

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND CIVILISATION

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THE MARKET IN SECOND-HAND CLOTHES AND FURNISHINGS  
IN VENICE, c.1500 - c.1650

PATRICIA ANNE ALLERSTON

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining  
the degree of doctor of the European University Institute.

Members of the Jury:

Professor Franco Angiolini,	Università degli Studi di Pisa (supervisor)
Professor Laurence Fontaine,	European University Institute and CNRS, Paris
Dr Richard Mackenney,	University of Edinburgh (external supervisor)
Professor Paolo Malanima,	Università degli Studi di Pisa
Professor Daniel Roche,	Institut d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine, CNRS, Paris

Florence, April 1996

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## ABSTRACT

The object of this study is to reinstate the market in second-hand clothes and furnishings within the history of Venice from c.1500 to c.1650. The discussion focuses on the Venetian guild of second-hand dealers, a number of 'alternative' exchanges of used goods, and a group of Jewish second-hand dealers who became established in Venice in the early sixteenth century. Particular attention is paid to the issues of guild exclusivism and the inelasticity of craft structures within the market for used goods.

There are seven chapters. Chapter 1 explores the notion that the guild of second-hand dealers was traditionally important in the market but did not have complete control, and Chapter 2 investigates various 'alternative' exchanges coexisting with the guild. In the next three chapters, these basic structures are examined in detail and their development is charted over the period as a whole. In Chapter 3, traders within the second-hand market are considered and the new group of Jewish competitors is introduced. The craft activities of the guild members and the Jewish dealers are analysed in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, a study is made of outlets for used goods and of their distribution within the city. The last two chapters assess the impact of two types of setbacks: outbreaks of plague, and a seventeenth-century recession in the used-goods market.





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## THE VENETIAN CALENDAR

In the text, modern dating replaces the Venetian system of dating which began on March 1st. The original calendar is respected in the footnotes and dates which might cause confusion are distinguished as *more veneto* [mv].

## VENETIAN CURRENCY

References to ducats, *lire* and *soldi* appear in the text. For most of the period, one Venetian ducat was worth 6 *lire* and 4 *soldi*, or 124 *soldi* (twenty *soldi* were equal to one *lira*). On Venetian moneys of account, see Frederic C. Lane, *Venetian ships and shipbuilders of the Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1934), pp.251-2. For an idea of Venetian workers' wages, see Brian Pullan, 'Wage-earners and the Venetian economy, 1550-1630', *Economic History Review*, n.s.16 (1964), 407-26 (pp.415-16); and Robert C. Davis, *Shipbuilders of the Venetian Arsenal: workers and workplace in the preindustrial city* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), pp.28-31.

## INTRODUCTION

### I. Topic

This is a study of the second-hand market in clothes, fabrics and furnishings in the city of Venice from circa 1500 to 1650, a period of considerable economic and social change. Many historians have examined developments in international trade during the medieval and early modern periods and, inevitably, Venetian commerce has attracted numerous commentators.<sup>1</sup> Although much has been written about external trade, the internal trade structures of towns and cities were, until recently, neglected. In conjunction with increased attention given to demand and consumption, interest in urban markets is beginning to grow.<sup>2</sup> In the past, for example, craft guilds were often

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<sup>1</sup> See the Bibliography for the works of Frederic C. Lane, Fernand Braudel, Domenico Sella, Carlo M. Cipolla, Gino Luzzatto, Maurice Aymard and Alberto Tenenti; see also Richard T. Rapp, 'The unmaking of the Mediterranean trade hegemony: international trade rivalry and the commercial revolution', *Journal of Economic History*, 35 (1975), 499-525.

<sup>2</sup> See *Mercati e consumi: organizzazione e qualificazione del commercio in Italia dal XII al XX secolo* (Bologna: Edizioni Analisi, 1986); Richard A. Goldthwaite, 'The economy of renaissance Italy: the preconditions for luxury consumption', in *I Tatti Studies: Essays in the Renaissance*, 2 (Florence: Olschki, 1987), pp. 15-39. Influential works were: Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J. H. Plumb, *The birth of a consumer society: the commercialization of eighteenth-century England* (London: Europa Publications, 1982); and Joan Thirsk, *Economic policy and projects: the development of a consumer society in early modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978). For other approaches, see *Work in Towns 850-1850*, ed. Penelope J. Corfield and Derek Keene (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1990); Andrzej Karpinski, 'The woman on the market place: the scale of feminization of retail trade in Polish towns in the second half of the 16e and in the 17e century [sic]', in *La donna nell'economia, secc. XIII-XVIII*, ed. Simonetta Cavaciocchi,

discounted as anachronistic institutions in the early modern period. The last fifteen years have seen a considerable number of publications on these trading organisations.<sup>3</sup> This recent trend in scholarship has encompassed the guilds of Italian cities as well as other parts of Europe.<sup>4</sup> Among these, the trades of Venice have

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Atti delle 'Settimane di studi' e altri convegni, Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica 'F. Datini', Prato, n.s.21 (Florence: Le Monnier, 1990), pp.283-92 (pp.283-4); Craig Muldrew, 'Interpreting the market: the ethics of credit and community relations in early modern England', *Social History*, 18 (May 1993), 163-83.

<sup>3</sup> On the neglect of guilds, see Richard Mackenney, *Tradesmen and traders: the world of the guilds in Venice and Europe, c.1250-c.1650* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble, 1987), p.xii; Merry E. Wiesner, 'Guilds, male bonding and women's work in early modern Germany', in *La donna nell'economia, secc.XIII-XVIII*, ed. Simonetta Cavaciocchi, Atti delle 'Settimane di studi' e altri convegni, Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica 'F. Datini', Prato, n.s.21 (Florence: Le Monnier, 1990), pp.655-192 (p.655). A list of publications is in Carlo Poni, 'Local market rules and practices: three guilds in the same line of production in early modern Bologna', in *Domestic strategies: work and family in France and Italy 1600-1800*, ed. Stuart Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1991), pp.69-101 (p.71, n.5). See also James R. Farr, *Hands of honor: artisans and their world in Dijon, 1550-1650* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988); *Conflitti nel mondo di lavoro*, ed. Simona Cerutti and Carlo Poni, special issue of *Quaderni Storici*, n.s.80 (Aug.1992). For numerous studies of women in guilds, see the Bibliography for works by Merry E. Wiesner, Natalie Zemon Davis, Margret Wensky, Diane Willen, Jean H. Quataert and Andrzej Karpinski.

<sup>4</sup> For examples, see Lia Gheza Fabbri, *L'organizzazione del lavoro in una economia urbana: le società d'arti a Bologna nei secoli XVI e XVII* (Bologna: CLUEB, 1988); Carlo Poni, 'Norms and disputes: the shoemakers' guild in eighteenth-century Bologna', *Past and Present*, 123 (1989), 80-108; idem, 'Local market rules'; Cinzio Violante, 'L'arte dei sarti nello svolgimento del sistema corporativo (secoli XIII-XV)' in *Economia società istituzioni a Pisa nel medioevo: saggi e ricerche* (Bari: Dedalo, 1980), pp.253-98; Simona Cerutti, 'Du corps au métier: la corporation des tailleurs a Turin entre XVIIe et XVIIIe siècle', *Annales ESC*, 43 (1988), 323-52.

attracted a significant amount of attention.<sup>5</sup>

Many of these investigations have centred on the production of goods by craft guilds and particular emphasis has been placed on methods of production and on groups of workers deemed precociously 'industrial'.<sup>6</sup> As well as craft structures, public markets and pedlars have also been scrutinised and much interest has been shown, especially

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<sup>5</sup> See Richard Tilden Rapp, *Industry and economic decline in seventeenth-century Venice* (Cambridge MA:Harvard University Press,1976); Franco Brunello, *Arti e mestieri a Venezia nel medioevo e nel rinascimento* (Vicenza:Neri Pozza, 1981); Mackenney, *Tradesmen*; Doretta Davanzo Poli, ed., *I mestieri della moda a Venezia nei sec.XIII-XVIII:documenti*, 2 vols (Venice:Gazzattino,1984-86); Giovanni Scarabello, 'Caratteri e funzioni socio-politiche dell'associazionismo a Venezia sotto la Repubblica', in *Scuole di arti, mestieri e devozione a Venezia*, ed.Silvia Gramigna, Annalisa Perissa (Venice: Arsenale,1981),pp.5-24; Massimo Costantini, *L'albero della libertà economica: il processo di scioglimento delle corporazioni veneziane* (Venice:Arsenale,1987); Antonio Manno, *I mestieri di Venezia: storia, arte e devozione delle corporazioni dal XIII al XVIII secolo* (Citadella, Padua: Biblos,1995); and the exhibition catalogues:*Arti e mestieri nella Repubblica di Venezia* (Venice: Soprintendenza ai beni artistici e storici di Venezia,1980); *Mestieri e arti a Venezia 1173-1806:mostra documentaria* (Venice: Archivio di Stato, 1986); *I mestieri della moda a Venezia dal XIII al XVIII secolo* (Venice:Stamperia di Venezia,1988).On specific crafts, see Susan Connell, *The employment of sculptors and stonemasons in Venice in the fifteenth century* (New York: Garland,1988); Robert C.Davis, *Shipbuilders of the Venetian Arsenal:workers and workplace in the preindustrial city* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press,1991); Andrea Vianello, *L'arte dei calegheri e zavateri di Venezia tra XVII e XVIII secolo*,Memorie della classe di scienze morali, lettere ed arti, 49 (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti,1993); Luca Molà, *La comunità dei Lucchesi a Venezia: immigrazione e industria della seta nel tardo medioevo*, Memorie della classe di scienze morali, lettere ed arti, 53 (Venice:Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 1994).

<sup>6</sup> For a Venetian example, see Rapp, *Industry and economic decline*. On the importance of retail structures in early modern Venice, see Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, p.81.

among historians of early modern England, in the products sold by these means.<sup>7</sup> The focus has remained primarily on the production and sale of new goods, however, and this is misrepresentative of urban trade as a whole in the pre-industrial period.

a) The second-hand market

The market for second-hand wares in early modern Europe was substantial. Exchanges of used goods within pre-industrial cities did, for example, account for a sizable proportion of urban trade. These exchanges coexisted with the market for new goods and were just as central to the local economy. Indeed, in many corporations of traders, including shoemakers and furriers, artisans specialised in old and new wares.<sup>8</sup> In short, the market for used goods was not a marginal feature within an early modern city's economy but was an integral part of it.

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<sup>7</sup> See Ronald M. Berger, 'The development of retail trade in provincial England, ca.1550-1700', *Journal of Economic History*, 40(1980),123-8; and the papers on retail trade in  *Mercati e consumi*. Pedlars have attracted much interest, see Margaret Spufford, *The great re-clothing of rural England: petty chapmen and their wares in the seventeenth century* (London:Hambledon Press,1984); Laurence Fontaine, *Histoire du colportage en Europe (XVe-XIXe siècle)*, 'L'Evolution de l'Humanité' series (Paris:Albin Michel,1993). Also relevant is, of course, Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and capitalism, 15th-18th century*, trans. Siân Reynolds, 3 vols (London: Fontana,1981-84),II: *The wheels of commerce* (1985),pp.26-80.

<sup>8</sup> Poni,'Norms and disputes',p.81. For Venetian examples, see Giovanni Monticolo ed., *I capitolari delle arti veneziane sottoposte alla Giustizia e poi alla Giustizia Vecchia dalle origini al MCCCXXX* [CAV], 3 vols in 4 parts (Rome:Istituto Storico Italiano,1896-1914),II(1905),1,p.154 [shoemakers and cobblers];*ibid.*,pp.99-114 [furriers].



Notwithstanding this centrality, historians of urban trades have tended to disregard the used-goods market. Lia Gheza Fabbri incorporated second-hand dealers into her study of Bolognese guilds, but she is an exception.<sup>9</sup> In his new book on Venetian trades, Antonio Manno acknowledges the existence of the craft, but he does not discuss it in any detail.<sup>10</sup> This neglect requires some consideration for it does not reflect a lack of evidence. From the nineteenth century onwards, Italian guild statutes relating to second-hand dealers have come to light, but, since then, the activities of traders in used goods (unlike other sorts of crafts) have aroused little curiosity.<sup>11</sup> When the subject has arisen, second-hand dealers have usually been assigned a place at the very bottom of the craft hierarchy.

The trade in old clothes and fabrics was a distinct sector within the market for used goods and was not inferior to other trades. During an early demarcation dispute at the

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<sup>9</sup> Fabbri, *L'organizzazione del lavoro*, pp.109-32. Fabbri's study shows second-hand dealers to have been among the top twelve guilds of Bologna, see *ibid.*, p.27 [I am grateful to James Shaw for reminding me of this point].

<sup>10</sup> Manno, *I mestieri di Venezia*, pp.14,17,160. Manno repeats misleading information about the guild's meeting place; on this topic see Chapter 5,IV.a) below.

<sup>11</sup> CAV,I(1896),135-8; CAV,II,2, XCVII,CLXXXVIII-IX,457-85; Ferdinando Sartini,ed.,*Statuti dell'arte dei rigattieri e linaioli di Firenze (1189-1340)* (Florence:Le Monnier,1940). On Roman statutes of 1609, see Gian Ludovico Masetti Zannini, 'Ebrei, artisti, oggetti d'arte (documenti romani dei secoli XVI e XVII)', *Commentari* (Rome), n.s.25 (July-Dec.1974),281-301(n.2,p.291). Odd Venetian statutes appear in Poli, *Mestieri*, II,201; and the guild register featured in her exhibition *I mestieri della moda* (cat.187,p.238).

end of 1431, the Venetian guild of hosiers acknowledged that it: '...was, and is, the most noble craft in the city.'<sup>12</sup> Practitioners of this trade were distinguishable from dealers in different sorts of second-hand wares like metal cooking pots and old shoes; unlike these other suppliers of used goods, Tommaso Garzoni devoted a separate discussion to old-clothes dealers in his great sixteenth-century compendium of trades, *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo*.<sup>13</sup>

Dealers in second-hand clothes and fabric were associated more with drapers, mercers and tailors, than with metal or leather-workers, and in certain Italian cities they belonged to general guilds of cloth retailers. Florentine second-hand dealers combined with linen-drapers, and at some stage, tailors were also incorporated into this guild.<sup>14</sup> Art historians rarely acknowledge that

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<sup>12</sup> BMC, *Mariiegola degli strazzaruoli* [M.St.], cap.42, f.36, nd (late 1431): '...chel mestier p[re]ditto de la stracaia è stado ed è el più nobele mestier de la terra [sic]'

<sup>13</sup> (Venice:Vincenzo Somasco,1595) [first published 1585], disc.153, 'De'stracciaroli', ff.917-8. On this work and its author, see Clemente Della Corte, *Tommaso Garzoni: vita ed opere* (S.M. Capuavetere: Progresso, 1913); Benedetto Croce, 'Pagine di Tommaso Garzoni', in 'Scrittori del pieno e del tardo rinascimento', no.31, *La Critica* (Naples), 42, 5-6 (Dec. 1944), 251-9; Ugo Tucci, 'I mestieri nella *Piazza universale* del Garzoni', in *Studi in memoria di Luigi dal Pane* (Bologna: CLUEB, 1982), pp.319-31; Alessandro Gnani, 'Valori urbani e attività marginali nella *Piazza universale* di Tommaso Garzoni', *Ricerche Storiche*, 20, 1 (1990), 45-71.

<sup>14</sup> ASF, *Arte dei rigattieri, linaioli e sarti*, no.5, *Lo statuto dei rigattieri e linaioli, 1340-1529*; *ibid.*, ms no.845, *Notizie sull'arte dei rigattieri, linaioli e sarti*, nd. See also Violante, 'L'arte dei sarti', p.273 and n.52.

Donatello's statue of Saint Mark on Orsanmichele was commissioned by these second-hand dealers as well as the linen-drapers, reflecting the low view generally held of the trade.<sup>15</sup> In Bologna, traders in used cloth belonged to the company of draper-second-hand dealers (*drappieri strazzaroli*).<sup>16</sup> Venetian retailers of used fabric and old clothes had their own separate guild, a privilege which was not extended to traders in other second-hand goods in the city.<sup>17</sup> Although they enjoyed close links with other cloth dealers, their organisation was independent of them.

It has long been recognised that Jews and women were also closely involved with the trade in old clothes. In the 1580s, for instance, Garzoni noted that the second-hand trade had particular links with the Jews.<sup>18</sup> The inclusion of these supposedly marginal bands of workers does not

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<sup>15</sup> ASF, *Arte dei rigattieri, linaioli e sarti*, ms no. 845, *Notizie sull'arte dei rigattieri, linaioli e sarti*. For the standard art-historical attribution, see Charles Avery, *Florentine renaissance sculpture* (London: Murray, 1970), p. 56.

<sup>16</sup> Lia Gheza Fabbri, 'Drappieri, strazzaroli, zavagli: una compagnia bolognese fra il XVI e il XVIII secolo', *Il Carrobbio* (Bologna), 4 (1980), 163-80 (pp. 164-5); idem, *L'organizzazione del lavoro*, pp. 109-11.

<sup>17</sup> See n. 8 above.

<sup>18</sup> Garzoni, *Piazza*, f. 917. See also David Kaufmann, 'A contribution to the history of the Venetian Jews', *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 1st series 2, 2 (1890), 297-305 (p. 298); Luigi Arnaldo Schiavi, 'Gli Ebrei in Venezia e nelle sue colonie: appunti storici su documenti editi ed inediti', *Nuova Antologia di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti* (Rome), 3rd series 47 (1893), 309-333, 485-519 (p. 320). On female dealers in Venice, see B. Cecchetti, 'Le industrie in Venezia nel secolo XIII', *Archivio Veneto*, 4 (1872), 211-57 (p. 234); for them elsewhere, see A. Abram, 'Women traders in medieval London', *Economic Journal*, 26 (1916), 276-85 (p. 276).

explain historians' neglect of the second-hand market. The history of these two groups has been studied for a considerable amount of time and the past thirty years have witnessed a notable output of works on both subjects.<sup>19</sup> Studies about Jews in the early modern period often include mention of the second-hand trade, but they do not investigate or re-examine it. Instead, they usually repeat received notions of the second-hand trade being a mean and unworthy activity, citing it as proof of the Jews' unfair treatment in economic affairs.<sup>20</sup> Historians of women's work have also reiterated accepted views of the trade, though Merry Wiesner Wood has recently argued that female dealers in used goods performed vital roles in urban economies.<sup>21</sup>

The misconception that the second-hand market was of relatively little importance, playing a peripheral part in

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<sup>19</sup> See the *Revue des Etudes Juives* (Paris, 1880- ); and the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, (London, 1889- ); also E. Dixon, 'Craftswomen in the *livre des métiers*', *Economic Journal*, 5 (1895), 209-28; and Alice Clarke, *Working life of women in the seventeenth century*, new edn (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982).

<sup>20</sup> Schiavi, 'Ebrei', p.320. For a recent example, see Roberto Bonfil, *Gli Ebrei in Italia nell'epoca del Rinascimento*, trans. Massimo Acanfora Torre Franca (Florence: Sansoni, 1991), p.67. Attilio Milano was an exception: *Storia degli Ebrei in Italia* (Turin: Einaudi, 1963), pp.549-50.

<sup>21</sup> Abram, 'Women traders', p.276; cf. Merry Wiesner Wood, 'Paltry peddlers or essential merchants? Women in the distributive trades in early modern Nuremberg', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 12, 2 (1981), 3-13 (pp.8-10); see also Peter Burke, 'Classifying the people: the census as collective representation', in *The historical anthropology of early modern Italy: essays on perception and communication* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp.27-39 (p.36).

the early modern urban economy, needs to be dispelled. The fallacy derives from a basic misunderstanding of the nature of the trade and is probably rooted in changes in attitudes towards used goods which accompanied the maturing of industrial economies and the onset of mass consumption.<sup>22</sup> Since the nineteenth century, second-hand goods (antiques excepted) have been associated predominantly with the poor and this is likely to have influenced the way modern historians have viewed the trade.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, it is only since increased interest has been shown in poverty that curiosity in the topic has been aroused.

Old-clothes dealers practising in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have recently attracted the attention of historians. Contemporaneously, two similar paths of research have been followed: one reflects the interest in English popular consumerism generated by McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb; and the other is part of an in-depth examination

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<sup>22</sup> For the influence of mechanisation and cheaper prices on attitudes to cloth, see Doretta Davanzo Poli, 'La veste dei simulacri', in *Madonne della laguna: simulacri 'da vestire' dei secoli XIV-XIX*, ed. Riccarda Pagnozzato (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1993), pp.121-38 (pp.136-7).

<sup>23</sup> On such views, see Madeleine Ginsburg, 'Rags to riches: the second-hand clothes trade 1700-1978' *Costume*, 14(1980), 121-35(p.128); Beverly Lemire, 'Consumerism in pre-industrial and early industrial England: the trade in secondhand clothes', *Journal of British Studies*, 27 (1988), 1-24(pp.21-3); Betty Naggar, 'Old-clothes men: 18th and 19th centuries', *Jewish Historical Studies*, Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England, 31(1990), 171-91(p.190)

of the history of appearances in France.<sup>24</sup> Carlo Poni's work on guild conflict has inspired a third type of research on eighteenth-century Roman dealers in used goods.<sup>25</sup> Despite these developments, there is still very little information about the second-hand market in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries - a period in which, notwithstanding the volume of textiles traded and the introduction of the much-celebrated 'new draperies', far fewer cheap fabrics were available.<sup>26</sup> In 1990, a

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<sup>24</sup> McKendrick et al, *Birth*; Lemire, 'Consumerism'; idem, 'The theft of clothes and popular consumerism in early modern England', *Journal of Social History*, 24(1990), 255-76; idem, 'Peddling fashion: salesmen, pawnbrokers, tailors, thieves and the second-hand clothes trade in England, c.1700-1800', *Textile History*, 22 (1991), 67-82; John Styles discussed clothes and non-élite consumers 1660-1800 at the conference, *Echanges et cultures textiles dans l'Europe pré-industrielle* [Rouen, May 1993: I am grateful to John Styles for a copy of his paper]; on the English trade, see also Ginsburg, 'Rags'; Naggar, 'Old-clothes men'; idem, *Jewish pedlars and hawkers, 1740-1940* (Camberley: Porphyrogenitus, 1992). On the Parisian trade, see Daniel Roche, *La culture des apparences: une histoire du vêtement (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècle)*, 2nd edn (Paris: Fayard, 1991), pp.327-45.

<sup>25</sup> Carlo M. Travaglini, 'Rigattieri e società romana nel settecento', *Quaderni Storici*, n.s.80 (Aug.1992), 415-448.

<sup>26</sup> On the cheaper new draperies and their wider appeal in society, see *Calendar of state papers and manuscripts, relating to English affairs, existing in the archives and collections of Venice, and in other libraries of Northern Italy*, ed. Rawdon Brown and others (London: HMSO, 1864-1947), XXII, ed. Allen B. Hinds (1919), p.326, Apr. 20 1630; Ralph Davis, 'England and the Mediterranean, 1570-1670', in *Essays in the economic and social history of Tudor and Stuart England in honour of R.H. Tawney*, ed. F.J. Fisher (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), pp.117-37 (p.123); also John May, *A declaration of the estate of clothing*, English experience series, 400, facs (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1971), p.21; F.J. Fisher, 'London's export trade in the early seventeenth century', *Economic History Review*, n.s. 3(1950), 151-61 (pp.154-56, 158); P.J. Bowdon, 'Wool supply and the woollen industry', *Economic History Review*, n.s.9(1956-57), 44-58 (pp.51-3); Charles Wilson, 'Cloth production and international competition in the seventeenth century',

conference held in Milan highlighted the importance of this market, but no detailed study yet exists of how it functioned or of how it fitted into the urban economy as a whole.<sup>27</sup> This thesis is intended to help fill that gap.

#### b) Venice

Venice is an excellent subject for a study of the second-hand market. The internal economy of this city offers a particularly suitable context in which to examine exchanges of second-hand goods and the Venetian archives are also rich in documentary material for the early modern period. As well as being cosmopolitan (the city was still a major centre for textiles and other foreign merchandise in the early modern period), the urban economy of Venice was also very developed.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, it was distinguished by

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*Economic History Review*, n.s.13 (1960) 209-21.

<sup>27</sup> *Per una Storia della Moda Pronta: Problemi e Ricerche*, Centro Italiano per lo Studio della Storia del Tessuto (CISST), Milan, Feb.1990 (Florence:EDIFIR,1991): papers by Marzia Cataldi Gallo, 'Il commercio degli abiti usati a Genova nel XVII secolo', pp.95-106; Antonio Musiari, 'Commercio di abiti usati o già confezionati a Parma nei secoli XVII e XVIII', pp.69-83; Bianca M.Du Mortier, 'Introduction into the used-clothing market in the Netherlands', pp.117-25; see also idem, 'Tweedehands kleding in de zeventiende eeuw', *Textielhistorische Bijdragen*, 31 (1991), 39-59 [I am grateful to Prof. Olwen Hufton for a copy]. The forthcoming book of Beverly Lemire (another participant) on the clothing trade in England, 1660-1800 will include the second-hand market.

<sup>28</sup> On the city's continuing role as entrepôt, see Domenico Sella, 'Les mouvements longs de l'industrie lainière à Venise aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles', *Annales ESC*, 12 (Jan.-Mar. 1957), 29-45 (p.34); idem, *Commerci e industrie a Venezia nel secolo XVII* (Venice: Istituto per la Collaborazione Culturale, 1961), pp.1-21; Braudel, *Civilization, III: The perspective of the world* (1988), pp.124-6.

remarkably specialised craft structures.<sup>29</sup> In 1638, Rabbi Simone Luzzatto, a commentator who, as a Jew, was acutely aware of the organisation of trades in the city, stated that:

...the Venetian Republic, the best organised of any other [Republic] in living memory, has always ensured and taken care to emphasise and sustain a precise differentiation of orders, not only in the tripartite framework of its government - of common people, citizens and nobility - but it has also taken great pains to divide and separate all the crafts of the city including lesser [trades]...<sup>30</sup>

Venetian guilds proliferated from the thirteenth century onwards, partly in response to the vast quantity of foreign goods coming into the city, but also to cater for the

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<sup>29</sup> Frederic C. Lane, *Venice: a maritime republic*, 4th edn (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), pp.155-66; Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, p.10; Manno, *I mestieri*, p.17. For a seventeenth-century list of guilds, see Rapp, *Industry*, pp.171-5.

<sup>30</sup> Simone Luzzatto, *Discorso circa il stato de gl'Hebrei, et in particolar dimoranti nell'inclita città di Venetia* (Venice: Gioanne Calleoni, 1638), f.22v: '...la Repub[b]lica venetiana [sic] la meglio ordinata di qualunque altra si conserva appresso la nostra memoria, co[n] ogni puntualità sempre procurò, & osservò non solo nel triplicato ordine spettante al pub[b]lico Governo di comun Popolo, Cittadinanza, e Nobilità di far apparire, & mantenere [sic] ferma un'esat[t]a distinctione [sic] d'ordini, ma ancora con indicibile industria ha diviso, e separato tutte l'Arti della città ben meno che mediocri...'. See Benjamin C.I. Ravid, *Economics and toleration in seventeenth-century Venice: the background and context of the Discorso of Simone Luzzatto*, American Academy for Jewish Research monograph series, 2 (Jerusalem: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1978).



city's expanding population.<sup>31</sup> They continued to play an important role in the urban economy until their demise at the beginning of the nineteenth century.<sup>32</sup> Luxury products including worked furs and high quality fabrics were very much associated with this guild-dominated economy; the same is true for second-hand goods, though some nineteenth-century historians found this notion hard to accept.<sup>33</sup> Venice is, therefore, an appropriate subject

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<sup>31</sup> On the guilds' obscure origins, see Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp. xii, 1-43; Lane, *Venice*, pp. 104-9; Maria Francesca Tiepolo, 'Arti e artigiani a Venezia nelle carte d'archivio', in *Venicemart'86* (Venice: Confartigianato, 1986), unpag. On whether they were spontaneous developments or imposed from above, see Sylvia L. Thrupp, 'The guilds', in *Cambridge Economic History of Europe, III: Economic organization and policies in the middle ages*, ed. M. M. Postan, E. E. Rich and Edward Miller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), pp. 230-80 (pp. 233-7); Ernesto Sestan's preface to *Arti e corporazioni nella storia d'Italia* (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1966), pp. 5-19 (p. 6). For links between the number of urban occupations, the state of commercial development and the size of population, see Derek Keene, 'Continuity and development in urban trades: problems of concepts and the evidence', in *Work in Towns 850-1850*, ed. Penelope Corfield and Derek Keene (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1990), pp. 1-16 (p. 7); Christopher R. Friedrichs, *The early modern city, 1450-1750*, A history of urban society in Europe series (London: Longman, 1995), p. 153.

<sup>32</sup> On the guilds' persistence, see Rapp, *Industry*, p. 15. For the process of their dissolution, see Costantini, *L'albero*.

<sup>33</sup> R. Delort, 'Un aspect du commerce vénitien au XVe siècle: Andrea Barbarigo et le commerce des fourrures (1430-40)', *Le Moyen Age*, 71, no. 2 (1965), 29-70; Pierre Sardella, 'L'épanouissement industriel de Venise au XVIe siècle: un beau texte inédit', *Annales ESC*, 2 (1947) 195-6; Sella, *Commerci*, ch. 1; idem, 'Mouvements'; Fernand Braudel, 'La vita economica di Venezia nel secolo XVI', in *La civiltà veneziana del rinascimento, IV: Il cinquecento* (Florence: Sansoni, 1958), pp. 81-102; Lane, *Venice*, pp. 161-2, 309-10; Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp. 81-4, 106-7; Lisa Monnas, 'Le luxe industriel', in *Venise 1500: la puissance, la novation et la concorde: le triomphe du mythe*, ed. Philippe Braunstein, Mémoires series, 22 (Paris: Editions Autrement, 1993), pp. 157-67. For bemused reactions to the second-hand trade, see Cecchetti, 'Industrie', p. 234; idem, *La vita dei Veneziani nel 1300*, facs., Collana di

for an examination of the second-hand market because it permits insight into the way in which it functioned in relation to other markets within a thriving and sophisticated early modern, urban economy.

In addition to a greater division of trades, the internal economy of Venice was, as Rabbi Luzzatto's statement suggests, characterised by an unusually high degree of state control.<sup>34</sup> Government intervention served various ends such as ensuring consumer protection and guild loyalty, and it also facilitated the levy of imposts and dues.<sup>35</sup> The close involvement of the Republic in the city's economy is of great significance to the historian because it generated a lot of documentation. A sufficient quantity of this documentation has survived to permit a close study of the second-hand market in Venice, which is

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bibliografia e storia veneziana, 13 (Bologna: Forni, 1980), 3, 'Le vesti', pp.108-9; Schiavi, 'Ebrei', p.320.

<sup>34</sup> See B.Cecchetti, 'I nobili e il popolo di Venezia', *Archivio Veneto*, 3(1872),421-48 (pp.440-1); Thrupp, 'The guilds', p.237; Viktor I.Rutenburg, 'Arti e corporazioni', in *Storia d'Italia* (Turin:Einaudi,1973),V: *I documenti*, I, pp.613-42(p.626); Rapp, *Industry*,p.15; Braudel, *Perspective*, p.135; Tiepolo, 'Arti e artigiani', unpag.; Costantini, *L'albero*, p.22; M.Dal Borgo, 'Le corporazioni e le scuole di arti e mestieri', in *Arti e mestieri in Venezia* (Venice: Università Popolare di Venezia and Fondazione Querini Stampalia, 1991), pp.15-19 (p.15).

<sup>35</sup> Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.9,13-4,23-9,219-21; Massimo Costantini, 'La statutaria delle corporazioni veneziane medioevali', in *Arti e mestieri tradizionali*, ed. Manlio Cortelazzo, *Cultura popolare del Veneto series* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale,1989),pp.25-45; Manno, *I mestieri*,pp.16-17. On taxes and other benefits of control, see Tiepolo, 'Arti e artigiani', unpag.; S.Luzzatto, *Discorso*, ff.22v-3r.

not the case for many other cities.<sup>36</sup>

c) The period

Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie has argued that to comprehend the structures of early modern peasant society 'as an historical phenomenon' they have to be made 'dynamic'.<sup>37</sup> The same can be said of early modern urban social structures. Much can be learnt about the market for used goods in Venice by tracing its development during the specific period of the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century. This was a time of considerable change over much of Europe. In Venice, both the urban economy and the city's population underwent rapid expansion, stability and gradual stagnation. These general shifts did not follow regular patterns but were interrupted by a number of short-term crises brought about by plagues, wars, famines and recessions. The uncertain patterns of development in Venice in this period are one reason why it is an appropriate span of time in which to study the evolution of the second-hand market. Another reason for focusing on this particular period is that it exactly coincides with an important interlude in the history of the Venetian market for used goods.

In the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries the

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<sup>36</sup> On poor English records, see Lemire, 'Consumerism', p.3.

<sup>37</sup> Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, 'The peasantry', in *New Cambridge Modern History*, XIII, ed. Peter Burke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp.115-61 (p.126).

second-hand market in Venice was distinguished by the participation of an élite of Jewish dealers. At the beginning of the period, a small number of wealthy Jews belonging to the German nation or Ashkenazim, the *Ebrei tedeschi*, was granted permission to practise the used-goods trade as residents in Venice.<sup>38</sup> The *Ebrei tedeschi* were the first of three nations of Jews allowed to settle in Venice during this period (the other two being Levantine and Ponentine Jews) and they were the only group permitted to deal in second-hand goods.<sup>39</sup> This differential treatment of Jews in Venice was not unusual. As Maffio Michiel, a member of the Venetian Board of Trade, observed in 1611, the Jews of that city were: 'separated by housing, tutelage and management, and differed among themselves in

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<sup>38</sup> The German nation of Jews was made up of Italian-born Jews and Jews of German descent who settled in Italy. See Jomtov Ludovico Bato, 'L'immigrazione degli Ebrei tedeschi in Italia dal trecento al cinquecento', in *Scritti in memoria di Sally Mayer (1875-1953)*, ed. U.Nahon (Jerusalem, 1956), pp.19-34; Cecil Roth, *History of the Jews in Venice*, Jewish communities series (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1930), p.60; Brian Pullan, *Rich and poor in renaissance Venice: the social institutions of a Catholic state, to 1620* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), pp.443-4; idem, *The Jews of Europe and the Inquisition of Venice, 1550-1670* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), pp.149-50; E.Ashtor, 'Gli inizi della comunità ebraica a Venezia', *Rassegna Mensile di Israel*, 44(1978), 683-703 (p.692); David Jacoby, 'Les Juifs à Venise du XIVE au milieu du XVIe siècle', in *Venezia centro di mediazione tra oriente e occidente (secoli XV-XVI): aspetti e problemi*, ed.H.-G.Beck, M.Manoussacas and A.Pertusi, *Civiltà veneziana studi*, 32,2 vols (Florence: Olschki, 1977), I, pp.163-247 (pp.182-3).

<sup>39</sup> On the prior exclusion of the Jews, see Chapter 3 below. For the three nations and limits on their activities, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.443, 510-13, 568; idem, *Jews*, pp.146, 149-50; Benjamin Ravid, 'The legal status of the Jewish merchants of Venice, 1541-1638', *Journal of Economic History*, 35 (1975), 274-9 (pp.274-5).

occupations, habits and volition'.<sup>40</sup> During the period, other less affluent *Ebrei tedeschi* pursued the second-hand trade and continued to do so way beyond the scope of this study.<sup>41</sup> By the mid-seventeenth century, however, the major Jewish second-hand dealers had diversified their activities. The period covered by this thesis was therefore one of particularly intensive involvement by Jews in the Venetian market for used goods.

## II. Problems

Setting this study of the second-hand market in a city with strong medieval corporative traditions during a period which saw great economic and social change as well as the entry of a new group of dealers, raises important questions about the role played by guilds within the market. In the past, various judgements have been formed of the power of guilds in medieval and early modern cities and once again Venice has attracted particular attention. It has long been assumed that Venetian guilds held a complete monopoly

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<sup>40</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 199, 29 June 1611, report by Michiel, 27 Jan.1610 [mv]: 'separati di habitatione [sic], di custodia et di governo, et tra di loro diversi di professione, di costumi, et di volontà...'. On the 'diverse synagogues' in the Ghetto, see Thomas Coryat, *Coryat's crudities, hastily gobled up in five moneths travells in France, Savoy, Italy, Rhetia... and now dispersed to the nourishment of the travelling members of this kingdome*, 2 vols (Glasgow: James MacLehose, 1905), I, p.371.

<sup>41</sup> See ASV, *Compilazione delle Leggi* [CL], b.48, *Arti in genere, arti relative a varj rami di commercio, ed agli usi, e comodi della vita civile* (1757), f.699v, strazzaruoli; *ibid.*, b.59, *Arti in genere: memorie, documenti, stampe*, nd [post 1750], f.666r. See also Giovanni Grevembroch, *Gli abiti de' Veneziani di quasi ogni età con diligenza raccolti e dipinti nel secolo XVIII*, 4 vols (Venice:Filippi, 1981), III, no.63.

of all economic activity in the city and that they consistently sought to preserve that exclusive position irrespective of the effect this had on the urban economy. Established historical opinion would have it that as the international economy altered at the beginning of the seventeenth century, these craft monopolies were unwilling and unable to adapt to change and thus hastened the city's decline.<sup>42</sup>

In recent years, the second of these opinions has been challenged. Professor Richard Rapp and Dr Richard Mackenney have both insisted that Venetian guilds were much more accommodating during that difficult period than had previously been thought.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, Rapp demonstrated that by absorbing excess labour, certain Venetian trades actually softened the impact of the harsh economic

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<sup>42</sup> Carlo M. Cipolla, 'The decline of Italy: the case of a fully matured economy', *Economic History Review*, n.s. 5 (1952), 178-87 (p.183 and n.1); Sella, 'Mouvements longs', pp.41-3,45; idem, *Commerci*, pp.62,64-5; Fernand Braudel and others, 'Le déclin de Venise au XVIIème siècle', in *Aspetti e cause della decadenza economica veneziana nel secolo XVII* (Venice: Istituto per la Collaborazione Culturale, 1961), pp.23-86(pp.85-6); idem, *Wheels of commerce*, p.310; Ralph Davis, 'England and the Mediterranean', pp.123-4. See also Ugo Tucci, 'Venezia nel cinquecento: una città industriale?', in *Crisi e rinnovamenti nell'autunno del rinascimento a Venezia*, ed. Vittore Branca and Carlo Ossola (Florence: Olschki, 1991), pp.61-83 (pp.80-1).

<sup>43</sup> Rapp, *Industry*, pp.16, 47-8, 112; Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.79, 122-5; Tucci, 'Venezia nel cinquecento', pp.68-73. Gigi Corazzol challenged the assumption from another angle: *Livelli stipulati a Venezia nel 1591: studio storico*, Supplementi di Studi Veneziani (Pisa:Giardini, 1986), p.148.

adjustments of the seventeenth century.<sup>44</sup> This issue of the elasticity of Venetian craft organisations in response to the setbacks of the seventeenth century and to change in general has still to be satisfactorily resolved. Since this thesis focuses on a part of the urban economy during the turbulent period up to and including the structural changes of the *seicento*, new evidence can be added to this historical debate.

Less attention has been paid to the basic notion of guild exclusivism. Several historians have noted that entry into the Venetian guild system was relatively easy at certain times, such as after serious bouts of plague or when groups of skilled artisans (like silk weavers from Lucca and German shoemakers) transferred to Venice.<sup>45</sup> Despite past consensus on guild protectionism, there has been

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<sup>44</sup> Rapp, *Industry*, pp.6,19-21,49,96-8; see also Ugo Tucci, 'Vita economica a Venezia nel primo seicento', in *Galileo Galilei e la cultura veneziana* (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 1995), pp.123-35 (p.132).

<sup>45</sup> On mortality rates and the need to replenish the workforce, see Brian Pullan, 'Wage-earners and the Venetian economy, 1550-1630', *Economic History Review*, n.s.16(1964), 407-26(pp.416-17); Lane, *Venice*, p.165; Reinhold C. Mueller, 'Stranieri e culture straniere a Venezia aspetti economici e sociali', in *Componenti storico-artistiche e culturali a Venezia nei secoli XIII e XIV* (Venice: Ateneo Veneto, 1981), pp.75-7(p.75); Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.23,221; also Molà, *La comunità dei Lucchesi*; Giovanni Mariacher, 'L'arte dei calzolai a Venezia dal sec. XIII al XX', in *La calzatura della riviera del Brenta: storia & design*, by Federico Bondi and Giovanni Mariacher (Venice: Cavallino, 1979), pp.185-215(p.196); Giovanni Marangoni, *Le associazioni di mestiere nella Repubblica veneta (vittuaria, farmacia, medicina)* (Venice: Filippi, 1974), pp.78-9 [German bakers]; and Brunello, *Arti e mestieri*, pp.16,132 [Flemish tapestry makers, potters from Emilia and the Marches].

surprisingly little consideration of the crafts' reactions to the relaxation of entry restrictions in such situations.<sup>46</sup> Mackenney's research on the mercers of Venice has indicated that that particular guild was remarkably open during the period as a whole, but, as he himself acknowledged, further study is required to ascertain whether or not this was typical.<sup>47</sup>

The problem of guild exclusivism is central to this thesis since the group of Jewish second-hand dealers which entered the market in the sixteenth century did so in spite of a long-established craft organisation, the *arte degli strazzaruoli*. The response of this guild to competition by *Ebrei tedeschi* has therefore to be assessed. The periodic entry of outsiders into Venetian trades was not, however, the only way in which guild monopolies were challenged. The unruly and chaotic nature of early modern society has been generally acknowledged by historians and even Fernand Braudel, one of the harshest critics of seventeenth-century Venetian guilds, had to admit that guild regulations and guild practice were not always synonymous.<sup>48</sup> As yet no one has questioned the

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<sup>46</sup> For brief mentions, see Connell, *Employment*, pp.72-9; Molà, *La comunità dei Lucchesi*, p.167.

<sup>47</sup> Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.91-2,96-7,122.

<sup>48</sup> See Richard John Palmer, 'The control of plague in Venice and northern Italy 1348-1600' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Kent, 1978), ch.8, pp.211-37; Renzo Derosas, 'Moralità e giustizia a Venezia nel '500-'600: gli Esecutori contro la Bestemmia', in *Stato, società e giustizia nella Repubblica Veneta (sec.XV-XVIII)*, ed.Gaetano Cozzi, 2 vols



plausibility of the notion of rigid guild exclusivism in this rather anarchic context.<sup>49</sup> To achieve a more rounded understanding of Venetian guild structures in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries this oversight needs to be corrected. In addition to addressing a specific threat to the monopoly of the guild of second-hand dealers, therefore, this thesis also pays attention to the ever-present problem of unregistered competition.

### III. Historiography

General information about the Venetian economic environment and the expansion of crafts in the sixteenth century may be found in the works of Gino Luzzatto, Domenico Sella, Fernand Braudel, Frederic C. Lane, Richard Mackenney and Ugo Tucci.<sup>50</sup> A number of studies focus on the sporadic crises affecting Venetian guilds in the period as well as

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(Rome:Jouvence,1980-85), I(1980), 431-528 (pp.510-24); Ruth Martin, *Witchcraft and the Inquisition in Venice 1550-1650* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell,1989),p.30; Robert C.Davis,'The police and the *pugni*: the limits of social control in early modern Venice', to be published in *Absolutism and urban space in early modern Italy*, ed. R.B.Litchfield and G. Simcox (Princeton: Princeton University Press [1996(?)]) [I am grateful to Prof. Robert Davis for forwarding the text]; see also Braudel, *Perspective*, p.135.

<sup>49</sup> The flexibility of craft structures elsewhere is just beginning to be acknowledged, see Friedrichs, *The early modern city*, p.157.

<sup>50</sup> Gino Luzzatto, 'La decadenza di Venezia dopo le scoperte geografiche nella tradizione e nella realtà', *Archivio Veneto*, 5th series 54-55 (1954), 162-81; Sella, 'Mouvements longs'; Braudel, 'Vita economica'; Lane, *Venice*, pp.308-321; Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, ch.3; Tucci, 'Venezia nel cinquecento'; idem, 'Vita economica a Venezia'.

the issue of seventeenth-century decline.<sup>51</sup> This basic literature can be supplemented by more recent works on artisans by Robert C. Davis and John Martin, both of whom take admirably broad approaches to the lives of Venetian workers.<sup>52</sup>

This thesis began as an investigation into the supply - the making and selling - of clothes in the early modern period.<sup>53</sup> The initial intention had been to focus on the work of artisans such as tailors and the starting point was the research on Venetian guilds undertaken by Rapp and Mackenney [see above]. Not long into the project, a decision was taken to concentrate on second-hand clothes. This narrower topic was chosen for two specific reasons. First and foremost, it became clear that the high cost of most new fabrics in the pre-industrial era meant that the

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<sup>51</sup> Of particular use are: Brian Pullan, ed., *Crisis and change in the Venetian economy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (London: Methuen, 1968); *Aspetti e cause della decadenza economica veneziana nel secolo XVII* (Venice: Istituto per la Collaborazione Culturale, 1961); also Sella, *Commerci e industrie*, pp.23-68; Rapp, *Industry*; Tucci, 'Venezia nel cinquecento'; idem, 'Vita economica'.

<sup>52</sup> Robert C. Davis, *Shipbuilders of the Venetian Arsenal: workers and workplace in the preindustrial city* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); John Martin, *Venice's hidden enemies: Italian heretics in a renaissance city* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). See also the recent work by Molà, *La comunità dei Lucchesi*.

<sup>53</sup> For a different approach to the clothing market, see Fritz Schmidt, 'Zur Genese kapitalistischer Konsumformen im Venedig der Frühen Neuzeit', in *Stadtgeschichte als Zivilisationsgeschichte: Beiträge zum Wandel städtischer Wirtschafts-, Lebens- und Wahrnehmungsweisen*, ed. Jürgen Reulecke, Siegener studies, 47 (Essen: Die Blaue Eule, 1990), pp.23-40 (pp.36-9).

majority of Venetians could not afford them and, in order to comprehend ordinary mechanisms of clothing supply, the second-hand trade needed to be studied.<sup>54</sup> Second, the sources available to study the guild of second-hand dealers were more comprehensive than those of the tailors' guild.

Concentrating on second-hand clothes necessitates a much broader approach since the means of supply in the market for used goods were extremely varied. As well as a guild structure and Jewish traders, the second-hand market in sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Venice also featured numerous other methods of distribution. Different types of studies have to be consulted to make sense of this wider market. Of these, Professor Brian Pullan's works on the *Ebrei tedeschi* of Venice deserve special mention.<sup>55</sup> Studies of Venetian Jews by Cecil Roth, Reinhold C. Mueller, Eliahu Ashtor and Benjamin Ravid also helped.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> On the cost of new clothes and the importance of the second-hand trade, see Maria Luisa Lombardo, 'Abbigliamento e moda a Roma nel secolo XV: fonti documentari', in *La famiglia e la vita quotidiana in Europa dal '400 al '600: fonti e problemi*, Saggi, 4 (Rome: Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato, 1986), pp.321-41 (p.340).

<sup>55</sup> Particularly, Pullan, *Rich and poor*, part III, pp.429-625.

<sup>56</sup> Especially Roth, *Venice*; Reinhold C. Mueller, 'Charitable institutions, the Jewish community, and Venetian society: a discussion of the recent volume by Brian Pullan', *Studi Veneziani*, 14 (1972), 37-82; idem, 'Les prêteurs juifs de Venise au moyen âge', *Annales ESC*, 30 (1975), 1277-1302; Eliahu Ashtor, 'Gli inizi'; Benjamin Ravid, 'Legal status'; idem, 'The establishment of the Ghetto Vecchio of Venice, 1541: background and reappraisal', in *Proceedings of the sixth world congress of Jewish studies* (Jerusalem: World congress of Jewish studies, 1975), II, 153-67; idem, *Economics and Toleration*.

Close scrutiny of the investigations into the Venetian justice system by Gaetano Cozzi and his students proved invaluable to the chapter on 'alternative' exchanges.<sup>57</sup>

This thesis, like so many others completed in the past twenty years, owes a general debt to the writings of Professor Pullan. Though they did not inspire this study, the meticulous methods and the propositions maintained in works such as *Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice: the social institutions of a Catholic state, to 1620*, were extremely influential.<sup>58</sup> Several articles by Professor Mueller, though focusing on a much earlier period, have

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<sup>57</sup> Gaetano Cozzi, 'Authority and the law in renaissance Venice', in *Renaissance Venice*, ed. J.R. Hale (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), pp. 293-345; idem, *Repubblica di Venezia e stati italiani: politica e giustizia dal secolo XVI al secolo XVIII* (Turin: Einaudi, 1982), ch. 2, pp. 81-216; idem, ed., *Stato, società e giustizia nella Repubblica Veneta (sec. XV-XVIII)*, 2 vols (Rome: Jouvence, 1980-85), especially: Claudio Povolo, 'Aspetti e problemi dell'amministrazione della giustizia penale nella Repubblica di Venezia, secoli XVI-XVII', I (1980), 153-258; Renzo Derosas, 'Moralità e giustizia', I, 431-528; Enrico Basaglia, 'Giustizia criminale e organizzazione dell'autorità centrale: la Repubblica di Venezia e la questione delle taglie in denaro (secoli XVI-XVII)', II (1985), 191-220; see also Stefano Piasentini, 'Alla luce della luna': i furti a Venezia 1270-1403, Ricerche: Collana della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell'Università di Venezia (Venice: Il Cardo, 1992); Guido Ruggiero, *Violence in early renaissance Venice* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1980); idem, 'Law and punishment in early renaissance Venice', *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 69 (1978), 243-56; Andrea Zorzi, 'Giustizia criminale e criminalità nell'Italia del tardo medioevo: studi e prospettive di ricerca', *Società e Storia*, 46 (1989), 923-65, especially pp. 923, 926-7. I am also grateful to Prof. Olwen Hufton for her advice on tackling criminal archives.

<sup>58</sup> (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971).

also proved helpful.<sup>59</sup>

#### IV. Sources

In Venice, a wide variety of sources, deriving from more than thirty different archives, was consulted. This diversity reflects three underlying concerns: the need to examine the wider second-hand market described above; a desire to take a more rounded approach to working life; and an obligation to compensate for the fragmentary nature of certain sources. Though many types of archives are employed, they make up a coherent body of evidence which has been consistently used throughout this thesis. Detailed references to individual points of documentation are made in the text and a full list of archives is included in the Bibliography, along with descriptions of each type of source, information about indices and precise archival references. As so many different types of sources are used, it is appropriate to explain the general rationale of this evidence.

The majority of documents consulted are located in the Venetian State Archives though some important guild

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<sup>59</sup> Reinhold C. Mueller, 'The Procurators of San Marco in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: a study of the office as a financial trust institution', *Studi Veneziani*, 13 (1971), 105-220; idem, 'Aspetti sociali ed economici della peste a Venezia nel medioevo', in *Venezia e la peste, 1348-1797* (Venice: Marsilio, 1979), pp.71-6; idem, 'L'imperialismo monetario veneziano nel quattrocento', *Società e Storia*, 3, 8(1980), 277-97; idem, 'Effetti della Guerra di Chioggia (1378-1381) sulla vita economica e sociale di Venezia', *Ateneo Veneto*, n.s.19 (1981), 27-41.

material is held in the library of the Correr Museum.<sup>60</sup> These documents consist mainly of institutional sources such as statutes and official rulings which were produced by a variety of government magistracies with differing jurisdictions. This institutional evidence is invaluable since it enables insight into the basic structures of the second-hand market.

As in other Italian cities, many aspects of life in early modern Venice were subject to juridical and bureaucratic procedures. It was usual for individuals and corporations alike to participate in these official processes, and, as a result, Venetian institutional sources are not so far removed from the lives of the people to which they refer. Guilds, Jews and people accused of various types of misdemeanours were thus part of the same basic conceptual system as government authorities and this is very much reflected in institutional documents.<sup>61</sup>

Close attention is paid to guild archives and to the records of authorities responsible for guilds, *Ebrei*

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<sup>60</sup> The reference work on the Venetian State Archives used here is Andrea Da Mosto, *L'Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, 2 vols (Rome: Biblioteca d'Arte Editrice, 1937-40); the new guide is: *Guida generale degli Archivi di Stato Italiani*, IV (Rome: Archivi di Stato Italiani, 1994).

<sup>61</sup> The notion of a shared conceptual system was used by Poni to explain the frequent recourse of Bolognese guilds to external authorities in 'Norms and disputes', pp.106-8 [I am grateful to Prof. Stuart Woolf for suggesting this as a means of analysis]. For the easy access of Venetian guilds and workers to justice: Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, p.4; Molà, *La comunità dei Lucchesi*, p.275.

*tedeschi* and petty justice. The *mariegola* of the guild of second-hand dealers (a register of trade statutes and rulings made throughout the period) can be found at the Correr Library and an important seventeenth-century membership list is in the guild collections of the Venetian State Archives.<sup>62</sup> The records of the *Giustizia Vecchia*, at the Archivio di Stato and the Marciana Library, offer additional details.<sup>63</sup> To gain an overall understanding of the guild system and of clothing trades in general, this material should be supplemented by archives of guilds practising similar crafts located at the Correr and the State Archives. Useful comparisons can be made with guilds of second-hand dealers practising elsewhere and Florence has several relevant trade registers [see Bibliography].

Information on the legal framework of the Jewish dealers' trade is to be found in the records of formal residence agreements (*condotte*) reached between the *Ebrei tedeschi* and the Republic. These contracts, which prescribe economic activities permissible to the Jews, are located in the archives of the Senate and Council of Ten [full details in Bibliography].<sup>64</sup> The process by which *Ebrei*

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<sup>62</sup> On the *mariegola*, see Chapter 1, I. below; on the membership register, see Chapters 3 and 4. On the ASV guild archives, see Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, II, 237-40. The nineteenth-century ASV index (no. 33) mistakenly classifies the guild as the '*arte degli strazzaruoli o revendigoli*'.

<sup>63</sup> Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 191-3.

<sup>64</sup> On the *condotte*, see Chapter 3, II. b) below. For earlier examples, see under *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* in the Bibliography. On the archives of the Senate, Council of Ten

*tedeschi* became established in the trade can be understood from rulings made by the Heads of the Ten and the Council of Ten as a whole, as well as petitions submitted to the Ten by the Jews.<sup>65</sup> Ideas about the development of the Jewish dealers' trade derive from later petitions presented by the Jews along with reports by pertinent magistrates, which are stored with *condotta* details in the rough files (*filze*) of the Senate archives [see above]. This has been supplemented by references from the statute-books and registers of the *Ufficiali al Cattaver*, magistrates charged with the daily administration of the Ghetto Nuovo.<sup>66</sup>

One way of investigating 'alternative' exchanges within the second-hand market is to examine the archives of petty justice officials. The records of the *Signori di Notte al Criminal* (the magistracy responsible for minor crimes) are notoriously uneven for the early modern period, though sufficient material does survive to show that petty theft was commonplace in Venice.<sup>67</sup> This source can be supplemented with specific examples of domestic thefts from the archives of the *Censori* magistrates, which, from 1541, had jurisdiction over servants and boatmen. Like the

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and *Sopraconsoli*, see Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 34-5, 52-5, 100.

<sup>65</sup> On the Heads of the Ten archives, see *ibid.*, I, 52-5.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 101; *Guida generale*, IV, 937-8.

<sup>67</sup> Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 97. For the problems associated with such sources, see Mario Sbriccoli, 'Fonti giudiziarie e fonti giuridiche: riflessioni sulla fase attuale degli studi di storia del crimine e della giustizia criminale', in *Studi Storici*, 29(1988), 491-501 (pp. 493-4) [I am grateful to James Shaw for this reference].



collections of the *Signori di Notte al Criminal*, the *Censori* documents are stored in the State archives.<sup>68</sup> Details of thefts also appear in registers kept by the *Ufficiali al Cattaver* and in the penal archives of the *Avogaria di Comun*.<sup>69</sup> Fraud, another form of illegal misappropriation, is often overlooked. Insight into this problem may be gained from the main statute book of the *Signori di Notte al Civil*.<sup>70</sup> References to a very particular type of fraud, the abuse of pawn-pledges, may also be found in the archives of the *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* and in reports made by these officials to the Senate during the negotiations to renew the Jews' residence contracts.

The key institutional sources cited above may be complemented by archives of other government bodies which had some control over the market for used goods. For various reasons, the guild of second-hand dealers was answerable to a host of different authorities, including the *Milizia da Mar*, the *Procuratori di San Marco, de supra*, and the *Provveditori alla Sanità* [see full list of sources in Bibliography].<sup>71</sup> In times of plague, the latter also regulated the activities of Jewish second-hand dealers and

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<sup>68</sup> Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 178; *Guida generale*, IV, 923.

<sup>69</sup> Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 68-9; *Guida generale*, IV, 921-2.

<sup>70</sup> On the *Signori di Notte al Civil*, see Chapter 2 below; see also Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 98.

<sup>71</sup> Tiepolo, 'Arti e artigiani', unpag.. On these archives, see Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 199, 25-6, 211.

sought to control theft. According to the Jewish *strazzaruoli*, the *Provveditori alle Pompe* exerted an additional influence on the trade.<sup>72</sup> The records of all of these magistracies contain material of relevance to the second-hand market.

In spite of its pertinence, the picture formed from these institutional sources is rather one-dimensional. As Luigi Einaudi noted: 'in the end history is not made of statutes, laws, regulations and institutions, but of men'.<sup>73</sup> In the late nineteenth century, when Giovanni Monticolo compiled the first volume of his collections of Venetian guild statutes, he sought to exclude all references to the lives of guildsmen beyond the trade fraternity.<sup>74</sup> Modern historians are much less concerned with divorcing work and life, preferring instead to study artisans in their immediate environment. Indeed, work is now perceived to be a vital element of popular culture.<sup>75</sup> To achieve a more rounded understanding of the second-hand market and its participants, other types of documents have to be consulted.

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., I, 207.

<sup>73</sup> Luigi Einaudi, 'Alba e tramonto delle corporazioni d'arti e mestieri', *Rivista di Storia Economica* (Turin), 6, 2 (1941), 81-111 (p.85).

<sup>74</sup> CAV, I, XLIV-V, Monticolo withheld: '...gli atti relativi ai loro interessi personali e privati come mutui, malleverie, vendite di bene et le punizioni per contravvenzioni alle leggi comuni e per reati, come stupri, insulti, false testimonianze...'.  
<sup>75</sup> Poni, 'Norms and disputes', pp.80-1.

Sources can be found in Venetian archives which, though technically institutional, contain quite different types of evidence to statutes and official rulings. For example, details of the many demarcation disputes between guilds in the ASV *Arti* archives and in *mariegole* at the Correr [see above], can greatly enrich our knowledge of craft activities and of their development over the period. Moreover, artisans' wills stored in the notarial section of the Venetian State Archives offer an important means of examining the personal circumstances of individual second-hand dealers.<sup>76</sup> This notarial evidence may be complemented by inventories of the contents of second-hand dealers' workshops and homes in the archives of the *Giudici di Petizion*.<sup>77</sup> The *Petizion* records, together with the archives of the *Istituzioni di Ricovero e di Educazione* [IRE] on the Giudecca, also include a large number of lists of goods sold at public auctions, an important alternative mechanism of exchange.<sup>78</sup>

As well as furthering our comprehension of working life, supplementary sources also play another essential role. Two central subjects tackled within this thesis are, by their very nature, poorly served by institutional documents: Jews and unregulated exchanges. Evidence on

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<sup>76</sup> Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 225-7 (these sources survived in institutional archives).

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 92.

<sup>78</sup> See Giuseppe Ellero, *Inventario dei fondi antichi degli ospedali e luoghi pii di Venezia* (Venice: IRE, 1987).

these two subjects is very uneven, but, by casting the net a little wider when consulting sources, a surprising amount of additional detail can be found which greatly increases our understanding of their place in the second-hand market: such details are located in the most unexpected places, including the archives of the Inquisition.

A considerable amount of information on craft activities undertaken by the *Ebrei tedeschi* is to be found in the guild archives at the Venetian State Archives and the Correr [see above]. *Mariegole* belonging to the guilds of mercers, goldsmiths and furriers, as well as that of the second-hand dealers, contain some discussion of trading by Jews [see Bibliography]. References to furnishings and to skilled services supplied by the Jews appear in seventeenth-century accounts compiled by the *Ufficiali alle Rason Vecchie*.<sup>79</sup> These accounts relate to hospitality provided to foreign dignitaries visiting Venice. Entries recording similar activities can also be found in the archives of the *Istituzioni di Ricovero e di Educazione*, the *Giudici di Petizion*, and the *Signori di Notte al Civil* in Venice [see above], as well as in ambassadorial correspondence stored at the Public Record Office in London [see Bibliography].

The informal nature of most unregulated exchanges means that documentation can be hard to locate. Often a mere

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<sup>79</sup> Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 139; *Guida generale*, IV, 933-4.

glimpse is allowed of a practice which was probably extremely common. Rare private archives and published sources afford some insight. Personal documents referring to such practices are contained within the *Commissarie* files of the *Istituzioni di Ricovero e di Educazione* on the Giudecca.<sup>80</sup> Printed material such as Pietro Aretino's letters and Lorenzo Lotto's account book, are also of use.<sup>81</sup> Additional evidence can be found where the personal world touches the public one, for example, when the services of a notary or another official are required to make an exchange legal; formal bequests, auctions, and some payments in kind fall into this category [see Chapter 2]. Evidently, this is not completely satisfactory as it returns us to the realm of institutional archives. However, incidental references do occur in official sources which are most illuminating. The practice of leaving pledges as security, for example, is well documented in the archives of the *Giustizia Nova*, the *Signori di Notte al Civil* and the *Giudici di Petizion*.<sup>82</sup>

Perhaps the most surprising source of information on

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<sup>80</sup> On *commissarie*, see Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 9. On these particular sources, see Ellero, *Inventario*, p. 22.

<sup>81</sup> Pietro Aretino, *Il primo libro delle lettere*, ed. Fausto Nicolini, *Scrittori d'Italia* series (Bari: Laterza, 1913); idem, *Il secondo libro delle lettere*, ed. Fausto Nicolini, 2 vols (Bari: Laterza, 1916); Lorenzo Lotto, *Il libro di spese diverse' (con aggiunta di lettere e d'altri documenti)*, ed. Pietro Zampetti (Venice: Istituto per la Collaborazione Culturale, 1969).

<sup>82</sup> On the archives of the *Giustizia Nova*, see Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 194.

'alternative' exchanges is the archives of the Inquisition stored at the Archivio di Stato.<sup>83</sup> Surviving transcripts of investigations into witchcraft contain rare and interesting details of domestic thefts. Heretical experiments were employed to identify the culprits of such crimes and this attracted the attention of the *Sant'Uffizio*. The meticulous nature of the Venetian Inquisition ensured that the circumstances surrounding incidents of heresy were carefully explored and recorded. So, although the Holy Office had little interest in the crimes, their archives retain important information about the nature of domestic theft and of victims' reactions to the loss of their property. The diffuse and fragmentary character of documentation such as that of the *Sant'Uffizio* does, however, require a careful analytical exposition.

#### V. Rationale

The aim in the first part of this thesis is to introduce the basic structures of the second-hand market, and Chapters 1 and 2 focus on guild traditions and 'alternative' exchanges respectively. Chapter 1 explores the notion that the guild of second-hand dealers was traditionally important in the market for used goods but did not have complete control. In the fifteenth century, the guild claimed predominance within the second-hand trade and it rigorously upheld that position; it was to maintain that defiant stance throughout the sixteenth and early

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., I, 181.

seventeenth centuries. Although the Venetian government recognised this predominance, it also reserved the prerogative to overrule the guild when this suited its purpose, and this was to prove of crucial importance at the beginning of the sixteenth century when it allowed the *Ebrei tedeschi* to practise the craft. Chapter 2 focuses on another way in which the guild's monopoly was challenged. Existing alongside the guild-dominated trading structure was a wide variety of 'alternative' exchanges. Many of these exchanges, such as informal gifts, bequests and loans of clothes, occurred irrespective of the commercial market, but some did not. Though neither the government nor the guild favoured irregular exchanges of second-hand goods, both were incapable of preventing them and they persisted throughout the period.

In the next three chapters, these structures are explored in greater detail and their development is charted over the period as a whole. First, traders within the second-hand market are examined and particular attention is paid to the new group of competitors, the *Ebrei tedeschi*, entering the market [Chapter 3]. Craft activities performed by these traders are then analysed [Chapter 4] and differences between guild members' pursuits and those of the Jewish dealers are highlighted. Next, a study is made of points of sale [Chapter 5] in which various types of outlets for second-hand goods are considered, as are changes in their distribution over the entire period. Separately, these

three chapters show that the market for second-hand goods in Venice had a broad-based composition of traders, surprisingly diverse craft activities, and a large variety and wide spread of outlets. Considered together, however, they reveal that, like most other sectors of the Venetian urban economy in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the second-hand market was highly developed.

Having explored the structures of the second-hand market and how they developed over time, the rest of the thesis assesses the impact on those structures of the sporadic setbacks which punctuated the period. Outbreaks of plague were a recurrent feature of life in Venice and had particular implications for the second-hand market, so in Chapter 6 the effect of this specific short-term crisis is analysed. The short, last chapter rounds off the thesis by considering the recession in the market for used goods which occurred in the early decades of the seventeenth century, the period so often associated with the decline of the city of Venice and of the Mediterranean economy as a whole.



## Chapter 1 GUILD TRADITIONS

Before we can assess the developments within the second-hand market, it is important to have an understanding of its basic structures. That is the purpose of the first part of this thesis and this chapter focuses on one particular sort of structure: the guild organisation. The guild of second-hand dealers was traditionally important in the market for used goods and continued to assert its predominance throughout the period. The guild did not, though, have complete control of this market, but was forced to share it with other sorts of traders.

### I. Traditional Structures

Before 1500, second-hand dealing was a traditional guild pursuit. Early this century, Giovanni Monticolo highlighted this fact and emphasised that the trade was organised by an established guild which could be traced back to the 1200s. He stressed this point in order to provoke awareness of the guild's existence among contemporary scholars.<sup>1</sup> In spite of Monticolo's efforts,

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<sup>1</sup> Giovanni Monticolo, ed., *I capitolari delle arti veneziane sottoposte alla Giustizia e poi alla Giustizia Vecchia dalle origini al MCCCXXX* [CAV], 3 vols in 4 parts (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano, 1896-1914), II(1905), 2, p. 474 n.1. Monticolo also raised the issue when reviewing B. Cecchetti, *La vita dei Veneziani: le vesti*, in *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 5th series, 1(1888), 256-72 (pp. 258-9); Cecchetti's reply: *Archivio Veneto*, 35(1888), 428-38 (p. 429). On the guild structure in this early period, see Richard Mackenney, *Tradesmen and traders: the world of the guilds in Venice and Europe, c. 1250-c. 1650* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble, 1987), pp. 3-28.

recently published work on the Ghetto in Venice indicates that knowledge is still lacking of the second-hand trade's medieval corporative roots.<sup>2</sup>

As Monticolo affirmed, the organised craft of second-hand dealing had a very long history in Venice. Evidence of guilds of used-goods dealers can be found among the earliest surviving trade documents. Guild statutes of 1233 reveal that pedlars sold various types of second-hand fabric along with other used goods at Rialto and throughout the city. Another set of regulations originating in 1264-65 shows that a different guild specialising in second-hand clothes and in used fabric and furs existed at that time.<sup>3</sup> By the beginning of the sixteenth century, the trade was associated with a single craft organisation, the *arte degli strazzaruoli* (the guild of second-hand dealers).

Traders belonging to this guild were meant to observe rules drawn up by its officials and sanctioned by the government.

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<sup>2</sup> Donatella Calabi, 'Il Ghetto e la città', in Ennio Concina, Ugo Camerino and Donatella Calabi, *La città degli Ebrei: il Ghetto di Venezia: architettura e urbanistica*, (Venice: Albrizzi, 1991), pp.201-301 (pp.208,215,244).

<sup>3</sup> CAV,I,135-8,265, *Capitulare de revendiculos et revendiculas omnia res veteris* [sic] (1233); CAV,II,2,pp.457-73, *Capitulare artis pannorum veterum*(1264-65,registered 1278). See also B. Cecchetti,'Le industrie in Venezia nel secolo XIII', *Archivio Veneto*,4(1872),211-57 (pp.234-5). The tailors' statutes of 1219 are the earliest surviving guild documents,see CAV,I,9-21; Cecchetti,'Industrie',pp.231-2; Mackenney,*Tradesmen*,pp.12-13; Massimo Costantini, 'La statutaria delle corporazioni veneziane medioevali', in *Arti e mestieri tradizionali*, ed. Manlio Cortelazzo, *Cultura popolare del Veneto series* (Milan:Silvana Editoriale,1989) pp.25-45 (p.26).

This was normal trade procedure. As indicated by the thirteenth-century examples cited above, Venetian guild statutes were formulated early on and by 1500 were established features of guild life. These regulations laid down the framework upon which a craft was intended to be based and, as a result, they contain important information about formal craft structures.<sup>4</sup> The register of statutes (*mariegola*) of the guild of second-hand dealers is thus an essential source for this thesis. Fortunately, it survived the break-up of the guild system in the early nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup>

In 1430, the *arte degli strazzaruoli* registered a reformed set of trade statutes with the *Giustizia Vecchia*, the supervisory body responsible for guilds.<sup>6</sup> Additions were made to these regulations during the fifteenth century and

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<sup>4</sup> Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, p.16. On Venetian guild statutes, see also Costantini, 'La statutaria'. For problems of using guild statutes as sources, see Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, p.9; and Introduction above.

<sup>5</sup> On *mariegole*, see Armand Baschet, *Les archives de la sérénissime république de Venise* (Paris: Amyot, 1857), pp.42-8; Andrea Da Mosto, *L'Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, 2 vols (Rome: Biblioteca d'Arte Editrice, 1937-40), I, 10; Giovanni Marangoni, *Le associazioni di mestiere nella Repubblica Veneta (vittuaria, farmacia, medicina)* (Venice: Filippi, 1974), pp.23-6; Franco Brunello, *Arti e mestieri a Venezia nel medioevo e nel rinascimento* (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1980), p.14; and Maria Francesca Tiepolo, 'Arti e artigiani a Venezia nelle carte d'archivio', in *Venicemart '86* (Venice: Confartigianato, 1986), unpag..

<sup>6</sup> On this magistracy, see Giovanni Monticolo, *L'Ufficio della Giustizia Vecchia a Venezia dalle origini sino al 1330*, Monumenti della Deputazione Veneta di Storia Patria, Miscellanea, 12 (Venice: Deputazione Veneta di Storia Patria, 1892), pp.3-4, 6, 18, 27, 36-7; Marangoni, *Associazioni*, pp.21-3; Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.9, 10, 12-13.

the same register of statutes was continually revised throughout the sixteenth century and on until the 1620s.<sup>7</sup> The guild was meant to be run according to the rules laid out in this *mariegola* and its officials swore an oath to this effect.<sup>8</sup> The guild warden (*gastaldo*) was also required to have the statutes read out to the membership every time a general meeting was held; this duty extended well into the sixteenth century.<sup>9</sup> In 1588 the *Collegio delle Arti* restated the obligation of guild officials to publish statutes at general meetings, to avoid the possibility of members pleading ignorance of them.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> BMC, *Mariegole* no.195, *Mariegola degli strazzaruoli* [M.St.], ff.1-30. The preamble and some statutes appear in CAV, II, 2, pp.474-85; see CAV, II, 1, pp.188-9. Monticolo argued they were reformed versions from a previous text, stressing an affinity with the *Capitulare artis pannorum veterum* of 1264-5: CAV, II, 2, p.474 n.1. For the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century additions, see BMC, M.St., ff.75-216 (the *capitolo* numbers are inconsistent in the later period so are not cited; the 1633 entry is an anomaly). Citations from a *Matricola d'argento dell'arte degli strazzaruoli* in the shoemakers' archives show that a later *mariegola* existed in the 1620s which has not survived. See ASV, *Arti, Arte dei calegheri e zavatterii*, b.32, proc.5 (*contro gli strazzaruoli*), fasc.11, 9 July 1670.

<sup>8</sup> BMC, M.St, cap.2, f.2: '...e sia i dado sacramento elli sia tegnudi de... governarla [l'Arte] cum i ordeni de la marigolla nostra'. See also M. Dal Borgo, 'Le corporazioni e le scuole di arti e mestieri', in *Arti e mestieri in Venezia* (Venice: Università Popolare di Venezia and Fondazione Querini Stampalia, 1991), pp.15-19 (p.16). On *mariegole* as 'living documents', see Tiepolo, 'Arti e artigiani', unpag.

<sup>9</sup> At least once a year: BMC, M.St, cap.19, f.12. On guild meetings, see Marangoni, *Associazioni*, pp.30-1. For the *gastaldo*'s duties, see *ibid.*, pp.27-8, 31; Brunello, *Arti e mestieri*, p.15, n.5; and Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.21-2.

<sup>10</sup> BMC, M.St., f.173, 18 Aug.1588: '...legga in capitolo general tutte quelle leggi et ordini a qual sara quell'arte sottoposta; et questo affine che non possa alcuno di essa arte pretender ignoranza di esse leggi, et ordini'. On the *Collegio delle arti*, see Marangoni, *Associazioni*, p.22.

Despite their antiquity, therefore, trade regulations were, of continual relevance to the guild, and, in theory, no guild member could be unaware of them.

Examining the fifteenth-century statutes of the *arte degli strazzaruoli*, the traditional concerns of the guild become clear. Three aspects of the guild's economic affairs stand out as being of particular importance and they are: maintenance of a trading monopoly; control of general trade practices; and active membership participation. None of these concerns was specific to the second-hand dealers' guild, indeed, all three were common elements of the Venetian guild system. The three concerns reveal that the *arte degli strazzaruoli* intended to dominate the market for used goods. Since guild statutes had to be sanctioned by the *Giustizieri Vecchi*, centrally elected representatives, we can infer that this pretension was quite acceptable to the Venetian government.

In the statutes, the guild's right to predominance is taken for granted. The guild expected to have a total monopoly of second-hand dealing in the city. Guild membership was a statutory prerequisite for practising the craft and unregistered dealers were forbidden to trade.<sup>11</sup> Additions to the *mariegola* record the guild's persistent endeavours

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<sup>11</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.9, f.6; cap.34, ff.24-5. The earlier statutes of the *arte dei panni vecchi* contain similar restrictions, see CAV,II,2, cap.20, p.468; cap.33, pp.472-3, 12 Nov. 1301.

to uphold this monopoly. They also indicate that two different strategies were adopted to achieve this end: one involved preventing unregistered dealers from practising the craft; and the other entailed absorbing groups of traders engaged in related activities.

Public auctions offered an alternative outlet for second-hand goods which was outwith the guild's direct control [see Chapter 5, III.a)]. It is clear that these sales were thought to be likely *fora* for irregular trading by many types of dealers, since these events were the focus of various actions by the guild.<sup>12</sup> Government officials presiding at public auctions were particularly suspect and *commandadori*, the petty functionaries who served as auctioneers at the sales, were regularly investigated. Rulings concerning their activities at auctions were strict: auctioneers were not permitted to buy or sell, on their own account, goods pertaining to the second-hand trade.<sup>13</sup> Captains of the night-watch and other petty justice officials had also to be checked, in case they took advantage of their duty to auction confiscated goods and indulged in unofficial second-hand dealing.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.45, ff.40-1; cap.32, ff.21-2.

<sup>13</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.27, f.15: '...che algun comandador non ossa ne p[re]suma conprar [sic] ad algun incanto ne ad algun incanto che'l incantasse alguna cossa che podesse aspettar al mestier nostro de la strac[i]aia...'. See also cap.12, f.9. On *commandadori*, see Chapter 5, III.b) below.

<sup>14</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.35, f.25, 15 Dec.1428. On justice officials, see Chapter 2, II.c).

Traders bringing in merchandise from outside Venice posed another threat to the guild's monopoly. Fears were expressed that cloth importers would abuse their right to ship fabric into the city, by importing ready-made items of clothing.<sup>15</sup> Petty traders also attracted the guild's attention. Of particular concern were sailors from the Flemish and English galleys selling small quantities of imported goods in the city who might also distribute wares bought closer to home. In 1442, the guild petitioned the *Giustizieri Vecchi* and also the *Provveditori di Comun* (other magistrates with authority over guilds) to be empowered to supervise such trading.<sup>16</sup> In general, foreigners engaging in trade were anathema to the guild of second-hand dealers, as they were to many other Venetian trades.<sup>17</sup> One of the first statutes in the *mariegola* stipulated that only Venetian residents could practise the craft.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.51, ff.46-7, 26 May 1436.

<sup>16</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.50, ff.45-6, 8 Aug.1442. On the two magistracies, see Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 178, 191; also Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.9, 48.

<sup>17</sup> Susan Connell, *The employment of sculptors and stonemasons in Venice in the fifteenth century* (New York: Garland, 1988), pp.75-6; Agostino Sagredo, *Sulle consorterie delle arti edificative in Venezia: studi storici con documenti inediti* (Venice: Pietro Naratovich, 1856), p.52; Marangoni, *Associazioni*, p.29; Giovanni Scarabello, 'Caratteri e funzioni socio-politiche dell'associazionismo a Venezia sotto la Repubblica', in *Scuole di arti, mestieri e devozione a Venezia*, ed. Silvia Gramigna and Annalisa Perissa (Venice: Arsenale, 1981), pp.5-24 (p.5); Costantini, 'La statutaria', p.41.

<sup>18</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.9, f.6. See also cap.36, ff.28-9, 11 June 1419: 'che l'arte n[ost]ra non pos[s]a esser fat[t]a se non p[er] i nostri cit[t]adini oreginal [sic]...'; the original ruling links foreigners to stolen and smuggled goods: ASV,

The second strategy adopted by the *arte degli strazzaruoli* to maintain its monopoly was to absorb subordinate groups of traders involved in similar pursuits. The *mariegola* records three early cases of such annexation and an interesting example concerns the trade in beds and bedding.<sup>19</sup> Abuses of this pursuit were, it was argued, harming second-hand dealers as well as the owners of rented properties who kept losing furnishings. It was subsequently decided that no one should deal in these goods without being registered in the guild.<sup>20</sup> Similar tactics were applied to hosiers and to retailers of *griso*, a coarse

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*Maggior Consiglio* [MC], *Deliberazioni*, reg.22, *Liber Ursa*, f.32, 11 June 1419 [I am grateful to Dott. Stefano Piasentini for this reference]. In this context *cittadini* simply means inhabitants, see BMC, M.St., caps 42-3, ff.34-7, 11 Jan.1431 [mv]; David Chambers and Brian Pullan, eds, *Venice: a documentary history, 1450-1630* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), p.282. On the specialised type of Venetian *cittadini*, see Andrea Zannini, *Burocrazia e burocrati a Venezia in età moderna: i cittadini originari (sec. XVI-XVIII)*, *Memorie della classe di scienze morali, lettere ed arti*, 47 (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 1993), pp.11-13; Ugo Tucci, 'The psychology of the Venetian merchant in the sixteenth century', in *Renaissance Venice*, ed. J.R.Hale (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), pp.346-78 (pp.360-6).

<sup>19</sup> On this trade, see Chapter 4 below; also William Wey, *The itineraries of William Wey, Fellow of Eton College to Jerusalem, AD 1458 and AD 1462; and to Saint James of Compostella, AD 1456* (London: J.B. Nichols for the Roxburghe Club, 1857), pp.5-6; Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, p.85.

<sup>20</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.34, ff.24-5: '...damo in avanti alguna persona si mascollo como femena si ter[r]ier como forestier non possa adovrar l'arte di lecti çoe de far far ni comprar lecti nuovi ne vechi per caxon de vender ni de dar a nollo per algun muodo over inçeño se i no[n] sera[nno] in prima scripti e intradi in l'arte del[l]a straçaria...' [bedding included mattresses, covers and sheets, see Chapter 4]. On similar abuses committed by *strazzaruoli*, see ASV, MC, *Deliberazioni*, reg.21, *Liber Leona*, f.141v, 20 Jan.1403 [mv] [I also owe this reference to Dott. Stefano Piasentini]. To find bedding dealers cited along with *strazzaruoli*, see BMC, M.St., cap.77, f.74, 4 Jan.1498 [mv].



type of woollen cloth.<sup>21</sup> Prior to 1430, this policy of annexation was probably also directed at pedlars of second-hand goods (*revendigoli*). Although this group had their own statutes in 1233 [see above] and were considered separate in the statutes of the *arte dei panni vecchi* of 1264-65, they were included in the 1430 *mariegola* of the guild of second-hand dealers.<sup>22</sup>

This alternative tactic of absorbing traders into the guild to ensure market dominance contrasts with the guild's attempts to prevent unregistered dealers from practising the craft. By adopting this approach, albeit on a limited number of occasions, the guild demonstrated both a willingness and an ability to open up its organisation. Such elasticity on the part of the *arte degli strazzaruoli* contradicts the customary view of Venetian guilds as rigid and exclusive structures. While the evidence outlined above does prove that the guild was concerned to ensure a monopoly of its trade, it also shows that this was not always achieved by exclusionary tactics. Paradoxically, the guild was an ardent monopolist, but it was not an overwhelmingly protectionist monopolist.

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<sup>21</sup> BMC, M. St., cap. 42, ff. 34-7, 11 Jan. 1431 [mv]; cap. 62, f. 56, 13 Oct. 1459. On *panno griso*, see Giuseppe Boerio, *Dizionario del dialetto veneziano*, 2nd edn, facs. (Florence: Giunti Martello, 1983), p. 318; Achille Vitali, *La moda a Venezia attraverso i secoli: lessico ragionato* (Venice: Filippi, 1992), p. 210.

<sup>22</sup> CAV, I, 135-8; CAV, II, 2, cap. 12, p. 462; BMC, M. St., cap. 11, ff. 8-9; cap. 65, ff. 60-1 [after 1474]. Mackenney noted a similar policy among mercers in the fifteenth century: *Tradesmen*, pp. 90, 93, 96. On pedlars, see Chapters 3-5 below.

In addition to its preoccupation with market dominance, the guild was also engaged in other matters concerning the second-hand trade - matters relating to general trade practice. One consideration was the maintenance of trading standards: the guild's responsibility to ensure honest dealing in the trade was an old tradition.<sup>23</sup> The *mariegola degli strazzaruoli* places great emphasis on fair trading and the prevention of fraud. It records that the guild warden and his elected colleagues were to inspect members' workshops regularly for evidence of dishonest practices and shoddy goods, such as fraudulently treated cloth and substandard materials.<sup>24</sup> The guild took this responsibility seriously. In the late fifteenth century, it banned the sale of bad quality *griso nero* since clothes made of this cloth did not wear well.<sup>25</sup> To prevent bad workmanship, the guild also introduced a five-year training period for the craft.<sup>26</sup>

Of equal concern to the guild was its control of trading outlets. The guild's vigilance at auctions is one example of this interest and it also focused on members' trading locations. Master second-hand dealers were meant to sell goods in Piazza San Marco only on official market days or

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<sup>23</sup> CAV, I, 135-36; CAV, II, 2, caps 2-3, pp. 459-60; cap. 9, p. 461; cap. 18, pp. 467-68.

<sup>24</sup> BMC, M.St., cap. 15, ff. 10-11.

<sup>25</sup> Shoddy goods were sold to the poor, see *ibid.*, cap. 67, ff. 62-3 [c. 1479]; cap. 73, f. 69, 24 Feb. [1488/9(?)].

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, cap. 65, ff. 60-1 [13 July 1479].

at special trade fairs. For the rest of the time, trading was supposed to occur in their workshops which were easier for guild officials to inspect [see above].<sup>27</sup> It was also feared that business conducted away from these outlets would adversely affect dealers paying high rents for central premises. For this reason, in 1479 the second-hand dealers of San Marco and Rialto complained about other members of the trade transporting their wares beyond the fortifications of the Lido, to sell direct to oarsmen stationed on galleys moored without.<sup>28</sup>

Motivated by similar concerns, the guild also studied the activities of artisans involved in related crafts. Every Venetian guild kept rival traders under surveillance in case they violated its jurisdictions. In the fifteenth century, however, the guild of second-hand dealers pursued a particularly aggressive policy *vis-à-vis* other trades, promoting itself at their cost. The tailors, drapers and furriers all lamented this tendency in the *strazzaruoli*.<sup>29</sup> In 1425, when the furriers' guild complained to the Senate that, not satisfied with their own trade, second-hand dealers were practising the trades of others, the vote went in their favour.<sup>30</sup> Discord with the furriers continued

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<sup>27</sup> On the guild's efforts to control members' outlets, see also Chapter 5, I..

<sup>28</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.66, ff.61-2, 1479.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., cap.28, ff.15-16, 22 Apr.1426; cap.60, ff.53-5, 8 Apr. 1457 [tailors]; cap.71, f.67, Feb.1486 [mv] [drapers].

<sup>30</sup> ASV, *Arti*, b.719, *Mariegola dei varoteri*, cap.18, f.7, 9 Feb. 1424 [mv]. See also f.13r, 1445; cap.41, f.16r, 5 Oct. 1470.

and became so bitter that eventually the *Collegio* interposed to settle the dispute so that the two guilds would practise their trades without jurisdictions being infringed.<sup>31</sup>

The *arte degli strazzaruoli* was, as we have seen, willing to absorb subordinate groups of traders involved in similar pursuits to ensure its monopoly of the market. The guild's disregard for the jurisdictions of rival, established trades can be seen as further evidence of this predisposition. It reveals that the guild did not perceive its market as fixed or limited, but was keen to expand and diversify.<sup>32</sup> In this regard, the guild of second-hand dealers appears even less of a defensive and protectionist monopolist, and can justifiably be termed an imperialist monopolist.<sup>33</sup> This contrasts sharply with the traditional view of Venetian guilds as exclusive, reactionary structures. Indeed, for the fifteenth century, there is ample evidence to show that second-hand dealers were

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<sup>31</sup> ASV, *Arti*, b.719, *Mariogola dei varoteri*, cap.47, ff.17v-18, 5 Mar.1483: '...metter fin al[le] controversie et differentie vertisse tra straz[z]aruoli et varoteri p[er] i pellami & fodre usano dicti straz[z]aruoli p[er]tinenti al mestier de la varoteria et dar tal forma ch[e] caduan seperatin possino & debiano far l'arte & marchadantia soa senza tuor de[ll]e jurisdiction[i] del[lo] altro...'

<sup>32</sup> Mackenney drew the same conclusion about the mercers' guild, see *Tradesmen*, p.93. In 1446, the mercers claimed a monopoly of second-hand dealing, though no mention of this occurs in the *strazzaruoli* records, see *ibid.*, p.90.

<sup>33</sup> I am indebted to Dr Richard Mackenney for suggesting the concepts of protectionism and imperialism as means of analysing guild monopolies.

actively courting change.

Closely related to the matters of market dominance and control of trade practices is the issue of active membership participation. This was a fundamental part of guild life as the effectiveness of craft organisations depended upon it. Members of the guild of second-hand dealers were meant to attend the annual general meeting. At this event, as well as having the statutes read aloud [see above], a new set of officials was elected and votes were taken on major issues affecting the guild.<sup>34</sup> The membership were expected to appear whenever the guild warden decided they ought to assemble.<sup>35</sup> There were also other ways in which members were required to participate. For example, the guild acquired land for the general use of its members at Treviso's annual trade fair and Venetian *strazzaruoli* were supposed to pay to use that facility, rather than set up stalls on their own.<sup>36</sup> To sum up, guild membership implied active participation in guild

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<sup>34</sup> Only masters enjoyed voting rights, see Tiepolo, 'Arti e artigiani', unpag.; Dal Borgo, 'Le corporazioni', p.16.

<sup>35</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.20, f.13; cap.2, ff.1-3; CAV, II, 2, pp.483-4, 476-7. This persisted, see BMC, M.St., ff.139-40, 27 Oct.1577. See also Marangoni, *Associazioni*, p.31; and Dal Borgo, 'Le corporazioni', p.16.

<sup>36</sup> BMC, M.St., caps 39-40, ff.31-3, 15-16 Oct.1431; caps 52, 54-5, ff.47-50; cap.59, f.52; cap.64, ff.58-9. *Strazzaruoli* also attended fairs at Chioggia and Mirano, see cap.30, ff.17-19, 25 Apr.1430; cap.57, f.51; cap.63, ff.57-8, 20 Jan.1459 [mv]; cap.75, ff.71-2, 1489. This was usual, cf. ASV, *Arti*, b.312, *Mariogola dei marzeri*, cap.22, ff.8-9r; cap.38, ff.23v-24r; cap.39, ff.24-25r; cap.44, ff.29r-30r [I am grateful to Dr Mackenney for reminding me of the mercers at Treviso].

affairs as well as the observation of a set of trading rules. Such involvement was intended to encourage a strong sense of identification with, and loyalty towards, the guild.

It is clear, then, that in the fifteenth century, the three aspects of guild business which were particularly important to the *arte degli strazzaruoli* all served to ensure the guild's predominance in the market. However, the management of its economic activities was only one side of a guild's life and to focus solely on that part would be misleading. The Christian faith underpinned the entire craft structure and guilds had a serious religious purpose which was of equal importance to their economic role.<sup>37</sup> Frederic C. Lane and Richard Mackenney have both highlighted this key element of guild affairs by demonstrating that Venetian craft guilds were an amalgamation of two separate institutions: the *arte* or trade guild, and the *scuola* or religious confraternity.<sup>38</sup>

The guild of second-hand dealers was no exception. Its *mariegola* records the centrality of religious concerns: at the beginning of the register, God is depicted being venerated by a guild member and the very first words evoke

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<sup>37</sup> On the piety of Venetian artisans, see Sagredo, *Arti edificative*, pp.54-5.

<sup>38</sup> Frederic C. Lane, *Venetian ships and shipbuilders of the Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1934), pp.72-73; Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.4-5,44-73. See also Marangoni, *Associazioni*, pp.11,20.

His name.<sup>39</sup> The statutes outline procedures for various Christian rites, including weekly masses and guild burials held at the Church of San Zulian behind Piazza San Marco.<sup>40</sup> Religious obligations conferred on guild members are also recorded. Members had to make an annual contribution for church lighting (*luminaria*) and could be dismissed from the guild for failing to do so.<sup>41</sup> In addition, the membership were meant to attend the religious ceremonies held by the guild and to cease trading on specific religious holidays.<sup>42</sup>

By 1500, therefore, the guild of second-hand dealers had two principal concerns which involved looking to the religious as well as the economic interests of its

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<sup>39</sup> BMC, M.St., after the list of contents. A reproduction can be found in *I mestieri della moda a Venezia dal XIII al XVIII secolo* (Venice: Stamperia di Venezia, 1988), p.238. See also CAV, II, 1, p.189 [Monticolo mixed up the two images: the full-length figure sporting staff and pilgrim's hat is San Giacomo Maggiore, patron saint of the guild, and the half-length figure venerated by a guild member is God]. See also BMC, M.St., cap.1, f.1, 24 July 1430.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., cap.16, ff.11-2; caps 22-3, ff.13-4. On the guild's association with San Zulian, see Chapter 5, IV.a).

<sup>41</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.19, ff.12-13; cap.77, f.74, 4 Jan. 1498 [mv]; cap.79, f.75 [c.1499-1515]. See also ASV, *Arti, Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni da farsi dai confratelli che entreranno nella detta arte (1616-1646)*, Anzolo, Hebreo fatto Cristiano [sic], Zuane Pio, Lunardo Cuccolo (converted Jews expelled for not paying *luminaria*). On *luminaria*, see Fabio Mutinelli, *Lessico veneto, Collana di bibliografia e storia veneziana*, 11, fasc. (Bologna: Forni, 1978), p.229.

<sup>42</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.16, ff.11-12; caps 22-3, ff.13-4; cap.14, ff.9-10; see also ASV, *Procuratori di San Marco [PSM], de supra* (Chiesa), b.55, *Procuratia de supra contro il magistrato della Giustizia Vecchia*, fasc.2, ff.7r-12r, 16 July 1567; and Marangoni, *Associazioni*, p.65.

membership. This dual focus persisted throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The guild did, for example, ensure that religious services continued to be provided for its members at San Zulian.<sup>43</sup> It is evident that the membership set great store by the *scuola's* religious function in the early modern period. Zuane Lionbardi, *strazzaruol*, made this abundantly clear in his will of 1588:

I want to be buried at San Zulian because I'm in the *scuola* of the second-hand dealers, and I want my executors to foot the bill without any burden on the *scuola*.<sup>44</sup>

In 1620, another second-hand dealer, Battista, wishing the whole fraternity to attend his funeral, noted that he had always paid his *luminaria* and taxes as was his duty.<sup>45</sup> The continuing centrality of religious issues to the guild is important, since it posed problems for any non-Christians, particularly Jews, wishing to enter the trade.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> BMC, M.St., ff.200-04, 11 May 1604.

<sup>44</sup> IRE, *Ospedale dei Derelitti* [Der.E], b.137, Zuane Lionbardi, *strazzaruol*, fasc.1, f.2, 4 Sept.1588: 'vogio esser sepola a S[an] Zulian p[er]ché son in la scolla di strazarolli [sic], et voglio sij fatta la spese p[er] li miei com[m]esarij senza danno alcun della scolla'.

<sup>45</sup> ASV, *Sezione Notarile, Testamenti*, b.226, notary Crivelli, will no.420, Battista, *strazzaruol*, 28 July 1620: '...et la scolla di strazzaroli [sic] a compagnarmi, ch[e] pago tutte le mie luminarie et tanse com'è debito mio...'

<sup>46</sup> See M.G. Sandri and Paolo Alazraki, *Arte e vita ebraica a Venezia, 1576-1797* (Florence: Sansoni, 1971), pp.99-100.



Economic interests were also sustained by the guild. The craft organisation's claim to market dominance, embodied in its statutes, endured throughout the early modern period and is recorded in eighteenth-century broadsheets printed by order of the *Giustizia Vecchia*.<sup>47</sup> As before, non-registered dealers were pursued and subordinate groups of traders absorbed. Such extensive continuity in guild concerns presents difficulties for historians exploring craft activities. Practices distinguished in a particular period are likely to have also featured in previous eras.<sup>48</sup> The persistence of the *arte degli strazzaruoli* as an important force within the second-hand market is examined in detail in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 below. Its perpetuation is also evident in its dealings with other guilds.

## II. Continuities: the Guild in the Guild System

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the guild of second-hand dealers continued its aggressive stance towards guilds involved in related trades. In spite of intervention by the *Collegio* in 1483, the inveterate

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<sup>47</sup> ASV, *Compilazione delle Leggi* [CL], b.55, *Arti in genere, leggi dal 1715-30*, f.98, 23 Nov.1717; f.107, 20 Apr.1718; f.466, 30 Apr.1727.

<sup>48</sup> See Derek Keene, 'Continuity and development in urban trades: problems of concepts and the evidence', in *Work in Towns 850-1850*, ed. Penelope J. Corfield and Derek Keene (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1990), pp.1-16 (p.2). On the Venetians' tenacious regard for their customs and institutions, see Simone Luzzatto, *Discorso circa il stato de gl'Hebrei, et in particolar dimoranti nell'inclita città di Venetia* (Venice: Gioanne Calleoni, 1638), f.11v.

dispute with the furriers was not resolved. Second-hand dealers continued to practise key elements of the furriers' craft. In the mid-sixteenth century, these transgressions provoked a protracted legal battle, lasting some fifteen years. During that bitter interlude, the furriers' main complaint was remarkably similar to the one made at the beginning of the fifteenth century, that is to say, that second-hand dealers were deliberately muscling in on the furriers' craft.<sup>49</sup> The same accusation was repeated in the seventeenth century.<sup>50</sup>

In addition to the furriers, other old adversaries reacted to the conduct of second-hand dealers. On several occasions, the drapers' and tailors' guilds proceeded against the *arte degli strazzaruoli*, accusing it of encroaching on their jurisdictions. Whereas clashes with the drapers were resolved in favour of the cloth dealers, confrontations with the tailors' guild merely served to emphasise the impotence of that guild *vis-à-vis* the second-hand dealers [see Chapter 4, I.a) below].<sup>51</sup> As late as

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<sup>49</sup> BMC, M.St., f.111, 2 Jan.1564 [mv]; see also f.102, 7 Nov. 1552; ff.105-10, 30 May 1554-16 Nov.1557; ff.112-3, 3-22 Jan. 1564 [mv]; also ASV, *Arti*, b.719, *Arte dei varoteri, Mariegola*, f.50r, 6 Jan.1548 [mv]; ff.55v-6, 30 May 1554; ff.70-1v, 24 Nov. -10 Dec.1563; f.71v, 7-21 Aug.1564.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, ff.122r-3v, 11 Feb.1622 [mv]-16 Mar.1623; ff.152-3, 21 Oct.1642-5 Mar.1643; ff.170v-3v, 19 Jan.-21 Feb.1651 [mv].

<sup>51</sup> Drapers: BMC, M.St., f.98, 29 Oct.1534; f.114, 23 Feb.1564 [mv]. Tailors: *ibid.*, ff.181-3, 7 Apr.1590; ASV, *Arti*, b.502, *Arte dei sartori, Capitoli e parti*, f.128v, 7 Aug.1614; see also ff.129-30, 19 May 1679-28 Sept.1683; ASV, *Arti*, b.32, *Arte dei calegheri e zavattereri*, proc.no.5, *contro arte degli strazzaruoli*, fasc.11-16, 9 July-22 Sept.1670.

the eighteenth century, the guild of tailors was still lamenting the same types of infringements on the part of *strazzaruoli*.<sup>52</sup>

Such friction between second-hand dealers and other artisans was more or less inevitable given the nature of the craft of second-hand dealing. *Strazzaruoli* exercised the same skills as tailors, furriers and drapers in the course of their legitimate trade [see Chapter 4]. Another group of craftsmen with whom second-hand dealers shared a certain expertise was the guild of goldsmiths and jewellers. In 1577, this guild challenged the right of the *arte degli strazzaruoli* to deal in precious metals and jewels. Clothes and furnishings containing these valuable materials were relatively common in the period and second-hand dealers were used to handling such goods.<sup>53</sup> Given that they dealt in the same types of wares and practised similar crafts to other artisans, it is not surprising that second-hand dealers took liberties. The guild supported such actions throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and this involved it in a considerable amount of litigation.

The pursuit of demarcation disputes through the courts, in

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<sup>52</sup> ASV, CL, b.59, *Arti in genere: documenti e memorie*, ff.469r-74, *Sartori* [after Dec.1749].

<sup>53</sup> BMC, *Mariegole* no.139, *Mariegola degli orefici e gioiellieri*, ff.31-2, 21 Aug.1577; see also f.36v, 13 May 1581; BMC, M.St., ff.121-2, 29 Aug.1578. For similar friction between the Jews and the goldsmiths, see Chapter 3, III. below.

Venice as elsewhere, was a typical feature of guild life.<sup>54</sup> During the early modern period the guild of second-hand dealers defended itself in a number of actions brought by other trades. If a decision went against the guild, it often pursued the case in a higher court. During the mid-sixteenth-century dispute with the furriers, for example, the second-hand dealers appealed to the *Quarantia Civil* to overturn rulings made by the *Giustizieri Vecchi* and the *Provveditori di Comun*.<sup>55</sup> The costs of complicated legal actions such as these were great [see Chapter 3, II.]. In the late sixteenth century, expenditure on lengthy demarcation disputes angered government officials as it affected funds earmarked for galley oarsmen and for the guilds' religious functions.<sup>56</sup> In spite of the Republic's obvious displeasure, the *arte degli strazzaruoli* persisted in promoting its economic interests by means of the courts.

In the main, it was business as usual for the guild of second-hand dealers during the sixteenth and seventeenth

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<sup>54</sup> See Carlo Poni, 'Norms and disputes: the shoemakers' guild in eighteenth-century Bologna', *Past and Present*, 123 (1989), 80-108 (pp.106-8).

<sup>55</sup> BMC, M.St., f.102, 7 Nov.1552. On the three courts, see Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 63-4, 191, 178.

<sup>56</sup> BMC, M.St., ff.165-6, 7 May 1561; ff.160-2, 30 Oct.1577; ff.168-9, 24 Nov.1585; ff.198-9, 21 Jan.1603 [mv]; f.209, 16 Nov.1618, 17 June 1619. On guild finances, see Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.221-32; Gigi Corazzol, *Livelli stipulati a Venezia nel 1591: studio storico*, *Supplementi di Studi Veneziani* (Pisa:Giardini, 1986), p.7 (restrictions on guild borrowing).

centuries. The guild continued to assert its claim to market dominance in an aggressive fashion and was prepared to back up those claims with legal action. Towards the end of the period, the *arte degli strazzaruoli* was involved in a series of conflicts with the mercers' guild. In this case, however, second-hand dealers were on the receiving end of vigorous guild tactics. From the 1590s onwards, the mercers embarked on their own campaign of monopolistic imperialism, breaching privileges held by a number of trades.<sup>57</sup> The *strazzaruoli* took exception to mercers selling certain types of cloth and making collars, and they sought to halt these infringements with recourse to the courts.<sup>58</sup>

The disputes with the mercers are significant because they serve to indicate the flux in the Venetian guild system. In spite of all the monopolistic rhetoric, there were, in fact, few absolutes: the privileges to which the second-hand dealers emphatically laid claim, had, in the past, often been poached from other trades.<sup>59</sup> This was not the

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<sup>57</sup> See BMC, *Mariegole* no.50, *Mariegola dei passamaneri*, ff.20v-2v, 27 Aug.1596; *ibid.*, f.23, 24-28 May 1597; also *ibid.*, ff.80v-1r, 11 Dec.1642; *ibid.*, ff.88v-90v, 20 Nov.-30 Dec.1659. Mackenney noted this trend in *Tradesmen*, p.111.

<sup>58</sup> BMC, M.St., f.196, 5 Dec.1596; ff.196-7, 9 June, 2 Aug. 1597 [*rasse*]; ASV, *Arti, Arte dei marzeri*, b.312, *Ristretto generale di tutto le parti, ordini, e regole della scuola*, ff.74-5, *Strassaroli* [sic], 1596-1688; *ibid.*, b.315, *Capitoli e parti*, ff.111v-12, 29 Jan.1619 [mv]; f.129r, 14 Apr.1622 [collars].

<sup>59</sup> On the indefinite boundaries between crafts in England, see Heather Swanson, 'Artisans in the urban economy: the documentary evidence from York', in *Work in towns 850-1850*, ed. Penelope J. Corfield and Derek Keene (Leicester: Leicester

only contradiction associated with the *arte degli strazzaruoli*. Irrespective of the tradition of market control embodied in its statutes and the bellicose tactics with which it sought to uphold that tradition, the guild did not, in fact, enjoy a complete monopoly of the market in second-hand goods made of cloth.

### III. Exceptions

Guild statutes portray a perfect model of the second-hand market. However, this model had to operate within the dynamic and disorderly world of medieval and early modern Venice where, in reality, nothing was perfect. The guild of second-hand dealers was obliged to coexist with other sorts of traders in used goods whose presence contradicted its rules; it did so throughout the fifteenth century and continued to do so until its demise.<sup>60</sup> The resolute and indomitable tone of the statutes is therefore misleading and belies the fact that the need to compromise was an essential part of guild life.

Although the Venetian government (by means of the *Giustizia Vecchia*) recognised the guild's right to a trading monopoly in the city, it had the prerogative to overrule the guild if this suited its purpose. Additions to the fifteenth-

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University Press, 1990), pp.42-56 (p.44).

<sup>60</sup> See Sylvia L. Thrupp's comments on the guilds' incomplete control of supply, in 'The guilds', *Cambridge Economic History of Europe, III: Economic organization and policies in the middle ages*, ed. M.M. Postan, E.E. Rich and Edward Miller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), pp.230-80 (p.246).

century statutes show that it regularly exercised this prerogative. Such action on the government's part was only to be expected, given that the Republic depended on trade and on the city's crafts.<sup>61</sup> Given half the chance, the guild would have prohibited the sale of second-hand goods on Piazza San Marco by sailors from the Flemish and English galleys [see above, I.]. However, this activity occurred with government permission, so the guild was powerless to act.<sup>62</sup> It was a similar case with foreigners. The statutes were, as we have seen, explicit on the topic of foreign competition, yet the guild was not always able to act against non-Venetian traders. As with sailors, the guild of second-hand dealers was unsuccessful at challenging foreigners who had been granted special permits to practise the trade. The only plausible solution was to try to oblige them to enter the guild.<sup>63</sup>

In addition to authorising certain groups of non-registered traders and issuing exceptional trading permits to foreigners, the Venetian government also suspended guild monopolies on specific occasions. The Ascensiontide

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<sup>61</sup> Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, p.122; Sandri and Alazraki, *Arte e vita*, p.101: 'ciò da la misura dell'atteggiamento della Repubblica, protezionistico da un lato e dall'altro molto aperto, com'era indispensabile ad una città, che viveva sugli scambi e sull'attività artigianale che ne conseguiva...'.  
<sup>62</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.51, ff.46-7, 26 May 1436; cap.50, ff.45-6, 8 Aug.1442.  
<sup>63</sup> Ibid., cap.34, ff.24-5; cap.36, ff.28-9. For foreigners practising the trade by privilege, see ASV, MC, *Deliberazioni*, reg.22, *Liber Ursa*, f.32, 11 June 1419. For other foreign workers admitted to Venice, see the Introduction, II. above.

[*Sensa*] fair was such an event: for the two-week-long duration of this fair, Piazza San Marco was designated a free-trade zone.<sup>64</sup> Albrecht Dürer was a famous foreign interloper who was fined three times for working illegally in Venice. Dürer was, however, entitled to sell his pictures at the *Sensa* fair, and, no doubt to the annoyance of the painters' guild, he did take advantage of the suspension of craft controls at this event.<sup>65</sup> In fact, non-Venetians were positively encouraged to participate at the *Sensa* fair. Though monopolistic retailing guilds like the mercers persistently grumbled about the presence of foreigners at the city's annual fair, they also took part, and thus, for the two-week period, their members traded alongside unregistered retailers.<sup>66</sup>

The Venetian government's ambivalent attitude towards the privileges of the guild of second-hand dealers was

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<sup>64</sup> Giambattista Gallicciolli, *Delle memorie venete antiche profane ed ecclesiastiche*, 8 vols (Venice:Domenico Fracasso, 1795), I, 288; see also Gino Luzzatto, 'Vi furono fiere a Venezia?', in *Studi di storia economica veneziana* (Padua: CEDAM, 1954), pp.201-09 (p.203) [Luzzatto argued that the privilege was limited to Venetian traders]. On this fair, see Chapter 5, I.a) below.

<sup>65</sup> On Dürer at the *Sensa* fair, see Jennifer M. Fletcher, 'The Bellini: a Venetian family firm', *Rivista*, 355 (Nov.1993/Jan. 1994), pp.2-6(p.4). For Dürer's bad relations with most Venetian painters, see his letter dated 7 Feb.1506, in Philippe Braunstein, 'Un étranger dans la ville, Albrecht Dürer', in *Venise 1500: la puissance, la novation et la concorde: le triomphe dy mythe*, ed. idem, Mémoires series, 22 (Paris:Editions Autrement, 1993), pp.214-29 (pp.216-18).

<sup>66</sup> BMC, M. St., cap. 50, f. 45, 8 Aug. 1442; cap. 62, f. 56, 13 Oct. 1459. See also ASV, PSM, *de supra (Chiesa)*, b. 50, *Terminazioni e decreti*, proc. 99, fasc. 1, f. 21v, 14 May 1561; *ibid.*, b. 58, proc. 115, 2, *Procuratia de supra contro la scuola dei marzeri*.



maintained throughout the period. It revealed itself, most spectacularly, at the beginning of the sixteenth century when a group of Jewish dealers was allowed to enter the trade [see Chapter 3,II.]. These incomers contradicted the basic tenets of the Venetian guild system - economic and religious alike - and yet they were permitted to practise the pursuit of second-hand dealing.

The guild's monopoly was not only challenged on particular occasions. The *arte degli strazzaruoli* also faced persistent competition from illicit traders.<sup>67</sup> Complaints about actions of *commandadori* and other government officials at public auctions can be interpreted very much in this light. Irregular dealing by unauthorised traders did not stop and references to their transgressions recur throughout the *mariegola* [see Chapter 5,III.b)]. In spite of its claim to market dominance, therefore, the guild of second-hand dealers was obliged to accept other sorts of competition. It had to tolerate unregistered traders operating by courtesy of special dispensations from the government and it was also forced to put up with the illegal activities of unwarranted traders which it consistently failed to stamp out. Such exceptions to the traditional guild structure coexisted with that structure and were just as traditional. As we shall see in Chapter 2, they did, in fact, form part of established alternative

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<sup>67</sup> See Tiepolo, 'Arti e artigiani', unpag.. This is further discussed in Chapter 5 below.

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## Chapter 2     ALTERNATIVE EXCHANGES

A wide variety of 'alternative' means of exchange existed alongside the guild within the Venetian second-hand market. Though more informal, these other systems of supply were as well-established as the regular trade structures and by these means a significant quantity of goods changed hands. In this chapter two different types of transfer are explored: legal and illegal exchanges.

### I.     Legal Exchanges

In addition to the guild-centred trading mechanisms introduced in Chapter 1, clothes and furnishings were circulated in a number of other ways in early modern Venice. Some of these 'alternative' means of exchange were illegal, but many of them were completely legitimate. Personal effects were transferred as gifts, as loans and as payments in kind. They were also used, voluntarily and involuntarily, as collateral; that is to say, they were pledged as security in transactions and seized as guarantees against debt.

#### a) Gifts

Demonstrations of generosity were important in the early modern period. Making gifts of clothes and furnishings was a customary practice and it occurred at all levels of

society.<sup>1</sup> Bequeathing goods in wills was a common means of exchange. In this way, belongings were passed on to relatives and friends, and also to servants. In 1535, for example, Angela, the pregnant wife of a shoemaker, made a will in which she left a garment of green serge to her sister and another to her niece.<sup>2</sup> Nicolosa, a widowed tailoress, bequeathed a bed furnished with bolster, pillow, large bed-cover and one pair of good sheets, to her niece in 1569.<sup>3</sup> Personal effects were also given to religious institutions as gestures of faith.<sup>4</sup> In his will of 1539, Doge Andrea Gritti bequeathed sumptuous clothes and furnishings to the monastery of San Francesco della Vigna,

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<sup>1</sup> On the *virtù* of gift-making among nobles, see Paolo Paruta, *Della perfezione della vita politica* (Venice: Domenico Nicolini, 1579), book 2, p.184; Pietro Aretino, *Il primo libro delle lettere*, ed. Fausto Nicolini, Scrittori d'Italia series (Bari: Laterza, 1913), p.19, no.12. Lower down the social scale, see Alessandro Caravia [Carravia], *Naspo bizaro, con la zonta del lamento, che'l fa per haverse pentio de haver sposao Cate bionda biriota* (Venice: G.A. Remondini, nd [c.1565]), 4, p.177: 'altro contento non trovo in sta vita/ Che'l spender, e donar aliegramente...'. On gifts of cloth and clothes, see Gina Fasoli, 'Lusso approvato e lusso riprovato' in *Memorial per Gina Fasoli: bibliografia ed alcuni inediti*, ed. Francesca Bocchi (Bologna: Grafis, 1993) pp.123-43 (p.135); G.M. Urbani de Gheltof, *Les arts industriels à Venise au moyen âge et à la Renaissance*, trans. Alfredo Cruvellie (Venice: Usiglio & Diena, 1885), pp.141-2.

<sup>2</sup> ASV, *Sezione Notarile, Testamenti*, b.217, notary Cavanis, will no.30: Angela, 14 May 1535.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, b.36, notary Abramo, will no.55: Nicolosa, *sartora*, 25 May 1569.

<sup>4</sup> Notaries had to remind clients of this duty, see ASV, *Secreta, Codici Svajer 14 (ex Breda 262), Capitolare dei notai*, 1542, f.15v, 21 Sept.1431; f.16v, 21 Dec.1486; f.21r, 26 June 1475; also *Difesa della sanità a Venezia secoli XIII-XIX* (Venice: Archivio di Stato, 1979), p.21.

for use in its religious ceremonies.<sup>5</sup>

Gifts of clothes were also made in other ways. Archival references to informal exchanges are rare but the correspondance of Pietro Aretino allows insight into such gifts. In his letters, Aretino publicises the reception of magnificent cast-offs from a number of wealthy patrons.<sup>6</sup> Federico Gonzaga, the Duke of Mantua, was one of these benefactors. In May 1529, for instance, Aretino thanked the duke for a garment made of black velvet trimmed and lined with gold, along with a long-sleeved tunic and a brocade jerkin.<sup>7</sup>

#### b) Loans

As in the case of casual gifts made between friends, documentary evidence of the practice of lending clothes and furnishings is scarce. Glimpses caught of this practice do suggest, however, that it was prevalent in the early modern period. The merit of lending one's belongings to friends was emphasised by Aretino. Concerning a gift of shirts and hats from Count Massimiliano Stampa in 1531, he

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<sup>5</sup> ASV, *Materia Ecclesiastica, San Francesco della Vigna*, b.3, I, *Istromenti di mansionerie disposte a farne del Convento di San Francesco della Vigna*, f.62, Andrea Gritti, 11 Mar.1539 [I owe this reference to Dr Joachim Strupp].

<sup>6</sup> On these patrons and the letters, see Christopher Cairns, *Pietro Aretino and the Republic of Venice: researches on Aretino and his circle in Venice, 1527-1556*, Biblioteca dell'Archivum romanicum' series 1, storia, letteratura, paleografia, 194 (Florence: Olschki, 1985), pp.21-5,125-61.

<sup>7</sup> Aretino, *Primo libro*, pp.19-20, no.12.

wrote:

And since it is carnival..., it [the parcel of clothes] has arrived at a most opportune time... for the sake of my friends, for love of whom I - sometimes stay a week or more at a time at home, with nothing to wear.<sup>8</sup>

Clothes lent in this manner were not always promptly returned. In 1616, the patrician Giovanni Battista Barbo took legal action against a certain Giacomo Antonio Foliani regarding one of his cloaks which had been borrowed and not given back.<sup>9</sup> On special occasions, wall-hangings and tapestries were also lent to public institutions such as churches and this, too, seems to have been common practice. A typical example is provided by the patrician Giulio Michiel who, in August 1593, lent several household rugs to the church of San Bartolomeo at Rialto for the celebration of its feast day.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Aretino, *Primo libro*, p.30, no.23, 7 Jan.1531: 'e, a punto per essere il carnasciale, son venute a tempo... per fornire gli amici, per amor dei quali rimango dispogliato in casa i sei e gli otto giorni' [trans. Aretino: *selected letters*, George Bull, Penguin Classics (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), p.67, no.7]; on Aretino's love of generosity, see Cairns, *Pietro Aretino*, p.40. On dressing up at Carnival, see Tommaso Garzoni, *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo* (Venice: Vincenzo Somasco, 1595), disc.75, 'De' ruffiani, et delle ruffiane', p.609; John Martin, 'Popular culture and the shaping of popular heresy in renaissance Venice', in *Inquisition and society in early modern Europe*, ed. Stephen Haliczer (London: Croom Helm, 1987), pp.115-28 (p.120).

<sup>9</sup> ASV, *Signori di Notte al Civil* [SNC], b.1, *Capitolare B*, f.74r, 28 Nov. 1616: '...il ferariol hauto [sic] dall'Ecc[ellen]te sig[no]r Gio[vanni] Battista Barbo imprestido ne di quello mai ha fatto la restitutione...'

<sup>10</sup> ASV, *Ufficiali al Cattaver* [UC], b.244, reg.5, f.91v, 9 Sept.1593.

In the early modern period, clothes and furnishings maintained a significant monetary value, particularly if they were made of good fabric, were dyed with a quality dye, or were finely worked, and there was a large demand for second-hand items. As a result, cloth goods were subject to various other forms of exchange. For example, they also changed hands as payments in kind.<sup>11</sup>

### c) Payments

In *La pastoral*, Ruzante's scurrilous, eponymous hero exploits poetic licence to the full by claiming a dead man's clothes for carrying away the body.<sup>12</sup> The use of clothes as pay was, though, relatively normal. While in Venice in June 1544, Lorenzo Lotto agreed to paint a small picture of the Virgin for an Observant Dominican friar, Lorenzo da Bergamo. Being a good friend no price was determined, though Lotto did expect malmsey wine and some additional things in return. On the painting's completion, the beverage duly appeared, accompanied by various other goods, including linen handkerchiefs, caps and clothes' linings, worth in total, as Lotto was careful to note, 18

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<sup>11</sup> On other sorts of payments in kind, see Reinhold C. Mueller, 'L'imperialismo monetario veneziano nel quattrocento', *Società e Storia*, 3, 8(1980), 277-97 (p.279); Gigi Corazzol, 'Interessi in natura e interessi in denari a Venezia nel secondo cinquecento', *Società e storia*, 27 (1985), 185-9 [I owe this reference to Dr Michael Knapton].

<sup>12</sup> Angelo Beolco il Ruzante, *I. La pastoral: La prima oratione: Una lettera giocosa*, ed. and trans. Giorgio Padoan, *Medioevo e umanesimo*, 32 (Padua:Antenore, 1978), XI.609-11: 'ma quelle sue straze/ e quel gaban, cum el sea sepelio,/ me le daràtu?'; see also XII.645-700 [I am grateful to Paul Holberton for this amusing reference].

lire.<sup>13</sup> Lotto was not unusual in receiving clothes as payment: prostitutes accepted them in return for the services they rendered.<sup>14</sup>

Clothes were also given to employees to supplement their wages. Apprenticeship contracts do, for example, reveal that clothes were provided to trainees in craft workshops. When taking on apprentices, master craftsmen often agreed to supply them with clothes as well as food and keep.<sup>15</sup> The records of the *Censori*, magistrates who, after 1541, had responsibility for regulating servants in Venice, show that this was also typical in that sphere of employment.

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<sup>13</sup> Lorenzo Lotto, *Il 'libro di spese diverse' (con aggiunta di lettere e d'altri documenti)*, ed. Pietro Zampetti (Venice: Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, 1969), pp.122-3: '...una tuzzarola de malvasia... et altri panni lini cioè fazoli, fazoleti, scufie e fodrete [sic]...'.

<sup>14</sup> Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine [WIHM], ms 223, *Lettere ed altre scritture appartenenti a Lodovico Cucino medico della Sanità di Venezia*, f.82v, 9 Apr. 1557 [see Chapter 6 below]. For a literary reference, see 'Le berte, le truffe, i arlassi, e le magnarie, che usa le puttane a i so berton recitae da Nico Calafao da l'Arsenale', in *Delle rime piasevoli di diversi auttori nuovamente raccolte da M. Modesto Pino, & intitolate La Caravana* (Venice: Domenico Farri, 1576), f.21v: 'e si ti poverin no ghe i ha da dar/ ti te n'acorzi che tutta la festa/ che le te fa se per tuorte la vesta'.

<sup>15</sup> ASV, *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Giustizia Vecchia* [GV], serie XIV, *Accordi di garzoni*, e.g. b.113, reg.154, 10 Mar.1592; Lotto, *Libro di spese*, pp.48-9,109; Riccardo Predelli, *Le memorie e le carte di Alessandro Vittoria* (Trento: Giovanni Zippel, 1908), pp.153-4; Maria Francesca Tiepolo, 'Arti e artigiani a Venezia nelle carte d'archivio', in *Venicemart '86* (Venice: Confartigianato, 1986), unpag. On the infrequency of wages in kind among building workers, see Brian Pullan, 'Wage-earners and the Venetian economy, 1550-1630', *Economic History Review*, n.s.16 (1964), 407-26 (p.425); Robert C. Davis, *Shipbuilders of the Venetian Arsenal: workers and workplace in the preindustrial city* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), p.119.



The problem of servants breaking their contracts and running off with the clothes on their backs, that is to say, clothes received for future service, was common.<sup>16</sup> This practice of paying wages in kind was not, however, restricted to intimate working environments. Arsenal workers also received used sailcloth as a wage-bonus which was subsequently sold to supplement their incomes.<sup>17</sup>

#### d) Collateral

The resale value of clothes and furnishings in the early modern period also helps to explain their widespread use as collateral [*pegni*].<sup>18</sup> Pawning such goods for cash was conventional and was practised by all sectors of society. When thanking Count Massimiliano Stampa for his gift of clothes in 1531 [see above, b)], Aretino noted:

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<sup>16</sup> ASV, *Censori, Registri, sentenze, costituiti e riferiti*, especially b.3, reg.3, e.g. f.96v, 26 Nov.1605. On the *Censori*, see Andrea Da Mosto, *L'Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, 2 vols (Rome: Biblioteca d'Arte Editrice, 1937-40), I, 177. On problems with servants, see Dennis Romano, 'The regulation of domestic service in renaissance Venice', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 22 (1991), 661-77 (p.674); also his forthcoming book *Housecraft-statecraft: domestic service in renaissance Venice, 1400-1600* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press [1996]).

<sup>17</sup> ASV, *Senato, Mar*, filza 166, 12 Aug.1605; *ibid.*, filza 301, 23 Feb.1635 [mv]; *ibid.*, filza 338, 4 May 1641; see also R.C. Davis, *Shipbuilders*, pp.58,119.

<sup>18</sup> See R.C.Davis, *Shipbuilders*, p.101. For legal definitions of *pegni*, see M. Ferro, *Dizionario del diritto comune, e veneto, che contiene le leggi civili, canoniche, e criminali*, 6 vols in 10 parts (Venice: Modesto Fenzo, 1778-81), pt 8 (1781), pp.154-65 '*pegno*'; Antonio Pertile, *Storia del diritto italiano dalla caduta dell'impero romano alla codificazione*, 6 vols (Padua: Salmin, 1873-87), IV: *Storia del diritto privato* (1874), 485-512; Claudio Schwarzenberg, '*Pegno (diritto intermedio)*', in *Novissimo digesto italiano* (Turin: UTET, 1965), XII, 766-72.

Any of my clothes that end up during Carnival time *ad hebreos fratres* [pawnbrokers] can count themselves lucky, for there is something left even despite the ferocious rates of interest.<sup>19</sup>

Lotto had regular dealings with the pawnbrokers in the Ghetto and his account book gives some idea of the procedure involved in pledging goods.<sup>20</sup>

The contracts [*condotte*] specifying conditions by which the *Ebrei tedeschi* were allowed to stay in Venice, show that clothes and fabric could be accepted as pawn-pledges.<sup>21</sup> In 1605, the *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* (magistrates who supervised the pawnbanks), made it known that they intended a typical pledge to be an item of clothing or something similar.<sup>22</sup> A few pawn-tickets survive from the mid-sixteenth century and they confirm that clothes and household furnishings were given as pledges. They show that, for example, in February 1553, a certain Aurelia

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<sup>19</sup> Aretino, *Primo libro*, pp.30-1, no.23, 7 Jan. 1531: 'e hanno una gran ventura i miei vestimenti, quando al tempo de le mascare si trovano *ad hebraeos fratres*, che certo fanno avanzo de l'usura, che se gli mangia' [trans. Aretino, *Selected letters*, p.67, no.7].

<sup>20</sup> Lotto, *Libro di spese*, pp.37-9; see also ASV, *Sant'Uffizio* [SU], b.52, proc. Solomon della Regina, 30 July 1585: test. Eusebius Renato, 3 Aug.1585. On prostitutes pawning goods, see Arturo Graf, 'Una cortigiana fra mille: Veronica Franco', in *Attraverso il cinquecento*, ed. idem (Turin: Ermanno Loescher, 1888), pp.217-366 (p.253).

<sup>21</sup> See ASV, *Senato, Deliberazioni (secreta)*, reg.66, f.55, 19 Dec.1548, cap.3.

<sup>22</sup> Andrea Alvise Viola, ed., *Compilazione delle leggi... in materia d'officj, e banchi del Ghetto*, 5 vols in 6 parts (Venice: Pinelli, 1786), V, 2, 233, 11 Apr.1605: '...metendosi un pegno una vesta, vestura, o simili cose...'

pledged two shirts in the Ghetto and in March of that year, Zulian Barbaro pledged one shirt along with a handkerchief at the same bank.<sup>23</sup> This use of cloth goods as pawn-pledges presented certain practical difficulties. Pledged goods were rarely clean and might have to be stored for periods of up to sixteen months, with an obvious risk of deterioration. The Jews' contracts stipulate that should an item become moth-eaten or be gnawed by rats (both common problems in early modern Venice), the pawnbroker was not to be held responsible, as long as the goods had been aired at least three times a year and that cats were kept nearby.<sup>24</sup>

The use of clothes and furnishings as pawn-pledges was not the sole occasion on which they served as collateral. They changed hands in a host of other situations. Taverns were typical places. A government official noted in 1531 that: '...it often happens that people go to the tavern to eat,

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<sup>23</sup> ASV, *Procuratori di San Marco* [PSM], *de supra (Chiesa)*, b.35, proc.75, fasc.1, f.3, 9 Feb.1552 [mv], 19 Mar.1553 [the pawn-tickets are small rectangles of paper (c.5x8cm), printed with the bank's name; the date, borrower's name, description of pledge and sum lent are written in pen]. On these sources, see Reinhold C. Mueller, 'Charitable institutions, the Jewish community, and Venetian society: a discussion of the recent volume by Brian Pullan', *Studi Veneziani*, 14 (1972), 37-82, p.74.

<sup>24</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 61, 11 July 1573, f.141r, cap.14: 'si tarmasse o fosse rosegato da sorzi'; see also Cecil Roth, *The history of the Jews of Italy* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1946), p.109. For a pledge held 14 months, see Lotto, *Libro di spese*, p.157.

and drink, and not having cash they leave a pledge'.<sup>25</sup> This practice was so general that provisions were made for storing the pledges and selling them at auction if they were forfeited [see Chapter 5, III.a)].<sup>26</sup> As tavern-goers did not always prove willing to leave securities, in 1541 the petty justice authorities gave Venetian innkeepers permission to seize goods such as cloaks from clients who refused to settle up.<sup>27</sup>

Pledges were also exchanged in the course of daily trade: they were left by clients to ensure payment for wares and were given by artisans as guarantees against the supply of valuable materials.<sup>28</sup> A turquoise set in gold stood security against the twenty pieces of wood given to Master Giacomo bookseller (to be engraved) by the printer Zuane

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<sup>25</sup> ASV, *Provveditori e sopraprovveditori alla Giustizia Nova* [GN], b.1, *Capitolare*, f.117, 26 Oct. 1531: '...che molte volte occorse che di certe persone vanno all'hostaria a manzar, et beber, et non havendo danari ghe lazano uno pegno...'; also *ibid.*, b.2, reg.2, f.61r [I am indebted to Dr Richard Mackenney for suggesting this archive]. For a list of such pledges, see ASV, *Giudici di Petizion* [GP], *Inventari*, b.354/19, no.35, q. Tommaso Calvis, mercante da vin all'Angelo, 16 June 1631; see also *ibid.*, b.349/14, no.9, q. Simon Mascarani, osto alla Luna e Rizza, 13 Jan. 1623 [mv].

<sup>26</sup> ASV, GN, b.2, reg.4, *Raccolta di decreti, terminazioni ecc. risguardanti i pegni cioè gli effetti dati dai privati ai negozianti di vino in garanzia dei loro debiti*, f.17, 20 Mar. 1511; ff.31-2, 21 Jan. 1601 [mv].

<sup>27</sup> ASV, SNC, *Capitolare B*, f.109r, 4 Jan.1540 [mv]: 'che li hosti, et taverneri di q[ues]ta città habbino licenza et libertà de tuor, et farse dar pegni da quelli che haverano manzado, et bevudo nelle sue osterie, et taverne, possando anco tuorghe il gaban, o altro'.

<sup>28</sup> Susan Connell, *The employment of sculptors and stonemasons in Venice in the fifteenth century* (New York: Garland, 1988), p.208.

Maria, and clothes and cloth were also used to this end.<sup>29</sup> References to such pledges recur in artisans' wills and in inventories of workshop contents. The worldly goods of Andrea Bozetti, mattress-maker, listed in 1631, included several lengths of cloth in pledge from Stefano, a cotton, linen and canvas merchant.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to private individuals, government officials accepted pledges. The *Signori di Notte al Civil*, who were active from 1545, enjoyed special powers over such goods.<sup>31</sup> In the course of settling civil disputes, they exacted payments and levied costs, and, since money was rarely immediately forthcoming, held pledges as guarantees. If the sum owed was not paid within a specified period, the goods were forfeited and auctioned off to meet the debt [see Chapter 5, III.a)]. In May 1608, for example, Master Zanetto, a locksmith, was ordered to recompense the patrician Pietro Frazier for an advance payment made some ten months previously for locks which had not been delivered. When the money failed to appear, an official confiscated a woman's garment from the locksmith's house. One month later the item was sold to Master Carlo Saggion,

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<sup>29</sup> ASV, SNC, b.261, *Presentation in Camera*, reg.1, f.31, 13 Apr.1580.

<sup>30</sup> ASV, GP, *Inventari*, b.353/18, no. 67, 18 Nov.1631.

<sup>31</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, ff.133v-5r, 17 Jan.1544 [mv]; Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 98.

a second-hand dealer.<sup>32</sup>

Arbitrating rent disputes was one of the principal duties of the *Signori di Notte al Civil* and this task required frequent recourse to the pledge system outlined above.<sup>33</sup> Tenants in arrears were asked to present a pledge to guarantee the sum owed. In 1580, for instance, at the insistence of Master Zuane Maria, a tailor, a certain Donna Francesca left a pair of breeches with the *Signori di Notte al Civil* as security for unpaid rent of 7 lire.<sup>34</sup> If a pledge did not appear, magisterial functionaries were dispatched to seize one, accompanied by a locksmith to open the tenant's door.<sup>35</sup> Since clothes and furnishings represented the main objects of value belonging to many

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<sup>32</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare B*, ff.56-7r, 12 May 1608. The *Signori* played a similar role to that of *Camere dei pegni* on the mainland, see Pietro Saviolo, *Camera de pegni di Padova* (Padua: Eredi di Paolo Frambotti, 1649); Mueller, 'L'imperialismo monetario', p.279; Gian Maria Varanini, 'Tra fisco e credito: note sulle camere dei pegni nelle città venete del quattrocento', *Studi Storici Luigi Simeoni* (Verona), 33 (1983), 215-46 [I am grateful to Dr Michael Knapton for this reference].

<sup>33</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, f.133v, 17 Jan.1544 [mv]; ASV, *Maggior Consiglio* [MC], *Libro d'Oro Vecchio*, no.XIV, ff.218r-19r, 14 Sept.1586.

<sup>34</sup> ASV, SNC, *Presentation in camera*, b.261, reg.1, f.41r, 25 Aug.1580.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, b.216, *Inventari d'asporti*, reg.1, 20 Apr.1583: '... han[n]o terminado a bossoli e ballote che si vadi alla casa tenuta ad'affitto p[er] S. Paulo Polacho in confin de S[an] Zulian de rag[i]o[n] del M[agnifi]co M. Pietro Zane nella qual al p[rese]nto no[n] se attrova alcuna persona, et di quella p[er] avvent[ur]a extrazer tante robbe che siano p[er] assicuraz[i]o[n] de L.100 et spese possendossi [sic] far aprir la porta al fauro...'

Venetians, they were often taken in these situations.<sup>36</sup> For example, when entry was gained to the house of Paulo the Pole in April 1583, a ragged garment, four small pieces of green cloth and a chest full of rags were confiscated, together with candlesticks, a bed and some other household goods.<sup>37</sup>

It is clear, then, that in early modern Venice, clothes and furnishings changed hands legitimately as a matter of course. Some exchanges were independent of commercial trade, but many were not: clothes and furnishings were employed as payments in kind and as pledges in situations where ready cash was unavailable.<sup>38</sup> Transfers of material goods did, in fact, serve important functions in a period when money was generally in short supply. They were able to perform these services because of the resale value of, and large demand for, second-hand goods. Confiscating a garment belonging to the locksmith Zanetto as a means of repaying Pietro Frezier was feasible because second-hand dealers like Carlo Saggion were keen to buy such goods; the same is true for pawn- and tavern-pledges. Exchanges of clothes and furnishings which were less obviously related to commercial mechanisms, like gifts, could also feed into the second-hand market. Aretino's letters indicate that

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<sup>36</sup> See also Varanini, 'Tra fisco e credito', pp.244-5.

<sup>37</sup> ASV, SNC, b.216, *Inventari d'asporti*, reg.1, 21 Apr.1583.

<sup>38</sup> For clothes sold for gambling, see Joanne M. Ferraro, 'The power to decide: battered wives in early modern Venice', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 48 (1995), 492-511 (pp.499-500, 506).

it was perfectly acceptable to pledge gifts and forfeited pledges were sold to the highest bidder. Apparently, clothes and furnishings were excellent items to sell or pledge when funds were low. This also made them prime targets for misappropriation.

## II. Illegal Exchanges

Defining theft for his eighteenth-century dictionary of Venetian law, Marco Ferro distinguished between two types of activities. For Ferro, theft, in the strictest sense of the word, was committed when other people's goods were stolen and taken away. He applied the term more freely to occasions when advantage was taken of another person's goods which had been given in guarantee and kept in store.<sup>39</sup> This broad definition of theft was a traditional aspect of Venetian legal thought and had existed in the early seventeenth century.<sup>40</sup> Both of these sorts of appropriation, theft, and what would normally be termed fraud, were common in early modern Venice.

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<sup>39</sup> Ferro, *Dizionario*, pt 5 (1779), p.298: 'il furto propriamente detto si commette col togliere, e asportar la roba altrui, impropriamente si dice quando uno si serve della roba altrui, della depositata, data in pegno...'.  
<sup>40</sup> Lorenzo Priori, *Prattica criminale secondo il rito delle leggi della Serenissima Repubblica di Venetia* (Venice: Antonio Pinelli, 1622), p.183: 'il furto è un tuore quel d'altri nascostamente, & senza arme... per dir meglio secondo la diffinitione de dottori, è una contrattatione d'una cosa aliena corporale, over uso, & possesso di quella, la qual si fa con animo di guadagnare invito domino...'. On Priori's definition of theft, see Ettore Zorzi, 'Il furto nella dottrina e nella legislazione veneta', *Atti del Reale Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti*, 95,2(1935-36),105-242 (pp.112-40).



### a) Theft

As Francesca Meneghetti Casarin has noted, commercial centres were particularly prone to theft.<sup>41</sup> Venetian lawmakers had long been preoccupied with this problem. The *Promissio Maleficorum*, the core of Venetian criminal law, begins with a section on larceny and early trade statutes drawn up by craft and retailing guilds reveal similar concerns about stolen goods.<sup>42</sup> Theft remained ubiquitous in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The period began amid war, dearth, and economic crises - perfect conditions for an increase in lawlessness. Gaetano Cozzi has highlighted the gruelling years of the war of the League of Cambrai (1509-1517), during which, he argued,

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<sup>41</sup> *I vagabondi, la società e lo stato nella Repubblica di Venezia alla fine del '700* (Rome: Jouvence, 1984), p.293: 'il furto tout court trova maggiori occasioni per esplicarsi nelle città centri di scambi commerciali, di fiere, di mercati'.

<sup>42</sup> On the *Promissio*, see Guido Ruggiero, *Violence in early renaissance Venice* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1980), p.41. See also *Capitolare dei Signori di Notte esistente nel Civico Museo di Venezia* (Venice: Filippo Nani Mocenigo at Grafia del'Tempo', 1877), p.21 [1270]; Stefano Piasentini, *'Alla luce della luna': i furti a Venezia 1270-1403*, Ricerche:Collana della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell'Università di Venezia (Venice:Il Cardo, 1992). For the trade statutes, see Giovanni Monticolo, ed., *I capitolari delle arti veneziane sottoposte alla Giustizia e poi alla Giustizia Vecchia dalle origini al MCCCXXX* [CAV], 3 vols in 4 parts (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano, 1896-1914): I, 13 [tailors, 1219]; I, 40-1 [jerkin-makers, 1219]; I, 137 [pedlars of used-goods, 1233]; I, 122-3 [goldsmiths, 1281]; II, 2, 458 [second-hand dealers, 1264-5]. See also Richard Mackenney, *Tradesmen and traders: the world of the guilds in Venice and Europe, c.1250-c.1650* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble, 1987), pp.18, 39 n.62.

Venice was swamped with criminality, including theft.<sup>43</sup> The sixteenth century ended with further economic crises which became more serious in the seventeenth century. Owing to the unevenness of judicial archives, it is hard to assess whether or not crime increased in Venice in the period.<sup>44</sup> Rulings against theft were consistently made, however, showing that the crime continued to be seen as a problem.<sup>45</sup>

Clothes and furnishings were susceptible to theft and it is no coincidence that the earliest surviving trade regulations on receiving stolen goods relate to tailors, jerkin-makers and second-hand dealers [see above n.42]. In September 1553, the *Signori di Notte al Criminal* (petty

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<sup>43</sup> On links between theft and crisis, see Piasentini, *Alla Juze*, pp.84, 120-1. On theft in plague-time, see Chapter 6, II. below. Gaetano Cozzi, 'Authority and the law in renaissance Venice', in *Renaissance Venice*, ed. J.R. Hale (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), pp.293-345 (pp.310-11, 318); cf. Piasentini above.

<sup>44</sup> For prosecution of thefts compared to other minor crimes, see ASV, *Signori di Notte al Criminal* [SNCr], reg. 20, *Rei espediti dai Signori di Notte: notizia data al Proprio (1513-1621)*; see the rewards paid for thieves in ASV, *Capi del Consiglio dei Dieci* [CCD], *Taglie*, regs 1-5, 1598-1634; and Enrico Basaglia, 'Giustizia criminale e organizzazione dell'autorità centrale: la Repubblica di Venezia e la questione delle taglie in denaro (secoli XVI-XVII)', in *Stato, società e giustizia*, ed. Cozzi, II (1985), 191-220 (pp.198-9, 205-9). On rising crime on the mainland, see Claudio Povolo, 'Aspetti e problemi dell'amministrazione della giustizia penale nella Repubblica di Venezia, secoli XVI-XVII', in *Stato, società e giustizia*, ed. Cozzi, I (1980), 153-258 (pp.168-76); Vincenzo Manzini, *Trattato del furto e delle varie sue specie*, 2 vols (Turin: UTET, 1902), II, 916.

<sup>45</sup> ASV, SNCr, reg.3, ff.49v-50, 17 Nov.1520; ff.78-9v, 10 Mar.1537; ff.82-3, 6 Sept.1538; f.91, 6 July 1540; ff.110v-11v, 27 Nov.1544 [harsher penalties]; f.121, 4 June 1549; ff.121v-2r, 21 June 1549; ff.122v-3r, 2 Aug.1549; f.162, 29 Mar.1560 [*capitolare* ends 1567].

justice authorities) recorded that stolen items, including clothes and household furnishings, turned up regularly in their office.<sup>46</sup> Specific cases of theft are rare in the archives of these officials, but examples can be found in the records of the *Sant'Uffizio*, the *Censori*, the *Ufficiali al Cattaver* and the *Avogaria di Comun*.<sup>47</sup> They confirm that thefts of clothes and furnishings were prevalent in Venice during the early modern period and also enable us to understand typical incidents of theft.

Domestic thefts were extremely common. Goods were lifted by chance, thanks to a door left carelessly ajar or a visitor left alone in a room.<sup>48</sup> More often, the thieves were people with intimate knowledge of households, such as servants, lodgers, neighbours and also subordinate family members.<sup>49</sup> Theft by servants were a perennial problem.

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<sup>46</sup> ASV, SNCr, reg.3, *Capitolare*, f.138v, 19 Sept. 1553: '...varie et diverse robe robate [sic]... come sonno razzi tapedi spaliere casse vesture sagli cape caldiere et altre simil robbe [sic]...'.

<sup>47</sup> See list of archives in Bibliography; also Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 97, 181, 178, 101, 68-9. Allusions to theft recur in literary sources such as Celio Malespini, *Duecento novelle* (Venice: Al Segno dell'Italia, 1609), 1.16, ff.43-7v, 'Furti ridicolosi di quattro gentilhuomeni succeduti in Vinegia nel tempo di Carnesciale'; *ibid.*, 2.43, ff.146-52, 'Furti perigliosissimi e facetissimi di alcuni giovani, che si ridussero poi nel ben vivere'.

<sup>48</sup> ASV, *Sant'Uffizio* [SU], b.89, proc. Cornelia de' Santi, test. Cattarina, 17 Aug.1634 [furrier stole while at work in a client's home].

<sup>49</sup> ASV, SU, b.59, proc. Marietta Greca, den. Agnesina, 23 Mar. 1587 [lodger]; *ibid.*, b.68, proc. Angelica Romana, test. Michela Dalmata, 4 Dec. 1591 [neighbour]; *ibid.*, proc. Cecilia Simonetti, 8 Aug. 1591 [while at Mass]; *ibid.*, b.13, proc. Margherita de' Vescovi, 25 June 1558 [master away]; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 207, 3 Sept. 1613, loose sheet: 'grossi[ssi]mi

Early in the period, in 1537, Aretino lamented the loss of valuable, finely worked shirts, stolen one night by a manservant keen to return to his home town of Lucca.<sup>50</sup> One hundred years later in 1637, Gerolemo Vacca recounted how his new maidservant, Franceschina, had run off with a great many goods, including several shirts, while he was in bed asleep.<sup>51</sup> The *Censori* registers record numerous similar incidents. Though lacking *de jure* sanction until well into the seventeenth century, these officials regularly prosecuted, *de facto*, servants who were guilty of theft.<sup>52</sup> In 1590, for example, they banished a certain Cesare Bronzon, ex-tailor, and punished Lucrezia, a wetnurse, for contriving to steal food and linen goods from the home of their employer.<sup>53</sup>

Clothes and furnishings were also stolen from trading

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scandoli vengono fatti giornalmente da figlioli... portando robba di casa di loro padri'.

<sup>50</sup> Aretino, *Primo libro*, p.123, no.104, 12 Mar.1537. On earlier thefts by servants, see Piasentini, *Alla luce*, p.90; see also Romano's forthcoming book, *Housecraft-statecraft*.

<sup>51</sup> ASV, SU, b.94, proc. Marietta Battaglia Rubini, test. Gerolemo Vacca, 23 Mar.1637; test. Angela, 25 Mar.; test. Paola, 20 Apr.1638. For a published example, see Predelli, *Alessandro Vittoria*, p.161, 15 May 1567.

<sup>52</sup> The *Signori di Notte al Criminal* retained jurisdiction over servants' thefts until 1626, see ASV, *Censori*, b.1, *Capitolare 2*, f.1, 17 Aug.1541; f.107r, 20/24 Apr.1626. For disputes, see ASV, SNCr, reg.3, ff.183v-4r, 20 Dec.1566; ff.184v-5, 14 Feb.1566 [mv]. On the *Censori*, see Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 177; Romano, 'Regulation', pp.668-9, n.22.

<sup>53</sup> ASV, *Censori*, b.3, *Registri di sentenze, costituiti e riferiti*, reg.2, ff.110v-11, 27 July 1590. For other examples, see *ibid.*, reg.3, f.1, 4 Mar.1598; ff.17v-18r, 24 Apr.1599; f.82r, 17 May 1604; f.141, 13 June 1609.

locations. These thefts, which range from petty pilfering to burglary, were of great concern to the *Signori di Notte al Criminal*. In 1549 they remonstrated against the many thieves and other undesirable persons loitering with intent around the traders and auctions at Rialto.<sup>54</sup> Second-hand dealers were as much at risk as other retailers. In 1594 thieves stole lengths of sumptuous fabric from a certain Master Antonio Venturini, a *strazzaruol* based at Rialto.<sup>55</sup> The Ghetto attracted its own quota of disreputable characters and, in 1591, a Jewish second-hand dealer, Giacob d'Anselmi, was robbed of a large quantity of clothes by such reprobates.<sup>56</sup>

Like domestic crimes, theft in the workplace was often committed by insiders, indeed, workshop embezzlement was a long-standing problem in the city. Although guild

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<sup>54</sup> ASV, SNCr, reg.3, ff.121v-2, 21 June 1549: '...ladri, giotti, et marioli, che non hanno mestier alcuno, quali si... praticano a torno R[ial]to nuovo, et alli banchi et incanti facendo in Rialto molti inconvenientj et ladronezzi...', repeated 24 June 1553.

<sup>55</sup> ASV, UC, b.244, reg.5, f.102r, 9 Feb.1593 [mv]; Brian Pullan, *Rich and poor in renaissance Venice: the social institutions of a Catholic state, to 1620* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), p.562. For an earlier example of theft from a second-hand dealer's shop in the Piazza, see ASV, *Avogaria di Comun* [AC], *Raspe*, reg.3651, f.102v, Luca di Ragusa, 20 Nov.1460; f.104, Giorgio Ungaro, 12 Dec.1460 [I owe this reference to Dott.Stefano Piasentini].

<sup>56</sup> ASV, AC, *Miscellanea Penale*, b.4608, De'Piero, Marcantonio, ff.1-2, 9 Mar.1591; ff.7-8, 15 Mar.1591 [I also owe this reference to Dott.Piasentini]. On shady types in the Ghetto, see ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.44, ff.147v-8 [2nd pag.], 1 June 1563; ASV, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* [CSM], b.62, fasc.165, I, 3 Jan.1575 [mv]; 8 Nov.1581; also Brian Pullan, *The Jews of Europe and the Inquisition of Venice, 1550-1670* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), pp.157,160.

statutes regulated against this activity, documents from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries record incidents of such abuse.<sup>57</sup> Typical offenders were poorly paid apprentices, journeymen and piece-workers. In 1526, Bartolomeo da Lese denounced his new apprentice Lorenzo for stealing various sorts of silk.<sup>58</sup> Iseppo, the tailor's employee who stole a garment of silk *ormesin* belonging to a client in 1581, was a journeyman.<sup>59</sup> Two Jewish tailors charged with theft in 1572 by the Calimani brothers who were second-hand dealers in the Ghetto [see Chapter 3, IV.], were likely to have been also employees.<sup>60</sup> Accusations of theft were clearly levelled at subordinate workers. When silk went missing from the workshop of the weaver Lorenzo Valandi in 1645, fear of being blamed prompted two of his journeymen to perform an heretical ritual to try to ascertain the real thief's identity.<sup>61</sup>

Clothes and furnishings also went astray whilst out of

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<sup>57</sup> CAV, II, 1, 146, no. 39 [shoemakers, 1271]; CAV, II, 1, 313, no. 17, [merciers, 1271]; also ASV, *Arte della seta*, b. 554, *Capitolare*, f. 6v, cap. 16; f. 27r, cap. 64, 8 June 1412; f. 53, 7 Oct. 1458. On pilfering in the Arsenal, see R.C. Davis, *Shipbuilders*, p. 119 [this argument on workshop embezzlement owes a debt to discussions within Prof. Olwen Hufton's 1991 seminar at the EUI, 'Crime and criminal identity in Europe'].

<sup>58</sup> ASV, *Arte della seta*, b. 572, *Denuncie e processi*, reg. 1, f. 1, 16 Feb. 1525 [mv].

<sup>59</sup> ASV, SNC, b. 261, *Presentation in camera*, reg. 1, f. 42, 5 Sept. 1580. On *ormesin*, see Achille Vitali, *La moda a Venezia attraverso i secoli: lessico ragionato* (Venice: Filippi, 1992), p. 273.

<sup>60</sup> ASV, SNCr, reg. 23, *Raspe antiche*, f. 155, 19 Feb. 1571 [mv].

<sup>61</sup> ASV, SU, b. 101, proc. Lorenzo Valandi, 3 July 1645. On these rituals, see below c).

sight of their owners. For instance, it was common for richer Venetians to send their employees to pledge or sell items in the Ghetto: as well as the distance involved in reaching this location, at some point in the period to be seen entering the Ghetto also began to carry a stigma.<sup>62</sup> The risk of losing goods in the process was great. A classic example is provided by the lawyer Antonio Casone who, in 1593, sent two young children to give a woollen cloak to one of the Calimani brothers in the Ghetto. Unfortunately, the item never reached its intended destination.<sup>63</sup> Transporting goods in Venice was evidently fraught with dangers. In 1590 a Jewish second-hand dealer, Isaac della Vida [see Chapter 3, IV.], petitioned the Senate to have use of the Ghetto canals and thus prevent the loss of goods carried through the city's streets.<sup>64</sup> The Senate granted this request, basing its decision on the advice of magistrates with experience of conditions around the Ghetto. Though Isaac della Vida considered water transport to be more reliable, Venetian boatmen were

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<sup>62</sup> Orazio Vecchi, *L'Amfiparnaso: comedia harmonica* (Venice: Angelo Gardano, 1597), III.1.1, III.3. ASV, UC, b.244, reg. 5, f.128, 27 Oct.1594; also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.549.

<sup>63</sup> ASV, UC, b.244, reg.5, f.70v, 16 Mar.1593. For another example, see Brian Pullan, 'Jewish moneylending in Venice: from private enterprise to public service', in *Gli Ebrei e Venezia, secoli XIV-XVIII*, ed. Gaetano Cozzi (Milan: Edizioni Comunità, 1987), pp.671-86 (p.683).

<sup>64</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 118, 13 Dec.1590 [petition, 18 June 1590]: '...è necessario ch[e] io posso tener una riva nella mia bottega per il cargare e discargare le dette tapezzarie e altre robbe e per schicar anco il pericolo che per la distantia della strada puo' occorrer nel smarire quantità di esse...'. On the Ghetto canals, see Chapter 5, II.b).

notorious for making off with passengers' goods.<sup>65</sup>

b) Fraud

Theft was a popular method of purloining goods, but it was only one of the means by which they were misappropriated. The broader interpretation of theft adopted by Marco Ferro indicates how else this could occur - by the illicit retention of other people's property in one's charge. Ferro clarified his definition of the offence by noting that:

it is committed by those who fail to return a pledge having received payment and thus by anyone who keeps the goods of others against their wish.<sup>66</sup>

As Ferro's statement suggests, this type of illegal activity represented fraudulent abuse of the legal

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<sup>65</sup> Aretino, *Primo libro*, p.123, no.104, 12 Mar.1537. On the exploits of boatmen, see also Thomas Coryat, *Coryat's crudities, hastily gobled up in five moneths travells in France, Savoy, Italy, Rhetia... and now dispersed to the nourishment of the travelling members of this kingdome*, 2 vols (Glasgow:James MacLehose,1905), I,311-12; Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan, '*Sopra le acque salse*': *espaces, pouvoir et société à Venise à la fin du moyen âge*, Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo: nuovi studi storici,14; Collection de l'Ecole Française de Rome,156, 2 vols (Rome: Ecole Française de Rome and Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo,1992), p.947; Dennis Romano, 'The gondola as a marker of station in Venetian society', *Renaissance Studies*, 8(1994), 360-74 (pp.365,372).

<sup>66</sup> Ferro, *Dizionario*, pt 5, p.299: 'si commette da quelli, che non restituiscono il pegno dopo che ricevertero il loro pagamento, e cosi da qualunque si ritenesse contro la volontà del patrone la roba altrui'. Priori's definition is more specific: '...è quando un creditore usa il pegno del debitore, overo che il depositario usa & possede la cosa depositata...', *Prattica criminale*, p.183; see also Zorzi, '*Furto nella dottrina*', pp.124-8, and pp.118-19.



processes of exchange previously described, particularly the transfer of goods as collateral.

Although research into criminality in the medieval and early modern periods has increased substantially in recent years, civil offences like fraud are rarely considered by historians.<sup>67</sup> This creates a distorted view of illegality. Fraud (*truffa*) was less sensational than many types of criminal offence, but it was commonplace in urban society.<sup>68</sup> As well as regulating theft, the early Venetian guild statutes also tackle this abuse, showing that both sorts of transgressions had long coexisted.<sup>69</sup> Regular attempts were made to curb fraudulent activities throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However, problems faced in quashing these illicit practices indicate that they not only continued, but were also

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<sup>67</sup> Craig Muldrew, 'Credit and the courts: debt litigation in a seventeenth-century urban community', *Economic History Review*, 46(1993), 23-38 (p.24,n.9). For work on Venetian criminality, see Andrea Zorzi, 'Giustizia criminale e criminalità nell'Italia del tardo medioevo: studi e prospettive di ricerca', *Società e Storia*, 46(1989), 923-65; Piasentini, *Alla luce*, p.10; Gaetano Cozzi, ed., *Stato, società e giustizia nella Repubblica Veneta (sec.XV-XVIII)*, 2 vols (Rome: Jouvence, 1980-85); see also Mario Sbriccoli, 'Fonti giudiziarie e fonti giuridiche: riflessioni sulla fase attuale degli studi di storia del crimine e della giustizia criminale', *Studi Storici*, 29(1988), 491-501.

<sup>68</sup> On '*truffa*', see Zorzi, 'Furto nella dottrina', p.158.

<sup>69</sup> CAV, I, 10-13 [tailors, 1219]; CAV, I, 135-6 [pedlars, second-hand goods, 1233]; CAV, I, 141 [dyers, 1243]; CAV, II, 2, 458-60 [second-hand dealers, 1264-5]; CAV, II, 1, 103 [furriers, 1271].

difficult to suppress.<sup>70</sup>

Clothes and fabrics were often exposed to fraudulent misappropriation. The illegal retention of these goods occurred in urban trade and two pronouncements made during a difficult economic period, 1519 to 1520 [see Chapter 3, II.b)], give a good idea of possible scenarios. In February 1519, the *Provveditori di Comun* together with the *Giustizieri Vecchi* reported that items given to be worked by artisans such as dyers, tailors, cloth shearers and furriers, were being used as securities against the artisans' own debts.<sup>71</sup> The following year, traders (including second-hand dealers) who had been similarly trusted with goods were accused of fleeing the city with them.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> ASV, SNCr, reg.3, *Capitolare*, f.131r, 21 Feb.1518 [mv]; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.21, f.194, 27 Nov.1520; ASV, *Arte della seta*, b.572, *Denuncie e processi*, f.44r, 4 Feb.1526 [mv]. See also ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.44, ff.147v-8r [2nd pag.], 1 June 1563; *ibid.*, reg.49, f.141v, cap.22, 11 July 1573; *ibid.*, filza 368, 29 Dec.1634 [SM report, 22 Dec.].

<sup>71</sup> ASV, SNCr, reg.3, *Capitolare*, f.131r, 21 Feb.1518 [mv]: 'el suol accader molte volte p[er] la necc[ess]ità dellj habitantj in questa città ch[e] le persone dan[n]o a diversi boteghieri come sono tentorj, sartorj, cimadorj, varoterj et tuttj altri boteghieri robbe a far lavorar over a tenzer over a far conzar credendo q[ue]lli de haver le sue robbe indriedo... et lor boteghieri... per desgratia di esser retenutj... dano per pegno della retention over voluntarie impegna le robbe i se trova nelle manj...'.

<sup>72</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.21, f.194r [2nd pag.], 27 Nov.1520: '...zoielieri, oresi [sic], straz[z]aruoli che togliono robe a vender venderigoli, venderigole, sartori et assai altri artesani di quali li zentilhomeni, citadini n[ost]ri et altri se fidano de lassarli le sue vestimente et altri lavori ne le mano, et alcuni scelesti, qua[n]do se vedono le bot[t]eg[h]e piene et p[er] bona sum[m]a de denarj se ne fuzeno cu[m] quelle de questa n[ost]ra cit[t]à...'.

The magistracy of the *Signori di Notte al Civil* was created to deal with this type of offence.<sup>73</sup> A register recording goods presented at its office between 1578 and 1582 records several cases of fraud. An interesting example concerns a tailor who was liable for a garment of silk *ormesin* left by a client and stolen by a workshop employee [see above, II.a)]. While the criminal investigation was pursued by the *Signori di Notte al Criminal*, the civil authorities ensured that the client was reimbursed for his loss.<sup>74</sup> Fraudulent misappropriation was not restricted to goods left by clients, pledges entrusted by other artisans were also prone to misuse. In 1580, at the insistence of a leather-worker, a fellow craftsman was ordered to present certain goods to the *Signori di Notte al Civil*. These items included two cloaks, a black woollen tunic, a belt and eight napkins, and they had changed hands as a guarantee against a consignment of leather.<sup>75</sup>

Employees quitting their jobs with clothes advanced against future service, practised a similar type of fraud. When Lotto dismissed Ercole, his apprentice, with two years of their contract still to go, he sought to be repaid for clothing supplied.<sup>76</sup> The *Censori* registers record many

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<sup>73</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, ff.133v-5, 17 Jan.1544 [mv]; also Giovanni Nicolò Doglioni, *Delle cose notabili della città di Venetia* (Venice: Altobello Salicato, 1606), p.88.

<sup>74</sup> ASV, SNC, b.261, *Presentation in Camera*, reg.1, f.42, 5 Sept.1580.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, f.24v, 22 Jan.1579 [mv]: 'per sua cautio[n]'.

<sup>76</sup> Lotto, *Libro di spese*, p.52, 17 Nov.1552.

analogous incidents and the case of Bernardo, servant to the patrician Vincenzo Capello, is typical. He was condemned to closed prison for a month for leaving his master's employment without reimbursing the value of his clothes.<sup>77</sup>

As the dispute between the two leather-workers suggests, the potential for fraudulent misappropriation was particularly great when goods were exchanged as collateral. Pawnbroking was a sensitive issue in Venice and concerns were expressed about abuses well before the establishment of Jewish bankers in the city in 1509. In 1493 the *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* complained to the Senate that various offences were committed when goods were accepted as pawn-pledges: while in the care of pawnbrokers, items were illicitly rented out and lent to others and were also swapped for goods of lesser value.<sup>78</sup> The strict regulations imposed upon the Venetian pawnbanks in the early sixteenth century can be seen as attempts to address such fears. These regulations became more detailed as the century progressed. In spite of such precautions, clothes and furnishings intended as pawn-pledges were regularly

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<sup>77</sup> ASV, *Censori*, b.3, *Registri di sentenze, costituiti e riferiti*, reg.3, f.96v, 26 Nov.1605.

<sup>78</sup> ASV, *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* [SM], b.1, *Capitolare, 'Liber quartus Judeorum'*, f.68v, 22 Dec.1493 [published in Viola, *Compilazione delle leggi*, V,2, 183-4].

misappropriated.<sup>79</sup>

For a variety of reasons, items were lost in the pledging process. Some goods, as we have seen, did not even reach the pawnbanks and in this respect the role played by brokers [*sanseri*] is particularly significant. Unofficial brokers hung around the gates of the Ghetto Nuovo, offering to pledge items for clients on favourable terms in return for a small fee. Deceptions practised by these agents resulted in a great many frauds and the frequent attempts made to remove these brokers had little effect.<sup>80</sup>

Goods that made it to the pawnbanks were not always pledged according to the rules and this made them difficult to trace. In theory, the bankers' ledgers contained details of all items accepted in the Ghetto, but this was not, in reality, the case. Entries in the 1590s register of the *Ufficiali al Cattaver* indicate that goods could be pawned illicitly. At that time, in spite of the regulations laid down over the previous seventy years, pledges could still be taken on the pawnbroker's word alone without the issue

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<sup>79</sup> ASV, *Senato, Deliberazioni (secreta)*, reg.48, f.91v, 4 June 1519 [pledge-swopping]; *ibid.*, *Terra*, filza 28, 16 Nov. 1558, cap.13 [renting out pledges].

<sup>80</sup> AC, *Miscellanea Penale*, b.4608, De'Piero, Marcantonio, ff.7-8r, 15 Mar.1591; ASV, SM, b.1, *Capitolare*, liber 5, *Terminazioni*, f.112, 26 Jan.1560 [mv]; ASV, UC, b.244, reg.5, f.3v, 24 Jan.1590 [mv]; f.30v, 14 Jan.1591 [mv]; f.84r, 2 Aug. 1593. See ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.11, 28 Nov.1535; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.44, pp.147v-8 [2nd pag.], 1 June 1563 [attempts to remove]. On Ghetto *sanseri*, see also Chapters 3, 5 below.

of a pawn-ticket.<sup>81</sup> At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* were adamant that such fraudulent activities were happening.<sup>82</sup>

Fraud committed by the Jewish bankers should, however, be seen in perspective. Misappropriation of goods left as collateral was certainly not restricted to the Ghetto, but was a general problem in Venice. Early in the period, in 1531, provisions were made to stop similar pledge-abuses being practised by innkeepers.<sup>83</sup> Stringent regulations were also drawn up for employees of government magistracies who were charged with administering pledges.<sup>84</sup> In addition, fraudulent brokers operated outwith the Ghetto. In May 1595, Zamaria Petratin, *sanser*, was accused by Zuane di Bartolomeo Tinto, an elderly silk-weaver based at the Frari, of misappropriating silk *ormesin* under the pretence

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<sup>81</sup> ASV, UC, b.244, reg.5, f.7, 5 Mar.1591: 'su la parola senza bollettin'; see also f.1v, 9 Jan.1590 [mv]; f.61v, 1 Dec.1592; f.64v, 15 Jan. 1592 [mv].

<sup>82</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 207, 3 Sept.1613 [*alta*], SM report, 4 Jan.1612 [mv]: '...gl'hebrei co[m]mettono ben mille fraudi nelle partite [sic], et particolarmente nel notar sempre nei bollettini, et nei giornali le robbe per vecchie, et stracciate, quando ben anco siano buone, et nuove.'

<sup>83</sup> ASV, GN, b.1, *Capitolare*, f.117r, 26 Oct. 1531: 'se scusano haverli persi, imprestadi over esser stati rubati, se potria esser che questi se convertissent in suo proprio uso...[sic]'; see also *ibid.*, b.2, reg.2, f.61r.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, b.2, reg.4, ff.11-12, 17 Apr.1505; f.17, 20 Mar.1511; ff.25-6, 12 Feb.1515 [mv]; ASV, SNCr, reg.3, *Capitolare*, ff.138v-9, 19 Sept.1553; ASV, *Compilazione delle Leggi* [CL], b.301 bis, *Pegni e pegnaroli*, f.30r, 21 Mar.1572; ASV, UC, b.2, reg.3, *Capitolare*, ff.14v-15, 19 Sept.1613; ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare B*, f.80r, 11 May 1624. For similar rules on the mainland, see Varanini, 'Tra fisco e credito', pp.238-43.

of selling it on his behalf.<sup>85</sup>

Regardless of Venetian laws, in the early modern period usury was not the monopoly of the Jewish bankers.<sup>86</sup> Pledges were taken against loans of cash by unauthorised moneylenders and, in the process, were also subjected to misuse. Despite the illicit nature of such loans, fraud victims were not excluded from justice. In 1582, Nicolò Giustinian and Filippo Gritti placed charges against a certain Alessandro, a Jew, for lending them money unofficially at extortionate rates of interest. These two Venetians had often borrowed from Alessandro but, on this occasion, they denounced him because he had surreptitiously rented out a garment pledged by them, which had been subsequently ruined.<sup>87</sup>

Illicit loans of money on pledges like clothes were also made by Christians. In 1578, Donna Maddalena, the wife of a second-hand dealer, was ordered by the *Signori di Notte al Civil* to present a pair of lined, black breeches held against a small loan of 40 *soldi*.<sup>88</sup> The following year

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<sup>85</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare B*, ff.48v-9v, 2 May 1595.

<sup>86</sup> ASV, *Giudici del Piovego*, b.1, *Capitolare*, ff.46v-7, 9 May 1553.

<sup>87</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare B*, ff.32r-3, 19 Jan.1581 [mv].

<sup>88</sup> ASV, SNC, b.261, *Presentation in camera*, reg.1, f.2, 2 Oct. 1578. On female second-hand dealers acting as pawnbrokers, see Merry Wiesner Wood, 'Paltry peddlers or essential merchants? Women in the distributive trades in early modern Nuremberg', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 12, 2 (1981), 3-13(p.9); see also Maria Bogucka, 'Women and economic life in the Polish cities during the 16th-17th centuries', in *La donna*

Zuane di Aghi, who was based at Rialto, was asked to yield a garment and four shirts which he was keeping as a pledge against a loan of 24 *lire*.<sup>89</sup> Long lists of debtors and pledges appear in certain inventories of workshop contents and these suggest that richer artisans such as bakers and mercers also acted as virtual moneylenders.<sup>90</sup>

So far it is clear that in the early modern period clothes and furnishings were vulnerable to misappropriation. To be able to assess the amount of goods coming onto the second-hand market by illegal methods of exchange, the effectiveness of the Venetian justice authorities has also to be taken into consideration.

### c) Administration of justice

While aware of the possible errors to be made in imposing modern notions of efficiency and inefficiency on a completely different historical reality, we do need to know whether or not early modern judicial procedures were successful in tackling petty misdemeanours such as theft

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*nell'economia, secc.XIII-XVIII*, ed. Simonetta Cavaciocchi, Atti delle 'Settimane di studi' e altri convegni, Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica 'F.Datini', Prato, n.s.21 (Florence:Le Monnier,1990), pp.185-94 (pp.190-1).

<sup>89</sup> ASV, SNC, b.261, *Presentation in Camera*, reg.1, f.19v, 12 Nov.1579.

<sup>90</sup> IRE, *Ospedale dei Derelitti* [Der.E], b.195, Agostino Spinelli, fasc.5, *Libro di debitori et creditor et cassa, 1560-93*; ASV, GP, b.351/16, no.93, q. Zuane Polleni, marzer all'insegno del San Lio in Frezzaria, *Notta del libro di debitori della bottega da marzer*, 17 Oct.1629.



and fraud.<sup>91</sup> Only then can we be sure of the role played by these illegal means of supply within the second-hand market.

Responsibility for the misappropriation of movable goods was held by a host of authorities. The *Signori di Notte al Criminal* are usually associated with theft, but they did not enjoy sole jurisdiction.<sup>92</sup> Guild members swore an oath to report light-fingered artisans and to declare stolen goods to their own authorities.<sup>93</sup> As the sixteenth century progressed, the *Censori* tried cases of theft committed by servants, eventually assuming sole responsibility for the offence.<sup>94</sup> Jews were also distinct. The *Signori di Notte al Criminal* did prosecute Jewish thieves, but by rights jurisdiction for the Ghetto

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<sup>91</sup> Basaglia, 'Giustizia criminale', p.193.

<sup>92</sup> ASV, SNCr, reg.3, f.185r, 14 Feb. 1566 [mv]: 'giudici ordinarj, et competenti di furti'; see also ASV, *Arte della seta*, b.554, *Capitolare*, f.53r, 7 Oct.1458; Marin Sanudo, *De origine, situ et magistratibus urbis venetae ovvero la città di Venezia (1493-1530)*, ed. Angela Caracciolo Aricò (Milan: Cisalpino - La Goliardica, 1980), ff.129-30; Ferro, *Dizionario*, pt.5, p.299; Ettore Zorzi, 'Furto nella dottrina', pp.217,225; Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, p.97; Basaglia, 'Giustizia criminale', p.209; Piasentini, *Alla luce*, pp.11,21-2,57.

<sup>93</sup> See above, n.41; also ASV, *Arte della seta*, b.554, *Capitolare*, f.53, 7 Oct.1458; *ibid.*, b.572, *Denuncie e processi*, f.1, 16 Feb.1525 [mv]; f.27r, 18 July 1526. On these authorities, see Tiepolo, 'Arti e artigiani', unpag.; Giovanni Monticolo, *L'Ufficio della Giustizia Vecchia a Venezia dalle origini sino al 1330*, Monumenti della Deputazione Veneta di Storia Patria, Miscellanea, 12 (Venice: Deputazione Veneta di Storia Patria, 1892), pp.20, 38,43; CAV, I, 40-1, n.1; Connell, *Employment*, pp.58-59, 208-9, 218-21; and Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.24,28.

<sup>94</sup> See above and Doglioni, *Delle cose notabili*, p.79.

belonged to the *Ufficiali al Cattaver*.<sup>95</sup> The Jewish community was also involved in matters of theft concerning its members.<sup>96</sup>

From 1545, petty civil offences including fraud were separated from minor criminal transgressions and the *Signori di Notte al Civil* were instituted as the responsible judicial authority.<sup>97</sup> They too shared this jurisdiction. Fraudulent activities involving guild members, like theft, came within the remit of trade authorities and this we have seen in Chapter 1, I.<sup>98</sup> Offences committed by servants involved the *Censori*.<sup>99</sup> Fraud practised in the Ghetto Nuovo was judged by three different groups. Misappropriation by pawnbrokers was the responsibility of the *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* and had

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<sup>95</sup> ASV, SNCr, reg.23, *Raspe antiche*, f.12v, 23 Oct. 1565; f.17v, 20 Aug.1566; f.155v, 19 Feb.1571 [mv]; see also the reference to SNCr trial documents dated 29 Jan.1616 [mv], in ASV, GP, b.363/27, no.21, q. Anselmo Sacerdoto, 14 May 1650. On criminal and civil justice in the Ghetto Nuovo, see ASV, Senato, Terra, filza 184, 5 Oct.1607 [UC report, 4 Sept]; David Kaufmann, 'A contribution to the history of the Venetian Jews', *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 1st series, 2, 2(1890), 297-305 (pp.298-300).

<sup>96</sup> ASV, Senato, Terra, filza 231, 14 Dec.1618 [UC report, 27 July]; see also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.561-2.

<sup>97</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, ff.133v-5, 17 Jan.1544 [mv]. The tasks of the *Signori di Notte* were divided into criminal and civil and shared with the *Signori di Notte al Criminal*, see *Capitolare dei Signori di Notte*, pp.6-7; Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 97-8.

<sup>98</sup> See also ASV, *Arte della seta*, b.572, *Denuncie e processi*, f.44r, 4 Feb.1526 [mv].

<sup>99</sup> ASV, *Censori*, b.1, *Capitolare 2*, f.11v, 10 Feb.1555 [mv]; f.84v, 16 Oct.1611, cap.14.

been so since before the creation of the Ghetto.<sup>100</sup> Fraud committed by Jewish second-hand dealers came within the jurisdiction of the *Ufficiali al Cattaver*, though the Jewish community was also permitted a significant degree of autonomy for civil matters.<sup>101</sup>

It is difficult to ascertain an exact division of authority between the many bodies responsible for criminal and civil misdemeanours. Distinctions were made between public and domestic offences, and transgressions within workshops, like crimes committed by servants against their masters, fell into the second category.<sup>102</sup> Fraud by guild members was investigated by the *Signori di Notte al Civil* as well as the trade authorities.<sup>103</sup> All the magistracies dealt with cases involving goods of relatively minor value, so

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<sup>100</sup> ASV, SM, b.1, *Capitolare*, '*Liber quartus Judeorum*', f.66r, 30 Dec.1393; f.68v, 22 Dec.1493; ASV, *Senato, Deliberazioni (secreta)*, reg.48, ff.91-2r, 4 June 1519.

<sup>101</sup> ASV, UC, b.2, reg.4, *Capitolare*, ff.41v-2, 14 Feb.1581 [mv]; *ibid.*, reg.3, ff.72v-4, 17 Nov.1628. See also ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 231, 14 Dec.1618 [UC report, 27 July]; filza 271, 16 Nov.1624 [UC report, 28 June]; filza 306, 8 Sept.1629 [second UC report, 9 May]. On justice in the Ghetto, see also Luigi Arnaldo Schiavi, 'Gli Ebrei in Venezia e nelle sue colonie: appunti storici su documenti editi ed inediti', *Nuova Antologia di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti* (Rome), 3rd series 47 (1893), 309-333, 485-519 (pp.328-30); Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.561.

<sup>102</sup> ASV, *Arte della seta*, b.554, *Capitolare*, f.53r, 7 Oct. 1458: [workshop thefts] 'sono furti domestici, e fatti da p[er]sone delle quali i mercanti, et altri esercitanti il mestier della seta si confidano'; see also Piasentini, *Alla luce*, p.119. On servants, see ASV, *Censori*, b.1, *Capitolare* 2, f.33, 27 Sept.1566; f.107r, 20 Apr.1626.

<sup>103</sup> See above and also ASV, SNC, b.261, *Presentation in Camera*, reg.1, f.17r, 13 Oct.1579; f.31r, 6 Apr.1581; ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare B*, ff.51v-2r, 15 Sept.1598; CAV, I, XLIV-V.

there was little hierarchical distinction.<sup>104</sup> Nor were the penalties imposed diverse. In civil matters, most of the judicial bodies seized disputed goods and fined wrongdoers.<sup>105</sup> Physical penalties like whipping were outwith the power of the guilds and the Jewish community, but they could be imposed by the *Signori di Notte al Criminal* and the *Censori*, and over time, also by the *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* and the *Ufficiali al Cattaver*.<sup>106</sup> The *Censori* and the *Ufficiali al Cattaver* also made use of the skills and facilities of the *Signori di Notte al Criminal*, whereas the University of the Jews took advantage of the coercive powers enjoyed by the *Ufficiali al Cattaver*.<sup>107</sup>

The involvement of such a large number of different bodies in the administration of justice is unremarkable. Overlaps between authorities were common features of early modern government in Venice and in the rest of Europe. The *ad hoc*

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<sup>104</sup> Both sets of *Signori di Notte* dealt with minor offences, serious transgressions were judged by the *Quarantie*, the *Avogaria di Comun* and the Council of Ten, see Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 63-9, 97-98. On the limits of guild tribunals, see Monticolo, 'Giustizia Vecchia', pp. 20, 41; Connell, *Employment*, pp. 219-20; Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 191.

<sup>105</sup> BMC, M.St., f. 181, 7 Apr. 1590; ASV, SNC, b. 1, *Capitolare B*, f. 56, 12 May 1608.

<sup>106</sup> ASV, SNCr, reg. 3, *Capitolare*, ff. 110v-11v, 27 Nov. 1544; ASV, *Censori*, b. 1, *Capitolare 2*, f. 1, 17 Aug. 1541; f. 22, 22 Jan. 1560 [mv]; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 161, 28 Feb. 1601 [mv], [SM report, 2 Jan.]; *ibid.*, filza 207, 3 Sept. 1613, cap. 23; ASV, UC, b. 242, reg. 1, f. 20r, 9 Nov. 1568.

<sup>107</sup> ASV, *Censori*, b. 3, reg. 1, f. 45r, 30 Dec. 1564 [whipping]; ASV, SU, b. 87, proc. Felice Magalotti, test. Luca, UC functionary, 4 Sept. 1629 [prison]; ASV, UC, b. 244, reg. 5, f. 140v, 2 May 1595; f. 171v, 29 Apr. 1596 [Jews].

manner in which magistracies were created and new powers bestowed upon existing councils, resulted in many coincidences.<sup>108</sup> What does need to be judged is whether this system of plural jurisdictions was effective at dealing with misappropriation.

The various magistracies were certainly active in tackling pilferage. In 1560, the *Signori di Notte al Criminal* noted that they were continuously forming trials for theft, and a great many of them at that.<sup>109</sup> The *Censori* recorded a similar situation and registers of sentences passed by these magistrates show that they were often preoccupied with servants' theft.<sup>110</sup> In the seventeenth century, the *Ufficiali al Cattaver* lamented the volume of their commitments and other officials responsible for civil justice were equally busy.<sup>111</sup> Active involvement in the

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<sup>108</sup> Ruggiero, *Violence*, p.10; Luciano Pezzolo, *L'oro dello stato: società, finanza e fisco nella Repubblica Veneta del secondo '500*, Studi veneti (Venice: Il Cardo,1990), p.24; and Casarin, *I vagabondi*, p.28.

<sup>109</sup> ASV, SNCr, reg.3, *Capitolare*, f.162r, 29 Mar.1560; see also *ibid.*, reg.20, *Rei espediti*.

<sup>110</sup> ASV, *Censori*, b.1, *Capitolare 2*, f.11v, 10 Feb.1555 [mv]; f.62r, 20 Feb.1595 [mv]; *ibid.*, b.3, *Registri di sentenze, costituiti, e riferiti*, reg.2 (1570-91), reg.3 (1598-1609).

<sup>111</sup> ASV, UC, b.2, reg.3, f.57v, 20 July 1623: 'vengono espediti molti casi criminali per l'officio nostro...'; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 271, 16 Nov.1624 [UC report, 28 June]: '...le froaudi, et transgressioni, dalle quali con cosi frequenti indoglienze [sic] viene tormentato il magistrato nostro...'. ASV, SNC, b.1., *Capitolare B*; *ibid.*, bb.216-7, *Inventari d'asporti (1583-1638)*; b.261, *Presentation in camera (1578-1650)*; b.271, *Vendite (1601-41)*; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 141, 31 Jan.1596 [mv], [SM report]; *ibid.*, filza 161, 28 Feb.1601 [mv], [SM report, 2 Jan.]; *ibid.*, filza 271, 16 Nov.1624 [UC report, 28 June].

administration of justice did not mean, however, that these authorities had a significant impact on petty crime.

In spite of incessant efforts to punish perpetrators, misappropriation of movable goods continued unabated throughout the period. Similar complaints about theft and fraud were made in 1506, in 1544, in 1597 and in 1640, and the judicial authorities were powerless in the face of this persistent lawlessness.<sup>112</sup> A clear sign of their general impotence is that measures introduced to stamp out petty misdemeanours were frequently re-enacted.<sup>113</sup> The inadequacy of early modern policing is well-known and the situation in Venice was no different from that of many other European cities.<sup>114</sup> A brief explanation may be offered of why Venetian officials were so unsuccessful in

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<sup>112</sup> *Leggi criminali venete*, ed. Ettore della Giovanna and Arturo Sorgato (Venice:RDS Editori,1980),f.23, 20 Aug.1506; f.135v, 27 Mar.1640; ASV,SNCr,reg.3, *Capitolare*,f.110v, 27 Nov. 1544; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 141, 31 Jan.1596 [mv], [SM report]. See also Manzini, *Trattato del furto*,II,831-2.

<sup>113</sup> ASV, SNCr, reg.3,*Capitolare*,ff.82-3,6 Sept.1538; f.91, 6 July 1540; ff.110v-11, 27 Nov. 1544; f.121, 4 June 1549 [theft]; ASV,CCD,*Notatori*, reg.11,28 Nov.1535; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.44, ff.147v-8 [2nd pag.], 1 June 1563; ASV, UC, b.242, reg.1, ff.11v-12, 9 Sept.1567; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 141, 31 Jan.1596 [mv]; *ibid.*, filza 161, 28 Feb.1601 [mv];*ibid.*, filza 207,3 Sept.1613 [fraud by Ghetto brokers]; ASV, *Censori*, b.1, *Capitolare 2* [servants' theft repeats].

<sup>114</sup> Renzo Derosas, 'Moralità e giustizia a Venezia nel '500-'600: gli Esecutori contro la Bestemmia', in *Stato, società e giustizia*, ed.Cozzi,I (1980),431-528; Basaglia,'Giustizia criminale'; Robert C.Davis, 'The police and the *pugni*: the limits of social control in early modern Venice', to be published in *Absolutism and urban space in early modern Italy*, ed. R.B.Litchfield and G.Simcox (Princeton:Princeton University Press [1996(?)]); *idem*, *The war of the fists: popular culture and public violence in late renaissance Venice* (New York:Oxford University Press,1994), pp.140-55.

preventing fraud and theft.

The multiplicity of authorities involved in the administration of justice did have negative repercussions. The division of powers resulted in a fragmentary and disunited legal apparatus which was not intended to function as an integrated system, and this meant that its overall effectiveness was severely limited.<sup>115</sup> Jurisdictional overlaps between the various magistracies also made disagreements between them common. As a result, time, energy and capital were expended on demarcation disputes instead of justiciary affairs.<sup>116</sup>

Methods used to tackle petty misdemeanours reveal another weakness in the system. Though many trials were held and sentences were passed, culprits were not discouraged from re-offending.<sup>117</sup> As far as punishments for theft were concerned, banishment from Venice was consistently ignored and the threat of torture or disfigurement failed to act as a deterrent.<sup>118</sup> As well as ineffectual techniques, the

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<sup>115</sup> Cf. Ruggiero, *Violence*, pp.10,39.

<sup>116</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare B*, f.15, 11 Dec.1563; ff.46v-7, 30 Oct.1591; ff.47v-8, 23 Dec.1591; ff.52v-3, 25 May 1602; f.62, 2 July 1612 [SNC v SNCr]; ff.32v-3, 19 Jan.1581 [mv], [SNC v SM]; also ASV, *Censori*, b.1, *Capitolare 2*, f.33, 27 Sept.1566 [Censori v SNC/SNCr]; f.107r, 24 Apr.1626 [Censori v SNCr]; ASV, SNCr, reg.3, ff.183v-4, 20 Dec.1566 [SNCr v Censori].

<sup>117</sup> ASV, SNCr, reg.3, *Capitolare*, f.162r, 29 Mar.1560.

<sup>118</sup> On punishments for theft, see Zorzi, 'Furto nella dottrina', pp.177-204. Many entries refer to their being ignored, see ASV, SNCr, reg.3, *Capitolare*. Harsher penalties were introduced in 1544, see *ibid.*, ff.110v-11v; also *Leggi criminali venete*. On the use of torture by the *Signori di*



personnel were also found wanting.

Responsibility for petty crime was not prestigious and patricians delegated humdrum policing to minor officials.<sup>119</sup> These officials left much to be desired. Two entries in the statute-book of the *Signori di Notte al Criminal* reveal the calibre of employee engaged by that magistracy. In 1555, gaolers were accused of seizing the few remaining clothes off poor prisoners' backs to pay for their own expenses.<sup>120</sup> Five years later, the *Signori* learned that many of their guards had prior convictions for theft and continued to frequent criminal acquaintances.<sup>121</sup> Some insight into unfavourable attitudes towards these officials can also be gained. At the end of the sixteenth

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*Notte al Criminal*, see ASV, SU, b.46, proc. Veronica Franco, 13 Oct. 1580; b.67, proc. Orsolina da Mestre, 16 May 1591, test. Joannetta Occhialina; Pietro Casola, *Viaggio di Pietro Casola a Gerusalemme* (Milan: Paolo Ripamonti Carpano, 1855); also Ruggiero, *Violence*, pp. 24, 28-9; Piasentini, *Alla Luce*, pp. 32-6.

<sup>119</sup> On the low status of *Signori di Notte al Criminal*, see Gasper Contareno, *The commonwealth and government of Venice*, trans. Lewes Lewkenor, English experience series, 101, facs. (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1969), p. 98; Cozzi, 'Authority and the law', p. 299; Ruggiero, *Violence*, pp. 15-6.

<sup>120</sup> ASV, SNCr, reg. 3, *Capitolare*, f. 145r, 29 Mar. 1555: '...li vardiani nostri della camera sono si impij et inhumanj ch[e] a beni ch[e] essi rej non habbiano altro al mo[n]do cha [sic] uno gabba[no] in dosso, et una camisa q[ue]lli ge [sic] cavano di dosso per sue spese...'.

<sup>121</sup> ASV, SNCr, reg. 3, *Capitolare*, f. 162v, 6 Apr. 1560: '...si attrovano molti officiali [sic] ch[e] sono sta altre volte com[m]u[tati p[er] il p[rese]nte off[ici]o p[er] importation de lattrocinio... no[n] cessa[no] di praticar con giotti, et ladri sotto coperta di homeni da bene...'. For earlier problems with personnel, see Elisabeth Pavan, 'Police des mœurs, société et politique à Venise à la fin du moyen âge', *Revue Historique*, 264 (1980), 241-88 (p. 262).



century, Tommaso Garzoni gave an extremely negative account of these functionaries (*sbirri*) and this view can be reinforced.<sup>122</sup> In 1644, Stefano Valetta, a second-hand dealer, was reported as saying that: '...money and friendship smother justice and giving a pair of silk hose to a captain of the watch shuts everyone up...'.<sup>123</sup>

Corrupt practices were endemic in Venetian magistracies and, given the Republic's poor record of paying functionaries' salaries, this is hardly surprising.<sup>124</sup> Superiors were in no doubt as to the adverse effect of these practices. In 1582, the *Ufficiali al Cattaver* complained of financial gifts received by their agents from the Jews which placed them under an obligation.<sup>125</sup> The *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* reported in 1602 that similar understandings reached with their own functionaries

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<sup>122</sup> Garzoni, *Piazza*, disc.151, 'De'sbirri, o zaffi, o agozini', pp.911-5: 'tradendo per dinari la giustitia occultamente'.

<sup>123</sup> ASV, SU, b.101, proc. Stefano Valetta, *strazzaruol*, den. Francesca della Fonte, 17 Mar.1644: '...dinari e amicitia soffocano la Giustitia [sic], e che dando un paro di calzette di seda ad un capitano, farà tacere ogn'uno...'. See Pullan, *Jews of Europe*, pp.103,253; and also Ruggiero, *Violence*, p.15.

<sup>124</sup> On corruption, see David Chambers and Brian Pullan, eds, *Venice: a documentary history, 1450-1630* (Oxford:Blackwell, 1992), p.99. On non-payment of salaries, see Derosas, 'Moralità e giustizia', pp.495-505 [see also Chapter 6, II. below].

<sup>125</sup> ASV, UC, b.2, reg.4, f.43v, 19 Apr.1582: '...ministri dell'off[icio] n[ost]ro sono soliti haver da loro Hebrei certa quantità ordinaria de danaro il che da loro è interpetrado [sic] regalo con el che procrepano [sic] l'animo di ministri, et li diviano [sic] in qualche parte dal debito loro...'. See also *ibid.*, f.44r, 22 May 1582; and Roth, *Venice*, p.123.

prevented Jewish bankers being disciplined for breaking the rules set out in their residence contracts.<sup>126</sup>

As with the guild system [see Chapter 1], the promotion of particular interests was intrinsic to the administration of Venetian justice and it can be traced at every level, from the demarcation disputes between magistracies at the top, to the self-motivated opportunism of petty officials at the bottom. This fact of early modern life has to be remembered when assessing the zeal with which judicial authorities carried out their responsibilities.<sup>127</sup> If an obligation coincided with their interests it was more likely to succeed and the guilds offer an excellent example.

The lack of detailed evidence, as Mackenney has noted, makes it hard ascertain the effectiveness of trade justice.<sup>128</sup> The *mariegola* of the guild of second-hand dealers does indicate, however, that that particular guild was much less concerned about offences committed by its own members than the transgressions of other artisans. A

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<sup>126</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 161, 28 Feb.1601 [mv], [SM report, 2 Jan.]: '...p[er] l'intelligentia [sic] che possono haver essi banchieri con quelli che devenano [sic] venir all'officio [sic] n[ost]ro et denuntiar [sic] le sue sinistre operationi [sic]'.

<sup>127</sup> On this theme, see the conference proceedings *Economia e corporazioni: il governo degli interessi nella storia d'Italia dal medioevo all'età contemporanea*, ed. Cesare Mozzarelli (Milan: Giuffrè, 1988), especially section II.

<sup>128</sup> Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, p.28.

mercator selling cloth associated with the second-hand dealers' trade was immediately challenged, whereas illicit activities with furs involving *strazzaruoli* were prosecuted by the furriers.<sup>129</sup> Trade justice can therefore be seen as fitting in with the guild's monopolistic strategies described in Chapter 1, though this did not necessarily impede its effectiveness. The pursuit of its own interests did, for example, encourage the guild to act as an additional policing body, keeping public auctions under close surveillance [see Chapters 1, I. and 5, III.b)]. In 1602, the guild was positively obliged to supervise these events and was authorised to take along functionaries employed by the *Giustizia Vecchia* to tackle wrongdoers.<sup>130</sup> Along with the guilds of mercers, goldsmiths, drapers and tailors, second-hand dealers also visited the Ghetto Nuovo on the look out for illicit activities on the part of their new trading rivals, the *Ebrei tedeschi* [see Chapter 4, II.].<sup>131</sup>

Successful administration of justice also depended on victims referring to the proper authorities and this did not always happen. The *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* gave one explanation for this: that the poor were ignorant of

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<sup>129</sup> BMC, M.St., f.196, 5 Dec.1596; f.111, 2 Jan.1564 [mv].

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., f.27, cap.35, 15 Dec.1428; ff.197-8, 13 Apr.1602.

<sup>131</sup> ASV, *Collegio, Notatorio*, reg.49, f.82v [2nd pag.], 1 June 1587 [refers to interference by the guilds of tailors and second-hand dealers 'p[er] interesse loro'].

judicial procedures.<sup>132</sup> However, to make a formal denunciation, an identifiable culprit was required, and, in spite of the domestic nature of many misdemeanours, a guilty party was not always distinguishable.<sup>133</sup> For this and other reasons, recourse was had to unorthodox means in order to determine the identity of offenders - the sort of means employed by Lorenzo Valandi's journeymen in 1645 [see above, II.a)]. They embraced magical experiments and unconventional prayers and we know of them because they were subjected to close scrutiny by the Inquisition.<sup>134</sup> If a name was forthcoming, then the authorities might be informed, but the justice system was also deliberately bypassed.

Fraud and theft occurring in domestic settings were also dealt with privately.<sup>135</sup> Distrust of magisterial

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<sup>132</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 161, 28 Feb.1601 [mv], [SM report, 2 Jan.]: 'p[er] l'inesperientia [sic] di poveri'.

<sup>133</sup> On denunciations, see Priori, *Prattica criminale*, pp.9-11.

<sup>134</sup> ASV, SU, b.13, proc. Margherita de'Vescovi, 25 June 1558; *ibid.*, b.68, proc. Angelica Romana, test. Michela Dalmata, 4 Dec.1591; *ibid.*, b.86, proc. Orsetta, 31 July 1628. On these practices, see Ruth Martin, *Witchcraft and the Inquisition in Venice 1550-1650* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), pp.113-23; Dino De' Antoni, 'Processi per stregoneria e magia a Chioggia nel XVI secolo', *Ricerche di Storia Sociale e Religiosa*, 4 (July-Dec.1973), 187-228 (pp.216-19).

<sup>135</sup> ASV, SU, b.101, proc. Lorenzo Valandi, 3 July 1645. For the *compromissum* system whereby guild disputes were settled out of court, see Connell, *Employment*, pp.208-9. On settling religious dissent within the family and workplace, see John Martin, 'L'inquisizione romana e la criminalizzazione del dissenso religioso a Venezia all'inizio dell'età moderna', *Quaderni Storici*, n.s.66 (1987), 777-802 (pp.780-1) [Martin argues that this diminished over time].

functionaries and dislike of the harsh nature of criminal procedures may have deterred appeals to the authorities concerning offences committed by close acquaintances. The *corda*, a method of torture employed by the *Signori di Notte al Criminal*, was certainly notorious.<sup>136</sup> It is just as likely, however, that the ineffectiveness of judicial authorities discouraged their use. For whatever reason, victims of fraud and theft found alternative means of tracing their goods.

By the 1580s a system had developed within the Ghetto Nuovo whereby the owners of misappropriated goods offered to reimburse anyone who had purchased their property or accepted it in pledge. Pressure was brought to bear by the rabbis who threatened to excommunicate members of their congregations failing to yield goods.<sup>137</sup> Jealous of any independent actions by the Jews, the *Ufficiali al Cattaver* consistently disputed their right to operate this system. Yet, they also had recourse to the rabbis, which would

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<sup>136</sup> ASV, SU, b.46, proc. Veronica Franco, test. 13 Oct.1580; *ibid.*, b.67, proc. Orsolina da Mestre, 16 May 1591, test. Joannetta Occhialina. For an illustration and a description of the technique, see John Martin, *Venice's hidden enemies: Italian heretics in a renaissance city* (Berkeley:University of California Press, 1993), pp.180-1.

<sup>137</sup> On excommunication, see Leon da Modena, *Historia de' riti hebraici, vita & osservanza de gl'Hebrei di questi tempi*, rev. edn (Venice:Giovanni de'Paoli, 1714), p.44; Roth, *Venice*, pp.130-1; Renzo Toaff, *La nazione ebrea a Livorno e a Pisa (1591-1700)* (Florence:Olschki, 1990), pp.230-2. For its use for the same purpose in Padua, see Antonio Ciscato, *Gli Ebrei in Padova (1300-1800)* (Padua: Società Cooperativa Tipografica, 1901), p.105.

suggest that it proved relatively successful.<sup>138</sup> Though evidence is rare, the process does seem to have worked. In 1595, some tapestries and a rug came to light thanks to a threat of excommunication and to arbitration carried out by two rabbis.<sup>139</sup>

It is clear, then, that early modern judicial procedures in Venice did not unduly hinder misappropriated goods from finding their way onto the second-hand market. The jumble of different justice authorities could hardly cope with the volume of transgressions in the city, let alone prevent crime. The alternative system developed in the Ghetto, though arguably more effective, did not resolve matters. Since the aim of the process was the return of misappropriated goods to their rightful owners and not the punishment of wrongdoers, it did not act as a deterrent. In fact, the system in the Ghetto positively encouraged crime: the thief or swindler was rewarded for taking goods and the receiver of illicitly obtained items was reimbursed for his outlay; only the owner of the property lost out. This mention of receivers is pertinent and it brings us on to a key question about illegal means of exchange: how did misappropriated goods actually come onto the second-hand

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<sup>138</sup> ASV, UC, b.2, reg.4, ff.41v-2, 14 Feb.1581 [mv]; *ibid.*, reg.3, ff.72v-4, 17 Nov.1628. See also ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 231, 14 Dec.1618 [UC report, 27 July]; *ibid.*, filza 271, 16 Nov.1624 [UC report, 28 June]; and for cooperation, ASV, UC, b.244, reg.5, 1590-97, e.g. f.1v, 9 Jan.1590 [mv].

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, f.139v, 13 Mar.1595: '...venute in luce p[er] vigor d[i] una scomunica'.

market?

d) The trade in misappropriated goods

In the fourteenth century, the *Signori di Notte* recorded testimonies given by receivers of stolen goods when prosecuting thieves.<sup>140</sup> Detailed evidence of illicit means of distribution is rare for the early modern period, though judicial energies continued to be directed at outlets where officials believed stolen goods would be sold.<sup>141</sup>

Concerns in guild statutes about craftsmen receiving stolen goods are understandable given that clothes and furnishings could be altered beyond recognition by artisans with appropriate skills.<sup>142</sup> The silk garment stolen by a journeyman tailor in 1580 [see above, II.a)], was sold to a maker of woollen caps and it is surely no coincidence that silk was used to line such caps.<sup>143</sup> The earliest statutes of second-hand dealers regulate against such

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<sup>140</sup> Cecchetti cites them in *La vita dei Veneziani nel 1300: le vesti*, facs. (Bologna: Forni, 1980), pp. 69, 71-2, 73, 77, 92-3; see also Piasentini, *Alla luce*, p. 71 [I am grateful to Dott. Piasentini for letting me consult his theft data-base recording receivers]. On the use of testimonies, see Ruggiero, *Violence*, p. 30; and on targeting receivers of stolen goods, see Manzini, *Trattato del furto*, II, 787-9.

<sup>141</sup> Doglioni, *Delle cose notabili*, p. 89. For very early references to this policy, see ASV, SNCr, reg. 3, *Capitolare*, f. 1, 7 Aug. 1237; f. 27v, 4 Aug. 1306. On the legal framework, see Priori, *Prattica criminale*, pp. 186-7.

<sup>142</sup> CAV, II, 2, 458.

<sup>143</sup> ASV, SNC, b. 261, *Presentation in camera*, reg. 1, f. 42, 5 Sept. 1580; on silk-lined 'barete', see Vitali, *Moda*, pp. 46-8.

improper activities, yet the fourteenth-century testimonies recorded by the *Signori di Notte* show that, at that time, traders in used goods were typical recipients of misappropriated items.<sup>144</sup> Few details survive from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but glimpses of illicit pursuits within the second-hand trade can be caught. In 1565, for example, a certain Francesco, a second-hand dealer in the Frezzaria (a busy shopping street near Piazza San Marco), admitted buying used goods from an untraceable source.<sup>145</sup> Jewish second-hand dealers, like Christian ones, were suspected of buying stolen goods and this is one of the reasons why the alternative system of retrieving goods was established in the Ghetto. In 1618 the *Ufficiali al Cattaver* tried to introduce a practice then required of guild members, whereby Jewish *strazzaruoli* were to register their purchases. The express purpose of this action was to trace thieves.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> CAV,I,40-1,n.1; also CAV,I,137; CAV,II,2,463-4. For fifteenth-century references to *strazzaruoli* and theft, see ASV, MC, *Deliberazioni*, reg.21, *Liber Leona*, f.141v [2nd pag.], 20 Jan.1403; *ibid.*, reg.22, *Liber Ursa*, f.32r [2nd pag.], 11 June 1419 [I am indebted to Dott. Stefano Piasentini for these references].

<sup>145</sup> BMC, M.St., ff.111-12, 2 Jan.1564 [mv].

<sup>146</sup> ASV, *Senato,Terra*, filza 231, 14 Dec.1618 [UC report, 27 July]: '...accio[ché] si posse vedere da chi fosse stato robbata detta robba'. On Florentine second-hand dealers and stolen goods, see ASF, *Arte dei rigattieri, linaiolì e sarti*, no.7, *Codice cartaceo contenute le deliberazioni de' consoli e statutori de' rigattieri (1408-1552)*, f.88, 29 Apr.1516; ASF, *Università dei linaiolì*, no.1, *Codice cartaceo contenente lo statuto de' linaiolì (1549-52)*, f.41v, 12 Dec. 1549; no.3, 1578, f.83.



Writing at the end of the sixteenth century, Garzoni portrayed second-hand dealers as disreputable characters. He described a scenario in which unscrupulous *strazzaruoli* encouraged youths to steal clothes from their homes which they then bought for next to nothing.<sup>147</sup> In a case bearing a striking resemblance to Garzoni's example, Andrea Nunciata, a Jewish convert, was charged with receiving stolen goods and spent a year in the prison of the *Signori di Notte al Criminal*. He was accused of buying goods from a young man which had been stolen from the youth's brother-in-law.<sup>148</sup>

In addition to second-hand dealers, taverns were likely places for marketing misappropriated goods. Once again, Garzoni had no doubts about the nature of these establishments, considering them proverbial dens of iniquity which attracted scoundrels, swindlers, knavish servants and other assorted ruffians.<sup>149</sup> Surviving

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<sup>147</sup> Garzoni, *Piazza*, disc.153, 'De' stracciaroli, over barattieri', p.918: '...s'avezzano i gioveni con la commodità loro a rubbare in casa qualche cosa usata, & la portano in ghetto, overo in stracciarìa, dove senza saputa de' padri, i stracciaruoli ghiottoni comprano una veste d'ormisino, o di raso, che sarà stata portata tre o quattro volte solamente per un par di scudi...'

<sup>148</sup> ASV, SU, b.91, proc. Andrea Nunciata, 19 Jan.1634: '...mi querelorno [sic] alli Signori di Notte al Criminale, come havessi compro alcune robbe da un giovine [sic], qual fecero andar via da Venetia, con dire, che d[ett]o giovine l'havesse rubbate ad un suo cugnato p[er] la qual causa mi fecero stare nei cammerotti un anno al scuro...'

<sup>149</sup> Garzoni, *Piazza*, disc.98, 'De' gli hosti, e bettolieri', p.709: 'qui miri andamenti strani, guardi da ghiotti, cenni da furbi, motti da marioli, carezze da boia, servitù furfantasca, liti per un quattrino, giuochi da disperato,

institutional sources reveal that few illusions were harboured about taverns. In 1455, the Council of Ten had described unlicensed drinking haunts (*furatole*) as refuges for thieves and banished criminals, and little had changed by 1515. In that year, fears were expressed that new wine shops set up for the poor would degenerate to a similar level.<sup>150</sup> The amount of official attention directed at hostelrys throughout the period reveals the authorities to have been acutely aware of the potential for illegality in these places.<sup>151</sup>

John Martin has shown that Venetian taverns created an 'atmosphere of trust' which freed strangers to express their own opinions.<sup>152</sup> No doubt, this environment also favoured more tangible forms of exchange. In 1584, Vidal

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spassi da mille forche, trattamenti da impiccati, e pagamenti che ti scortican la pelle di dosso, e ti fanno restare a guisa d'un povero Bragadino'.

<sup>150</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, f.6, 13 Sept.1455; ASV, GN, b.1, *Capitolare*, ff.88v-9r, 13 Sept.1515. Wine-shop licences were restricted, see ASV, GN, b.2, reg.2, *Capitolare secondo*, f.44, 12 June 1514. On *furatole* and problems associated with them, see Crouzet-Pavan, '*Sopra le acque salse*', pp.861-2.

<sup>151</sup> The *Capi di Sestieri* had: '...curam circa hostarias et tabernas et conversantibus in eis, et qualiter tenenter in eis circare', ASV, SNC, *Capitolare A*, f.1r, nd; Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 98; Pavan, '*Moeurs*', pp.246, 271. On *sbirri* going '...per le bettole, per le piazze, per gli ridotti, per le baccane...', see Garzoni, *Piazza*, disc.151, '*De' sbirri*', f.913. For officials responsible for *furatole*, see ASV, GN, b.2, reg.2, ff.36r-7r, 14 Nov.1510. See also Frederic C. Lane, *Venice: a maritime republic*, 4th edn (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), p.347.

<sup>152</sup> J. Martin, '*Popular culture*', pp.118-9, 123-4; idem, *Hidden enemies*, pp.170-2; see also Derosas, '*Moralità e giustizia*', pp.449-50.

Spagnoletto and Cervetto, two Jewish traders, considered the San Zorzi tavern at San Bartolomeo (Rialto) to be a good place to sell pairs of breeches.<sup>153</sup> In 1549, the *Signori di Notte al Criminal* singled out innkeepers as probable receivers of stolen goods, believing them to accept items as payment in kind for services rendered.<sup>154</sup> Misappropriated goods were also received as tavern-pledges. In 1599, Iseppo di Zamaria, a functionary of the *Camera del Purgo* (the woollen-cloth industry employers' organisation), seized cloth at a tavern-pledge auction which had previously been stolen.<sup>155</sup> As this example suggests, auctions, too, were used to pass on ill-gotten gains. Worries about the provenance of items sold at these events, along with other concerns, motivated similar efforts on the part of Venetian authorities to control public sales [see Chapter 5, III.a)].

As we have seen, misappropriated goods were just as likely to be used as pawn-pledges. The residence contracts of the

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<sup>153</sup> ASV, UC, b.243, reg.4, f.181r, 12 Dec.1584; f.181v, 20 Dec. 1584; ff.181v-2r, 18 Mar.1585. On taverns as locations for business and thieves, see Casarin, *I vagabondi*, pp.177,203.

<sup>154</sup> ASV, SNCr, reg.3, ff.122v-3, 2 Aug.1549: 'si ritrovano in questa città alcunj malignj, et tristi homenj et femine che ogni giorno et notte danno r[e]capito a marjolj, ladrij, taiaborse et altrj furfa[n]tj et homenj dj mala sorte, da[n]dollj etia[m] da manzar et beber, et qua[n]do non ha[nn]o d[e]narj lj dan[n]o in credenza, et da loro tuoleno non soli lj d[e]narj ma stja robbe robbate [sic]'. For earlier references to innkeepers as receivers, see CAV, I, 40-1, n.1; Piasentini, *Alla luce*, p.71.

<sup>155</sup> ASV, GN, b.29, filza 18, *Notifiche e riferite di pegni*, 17 May 1599. On the *Camera del Purgo*, see Lane, *Venice*, p.313.

*Ebrei tedeschi* protected pawnbrokers in the Ghetto Nuovo from financial loss if they unknowingly accepted stolen goods.<sup>156</sup> The alternative system of retrieving purloined goods in the Ghetto suggests that pawnbrokers did, unconsciously or otherwise, accept such goods, and this notion is reinforced by entries in the registers of the *Ufficiali al Cattaver*. In July 1592, for example, information was sought about two garments lined with silk which had been stolen from the patrician Sebastian Morosini and were believed to have ended up in the Ghetto.<sup>157</sup>

All this suggests that in early modern Venice it was relatively easy for goods taken by theft or fraud to find their way onto the second-hand market. An infrastructure of outlets existed, consisting of second-hand dealers, taverns, auctions and pawnbrokers, by which misappropriated goods could be readily dispersed.<sup>158</sup> As the centre of most pawnbroking activities in the city, the site of a flourishing second-hand trade and being within easy reach of a number of disreputable taverns, the Ghetto Nuovo had become, by the end of the sixteenth century, a particularly

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<sup>156</sup> ASV, *Senato, Deliberazioni (Secreta)*, reg.48, f.91r, 4 June 1519; *ibid.*, *Terra*, filza 122, 7 Dec. 1591, cap.19. This was also the case for unwitting buyers of stolen goods, see Priori, *Prattica criminale*, p.187.

<sup>157</sup> ASV, UC, b.244, reg.5, f.46v, 10 July 1592. For other examples, see *ibid.*, f.44v, 18 June 1592; f.62v, 24 Dec. 1592; f.91v, 9 Sept. 1593; f.102r, 9 Feb. 1593 [mv].

<sup>158</sup> It lasted well into the eighteenth century, see ASV, CL, b.368 'Vagabondi', f.291, 30 Dec. 1775.

attractive place for selling illegally procured goods.<sup>159</sup>

'Alternative' means of exchange, both legal and illegal, were diffuse within Venice. These other mechanisms of supply coexisted with the traditional guild structure presented in Chapter 1, and they, together with the guild, formed part of the second-hand market. Having been introduced to the basic structures of the market, we can now begin to explore them in greater detail and to trace their development over the period as a whole.

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<sup>159</sup> On *osterie* at San Geremia, San Gerolamo and in the Ghetto Vecchio, which attracted thieves and prostitutes, see ASV, CSM, b.62, fasc.165, 1, 3 Jan. 1575 [mv]; on this aspect of the Ghetto, see also Roth, *Venice*, p.132

### Chapter 3 TRADERS

The Venetian market in second-hand clothes and furnishings was not monopolised by a single group of traders. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, second-hand dealers included members of a specialised guild along with other types of retailers who acted independently of regular commercial organisations. These traders continued to participate in the market from around 1500 to the middle of the seventeenth century. During that period they were joined by another group of dealers made up of *Ebrei tedeschi*. Here we will consider how these newcomers fitted in with the traditional structures introduced above, focusing particularly on the relationship between the incoming Jewish dealers and the established *arte degli strazzaruoli*. Although the guild reacted strongly to the Jewish dealers, it could not prevent them from trading and was thus also obliged to operate alongside this other set of traders.

#### I. Continuity and Change

Continuity was an important feature of the second-hand market in early modern Venice. 'Alternative' exchanges of used clothes and furnishings, as we have seen, had been under way for some time and they persisted throughout the period. These exchanges were associated with a wide range of people including artisans, pawnbrokers, innkeepers, unscrupulous officials, thieves and swindlers, as well as

a large proportion of the ordinary inhabitants of Venice. The guild of second-hand dealers also carried on largely as before. In the early 1430s, the trade in old clothes and furnishings had been described as the most noble craft in the city. That was doubtless an exaggeration and in any case other guilds claimed the same distinction, but the *arte degli strazzaruoli* did rank among the more respectable trades in the Venetian guild hierarchy and it maintained that position for most of the period.<sup>1</sup>

An effective indicator of the relative status of a guild is its admission fees (*benintrada*) and the sum required by the guild of second-hand dealers remained somewhat steep throughout the sixteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Its fees compare with subscriptions to the mercers' guild even though, as Mackenney has argued, the status of that guild increased dramatically in the sixteenth century [see Table 3.1].<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Introduction, I.a) above for quotation. Mercers made this claim, see Richard Mackenney, *Tradesmen and traders: the world of the guilds in Venice and Europe, c.1250-c.1650* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble, 1987), p.90. On guild hierarchies, see Sylvia L. Thrupp, 'The guilds', *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, III: *Economic organization and policies in the middle ages*, ed. M.M. Postan, E.E. Rich and Edward Miller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), pp.230-80 (p.263).

<sup>2</sup> On *benintrada*, see Agostino Sagredo, *Sulle consorterie delle arti edificative in Venezia: studi storici con documenti inediti* (Venice: Pietro Naratovich, 1856), p.52; Massimo Costantini, 'La statutaria delle corporazioni veneziane medioevali', in *Arti e mestieri tradizionali*, ed. Manlio Cortelazzo, *Cultura popolare del Veneto series* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 1989), pp.25-45 (p.41). On the large sum asked by second-hand dealers, see Maria Francesca Tiepolo, 'Arti e artigiani a Venezia nelle carte d'archivio', in *Venicemart '86* (Venice: Confartigianato, 1986), unpag.

<sup>3</sup> Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.90-111, 223.

Table 3.1: Fees for admission to the guilds of second-hand dealers and mercers (ducats) <sup>4</sup>

second-hand dealers		mercers	
1499		Venetians	- 3
		Venetian subjects	- 5
		foreigners	- 10
1515	masters - 3		
1520		Venetians	- 1
		Venetian subjects	- 2
		foreigners	- 3
1575	masters - 3		
	pedlars - 3		
1585	masters - 3		
	subordinate traders - 5		
1592	masters - 3		
	subordinate traders - 5		
pre 1596		<u>wholesale:</u>	<u>retail:</u>
		Venetians - 3	Venetians - 1.5
		Venetian subjects - 4	Venetian subjects - 2.5
		foreigners - 5	foreigners - 3.5
1596		Venetians - 6	Venetians - 3
		Venetian subjects - 8	Venetian subjects - 5
		foreigners - 10	foreigners - 7
1608		Venetians - 8	Venetians - 5
		Venetian subjects - 10	Venetian subjects - 7
		foreigners - 12	foreigners - 9
1616	masters - 3		
- 46	pedlars - 10		
	renters - 5		
	cloth sellers - 5		
	hosiers - 10		

<sup>4</sup> Sources: BMC, *Mariegole*, no. 195, *Mariegola degli strazzaruoli* [M.St], f.75, 1 Mar.1515; f.123, 20 Jan.1574 [mv]; ff.156-8, 3 Jan.1584 [mv]; ff.186-8, 28 Sept.1592; ASV, *Arti, Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni da farsi dai confratelli che entreranno nella detta arte*; *ibid.*, *Arte dei marzeri*, b.312, *Mariegola*, cap.14, f.57r, 1499; cap.161, f.72v, 7 Mar.1520; cap.283, f.136v, 5 Feb.1595 [mv]; b.312, *Ristretto generale di tutto le parti, ordini e regole della scuola*, f.7v, 14 Apr.1608. For an idea of workers' wages, see Brian Pullan, 'Wage-earners and the Venetian economy, 1550-1630', *Economic History Review*, n.s.16 (1964), 407-26 (p.415).



In the 1520s it was more expensive for a Venetian to enter the second-hand dealers' guild than to join the mercers. By the early 1590s, admission fees for master second-hand dealers were the same as Venetian wholesale mercers (*arte mazor*) and twice the amount asked of Venetians setting up as smaller-scale retail mercers (*arte minor*).<sup>5</sup> The relationship between the two guilds' admission charges altered strikingly in 1596. In that year, mercers' fees doubled and the sum asked of master *strazzaruoli* was then half that paid by Venetian wholesale mercers and the same as Venetian retail mercers. This sharp rise in the mercers' charges at the end of the 1500s reflects a divergence in the status of the two guilds. In that year, along with the goldsmiths, the mercers were exempted from the personal galley service expected of all guild members, joining the privileged rank of the drapers, the wool and silk merchants and the richer members of the great Venetian religious confraternities, the *Scuole Grandi*.<sup>6</sup>

Although the sums charged by both guilds compare for most of the sixteenth century, it is clear that entry fees performed quite different roles for each organisation and this merits attention. The mercers and the second-hand dealers used admission charges to further their traditional

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<sup>5</sup> On these types of mercers, see Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, p.104.

<sup>6</sup> See Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, p.223 [exemptions], p.220 [galley service] [I am grateful to Dr Mackenney for noting the importance of 1596]. Cf. Thrupp, 'The guilds', p.263, on the problems of reading changes in guild-entry fees.

monopolistic policies [see Chapter 1, I.] and their respective strategies had important implications for the composition of each guild.

Throughout the period, the mercers differentiated their entry fees according to the origins of an applicant and in this way penalised immigrants from the Venetian dominions and foreigners who wished to join the guild. In contrast, for most of the sixteenth century, the second-hand dealers' guild did not distinguish between entrants by means of its fees (except for apprentices and workshop employees). From the mid-1570s onwards when the guild did become more discriminating, it was so in a manner different from the mercers' guild. Whereas entry fees for master second-hand dealers were kept stable at three ducats throughout the period, the guild increased the fees asked of subordinate groups of traders within the guild (*colonelli*).<sup>7</sup> This strategy is particularly evident in the period from 1616 to 1646 when three separate tariffs were charged to traders joining the guild to practise different aspects of the trade. Unlike the mercers, therefore, who favoured Venetians against immigrants, the second-hand dealers' guild used its admission fees to promote the interests of its masters.

Given our concern with a group of newcomers entering the

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<sup>7</sup> BMC, M.St., f.123, 20 Jan.1574 [mv]; ff.156-8, 3 Jan.1584 [mv]; ff.186-8, 28 Sept.1592.

workplace in the early sixteenth century, the alternative admission mechanisms deployed by the two guilds are particularly interesting. In comparison with the guild of second-hand dealers whose policy of refusing admittance to foreigners was discussed in Chapter 1, the mercers' guild was technically open to non-Venetians, albeit at disadvantageous rates. In the event, however, the mercers did not extend this openness to the *Ebrei tedeschi*. Instead, the second-hand dealers, who were more xenophobic, were forced to accept the incomers within their trade.<sup>8</sup>

## II. The Entry of the Jews

The prevailing view of Jewish economic activities in Venice is that they were severely restricted and that they were not permitted to impinge upon Christian pursuits.<sup>9</sup> According to Brian Pullan, these activities were carried

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<sup>8</sup> Unlike the mercers' guild, the *arte degli strazzaruoli* also accepted baptised Jews into its ranks, see ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni*; cf. ASV, *Arte dei marzeri*, b.364, *Processi*, fasc.101, *Contro Ebrei fatti Christiani*, 26 Sept.1692.

<sup>9</sup> See Cecil Roth, *History of the Jews in Venice*, Jewish communities series (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1930), pp.171-86; idem, *The history of the Jews of Italy* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1946), p.122; Pier Cesare Ioly Zorattini, 'Gli Ebrei a Venezia, Padova e Verona', in *Storia della cultura veneta*, III,1: *Dal primo quattrocento al Concilio di Trento*, ed. Girolamo Arnaldi and Manlio Pastore Stocchi (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1980), pp.537-76 (pp.540, 544); Riccardo Calimani, *Storia del Ghetto di Venezia* (Milan: Rusconi, 1985), p.38. This view was expressed in the seventeenth century by Simone Luzzatto in *Discorso circa il stato de gl'Hebrei, et in particolar dimoranti nell'inclita città di Venetia* (Venice: Gioanne Calleoni, 1638), pp.15v, 18v, 24v, 28v; and Leon Modena, *Historia de' riti hebraici, vita & osservanza de gl'Hebrei di questi tempi*, rev.edn (Venice: Giovanni de' Paoli, 1714), pp.46-7.

out in the 'cracks and vacancies' left by Christians.<sup>10</sup> This may have been the case in banking and pawnbroking at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and, from the mid-century onwards, in international trade, but it was not the case in second-hand dealing.<sup>11</sup> The Jewish dealers entering the market for used clothes and fabrics in the period competed with long-established groups of traders, including a well-respected craft guild which fought them relentlessly.<sup>12</sup> It is therefore misleading to claim, as a recent commentator has done, that in Venice trading in second-hand goods was a predominantly Jewish pursuit.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Brian Pullan, *The Jews of Europe and the Inquisition of Venice, 1550-1670* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), pp. 166, 146; see also idem, *Rich and poor in renaissance Venice: the social institutions of a Catholic state, to 1620* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), p. 551. On Pullan's importance, see Benjamin Ravid, 'The establishment of the Ghetto Vecchio of Venice, 1541: background and reappraisal', in *Proceedings of the sixth world congress of Jewish studies* (Jerusalem: World congress of Jewish studies, 1975), II, 153-67 (p. 157, n. 10).

<sup>11</sup> On banking and pawnbroking, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp. 429-625; on overseas trade, Benjamin Ravid, *Economics and toleration in seventeenth-century Venice: the background and context of the Discorso of Simone Luzzatto*, American Academy for Jewish Research monograph series, 2 (Jerusalem: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1978); idem, 'The legal status of the Jewish merchants of Venice, 1541-1638', *Journal of Economic History*, 35 (1975), 274-9; idem, 'Establishment of the Ghetto Vecchio'.

<sup>12</sup> Roth noted that there was a guild of *strazzaruoli* which protested at the Jews' admittance, see *Venice*, pp. 173-4; see also David Jacoby, 'Les Juifs à Venise du XIVE au milieu du XVIIe siècle', in *Venezia centro di mediazione tra oriente e occidente (secoli XV-XVI): aspetti e problemi*, ed. H.-G. Beck, M. Manoussacas and A. Pertusi, *Civiltà veneziana studi*, 32, 2 vols (Florence: Olschki, 1977), I, 163-247 (p. 200).

<sup>13</sup> Donatella Calabi, 'Il Ghetto e la città', in Ennio Concina, Ugo Camerino and Donatella Calabi, *La città degli Ebrei: il Ghetto di Venezia: architettura e urbanistica* (Venice: Albrizzi, 1991), pp. 201-301 (p. 244): 'banchi e strazzerie sono entrambe dunque attività di spettanza ebraica, che in altri sestieri mancano...'

The existence of an established guild prompts important questions about the involvement of Jews in the Venetian second-hand market. Why the *Ebrei tedeschi* engaged in a traditional Venetian trade requires an explanation and to achieve this we need to consider not only why they chose to pursue that particular activity but also why they were allowed to do so. The most effective way of tackling these problems is to look closely at the process by which Jewish traders became entrenched in the second-hand market.

In effect, there were two key stages in the entry process: one corresponded with the years circa 1511-1518 and the other from 1519 onwards. This does not mean that Jewish second-hand dealers were absent from the city before these dates. In spite of the strict residence policy practised towards Jewish traders in the fifteenth century, they probably were, as Roth asserted of Jews in general, 'familiar figures'.<sup>14</sup> A ruling of 1498 confirms that Jews were allowed to attend fairs in Venice but could not settle in the city.<sup>15</sup> This suggests that some Jewish dealers had

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<sup>14</sup> Roth, *Venice*, p.19. On the residence policy, see Reinhold C. Mueller, 'Les prêteurs juifs de Venise au moyen âge', *Annales ESC*, 30 (1975), 1277-1302 (pp.1291-3); E.Ashtor, 'Gli inizi della comunità ebraica a Venezia', *Rassegna Mensile di Israel*, 44 (1978), 683-703 (pp.683,689-91).

<sup>15</sup> ASV, *Inquisitori sopra l'Università degli Ebrei* [IE], b.19, *Documenti diversi*, fasc.1497, f.37r, 11 Feb.1497 [mv]; on this archive, see Andrea Da Mosto, *L'Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, 2 vols (Rome: Biblioteca d'Arte Editrice, 1937-40), I, 180. On trading freedom at fairs, see Chapter 1, III. above.

also been practising illicitly in Venice.<sup>16</sup> In addition, the odd individual, such as the keeper of the Jewish inn, could obtain a special licence to trade in second-hand goods.<sup>17</sup> This earlier involvement on the part of Jewish traders did not represent a radical departure for the trade. We have seen in Chapter 1 [III] that the *arte degli strazzaruoli* had long coexisted with unregistered competitors, authorised and unauthorised alike. The guild did, however, become very defensive towards Jewish second-hand dealers in the second decade of the sixteenth century, recognising that a significant change was then under way.<sup>18</sup> It is in this period that Jewish *strazzaruoli* became firmly established in Venice.

a) Renewable permits, c.1511-1518 <sup>19</sup>

During the first stage of settlement, Jewish dealers were

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<sup>16</sup> Roth saw this as rebuffing a first attempt by the Jews to engage in the trade, see *Venice*, pp.173-4; see also Giambattista Gallicciolli, *Delle memorie venete antiche profane ed ecclesiastiche*, 8 vols (Venice:Domenico Fracasso, 1795),II,300-1. More likely, licensed and illicit dealers were part of a gradual infiltration of Jews into Venice during the fifteenth century, see Ashtor, 'Gli inizi', pp.692, 702-3; Jacoby, 'Les Juifs', pp.181,199-200.

<sup>17</sup> ASV, *Capi del Consiglio dei Dieci* [CCD], *Notatorio*, reg.3, f.216r [2nd pag.], 30 Oct.1512 [refers to predecessor]. On the Jewish inn, see Chapter 5, II.a) below.

<sup>18</sup> BMC, M.St., ff.81-3, 26 Apr.1515 highlights difficulties of 'circa' four years caused by the Jews. For mention of Jewish dealers in the *mariegola*, see *ibid.*, f.76, 30 Oct.1512; ff.76-7, 20 Dec.1514; f.77, 23, 28 Mar.1515; f.78, 27 June 1515; f.80, nd [refers to Mar.1515].

<sup>19</sup> Exactly when the Jews first received trading permits is not clear, the date 1511 is inferred from a *mariegola* entry, see previous note. The first definite date is 1512, see ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.3, f.216r [2nd pag.], 30 Oct.1512; *ibid.*, reg.4, f.43r [2nd pag.], 20 Dec.1514 [refers to 17 Dec.1512].

required to hold special licences to practise the second-hand trade in the city.<sup>20</sup> The situation was chaotic and uncertain since the involvement of Jewish dealers in the market for used goods coincided with the general influx of Jewish refugees into Venice from 1509 onwards, precipitated by the War of the League of Cambrai.<sup>21</sup> Attempts were made to expel Jews from the city in 1511, yet Jewish dealers were given permits to trade in 1512.<sup>22</sup> The guild of second-hand dealers contested these concessions and the Jews' licences were revoked in March 1515.<sup>23</sup> One month later, however, nine three-year trading permits were granted to groups of Jewish dealers by the Council of Ten,

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<sup>20</sup> ASV, *Consiglio dei Dieci* [CD], *Parti miste*, filza 37, 13 Mar.1516: '...no[n] possino senza la gratia [sic] d[i] v[ost]re ex[cellentissi]me s[igno]rie far ne exercitarsi in straz[z]arie...' [Jew's petition]. See Chapter 1, III., on such concessions; also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.482.

<sup>21</sup> Jewish communities on the mainland were sacked after the Venetians' rout at Agnadello on May 14 1509, see M. Ferro, *Dizionario del diritto comune, e veneto, che contiene le leggi civili, canoniche, e criminali*, 6 vols in 10 parts (Venice:Modesto Fenzo,1778-81),pt 5,pp.2-3 'Ebrei'; Pullan, *Rich and poor*,p.478;Felix Gilbert,'Venice in the crisis of the League of Cambrai',in *Renaissance Venice*, ed. J.R. Hale (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), pp.274-91 (p.281); Ravid, 'Establishment',pp.156-7; Robert Finlay,'The foundation of the Ghetto: Venice, the Jews, and the war of the League of Cambrai',*Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 126 (1982), 140-54 (pp.140,142).

<sup>22</sup> On the expulsion, see Marin Sanudo [Marino Sanuto], *I diarii*,ed.Rinaldo Fulin and others,58 vols (Venice:Fratelli Visentini,1879-1903) [DMS], XII, coll.98-9,2 Apr.1511; coll. 110-1,8 Apr.1511. Jews with special privileges could stay and it is unclear if this included *strazzaruoli*. See also Gallicciolli,*Delle memorie venete*,II,302-3; Roth,*Venice*,pp. 43-4; Pullan,*Rich and poor*,pp.478-9.On the Jewish dealers' 1512 permits,see ASV,CCD,*Notatorio*, reg.4,f.43r [2nd pag.], 20 Dec.1514.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*,f.43r,20 Dec. 1514; ASV, CD, *Parti miste*, reg.38, f.109 [2nd pag.], 23 Mar.1515; f.110v, 28 Mar.1515.

and a tenth was added the following year.<sup>24</sup> These permits survived the upheaval of the Jews' resettlement to the Ghetto in 1516 [see Chapter 5, II.a)]. As in the previous century, the *arte degli strazzaruoli* proved impotent in the face of competition from unregistered dealers who had been granted special trading dispensations by the Venetian government. The fact that these competitors were Jewish made little effective difference to the guild's case.

Ascertaining why Jewish dealers chose to practise the second-hand trade in Venice at this time is not straightforward. Evidently Pullan's argument that there were 'cracks and vacancies' does not stand since there existed an established guild of second-hand dealers. Nor is it exactly true, as many commentators have asserted, that the Jews were forced to undertake the trade in the city.<sup>25</sup> They petitioned expressly to sell second-hand wares and they also fought doggedly to keep their trading permits. In seeking to understand their choice of trade therefore we need to explore other options.

The Jewish dealers' willingness to enter the market for used goods can be attributed to three different motives:

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., f.163v [2nd pag.], 27 June 1515; reg.39, f.196 [2nd pag.], 13 Mar.1516. For the Jewish dealers' petitions, see *ibid.*, filza 35, 27 June 1515; filza 37, 13 Mar.1516. See also ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.4, f.62 [2nd pag.], 8 July 1515.

<sup>25</sup> For example, see Roth, *Venice*, pp.26, 173; M.G. Sandri and Paolo Alazraki, *Arti e vita ebraica a Venezia, 1576-1797* (Florence: Sansoni, 1971), p.98. For Pope Paul IV's attempt to impose such a policy in 1555, see Chapter 4, II.a) below.



the newcomers were already skilled traders in second-hand goods; their choice was influenced by Venetian guilds; and the trade in used goods was particularly lucrative in the city at that time. The first motive is an obvious one, that is to say that the 'new' Jewish dealers had practised the trade long before their arrival in Venice.

The ten groups of traders licensed during the years 1515-16 had all come from the Venetian mainland and at least three of them were from Treviso.<sup>26</sup> We know that Jewish traders kept shops in that town at the end of the fifteenth century and that there were also Jewish *strazzaruoli* in Padua and Verona prior to the War of the League of Cambrai.<sup>27</sup> In 1509, Jews from these cities, as from most other mainland settlements, had been forced to flee to Venice.<sup>28</sup> Once in

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<sup>26</sup> ASV, CD, *Parti miste*, filza 35, 27 June 1515: '...li hebrei...de[l]le terre del d[omi]nio vostro fidelissimi de q[ue]sto inclyto [sic] Senato...'. For the references to Treviso, see *ibid.*, filza 37, 13 Mar. 1516; ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg. 4, f. 61v [2nd pag.], 5 July 1515.

<sup>27</sup> Treviso tried to expel its Jewish shopkeepers in 1497, see Andrea Alvise Viola ed., *Compilazione delle leggi... in materia d'officj, e banchi del Ghetto*, 5 vols in 6 parts (Venice: Pinelli, 1786), V, 2, 186, 15 Sept. 1497. On Paduan second-hand dealers, see Antonio Ciscato, *Gli Ebrei in Padova (1300-1800)* (Padua: Società Cooperativa Tipografica, 1901), pp. 99-100, 103-4. On Veronese ones, see Gian Maria Varanini, 'Tra fisco e credito: note sulle camere dei pegni nelle città venete del quattrocento', *Studi Storici Luigi Simeoni* (Verona), 33(1983), 215-46 (p. 234).

<sup>28</sup> On the sacking of Jews in Treviso and their flight to Venice, see DMS, VIII, col. 340, 3 June 1509; on expulsions of Jews from Padua, see coll. 355-6, 6 June 1509. A good account of the events in Treviso is in Giovanni Bonifaccio, *Istoria di Trivigi*, rev. edn (Venice: Gianbattista Albrizzi, 1744), p. 495; Elia Capsali's description of fleeing from Padua is in Zorattini, 'Gli Ebrei a Venezia', p. 547; see also Ciscato, *Ebrei*, p. 60; Gilbert, 'Venice in the crisis', p. 274.

the city, the community of Jewish refugees was liable to a hefty annual tax and this obligation could best be met by its members continuing with familiar activities.<sup>29</sup> Petitioning the government for the renewal of their trading permits in 1515, the Jewish second-hand dealers promised to return afterwards to their prior locations and to 'practise their trade as before'.<sup>30</sup>

Undoubtedly, the incomers' experience of trading was different from the activities permitted in Venice. Limitations on commercial pursuits varied among the Jewish communities on the mainland. In places like Padua, Jewish traders enjoyed considerable freedom and were actively encouraged to compete with Christian artisans.<sup>31</sup> However, the unusual degree of specialisation within the Venetian trade system, together with the jealous attention given by each guild to its craft jurisdictions, ensured that overlaps in the activities of the immigrants would be

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<sup>29</sup> In 1510 the tax was 5,000 ducats. The Senate tried to double it in 1512, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.481-2. The Jewish dealers linked tax to the permits of 1512, see ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.4, f.43r [2nd pag.], 20 Dec.1514. By 1519, Jewish *strazzaruoli* contributed more than 800 ducats in tax, see DMS, XXVII, col.359, 4 June 1519.

<sup>30</sup> ASV, CD, *Parti miste*, filza 35, 27 June 1515: 'e dapoi possino et debano tornar a le terre et l[u]og[h]i soliti a far el suo exercitio [sic] come prima'. Roth also stressed continuity, see *Jews of Italy*, p.185.

<sup>31</sup> ASV, *Avogaria di Comun* [AC], *Miscellanea Civile*, C.46.7, *Arti-Padova, arte degli strazzruoli*, ff.4v,7, 23 Oct.1548; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 19, 28 May 1554 (Castelfranco); filza 96, 31 Dec.1585 (Padua); filza 111, 3 June 1589 (Verona). See also Ciscato, *Ebrei*, pp.4, 91, 100-1, 103-4, 110, 178; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.527, 551.

challenged. Early on, there were successful actions against the Jews by the guilds of drapers, mercers and goldsmiths and jewellers, and they are detailed in Chapter 4. The fact that these three guilds were able to bar the Jewish dealers from their trades whereas the *arte degli strazzaruoli* was not, is significant. It reflects the superior strength of these trade bodies. In comparison with other pertinent spheres of economic activity in Venice, therefore, the second-hand market was a softer option.

As well as contributing to the annual community tax, the nine groups of Jewish petitioners of 1515 agreed to lend the Venetian government 5,000 ducats for two years. The tenth group to receive a trading permit (in 1516) increased this sum by 500 ducats.<sup>32</sup> 5,500 ducats was a large amount of money to commit at such an uncertain time - it compared with the annual tax asked at that time of the Jewish community as a whole, including the banks (6,500 ducats).<sup>33</sup> The Jewish dealers' readiness to lend this sum

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<sup>32</sup> They offered 4,000 ducats for 3 years, this was raised to 5,000 ducats for 2 years, see ASV,CD,*Parti miste*, filza 35, 27 June 1515; *ibid.*, reg. 38, ff. 163v-4r [2nd pag.]. In 1516, a gift of 100 ducats and a loan of 400 were made, see *ibid.*, filza 37, 13 Mar. 1516; *ibid.*, reg. 39, f. 196 [2nd pag.]. See also DMS, XX, coll. 339, 342, 27-8 June 1515; col. 354, 3 July 1515; col. 360, 5 July 1515; XXII, col. 38, 13 Mar. 1516.

<sup>33</sup> See Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p. 482 [Jewish community tax], p. 494 [earlier loans, Venetian patrician and Jews]. For an idea of workers' wages, see Pullan, 'Wage-earners', p. 415. One Jewish dealer was worried about his finances, but he had been ill and had traded less than the others, see ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg. 4, f. 81v [2nd pag.], 30 Oct. 1515.



There were, therefore, three motives for undertaking the second-hand trade in Venice in this initial stage: habit, guild pressure and lucre. Discerning which motive was most important is difficult and it is conceivable that all three influenced the Jewish dealers' decision. Understanding why the Venetian government (by means of the Council of Ten) allowed the Jews to trade is much easier. The Jewish second-hand dealers, like the Jewish bankers, could offer money, which the Republic desperately needed.<sup>39</sup> This inducement was not the sole incentive, but it is clearly the most significant factor.<sup>40</sup>

Petitions submitted by the Jewish dealers in 1514, 1515 and 1516 all emphasise damage suffered by them on the mainland along with their continuing loyalty to the Republic.<sup>41</sup> Sympathy with their situation was recorded in the 1515 licence and it may have favoured their case, but it was not

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goods, see Gilbert, 'Venice in the crisis', pp.280-1.

<sup>39</sup> Roth was right in attributing the concessions of 1515 to pressing financial need, but wrong in dating the Jews' trading to that year, see *Venice*, pp.46-7. For the bankers' tax arrangements and the dealers' loans, see also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.481-2,508.

<sup>40</sup> Sanudo knew of the loan, see DMS, XX, coll.339,342, 27-8 June 1515; col.354, 3 July 1515; col.360, 5 July 1515.

<sup>41</sup> ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.4, f.43r[2nd pag.], 20 Dec.1514; ASV, CD, *Parti miste*, filza 35, 27 June 1515: '...sachizati et scazati [sic] de[l]le terre... reduiti [sic] cum el poco residuo loro ad habitar in q[ue]sta cit[t]à... la Ill[ustrissi]ma S[ignori]a [vostr]a conscia de li [sic] dan[n]i have[v]ano ha[v]uti tolerato [sic] potessino tenir straz[z]aria...'; see also *ibid.*, filza 37, 13 Mar.1516.

crucial.<sup>42</sup> The Jewish second-hand dealers also had an influential supporter in the patrician Antonio Balbi. He championed their cause for a considerable length of time, representing a Jewish innkeeper dealing in second-hand goods before the Council of Ten in 1512 and promoting Jewish *strazzaruoli* during heated Senate debates in 1519-20 [see below, b)].<sup>43</sup> Those debates show that Christian second-hand dealers also had friends in high places, so Balbi's importance has to be qualified.<sup>44</sup> When granting the nine permits in 1515, the Council of Ten was reticent about publicising its prime motive, but it was less guarded in private. Struck through in a rough draft of its resolution are the words: 'there being the imperative need and necessity for money [together with] the difficulty of finding money, everyone of us [agrees] this should be granted to the present petitioners...'.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.4, f.62 [2nd pag], 8 July 1515: '...mossi dal[1]a humile supplicatione de li infrascripti zudei, habiamo...concesso ch[e]...possino far et tenir bot[t]eg[h]e n[umer]o 9 de straz[z]aria...'

<sup>43</sup> Balbi is an interesting figure about whom more should be known. He held various official posts requiring him to sell off debtors' goods and this may be the link with the Jewish dealers. For his championship of the Jews, see ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.3, f.216r [2nd pag.], 30 Oct.1512; DMS, XXVII, col.359, 3 June 1519. On Balbi, see *ibid.*, VI, col.163, 13 May 1505; VII, col.105, 23 June 1507; X, col.321, 14 May 1510; col.545, 10 June 1510; XVI, coll.142-4, 11 Apr.1513; XVIII, col.177, 3 May 1514; XIX, coll.8-9, 1 Sept.1514.

<sup>44</sup> ASV, *Senato, Deliberazioni (secreta)*, reg.48, ff.91-2, 4 June 1519; DMS, XXVIII, coll.61-4, 10 Nov.1519; also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.495.

<sup>45</sup> ASV, CD, *Parti miste*, filza 35, 27 June 1515: 'che essendo il su[m]mo bisogno et necessità d[i] danari d[e]lla difficoltà [sic] di ritrovarli danari ch[e] ciaschun [sic] in tondo sia concesso a li p[resen]tati supplicanti questo...' (draft after Jews' petition). The concession of 1516 was:

So fiscal motivations affected the Government's decision in 1515 and the tenor of the Jewish dealers' 1514 petition suggests that they had consistently influenced official decisions during the first stage of settlement.<sup>46</sup> The Republic needed to finance the war and not only did Jewish *strazzaruoli* have cash in plenty, but they were also prepared to use it to bargain for trading privileges.<sup>47</sup> The celebrated Meshullam brothers, rich bankers who settled in Venice, were not the only skilled Jewish lobbyists.<sup>48</sup> Petitioning for trading rights in 1516, the tenth group of Jewish dealers divulged that the other Jewish *strazzaruoli*:

...have money hidden in the second-hand shops [and] they will disburse large sums of money to your most excellent Lordships every time that they are forbidden from practising it [the trade]....<sup>49</sup>

It is all too easy to forget that the guild of second-hand dealers was a significant part of this equation. A possible means of frustrating the Jews' petitions would

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'necessarijssimo per le rason e cause a tut[t]i manifeste', *ibid.*, reg.39, f.196 [2nd pag.], 13 Mar.1516.

<sup>46</sup> ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.4, f.43r [2nd pag.], 20 Dec.1514.

<sup>47</sup> On war finances and the 'makeshift measures' adopted to muddle through, see Gilbert, 'Venice in the crisis', pp.283-4.

<sup>48</sup> On this lobbying, see Finlay, 'Foundation', p.146.

<sup>49</sup> ASV, CD, *Parti miste*, filza 37, 13 Mar.1516: '...han[n]o danarj in le [sic] bot[t]eg[h]e d[i] straz[z]arie oc[c]ultame[n]te exborsaran[n]o [sic] gran qua[n]tità d[i] danarj a v[ost]re ex[cellentissime] S[igno]rie ogni volta ch[e] ge sara p[ro]hibito lo exercitarsi [sic]...'.

have been to counter their financial offers with higher ones. There was a precedent. In the past, most probably in the financial crisis during the War of Chioggia (1378-81), the guild had made a substantial loan of 80,000 *lire* to the Republic and this sum was subsequently cited whenever the guild wanted to prevent foreigners and other unwelcome competitors participating in the trade.<sup>50</sup> Unfortunately, at this crucial moment the guild was drastically short of funds: all disposable capital went towards achieving the revocation of the Jews' permits in March 1515 and the rest of the guild's funds was tied up in the ill-fated *Monte Nuovo*.<sup>51</sup> Without money, the guild was effectively powerless during the rest of the period from June 1515 to 1518.

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<sup>50</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.34, ff.24-5,; cap.36, ff.28-9, 11 June 1419; cap.65, f.60, 13 July 1479. On forced loans to equip galleys and donations for the war with Genoa, see Gino Luzzatto ed., *I prestiti della Repubblica di Venezia (sec. XIII-XV): introduzione storica e documenti*, Documenti Finanziari della Repubblica di Venezia, 3rd series, 1, 1 (Padua: R. Accademia dei Lincei, 1929), pp. CXXXIII-CXL; on the value of 80,000 *lire*, see p. CXLIV. See also idem, 'Il debito pubblico nel sistema finanziario veneziano dei secoli XIII-XV', in *Studi di storia economica veneziana* (Padua: CEDAM, 1954), pp. 211-24 (p. 217); Reinhold C. Mueller, 'Effetti della Guerra di Chioggia (1378-1381) sulla vita economica e sociale di Venezia', *Ateneo Veneto*, n.s. 19 (1981), 27-41 (p. 29).

<sup>51</sup> On the guild's finances in 1515 and the 'fatiche et spexe' of the previous four years, see BMC, M.St., ff. 81-3, 26 Apr. 1515. To prevent ruin, the guild raised its entry fees on 1 March 1515 and *luminaria* costs were increased until 'si scuode el Monte N[u]ovo e che la camera paga', *ibid.*, f. 75, caps 79-80. On the *Monte Nuovo* (government loan fund), see Priuli in David Chambers and Brian Pullan, eds, *Venice: a documentary history, 1450-1630* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), pp. 160-1; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p. 138; Gilbert, 'Venice in the crisis', p. 283. Interest was still not being paid by 1519, see DMS, XXVIII, col. 63, 10 Nov. 1519.



b) More permanent establishments, 1519 onwards

During the second stage of settlement, Jewish dealers were given permission to practise the second-hand trade in Venice for as long as *Ebrei tedeschi* remained in the city. It was not evident at the time, but this meant until the end of the Republic itself. Jewish *strazzaruoli* no longer required special licences to trade since general permission was reaffirmed with every subsequent residence agreement made with the Jewish community as a whole. This represented a considerable improvement in the position of these traders and it resulted from the *condotta* debates of 1519-20.<sup>52</sup> Ironically, the guild of second-hand dealers helped to precipitate this change.

The ten permits granted in 1515-16 expired at the end of 1518, the same time as the Jewish community's general residence agreement. When petitioning for those permits, the Jewish dealers had promised to leave Venice at the end of the three-year term [see above]. In the event, they did not depart but continued to trade and they must also have tried to renew their licences at the *Provveditorato di Commun* or at the office of the *Giustizia Vecchia* (or perhaps both), because in June 1519 the second-hand dealers' guild appealed on this matter to the Heads of the

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<sup>52</sup> The Jews' *condotte* were fixed-term agreements outlining their rights and obligations as aliens living in Venice. They were renegotiated every five years or so. See Roth, *Venice*, p.16; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.440 and also p.497.

Ten.<sup>53</sup> The issue of Jewish involvement in the second-hand trade was being discussed in the *condotta* debates, so the Heads of the Ten forbade the two trade magistracies to issue new permits and ordered them to make the Jews shut up their shops until a decision had been reached in the Senate.<sup>54</sup> Extra impetus was then added by the Jewish bankers who threatened to shut down their banks in retaliation for this closure of the Jewish second-hand dealers' shops.<sup>55</sup>

The Jewish *strazzaruoli* were clearly keen to continue trading in Venice. Prior to the drastic threat of closing the banks, more subtle forms of persuasion had been tried. When advocating their cause in the Senate at the beginning of June, Antonio Balbi had expounded upon the utility of the Jewish second-hand dealers on one hand, while on the other he announced that they were willing to give 1,000 ducats a year to keep their shops.<sup>56</sup> Why the Jewish dealers were so enthusiastic about trading at this time, however, is not so evident.

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<sup>53</sup> ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, filza 5, f.2r, 27 June 1519.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.: '...co[m]mandemo a v[ost]rij S[ignor]i P[rov]veditori di Com[m]un et Justicij Vec[c]hij: che non debiate p[er]metter i p[re]s[en]tati hebrej tener ne far straz[z]aria in q[ue]sta n[ost]ra cit[t]à, ma li facete [sic] ser[r]are le loro bot[t]eg[h]e, fin ch[e] sera delib[er]ato altro in q[ue]sta materia p[er] el conseio n[ost]ro di p[re]gadi...'

<sup>55</sup> DMS, XXVII, col. 467, 11 July 1519; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p. 489.

<sup>56</sup> DMS, XXVII, col. 359, 4 June 1519; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p. 496.

Sanudo's comments of 1519 on the Venetian economy are well known: there was very little trade in the city and shopkeepers were unable to sell their stock [see also Chapter 2,II.b)].<sup>57</sup> It may be that second-hand dealers were managing this crisis better than other retailers: Balbi's speech does indicate that Jewish dealers were still buying goods in June 1519. Perhaps they looked to the future. The metropolis was the main focus of the Venetian second-hand trade and the Jewish dealers preferred to stay there if at all possible. A petition presented by one of the Jewish trading groups in 1528 records that the city was an 'advantageous place for *strazzaria*'.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, the events of 1509 had demonstrated how vulnerable Jewish traders were on the mainland and proved Venice to be a much safer place. The importance of the 1509 sackings to the community of *Ebrei tedeschi* in Venice should not be underestimated - reference was still being made to them more than a century afterwards.<sup>59</sup>

The Senate debates of 1519-20 had a much higher profile than the Council of Ten's meetings of 1515-16 and more members of the Venetian political establishment

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<sup>57</sup> DMS, XXVIII, col.63, 10 Nov. 1519: '...la terra fa pochissima merchadantia; li botegieri si lamenta non vendono la sua roba..' [sic]; see also Roth, *Venice*, pp.55-6; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.495.

<sup>58</sup> ASV, CD, *Registro comune* 4, f.63v, 31 July 1528: 'convenie[n]te loco p[er] la straziaria [sic]'. See also Rabbi Simone Luzzatto's comments, *Discorso*, p.16r.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.15v-16r.

participated in them. Passions were aroused about the establishment of a resident Jewish community in Venice and it was not so evident that a new contract would be granted.<sup>60</sup> Balbi was a voice in favour of the Jewish dealers, but other speeches were heard against them and patricians complained that Jewish *strazzaruoli* were depriving Christian second-hand dealers of their livelihoods. On 4 June 1519, 71 senators voted against the Jewish dealers' shops compared to 64 in favour.<sup>61</sup> Given this antagonism it is surprising that Jewish second-hand dealers were permitted to continue trading at all, let alone that their legal position was considerably improved.

The Republic still needed money at this time and this eventually swayed the Senate to renew the *condotta*.<sup>62</sup> Although the Jewish second-hand dealers made a separate financial offer, it did not prove to be central to the debates.<sup>63</sup> In the event, the act of solidarity shown by the Jewish bankers was more important and the gamble paid off. Thereafter, every proposal in favour of keeping the

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<sup>60</sup> Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.488-9.

<sup>61</sup> ASV, *Senato, Deliberazioni (Secreta)*, reg.48, ff.91-2r, 4 June 1519; f.93, 10 Nov.1519; ff.96r-7, 10 Feb.1519 [mv]; ff.99v-100v, 101, 2 Mar.1520. DMS, XXVII, col.359, 4 June 1519; XXVIII, coll.61-3, 10 Nov.1519; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.488-96.

<sup>62</sup> Cash was needed for the Arsenal: ASV, *Senato, Deliberazioni (secretata)*, reg.48, ff.98-9, 2 Mar.1520; f.102r, 16 Mar.1520; Roth, *Venice*, pp.55-6; Viola, *Compilazioni delle leggi*, V, 2, 199-200, 28 Sept.1521; also for the *Monte Nuovo*: Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.496-7. See also *ibid.*, p.491, on the triple financial function of the Jews.

<sup>63</sup> DMS, XXVII, col.359, 4 June 1519.

Jews in Venice incorporated the second-hand dealers, as did the eventual agreement reached in March 1520.<sup>64</sup> This is the real reason why Jewish second-hand dealers became permanently established in Venice; it had little to do with commercial considerations and occurred because of the overriding importance of the Jewish banks to the Republic at the time. As Sanudo noted, Jewish bankers were 'even more necessary to a city than bakers'.<sup>65</sup>

Having looked in some detail at the two key stages by which Jewish traders in second-hand goods became established in Venice, it is now clear why they engaged in that pursuit. The Jewish dealers were influenced by craft concerns: the second-hand trade was one they knew, it was lucrative and other guilds were more effective at blocking their involvement than the *arte degli strazzaruoli*. The Venetian government was certainly sensitive to such commercial concerns. The Heads of the Ten took them into account when confirming the Jews' right to trade in 1514 and also, either separate from or together with the rest of the Council of Ten, judged in favour of the guild of second-hand dealers at three key points in the period: March 1515, November 1515 and June 1519 [see above]. In the final

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<sup>64</sup> ASV, *Senato, Deliberazioni (Secreta)*, reg.48, ff.92-3, 10 Nov.1519; ff.96r-7, 10 Feb.1519 [mv]; ff.98-100v, 101, 2 Mar. 1520; f.102r, 16 Mar.1520; also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.497.

<sup>65</sup> DMS, XXVIII, col.63, 10 Nov.1519; see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.495-6, 508-9. In 1521 the Heads of the Ten made it clear that taxes paid by the Jews were of supreme importance, see ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.5, ff.98v-9, 19 Jan.1520 [mv].

analysis, however, financial considerations had a greater influence on the government in both stages of the entry process.

The need for funds secured the Jews' trading permits of 1515-16 and also overcame the reservations about Jewish second-hand dealers in 1519-20. This does not mean to say that the pragmatists among Venetian patricians had an easy task. Indeed, it was with considerable effort that they held sway. Although the nine permits of 1515 were issued without problems, the tenth one of 1516 was only passed after three ballots.<sup>66</sup> The extended *condotta* debates of 1519-20 are testimony enough to the difficulties experienced in reaching an agreement at that time. Eventually, coercive measures were adopted to resolve the issue.<sup>67</sup> In all of this, guild-exclusivism had precious little effect.

Guild actions influenced the Jews' choice of trades and they certainly complicated matters, but they did not prevent the *Ebrei tedeschi* from establishing themselves in a traditional Venetian trade. As in the fifteenth century, the decisive influence was the Venetian government not the

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<sup>66</sup> ASV,CD, *Parti miste*, reg.38, ff.163v-4 [2nd pag.], 27 June 1515; *ibid.*, reg.39, f.196 [2nd pag.], 13 Mar.1516. A similar occurrence happened later, see ASV,CD, *Registro comune 4*, f.60v, 23 July 1528; ff.63v-4, 31 July 1528.

<sup>67</sup> Senators were obliged to attend a final meeting or be fined 100 gold ducats apiece, ASV, *Senato, Deliberazioni (secreta)*, reg.48, ff.97v-8, 25 Feb.1519 [mv].

*arte degli strazzaruoli*, and the government decided against the guild and in favour of the Jews. The entry of the *Ebrei tedeschi* into the Venetian second-hand market in the early sixteenth century is an excellent indicator of how open Venetian trade structures could be. The aggressively monopolistic *arte degli strazzaruoli* could not exclude the Jewish dealers and was subsequently obliged to share the second-hand market with them.

Twenty-five years ago, M.G. Sandri noted that there were many foreigners in Venetian guilds as well as several specialised guilds of foreigners in Venice, and he cited the example of the Jewish *strazzaruoli* as proof of elasticity within the city's trading structures.<sup>68</sup> Little notice was taken of these points and this is unsurprising since they were made in a book about Jewish crafts. Few historians have questioned the conventional view that Jews were forbidden to compete with Christian traders in the city. The experience of the Jewish second-hand dealers in Venice exposes the shortcomings of that perspective. The process by which Jewish dealers entered the second-hand market was not, however, straightforward. Each concession gained by them was extremely hard-won.<sup>69</sup> The guild of second-hand dealers not only challenged the Jewish *strazzaruoli* in the courts but also harassed them in the

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<sup>68</sup> Sandri and Alazraki, *Arte e vita*, p.101.

<sup>69</sup> Roth was spot on about this though mistaken about the stages of entry, see *Venice*, pp.173-4. See also Jacoby, 'Les Juifs', p.200.

workplace.<sup>70</sup> This initial antagonism did not augur well for the subsequent assimilation of the Jewish traders which we will now examine.

### III. Points of Contact

Given its monopolistic tendencies and religious concerns [see Chapter 1, I.], it is hard to imagine how the guild of second-hand dealers would accept the presence of an established group of Jewish rivals in the market for used goods. The need to compromise was an important part of guild life in Venice and the *arte degli strazzaruoli* was used to coexisting with specially licensed individuals and illicit traders in used goods, but this was somewhat different. In 1520 when the *condotta* was finally renewed, the Jewish second-hand dealers were accorded similar trading privileges to those enjoyed by the guild. In other words, the Venetian government no longer recognised the fundamental right of the guild to a trading monopoly in the city.

Much earlier, from at least the beginning of the fourteenth century, the second-hand dealers of Padua had been faced with a similar quandary. Problems of trade authority and control posed by Jewish immigrants adopting their trade were resolved by the Paduans in an original way: they

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<sup>70</sup> Evidence of intimidation can be found in ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.3, f.216r [2nd pag.], 30 Oct.1512; *ibid.*, reg. 4, f.43r [2nd pag.], 20 Dec.1514.



absorbed the incoming Jewish dealers into their guild.<sup>71</sup> This did not happen in Venice, however, and the Jewish traders formed a separate corporate body within the market for used goods.<sup>72</sup>

The two sets of dealers were divided from the start. Rules governing the Jewish dealers' trade were distinct from the guild's statutes and were laid down in the residence contracts of the Jewish community as a whole [see Chapters 4, II.a) and 5, II.a)]. These trading regulations were also enforced by a different authority. As the *Giustizieri Vecchi*, the magistrates responsible for most guilds in Venice were forcibly reminded in 1526, the Jewish second-hand dealers did not come within normal guild jurisdictions but were answerable to officials responsible for the Ghetto Nuovo, the *Ufficiali al Cattaver*.<sup>73</sup>

This institutional segregation did not exactly suit the *arte degli strazzaruoli*. Admittance of the Jewish dealers had robbed the guild of its traditional claim to

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<sup>71</sup> Ciscato, *Ebrei*, pp.12-14. Paduan Jews belonged to the guild of *strazzaruoli* and enjoyed similar rights. They formed a separate body in the guild and were uninvolved in its religious activities, see *ibid.*, pp.103-4; Roth, *Venice*, p.281. This continued, see ASV, AC, *Miscellanea Civile*, C. 46.7, *Arti-Padova, arte degli strazzaruoli*, 23 Oct.1548.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Luigi Arnaldo Schiavi, 'Gli Ebrei in Venezia e nelle sue colonie: appunti storici su documenti editi ed inediti', *Nuova Antologia di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti* (Rome), 3rd series 47 (1893), 309-333, 485-519 (p.320).

<sup>73</sup> ASV, *Ufficiali al Cattaver* [UC], b.2, reg.4, *Capitolare*, f.137, 13 Dec.1526. On this responsibility, see *ibid.*, f.130v ff, *Ordini circa l'habitare dalli hebrei in Ghetto*.

predominance and it sought to clarify the uncertain position of these new rivals in the market. Though motivated very much by monopolistic concerns, the guild adopted a religious pretext when it lodged a complaint in November 1515, objecting that Jewish dealers were trading on Christian holidays when guild members were forbidden to sell [see Chapter 1, I.]. The Heads of the Ten agreed that it was unfair for Jewish traders to have this advantage and forbade such activities, stipulating that in trading matters Jewish *strazzaruoli* were to be equal to the guild, although no mention was made of Jewish holidays.<sup>74</sup> The Jewish dealers contested the ruling, but it held.<sup>75</sup> In 1610, they were still complaining about this decision, blaming it for continuous harassment by Christian *strazzaruoli*, and were reminded that they were the same as those Christian second-hand dealers, and were to be judged and sentenced accordingly.<sup>76</sup>

In theory, then, the Jewish second-hand dealers were on a par with the guild and, as far as their work was concerned, they were supposed to be treated like ordinary craftsmen. What this meant in practice, however, is not so clear. If,

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<sup>74</sup> ASV, *Arti, Arte dei varoteri*, b.720, *Processi*, fasc.2, f.4, 6 Nov.1515: '...in tutte le cose i siano alla conditio[n] delle christiani per quanto aspetta alla comprada et vendeda...' [Latin original: ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.4, f.82r].

<sup>75</sup> ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.4, f.86r, 22 Dec.1515.

<sup>76</sup> ASV, UC, b.2, reg.3, *Capitolare*, ff.7v-8r, 23 Oct.1610: '...di cettero [sic] detti hebrei strazarioli siano in tutto, et p[er] tutto alla conditione di essi strazarioli christiani, et giudicati et condenati come sono...'

for example, the guild's officials tried to inspect the Jewish dealers' premises, as they did other traders' workshops, for dishonest trading practices [see Chapter 1, I.], they were thwarted.<sup>77</sup> The relative status of the two sets of second-hand dealers becomes further complicated towards the end of the sixteenth century when a select group of Jewish *strazzaruoli* held sway in the Ghetto.<sup>78</sup>

This group of Jewish traders engaged in a large volume of trade and also supplied goods to the Venetian government [see Chapter 4, II.b)]. In June 1592, when three of its members sought a concession, they called on the Procurators of Saint Mark's to support their case. At the behest of these important authorities, the *Ufficiali al Cattaver* had no choice but to grant the request.<sup>79</sup> Evidently, these Jewish traders were not simply humble artisans, though they were not slow to take advantage of their uncertain trading status when this suited their purpose. In June 1593 the six heads of the Jewish community (five of whom were second-hand dealers) complained to the *Milizia da Mar* about

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., reg. 4, *Capitolare*, f. 137, 13 Dec. 1526; ASV, *Collegio, Notatorio*, reg. 49, f. 82v [2nd pag.], 1 June 1587; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 207, 3 Sept. 1613, ff. 13v-15r.

<sup>78</sup> The idea of an élite was mooted by Pullan in *Rich and poor*, pp. 548-49; idem, 'Jewish moneylending in Venice: from private enterprise to public service', in *Gli Ebrei e Venezia, secoli XIV-XVIII*, ed. Gaetano Cozzi (Milan: Edizioni Comunità, 1987), pp. 671-86 (p. 675).

<sup>79</sup> ASV, UC, b. 244, reg. 5, ff. 43v-4, 11 June 1592. On the Procurators, see da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 25-7; Reinhold C. Mueller, 'The Procurators of San Marco in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: a study of the office as a financial trust institution', *Studi Veneziani*, 13 (1971), 105-220.

being taxed for galley personnel.<sup>80</sup> They argued (successfully on this occasion) that the Jews should not be harassed like the guilds for naval contributions as they were: '...not equal to the guilds and brotherhoods that live permanently in this city...'.<sup>81</sup>

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, therefore, the *arte degli strazzaruoli* and the Jewish traders formed two distinct corporations within the second-hand market. Faced by competition from the Jewish traders, the guild had been unable to effect its traditional monopolistic strategies: on the one hand, it could not prevent the Jews from trading, and on the other, it could not absorb them within its organisation and thus establish a measure of control. Both groups were theoretically equal, but the crafts' disciplinary procedures did not extend effectively to the Ghetto Nuovo. Officially, the guild never accepted the Jewish traders as it had never accepted unregistered second-hand dealers. In the same way that the tailors complained futilely about its members' encroachments on their trade [see Chapter 1,II. above], the *arte degli strazzaruoli* continued to lament the presence of both of

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<sup>80</sup> ASV, IE, b.19, *Documenti diversi*, fasc.1593, f.422r, 10 June 1593. For their heavy obligation compared to the guild, see ASV, *Milizia da Mar* [MM], b.705, *Registro partitario della quota di tansa galeotti imposta alle arti, 1581*, ff.117v, 80v. On the *Milizia da Mar* and the guilds' obligation to yield personnel, see Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, ch.6, esp. pp.219-223.

<sup>81</sup> ASV, IE, b.19, fasc.1593, f.422, 10 June 1593: '...non essendo essi hebrei alla medesima conditione che sono le arti et fragie che del continuo habitano [sic] in questa città..'.

these sets of rival traders in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>82</sup> Over the period, however, guild members did tacitly accept trading by the Jews and there were many points of contact between them.

The guild's monopolistic interests and its religious concerns did not unduly affect daily trade. As Alberto Bolognetti, the papal representative, wrote of German protestant craftsmen in Venice at the end of the sixteenth century, artisans were too busy making a living to concern themselves much with such things.<sup>83</sup> The two sanctioned sets of second-hand dealers, Christians and Jews, practised similar trades within limited territorial boundaries, and as a result their paths often crossed, for example, when they bought goods at the city's public auctions.<sup>84</sup> Both groups of dealers were also affected by fluctuations in the second-hand market, such as at times of plague [see Chapter 6]. Moreover, although the government had taken care to

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<sup>82</sup> ASV, MM, b.555, *Atti relativi alla tansa e taglione dei stramazzeri e strazzaruoli, scrittura dei strazzaruoli*, 18 Aug.1660; ASV, *Compilazione delle Leggi* [CL], b.48, *Arti in genere, filza, Arti relative a varj rami di commercio, ed agli usi e comodi della vita civile* (1757), f.699v, *strazzaruoli*.

<sup>83</sup> Aldo Stella, *Chiesa e stato nelle relazioni dei nunzi pontifici a Venezia*, *Ricerche sul giurisdizionalismo veneziano dal XVI al XVIII secolo*, Studi e testi, 29 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1964), p.278: '...et questi per esser intenti ai loro guadagni poco discorrono di cose di religione...'. Cf. John Martin, *Venice's hidden enemies: Italian heretics in a renaissance city* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

<sup>84</sup> IRE, *Ospedale dei Derelitti* [Der.E], b.87, Pier Iseppo Donesan, fasc.2, 9 July 1567; ASV, *Signori di Notte al Civil* [SNC], b.271, *Vendite*, reg.1, ff.6v-7, 26-7 Apr.1601. Until 1597 Jews could not buy at pawn-pledge auctions, see Chapter 5.

separate the two groups of traders at the start, it later associated them when issuing new legislation on the second-hand market. In 1535, for example, rules were changed about the sale of sumptuous cloth, and Christian and Jewish second-hand dealers benefited alike.<sup>85</sup> Commercial rivals such as the guild of goldsmiths and jewellers also linked the two sets of dealers, accusing them of similar transgressions and treating both of them with suspicion.<sup>86</sup> In the mid-sixteenth-century dispute between the furriers and the second-hand dealers [Chapter 1, II.], the furriers not only passed resolutions against the two types of *strazzaruoli*, but also prosecuted members of both groups.<sup>87</sup>

It is clear, then, that although Christian and Jewish second-hand dealers were formally separate they were integrated within the market for used goods. As a result, the relationship which developed between these traders over the period contained contradictory elements of conflict and

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<sup>85</sup> ASV, *Collegio, Notatorio*, reg.23, f.35r [2nd pag.], 9 July 1535 [I am obliged to the archivist Scarpa for help tracing this reference, the version in BMC, M.St., f.94, is corrupted]. For another example, see ASV, CL, b.51, *Arti in genere, leggi dal 1530-77*, ff.108-9, *strazzaruoli*, 20 Apr.1540 [*Messetaria*].

<sup>86</sup> BMC, *Mariegole* no.139, *Mariegola degli orefici e gioiellieri*, ff.31-2, 21 Aug.1577; f.36v, 13 May 1581.

<sup>87</sup> ASV, *Arti*, b.719, *Mariegola dei varoteri*, f.50r, 6 Jan.1548 [mv]: 'et ch[e] niun artifice [sic], si strazzaruol, come zudeo... ch[e] non sia della ditta arte dj varoterj non possi p[er] alcun modo impazarsj in ditta arte...'. In 1550 Isaac, a Jew, and Master Valerio, *strazzaruol*, were accused of similar transgressions, see *ibid.*, f.51r, 17 Nov.1550; *ibid.*, b.720, *Processi*, fasc.2, *Contro Hebrei*, f.9, 24 July 1550.

cooperation, rather like the antagonistic rapport already existing between other trade rivals in the city. This does not mean that the uneasy association between Christian and Jewish second-hand dealers was repeated with other Venetian artisans facing competition from the Jews in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is conceivable, however, that a similar process of reluctant assimilation had occurred in the past when incoming workers such as the *Lucchesi* weavers and the German shoemakers had been allowed craft organisations separate from those of Venetian artisans.<sup>88</sup> In such cases, the number of trade rivals immigrating into the city was likely to affect trade relations and that is the topic explored in the last part of this chapter.

#### IV. Market Parameters

Quantifying the traders involved in the second-hand market over the period as a whole is not feasible. Surviving guild archives contain relatively few membership details and the information which does exist needs to be treated with caution.<sup>89</sup> These problems pale in comparison with the difficulties of calculating the numbers of Jewish dealers and 'alternative' traders in the market. In short, there is insufficient evidence to allow a systematic

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<sup>88</sup> Immigrants usually joined existing guilds, see Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.5,23, also pp.112-13. On the *Lucchesi* and the German shoemakers, see the Introduction, II. above.

<sup>89</sup> For reservations about guild membership records, see Brian Pullan's review of Rapp, *Industry and economic decline*, in *Economic History Review*, 30 (1977), 207-8.

analysis of any of the groups' complements in the medium term. Given our interest in the structure of the second-hand market and the assimilation of incoming dealers within that structure, however, it is important to have some conception of the market's parameters. 'Alternative' traders must remain perforce an indeterminate market presence, but existing documents can provide an idea of the size of the guild and of the group of Jewish dealers at specific points in the period.

Traders registered in the *arte degli strazzaruoli* continued to represent a substantial proportion of second-hand dealers throughout the sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth century. The guild was not, though, a large organisation. Richard Tilden Rapp has compiled statistics of general guild membership in the latter part of the period using lists submitted by the guilds to the *Milizia da Mar* to calculate *galleotti* levies [Table 3.2].<sup>90</sup> Rapp's figures show that at that time the *arte degli strazzaruoli* was quite small in comparison with other guilds involved in the clothing trades. Similar in size to the furriers, it had far fewer members than the guilds of tailors, shoemakers and mercers.

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<sup>90</sup> Richard Tilden Rapp, *Industry and economic decline in seventeenth-century Venice* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 58-62; see Pullan's review in previous note. On the *Milizia da Mar*, see above III.; also M. Dal Borgo, 'Le corporazioni e le scuole di arti e mestieri', in *Arti e mestieri in Venezia* (Venice: Università Popolare di Venezia and Fondazione Querini Stampalia, 1991), pp. 15-19 (p. 16). For guild complaints about the use of these lists to fix manpower levies, see Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp. 271, 333.



Table 3.2: *Guild membership in the clothing trades* <sup>91</sup>

guild	1595	1603	1660
furriers	107	122	71
merciers	567	596	1243
second-hand dealers	140	143	123
shoemakers	727	901	968
tailors	642	503	549

Rapp's data on the mercers' guild are borne out by research undertaken by Mackenney, but a membership list compiled by the guild of second-hand dealers for the *Milizia da Mar* in 1659 does not tally with Rapp's 1660 figure for that guild as it contains 197 names.<sup>92</sup> This incongruity does not, however, cast doubt on the notion that the *arte degli strazzaruoli* was smaller than most other guilds involved in related trades. According to Rapp's statistics, moreover, the guilds of second-hand dealers and furriers experienced a decline in numbers at the end of the period in sharp contrast with the mercers and shoemakers and, to a certain extent, the tailors. Evidently, the 1659 list does not support this trend, though, as we shall now see, another source is consistent with it.

<sup>91</sup> Source: Rapp, *Industry*, pp.58-62.

<sup>92</sup> Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.91,94,96,103-6. The 1659 second-hand dealers' list is in ASV, MM,b.642, *Filza contenute i ruoli nominali dei membri delle arti colla relativa quota di tansa e taglione, 1605, 1661, ecc., arte degli strazzaruoli*, 10 Sept.1659.

A guild register survives in the Venetian State Archives which records the membership of the *arte degli strazzaruoli* during the thirty-year period lasting from 1616 to 1646.<sup>93</sup> In this register the membership is divided into three arbitrary categories (second-hand dealers, pedlars and women) and the years in which guild dues were paid are noted. A few repetitions recur in the document, but, taking them into account, it is possible to calculate the number of members enrolled in the guild in specific years [Table 3.3].<sup>94</sup>

Table 3.3: *Membership of the second-hand dealers' guild at five-year intervals, 1616-1646*<sup>95</sup>

year	second-hand dealers	pedlars	women	total
1616	80	86	17	183
1621	71	88	21	180
1626	74	104	38	216
1631	50	81	12	143
1636	82	111	12	205
1641	88	114	14	216
1646	56	81	7	144
No dates	14	8	6	28

<sup>93</sup> ASV, *Arti, serie 73, Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni da farsi dai confratelli che entreranno nella detta arte*. It contains a few pre-1616 and post-1645 references, but the majority fall between 1616 and 1646.

<sup>94</sup> The list contains 782 names viz: *strazzaruoli* 285, *revendigoli* 387, *donne* 110. Modified to account for repetitions: *strazzaruoli* 273, *revendigoli* 372, *donne* 110 - a corrected total of 755. Why the divisions are arbitrary is explained in Chapter 4, I.f) below.

<sup>95</sup> Source: ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni*.

The membership totals recorded in Table 3.3 are noticeably higher than Rapp's figures for 1603 and 1660 and this serves to illustrate some of the problems associated with using guild membership lists as sources. The 1616-46 register includes members of other guilds such as canvas merchants, mattress makers and mercers who enrolled in the guild of second-hand dealers to sell certain types of goods [see Chapter 4, I.e)]. Given that the *Milizia da Mar* used its guild lists to fix manpower levies, it is likely that the guilds massaged the membership figures submitted to that organisation in the hope of lessening the toll and that this is reflected in Rapp's statistics.

The annual totals set out in Table 3.3 do confirm that the overall membership of the guild of second-hand dealers in the period was significantly less than the numbers of artisans in the guilds of mercers, shoemakers and tailors as recorded by Rapp. They also show that the guild's membership fluctuated quite dramatically between 1616 and 1646. A rapid expansion occurred in the early 1620s, reflecting the number of women and 'pedlars' entering the guild and this was followed by a severe reduction of members in 1631. By 1636, a high level had again been reached and the 1626 peak was regained in 1641. By 1646, however, the guild's membership had dropped once more to the low level of 1631. Other evidence bears out these fluctuations. For example, in 1624 the Jewish *strazzaruoli* complained that there were more Christian second-hand

dealers in the city at that time.<sup>96</sup> The drastic fall in membership registered in 1631 was undoubtedly due to the devastating plague of 1630-31: an entry in the second-hand dealers' *mariegola* made at the end of 1633 reports that the guilds of Venice had all lost substantial numbers of members.<sup>97</sup>

The surviving guild membership details discussed above are hardly exhaustive, nor are they evenly distributed. Membership lists are more prevalent from the end of the period because guilds were then increasingly called upon to compile such lists, often, as previously noted, for tax purposes.<sup>98</sup> Frustratingly, enrolment lists do not survive from the earlier part of the sixteenth century when the Jewish traders entered the market.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 271, 16 Nov. 1624 [Jewish petition, 9 May 1624]. These fluctuations are discussed in Chapter 7.

<sup>97</sup> BMC, M.St., ff. 214-5, 28 Dec. 1633; see Chapter 6, III. below.

<sup>98</sup> BMC, M.St., f. 151, 9 Oct. 1584; f. 159, 22 Nov. 1584; Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, ch. 6. See Chapter 4, I.f), below for another reason why lists were compiled.

<sup>99</sup> Records do exist from the mid-century onwards of members voting at guild meetings:

30 Jan. 1547 [mv]	- 40	1 May 1586	- 70
22 Sept. 1549	- 53	25 Apr. 1598	- 74
24 Jan. 1574 [mv]	- 58	29 Apr. 1598	- 85
10 June 1584	- 100	9 July 1623	- 73

Since only masters had voting rights [see Chapter 1 above] these figures do not represent the whole membership, see Sagredo, *Consorterie delle arti edificative*, p. 53; Tiepolo, 'Arti e artigiani', unpag.; Dal Borgo, 'Le corporazioni', p. 16. Comparing the 1623 figure with the 1620s membership figures in Table 3.3, masters made up about a third of the members, so we might be dealing with a membership of c. 150-200. Sources: BMC, M.St., ff. 98, 100, 123, 158; ASV, *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Giustizia Vecchia* [GV], serie XV, *Parti e capitoli*, b. 213, *strazzaruoli*, parti no. 1, 2, 3.

In direct contrast to the guild, no lists record the number of Jewish second-hand dealers active at the end of the period, whereas details do exist for the first two stages of their establishment in Venice. Some account of the Jewish dealers later on can, however, be obtained from the registers of the *Ufficiali al Cattaver* and other sources. It is not possible to delineate the group of Jewish traders with any degree of precision, but a sense of proportion can be achieved.

At the time of the Ghetto decree of 29 March 1516 there were ten licensed groups of Jewish second-hand dealers in Venice [see above, II.a)].<sup>100</sup> The traders making up these groups are recorded, and, if all the dealers named were active traders, at the end of March 1516 there were at least 26 Jewish *strazzaruoli* in the city.<sup>101</sup> It is not clear, though, whether all ten groups transferred into the Ghetto Nuovo. The Jewish traders reacted to the decision to move their outlets, and they, along with the bankers,

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<sup>100</sup> ASV, CD, *Parti miste*, reg.38, ff.163v-4 [2nd pag.], 27 June 1515; *ibid.*, reg.39 [2nd file], f.196 [2nd pag.], 13 Mar.1516. The tenth group was licensed just 16 days before the Ghetto decree, at which time the other nine businesses were still in operation, see *ibid.*, filza 37, 13 Mar.1516.

<sup>101</sup> The ten groups were: Abraham di Beneto, Isaac and Frizole; Solomon da Treviso, Caliman and Orsin; the brothers David and Solomon and their colleague David; the brothers Solomon, Conscio and Anzolo; the brothers Solomon, Prospero and Moisè; Aberlin di Sanson and his brother-in-law Isaac; Isaac da Treviso; the brothers Grassin and Lazzarin da Novara; the brothers Joseph and Baron da Novara and their Uncle Moisè; Moisè q. Elia da Treviso, his brothers and others. ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.4, f.61v [2nd pag.], 5 July 1515; f.62, 8 July 1515; ASV, CD, *Parti miste*, reg.39, f.196, 13 Mar.1516.

attempted to maintain their original premises.<sup>102</sup> As the banker Asher Meshullam had predicted, the failure of this effort may have encouraged one of the groups to leave Venice: in 1519 there were only nine second-hand dealers' shops in the Ghetto.<sup>103</sup>

Fragmentary references permit an insight into how some of these dealers carried on in the new setting. Recently, Ennio Concina published details about a group of houses in the Ghetto Nuovo which, in 1521, belonged to the da Brolo family. They reveal that three premises out of a total of 20 were rented by Jewish *strazzaruoli* - Moisè da Civaldà, the brothers Moisè and Solomon Luzzatto, and Caliman da Treviso. The Luzzatto brothers and Caliman da Treviso, who rented relatively large spaces, may have been linked to two of the groups licensed in 1515.<sup>104</sup> In July 1528, moreover, special concessions were made to Conseio, Anzolo and their brothers and sons, who ran a successful second-hand dealing business in the Ghetto. It is highly likely that these dealers were related to the group registered in 1515 made up of Solomon, Conscio and Anzolo. Conseio (Consiglio) went on to become representative of the Jewish

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<sup>102</sup> On resettlement to the Ghetto Nuovo and the reaction of the Jewish *strazzaruoli*, see Chapter 5, II.a) below.

<sup>103</sup> ASV, *Senato, Deliberazioni (secreta)*, reg. 48, f. 92r, 4 June 1519. On the prediction, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp. 487-8.

<sup>104</sup> Solomon, Prospero and Moisè; and Solomon da Treviso, Caliman and Orsin, see above. See Ennio Concina, 'Parva Jerusalem', in Ennio Concina, Ugo Camerino and Donatella Calabi, *La città degli Ebrei: il Ghetto di Venezia: architettura e urbanistica* (Venice: Albrizzi, 1991), pp. 9-155 (pp. 41-2).

community during 1531-32 and his holding of this position in the early days of the Ghetto would suggest that he had been one of its founder members.<sup>105</sup>

Details can also be pieced together about the select group of Jewish second-hand dealers active in the Ghetto from the 1580s to the 1600s [see above, III.]. Numerous references to these dealers recur in the registers of the *Ufficiali al Cattaver* which record decisions made on the daily management of the Ghetto Nuovo.<sup>106</sup> On the basis of these sources, Pullan argued that this 'élite' of second-hand dealers began to control the Ghetto Nuovo during the last few years of the sixteenth century.<sup>107</sup> Like the corpus of Jewish traders in the city at the beginning of the period, the late-sixteenth-century group was made up of about eight different sets of dealers.<sup>108</sup> The traders making up this select group were not, however, the only

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<sup>105</sup> ASV, CD, *Registro comune 4*, f. 60v, 23 July 1528; ff. 63v-4r, 31 July 1528. On Consiglio's role as representative, see Concina, 'Parva Jerusalem', p. 51 (refers to Consiglio, Angelo and *compagni ebrei*); DMS, LV, col. 656, 22 Mar. 1532; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p. 506. For a 1540s reference to Consiglio, see Viola, *Compilazione delle leggi*, V, 2, 205-6.

<sup>106</sup> ASV, UC, bb. 242-58, *Ebreorum Cattaveri (1565-1653)*; see also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p. 646.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 548-9; *idem*, 'Jewish moneylending', p. 675.

<sup>108</sup> *Viz*: Isaac dalla Vida; the brothers Abraham, Benedetto and Nascimben Calimani; Anselmo and Grassin, heirs to the late Michiel di Mazzo, called the 'Sorzetti'; Orso dalla Man; Anselmo Scocco; Isaac Luzzatto; Iseppo dalla Baldosa; David Luzzatto. Some had links: Isaac Luzzatto was brother-in-law to the Calimani; Orso dalla Man was referred to as Orso Scocco; see ASV, UC, b. 244, reg. 5, ff. 128-9, 27 Oct. 1594; f. 51, 3-7 Aug. 1592.

Jewish second-hand dealers operating in the Ghetto at that time.

In 1591, clothes, presumably second-hand, were stolen from a well-stocked and appointed shop in the Ghetto Nuovo [see Chapter 2,II.a)]. The shop belonged to a certain Giacob d'Anselmi, a name which is not included in the above group of dealers. This trader was clearly important, though, as a plea for justice was made on his behalf by the leaders of the Jewish community and they also offered a reward.<sup>109</sup> In addition, several Jewish second-hand dealers are cited in the records of auctions held by the *Signori di Notte al Civil* at the beginning of the seventeenth century.<sup>110</sup> Only one of the names, Isaac dalla Vida, corresponds with the Ghetto 'élite'. In July 1601 he bought a gilded iron bedstead at auction.<sup>111</sup> The clique was certainly active at this time: Iseppo dalla Baldosa had petitioned the Senate in 1599; Isaac Luzzatto rented goods to the English ambassador Henry Wotton between 1604 and 1610; and in 1614 the Calimani still had a flourishing shop in the Ghetto Nuovo.<sup>112</sup> However, these dealers did not attend the

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<sup>109</sup> ASV,AC,*Miscellanea Penale*,b.4608, De'Piero, Marcantonio, f.4 ff., 10 Mar. 1591 [I am indebted to Dott. Stefano Piasentini for this valuable reference].

<sup>110</sup> ASV,SNC,*Vendite*, b.271, reg.1 (1601-04). On the *Signori di Notte al Civil*, see Chapters 2,I.d), II.c) and 5,III.a).

<sup>111</sup> ASV, SNC, *Vendite*, b.271, reg.1, f.13r, 19 July 1601.

<sup>112</sup> ASV,*Senato,Terra*,reg.69,f.142v [2nd pag.],9 Oct.1599; ASV,UC,b.2,reg.3,*Capitolare*,f.24,13,26 Nov.1614 [Calimani]; on Luzzatto's dealings with Wotton, see Chapter 4 below.



auctions of the *Signori di Notte al Civil* whereas other Jewish traders did.

With rare exceptions, such as the gilded bedstead bought by Isaac dalla Vida, the goods at these auctions were of very poor quality and they sold for a pittance.<sup>113</sup> Jewish traders who bought these goods, such as Raphael Spiera and Isaac Gobbo, were not therefore in the same league as the main group of Ghetto dealers who dealt mostly in luxury household furnishings.<sup>114</sup> Either these dealers were working for the more prominent traders or there were more than eight second-hand dealing concerns in the Ghetto at that time.<sup>115</sup> The Jews who participated at the civil justice authority's auctions were, however, small in number and they were considerably less than the Christian traders recorded at these events.<sup>116</sup> Indeed, the proportion of Jewish to Christian second-hand dealers in general is likely to have remained tiny throughout the period because

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<sup>113</sup> For example, on 2 October 1602, six ragged napkins sold for 3 *lire* and an old sheet and worn-out, man's shirt for 7 *lire*; see ASV, SNC, *Vendite*, b.271, reg.1, f.65.

<sup>114</sup> On April 26 1601, Spiera bought breeches and a collar, see ASV, SNC, *Vendite*, b.271, reg.1, f.6v. Gobbo bought an old black serge dress in November 1601, f.30r, 27 Nov. See Chapter 4, II.b) on the activities of the Ghetto élite.

<sup>115</sup> Sandri noted that *strazzaria* was a family activity practised in every Jewish home but cited no evidence, see Sandri and Alazraki, *Arte e vita*, p.194. Giovanni Grevembroch gave a similar idea of the trade in the eighteenth century, see *Gli abiti de' Veneziani di quasi ogni età con diligenza raccolti e dipinti nel secolo XVIII*, 4 vols (Venice:Filippi, 1981), III, no.63.

<sup>116</sup> About ten Jewish dealers' names appear in the sales register for 1601-04, see ASV, SNC, *Vendite*, b.271, reg.1.

the entire community of *Ebrei tedeschi* was itself relatively small.<sup>117</sup> As well as a difference in numbers, there were other important distinctions between the two groups of traders.

The *arte degli strazzaruoli* was not an homogenous body of artisans practising the same craft. The policy of monopolistic expansion pursued by the guild [see Chapter 1, I.] had created an agglomerate of diverse groups of traders (*colonelli*) involved in different aspects of the second-hand trade.<sup>118</sup> Within the guild, master craftsmen coexisted with a large number of pedlars without fixed premises. Other members specialised in renting out goods, in selling certain types of cloth, and in making and selling collars and different sorts of legwear [see Table 3.1 above and Chapter 4, I.].<sup>119</sup> What is more, women were also enrolled in the guild.

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<sup>117</sup> Beloch gives the following figures for the Ghetto as a whole:

1552	-	902	1593	-	1043
1563	-	1424	1606-07	-	1157
1586	-	1694			

Giulio Beloch, 'La popolazione di Venezia nei secoli XVI e XVII', *Nuovo Archivio Veneto*, 3 (1902), 5-49 (pp.27-9); see also Roth, *Venice*, pp.106-7.

<sup>118</sup> Guild agglomerations were common in early modern Europe, on Venice, see Sagredo, *Consorterie delle arti edificative*, p.54; Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.4,96,111,113; Rapp, *Industry*, p.19; Antonio Manno, *I mestieri di Venezia: storia, arte e devozione delle corporazioni dal XIII al XVIII secolo* (Citadella, Padua: Biblos, 1995), p.17.

<sup>119</sup> Lists of *colonelli* can be found in BMC, M.St., f.156, 3 Jan.1584 [mv]; ASV, *Arti, Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni* (*strazzaruoli* list).

This last feature of the trade surprised Bartolomeo Cecchetti, who wrote about Venetian craft activities in the late nineteenth century, but the presence of female second-hand dealers can be traced throughout the trade's records.<sup>120</sup> The seventeenth-century membership list records the names of 111 women registered in the guild from 1616-46, which indicates that women made up approximately one seventh of the total membership during that thirty-year period.<sup>121</sup> Women entering the guild in the 1620s did, as we have seen, contribute significantly to a rapid increase in membership at that time. Other women who were not registered in the guild on their own account were also very much involved in the trade, that is to say they were wives and daughters of male guild members.<sup>122</sup> In 1419, when the

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<sup>120</sup> B. Cecchetti, 'Le industrie in Venezia nel secolo XIII', *Archivio Veneto*, 4(1872), 211-57 (p.234). See CAV, II, 2, cap. 17, p.466; Tiepolo, 'Arti e artigiani', unpag.; Peter Burke, 'Classifying the people: the census as collective representation', in *The historical anthropology of early modern Italy: essays on perception and communication*, ed. idem (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp.27-39 (p.36). For female traders elsewhere, see Merry Wiesner Wood, 'Paltry peddlers or essential merchants? Women in the distributive trades in early modern Nuremberg', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 12, 2 (1981), 3-13 (pp.4, 9-10); Merry E. Wiesner, 'Spinning out capital: women's work in the early modern economy', in *Becoming visible: women in European history*, ed. Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz and Susan Stuard, 2nd edn (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), pp.222-49 (p.238); Bianca M. Du Mortier, 'Tweedehands kleding in de zeventiende eeuw', *Textielhistorische Bijdragen*, 31(1991), 39-59 (p.48).

<sup>121</sup> ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni* (110 in *donne* list, 1 in *strazzaruoli* list). On their activities, see Chapter 4, I.d) below.

<sup>122</sup> On the involvement of women in their menfolks' trades, see Wood, 'Paltry peddlers', p.4; Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Women in the crafts in sixteenth-century Lyon', *Feminist Studies*, 8 (1982), 46-80 (pp.49, 53-8); Diane Willen, 'Guilds-women in the

Great Council gave an important decision on the trade, explicit reference was made to the wives who practised the second-hand trade with their husbands.<sup>123</sup> These women remain a shadowy presence and their numbers cannot be accurately gauged, but occasional references shed light on their activities. For example, in February 1623, items found in the workshop of Lauro, a second-hand dealer based in Piazza San Marco, had been lined in his house by his 'women'.<sup>124</sup> Nicolosa, the widow of a second-hand dealer who made a will in 1569, was a tailoress and had presumably worked with her husband in the same way.<sup>125</sup> Donna Maddalena, similarly married to a *strazzaruol*, made small loans of cash on items of clothing which, if forfeited, no doubt found their way into her husband's workshop [see Chapter 2,II.b)].<sup>126</sup>

Whereas the guild contained an array of disparate elements, there was less scope for variety among the group of Jewish

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city of York, 1560-1700', *The Historian*, 46 (Feb. 1984), 204-18 (p.205); Jean H. Quataert, 'The shaping of women's work in manufacturing: guilds, households, and the state in central Europe, 1648-1870', *American Historical Review*, 90 (1985), 1122-1148 (p.1133).

<sup>123</sup> ASV, MC, *Deliberazioni*, reg.22, *Liber Ursa*, f.32r, 11 June 1419.

<sup>124</sup> ASV, *Arte dei varoteri*, b.719, Mariegola, f.123v, 11 Feb. 1622 [mv]: '...havendo detti lavori fatti fabricar in casa sua dalle sue donne'.

<sup>125</sup> ASV, *Sezione Notarile, Testamenti*, b.36, notary Abramo, will no.55, Nicolosa, *sartora*, 25 May 1569.

<sup>126</sup> ASV, SNC, b.261, *Presentation in camera*, reg.1, f.2, 2 Oct. 1578.

dealers. It was much smaller than the *arte degli strazzaruoli* and stricter limits were also placed on the activities of the Jewish dealers. They were excluded from most of the pursuits of the guild's additional *colonelli* [see Chapter 4,II.a)]. The group of Jewish second-hand dealers was therefore made up predominantly of heads of businesses, their dependents, and, if they could afford them, employees.<sup>127</sup>

The restrictions on the Jewish second-hand dealers did, however, prompt the development of a spin-off profession - that of Ghetto broker (*sanser*).<sup>128</sup> These brokers acted as go-betweens and united the Jewish traders with clients, by leading people directly to the shops inside the Ghetto and by taking goods out of the Ghetto to sell.<sup>129</sup> They received a small commission on any deals struck. A limited number of Christian and Jewish brokers were sanctioned to

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<sup>127</sup> For tailors prosecuted for theft by Jewish dealers, see Chapter 2,II.a). Apart from an odd reference of 1523, little trace has been found of female Jewish traders: ASV, *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità*, reg.726, *Notatorio* 3, f.63, 23 July 1523. For references to Jewish women in the eighteenth century, see Grevembroch, *Gli abiti*, III,no.63; see also Roth, *Venice*, pp.171,174.

<sup>128</sup> Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.549-50; Carla Boccato, 'La disciplina delle sansarie nel Ghetto di Venezia', *Giornale Economico* (Venice), 6 (Nov.-Dec.1974), 27-36. Brokers were common in Venice, they could, for example, be found at the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, see ASV, CD, *Registro comune* 4, f.67r, 3 Aug.1528; Chambers and Pullan, *Venice*, p.10.

<sup>129</sup> For an idea of how the system worked, see ASV, *Sant'Uffizio* [SU], b.52, proc. Solomon della Regina, test. Eusebius Renato, 3 Aug.1585 (published in Pier Cesare Ioly Zorattini, *Processi del S.Ufficio di Venezia contro Ebrei e giudaizzanti (1548- )*, [9+ vols] (Florence:Olschki, 1980- ), VII (1585-89), p.74); see also ASV, UC, b.244, reg.5, f.145, 6 June 1595.

perform this activity, but, as we have seen in Chapter 2 [II.b)], a large number of unregistered brokers also operated in and around the Ghetto.<sup>130</sup> Although these brokers were independent of the Jewish traders, they were an integral part of second-hand dealing in the Ghetto and can thus be considered an informal sub-group within the trade.

It is clear, then, that a number of different types of trader participated in the Venetian market for second-hand clothes and furnishings during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Alongside dealers enrolled in the *arte degli strazzaruoli* and diverse sorts of 'alternative' traders who had long been active in the city, a group of Jewish second-hand dealers became firmly established in the market. The entry of these Jewish traders challenged the guild's claim to predominance and created much antagonism, yet it succeeded.

The participation of the Jewish dealers was an important development within the market for used goods in Venice. It did not represent a completely new departure for the *arte degli strazzaruoli*, since the guild was accustomed to innovations introduced by the Venetian government and it

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<sup>130</sup> For an example, see ASV, SU, b.64, proc. Giorgio Moretto, test. 13 Apr. 1589. For attempts to regulate such brokers, see ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg. 11, 28 Nov. 1535; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg. 44, ff. 147v-8 [2nd pag.], 1 June 1563 (cited in Boccato, 'La disciplina', p. 31); decisions made on *sanseri* 1565-97 can be found in ASV, UC, b. 242, reg. 1. See also Roth, *Venice*, p. 135; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p. 550, n. 41.

was also well used to diversity within the market. The guild did, however, react bitterly to the permanent establishment of the Jewish traders. Contrary to the rhetoric employed in demarcation disputes, their rancour had little to do with the Jews' religion. It was partly due to the status attributed to Jewish dealers within the second-hand market and, as we shall see in Chapter 4 [II.], it also resulted from their trading activities.

## Chapter 4 THE CRAFT

The craft of second-hand dealing has excited as little curiosity as traders in used goods. Neither Sylvie Favaliere or Alessandro Gnani had any qualms about describing the trade in the sixteenth century as one undertaken by non-specialised workers, similar to the work of unskilled manual labourers like porters (*facchini*).<sup>1</sup> This view of the second-hand trade as unskilled, mean and of little importance has a long pedigree in Venetian historiography. In the late nineteenth century, Bartolomeo Cecchetti considered it to be a dishonourable pursuit, linking its practitioners with rubbish-men.<sup>2</sup> Traces of similar attitudes can also be found earlier. An extensive inquiry into the guild system in 1757 found that second-hand dealing was an 'easy trade, which can be learnt immediately, because if you have goods you sell them'.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sylvie Favaliere, 'Le attività lavorative in una parrocchia del centro di Venezia (San Polo - secolo XVI)', *Studi Veneziani*, n.s.9 (1985), 187-97 (pp.188,193,197); Alessandro Gnani, 'Valori urbani e attività marginali nella Piazza universale di Tommaso Garzoni', *Ricerche Storiche*, 20, 1 (1990), 45-71 (p.47). On *facchini*, see Francesca Meneghetti Casarin, *I vagabondi, la società e lo stato nella Repubblica di Venezia alla fine del '700* (Rome: Jouvence, 1984), p.72.

<sup>2</sup> B. Cecchetti, *La vita dei Veneziani nel 1300*, facs., Collana di bibliografia e storia veneziana, 13 (Bologna: Forni, 1980), 3: 'Le vesti', pp.108-9; idem, 'Le industrie in Venezia nel secolo XIII', *Archivio Veneto*, 4 (1872), 211-57 (pp.233-4).

<sup>3</sup> ASV, *Compilazione delle Leggi* [CL], b.48, *Arti in genere*, f.699v, *Arti relative a varj rami di commercio ed agli usi e comodi della vita civile*: 'mestier facile, che subito si apprende, purché si abbian cose le quali vendere [sic]'. On guilds in the 1700s, see Massimo Costantini, *L'albero della libertà economica: il processo di scioglimento delle*



Documentary evidence from the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries does not quite accord with this interpretation. Second-hand dealing in that period did encompass humble and unspecialised activities, but it also included a wide range of other pursuits which were not of that ilk. These other activities ensured that the guild held a relatively high position in the Venetian trade hierarchy: it compared quite well with the drapers' and mercers' guilds, was roughly equal to the furriers and was more important than the tailors' guild.

Like other urban pursuits, the trade in used goods developed consistently.<sup>4</sup> In the period from 1500 to 1650, *strazzaria* was a type of merchandise which was stocked and sold, and it was also a distinctive craft practised by artisans.<sup>5</sup> Instead of one sole identifiable pursuit, the art of second-hand dealing consisted of a number of activities which came within the general scope of the trade in used goods. Not only was the guild an amalgamation of artisans performing different aspects of the trade, but the second-hand market as a whole was composed of groups of dealers specialising in various trade activities.

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*corporazioni veneziane* (Venice: Arsenale, 1987), pp.29-41.

<sup>4</sup> For changes caused by imported ready-treated and finished cloth from Flanders and England, see BMC, *Mariegole* no.195, *Mariegola degli strazzaruoli* [M.St.], ff.169-70, 15 Mar.1584.

<sup>5</sup> ASV, *Consigli dei Dieci* [CD], *Parti miste*, filza 35, 27 June 1515: 'tenir strazzaria', 'far strazzaria'; see also ASV, *Senato, Deliberazioni (Secreta)*, reg.66, f.54v, 19 Dec. 1548. The *Strazzaria* was also once a part of the city known as a focus of second-hand dealers, see Chapter 5, IV. below.

## I. Guild Members

### a) Masters

According to the guild, the craft practised by its master craftsmen and passed on to their apprentices was the principal *arte della strazzaria*. In theory, only masters were entitled to call themselves *strazzaruoli* and acquiring their craft, like that of the tailors, took five years of training.<sup>6</sup> Unlike the statutes of the Florentine guild of second-hand dealers, the Venetian *mariegola* does not set down craft activities in detail.<sup>7</sup> To understand the *arte della strazzaria*, therefore, these activities have to be reconstructed and an obvious, but unsatisfactory, starting-point is the trade name.

A literal translation of *strazzaruol* (*straccivendolo*) is 'rag seller'. This definition corresponds with the base type of trade described by Favali, Gnani and Cecchetti, but it is not truly representative of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century craft. Inventories recording goods found in workshops of *strazzaruoli* do substantiate this

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<sup>6</sup> On apprenticeship rules, see BMC, M.St., cap.65, ff.60-1, 13 July 1479; f.100, 22 Sept. 1549; f.157, 10 June 1584; ASV, *Arti, Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni da farsi dai confratelli che entreranno nella detta arte (1616-1646)* [*strazzaruoli list*]. They were still in force in 1757: ASV, CL, b.56, *Arti in genere*, f.526, 1 Sept. On tailors, see *ibid.*, b.59, f.471r. For apprentices' contracts, see ASV, *Provveditori e Sopraproveditori alla Giustizia Vecchia* [GV], serie XIV, *Accordi di garzoni*, b.112, reg.152, f.10r, 7 June 1582; f.35, 24 Aug. 1582; f.103r, 14 Dec. 1582.

<sup>7</sup> Ferdinando Sartini, ed., *Statuti dell'arte dei rigattieri e linaioli di Firenze (1189-1340)* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1940), pp.45-6, 1318.

connection with rags (rags were collected, sorted and sold for making paper and other purposes), but they also show that the dealers traded in many other sorts of wares.<sup>8</sup> The craft of *strazzaria* was therefore more than its name implies. Giuseppe Boerio's definition of *strazzaruol*, written in the nineteenth century, encompasses a broader range of activities. For Boerio, the word meant a 'second-hand dealer, seller of used clothes and household goods'. According to Boerio, moreover, the term '*cenciaiuolo* or *cenciaio*, was used of one who goes around the city collecting and buying rags'.<sup>9</sup>

Master second-hand dealers continued calling themselves *strazzaruoli* throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, showing that there was little stigma attached to their name. This suggests that the meaning of the word changed, keeping pace with an evolving trade. Developments

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<sup>8</sup> ASV, *Cancelliera Inferiore, Miscellanea, Atti notai diversi*, b.39, no.44, Antonio Rossati, 29 Oct.1556 [I am indebted to Prof.Reinhold Mueller for this reference]; ASV, *Signori di Notte al Civil* [SNC], b.216, *Inventari d'asporti*, reg.7,8 Jan. 1618 [mv], Battista; ASV, *Giudici di Petizion* [GP], *Inventari*, b.347/12, no.106, anonymous *strazzaruol*, 27 Aug.1621; b.359/24, no.36, Betta, 14 Nov.1644; *ibid.*, no.99, Giacomo Carletti, 16 May 1645. On the use of rags for paper, see Renzo Sabbatini, 'La manifattura cartaria in età moderna: imprenditorialità, rapporti di produzione e occupazione', in *Produzione e commercio della carta e del libro, secc. XIII-XVIII*, ed. Simonetta Cavaciocchi, Atti delle 'Settimane di studi' e altri convegni, Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica 'F. Datini', Prato, n.s.23 (Florence:Le Monnier, 1992), pp.99-142 (pp.113-16).

<sup>9</sup> Giuseppe Boerio, *Dizionario del dialetto veneziano*, 2nd edn, facs. (Florence: Giunti Martello, 1983), p.713: 'strazzariol: rigattiere, venditore di vestimenti e di masserizie usate.... Cenciaiuolo o Cenciaio, dicesi colui che va raccogliendo per la città e comprando cenci'.

such as these make the task of reconstructing craft activities more complicated.<sup>10</sup> While confirming that *strazze* meant rags, Boerio noted that it could also signify goods or general household items (*roba* or *masserizia*) and this brings us closer to the merchandise listed in the workshop inventories.<sup>11</sup> This alternative interpretation is supported by other Venetian authorities.<sup>12</sup> Clearly, analysing the term *strazzaruol* is not the most successful means of understanding the craft.<sup>13</sup> Instead of taking an etymological approach, a more effective way of tackling the subject is to study the surviving documentation and to use that to build up a composite image of the trade.

As Cecchetti rightly observed, Venetian guild documents are

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<sup>10</sup> Derek Keene, 'Continuity and development in urban trades: problems of concepts and the evidence', in *Work in Towns 850-1850*, ed. Penelope J. Corfield and Derek Keene (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1990), pp.1-16 (p.9).

<sup>11</sup> Boerio, *Dizionario*, p.713. Piero Fiorelli noted that the technical language relating to the trade and use of rags had '...esprimere nozioni e concetti e sfumature che l'uso dei più non potrebbe conoscere...', 'La lingua degli stracci', *Lingua Nostra* (Florence), 7(1946), 14-19 (p.14) [I am grateful to Dott. Claudia Salmini for this reference]. On 'stracci', see also *Enciclopedia italiana*, XXXII (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1935-36), pp.797-8.

<sup>12</sup> Giambattista Gallicciolli, *Delle memorie venete antiche profane ed ecclesiastiche*, 8 vols (Venice: Domenico Fracasso, 1795), II, 301: 'appellavasi poi, e s'appella ancora in Venezia *strazzaria*, gli abiti, mobili e tutt'altre suppelletili, delle quali siasi almeno fatto qualche uso, onde non si reputano più nuove. ...e *strazzaroli* sono detti i venditori di robe già usate, o vecchie'.

<sup>13</sup> See also Antonio Ciscato, *Gli Ebrei in Padova (1300-1800)* (Padua: Società Cooperativa Tipografica, 1901), p.103; Gian Ludovico Masetti Zannini, 'Ebrei, artisti, oggetti d'arte (documenti romani dei secoli XVI e XVII)', *Commentari* (Rome), n.s.25 (July-Dec.1974), 281-301 (p.281).

more informative on discipline in the workplace than on craft techniques.<sup>14</sup> Guild statutes, for example, indicate what artisans were meant to be doing instead of what they actually did. To achieve a more rounded picture of guild members' activities, these documents have to be supplemented with other types of sources such as the workshop inventories cited above, guild trial records, artisans' wills and lists of goods bought by *strazzaruoli* at auction. Taken together these sources give a better idea of the trade practised by master craftsmen.

In the first place, they confirm that buying and selling used goods was central to the craft. The guild's 1430 statutes refer to trading in men's and women's clothes, including cloaks, hose and jerkins, as well as household furnishings such as mattresses and bedding, rugs, wall-hangings and lengths of used cloth.<sup>15</sup> Items such as these, which were bought from individuals like the executors of wills and also at auction [see Chapter 5, III.a)], were handled throughout the period.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Cecchetti, 'Le industrie', p.212.

<sup>15</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.9, ff.6-7; cap.27, f.15; cap.32, ff.21-2; cap.34, ff.24-5.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., f.105, 30 May 1554; f.110, 16 Nov.1557; ff.169-70, 15 Mar.1584; f.180, 24 Jan.1585 [mv]; ff.181-2, 7 Apr.1590. For a detailed workshop inventory, see ASV, *Cancelliera Inferiore, Miscellanea, Atti notai diversi*, b.39, no.44, Antonio Rossati, 30 Sept.1556. The mirror in the shop of Marina, widow of Girolamo Targa, was presumably used to effect sales, see ASV, GP, *Inventari*, b.364/28, no.101, 28 Nov.1653. On sources of supply, see Marin Sanudo [Marino Sanuto], *I diarii* [DMS], ed. Rinaldo Fulin and others, 58 vols (Venice: Fratelli Visentini, 1879-1903), XXVII, col.359, 4 June 1519; BMC, M.St.,

These goods were not simply traded as recorded in the inquiry of 1757 [see above], but they were also altered. A key part of the five-year apprenticeship required of master *strazzaruoli* was learning how to measure, cut and sew cloth.<sup>17</sup> The centrality of these activities is demonstrated in the *mariegola*, as tailors' shears are included in the full-page illustration of San Giacomo Maggiore, the guild's patron saint [see Chapter 1,I.].<sup>18</sup> In contrast to the non-specialised trade conjured up by Favalier and Gnavi, therefore, the *arte della strazzaria* was a skilled occupation.<sup>19</sup> In theory, this 'tailoring' proficiency differentiated master craftsmen, who were at the top of the guild's hierarchy, from other traders like pedlars (*revendigoli*) who were lower down within the organisation [see below, b)], and the masters were proud of this distinction.<sup>20</sup> The tailors' guild, on the other hand, resented them for it, seeing it as an encroachment upon their trade.<sup>21</sup>

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f.106,c.23 June 1554; ASV, SNC, b.271, *Vendite*, reg.1 (1601-04).

<sup>17</sup> BMC, M.St., f.100, 22 Sept.1549.

<sup>18</sup> Shears are among the goods of Battista, seized for debt: ASV, SNC, b.216, *Inventari d'asporti*, reg.7, 8 Jan.1618 [mv].

<sup>19</sup> In statistics compiled by Apollonio Del Senno from material gathered during 1798-99, the guild was included with trades requiring a professional qualification, see Costantini, *L'albero*, p.39.

<sup>20</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.32, ff.21-2; f.100, 22 Sept.1549; f.110, 16 Nov.1557; ff.210-12, 23 Sept.1621.

<sup>21</sup> On this animosity, see Chapter 1,II. For tailors' sons who were *strazzaruoli*, see ASV, *Sezione Notarile, Testamenti*, b.42, notary Trevisan, will no.2, Domenico, 10 Sept.1529; b.199, notary Cigrini, will no.319, Zuane, 17 Nov.1579; b.222, notary Crivelli, will no.1178, Lunardo, 1 July 1589; ASV, GV, *Accordi di garzoni*, b.112, reg.152, f.35, Camilo, 24 Aug.1582;

Masters applied their skills in a number of ways. Like tailors, they mended second-hand clothes and furnishings, and by thus improving the quality of their stock, could ask higher prices when selling it on.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, *strazzaruoli* sewed fur and other types of linings into clothes, adapting garments to the seasons and further increasing their worth.<sup>23</sup> An intriguing reference in the archives of the *Milizia da Mar* suggests that second-hand dealers also 'revamped' old clothes in line with the latest styles.<sup>24</sup> As well as altering existing garments, second-

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f.104, Francesco, 16 Dec.1582.

<sup>22</sup> BMC, M.St., f.95, 10 Dec.1538: 'comprano, reconzano, & vendono'; ASV, *Milizia da Mar* [MM], b.555, *Atti relativi alla tansa e taglione dei strammazzeri e strazzaruoli, scrittura dei strazzaruoli*, 18 Aug.1660: 'coscir et rappezzar [sic] li habiti'. For clothes refurbished by a tailor, see Lorenzo Lotto, *Il 'libro di spese diverse' (con aggiunta di lettere e d'altri documenti)*, ed. Pietro Zampetti (Venice: Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, 1969), p.233.

<sup>23</sup> BMC, M.St., f.111, 2 Jan.1564 [mv]; ASV, *Arte dei varoteri*, b.719, *Mariogola*, f.17v, 5 Mar.1483; ff.70-1v, 24 Nov.1563; f.71v, 7 Aug.1564; ff.122-3v, 11 Feb.1622 [mv]. On the importance of fur linings and their re-use at the highest levels of society, see Giovanna Lazzi, 'Un'eccezionale occasione di lusso: l'incoronazione di Cosimo I de' Medici (1569)', *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 147(1989), 99-119 (pp.103-4) [I am grateful to Prof. F.Angiolini for this reference].

<sup>24</sup> In 1660 guild members complained that: '...non potendosi ridur aggiustam[en]to i vestiti vecchi alle presenti nove foze...', ASV, MM, b.555, *Atti relativi alla tansa e taglione dei strammazzeri e strazzaruoli, scrittura dei strazzaruoli*, 18 Aug.1660. On changing styles, see ASV, *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alle Pompe* [Pompe], b.1, *Capitolare primo*, f.53v, 21 Jan.1599 [mv]; Tommaso Garzoni, *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo* (Venice: Vincenzo Somasco, 1595), disc.120, 'De'sartori', f.819; Cesare Vecellio, *Degli habiti antichi, et moderni di diverse parti del mondo* (Venice: Damian Zenaro, 1590), p.140v; also G.F. Busenello's seventeenth-century poem 'Al tempo che la luna burattava', in Arthur Livingston, *La vita veneziana nelle opere di Gian Francesco Busenello* (Venice: Callegari, 1913), pp.310-13.

hand dealers also made clothes from scratch.<sup>25</sup>

In 1586, the *arte degli strazzaruoli* was reminded, most probably at the insistence of the tailors' guild, that second-hand dealers were to act in good faith when making clothes to sell.<sup>26</sup> *Strazzaruoli* fashioned 'new' clothes from old garments and various references to unpicked (*disfatti*) clothes can be found in workshop inventories. The *bottega* of second-hand dealer Antonio Rossati, for example, contained an old tunic of black damask and a pair of thick white hose, both unpicked.<sup>27</sup> In 1602, four unpicked shirts were yielded by Andrea, *strazzaruol*, to guarantee a debt.<sup>28</sup> There was clearly a market for these recycled clothes, since, in August 1605, a pair of black breeches made of used silk cloth was accepted by officials

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<sup>25</sup> This was an old tradition, see BMC, M.St., cap.60, ff.53-5, 8 Apr.1457; and the poem of 1442 by d'Albizzotto Guidi in Roberto Cessi and Annibale Alberti, *Rialto: l'isola, il ponte, il mercato*, facs. (Venice: Assessorato Affari Istituzionali del Comune di Venezia, [1991]), p.441: '...stracciaruoli/ chi fa ghonele e chi giorne frapate.../ anche v'è quelli da miglior derrate/ che fan ghonele di rascie e di frigio/ e veste vecchie che son richardate/ di panni di cholori e chi di bigio...'. On Guidi, see Vittorio Rossi, 'Jacopo d'Albizzotto Guidi e il suo inedito poema su Venezia', *Nuovo Archivio Veneto*, 5(1893), 397-451.

<sup>26</sup> BMC, M.St., f.180, 24 Jan.1585 [mv]: 'che niun straz[z]aruol non possa com[m]etter fraude nel far drappi da vender ne quelli scanar ma che siano li feraruoli de tutto tondo come fanno li sartori...'. On *feraruoli* (cloaks), see Boerio, *Dizionario*, p.728 (*tabaro e ferariol*); also Achille Vitali, *La moda a Venezia attraverso i secoli: lessico ragionato* (Venice: Filippi, 1992), pp.367-73, *tabaro*.

<sup>27</sup> ASV, *Cancellaria Inferiore, Miscellanea, Atti notai diversi*, b.39, no.44, Antonio Rossati, 29 Oct.1556, f.4.

<sup>28</sup> ASV, SNC, b.261, *Presentation in Camera*, reg.2, f.104v, 10 July 1602.



of the *Signori di Notte al Civil* to be sold for debts.<sup>29</sup>

The practice of creating 'new' garments from old material raises interesting questions about how used clothes were perceived, yet simply identifying new and old clothes is not so straightforward. In the early modern period, as now, the terms 'new' and 'old' (*nuovo / vecchio*) were used as descriptions of quality, and then, too, 'new' was preferred.<sup>30</sup> Since there were so many second-hand goods in circulation, though, the terms were applied to more gradations of used items.<sup>31</sup> 'New' could mean 'nearly new' or 'like new' as well as 'completely new', whereas 'old' could describe goods that were extremely worn and dilapidated.<sup>32</sup> The wider use of these two terms is an indication in itself that second-hand goods were more

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., reg.3, f.42v, 22 Aug.1605: 'uno p[er] de brag[h]-es[s]e de ferandin negre refatte de robba vec[c]hia'. Vitali, *Moda*, pp.64-70 (*braghese*); pp.188-9 (*ferandina*).

<sup>30</sup> On the importance of new goods, see 'Le berte, le truffe, i arlassi, e le magnarie, che usa le puttane a i so bertoni recitae da Nico Calafao da l'Arsenale', in *Delle rime piasevoli di diversi auttori nuovamente raccolte da M. Modesto Pino, & intitolate La Caravana* (Venice: Domenico Farri, 1576), f.20v: 'tutta la massaria iera da nuovo...'; also Pietro Aretino, *Ragionamento: Dialogo* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1988), p.250: Antonia. 'Perché vendesti tu le massarizie?'; Nanna. 'Per farle di vecchie nuove...'.

<sup>31</sup> The terms recur in inventories of goods such as the *Giudici di Petizion inventari*, see Paola Pavanini, 'Abitazioni popolari e borghesi nella Venezia cinquecentesca', *Studi Veneziani*, 5 (1981), 63-126 (pp.111-12,126).

<sup>32</sup> See Bianca M. Du Mortier, 'Introduction into the used-clothing market in the Netherlands', in *Per una storia della moda pronta*, pp.117-25 (p.118). On ambiguous use of 'vecchio' and 'antico', see Isabella Palumbo-Fossati, 'L'interno della casa dell'artigiano e dell'artista nella Venezia del cinquecento', *Studi Veneziani*, 8 (1984), 109-53 (pp.130,144).

acceptable in early modern society. The issue is, however, rendered more confusing by the fact that some second-hand dealers dealt in items that were completely new.

Master craftsmen in the guild of second-hand dealers were divided into *strazzaruoli dell'arte vecchia* and *strazzaruoli dell'arte nuova*.<sup>33</sup> Whereas the former handled used garments [see above], the latter made new clothes from unused lengths of cloth.<sup>34</sup> Such divisions between craftsmen working with new and old goods were common in the guild system. The shoemakers' guild included masters who made shoes from new leather (*calegheri*), and cobblers (*zavattereri*) who, at least in theory, were limited to reworking old leather and doing repairs.<sup>35</sup> A similar

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<sup>33</sup> ASV, *Arte dei marzeri*, b.364, *Processi*, fasc.102, nos 11-12, nd(pre 6 Sept.1586); b.315, *Capitoli e parti*, f.111v, 29 Jan. 1619 [mv]; BMC, M.St., f.100, 22 Sept.1549; ff.169-70, 15 Mar. 1584; f.123, 20 Jan.1574 [mv]. Paduan *strazzaruoli* were also divided, see ASV, *Avogaria di Comun* [AC], *Miscellanea Civile*, C.46.7, *Arti-Padova, arte degli strazzaruoli*, f.4v, 23 Oct.1548.

<sup>34</sup> Cloth was bought by second-hand dealers at auction and from other sources, see BMC, M.St., cap.32, ff.21-2; ff.169-70, 15 Mar.1584; also ASV, SNC, b.271, *Vendite*, reg.1, f.7r, 27 Apr.1601; f.77r, 7 Jan.1602 [mv]; f.116r, 30 Jan.1603 [mv].

<sup>35</sup> ASV, CL, b.53, ff.106r-7v, 26 Feb.1621 [mv]; Giovanni Monticolo, ed., *I capitolari delle arti veneziane sottoposte alla Giustizia e poi alla Giustizia Vecchia dalle origini al MCCCXXX* [CAV], 3 vols (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano, 1896-1914), II, 1, 154, *Capitulare Callegariorum*, cap.66 and n.3; Garzoni, *La piazza*, disc.130, *De' calzolari* (ff.823-4); Giovanni Mariacher, 'L'arte dei calzolari a Venezia dal sec. XIII al XX', in *La calzatura della riviera del Brenta: storia & design*, Federico Bondi and Giovanni Mariacher (Venice: Cavallino, 1979), pp.185-215 (p.196); Andrea Vianello, *L'arte dei calegheri e zavateri di Venezia tra XVII e XVIII secolo*, *Memorie della classe di scienze morali, lettere ed arti*, 49 (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 1993), pp.18-19. On disputes between these artisans, see ASV, GV, b.52, *filza 43, Domande, scritture e risposte in causa*, 25

distinction existed in the furriers' guild.<sup>36</sup> It is surprising, though, to come across this division in a guild of second-hand dealers.

The separation of activities was already well-established by the sixteenth century. In 1586, the guild declared that the right to make new clothes was conceded a long time before.<sup>37</sup> This is confirmed by two fifteenth-century disputes with the tailors' guild.<sup>38</sup> The second-hand dealers' privilege contradicted the tailors' craft monopoly, yet was granted: of the two guilds, therefore, the *arte degli strazzaruoli* had the upper hand.<sup>39</sup> It is clear, then, that master second-hand dealers specialised in various aspects of clothing provision.<sup>40</sup> They also had

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Nov. 1624; and Carlo Poni, 'Norms and disputes: the shoemakers' guild in eighteenth-century Bologna', *Past and Present*, 123 (1989), 80-108 (pp. 92-6).

<sup>36</sup> CAV, II, 1, 99-114, *Capitulare pillipariorum nove et veteris*.

<sup>37</sup> ASV, *Arte dei marzeri*, b. 364, *Processi*, fasc. 102, f. 15, *strazzaruoli* petition, nd (pre 6 Sept. 1586): '...questa habilità di tagliar et far tagliar drap[p]i novj è anticam[ent]e concessa dalla Ser[enità] v[ostra] all'arte n[ost]ra...'

<sup>38</sup> BMC, M. St., cap. 60, ff. 53-5, 8 Apr. 1457. A ruling of 1426 went against the *strazzaruoli*, though in 1428 mention was again made of 'veste de la so [sic] arte nuove e vec[c]hie', *ibid.*, cap. 28, ff. 15-6, 22 Apr. 1426; cap. 35, f. 26, 15 Dec. 1428.

<sup>39</sup> In Florence, tailors were subject to second-hand dealers in the same guild, see Cinzio Violante, 'L'arte dei sarti nello svolgimento del sistema corporativo (secoli XIII-XV)' in *Economia società istituzioni a Pisa nel medioevo: saggi e ricerche*, ed. idem (Bari: Dedalo, 1980), p. 253-98 (p. 278, n. 20, p. 273; and also Introduction, I.a) above.

<sup>40</sup> The eighteenth-century definition of second-hand dealer by Grisellini shows this continued: *Dizionario delle arti e de' mestieri compilato innanzi da Francesco Grisellini ed ora continuato dall'abate Marco Fassadoni*, 18 vols (Venice: Modesto Fenzo, 1768-78), XIV, 220: 'il rigattiere è colui, che

other interests which were closely related to this core pursuit. For instance, as well as trading stocks of clothes, they also rented them out, and the same applies to household furnishings.

On visiting Venice in 1494, Canon Pietro Casola had been struck by the sumptuous attire of local women. He discovered that not all the women were able to afford to dress so richly and that many hired their finery.<sup>41</sup> Supplying such goods on short terms was a customary practice in the city [see below, c)].<sup>42</sup> Indeed, renting out goods was generally widespread in Venice: for special events, whole hosts of artisans rented out wares. At an official reception held in 1608, a vintner supplied

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fa professione di comperare, vendere, e rapezzare arnesi, ed abiti vecchj. Possono ancora i rigattieri fare, o far fare da altri de' vestiti nuovi di drappi di lana, pelo, e seta per uomini, per donne, e fanciulli senza misura certa'. On Grisellini's dictionary, see Antonio Manno, *I mestieri di Venezia: storia, arte e devozione delle corporazioni dal XIII al XVIII secolo* (Citadella, Padua: Biblos, 1995), pp.25-6.

<sup>41</sup> Pietro Casola, *Viaggio di Pietro Casola a Gerusalemme* (Milan: Paolo Ripamonti Carpano, 1855), p.15: 'ho dicto ancora quelle che non possono, perchè me fu dicto che molte ne pigliavano a ficto'; idem, *Canon Pietro Casola's pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the year 1494*, ed. and trans. Margaret Newett, University of Manchester publications, historical series, 5 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1907), p.145. On this type of activity, see Gina Fasoli, 'Lusso approvato e lusso riprovato' in *Memorial per Gina Fasoli: bibliografia ed alcuni inediti*, ed. Francesca Bocchi (Bologna: Grafis, 1993), pp.123-43 (p.139). For tax on jewellery rental, see David Chambers and Brian Pullan, eds, *Venice: a documentary history, 1450-1630* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), p.138.

<sup>42</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, ff.140v-1r, 10 Apr.1562: '...la longa consuetudine circa il dar a nollo drappi...'. It continued late into the seventeenth century, see ASV, CL, b.54, *Arti in genere*, f.268, 28 Aug.1692.

equipment for serving wine, a glass-worker furnished drinking vessels, a carpenter provided stools and a painter supplied works of art - all on a short-term basis.<sup>43</sup> On prestigious occasions such as these, there was also a great demand for luxury furnishings.

In August 1618, the new Tuscan Resident in Venice, Niccolò Sacchetti, had to furnish his palace in a hurry in order to accommodate a special envoy. The hangings were not ready but this was surmountable, for, as he assured his superiors: 'the city is big and in two days those still lacking can be obtained for hire'.<sup>44</sup> Second-hand dealers met this sort of demand and an early example is recorded in the diaries of Marino Sanudo. In 1511, for a procession celebrating the Holy League, a certain Master Stefano, *strazzaruol* in Piazza San Marco, supplied enough tapestries and wall-hangings to decorate the entire facade of the Ducal Palace towards the Piazzetta. According to Sanudo, this dealer was capable of furnishing the rest of the palace and he had done so in 1495.<sup>45</sup> For the ceremonial

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<sup>43</sup> ASV, *Ufficiali alle Rason Vecchie* [RV], b.222, *Spese per l'arrivo di principi, fasc.1608, spese fatte nelli refrescamenti per l'occasion delli Serenissimi Principi di Savoia*, 21 Apr.1608.

<sup>44</sup> ASF, *Archivio Mediceo del Principato*, no.3006, *Carteggio Niccolò Sacchetti, Residente in Venezia*, f.25v, 4 Aug.1618.

<sup>45</sup> DMS, XIII, col.131, 10 Oct.1511: 'el palazzo era tutto conzato la faza sopra la piazza verso el campaniel di tapezarie et spaliere e tapedi grandi di tavola e tapedi altri sopra le colonelle, cossa bellissima a veder; et è da saper, tute queste tapezarie erano di uno mastro Stephano strazzaruol tien botega sopra la dita piazza, et ne ha ancora tante che haria conzato il resto dil palazzo, e lui da se

entrance of Dogaressa Morosina Morosini Grimani in 1597, the guild advertised this aspect of its trade by decorating part of the Ducal Palace with fine tapestries.<sup>46</sup>

Given the nature of their trade, master second-hand dealers were expert valuers of movable goods and they were regularly employed for this skill.<sup>47</sup> In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, guild members were appointed to appraise incoming cargoes of cloth goods (including bales of rugs) for custom duties.<sup>48</sup> References to *strazzaruoli* valuing goods can also be found in inventories of movables. In 1603, for example, the belongings of Nadalin di Nadali, the recently deceased priest of San Canzian, were evaluated by Master Anzolo, *strazzaruol* of the same parish.<sup>49</sup>

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volse conzar dito palazzo, come *etiam* fece a tempo di l'altra liga, che fo fata dil 1495...'. On the Holy League of 1511 (a political alliance), see Brian Pullan, *Rich and poor in renaissance Venice: the social institutions of a Catholic state, to 1620* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), pp.52-3; Richard Mackenney, *Tradesmen and traders: the world of the guilds in Venice and Europe, c.1250-c.1650* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble, 1987), p.133.

<sup>46</sup> *Lettera nella quale si describe l'ingresso nel palazzo ducale della Serenissima Morosina Morosini Grimani Principessa di Vinetia co' la cerimonia della rosa benedetta, mandatale a donare dalla santità di Nostro Signore* (Venice: Gio. Antonio Rampazetto, 1597); p.18r: '...fù da strazzaruoli coperto de finissimi arazzi, et ornato con bellissimi fregi...'. On this event, see Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.145-7.

<sup>47</sup> For evidence of literacy and numeracy, see these self-written wills: ASV, *Sezione Notarile, Testamenti*, b.95, notary Benzon, will no.170, Domenico, 9 Sept.1538; b.197 bis, notary Cavanis, will no.38, Cristoforo, 22 June 1571.

<sup>48</sup> BMC, M. St., cap.69, f.65, nd (June/July 1482); cap.72, f.68, 29 Jan.1487 [mv]; cap.74, ff.70-1, nd (1489); f.87, 11 July 1521.

<sup>49</sup> ASV, GV, *serie XVI, Documenti per oggetto*, b.231, no.5, *Masserizie: Inventarii di effetti mobili diversi*, fasc.1603-1619, 11 Sept.1603. See also IRE, *Ospedale dei Derelitti*

Appraisals of household goods were not restricted to second-hand dealers but were also made by bailiffs, lawyers and other artisans with appropriate skills.<sup>50</sup> Tailors performed this service and had done so for some time. They did complain, though, in 1614, that the *arte degli strazzaruoli* was trying to limit this activity to its own members.<sup>51</sup>

From all of this it is clear that the trade practised by master craftsmen in the guild of second-hand dealers included a broad range of activities, many of which required great competence. Other groups of traders within the guild were meant to pursue specific, usually unskilled, aspects of the craft and it was on this basis that they were allowed to join the organisation. Pedlars, for example, enrolled simply to trade in second-hand goods.

#### b) Pedlars

Pedlars (*revendigoli*) were street traders dealing in small quantities of many different sorts of goods, including comestibles.<sup>52</sup> Male and female pedlars belonged to the

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[Der.E], b.191, Ruggero Ruggeri, fasc.4, no.39, 12 Apr.1612 (appraisal of movables by Antonio Quali, *strazzaruol*).

<sup>50</sup> On bailiffs (*commandadori*), see Chapters 1 and 5. On costs charged by lawyers for this task, see ASV, *Secreta, Codici Svajer 14 (ex Breda 262), Capitolare dei notai, 1542, f.36.*

<sup>51</sup> ASV, *Arte dei sartori*, b.502, *Capitoli e parti*, f.128v, 7 Aug.1614. The dispute was unresolved, see *ibid.*, ff.129v-30, 9 Sept.1679 - 28 Sept.1683; ASV, CL, b.53, f.821, 19 May 1679.

<sup>52</sup> Boerio defined *revendigolo* as: '*...colui che rivende cose minute, come mobili usati, panni etc.*', *Dizionario*, p.572. For earlier definitions, see Gaetano Zompini, *Le*

second-hand dealers' guild and this allowed them to hawk old clothes and used furnishings in Venice. In 1621, the pedlars in the guild affirmed that they had always gone about the city 'shouting, buying and selling old clothes, old cloaks and other goods'.<sup>53</sup> Of the two types of second-hand dealers, masters and pedlars, it is the pedlars who more suit the term 'rag seller'.

These street traders did, as they declared, have a long history in Venice: guild statutes relating to pedlars in used goods survive from 1233, and *revendigoli* also feature in the second-hand dealers' statutes of 1264-65.<sup>54</sup> The 1260s reference shows that master second-hand dealers gave used goods to pedlars, presumably to sell. When attempts were made to limit these pedlars' markets in 1575 [see Chapter 5,I.b)], the *strazzaruoli dell'arte vecchia* protested and this gives grounds for believing that links between the two sets of traders also existed in the sixteenth century.<sup>55</sup> Masters of used goods may well have employed pedlars to distribute their wares in the city.

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*arti che vanno per via nella città di Venezia* (Milan: Longanesi, 1980), no.39; Grisellini, *Dizionario*,XIV,235-6.

<sup>53</sup> BMC,M.St.,f.210,23 Sept.1621: 'sono sempre andati [g]li strazzaruoli revendigoli cridando, comprando, et vendendo p[er] questa città strazze vec[c]hie, cappe vec[c]hie, et altro'.

<sup>54</sup> CAV,I,135-8, *Capitulare de revendiculos et revendiculas omnia res veteres* (1233); CAV,II,2,462, *Capitulare artis pannorum veterum* (1264-65).

<sup>55</sup> BMC, M.St.,f.123, 20 Jan.1574 [mv]: 24 of the 58 masters present voted against this. A complaint by the *strazzaruoli dell'arte vecchia* in 1579 was overruled,see *ibid.*,ff.123-4.



If so, this makes sense of Garzoni's quip that *strazzaruoli* were 'next of kin to pedlars' and that there was 'so much familiarity and connection between them' that it was 'impossible to separate one from the other'.<sup>56</sup>

In theory, the essential difference between pedlars in used goods and *strazzaruoli* was that pedlars were not skilled second-hand dealers, that is to say, they had not undergone the five-year apprenticeship and were thus unable to measure, cut or sew [see above, a)]. In practice, however, a different consideration came into play - these pedlars were street traders by necessity. As they explained themselves in 1621, owing to poverty they did not '...have the means to set up shop so they go about with a few goods shouting [their wares]...'.<sup>57</sup> Pedlars in used goods were not, moreover, the only poor traders who entered the guild.

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<sup>56</sup> Garzoni, *Piazza*, disc.153, 'De' stracciaroli', f.917: 'sono parenti stretti ancora de' rivendruoli, & han fra loro tanta domestichezza, et congiotione, che non possono a pena spiccasi l'un dall'altro'. On retailers' use of pedlars elsewhere, see Andrzej Karpinski, 'The woman on the market place: the scale of feminization of retail trade in Polish towns in the second half of the 16e and in the 17e century [sic]', in *La donna nell'economia, secc. XIII-XVIII*, ed. Simonetta Cavaciocchi, Atti delle 'Settimane di studi e altri convegni, Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica' F. Datini', Prato, n.s.21 (Florence: Le Monnier, 1990), pp.283-92 (p.288) [I owe this reference to Prof. Franco Angiolini].

<sup>57</sup> BMC, M.St., f.210, 23 Sept.1621: 'poiché non havendo loro il modo stante la sua povertà di far botteghe van[n]o con poco capitale cridando...'. On this theme, see Casarin, *I vagabondi*, p.71. On capital and workshops, see also M. Dal Borgo, 'Le corporazioni e le scuole di arti e mestieri', in *Arti e mestieri in Venezia* (Venice: Università Popolare di Venezia and Fondazione Querini Stampalia, 1991), pp.15-19 (p.18).

### c) Renters

Traders joined the *arte degli strazzaruoli* to practise various other aspects of the second-hand trade. Dealers wishing solely to rent out cloth goods, for example, were also obliged to enrol.<sup>58</sup> Like masters [see above], these renters dealt mainly in clothes and household furnishings, though traders such as grain merchants also registered to rent out sacks.<sup>59</sup> In the fifteenth century, the rental trade in beds and bedding had had disreputable associations and one reason for incorporating it into the guild had been to subject it to control [see Chapter 1,I.].<sup>60</sup> Problems relating to renters of cloth goods also occurred in the sixteenth century and, in addition to the guild, other disciplinary bodies were involved in regulating their activities.

The *Capi di Sestieri*, *Signori di Notte al Civil* and *Provveditori alla Sanità* all sought to control renters of

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<sup>58</sup> BMC, M.St., ff.174-5, 14 Nov.1588; see also ASV, CL, b.54, *Arti in genere*, f.268, 28 Aug.1692. For entry fees paid by renters, see BMC, M.St., cap.77, f.74, 4 Jan.1498 [mv]; f.157, 3 Jan.1584 [mv]; f.187, 28 Sept.1592; ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni (1615-46)*.

<sup>59</sup> On renting out clothes and furnishings, see ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, f.129, 31 July 1533. For grain merchants enrolled 'per dar sacchi a nolo', see ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni (1616-46)*. See also IRE, Der. E, b.115, Iseppo Gaffuri dai sacchi, (1588-1608).

<sup>60</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.34, ff.24-5. On the problem of stolen goods, see ASV, MC, *Deliberazioni*, reg.21, *Liber Leona*, 20 Jan.1403 [mv] [I owe this reference to Dott. Stefano Piasentini].

used goods.<sup>61</sup> Concern was expressed about excessive prices charged by unscrupulous renters and, more particularly, about the possible consequences resulting from this action.<sup>62</sup> Poor women were thought to be most vulnerable to such dealers. In the 1530s, the *Capi di Sestieri* highlighted the plight of impoverished prostitutes who faced spiralling debts and incarceration due to hiring clothes and household furnishings at exorbitant rates.<sup>63</sup> During the 1540s and 1550s, the emphasis shifted to young girls and other chaste women, whom it was feared, would be drawn into prostitution because of such debts.<sup>64</sup>

The documents produced by these magistrates are most interesting. In the first place, they record the sorts of

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<sup>61</sup> On these magistracies, see Andrea Da Mosto, *L'Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, 2 vols (Rome: Biblioteca d'Arte Editrice, 1937-40), I, 211, 98.

<sup>62</sup> The *Signori di Notte* inherited this in 1545, see ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A* [ex-*Capi di Sestieri*], f.129, 31 July 1533; f.139, 20 Dec.1557. See also ASV, *Provveditori e sopraprovveditori alla Sanità*, reg.729, *Notatorio 6*, f.7, 27 July 1542.

<sup>63</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, f.129, 31 July 1533. On the *Capi di Sestieri* and prostitutes, see Elisabeth Pavan, 'Police des mœurs, société et politique à Venise à la fin du moyen âge', *Revue Historique*, 264 (1980), 241-88 (p.246). On prostitutes renting goods, see 'Pronostico alla villota sopra le putane composte per lo eccellente dottore M. Salvador' (1558), in *Leggi e memorie venete sulla prostituzione fino alla caduta della Repubblica* (Venice: Marco Visentini a spese del Conte di Orford, 1870-72), p.397; also 'Le berte, le truffe, i arlassi', p.19r; Arturo Graf, 'Una cortigiana fra mille: Veronica Franco', in *Attraverso il cinquecento* (Turin: Ermanno Loescher, 1888), pp.217-366 (pp.231, 240).

<sup>64</sup> ASV, Sanità, reg.729, *Notatorio 6*, f.7, 27 July 1542 (*Leggi venete sulla prostituzione*, p.105); ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, f.139, 20 Dec.1557. The *Provveditori alla Sanità* were given responsibility for prostitutes from 1539, see *Difesa della sanità a Venezia secoli XIII-XIX* (Venice: Archivio di Stato, 1979), p.60.

goods hired and this permits greater insight into the rental trade. The clothes and furnishings in question include basic items such as shirts, skirts, bonnets, hose, clogs, veils, bedcovers, sheets and rugs - prostitutes, it would appear, rented the trappings of their trade - as well as jewellery.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, irrespective of whether women were seduced into whoredom by renting such goods, the documents indicate that a flourishing demand for clothes and household goods existed among the poorer sections of Venetian society. Additional proof of the vitality of the rental trade is the failure of efforts to control it.

Steps taken in 1533 to restrict rental periods along with the value of transactions were ineffective, as was the more draconian measure enacted by the *Provveditori alla Sanità* in 1542, forbidding renters to supply prostitutes with goods.<sup>66</sup> Documents from the mid-sixteenth century show that rules made by the *Signori di Notte al Civil* were challenged and reversed, whereas renters prosecuted by the *Provveditori alla Sanità* promptly reoffended.<sup>67</sup> As ever, magisterial infighting impeded the enforcement of

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<sup>65</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, f.129, 31 July 1533; f.139, 20 Dec.1557; ASV, *Sanità*, reg.729, *Notatorio 6*, f.7, 27 July 1542.

<sup>66</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, f.129, 31 July 1533 (see also f.139, 20 Dec.1557); ASV, *Sanità*, reg.729, *Notatorio 6*, f.7, 27 July 1542.

<sup>67</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, f.140r, 22 Mar.1558; ff.140v-1, 10 Apr.1562. For prosecutions of 30 Aug.1550 to 29 Nov.1552, see ASV, *Sanità*, reg.729, *Notatorio 6*, ff.205v-6v, 234, 236, 237v-8; for repeat prosecutions, f.233v, 12 Sept.1552; f.234v, 1 Oct.1552 (cited in *Leggi venete sulla prostituzione*, pp.280-1).

regulations [see Chapter 2,II.c)].<sup>68</sup> Another reason for the failure of these efforts was that many renters, like pedlars, practised their trade by necessity. They, too, were poor traders who could ill afford to lose custom and this was eventually acknowledged by the *Signori di Notte al Civil*.<sup>69</sup>

Renters prosecuted by the *Provveditori alla Sanità* during 1550-52 were all women. Another renter, Catherina Lizzana, denounced to the guild authorities in 1588 for failing to join the guild, was also female.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, as the *Signori di Notte al Civil* recorded in 1557, renters of cloth goods were predominantly women.<sup>71</sup> Female traders such as these had a high profile in the market for used goods and they merit a separate discussion.

d) Women

Female dealers in used clothes and furnishings played a significant role in the second-hand trade. Women belonging to the *arte degli strazzaruoli* [see Chapter 3,IV.], did however, have limited influence within that organisation. Female guild members registered on their own account were

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<sup>68</sup> See ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, f.140r, 22 Mar.1558; BMC, M.St., ff.174-5, 14 Nov.1588.

<sup>69</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, f.140v, 10 Apr.1562: '... vista la instantia de molte povere persone che davano a nollo drappi et robbe per sustentation de casa sua [sic]'.  
<sup>70</sup> BMC, M.St., ff.174-5, 14 Nov.1588.

<sup>71</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, f.139, 20 Dec.1557: '...qual sono la mazor parte femine...'.  
<sup>70</sup> BMC, M.St., ff.174-5, 14 Nov.1588.

low in status, ranking among subordinate *colonelli* rather than masters. That does not mean to say that female second-hand dealers were unskilled. In Chapter 3 [IV.] we saw that the wives and daughters of master craftsmen engaged in skilled aspects of the craft: in 1623, Lauro's 'women' sewed fur linings into clothes intended for sale. It was rare, though, for such women to run their own workshops in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>72</sup>

During the thirty-year period of 1616 to 1646, only two out of a total of 111 women, were enrolled in the guild as *maestre* ('masters') [see Table 4.1].<sup>73</sup> Though they did not, on the whole, manage workshops, women did endeavour to perpetuate family businesses. In her will of 1589, Franceschina, widow of Zuane Lionbardi *strazzaruol*, bequeathed her husband's workshop at the Ponte della Beccaria (Rialto) to her brother. This was done so that: 'it would not be taken away'.<sup>74</sup> Her sibling was entrusted to keep one of her sons by him and to treat him as his own, until such time as that son was old enough to run the

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<sup>72</sup> This may not always have been so; wills of *strazzaruole* of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries are listed under *strazzaruol* in the ASV, *Sezione Notarile* card index.

<sup>73</sup> 21 women did not specify why they entered but they were unlikely to be *maestre*, see Table 4.1.

<sup>74</sup> IRE, Der.E, b.137, Zuane Lionbardi, *strazzaruol*, fasc.1, f.33v, Franceschina's will, 21 Dec.1589: 'lasso, che non sia tolta la bottega a mio fradel Francesco...'. Her husband's will does not mention the workshop, it only states that his capital should be invested securely for his male heirs, see *ibid.*, f.2, Zuane Lionbardi, 4 Sept.1588.

workshop by himself.<sup>75</sup>

Table 4.1: *Occupations of female second-hand dealers registered in the guild, 1616-1646*<sup>76</sup>

occupations	members
renters	58 <sup>77</sup>
traders in collars, hose etc.	14 <sup>78</sup>
pedlars	7
<i>maestre</i>	2 <sup>79</sup>
renters of bags and sacks	2
cloth sellers ( <i>griso</i> and <i>schivavina</i> )	2
miscellaneous	5 <sup>80</sup>
unspecified	21 <sup>81</sup>
total women	111

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.: '...et che Zuan Maria mio fiol stia appresso de lui, et chel sia come suo fiol, fino el sia in ettà [sic] di poter esser bon a far andar la botega...'. For a later example of a widow's brother governing his brother-in-law's *strazzaria* shop, see *ibid.*, b.156, Sebastiano Migliori, fasc.2, ff.11v-12, Domenego Mezalengua to Alessandro Migliori, 19 Apr.1622. Cf. Merry E. Wiesner, 'Guilds, male bonding and women's work in early modern Germany', in *La donna nell' economia, secc.XIII-XVIII*, ed. Simonetta Cavaciocchi, Atti delle 'Settimane di studi' e altri convegni, Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica 'F. Datini', Prato, n.s.21 (Florence:Le Monnier,1990),pp.655-192 (pp.665-6).

<sup>76</sup> Source: ASV, *Arti, serie 73, Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni da farsi dai confratelli che entreranno nella detta arte* [see Chapter 3,IV.].

<sup>77</sup> One woman enrolled to rent out goods and to be a pedlar.

<sup>78</sup> Viz: *collari, calzette, scarpete*. 4 women sold all 3; 7 sold or made collars, 1 sold *calzette*, 1 *scarpete*, 1 *calzette* and *scarpete*. On *calzette* (hose) and *scarpete*, linen or woollen footwear worn under hose, see below e).

<sup>79</sup> One *maestra* entered the guild after a vote at the annual general meeting, the other one is in the *strazzaruoli* list.

<sup>80</sup> Dual occupation members: mercers, ribbon-makers etc.

<sup>81</sup> Three of these women were widows.

Unlike the wives and daughters of master craftsmen, female dealers enrolled in the guild were poor, often single, women who registered to practise specific aspects of the craft.<sup>82</sup> Analysis of the seventeenth-century membership register in the Venetian State Archives allows some idea of their occupations.<sup>83</sup> It reveals that, between 1616 and 1646, female guild members signed up for a number of different craft pursuits, including trading in collars and leggings, and peddling goods [see Table 4.1].<sup>84</sup> By far the vast majority of these women - more than half of them - registered to rent out used goods. Thus, not only were renters of clothes and furnishings 'predominantly women' in 1557 [see above], but in the years between 1616 and 1646, they were, masters aside, almost exclusively women [see Table 4.2].

The list of women enrolled in the *arte degli strazzaruoli* from 1616 to 1646 differs from the two lists of male

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<sup>82</sup> Cf. 'the woman as wage-earning artisan' in Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Women in the crafts in sixteenth-century Lyon', *Feminist Studies*, 8 (1982), 46-80 (pp.58-62). They compare with female workers lacking capital in Martha C. Howell, 'Women, the family economy, and the structures of market production in cities of northern Europe during the late middle ages', in *Women and work in preindustrial Europe*, ed. Barbara A. Hanawalt (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp.198-222 (p.198).

<sup>83</sup> On this source, see Chapter 3, IV. above.

<sup>84</sup> This accords with findings on urban women's occupations elsewhere. See, for example, Maria Bogucka, 'Women and economic life in the Polish cities during the 16th-17th centuries', in *La donna nell'economia, secc.XIII-XVIII*, ed. Simonetta Cavaciocchi, *Atti delle 'Settimane di studi e altri convegni, Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica 'F. Datini'*, Prato, n.s.21 (Florence: Le Monnier, 1990), pp.185-94 (p.190).



traders in the same membership register. Fewer women are enrolled than men, they are registered for shorter periods and less details are recorded about them. This suggests that female traders were less involved in the guild and were more likely to flit in and out of the organisation.<sup>85</sup> Documents from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries bear witness to second-hand dealers, including female traders, working outwith the guild.<sup>86</sup> Such unofficial activity was noted in Chapters 1 and 2 and it was a very old tradition in the trade. The 1616-46 guild register indicates that female dealers tended to operate at the guild's margins, and from that position it was but a short step to the sphere of 'alternative' exchanges. In addition to peddling, most of the registered occupations of female guild members were also practised by men and they require further discussion.

e) Other guild personnel

Dealers intending to sell *schivina* and *griso*, coarse types of woollen cloth used for bedcovers and for clothing the very poor, were meant to enrol in the guild since it had

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<sup>85</sup> On this topic, see Karpinski, 'The woman on the market place', p.290. For a more general discussion: Christopher R. Friedrichs, *The early modern city, 1450-1750*, A history of urban society in Europe series (London:Longman, 1995), p.155.

<sup>86</sup> ASV, GV, *Parti e capitoli*, b.213, *strazzaruoli parti*, no.3, 9 July 1623; ASV, CL, b.54, *Arti in genere*, f.268, 28 Aug.1692; b.55, f.98, 23 Nov.1717; f.107, 20 Apr.1718; f.466, 30 Apr.1727; b.56, f.1017, 31 July 1795 (*Buranelle*). On flexible craft structures in the eighteenth century and workers within and outwith them, see Casarin, *I vagabondi*, pp.74-7, 140-3, 157-8.

a monopoly of these goods.<sup>87</sup> Many that did register for this purpose were not second-hand dealers at all but practised other trades. They included canvas merchants (*telaruoli*), mercers, cotton and linen merchants (*bombaseri*) and mattress makers (*stramazzeri*).<sup>88</sup> Traders also entered the guild to deal in other types of wares.<sup>89</sup> Unspecified in the *mariegola*, additional sources reveal these goods to have been collars and certain types of leg- and foot-wear (*calzette* and *scarpete*).<sup>90</sup> These cloth sellers and additional traders are, like other dealers belonging to the *arte degli strazzaruoli*, well represented in the guild membership register of 1616-46. Indeed, this

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<sup>87</sup> On these fabrics, see Vecellio, *Habiti*, no.136; Boerio, *Dizionario*, pp.625,318; Giuseppe Tassini, *Curiosità veneziane, ovvero origini delle denominazioni stradali di Venezia*, rev. Lino Moretti (Venice:Filippi,1979),p.585; *I mestieri della moda a Venezia dal XIII al XVIII secolo* (Venice: Stamperia di Venezia,1988),pp.347,345; Vitali, *Moda*, pp.345,210; also Chapter 1, I. above. In the 1590s, the guild sought control of *rasse*, woollen cloth used for gondola hoods: BMC, M.St., f.196, 5 Dec.1596; f.197, 2 Aug.1597; ASV, *Arte dei marzeri*, b.312, *Ristretto generale*, f.74, *strassaroli* [sic]; f.67. On *rasse*, see Vitali, *Moda*, p.321; Tassini, *Curiosità*, pp.538-9.

<sup>88</sup> BMC, M.St., f.207, 14 May 1607 (*telaruoli*); ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni (1616-46)*; ASV, CL, b.59, f.661r, *stramazzeri*. On these trades, see also Richard Tilden Rapp, *Industry and economic decline in seventeenth-century Venice* (Cambridge MA:Harvard University Press,1976), pp.171-4. On German *griso* sellers, see Chambers and Pullan, *Venice*, p.329.

<sup>89</sup> BMC, M.St., f.157, 10 June 1584: 'li altri...possino entrar in detta scuola nel modo come hanno fatto per il passato, cioè per venderigoli, p[er] dar a nol[l]o, vender schiavine, e grisi, et ogni altra cosa che fusse sottoposta alla nostra arte...'.

<sup>90</sup> ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni (1616-46)*. See Vitali, *Moda*, p.146 [collars]; pp.99-103; Garzoni, *Piazza*, disc.120, 'De'sartori', f.819 [*calzette*]; Boerio, *Dizionario*, p.621 [*scarpete*]. Suede sellers joined in 1598 to make suede leggings, see ASV, GV, *Parti e capitoli*, b.213, *strazzaruoli, parti*, fasc.3, 25 Apr.1598.

source enables us to quantify certain types of dealers enrolled in the guild in the early seventeenth century.

f) Some data from the seventeenth century

Traders entering the guild of second-hand dealers were obliged to declare aspects of the craft which they intended to pursue. Presumably, this entry regulation was tightened up from 1575 onwards, when the masters began to practise a discriminating admissions policy upon subordinate traders [see Chapter 3,I., Table 3.1]. By 1616, it cost more to enrol as a pedlar or a hosier, than as a renter or cloth seller and all of these traders paid higher admission fees than master craftsmen. To enforce these differential charges, the guild needed precise records and into this context fits the surviving guild membership register (the 'register of payments to be made by members who enter in the guild') which covers the period 1616-46.<sup>91</sup> Though it is not as clearly organised as one might expect, it does document specific activities for a large number of the subordinate traders enrolled in the guild [see Table 4.2].

The division of this membership register into three lists of traders (second-hand dealers, pedlars and women) is confusing. Not all members in the *strazzaruoli* section are master second-hand dealers, nor is the list of pedlars made up simply of street traders. Traders enrolled to practise

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<sup>91</sup> ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni da farsi dai confratelli che entreranno nella detta arte*. On this source, see Chapter 3,IV. above.

the guild's additional activities appear in both lists: for example, 19 canvas merchants (*telaruoli*) registered to sell *griso* and *schiaquina* are recorded in the second-hand dealers' list, whereas 29 more occur in the list of pedlars. There are also repetitions [see Chapter 3, IV. above]. The list of women is more consistent, though one *maestra* is cited in the all-male *strazzaruoli* list and does not feature among the women. Since female traders were engaged in the same activities as men, it is not so clear why they are separated.<sup>92</sup> This is more likely to be due to the oarsmen levies of the *Milizia da Mar*, than a discriminating guild policy.<sup>93</sup> Given the arbitrary nature of the register's divisions and overlaps between them, the best way of calculating the number of guild members involved in specific activities is to amalgamate the three lists [Table 4.2].<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> There is no mention of different entry fees in ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni*, or the other sources cited in Table 3.1. Female, Florentine second-hand dealers were charged the same as men, but female tailors less, see ASF, *Archivio delle Arti*, *Università del linaioli*, no.1, *Codice cartaceo contenente lo statuto de' linaioli*, ff.15-16, 12 Dec.1549.

<sup>93</sup> On guilds, *galeotti* levies and the *Milizia da Mar*, see Chapter 3, III (women were exempt).

<sup>94</sup> Table 4.2 has been drawn up according to the corrected totals cited in Chapter 3, IV.

Table 4.2: *Occupations of second-hand dealers registered in the guild, 1616-1646*<sup>95</sup>

occupations	second-hand dealers	pedlars	women	total	
cloth sellers	31	55	2	88	96
masters	33	33	1	67	97
pedlars	26	31	7	64	
renters	3	1	58	62	
traders in collars, hose	14	32	14	60	98
renters of bags and sacks	6	16	2	24	99
traders in bags	2	7	0	9	100
miscellaneous	2	5	5	12	101
unspecified	156	192	21	369	
<b>total</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>755</b>	

The 1616-46 guild membership register is more specific on some craft activities than on others and this is reflected in Table 4.2. It duly records traders who joined to sell

<sup>95</sup> Source: ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni*.

<sup>96</sup> Viz: *griso* and *schivina*. Second-hand dealers' list: 1 cut and sold bags; 1 sold *schivina* and *felzade* (gondola hoods). Pedlars' list: 1 joined for *schivina* and *scarpete*; 2 for *calzette*, *scarpete*, *schivina*; 1 for *schivina*, *griso*, *polone*, *felzade*. 48 cloth sellers were canvas merchants (*telaruoli*).

<sup>97</sup> A *maestra* is included in the second-hand dealers' list.

<sup>98</sup> Viz: *collari*, *calzette*, *scarpete*. Second-hand dealers' list: 1 sold *scarpete*, *calzette* and *fazzoletti*; 3 *scarpete*; 1 *scarpone*. Pedlars' list: most joined for *calzette*; 4 *scarpete*; 2 *colari*; 2 *calzette* and *scarpete*; 1 *calote*; 1 *scarpete*, *traverse*, *fazzoletti*; 1 wanted to sell other goods (for definitions, see Boerio, *Dizionario*).

<sup>99</sup> Pedlars' list: 1 joined to rent out bags, to be a pedlar and to sell *griso* and *schivina*.

<sup>100</sup> Pedlars' list: 1 joined to sell bags and rent out goods.

<sup>101</sup> Second-hand dealers' list: 1 joined to buy and sell; 1 for feather beds. Pedlars' list: 1 joined to sell feather beds; 1 for strings and fastenings; 1 for caps; 1 for linen (*biancaria*); and 1 for laundry (*bucato*).

*griso* and *schivina* and about 11 per cent of all members practised this aspect of the craft. The register also identifies members enrolling solely as renters and as traders in hose and collars. In the table, it is plain that roughly the same number of traders joined for these two activities (about eight per cent apiece). Whereas these renters were predominantly women, the smaller number of members renting out just sacks and bags were mainly men, reflecting that trade's links with grain merchants [see above]. Though the register is clear on these four *colonelli*, it is more equivocal on master second-hand dealers and pedlars.

Some masters and pedlars are specified in individual entries but they are few in number and unrepresentative of the two groups of dealers as a whole. As one would expect, they are divided between the lists of second-hand dealers and pedlars. In these two lists there is also a large proportion of members (more than half of each list) whose occupations are not recorded and it is more than likely that these unspecified members account for the rest of the masters and pedlars. As demonstrated by the division of the register, these two sets of dealers were the most prominent *colonelli* in the guild.<sup>102</sup> Their occupations were presumably taken for granted when the register was

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<sup>102</sup> Masters and pedlars are always the first two groups of members cited in the *mariegola*, see BMC, M.St., ff.156-7, 10 June 1584. See also CAV,II,2, p.462, *Capitulare artis pannorum veterum* (1264-65).

compiled; it does, after all, make sense for the majority of members in the *strazzaruoli* section to be master second-hand dealers and for the pedlars' list to contain mainly street traders.

To sum up this discussion of guild members' pursuits, the *arte degli strazzaruoli* was composed of several groups of dealers engaged in various occupations, of which masters were permitted the widest range of activities.<sup>103</sup> It is important, though, to avoid classifying guild members too rigidly. Master craftsmen, for example, did not form an homogenous, static group. They were divided between traders in old and in new wares and they also encompassed a wide range of dealers: from rich masters able to afford the high rents of Rialto and San Marco, to masters based in peripheral areas catering for poor clients [see Chapter 5,IV.]. The difference between a poor master and a pedlar need not therefore have been apparent.<sup>104</sup> Moreover, after plagues, the guild's entry regulations were occasionally relaxed [see Chapter 6,II.] and this enabled untrained traders like pedlars to set up as master second-hand dealers. Irrespective of their skill, individual guild

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<sup>103</sup> Bartolomeo q. Antonio, a master enrolled from 1618-29, was known as '*fa tutto*', see ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni (1616-46)*, *strazzaruoli* list.

<sup>104</sup> See ASV, *Sezione Notarile, Testamenti*, b.222, notary Crivelli, will no.1178, Lunardo, *strazzaruol*, 1 July 1589; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 36, 28 Apr.1562, Zuane, *strazzaruol*, 28 July 1561 [I owe this reference to Dott. Luca Molà]. Lunardo, possessing only 5 *scudi*, attributed his poverty to his trade; Zuane was '*...poverissimo et quasi mendico...*'.

members could also be demoted or promoted within the organisation.<sup>105</sup>

Although the guild was flexible on internal craft matters, it was, as seen in Chapter 1, quick to counter external encroachments on its activities. The establishment of a rival group of traders - the 'German' Jews - in the second-hand market posed a major challenge to the guild's management of craft pursuits. Any activities undertaken by the Jewish dealers were anathema to the guild. This, then, is the context in which the craft of the *Ebrei tedeschi* should be considered.

## II. Jewish Traders

### a) Rules

The trade carried on by Jewish second-hand dealers in Venice was strictly regulated. Defining the legal status of Jews in the city, Marco Ferro, the late-eighteenth-century lawyer, wrote that *Ebrei tedeschi* were restricted to the second-hand trade, which he described as buying and selling old goods. He added that they were absolutely forbidden to make and sell new wares of any sort under the pretence of *strazzaria*.<sup>106</sup> Although the *arte della*

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<sup>105</sup> In the 1620s, a bankrupt master, Giacomo Bertozzo, was made a pedlar whereas Belin da Este, a pedlar, was voted a master by the annual general guild meeting of 1640: ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni*.

<sup>106</sup> M.Ferro, *Dizionario del diritto comune, e veneto, che contiene le leggi civili, canoniche, e criminali*, 6 vols in 10 parts (Venice: Modesto Fenzo, 1778-81), pt 5, pp.8-9, 'Ebrei': 'si permette ad essi il solo esercizio dell'arte



*strazzaria* in Venice was not limited to used goods, the craft practised by Jewish second-hand dealers was meant to be restricted to them.

Surviving sources contain few details of what the Jewish traders were permitted to do on first arriving in the city. They record that the Jews could keep stocks of used goods and were allowed to practise the craft (*tenir* and *far strazzaria*), and they specify that this entailed buying and selling, but they are not clear on other aspects of the craft which were practised.<sup>107</sup> This ambiguity may be due to the lack of documentation, but it is also possible that the Jewish dealers' craft regulations became detailed only with time and in response to pressure from interested parties such as the *arte degli strazzaruoli*. During the important *condotta* debates of 1519-20 in which the guild of second-hand dealers was very much involved [see Chapter 3,II.b)], the craft activities permitted to the Jews were set down much more carefully.

On 10 November 1519, a group of Senators proposed a general residence agreement in which the Jewish dealers could carry

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della strazzaria, cioè il comprar, e rivender robe vecchie di qualunque genere; e risolutamente si vieta di fabbricar roba nuova di qualunque sorta col pretesto della strazzaria, e di venderla per consumo interno dello Stato'.

<sup>107</sup> ASV, *Capi del Consiglio dei Dieci* [CCD], *Notatorio*, reg.4, f.43r [2nd pag.], 20 Dec.1514 (refers to a *Giustizia Vecchia* decision of 17 Dec.1512); f.84r, 27 Nov.1515; reg.5, f.2r, 27 June 1519. See also ASV, CD, *Parti miste*, filza 35, 27 June 1515 (Jews' petition); ASV, *Arte dei varoteri*, b.720, *Processi*, fasc.2, *Contro Hebrei*, 6 Nov.1515.

on-practising the craft of second-hand dealing in Venice but were not to sell new items.<sup>108</sup> This distinction between old and new goods recorded in 1519, characterised the craft in the Ghetto for the rest of the period: Jewish traders were meant to deal solely in used merchandise. The discussion of craft activities in these *condotta* debates set another precedent. Subsequently, when changes were made to the rules governing the Jewish dealers' craft, they were recorded in the *condotta* of the *Ebrei tedeschi* as a whole. In the contract of 1548, for example, trading activities were redefined: *Ebrei tedeschi* could still practise the second-hand trade, but they were not to sell new goods, nor in future were they to engage in the tailors' or furriers' trades.<sup>109</sup> This addition is significant. It implies that unlike master craftsmen in the guild, Jewish *strazzaruoli* were not supposed to mend or adapt goods passing through their hands.<sup>110</sup>

These restrictions imposed upon their craft left the *Ebrei tedeschi* only two legitimate pursuits: they could sell used

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<sup>108</sup> ASV, *Senato, Deliberazioni (secreta)*, reg.48, f.93r, 10 Nov. 1519: 'possano li Hebrei far l'arte della straz[z]aria in G[h]etto, secondo el solito, ma non possano vender roba nuova de sorte alcuna, ne a peçia, ne a braçio, ma solamente robe, ch[e] se rechiede a straz[z]arie'.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, reg.66, f.54v, 19 Dec.1548: 'et similmente non possono far l'arte della sartoria, ne della varotaria...'

<sup>110</sup> For a similar limit on Jewish dealers in eighteenth-century Amsterdam, see du Mortier, 'Introduction', p.121. For restrictions on Jewish traders in Rome, see Emmanuel Rodocanachi, *Le saint-siège et les Juifs: le ghetto à Rome* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1891), p.268.

goods and they could rent them out. In theory, then, the craft of the Jewish second-hand dealers included a narrower range of activities than that of master craftsmen and was more akin to the trade of two subordinate groups of dealers within the guild - pedlars and renters.

Such restraints on Jewish economic activities are usually attributed to religious prejudice. Discussing explicit restrictions on tailoring by *Ebrei tedeschi* which were introduced in 1597, Pullan suggested that:

behind these regulations, though it was never expressly acknowledged, there probably lay the desire to deny the Jews the satisfaction of creative work, and to thrust them into a position in which they appeared to be social parasites - dealers, middlemen and moneylenders, never producers. Anti-semitism itself foists upon the Jews the characteristics it later ascribes to their innate depravity.<sup>111</sup>

Religiously motivated limitations on Jewish pursuits can be traced back far in Italian history. Roberto Bonfil has dated them to the Fourth Lateran Council of Pope Innocent

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<sup>111</sup> Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.552. See also idem, 'The old Catholicism, the new Catholicism, and the poor', in *Timore e carità: i poveri nell'Italia moderna*, ed. Giorgio Politi, Mario Rosa and Franco della Paruta, *Annali della Biblioteca Statale e Libreria Civica di Cremona* 27-30 (Cremona: Biblioteca Statale e Libreria Civica di Cremona, 1982), pp.13-25 (p.15).

III in 1215.<sup>112</sup> *Cum nimis absurdum*, the infamous bull issued by Pope Paul IV in 1555 which sought to limit Jews to the second-hand trade, is also pertinent in this respect.<sup>113</sup> Such reasoning is not, however, the most helpful means of understanding the limitations imposed upon Jewish second-hand dealers in Venice in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; if anything, it is misleading.<sup>114</sup>

Jewish second-hand dealers, like the German shoemakers before them, were granted special privileges to practise their trade in the city in spite of the presence of a long-

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<sup>112</sup> Roberto Bonfil, *Gli Ebrei in Italia nell'epoca del Rinascimento*, trans. by Massimo Acanfora Torre Franca (Florence: Sansoni, 1991), p.62.

<sup>113</sup> *Bullarum diplomatum et privilegiorum sanctorum romanorum pontificum taurinensis editio*, ed. S.Franco and H.Dalmazzo (Aosta, 1857-72), VI: Hadriano VI (MDXXII) ad Paulum IV (MDLIX) (1860), pp.498-500 (p.499), cap.9: 'Iudaei quoque praefati sola arte strazzariae, seu cenciariae (ut vulgo dicitur) contenti, aliquam mercaturam frumenti vel hordei, aut aliarum rerum usui humano necessariarum facere'. The bull's tone is clear in its preamble: 'cum nimis absurdum et inconveniens existat ut iudaei, quos propria culpa perpetuae servituti submisit, sub praetextu quod pietas christiana illos receptet et eorum cohabitationem sustineat, christianis adeo sint ingrati, ut, eis pro gratia, contumeliam reddant, et in eos, pro servitute, quam illis debent, dominatum vendicare procurent.' See Attilio Milano, *Storia degli Ebrei in Italia* (Turin: Einaudi, 1963), pp.549-50; idem, 'Ricerche sulle condizioni economiche degli Ebrei a Roma durante la clausura nel Ghetto (1555-1848)', *Rassegna Mensile di Israel*, 5(1931), 445-65, 545-66, 629-50 (pp.446-51); Bonfil, *Ebrei*, pp.61-2; Cecil Roth, *The history of the Jews of Italy* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1946), pp.294-309; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.518, 528; idem, 'The old Catholicism', p.15. Although this bull was severe, a decree issued soon afterwards permitted other trades, see Rodocanachi, *Le saint-siège et les Juifs*, pp.179-80.

<sup>114</sup> For an attempt to introduce such a policy in Venice in 1777, see Samuele Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, 10 vols (Venice: Pietro Naratovich, 1853-61), VIII, 212-4; also Casarin *I vagabondi*, p.311, n.263.

established guild [see Chapter 3,II.].<sup>115</sup> The *arte degli strazzaruoli*, as it was wont to do, disputed this innovation. It reacted to competition from the Jews much as it had reacted to other sources of trade rivalry (government officials, Venetian cloth importers, unregistered traders and foreigners) in the fifteenth century [see Chapter 1,I.]. Unable to prevent the establishment of Jewish second-hand dealers in the city, the only course left to the guild was to try to limit their activities.

The *arte degli strazzaruoli* was not alone among the guilds in employing this tactic. The instigator of the stringent craft restrictions imposed in 1597 which provoked the comment by Pullan [see above], was the tailors' guild.<sup>116</sup> In seeking to understand specific guilds' responses to trading competition from the Jews, religious motivations need to be seen in perspective. Spiritual concerns were important, but they represented only one side of guild business: craft concerns, as we have seen in Chapter 1 [I.], were equally important. The tailors militated against the trading activities of Christian second-hand dealers in much the same way (and for much the same reason) that they endeavoured to limit the Jewish dealers'

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<sup>115</sup> On the privileges granted to German shoemakers, see Mariacher, *L'arte dei calzolari*, p.196.

<sup>116</sup> Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.551-2.

craft.<sup>117</sup>

Guild interference with the Jewish dealers' craft pursuits did not end with trading restrictions. The guilds were keen to ensure that the rules laid down were observed.<sup>118</sup> A similar procedure to the one used in their own demarcation disputes was followed: accusations were made to the relevant authorities, traders' premises were searched and controversial goods confiscated.<sup>119</sup> Since the guilds had no real authority in the Ghetto, however, [see Chapter 3,III.] actions such as these greatly antagonised the Jewish dealers.

In June 1587, representatives of the Jewish community brought a successful case against officials of the *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* on behalf of Simon de Salvadio. Salvadio, accused of making new goods, had had his premises searched and property seized with insufficient justification.<sup>120</sup> The zealous attention of the guilds of tailors, second-hand dealers and other interested parties was acknowledged to be a problem in the Ghetto, and, as a result, the denunciatory procedures used there were

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<sup>117</sup> The same is true of the furriers, see Chapter 1,II.

<sup>118</sup> See Cecil Roth, *History of the Jews in Venice*, Jewish Communities series (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1930), p.172.

<sup>119</sup> For denunciations against Christian *strazzaruoli*, see ASV, *Arte dei varoteri, Mariegola*, ff.70-1v, 24 Nov.1563; f.71v, 7 Aug.1564; ff.122-3, 11 Feb.1622 [mv]; ff.152-3r, 21 Oct.1642.

<sup>120</sup> ASV, *Collegio, Notatorio*, reg.49, f.82v [2nd pag.], 1 June 1587.

revised.<sup>121</sup>

To sum up, in accordance with its traditional monopolistic strategies, the *arte degli strazzaruoli* sought to limit the activities of the Jewish second-hand dealers in Venice. The Jewish dealers were treated as if they were a subordinate group of traders (like pedlars) wishing to enter the trade and allotted a restricted sphere of activities which did not threaten the masters' core pursuits. This approach was unashamedly hierarchical, but it can hardly be called anti-Semitic. Given the guild's traditional emphasis on apprenticeships, moreover, this reprehensible attitude can also be understood. It is unlikely that training received by the Jewish dealers, like that of other foreign masters, was readily recognised by the guild.<sup>122</sup> With such considerations in mind we can now examine the reality of the Jewish traders' craft.

#### b) Reality

Though Jewish *strazzaruoli* were restricted to dealing in used goods, they excelled at this activity. Indeed,

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid.: '...si aggravo l'arte di sartori, strazzaruoli, et altri per interesse loro...'. This case set a precedent, see ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 207, 3 Sept. 1613, ff. 13v-15r. On harassment, see also ASV, *Ufficiali al Cattaver* [UC], b. 2, reg. 3, ff. 7v-8, 23 Oct. 1610.

<sup>122</sup> Mention of Jewish dealers' training is rare. Starting at age four, Giorgio, a baptised Jew, spent 16 years in a Jewish trader's workshop, then moved to other Jews' shops, see ASV, *Sant'Uffizio* [SU], b. 52, proc. Solomon della Regina, test. Giorgio, 30 July 1585; Pier Cesare Ioly Zorattini, *Processi del S. Uffizio di Venezia contro Ebrei e giudaizzanti (1548-)* [9+ vols] (Florence: Olschki, 1980-), VII, 73.

references to the volume of goods passing through the Ghetto by the end of the sixteenth century belie the notion of these second-hand dealers being subordinate traders in any way.<sup>123</sup> In 1594, the select group of Jewish second-hand dealers [see Chapter 3,III.] described themselves as: '...very successful merchants whose houses are frequented by various nobles and by the principal subjects of the Republic wishing to procure tapestries along with other furnishings and hangings...'.<sup>124</sup> These traders dealt in various sorts of goods, including clothes, but, as their own statement indicates, they were renowned for luxury furnishings.<sup>125</sup>

In Ben Jonson's early seventeenth-century play *Volpone*, Sir Politic Would-be is ridiculed for saying that he knew Venetian forms well; yet when he took a house in Venice, and dealt with his 'Jews to furnish it with movables', this

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<sup>123</sup> *Strazzaria* in the Ghetto was not the 'modest activity' described by Gaetano Cozzi in 'Società veneziana, società ebraica', in *Gli Ebrei e Venezia, secoli XIV-XVIII* (Milan: Edizioni Comunità, 1987), ed. idem, pp. 333-74 (p. 344). Large sums of cash were deployed by Jewish dealers: on loans made to the government during 1515-16, see Chapter 3, II. a) above; for a *galeotti* tax of 400 ducats, see ASV, MM, b. 705, *Registro partitario della quota di tansa galeotti, 1581*, f. 117v.

<sup>124</sup> ASV, UC, b. 244, reg. 5, f. 128, 27 Oct. 1594: '...sono tut[t]i merca[n]ti di gran negotio, vengono frequentati da diversi nobeli et delli principali d[i] questa eccel[l]e[ente] republica le case loro p[er] diversi negotii d[i] tapez[z]arie et altri negotii quali tut[t]i signori...'. See Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp. 548-9; Roth, *Venice*, p. 175.

<sup>125</sup> A 1629 inventory of the workshop contents of Giacob q. Grassin di Michiel di Mazzo (Sorzetto), one of the Ghetto élite, shows that clothes were stocked, as does an anonymous dealer's one of 1630, see ASV, GP, *Inventari*, b. 352/17, no. 32, 29 July 1630 (23 Aug. 1629); b. 351/16, no. 125, 14 Feb. 1629 [mv].



proves that he did understand those forms.<sup>126</sup> Over the course of the sixteenth century, successful Jewish second-hand dealers in the Ghetto, like those in Rome, built up an impressive trade in furnishings which they sold and rented out at great profit.<sup>127</sup> An appropriate example of this activity, given the mention of Sir Politic Would-be, is the entire palace contents of quality furnishings rented to Sir Henry Wotton, English ambassador to Venice from 1604 to 1610 (also later), by the Jewish second-hand dealer Isaac Luzzatto.<sup>128</sup> An inventory of the goods rented by Wotton was drawn up in 1610 when he was succeeded as ambassador by Sir Dudley Carleton. It records that the goods supplied included: figured tapestry wall-hangings for the audience chamber, leather wall furnishings for the main reception area, tapestries for the dining room, 13 beds completely furnished with bedding, velvet-covered seats, a bed canopy for the ambassador's bedroom and even a billiards table and a gondola - presumably the gondola in

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<sup>126</sup> Ben Jonson, *Volpone, or the fox, in Five plays*, ed. G.A. Wilkes, The World's Classics series (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp.219-348 (IV.1.36-41).

<sup>127</sup> Brian Pullan, 'Jewish moneylending in Venice: from private enterprise to public service', in *Gli Ebrei e Venezia, secoli XIV-XVIII*, ed. Gaetano Cozzi (Milan: Edizioni Comunità, 1987), pp.671-86 (p.675). Jews, like guild members, bought stock from individuals and auctions: Vielmo dalla Baldosa acquired costly tapestries and other goods from the estate of Leonardo Mocenigo, Bishop of Ceneda, see ASV, GP, b.348/13, no.92, 21 Oct.1623; b.350/15, no.52. On the Roman dealers, see Zannini, 'Ebrei, artisti', pp.281-2, 284-5.

<sup>128</sup> Wotton's palace was located near the Ghetto, see Thomas Coryat, *Coryat's crudities, hastily gobled up in five moneths travells in France, Savoy, Italy, Rhetia... and now dispersed to the nourishment of the travelling members of this kingdome*, 2 vols (Glasgow: James MacLehose, 1905), I, p.379.

which he had entertained Thomas Coryat two years earlier.<sup>129</sup> Although renting out furnishings was a normal practice, Wotton's contract appears to have been rather untypical. Like the impoverished prostitutes mentioned above [I. c)], advantage was taken of the financially embarrassed Wotton when he rented luxury goods.<sup>130</sup>

Proof of the Jewish dealers' competitiveness in the furnishings trade is that towards the end of the sixteenth century they were awarded prestigious government contracts to supply (sell and rent) tapestries and luxury furnishings for major official events. From the 1580s onwards, this lucrative trade went to a succession of Jewish *strazzaruoli*.<sup>131</sup> Isaac dalla Vida took over this business from Simon Luzzatto in 1587 and continued until 1595, when he resigned in favour of the brothers Caliman and Nascimben

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<sup>129</sup> PRO, *State Papers Venetian*, vol.6, pt 2, f.211r, *Mr Wake's note with the Jew*, Dec.1610; ff.215r-16v, *Inventory taken by Wake the day before Wotton went*, Dec.1610; f.209r, *Note of reckoning of Wotton with the Jew*, Dec.1610. See also Logan Pearsall Smith, *The life and letters of Sir Henry Wotton*, 2 vols (Oxford:Clarendon Press,1907), I, 57, 498-9, 501-2; also Coryat, *Coryat's crudities*, I, pp.332, 376-80.

<sup>130</sup> Unsurprisingly, since Wotton left him debts of 1220 ducats, Carleton thought Wotton misguided in his dealings with the Jewish dealers: PRO, *State Papers Venetian*, vol.6, pt 2, f.213, *Memorial of money due to Jew by Wotton*, Dec.1610; Dudley Carleton, *Dudley Carleton to John Chamberlain 1603-1624: Jacobean letters*, ed. Maurice Lee Jr (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1972), pp.13, 170-2; L.P. Smith, *Life and letters*, I, 57.

<sup>131</sup> For mercers' complaints of being usurped, see ASV, *Arte dei marzeri*, b.364, *Processi*, fasc.102, *Contro Ebrei che vendono merci*, no.7, nd [c.23 July 1586]. For a Jewish dealer, Vidal Spagnoletto, selling a rug to the government, see ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 98, 13 Aug.1586.

di Calimani.<sup>132</sup> Another member of the select group of Jewish second-hand dealers, Iseppo dalla Baldosa, supplied rugs for the Queen of Spain's visit to the Veneto in 1598.<sup>133</sup>

The success of the Jewish furnishings suppliers proved to be their Caudine Forks. Retrenching on public expenditure, from 1597 onwards the Republic compelled the Jews to supply such goods free of charge.<sup>134</sup> In 1607, this duty was extended and the Jewish dealers also had to furnish palaces offered to important visitors to Venice who were housed at public expense.<sup>135</sup> In this way, supplying furnishings for

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<sup>132</sup> ASV, UC, b.242, ff.161v-3, 10 Aug.1594 - 8 June 1595; see also b.244, reg.5, ff.43v-4, 11 June 1592. Duties included: furnishing Ducal banquets; the Basilica for the religious festivals of San Marco and Ascension-day; the Ducal Palace for *Giobba Grasso*; the Lido for *regatte*, see ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 118, 13 Dec.1590 [petition, 18 June 1590]; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 141, 31 Jan.1596 [mv]; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.549.

<sup>133</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.69, f.142v[2nd pag.], 9 Oct.1599; Benjamin C.I.Ravid, *Economics and toleration in seventeenth-century Venice: the background and context of the Discorso of Simone Luzzatto*, American Academy for Jewish Research monograph series, 2 (Jerusalem: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1978), p.80, n.74. On this event, see *Vera, et fedele relatione del passaggio della Ser[enissi]ma Principessa Margherita d'Austria Regina di Spagna per lo Stato della Serenissima Signoria di Venetia* (Verona: Angelo Tamo, 1599).

<sup>134</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 141, 31 Jan.1596 [mv], no.35. On the Republic's problems in the 1590s, see Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.221-3.

<sup>135</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 184, 5 Oct. 1607, no.39 (the cost was spread within the Jewish community). See also Simone Luzzatto, *Discorso circa il stato de gl'Hebrei, et in particolar dimoranti nell'inclita città di Venetia* (Venice: Gioanne Calleoni, 1638), ff.29v-30; David Kaufmann, 'A contribution to the history of the Venetian Jews', *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 1st series 2,2 (1890), 297-305 (pp.298, 303); Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.549, 566; idem, *The Jews of Europe and the Inquisition of Venice, 1550-1670*

State occasions became a new type of taxation which was imposed upon the Jewish community.

Jewish second-hand dealers were, therefore, successful within their limited sphere of activities. This does not mean to say that they were satisfied with the restrictions imposed upon their craft. There was little chance of revoking the rules, but other ways were found of dealing with them.

Futile attempts were made by the Jewish dealers to diversify their craft activities. Renewing their *condotta* in 1586, the *Ebrei tedeschi* let it be known that they wanted to deal in new goods as well as old.<sup>136</sup> On that occasion they were thwarted by the combined efforts of the guilds of second-hand dealers, drapers and mercers, amongst others.<sup>137</sup> These guilds remained vehemently opposed to any change in the Jewish dealers' craft and they also

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(Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), p. 148; Ravid, *Economics*, pp. 79-81, 119-20; Cozzi, 'Società veneziana', p. 344. In Verona, this duty was performed by the guilds, see ASV, CL, b. 53, *Arti in genere*, f. 546, 30 Jan. 1652 [mv].

<sup>136</sup> ASV, *Arte dei marzeri*, b. 364, *Processi*, fasc. 102, no. 15, *strazzaruoli* petition, nd [pre 6 Sept. 1586]: 'habbia[m]o presentito noj strazzaruolj di S[an] Marco, co[n] grandiss[im]o ram[m]arico et dolore, ch[e] li Heb[r]li intendono nella sua condotta far prender un cap[itolo]o nell'E[ccellentiss]imo Senato di poter oltra l'essercitar la strazzaria di robbe usate, di tagliar, et far tagliar de sartorj robbe nove...[sic] '. See also *ibid.*, no. 13, mercers' petition, nd [1586].

<sup>137</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 98, 13 Aug. 1586 (*strazzaria* clause dated 6 Sept.). Copies of the guilds' petitions are in ASV, *Arte dei marzeri*, b. 364, *Processi*, fasc. 102, no. s 9, 10, 23 July 1586, no. s 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 nd [pre 6 Sept. 1586].

frustrated another bid by the Jews to broaden their range of craft pursuits in 1624.<sup>138</sup> The fact that the restrictions remained in force throughout the period does not imply that they were heeded. As the *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* reported in 1634, by: '...disobeying the public decrees, they [the Jews] have indirectly achieved that which they could never hope to attain directly...'.<sup>139</sup>

In spite of an extensive legal apparatus, civil and criminal misdemeanours continued unabated in early modern Venice [Chapter 2,II.c)]. Jewish second-hand dealers, like other traders including members of the guild, took advantage of similar weaknesses in the trades system to pursue their own ends. Roth's supposition that the Jews sought to 'evade the restrictions placed upon them' is quite true: Jewish *strazzaruoli* refused from the start to be bound by the limitations on their trade.<sup>140</sup> In

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<sup>138</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 271, 16 Nov.1624: '...che al meno la possiamo fare e tenir per apunto, come fanno tutte le botteghe di straz[z]aroli di questa città...' [Jews' petition, 9 May 1624]; *ibid.*, UC report, 28 June 1624: '...lasciandosi intendere che vogliono poter anco comprar robba nova et fabricar di novo'. For objections by the *arte degli strazzaruoli*, see *ibid.*, SM report, 23 Sept.1624.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, filza 368, 29 Dec.1634 [SM report, 22 Dec.1634, cap.12]: '...deludendo i pub[bli]c[h]i decreti, hanno indiret[t]am[en]te ottenuto q[ue]llo che diret[t]am[en]te non speravano conseguire...'.  
<sup>140</sup> Roth, *Venice*, pp.174-5. Cf. Benjamin Ravid, "'How profitable the nation of the Jewes are": the humble addresses of Menasseh ben Israel and the *Discorso* of Simone Luzzatto' in *Mystics, philosophers, and politicians: essays in Jewish intellectual history in honor of Alexander Altmann*, ed. Jehuda Reinharz and Daniel Swetschinski, Duke monographs in medieval and renaissance studies, 5 (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1982), pp.159-80 (p.169). On

November 1515, the drapers' guild complained to the Heads of the Ten that instead of focusing on the second-hand trade, Jewish *strazzaruoli* were also dealing in cloth and making new clothes to sell.<sup>141</sup> The goldsmiths and jewellers and the mercers also protested in the early 1520s that *Ebrei tedeschi* were practising their crafts.<sup>142</sup>

Accusations that the Jewish second-hand dealers were infringing the restrictions placed upon them recur throughout the period.<sup>143</sup> The mercers' exasperation at encroachments by the Jews is plainly visible in their petitions of 1586.<sup>144</sup> Far from being anti-Semitic

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the futility of attempts made to restrict the Jews of Rome, see Rodocanachi, *Le saint-siège et les Juifs*, pp.265-6.

<sup>141</sup> ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.4, f.84r [2nd pag.], 27 Nov. 1515: '...quali non contenti di quanto li essa concesso p[er] el prefato Il[lustrissimo] Consiglio de potter [sic] far la straz[z]aria in casa sua: che anche si inserisseno in vender panni de diverse sorte et de quelli far veste et venderle p[er] panni veneziani de lana francescha... contra la forma de le leze [sic] et ordini de questa cit[t]à'.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, reg.5, f.78, 30 Oct. 1520 (goldsmiths and jewellers); ASV, *Arte dei marzeri*, b.312, f.77, 22 Dec. 1523 - 12 Aug. 1524.

<sup>143</sup> ASV, *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* [SM], b.1, liber 5, *Terminazioni*, ff.101v-2, 26 Aug. 1542; ASV, *Arte dei marzeri*, b.312, *Ristretto generale*, f.28r, *Hebrei che pretessero far l'arte del marzer*; BMC, *Mariogola degli orefici e gioiellieri* (*mariogole* no.139), f.36v, 13 May 1581; f.63r, 20 July 1618; ff.74-5r, 28 Nov. 1636.

<sup>144</sup> ASV, *Arti, Arte dei marzeri*, b.364, *Processi*, fasc.102, no.10, 23 July 1586: 'non possiamo più difendersi da loro hebrei ch[e] così come ne han[n]o levato il trafficho di tapedi n[u]ovi sotto pretesto d[i] vender tapedi vec[c]hi, così ne levarano il trafficho de zamb[ellot]ti, tassaini, mochag[iar]i, grograni, erbazi, et sarze d[i] ogni sorte, come di già han[n]o cominciato, coprendossi come gli le trovavano che sono i[n] pegno et ch[e] non li è proibito dalla sua condotta [sic]'. See also *ibid.*, nos 7-9, 11-14 (no.7 attributes the Jews' furnishings success to illegal activities).

tirades, these petitions are typical, melodramatic guild protests against illicit trading activities, of which there was a long tradition in Venice. They echo the furriers' frustrated protests against persistent transgressions by members of the second-hand dealers' guild [see Chapter 1, I,II] and the comparison is a pertinent one. Like Christian second-hand dealers, Jewish *strazzaruoli* shared similar skills with other artisans and their large sums of capital also allowed them to invest in stocks of expensive merchandise. It is unsurprising that, contrary to the restrictions, they made use of these advantages. As with the Christian second-hand dealers, moreover, disgruntled competitors could do very little about transgressions by the Jews. Instead of stamping them out, they could only impede the Jewish dealers' trade and this they continued to do in spite of orders not to harass the Jewish community.<sup>145</sup>

Illicit trading activities such as these should be seen in context. They were not exceptional occurrences brought about by marginal traders but were structural features, not only of the early modern second-hand market, but of the urban economy as a whole. All trades in early modern Venice, like most other means by which Venetians made a

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<sup>145</sup> In 1635 the mercers proceeded against a Jew for selling new cloth, despite a warning by the *Avogador* not to harrass the Jewish dealers, see *ibid.*, fasc.100, 1 May - 5 June 1635. See also ASV, UC, b.2, reg.3, ff.7v-8r, 23 Oct.1610.

living, contained an element of dishonest activity.<sup>146</sup> Tommaso Garzoni is criticised for his relish for suspect activities but he was right about this aspect of early modern society. Condemning fraudulent tricks by shoemakers (like selling reworked old shoes as new ones) he asserted that their swindling, like their poverty, was 'common...to all the sorts of people who serve others'.<sup>147</sup>

To sum up, the Jewish dealers played a prominent role in the Venetian second-hand market in spite of restrictions on their trade. The success of the Jewish dealers proves, once again, that the guild did not control the market for used goods. The *arte degli strazzaruoli* tried to regulate craft activities and it also endeavoured to limit the Jewish dealers' pursuits. In the end, though, just as allowances had to be made for internal flexibility, the guild also had to accept that the Jewish dealers' craft, like that of other sorts of traders in the second-hand market, was effectively beyond its sphere of influence.

The fact that a new group of traders could be successful, irrespective of craft restrictions and a resentful craft guild, says much about the second-hand market in Venice in

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<sup>146</sup> Garzoni, *Piazza*, disc.153, 'De' stracciaroli', ff.917-8; Cecchetti, 'Le vesti', pp.108-9. See also the guild statutes cited in Chapter 2, II.a), b); and Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, p.18.

<sup>147</sup> Garzoni, *Piazza*, disc.130, 'De' calzolari' [misnumbered in 1595 edition]: 'i stenti, e le bugie sono communi a loro, come a tutte le sorte di genti, che serve ad altri'; see also Poni, 'Norms and disputes', p.108, n.90. On marginal pursuits in Garzoni's work, see Gnavi, 'Valori urbani'.



the sixteenth century. It shows that that market was able to support a great many dealers specialising in different aspects of the trade. Exchanges of second-hand clothes and furnishings were not so great elsewhere. In the 1560s, for example, it was considered impossible for Jewish traders to make a decent living from *strazzaria* on the mainland.<sup>148</sup> A petition made in 1585 by Simon, a Paduan Jew, put it more forcibly. Arguing that the Paduan second-hand trade was insignificant, he noted that one single second-hand shop in the Venetian Ghetto was worth more than all the other shops on the *Terra ferma* put together.<sup>149</sup> A greater understanding of how Venice was able to support so many traders in used goods can be had by exploring the places where the craft was practised.

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<sup>148</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 44, 6 Aug.1565: '...l'arte d[el]la straz[z]aria in ter[r]a ferma no[n] è ch[e] si potese viver...'.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., filza 96, 31 Dec.1585: '...nella inclita città di Venetia... esercitano una strazzaria nobiliss[i]ma et d'importantia, com'è notorio, il che non si fa in Pad[ov]a dove la strazzaria consiste in due para de calze, et uno ferrarolo vecchio, et val più una bot[t]egha di strazzaria d'un Hebreo di Vinegia, che non hanno tutti quelli di Terra Firma'. See also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.528 n.38, p.554.

## Chapter 5 MARKETS

As well as comprising a broad complement of traders engaged in numerous craft activities, the market in second-hand clothes and furnishings also boasted a wide variety of outlets. The means of distribution allowed to guild members and to Jewish traders differed, as did the market channels associated with alternative forms of exchange. To comprehend the scope of the second-hand market in Venice, the spread of these outlets has to be taken into account. The sixteenth century was a dynamic period, and, according to Richard Mackenney and Ennio Concina, the Venetian urban economy developed in keeping with the physical expansion of the city during that time.<sup>1</sup> Here we will also consider how the market outlets fitted into these changing urban structures.

### I. Guild Members

Points of sale used by members of the *arte degli strazzaruoli* in the early modern period were the same as those used by their medieval predecessors and by the many other guilds engaged in retailing. Goods were sold from workshops, stalls and benches, laid out on the ground and

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Mackenney, *Tradesmen and traders: the world of the guilds in Venice and Europe, c.1250-c.1650* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble, 1987); Ennio Concina, *Venezia nell'età moderna: struttura e funzioni* (Venice: Marsilio, 1989).

hawked about the city.<sup>2</sup> The workshop (*bottega*) was the main focus for master craftsmen.

a) Masters

*Botteghe* were workshops in the most literal sense of the word, where goods were worked and sold, and they could also be shops in the more modern sense, where stock was stored and sold.<sup>3</sup> In the daytime, merchandise was displayed on front of these premises, thus maximising the available selling space while coincidentally advertising wares.<sup>4</sup>

From 1479 onwards, anyone wishing to establish a *strazzaria*

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<sup>2</sup> ASV, *Arte dei marzeri*, b.312, *Mariegola*, f.71r, 7 Mar.1520. See also Giovanni Marangoni, *Le associazioni di mestiere nella Repubblica veneta (vittuaria, farmacia, medicina)* (Venice: Filippi, 1974), pp.34,42.

<sup>3</sup> Susan Connell, *The employment of sculptors and stonemasons in Venice in the fifteenth century* (New York:Garland,1988), p.85. On *botteghe* and problems with this term, see the papers by Fabio Redi and Franca Miani Uluhogian in *Mercurio e consumi: organizzazione e qualificazione del commercio in Italia dal XII al XX secolo* (Bologna: Edizioni Analisi, 1986), pp.647-8,706. Goods were also worked at home: ASV, *Arte dei varoteri*, b.719, *Mariegola*, f.71r, 2 Dec. 1563; f.123v, 11 Feb.1622 [mv]. Masters of other trades who joined the guild also ran *botteghe*, see ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni (1616-46)*.

<sup>4</sup> Roberto Cessi and Annibale Alberti, *Rialto: l'isola, il ponte, il mercato*, facs. (Venice:Assessorato Affari Istituzionali del Comune di Venezia, [1991]), p.119; Guido Perocco and Antonio Salvadori, *Civiltà di Venezia*, 2nd edn, 3 vols (Venice: Stamperia di Venezia, 1976-79), I, 348, fig.439; Domenico Micconi, 'I luoghi veneziani dei mestieri della moda', in *I mestieri della moda a Venezia dal XIII al XVIII secolo* (Venice: Stamperia di Venezia, 1988), pp.87-99 (pp.95-8); *Il gioco dell'amore: le cortigiane di Venezia dal trecento al settecento* (Milan: Berenice, 1990), p.145, cat.no. 38/2 (seventeenth-century print). On the abundance of goods in shops, see Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.85-7,107. For the intimacy of *botteghe*, see John Martin, 'Popular culture and the shaping of popular heresy in renaissance Venice', in *Inquisition and society in early modern Europe*, ed. Stephen Haliczer (London: Croom Helm, 1987), pp.115-28 (p.121).

workshop was meant to have had at least five years' working experience with a master craftsman.<sup>5</sup> This requirement was not always enforced but it was reaffirmed by the guild in 1549.<sup>6</sup>

As well as their shops, some master craftsmen also had stalls at one of the city's weekly markets taking place on Saturdays in Piazza San Marco, on Wednesdays at San Polo and elsewhere on other days.<sup>7</sup> Running these supplementary outlets was delegated to relatives or to workshop

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<sup>5</sup> BMC, *Mariegole* no.195, *Mariegola degli strazzaruoli* [M.St.], cap.65, ff.60-1 [13 July 1479]. Cf. Giovanni Grevembroch, *Gli abiti de' Veneziani di quasi ogni età con diligenza raccolti e dipinti nel secolo XVIII*, 4 vols (Venice:Filippi,1981),IV,no.71.The Latin statutes refer to *staciones*: Giovanni Monticolo, ed., *I capitolari delle arti veneziane sottoposte alla Giustizia e poi alla Giustizia Vecchia dalle origini al MCCCXXX* [CAV],3 vols in 4 parts (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano, 1896-1914),II,2, cap.11, p.462; cap.17,p.466; cap. 22, p.469. For early use of the term '*bottega*' see BMC,M.St., cap.11, ff.8-9; cap.65, f.60.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, f.100, 22 Sept.1549. On this sort of rule, see Agostino Sagredo, *Sulle consorterie delle arti edificative in Venezia: studi storici con documenti inediti* (Venice: Pietro Naratovich,1856), p.53. Masters' sons were not bound by this but needed to be old enough to manage a workshop, IRE, *Ospedale dei Derelitti* [Der.E], b.137,Zuane Lionbardi, *strazzaruol*, fasc.1,f.33v,Franceschina's will, 21 Dec.1589.

<sup>7</sup> Viz: Santa Maria Formosa and Santi Apostoli, see Appendix I; Perocco and Salvadori, *Civiltà*,II,610,fig.756; Mackenney, *Tradesmen*,pp.17,85; Fabio Mutinelli, *Lessico veneto*, Collana di bibliografia e storia veneziana, 11,facs.(Bologna:Forni, 1978),p.259;Marangoni, *Associazioni*,pp.39-40; Gino Luzzatto, '*Vi furono fiere a Venezia?*', in *Studi di storia economica veneziana* (Padua:CEDAM,1954),pp.201-09 (p.202). On the wide range of market goods, see Marin Sanudo, *De origine, situ et magistratibus urbis venetae ovvero la città di Venezia (1493-1530)*, ed. Angela Caracciolo Aricò (Milan: Cisalpino-La Goliardica, 1980),p.27.

employees.<sup>8</sup> In addition, master second-hand dealers also rented booths at trade fairs held in Venice and in neighbouring towns on the mainland.<sup>9</sup> The main Venetian fair, which was held in Piazza San Marco, lasted a fortnight and coincided with the important religious festival of the Ascension (the *Sensa*).<sup>10</sup>

Though not strictly an international event, the *Sensa* fair was well known and was frequented by crowds of people, including non-Venetians as well as Venetians.<sup>11</sup> Stands

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<sup>8</sup> On *strazzaruoli* at market, see BMC, M.St., caps 10-11, ff.7-9; ASV, *Arte dei varoteri*, b.719, *Mariegola*, f.56r, 14 July 1554; f.70v, 2 Dec.1563; Giambattista Gallicciolli, *Delle memorie venete antiche profane ed ecclesiastiche*, 8 vols (Venice: Domenico Fracasso, 1795), I, 283.

<sup>9</sup> On fairs at Treviso, Chioggia and Mirano, see Chapter 1, I. above. For other fairs, see G. Luzzatto, 'Vi furono fiere', pp.201-2; Francesca Meneghetti Casarin, *I vagabondi, la società e lo stato nella Repubblica di Venezia alla fine del '700* (Rome: Jouvence, 1984), p.71. Giacomo di Bernardo, *strazzaruol*, made a will before going to the fair at Recanati, see ASV, *Sezione Notarile, Testamenti*, b.217, notary Cavaneis, will no.184, 27 Sept.1540.

<sup>10</sup> David Chambers and Brian Pullan, eds, *Venice: a documentary history, 1450-1630* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), p.191. On '*Sensa*', see Giuseppe Boerio, *Dizionario del dialetto veneziano*, 2nd edn, facs. (Florence: Giunti Martello, 1983).

<sup>11</sup> See G.Luzzatto, 'Vi furono fiere', pp.201-9; Cesare Vecellio, *Degli habiti antichi, et moderni di diverse parti del mondo* (Venice: Damian Zenaro, 1590), ff.128v-9r; Gallicciolli, *Memorie venete*, I, 284-9; Giustina Renier Michiel, *Origine delle feste veneziane*, 6 vols (Milan: Editori degli Annali Universali delle Scienze e dell'Industria, 1829), I, 142-95; Bianca Tamassia Mazzarotto, *Le feste veneziane: i giochi popolari, le cerimonie religiose e di governo* (Florence: Sansoni, 1961), pp.189-98; Lina Padoan Urban, 'La festa della *Sensa* nelle arti e nell'iconografia', *Studi Veneziani*, 10 (1968), 291-353 (pp.330-3). For an idea of the importance of the fair in seventeenth-century life, see G.F. Busenello's poems 'La zornada della *Sensa*' [BQS, ms.cl.VI, cod.20 (1268)]; 'Do brazzolari in man ha la natura', in Arthur Livingston, *La vita veneziana nelle opere di Gian Francesco Busenello* (Venice: Callegari, 1913), p.133.

managed by members of the *arte degli strazzaruoli* could be found at the fair, alongside the stalls of many other sorts of artisans.<sup>12</sup> Master second-hand dealers did, in fact, account for a significant number of the booths in Piazza San Marco, and before the traditional layout of the fair was changed in the eighteenth century, they, like goldsmiths and mercers, had a thoroughfare named after them [see Fig.1].<sup>13</sup> At one point, second-dealers were the fourth-largest group of traders represented at the fair.<sup>14</sup> A rough, seventeenth-century sketch of the *Sensa* fair shows that stalls run by *strazzaruoli dell'arte nuova* and *strazzaruoli dell'arte vecchia* [see Chapter 4,I.a)]

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<sup>12</sup> On guilds at the fair, see ASV, *Procuratori di San Marco* [PSM], *de supra (Chiesa)*, b.50, proc.99, *Fiera dell'Ascensione detta la Sensa*, fasc.1, *Terminazioni e decreti*, f.28r, 27 May 1585; G.Luzzatto, 'Vi furono fiere', pp.203-4; Egle Renata Trincanato, 'Rappresentatività e funzionalità di Piazza San Marco', in Giuseppe Samonà and others, *Piazza San Marco: l'architettura, la storia, le funzioni* (Padua:Marsilio,1970), pp.79-91 (p.88);Giovanni Mariacher, 'L'arte dei calzolari a Venezia dal sec.XIII al XX', in *La calzatura della riviera del Brenta: storia & design*, by Federico Bondi and Giovanni Mariacher (Venice: Cavallino, 1979), pp.185-215 (p.194); Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, p.159; Micconi, 'Luoghi dei mestieri', p.96; Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan, '*Sopra le acque salse*': *espaces, pouvoir et société à Venise à la fin du moyen âge*, Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo: nuovi studi storici,14/ Collection de l'Ecole Française de Rome,156,2 vols (Rome: Ecole Française de Rome & Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo,1992), pp.943-4. For a sixteenth-century woodcut of the Piazzetta with stalls set up for the fair, see Pompeo G. Molmenti, *La storia di Venezia privata dalle origini alla caduta della Repubblica*, 7th edn, 3 vols (Trieste: LINT, 1973),I, 206.

<sup>13</sup> On the change, see *I mestieri della moda a Venezia dal XIII al XVIII secolo* (Venice: Stamperia di Venezia, 1988), pp.295,315,cat.284-5,329; Mazzarotto, *Feste veneziane*, p.194.

<sup>14</sup> ASV, PSM, *de supra (Chiesa)*, b.50, proc.99, fasc.2, *Nota delle professioni et arti che devono venire in Sensa*, nd [c.1620]: mercers had 20 stalls, goldsmiths 24, foreign *telaruoli* 24 and *strazzaruoli* 12.

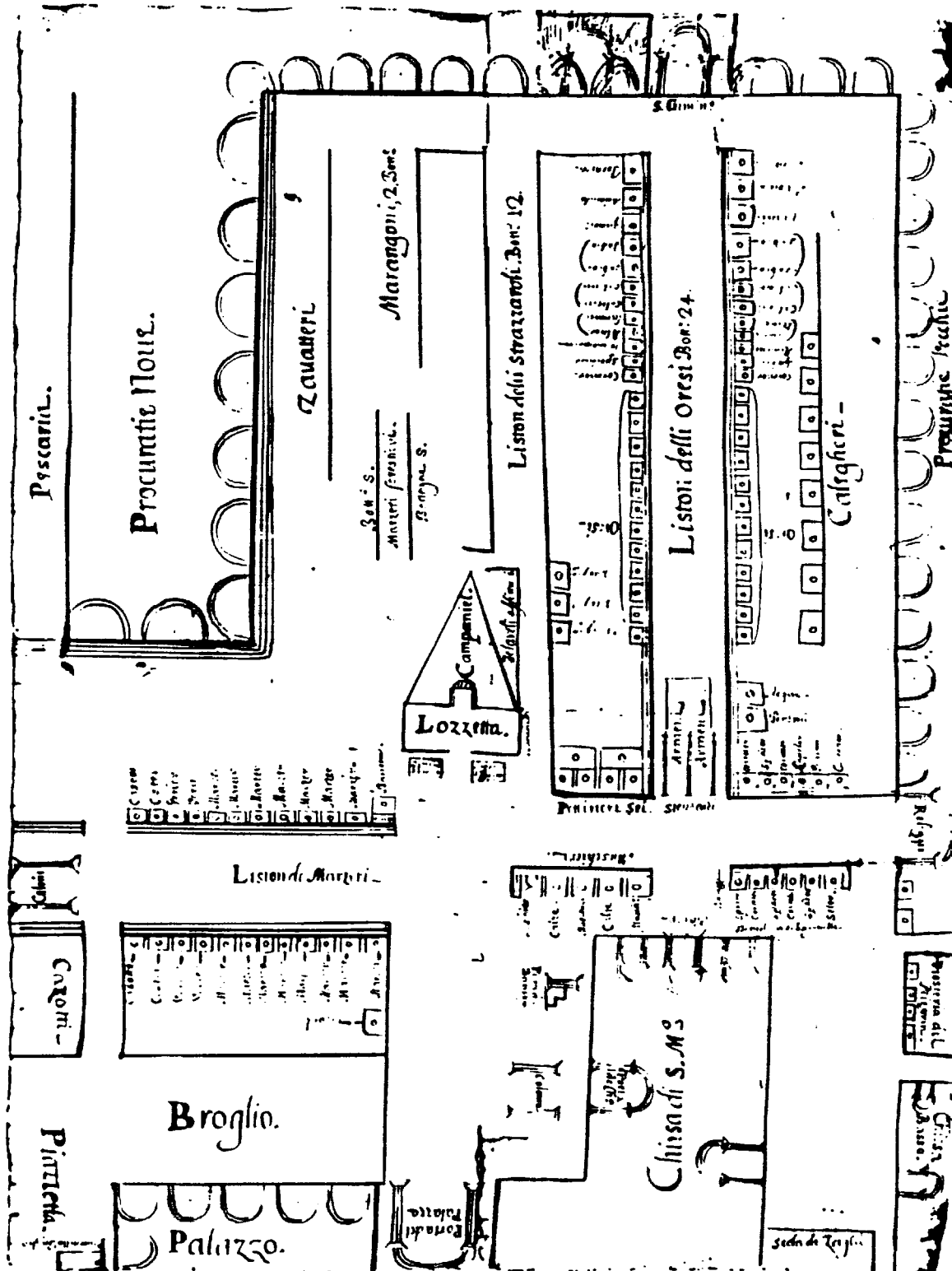


Fig. 1: Traditional layout of Piazza San Marco during the Sensa Fair, pen on paper, catalogued as sixteenth century, probably eighteenth century

Source: ASV, Misc. mappe 1396 (olim Sala Margherita, serie LXXVIII, 4, PSM, de supra (Chiesa), b.53.

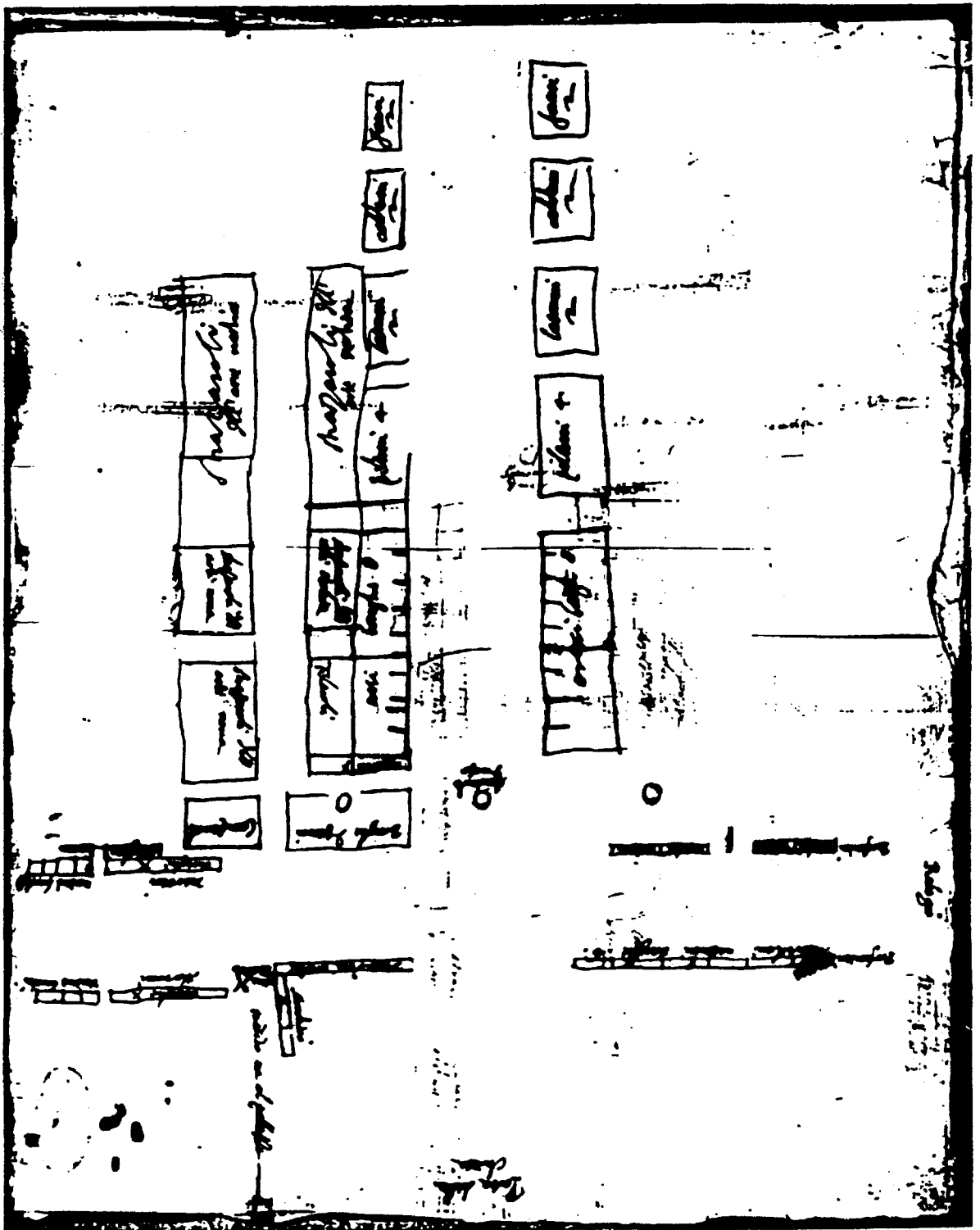


Fig.2: Rough sketch of Piazza San Marco during the Senza Fair, pen on paper, early seventeenth century

Source: PSM, *de supra* (Chiesa), b.58, proc.115, Litigi contro diversi per diritti, fasc.5, Privilegio all'arte dei marzeri d'esser soli venditori delle loro merci (1620-81).



occupied a substantial part of the Piazza near the *Procuratie Nuove* [Fig.2].<sup>15</sup> Not all masters could afford a workshop, let alone one of these prestigious stands. Some *strazzaruoli* were, like pedlars and other poor traders, forced to hawk goods in the city's streets.<sup>16</sup>

#### b) Pedlars and other traders

In its efforts to control the trade, the guild of second-hand dealers tried to regulate its members' markets [see Chapter 1,I.]. Liberties taken by pedlars of used goods were a cause of constant concern. One of the guild's earliest statutes describes how they distributed the wares of illicit trade rivals in the city.<sup>17</sup> In 1575 the guild adopted a drastic measure and restricted the pedlars on its books to fixed outlets and markets.<sup>18</sup> *Revendigoli* were thus forbidden to follow their traditional commercial pursuit of wandering through the city's streets carrying goods and shouting their trade.

The restrictions of 1575 contradicted the guild's own rule limiting workshops to skilled workers and they were also impracticable. The choice of outlets available to pedlars

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<sup>15</sup> For a dispute between the two types of *strazzaruoli* over outlets at the fair, see *ibid*, fasc.1, *Terminazioni*, ff.31v-2r, 20 Aug.1593.

<sup>16</sup> For a second-hand dealer plying his trade by foot, see ASV, *Sant'Uffizio* [SU], b.41, proc. Cesare Pastaro, *strazzaruol*, test. Francesco Crosi, 13 Apr.1577; Cesare Pastaro, 20 Apr. 1577 [I owe this reference to Prof. John Martin].

<sup>17</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.32, f.21.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, f.123, 20 Jan.1574 [mv].

was, as discussed in Chapter 4 [I.b)], determined by financial means and permanent workshops were usually out of the question. These limitations were not removed until 1621, but the extent of their impact is therefore debatable.<sup>19</sup> Complaints made by pedlars in 1621 suggest that the ruling of 1575 had caused hardship, but there is also evidence that the restrictions had been ignored.<sup>20</sup> Emergency regulations issued to check the plague of 1575-77, indicate that traders were still going about the city buying old clothes, bedding and rags at that time.<sup>21</sup> In 1604 the civil justice authorities recorded the trade of a certain Valentin Mesini who was 'going shouting "rags" through the streets'.<sup>22</sup>

This long-running dispute about pedlars' outlets highlights a general quandary faced by the guild in trying to control its members' markets. Its problems with renters and other poor traders were similar to the difficulties it experienced with the pedlars.<sup>23</sup> On the one hand, the guild had trouble supervising traders without fixed outlets, yet, on the other, it could not make them rent

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., f.210, 23 Sept.1621.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> ASV, *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità*, reg. 6, *Ordini e parti prese durante la peste 1575-77*, f.4v, 3 Oct.1575. On such rules, see Chapter 6,1.

<sup>22</sup> ASV, *Signori di Notte al Civil* [SNC], b.1, *Capitolare B*, ff.54r-5r, 9 Mar.1604: 'va cridando strazze per la terra'.

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, BMC, M.St., ff.174-5, 14 Nov.1587.

premises which might be more easily checked.<sup>24</sup> No solution was found to the problems caused by pedlars: the imposition of severe restrictions in 1575, like the sharp rises introduced in their entry fees [see Chapter 3,I.], merely alienated them from the guild.<sup>25</sup>

The guild's endeavours to regulate the markets of pedlars were unsuccessful because account was not taken of the reduced circumstances of many of those traders. Clearly, wealth or poverty, not the guild, was the prime determinant of its members' outlets. The guild's efforts to control its members' selling locations were therefore unrealistic and it remains to be seen whether attempts to limit the markets of the Jewish second-hand dealers were more successful.

## II. Jewish Traders

A development which had little to do with the guild of second-hand dealers - the creation of the Ghetto - greatly affected the Jewish traders' outlets. In theory, the

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<sup>24</sup> This was a perennial problem, see Cessi and Alberti, *Rialto*, p.245; Maria Francesca Tiepolo, 'Arti e artigiani a Venezia nelle carte d'archivio', in *Venicemart '86* (Venice: Confartigianato, 1986), unpag.

<sup>25</sup> Despite the reversal of 1621, unregistered pedlars continued to trade, see ASV, *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Giustizia Vecchia* [GV], b.213, *Parti e capitoli, strazzaruoli, parti*, 9 July 1623; ASV, *Compilazione delle Leggi* [CL], b.55, *Arti in genere*, f.98, 23 Nov.1717; f.107, 20 Apr.1718; f.466, 30 Apr.1727; b.59, ff.666r,668v; b.56, f.1017, 31 July 1795. See also Giuseppe Tassinì, *Curiosità veneziane, ovvero origini delle denominazioni stradali di Venezia*, rev. Lino Moretti (Venice: Filippi, 1979), p.633.

physical restrictions imposed upon the *Ebrei tedeschi* in 1516 made them easier to control.<sup>26</sup> In reality, however, like the attempts to regulate pedlars' selling locations, these limitations did not have a significant impact on the Jewish traders' markets.

#### a) Rules

As with guild members, efforts were made to control the trading outlets of Jewish *strazzaruoli*. Surviving regulations pre-date the restrictions on the Jewish traders' craft activities [see Chapter 4,II.a)] and they are much less ambiguous in nature. The first fixed point of sale for which we have evidence is an inn, to be more precise, the one Jewish inn in Venice at that time.<sup>27</sup> In October 1512, the Heads of the Ten ruled that the new keeper of that establishment, Auraca q. Elia Rebuli of Rettimo (Rethimnon, Crete), a Jew, was entitled to the same privileges as the previous innkeeper. Second-hand goods acquired by Auraca in the city could therefore be sold in

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<sup>26</sup> David Jacoby, 'Les Juifs à Venise du XIVE au milieu du XVIe siècle', in *Venezia centro di mediazione tra oriente e occidente (secoli XV-XVI): aspetti e problemi*, ed. H.-G. Beck, M. Manoussacas and A. Pertusi, *Civiltà veneziana studi*, 32, 2 vols (Florence: Olschki, 1977), I, 163-247 (p.178).

<sup>27</sup> On this inn, see ASV, *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* [SM], b.1, *Liber quartus Judeorum*, f.73, 25 Jan.1502 [mv]; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.16, f.26r, 3 Aug.1508; f.78r, 29 Mar.1516; Cecil Roth, *The history of the Jews in Venice*, Jewish communities series (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1930), pp.153-4; Brian Pullan, *Rich and poor in renaissance Venice: the social institutions of a Catholic state, to 1620* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), p.477. Most visitors to Venice were segregated, see Mutinelli, *Lessico*, p.21; Chambers and Pullan, *Venice*, pp.331-2; and Marangoni, *Associazioni*, p.148.

this inn.<sup>28</sup>

The main group of Jewish second-hand dealers active in Venice in the second decade of the sixteenth century [see Chapter 3,II.] was more limited in its choice of outlets. In December 1512, the *Giustizieri Vecchi* (the magistracy responsible for the guilds) ruled that all trading be confined to their houses and the Jewish traders were expressly forbidden separate workshops or stalls.<sup>29</sup> These restrictions were reaffirmed by the Heads of the Ten in December 1514 and, when the Jewish dealers' trading permits were revoked in March 1515 [see Chapter 3,II.a)], the Jews successfully petitioned the Council of Ten to sell from their houses as before.<sup>30</sup> The early selling locations of the Jewish dealers were therefore prescribed. *Ebrei tedeschi* were deprived of the means of distribution available to master second-hand dealers and to other members of the *arte degli strazzaruoli*: their trading was meant to occur indoors and in private.

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<sup>28</sup> ASV, *Capi del Consiglio dei Dieci* [CCD], *Notatorio*, reg. 3, f.216r [2nd pag.], 30 Oct.1512: '...comprar in q[ue]sta cit[t]à et vender in q[ue]lla hostaria ogni sorta rob[b]a uxada pertinente al mestier de la straz[z]aria...' (copy in BMC, M.St., f.76). This was later revoked: ASV, *Consiglio dei Dieci* [CD], *Parti miste*, reg.38, f.110v [2nd pag.], 28 Mar.1515.

<sup>29</sup> ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.4, f.43r [2nd pag.], 20 Dec. 1514 [decision of 17 Dec.1512].

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*: '...tenir dentro le case sue private la straz[z]aria, et vender in quelle, ma no[n] fuori, ne in bot[t]eg[h]e, ne sop[ra] balchoni aliquo modo'. ASV, CD, *Parti miste*, reg. 38, f.109r [2nd pag.], 23 Mar.1515 [annulment]; f.80, 29 Mar. 1515. The petition is in *ibid.*, filza 35, (27 June 1515).

Given the involvement of the *Giustizieri Vecchi* in the decision of December 1512, the guild of second-hand dealers probably had a say in these restrictions imposed upon the Jewish traders' markets. The *arte degli strazzaruoli* had, after all, tried to stop trading in the Jewish inn only two months before.<sup>31</sup> The marketing restrictions were recorded in the *mariegola*.<sup>32</sup> Though the guild was well-informed on the regulations, other parties were not so meticulous about them, suggesting that they had little real effect.

The letters patent issued to the Jewish traders in July 1515 refers to the *botteghe* in their houses and this is also how a petition of 1516 describes their outlets.<sup>33</sup> Except for open access to the street, these premises cannot have been markedly different from the many workshops combined with artisans' homes in Venice.<sup>34</sup> Indeed, in July 1515, Marin Sanudo called the Jewish traders' outlets 'shops' (*botteghe*) and he did not distinguish them in any way.<sup>35</sup> These shops were based at Rialto, the hub of the

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<sup>31</sup> ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.3, f.216r [2nd pag.], 30 Oct.1512.

<sup>32</sup> For *mariegola* entries on the Jews, see BMC, M.St., f.76, 30 Oct. 1512; ff.76-7, 20 Dec.1514; f.77, 23-28 Mar.1515; f.78, 27 June 1515; f.80, 29 Mar.1515; f.81, 26 Apr.1515.

<sup>33</sup> ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.4, f.62 [2nd pag.], 8 July 1515. The petition to have 'una bottega in casa' is in ASV, CD, *Parti miste*, filza 37, 13 Mar.1516.

<sup>34</sup> The *casa con bottega* was common at Rialto and San Marco, see Concina, *Venezia*, pp.41-2. For an example, see ASV, *Cancellaria Inferiore, miscellanea, atti notai diversi*, b.39, no.44, Antonio Rossati, 29 Oct.1556.

<sup>35</sup> Marin Sanudo [Marino Sanuto], *I diarii* [DMS], ed. Rinaldo Fulin and others, 58 vols (Venice: Visentini, 1879-1903), XX, coll.354, 360, 3-5 July 1515; also XXII, col.38, 13 Mar.1516.

Venetian economy, but this was to change with the Ghetto decree of March 1516.<sup>36</sup>

As is well known, the Ghetto decree required all Jews living in Venice to move to a complex of buildings on a small island in the north-western part of the city - the Ghetto Nuovo [see Fig.3 and Appendix I at end].<sup>37</sup> Having paid dearly for their central outlets, the Jewish *strazzaruoli* considered this decision to be a serious breach of faith on the part of the Council of Ten.<sup>38</sup> In April 1516 they, along with the bankers, tried to negotiate with the Venetian government so that they might maintain their business premises at Rialto while living in the Ghetto.<sup>39</sup> These efforts were unsuccessful and the Jews'

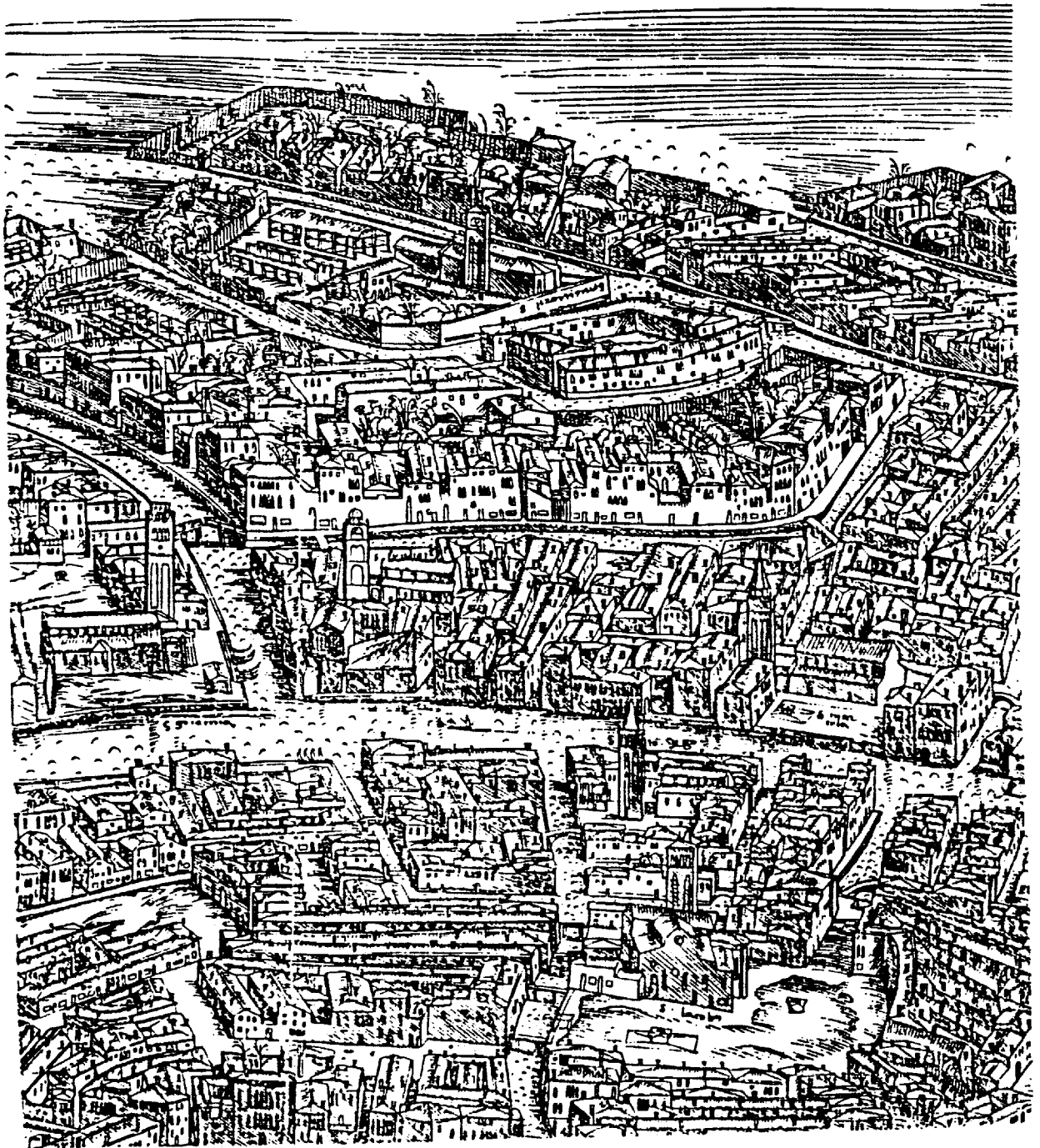
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<sup>36</sup> On Rialto, see Perocco and Salvadori, *Civiltà*, II, 609-41, and figs 756,758.

<sup>37</sup> For the decree, see ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.19, ff.78-9r, 29 Mar.1516; also ff.92v-3r, 29 July 1516 (published in Benjamin Ravid, 'The religious, economic and social background and context of the establishment of the Ghetti of Venice', in *Gli Ebrei e Venezia, secoli XIV-XVIII*, ed. Gaetano Cozzi (Milan: Edizioni Comunità, 1987), pp.211-59 (pp.248-50); translated in Chambers and Pullan, *Venice*, pp.338-9). On the Ghetto, see Roth, *Venice*, pp.39-61; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, ch.2 (especially pp.487-8); Benjamin Ravid, 'The establishment of the Ghetto Vecchio of Venice, 1541: background and reappraisal', in *Proceedings of the sixth world congress of Jewish studies* (Jerusalem: [n.pub.], 1975), II, 153-67 (pp.156-61); Robert Finlay, 'The foundation of the Ghetto: Venice, the Jews, and the war of the League of Cambrai', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 126 (1982), 140-54.

<sup>38</sup> DMS, XXII, coll.72-3, 26 Mar.1516; coll.108-9, 5 Apr.1516. See also Roth, *Venice*, pp.50-1; Finlay, 'Foundation', p.151; Ravid, 'Religious, economic and social background', p.216.

<sup>39</sup> DMS, XXII, col.162, 24 Apr.1516. See also Roth, *Venice*, p.53; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.488; Ravid, 'Establishment of the Ghetto Vecchio', p.161.



**Fig.3:** Jacopo de' Barbari, *The Ghetto Nuovo*, detail from *View of Venice*, woodcut, 1500 (Museo Correr).



markets were thus relegated from the city centre to the far end of Cannaregio.

In the Ghetto, the pretence of selling from closed outlets was dropped and Jewish dealers had open shops.<sup>40</sup> The pressure on space in this new location did, however, bring new restrictions: room available for commercial premises was limited, as was the dealers' effective choice of sites.<sup>41</sup> Second-hand dealers rented upper storeys as well as street-level premises.<sup>42</sup> Some continued trading from combined houses and shops.<sup>43</sup> The cramped conditions and

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<sup>40</sup> ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.5, f.2r, 27 June 1519; DMS, XXVII, col.467, 11 July 1519; Luigi Arnaldo Schiavi, 'Gli Ebrei in Venezia e nelle sue colonie: appunti storici su documenti editi ed inediti', *Nuova Antologia di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti* (Rome), 3rd series 47 (1893), 309-333, 485-519 (p.326); Roth, *Venice*, p.182. David Kaufmann misinterpreted a document of c.1635 in this respect: 'A contribution to the history of the Venetian Jews', *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 1st series 2, 2 (1890), 297-305 (pp.298,303).

<sup>41</sup> DMS, XXII, coll.108-9, 5 Apr.1516 [lack of space]. On overcrowding and high rents, see Brian Pullan, *The Jews of Europe and the Inquisition of Venice, 1550-1670* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), pp.155-8; Roth, *Venice*, pp.51,107; Ennio Concina, 'Parva Jerusalem', in Ennio Concina, Ugo Camerino and Donatella Calabi, *La città degli Ebrei: il Ghetto di Venezia: architettura e urbanistica* (Venice: Albrizzi, 1991), pp.9-155 (pp.40-5).

<sup>42</sup> In 1521, they had 2 upper-storey and 1 street-level space in a complex of 8 buildings, see Concina, 'Parva Jerusalem', p.42. For a description of a shop, see ASV, *Avogaria di Comun* [AC], *Miscellanea Penale*, b.4608, De' Piero, Marcantonio, ff.1-2, 9 Mar.1591. Orso dalla Man rented a *soffitta*, see ASV, *Ufficiali al Cattaver* [UC], b.244, reg.5, f.113, 6 Mar.1594. In 3 years, Iseppo dalla Baldosa rented several places, see *ibid.*, f.64r, 11,15 Jan.1592[mv]; f.96v, 29 Dec.1593; ff.174r-5r, 27 May, 6 June 1596.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, ff.128-9, 27 Oct.1594. Giacob di Michiel di Mazzo had a *casa con bottega*, see ASV, *Giudici di Petizion* [GP], *Inventari*, b.352/17, no.32, 29 July 1630.

the expense of living in the Ghetto were unrepresentative of that part of Cannaregio, but their impact on the Jewish traders has to be qualified.<sup>44</sup> Over-crowding at Rialto was similar to that in the Ghetto, and buildings there (such as around Calle dei Botteri and the Carampane) were almost as tall. Rents at Rialto were also extortionate.<sup>45</sup> Storage was an awkward problem in the Ghetto, as it was at Rialto, needing to be readily accessible for traders, secure against theft and cheap.<sup>46</sup> Yet the wide expanse of the Ghetto *campo* may have offered additional retail space.<sup>47</sup>

Although earlier restrictions on the Jewish dealers' outlets lapsed with the move to the Ghetto, other rules were established. The Ghetto decree set down that the settlement was to be physically separated from the surrounding neighbourhood and access to the canals was thus denied.<sup>48</sup> Removal of the Jewish dealers' outlets from the centre of Venetian economic life was a blow, but to be prevented from using the city's waterways was far more

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<sup>44</sup> On Cannaregio, see Concina, *Venezia*, ch.3, and pp.82-6.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.27,37-40, and maps II,III,V,VI.

<sup>46</sup> On lack of space for goods and the creation of the Ghetto Vecchio, see Ravid, 'Establishment', pp.162-3. Demand for storage was general, see ASV, UC, b.2, reg.3, ff.14v-15, 19 Sept.1613. On the number of stores at Rialto, see Concina, *Venezia*, p.40.

<sup>47</sup> Pitches on the square had to be paid for, see Concina, 'Parva Jerusalem', p.44. On Jewish markets and fairs, see Cecil Roth, *The history of the Jews of Italy* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1946), p.355.

<sup>48</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.19, f.78v, 29 Mar.1516.

serious.<sup>49</sup> Canals were the only viable means of shifting goods in Venice, especially bulky items such as rugs and carpets. Moreover, being an island and a place where a foundry for heavy metal goods had once been located, the Ghetto Nuovo was extremely well served with waterways [see Fig.3].<sup>50</sup>

Additional regulations were laid down during the sixteenth century. The dealers' employment of brokers [see Chapter 3,IV.] probably predated the Ghetto, developing when Jewish *strazzaruoli* were forbidden to display goods openly. Use of these go-betweens [*sanseri*] invited the intervention of Venetian authorities: they insisted on appointing the Ghetto brokers and an accredited *sanser* was meant to be present at every transaction.<sup>51</sup> The rules governing *sanseri* did not deter the many unofficial brokers who touted for business around the Ghetto, but they did affect dealers' sales and, in 1569, the *strazzaruoli* in the Ghetto

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<sup>49</sup> On the advantages of Rialto, see DMS,XXII,col.73. For protests of Jewish traders in Padua and Verona at non-central Ghetto sites, see Antonio Ciscato, *Gli Ebrei in Padova (1300-1800)* (Padua: Società Cooperativa Tipografica, 1901), p.79; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.559. On the viability of water transport in Venice, see Perocco and Salvadori, *Civiltà*, I, figs 265-7; Concina, 'Parva Jerusalem', p.30.

<sup>50</sup> On the Ghetto site, see Thomas Coryat, *Coryat's crudities, hastily gobled up in five moneths travells in France, Savoy, Italy, Rhetia... and now dispersed to the nourishment of the travelling members of this kingdome*, 2 vols (Glasgow:James MacLehose, 1905), I, p.370. On the foundry, see Concina, 'Parva Jerusalem', pp.16-18.

<sup>51</sup> On these regulations, see Chapter 3,IV. above. Schiavi noted that Jews' shops were meant to be open to view (no curtains or shutters) to prevent abuses: 'Ebrei', pp.327-8.

insisted upon their right to trade freely in their own shops.<sup>52</sup>

In 1586, allegations were made by officially appointed brokers that Jewish traders had been peddling second-hand goods in peripheral areas of the city such as the island of San Pietro and at San Nicolò, where their activities could not be supervised. A ruling was then passed that only Jewish shop-keepers were allowed out of the Ghetto with goods to sell and that their business was to be confined within more eminent clients' homes.<sup>53</sup> If the traders needed to stay out later than the Ghetto curfew, then they, like other Jews, needed special permits.<sup>54</sup> Such licences were not hard for second-hand dealers to come by, Nascimben di Calimani had just cause for remaining outside the Ghetto in January 1595 because he was supplying furnishings.<sup>55</sup>

The brokers' accusations of 1586 were couched in emotive religious language, but their chief objective was very much

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<sup>52</sup> ASV, UC, b.242, reg.1, ff.22-3r, nd [May 1569]: '...le botteghe n[ost]re tenemo apperte [sic] con molti n[ost]ri interessi p[er] espedir la robba n[ost]ra. Et tutti sono invitati a venir a comprar da noi...'. See also f.25r, 13 May 1569; f.25r, 27 May, 13 June 1569. For the burden on traders, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.550.

<sup>53</sup> ASV, UC, b.242, f.104, 24 May 1586; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.550-1. See also below IV.b).

<sup>54</sup> For restrictions on movement, see ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg. 19, ff.78-9, 29 Mar. 1516. On the licences, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.552-3. For examples, see ASV, UC, b.244, reg.5, f.100, 22, 29 Jan., 9 Feb. 1593 [mv]; f.191, 14, 19 Dec. 1596.

<sup>55</sup> ASV, UC, b.244, reg.5, f.134v, 14 Jan. 1594 [mv].

the same as that of the guilds discussed in Chapter 4 [II.]. Obligated to compete with the Jewish traders, they used various strategies to try to stay ahead. As in the case of the Jewish dealers' craft activities, however, neither the rules imposed on their outlets, or the attention of interested parties fixed upon those outlets, unduly limited trade. On the one hand, the restrictions did not affect the demand for services provided by the Jewish traders, and, on the other, the competitors did not account for the resourcefulness of the *strazzaruoli* when faced by challenging market conditions. Yet again, the rules did not reflect reality.

b) Reality

The early policy of containing Jewish second-hand dealers within their houses was, like the guild's attempt to restrict its pedlars' outlets, a failure. It did not prevent trade from coming their way. The Jewish dealers also flourished after their relocation to the Ghetto in 1516. In both cases, the benefits accrued from trading with the Jewish dealers outweighed the problems caused by finding them. In 1519, Antonio Balbi admonished the Senate of the utility of the Jewish traders and even Marino Sanudo, hardly an avid supporter of Jewish *strazzaruoli*, admitted that they were useful.<sup>56</sup> The success of the

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<sup>56</sup> DMS, XXVII, col. 359, 4 June 1519. Sanudo wrote: 'L'è vero non haria voluto i tenisseno botege [sic] di straz[z]aria per non tuor l'inviamento da' christiani, ancora che a tenirli sia gran beneficio di le rob[b]e si vol vender...', DMS, XXVIII, col. 63, 10 Nov. 1519.

Jewish second-hand dealers over the course of the sixteenth century shows that this continued. Consumer demand was important, but the ability of the Jewish *strazzaruoli* to counter the restrictions was also relevant.

Irrespective of the limits placed on their outlets, Jewish second-hand dealers, like other Jewish traders, had access to different parts of the city where much of their business was conducted.<sup>57</sup> While sick in 1515, Isaac da Treviso, a Jewish *strazzaruol*, had been unable to leave his house and this confinement seriously affected his trade.<sup>58</sup> Quite early on, Jewish dealers are recorded as attending the city's public auctions and this continued into the seventeenth century.<sup>59</sup> In addition to buying goods at these sales, Jewish dealers also sold goods outside the Ghetto. During the plague of 1523, the Health Office tried to regulate the goods carried to and from the Ghetto by Jews to sell around the city [see Chapter 6,I.] and the Ghetto brokers' complaints of 1586 show that Jewish traders continued to use this means of distributing their wares.<sup>60</sup> Mention was made of Jews transporting goods about Venice in 1624 which shows that the practice was not so easily

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<sup>57</sup> Cf. Roth, *Venice*, p.173. For complaints of Jews hanging about goldsmiths' shops at Rialto, see BMC, *Mariiegola degli orifici e gioiellieri* (*mariiegola* no.139), ff.16v-17r, 4 Sept. 1520; f.18, 30 Oct, 20 Nov.1520; ff.63-4, 20 July-22 Oct.1618.

<sup>58</sup> ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.4, f.81v [2nd pag.], 30 Oct.1515.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, f.82r [2nd pag.], 6 Nov.1515; ASV, SM, b.1, *Capitolare*, liber 5, *Terminazioni*, ff.101v-2, 26 Aug.1542. On the Jews at auction, see Chapter 3,III.; below III.a).

<sup>60</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.726, *Notatorio* 3, f.63, 23 July 1523.

prevented.<sup>61</sup>

Problems caused by lack of space in the Ghetto were never completely resolved, but they were, to a certain extent, overcome. The wealthier Jewish second-hand dealers, in the Ghetto as at Rialto, had the best available premises.<sup>62</sup> In the 1590s, second-hand dealers, like bankers, had prime sites in the Ghetto Nuovo.<sup>63</sup> The outlets 'frequented by nobles and by the principal subjects of the Venetian Republic' [see Chapter 4,II.b)], not to mention 'foreign noble lords', were sure to be suitable for such clients.<sup>64</sup> Second-hand dealers solved the problems caused by the lack of storage in the Ghetto Nuovo by renting storerooms outside.<sup>65</sup> In the seventeenth century, Anselmo Scocco, one of the select group of Jewish second-hand dealers, rented a house in the Ghetto Nuovo (where he sold goods) and he also had a lock-up [*magazen*] full of goods in the Ghetto Vecchio.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 271, 16 Nov.1624 [UC report, 28 June 1624].

<sup>62</sup> 2 of the 3 sets of dealers of 1521 had relatively spacious units, see Concina, 'Parva Jersusalem', p.42.

<sup>63</sup> The *strazzaria* shop burgled in 1591 [see Chapter 2,II. a)] was close to one of the pawn banks, see ASV, AC, *Miscellanea Penale*, b.4608, De Piero, Marcantonio, f.4, c.9 Mar.1591.

<sup>64</sup> ASV, UC, b.244, reg.5, f.165r, 19 Dec.1595.

<sup>65</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra* filza 161, 28 Feb.1601 [mv], cap.37: '...nelle loro volte, o magaz[z]eni, ch[e] essi hanno fuori di ghetto'. Ibid., filza 231, 14 Dec.1618 [UC report, 27 July 1618]; filza 271, 16 Nov.1624 [UC report, 28 June 1624].

<sup>66</sup> ASV, GP, b.363/27, nos 9-10,12,21, q. Anselmo Sacerdoto detto Scocco, 10 Mar.-14 May 1650. On *Ebrei tedeschi* living in the Ghetto Vecchio, see ASV, UC, b.2, reg.3, *Capitolare*, ff.13-14, 15 Dec.1609.

Scocco's storeroom was located near by a canal and this situation is significant. Despite the vehement language of the original Ghetto decree and later references to the ban on canal use, access to the Ghetto's waterways was not consistently denied. Bankers were permitted wharves (*rive*) very early on and by the end of the sixteenth century second-hand dealers had been accorded similar concessions.<sup>67</sup> Authorisation was often given to, and retracted from, individual traders, but whatever the official stance, Jewish *strazzaruoli* had relatively easy access to the water.<sup>68</sup> Nicolò, the Jews' porter (*fachin degli Ebrei*), hired boats to transport furnishings to the official reception held in 1608 [see Chapter 4,I.a) and Chapter 7], and, in 1635, Vincenzo Luzzatto also used a gondola to return goods to the Ghetto after a visit of the French special envoy.<sup>69</sup>

In 1594, the top second-hand dealers in the Ghetto Nuovo

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<sup>67</sup> The Council of Ten allowed bankers to have wharves in 1516, see *ibid.*, reg.4, f.135, 24 May 1546. On *rive*, see Gallicciolli, *Memorie venete*, I, 201-3; Perocco and Salvadori, *Civiltà*, I, 250-7, figs 294-302,305-7.

<sup>68</sup> See ASV,UC,b.244,reg.5,f.68,11 Feb.1592 [mv]; ff.121v-2, 27 July 1594; ff.128-9,27 Oct.1594;ff.149v-51,27 June 1595; f.165r,19 Dec.1595; f.198,10-13 Mar.1597 [reversals]; ASV, *Senato,Terra*,filza 184,5 Oct.1607, cap.41 [rules]; ASV,UC, b.2,reg.3,ff.13-4,15 Dec.1609 [reality]. See also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.549.

<sup>69</sup> ASV, *Ufficiali alle Rason Vecchie* [RV], b.222, *Spese per l'arrivo di Principi, Spese fatte nelli refrescamenti p[er] [i] Ser[enessi]mi Principi di Savoia, 21 April 1608, no.6, spese diverse; Conto delle spese fatte nell'alloggio dell' Ecc[ellentissimo] Sig[no]r Pomponio Bellieure, ambasciatore straordin[ario] del Re Christianissimo, 1635, no.7, spese diverse.*



argued that they needed wharves for their shops because eminent clients were wary of being seen entering the Ghetto.<sup>70</sup> This problem, like others posed by the Jews' trading location, was resolved since their request was granted. The limitations placed on the outlets of the Jewish dealers did not, then, have an unduly adverse effect on their trade. Although, after 1516, the Ghetto Nuovo was the main focus of the Jewish dealers' trade, the range of their outlets was diverse and was not restricted to that place. Taken together, the Jewish traders and the guild of second-hand dealers commanded an impressive variety of outlets. They did not account for all the means of distribution within the second-hand market, though, for these also included channels for alternative exchanges.

### III. Other Mechanisms of Exchange

#### a) Auctions

Another means of exchanging second-hand goods had long coexisted with traders' outlets - the public auction. Auctions (*incanti*) were common occurrences in early modern Venice, as they were in other Italian cities. In Venice, they were held to allocate items as diverse as flour warehouses, taverns, galleys for trading voyages, public offices, ferry licences and the collection of customs

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<sup>70</sup> ASV, UC, b.244, reg.5, f.128r, 27 Oct.1594; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.549. This may reflect greater use of pawn-banks by the poor, see the Jews' petition in ASV, AC, *Miscellanea Penale*, b.4608, *De Piero, Marcantonio*, f.4, c.9 Mar.1591.

duties and taxes.<sup>71</sup> Here, more prosaic types of auctions, sales of movable goods, are of interest, since clothes and furnishings made up a high proportion of the items sold at these events.

Auctions of household goods and personal effects were traditional features of urban life in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These events were familiar to Venetians and many had resort to them, but they have been comparatively neglected by historians. Auctions fulfilled important social and economic functions which have been rarely discussed, perhaps because historians of poverty have tended to concentrate on charity provision and pawn-banks, whereas historians of the urban economy have limited themselves to craft structures, methods of production and the creation of profit.<sup>72</sup> The origins of auctions are obscure, but evidence of them dates back as far as the

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<sup>71</sup> Boerio, *Dizionario*, p.333 [*incanti*]. See Donatella Calabi and Paolo Morachiello, *Rialto: le fabbriche e il ponte, 1514-1591* (Turin: Einaudi, 1987), p.29 [flour warehouses]; ASV, *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Giustizia Nova* [GN], b.2, reg.2, *Capitolare secondo*, f.44, 12 June 1514 [*malvasie*]; Sanudo, *Origine*, p.28 and Frederic C. Lane, *Venice: a maritime republic*, 4th edn (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), p.145 [galleys]; *ibid.*, p.266 [offices]; Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, p.87 [ferry licences]; ASV, CL, b.231, *Incanti*, f.466, 28 May 1615; f.474, 25 Feb. 1626 [mv] (*dazi*).

<sup>72</sup> On poverty, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*; *idem*, 'Poveri, mendicanti e vagabondi (secoli XIV-XVII)', in *Storia d'Italia: Annali, 1: Dal feudalesimo al capitalismo* (Turin: Einaudi, 1978), pp.981-1047. On the urban economy, see Richard Tilden Rapp, *Industry and economic decline in seventeenth-century Venice* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1976); Mackenney, *Tradesmen*; Marangoni, *Associazioni*; Franco Brunello, *Arti e mestieri a Venezia nel medioevo e nel rinascimento* (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1981).

guild records, so, as far as we can tell, the two means of supply were coeval.<sup>73</sup> The reasons for holding public sales were, however, very different from traders' motives.

The principal *raison d'être* of movable-goods auctions was to realise assets, not to make profits. Like other types of outlets, public sales were closely regulated and they were intended to be quite separate from commercial forms of exchange. People wishing to sell goods at auction swore an oath to this effect and distinctions between the two means of distribution were established early on.<sup>74</sup> Whereas traders were forbidden to sell goods on religious holidays [see Chapters 1, I. and 3, III.], some types of auctions were permitted on those occasions.<sup>75</sup> Since there were several kinds of movable-goods auctions in Venice, they are best approached as discrete entities.

**Auctions funding bequests.** This first type of sale (*incanti di commissarie*) was held to facilitate testamentary bequests. When making a will, an individual

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<sup>73</sup> For early auction laws, see ASV, CL, b.231, *Incanti*, f.418, 15 June 1250; f.422, 7 June 1264; f.420r, 30 Apr.1281. On guild records, see G. Monticolo, 'Il più antico registro ufficiale degli statuti delle arti veneziane sottoposte al Magistrato della Giustizia Vecchia', *Bollettino dell'Istituto Storico Italiano*, 10 (1891), 1-6.

<sup>74</sup> CAV, I, 138, 20 Sept.1403; BMC, M.St., cap.12, f.9; ff.117-18, 8 Apr.1578 [oaths]. Auction permits recorded oaths, see below.

<sup>75</sup> CAV, I, f.138, 20 Sept.1403. Jewish traders were not to go to auctions on Christian *feste*, see ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.4, f.82r [2nd pag.], 6 Nov.1515. Not all sales were allowed on holidays, see ASV, PSM, *de supra (Chiesa)*, b.55, fasc.2, f.5r, 27 Mar.1480; f.8r, 16 July 1567; BMC, M.St., f.95, 10 Dec.1538.

chose how to allocate his or her worldly goods after death. One option was to have some of those effects, such as clothing and household furnishings, sold at auction and the resulting cash directed to different ends.<sup>76</sup> The executor named to administer the will (*commissario*) would arrange a public sale, having first effected an inventory of the goods in question.<sup>77</sup> This kind of auction was common and many records survive of the goods sold at such events.<sup>78</sup>

**Emergency auctions.** Since auctions were a quick means of

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<sup>76</sup> Viz: to have masses said for own's soul or for charitable purposes, see ASV, *Sezione Notarile, Testamenti*, b.197 bis, notary Cavanis, will no.38, Cristoforo, 22 June 1571. Wills also precluded auctions, see *ibid.*, b.217, notary Cavaneis, will no.184, Giacomo di Bernardo, 27 Sept. 1540. Notaries had to remind clients of pious duties, see ASV, *Secreta, Codici Svajer 14 (ex Breda 262), Capitolare dei notai, 1542*, ff.15v-16v, 21 Sept.1431, 21 Dec.1486; f.21r, 26 June 1475.

<sup>77</sup> On *commissari*, see M.Ferro, *Dizionario del diritto comune, e veneto, che contiene le leggi civili, canoniche, e criminali*, 6 vols in 10 parts (Venice:Modesto Fenzo,1778-81), pt 3, ff.286-8; also Andrea Da Mosto, *L'Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, 2 vols (Rome:Biblioteca d'Arte Editrice,1937-40), I,9. If a testator did not specify how bequests were to be funded, the executor decided, see IRE,Der.E,b.179,Benedetto Picchi, fasc.2, will, 9 June 1578; auction 23 Nov.1579.

<sup>78</sup> Pious institutions were typical beneficiaries and were named as executors, see *ibid.*, fasc.3,1579-80;b.68,Cristoforo Castigante, fasc.4, 1589; b.87, Pier Iseppo Donesan, fasc.2, 1601; Giuseppe Ellero, *Inventario dei fondi antichi degli ospedali e luoghi pii di Venezia* (Venice:IRE,1987),p.22.The Procurators of San Marco were also executors, see Reinhold C.Mueller, 'The Procurators of San Marco in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: a study of the office as a financial trust institution', *Studi Veneziani*,13 (1971),105-220 (pp.110-1,132-147); *idem*, 'Charitable institutions, the Jewish community, and Venetian society: a discussion of the recent volume by Brian Pullan', *Studi Veneziani*,14(1972),37-82 (p.40) [I am grateful to Prof.Mueller for his advice on inventories]. Queries over wills were made to the *Giudici di Petizion*, see ASV,GP,*Inventari*,b.340/5,no.78,Bartolomeo, 20 May 1593; b.341/6, no.35, Carlo Gritti, 22 Mar.1597; b.355/20, no.60, q. Anzola Viviani, 21 Mar.1634.

converting personal possessions into cash, they were also held for individuals in urgent need of money (*incanti di particolari persone*). This type of sale was often a last resort: Venetians were reluctant to part with their goods under duress and there were other ways of raising cash in emergencies, such as borrowing from a relative or a friend, or pawning goods.<sup>79</sup> The Venetian government maintained the Jewish pawn-banks in the city for precisely this purpose.<sup>80</sup> By emphasising that this sort of auction enabled people to realise their assets in times of extreme necessity, it is clear that it performed an essential social function.

The framework of regulations governing emergency auctions reveals the Venetian authorities to have been acutely aware of their importance and determined that they should persist. Not only were sales allowed to take place on holidays, but other efforts were also made to ensure that

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<sup>79</sup> Robert C. Davis, *Shipbuilders of the Venetian Arsenal: workers and workplace in the preindustrial city* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), p. 102. For reluctance to forfeit clothes, see IRE, Der. E, b. 156, Sebastiano Migliori, fasc. 2, ff. 12-14v, 24-28 Apr. 1622. For a woman borrowing money from, and having pawn-pledges bailed out by, a relative, see *ibid.*, b. 195, Agostino Spinelli, fasc. 5, *Libro di debitori et creditor*, f. 2, 28 Dec. 1564, 9 May 1571, 26 Sept. 1579; f. 144, 26 Sept. 1593. See also Lorenzo Lotto, *Il 'libro di spese diverse' (con aggiunta di lettere e d'altri documenti)*, ed. Pietro Zampetti (Venice: Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, 1969), pp. 36-9, Dec. 1548 - Nov. 1549.

<sup>80</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 44, 6 Aug. 1565: 'conviene al bon governo de Stati haver cura...d[e]l bisogno di poveri p[er] darli modo co[n] il quale possono soumirsi nelle loro necessità senza esser astretti vender le misere robbe loro'.

they were easily accessible.<sup>81</sup> Individuals needing to sell just a few belongings, such as one or two items of clothing or a rug, were not obliged to have a separate auction. In such cases, a less formal sale was permitted to prevent them incurring auction fees. Alternatively, the goods could be tacked on to one of the many *incanti di commissarie*.<sup>82</sup>

As this suggests, emergency auctions had close links with bequest auctions.<sup>83</sup> The two sorts of sales were conducted by the same minor government officials (*commandadori*) and supervised by the same magistrates, the *Provveditori alla Giustizia Vecchia*.<sup>84</sup> *Commandadori* were petty functionaries who performed various duties, including announcing new laws and publicising trials.<sup>85</sup> Given their

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<sup>81</sup> BMC, M.St., ff.118-19, 8 Apr.1578; f.194, 9 Mar.1602: '...oc[c]or[r]e spesse volte che le povere persone, che hanno momentaneo bisogna di vender alcuna sua robba all' incanto... et accioc[c]hé non habbino ad havere dilatione di tempo...'

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., ff.117-19, 8 Apr.1578.

<sup>83</sup> See also CAV,I,138,20 Sept.1403 [Monticolo defined *incanti di commissarie* as 'lasciti per beneficenza' and *incanti di particolari persone* as 'incanti di urgenza'].

<sup>84</sup> BNM, *Capitolare della Giustizia Vecchia*, ms.Ital.,cl.VII, 1572 (7642),I, *Commandadori e incanti*, ff.42v-5. Officials such as the *Sopragastaldo* and the *gastaldo* of the Procurators of Saint Marks' also supervised these auctions, see IRE, Der.E,b.155, Sebastiano Migliori, fasc.6, f.1v, (22 Apr.1598); Mueller, 'Procurators', pp.115,148. On the *Sopragastaldo*, see Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*,I,102.

<sup>85</sup> There were 50 *commandadori*, see ASV, *Senato,Terra*, filza 141,31 Jan.1596 [mv]; Francesco Sansovino, *Venetia: città nobilissima et singolare*, rev. Giustiniano Martinioni, facs., 2 vols, (Venice:Filippi,1968),p.493; Grevembroch, *Abiti*,III, no.9. For depictions, see Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venetian narrative painting in the age of Carpaccio*, 2nd edn (New

function as town criers, *commandadori* made excellent auctioneers and they were to be heard calling at these events.<sup>86</sup> To be able to hold auctions, they were obliged to have a licence from the *Provveditori alla Giustizia Vecchia*.<sup>87</sup>

The magistracy of the *Giustizia Vecchia* is more usually associated with consumer protection in the market-place.<sup>88</sup> In the case of auctions, it was responsible for defending sellers of goods as well as buyers. In addition to supervising auctioneers, the *Giustizieri Vecchi* also regulated participants: anyone wishing to have goods sold

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Haven:Yale University Press,1989),Pl.98 (Matteo Pagan, *Procession of the Doge*,c.1560); Vecellio,*Habiti*,no.92. On their duties, see Tommaso Garzoni, *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo* (Venice: Vincenzo Somasco, 1595), disc.113, 'De' piazzari, o commandatori, o trombetti', ff.795-7; Mutinelli, *Lessico*, p.109; Boerio, *Dizionario*, p.182; Concina, *Venezia*, p.92. See also Ben Jonson, 'Volpone, or the fox', in *Five plays*, ed. G.A. Wilkes, The World's Classics series (Oxford:Oxford University Press,1988),pp.219-348 [IV.5;V.3;V.8: 'And your red saucy cap, that seems (to me)/ Nailed to your jolt-head, with those 2 cecchines']. For definitions as beadles, tipstuffs and heralds see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.550; Chambers and Pullan, *Venice*, pp.50,107.

<sup>86</sup> Garzoni, *Piazza*, disc.113, 'De' piazzari', f.796: 'servono ...a gridare all'inca[n]to e una, e due, e tre...'. See also Mutinelli, *Lessico*, p.109.

<sup>87</sup> From 1578 they were assigned to sales by lot and these auctions were known as 'gli incanti de'bollettini':BMC,M.St. f.118, 8 Apr.1578; ASV,CL,b.231, *Incanti*, f.464, 7 Aug.1604.

<sup>88</sup> See Giovanni Monticolo, *L'Ufficio della Giustizia Vecchia a Venezia dalle origini sino al 1330*, Monumenti della Deputazione Veneta di Storia Patria, Miscellanea, 12 (Venice: Deputazione Veneta di Storia Patria, 1892); Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 191; Sanudo, *De origine*, pp.136-7; Marangoni, *Associazioni*, pp.21-3; Brunello, *Arti e mestieri*, pp.14-5.

at auction was meant to obtain a permit.<sup>89</sup> Other magistrates were also closely involved with auctions.

Debt auctions. Auctions proved a convenient, though somewhat drastic, solution to problems of debt collection and sales were organised by various government bodies for this purpose.<sup>90</sup> In the sixteenth century, the *Governatori delle Entrate*, who were responsible for harrising debtors of the tenth-tax (*decima*), had recourse to this means.<sup>91</sup> During periods of conflict when much depended on State revenues, exacting taxes became a priority. In the crisis years of the Italian Wars, for example, magistrates were exhorted to hold auctions of debtors' goods every day of

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<sup>89</sup> CAV, I, 138, 20 Sept. 1403; BMC, M.St., cap. 2, f. 9; f. 95, 10 Dec. 1538; BNM, *Capitolare della Giustizia Vecchia*, ms. Ital. cl. VII, 1572 (7642), I, *Commandadori e incanti*, ff. 42v-3, 8 Apr. 1578; ff. 43v-4r, 29 Mar. 1602. For permits, see IRE, Der. E, b. 87, Pier Iseppo Donesan, fasc. 2, 21 July 1601; b. 186, Zuane Domenego Ranco, fasc. 4, 3 Feb. 1607 [mv]; b. 191, Ruggero Ruggeri, fasc. 4, 21 May 1612; ASV, GP, *Inventari*, b. 356/21, no. 43, Andrea Polverini, 18 June 1638.

<sup>90</sup> Often at the behest of higher government bodies, see ASV, UC, b. 2, reg. 4, *Capitolare*, f. 81r, 18 Dec. 1532.

<sup>91</sup> The *decima* was a direct tax levied on incomes, see Luciano Pezzolo, *L'oro dello stato: società, finanza e fisco nella Repubblica Veneta del secondo '500*, Studi veneti (Venice: Il Cardo, 1990), pp. 43-5; Chambers and Pullan, *Venice*, pp. 134-5, 137-9; Sanudo, *De origine*, pp. 106-7; Mutinelli, *Lessico*, p. 124; Daniele Beltrami, *Storia della popolazione di Venezia dalla fine del secolo XVI alla caduta della Repubblica*, Collana Ca' Foscari, Istituto di Storia Economica (Padua: CEDAM, 1954), p. 197. On the *Governatori delle Entrate*'s role in the sixteenth century, see ASV, Index no. 159 bis. For the (mainly stable) goods sold at their auctions, see ASV, *Governatori delle Entrate Pubbliche*, bb. 172-191, *Istrumenti (registri di vendite al pubblico incanto dei beni confiscati a pubblici debitori) 1492-1655*. Alessandro Vittoria bought a house at an auction, see Riccardo Predelli, *Le memorie e le carte di Alessandro Vittoria* (Trento: Giovanni Zippel, 1908), pp. 25, 45, 87.



the week.<sup>92</sup> Mundane types of auctions settling minor debts are relevant here, since they featured movable goods and were common occurrences.

Public sales of confiscated property were an effective means of recovering fines and costs imposed by officials in the course of their daily business.<sup>93</sup> The practice of holding pledges to guarantee such payments is described in Chapter 2 [I.d]): if money due was not paid, the pledge was forfeited and sold at auction.<sup>94</sup> Rent arrears, a common form of debt in early modern Venice, were settled in the same way. As with bequest and emergency auctions,

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<sup>92</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.19, f.29v, 19 July 1515; f.22, 2 June 1515; f.74, 4 Mar.1516; reg.23, f.53r [2nd pag.], 2 Sept.1523; Felix Gilbert, 'Venice in the crisis of the League of Cambrai', in *Renaissance Venice*, ed. J.R.Hale (London:Faber and Faber, 1973), pp.274-91 (p.284). On earlier debt auctions in wartime, see Reinhold C. Mueller, 'Effetti della Guerra di Chioggia (1378-1381) sulla vita economica e sociale di Venezia', *Ateneo Veneto*, n.s.19 (1981), 27-41 (pp.29-31).

<sup>93</sup> BMC, M.St., f.117, 8 Apr.1578. For a fine and costs linked to goods, see ASV, AC, *Miscellanea Civile*, C.243.17, *Strazzaruola Giovanna contro specchier Giovanni Battista*, 1 Mar.1625. This was an old practice, see ASV, CL, b.231, *Incanti*, f.422r, 7 June 1264; BMC, M.St., cap.35, f.26, 15 Dec. 1428. On the importance of fines and costs to magistracies, see Renzo Derosas, 'Moralità e giustizia a Venezia nel '500-'600: gli Esecutori contro la Bestemmia', in *Stato, società e giustizia nella Repubblica Veneta (sec.XV-XVIII)*, ed. Gaetano Cozzi, 2 vols (Rome:Jouvence, 1980-85), I(1980), 431-528 (pp.495,501-2). Such auctions were also used to punish perpetrators of serious crimes, see Sansovino, *Venetia*, p.385; Lorenzo Priori, *Prattica criminale secondo il rito delle leggi della Serenissima Repubblica di Venetia* (Venice: Antonio Pinelli, 1622), pp.68-9.

<sup>94</sup> ASV, CL, b.231, *Incanti*, f.450, 8 Jan.1585 [mv]: 'p[er] assicurazione di condane'. See ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.23, f.38r, 2 Sept.1523; ASV, *Giudici del Piovego*, b.1, f.39, 27 Jan.1542 [mv]; f.40v, 29 June 1543; ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare B*, f.56, 12 May 1608; ASV, GV, b.52, filza 43, 8 Jan.1632 [mv]; also Ferro, *Dizionario del diritto*, pt 8, pp.163-5 'pegno'.

*commandadori* were employed at debt sales, but they were less important as the treasurer (*cassier*) of the presiding magistracy played a central role.<sup>95</sup>

Motivated by piety and a keen sense of justice, the Venetian authorities tried various means to protect the poor from getting badly into debt. As mentioned, the Jewish loan-banks were maintained to provide them with a cheap means of borrowing money.<sup>96</sup> Close attention was also paid to debt auctions. Strict regulations were drawn up governing the confiscation of debtors' goods and their subsequent sale at auction, bearing out, in theory at least, Contarini's assertion that 'the commodities of the people' were 'exceedingly respected'.<sup>97</sup> As with emergency auctions, particular concern was felt for the most vulnerable members of society with few belongings. In 1570, the Great Council sought to prevent creditors from seizing the entire worldly goods of poor debtors, insisting

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<sup>95</sup> ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare A*, f.134v, 17 Jan.1544 [mv]; Sanudo, *De origine*, pp.135,137. Pledges were sold by order of the treasurer, see *ibid.*, b.271, *Vendite*, reg.1, f.12r, 19 June 1601. On the role of *commandadori*, see ASV, *Maggior Consiglio* [MC], *Libro d'Oro Vecchio*, no.14, f.218, 14 Sept. 1586. The *Sopragastaldo* also organised debt sales, see IRE, Der.E, b.87, Pier Iseppo Donesan, fasc.2, 9 July 1567.

<sup>96</sup> See Brian Pullan, 'The relief of prisoners in sixteenth-century Venice', *Studi Veneziani*, 10(1968), pp.221-9 (p.221).

<sup>97</sup> ASV, CL, b.231, *Incanti*, f.440, 15 Oct.1531; f.450, 8 Jan.1585 [mv]; f.480, 7 Aug.1637; b.301 bis, *Pegni*, f.30r, 21 Mar.1572; see also ASV, SNC, b.1, *Capitolare B*, f.80r, 11 May 1624. Gasper Contareno, *The commonwealth and government of Venice*, trans. Lewes Lewkenor, English experience series, 101, facs. (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1969), p.140. Precise rules were also drawn up governing the confiscation of criminals' goods, see Priori, *Prattica criminale*, pp.68-9.

that beds and some bedding should be left with their owners.<sup>98</sup> This stipulation was not always respected. Goods impounded on behalf of the *Signori di Notte al Civile* (for rent arrears) in the early seventeenth century, included such beds and bedding.<sup>99</sup> Responsibility for the poor did remain, however, a priority and it tempered the handling of most types of auctions, including the sale of unredeemed pledges from the pawn-banks in the Ghetto.

**Pawn-pledge auctions.** Of the various types of movable-goods auctions in Venice, sales of unredeemed pawn-pledges from the Jewish banks have attracted the most attention.<sup>100</sup> These auctions were not, however, the only pledge sales in the city, nor were they unusual in being carefully regulated. Pawn-bank pledge auctions had been held in Venice well before the sixteenth century. They cannot be dated back as far as other auctions, but documentation does exist from the end of the fourteenth

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<sup>98</sup> ASV,MC,*Deliberazioni*, reg.29, *Liber Angelus*,ff.52v-3, 5 Nov.1570: 'si truova [sic]... in questa nostra città grande numero de poveri la maggior parte oppressi da debiti particolari, a quali poi ch[e] no[n] ni è il muodo [sic] di pagar il povero affitto dell'habitation, viene dalli creditori fatto tuor fino il letto di sotto p[er] satisfarsi, facendoli in questo muodo restar privi di quello ch[e] all'huomo è necessario per riposo [sic] della vita soa [sic],il qual letto si vende... con danno notabile delli p[re]det]ti poveri debitosi, pregiuditio della giustitia et murmuratio[n] [sic] de tutti li buoni...'. See also Pullan, 'Relief of prisoners', p.222.

<sup>99</sup> For example, see ASV, SNC, b.216, *Inventari d'asporti*, reg.7, 8 Jan.1618 [mv].

<sup>100</sup> See Roth, *Venice*, p.135; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.532, 540,551; Mueller, 'Charitable institutions', pp.67,74.

century.<sup>101</sup> During the fifteenth century, unredeemed pawn-pledges were sold in Venice although the banks were then based at Mestre.<sup>102</sup> These auctions were not conducted by Jewish bankers. From the early days and throughout the period covered by this thesis, the *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* were responsible for organising the events.<sup>103</sup>

Meticulous procedures were established for pawn-pledge sales.<sup>104</sup> Like the activities permitted of Jewish second-hand dealers, these procedures were set down in the residence agreements of the *Ebrei tedeschi*. When a loan-term expired without the redemption of a pledge, the goods were meant to be given to the *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* to

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<sup>101</sup> ASV, SM, b.1, *Liber quartus Judeorum*, f.66v, 24 Dec.1385; ff.65v-6, 12 Mar.1393; Mueller, 'Charitable institutions', p.66-7; idem, 'Les prêteurs juifs de Venise au moyen âge', *Annales ESC*, 30 (1975), 1277-1302 (pp.1282-4).

<sup>102</sup> ASV, SM, b.1, f.67v, 4 June 1404; f.69r, 26 Mar.1496; DMS, I, col.81, 26 Mar.1496; Andrea Alvise Viola, ed., *Compilazione delle leggi... in materia d'officj, e banchi del Ghetto*, 5 vols in 6 parts (Venice: Pinelli, 1786), V, 2, 185-6; Gallicciolli, *Memorie venete*, II, 290; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.444; Mueller, 'Charitable institutions', p.67.

<sup>103</sup> ASV, SM, b.1, f.66v, 24 Dec.1385; f.69r, 26 Mar.1496; ff.73v-4, 25 Jan.1502 [mv]; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 368, 29 Dec.1634 (Gerolemo Querini, *Sopraconsolo*, 22 Dec.1634). See also Kaufmann, 'Contribution', p.290; Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 100; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.505; Mueller, 'Charitable institutions', p.67; idem, 'Prêteurs juifs', p.1293; Jacoby, 'Les Juifs', p.192; E.Ashtor, 'Gli inizi della comunità ebraica a Venezia', *Rassegna Mensile di Israel*, 44 (1978), 683-703 (p.691). The *Giudici del Piovego* held the sales from 1382-87, see Mueller, 'Prêteurs', pp.1282-4.

<sup>104</sup> ASV, SM, b.1, f.71, 25 Jan.1502 [mv].

be sold.<sup>105</sup> The *Sopraconsoli* stored the pledges while the sale was publicised, then, having allowed the owners another chance to reclaim their property, the auction went ahead. The sale of a pledge was only valid if the banker's loan, interest and costs were covered. On the other hand, any profit made on the sale (*soprabondante*) was meant to be returned to the owner of the pledge.<sup>106</sup> These auction procedures were occasionally modified, but they remained basically the same throughout the period.<sup>107</sup>

Without knowledge of the other types of movable-goods auctions, one might be forgiven for attributing the careful regulations governing pawn-pledge auctions to wariness about the involvement of Jews. The Jews' money-lending activities aroused passions, which is hardly surprising given the heady combination of long-established theological reservations about usury, the involvement of an alien community and awareness of the vulnerability of people

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<sup>105</sup> The number of unredeemed pawn-pledges appears to have been low; of 39,260 pledges taken from 1 Mar. 1562 to 28 Feb. 1563, only 912 were sold, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p. 534.

<sup>106</sup> ASV, SM, b. 1, f. 71, 25 Jan. 1502 [mv]; Viola, *Compilazione*, V, 2, 189-9, 10 Apr. 1520; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg. 16, ff. 25v-6, 3 Aug. 1608; *ibid.*, *Deliberazioni (secreta)*, reg. 66, f. 55v, 19 Dec. 1548; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p. 532. For rules on sale profits, see ASV, PSM, *de supra (Chiesa)*, b. 35, proc. 75, fasc. 1, *Soprabondante dei Sopraconsoli*; Mueller, 'Charitable institutions', p. 74.

<sup>107</sup> Sale profits were consigned to the Procurators of San Marco; storing pledges before and after auctions changed; loan periods were reduced from 15 months to 12: see ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 28, 16 Nov. 1558, f. 4; filza 44, 6 Aug. 1565 (undated sheet of auction procedures); filza 46, 16 Mar. 1566; reg. 49, ff. 139v-40r, 11 July 1573.

needing to borrow.<sup>108</sup> Attempts were made to expel the Jewish bankers from Venice, but, as Brian Pullan has shown, the Venetian authorities preferred to maintain the services of *Ebrei tedeschi*.<sup>109</sup> Although pawn-pledge auctions were public manifestations of money-lending by the Jews, they were not unduly affected by these tensions.

The regulations drawn up for pawn-pledge auctions were prompted by the same motives as the rules governing emergency and debt auctions - justice and piety towards the poor.<sup>110</sup> New measures which were introduced were not intended to penalise the Jewish bankers, but to enable poor people to reclaim their pledges up until the last possible moment.<sup>111</sup> Items received by a banker *in lieu* of his outlay were meant, for example, to be held for an extra week after an auction, to allow the debtor another chance

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<sup>108</sup> See ASV, *Senato, Deliberazioni (secreta)*, reg.66, f.57, 19 Dec.1548.

<sup>109</sup> Expulsions were sought in 1519-20, 1563-66, 1571-73 and 1636, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.488-93,532-3,538-40; Benjamin Ravid, 'The socioeconomic background of the expulsion and readmission of the Venetian Jews, 1571-1573', in *Essays in modern Jewish history: a tribute to Ben Halpern*, ed. Frances Malino and Phyllis Cohen Albert (Rutherford,NJ:Herzl,1982),pp.27-55;idem,*Economics*,pp.9-11. On an earlier expulsion, see Mueller,'Prêteurs juifs'. On the Venetian policy, see Pullan *Rich and poor*,ch.s 1-4;Mueller, 'Charitable institutions', pp.64-6,70-2.

<sup>110</sup> ASV,SM,b.1,*Liber 3, Rappresaglie*,f.63, 5 Jan.1514 [mv]; f.62v,10 Apr.1520; ASV,CL,b.231,*Incanti*,f.470,15 Dec. 1618: '...la materia de pegni venduti sopra [g]li incanti... è di tanto rillievo in se stessa, che abbraccia tutti li maggiori interessi della povertà...'.This was also true of the *monti di pietà*, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*,pp.471-2,585.

<sup>111</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 46,16 Mar.1566; filza 141,31 Jan. 1596 [mv], SM report; filza 44, 6 Aug.1565 (undated sheet).

to redeem them.<sup>112</sup> This was quite normal: a similar practice occurred at the debt auctions held by the *Signori di Notte al Civil*.<sup>113</sup> From early on, concern was expressed about the activities of interested parties at pawn-pledge auctions, but as much attention was paid to corrupt officials and other participants as to Jews.<sup>114</sup> Although Jewish traders were, at first, forbidden to buy goods at these auctions, from 1597 they were positively encouraged to do so, to reduce the chance of illicit agreements being made between Christian second-hand dealers.<sup>115</sup>

Compared with other types of movable-goods auctions, therefore, sales of pawn-pledges were not particularly unusual. The organisation of these events by a separate magistracy, the regulations devised for them and the concern shown for the poor, paralleled other public sales. One aspect of pawn-pledge auctions which was distinct was the solicitous regard for sale profits [see above].<sup>116</sup> This, too, was not limited to auctions involving Jews, but

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid., filza 28, 16 Nov.1558, cap.15, (f.5v); reg.49, f.139v, 11 July 1573.

<sup>113</sup> 'Fu restituita la detta robba alla debitore' is often written on auction lists, see ASV,SNC,b.271,*Vendite*, reg.1, f.6v, 26 Apr.1601; f.15, 18 Aug.1601;f.19v, 21 Aug.1601.

<sup>114</sup> ASV, SM, b.1, *Liber 3, Rappresaglie*, f.63, 5 Jan. 1514 [mv]; f.62v, 10 Apr.1520.

<sup>115</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 141, 31 Jan.1596 [mv], SM report: '...con tal mez[z]o si venira a levar li accordi...'.

<sup>116</sup> ASV, SM, b.1, f.63, 5 Jan.1514 [mv]; f.62v, 10 Apr.1520; ASV, CL, b.301 bis, *Pegni & pagnaroli*, f.36, 24 July 1624; *Schiavi, 'Ebrei'*, p.320.

it also influenced the conduct of another type of auction - the tavern-pledge sale.

**Tavern-pledge auctions.** The practice of leaving pledges at taverns to pay for food and drink [see Chapter 2,I.d)] has a long history.<sup>117</sup> At some point, this custom began to include small loans of money as well as refreshments.<sup>118</sup> Defining *vin da pegni*, a rough sort of wine drunk in Venice, Giuseppe Boerio attributed its name to the circumstances in which it was served. Innkeepers, noted Boerio, lent money on pledges, but to avoid charges of usury advanced two thirds in cash and a third in cheap wine.<sup>119</sup> Such pledges were kept for up to three months and then, if unredeemed, were sold at auction by the *Provveditori alla Giustizia Nova*, the magistrates responsible for taverns and inns.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> ASV,GN,b.2,reg.4,f.3r,2 Apr.1388;f.5r,1 Mar.1442. Bakers also took pledges, see Grevembroch, *Abiti*,I,no.81; ASV,GP, b.352/17, no.34, Francesco Lesembiant, 30 July 1630; b.355/20,no.33, Foresto Foresti, 16 Sept.1636; b.357/22, no.1, 2 Mar.1640, Zuane Brusca.

<sup>118</sup> Innkeepers were meant to record the sum of money advanced, see ASV,GN,b.2,reg.4,ff.73-4,26 Sept.1630.

<sup>119</sup> Boerio, *Dizionario*, p.794: 'vin da pegni, dicevasi ne' tempi veneti a quel vino pessimo che i magazenieri o bastioneri davano sul pegno. Costoro prestavano danaro sulla robba, e per palliare l'usura davano due terzi della valuta in danaro e l'altro terzo in vino del peggiore che avessero'. According to Grevembroch, half was given in money and half in victuals, see *Abiti*,I,no.81. Elio Zorzi noted a longer period before auction, see *Osterie veneziane*, 2nd edn (Venice: Filippi, 1967), pp.71,75.

<sup>120</sup> Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*,I,194; Marangoni, *Associazioni*,p.142. For pledges held by a wine seller (including 9 pairs of wool-workers' combs), see ASV,GP, *Inventari*,b.354/19, no.35, Tommaso Calvis, 16 June 1631.



The procedures established for tavern-pledge auctions were similar to those of debt sales: the magistracy's treasurer presided, attended by a clerk, and a *commandador* provided the voice.<sup>121</sup> At the start of the seventeenth century, the regulations governing these sales were tightened. Innkeepers were ordered to keep careful records of pledges and to publish auctions of forfeited goods well in advance.<sup>122</sup> The shift to lending money may date from around this time, since rules were also introduced restricting the involvement of innkeepers at auctions. As with pawn-pledge auctions, concern was expressed that sale profits might remain with innkeepers or auction officials, instead of being returned to the debtors.<sup>123</sup>

To sum up, several different types of movable-goods auctions were held in Venice. They performed important social functions and, as a result, were strictly regulated. Although these auctions were intended to be separate from commercial outlets, they played an important role in the transfer of second-hand items in the city. Since individuals and executors of wills chose to realise their assets at auctions as well as by selling them to second-

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<sup>121</sup> ASV, GN, b.2, reg.2, f.23, 17 Apr.1505; reg.4, ff.11-12. Grevembroch depicted this type of auction in *Abiti*, I, no.81.

<sup>122</sup> An announcement was to be made outside the parish church a month before the sale and a printed notice to be pinned to the tavern's door a week before, see ASV, GN, b.2, reg.2, ff.103-5, 21 May 1603; reg.4, ff.35-40.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, reg.2, ff.103-5, 21 May 1603; ff.105v-8r, 10 June 1604; reg.4, ff.31-2, 21 Jan.1601 [mv]; ff.47r-54v, 10 June 1604; ff.63-4v, 17 Sept.1605; ff.69r-70v, 14 May 1621.

hand dealers, they were a direct alternative for sellers of used goods. The two sorts of outlets had, however, long coexisted so there cannot have been fundamental conflicts of interest between them. By examining their relative merits as outlets for second-hand goods, it is evident that they fulfilled distinct and complementary functions.

The two decisive advantages of auctions were that they offered a quick means of realising assets and they could accommodate large numbers of goods, hence their attraction to individuals in urgent need of money and to executors of wills. On the other hand, they involved a significant amount of chance as sellers could never be sure how much goods would fetch. The artist Lorenzo Lotto, whose careful accounts evidence the financial canniness born of necessity, was aware of the dangers involved and stipulated in his will that, though it was more convenient, he did not want his estate settled in this way.<sup>124</sup> The cheapness of goods at auction did, in fact, make the events an attractive source of merchandise for second-hand dealers - guild members, Jews and illicit traders alike.<sup>125</sup> Clearly, the two means of distribution catered to rather

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<sup>124</sup> Lotto, *Libro di spese*, p.304, 25 Mar.1546: '...quelle cose che si haverà a vendere non voria fusse poste a l'i[n]canto, pur si farà como parerà meglio e più brieve, per non darle per pochi precii a persone extrane che per li bassi precii più presto le avesse amici...'. Alessandro Vittoria, the sculptor, was not so shrewd, see Predelli, *Alessandro Vittoria*, pp.170,187.

<sup>125</sup> On guild members and Jews at auction, see Chapter 3, III. above. On illicit traders, see BMC, M.St., cap.32, f.21.

different needs and the Venetian second-hand market could support auctions and commercial outlets. Public sales were not, moreover, the only alternative outlets for second-hand goods, illicit markets were also of consequence.

b) Illicit traders

Outlets for misappropriated goods, such as pawn-banks in the Ghetto, taverns and auctions, are discussed in Chapter 2 [II.d)]. These illicit markets are important, but they represent only one part of the picture - there was also a black market in second-hand clothes and furnishings in Venice.<sup>126</sup> Illegitimate traffickers of used goods disregarded guild rules along with the other sorts of market controls. Documenting their activities is difficult, but evidence does exist which suggests that the distribution of goods in this way warrants recognition. Combatting illicit trading was a constant feature of guild business throughout the period covered by this thesis.

Irregular traders in second-hand goods included fully enrolled guild members as well as unregistered traders. These black marketeers made use of the same selling locations as respectable retailers and also alternative outlets such as taverns.<sup>127</sup> The guild's inability to control its markets [see above I.b)] facilitated these

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<sup>126</sup> On 'lavoro nero', see Tiepolo, 'Arti e artigiani', unpag.

<sup>127</sup> On a Jewish *strazzaruol* selling clothes in a tavern at Rialto, see ASV,UC,b.243,reg.4,f.181,12,20 Dec.1584.

illicit exchanges. It simply was not feasible to supervise all sales of second-hand goods in the city and auctions were also subject to misuse.

It was hard to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate goods at auction and this encouraged various sorts of transgressions. In 1542, for example, the *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* accused the Jews of illicit trading at pawn-pledge sales.<sup>128</sup> The guild of second-hand dealers had long been concerned with such abuses [see Chapter 1, I.] and monitored auctions for irregularities.<sup>129</sup> In 1538, the guild accused *commandadori* of using these events to sell second-hand wares for their own profit and it continued to focus on the activities of these officials.<sup>130</sup>

Like pedlars, *commandadori* did not have the formal training required of *strazzaruoli*, but their various duties as auctioneers and bailiffs, not to mention the odd Ghetto brokerage awarded for loyal service, stood them in good stead.<sup>131</sup> With unregistered experts such as these

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<sup>128</sup> ASV, SM, b.1, *Liber 5, Terminazioni*, f.102r, 26 Aug.1542: '...ve[n]dono robbe di loro strazzaria no[n] impegnate ad usura, sotto l'ombra, et p[re]testo del banco...'. For their reaction, see ASV, CCD, *Notatorio*, reg.12, f.164r, 29 Sept.1542.

<sup>129</sup> BMC, M.St., cap.32, f.22; cap.35, f.27, 15 Dec.1428; f.198, 13 Apr.1602.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, ff.95-6, 10 Dec.1538.

<sup>131</sup> See BMC, M.St., f.146, 5 Dec.1581; ASV, GV, *Documenti per oggetto*, b.231, no.5, *Masserizie: inventari di effetti mobili diversi venduti e da vendersi al pubblico incanto*. On their duties see Garzoni, *Piazza*, ff.795-7, 'De'piazzeri'. Two ghetto

'trotting about the city in their clogs', it is hardly surprising that the guild found illicit trading difficult to quash.<sup>132</sup> Although the *arte degli strazzaruoli* was keen to eradicate competition by these interlopers, there were other, more important considerations. On the government's part there were fears that the social functions of auctions would be jeopardised if self-interest was too involved and this is why *commandadori* were forbidden to enrol in the guild of second-hand dealers.<sup>133</sup> Irrespective of the restrictions, however, *commandadori* continually used auctions as personal trading outlets.<sup>134</sup>

So far, a striking variety of outlets for second-hand goods has been introduced. What is not yet clear, is how the second-hand market was able to support so many different

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brokerages were awarded to Piero Antonio in 1568, see ASV, UC, b.242, reg.1, f.15, 23 Aug.1568; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.550.

<sup>132</sup> Garzoni, *Piazza*, f.796: '...trottando per le strade con gli zoccoli...'. For 17 *commandadori* accused of irregular activities in 1592, see BMC, M.St., ff.188-9. On links between the guild and auctioneers, see ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni, 1616-46*: Giulio Mangano and Marco de Giacomo Benai left to become *commandadori*; and two sons of *commandadori*, Marco de Francesco and Paolo de Piero, were guild members.

<sup>133</sup> BMC, M.St., ff.117-21, 8 Apr.1578; f.125, 15 Dec.1579; see also ASV, GV, b.1, reg.3, ff.93v-4, 13 July 1581. Second-hand dealers and other artisans were also forbidden to sell goods at auction, see *ibid.*, f.120; ff.197-8, 13 Apr.1602.

<sup>134</sup> BMC, M.St., f.117, 8 Apr.1578: '...mantengono in R[ial]to incanti perpetui fingendo che la robba che vendono sij di commissarie, et de altre particolari persone niente di manco essa robba è per il sforzo suo, la quale essi com[m]andadori la comprano da particolari persone, o da com[m]issarie...'. On the prolonged dispute (1578-1602), see *ibid.*, ff.125-7, 142-9, 170-2, 176-80, 183-4, 188-91, 193-5, 205.

means of distribution. A more comprehensive understanding of the market is therefore required and one way of achieving this is to consider the distribution of selling locations in the city.

#### IV. Market Locations

Exploring the distribution of market outlets in Venice over the period as a whole is not straightforward as the body of sources consulted for this thesis offers a rather uneven picture. Detailed analysis of market locations requires close study of other types of evidence, such as *decima* tax returns, and that is a task far beyond the reasonable scope of this work.<sup>135</sup> The archives investigated do allow some idea of the spread of outlets in the city and it is encouraging to note that this coincides with findings from *decima* returns used by Ennio Concina, an historian of Venetian urban development.<sup>136</sup> Trade sources and the other types of evidence consulted supply information on the distribution of markets at different points in time.

##### a) Distribution of outlets

From very early on, there were two distinct clusters of outlets for second-hand goods in Venice: one at San Marco

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<sup>135</sup> See Franca Miani Uluhogian, 'La distribuzione delle "botteghe" a Parma: un tentativo di interpretazione geografica della struttura commerciale', in *Mercati e consumi: organizzazione e qualificazione del commercio in Italia dal XII al XX secolo* (Bologna: Edizioni Analisi, 1986), pp.705-19 (p.705). On the *decima*, see above III.a).

<sup>136</sup> Concina used the *decima* lists of 1537, 1582, 1661, 1712 and 1740 in *Venezia nell'età moderna*, see below b).

and the other at Rialto. Members of the guilds of second-hand dealers and of pedlars could be found at both of these locations in the thirteenth century and they continued to frequent these sites.<sup>137</sup> The fifteenth-century *arte degli strazzaruoli* (which amalgamated the two types of dealers) met at the church of San Zulian near Piazza San Marco, within easy reach of both centres.<sup>138</sup> During the 1470s and 1480s, petitions made by 'the *strazzaruoli* of San Marco and Rialto' refer to the many shops of second-hand dealers in those two places.<sup>139</sup> High rents were charged for central outlets, but San Marco and Rialto were never restricted to wealthy traders since open-air markets were held there [see above I.a)] and pedlars sold goods at both sites.<sup>140</sup> Although there was no Strazzaria (like the

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<sup>137</sup> CAV, II, 2, cap. 22, p. 469 (1264-65); cap. 31, pp. 471-2, 26 Sept. 1290; CAV, I, 135 (1233); p. 137, 20 Sept. 1403; see also B. Cecchetti, *La vita dei Veneziani nel 1300*, facs., Collana di bibliografia e storia veneziana, 13 (Bologna: Forni, 1980), 1, 'La città, la laguna', p. 77. *Strazzaria* workshops in the Piazza burnt down in 1436, see *I mestieri della moda*, p. 330; for *strazzaruoli* workshops at Rialto in 1442, see Cessi and Alberti, *Rialto*, p. 441.

<sup>138</sup> BMC, M. St., cap. 22, f. 13; cap. 23, f. 14; cap. 25, f. 15; Peter Humfrey and Richard Mackenney, 'The Venetian trade guilds as patrons of art in the Renaissance', *Burlington Magazine*, 128 (1986), 317-30 (p. 325); Micconi, '*Luoghi veneziani dei mestieri*', p. 97. On the proximity of guilds to concentrations of workers, see Marangoni, *Associazioni*, p. 30. On San Zulian, see V. Alinari, *Eglises et 'scuole' de Venise* (Florence: Alinari, 1906), pp. 164-5; and Tassini, *Curiosità*, pp. 305-7.

<sup>139</sup> BMC, M. St., cap. 65, f. 60 [13 July 1479]; cap. 66, ff. 61-2, nd; cap. 73, f. 69, 24 Feb. 1488 [mv]; cap. 74, ff. 70-1, nd. Sanudo noted that *strazzaruoli* had a 'ruga' at Rialto: *De origine*, p. 57. For details of a shop at San Marco, see ASV, *Cancellaria Inferiore, Notai*, b. 62, notary Camuccia di Bartolomeo, fasc. 10, 1 Mar. 1465 [I owe this reference to Dott. S. Piasentini].

<sup>140</sup> Sanudo, *De origine*, p. 29; Concina, *Venezia*, pp. 14-5, 27 [rents]; and BMC, M. St., cap. 10, ff. 7-8; cap. 35, f. 26, 15 Dec. 1428 [guild members paying high rents for workshops].

famous Merceria) in early modern Venice, it was not hard to locate outlets for second-hand goods: buyers simply went to San Marco or Rialto.<sup>141</sup>

In addition to guild members' markets, other points of sale could also be found at the two central locations. Auctions had long associations with both sites and this continued throughout the period.<sup>142</sup> Public sales held at Rialto were meant to take place in *Campo di Rialto Nuovo*, but, in practice, occurred in *Campo San Giacomo di Rialto*, supposedly reserved for international trade.<sup>143</sup> In Piazza San Marco, the *Signori di Notte al Civil* held regular auctions between the standards and at the corner of the basilica.<sup>144</sup> As *commandadori* were involved, use was

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid., cap. 66, f. 62, c. 1487. See Sanudo, *De origine*, p. 25; Coryat, *Coryat's crudities*, I, pp. 318, 328; Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp. 106-7 [Merceria]. Garzoni refers to the *stracciarìa* in *La Piazza*, disc. 153, 'De' stracciaroli', f. 918; as does Gallicciolli, *Memorie venete*, II, 301. Biagio, *strazzaruol*, lived at San Zulian 'in straccaria' in 1368, see ASV, *Signori di Notte*, reg. 9, f. 94v, 26 Mar. 1368 [I am grateful to Dott. Stefano Piasentini for this reference].

<sup>142</sup> They were held near magistrates' offices, see ASV, CL, b. 231, *Incanti*, f. 422, 7 June 1264; BMC, M. St., cap. 11, ff. 8-9; Sanudo, *De origine*, pp. 135-6, 137, 195, 265-6, 266-7; BMC, M. St., ff. 117-21, 8 Apr. 1578.

<sup>143</sup> Cessi and Alberti, *Rialto*, p. 246. For complaints, see BMC, M. St., ff. 120-1, 8 Apr. 1578 (magistrates' auctions went on under the porticos). For bequest sales at Rialto, see IRE, Der. E, b. 68, Cristoforo Castigante, fasc. 4, f. 23, 20 Apr. 1589; b. 191, Ruggero Ruggeri, fasc. 4, 22 May 1612; ASV, GP, *Inventari*, b. 340/5, no. 78, Bartolomeo Giudise, 20 May 1593; b. 341/6, no. 35, Carlo Gritti, 22 Mar. 1597; b. 342/7, no. 12, Matteo Ruggieri, 26 July 1602; b. 355/20, no. 2, Cecilia Zarapaglia, 5 June 1636.

<sup>144</sup> ASV, MC, *Libro d'Oro Vecchio*, no. 14, f. 218v, 14 Sept. 1586; Sansovino, *Venetia*, p. 293 [standards]. For an example, see ASV, GP, *Inventari*, b. 341/6, no. 90, Salustio Gnechi, 17 Dec. 1599.



presumably made of the *pietra del bando*, the short porphyry stand mounted by these officials when making public announcements [see Figs 1 and 2].<sup>145</sup> Taverns and inns, alternative types of outlets, were also concentrated at San Marco and Rialto.<sup>146</sup> By 1514, 11 parishes, all in, or on the fringes of, the two areas, were already well-served by such establishments.<sup>147</sup> At the beginning of the period, then, San Marco and Rialto were important foci of the market for second-hand goods, though that did not preclude trading elsewhere.

Open-air markets were held in other parts of Venice such as at Santa Maria Formosa [see Appendix I at end], and auctions also occurred away from the centre.<sup>148</sup> Pedlars hawked goods throughout the city and second-hand dealers, too, are recorded farther afield. Towards the end of the fifteenth century, enterprising *strazzaruoli* rowed boats carrying used goods out of the lagoon to sell to oarsmen at sea [see Chapter 1,I.]. When a new chapter house was erected for a religious confraternity on the periphery of

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<sup>145</sup> On this column, see Trincanato, 'Rappresentatività', p.84; Perocco and Salvadori, *Civiltà*, I, fig.169. On the *gobbo* of Rialto, perhaps also used for auctions, see *ibid.*, II, fig.775.

<sup>146</sup> Cessi and Alberti, *Rialto*, pp.282-7; Elio Zorzi, *Osterie*, p.67; Marangoni, *Associazioni*, pp.141,146; Concina, *Venezia*, p.44; Elisabeth Pavan, 'Police des moeurs, société et politique à Venise à la fin du moyen âge', *Revue Historique*, 264(1980), 241-88 (p.254).

<sup>147</sup> ASV, GN, b.2, reg.2, f.44, 12 June 1514.

<sup>148</sup> Perocco and Salvadori, *Civiltà*, II, fig.756 [markets]; BMC, M.St., f.117, 8 Apr.1578 [auctions]; ASV, SNC, b.271, *Vendite*, reg.1, f.2, 4 Apr.1601 [silk worker's tools sold, S.Geremia].

Santa Croce in 1507, a certain Alessandro, *strazzaruol*, was closely involved.<sup>149</sup> Although San Marco and Rialto were not the sole markets for second-hand goods, they did see the greatest volumes of trade. It made sense to locate outlets near clients and, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, that meant the bustling city-centre rather than the less densely-populated perimeter.<sup>150</sup> The Jewish traders' initial decision to set up shop at Rialto [see above, II.] was surely no coincidence. Not only was Rialto the hub of commercial life, but it was also one of two poles of the Venetian second-hand market. By the end of the period, however, the topography of that market had significantly changed.

During the sixteenth century, another major centre developed for second-hand clothes and furnishings - the Ghetto Nuovo [see Figs 3 and 4]. The transfer of the Jewish traders' shops from Rialto in 1516 thus had a

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<sup>149</sup> His name, recorded on the architrave, lead to the *scuola* being wrongly linked to the *arte degli strazzaruoli*, see *Arti e mestieri nella Repubblica di Venezia* (Venice: Soprintendenza ai beni artistici e storici di Venezia, 1980), p.90, cat.no.25. The mistake was corrected, but the subsequent description of the building by Silvia Gramigna and Annalisa Perissa is still misleading, see *Scuole di arti, mestieri e devozione a Venezia* (Venice: Arsenale, 1981), p.66; Antonio Manno, *I mestieri di Venezia: storia, arte e devozione delle corporazioni dal XIII al XVIII secolo* (Citadella, Padua: Biblos, 1995), p.160. The building's title-deeds show that the guild had no link with it: ASV, *Scuole piccole e suffragi, serie 61, Beata Vergine Assunta Scuola in Santa Maria Maggiore*, b.98, filza I, *Acquisti in materia dell'erezione di detta scuola, 1502-1507*.

<sup>150</sup> On the topography of Venice at this time, see Concina, *Venezia*, ch.s 1,3,4, and map II; also Crouzet-Pavan, *Sopra le acque salse*, ch.s 11 and 13, especially, pp.921-32.

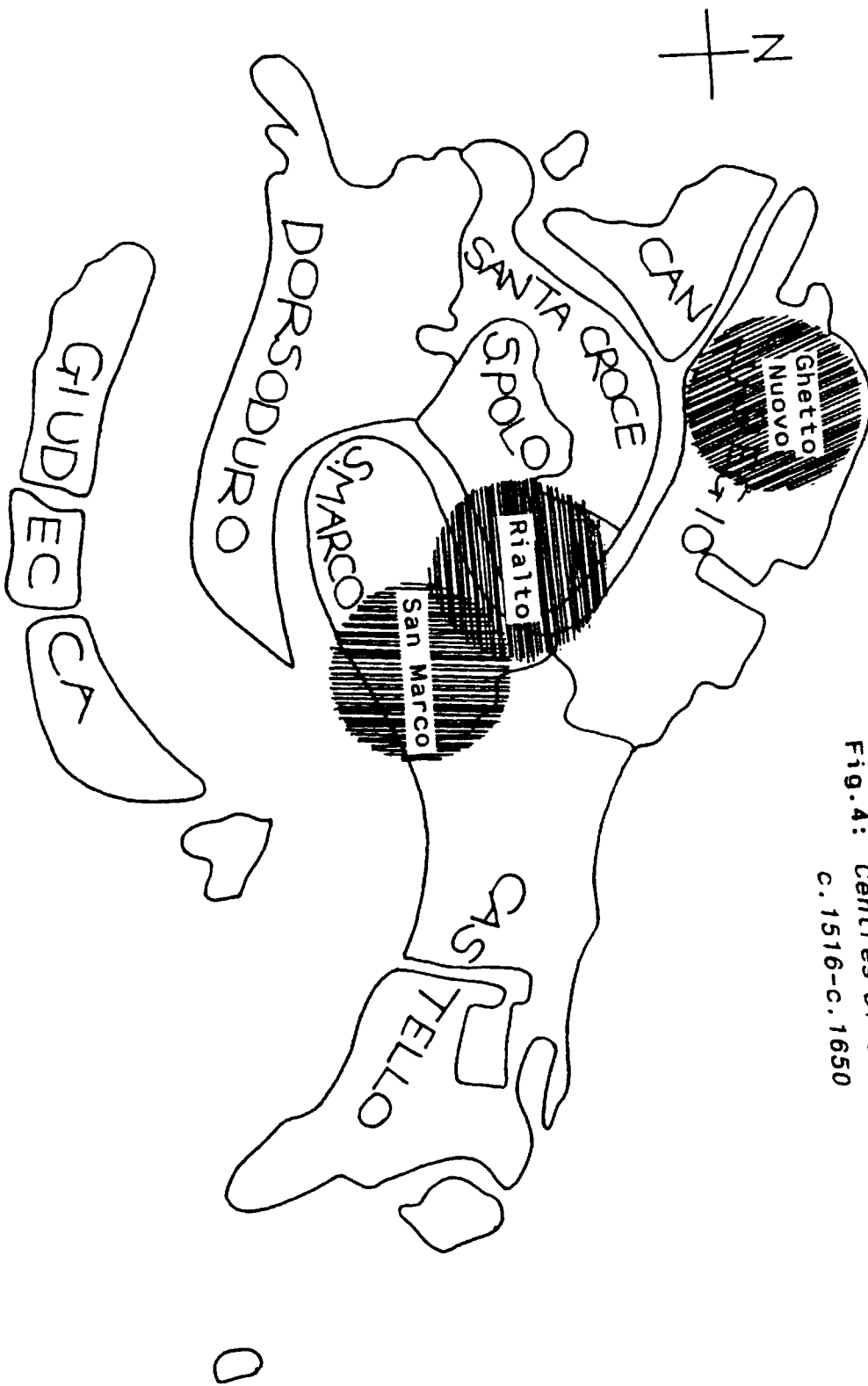


Fig. 4: Centres of the Venetian second-hand market,  
c. 1516-c. 1650

considerable effect, converting the predominantly bipolar second-hand market into one with three nuclei. The Jewish dealers were not restricted to the Ghetto Nuovo, but it was their base and it became known as an excellent place for second-hand goods [see Chapter 4,II.b)]. The creation of this vibrant third market did not, however, detract unduly from the two traditional centres: San Marco and Rialto continued to be important foci of trade throughout the period. This trend can be traced by analysing the seventeenth-century membership register of the guild of second-hand dealers.<sup>151</sup>

Identifiable trading locations of more than half of the members enrolled in the *arte degli strazzaruoli* between 1616 and 1646 are recorded in this list. Many of the other members cited the name of their workshops, but did not specify where they were situated. From the available information can be achieved a good idea of the distribution of registered second-hand dealers within the city over the thirty-year period as a whole.

Details set down in Table 5.1 show that guild members were located in all six *sestieri* of Venice, but that they were unevenly spread.<sup>152</sup> The majority of traders were based in

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<sup>151</sup> ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni da farsi dai confratelli che entreranno nella detta arte (1616-46)*. On this register, see Chapter 3,IV.

<sup>152</sup> On *sestieri*, the six administrative wards of Venice, see Boerio, *Dizionario*, p.649; Perocco and Salvadori, *Civiltà*, I, fig.373, p.292. Their boundaries are hard to establish for

the *sestieri* of San Marco, Castello and San Polo. These three wards contained 41 per cent of all registered dealers in the city while the others accounted for only 14 per cent. More than twice the number of guild members were located in San Marco, the *sestier* with the highest proportion of traders, compared to the fourth-favoured area, Cannaregio. The division of Venice into *sestieri* is useful for a general analysis such as this, but it is not sufficiently precise on the marketing centres of Piazza San Marco and Rialto.

Table 5.1: *The distribution of second-hand dealers registered in the guild, 1616-46*<sup>153</sup>

sestier	second-hand dealers	pedlars	women	total	%
San Marco	56	52	17	125	17
Castello	26	37	34	97	13
San Polo	26	44	12	82	11
Cannaregio	19	26	16	61	8
Santa Croce	8	10	4	22	3
Dorsoduro	14	6	0	20	3
located	149	175	83	407	55
unlocated	124	197	27	348	45
total	273	372	110	755	100

The clusters of outlets at San Marco and Rialto do not fit

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set terms. Table 5.1 follows Sansovino based on the *sestieri* lists of the *Provveditori alla Sanità (Venetia, p.210)*. See also Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.244-8; Concina, *Venezia*, map I.

<sup>153</sup> Source: ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni*.

neatly into *sestieri*. Calle delle Rasse, for example, a busy street containing a number of second-hand dealers' shops, is located just behind Piazza San Marco in the *sestier* of Castello.<sup>154</sup> Rialto, moreover, is not tidily contained within the *sestier* of San Polo. Adjacent areas such as San Cassiano are closely associated with Rialto, and Campo San Bartolomeo with its surrounding network of streets is as much a part of that trading complex as the more celebrated markets on the other side of the bridge. In seeking to understand the distribution of dealers at San Marco and at Rialto, we need to try another tack.

By considering specific concentrations of guild members, irrespective of *sestieri*, additional insight can be gained [see Appendix I at end]. This approach proves that, between 1616 and 1646, more registered traders were located near Piazza San Marco and at Rialto than anywhere else in the city. At San Marco, most dealers plied their trade in the Piazza, at San Moisè and in the Frezzaria to the west, and in Calle delle Rasse to the east.<sup>155</sup> Over the thirty-year period as a whole, marginally more second-hand dealers were located near Rialto than at San Marco. Many could be found on or near the bridge, with a respectable number of traders on the northern and western fringes of the complex.

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<sup>154</sup> On the economic importance of Calle delle Rasse, see Concina, *Venezia*, pp.37,155. On its taverns, see *ibid.*, p.155; Tassini, *Curiosità*, p.539; Elio Zorzi, *Osterie*, p.114.

<sup>155</sup> One *strazzaruol*, Zuane di Nicolò, registered from 1616-41, moved from Ponte della Paglia into the Piazza.

A significant number of members also traded on the other side of the canal, in the thoroughfares leading up to the bridge. Unsurprisingly given the strength of the mercers' guild in the seventeenth century, few traders were located on the Merceria, the most famous of these routes linking Rialto to Piazza San Marco.<sup>156</sup>

The existence of other concentrations of dealers, though smaller, at the traditional district market sites of Santa Maria Formosa, San Polo and Santi Apostoli, indicates that these places continued to be significant areas of commercial activity [see Appendix I]. The location of another group of traders in the immediate vicinity of the Ghetto is further proof that it had become an important centre in the second-hand market. As a major focus of trade, the Ghetto Nuovo also attracted guild members.

The guild membership register of 1616-46 makes a clear distinction between male and female members. Three quarters of the women registered in the guild on their own account are located and this is a very high percentage. These female traders had a markedly different pattern of distribution from that of the men [see Table 5.1 and Appendix I]. For example, very few women are recorded near Piazza San Marco, and, although more were based at Rialto,

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<sup>156</sup> On the Merceria, Salizzada San Lio and Salizzada del Fondaco dei Tedeschi, see Perocco and Salvadori, *Civiltà*, II, 611; see also Trincanato, 'Rappresentatività', p. 83. On the mercers, see Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp. 90-113.

neither of these two locations was a particularly important centre of registered female activity. A much larger female presence is recorded in Castello. Women accounted for a third of all dealers registered in this *sestier*, the second most popular *area* for traders in second-hand goods. Female dealers also plied their trade at different sites from men. San Samuele, a parish containing cheap housing in the *sestier* of San Marco, was completely dominated by women, as was Santa Trinità near the Arsenal in Castello. Other areas, such as San Zuan in Bragora and San Zuan Novo, also in Castello, had a high proportion of female dealers. Women also had a monopoly of the ferry landing-stages at San Tomà and San Samuele [see Appendix I].<sup>157</sup>

Towards the end of the period, registered traders in second-hand goods could therefore be found throughout much of Venice. Rialto and Piazza San Marco retained the greatest number of selling locations and they remained the most popular sites for retailing goods of any kind.<sup>158</sup> At these two central places, second-hand dealers catered for clients who came specifically, not necessarily from Venice, for the purpose of buying or selling goods, as well as a

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<sup>157</sup> Between 1616 and 1646, 6 women are recorded at San Samuele and 3 at Santa Trinità; 6 out of 9 dealers at San Zuan in Bragora are women, and 5 out of 7 at San Zuan Novo, see ASV, *Arte degli Strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni, donne*. On female renters of goods located at San Samuele in the mid-sixteenth century, see ASV, *Sanità*, reg. 729, *Notatorio* 6, ff.205v-6v,234,236,237v-8r.

<sup>158</sup> On the distribution of shops in 1537 and 1582, see Concina, *Venezia*, maps II and III; in 1661, Beltrami, *Storia della popolazione*, p.53.



large passing trade. Except for the Ghetto Nuovo, dealers located in other parts of the city had different types of clients. A number of traders in Castello, such as the women at Santa Trinità, met the needs of a residential clientele whose fortunes were bound up with the Arsenal.<sup>159</sup> Other Castello traders, located at Santa Maria Formosa and near the harbour, served different needs.<sup>160</sup> All second-hand dealers did not, therefore, flock to the richest pickings, but they did locate near to communities of people where there was a regular demand for their wares.

Unlike Christian dealers, Jewish traders were unable to have shops in places of their choice and they were obliged to base their outlets in a peripheral part of Cannaregio. Yet, by the early 1600s, the dealers in the Ghetto were catering for the same kinds of clients as their counterparts at San Marco and Rialto. The Ghetto, like the two central sites, also attracted other traders, further reflecting its development as an important alternative

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<sup>159</sup> See ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni*; R.C.Davis, *Shipbuilders*, ch.3 [*Arsenalotti*]; pp.100-2 [importance of material goods; links with second-hand dealers]. Davis is borne out by a poem purporting to be by an Arsenal worker: 'Le berte, le truffe, i arlassi, e le magnarie, che usa le puttane a i so bertonì recitae da Nico Calafao da l'Arsenale', in *Delle rime piasevoli di diversi auttori nuovamente raccolte da M. Modesto Pino, & intitolate La Caravana* (Venice:Domenico Farri, 1576), f.20v: 'haveva una casacca de velvo/ pugnai d'arzeno e i miei anei sfozai/ che un che no me avesse cognossuo/ g'haveria parso capitano a i cai'.

<sup>160</sup> See Appendix I; and R.C.Davis, *Shipbuilders*, p.96.

market.<sup>161</sup> The spread of the market for second-hand clothes and furnishings in the sixteenth century paralleled the developments within the Venetian urban economy as a whole.

b) The second-hand market and the metropolitan economy

It is difficult to characterise economic change in the sixteenth century.<sup>162</sup> Based on research into Venetian guilds, Richard Mackenney has argued that the expansion of the city's manufactures so often associated with the city's economic development, was matched by a corresponding extension of the means of distribution linking producers and consumers. As a result of this dual increase of production and provision, the geography of what Mackenney defines as the 'metropolitan' economy of Venice, underwent significant structural change.<sup>163</sup> This transformation did not reduce the importance of the city-centre, indeed, the

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<sup>161</sup> For example, *strazzaruol* Zuane q. Marco was based at San Geremia 'arente il Getto' from 1622 to 1644, see ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni*.

<sup>162</sup> On the topic, see Domenico Sella, 'Les mouvements longs de l'industrie lainière à Venise aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles', *Annales ESC* (Jan.-Mar.1957), 29-45; idem, *Commerci e industrie a Venezia nel secolo XVII* (Venice: Istituto per la Collaborazione Culturale, 1961), pp.1-21; Lane, *Venice*, pp.308-21; Ugo Tucci, 'Venezia nel cinquecento: una città industriale?', in *Crisi e rinnovamenti nell'autunno del rinascimento a Venezia*, ed. Vittore Branca and Carlo Ossola (Florence: Olschki, 1991), pp.61-83 (pp.67,78).

<sup>163</sup> Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.81-5 [expansion of manufactures] (the start of the development is dated to the mid-fifteenth century); pp.81,85-8, fig.3.1 [metropolitan economy]. Part of Mackenney's argument has been taken up by Ugo Tucci, see 'Vita economica a Venezia nel primo seicento', in *Galileo Galilei e la cultura veneziana* (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 1995), pp.123-35 (p.124).

economic predominance of Rialto and San Marco intensified during the sixteenth century.<sup>164</sup> The most striking manifestation of change was the opening up of new markets in the city in addition to the long-established central ones. Understanding why this occurred requires us to consider another important process affecting Venice in the sixteenth century: the physical expansion of the city.

This phenomenon was bound up with the escalation of the Venetian population in the sixteenth century.<sup>165</sup> In Ennio Concina's opinion, it was in this century that Venice saw the most dynamic urban change. According to his thesis, this was when a secondary system of neighbourhoods located between the densely populated city-centre and the sparsely populated marginal areas, came into its own. Venice did not, however, become a polycentric city at this time as the newly-developed districts were fully integrated with, and

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<sup>164</sup> Perocco and Salvadori, *Civiltà*, I, fig.372, pp.291,296-7; II,495,609-41 (Rialto), fig.756; Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, p.85; Beltrami, *Popolazione*, pp.50-5; Concina, *Venezia*, pp.37-45. Insufficient emphasis has been put on the commercial importance of Piazza San Marco, see, for example, Giuseppe Samonà and others, *Piazza San Marco: l'architettura, la storia, le funzioni* (Padua: Marsilio, 1970), pp.67,79.

<sup>165</sup> On the links between population changes and increasing numbers of shops, see Beltrami, *Storia della popolazione*, p.50. The Venetian population grew from 115,000 to c.170,000 from 1509-63: Pullan, 'Wage-earners', p.410, n.3; Giulio Beloch, 'La popolazione di Venezia nei secoli XVI e XVII', *Nuovo Archivio Veneto*, 3 (1902), 5-49 (pp.40-44). On the scale of public building in Venice, see Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean world in the age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds, 2nd edn, 2 vols (London: Fontana/Collins, 1976), II, 895.

dependent on, the centre.<sup>166</sup> Far from limiting his study to urban structures, Concina was also, as the title of his 1989 work suggests, very much concerned with the functions of the rapidly expanding city.

Concina's conclusions corroborate the findings of Mackenney reached from very different sources. Employing remarkably similar anatomical analogies, these two historians both describe a unitary system combining production and distribution with an extremely dynamic centre, which was also an aggregation of separate, distinct markets.<sup>167</sup> Central outlets remained of paramount importance, but by the end of the century there were, as Francesco Sansovino recounted with civic pride and yet another anatomical simile, shops '...dotted throughout the entire body and

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<sup>166</sup> Concina, *Venezia nell'età moderna*, pp.230-4. See p.45, in which he discusses the second system of *contrade*; pp.45-7, 168-70, where he refutes polycentric interpretations and reaffirms the centre's importance; pp.101, 120-1, for specific areas of expansion such as the Biri at San Canciano; pp.150-1, on the increase of rented accommodation in Cannaregio, Castello, San Polo and Dorsoduro. Concina's points are supported by Beloch, 'Popolazione', p.39; and also Beltrami, *Popolazione*, p.44. On the geography and dynamics of the peripheries and the centre at the end of the middle ages, see Crouzet-Pavan, '*Sopra le acque salse*', chs. 11 and 13.

<sup>167</sup> Mackenney describes Rialto as a main artery pumping goods to district markets, and retail outlets as the system's veins: *Tradesmen*, p.85. Concina has a chapter on the '*viscere*' of the city in which the human body is used as a model for town planning: the Merceria and Calle delle Rasse become 'veins' and the Piazza is the 'umbilical centre', see *Venezia*, pp.36-8, also p.48. On the economic functions of the secondary system of *contrade*, see p.45.

circuit of this city...'.<sup>168</sup> Most neighbourhoods, even the more peripheral ones, boasted outlets providing consumer goods, including bakers' ovens and wine shops and also, again according to Sansovino, tailors, fruit sellers and shoemakers.<sup>169</sup>

One of these outlets was likely to be that of a second-hand dealer. The concentration of registered traders in the two most central locations of Venice in the early seventeenth century, together with the generous spread of guild members throughout the city as a whole at that time, suggests that the market for second-hand goods reflected the general expansion of the Venetian metropolitan economy charted by Mackenney.<sup>170</sup> This would account for the many different types of outlets for second-hand goods in Venice, and it would also help to explain why the market was able to support a third major trading centre in the Ghetto.

A symptom of economic expansion described by Mackenney is the very high number of boats in the city: the ferries

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<sup>168</sup> Sansovino, *Venetia*, p.389: '...le botteghe che sono sparse per tutto l'universo corpo, & circuito d'essa città'. See also Concina, *Venezia*, p.165; Beltrami, *Popolazione*, p.50; and Tucci, 'Vita economica', p.123.

<sup>169</sup> Sansovino, *Venetia*, p.389. Cf. R.C.Davis, *Shipbuilders*, pp.95-7 [I am grateful to Mr Chris Black for his questions about peripheral outlets].

<sup>170</sup> The brokers' complaints of 1586 [see above,II.] indicate that the Jewish dealers were actively pursuing new markets in peripheral districts such as San Domenico, Quintavalle (Isola di San Pietro), the Giudecca, San Nicolò and Santa Maria Maggiore, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.550.

(*traghetti*) crossing the Grand Canal were, in his words, 'like taxi ranks'.<sup>171</sup> The *traghetti* were not, however, restricted to the wharves around Rialto and San Marco. In 1562, the warden and company operating the Ghetto Nuovo ferry complained of the large number of additional boatmen illicitly plying their trade, to great profit, in the canals around the Ghetto Nuovo.<sup>172</sup>

This examination of markets prompts a number of conclusions. The great variety of outlets for used goods, together with the spread of those outlets in the city, reveals that the means of distribution in the second-hand market covered the whole of Venice, both geographically and socially. This marketing diversity, added to the broad complement of traders engaged in numerous craft activities, made the second-hand market a sophisticated part of the Venetian urban economy. The parallel development of outlets in the second-hand market and in markets for new goods, shows that the second-hand-goods market was not a

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<sup>171</sup> Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, p.87. On *traghetti*, see also Coryat, *Coryat's crudities*, I, pp.311-12; Crouzet-Pavan, '*Sopra le acque salse*', pp.946-8; and Dennis Romano, 'The gondola as a marker of station in Venetian society', *Renaissance Studies*, 8 (1994), 360-74 (pp.368-9).

<sup>172</sup> ASV, *Censori*, b.1, *Capitolare 2*, f.26, 27 Oct.1562: '...molti barcaruoli si da trag[het]ti come da ventura, et viandanti non cessano quotidianamente di andar con le sue barche si al trag[het]to... del gheto novo [sic] come alli confini et rive di rason d[i] ditto suo trag[het]to dal ponte del[l']Asedo fin in ca[p]o del rio d[i] S[an] Hier[onim]o, come hanno mostrado p[er] la sua mariegola, volendo star in dittj luoghi, et guadagnar, facendo diversi nolli [sic] contra ogni debito d[i] rason...'. The *Censori* had responsibility for boatmen's abuses, see *ibid.*, f.1, 17 Aug.1541; Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 177; and Romano, 'Gondola', p.366.

marginal part of the Venetian urban economy, but was fully integrated into it.

The great variety of outlets for second-hand goods within Venice and the comparisons with other sectors of the urban economy elicit the question of whether the second-hand market was simply confined to the city. This is beyond the scope of this thesis, but there are indications that it did extend beyond the city's boundaries. Cecchetti noted that, in 1437, *strazzaria* was imported and exported, and this makes sense of the early sixteenth-century references to second-hand dealers appraising incoming cargoes of goods on Flemish galleys [see Chapter 4, I.a)].<sup>173</sup> In addition, in 1540, during a debate over whether Christian and Jewish second-hand dealers should pay *messetaria* tax, it was noted that they sent goods out of the city for trading purposes.<sup>174</sup> This is borne out by a ruling made in 1557 concerning second-hand dealers and furriers.<sup>175</sup> Added to the facts that guild members attended fairs on the mainland [see above I.a)] and Jewish dealers rented goods for use

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<sup>173</sup> Duties paid on the export of used canvas and fabric were the same as for 'strazzaria importata', see Cecchetti, *La vita dei Veneziani*, 3: 'Le vesti', pp.14-15, n.1.

<sup>174</sup> ASV, CL, b.51, *Arti in genere*, ff.108-9, 20 Apr.1540: '...la robba che saran[n]o mandada fuora non per uso ma per marcadantia [sic]...'. *Messetaria* tax was imposed on goods and contracts, see Boerio, *Dizionario*, p.413.

<sup>175</sup> Furriers were not to practise second-hand dealing, viz: to make clothes of any sort, to sell lined garments, to trade surreptitiously with the Jews or to send tailored items 'fuor di questa città p[er] barat[t]ar', see BMC, M.St., f.110, 16 Nov.1557.

on the mainland, these references suggest that the market was not limited to the city.<sup>176</sup>

The picture presented so far is one of steady development in the market for second-hand clothes and furnishings. However, some questions remain unanswered, since we have yet to consider any of the sporadic setbacks affecting commerce in the period. The last part of this thesis will therefore examine the impact on the market of the short-term crises created by plague and a lengthier recession in the market for used goods which struck in the early decades of the seventeenth century.

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<sup>176</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 152, 8 July 1599; reg. 69, f. 142v [2nd pag.], 9 Oct. 1599. See also Ravid, *Economics*, p. 80, n. 74.



## Chapter 6 PLAGUE

The sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries saw periodic crises occasioned by wars, famines, outbreaks of disease and sharp swings in the economy.<sup>1</sup> To achieve a more complete understanding of the market in second-hand clothes and furnishings, the impact of these emergencies needs to be explored.<sup>2</sup> The most pertinent sort of crisis is plague: pestilence was prevalent in Venice, as in other major European cities and ports, and it had particular bearing upon the second-hand market.

Plague was, as it had long been, a significant problem in Venice.<sup>3</sup> Outbreaks of the disease recurred frequently during the first half of the sixteenth century and the

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<sup>1</sup> Gino Luzzatto, 'La decadenza di Venezia dopo le scoperte geografiche nella tradizione e nella realtà', *Archivio Veneto*, 5th series, 54-55 (1954), 162-81 (p.174); *Aspetti e cause della decadenza economica veneziana nel secolo XVII* (Venice: Istituto per la Collaborazione Culturale, 1961), pp.35,310; Brian Pullan, ed., *Crisis and change in the Venetian economy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (London: Methuen, 1968), especially pp.1-21.

<sup>2</sup> On the need to study crises, see Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean world in the age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds, 2nd edn, 2 vols (London: Fontana/Collins, 1976), II, 900. On trends, intermediate-term fluctuations and conjunctures in history, see pp.892-900.

<sup>3</sup> On the types of plague, see Richard John Palmer, 'The control of plague in Venice and northern Italy 1348-1600' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Kent, 1978), p.ix. On earlier outbreaks, see *ibid.*, pp.1-26, 27, 49, 51-66; and Reinhold C. Mueller, 'Aspetti sociali ed economici della peste a Venezia nel medioevo', in *Venezia e la peste, 1348-1797* (Venice: Marsilio, 1979), pp.71-6 (p.75).

epidemic of 1528-29 was particularly bad.<sup>4</sup> Thereafter, incidents of pestilence were less common but two of the worst plagues ever experienced in the city occurred during the years 1575-77 and 1630-31.<sup>5</sup> At such times, there was great economic disruption as traders succumbed to the disease and shut up shop to avoid infection. In addition, prophylactic measures developed to prevent the spread of plague were specifically directed at commerce and at urban trade.<sup>6</sup> All retailing activities were vulnerable when such action was deemed necessary, but the second-hand market was particularly affected since used clothes and household furnishings were thought to be among the main carriers of infection.<sup>7</sup> Outbreaks of plague thus had

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<sup>4</sup> David Chambers and Brian Pullan, eds, *Venice: a documentary history, 1450-1630* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), p. 113; on the plague of 1528-29, see Brian Pullan, *Rich and poor in renaissance Venice: the social institutions of a Catholic state, to 1620* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), pp. 249-50.

<sup>5</sup> Epidemics are listed in Palmer, 'Control of plague', pp. 328-37. See also ASV, *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* [Sanità], reg. 5 [summary of hygiene legislation drawn up in 1584 by Filippo Caogrosso, unpag.]; Giambattista Gallicciolli, *Delle memorie venete antiche profane ed ecclesiastiche*, 8 vols (Venice: Domenico Fracasso, 1795), II, 210-13, no. 801; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p. 219.

<sup>6</sup> For the effects of health measures on economies, see J.L. Biraben, 'Consequénces économiques des mesures sanitaires contre la peste du moyen âge au 18e siècle', *Annales Cisalpines d'Histoire Sociale* (Pavia), 1st series, 4 (1973), 49-61. On Venice, see Brian Pullan, 'Wage-earners and the Venetian economy, 1550-1630', *Economic History Review*, n.s. 16 (1964), 407-26 (p. 409); idem, *Rich and poor*, p. 315; see also Palmer, 'Control of plague', pp. 41, 142-3, 156, 271-5.

<sup>7</sup> Pullan, 'Wage-earners', p. 409; idem, *Rich and poor*, p. 220; Biraben, 'Consequénces économiques', pp. 51-3; Carlo M. Cipolla, 'Origine e sviluppo degli uffici di sanità in Italia', *Annales Cisalpines d'Histoire Sociale*, 1st series, 4 (1973), 83-101 (p. 94). Fabrics associated with infection are listed in ASV, *Sanità*, reg. 2, *Capitolare primo*, f. 103 [1541]. Contagion theories are covered by Palmer in 'Control of plague',

serious implications for the market in *strazzaria*. 12

When an epidemic was pronounced, exchanges of used clothes and furnishings were subjected to emergency regulations in order to prevent, as the health officials explained in 1529, the:

...many difficulties which can happen with the city infected, by means of the trade in people's belongings carried on by the pedlars and second-hand dealers of this city....<sup>8</sup>

Given the concern with contagion and the dangers associated with the trade in used goods made of cloth, it is logical to presume that economic inactivity was the norm among second-hand dealers during epidemics. Brian Pullan has argued that, at such times, unemployment in Venice 'began among second-hand clothiers'.<sup>9</sup> Adopting this line of reasoning, it would follow that, for fear of reinfection, *strazzaruoli* were the last to resume trading when the

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pp.10-11 and ch.4; for Girolamo Fracastoro's theory of how cloth carried disease, see pp.91-2. On this topic, see also Jean-Noël Biraben, *Les hommes et la peste en France et dans les pays européens et méditerranéens*, Civilisations et sociétés, 36, 2 vols (Paris: Mouton, 1976), II: *Les hommes face à la peste*, ch.5, especially pp.21-22.

<sup>8</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.727, *Notatorio* 4, f.22, 21 Apr.1529: '...moltj inconvenienti quali cu[m] infection [sic] di questa cit[t]à occurrer potriano [sic] per el vender et comprar robbe di diverse persone qual robbe... p[oss]ono comprate da vendorigoli [sic] et straz[z]aruoli di questa cit[t]à...'. On surveillance of second-hand dealers elsewhere, see Cipolla, 'Origine e sviluppo', p.96; Biraben, 'Consequénces économiques', p.52.

<sup>9</sup> Pullan, 'Wage-earners', p.409; see also Palmer, 'Control of plague', p.142.

disease waned; elsewhere, in towns such as Lille, second-hand dealers were treated differently after epidemics.<sup>10</sup> It was not the case, however, that the Venetian second-hand market was completely dormant during outbreaks of plague. The hygiene rules proved to be remarkably flexible, and, as usual, they did not always reflect reality.

### I. Plague Rules

The predominant position of Venice in the history of plague control is well known.<sup>11</sup> The Republic was not, as is so often assumed, in the vanguard when measures to combat plague were devised, though the city did boast the first permanent isolation hospital (the *Lazzaretto Vecchio*) in which plague victims were quarantined during epidemics, together with a sister institution (the *Lazzaretto Nuovo*) designed for plague contacts and for airing suspect goods.<sup>12</sup> By the sixteenth century, the Venetians were eminent in fighting the disease and a permanent Health Office run by *Provveditori alla Sanità* (Commissioners of Public Health) had been established and given extensive

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<sup>10</sup> In Lille, infected second-hand dealers had to wait three months after normal quarantine before starting to trade, see Biraben, 'Consequénces économiques', p.53.

<sup>11</sup> Palmer, 'Control of plague', p.v; A.Canalis and P.Sepulcri, 'Prescrizioni mediche ufficiali e altri provvedimenti di governo in Venezia nella peste del 1575-1576', *Annali della Sanità Pubblica* (Rome), 19 (1958), 1201-14 (p.1202); Paolo Selmi, 'Il Magistrato alla Sanità', in *Difesa della sanità a Venezia secoli XIII-XIX* (Venice: Archivio di Stato, 1979), pp.28-50 (p.28).

<sup>12</sup> See Palmer, 'Control of plague', pp.30-6, 51-9 [Milan's precocity in plague control, initial reluctance of Venice]; pp.183-6, 189-90 [*lazzaretti*].

powers.<sup>13</sup> In times of plague, the *Provveditori alla Sanità* introduced measures which directly affected the second-hand trade.

The Health Office could, for example, destroy supposedly infected goods.<sup>14</sup> This action was taken during bad epidemics when the city's plague hospitals were overwhelmed with plague victims' property. In 1528 orders were issued to burn large amounts of bedding in the *lazzaretti* 'being difficult goods to clean'.<sup>15</sup> Similar steps were taken during the plagues of 1555-58 and 1575-77, and clothes were often included.<sup>16</sup> The decision to implement this policy

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<sup>13</sup> On the Republic's role and sixteenth-century provisions, see Palmer, 'Control of plague', ch.5; and *Difesa della Sanità a Venezia secoli XIII-XIX* (Venice:Archivio di Stato, 1979). On the late-fifteenth-century foundation of the Health Office and its hesitant beginnings, see Palmer, 'Control', ch.3; ASV, *Sanità*, reg.2, f.1, 7 Jan.1485 [mv]; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.219-20; and Cipolla, 'Origine e sviluppo', pp.83-101. For its powers, see ASV, *Sanità*, reg.5, preamble; Andrea Da Mosto, *L'Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, 2 vols (Rome:Biblioteca d'Arte Editrice, 1937-40), I, 211-12; Canalis and Sepulcri, 'Prescrizioni mediche', p.1203.

<sup>14</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.5, ff.211-17, *Cerca el brusar et sborrar le robbe* (1584). See also Paolo Preto, *Peste e società a Venezia nel 1576*, *Studi e testi veneziani*, 7 (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1978), p.51; Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan, '*Sopra le acque salse*': *espaces, pouvoir et société à Venise à la fin du moyen âge*, Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo: nuovi studi storici, 14/ Collection de l'Ecole Française de Rome, 156, 2 vols (Rome: Ecole Française de Rome and Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 1992), p.868.

<sup>15</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.25, f.107 [2nd pag.], 12 Dec.1528; see also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.251. For airing methods used to disinfect goods and the problems involved, see Palmer, 'Control of plague', pp.200-2.

<sup>16</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.2, ff.82-3, 12 Dec.1556; reg.6, f.4v, 29 Sept.1575; f.8r, 13 Nov.1575; f.10r, 11 Jan.1575 [mv]; f.11, 24 Feb.1575 [mv]; f.12v, 18 Mar.1576; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 27, 5 Mar.1558. See also Preto, *Peste e società*, p.101.

of destroying people's property was not taken lightly. Concerned about the social consequences of this drastic course of action, particularly among the poor, the Venetian government undertook to provide a measure of compensation for the owners of such goods.<sup>17</sup> Funds were allocated to the *Provveditori alla Sanità* and these officials set standard values for items of bedding such as mattresses and sheets, as well as clothes.<sup>18</sup> In spite of this palliative, the wholesale destruction of suspect goods during serious outbreaks of plague jeopardised the second-hand market. The policy had disastrous consequences for traders whose premises were visited by disease [see below] since full compensation was not always paid.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, the burning of bedding and clothes also reduced the overall supply of second-hand items in Venice.<sup>20</sup> As well as confiscating and destroying used goods made of cloth in

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<sup>17</sup> On the State's responsibility to provide compensation, see Brian Pullan, 'The famine in Venice and the new poor law, 1527-1529', *Bollettino dell'Istituto di Storia della Società e dello Stato Veneziano*, 5-6 (1963-64), 141-202, (p.169); idem, *Rich and poor*, pp.251, 319. On the impact of plague policies in England, see Paul Slack, 'The response to plague in early modern England: public policies and their consequences', in *Famine, disease and the social order in early modern society*, ed. John Walter and Roger Schofield, Cambridge studies in population, economy and society in past time, 10 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp.167-87.

<sup>18</sup> For funds allocated in 1576, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.319. On values set, see ASV, *Sanità*, reg.730, *Notatorio* 7, f.153, 18 June 1557 [bedding]; reg.5, f.207, 9 Apr.1576 [clothes of the poor].

<sup>19</sup> Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.319.

<sup>20</sup> See Michela Dal Borgo, 'Cinque secoli di produzione cartacea nei territori della Repubblica di Venezia', in *Charta: dal papiro al computer*, ed. Giorgio Raimondo Cardona (Milan: Mondadori, 1988), pp.180-81 (p.180).

times of plague, exchanges of these items were also closely regulated.

One of the main emergency measures taken during the epidemic of 1485 had been the halting of trade in second-hand clothes.<sup>21</sup> On its foundation, the Health Office had the authority to close shops and to forbid pedlars from plying their trade in the streets. It could also prohibit auctions and weekly markets and could even ban the prestigious *Sensa* trade fair [see Chapter 5,II.a)].<sup>22</sup> The Health Office used these powers on various occasions. In 1509, for example, street-peddling was proscribed for the duration of the plague.<sup>23</sup> A proclamation made in 1513 forbade public markets along with auctions of individuals' property, and it also restricted the trading activities of pedlars, Jews and others who bought second-hand goods.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Palmer, 'Control of plague', p.63. The policy was adopted in the Black Death, see Alberto Chiappelli, 'Gli ordinamenti sanitari del comune di Pistoia contro la pestilenza del 1348', *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 20 (1887), 3-24 (pp.8-9,11); Ann G. Carmichael, *Plague and the poor in Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp.99,109.

<sup>22</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.725, *Notatorio 1*, f.7r, 3 Apr.1490; f.37r, 10 May 1498; reg.5, f.187r, 26 June 1498; D.Giordano, 'Difesa di Venezia contro la peste', *Archivio Italiano di Scienze Mediche Coloniali* (Modena), 13 (Oct.1932), 575-620 (p.581); Lina Padoan Urban, 'La festa della *Sensa* nelle arti e nell'iconografia', *Studi Veneziani*, 10(1968), 291-353 (p.333); Crouzet-Pavan, 'Sopra le acque salse', p.872. For more details on Venetian health measures, see Palmer, 'Control of Plague', ch.5; Chambers and Pullan, *Venice*, pp.115-17.

<sup>23</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.5, f.187r, *Ordni cerca li mercati, incanti, et venderigoli*, 3 Aug.1509.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, f.187v, 11 July 1513 (from a missing *notatorio* register [no.2]). For a similar ban in 1524, see reg.726, *Notatorio 3*, f.82v, 9 Apr.1524.

The *Sensa* fair was cancelled in 1527 and 1530.<sup>25</sup> Monthly bans on all points of sale were imposed during the terrible plague of 1575-77.<sup>26</sup> Suppressing the entire market for second-hand clothes and furnishings during times of plague was, however, an extreme measure and on most occasions the *Provveditori alla Sanità* tried a more moderate method of preventing the spread of disease.<sup>27</sup>

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Venetian Republic adopted a system of health passes to facilitate trading with neighbouring territories during times of plague.<sup>28</sup> A similar procedure was put into action within the city itself. When plague struck, parish priests became the Health Office's representatives and they issued health passes to retailers, including second-hand dealers, who wished to trade.<sup>29</sup> Already underway by 1509, this practice was later extended to Jewish *strazzaruoli* and a

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<sup>25</sup> Pullan, 'The famine in Venice', p.159; Marin Sanudo [Marino Sanuto], *I diarii* [DMS], ed. Rinaldo Fulin and others, 58 vols (Venice: Visentini, 1879-1903), LIII, col.196, 9 May 1530; see also Urban, 'La festa della *Sensa*', p.333.

<sup>26</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.5v, 10 Nov.1575 [ban Nov. and Dec.]; f.30r, 22 June 1576 [ban until the end of July].

<sup>27</sup> Palmer makes a similar point for the fifteenth century, see 'Control of plague', p.41. On the value of the second-hand market and means used elsewhere to protect it during plagues, see Biraben, 'Consequénces économiques', pp.52-3.

<sup>28</sup> On health passes and their use in Venice, see Palmer, 'Control of plague', pp.41-2, 137; Carlo M. Cipolla, *Public health and the medical profession in the renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p.29; Biraben, *Les hommes et la peste*, II, 86-8.

<sup>29</sup> For similar use of parish priests in typhus epidemics and to collect taxes for poor relief in plagues, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.373, 320.



Health Office decree of 1523 gives insight into the working of the system.<sup>30</sup> To continue selling their wares in the city, Jewish traders had to obtain a certificate in writing from the priest of the parish in which they intended to trade, to the effect that the buyer's house was not infected by plague. Having received this certificate, they were then meant to have it validated by another official.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, Jewish dealers were not supposed to buy used goods outside the Ghetto and to transfer them back into that precinct without a similar, stamped pass giving them a clean bill of health.<sup>32</sup>

This certificate system was often used by the Health Office during outbreaks of disease, including the epidemic of 1528-29. At that time it was thought to be the answer to the 'many difficulties' caused by the second-hand trade within the plague-infected city [see above].<sup>33</sup> A milder alternative therefore coexisted with the harsh regulations which forbade all exchanges of second-hand goods. Which

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<sup>30</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.5, f.187r, 22 July 1509.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., reg.726, *Notatorio* 3, f.63, 23 July 1523: '...no[n] sia alcun hebreo cussi maschio come femena ch[e] possi portar ne far portar robe d[i] straz[z]arie ne di marzarie d[i] G[h]et[t]o fuora d[i] G[h]et[t]o in casa alguna p[er] vender se prima no[n] haverà una fede in scrit[t]ura d[e]l piovàn d[i] q[ue]lla contrada dove vor[r]an[n]o portar dicte robe ch[e] fu dicte [sic] casa no[n] sia suspeto [sic] d[i] peste, et dapoi havuta dicta fede sia tenuti [sic] a portar dicte fede a Simonet[t]o fiol d[i] Anselmo soprastante... et farlo bollare cu[m] el suo sizilo.'

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. For similar rules affecting Christian second-hand dealers, see ff.58v-9r, 26 June 1523.

<sup>33</sup> For other orders on permits at that time, see *ibid.*, f.138v, 23 June 1528; f.141v, 23 July 1528.

option was selected in time of plague depended on the severity of an outbreak and both might be used at different stages of the same epidemic. In December 1528, for example, regardless of licences issued, auctions, public markets (for goods other than food) and peddling were banned.<sup>34</sup> The Health Office sought to sustain trade if at all possible, so complete economic inactivity among second-hand dealers was not necessarily the result of the sanitary legislation imposed in times of plague.<sup>35</sup> Harsh regulations were reserved for the worst epidemics such as the plague of 1575-77.

By the time of that awful plague, the Venetian Republic thus possessed an intricate apparatus of health control for regulating the urban economy during such a catastrophe.<sup>36</sup> At the onset of the epidemic, the Health Office was hindered by a reluctance on the part of the medical establishment and the State to admit that the disease was plague.<sup>37</sup> Whenever possible, the *Provveditori alla Sanità* introduced their strictest measures to restrain the spread

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., f.177r, 14 Dec.1528. On the three stages of plague, see Canalis and Sepulcri, 'Prescrizioni mediche', p.1203.

<sup>35</sup> See also Cipolla, 'Origine e sviluppo', p.98.

<sup>36</sup> For general information on the plague of 1575-77, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.315-25; Preto, *Peste e società*. Fascinating accounts exist of the health measures in place during this plague, see Francesco Sansovino, *Venetia: città nobilissima et singolare*, rev. Giustiniano Martinioni, facs., 2 vols (Venice:Filippi, 1968), ff.232-3; Rocco Benedetti in Chambers and Pullan, *Venice*, pp.117-19.

<sup>37</sup> Canalis and Sepulcri, 'Prescrizioni mediche', p.1202. For details, see Palmer, 'Control of plague', ch.9.

of disease.<sup>38</sup> Lessons learnt from the plague epidemic of 1555-58 ensured that extra efforts were made to prevent contagion by infected goods and a proclamation of November 1575 included a two-month total ban on trading in used goods made of cloth.<sup>39</sup> More rules followed when the epidemic worsened and the Health Office was given complete control: exchanges of second-hand goods were prohibited; the *Sensa* fair was banned; shopkeepers were obliged to withdraw into their shops and houses; and workers were forbidden to sew or to practise any other trades in infected houses.<sup>40</sup> During the course of the epidemic, a great many used goods were destroyed and, towards the end, Venetians who had fled the city with their clothes and household furnishings were prevented from re-entering Venice with these belongings unless the goods were disinfected.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> See Morello's summary in ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6 (original document in ASV, *Secreta, Materie miste notabile*, reg.95, f.151; see Palmer, 'Control of plague', p.212; Preto, *Peste e società*, p.13). On this plague, see also Ernst Rodenwaldt, *Pest in Venedig, 1575-1577. Ein Beitrag zur Frage der Infektkette bei den Pestepidemien West-Europas*, Sitzungberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Mathematisch-naturwissenschaftliche Klasse (Heidelberg, 1953).

<sup>39</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.11r, 24 Feb.1575 [mv]; ff.5-6, 10 Nov. 1575. For other measures, see Canalis and Sepulcri, 'Prescrizioni mediche', pp.1206-7.

<sup>40</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, ff.20-1, 13 June 1576; ff.24v-30v, 22 June 1576. On the *Sensa*, see Urban, 'La festa della Sensa', p.333. See also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.316

<sup>41</sup> See ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, p.4, 29 Sept.1575; f.8r, 13 Nov.1575; f.10, 11 Jan.1575 [mv]; f.11, 24 Feb.1575 [mv]; ff.12v-13, 18 Mar.1576 [burning goods]; reg.733, *Notatorio 10*, ff.75v-6v, 5 Dec.1576 [clothes ban]. See also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.315.

We would expect the harsh measures introduced during the plague of 1575-77 to have seriously affected the second-hand market. Afterwards, the *Ebrei tedeschi* certainly complained of the sorry state of their affairs in the Ghetto Nuovo. In 1580 they reminded the Doge that they had been unable to trade during the plague. All their capital was tied up in second-hand goods and, not only had the stock laid up in store during the epidemic been ruined by moths and the like, but it had also been seized from the houses of infected traders and was presumably destroyed.<sup>42</sup> This account must have been substantially correct since the declaration formed part of the Jews' petition to renew their residence contract and any claims made in it would have been subject to verification.<sup>43</sup> Yet, shortly after 1580, the Jewish dealers' trade was positively flourishing [see Chapter 4,II.b)], so the plague's harmful effects evidently did not prevail. It was easier for trade to recover after a limited bout of disease since the health

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<sup>42</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 80, 24 May 1580, petition of 10 Jan.1579 [mv]: 'può esser beniss[im]o noto a V[ostra] Ec[cellenz]a lo stato nel quale si trova la povera e fideliss[im]a Università delli Hebrej di Ghetto la quale p[er] il co[n]tagio d[e]lli anni passati è riddota in estrema miseria et povertà p[er]ché havendo tutto il suo poco capitale et havere in strazzarie sottoposte et pericolosiss[im]e di co[n]tagio q[ue]lli che si sonno [sic] preservati sani no[n] hanno potuto far quel negotio [sic] onde soleva cavar il viver delle lor povere, et miserabile fameglie [sic], et la maggior parte delle robbe che si trovavano si sono tarmate et guaste et quelle case ch[e] hanno havuto il co[n]tagio, oltra l'haver p[er]duto quasi tutte le lor robbe, vi hanno anco lasciate le persone.' On the problems of storing used goods in Venice, see Chapter 2, I.d) above.

<sup>43</sup> On checking claims, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.529.

regulations were less drastic. The prophylactic measures adopted in severe plagues such as the one of 1575-77 were, however, specifically designed to disable the market and some explanation of why the trade in second-hand goods revived so promptly is required.

## II. The Reality of Plague

The swift regeneration of the second-hand market after serious plague epidemics had two principal causes: on the one hand, the economic dislocation brought about by Draconian sanitary legislation was not complete; and, on the other, favourable market conditions actively encouraged recovery. The framework of legislation applied during bad plagues is most impressive, and, in the long term, it did prove effective.<sup>44</sup> When proclaiming the new rules of November 1575, the *Provveditori alla Sanità* ordered that the regulations were to be 'inviolably observed'.<sup>45</sup> The strong image evoked by such commands is, however, misleading and it is contradicted by other measures taken by the Health Office.<sup>46</sup> It is quite clear that the sanitary cordon imposed in severe plagues was not carried out in full.

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<sup>44</sup> Palmer, 'Control of plague', p.180.

<sup>45</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.5r, 10 Nov.1575.

<sup>46</sup> On the 'heroic but hopeless struggle' of the Health Office and exaggerations of efficiency, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.322. See also Cipolla, *Public health*, pp.38,56; cf. Selmi, 'Il Magistrato alla Sanità', pp.31-3.

To start with, there were exceptions to the rules about contagion. Some exceptions were deliberate but many were not and the Health Office proved powerless to prevent them. As Richard Palmer has explained '...judicial authority was not the same as control'.<sup>47</sup> The sanitary authorities did, for example, have a strangely ambiguous attitude towards public auctions. Whereas bequest and emergency auctions were often prohibited in times of plague, in the earlier part of the sixteenth century debt sales were allowed to continue.<sup>48</sup> Rent still had to be paid even when tenants and their belongings were quarantined in the isolation hospitals, and goods were seized for this purpose.<sup>49</sup> The dangers attached to this course of action were certainly recognised. In 1535, health officials admitted that the sequestration of property in the *lazzaretti* '...could easily be the cause of contaminating this city...', yet exceptions were made to pay for burials, food, medicines, earnings and rents.<sup>50</sup> After serious plagues, including the one of 1575-77, moreover, large quantities of unclaimed property remaining in the isolation hospitals were sold by

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<sup>47</sup> Palmer, 'Control of plague', p.69.

<sup>48</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.2, f.3, 25 Aug.1509. A document of 1634 suggests that plague-victims' goods continued to be sold for debts, see *ibid.*, reg.739, *Notatorio 17*, f.93v, 10 Mar. Emergency auctions occurred with permission, see *ibid.*, reg.726, *Notatorio 3*, f.177r, 14 Dec.1528.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, reg.2, f.3, 21 June 1510; f.4, 12 Dec.1510.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, f.18, 24 July 1535: '...sequestrar robe nelli lazarethi potria [sic] esser facil causa de contagionar questa città...'. The exceptions were: 'sepulture [sic], fonteg[h]i, medicine, mercede et [af]fitti di casa'.

auction.<sup>51</sup>

The Health Office could also grant exemptions from its harshest rules. In March 1576, various silks, shoes and other goods belonging to a certain Valerio in the courtyard of Ca' Balbi together with a shoemaker in Calle delle Rasse and Mandolin, a Jew, were saved from burning, though the rest of their belongings were destroyed.<sup>52</sup> During the plague of 1575-77, the severe policy of incinerating infected goods made of cloth was eventually relaxed. The system of compensation [see above, I.] had clearly worked since the outlay on reimbursements for destroyed property had escalated beyond the government's ability to pay.<sup>53</sup> It had also become evident that stocks of infected goods were being deliberately hidden from officials, no doubt by richer Venetians whose belongings were not completely covered by that compensation - Venetians with 'spacious houses' were later allowed to treat their own suspect goods at home.<sup>54</sup> The Lido was one place chosen to secrete

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<sup>51</sup> On the sale of goods left after the plague of 1528-29, see *ibid.*, reg.5, f.211v, 9 Mar.1532. On the goods sold in 1577, see *ibid.*, reg.6, ff.150v-51r, 24 Sept.1577; reg.5, f.216v, 24 Oct.1577. For rules on this matter, see *ibid.*, reg.730, *Notatorio* 7, f.74, 29 Sept.1556. For goods left in 1632, see ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.107, f.169 [2nd pag.], 29 May 1632.

<sup>52</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.13r, 20 Mar.1576. See also Preto, *Peste e società*, p.101.

<sup>53</sup> See Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.251,319 [expense].

<sup>54</sup> See ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.10r, 28 Dec.1575 [hidden goods]; ff.100v-01r, 105r-08r, 114v-20v, 140r-2r, 9 Oct.1576 ff [other methods of disinfecting clothes, reluctance to submit]. On airing goods at home, see Benedetti, in Chambers and Pullan, *Venice*, p.119. See also Palmer, 'Control of plague', p.202.

property. At the end of the plague a cache of expensive furs and women's clothes was found there which were stinking, ruined and impossible to sell.<sup>55</sup>

Disobeying orders to yield infected goods was only one of several ways in which the Health Office was defied; its hold on the second-hand market was also less than complete. Irregular trading, so difficult to control under normal conditions [see Chapters 2, 4 and 5], proved equally hard to prevent in times of plague. Despite the dangers associated with infected goods and the threat of harsh penalties, illegitimate exchanges continued to occur. Counterfeit health passes, so the health authorities believed, were used to transport used goods about the city.<sup>56</sup> Illicit movements would, in any case, have been difficult to detect, given the great amount of activity on the canals during serious epidemics.<sup>57</sup>

Incredible though it now seems, there was also a thriving trade in items stolen from plague-infected houses and the *lazzaretti*. In 1575, the *Provveditori alla Sanità* could

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<sup>55</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.142r, 7 May 1577: '...le qual cose sono puzzolente et guaste, che no[n] possono vender, se no[n] [con] cat[t]ivo odor[e] cosi nella città come nelle robbe che si incassano'.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, f.29r, 22 June 1576, nos 28,29. On indifference to infection, see Brian Pullan, 'Plague and perceptions of the poor in early modern Italy', in *Epidemics and ideas: essays on the historical perception of pestilence*, ed. Terence Ranger and Paul Slack (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp.101-23 (p.109).

<sup>57</sup> Benedetti in Chambers and Pullan, *Venice*, p.118.



not credit it that anyone existed who would dare to steal and distribute infected goods in Venice.<sup>58</sup> Exist they did, however. In 1576, Zorzi di Battista Balatin, who was charged with disseminating infected goods, was condemned by the Council of Ten to row, clapped in irons, in the galleys for ten years and to be then banished from Venice for ever.<sup>59</sup>

Evidently, despite official recognition of the importance of plague control and the extensive powers enjoyed by the Health Office, a discrepancy existed between plague rules and the reality of urban life during epidemics. This incongruity does not accord with the traditional notion of the well-ordered Venetian Republic, but it is perfectly consistent with recent assessments of the unruly and chaotic nature of early-modern urban society [see Introduction, II.].<sup>60</sup> Guild officers and justice

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<sup>58</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.5, 10 Nov.1575: '...se ben no[n] potriamo creder, che vi sia alcuno cosi sceleratti che habbia habudo [sic] ardir di robbar robbe apestade, et quelle disseminar p[er] la città...'

<sup>59</sup> ASV, *Consiglio dei Dieci* [CD], *Parti criminali*, reg.12, f.138 [2nd pag.], 19 Dec.1576; see also ff.140v-1r, 28 Feb. 1576 [mv]. For earlier thefts and rulings, see ASV, *Sanità*, reg.726, *Notatorio* 3, f.165r, 16 Oct.1528; f.194r, 12 Dec.1528; reg.730, *Notatorio* 7, f.76, 29 Sept.1556. On clandestine trade in 1485, see Palmer, 'Control of plague', p.64. For later examples, see ASV, *Sanità*, reg.3, ff.18v-19r, 21 Mar.1576; reg.17, ff.85-9, 4 Sept.1630. For the threat of hanging, see *ibid.*, reg.6, f.5, 10 Nov.1575.

<sup>60</sup> For a recent assessment of the myth of Venice, a re-evaluation of its value to Venetian history and references, see James S.Grubb, 'When myths lose power: four decades of Venetian historiography', *Journal of Modern History*, 58 (1986), 43-94 [I am grateful to Prof. Franco Angiolini for reminding me of this article]. For similar problems in

officials had great difficulty enforcing their respective statutes and it was not any different for the sanitary authorities. Various circumstances served to limit the effectiveness of the Health Office in times of plague.

The overriding importance of trade to the Venetian economy compromised the successful implementation of sanitary legislation. As Biraben noted about health regulations in general: '...such measures could never be as Draconian as the contagionist theory required, for fear of completely stifling the economy....'<sup>61</sup> Such concerns had made the Venetian authorities delay the adoption of health controls in the first place, and they continued to influence decisions.<sup>62</sup> This point has often been made about external trade, but it is just as relevant for urban markets as for international ones.<sup>63</sup> Trading bans within Venice were introduced too late or were too brief to be completely successful, and, as indicated above, it was for

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London during plague, see Paul Slack, 'Metropolitan government in crisis: the response to plague', in *London 1500-1700: the making of the metropolis*, ed. A.L. Beier and Roger Finlay (London: Longman, 1986), pp.60-81.

<sup>61</sup> Biraben, 'Consequénces économiques', p.58: '...de telles mesures ne peuvent être aussi draconiennes que le voudrait la théorie contagioniste, sous peine d'asphyxier totalement l'économie....'. For a general list of obstacles facing the Health Office, see Cipolla, 'Origine e sviluppo', p.101.

<sup>62</sup> See Palmer, 'Control of plague', pp.51-9,157-9; Mueller, 'Aspetti sociali ed economici', p.74; also Preto, *Peste e società*, p.34.

<sup>63</sup> See ASV, *Sanità*, reg.5, f.213r, 16 July 1568; reg.6, ff.61v-2, 2-3 Aug.1576 [dispensations for brokers and merchants]. On protecting trade in general, see Giordano, 'Difesa di Venezia', p.589; Palmer, 'Control of plague', pp.157-9; Biraben, 'Consequénces économiques', p.55.

reasons of trade that exceptions were usually made.<sup>64</sup> The Venetian government was, moreover, acutely aware of the dire social consequences of economic inactivity and it endeavoured to protect the poor from this eventuality.<sup>65</sup> During the plague of 1630-31, it even tried to persuade the wealthier mercers and other retailers to continue trading so that the many workers dependent upon them would survive.<sup>66</sup>

As this suggests, severe plagues wrought havoc among the urban poor. Whereas richer residents could afford to flee or shut up shop, the poor had no choice but to stay in the city and to persevere.<sup>67</sup> Unable to work during epidemics, the majority of Venetians faced immediate crisis and were obliged to find other ways of getting by.<sup>68</sup> Seeking public charity was one such means and another was to engage

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<sup>64</sup> See also Palmer, 'Control of plague', p.202.

<sup>65</sup> Pullan, 'Wage-earners', p.410. On this topic, see also idem, 'Plague and perceptions', p.115.

<sup>66</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.17, ff.129r-32, 26 Oct.1630. For other examples of this policy, see Cipolla, *Public health*, pp.41-2; Biraben, 'Consequénces économiques', p.57.

<sup>67</sup> On the 1575-77 plague Gallicciolli noted: 'non si teneva la ragione in palazzo: la Merceria era chiusa... era scritto sulle botteghe: "Per schiavar el scandolo": in altre, "Il Mistro ha paura": in altre, "se no vogio vender, cossa gaveu vu da far?": *Memorie venete*, II, 213; cited in *700 anni di costume nel Veneto: documenti di vita civile dal XII al XVIII secolo*, ed. Davide Rampello (Treviso, 1976), p.273. See also Pullan, 'Plague and perceptions', pp.108, 115; on earlier plagues, Mueller, 'Aspetti sociali', pp.71-2. On rich and poor in plague-time, see Preto, *Peste e società*, pp.120-30.

<sup>68</sup> Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.251; Cipolla, *Public health*, p.41. For a crisis in Verona in 1575, see Pullan, 'Wage-earners', pp.409-10; idem, *Rich and poor*, p.316; and Palmer, 'Control of plague', pp.271-6.

in trade, albeit illicitly.<sup>69</sup> Under normal conditions, it was for this type of personal emergency that the social functions of the second-hand market came into play and the situation was no different in times of plague. Indeed, the spread of infection in 1575 was partly attributed to infected goods being sold and pledged to pay for sickness care and burial expenses.<sup>70</sup> Despite fear of contagion, the Health Office, as seen above, permitted certain types of auctions to be held during outbreaks of plague. Another vital social service was provided in prolonged epidemics - moneylending.

All other exchanges of second-hand goods were prohibited in June 1576, but people needing to pledge movables to friends were sanctioned by the *Provveditori alla Sanità*. As in the case of health passes for urban traders [see above, I.], use was made of the city's parish priests to

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<sup>69</sup> On charity in plague-time, see Brian Pullan, 'Poverty, charity and the reason of state: some Venetian examples', *Bollettino dell'Istituto di Storia della Società e dello Stato Veneziano*, 2(1960), 17-60 (pp.26-7); idem, 'Famine in Venice', pp.168-9; idem, *Rich and poor*, pp.251, 321-2; Cipolla, *Public health*, p.42; Biraben, *Les hommes et la peste*, II, 145-9. For a *strazzaruol* selling goods in the plague who had been quarantined in the *Lazzaretto Nuovo*, see ASV, *Sant' Uffizio* [SU], b.41, proc. Cesare Pastaro, test. Pastaro, 20 Apr.1577; test. India, 18 Apr.1577.

<sup>70</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.154 [Morello's summary]: '...quasi tutti li drap[p]i del tre[n]tino fur[o]no da quelli di casa venduti et impegnati per sov[v]enirlo...et anco p[er] farlo sep[p]el[l]ir in pochi g[ior]ni...'. See Giordano, 'Difesa di Venezia', p.588; Palmer, 'Control of plague', pp.211-12.

avoid the exchange of infected goods.<sup>71</sup> The Ghetto was understood to be extremely vulnerable to plague and, usually, Jewish pawnbrokers were absolved from accepting pledges during epidemics.<sup>72</sup> Anyone wishing to redeem property at such times had to refer to the *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti*.<sup>73</sup>

*Ebrei tedeschi* were, however, obliged to fulfil their moneylending functions during the severe plague of 1630-31. The Health Office closed the pawnbanks at the start of that epidemic, but, in October 1630, the Senate ordered that a special bank be opened by the Jews just outside the Ghetto.<sup>74</sup> Once again, the chief stimulus for this action was the Republic's overriding responsibility for the urban poor who needed the means to raise cash in times of emergency [see also Chapter 5, III.a)].<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.28v, 22 June 1576: 'se alcuno per bisogno vor[r]à prevalersi de alcu[no] mobile suo p[er] impegnar ad alcu[no] suo amico debba il tutto dar in nota al piova[n] della contrada...'

<sup>72</sup> See ASV, *Sanità*, reg.5, f.151, *Ordini cerca li Hebrei*; also Carla Boccato, 'Testimonianze ebraiche sulla peste del 1630 a Venezia', *Rassegna Mensile d'Israel*, 41 (1975), 458-67 (pp.462,466-7).

<sup>73</sup> ASV, *Senato, Deliberazioni (secreta)*, reg.48, f.92r, 4 June 1519; reg.66, f.56v, 19 Dec.1548; *Senato, Terra*, reg.49, f.141r, 29 June 1573; reg.94, ff.247v-8 [2nd pag.], 16 Nov.1624. On the *Sopraconsoli*, see Chapters 2, II.c) and 5, III.a) above.

<sup>74</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 318, 8 Oct.1630. See also Giordano, 'Difesa di Venezia', p.602; Mario Trinchieri di Venanson, 'La peste e i suoi rimedi a Venezia nel XVII secolo', *Atti del II congresso internazionale di storia della farmacia* (Pisa: Arti Grafiche Pacini Mariotti, 1958), pp.444-56 (p.448).

<sup>75</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 319, 23 Nov.1630 [lengthier discussion after vote]: '...acciò possa la povertà nella miseria delli presenti tempi ricever l'ordinario et

This decision to open a pawnbank during the crisis proved controversial and a second vote on the issue was only passed after four ballots and with assurances that stringent precautions would be 'inviolably observed'.<sup>76</sup> Yet again, parish priests were assigned an important role, issuing health passes for pledges to their parishioners. Specific types of chattels were permitted. They were not, as might be expected, items unsusceptible to contagion, but comprised all sorts of personal effects such as linen, woollen wall-hangings, over-garments, women's clothes and even bedding. It was commercial wares such as lengths of cloth which were prohibited.<sup>77</sup> Later, either because the epidemic worsened or because the Jewish community protested (perhaps both), the list of sanctioned pledges was restricted to metal goods such as jewellery and silverware, which, if soaked in vinegar, were believed to be safe from infection.<sup>78</sup>

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necessario comodo dell'impegnare...'. On the Jews and the 1630 plague, see also Simone Luzzatto, *Discorso circa il stato de gl'Hebrei, et in particolar dimoranti nell'inclita città di Venetia* (Venice: Gioanne Calleoni, 1638), f.31v.

<sup>76</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 319, 23 Nov.1630. Copies of the decree [without the extra list of precautions] are in ASV, *Sanità*, reg.17, ff.177-80; and Andrea Alvisè Viola, ed., *Compilazione delle leggi... in materia d'officj, e banchi del Ghetto*, 5 vols in 6 parts (Venice:Pinelli,1786),V,2,237.

<sup>77</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 319, 23 Nov.1630 [discussion after vote]: '...intender che saran[n]o biancaria d'ogni sorte, fornime[n]ti da muro di lana, ferar[u]oli, vesture da donna, et fornime[n]ti da letto. Essendo del tutto proibito [sic] l'imprestar et accettar... robba [sic] di qual si voglia sorte in pezza'.

<sup>78</sup> For a decision revoking this restriction (19 June 1632), see Viola, *Compilazione delle leggi*, V,2,237. Cecil Roth noted that the pawnbank of 1630-31 only accepted metal objects, see *The history of the Jews in Venice*, Jewish

The severe crisis provoked by bad plagues thus created a need for drastic policies which contravened health measures, and it also dramatically increased the opportunities for illicit exchanges. The inevitable breakdown in guild supervision during epidemics greatly facilitated irregular trading. In theory, guilds were co-opted to enforce quarantine regulations.<sup>79</sup> The reality, however, was different: the 'many difficulties' decree of 1529 [see above, I.] was clearly a response to illicit trading by unsupervised second-hand dealers. In addition, theft, in both senses of the word [see Chapter 2,II.], boomed. Indeed, the criminality that swamped Venice during the chaotic period of the War of the League of Cambrai [Chapter 2,II.] was not an isolated incident. It proved to be a regular recurrence whenever the Republic's administrative organs became less effective than usual.

Theft, strictly defined, was prevalent in times of plague because a great many houses and shops were empty, their owners fled, quarantined or dead.<sup>80</sup> In this context,

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communities series (Philadelphia:Jewish Publication Society of America,1930),p.96. On the non-contagious properties of metals and the use of vinegar, see ASV,*Sanità*,reg.2, *Capitolare*,f.103 [1541]; also Palmer,'Control of plague',p.200.

<sup>79</sup> Canalis and Sepulcri, 'Prescrizioni mediche', p.1203.

<sup>80</sup> Preto, *Peste e società*, p.99; Pullan, 'Plague and perceptions',p.116. For thefts in 1478, see Palmer,'Control of plague',p.62. For earlier cases, see Mueller, 'Aspetti sociali',p.72. Theft from empty houses was general in plagues, see Vincenzo Manzini, *Trattato del furto e delle varie sue specie*,2 vols (Turin:UTET,1902),pp.944-5; Alessandro Pastore, *Crimine e giustizia in tempo di peste nell'Europa moderna* (Rome:Laterza,1991), pp.77-82,141-8,191-5.

restrictions on movement imposed during epidemics can be seen as fulfilling a dual purpose: they were security precautions as much as health measures.<sup>81</sup> The freedom enjoyed by servants was thought to pose a special threat during plagues and, in July 1576, these employees were forbidden to venture abroad without written permission.<sup>82</sup> Ostensibly to prevent the spread of disease, this decision reveals all the usual exasperation provoked by uncontrollable retainers roving about wherever they pleased.<sup>83</sup> How effective this measure was, however, is a matter for conjecture, given that servants were left behind on premises or dismissed while their masters sought safety away from the city.<sup>84</sup>

Fraud, which is theft less strictly defined [see Chapter 2,II.b)], was just as widespread. Health officials were entrusted with considerable powers over other people's property during epidemics and they often betrayed that trust. *Pizzigamorti*, the minor officials responsible for removing the dead, disinfecting quarantined houses and

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<sup>81</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.41r, 9 July 1576. For another example, see Gallicciolli, *Memorie venete*, II, 215, no.807. On such restrictions, see also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.251.

<sup>82</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.41, 9 July 1576.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.: '...l'andar che fan[n]o li servitori di questa città così vagabondi dove a loro piace...'. On thefts by servants, see Chapter 2,II. above.

<sup>84</sup> The owners of the house where plague first took hold in 1575 were at their villa and had entrusted a boatman to guard it; maidservants were also left behind, see ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.154r, 1583. For the rich paying off servants upon leaving Venice, see Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.317.



transporting, destroying and cleaning infected goods, were afforded ample opportunities for misappropriation.<sup>85</sup> However reluctant, householders were meant to hand over their infected belongings to these functionaries whenever a case of plague in their midst was confirmed.<sup>86</sup> The Health Office recognised the need to employ good and loyal men for this important work, but employees such as these were hard to find, which is hardly surprising given the vile and dangerous nature of the job.<sup>87</sup> Normally unpaid, *pizzigamorti* commanded huge salaries during epidemics.<sup>88</sup> Even so, there can be little doubt that in times of plague

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<sup>85</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.25, f.107v [2nd pag.], 12 Dec.1528; filza 27, 5 Mar.1558; Giordano, 'Difesa di Venezia', p.598 [1576]. Preto saw frauds by *pizzigamorti* as 'fatti abituali' in the crisis of 1575-77: *Peste e società*, p.100; see also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.319; idem, 'Plague and perceptions', p.117; Crouzet-Pavan, '*Sopra le acque salse*', pp.867-9. A good idea of the duties of these officials can be gained from ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6; Canalis and Sepulcri, 'Prescrizioni mediche', p.1202; and Palmer, 'Control of plague' p.75.

<sup>86</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.726, *Notatorio* 3, ff.149v-50r, 31 Aug.1528: '...per li ministri del officio... siano facti dar fora de dicte case lecti, coltre, nenzuoli, schiavine et ogni altra cosa...'. See also Preto, *Peste e società*, p.101.

<sup>87</sup> Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine [WIHM], ms.223, *Lettere ed altre scritture appartenenti a Lodovico Cucino medico della Sanità di Venezia*, f.64r, 11 Dec.1555; ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.115v, 9 Nov.1576: 'homeni discreti et fedelli'; see also f.20v. For the awful nature of the job, see Tommaso Garzoni, *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo* (Venice: Vincenzo Somasco, 1595), disc. 43, 'De' beccamorti, o pizzigamorti o monatti, o sotterratori', ff.444-7: 'quanto all'officio poi del beccamorto non si può dire, se no[n] che sia vilissimo...'.

<sup>88</sup> On normal wages, see Palmer, 'Control of plague', pp.74-5. On 'salarij eccessivi et straordinarij', see ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.108v, 28 Oct.1576; Pullan, 'Plague and perceptions', p.117; see also Crouzet-Pavan, '*Sopra le acque salse*', p.868.

their incomes were also bolstered by ill-gotten gains.<sup>89</sup>

*Pizzigamorti* were by no means the sole corrupt health officials. Everyone associated with the quarantine hospitals, from the boatmen and the people who aired infected goods, right up to the head official, the prior, was capable of misappropriating property.<sup>90</sup> A number of the petty functionaries active during plagues, including the *lazzaretti* guards, were also convicted offenders.<sup>91</sup> Francesco Sansovino gives a favourable impression of the staff employed at the *Lazzaretto Vecchio* during the plague of 1575-77.<sup>92</sup> In the opinion of the Health Office physician based at that isolation hospital in the mid-1550s, however, the plague of those years was prolonged by personnel from that very institution smuggling infected

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<sup>89</sup> On abuses by *pizzigamorti*, see WIHM, ms.223, *Lettere ed altre scritture appartenenti a Lodovico Cucino*, f.12, 14 Apr. 1555; ff.15r-16r, 16 Apr. 1555; f.22, 27 Apr. 1555; f.33, 14 May 1555; f.50, 10 Aug. 1555. On scandals by officials elsewhere, see Pastore, *Crimine e giustizia*, p.183 [Genova]; Christopher R. Friedrichs, *The early modern city, 1450-1750*, A history of urban society in Europe series (London: Longman, 1995), p.283.

<sup>90</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.730, *Notatorio 7*, f.76, 29 Sept. 1556; reg.1, ff.95-6, 22 Sept. 1561; ASV, CD, *Parti criminali*, reg.12, f.138 [2nd pag.], 19 Dec. 1576; Preto, *Peste e società*, p.100; and Crouzet-Pavan, 'Sopra le acque salse', p.869. On Health Office employees, see Palmer, 'Control of plague', pp.73-6.

<sup>91</sup> On use of prisoners, see Giordano, 'Difesa di Venezia', p.608; Pullan, 'Plague and perceptions', p.117; see also *idem*, *Rich and poor*, p.319. For the threat of such jobs as punishment, see ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.41, 9 July 1576. See also Biraben, *Les hommes et la peste*, II, 120-22; Pastore, *Crimine e giustizia*, p.129 [Bologna, 1630].

<sup>92</sup> Sansovino, *Venetia*, p.232. For a more realistic view of the *Lazzaretto Vecchio* in 1575-77, see Benedetti in Chambers and Pullan, *Venice*, p.119.

clothing back into Venice to pay for sex.<sup>93</sup> Fraudulent activities among plague officials were, in fact, virtually inevitable. The Health Office suffered from the same administrative weakness as the judicial magistracies discussed in Chapter 2 [II.c]): it could not afford to pay its employees regularly.<sup>94</sup>

It is clear, then, that the short-term crisis prompted by plague affected all parts of the second-hand market: guild members, Jewish dealers, auctions and irregular traders, as well as legal and illegal alternative exchanges. That does not mean to say, though, that life ground to a halt during outbreaks of the disease, as is often assumed. The market's response to plague depended on three variables: the severity of the epidemic; the measures introduced by the health authorities; and the desperation of the people involved. The second-hand market functioned even during the worst epidemics because it performed important social functions and, at such times, conditions also favoured illegal exchanges. The persistence of exchanges during

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<sup>93</sup> WIHM, ms.223, *Lettere ed altre scritture appartenenti a Lodovico Cucino*, f.82v, 9 Apr.1557: '...di mano in mano pigliandosi piacere con diverse pagandole con gli drappi ch'havevano in governo, portandolo li nella città di nascosto...'; see also Palmer, 'Control of plague', p.108. On the theft and resale of infected clothes, see also Crouzet-Pavan, '*Sopra le acque salse*', p.869. On sex in times of plague, see Pastore, *Crimine e giustizia*, pp.57-8.

<sup>94</sup> On the administrative problems of the Health Office, see Palmer, 'Control of plague', ch.8, especially, pp.229-36 [salary arrears, staff prosecutions]. Palmer notes that 'the loyalty of staff unpaid for such long periods is unlikely to have been great and poverty must have been a spur to crime' (pp.230-1).

plagues is one reason why business revived so easily after epidemics and another reason is the existence of propitious market conditions.

As detailed in Chapter 5 [IV.b)], the expansion of the Venetian urban economy in the sixteenth century embraced retailing trades as well as manufacturing crafts, including the trade in second-hand goods. Plagues, however terrible, were merely temporary interruptions in this general pattern of development, and they did not have lasting adverse effects. This underlying trend helps to explain the prompt revival of the city's markets after epidemics and the second-hand market is an excellent example of this phenomenon. Despite annual bouts of plague during the years 1509 to 1512, in 1514 the used goods trade was reported to be in a very healthy state.<sup>95</sup> The epidemic of 1528-29 was already under way and health regulations affecting *strazzaruoli* had been imposed when Consiglio and Anzolo, second-hand dealers in the Ghetto, described Venice as an 'advantageous place for *strazzaria*'.<sup>96</sup> Business also thrived in the Ghetto Nuovo at the beginning of the

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<sup>95</sup> See Palmer, 'Control of plague', pp.328-337 [Venetian epidemics, 1348-1631]. ASV, Capi del Consiglio dei Dieci [CCD], *Notatorio*, reg.4, f.43r [2nd pag.], 20 Dec. 1514 [quoted in Chapter 3,II.a) above].

<sup>96</sup> For measures introduced in 1528, see ASV, *Sanità*, reg.726, *Notatorio* 3, f.138, 23 June 1528; f.141v, 23 July 1528. The citation is in ASV, CD, *Registri comuni* 4, f.63v, 31 July 1528 [quoted in Chapter 3,II.b) above].

1560s, irrespective of the prolonged epidemic of 1555-58.<sup>97</sup>

The loss inflicted by plague in 1575-77, some 50,000 or more lives, was the worst of the sixteenth century, yet the economy recovered after even that terrible blow.<sup>98</sup> In the 1580s, the successful trade controlled by the Jewish second-hand dealers of Venice was common knowledge, and the *Ebrei tedeschi* often quoted this success when lobbying for concessions.<sup>99</sup> Pullan has argued that the period between the two worst plagues of 1575-77 and 1630-31 was not all 'unrelieved gloom and growing despondency'.<sup>100</sup> For some traders within the second-hand market, part of that period was very prosperous indeed. Recuperation, then, was a persistent feature of Venetian economic life and for most of the period it occurred quickly and easily because of a positive economic trend.<sup>101</sup> This capacity for recovery

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<sup>97</sup> ASV, *Censori*, b.1, Capitolare 2, f.26, 27 Oct.1562 [quoted in Chapter 5,IV.b)].

<sup>98</sup> For statistics concerning the plague of 1575-77, see Pullan, 'Wage-earners', p.408 and n.3; idem, *Rich and poor*, pp.324; and Palmer, 'Control of plague', p.337.

<sup>99</sup> On their 'noble and great second-hand trade', see ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 96, 31 Dec.1585, petition of Simon the Jew [quoted in Chapter 4,II.b) above]. On their bargaining, see ASV, *Ufficiali al Cattaver* [UC], b.244, reg.5, ff.43v-4, 11 June 1592; f.128, 27 Oct.1594 [see Chapters 3,III.;5,II.b) above].

<sup>100</sup> Pullan, 'Wage-earners', p.409.

<sup>101</sup> On this ability to recuperate after plagues, see Reinhold C. Mueller, 'Stranieri e culture straniere a Venezia aspetti economici e sociali', in *Componenti storico-artistiche e culturali a Venezia nei secoli XIII e XIV* (Venice: Ateneo Veneto, 1981), pp.75-7 (p.75); idem, 'Aspetti sociali ed economici', p.75. See also G.Luzzatto, 'La decadenza'; Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.17; Richard Tilden Rapp, *Industry and*

within the urban economy of Venice was not limited to the short-term crises brought about by plague. Prompt revivals occurred after most of the sporadic setbacks affecting Venice in the sixteenth century, from the War of the League of Cambrai (1509) to the War of Cyprus and Lepanto (1570-73).<sup>102</sup> As well as this underlying economic trend, specific market conditions prevailing after severe plagues also encouraged quick recovery.

The shortage of skilled artisans did, for instance, ensure a larger market share for survivors.<sup>103</sup> In addition, the destruction of infected belongings in epidemics created a pressing demand among survivors for the most basic personal goods: clothes and bedding.<sup>104</sup> Second-hand dealers represented an obvious source of such goods for the people who had been reimbursed for destroyed property. The Venetian government also undertook to clothe and provide

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*economic decline in seventeenth-century Venice* (Cambridge MA:Harvard University Press,1976),pp.vii-viii,34; Richard Mackenney, *Tradesmen and traders: the world of the guilds in Venice and Europe,c.1250-c.1650* (Totowa,NJ: Barnes & Noble, 1987), p.103.

<sup>102</sup> On the resistance of the Venetian economy during the Italian Wars, see Gino Luzzatto, *Storia economica di Venezia dall'XI al XVI secolo* (Venice: Centro Internazionale delle Arti e del Costume, 1961), pp.256-62.

<sup>103</sup> See Pullan, 'Wage-earners', pp.414-16 [increase in master builders' wages, 1577-85]; pp.421,423 [links with wages of other trades]. See also Domenico Sella, 'Les mouvements longs de l'industrie lainière à Venise aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles', *Annales ESC* (Jan.-Mar.1957),29-45 (p.41).

<sup>104</sup> The Senate registered the problem of the poor leaving isolation hospitals '*...co[n] grandissimo bisogno di tutte le cose loro necessarie per esser state mandate a bruciare...*', see ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6,f.102r, 14 Oct.1576.

bedding for the very poor coming out of the *Iazzaretti* and it is unclear where its officials went for such items.<sup>105</sup> When changes of clothes were procured for the quarantined poor during the plague of 1555-58, cheap ready-made items were sought and these types of goods certainly came within the craft practised by *strazzaruoli* [see Chapter 4, I.a)].<sup>106</sup> Most Venetians were wary of buying goods associated with disease such as beds and bedding, yet a market existed even for these types of items.<sup>107</sup> After the plague of 1575-77, for example, the Health Office was able to sell off old bedding from the isolation hospitals, rather than have it destroyed.<sup>108</sup>

After epidemics, in addition to opportune market forces, the Venetian government also deliberately fostered trade. So keen was the Republic to revive the economy that some

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<sup>105</sup> In 1576, the Senate gave funds to the Health Office for 'stramazzi, schiavine da letto et vestime[n]ti' to be provided 'di quel modo che al Coll[egi]o n[ost]ro co[n] intervento... di detti Sopraprov[v]ed[ito]ri parera...', see *ibid.*, 14 Oct.1576.

<sup>106</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.730, *Notatorio* 7, f.171v-2r, 23 Aug.1557 [one shirt and a pair of breeches per person].

<sup>107</sup> The beds and bedding cited in Chapter 5, III.a) sold for much less than their real value since '...li compratori non levano dalli incanti simil sorte di robbe [sic] sta[n]do sempre con sospetto [sic] ch[e] siano state di persone inferme de mali contagiosi...', see ASV, *Maggior Consiglio* [MC], *Deliberazioni*, reg.29, *Liber Angelus*, f.52v, 5 Nov.1570. For a *strazzaruol* buying 'un letto marzo...de pochiss[im]o valor', see ASV, *Signori di Notte al Civil* [SNC], b.271, *Vendite*, reg.1, f.24v, 28 Sept.1601.

<sup>108</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.6, f.150v, 24 Sept.1577.

of its actions even pre-empted the end of the plague.<sup>109</sup> In March 1577 the Senate relaxed restrictions on guild-entry for a period of three years and this decision was published throughout the mainland and in Istria.<sup>110</sup> The policy obviously worked since accusations were soon made that men newly arrived from the Bergamo area and elsewhere were being intimidated by surviving guild members.<sup>111</sup> Despite such initial resentment and confusion, non-Venetian craftsmen coming into the city in the wake of plagues greatly benefited trade.<sup>112</sup>

After plagues, rapid recovery in the second-hand market was therefore encouraged by the generally high demand for goods within the Venetian economy and favourable short-term trading conditions. The same combination of a buoyant market and positive incentives also encouraged quick revivals after most of the temporary crises in Venice in the sixteenth century. Although recuperation was a

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., ff.61v-2, 2-3 Aug.1576. Mueller made a similar point on the Black Death, see 'Aspetti sociali ed economici', p.74.

<sup>110</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.51, f.193r [2nd pag.], 15 Mar.1577; see also Pullan, 'Wage-earners', pp.416-17; and Preto, *Peste e società*, pp.117-18.

<sup>111</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, reg.52, f.67 [2nd pag.], 11 Jan.1577[mv]; see also Pullan, 'Wage-earners', p.416; and Ugo Tucci, 'Vita economica a Venezia nel primo seicento', in *Galileo Galilei e la cultura veneziana* (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 1995), pp.123-35 (p.125).

<sup>112</sup> Pullan, 'Wage-earners', p.416. Rapp also discusses the importance of immigration after plague and highlights the spectacular recovery after 1577, see *Industry*, pp.40-41. On disorder in the guilds brought about by the entry of new workers, see BMC, *Mariogola degli strazzaruoli* [M.St.], f.139, 27 Oct.1577; f.163, 19 Feb.1577 [mv].



consistent feature of Venetian economic life, this was not to prove quite the case following the plague of 1630-31.

### III. The Plague of 1630-31

In one sense, the second-hand market did recover after the catastrophic epidemic of 1630-31. Guild membership, which had fallen sharply during the plague from 216 members in 1626 to 143 in 1631, was more or less restored by 1636 when it numbered 205 people.<sup>113</sup> The revived market of the mid-seventeenth century was, however, radically different to the revived market of the 1580s. Its structures had altered and there was also a significant diminution in overall market prosperity.

In 1634, the Jewish *strazzaruoli* lamented that they were in a wretched state and that they could no longer support themselves by practising just the second-hand trade.<sup>114</sup> In contrast to their complaints of 1580 discussed in the first part of this chapter, this pessimism was not contradicted by subsequent events. From 1634 onwards, *Ebrei tedeschi* began to abandon the second-hand trade and *strazzaria* assumed a minor position within the Jewish

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<sup>113</sup> See Table 3.3. On demographic recovery after the plague and the stabilisation of employment levels, see Pullan, 'Wage-earners', p.416; and Rapp, *Industry*, pp.41,154,165.

<sup>114</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 368, 29 Dec.1634 [Jewish petition, 2 Nov.1634]: '...si sono talmente indebolite le tenue n[ost]re forze, ch[e] no[n] potiamo [sic] più sostentarsi co[n] la sol arte della strazzaria [sic]'.

economy as a whole.<sup>115</sup> In the same way that the select group of Jewish second-hand dealers had superseded the bankers in the Ghetto Nuovo during the second half of the sixteenth century, it too was supplanted in the 1630s-40s by international merchants within the Sephardim.<sup>116</sup>

According to Cecil Roth, the plague of 1630-31 delivered a blow from which neither the Jews or the Venetian economy ever truly recovered and this explanation has proved popular with historians seeking to understand the phenomenon of the decline of the city of Venice and of Italy in general during the first half of the seventeenth century.<sup>117</sup> The impact of plague is not, however, completely satisfactory as an explanation for the changed state of the Venetian second-hand market in the 1630s. The epidemic was extremely severe, but it was no more vehement

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<sup>115</sup> On the reduced profitability of the second-hand trade, see Benjamin C.I. Ravid, *Economics and toleration in seventeenth-century Venice: the background and context of the 'Discorso' of Simone Luzzatto*, American Academy for Jewish Research monograph series, 2 (Jerusalem: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1978), pp.72-3.

<sup>116</sup> Brian Pullan, 'Jewish moneylending in Venice: from private enterprise to public service', in *Gli Ebrei e Venezia, secoli XIV-XVIII*, ed. Gaetano Cozzi (Milan: Edizioni Comunità, 1987), pp.671-86 (p.675). On the reduced economic power of the *Ebrei tedeschi*, see *ibid.*, pp.679-81; Riccardo Calimani, *Storia del Ghetto di Venezia, 5th edn* (Milan: Rusconi, 1985), p.88.

<sup>117</sup> Roth, *Venice*, pp.95-8, 332; see also Boccato, 'Testimonianze ebraiche sulla peste', pp.458-9. On the plague and decline, see Pullan, 'Wage-earners', p.422; *idem*, *Crisis and change*, p.14; *idem*, *Rich and poor*, p.3. One such historian was Carlo Cipolla, see 'The decline of Italy: the case of a fully matured economy', *Economic History Review*, n.s.5(1952), 178-87 (pp.184, 186). On the decline, see Chapter 7 below.

than the scourge of 1575-77.<sup>118</sup> The number of victims was much the same on both occasions and, if anything, fewer people died during the seventeenth-century plague.<sup>119</sup> The two epidemics were also similar in other respects.

In general, the calamity which hit Venice in 1630 stuck close to the pattern of earlier plagues. From the start, the sanitary authorities were well organised.<sup>120</sup> Prophylactic measures appropriate to a severe outbreak of disease were introduced and four noble *Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* (Head Commissioners of Public Health) were elected to assist the Health Office in controlling the disease.<sup>121</sup> As usual, magisterial attentions focused on the market for second-hand goods: the sale and exchange of used goods was prohibited and auctions were banned.<sup>122</sup> In addition, the *Sensa* fair of 1631 was cancelled.<sup>123</sup> Recognised procedures for quarantining houses and seizing infected property were followed throughout the plague and

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<sup>118</sup> Rapp, *Industry*, p.41; see also Pullan's review of this work in *Economic History Review*, 30 (1977), pp.207-8. Cf. Pullan, 'Wage-earners', p.422.

<sup>119</sup> 50,000-51,000 people died in 1575-77, compared to 46,490 in 1630-31, see Palmer, 'Control of plague', p.337. See also ASV, *Sanità*, reg.17, ff.407-8, *Morti nella città e laz[za]ret[ti] di Venezia [1630-33]*; Pullan, 'Wage-earners', p.408 and n.3, p.416, n.5; idem, *Rich and poor*, p.324. The death toll of 1630-31 did represent a higher percentage of the population than that of 1575-77, see Chambers and Pullan, *Venice*, p.113.

<sup>120</sup> On the maturity of the Health Office in 1600, see Palmer, 'Control of plague', p.vi.

<sup>121</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 318, 8 Oct.1630.

<sup>122</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.17, f.85v, 4 Sept.1630; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 318, 22 Oct.1630. See also Roth, *Venice*, p.96.

<sup>123</sup> ASV, *Sanità*, reg.17, f.321r, 13 May 1631.

these actions gave rise to the habitual problems of concealment, theft and fraud.<sup>124</sup> When the city was pronounced free of plague in November 1631, the customary steps were taken to encourage immigration.<sup>125</sup>

On this occasion, the relaxation of guild-entry restrictions was not as effective as it had been in 1577. Some immigrants arrived in Venice, but by 1633 many guilds still lacked members.<sup>126</sup> For the following two years, master artisans were permitted to take on unlimited numbers of apprentices, but this concession appears to have had little effect, since it was repeated in 1635.<sup>127</sup> A problem of labour shortage was not, though, faced by the guild of second-hand dealers. Although the decision of 1633 was duly recorded in its *mariegola*, until 1646 the *arte degli strazzaruoli* evinced little difficulty in attracting new members [see Chapter 3, Table 3.3]. This rapid replenishment of the guild of second-hand dealers after the plague of 1630-31 was not an isolated occurrence. Richard Rapp has shown that various trades were similarly

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., ff.85-9, 4 Sept.1630; ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 318, 22 Oct.1630; filza 319, 23 Nov.1630; filza 562, f.81 [nd]; filza 368, 29 Dec.1634 [SM report, 22 Dec.1634]. See also Boccato, 'Testimonianze ebraiche', pp.459, 463-4, 466-7; and Povoio, 'Aspetti e problemi', pp.175-6.

<sup>125</sup> On the end of the plague, see ASV, *Sanità*, reg.7, f.112, 21 Nov.1631. On guild-entry changes see Rapp, *Industry*, p.20; the decision is recorded in BMC, M.St., f.214, 28 Sept.1633.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., ff.214-15, 28 Sept.1633: '...vi manca buon numero d'huomini'.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid. The extension is recorded in BMC, *Mariegola dei Passamaneri* [*mariegole no.50*], ff.66v-7, 16 July 1635. On dwindling numbers in export guilds, see Rapp, *Industry*, p.20.

revived and that they were predominantly concentrated in the spheres of retail, construction and foodstuffs. The mercers' guild was a particularly impressive example of this regeneration.<sup>128</sup>

The full impact of the plague of 1630-31 on the second-hand market is therefore unclear. The plague did confirm, however, that radical alterations had occurred in the Venetian market for used goods. To understand the principal characteristics of those changes, we need to examine the period before the epidemic. It then becomes apparent that the second-hand market was already in the throes of a lengthy recession and that it was this, rather than the plague of 1630-31, which had a decisive effect.

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid., p.98, p.103, Table 3.10 [mercers' guild]. On the openness of the mercers' guild and its growth in the seventeenth century, see Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.96-7, 231.

## Chapter 7 THE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CRISIS IN THE SECOND-HAND MARKET

In 1586 the Jewish *strazzaruoli* of Venice had tried and failed to increase their permitted range of activities within the second-hand trade [see Chapter 4, II.b)]. This attempt at diversification reflected their commercial success at that time. It was natural for the Jewish second-hand dealers to try to take advantage of their economic power: the *arte degli strazzaruoli* had rarely missed a chance to expand and diversify its craft when the circumstances were propitious [see Chapter 1,I.]. Early in the seventeenth century, the *Ebrei tedeschi* launched another bid to increase their authorised pursuits. In contrast with the experiment of 1586, this attempt was symptomatic of economic malaise rather than success. In the early 1600s, the Jewish dealers were less interested in improving upon their limited activities within the second-hand trade, preferring instead to enter different spheres of activity.

From 1612 onwards, a steady flow of complaints about the condition of the second-hand trade issued from the *Ebrei tedeschi*. At the start, these complaints were restrained. In 1612 the Jews informed the Doge that the second-hand trade had been reduced 'to much straitened circumstances' and they asked to be allowed to engage in international

trade.<sup>1</sup> This request was refused.<sup>2</sup> Thereafter, the *Ebrei tedeschi*, increasingly frustrated with *strazzaria*, vented their anxiety in subsequent *condotta* petitions. In the years 1617-18, they lamented the decline of their unfortunate activity and drew attention to the Ghetto where shops had been shut up and where 'no one' was trading in second-hand goods.<sup>3</sup> Similar reports of the wretched condition of the market were included in the *condotta* petitions of 1624, 1628 and 1634.<sup>4</sup> According to the *Ebrei tedeschi*, therefore, the second-hand market was in a bad way from early 1612 until well after the plague of 1630-31.

The Jewish traders' observations on the recession in the

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<sup>1</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 207, 3 Sept.1613, Jews' petition, 27 Feb.1611 [mv]: '...esse[n]do ridotta la strazzaria in stato assai ristretto...'.  
<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., filza 231, 14 Dec.1618, Jews' petition, 12 Dec.1617: '...noi poveri ristretti nel solo infelicissimo negotio della strazzaria...'. See also the Jews' petition of 11 Nov.1618: '...ristretti nella sola infelice e decaduta arte di straz[z]aria...'; and the undated one: '...a segno che in G[h]etto sono lacrimevol[e]m[en]te ser[r]ate le porte delle bot[t]eghe ne vi è chi compra [sic] o chi venda...'.  
<sup>4</sup> In 1624, the Jews tried again to expand their activities within the second-hand trade, see *ibid.*, filza 271, 16 Nov. 1624, Jews' petition, 9 May 1624; Chapter 4, II.b) above; see also ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 306, 8 Sept.1629, Jews' petition, 17 Dec.1628; filza 368, 29 Dec.1634, Jews' petition, 2 Nov.1634. On their discontent with the trade, see also Giambattista Gallicciolli, *Delle memorie venete antiche profane ed ecclesiastiche*, 8 vols (Venice:Domenico Fracasso,1795), II,2, p.318; Benjamin C.I. Ravid, *Economics and toleration in seventeenth-century Venice: the background and context of the 'Discorso' of Simone Luzzatto*, American Academy for Jewish Research monograph series, 2 (Jerusalem:American Academy for Jewish Research, 1978), pp.37-8; Brian Pullan, 'Jewish moneylending in Venice: from private enterprise to public service', in *Gli Ebrei e Venezia, secoli XIV-XVIII*, ed. Gaetano Cozzi (Milan: Edizioni Comunità, 1987), pp.671-86 (p.682).

second-hand trade merit careful consideration. Much rested on the success of these dealers since their profits helped to maintain the three pawnbanks in the Ghetto.<sup>5</sup> Without the banks, *Ebrei tedeschi* had little justification for remaining in Venice and it was for this reason that the select group of second-hand dealers in the Ghetto Nuovo was so sensitive to alterations in its trade. From the second decade of the seventeenth century onwards, Jewish second-hand dealers found it increasingly difficult to make the sort of surplus which enabled them to fulfil this obligation.<sup>6</sup> As the years passed, Ponentine and Levantine Jews were called on to contribute proportionately more for the upkeep of the banks.<sup>7</sup>

In 1597 and 1607, prior to the downturn in their trade, the

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<sup>5</sup> On the banks as loss-making concerns and the role of the second-hand trade, see Brian Pullan, *Rich and poor in renaissance Venice: the social institutions of a Catholic state, to 1620* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), ch.4, esp. pp.539-40,548; idem, 'Jewish moneylending', pp.673-6. On this burden, see the undated Jewish petition in ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 231, 14 Dec.1618; Simone Luzzatto, *Discorso circa il stato de gl'Hebrei, et in particolar dimoranti nell'inclita città di Venetia* (Venice:Gioanne Calleoni,1638), pp.32v-33.

<sup>6</sup> Ravid, *Economics and toleration*, pp.72-3. On the general need for success, see idem, '"How profitable the nation of the Jewes are": the humble addresses of Menasseh ben Israel and the *Discorso* of Simone Luzzatto' in *Mystics, philosophers, and politicians: essays in Jewish intellectual history in honor of Alexander Altmann*, ed. Jehuda Reinharz and Daniel Swetschinski, Duke monographs in medieval and renaissance studies, 5 (Durham, N. Carolina: Duke University Press, 1982), pp.159-80 (p.160).

<sup>7</sup> Cecil Roth, *The history of the Jews in Venice*, Jewish communities series (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1930), p.70; Pullan, *Rich and Poor*, pp.568-70; idem, 'Jewish moneylending', pp.679-82; Ravid, *Economics and toleration*, pp.80-1, n.74.



Jewish second-hand dealers had suffered two important setbacks. In those years, as seen in Chapter 4 [II.b)], lucrative government contracts to supply sumptuous furnishings for public occasions and for the palaces of visitors hosted at state expense were converted into liabilities. Thereafter, the goods were supplied by the Jewish traders free of charge. These reversals were significant, but the *Ebrei tedeschi* did not blame them for their predicament [see below]. Instead, they attributed their diminishing returns to other causes. The Jewish dealers' explanations for the sorry state of their trade offer insight into the structural changes under way within the second-hand market as a whole.

During the *condotta* negotiations of 1618, the *Ebrei tedeschi* blamed the decline of their trade on the many sumptuary laws imposed on private citizens and on governors of the Venetian dominions (*rettori*).<sup>8</sup> They repeated this assertion in 1624 and 1629.<sup>9</sup> Sumptuary regulations, laws intended to deter ostentatious displays of wealth by individuals, were certainly introduced during these

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<sup>8</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 231, 14 Dec.1618, Jews' petition, nd: 'p[er] tante proibizioni de ponpe [sic] sia [a] reg[g]im[ent]ati come a privati...'. See also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, p.568.

<sup>9</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 271, 16 Nov.1624, Jews' petition, 9 May 1624: 'le strettezze delle parti delle pompe'; filza 306, 8 Sept.1629, Jews' petition, 17 Dec. 1628.

years.<sup>10</sup> Laws were made to limit the wearing of luxury clothing, and the furnishings used by *rettori*, the Venetian patricians dispatched to govern subject cities, attracted particular attention.<sup>11</sup> In addition, any artisans, including second-hand dealers, caught providing such goods were meant to be severely punished.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The officials responsible were the *Provveditori* and *Sopraprovveditori alle Pompe*, see Andrea Da Mosto, *L'Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, 2 vols (Rome: Biblioteca d'Arte Editrice, 1937-40), I, 207; Gasper Contareno, *The commonwealth and government of Venice*, trans. Lewes Lewkenor, English experience series, 101, facs. (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1969), p. 155. On the laws, see G. Bistort, *Il magistrato alle pompe nella Repubblica di Venezia: studio storico*, Collana di bibliografia e storia veneziana, 4, facs. (Bologna: Forni, 1969). See also Armand Baschet, *Les archives de la sérénissime république de Venise* (Paris: Amyot, 1857), pp. 31-9; David Chambers and Brian Pullan, eds, *Venice: a documentary history, 1450-1630* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), pp. 177-9; Peter Burke, 'Conspicuous consumption in seventeenth-century Italy', in *The historical anthropology of early modern Italy: essays on perception and communication* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 132-49 (p. 144). On earlier laws, see M. Margaret Newett, 'The sumptuary laws of Venice in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries', in *Historical essays by members of the Owens College, Manchester*, ed. T.F. Tout and James Tait (London: Green, 1902), pp. 245-78. On Italian sumptuary laws in general, see Diane Owen Hughes, 'Sumptuary law and social relations in renaissance Italy', in *Disputes and settlements: law and human relations in the West*, ed. John Bossy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 69-99.

<sup>11</sup> ASV, *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alle Pompe [Pompe]*, b.1, *Capitolare primo (1562-1650)*, ff. 89-133: ff. 92v-3, 26 Nov. 1616, ff. 97v-8, 22 May 1619, f. 103, 30 Mar. 1622 [clothes]; *ibid.*, b.7, *Decreti circa le pompe dei reggimenti*, printed sheets dated 22 June 1609, 3 Mar. 1618, 30 June 1623, 19 June 1625, 10 May 1633 [*rettori*]; see also Bistort, *Magistrato alle pompe*, pp. 144-5, 277-88. On *rettori* and their ostentation, see Giuseppe Boerio, *Dizionario del dialetto veneziano*, 2nd edn, facs. (Florence: Giunti Martello, 1983), p. 571; ASV, *Pompe*, b.1, ff. 79v-84r, 22 June 1609; Brian Pullan, 'The occupations and investments of the Venetian nobility in the middle and late sixteenth century', in *Renaissance Venice*, ed. J.R. Hale (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), pp. 379-408 (p. 396).

<sup>12</sup> ASV, *Pompe*, b.1, f. 89, 6 May 1613; f. 98, 22 May 1619; f. 103, 30 Mar. 1622. For references to *strazzaruoli*, see f. 58v, 27 Oct. 1600; f. 59, 5 Nov. 1600 [laws made known to the guild of

Until more research is undertaken on the actions of the *Provveditori alle Pompe* (Commissioners on Ostentation) in the seventeenth century, it is hard to determine whether or not these regulations had a significant effect on the market for luxury goods.<sup>13</sup> A degree of scepticism can, however, be registered. The same types of restrictions, including the rules affecting *rettori*, were issued at various times during the sixteenth century without obvious detriment to suppliers of goods.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the *Provveditori alle Pompe* were ineffective at enforcing their laws.<sup>15</sup> Introducing another set of rules on *rettori* in 1609, they complained that regulations which had been introduced in 1598 and then repeated in 1600, had still not

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second-hand dealers and in the Ghetto]; f.71r, 4 Nov.1608. On this topic, see also Newett, 'Sumptuary laws', pp.254-5, 275; and Bistort, *Magistrato alle pompe*, p.145.

<sup>13</sup> On the expansion of the magistracy at this time, see Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 207. For Bistort's attitude to the seventeenth-century laws, see *Magistrato alle pompe*, p.144

<sup>14</sup> ASV, *Pompe*, b.7, decrees dated 22 Aug.1539, 16 Feb.1540 [mv], 12 Feb.1559 [mv], 23 Nov.1569; see also b.1, f.4v, 15 Oct.1562; f.35v, 25 Aug.1594; ff.40r-1v, 29 June 1595. On the laws of 1549 and 1559, see Pullan, 'Occupations', p.396; see also Bistort, *Magistrato alle pompe*, pp.279-86. Laws were made throughout the seventeenth century, see ASV, *Pompe*, b.7, printed sheets, 1 May 1637-11 Nov.1708; see also Michela Dal Borgo, 'L'abbigliamento come storia: note sulla società veneziana attraverso i costumi dei barcaroli dal XV secolo ai nostri giorni', in *Le marinerie adriatiche tra '800 e '900*, ed. Pasqua Izzo (Rome:De Luca, 1989), pp.17-24 (p.18).

<sup>15</sup> On the magistracy's inefficiency, see Bistort, *Magistrato alle pompe*, 20-44, 308-9; Gaetano Cozzi, 'Authority and the law in renaissance Venice', in *Renaissance Venice*, ed. J.R.Hale (London:Faber and Faber, 1973), pp.293-345 (pp.312, 323); also Chambers and Pullan, *Venice*, p.177.

been carried through.<sup>16</sup> New ways were also found of furnishing official residences which, though technically within the laws, contradicted the spirit of the legislation.<sup>17</sup> For these reasons, expenditure on the embellishment of governors' palaces continued.<sup>18</sup>

Irrespective of its impact, the fact that the Jewish dealers believed sumptuary legislation to be responsible for the slump in their trade is revealing.<sup>19</sup> By blaming laws which, in theory, reduced demand for luxury goods, they made it known that it was in this sector, which was by far the most profitable part of the second-hand market, that business was dwindling.<sup>20</sup> In 1624 and again in 1628,

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<sup>16</sup> ASV, *Pompe*, b.1, ff.79v-84r, 22 June 1609; see also f.68v, 14 Apr.1608. For the earlier laws, see ff.43r-5r, 20 May 1598; ff.56v-7v, 21 Apr.1600; f.58r, 24 Apr.1600. Surviving evidence on enforcement is uneven, see b.6, *Denuncie (1604-1734)*; *Carte giudiziarie (1572-1747)*; see also Bistort, *Magistrato alle pompe*, pp.302,308.

<sup>17</sup> ASV, *Pompe*, b.7, printed sheet, 3 Mar.1618: 'poiché alcune nove inventioni [sic] usate da molti delli rettori nostri in fornime[n]to & altro, che se bene non contrariano alla parte 22 zugno 1609 sono però di spesa così eccessiva & alterano in maniera il buon fine di essa'.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., printed sheet, 30 June 1623: 'vedendosi più che mai continuare le spese delli rettori... nelli ornamenti delli palazzi...'

<sup>19</sup> The guild of ribbons and trimmings makers and of tailors lodged similar complaints, see ASV, *Pompe*, b.1, *Capitolare primo*, f.149, 28 Mar.1639 [*passamaneri*]; f.159, 9, 18 Sept.1649 [*sartori*]; see also Bistort, *Magistrato alle pompe*, pp.145-6.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Burke, 'Conspicuous consumption', pp.145-6. On increasing consumption among artisans, see Fritz Schmidt, 'Zur Genese kapitalistischer Konsumformen im Venedig der Frühen Neuzeit', in *Stadtgeschichte als Zivilisationsgeschichte: Beiträge zum Wandel städtischer Wirtschafts-, Lebens- und Wahrnehmungsweisen*, ed. Jürgen Reulecke, Siegener studies, 47 (Essen: Die Blaue Eule, 1990), pp.23-40 [I am grateful to Prof. R.C. Mueller for this reference].

the Jewish *strazzaruoli* reported two additional causes which they said also accounted for the reduction in their trade: the many auctions held 'continuously' in Venice; and the large number of second-hand dealers' shops opened recently in the city.<sup>21</sup> As with the introduction of sumptuary laws, both of these phenomena were grounded in reality.

Several types of movable-goods auctions were held in Venice as we have seen in Chapter 5 [III.a)]. Since Jewish second-hand dealers attended these auctions, we can presume that they were knowledgeable about the events.<sup>22</sup> The Jewish traders' complaints suggest that in the 1620s the complementary relationship which had long existed between auctions and second-hand dealers as markets for used goods, deteriorated.<sup>23</sup> Either the volume of personal effects sold at public sales increased disproportionately to the detriment of the trade of second-hand dealers, or the trading slump then under way made *strazzaruoli* more sensitive to the potential competition of auctions.

The numbers of debt and emergency auctions probably did

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<sup>21</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 271, 16 Nov. 1624, Jews' petition, 9 May 1624: '...si per li molti incanti che di continuo si fanno e per molte botteghe di strazaroli, che da poco tempo in qua si sono aperte per tutta la città...'. See also filza 306, 8 Sept. 1629, Jews' petition, 17 Dec. 1628.

<sup>22</sup> See Chapter 3, III. and 5, II.b), III.a).

<sup>23</sup> Complaints about auctions continued into the eighteenth century, see ASV, *Compilazione delle Leggi* [CL], b.59, *Arti in genere*, f.666r, nd. On this rapport, see Chapter 5, III.a).

rise during the early part of the seventeenth century. Richard Mackenney has shown that the value of creditors' claims registered by artisans was high during the difficult economic period after 1594 and he has also suggested that trade credit became less accessible at that time.<sup>24</sup> Auctions were a drastic resort for creditors and debtors, but the general tightening up of regulations governing public sales, which occurred at the beginning of the century, could be seen as reflecting governmental awareness of the increased need for these facilities.<sup>25</sup>

During the second and third decades of the seventeenth century, Venetians in urgent need of cash had similar recourse to the city's emergency mechanisms. According to the *Ebrei tedeschi*, the number of pledges accepted in the Ghetto escalated and this put a great strain on the

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<sup>24</sup> Richard Mackenney, *Tradesmen and traders: the world of the guilds in Venice and Europe, c. 1250-c. 1650* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble, 1987), pp. 99-101. On increased recourse to Venice for credit in general from 1591, see Gigi Corazzol, *Livelli stipulati a Venezia nel 1591: studio storico*, Supplementi di Studi Veneziani (Pisa: Giardini, 1986). On the 1590s crisis, see Brian Pullan, 'Wage-earners and the Venetian economy, 1550-1630', *Economic History Review*, n.s. 16 (1964), 407-26 (p. 412). On links between moneylending and economic fluctuations, see Paola Lanaro Sartori, 'L'attività di prestito dei monti di pietà in terraferma veneta: legalità e illeciti tra quattrocento e primo seicento', in *Studi Storici Luigi Simeoni* (Verona), 33 (1983), 161-77 (p. 170).

<sup>25</sup> BMC, *Mariogola degli strazzaruoli* [M.St.], ff. 193-5, 9 Mar. 1602 [bequest and emergency sales]; ASV, *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Giustizia Nova* [GN], b. 2, reg. 2, ff. 103-5, 21 May 1603; reg. 4, ff. 35-40 [tavern-pledge sales]. See also Chapter 5, III.a).

pawnbanks.<sup>26</sup> In 1618, they reported that nobles as well as merchants and shopkeepers were making use of their facilities, the latter pledging their merchandise.<sup>27</sup> The great demand for the moneylending services of the Jews in this difficult economic period helps to explain the efforts made to ensure that they continued to be provided during the devastating plague of 1630-31 [see Chapter 6, II].<sup>28</sup> An expansion of pawnbroking would naturally increase the volume of goods at pledge auctions since any growth in lending would be mirrored by a rise in the number of unclaimed pledges. The pressing demand for cheap credit also shows that the years between 1610 and 1630 were difficult ones for many Venetians and it was in such periods of hardship that debt and emergency auctions proliferated.

As in the case of sumptuary legislation, the relevance of movable-goods auctions to the slump in the Jewish dealers'

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<sup>26</sup> See ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 207, 3 Sept.1613, Jews' petition, 27 Feb.1611 [mv]; filza 231, 14 Dec.1618, petitions of 12 Dec.1617, 11 Nov.1618 and undated one; filza 271, 16 May 1624, petition 9 May 1624; filza 306, 8 Sept.1629, petition 17 Dec.1628; also Pullan, *Rich and poor*, pp.566-7.

<sup>27</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 231, 14 Dec.1618, Jews' petition, 12 Dec.1617; *ibid.*, undated petition: '...et da certa abominevole introductione [sic] di mercanti e botteghieri, che inpegnano [sic] le pezze intiere di robbe come grograni, zanbelote et altre cose simili, cavando dalli banchi denari l'estate sopra le robbe da inverno, et l'inverno s[opr]a quelle d'estate...'

<sup>28</sup> For examples of indebted artisans in 1629, see the many debtors in ASV, *Giudici di Petizion* [GP], *Inventari*, b.351/16, no.93, q. Zuane Polleni, *marzer all'insegno del San Lio in Frezzaria*, 17 Oct.1629.

trade has to be questioned. More likely, the downturn in their trade made *strazzaruoli* more sensitive to the potential competition of auctions. It was the select group of Jewish second-hand dealers at the top end of the market who were feeling the pinch and it is doubtful, even allowing for a dramatic increase in the volume of goods sold at public sales, whether these events posed a direct threat to their trade. The vast majority of goods sold at the debt auctions of the *Signori di Notte al Civil* was of poor quality and there is evidence to suggest that the general grade of item sold at pawn-pledge sales deteriorated as the century progressed.<sup>29</sup> Mean goods were bought by some Jewish dealers [see Chapter 3, IV.], but they were hardly the stuff of the 'noble and great second-hand trade' in the Ghetto. Similar doubts can be raised about the challenge the *Ebrei tedeschi* attributed to the increased number of second-hand dealers' shops in Venice.

Paradoxically, in spite of the problems at the top end of the market, a significant expansion occurred in the number of second-hand dealers in Venice and this is borne out by the 1616-46 membership list of the *arte degli strazzaruoli* [see Chapter 3, Table 3.3]. Between 1621 and 1626, affiliation to the guild of second-hand dealers rose by a

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<sup>29</sup> See the goods listed in ASV, SNC, b.271, *Vendite*, reg.1, 1601-04; reg.2, 1621-23. See also ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 368, 29 Dec.1634, report by Gerolemo Querini, *Sopraconsolo*, 22 Dec.1634: '...non capitar quasi mai sopra l'incanti che vengono fatti... di mese in mese pegno alcuno che sij di molto più valore...'



quarter. As with auctions, though more traders in used goods were operating in Venice in the early part of the seventeenth century, few posed a threat to the established second-hand dealers in the Ghetto Nuovo. The majority of new members who joined the guild in the 1620s did not open workshops, but operated at the lower end of the market: nearly half of the entrants were women, and, as we have seen, very few women ran *botteghe*.<sup>30</sup> The expansion in the guild's membership did not, therefore, constitute a renaissance in the fortunes of the *arte degli strazzaruoli*. On the contrary, like the trading problems faced in the Ghetto, it also reflected the inauspicious structural changes under way in the second-hand market: in the future, poor traders without fixed premises would become a preponderant feature of the guild.<sup>31</sup>

Doubts, then, exist about the effectiveness of sumptuary legislation, and auctions and the increase in the number of Venetian second-hand dealers could not have had a serious impact on the market for luxury goods, so it

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<sup>30</sup> On the number of women entering the guild, see Chapter 3, Table 3.3; on women and workshops, see Chapter 4, I.d). Seven baptised Jews also joined the guild between 1624 and 1642, see ASV, *Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni*.

<sup>31</sup> On the wretched state of the guild in 1660, see ASV, *Milizia da Mar* [MM], b.555, *Atti relative alla tansa e taglione dei stramazzeri e strazzaruoli*, unpag., *strazzaruoli* petition, 18 Aug.1660. Lacunae in the guild records prevent a greater understanding of the structural changes; the *mariegola* effectively ends in 1621 and the later *mariegola d'argento* is lost. On the majority of pedlars in 1713, see ASV, MM, b.555, sheet dated 8 July 1713; see also ASV, CL, b.59, *Arti in genere*, f.666, nd (late 1700s).

appears that the *Ebrei tedeschi* did not fully understand the reasons for the slump in their trade. In 1628, they added the provision of furnishings to their list of grievances, lamenting the expense involved in providing goods free of charge for official events and for the residences of influential visitors who came to Venice.<sup>32</sup> In this period, the Jewish second-hand dealers did supply quality goods to the *Ufficiali alle Rason Vecchie*, the magistrates responsible for state hospitality.<sup>33</sup> Calculations made by Benjamin Ravid for 1636 and a document of 1659 found by Brian Pullan indicate that the Jews' outlay on furnishings was around 5,000 ducats per year towards the end of the period.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 306, 8 Sept.1629, Jews' petition, 17 Dec.1628. On this burden, see Chapter 4,II.b) above; Simone Luzzatto, *Discorso*, pp.29v-30; Ravid, *Economics and toleration*, pp.79-81, n.74. The other nations of Jews soon contributed to the expense, see *ibid.*, pp.80-1, n.74; S.Luzzatto, *Discorso*, pp.29v-30.

<sup>33</sup> ASV, *Ufficiali alle Rason Vecchie* [RV], b.222, *Spese per l'arrivo di Principi: spese fatte... nelli refrescamenti... delli Ser[enissimi]mi Principi di Savoia*, 1608, no.6, *spese diverse* [Nicolò, fachin degli ebrei]; *spese fatte... nell' alloggio dell'Ecc[ellentissimo] Sig[no]r Pomponio Bellieure, ambasciatore straordin[ario] del Re Christianissimo [sic]*, 1635, no.6, *Ufficiali e serventi* [guarda Robba: Vincenzo Luzzatto, Marco Sorzetto]; no.7, *spese diverse* [soprastante alle robbe Ghetto: Vincenzo Luzzatto]; no.8, *robbe rotte* [Jews' damaged goods]. On the *Ufficiali alle Rason Vecchie*, see Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, I, 139-40; Marin Sanudo, *De origine, situ et magistratibus urbis venetae ovvero la città di Venezia (1493-1530)*, ed. Angela Caracciolo Aricò (Milan: Cisalpino-La Goliardica, 1980), pp.111, 248.

<sup>34</sup> Ravid, *Economics and toleration*, pp.80-1, n.74 [c.5822 ducats]. Brian Pullan, *The Jews of Europe and the Inquisition of Venice, 1550-1670* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), pp.148, 317-18 [c.5000 ducats].

Although the *Ebrei tedeschi* complained about the provision of luxury furnishings in 1628, they did not blame it for the reduction in their trade.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, as they had waited 22 years before citing the provision of these goods, this would suggest that it had had little effect on the downturn of those years. Complaints had been made about the mishandling of their property in 1607, but the *Ebrei tedeschi* affirmed that they were willing to supply all the goods requested by the government.<sup>36</sup> Clearly, the outlay on furnishings, like the three direct causes cited by the Jewish traders, does not satisfactorily explain the recession in the second-hand trade. This is unsurprising since most of the reasons offered by the *Ebrei tedeschi* for the fall in demand for luxury goods were also symptoms of the structural changes then under way. To understand the Jewish dealers' plight we need to look beyond the second-hand market. The Jewish dealers' lengthy discourse with the Venetian government in the early part of the seventeenth century does prove, though, that the crisis in the second-hand market had set in well before the plague of 1630-31.

Seen in this context, the post-plague *condotta* petition of

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<sup>35</sup> Auctions, shops and sumptuary legislation were blamed, see ASV, *Senato, Terra*, filza 306, 8 Sept.1629, Jews' petition, 17 Dec.1628.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., filza 184, 5 Oct.1607, Jews' petition, 18 Sept. 1607: '...prontam[en]te et con allegro animo c'offerimo [sic] servire V[ostra] S[e]r[eni]tà di tutte quelle robbe ricercate, che saran[n]o nelle mani nostre...'.

the *Ebrei tedeschi* of 1634 [see Chapter 6, III.] offers little in the way of new information. In it, the *Ebrei tedeschi* reported that they were unable to support themselves by practising just the second-hand trade for the following reasons: the number of Jews taken by the plague; the provision of furnishings; and the number of auctions and the other second-hand dealers' shops in the city.<sup>37</sup> The main difference of the *condotta* of 1634 was that it finally permitted the *Ebrei tedeschi* to engage in international trade.<sup>38</sup>

Examining the slump in the Jewish dealers' trade in the second and third decades of the seventeenth century helps us to understand why the Venetian second-hand market did not completely recover after the devastating epidemic of 1630-31. Although guild numbers had been replenished by the late 1630s [see Chapter 3, Table 3.3], richer dealers such as the select group of merchant traders in the Ghetto Nuovo were obliged to diversify their activities.<sup>39</sup> The

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<sup>37</sup> Sumptuary laws were not cited, see *ibid.*, filza 368, 29 Dec.1634, Jews' petition, 2 Nov.1634. A loss of traders was also reported after the plague of 1575-77, see *ibid.*, filza 80, 24 May 1580, Jews' petition, 10 Jan.1579 [mv] [cited in Chapter 6,I.].

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, reg.112, 29 Dec.1634. The *condotta* is published by Ravid in *Economics and toleration*, pp.125-6. On the concession, see Benjamin Ravid, 'The legal status of the Jewish merchants of Venice, 1541-1638', *Journal of Economic History*, 35 (1975), 274-9 (p.278).

<sup>39</sup> Jewish traders did not desert the trade, see ASV, RV, b.222, *Spese fatte... nell'alloggio di Signori Ambasciatori di Moscovia*, 1663, 9, *Officiali e serventi*, Jacob and Franzin Sorzetto; ASV, CL, b.59, ff.666-8, nd (late 1700s); Gino Luzzatto, 'Un'anagrafe degli Ebrei di Venezia del settembre 1797', in

body of Jewish *strazzaruoli* was never large but it had been an intrinsic part of the developed second-hand market of the late sixteenth century. The alteration in their activities is a sign that the market was in straitened circumstances.<sup>40</sup>

The market for second-hand goods, as we have seen in Chapters 5 and 6, reflected the general shifts in the Venetian economy which occurred during the sixteenth century. In keeping with the expansion of the metropolitan economy, the second-hand market extended over the period and its recovery after the short-term crises created by plague accorded with the experience of the Venetian economy as a whole. The trading recession evidenced in the *condotta* petitions of the *Ebrei tedeschi* of 1612 onwards shows that the second-hand market also shared the Republic's economic problems which began at that time.<sup>41</sup>

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*Scritti in memoria di Sally Mayer (1875-1953): saggi sull'ebraismo italiano*, ed. U.Nahon (Jerusalem, 1956), pp.194-8 (pp.197-8); ASV, *Sezione Notarile, Atti*, b.10117, notary Michieli, no.1227, 25 Jan.1807 [*strazzaruol* shop in Ghetto]. David Levi furnished Palazzo Corner for the first Italian prefect in Venice in 1866, see ASV, *Prefettura, Gabinetto (1866-71)*, fasc.15, 6,I, 18 Nov.1866 [I am indebted to Dr Nico Randerad for this reference].

<sup>40</sup> One of the Ghetto élite, Anselmo Scocco, died in poverty, see ASV, GP, b.363/27, no.s 9-10, 12, 21, q. Anselmo Sacerdoto detto Scocco, 10 Mar.- 14 May 1650.

<sup>41</sup> On these problems, see *Aspetti e cause della decadenza economica veneziana nel secolo XVII* (Venice: Istituto per la Collaborazione Culturale, 1961), pp.9-19, 23-4, 309-11; Domenico Sella, *Commerci e industrie a Venezia nel secolo XVII* (Venice: Istituto per la Collaborazione Culturale, 1961), ch.2, pp.23-47; Pullan, 'Wage-earners', pp.421-22; idem, *Rich and poor*, pp.17, 19; Richard Tilden Rapp, *Industry and economic decline in seventeenth-century Venice* (Cambridge

The slump in demand with which the Jewish traders tried so hard to come to terms was mirrored in other sectors of the economy.<sup>42</sup>

The rapid expansion of the guild of second-hand dealers in the 1620s and the replenishment of its numbers in the 1630s confirms Richard Rapp's theory about the partial abandonment of the unitary guild system in the difficult economic period of the seventeenth century.<sup>43</sup> The guild's growth can be attributed to unemployed Venetians, such as female textile workers, transferring from export crafts.<sup>44</sup> Another feature of the second-hand market in the early 1600s contradicts one important part of Rapp's thesis - the preservation of prosperity in Venice during its decline.<sup>45</sup>

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MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp.3,153; Schmidt, 'Zur Genese kapitalistischer Konsumformen', pp.23-4; and Ugo Tucci, 'Venezia nel cinquecento: una città industriale?', in *Crisi e rinnovamenti nell'autunno del rinascimento a Venezia*, ed. Vittore Branca and Carlo Ossola (Florence: Olschki, 1991), pp.61-83 (pp.64-5).

<sup>42</sup> For complaints similar to those of the Jews made by other sorts of traders, see Mackenney, *Tradesmen*, pp.225-6. On links between the slump in international trade and urban crafts, see Sella, *Commerci e industrie*, p.45.

<sup>43</sup> Rapp, *Industry*, pp.19,21.

<sup>44</sup> On the shift of production from export to domestic consumption, see Rapp, *Industry*, pp.6,20,47,82,166; see also p.98 [increased number of shops in the city]; Brian Pullan's review of Rapp's book in *Economic History Review*, 30 (1977), pp.207-8; Sella, *Commerci e industrie*, p.73; Ugo Tucci, 'Vita economica a Venezia nel primo seicento', in *Galileo Galilei e la cultura veneziana* (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 1995), pp.123-35.

<sup>45</sup> See Rapp, *Industry*, pp.3-4; also Pullan's review, in *Economic History Review*, 30,p.207. Cf. Carlo Livi, Domenico Sella and Ugo Tucci, 'Un problème d'histoire: la decadence

New traders were attracted to the market in second-hand goods for motives of self-preservation rather than gain, and the scope for profit in the market had, at any rate, declined. In short, there is ample evidence of the reduction of affluence in the second-hand trade. The fortunes of the Venetian second-hand market were bound up with the city's economy in every way.

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économique de Venise', in *Aspetti e cause della decadenza*, pp.290-317 (p.314); and Brian Pullan, ed., *Crisis and change in the Venetian economy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (London: Methuen, 1968), pp.20-1.

## CONCLUSION

Studies of international commerce and, more recently, of urban trade structures in the early modern period have emphasised the importance of the products of craft-based economies. In the pre-industrial period, a flourishing trade in used goods coexisted with the market for new wares and it was just as central to early modern economies. If not completely neglected, this trade has been misunderstood and its centrality has been largely ignored. The object of this thesis has been to reinstate the market in second-hand clothes and furnishings within the history of Venice from c.1500 to c.1650. This study has shown that, instead of being a peripheral and inconsiderable part of the Venetian urban economy, the market in used goods made of cloth was completely integrated into that economy and it was highly developed, serving Venetians of many different social groups.

The exclusivism and the inelasticity which are so often associated with Venetian guild structures have proved difficult to isolate within the second-hand market. Although the guild of second-hand dealers sought to monopolise its trade, this was not always to the exclusion of others. In any case, the guild was, in spite of itself, obliged to accommodate various other traders and means of exchange. The Venetian government was able to overrule the guild whenever this suited the Republic's interests, as it



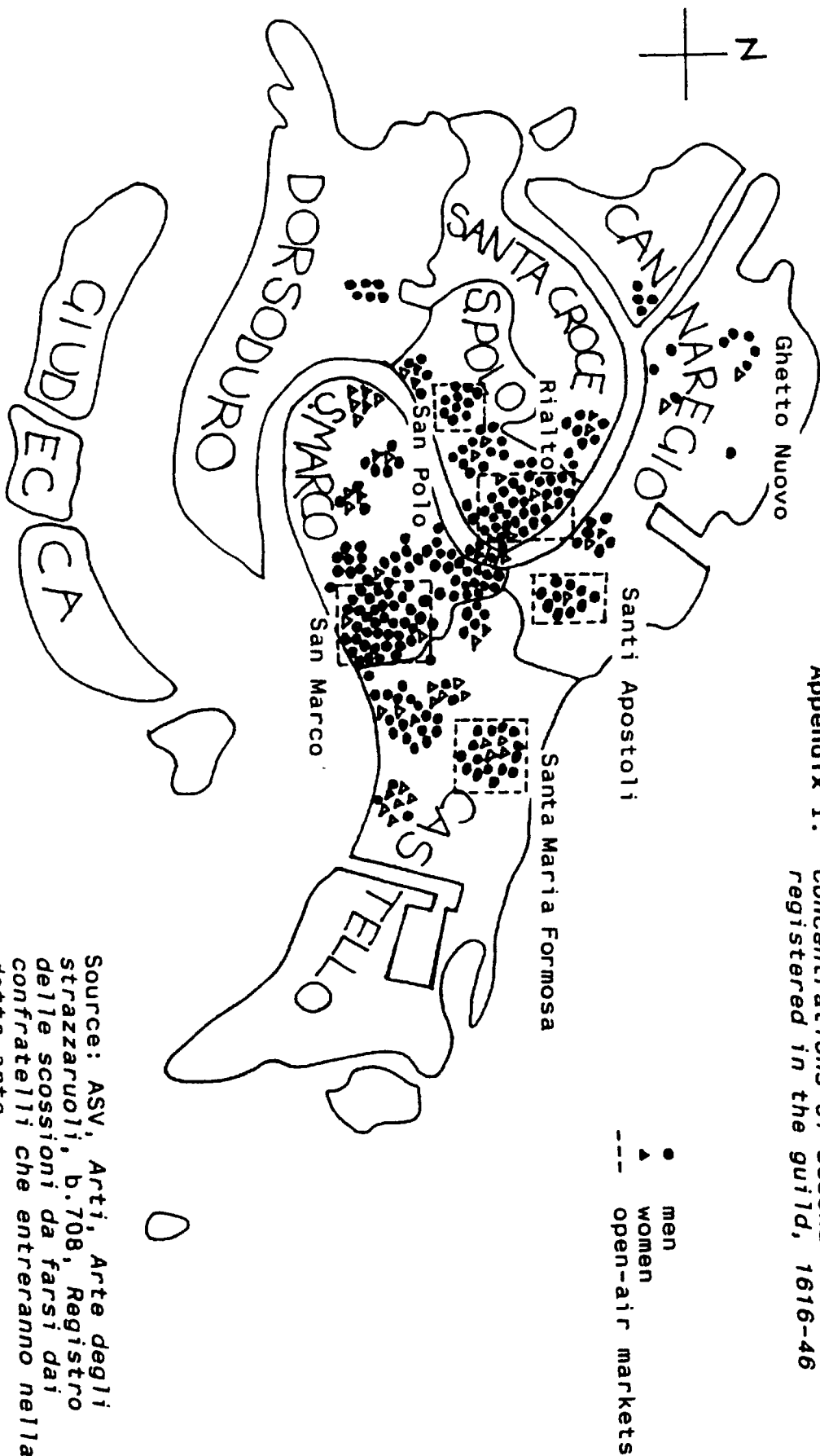
did at the beginning of the sixteenth century, allowing the *Ebrei tedeschi* to become established within the second-hand market. Moreover, irrespective of the guild's efforts and those of government officials, throughout the unruly early modern period the *arte degli strazzaruoli* shared the market with irregular traders and illegal 'alternative' exchanges.

The structural development of the second-hand market during the turbulent period of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and the impact on the market of the setbacks punctuating that period - plague and the *seicento* recession - also belie the notion of a rigid guild structure. This accords with the research undertaken by Richard Rapp and Richard Mackenney and adds further doubt to the received opinion of Venetian guilds being closed and reactionary organisations in the early modern period. Far from being an insignificant phenomenon, therefore, much can be learnt from the market in second-hand clothes and furnishings. Old clothes are, in the words attributed to Herr Teufelsdröckh by the Scot, Thomas Carlyle, silent:

...but expressive in their silence: the past witnesses and instruments of woe and joy, of passions, virtues, crimes, and all the fathomless tumult of Good and Evil in 'the prison called life'.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor resartus: the life and opinions of Herr Teufelsdröckh*, XIXth century classics series (London: Ward, Lock & Bowden, 1896), p.260.



Appendix I: Concentrations of second-hand dealers registered in the guild, 1616-46

Source: ASV, Arti, Arte degli strazzaruoli, b.708, Registro delle scossioni da farsi dai confratelli che entreranno nella detta arte

Appendix I: *Concentrations of second-hand dealers registered in the guild, 1616-1646*<sup>1</sup>

Key:

S - second-hand dealers' list

P - pedlars' list

W - womens' list

a) In and around Rialto		S	P	W	Total
<u>Rialto:</u>					
	at Rialto	3	6	2	11
	on / at Rialto bridge	3	5	3	11
	under porticos at Rialto	2	2		4
	Beccaria	2	5		7
	Draparia		1		1
	Pescaria		1		1
	Riva del Vin		2		2
	Ruga degli Oresi		1		1
	San Giacomo di Rialto	1		1	2
	San Matteo	1	1	1	3
 <u>North and west of Rialto:</u>					
	Calle dei Botteri	1	1		2
	Sant'Aponal	4	7	2	13
	San Cassiano	2	4	2	8
 <u>Across Rialto:</u>					
	Calle della Bissa	4	3		7
	Calle dei Bombasari		5		5
	Calle degli Stagneri		1		1
	Fondaco dei Tedeschi		3		3
	Riva del Ferro	1			1
	San Bartolomeo		2		2
	San Lio		2	2	4
	San Salvador	2	2		4
		26	54	13	93

<sup>1</sup> Source: ASV, *Arti, Arte degli strazzaruoli*, b.708, *Registro delle scossioni da farsi dai confratelli che entreranno nella detta arte.*

b) Around Piazza San Marco		S	P	W	Total
<u>Piazza:</u>	at San Marco	5	2	1	8
	in the Piazza	9	5		14
	under portico at S.Marco	2	2		4
	under the Palace	4	1		5
	under the clock-tower		1		1
	under <i>Procuratie Nuove</i>		1		1
	under <i>Procuratie Vecchie</i>		1		1
<u>North-east of Piazza:</u>					
	San Basso	1			1
	Merceria		1		1
	Ponte dei Baratteri	1			1
	San Zulian		1		1
	Spadaria	2		1	3
<u>West, north-west of Piazza:</u>					
	Calle Vallaresso		1		1
	Campo Rusolo		1		1
	Frezzaria	5	3	1	9
	San Moisé	3	5		8
<u>East of Piazza:</u>					
	Calle delle Rasse	6	10	3	19
	Ponte della Paglia	1	1		2
	San Filippo Giacomo		1		1
		39	37	6	82

c) Other concentrations of more than six dealers		S	P	W	Total
	Sant'Angelo	2	3	2	7
	SS. Apostoli	5	5	1	11
	San Fantin	3		3	6
	Santa Margherita	6			6
	Santa Maria Formosa	7	8	4	19
	San Polo	3	7		10
	San Samuele			6	6
	Santa Sofia	1	5	2	8
	San Tomà	3	1	3	7
	San Zuan in Bragora	3		6	9
	San Zuan Novo	2		5	7

d) In and around the Ghetto	S	P	W	Total
at the bridge/on the <i>fondamenta</i> of the Ghetto	1	3		4
at Ponte dei Mori		1		1
at Ponte degli Ormesini	1		1	2
Calle/ponte del Asedo	1		1	2
San Geremia ( <i>'arente il Ghetto'</i> )	2	2		4
San Marcuola on the <i>fondamenta</i> at		1		1
San Leonardo		1		1
	5	7	3	15

## ABBREVIATIONS

In footnotes, archival references have been abbreviated as following:

AC	<i>Avogaria di Comun</i>
Arti	<i>Corporazioni di Arti e Mestieri</i>
ASF	<i>Archivio di Stato di Firenze</i>
ASV	<i>Archivio di Stato di Venezia</i>
BMC	<i>Biblioteca del Museo Correr</i>
BNM	<i>Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana</i>
BQS	<i>Biblioteca Querini Stampalia</i>
CCD	<i>Capi del Consiglio dei Dieci</i>
CD	<i>Consiglio dei Dieci</i>
CL	<i>Compilazione delle Leggi</i>
CSM	<i>Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia</i>
Der.	<i>Ospedale dei Derelitti</i>
GN	<i>Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Giustizia Nova</i>
GP	<i>Giudici di Petizion</i>
GV	<i>Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Giustizia Vecchia</i>
IRE	<i>Archivio delle Istituzioni di Ricovero e di Educazione</i>
IE	<i>Inquisitori sopra l'Università degli Ebrei</i>
MC	<i>Maggior Consiglio</i>
MM	<i>Milizia da Mar</i>
Piovego	<i>Giudici del Piovego</i>
Pompe	<i>Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alle Pompe</i>
PRO	Public Record Office, London
PSM	<i>Procuratori di San Marco</i>

RV	<i>Ufficiali alle Rason Vecchie</i>
Sanità	<i>Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità</i>
SU	<i>Sant'Uffizio</i>
SNC	<i>Signori di Notte al Civil</i>
SNCr	<i>Signori di Notte al Criminal</i>
SM	<i>Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti</i>
UC	<i>Ufficiali al Cattaver</i>
WIHM	Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, London

Other abbreviations:

2nd pag.	second pagination
b.	<i>busta</i> (file containing archive sources)
cap.	<i>capitolare</i>
CAV	Giovanni Monticolo, ed., <i>I capitolari delle arti veneziane sottoposte alla Giustizia e poi alla Giustizia Vecchia dalle origini al MCCCXXX</i> , 3 vols in 4 parts (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano, 1896-1914)
cf.	compare
den.	denunciation
disc.	<i>discorso</i> (discussion)
DMS	Marin Sanudo [Marino Sanuto], <i>I diarii</i> , ed. Rinaldo Fulin and others, 58 vols (Venice: Visentini, 1879-1903)
fasc.	<i>fascicolo</i> (dossier)
filza	referred to in full throughout (file)
inv.	inventory
M.St.	<i>Mariogola degli strazzaruoli</i>
mv	<i>more veneto</i>

nd            not dated  
no.          number  
not.        *notatorio* (minute-book)  
proc.       *processo* (trial)  
q.          *quondam*  
reg.        register  
sponte  
comp.      *sponte comparente* (voluntary appearance)  
test.       testimony  
unpag.     unpaginated



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### I. Manuscript Sources

The vast majority of manuscripts consulted for this thesis can be found in the Venetian State Archives. These archives are stored in separate collections depending on where the documents originated (usually government councils or magistracies); the collections consulted for this study are listed below in alphabetical order. The library of the Correr Museum in Venice holds additional registers of guild statutes and rulings (*mariegole*) including the *mariegola* of the guild of second-hand dealers which is one of main sources for this thesis. Primary material within the archives of the *Istituzioni di Ricovero e di Educazione* - religious and charitable institutions - stored on the Giudecca in Venice, was also consulted, together with documents in the Marciana Library and the Querini Stampalia Library. Other sources were consulted in the Florentine State Archives, as well as the Public Record Office and the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, London.

#### a) Archivio di Stato di Venezia [ASV]

*Avogaria di Comun* [AC]

Index no.86

[card-index of civil and criminal lawsuits in reading room]  
This venerable council played an important role in the Republic's judicial system, though by the sixteenth century its legal powers had been eroded by the Council of Ten.

It acted as a clearing-house for lawsuits for the Courts of the Forty and intervened in cases heard in lower courts and on the Venetian mainland. Its archives contain records of civil and criminal proceedings involving second-hand dealers.

*Miscellanea Civile*

C.46.7, *Arti - Padova, arte degli strazzaruoli*,  
23 Oct. 1548

[guild dispute involving Christian and Jewish second-hand dealers in Padua].

C.243.17, Strazzaruola Giovanna contro specchier Giovanni Battista, 3 July 1624 [slander case].

*Miscellanea Penale*

b.4608, De Piero, Marcantonio, 9 Mar. 1591

[clothes theft from Jewish second-hand dealer's shop in Ghetto].

*Raspe*

reg.3650, Paduan second-hand dealers, 2 Sept. 1454

reg.3651, Luca di Ragusa, 20 Nov. 1460 and Giorgio Ungaro, 12 Dec. 1460 [theft of clothes from second-hand dealer's shop in Piazza San Marco]

*Capi del Consiglio dei Dieci* [CCD]

Included in index no.92

Three chairmen were elected every month from within the Council of Ten [see *Consiglio dei Dieci*]. They directed trials, attended to general business, executed decisions and acted as public representatives in emergencies.

Sixteenth-century minute-books record key decisions concerning Jewish second-hand dealers and registers of *taglie* give information on rewards paid for capturing elusive criminals.

*Notatori:*

reg.3, (1506-12), [Jewish innkeeper trading in *strazzaria*]

reg.4, (1513-19), [Jewish second-hand dealers' shops]

reg.5, (1519-22), [Jewish second-hand dealers' shops]

reg.11, (1535-36), [Jewish brokers]

*Taglie:*

reg.s 1-5, (1598-1634)

*Censori*

Index no.75

Two Censors per year were chosen to investigate election-rigging in the *Maggior Consiglio* and Senate. They also regulated gambling and, from 1541, servants and boatmen. The Censors' archives contain details of thefts and fraudulent activities by household retainers. In theory, theft was not within the jurisdiction of these officials - it was the responsibility of the *Signori di Notte al Criminal*. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, however, they assumed *de facto* authority over the offence and, in 1626, gained formal permission to act.

b.1, *Capitolare 2 (1541-1790)*

[rulings concerning boatmen and maidservants]

b.3, *Registri di sentenze, costituiti e riferiti:*

reg.1 (1561-1569)

reg.2 (1570-1591)

reg.3 (1598-1609)

b.4, reg.4 (1610-1612)

*Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* [CSM]

Indices no.s 223-5 [224]

The Venetian Board of Trade, founded in 1507 and made permanent in 1517, had a broad brief. Close links with Levantine Jewish traders made it an obvious choice of supervisory magistracy when a separate ghetto was established in 1541. A summary investigation into its archives produced little useful information about the Jews, but did turn up details about the supply of rags to the paper industry on the mainland at the end of the period.

*nuova serie - materia commerciale*

b.16, *Carta (1622-1745)* [mid-17th-century rag shortage, restrictions on second-hand dealers]

b.62, *Ebrei levantini abitanti (1516-1724)* [thieves in Ghetto]

b.63, *Ebrei tedeschi e loro università (1586-1724)*

b.125, fasc.2, *Panni fabbriche di Venezia ad uso di Francia, ecc.* [18th-century complaints about the hard-wearing nature of Venetian woollen cloth].

*Compilazione delle Leggi* [CL]

Index no.85

This eighteenth-century archive, compiled to facilitate the process of codifying Venetian law, contains copies of

decrees and laws made throughout the Republic's history. It is organised alphabetically according to subject, and, though not always precise, serves as a useful starting point for locating information.

bb.48-56, *Arti in genere, leggi dal 1256-1795*

b.57, *Arti in genere, sommari e documenti (1807)*

bb.58-59, *Arti in genere, documenti e memorie [late 1700s]*

b.213, *Furatole and Furti*

b.231, *Incanti*

b.301, *Padroni e servitori*

b.301 bis [not listed in index], *Pegni e pegnaroli*

b.368, *Vagabondi*

*Consiglio dei Dieci* [CD]

Index no.92

Along with the Senate, the Council of Ten was a central government body. Established after the Tiepolo-Querini conspiracy of 1310, it maintained security and had wide-ranging powers, though these powers were curbed in the 1580s. The council reacted quickly and proved very effective in crises such as the War of the League of Cambrai (1509 onwards). During that sensitive time, the Ten played a prominent role in settling *Ebrei tedeschi* in Venice. Its archives contain details about Jewish second-hand dealers' shops and residence contracts drawn up with the Jewish community.

*Parti miste:*

reg.36, (1513-14) [*condotta* of 1513]

reg.38, (1514-15) [Jewish second-hand dealers' shops]  
reg.39, (1515-16) [Jewish second-hand dealers' shops]  
filza 35, (1515) [petition of Jewish second-hand dealers]  
filza 37, (1516) [petition of Jewish second-hand dealers]

*Parti comuni:*

filza 69, (1556) [election of RV superintendent]

*Parti criminali:*

reg.12, (1574-79) [distribution of plague-infected goods]

*Registri comuni:*

no.4, (1528), [Jewish *strazzaruoli*; *condotta* of 1528]

no.9, (1533), [*condotta* of 1533]

no.11, (1535-36), [background to *condotta* of 1537]

no.12, (1537-38), [*condotta* of 1537]

no.13, (1539-40), [Sanità ruling on beggars & prostitutes]

*Corporazioni di Arti e Mestieri* [Arti]

Index no.33

Along with the guild registers in the Correr Library, the archives of retailing and craft guilds in the Venetian State Archives are central to this thesis. They contain a mixture of sources such as guild statutes, membership lists and details of demarcation disputes between guilds. The quantity of material in each archive varies: whereas the mercers' records are extensive, the tailors' archive is slim. All documents relating to the second-hand dealers' guild in the period before 1650 were studied, as were several later records. They were supplemented with archives of other clothing trades, including guilds in

conflict with second-hand dealers. Few trial documents survive from the period, but later sources record earlier rulings concerning *strazzaruoli*. The shoemakers' files retain copies from a second-hand dealers' register which no longer exists. These archives also contain references to Jewish craft activities, legal and otherwise.

serie 13 - *Arte dei calegheri e zavatteri*

b.27, *Copia di mariegola ed altri atti relativi alla storia dell'arte (1503-1773)*

b.32, *Processi, no.5, contro arte degli strazzaruoli*

[copies of rulings on second-hand dealers, 1419-1787]

serie 43 - *Arte dei marangoni*

b.306, *Processo contro gli strazzaruoli (1691)*

serie 45 - *Arte dei marzeri*

b.312, *Mariegola (1471-1787)*

\_\_\_, *Ristretto generale di tutto le parti, ordini e regole della scuola (1452-1667)*

[material on Jews and guild of second-hand dealers]

b.314, *Capitoli e parti (1508-1608)*

b.315, *Capitoli e parti (1607-36)*

[1620s dispute with *strazzaruoli* over collars]

b.364, *Processi:*

fasc.100, *Marzeri contro Salamon Porto Hebreo denunciato per vender panni nuovi da Muro, 1635*

fasc.101, *Scuola di marzeri contro Ebrei fatti Cristiani (1676,1688,1692)*

fasc.102, *Scuola di marzeri contro Ebrei che vendono merci e altro* [details of retailing and

craft activities of Jews, 1512-1586, 1676-1712;  
includes 1586 petition by guild of *strazzaruoli*]  
fasc.103, *Sommario per scuola di marzeri contro  
diversi Ebrei.*

b.377, *Processi, scuola di marzeri contro strazzaruoli*  
[date mostly from the late 17th century on; odd  
references to disputes with second-hand dealers'  
guild in 1619 and mid-17th century]

b.397, *Nomi di fratelli (1586-1692)* [includes second-hand  
dealers enrolled in mercers' guild]

serie 63 - *Arte dei sartori*

b.502, *Capitoli e parti prese nell'arte dei sartori*  
[patchy records, details of 1614 dispute with  
second-hand dealers' guild]

serie 73 - *Arte degli strazzaruoli o revendigoli* [sic]

b.708, *Registro delle scossioni da farsi dai confratelli  
che entreranno nella detta arte (1616-1646)*  
[important list of guild-members, includes women]

\_\_\_, *Registro di capitoli (1747-1804)*

serie 81 - *Arte dei varoteri*

b.719, *Mariegola dei varoteri (1422-1713)*  
[numerous disputes with second-hand dealers' guild  
and friction with Jews]

b.720, *Processi:*

fasc. no.2, *Contro Hebrei* [copies of documents,  
1429-1650 with details about Christian *strazzaruoli*]

fasc. no.11, *Contro strazzaruoli A*

[copies of documents, 1332-1675 with details about



Jewish second-hand dealers]

fasc. no.12, *Contro strazzaruoli B* [1424-1674]

*Arte della seta*

The silk guild archive is separate from the other craft guilds' records, reflecting the guild's independent status.

b.554, *Capitolare* (fifteenth century) [thefts of silk]

b.572, *Denuncie e processi* (1526)

*Giudici di Petizion* [GP]

Alphabetical card-index in main reading room

The Petition Judges arbitrated in commercial disputes and cases of debt ranging from 50 *lire* to 50 ducats; they also settled issues of inheritance and tutelage. Their archives contain inventories of house and workshop contents dating from the end of the sixteenth century. These inventories have proved a rich source of information since they include stock belonging to *strazzaruoli* (Christian and Jewish), along with movable goods sold at auction.

*Inventari*

b.338/3, no.s 9-10, Caliman, Abraham, Benedetto e Nascimben fratelli ebrei, 23 June 1583 [petition about tutelary authority involving Jewish *strazzaruoli*]

b.340/5, no.78, Bartolomeo Giudise, mandoler al Sole, 20 May 1593 [inv. with values of movable goods sold by executors at public auction at Rialto]

b.341/6, no.35, q. Carlo Gritti, 22 Mar. 1597 [inv. with values of goods auctioned by executors at Rialto]

- \_\_\_, no.s 89-92, q. Salustio Gnechi, cavalier, 19 Nov. -17 Dec. 1599 [two inv.s: one with estimates; one with values of goods sold on Piazza San Marco]
- b.342/7, no.12, Anonymous, 29-31 Dec. 1599 [auction goods]
- \_\_\_, no.s 34-6, q. Matteo Ruggieri da Capua, 23 July - 2 Aug. 1602 [inv. with values of goods auctioned by executors at Rialto and San Marco]
- b.347/12, no.106, Anonymous strazzaruol at Santa Margarita, 27 Aug. 1621 [inv. of house at SS. Apostoli]
- b.348/13, no.92, Leonardo Mocenigo, Vescovo di Ceneda, 21 Oct. 1623 [list with values of expensive movable goods sold by executors to Jewish second-hand dealer Vielmo dalla Baldosa]
- b.349/14, no.9, q. Simon Mascaroni, osto alla Luna e Rizza, 13 Jan. 1623 [mv] [value of goods in tavern including pledges]
- \_\_\_, no.85, Leonardo Mocenigo, Vescovo di Ceneda, 27 June 1623 [inv. of movable goods with estimated values, includes luxurious furnishings]
- b.350/15, no.52, Leonardo Mocenigo, Vescovo di Ceneda, 20 May 1623 [creditors and debtors of the bishop's estate including Vielmo dalla Baldosa]
- b.351/16, no.s 67,74,93,96, q. Zuane Polleni, marzer all' insegno del San Lio in Frezzaria, 14 July - 17 Oct. 1629 [inv.s of house, shop and documents; auctioned goods; debtors include *strazzaruoli*].
- \_\_\_, no.125, Anonymous Jew, 14 Feb. 1629 [mv] [contents of house and second-hand dealer's shop]

- in Ghetto; goods pledged to Jewish second-hand dealer Jacob Sorzetto - see below]
- b.352/17, no.32, Jacob q. Grassin di Michiel di Mazzo Ebreo, detto Sorzetto, 29 July 1630  
[contents of house and second-hand dealer's shop]
- \_\_\_, no.34, q. Francesco Lesembiant, pistor tedesco, 30 July 1630 [inv. of house and shop including clothes held as pledges in the bakery]
- \_\_\_, no.54, q. Domenico Pizzoni, 28 Nov. 1630  
[inv. of household goods including bundles of cloth plus clothes left in pledge]
- b.353/18, no.60, q. Giustina Galla, 31 Oct. 1631 [plague death, inv. of goods returned after disinfection]
- \_\_\_, no.67, q. Andrea Bozetti, stramazzer, 18 Nov. 1631 [house, shop contents & goods in pledge]
- \_\_\_, no.131, q. Michiel q. Simon Calianni [Caliman?] Ebreo, 21 Oct. 1632 [house and shop contents; clothes left in pledge with values]
- b.354/19, no.35, q. Tommaso Calvis, mercante da vin all' Angelo, 16 June 1631 [inv. of pledges found in store including many clothes and furnishings]
- b.355/20, no.2, Cecilia Zarapaglia, 6 Mar. - 5 June 1636  
[inv. with estimates of household goods plus inv. with values of goods auctioned at Rialto]
- \_\_\_, no.33, q. Foresto Foresti, pistor, 16 Sept. 1636  
[contents of house & bakeries; clothes pledges]
- \_\_\_, no.60, q. Anzola Viviani widow, 21 Mar. 1634  
[Inv. of goods: some bequeathed, some to landlord]

- for rent, others sold to David Lonigo, Jew]
- b.356/21, no.s 27,29,30, Antonia q. Simon Trentino moglie di Nicolò di Zuliano, trentino, strazzaruol a Sant'Angelo 19 Aug. - 13 Sept. 1638 [will names second-hand dealer as executor; goods, accounts]
- \_\_\_\_, no.43, Andrea Polverini, 2 Dec. 1638  
[goods in house of Isabella Polverini, widow, printed Giustizia Vecchia auction permit]
- b.357/22, no.1, Zuane Brusca, pistor, 2-8 Mar. 1640  
[inv. of contents of three bakeries including lots of jewellery and clothes left as pledges]
- b.359/24, no.36, Betta, strazzaruola e marzera, 14 Nov. 1644 [inv. of house and workshop contents]
- \_\_\_\_, no.99, Giacomo Carletti, strazzaruol di contrà di San Moise, 16 May 1645 [house & workshop]
- b.361/26, no.82, q. Francesco, fontegher, 28 July 1649  
[movable goods sold at auction by *Magistrato della Biave*]
- b.363/27, no.s 9-10, 12, 21, q. Anselmo Sacerdoto detto Scocco, 4 April - 14 May 1650 [inv. of goods belonging to Jewish second-hand dealer]
- b.364/28, no.101, q. Marina widow of q. Girolamo Targa, 28 Nov. 1653 [contents of second-hand dealer's shop in Campo Santa Maria Formosa plus shop fittings]
- b.365/29, no.27, q. Alessandro Cima q. Nicolò, 12 Oct. 1654  
[contents of second-hand dealer's shop in Piazza San Marco; shop fittings and gold scales]

*Sentenze a Giustizia*

reg.173, ff.171-9,200-06, q. Pietro Saimben, 30 Aug. - 28  
Sept. 1481 [maladministration of inheritance,  
involves second-hand dealer's shop]

*Giudici del Piovego*

Index no.256

These public magistrates were responsible for bridges and public waterways, and also judged disputes over small sums of money. Their jurisdiction extended to unlicensed lending by Christians and Jews, and exorbitant charges levied by licensed usurers. Their archives contain odd references to such illicit activities.

b.1, *Capitolare del magistrato del Piovego (1254-1566, 1597-1616)*

*Inquisitori sopra l'Università degli Ebrei [IE]*

Index no.195

Three public auditors were introduced in the eighteenth century to oversee administration of the bankrupt Jewish community. Their archive contains copies of earlier rulings about Jewish second-hand dealers.

b.19, *Documenti diversi (fedi, suppliche, informazioni, contratti e testamenti), 1434-1613*

b.20, *Documenti diversi (fedi, suppliche, informazioni, contratti e testamenti), 1614-1660*

*Maggior Consiglio* [MC]

The Great Council, one of the principal organs of Venetian government, was a regular assembly of all adult patrician men who approved laws and elected officials to other councils. Miscellaneous registers recording rulings made by the Great Council were consulted.

*Deliberazioni:*

reg.21, *Liber Leona* (1384-1415)

reg.22, *Liber Ursa* (1400s)

reg.29, *Liber Angelus* (1566-74) [copy]

*Libro d'Oro Vecchio*, no.XIV (1571-89)

*Terminazioni*, reg.24, *Registro Stella* (1497)

*Milizia da Mar* [MM]

Index no.228

The *Milizia da Mar*, created in 1539, was responsible for manning Venetian galleys. It levied guilds for oarsmen as well as for financial contributions. The council's records, dating from the end of the sixteenth century, contain details about the size and wealth of guilds and their reactions to naval levies. They also include references to individual artisans.

b.382, *Registro contenute ordini, riferite ecc. relativi ai debitori delle arti, 1617-26*

b.485, *Registro alfabetico dei termini concessi alle arti per il pagamento della tansa galeotti, 1599-1605*

b.555, *Atti relativi alla tansa e taglione dei stramazzeri e strazzaruoli* [mainly 1700s, includes 1606 dispute

and 1660 guild petition]

b.642, *Filza contenute i ruoli nominali dei membri delle arti colla relativa quota di tansa e taglione 1605, 1661 ecc.* [includes list of 197 second-hand dealers drawn up by the guild's tax officials in 1659]

[bb.642-644 are stored together in one large file]

b.705, *Registro partitario della quota di tansa galeotti imposta alle arti, 1581*

b.707, *Quote di tanse alle arti, scuole e traghetti per l'armar delle 50 galere in ordine ai decreti 1595 e 1602 del Senato*

b.714, *Indice alfabetico delle arti che contribuiscono per le 4 galere grosse, 1617*

[bb.705-714 are stored together in one large file]

b.716, *Registro dei galeotti incaparrati dalle arti per le 2 galere grosse, 1639*

b.719, *Registro dei galeotti delle arti, fraglie, traghetti et altri, 1646-47*

b.720, *Quote di tanse alle arti, scuole e traghetti per 1600 galeotti in ordine alla parte 1647 del Senato*

b.755, *Pacco di processi ed altri documenti relativi a galeotti, 1540-1719* [includes 1635 trial of second-hand dealer who bought official ship biscuits]

*Procuratori di San Marco, de supra (Chiesa)* [PSM]

Index no.285

The Procurators of Saint Mark's held prestigious posts, second only to the Doge. They had custody of orphans,

acted as executors of estates and administered trust funds for deceased Venetians. The *de supra* division of procurators was one of three groups making up this magistracy. It attended to the fabric and treasury of Saint Mark's, including the Piazza precincts. The *de supra* Procurators regulated the Saturday market held on the Piazza, together with the annual Ascensiontide fair, and had various dealings with guilds. Security surrounding the funds administered by these officials also made them a safe deposit for excess cash taken at pawn-pledge auctions.

b.35, proc.75, *Proprietà e diritti della Procuratia de supra; diritti varj, sopraprezzi di pegni:*

fasc.1, *Soprabondante dei Sopraconsoli per bollettini di Ghetto (1535-1686)* [includes 1550s pawn tickets]

fasc.2, *Signori di Notte al Civil per la Camera dei pegni (1568-1716)* [deliberations concerning pledges]

b.50, proc.99, *Fiera dell'Ascensione detta la Senza:*

fasc.1, *Terminazioni e decreti - disposizioni per la regolarità della fiera (1488-1776)* [guild disputes about stalls; second-hand dealer's petition of 1593]

fasc.2, *Controversie seguite*  
[guild disputes; lists of guilds present]

b.51, *Fiera dell'Ascensione detta la Senza:*

fasc.4-5, *Dettagli delle arti scelte per portarsi in fiera (1620s-90s)*

b.55, *Procuratia de supra contro il magistrato della Giustizia Vecchia:*

fasc.2, *Contestazioni sulle diverse arti che occupano*



*la Piazza il sabato (1444-1747)*

b.58, proc.115, *Litigi contro diversi per diritti:*

fasc.2, *Procuratia de supra contro la Scuola dei Marzeri* [foreign merchants at fair]

fasc.5, *Privilegio all'arte dei marzeri d'esser soli venditori delle loro merci (1620-81)* [Sketch-map of Senza fair including second-hand dealers' stalls, c.1620]

*Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Giustizia Nova*

Index no.158

The magistracy of the *Giustizia Nova* [GN] was a sister organisation of the *Giustizia Vecchia* (see below). Like its counterpart, the *Giustizia Nova* protected consumers of food-stuffs and beverages and also regulated taverns and wine shops. Officials organised sales of forfeited pledges left against payment of food and drink in such places.

[bb.1-11 *alta*]

b.1, *Capitolare (1269-1785)* [18th-century copy, entries mainly 16th-century]

b.2, reg.2, *Capitolare secondo (1269-1731)*

—, reg.3, *Copia del capitolare antico del Collegio Eccellentissimo dei Signori Sette Savi* (1384-1714)

—, reg.4, *Raccolta di decreti, terminazioni ecc. riguardanti i pegni cioè gli effetti dati dai privati ai negozianti di vino in garanzia di loro debiti (1388-1795)* [18th-century copy, decrees bunched between years 1502-16, 1601-06, 1621-49]

b.29, filza 18, *Notifiche e riferite di pegni (1599-1796)*

[one 1599 sheet documents stolen cloth at auction]

b.40, filza 33, *Pegni venduti al pubblico incanto:*

*inventarii, prospetti, fedì ecc. (1665-1747)*

[later 17th-century auctions; lists of pledges]

*Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Giustizia Vecchia*

Index no.159

The magistracy of the *Giustizia Vecchia* [GV] was formed, along with the *Giustizia Nova*, in the thirteenth century and its principal function was to protect consumers against fraud in the market-place. Officials monitored prices, weights and measures and exercised control over most craft and retailing guilds. They authorised guild statutes, registered apprentices, arbitrated in trade disputes and settled differences between individual artisans. Two important types of auctions were also supervised: sales funding bequests and emergencies. Documents relating to second-hand dealers are quite sparse but supplement details in the guild archives. An additional register is in the Marciana library.

serie X - *Domande e risposte in causa*

b.52, filza 43, *Domande, scritture e risposte in causa per*

*crediti e differenze varie fra gli artigiani (1524-*

*1658)* [mainly 17th-century]

serie XIV - *Accordi di garzoni*

[Apprenticeship details - registers in very bad condition,

I was unable to consult bb.114-6 (1592-95), (1598-1607)]

b.112, registri 151-152 (1575-83)

b.113, registri 153-154 (1583-84, 1591-92)

serie XV - *Parti e capitoli ed altri atti delle arti*

b.213, *Strazzaruoli*:

a) *Parti (1586-1778)*

b) *Capitoli (1731-95)*

serie XVI - *Documenti per oggetto*

b.231, no.5, *Masserizie: inventarii di effetti mobili diversi venduti e da vendersi al pubblico incanto a pagamento di debiti di privati ed altre cause, 1581-1673* [auction goods, mostly 17th-century]

*Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alle Pompe [Pompe]*

Index no.266

Sumptuary laws (regulations intended to deter ostentatious displays of wealth) existed in Venice from the thirteenth century. In 1515, a permanent magistracy was created and the *Provveditori alle Pompe* were very active in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Their legislation was blamed for discouraging the trade in luxurious used goods.

b.1, *Capitolare primo (1562-1650)*

*Capitolare secondo (1644-73)*

b.6, Miscellaneous material, viz:

*Denuncie (1604-1734)* [mostly 18th century]

*Memorie varie, decreti in materia di pompe*

*Carte giudiziarie (1572-1747)*

*Sommari di decreti (1334-1797)*

*Decreti*

b.7, *Decreti circa le pompe dei reggimenti (1458-1781)*

*Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità [Sanità]*

Index no.300

A permanent Venetian Health Office run by *Provveditori alla Sanità* (Commissioners of Public Health) was established in the late fifteenth century. It enjoyed extensive powers and protected the city from outbreaks of disease. The Health Office developed methods for checking the spread of plague; it was also concerned with public sanitation and regulated social groups associated with disease, such as prostitutes, beggars, doctors and barbers. Movements of second-hand clothes and furnishings were restricted during plagues, which is why these archives were consulted.

reg.1, *Indice de' capitolari del magistrato alla Sanità*

reg.2, *Capitolare primo (1484-1574)*

reg.3, *Capitolare secondo (1574-1689)*

reg.5, *Sommarj e repertorj di tutte le leggi, ordini, terminazioni e deliberazioni prese in oggetti di sanità, redatti da Filippo Caogrosso per ordine dei tre Provveditori all Sanità... nel 1584*

[orders affecting Jews, pedlars, markets, auctions; rules for disinfecting clothes]

reg.6, *Ordini e parti prese nel Consiglio dei Dieci, Pregadi, Collegio e Provveditori alla Sanità durante la peste 1575-77, raccolte per ordine pubblico da Cornelio Morello a 1 marzo 1584 [copy]*

reg.7, *Indice generale delle categorie, o sieno classi,*

*nelle quali sono divisi li quattro tomi che seguono*  
[18th-century index in with reg.6]

reg.8, Rubrica delle leggi ecc. del Magistrato  
Eccellentissimo alla Sanità va dal 1485 in cui fu  
creato [late 18th-century copy]:

Tomo I

reg.9, Tomo II

reg.10, Tomo III

reg.11, Tomo IV

reg.17, *Registro di decreti del Maggior Consiglio e di*  
*Pregadi dal 1321-1631*

*Notatori - Decreti, ordini e parti prese dal magistrato*  
*alla Sanità*

reg.725, *Notatorio 1 (1485-1508)*

reg.726, *Notatorio 3 (1515-28)* [Notatorio 2 missing]

reg.727, *Notatorio 4 (1528-37)*

reg.728, *Notatorio 5 (1538-42)*

reg.729, *Notatorio 6 (1542-55)*

reg.730, *Notatorio 7 (1555-65)*

reg.732, *Notatorio 9 (1574-76)*

reg.733, *Notatorio 10 (1576-77)*

reg.736, *Notatorio 15 (1597-1607)*

reg.739, *Notatorio 17 (1624-42)*

reg.740, *Notatorio 18 (1642-51)*

reg.741, *Notatorio 19 (1651-64)*

filza 562, *Opinioni mediche sul contagio di Venezia, 1630*

*Sant'Uffizio* [SU]

Index no.303

Records of investigations undertaken by the Inquisition in Venice have been well-studied by historians. In spite of the methodological difficulties, these archives represent an extremely rich source of information about Venetian society. Transcripts produced by the *Sant'Uffizio* (Holy Office) from the mid-sixteenth century were consulted because, in addition to references about second-hand dealers, they contain details about domestic thefts. Magical experiments and spurious prayers were employed to identify the perpetrators of such crimes: if reported and subsequently proven, the instigators of these heretical practices incurred punishment by the Holy Office. The information about petty thefts within the Inquisition records not only complements material gained from other sources, but it also provides rare insight into the immediate context of domestic crimes and the reactions of victims to the loss of material goods.

b.7, proc. Franceschina et al: test. Donna Menega, 14 Sept. 1548 [witness: second-hand dealer's wife].

b.13, proc. Margherita de' Vescovi, 25 June 1558 [theft of priest's clothes].

b.41, proc. Cesare Pastaro, *strazzaruol*: den. Giovanni de Zanetris, 15 Apr. 1577; test. Francesco Crosi; Domenego Frezer; India; const. Cesare Pastaro, 20 Apr. [second-hand dealer accused of blasphemy; mention of *lazzaretti* and plague].

- b.46, proc. Veronica Franco: den. Ridolfo Vannitelli, 3 Oct. 1580; Const. Veronica Franco, 8 & 13 Oct. 1580 [theft of precious goods].
- b.52, proc. Solomon della Regina, 30 July 1585: test. Giorgio; test. Eusebius Renato, 3 Aug. 1585 [Jewish traders and pledging reference].
- b.59, proc. Marietta Greca: den. Agnesina, 23 Mar. 1587 [domestic theft].
- \_\_\_, proc. Domenica de' Recaldini: den. Odoardo, head of the Watch, 21 May 1587 [thief].
- \_\_\_, proc. Valeria Brugnalesco & Splandiana Mariani: den. Lucrezio Cilla, 30 May 1587; test. Donna Fulvia, 10 June; Abj. Valeria Brugnalesco & Splandiana Mariani, 31 July [domestic theft].
- b.63, proc. Franceschina: den. Elena, c.28 Apr. 1588; test. Narcissa, 17 May; Marietta, 17 May [clothes' theft].
- b.64 proc. Giorgio Moretto, 8 Apr. 1589: test. Abraam Salvadeo; test. Giorgio Moretto, 13 Apr. 1589 [broker].
- b.66, proc. Apollonia Colomba: test. Angelo, 19 June 1590; Const. Apollonia Colomba, 28 May 1591; den. Vincenzo Malipiero, 12 June 1583; test. Lucrezia Schiavina [accused of stealing husband's clothes].
- b.67, proc. Maria da Ponte: test. Zuane Battista, 27 Apr. 1591; Carlo, 2 May; Const. Maria, 7 May [theft].
- \_\_\_, proc. Orsolina da Mestre: test. Pietro, 18 May 1591; Joannetta Occhialina [domestic theft].
- b.68, proc. Angelica Romana: test. Michela Dalmata, 4 Dec. 1591; Andriana, 10 Dec. [theft of household linen].

- , proc. Cecilia Simonetti [sponte comp.], 8 Aug. 1591  
[theft of two shirts while at Mass].
- b.85, proc. Chiara Cavazza [sponte comp.], 14 Dec. 1627  
[theft of household linen, serving girl suspected].
- b.86, proc. Orsetta, 31 July 1628 [clothes' theft].  
—, proc. Giacoma Davod [sponte comp.], 22 Aug. 1628  
[domestic theft].
- , proc. Vincenza Pezzina: den. Oliva da Murano, 1 Jan.  
1628 [lost and stolen goods].
- b.87, proc. Felice Magalotti: test. Liberman Todesco  
Ebreo, 18 Aug. 1629; Luca, UC functionary, 4 Sept.  
1629; Giosua Iosarum Ebreo [red hat rented in Ghetto,  
black hat left as pledge].
- b.89, proc. Isabella de' Cecca: test. Betta, 20 June 1632  
[domestic theft of jewellery].  
—, proc. Pietro Vincenzo Maria Sandoval: test. Giovanni  
Pio, 26, 31 Aug. 1632, 21 Feb. 1633 [witness:  
baptised Jew enrolled in second-hand dealer's guild,  
*bottega* near Ghetto, non-baptised Jew apprentice].
- , proc. Cornelia de' Santi: test. Antonia, 19 Mar.  
1633; Betta, 12 May; Cattarina, 17 Aug. 1634  
[domestic theft].
- b.91, proc. Andrea Nunciata: test. Bartolomeo Cordellina,  
weaver and *sanser* in Ghetto, 20 Nov. 1635; Const.  
Andrea Nunciata [false accusation of buying stolen  
goods, Giovanni Pio, second-hand dealer cited].
- b.94, proc. Marietta Battaglia Rubini: test. Gerolemo  
Vacca, 23 Mar. 1637; Angela, 25 Mar.; Paola, 20 Apr.



- 1638 [theft of clothes and other goods by maid].
- b.98, proc. Isabella/Candia, 18 June 1642 [clothes theft].
- b.101, proc. Lorenzo Valandi, silk weaver [sponte comp.],  
3 July 1645 [theft of silk from workshop].
- —, proc. Stefano Valetta, *strazzaruol*: den. Francesca  
dalla Fonte, 17 Mar. 1644 [baptised Jew accused of  
consorting with Jews and bribing justice officials].
- b.105, proc. Maddalena Obizzi: den. Silvestro, 31 May, 9  
June 1650; const. Maddalena 30 June [glass theft].
- b.108, proc. Isaac Levi: test. Francesco Botticelli, 30 Jan  
1659; Vittoria, 4 Feb. [theft of pawn tickets]

### *Senato*

The Senate, a central organ of government, was an assembly of more than a hundred patricians, partly elected from the *Maggior Consiglio* with additional members from other councils of state. It met several times a week to debate and vote upon issues. Matters affecting the city of Venice together with the mainland (*terra*) were considered, as were affairs relating to the sea empire and maritime fleet (*mar*). The Senate's archives, made up of registers and rough files, reflect these concerns: the *Senato terra* series was consulted mainly for information about residence contracts drawn up with the *Ebrei tedeschi*; and the *Senato mar* series for details of disputes over old sailcloth. Registers recording secret resolutions were also studied.

#### *Deliberazioni (secreta):*

reg.48, (1519-21) [*condotta* of 1520]

reg.66, (1548-49) [*condotta* of 1548]

*Mar filze:*

reg.26, (1541) [Levantine Jews' Ghetto ruling]

filza 166, (1605) [old sailcloth]

filza 301, (1636) [old sailcloth]

filza 338, (1641) [old sailcloth]

*Terra registri:*

reg.16, (1508-09) [*condotta* of 1508]

reg.18, (1512) [*Ebrei tedeschi* tax obligations]

reg.19, (1515-16) [Ghetto decree, plus debt auctions]

reg.21, (1519-21) [*soprabondante* at pledge auctions; fraud]

reg.23, (1523-25) [*condotta*, auctions, Monti di Pietà]

reg.25, (1528) [plague reference]

reg.44, (1563) [Ghetto brokers ruling]

reg.45, (1564-65) [Monte di Pietà regulations]

reg.49, (1572-73) [*condotta* of 1573]

reg.51, (1577) [post-plague guild rules]

reg.52, (1578) [post-plague guild rules]

reg.57, (1587) [RV furnishings reference]

reg.69, (1599) [Jewish *strazzaruol* compensation]

reg.94, (1624) [*condotta*]

reg.102, (1629) [*condotta*]

reg.112, (1634) [*condotta*]

*Terra filze:*

filza 19, (1554) [Jews and crafts on the mainland]

filza 27, (1558) [stolen goods and plague]

filza 28, (1558) [*condotta*]

filza 36, (1562) [indebted second-hand dealer's petition]

filza 44, (1565) [rejected *condotta* plus Jews' petitions]  
 filza 46, (1566) [*condotta* plus Jewish petition]  
 filza 58, (1571) [rejected *condotta - alta*]  
 filza 61, (1573) [*condotta - alta*]  
 filza 66, (1575) [Monte di Pietà regulations]  
 filza 71, (1577) [post-plague guild rules]  
 filza 72, (1578) [post-plague guild rules]  
 filza 80, (1580) [*condotta* plus Jewish petition]  
 filza 91, (1584) [Jews and fur trade]  
 filza 96, (1585) [Paduan Jews *condotta* and petitions]  
 filza 98, (1586) [*condotta*: Jewish petition & tailors;  
                   RV furnishings accounts, include Jew]  
 filza 111, (1589) [Veronese Jews' *condotta*; *strazzaruoli*]  
 filza 118, (1590) [ghetto wharf; Jewish *strazzaruol*]  
 filza 122, (1591) [*condotta*: Jews'petition, UC,SM reports]  
 filza 141, (1597) [*condotta*: Jews' petitions, reports from  
                   UC, SM, Patriarch; furnishings provided  
                   to State by Jewish second-hand dealer]  
 filza 148, (1598) [Levantine Jews *condotta*]  
 filza 152, (1599) [Jewish *strazzaruol* compensation]  
 filza 156, (1600) [Veronese Jews *condotta* and petition]  
 filza 161, (1602) [*condotta*: Jews'petition, UC,SM reports]  
 filza 184, (1607) [*condotta*: Jews'petition, UC,SM reports]  
 filza 199, (1611) [Levantine Jews *condotta*: petitions, UC,  
                   CSM, SM, *Savi sopra la Mercanzia* reports]  
 filza 207, (1612-13) [*condotta*: Jewish petitions, UC, SM  
                   & CSM reports - *alta*]  
 filza 215, (1615) [University of Padua petiton]

filza 231, (1618) [*condotta*: petition, UC,SM,CSM reports]  
filza 271, (1624) [*condotta*: petition, UC,SM,CSM reports]  
filza 306, (1629) [*condotta*: petition, UC,SM,CSM reports]  
filza 318, (1630) [pledges in Ghetto during plague]  
filza 319, (1630) [plague regulations; pawn-bank rules]  
filza 368, (1634) [*condotta*: petitions, UC,SM,CSM,RV  
reports]  
filza 649, (1658) [*condotta*: petitions, UC,SM,CSM reports  
plus summary of *condotte* 1624-34]  
filza 660, (1659) [cost to Jews of furnishing palaces]

### *Sezione Notarile*

Card index in main reading room

The notarial section of the Venetian State Archives contains notaries' records and copies of legal documents. Wills (*testamenti*) drawn up by lawyers for second-hand dealers and their relatives were consulted for this thesis. Systematic examination of archives belonging to notaries employed by second-hand dealers and the Jewish community in the Ghetto Nuovo was not feasible for this study, but such an approach is likely to produce more details about the personal circumstances of *strazzaruoli*.

### *Testamenti*

- b.36, notary Pietro Abramo, will no.55: Nicolosa,  
*sartora*, 25 May 1569 [widow of second-hand dealer]  
b.42, notary Agostino Trevisan, will no.2: Domenico,  
*strazzaruol*, *commandador et ministerial del palazzo*,  
10 Sept. 1529

- b.95, notary Benzon, will no.170: Domenico, *strazzaruol*,  
*commandador et ministerial del palazzo*, 9 Sept. 1538
- b.193, notary Marcantonio Cavanis, will no.79: Antonio,  
*strazzacappa*, 17 Mar. 1563
- b.197, notary Marcantonio Cavanis, protocol, f.202 [f.125  
 2nd pag.]: Francesco di Piero, *strazzaruol*, will,  
 25 June 1559
- b.197 bis, notary Marcantonio Cavanis, will no.38:  
 Cristoforo, *strazzaruol*, 22 June 1571
- b.199 notary Nicolò Cigrini, will no.319: Zuane,  
*strazzaruol*, 17 Nov. 1579 [tailor's son]
- b.200 notary Nicolò Cigrini, will no.709: Marietta, 30  
 Oct. 1576 [second-hand dealer's daughter]
- b.217, notary Giovanni Maria Cavaneis, will no.30:  
 Angela, 14 May 1535 [second-hand dealer's daughter  
 married to a shoemaker]
- b.217, notary Giovanni Maria Cavaneis, will no.184:  
 Giacomo di Bernardo, *strazzaruol*, 27 Sept. 1540
- b.222, notary Crivelli, will no.970: Ioppa, 5 Aug. 1577  
 [second-hand dealer's daughter]
- b.222, notary Crivelli, will no.1178: Lunardo,  
*strazzaruol*, 1 July 1589 [tailor's son]
- b.226 notary Crivelli, will no.420: Battista,  
*strazzaruol*, 28 July 1620
- b.1202, notary Bortolomeo Moro, will no.78: Moise di  
 Grassini, 12 Feb. 1604 [mv], [Jewish *strazzaruol*]

*Atti*

- b.10117, notary Bartolomeo Michieli, no.1227, 25 Jan. 1807

[description of the structural features of a  
second-hand dealer's shop in the Ghetto Nuovo]

*Signori di Notte al Civil* [SNC]

Index no.330

This magistracy was a sister organisation of the criminal justice authority of the same name [see below]. Formed in 1545 to deal with minor civil cases, it also assumed duties of the *Capi di Sestieri*, an older group of justice officials. The *Signori di Notte al Civil* were concerned with slander, petty fraud and rent arrears; they also seized, stored and sold pledges for judicial purposes. Fraud included the misappropriation of goods left as security in transactions. Surviving trial records are not extensive, but the archive does contain valuable details about the management of pledges.

b.1, *Capitolare A (1270-1586)*

[statute book of the *Capi di Sestieri*; rulings on similar matters by the SNC, includes clothes' hire]

—, *Capitolare B (1545-1785)*

[17th-century source?, mostly 16th-century entries, various cases of fraud involving cloth and clothes]

b.216, *Inventari d'asporti (1583-1622)*

b.217, *Inventari d'asporti (1622-1638)*

[registers of lists of goods seized from houses and workshops for debts; include clothes & furnishings]

b.261, *Presentation in Camera (1578-1607)*

reg.1 (1578-82)

reg.2 (1601-03)

reg.3 (1605)

reg.4 (1606-07)

[registers of disputed goods presented for safe keeping to the *Signori*, include lots of clothes]

b.271, *Vendite dei Signori di Notte al Civil (1601-41)*

reg.1 (1601-04)

reg.2 (1621-23)

reg.3 (1630-38)

reg.4 (1639-41)

[lists of pledges sold at auction for rent arrears and to pay fines and costs, lots of clothes and furnishings; buyers cited include *strazzaruoli*]

*Signori di Notte al Criminal* [SNCr]

Index no.331

Originally responsible for maintaining order in the city at night, the *Signori di Notte al Criminal* also had powers to arrest and to prosecute minor crimes. Petty theft came within this jurisdiction. Surviving documents for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are uneven: there is a relevant *capitolare*, but few trial records. These sources allow insight into the framework of justice and problems facing officials, and they can be supplemented with details of crimes from the archives of the *Censori*, *Sant'Uffizio* and guilds. Given the many overlaps in jurisdiction between these magistracies in the early modern period, this 'composite' approach is quite appropriate.

reg.1a, *Capitolare (1254-1523)*

[references to servants' theft and street theft]

reg.2, *Capitolare (1232-1797)*

[18th-century copy, details about theft]

reg.3, *Capitolare (1237-1567)*

[16th-century register, copies of old laws, various entries about theft in domestic and public places and the problems of preventing it]

reg.12, *Frammenti di processi (1389-1403, 1516-23)*

[odd references: prosecutions for theft]

reg.14, *Registro di banditi (1486-1523)*

[includes sentences of criminals exiled for theft]

reg.20, *Rei espediti dai Signori di Notte: notizia data al Proprio (1513-1621)*

[details of sentences given to appeal court]

reg.23, *Raspe antiche (1564-72) ritrovate per accidente nel mese di marzo 1769 sotto un scalino del tribunale*  
[records of sentences for crimes including theft]

b.13, *Signori di Notte al Criminal contro Capi dell'arte dei strazzaruoli degli ebrei (1653-1717)*

[18th-century trial, copies of earlier documents; trade controls to check reception of stolen goods]

*Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* [SM]

Index no.221

The *Sopraconsoli dei Mercanti* were established to help bankrupts settle their affairs. From the late fourteenth century onwards they were also responsible for auctions of



unredeemed pledges kept by Jewish money-lenders. Their control of pledge-auctions and Jewish pawn-banks continued throughout the period.

b.1, *Capitolare (13th C.-1615)*

[16th-century copy compiled after Rialto fire, 1514]

liber 3 - *Rappresaglie* [*soprabondante* rules]

liber 4 - '*Liber quartus Judeorum*' (1385-16th C.)

[Jewish lenders & pledge sales; *condotte* of 1385 & 1503, pledge abuses]

liber 5 - *Terminazioni* (16th C.-1615)

[auction abuses, lending problems]

*Ufficiali al Cattaver* [UC]

Index no.72

The magistracy of the *Cattaver* was long-established and had diverse functions. Initially responsible for bolstering public revenues, the *Ufficiali al Cattaver* also regulated boat-pilots, pursued the Republic's salvage rights and investigated cases of intestacy. In 1516, they assumed an additional task - general supervision of the Ghetto Nuovo.

b.2, reg.3 *Capitolare (1608-67)*

[rulings on the Jews, Ghetto Vecchio, Jewish and Christian second-hand dealers, wharfs and brokers]

\_\_\_, reg.4, *Capitolare (1395-1744)*

[various rulings, mostly 16th century: justice in Ghetto, bribes, decrees regulating Jews' activities]

bb.242-58 *Ebreorum Cattaveri (1565-1653)*

[Series of detailed registers recording decisions on the

day-to-day management of the Ghetto Nuovo, including references to second-hand dealers. Specific registers were examined for the years 1565-1597, a period for which there are few alternative sources on the Jewish second-hand trade; bb.245-58 are likely to yield more details about individuals and the trade.]

b.242, reg.1, *Ebreorum Cattaveri (1565-97)*

[specific to Ghetto brokers]

b.243, reg.3, *Ebreorum Cattaveri (1582-84)*

\_\_\_, reg.4, *Ebreorum Cattaveri (1584-88)*

b.244, reg.5, *Ebreorum Cattaveri (1590-97)*

[lists of 'lost' goods believed in Ghetto]

*Ufficiali alle Rason Vecchie* [RV]

Index no.296

The magistracy of the *Rason Vecchie* helped to regulate expenditure within the Republic and its officials reviewed accounts of provincial governors. From the fourteenth century, the *Ufficiali alle Rason Vecchie* provided hospitality to foreign dignitaries visiting Venice, and also organised public festivals and ducal banquets. Luxurious furnishings were bought, rented and borrowed for such occasions and this brought officials into contact with second-hand dealers. The *Rason Vecchie* archives are uneven, but contain details about the use of furnishings for public events and odd references to the *Ebrei tedeschi* who, from the end of the sixteenth century, were obliged to provide goods free of charge.

- b.1, *Capitolare (1260-1752)*  
 [18th-century copy: details about procedures and a few examples of receptions; problems of storage]
- b.3, *Capitolare (1368-1557)*  
 [problem of costs; importance of receptions; rental of tapestries]
- b.30, *Notatorio 14 (1593-1602)*
- b.105, *Mandati e carte del Consiglio de' Dieci alle Rason Vecchie (1512-30)*
- b.222, *Spese per l'arrivo di principi (1608-1706)*  
 [detailed accounts of goods provided for receptions]  
 fasc.1608, Spese fatte nelli refrescamenti per l'occasion delli Serenissimi Principi di Savoia, 1608.  
 fasc.1635, Spese fatte nell'alloggio dell'Eccellentissimo Signor Pomponio Bellieure, ambasciatore straordinario del Re Christianissimo [sic], 1635.  
 fasc.1663, Spese fatte nell'alloggio de Signori Ambasciatori de Moscovia, 1663.

Miscellaneous archives consulted:

- *Cancellaria Inferiore, miscellanea, atti notai diversi*, b.39, no.44, Antonio Rossati, strazzaruol, 29 Oct. 1556 [inv. of huge number of goods in *bottega* and house]
- *Cancellaria Inferiore, notai*, b.62, notary: Camuccia di Bartolomeo
- *Collegio:*

- *Notatori:*
  - reg.23, (1535)
  - reg.24, (1539-43)
  - reg.49, (1587) [harassment of Jewish trader]
- *Risposte di dentro (suppliche)*, filza 38, 23 Feb. 1647 [m.v.]
- *Secreta, Esposizioni principi*, filza 25, 10 Feb. 1617 [mv], [Wotton's fire]
- *Governatori delle Entrate Pubbliche, registri istrumenti vendite*, b.174 (1537-66)
- *Materia Ecclesiastica, San Francesco della Vigna*, b.3, I, *Istromenti di mansionerie disposte a farne del Convento di San Francesco della Vigna*, ff.62r-63v, Doge Andrea Gritti, 11 Mar. 1539 [will: luxurious furnishings and clothes bequeathed to monastery]
- *Miscellanee mappe 1396 (olim Sala Marherita, serie LXXVIII, 4, PSM, de supra (Chiesa)*, b.53
- *Scuole piccole e suffragi, serie 61, Beata Vergine Assunta Scuola in Santa Maria Maggiore*, b.98, filza I, *Acquisti in materia dell'erezione di detta scuola, 1502-1507*
- *Secreta, Codici Svajer 14 (ex Breda 262), Capitolare dei notai, 1542*

b) Biblioteca del Museo Correr, Venice [BMC]

*Mariegole:*

The Correr Library has a number of important guild registers. A separate index is given on request though it

is not completely accurate. Not all the registers listed are *mariegole* (registers of guild statutes), and the source cited as *mariegola* no.200, *stramazzeri*, is in fact an eighteenth-century *strazzaruoli* guild membership list.

no.50, *Mariegola dei passamaneri (1593-1659)*  
no.102, *Mariegola dei marzeri (1564-1806)*  
no.139, *Mariegola degli orefici e gioiellieri (1434-1800s)*  
[references to Jews and second-hand dealers]  
no.195, *Mariegola degli strazzaruoli (1430-1633)* [M.St.]  
[one of most important sources for this thesis: 218 pages, detailed entries for whole of period including copies of earlier statutes]  
no.200, *Strazzaruoli: tansa di milizia, taglion e luminaria (1776-c.1800)* [list of members with trades]

c) Archivio delle Istituzioni di Ricovero e di Educazione, Venice (Giudecca) [IRE]

The archives of the old charity hospitals and other pious institutions contain a great deal of useful material. Not all the collections have been indexed and only the most accessible sources, the archives of the Ospedale dei Derelitti (Ospedaletto), were consulted for this thesis. Within these archives, material classified as *Commissarie* (documents resulting from the administration of deceased people's estates) was of particular use. These sources contain a mixture of relevant records including wills, inventories of personal belongings, auction permits and private correspondence.

*Ospedale dei Derelitti* [Der.E]

- b.68, Cristoforo Castigante, fasc.4 (1588-89)
- b.87, Pier Iseppo Donesan, fasc.2 (1515-1615)
- b.115, Iseppo Gaffuri dai Sacchi, (1588-1615)
- b.130, Angelica Leoncini, fasc.4 (1569-70)
- b.131, Angelica Leoncini, fasc.3 (1508-69)
- b.137, Zuane Lionbardi, *strazzaruol*, fasc.1, (1588-89)  
[will, wife's will which refers to a shop, and later  
will drawn up for son]
- b.155, Sebastiano Migliori  
[details of a long dispute over a substantial  
inheritance involving two bothers, sons of a  
prominent second-hand dealer, and their aunt]  
\_\_\_\_\_, fasc.1, (1585)  
\_\_\_\_\_, fasc.6 - 9, (1630-36)
- b.156, Sebastiano Migliori, fasc.2, (1621-29)
- b.163, Sebastiano Migliori, fasc.1, (1585-1676)  
\_\_\_\_\_, fasc.3, (1621-35)  
\_\_\_\_\_, fasc.7, (1629-62)
- b.179, Benedetto Picchi, fasc.1, (1578)  
\_\_\_\_\_, fasc.3, (1579-80)
- b.186, Zuane Domenego Ranco, fasc.2, (1607)  
\_\_\_\_\_, fasc.4, (1606-08)
- b.191, Ruggero Ruggeri, fasc.4, (1580-1612)
- b.195, Agostino Spinelli, fasc.5, (1560-93)  
*Libro di debitori et creditor et cassa di contadi  
misier Augustin Spinelli* [baker]
- b.205, Cattarinella Zane, fasc.3, (1567-98)

d) Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice [BNM]

ms. Ital., cl. VII, 1572 (7642), vol.1

*Capitolare della Giustizia Vecchia: Sommario dei  
Capitolari Antico, Rosso, Rosa, et Orsa et di altre  
Parti...* [decisions on trades, includes *strazzaruoli*]

e) Biblioteca Querini Stampalia, Venice [BQS]

ms. cl. VI, cod.20 (1268)

*Poesie oscene dell'ill[ustriss]mo S[ignore] Gio.  
Fran[cesco] Businello*

- '*La zornada della Sensa*' [first poem, pages missing]

f) Archivio di Stato di Firenze [ASF]

For purposes of comparison, a limited amount of research was undertaken on guild records in the Florentine State Archives. Reports from Florentine ambassadors in Venice (*Residenti*) were also checked for information about furnishing official residences.

*Archivio delle Arti*

*Inventory N/34 (Inventari: Arti, Accademia del Disegno e  
Camera del Commercio)*

[in sixteenth-century Florence, second-hand dealers were part of a large agglomerate including linen merchants, tailors, wine merchants and innkeepers]

*Arte dei rigattieri, linaioli e sarti*

no.1, *Codice membranaceo contenute lo statuto de'  
rigattieri e sue aggiunte (1295-96)*

- no.5, *Detto contenute lo statuto dei rigattieri e  
linaioli (1340-1529)*
- no.7, *Codice cartaceo contenute le deliberazioni de'  
consoli e statuari de' rigattieri (1408-1552)*  
[references to trade frauds, stolen goods, abuse of  
pledges, pedlars and rental of household goods]
- Ms no.845, *Notizie sull'arte dei rigattieri, linaioli e  
sarti* [nd, probably 18th-century]
- Università dei linaioli* (formed 1534, includes rigattieri)
- no.1, *Codice cartaceo contenente lo statuto de' linaioli  
con approvazioni (1549-52)*  
[entries on female traders in Florence, rental of  
household goods, stolen goods, pedlars]
- no.2, *Inserto contenente varie riforme di statuti (1561-  
75)* [stolen goods and abuses by second-hand dealers]
- no.3, *Codice cartaceo contenente lo statuto suddetto  
riformato nel 23 luglio 1578 con le successive  
approvazioni (1578-1766)*  
[references to Orsanmichele, matriculation fees,  
female tailors, stolen goods, sale of cloth remnants  
to Jewish second-hand dealers]

*Archivio Mediceo del Principato*

- no.2995, *Carteggio Asdrubale Barbolani, Residente in  
Venezia (1596-1618)*
- no.3006, *Carteggio Niccolò Sacchetti, Residente in  
Venezia (1618-27)*  
[details about furnishing palace on Grand Canal]



and renting goods at short notice]

g) Public Record Office, London [PRO]

Consulted for information about the English ambassadors to Venice Henry Wotton and Dudley Carleton who had dealings with Jewish second-hand dealers. The Venetian State Papers series contains fascinating details about the provision of furnishings on a short-term basis in Venice.

*State Papers Venetian (SP99)*

- vol.6, part 2, Henry Wotton to Dudley Carleton, Nov. 1610  
\_\_\_\_\_, Henry Wotton to Dudley Carleton, Nov. 1610  
\_\_\_\_\_, Inventory for monthly payment, Dec. 1610  
[list of household furnishings in Italian,  
reference to Isaac Ebreo]  
\_\_\_\_\_, Henry Wotton to Dudley Carleton, Dec. 1610  
\_\_\_\_\_, Isaac Wake to Henry Wotton, Dec. 1610  
[disagreement between Carleton and the  
Jewish second-hand dealer over contract]  
\_\_\_\_\_, Note of reckoning of Wotton with the Jew,  
Dec. 1610 [inv. of goods supplied to  
Wotton with costs, in Italian]  
\_\_\_\_\_, Mr Wake's note with the Jew, Dec. 1610  
[breakdown of costs owed to Isaac Ebreo  
and rented goods Carleton kept on]  
\_\_\_\_\_, Memorial of money due to Luzzatti the Jew  
by Wotton, Dec. 1610 [includes debts]  
\_\_\_\_\_, Inventory taken by Wake the day before

Wotton went, Dec. 1610 [list of household goods in English, Hebrew reckoning]  
vol.7, part 3, Carleton's last account with Isaac Luzzatti, the Jew, June 1611  
vol.17, part 1, Carleton to Chamberlain, Sept. 1614  
\_\_\_\_\_, part 2, Carleton to Chamberlain, Oct. 1614  
[called back to Venice after belongings shipped on, obliged to rent from Jews]  
vol.18, part 1, Carleton to Chamberlain, Nov. 1614  
vol.19, part 2, Receipt for rent of house, May/June 1615  
vol.20, part 1, Account of expenses, Oct.1615  
vol.21, part 2, Wotton to Carleton, Aug/Sept 1616

h) Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, London  
[WIHM]

ms 223: *Lettere ed altre scritture appartenenti a Lodovico Cucino medico della Sanità di Venezia.*

[Notebook relating to Ludovico Cucino, Physician to the Venetian Health Office, who was based in the Lazzaretto Vecchio during the plague of 1555-58. Contains copies of letters dating from this period; catalogued as a 17th-century document]

## II. Printed Sources

*700 anni di costume nel Veneto: documenti di vita civile dal XII al XVIII secolo*, ed. Davide Rampello (Treviso, 1976) [exhibition catalogue]

*Delle accoglienze usate dai viniziani ai principi esteri: dissertazione inedita di dotto patrizio veneto* (Venice: Alvisopoli, 1840)

- Amman, Jost, and Hans Sachs, *The book of trades (Ständebuch)* (New York: Dover Publications, 1973)
- Aretino: *selected letters*, trans. George Bull, Penguin classics series (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976)
- Aretino, Pietro, *Il primo libro delle lettere*, ed. Fausto Nicolini, Scrittori d'Italia series (Bari: Laterza, 1913)
- Aretino, Pietro, *Il secondo libro delle lettere*, ed. Fausto Nicolini, 2 vols (Bari: Laterza, 1916)
- Aretino, Pietro, *Ragionamento: Dialogo* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1988)
- Aretino, Pietro, *Cortigiana: Opera nova: Pronostico: Il testamento dell'elefante: Farza*, ed. Angelo Romano (Milan: Rizzoli, 1989)
- Barbaro, Antonio, *Pratica criminale* (Venice: Giuseppe Bortoli, 1739).
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