



**A Latin Look at Famagusta:
Fragmentary Remains and Some Venetian Heraldic Shields
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Since antiquity, the islands of the Mediterranean basin have hosted the trade, supply and settlement of peoples from diverse cultures.* During the period spanning the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, two islands in particular were of primary importance in the exchange between East and West, between the Christian and Islamic cultures: Sicily, and the more self-contained Cyprus. Both stood at commercial crossroads, and that in turn had repercussions for their political stability. If the first was considered the pearl of the Tyrrhenian Sea, coveted by France and Spain, Cyprus, against the backdrop of a new Islamic expansion, found itself in a difficult equilibrium, torn between the ambitions of the Genoese, the Catalans and the Venetians. On this historical stage, it was the royal Lusignan dynasty that, with an increasingly uncertain touch, sought to maintain a delicate balance by attempting to hold these competing powers in check.

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The magnificent history of Cyprus can be illustrated by considering the buildings on the island in which the Gothic-Renaissance *Ars Aedificandi* is enriched by sculpted handiwork and fragments of painted frescoes. The surviving examples of the civic and religious architecture, albeit comprising only a tiny proportion of the artistic and architectural accomplishments that once existed, are rightly and widely celebrated: witness the fine masonry that would appear to have been the work of the best European master builders and craftsmen, some of whom may have accompanied King Louis IX of France to Cyprus in 1248. There are some superb decorative displays, not least those to be found on the lintels of the portals and windows. After the Ottoman conquest, Cyprus was kept in the public eye in western Europe thanks to the numerous publications from the presses in Venice and other centres including Paris and Nuremberg that appeared in the following century. One of the promoters of this historical propaganda was Fr. Stefano Lusignano (Etienne de Lusignan), a Dominican lector, who was already at work in the Neapolitan monastery of Santa Catherina di Formello in 1570. Lusignano dedicated his *Chorograffia et breve Historia Universale dell'Isola de Cipro, principiando al tempo di Noè per in sino al 1572* to the King Charles IX of France and King Henry of Poland. The volume appeared in 1573 courtesy of the famous Bolognese publisher Alessandro Benaccio. In describing 'the many sectors in which the island of Cyprus was divided', Lusignan provided a list of the principal Cypriot and Venetian noble families who had lived on the island – a list that has proved to be a valuable historical tool for the dating and study of the heraldic insignia that survives to this day either still *in situ* or collected in the lapidary museums of the island. One hundred years later, another important book finally appeared in print, Monsignor Antonio Maria Gratiani's *Histoire de la Guerre de Chypre* (Paris 1685). In this work, the author described the daily life of the besieged Cypriots, citing episodes and naming the primary defenders of Nicosia, such as the Rochas and the Podocataro, as well as revealing the antagonism that existed between the Venetian captains of this walled city and those of Famagusta.

During my sojourns on the island, I was kindly welcomed by all and left free to visit the urban sites in search of the ancient architecture that existed prior to that celebrated conquest. Assisted by my former Greek Cypriot students, I also had the opportunity to undertake architectural measurements in order to arrive at a more precise documentation of the sites. My first study visit took place in Nicosia in 1991, accompanied by the professor of architecture, Corrado Balistreri, as part of a cultural exchange signifying the centuries-old

friendship between the Veneto Region and the Cypriot government. The material gathered was also utilized by my colleague Dario Zanverdiani, who has embarked upon an in-depth archival study to confirm the close relationship between Cyprus and the Serenissima. On that occasion, we visited the old city of Nicosia and executed various measurements of buildings and details. Among the buildings visited was the former Byzantine church known as Stavrou tou Misericou, transformed into a mosque after 1571 and henceforth known as the Arablar Mosque. It is located in October Square in the Greek sector of Nicosia, not far from the Orthodox church of Phaneromene. The exterior is notable for its stylistically contrasting elements, such as a rich crowning continuous phytomorphic cornice, with faced volutes, and the underlying structure of buttresses, in typical French Gothic scheme with angles formed by stone drops. These buttresses can be compared with those on monuments in the Turkish sector of Nicosia, such as the former church of St George of the Latins, now the Büyük Hamam, or the thirteenth-century cathedral of St Sophia. They are also comparable to those found in Famagusta on the exterior of St George of the Greeks (fourteenth century) and St George of the Latins (thirteenth-fourteenth centuries). The interior of the Arablar Mosque is divided into three aisles, with a central apse enclosed by Gothic columns. Of interest are the two tombstones embedded in the stone floor, both of which contain an image of a recumbent figure fashionably dressed in sixteenth century Venetian style, with breeches [brache]. Unfortunately the epigraphs have been abraded. I hope before long to expand this important collection of data, taking advantage of the more amicable relations that now prevail to work in the Turkish areas.

This conference on Famagusta and its historic centre allows us a further opportunity to study of the sites in the town, not only as evidence for history and society in the period of Lusignan and Venetian domination, but also as a platform for a discussion of their conservation and the *modus operandi* for restoration and possible re-use. We can all suggest different interpretations of what the historic centre comprises and how it should be managed for its preservation and display on the international stage in a way that will in turn to give rise to the provision of the financial resources needed to facilitate further conservation and restoration. As my own contribution, linked to a short visit to this city so famous but unknown to me, I should like to focus attention on the splendour of masonry structures of buildings and the importance of the remaining sculptural decorations. As heraldry expert and member of the *Istituto Araldico Genealogico Italiano*, I put particular attention, during my visit, to

buildings and the heraldic emblems of the Venetian period. The latter, according to the administration's use of the Serenissima, were essential to remember the date of architectures or of a subsequent renewal and now needed to attempt to supply dates and define chronologies.

The city of Famagusta has a notable historic town centre enclosed within a complete enceinte. At its centre stands the noble and imposing early fourteenth-century cathedral of St Nicholas (since the Ottoman conquest the Lala Mustafa Pasha mosque),-but there are many other building of major historical interest, the importance of which, despite their obvious state of disrepair, is plain to see and cries out to us as scholars or as conservators to perpetuate their legacy from a civilization famed for its universal values.

Let us take for example the interesting rectangular building, usually known as the Bishop's Palace, located to the right of the façade of the cathedral. Here two circular rose windows frame a magnificent main portal. This richly decorated entrance is crowned by Venetian heraldic emblems: to be precise, two escutcheons of the Bembo family, which boasted bonds of kinship with Queen Caterina Cornaro. The first, enshrined in a renaissance *accartocciato* shield, is set in the wall above the right window just under the cornice – a crowning frieze, in which the first band is composed of an order of double leaves with a channelled upper band in classical renaissance style above. The second blazon is on the ground, carved into the side of an antique marble frieze and composed within a *sannitico* shield, typically Venetian with its two upper volutes. The two pairs of three columns of compact white limestone, which support the carved arches of the portal, have extremely stylized capitals reminiscent of an archaic Byzantine form which are out of harmony with the overhanging Gothic cornices. Between these and the capitals, is a band of coussinet [*pulvini*] decorated with rosettes, and inserted in the median capital are two emblems, also of the Bembo family, which confirm their fifteenth-century origin. The keystone in the interior room, which displays the lion of the Serenissima, in the form known as *moeca* [crab], reaffirms this. The fourth ring of the arches has a mixtilineal undulation, that recalls Sicilian *Chiaramontani* buildings and which were used in Cyprus and in Mediterranean area. Many Sicilian people, in Chiaramonte family period , sailing and traded. They had properties in the island, and even later, with the

Venetian influence, maintained economic ties¹. The merchants and gentlemen Sicilian brought certainly on the island of Cyprus, architectural forms of their land.

Continuing now description of the rich building next to the Cathedral, which we can call “Loggia Bembo”, you notice that base of the outermost arch is decorated with Hercules struggling with the lion; the second by a winged dragon, while the third has suffered too much from wind erosion due to the current passing through the two portals, for its decorations to be identified. Camille Enlart suggested that this building housed the cathedral school, but the lack of religious symbolism argues against this idea. The splendour of the internal structure, with its ribbed cross vaults linked to a simple rectangular plan, indicates that it functioned as a place for public gatherings. This idea finds support in the positioning of the two portals in the centre of the building’s frontage, thereby permitting free access and exit. Indeed, the unusual size of the large circular windows, now missing the floral tracery that once radiated from their centres, and the fact that they are placed relatively low down in respect of the former level of the churchyard, can be interpreted as an attempt at visual and noise control by the ruling elite, which would have held meetings, restricted to noblemen, behind closed doors. Use of a building of this sort for this purpose was a long-established tradition in Italy. At Nicosia in Sicily, for example, the loggia in which regular gatherings were held was adjacent to the base of the great bell-tower of the Gothic cathedral. There the building dates from the same era and has a similarly rich architectural style. The Famagusta building was repeatedly modified by maintenance work and reconstruction. The most recent alterations were most likely executed during the period of office of the Venetian captain Daniele Bembo (1485-88), who took the opportunity to reveal his antiquarian sensibilities and his appreciation of the grandeur of Greco-Roman art. The Bembo family retained its links with Cyprus in the sixteenth century, providing the island with two captains: Gian Matteo (1546-48) and Lorenzo (1564-66). Of beside the big door there are two friezes, probably *spolia* from Salamis, that serve as bench. The one on the right side is richly decorated with acanthus leaves. It is pendant to the frieze, to the left, that was raised up to chair height, placed on different geometric frames made of local stone. That is carved with *girali* containing animals on the move inside. Furthermore this sculptural relief is comparable

1 For example Nicholas Coureas, in his accurate essay *Taverns in Medieval Famagusta*, exhibited at this meeting, mentions Nicholas of Palermo, rich owner of a tavern and houses, politically tied to the Count of Tripoli and recalled in chronicles of second half of fifteenth century.

to an antique frieze made of polychrome mosaic², for confirmation of archaeological provenance. A similar iconography is present in Venice in the Romanesque-Byzantine friezes, such as access to famous Palazzo Contarini³ "*dalla Porta di Ferro*" (*Sestiere of Castello*). In it, the ring of raised arch (XIII cent.)⁴ Is carved in low relief with *girali* that contain animals on the move. These are quadrupeds and birds, which include the types of Roman late imperial period. The arch is also inscribed in a frame, also carved in low relief, where there is a continuous form of rosettes with four petals, recalling precisely the ones already mentioned and put on the band of coussinet of which I called "*Loggia Bembo*".

A similar example of architectural renewal put to use to celebrate Venetian administration through the reuse of ancient stonework, is to be seen directly opposite St Nicholas. The Doric porch (1552-59) of the palace of the Provveditore utilizes four reused monolithic drums of Egyptian granite in a manner which recalls the typology of a tripartite Roman triumphal arch. The lexicon is clearly Vignolesque, displaying an awareness of the latest Sansovino-inspired architectural trends current in Venice and thereby confirming the rich variety of the styles diffused by the Serenissima. On the keystone of the central arch is the bi-chrome marble emblem of Giovanni Renier, captain in the years 1552-54 and then lieutenant, 1557-1559, within a foiled shield, dominated, in accord with a Renaissance tradition, by a lion's head with *svolazzi*. Two other columns stand isolated to the left of the cathedral, one built with an identical monolith of stone material, recalling the famous twin columns of St Mark and St Theodore in the Piazzetta San Marco at Venice.

It should be stressed that, despite the poor state of many of the historic buildings in Cyprus, the Lusignan era was a particular rich and imaginative period. Concentrated in Famagust and Nicosia is a wealth of architectural detail, with few parallels in Europe, and a rich variety of imaginative decoration, rare even in Venice, regarded in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the richest city of Europe after Constantinople. Thus for example the lintels of some of the doorways in Cyprus present full bodied sets of carving employing geometric and

2 Roman mosaic in House of Dionysos, Paphos: Campagnolo, Courtois, Martiniani-Reber, Michaeleidou 2006, p. 86.

3 In 1473, a branch of the family Contarini, had the title of "the Zaffo" for the investiture of the Barony of Jaffa and the Lordship of Ascalon, from Caterina Cornaro.

4 Arslan 1970, p. 17.

phytomorphic elements that are remindful of Flemish Gothic at its most beautiful, very similar to the carved wooden pelmets in the altarpieces of Vivarini.

What we have here in the centre of Famagusta is an assemblage of historic monuments of inestimable value that urgently require conservation, as does the ruins of the nearby church of St George of the Greeks. Hopefully their preservation will serve as a tangible example of international collaboration. The church of St George, now reduced to its still imposing apses and its partially surviving outer walls, was once adorned by frescos by talented artists who were themselves perhaps influenced by the school of Giotto. This can be seen, in particular, from the little that remains of the fresco of the Crucifixion on the rear wall above the right portal near the spiral staircase that led to the upper floors. The figurative painting gives the appearance of a bi-chromatic colour scheme, similar to a photographic negative in which the figures appear dark when compared to the background. This effect is almost certainly due to the lack of protection of the weather and has led to a consequent chemical-chromatic variation which fortunately can be restored in some cases to its original state. The grieving figures below the Cross and the angels, high in the fresco, descending alongside the Crucifix can be compared to fourteenth-century Italian art. Relations between Byzantine and Italian art, have been well studied by Joannes A. Eliades⁵, citing rightly and compares, among them, the Crucifixions from the Church of St. Luke in Nicosia and from the Church of St. Domenico Maggiore in Naples, city of sea that had certainly relations with the island of Cyprus. The above circular symbols of the sun and moon, formerly of Roman origin, might usefully be compared to others in the Goreme region, in central Cappadocia. As an example, there is the beautiful and well preserved Crucifixion in the Karanlik Kilise (Dark Church), which is located in the famous valley formerly known as Korama and which is still considered one of the archaeological wonders of the world. The style shows Syrian influence from ancient Palestine and Armenia, with an admixture of early Christian and Byzantine art forms. All these decorative cycles probably began in the second half of the ninth century, continuing until around 1250. The main churches in the valley are known as the ‘churches of the columns’: the Karanlik Kilise together with the Elmani K. and the Carikli K., contain frescos with rich decorative supports that are datable to the eleventh century, a period that saw a major boost in religious Byzantine art. It might be suggested that this was a plausible

⁵ Eliades 2006, p. 18.

artistic influence, coming as it was from a location near the island of Cyprus and bordering on the realm of Cilician Armenia. In 1342 a member of the Cypriot Lusignan family, Guy, had become king of Cilician Armenia, thus marking the culmination of a long history of relations between the two kingdoms fostered by a series dynastic marriages stretching back to the beginning of the thirteenth century. Cilicia was overrun by the Muslims in the 1370s, and, with the death of the last of the Armenian Lusignans in 1393, the Cypriot royal house claimed the titular kingship; it was for that reason that the lion rampant of Armenia appears henceforth on their arms quartered with the emblems of Jerusalem and Lusignan. This quartered shield appears on some of the silver coinage minted in Cyprus during the reigns of Queen Carlotta (1458-60) and then Caterina Cornaro (1473-89)⁶.

Enough survives of this beautiful Gothic building to allow us to see the essential architectonic features: nave and two side aisles where circular columns, of well-drafted stones, were supporting ogival arches, enriched by tracery-contours, that, delimiting the vaults upwards, then come back down in the side walls, thus hiding, in their trilobal section, the buttresses which provide the outer structural support. Those pilasters strips are interrupted, at the level of top horizontal frame, by stone elements in the shape of a truncated cone, which act as capitals. These, turn, become elements supporting overhead rib structure. The main apse, below its semi dome, is lit by three large single ogival windows, doubled into two orders, the upper being almost double the height of the lower. The lateral apses are lit on the other hand by a single opening placed in the centre. The pictorial cycles were arranged around the walls, with the sequences of saints and episodes in the life of Christ limited by the vertical cording and the window openings themselves. In the left-hand apse schematic drawings of Venetian or European ships were scratched by pious persons, into the plaster, probably during the period of the siege, as tangible expressions of the prayers for the arrival of Christian fleet⁷. Furthermore, there are notches representing the days of painful waiting.

6 Campagnolo, Courtois, Martiniani-Reber, Michaeleidou. n. 179. Even in Venice, a Lusignan coat of arms was designed by John Ruskin: Lucchese, Zanverdiani 2008, p. 64.

7 Affect shapes of ships and notches, which indicated the number of ships or days of travel (round trip), was very old tradition in the Mediterranean, especially in villages on the coast. Already, at the Romans, this habit, then kept in the Christian world, was used in temples and sacred enclosures by the sailors and children. Among the many examples of the first century after Christ, in Vesuvius area, we point out that existing in the villa called of San Marco, near Castellammare di Stabia (vessels of different sizes and notches).

In the Renaissance period, the custom of offering ex vote of ships and sailors, is witnessed, even in Venetian painting of the Crucifix The Apparition of Mount Ararat in the Church of Sant'Antonio di Castello (Gallerie dell'Accademia), painted by Vittore Carpaccio in 1515. This church, located near the Hospital of Sailors, is filled with votive wax, colored flags used in the navy and miniature models of galleons and galleys. Who did

Originally, the columns of naves were the same size and height, and bore the same capitals, as the semi-columns that define the great apse. This apse yet necessary so that the clergy could sit during religious ceremonies. An examination of a cross-section of the plinths of the columns, in the nave, reveals that at some point they were reinforced by an outer ring of more coarsely cut masonry. This repairs indicates the need for structural consolidation resulting, in all likelihood, from the fear of a possible collapse as a result of an earthquake or cracks in the upper walls of the nave. The left aisle is the only one to have *arcosolium* tombs, with the lateral springers supporting the tombstone and showing heraldic or phytomorphic decorations forming a frame to sculpted full-length portrait of deceased sleeping (*gissant*). The side walls of the arches are the only ones to retain images of patron saints. The back walls, on which images of the Madonna or Christ were once visible, now reveal only the ashlar of which they are built. This funerary typology is paralleled throughout Europe and concurrently in Italy. To rebuild the image of the splendor of decorative painting, one must know the major European churches and more specifically refer to the work of the historian Camille Enlart, that follower of the famous art historian and architecture Viollet le Duc, went to Cyprus and studied the remains of the ancient medieval and Renaissance architecture.⁸

not offer models and objects in wax, simply drawn or scratched the base of the interior walls. By the end of the fifteenth century, ships of various tonnage existed, to civilian and military use, from one to four masts (see Navi by D. Zanverdiani, in Balistreri-Trincanato, Zanverdiani, 2000). The primitive and stylized pictures of former vote, now makes it difficult a precise interpretation.

⁸ For Venice, which was city of economic and artistic reference in the Mediterranean, I wish to mention a few examples of funerary monuments, by *arcosolia* type, which may correspond to type and decorative richness.

In the Basilica of the Frari, the tomb of Doge Francesco Dandolo (1329-39) and his wife Elizabeth Contarini, triumphs for beauty. The noble and rich family that had economic interests in Cyprus and gave to the administration of the island, a governor and several captains. The tomb consists of an ark, with two side shelves, which support a Gothic arch carved and polychrome, with the presence of gilding. These architectural elements surrounded a beautiful and valuable painting by Paolo da Venezia. Following the fashion of the time, the dead are presented by two patron saints to the Virgin enthroned with Child. The tomb of Duccio Alberti, the Florentine ambassador (died 1336), is always to *arcosolia*, where the tombstone is engraved with the deceased sleeping (*gissant*). The space, again between sculpture and arches, was designed for religious images accompanied by patron saints of the deceased. Another monument, which is great for beauty is to Scipione Bon, said friar Pacific (died 1362), where the arch is decorated by a ring of foliage and figures, sculpted and painted in polychrome with gilding. A blue sky, sprinkled in gold stars, contains the subject of religion.

Equally beautiful the solemn memorial in the form of *arcosolia*, for the Doge Morosini Michele (died 1332), in the temple of Saints John and Paul, glaring wealth for the wall to the right of the great apse. Above the tombstone, with *gissant* in Doge dress and horn, the beautiful polychrome mosaic triumphs with crucifixion and patron saints. The bas-reliefs, statuettes and the foliage of architectural decoration, can be attributed to sculptors from Masegne.

Examples of graves to *arcosolia*, are also found in other Italian cities, for example in Bologna, seat of the oldest university in Europe, where professors and those belonging to the noble families erect these, not only within churches, but even under the arcades of the buildings. Many painted and all are in Zamboni street and along the perimeter of the Basilica of San Giacomo, for example monument of Salaroli family.

In the past, scholars have noted the particular structural characteristics of the roof vaults. Indeed, this is possible because the condition of architectural remains allows the construction techniques to be observed. It is as if we had an assonometric section – rather like those *Trecento* Giottesque frescos in which the ecclesiastic or the donor presents a model to the patron saint – so that this architectural complex can be read usefully by experts in the techniques of restoration. Here, as in the vaults of other religious buildings, we find amphorae or pitchers being used to reduce the weight of the vaults in accordance with the techniques of the Roman *Ars Aedificandi*. Thus, as seen in the Byzantine territories in Italy, especially the Exarchate of Ravenna, a sequence of wine amphorae, their necks broken off, were placed one within the other and made to follow the curvilinear construction of the vault, relying on the effect of gravity to hold them in place. The gaps between them were then filled and then they were plastered over. This construction technique is observable, even in load-bearing walls. On the exterior, the great apse flanked by the two smaller ones is reminiscent of the architectural arrangement found in Norman churches in Sicily, suggesting cultural exchange and building techniques in the eastern Mediterranean. The west façade was enriched by a well-carved lattice rose window, although regrettably only a few curvilinear elements now remain. Among the surviving windows of the single right aisle, the only one to have retained the stone mullioned open-work is the second counting from the apses. Fortunately some pieces of the stone-work lie on the ground and are therefore recoverable. The third span on the right and perhaps the fourth before the presbytery has direct access to a more ancient church built in Byzantine style, St Simeon. Here again the remains deserve a more detailed study so that the beauty of its proportions can be fully appreciated. Although in ruins, it nevertheless retains its interest, and we can take pleasure in the ancient skills of building in stone. I just wonder whether this architectonic ensemble could become home to a lapidary museum for Famagusta, into which might be gathered the numerous examples of carved stones that are scattered throughout the town. Then, at a future date, with the nearby church of St George of the Greeks restored by experts and provided with walk-ways and floodlights, it would form a striking setting, worthy of Famagusta's architectural heritage.

Celebrated in Florence, the succession of medieval tombs to arcossolia forming the perimeter wall of the church and the cemetery of Santa Maria Novella. Some of these were owned by famous families, like Medici, Mazzinghi, Martelli, Guicciardini, Cerchi-Arbizi. Under the Gothic arches were painted religious images.

This desirable intervention should maintain a kind of romantic and Gothic ruins, to enhance the superb architectural scenery of the church.

A similar programme of restoration and reuse could also be realized at the citadel commonly known as Othello's Tower, with the recovery and display of the carvings there that are currently subject to sad neglect. They need to be catalogued and dated; heraldic emblems must be identified; and then put on display with sufficient information to explain their contexts. The sort of examples I have in mind are the two quartered coats of arms with the Lusignan lion rampant and the radiant sun, one of which is in the Museum of Archbishop's Palace in Lefkosia, and the coats of arms with the *ciclamoro* [annular symbol in heraldry] of the Barbaro family in the vaulted chambers at the Castle, near the *San Michele* Bastion. Another Barbaro coat of arms, in white stone, is embedded in the wall on the right pillar of the inward façade of the *Porta Giuliana* now Famagusta Gate in Nicosia, above those of the Civran family. On angular parastas, on the extreme right of gate, there is instead a Loredan shield.

For those visiting the magnificent defensive structure of Famagusta is very remarkable is the winged lion, looking at the observer (*guardant* lion), above the main entrance of Othello's Tower, rebuilt by Venetian Captain Nicolò Foscarini (1492). Its archaic muzzle can be compared with that of bronze lion in the *Piazzetta San Marco* in Venice. Similar elements are the grim-frowning face, protruding, stylized eyes and mane carved as the heraldic symbol 'sun in splendour' emblazoned with special, wavy rays, typically present in images of lion of Saint Mark, dating to the end of the fifteenth century.

This similarity shows that the sculptor had copied a drawing certainly came from Venice, as an icon of the emblematic lion of St. Mark. This, on the *Piazza* of Venice, was visible to everyone, including foreign visitors. Indeed, in painting, where a strong political need was not, the symbol of the Serenissima Republic is representing in more realistic way. Example is the beautiful painting of 1516, by Vittore Carpaccio, known as the *Lion of San Marco di Palazzo Ducale* (130 x 368 cm). The two hind legs are in the sea water, the front left rests on the ground, right leg supports the Gospel open. Even if the muzzle is seen in profile and is more realistic, however, mane tends to keep the symbolic wavy ray. The heraldic composition, of stone panel shows a *passant* lion, with its front paws placed on a rocky coast

and both the rear plunged into the sea, as in that painting. On a symbolic rock, a sign of strength, stands a castle with crenellated tower from which a waving flag. In all the lands of the domain of Venice, this heraldic composition recalls the *Stato da Tera* and the *Stato da Mar* [the domains of land and sea], as for example in a miniature of Doge Leonardo Loredan (1501-21).

The panel of Famagusta is also composite. The figure of the lion appears older and is made with stone material different from the frame and the completion on left side. This is of another color, degradation and sculptural work different in style. See the summary execution of pens on the right wing of the lion, next to the symbolic stronghold⁹. The inscription in memory of Foscareno is now partially legible, because the date is unreadable in the latest numbers in Roman characters (... XII). On the head of the lion, an ancient crown is kept, that does not appear in official iconography, when placed on public land monuments in Italy; in fact, generally, the halo is present, indicating more Marco Evangelista.

Instead the crouched lion sculpted all-round, placed near Sea Gate, is almost *pendant* of a marble one, placed at portal of Venice Arsenal in 1687. In heraldry language, this position of animal is defined lion *couchant*, drawn in an alert posture. As the Venetian lion comes from Greece (Lepsina, Athens) and has archaeological origin, so the sculpture of Famagusta may have a similar history.

This one, among many other suggestions for research, is offered to us by the ruins of Famagusta. In despite of despoliation, stripping, abandonment, even the stones speak. The fundamental, perhaps sometimes dusty, past studies have mapped out guidelines to understand them. Now it is necessary to get closer to the ancient artefacts, each with the own cultural contribution, without preconceptions and absolute truths, in regard to rediscover, in matter, the spirit and values of a melting pot of civilizations, the work and the life of generations of craftsmen, artists, clients. Inseparable aspects and meanings, that we must exploit as a live, common and inalienable heritage. To avoid having to say, even and especially in future, that each step one encounters the work of a destroyer, as bitterly and prophetically, John Ruskin noted¹⁰, in Venice to half of the nineteenth century. Precisely for

⁹ This recalls the castle “da mar” of Modone, on the Ionian coast of the Peloponnese.

¹⁰ 1851: in a letter to Pauline Trevelyan.



this reason, as an architect who deal with the recovery of historic architecture, combining principles of conservative restoration and use of innovative technologies and materials, I hope that these architectures, even when reduced to ruins, continue to communicate their message of "ancient knowledge" transposed in Art and Architecture.



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Appendix 1

Chronology of Venetian administration to date coats of arms

Luogotenenti [Lieutenants] (civil governors)

1489 – 1491	Francesco Barbarigo
1491 – 1493	Girolamo Pesaro
1493 – 1495	Giovanni Donato
1495 – 1497	Andrea Barbarigo
1497 – 1499	Cosimo Pasqualigo
1499/1500 – 1501	Andrea Venier
1501 – 1503	Nicola Priuli
1503 – 1505	Pietro Balbi
1505 – 1507	Cristoforo Moro
1507 – 1509	Lorenzo Giustiniani
1509 – 1511	Nicola Pesaro
1511 – 1514	Paolo Gradenigo
1514 – 1516	Donato Marcello
1516 – 1518	Fantino Michiel
1518 – 1519	Alvise d'Armer
1519 – 1522	Sebastiano Moro
1522 – 1523	Jacopo Badoer
1523 – 1525	Domenico Capello
1525 – 1527	Donato di Lezze
1527 – 1529	Silvestro Minio
1529 – 1531	Francesco Bragadin
1531 – 1533	Marcantonio Trevisan
1533 – 1535	Stefano Tiepolo
1535 – 1536	Giovanni Moro
1536 – 1539	Domenico da Mosto
1539 – 1541	Francesco Badoer
1541 – 1543	Cristoforo Capello
1543 – 1545	Luigi Riva
1545 – 1547	Carlo Capello
1547 – 1548	Vittorio Barbarigo



1548 – 1550	Salvatore Michiel
1550 – 1551	Alessandro Contarini
1551 – 1553	Francesco Capello
1553 – 1555	Marco Grimani
1555 – 1557	Gianbattista Donato
1557 – 1559	Giovanni Renier
1559 – 1561	Giovanni Barbaro
1561 – 1563	Pietro Navagero
1563 – 1565	David Trevisan
1565 – 1566	Pandolfo Guoro
1566 – 1567	Nicola Querini
1567 – 9 Sept. 1569	Nicola Dandolo
1569 – 1570	Sebastiano Venier

Appendix 2

Capitani [Captains] (military governors)

1480 – 1483	Giovanni Diedo
1483 – 1485	Francesco Cicogna
1485 – 1488	Daniele Bembo
1488 – 1489	Matteo Barbaro
1489 – 1491	Baltassare Trevisan
1491 – 1493	Nicolò Foscarini
1493 – 1495	Cosimo Pasqualigo
1495 – 1497	Nicolo Priuli
1497 – 1499	Bartolomeo Minio
1499 - 1501	Troilo Malipiero
1501	Girolamo Bon
1501 – 1503	Lorenzo Contarini
1503 – 1505	Paolo Antonio Marin
1505 – 1507	Domenico Benetti
1507 – 1509	Benetto Sanudo
1509 – 1511	Pietro Lion
1511 – 1514	Luigi Contarini



1514 – 1516	Giovanni Centani
1516 – 1518	Vincenzo Cappello
1518 – 1520	Bartolomeo da Mosto
1520 – 1522	Zaccaria Loredan
1522 – 1525	Nicolò Dolfin
1525 – 1526	Andrea Donato
1526 – 1527	Marcantonio Canale
1527 – 1530	Anzolo Trevisan
1530 – 1532	Antonio Soriano
1532 – 1534	Tommaso Contarini
1534 – 1535	Domenico Contarini
1535 – 1537	Lunardo Venier
1537 – 1538	Maffio Pisani
1538	Giovanni Gritti
1538 – 1540	Giovanni Contarini
1540 – 1542	Nicolò Giustiniani
1542 – 1544	Giovanni Contarini (2 nd time)
1544 – 1546	Andrea Dandolo
1546 – 1548	Gian Matteo Bembo
1548 – 1550	Francesco Grimani
1550 – 1552	Marco Loredano
1552 – 1554	Giovanni Renier
1554 – 1556	Cornelio Barbaro
1556 – 1558	Pietro Navagero
1558 – 1560	Domenico Trevisan
1560 – 1562	Pandolfo Guoro
1562 – 1564	Nicolo Gabriel
1564 – 1566	Lorenzo Bembo
1566 – 1569	Marco Michiel
1569 – 15 Aug 1571	Marcantonio Bragadin

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