the religious sentiment expressed in the ground storey inscriptions, but it is an odd choice for a palace. In the light of the decorations being put in place on the exterior of the nearby Ducal Palace in the same years, especially in the Arco Foscari sculptures with their complex allusions to the Doge's role in the process of redemption it

may just be possible that this plaque, with its paradisial overtones, could be alluding to the city of Venice as a type of paradise, to which this beautifully decorated palace is contributing. William Bouwsma has discussed how patrons had both a public and a private motives in building palaces. Their residences glorified the family, but they were also intended to enhance the city, as Venetians took great pride in its magnificence.¹³

There is another explanation for the presence of this interesting plaque on the facade of the Ca’ Trevisan-Cappello. While Ruskin identifies the piece as being copied from a Byzantine church no longer extant, he also likens it to some of the decorations in the state church of San Marco. Ruskin may well have been referring to the group of relief sculptures inset into the South Tesoro Wall on the exterior of the church (fig. 49). There are pieces resembling both the abstract framing motifs and the motif of the two birds discussed above. Otto Demus has remarked upon the importance of this wall. It was the spot where the most important pieces of sculpture which had been taken as spoils of wars with the Turks and the Genoese in the thirteenth century were displayed. These pieces were important symbols of Venice's power as a maritime empire, and were located on the South facade of the church because it was clearly visible on the approach into Venice from the sea. As

Demus states, this wall took on an "official character." In the fifteenth century, with the connection of the church to the new south-west wing of the Ducal palace by the Porta della Carta, this part of the church took on added significance, becoming part of the triumphal entrance into the Ducal palace. Perhaps a Byzantine plaque was chosen as a decoration for the Palazzo Trevisan-Cappello in Canonica to refer to Venice's longstanding successes in her maritime empire, a Byzantine style triumph as it were.

The sculpted relief panel of the next floor, or second piano nobile is not surprising considering the implications of the image of the floor below. It consists of a winged warrior or victory figure holding a shield and a pike on which rests a feathered helmet topped by a tricipitium, the same image of Prudence which appears on the Palazzo Vendramin a San Fosca (Fig. 50 & 51). Also interesting is the small balance that is suspended halfway down the pike, a common symbol for Justice. The qualities of Justice and Prudence are ones with


15 Elena Bassi, in Palazzi di Venezia, 242f, thinks that this image was probably added later in the sixteenth century when the Malipiero bought the palace. I disagree with this for three reasons. Firstly, the warrior figure on the Palazzo dell'Ambasciatore is dated to the 1480's according to Ralph Lieberman and was a popular image on tombs, so this type of figure actually was used. Secondly, the image of the tricipitium appears on the Vendramin San Fosca of approximately the same date, and thirdly, Tafuri Venezia e il Rinascimento, 19 notes that this image was used as an emblem of Treviso (tre visi) so it is more likely to have been put on the palace when it was built by the Trevisan family than the Cappelli, the next owners.
which the patrician, as a member of the elite group of Venetians who were eligible to partake in Venice's government processes, would want to associate. Again, the inspiration for the depiction of these qualities may have come from the Ducal Palace, since the Ca'Trevisan was located almost behind it. In fact, prominently displayed in the same public entrance area of the Ducal Palace next to the South Tesoro facade mentioned in connection with the image on the floor below, are two allegorical figural groups expressing similar concepts. On the top of the Porta della Carta, the beginning of the new palace entrance system, is a female personification of Justice, holding a balance and a sword. She is situated above the Doge and Lion group, an evocative symbol of the Venetian state power, implying that Justice is one of the chief attributes of the state. David Rosand has shown that the association of the Ducal Palace with a palace of justice is also suggested by the group of the Judgement of Solomon, which is located at the corner of the west wing of the palace flanking the Porta della Carta. Since Solomon's palace is the archetypal seat of justice, his presence implies that Venice's Ducal Palace is a palace of justice. Rosand goes on to discuss how the famous throne of Solomon the wise judge is called the sedes sapientiae, or seat of wisdom. The Venetian government is

16 David Rosand, "Venetia Figurata: The Iconography of a Myth", in Interpretazione Veneziane, (Venice: 1984), 27. See also S. Sinding-Larsen, Christ in the Council Hall, (Rome: 1974) for analyses of the Ducal Palace figures and their significance to state iconography as allegories of good government.
being associated with the quality of wisdom, and wise justice.

Because this imagery is so prominently displayed in the Ducal palace, those walking around the back of the Palazzo Ducale and San Marco complex to reach the rio on which the Trevisan Palace is located would probably recognize the conceptual similarity of the imagery on the second piano nobile relief of the Ca' Trevisan-Cappello. The images on the warrior figure's pike can be associated with Prudence and Justice, and they are displayed in a kind of triumphal mode. Since Prudence is a synonym for wisdom, the connection can be made between qualities attributed to the state and those with which the Trevisan family, (whose coat of arms would probably have been displayed on the warrior's shield) may have wished to be associated with.

The final important decoration is on the top storey, a twelve roundel Cosmati type design similar to many seen in this study, connected to Byzantine and Christian imperial power, and in Renaissance Venice used to denote the residences of important families (Fig. 52).

The Palazzo Trevisan-Cappello in Canonica is one of the largest palaces of the period. Situated on a narrow canal, and surrounded by buildings, it always dominates viewers, looming above them. The imagery of this palace, inspired by decorations of the state church of San Marco and imitating some on the Ducal Palace is the most complex so far. This is probably due to the proximity of the Ducal Palace, with its
fascinating corpus of suggestive imagery. The function of the decorations on the Palazzo Trevisan-Cappello in Canonica may have been to portray the patricians who owned the palace as a pious family who were involved in the government of Venice: a state declared, by the decorations of the Ducal Palace to be synonymous with good government.

The Palazzi Grimani a San Polo and Contarini delle Figure are differentiated from the works already discussed because they are located on the Grand Canal (Figs. 53 & 54). They hold more strongly to the typology set up in facades such as the Corner-Spinelli and the Contarini-Polignac, while the other palaces discussed in this chapter have tended to rely on the Zorzi a San Severo, as it was a large palace not on the Grand Canal. These two palaces, have no land access from the front, and have only one entrance instead of three or four. Each has three stories, and uses pilasters to clearly demark the window and balcony areas into equidistant zones.

Ralph Lieberman comments on the subdued relief and the grid-like organization of the Grimani a San Polo.17 Because of this simplicity, the use of the classical tradition is more emphatic here than on other facades. The palace is notable for its rather simple sense of balance provided by the regularized placement of window and door openings. Its stucco facade incorporates colored marble only in the few strategically placed roundels and plaques. This may have something to do

17 Ralph Lieberman *Architecture*, plate 189.
with the fact that the friezes are reported to have been painted in gold, though whether this was so during the Renaissance is not certain. If this is true, the facade would have had a very rich and sumptuous appearance, quite different from the restrained version visible today. The number of different architectural and decorative elements in this facade is minimal, contributing to the clarity and cohesion. Unusual features are the pediments over the lower storey windows, perhaps added later, and the oval windows beside the main portal. The porphyry plaques and roundels, taken from the Roman decorative repertoire, first used in decorative combinations on the Corner-Spinelli palace, and already discussed with regard to the Malipiero-Trevisan facade, add a festive or triumphant note. Other touches of classical triumphal imagery are present in the little flame which tops the arches of the balconies and windows of the piano nobile, and the almost invisible putti heads and crossed shields above and below the rectangular porphyry plaques. All seems perfect and orderly in Palazzo Grimani a San Polo, but a closer look shows that the capitals of the flanking pilasters on the piano nobile and the ground floor do not match their counterparts on the other side. The former sports a Sphinx head and the latter an eagle. It is difficult to know whether these images were used in the decorations because of their symbolism or because it was fashionable to do so. Could the

16 Elena Bassi, Palazzi di Venezia, 418.
eagle, often a symbol of Imperial apotheosis and immortality, have been used to suggest the power of the Grimani; that they are a family whose line will never extinguish? The same could be true of the Sphinx. As an Egyptian symbol of power and wisdom, it was incorporated into Italian symbolic repertoire by a fashion for things Egyptian, visible in the Hypnerotonomachia Poliphili of Francesco Colonna. Was it just added because the image was in vogue at the time, or are deeper qualities being inferred by the image? Again, it is difficult to know.

Although the facade of the Contarini delle Figure palace is organized like that of the Grimani a San Polo, it is more ornately decorated with sculpture and richly colored veined marbles, than any other palace discussed so far in this group. It is also quite complex, not only in the vertical rows of sculptural applique between the windows, but in the treatment and shape of the window and balcony openings themselves, which is different on each floor.

The water level storey is very large in this palace. It has term figures (after which the palace is named) holding up the balcony from underneath above the simple main portal. The side windows are split into an upper arched and lower square one, with a lozenge shaped colored marble plaque in the centre. The top floor has tall single arched windows, whole versions of the split ones on the ground storey. These, top storey windows are unusual in that they are placed between flat pilasters which run from the frieze to the cornice. The windows on the
piano nobile are also round, but have no floor-to-ceiling pilasters, instead they have pedimental caps supported by half round pilasters. They introduce the superb central balcony with its temple front type pediment and fluted columns. These essentially round arched windows suggests that the pediments were added at a later date, though there is no solid evidence for this in the literature. This pediment is a potent allusion to antiquity; the possibility that the architect was familiar with the Pantheon or Diocletian's palace at Spalato cannot be ruled out. If it is the latter, then the eastern Roman empire theme is again being drawn upon. The balconies interestingly have no balusters, but have cut stone screens of oriental or Byzantine extraction already noted on other works in this group; they contrast strongly with the classicism of the pediment and columns of the top portion of the balcony. Most fascinating are the "lists" of sculpted bits, perhaps inspired by the relief panels on the sides of the Scala dei Giganti. On the top floor is a mixture of classical and Veneto Byzantine imagery, some quite familiar by now. Putti heads, in earlier palaces only in friezes, are atop beribboned roundels, as little Victories, on the top storey. The lower floor also uses these heads, but in combination with a large porphyry "commemorative" plaque and a winged porphyry roundel, an antique symbol of eternity which has also appeared on tombs of the period. The piano nobile has no roundels, but has an interesting, almost heraldic device (commented on by Ruskin) of
a shield, and crossed torches atop a tree which has been stripped of its branches, like a trophy from a Roman triumphal arch. It is similar to devices seen in popular triumph series' of paintings such as Mantegna's *Triumph of Caesar*, dating from roughly the same period. The imperial symbol of the eagle again appears above the shield, lest anyone not catch the allusion to power and grandeur. Because of the increased use of classical imagery, the Palazzi Grimani a San Polo and Contarini delle Figure, make a much less religious, and more blatant statement of power than the other palaces in the group.

The style of the Venetian palaces built in Venice from 1495 to 1510, which is in essence the developed Venetian Renaissance palace style, has two components, a similar basic form, decorative additions in what can be called a triumphant theme, some of which allude to patrician values.

The first component, the basic organizational form of the palaces was analyzed thoroughly in Chapter Three, in the discussion of such palaces as the Contarini-Polignac. This basic form is an infusion of Veneto-Byzantine and Roman classical architectural elements onto a tripartite structure which was a continuation of the late Gothic style. All five of the palaces discussed in this chapter adhere to this basic format.

The second characteristic of these palaces concerns the decorative additions made to the palaces. These decorations are culled from both Byzantine and Roman sources, often both on
the same palace, in keeping with the Byzantine Roman synthesis effected in the basic form. They have as a common theme festive, triumphant or ceremonial types of images. These originate in the early group of palaces in such motifs as the garland and eagle frieze on the Palazzo Contiarin-Polignac and in the "appearance loggia" focus of the central part of the piano nobile balcony of the Palazzo Zorzi a San Severo. They run rampant in the later group of palaces. In the Palazzo Vendramin a San Fosca for example, the portal becomes a kind of ceremonial entrance-way, marked off by wide pilasters and lintel, carved in an all'antica relief style, including bucrania and urns. In the Malipiero-Trevisan Palace near Santa Maria Formosa the entrance-system is turned into a veritable triumphal arch, and even has the imperial eagles carved on the volutes covering the keystones as they do on many Roman triumphal monuments. The cornice frieze of this same palace has a row of "Emperor" type heads in various types of profile reminiscent of Roman coinage; this has been noted as a popular form of triumphal imagery in contemporary Venetian books and manuscripts.

The same Malipiero-Trevisan palace also has a motif which has survived from the Byzantine Imperial ceremonial repertoire in the variation on the Cosmati-type device on its upper storey. The Ca' Trevisan-Cappello in Canonica also incorporates a fancier version of the same device into the facade of its upper floor, to infer that its residents have
special status. Veneto-Byzantine triumph is also suggested in the Trevisan-Cappello Palace in the plaque on the first piano nobile, which resembles the spoils of war displayed on the south facade of San Marco, and could be an allusion to Venice's long and illustrious past. The warrior figure of the second piano nobile of this palace, holding his pike and shield, protects the palace in a visual rendition more common to the Roman tradition.

The Palazzi Grimani a San Polo and Contarini delle Figure are decorated with festive and triumphant images similar to those seen on Roman carved trophies and triumphal arches. They are interspersed with commemorative plaque-type devices, which instead of bearing inscriptions as they would have done on tombs and monuments, are filled with porphyry or verde antico marble to allude to both Roman and Byzantine Imperial traditions in the same image.

Wendy Stedman Sheard, in her dissertation on the tomb of Andrea Vendramin, discusses triumphal imagery as part of a pan-Italian fashion in the second half of the Quattrocento. She notes the tremendous popularity such imagery had especially in Venice. Sheard mentions the decorations of the exterior of the Palazzo Ducale--already discussed in Chapter Two as important catalysts of stylistic change in Venetian domestic architecture--as a "vast triumphal complex." The


combination of the Porta della Carta and the Arco Foscari are discussed as an elongated triumphal arch. The Scala dei Giganti has its triumphal arch portico at the top, graceful victory figures and carved lesenes rife with trophy types of ornaments, all of which glorify the office of the Doge. With such an array of triumphal types of decoration newly complete on the Ducal Palace, it is understandable that these motifs would enter and dominate the decorative vocabulary of the Venetian palace builders.

The complex allegories concerning the nature of ducal power which scholars such as Debra Pincus and Michelangelo Muraro have interpreted with relation to the Arco Foscari and the Scala dei Giganti may also have had something to do with triggering the third component of the Venetian Renaissance style, the inclusion of allusive imagery, possibly referring to patrician values and public image. Values such as piety are expressed in such things as the pelican and phoenix in the portal of the Vendramin a San Fosca, in the dedicatory inscription of the Palazzo Trevisan-Cappello in Canonica, and even possibly in the enigmatic symbol of Christ in the cornice of the Malipiero-Trevisan near Santa Maria Formosa. Qualities of good rulers are also present in the triple-headed figure that appears on the Palazzi Vendramin a San Fosca and the Trevisan-Cappello in Canonica. The latter also reflects the themes of the decorations in the Ducal palace in the presence of the scales of Justice. There are many reasons for the
popularity of the Byzantine and Roman classical repertoire at this time, and for the turn to an explicit triumphal imagery. The larger Venetian context will be discussed in Chapter Six.
CHAPTER FIVE

THE VENDRAMIN-CALERGI PALACE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE VENETIAN RENAISSANCE PALACE TYPE

One palace conspicuously absent from this study is the Vendramin-Calergi, dated 1500 to 1508 and attributed to Mauro Codussi (fig. 55). It is the largest and most famous of the early sixteenth century patrician residences. Even today it stands out among Venetian palaces, holding its own among the monster edifices of the seventeenth and eighteenth century on the Grand Canal. We can only imagine the astounding impact that the Vendramin-Calergi palace made in its own time, and how proud its original patron, Andrea Loredan must have been of his home.

Because of its grandeur and famous residents, it has the most complete historiography of any palace of the period, being mentioned in almost every guidebook and discourse on Venetian architecture.¹ Most scholars have argued that the facade is the earliest example of a classically comprehensive work, and leads Venetian palace architecture into the high Renaissance of the Sansovino, trained in Florence and Rome. Deborah Howard sums up centuries of commentary about the building in discussing the Vendramin-Calergi palace as the first Venetian

¹ See Chapter One.
discussing the Vendramin-Calergi palace as the first Venetian facade in which the classical orders express the whole structure. These orders make the function of each storey clear. The most ornate fluted corinthian columns are used for the piano nobile articulation, plain shafts for the top storey, and flat pilaster strips on the water level. In other Venetian palaces the windows and wall decorations identified function. Furthermore, the columns seem to support the building without the need of the walls. Howard cites the Alberti's Florentine Palazzo Rucellai as the inspiration for this, but the concept is carried out in a much more plastic mode in the Palazzo Vendramin-Calergi.

Codussi is truly innovative in the way he adapts both the concepts and forms of antiquity to palace facade design. Scholars have liked the way in which he incorporates elements of the Florentine Renaissance palace tradition into the facade. However, Florentine flavored classicism is not the only architectural theme at work in this palace. The other traditions which have been synthesized in the Venetian Renaissance palaces discussed in Chapters Three and Four, such as the Byzantine and the Gothic are also brilliantly worked into this facade. Scholars tend to ignore the Venetian aspect of the Vendramin-Calergi palace. It was not created in a vacuum; and needs relating to this context in order for the facade to be understood.

The idea of the facade's architectural members appearing to provide massive and substantial forms of support is not new in the Vendramin-Calergi palace. It has previously been discussed as one of the characteristics of first Renaissance buildings, such as the Ca' del Duca. The basement level of the highly suggestive but fragmentary Ca' del Duca has heavy doubled columns at the corners which may have been intended to have a supporting function. Codussi was perhaps looking at the rustication of the Ca del Duca when he designed the bottom storey of the Corner-Spinelli palace; the length and solid features of the same fragment may have been on his mind when he was designing the Vendramin-Calergi palace.

The concept of the whole facade supporting itself is not entirely new to Venetian palaces either, as pilasters are used between the central and flanking sections of windows, and along the edges of the facades, on many of the Renaissance palaces. The difference in the Vendramin-Calergi palace is that the volume of these almost freestanding columns is such that the illusion of support (especially on the two upper storeys) is convincing; on earlier facades it is always a suggestion. The structural skeleton provided by the columns is further emphasized because they are of white Istrian stone, which contrasts nicely with the expensive blue-grey and yellow marbles of the revetment.

Ralph Lieberman argues for the architect's skill as

3 See Chapter Two.
thinker and problem solver in his discussion of how the facade elements are manipulated to give the impression of equal height storeys and complete balance. This is done by making the windows of the top two storeys seem identical by having the piano nobile entablature cut the top storey windows off at the same level at which the piano nobile windows sink behind the balcony balusters. The bottom storey is made to appear equivalent to the upper two because the pilasters rest on a base with thick mouldings, in order to reduce their height. Spatial manipulations such as these, although exceptionally well carried out in the Vendramin-Calergi example, have been a characteristic of many of the palaces discussed: the Contarini-Polignac and the Corner-Spinelli are just two examples.

Unlike the facades of the 1495 to 1510 group of palaces, which have basements that are only subtly differentiated from the upper storeys, Codussi flattens the relief of the lower storey to the extent that the upper two seem to be resting on a bland support, placing the visual emphasis on the two upper storeys. Though the basement may not have the prominence it has in some of the earlier palaces, the decorative imagery used is that which appears consistently on facades of the later 1490's and early years of the sixteenth century. The flanking portions of the basement are the simplest, containing only small, square half windows. This leaves room for the Latin inscriptions "Non Nobis," which run across the blank panel on

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4 Lieberman, Architecture, plate 64.
either side. These are the first words of Psalm CXV, which reads "Not to us O Lord, not to us, but to thy name be the glory given." The words "Domus Pace", or "House of Peace" are inscribed on the door jambs. As on the Palazzo Trevisan-Cappello in Canonica, the palace is dedicated to God, so that its sumptuousness will not be attributed to a desire for personal glory. The plainness of the flanking sides serves two visual purposes. They appear to provide two solid support zones, one on either side of the palace, to bear up the heavy looking piano nobile. Also, these zones provide a good framing device for the triple arched window and door combination, which is decorated, as in many other palaces of the time, as a triumphal arch. The central door has the same eagle modillion covering the keystone that is on the Palazzo Malipiero in the Campo di Santa Maria Formosa. The door jambs are carved with trophies and armour, similar but simplified versions of the lesenes of the Scala dei Giganti, and instead of the customary porphyry roundels there are profile heads reminiscent of the "Emperor" heads which adorn the cornice of the Santa Maria Formosa palace facade. Thus, as in the second group palaces, the entrance-way is given an important focus with the use of the triumphal arch theme, though the storey as a whole is less forceful when compared to the floors above.

The two top storeys appear to be almost identical, as their windows look to be the same height. This, along with the

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5 Ibid., plate 64.
entablatures and friezes which run virtually uninterrupted across the facade, give it a strong horizontal emphasis common to Renaissance palace style. The traditional tripartite format is still operational, but is a minor component here, as the window units are enlarged and are spread much more evenly across the facade than in any other Renaissance palace. In this respect, the Vendramin-Calergi Palace loses the late Gothic model which is always a feature of the other Renaissance palaces. Here, the windows are a fairly closely set series of narrow round arches, organized to resemble the twin layers of the twelfth and thirteenth century Veneto-Byzantine palaces such as the large Fondaco dei Turchi, which happens to be situated nearby, on the other side of the Grand Canal. This palace was certainly visible to Codussi and Andrea Loredan as they stood on the site of the Vendramin-Calergi palace.\textsuperscript{6} In terms of the window size and placement on the two upper storeys of the palace, the Vendramin-Calergi facade looks even more like the two storey Trecento type than the earlier buildings do. The antique seven-eighth columns do not detract from this effect. The Veneto-Byzantine theme is also carried on in the placement of porphyry or green marble roundels at the top of each window unit.

\textsuperscript{6} Another likeness to a Veneto-Byzantine palace is that the androne is oriented in a similar way, ie parallel to the facade wall instead of running back from it as in Gothic buildings. McAndrew surmises that perhaps the Loredan liked the arrangement as it appeared in their trecento palace located near the Rialto, and decided to repeat it here.
The Vendramin-Calergi palace fenestration is one of its most unusual features (fig. 56). Codussi knew that this was traditionally the most expressive part of a palace, and uses it to his advantage here. As with the Palazzo Zorzi a San Severo, the broad expanses of window are kept in check by the rhythmic facade structure. Here, each group of two windows is held in check by a round arch which encompasses them, and the whole is framed by a pair of columns. A stone circlet rests in the spandrel of the bifurcations; it is firmly attached to the entablature above by a volute. Scholars have concentrated upon the Vendramin-Calergi palace windows as a magnified version of those of the Rucellai and Piccolomini palaces, built in Florence and Pienza respectively (fig. 28). They usually do so in order to draw attention to the architect's ability to absorb Florentine tradition. What should be added to these observations is the functions of such borrowings. The inclusion of a motif which had been connected with nobility in other centres may have impressed upon foreign visitors that this was a nobleman's palace. Unlike their Tuscan counterparts, however, there are no solid stone areas to the window. Instead, the roundel in the spandrels is treated like tracery, and provides more light. Made possible by the availability of Venetian glass, this is another variation on the theme of updating the Gothic quatrefoil tracery with which Codussi had experimented in the earlier Corner-Spinelli facade. In the Palazzo Vendramin-Calergi Codussi "classicizes" tracery,
by omitting any reference to pointed arches or to the elongated
teardrop shapes which characterized the Corner-Spinelli
windows. He has effected a tremendously significant
reconciliation of the Gothic tracery tradition with the new
Renaissance idiom.

This window type was not often repeated, but it was a
very important innovation. Three traditions are called to mind
in the fenestration of the Palazzo Vendramin-Calergi: the
Veneto-Byzantine, the Florentine, and the Venetian Gothic.
These forms are all synthesized so cleverly that they continue
to allow what has traditionally been the most expressive part
of the Venetian palace to function in multiple layers of
significance.

The facade is topped by a huge overhanging cornice with
clearly defined fluting, dentils and egg and dart moulding from
the Roman classical tradition. This is probably another
element borrowed from Florentine palaces, as it is similar to
the Medici palace cornice. It is a necessary addition to this
palace, as a final, strong horizontal framing element to anchor
the facade, lest the play of light and reflections from the
water dissolve the forms of the basement and make the palace
appear to float.

Just as the triumphal motif shows up in the entrance-way
articulation and decorations, it also appears as a theme in the
sculptural motifs of the wall decorations and in the cornice
frieze. The Vendramin-Calergi does not follow the usual
pattern of applying the most prominent decorative ornaments to the piano nobile. Here, Codussi left plain porphyry roundels on the piano nobile in order not to detract from the elegance of the fluted columns, and it is these which state the importance of the storey. The top storey however, has significant sculptural groups applied to it. On either side of the flanking windows there are pendant groups of porphyry roundels, cuirasses, lions and masks, Venetian variations on the Roman trophy and tomb motifs already seen on the Contarini delle Figure and the Grimani a San Polo. Additional festive imagery appears in the garland friezes that run behind the capitals on all three stories, a unifying theme, used in a more subtle manner than on the Contarini-Polignac and the Corner-Spinelli palaces, on which the motif appears earlier.

The truly significant imagery is on the cornice. It is heraldic, and like those of the Palazzi Vendramin a San Fosca and Trevisan-Capello in Canonica, the images seem to be proclaiming certain qualities for the family. Eagles, often seen on the other Renaissance palaces as popular triumphal motifs of apotheosis, are alternated with other symbols, such as unicorns and flaming vases. Guy de Tervarent says that often the heraldic function of the unicorn is to represent honesty and purity. It can also represent integrity in a public office. He interprets the flaming vase as a common symbol of
the love of God. These are all qualities appropriate to describe the patron Andrea Loredan, who was involved with the Camaldolese monastery, and spent many years in government service. He even died while serving the state as an officer during the Cambrai wars. The symbolic nature of the images is supported by two factors. Firstly, the piety is attested to in the lower storey inscriptions dedicating the palace to God and entitled it a house of peace. Secondly, Zanetti, in 1760 engraved an image which decorated the walls of the atrium of the palace. The figure was identified as Diligence, and attributed to Giorgione. According to Boschini, who described the area in 1674, it was accompanied by coats of arms, heads of lions, other nude figures, and a figure of Prudence across from that of Diligence. We have already seen how the attribute of prudence was suggested by the three-headed figure on the Palazzi Vendramin a San Fosca and Trevisan-Capello in Canonica, accompanied symbols of piety and justice. Here, diligence and honesty or integrity in public office are possibly being suggested as other qualities appropriate to the ruling families. Returning to the frieze, the two coats of arms, each with six roses, link all the figures and their attributes of to

7 Guy de Tervarent, Attributs et symboles dans l'art profane, 1450-1600 (Geneva: E. Droz, 1958), 240,196.

8 See appendix.

9 A.M. Zanetti, Varie pitture a fresco dei principali maestri veneziani, (Venice: 1760), fig. 4.: M. Boschini, Le ricche minere della pittura veneziana, (Venice: 1674); this is also discussed in Bassi, Palazzi di Venezia, 200, & fig. 243.
the Loredan family, and clearly state palace ownership. The eagles in their role as symbols of apotheosis, could suggest that the family will have a long and glorious history.

The lions heads, which appear on the top storey of the facade, and which may have been painted in the atrium, have not been seen on a private palace since the early Quattrocento. They decorate palaces such as the Ca’ Foscari and the Ca d’Oro, as a symbol of the state patron, Saint Mark. The lions on those palaces were part of the tracery that was copied from the Ducal Palace, or were placed on the balconies, and were very small. Here, they are large and prominent. Some scholars suggest that they were placed on the facade to show that Andrea Loredan was related to the reigning Doge, Leonardo Loredan. This is possible, but Andrea Loredan was a wealthy and powerful man in his own right, who did not need to confer status upon himself by connection to the Doge. The lions may be a way of connecting the palace to the state, suggesting that the magnificent palace is to the glory of Venice, as well as to God. The Palazzo Dario is dedicated to the city, hence there is a precedence for the idea. A simple roundel with the initials of Christ served to suggest that the Malipero-Trevisan palace in the Campo di Santa Maria Formosa was for the glory of God, it is possible that these lion-heads are suggesting that the palace benefits the city. The Vendramin-

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10 Bassi, Palazzi di Venezia, 197.
Calergi palace is so large, and its architectural imagery so evocative, that a double dedication would almost be necessary to offset the comments about personal glorification that may have been raised.

Although this palace would not have been possible without the innovations worked out in earlier facades, the palace differs from the other Renaissance palaces in some distinctive ways. Codussi reintroduces certain Gothic elements that are missing from the Renaissance palaces, such as the lion motif, and window tracery. At the same time however, he moves away from that tradition by not adhering to the late Gothic tripartite form that is the basis of the other Renaissance palaces. While the decorative members of the Vendramin-Calergi’s contemporaries suggest facade support, those of the Vendramin-Calergi actually appear to do so, and are aided by the use of antique models. References to the Roman classical tradition, such as the use of orders and the triumphal arch doorway are rendered more powerfully here than on other palaces.

The differences between the Vendramin-Calergi palace and its contemporaries are offset by its similarities to them. The classical orders of the Vendramin-Calergi palace facade may express the structural nature of the building and the function of the floors, but the effect is richly textural, with a rhythmic flow being achieved by the alternation of recessed and projecting elements. In other palaces of this period, panels
framed by mouldings, and large sculptural additions are aimed at a similar decorative effect with different means. The Veneto-Byzantine theme also common to Venetian Renaissance palace design is managed in a new way in this palace. The expansion and repetition of the windows across the two top storeys, underplays the more typical tripartite divisions. Florentine elements, such as the bipartite window design, combine borrowed with native patrician palace associations, so that all will know that this is the residence of a noble family. The colored marble roundels, the trophy sculptures, the triumphal arch door type, and the relief patterns, all types of triumphal imagery, are important elements linking the Vendramin-Calergi palace to its contemporaries.

Perhaps to offset the imperial connotations of the Roman classical framework, the palace, like many others of its time is dedicated to God, and possibly to the city, by the use of inscriptions and lion motifs. Furthermore, qualities such as piety, or love of God, honesty and diligence in public office are suggested by the symbols of the cornice frieze, which are alternated with Loredan coats of arms to connect the concepts with the family. In this way, the Palazzo Vendramin-Calergi imagery displays the same concern for the patrician public image that is operant in other palaces of the period.

Because of its size and monumental expressive forms, the Vendramin-Calergi palace is the closest facade to that mysterious Ca' del Duca fragment from earlier in the century,
which no one could bear to tear down. While a fascinating building, the Vendramin-Calergi remains a bit of an anomaly, just as the innovative Palazzo Rucellai was to be in the city of Florence. Most palaces built later in the sixteenth century followed the pattern of the more subdued facade type as it developed from 1480 to 1500, in which Roman and Byzantine forms are grafted onto the late Gothic tripartite base. Furthermore, the Vendramin-Calergi palace would not have been possible without the innovatory examples provided by the other Venetian Renaissance palaces.
CHAPTER SIX

VENICE IN THE LATE FIFTEENTH CENTURY: A HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A VENETIAN RENAISSANCE PALACE STYLE

A brief overview of the Venetian political and cultural environment of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries suggests a meaningful context within which to place the development of the Renaissance palace style.

The Political Situation Toward the Turn of the Sixteenth Century.

Over the centuries since Venice shook off the rule of the Byzantine empire, the city built up its own maritime empire, based on trade with the Levant and domination of key areas along the trade routes. During the fifteenth century the Venetian empire was being threatened by two factors. The first was the loss of trade income to other trading nations such as the Portuguese.¹ The second was the incursions of the Turks, who managed to take over Constantinople in 1453, effectively putting an end to the last vestiges of the Roman empire. This

¹ Bouwsma, Defense, 96.
was a devastating blow to the west, but especially to Venice, for now there was nothing to detract the Turks from swallowing Venetian territories. The Venetians suffered heavy losses in the wars from 1463 to 1479, and again from 1499 to 1503. This war was not always fought in distant lands; in 1477, in their campaigns on the Dalmatian coast, the Turks overran Friuli and came within seventy kilometers of Venice itself. The pressures of these wars were only relieved by the negotiation of peace treaties which were not always favorable to Venice.

The Italian powers were not at all sympathetic to Venice's plight. In fact, Florence and Milan actually encouraged the Turks to attack the city. Because the Venetians had been trying to offset their losses in the east by gaining territories on the Italian mainland, they were accused of always being on the lookout for new territory. They incurred the wrath of the Pope in 1484 over Ferrara, to the point where a papal interdict was issued. Venice was not above helping foreign powers, such as the French, invade Milan in 1499, on the promise of receiving Cremona as payment. These

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2 Ibid., 97.
3 Sheard, *Vendramin Tomb*, 11.
actions, as well as her incursions into the Papal territories of Romagna, caused the Italian states to form the League of Cambrai, and to lead a concerted attack on Venice in 1509; Venice survived, but not without some extremely tense moments.

**Venetian Responses to Political Difficulties.**

The years during which the first Renaissance palaces were being built must have been extremely difficult ones. Not only were there vast political tensions, in which the prized Venetian liberty was at stake from both the Turks in the east and the Italians in the west, but the financial strain of constant war was devastating even to the wealthy Venetians. Venice was in a state of crisis, but a public appearance of strength and wealth was essential in order to preserve the city's image as a serene and inviolable republic. A result of this situation seems to have been increased propagandization of the state. W. Sheard and E. Muir have pointed out the rise in types of public festivals and ceremonies to keep public morale high. There were the annual ceremonies to mark the important historical events which gave legitimacy to the state, as well as impromptu ones celebrating battle victories. W. Bouwsma discusses how the first official histories of Venice, stressing the virtues of the state, begin to appear in the second half of

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7 N. Rubinstein, "Italian Reactions," 197.

The fifteenth century. The public pageantry involves the theme of triumph discussed in Chapter Four, and this can perhaps be connected to a desire to downplay Venetian troubles.

**Venice and the Imperial Traditions: Byzantium and Rome**

In the latter decades of the fifteenth century and into the sixteenth century, Venice was presented both as an heir to the Byzantine empire and as a type of "new" Rome. It was the same empire to people living in the fifteenth century, only the Roman empire had been pagan for part of its existence, and the Byzantine continuation of it was Christian. As Otto Demus has pointed out, Venetians had been linking themselves to Byzantium ever since the thirteenth century when they managed to divert the Fourth Crusade and capture Constantinople. They even tried to appear as successors of Justinian, fabricating histories to antedate the foundation of the city. For this reason, the state church of San Marco was built in the form of the Justinian church of the Holy Apostles, and decorated with the spoils of the invasion of Constantinople; it was a powerful monument to Venice's Byzantine connection. Venice even ruled Ravenna for a time. Ties with Byzantium remained strong through the centuries, and when Constantinople fell, many Greeks flooded into Venice as refugees. Venice became the centre for Greek studies in the West, and Cardinal Bessarion

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8 Bouwsma, *Defense*, 89-93.

10 Demus, "Renascence," 357.
likened it to another Byzantium.\footnote{Rona Goffen, "Icon and Vision: Giovanni Bellini's Half-Length Madonnas, \textit{Art Bulletin} 57 (1975): 488.}

Rona Goffen has pointed out the popularity of Byzantine art in Venice in the last decades of the fifteenth century. Greek icons were venerated, and Giovanni Bellini painted his Madonnas in a Byzantine style set against mosaic domes.\footnote{Ibid., 488.} Ralph Lieberman and John McAndrew have both discussed the revival of Byzantine styles of churches using the Greek cross within a square and domes on pendentives in the work of Mauro Codussi.\footnote{McAndrew, \textit{Sant'Andrea della Certosa}, and Lieberman, \textit{Venetian Church Architecture around 1500}.} The Byzantine revival styles of the 1490's may be a reflection of a need to assert Venice as an heir to the Byzantine empire.

In accordance with current trends in mainland Italy, Venice also connected herself to the more Roman aspect of the imperial tradition. David Chambers has outlined how Venetians proclaimed themselves in orations, histories, art and verse, as successors to the Romans.\footnote{David Chambers, \textit{The Imperial Age of Venice}, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1970), 12.} They were quite successful. When the humanists, both Florentine and Venetian, started to examine the classical political theories of Plato and Aristotle, Venice
came to be seen as the ideal of the free republic.\textsuperscript{15}

Conversely, Francesco Sforza, in 1451 complained:

\ldots they are constantly greedy for power and for the possessions of all their neighbours, in order to satisfy their ambition to dominate Italy, and then to extend their rule beyond Italy, as the Romans had done; for they believe that they can compare themselves to the Romans of the days when they were powerful.\textsuperscript{16}

Prominent Venetian families invented family histories that linked them to great Roman families. For example, the Loredan claimed that their name derived from \textit{Laureati}, the illustrious descendants of Mucius Scaevola \textsuperscript{17}, and the Cornaro believed they were of the \textit{gens Cornelia}, related to Scipius Africanus.\textsuperscript{18}

Roman architectural and decorative imagery was an important element of the depiction of Venice as a "new Rome." It figures prominently in the exterior decorations of the Ducal palace, which was an especially concentrated area of building activity in the 1480's and 1490's.\textsuperscript{19} The Arco Foscari was


\textsuperscript{16} Letter of Francesco Sforza to Nicodemo Tranchedini quoted in N. Rubinstein, "Italian Reactions", 205.

\textsuperscript{17} David McTavish "Roman Subject Matter and Style in Venetian Facade Frescoes," \textit{RACAR} XII (1985), 195.

\textsuperscript{18} George Knox, "The Camerino of Francesco Corner," \textit{Arte Veneta} 32 (1978), 80.

\textsuperscript{19} The rather dilapidated frescoes in the Maggior Consiglio or main council hall were ordered repainted in the 1470's, so that Venice's historical triumphs could be properly displayed, and to remove the possibility of visitors likening the crumbling nature of the frescoes to the Venetian state.
completed during these years, and construction of the Scala dei Giganti was begun after the 1483 fire, for the new Ducal coronation ceremony. Since the Italian powers were all using the language of Roman classicism in their buildings, in order that the correct message of power be conveyed, it was appropriate, and even necessary for the Venetians to do so. Thus, the main body of the Arco Foscari, and the Scala dei Giganti are all worked in a classicizing style. Edwin Muir, following the research of Michelangelo Muraro discusses the Scala dei Giganti and its decorations as part of a fifteenth century trend in which the Doges were increasingly allowed to exalt themselves, although they were only state figureheads. The Doge Agostino Barbarigo, under whom the Scala was completed, carried this trend to its limit, by covering the reliefs on the sides of the staircase with images of personal triumph which "...magnified the heroic Agostino as the leader of the New Rome." The Imperial connotations of the iconography of the Scala are offset by the more Christian message of the Ducal role as interpreted by Debra Pincus. It seems that the Venetian government wanted to appear to have a strong emperor-like ruler who embodied the ideals of the state, in order to convey the impression of unity and power to other states.

**Patrician Values in Venice.**

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What was the role of the patrician at this time in Venice? As participants in the Venetian government, they were identified with certain attributes connected to the network of ideas of Venetian self-definition which scholars call the myth of Venice.

Donald Queller explains that the myth of the patriciate was as pervasive as the other parts of the myth. He lays out how the Venetian patriciate were venerated primarily because of their good judgement and prudence in both domestic and foreign affairs. Nobles were quite old when they reached the highest offices, creating an atmosphere of gravity, decorum and wisdom associated with old age. Venetian patricians were supposed to have a strong sense of duty, subordinating their own interests to those of the state. David Chambers cites an incident in 1509 where Andrea Loredan, the owner of the Vendramin-Calergi palace, told the non-patrician bureaucrats that they were the privileged class in Venice because the patricians only held office temporarily, incurred heavy expenses and risked dying as officers during wartime. The bureaucrats, on the other hand were hired for life, and were free of such duties. While both Queller and Chambers realize that the myth was different from the reality, the patricians managed to convey the


22 Ibid., 14.

23 Chambers Imperial Age, 100f.
impression that they were responsible for maintaining the justice, peace and liberty of Venice, and that they took this duty seriously.

Humanism played a role in defining the values of the state and the patricians. Venetian humanists, who, as Margaret King points out, were often of or closely connected to the patrician class, worked to put the values associated with the myth of Venice into a broader context. They constructed a set of perceptions about the universe, the society, and the individual, and demonstrated how the latter two are related to the former, which was entirely agreeable with the social and political structure of Venice. They married Aristotelian philosophy to Christianity and reified the position of the Venetian aristocrats as the ones in a highly stratified society fit to rule by virtue of their birth and their wealth. King identifies unanimitas, or subordination of the individual to the group, as the most important theme of fifteenth century humanist literature. This concept served as an ideal for all citizens, and defined the role of the patrician in terms of an acceptable world view, for it combined the wisdom of both Christian and Classical scholars. In difficult times, it proved useful to show the public the virtue and selflessness of Venetian rulers.


25 Ibid., 184-185.
Venetian Palace Decoration as a Reflection of Political and Cultural Issues.

As was discussed earlier, William Bouwsma makes an important point about how the Venetian patriciate believed they were making a significant contribution to their city by building beautiful palaces. Sansovino's pride in the palaces of Venice speaks to this concept as well. The 1480 to 1510 period must have been personally difficult for Venetians, as their own fortunes rose and fell with those of the state. Yet they built many palaces during this period, and did so using expensive marbles in a new architectural style. It is almost as though the patricians in their private residences were reflecting the image of wealth and strength put forth by the Ducal Palace. The mood of triumph in the decorative imagery of the palaces reflected the trend current in Venice; it appears in art, literature and public pageantry, and can be connected to a need to put on a brave front in the face of difficulty. In dedicating their palaces to God or to the city the patricians were disassociating themselves from the glory of the palace, a possible expression of the concept of *unanimitas* discussed by King.

The revival of Byzantine style in the palaces could be a reflection of Venetian desire to reaffirm the state's Byzantine heritage at this time. Byzantine style does not enter into the

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26 Bouwsma, *Defense*, 133.
decorations of the Ducal palace which were so important as a reference point for the patrician architectural projects, because the most famous Byzantine monument of all, San Marco, was present beside the Ducal Palace. Furthermore, the palaces of the Procuratori, located in the Piazza, were still in the Veneto-Byzantine style. Byzantine revival takes on an interesting form in the palaces. The Veneto-Byzantine palaces are chosen as a basis for the new type. It is possible that fifteenth century Venetians connected them with Justinianic palaces, as Otto Demus says the Trecento Venetians did. Further, the decorative Cosmati-style stonework seems to have been drawn from Byzantine church walls and pavements, making a connection with Byzantine imperial power and Venetian patricians.

The other side to Venetian decorative trend was that of Roman Classicism. It is so strongly present in the decorations of the Ducal palace exterior that if Venice was being likened to a New Rome, then the Venetians would think it fitting to play the role of New Romans, and decorate their palaces in the Roman Classical style. Thus, round arches and all'antica friezes and capitals mesh with the Byzantine-type motifs on the facade to recall two types of Imperial tradition, something which no other Italian state could do.

The interpretation of some of the sculpture on facades is a difficult aspect of the study of the Renaissance palaces. Some of the pieces make reference to attributes such as piety,
justice and prudence, qualities with which patricians, whose state was being denigrated as too imperialistic and greedy, would want to be associated. Some scholars however, have tried to define these images as proof of a messianic type of patron. Lionello and Loredana Olivato Puppi, in their monograph on Mauro Codussi, link Codussi's patrons to a group of devout humanist patrons involved in the Camaldolese monastery on San Michele in Isola. They argue that these patrons learned of Alberti's theories of architecture and passed them on to Codussi, so that his buildings would contribute to the visual manifestation of a peaceful Venice, the city of Justice and Liberty, as it was portrayed in humanist literature. While these were valid interests of the patrician humanists, unfortunately, no architectural proof is presented to support such a theory. Manfredo Tafuri isolates the imagery on the Vendramin a San Fosca and Trevisan-Cappello palaces, and calls them images of Christian humanism. He interprets them as symbols used by the Venetian patriciate to suggest that Venice, with its good and just rulers was a type of earthly paradise. While there is one image, the plaque on the Cappello in Canonica, (which Tafuri neglects to mention) that may be referring to paradise, it is difficult to attach such a far reaching vision to such a small number of images. It is more

27 Puppi and Puppi, \textit{Mauro Codussi}, Chapter Four, "Il palazzo e la scena urbana del potere," passim.

28 Tafuri, \textit{Venezia e il Rinascimento}, 21, ". . .il tempo della redenzione viene ufficialmente identificato con il tempo veneziano.
likely that patricians wanted to offset the possible negative connotations of their palace building with affirmations of their piety and dedication to good values: to assert their devotion to the state, or *unanimitas*, rather than to personal glory.

**Conclusions.**

Chapter One dealt with how Venetian Renaissance palaces have been criticized because their architects did not develop a Renaissance style which used Florentine interpretations of classical decorative motifs. However, the palace type developed by the Florentines in the late 1440's was suited to their city's environment. It was an updated version of a Tuscan government palace model, and clearly would have been out of place in Venice.

During these same years in Venice, the late Gothic palace type was being perfected. It was uniquely suited to the Venetian environment, and, like the Florentine type also based its window tracery on that of the city's seat of government, the newly completed Ducal Palace. Where the Florentine merchant patrons needed to confer patrician status upon themselves, by adding the imagery of ancient Rome to their government palace models, the Venetian patricians already had a clearly defined place as the Venetian ruling class; they referred to the Venetian Ducal Palace to affirm, rather than to create status.

The Venetian tripartite Gothic palace has elongated
pointed arch windows, and thin, elegant mouldings, resulting in a primarily vertical decorative orientation. It has its own logic and aesthetic goals. An understanding of the way it works is essential for recognizing the changes that occur in palace decoration in the late fifteenth century. The Gothic palace type is important because it forms the structural skeleton upon which the Renaissance architectural language would be applied.

The first Renaissance palace was actually begun in the 1460's, not long after the first Florentine Renaissance palaces were completed. This was the Ca' del Duca, and although it remained a fragment, its base showed that it would have had massive columns to support the facade, a concept of architectural articulation drawn from the antique. It is quite different from the Gothic aesthetic, in which the spidery forms make the buildings appear weightless.

It was not until the 1480's that the Renaissance palace style really began in Venice. The Venetian patricians took their cue from the classicizing style apparent in the exterior decorations of the Ducal palace, which may have been introduced as a result of political pressure on Venice at this time. The patricians, who often sat on the committees which defined decorative systems for the Ducal palace, were sensitive to the role architecture, could have in presenting a strong and confident state image. They wanted to extend this image throughout the city.
As with any new style, a phase of experimentation was necessary to find a satisfactory expressive form. Thus, the first Renaissance palaces, built from 1480 to 1495, were diverse. The architects used as their basic form the shell of the developed Gothic palace. Large balcony and door groupings were centred on the facade and framed by small window groups. The pointed arches, tracery and mouldings of the Gothic type were stripped away and replaced with antique inspired forms such as round arches, pilasters, and all'antica friezes. These were manipulated so that each storey appears to be supporting the architectural element above it. The decorative focus was taken away from the windows, and transferred to the walls, which were now reveted in Istrian stone and decorated with costly colored marble insets inspired by Byzantine decorations. Some facades were too narrow to articulate in this manner, and a balanced bipartite solution was explored. Wide facades were united with complex architectural rhythms. In all these palaces, the banks of round arches, stripped of their tracery resembled those of the Trecento Veneto-Byzantine palace type, developed during the period when Venice was at the height of its imperial power.

By the mid 1490's, the period of experimentation had produced a standard Renaissance palace type. It was a synthesis of three traditions. A balanced, tripartite structure, derived from the Venetian late Gothic palace was the base. The pilasters, columns, capitals, arches and mouldings
were inspired by antique Roman models. Precious marble roundels and polychomed reliefs were derived from the Byzantine decorative tradition. Veneto-Byzantine palaces were evoked by the superimposed banks of arches. Thus, the Gothic, the Roman, and the Byzantine, were all thoughtfully combined in the Venetian Renaissance palace type. The Byzantine motifs took advantage of Venice's long association with the Eastern Roman empire of Byzantium, and the Roman style was part of a trend in which Venice, like other Italian cities likened itself to a new Rome.

A further level of significance was added to these palaces with the placement of sculptural decorations, triumphant in theme, which often allude to the qualities of the patrician owners, such as their piety and wisdom.

The Palazzo Vendramin-Calergi has received the most attention of all the palaces not only because it is the largest of them, but also because it uses more archaeologically correct antique forms, and reflects the Florentine Renaissance palace style. These elements are seen in the way in which the orders express facade function and in the window type used. The facade, however, is also to be seen as a product of its environment. It partakes of the innovations of Venetian Renaissance style in a number of ways apart from the adaptation of antique Roman forms. Firstly, the Tuscan window type is adapted to suggest tracery, a Venetian Gothic form. Secondly, the long banks of windows carry the concept of Veneto-Byzantine
revival to its logical conclusion, even if the Gothic tripartite shell is suppressed in the process. Thirdly, triumph is the theme of the decorations, as it was in the other palaces studied. Finally, in using heraldic imagery, the patron may be trying to suggest the qualities he would like attached to himself, and in doing so is involving himself in the concerns of many patrician palace builders at this time.

In dedicating the palace to God, and possibly to the city, Loredan is denying himself the glory of the building and presenting it as a gift to Venice and to the world, joining the other patrician builders who want to display the image of a patriotic and selfless ruling class. William Bouwsma, in discussing the civic element in the patrician patronage of art and architecture sums up the Vendramin-Calergi palace, and indeed all the Renaissance palace from built from 1480 to 1510 nicely in saying that:

the new buildings of Venice...served an important psychological and patriotic function. They expressed deep feelings about the dignity and importance of the community. When a Venetian family built a palazzo, it did so not only as a monument to its own eminence, but also to enhance the magnificence of the city, in whose glories it took a deep pride.\textsuperscript{29}

Venetian palaces built from 1480 to 1510 are not simply poorly conceived early attempts at classical revival. They use some of the motifs of ancient Roman architecture, but go far beyond this and also incorporate imagery from the Byzantine empire as well, without losing the functionality of the Gothic

\textsuperscript{29} Bouwsma, Defense, p. 133.
palace type. They are a carefully worked out synthesis of imperial and indigenous traditions, all meaningful to Venetians, and evoked at a time when their liberty and security was threatened.
Fig. 1. Gentile Bellini, Miracle at San Lorenzo, Venice, Accademia, c. 1500.

Fig. 2. Gentile Bellini, Detail of Miracle at San Lorenzo, Venice, Accademia, c. 1500.
Fig. 4. Palazzo Davanzati, Florence, fourteenth century.

Fig. 3. Jacopo de' Barbari, Birds Eye View of Venice, Detail, Venice, Correr Museum, c. 1500.
Fig. 5. Palazzo Medici, Florence, begun 1444.

Fig. 6. Palazzo Rucellai, Florence, 1449.
Fig. 7. Fondaco dei Turchi, Venice, fourteenth century.
Fig. 8. Palazzo Loredan, Venice, fourteenth century.

Fig. 9. Vestibule of Diocletian's Palace, Spalato, 300.
Fig. 10. Ducal Palace, Venice, 1345-1438.

Fig. 11. Plans, Ca' Foscari and Giustiniani, Venice
Fig. 12. Cross Section of Ca’ d’Oro, Venice

Fig. 13. Palazzo dell’Ambasciatore, Venice, c. 1455
Fig. 14. Ca' Foscari, Venice, c. 1425

Fig. 15. Ca' d'Oro, Venice, begun 1421
Fig. 16. Detail, Ducal Palace Tracery, Venice

Fig. 17. Ca' del Duca, Venice, started 1457
Fig. 18. Ca' del Duca

Fig. 19. Filarete, Palace in a Marshy Place, from the *Treatise on Architecture*
Fig. 20. Arco Foscari, Ducal Palace, Venice, 1450-85
Fig. 21. Scala dei Giganti, Ducal Palace, Venice, c. 1485

Fig. 22. Palazzo Contarini-Polignac, Venice, c. 1485
Fig. 24. Palazzo Contarini-Polignac, diagram of window (Angelini)

Fig. 23. Palazzo Contarini-Polignac, detail
Fig. 25. Palazzo Contarini-Polignac, diagram of balcony decorations (Angelini)

Fig. 26. Palazzo Contarini-Polignac, diagram of piano nobile balcony, (Angelini)
Fig. 27. Palazzo Corner-Spinelli, Venice, c. 1485

Fig. 28. Tuscan and Venetian window types (Angelini)
Fig. 29. Palazzo Zorzi a San Severo, Venice c. 1480

Fig. 30. Palazzo Zorzi, (Moro and Kier) c. 1845
Fig. 31. Palazzo Zorzi, diagram (Angelini)
Fig. 32. Palazzo Zorzi, side door

Fig. 33. Palazzo Zorzi, piano nobile balcony detail
Fig. 34. Palazzo Gussoni, Venice, c. 1485

Fig. 35. Palazzo Gussoni
Fig. 36. Palazzo Gussoni, detail

Fig. 37. Ca d'Oro, detail
Fig. 38. Ca' Dario, Venice, c. 1485

Fig. 39. Palazzo Vendramin a San Fosca, Venice, 1489
Fig. 40. Palazzo Vendramin a San Fosca

Fig. 41. Palazzo Vendramin a San Fosca, door
Fig. 42. Palazzo Vendramin a San Fosca, detail of door
Fig. 43. Palazzo Malipiero-Trevisan a Santa Maria Formosa, Venice, c. 1500

Fig. 44. Palazzo Malipiero-Trevisan, Diagram, (Cicognara, Diedo, Selva)
Fig. 45. Arch of Constantine, Rome, 312

Fig. 46. Palazzo Trevisan-Capello in Canonica, Venice, c. 1500
Fig. 47. Palazzo Trevisan-Capello, diagram

Fig. 48. Palazzo Trevisan-Capello, decorative panel, (Ruskin)
Fig. 49. San Marco, Venice, South Tesoro Wall, thirteenth century
Fig. 50. Palazzo Trevisan-Capello, Warrior relief

Fig. 51. Palazzo Trevisan-Capello, detail of Warrior relief
Fig. 52. Marble roundels from Palazzo Trevisan-Capello and Ca' Dario, (Ruskin)

Fig. 53. Palazzo Grimani a San Polo, Venice, c. 1500
Fig. 54. Palazzo Contarini delle Figure, started c. 1504
Fig. 55. Palazzo Vendramin-Calergi, Venice, 1500-1508

Fig. 56. Palazzo Vendramin-Calergi, detail
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APPENDIX

A: CHECKLIST OF PALACES

This section contains information about the patron, dating, architects and other pertinent data concerning the palaces that is not included in the text. The palaces are listed here in the order in which they appear in the text.

Contarini-Polignac

Calle Rota 875, DD.
Other names: Contarini dal Zaffo or Contarini San Vito, Montecuccoli, Decazes, Manzoni-Angaran
Usually dated c. 1485-90, the original patron of this palace is unknown. It was bought in the second half of the sixteenth century by the branch of the Contarini family known as the dal Zaffo. Elena Bassi, noting the Florentine decorative motifs on the facade speculates that this building may have been one of a series that the Florentine architect Michelozzo was supposed to have designed for friends while the Medici family were in exile in Venice in 1433. Since Giovanni Buora and his son Andrea worked on the library Michelozzo designed for the Convent of San Giorgio, and because their workshop was located across the canal from the Palazzo Contarini-Polignac, Bassi tentatively attributes the palace to them.

Selected bibliography: Selvatico; Ruskin; Fontana; Tassini; Paoletti; Lorenzetti; Angelini; Bassi; Puppi & Puppi; Lauritzen; Lieberman, 1982.

Corner-Spinelli

Campiello del Teatro, 3877 SM.
Other names: Lando, Taglioni, Salom
Dated from 1485-90, and usually attributed to Mauro Codussi because the ground storey stonework is similar to that of the church of San Michele in Isola, and the traceried windows are like those of the clerestory of San Zaccaria. None of the original documents concerning the commission have survived, but the original owners may have been the Lando family, because they sold it to Zuanne Corner in 1542, for 9000 ducats. Vasari did some work in the palace in 1542, and
although he mentions the architect Sanmichele, to whom the alterations of the androne are attributed, he makes no mention of the original architect of the palace.

Selected bibliography: Sansovino; Cicognara, Diedo, Selva; Fontana; Selvatico; Tassini, Curiosita; Paoletti; Lorenzetti; Angelini; Bassi; Lauritzen; Lieberman; 1982; McAndrew.

Zorzi a San Severo

Salizzada Zorzi, 4930 CS.
Other names: Galeoni, Benvenuti, Gazzato, Contin, Societa Mauro Codussi.

It is usually dated around 1480, and Paoletti attributed it to Mauro Codussi for stylistic reasons. Puppi and Puppi link the Zorzi family of San Severo, who commissioned the palace, to Codussi's Camaldolese monastery patrons. In 1475, when Giovanni Zorzi, owner of the two palaces originally on the property died, his son Marco asked the monks of San Michele for the right absidal chapel as family tomb. Mauro Codussi is documented as working at San Michele at this time, and so the Puppi suggest that Marco Zorzi, who built the palace, would have known Codussi. The Palazzo Zorzi must have been finished by 1500, as it appears on the Jacopo de' Barbari map.

Selected bibliography: Sansovino; Fontana; Tassini; Ruskin; Lorenzetti; Angelini; Bassi; Lieberman 1982; Puppi & Puppi; McAndrew.

Gussoni a San Lio

Calle della Fava, 5601 SM.
Other names: Guizette, Reali.

Dated from 1480-90, and attributed to Pietro Lombardo by Lieberman and McAndrew. They also suggest that the palace belonged to Senator Jacopo Gussoni, who commissioned the Cappella Gussoni in nearby the Church of San Lio, also thought to be by Pietro Lombardo. Lieberman notes that it is a rare example of a family chapel and a residence being in a similar decorative style.

Selected bibliography: Tassini; Lorenzetti; Heydenreich & Lotz; Lieberman 1982; McAndrew.

Dario

Campiello Barbaro, 351 DD.
Other names: Dario a San Gregorio, or a San Vito.
Usually dated around 1488 and most often attributed to Pietro Lombardo, due to the similarity of its decorations to those of Santa Maria dei Miracoli. The patron was Giovanni Dario, who concluded a peace treaty in 1479 between Venice and
Turkey. The grateful Venetians rewarded his service with money and land. Although he was not a member of the patrician class, he was honored by the Venetian state, and he married his daughter to a member of the Barbaro family. According to P. Brown, he was Guardian Grande of the Scuola di San Giovanni Evangelista in 1479. Pietro Lombardo may have come into contact with Dario at that time, as the architect was reportedly working on the atrium from 1478 to 1481. Perhaps Dario liked Pietro’s work and decided to hire him to build his palace.

Selected bibliography: Selvatico; Fontana; Tassini; Lorenzetti; Lieberman 1982; Lauritzen; McAndrew; P. Brown.

Vendramin a San Fosca

Fondamenta del Forner, 2400 CN.

Paoletti cites a document of 1489 naming Simone Gruato del fu Niccolò da Venezia, Ambrogio di Giovanni da Albino, and Bernardino da Calcinate as stonemasons hired to work on this palace. The original patron was Leonardo Vendramin, but by 1530 the palace had passed on to his son-in-law Gabriele Vendramin, because this was where Marcantonio Michiel saw Giorgione’s Tempesta, Jacopo Bellini’s sketchbooks and various antiquities in the famous camera d’anticaglie.

Essential bibliography: Sansovino; Selvatico; Tassini; Paoletti; Lorenzetti; Puppi & Puppi; Tafuri.

Malipiero-Trevisan a Santa Maria Formosa

Campo Santa Maria Formosa, 5250 S.M.

Other names: Bembo, Diedo, Zen, Cecchini, Stamperia Fracaso.

There are no surviving documents concerning the commission, but the palace is usually dated c. 1500. Puppi & Puppi state that it was built on the foundations of a Trecento palace, by the Malipiero family on the occasion of the marriage of one of their daughters to a member of the Trevisan family, to whom the property passed. It has been attributed to Sante Lombardo, but he was not born until 1504. The roundels with heads in profile on the cornice frieze may have been the inspiration for those on the Palazzo Contarini a San Beneto, finished later in the sixteenth century.

Essential bibliography: Sansovino; Temanza; Cicognara, Diedo, Selva; Selvatico; Fontana; Paoletti; Angelini: Lorenzetti; Bassi; Onians; Puppi & Puppi.

Trevisan-Capello in Canonica

Rio di Palazzo, 4330 CS.

Other names: Collalto, Mora, Sceriman, Miari.

This palace is usually dated c. 1500, and was built for the Trevisan family. Fontana states that this family were
pious, as they were the patrons of the nearby church of San Giovanni Nuovo, and in 1479 gave a relic of the Holy Blood from Constantinople to the church of the Frari. It has sometimes been attributed to Guglielmo Bergamasco. Bassi suggests that Bartolomeo Bon may have been the architect, as he was working in the vicinity of the Ducal palace at this time.

Essential bibliography: Sansovino; Cicognara, Diedo, Selva; Selvatico; Fontana; Paoletti; Tassini, Curiosita; Ruskin; Lorenzetti; Angelini; Bassi; Onians; Puppi & Puppi; Tafuri.

Grimani a San Polo

Ramo Grimani, 2033 SP.
Vendramin, Grimani, Giustinian, Marcello, Sorlini.
The palace does not appear on the Jacopo de' Barbari view of 1500; Lieberman thinks it may have been designed and built between 1500 and 1520, on a thirteenth century skeleton. Puppi and Puppi state that the family of Doge Andrea Vendramin, who owned the palace before the Grimani, ordered the renovations. The architect is unknown; it was once attributed to Mauro Codussi, but this palace does not resemble any of his later works. Paoletti suggests that Giovanni Buora may have been the architect, and many scholars concur. Paoletti, Selvatico and Bassi all comment on the sphinx and the eagle which replace the corinthian capitals on the left edge of the palace. Bassi suggests that they were allegorical representations, the significance of which is now lost.

Essential bibliography: Temanza; G.G Fontana; Selvatico; P Paoletti; Lorenzetti; Angelini; Bassi; Puppi & Puppi; Lieberman 1982.

Contarini delle Figure

Calle Mocenigo, 3327 SM
Other names: Mocenigo San Samuele, Venier, Cocco, Guiccioli, de Sangro.
Although work began on the palace in 1504, it was not finished until 1548, and Lieberman thinks that the current design dates from 1520. However, it does contain decorative elements from buildings started around 1500. The lacy stonework of the balcony is similar to that of the Palazzo Malipiero in the Campo di Santa Maria Formosa, and some of the sculptural decorations (which fascinated Ruskin) are like those of the Palazzi Grimani a San Polo and the Vendramin-Calergi. It is often attributed to Antonio Scarpagnino and Giorgio Spavento, on stylistic grounds. The renovations were ordered by Pietro Contarini, and the building passed to his son Jacopo. According to Lauritzen, Jacopo Contarini was a great patron of arts and letters, collector of the works of the followers of Giorgione, and friend to Palladio. It would be interesting to know whether his father, the patron of the palace, had similar
humanist leanings.

Essential bibliography: Sansovino; Cicognara, Diedo, Selva; Fontana; Ruskin; Paoletti; Lorenzetti; Angelini; Bassi; Lauritzen; Puppi & Puppi; Lieberman 1982.

Vendramin-Calergi

Campiello Vendramin 875 CN.

Other names: Loredan, Brunswick, Duke of Mantua, Grimani San Marcuola, di Berry, Volpi.

The patron, Andrea Loredan, apparently started to acquire land for the palace in 1481, but the building was not begun until after 1500, because it does not appear on the Jacopo de' Barbari view. It was finished around 1508. The palace is usually attributed to Mauro Codussi for the same stylistic reasons as the Corner-Spinelli, and also because Andrea Loredan had ties to the Church of San Michele, where Codussi's work is documented. Codussi died in 1504, so the palace must have been finished according to his instructions. McAndrew says that certain elements, such as the balconies, seem out of place and were designed by the stonemasons who followed Codussi. The interior had allegorical figures, coats of arms and friezes by Giorgione.

Andrea Loredan was rich and powerful. He held many important positions in the Venetian government such as head of the Consiglio dei Dieci, and was also a high-ranking military official. He died in battle in 1513. Doge Leonardo Loredan, who ruled from 1501-1521 was a relation of Andrea.

Selected bibliography: Sansovino; Zanetti; Temanza; Cicognara, Diedo, Selva; Fontana; Selvatico; Burckhardt; Tassini Curiosita; Paoletti; Lorenzetti; Angelini; Bassi; Lauritzen; Puppi & Puppi; McAndrew; Lieberman 1982;
B: VENETIAN PALACES FROM 1480-1510 NOT INCLUDED IN THE STUDY

1. Contarini del Bovolo, or Minelli, San Paternian
2. Morolin-Michiel-Olivo, Rio di San Polo 2672
3. Mastelli, Rio della Madonno dell'Orto
4. Michele, Rio della Sensa
5. Grimani ai Servi (destroyed)
6. Giustinian-Persico, Grand Canal, near Rio di San Toma
7. Cocco-Molin, Rio dei Barcaroli
8. Cappello-Memmo, Rio dei Greci
9. Soranzo-Piovene, Grand Canal