

Romano, D.

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pp. 63-81

Romano, D., (1984) "Charity and Community in Early Renaissance Venice", *Journal of Urban History*, 11, 1, pp.63-81

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Course of Study: HI3G9 - Venice in the Renaissance

Title: *Journal of Urban History: "Charity and Community in Early Renaissance Venice"*

Name of Author: Romano, D.

Name of Publisher: Sage Publications Ltd

CHARITY AND COMMUNITY IN EARLY RENAISSANCE VENICE

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Along with kinship and marriage ties, ties to neighbors were important to city dwellers in the city-states of Renaissance Italy. For the individual citizen, much of his or her social life centered on the local *piazza* or parish church where business deals were struck, marriages contracted, and opinions exchanged. Neighborhoods played a role in the public life of citizens as well. In many cities, seats in the councils of government were apportioned by districts and public services were administered by neighborhood officials. This admixture of public and private functions had important consequences both for individuals and for the cities themselves. In some cities, most notably Florence and Genoa, neighborhoods became the power bases of influential families that drew the surrounding residents around them in circles of clientage. In times of peace these neighborhood coalitions served as informal pressure groups attempting to influence civic policy; in times of unrest, they became armed bands and their districts fortified enclaves. Neighborhood coalitions, along with kinship groups, guilds, and confraternities,

Author's Note: Part of the research for this article was funded by a grant from the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation. A Charles Phelps Taft Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of Cincinnati provided an opportunity to write it. I would like to thank Stanley Chojnacki and John Martin for their comments on an earlier version.

contributed to the particularism that threatened civic unity and exacerbated civic strife in the Italian cities.¹

In his distinguished work, *Venice: A Maritime Republic*, Frederic C. Lane argues that neighborhoods played a different role in Venice from that which they played in most Italian cities. Rather than promoting particularism and therefore discord, Lane believes that the parishes of Venice provided a "foundation stone of Venice's social stability." According to the author, Venetian parishes contained all the elements essential for neighborhood life (churches, *campi*, wells, houses, and shops) that served to forge parishioners into a community. What made the parishes of Venice particularly distinctive was their social composition; each contained a cross section of the Venetian populace, including patricians, well-to-do commoners, artisans, and the poor. Lane argues that social integration on the parish level served to mitigate social tension on the civic level by giving the disenfranchised *popolo* or commoners of Venice "a sense of belonging."² Other historians have adopted this view, and it is rapidly becoming the accepted position on Venetian neighborhood life.³

Lane's view of Venetian parochial life derives from two sources. On one hand, it arises from his reading of official records that show that the regime treated parishes as corporate entities with responsibilities to a larger corporate entity—the Venetian state. Parishes and the officials assigned to them were responsible for keeping streets and bridges in good repair, distributing grain to the needy, disseminating news and official information, and maintaining surveillance over the populace. In addition, recruitment for the city's militia and reserve fleet was based on parish residence. All males between the ages of 20 and 60 were organized into groups of 12 by parish and were liable for military service. Parishes also were responsible for organizing one of the major civic festivals in late medieval Venice, the festival of the *Marie* or *Marys*. Each year two of the city's seventy parishes had to outfit and fête 12 girls selected as the *Marys*.⁴

Lewis Mumford's exposition of Venice's urban development in his *The City in History* also influenced Lane. Mumford saw in

the fabric of Venice his ideal urban form. For Mumford, the parishes of Venice with their mix of social groups recreated on the neighborhood level the social structure of the entire city. Each parish square was a microcosm of the Piazza S. Marco, and Mumford argued that this contributed to the city's social stability.⁵

Although Lane's view of Venetian parish life has a clear appeal, upon close scrutiny it raises a number of questions as well. For example, it is legitimate to ask whether the official view of parishes as corporate entities was a valid reflection of parochial realities as experienced by the inhabitants of those parishes or merely an administrative convenience. Governments frequently create geographically defined administrative units (dubbed neighborhoods) that bear little resemblance to the sense of neighborhood and community experienced by the inhabitants of those units. Second, we may ask whether the level of parochial feeling changed over time. As it stands in the current historiography, parochial feeling represents a nearly constant force in Venetian history from the twelfth to the twentieth centuries.⁶ Finally, we may question the presumed distinctiveness of Venetian parishes. Neighborhoods in Florence and Genoa were also agglomerations of rich and poor.⁷ Why did social integration on the neighborhood level not serve to promote civic harmony in those cities?

In order to answer these questions and to understand the significance of parishes to individual Venetians we must look beyond official accounts and penetrate the private level. One source to which we may look for answers is testaments, and specifically to the charitable bequests contained in them, for when disposing of their worldly goods, Venetians had to make a number of choices about the destination of their legacies. First, they had to decide how much of their wealth they would leave to kinsmen and friends and how much they would leave to pious causes. And once they decided how much to leave for pious bequests, they had to determine which institutions and individuals (parishes, hospitals, secular clergy, mendicant friars, etc.) were most worthy in the eyes of God and therefore most efficacious for their souls. If we take as our assumption that the

recipients of these bequests were institutions or individuals with whom testators felt some sense of solidarity, then we may use the evidence of pious bequests not only to document changing patterns of charity (a use to which testaments have often been put)⁸ but also to delineate changing notions of identity and community.

In the pages that follow we will examine some of the charitable bequests made in the wills of 333 Venetians who lived in the parish of S. Giacomo dall'Orto between 1297 and 1423. S. Giacomo may be taken as fairly typical of Venetian parishes for it had a mixed population of nobles and commoners and ranked squarely in the middle of Venetian parishes in the wealth of its inhabitants.⁹ Of the 333 testators examined, 292 were commoners, 34 were nobles, and 7 were clerics. There were 213 women and 120 men.¹⁰ Using charitable bequests as an index, this examination will show that from the early fourteenth to the early fifteenth century the sense of parochial solidarity declined as Venetians began to identify with groups and institutions with a citywide orbit.

When parishioners drew up their wills, there were any number of ways they could remember the parish. For instance, bequests could be made for the church of S. Giacomo itself. Some parishioners left contributions to the church's building fund (*pro fabrica ecclesiae*), whereas others left money for the purchase of items with which to adorn the building. In 1326, for instance, Francesca Zusto left money so that the church could buy a cloth for the altar dedicated to Saint Nicolas; another parishioner, nobleman Gasparino Loredan, wanted a cloth made for the main altar of the church.¹¹ The church also needed candles and oil for illumination, and some parishioners chose to leave money for the purchase of those items. Two motives prompted these bequests. On one hand, testators hoped to gain benefits for their souls by contributing to the adornment or illumination of the church. On the other hand, local pride and the desire to make the parish church more beautiful also contributed to these bequests.¹² Of the 333 parishioners examined, 30 (9.01 percent) left some form of bequest for the adornment, repair, or illumination of the church.

Legacies to the parochial clergy were also common. Sometimes testators left bequests to the parochial clergy as a group. Thirty-one testators (9.5 percent) left bequests to the chapter of S. Giacomo. More common was the endowment of a particular clergyman, almost always the testator's *patrinus*. The *patrinus* was the testator's confessor or spiritual advisor; but in some instances, the relationship between parishioners and their *patrini* extended well beyond purely spiritual matters.¹³ Parishioners called on their *patrini* as proctors, fiduciaries, and even as lenders of money. Fifty-seven (17.1 percent) of the testators examined left bequests to their *patrini*. In almost all instances, bequests were made with the understanding that the clergy would recite masses for the testators' souls; but again a more practical motive, the wish to secure the favor of the clergy for the testators' heirs, may also have been on their minds.

Although these bequests indicate that some testators felt an attachment to the local church itself or to favorite clergymen, they do not indicate how they felt about their fellow parishioners. To evaluate those attachments, we must look at bequests that were made to fellow parishioners.¹⁴ These bequests most often took the form of *caritadi*. *Caritadi*, love feasts, were meals prepared and distributed to the poor. Persons wishing to make *caritade* bequests left enough money for the procurement of the necessary items. For instance, Catarucia, wife of the mason Giovanni Furlan, stated in her will that she wanted a *caritade* of bread and wine (*de pane et de vino*) distributed in S. Giacomo.¹⁵ Another parishioner, cheeseseller Giovanni Tron, left enough money for four *caritadi*, stipulating that the poor receive "uncured pork, bread, and wine."¹⁶ All but one of the testators leaving *caritadi* to the parish left them to the entire parish, but Gerita, wife of a cobbler, wanted her *caritade* restricted to one small section of the parish known as "the island."¹⁷

Table 1 gives the aggregated figures for the number of testators leaving bequests to the poor of S. Giacomo. It shows that in the period 1297 to 1423, 39 (11.7 percent) of the testators left bequests to their poorer fellow parishioners. It is difficult to evaluate the

TABLE 1
Charitable Bequests to Poor Parishioners

Date	Number of Testators	Number of Bequests*
1297-1347	55	13 23.6%
1348-1381	130	19 14.6%
1382-1423	148	7 4.7%
Total	333	39 11.7%

*These are the figures for the number of testators making a bequest to the poor of S. Giacomo. Included are caritate bequests and other bequests to the poor of the parish.

significance of that figure itself, but when the testaments are arranged chronologically, they show that there was not a constant rate of endowment. Instead, they show that bequests declined steadily throughout the period.

For purposes of analysis, I have divided the period 1297 to 1423 into three subperiods. The first (1297-1347) was the era in which Venice's aristocratic regime was established and tested. It began in 1297 with the *Serrata*, or closing of the Great Council, and ended on the eve of the plague. Two conspiracies, one in 1300 and another in 1310 challenged the regime but failed. Business and commerce prospered during much of this period. The second period (1348-1381) also has integrity as a unit. Beginning in 1348 with the Black Death, these were years of crisis, instability, and economic problems. The Black Death caused severe social dislocation, and a conspiracy led by the doge himself shook the city in 1355. The period also witnessed two wars with Genoa. The second, known as the Fourth Genoese War or War of Chioggia (1379-1381), caused severe financial strain and almost led to the capture of Venice by the Genoese fleet. The final period (1382-1423) was one of reconstruction and reorientation for the Venetians. In the first decade of the fifteenth century, Venice acquired Padua, Vicenza, and Verona. And the election of

Francesco Foscari as doge in 1423 marked a new orientation toward the west in Venetian foreign policy.¹⁸

As the table shows, in the first period, 1297-1347, 13 of 55 testators (or 23.6 percent) left part of their estate to those less fortunate than themselves. In the period 1348-1381 the number of parishioners remembering their neighbors dropped to 14.6 percent. By the final period, 1382-1423, the number had dropped precipitously so that only 7 of 148 testators, a mere 4.7 percent, were remembering their poorer neighbors with pious bequests. When examined chronologically, the figures illustrate a steady and marked decline in this testamentary practice. By the beginning of the fifteenth century fewer residents of S. Giacomo were leaving pious bequests to their fellow parishioners.

In order to get some sense of the scale of this decline in testamentary largesse, it is instructive to compare the figures of *caritadi* for S. Giacomo with some other forms of charity. *Caritadi* were not only given to the poor of the local parish. Two other groups were frequently the recipients of *caritate* bequests: the poor of the hospital of S. Lazzaro and prisoners in the city's jails. The monastery and hospital of S. Lazzaro originally served as a leper colony but later came to serve as one of Venice's plague hospitals. Testators made bequests to help feed and clothe the patients.¹⁹ Testators left legacies to prisoners for the same reasons.²⁰ Table 2 compares donations to the poor of S. Giacomo with donations to S. Lazzaro, to prisoners, and to bequests made in expiation of usury (known as *male ablatis, mal tolesto*).

Several trends can be discerned here. First, we see that bequests to S. Lazzaro were the only charity under consideration that grew in popularity during the entire period. Indeed bequests to the poor of the parish and to S. Lazzaro reversed their relative importance in parishioners' wills from 1297 to 1423. Bequests to S. Lazzaro increased steadily whereas bequests to parishioners decreased steadily. Second, the table shows that all charities, except *caritadi* for S. Giacomo, increased substantially in the period 1348 to 1381. This indicates that the decline in bequests to S. Giacomo during that period cannot be attributed to a general

TABLE 2
Distribution of Charitable Bequests

Date	Testators	S. Giacomo	S. Lazzaro	Prisons	Male Ablatis
1297-1347	55	13 23.6%	3 5.5%	3 5.5%	3 5.5%
1348-1381	130	19 14.6%	27 20.8%	22 17.0%	30 23.1%
1382-1423	148	7 4.7%	34 23.0%	9 6.1%	12 8.2%
Total	333	39 11.7%	64 19.4%	34 10.2%	45 13.5%

constriction of legacies. Instead, parishioners channeled bequests elsewhere, to the sick and imprisoned of the entire city. Finally, the figures show that bequests made as expiation for usury increased substantially (17.6 percent) during the period 1348-1381, showing an even stronger increase than bequests to S. Lazzaro (up 15.3 percent). The specter of death in 1348 and the possibility of defeat during the War of Chioggia, which many took as signs of God's displeasure, must have led to personal atonement for sins and a desire to purchase forgiveness.²¹ But once the crises passed, bequests dropped nearly to their previous level.²²

The evidence of charitable bequests shows that during the fourteenth century fewer and fewer parishioners viewed their poorer neighbors as worthy of their legacies. This suggests that the perception of the parish as a community of rich and poor, united by common parochial residence, declined. Even during the years of crisis from 1348 to 1381 when a series of disruptions created a desire to atone for sins (which translated into increased testamentary largesse), bequests to the parish continued to decline. At the same time, charity to a more broadly based community of the sick and the unfortunate of the entire city increased.

Further evidence of a declining sense of parochial solidarity is the feeble support that parishioners gave to a hospital located in the parish. In 1309, nobleman Angelo da Pesaro left 3000 *lire* for

the construction of a hospital in the parish of S. Giacomo dall'Orio. Pesaro wanted the establishment to serve at least 20 poor persons; and to maintain it, he set up a trust fund that would provide an annual stipend of 300 *lire*.²³ But Pesaro's fellow parishioners did not follow up his endowment with continuing support. Only two parishioners (of the 332, excluding Pesaro himself) left endowments specifically to the hospital. And these testators had special reasons for doing so: one was the prior of the hospital, the other an inmate.²⁴

The absence of bequests to the hospital in S. Giacomo cannot be explained by a lack of awareness of hospitals as suitable recipients of pious bequests. We have already seen that the hospital of S. Lazzaro was well endowed, and many parishioners left bequests to other hospitals as well.²⁵ Instead it appears that the residents of S. Giacomo attached no special significance to the hospital and its inmates who were, quite literally, in their midst. It may even reflect the animosity or resentment the parishioners felt toward their powerful noble neighbors. Regardless, the parishioners' sense of the parish as a religious community appears to have been growing weaker.

How are we to account for this declining sense of parochial solidarity in *trecento* Venice? It seems likely that the decline was the result of two different trends. On the one hand, various crises of the fourteenth century, notably the Black Death and the War of Chioggia, loosened parochial bonds. Consequently, the parish became a less cohesive unit—one less able, or willing, to meet the needs of its poorer members. On the other hand, at the very time that parishes were declining, new institutions, notably hospitals and confraternities, were developing that ministered to persons who were distinguished by sickness or imprisonment from their fellow Venetians and who were drawn from a citywide orbit. These new institutions, like the problems they dealt with, were supraparochial; the attraction of these institutions and the charity they performed worked to break down the parochial orientation of *trecento* Venetians. Let us examine these two trends in a bit more detail.

The patterns of life as they had developed in Venice were severely shaken in the third quarter of the fourteenth century. The plague struck the city very hard, carrying off as much as one-half of the populace.²⁶ Rich and poor alike were affected, and some families were decimated.²⁷ To make matters worse, the plague returned frequently. There were further outbreaks in 1361, 1381-1382, 1391, 1397, 1403, and 1411.²⁸ It seems likely that the plague broke at least temporarily the rhythms of parochial and familial life and damaged social bonds. A further consequence of the epidemics was that in their aftermath waves of immigrants entered the city. After each outbreak the city's ranks were replenished with immigrants from the mainland.²⁹ These immigrants brought with them local customs, habits, and dialects, and it took time for some of them to adjust to the Venetian way of life.³⁰

The War of Chioggia also caused much social dislocation. The most dramatic evidence of this is the fact that after the war, as a reward for service they had rendered in the war effort, 30 *popolano* families were elevated to the status of patricians. This was the last significant addition to the ruling class before the sale of memberships began in the seventeenth century.³¹ The changes wrought by the war on the civic level were felt on the parochial level as well. For example, at least two noble proprietors in the parish of S. Giacomo were forced to sell their property as a result of debts they had incurred during the war. One was the noble Pesaro family, which was forced to sell its "possession granda." The palace (now known as the Fondaco dei Turchi) had been built by the family in the thirteenth century, and the Pesaro family had endowed a hospital in the parish. But as a consequence of the war, the Pesaro family lost its place in the parish.³² In the other instance, nobleman Giacomo da Molin of the neighboring parish of S. Stae had to sell his property in S. Giacomo. Pietro Regia, one of the parish's premier commoners, bought it.³³ Property ownership was important because property holders were the only ones allowed a voice in the election of parish clergy.³⁴ By causing a reshuffling of property, the war contributed to a redistribution of power within the parish. A further consequence of this turnover

of property was the disruption of landlord-tenant relations. Many poor parishioners now had new landlords.

The Black Death and the War of Chioggia thus caused changes in the city in general and in the parishes in particular. Familial and associative networks were disrupted by the demographic catastrophe, and economic problems brought on by the war led to a reshuffling of power. These changes loosened the bonds between parishioners and were reflected in the declining endowment of poor parishioners. The parish as the locus of charity lost its attraction as the sense of the parish as a community declined.

Viewing the evidence from another perspective, however, we can see that while parochialism declined, Venetians acquired a broader, often a citywide, orientation. The development of several institutions contributed to this change. The fourteenth century witnessed tremendous growth in the number of *scuole* or religious confraternities. The confraternities, especially the major ones, the *scuole grandi*, drew their members from throughout the city and attracted men from various social ranks. Most of the charitable activities of these confraternities were directed inward; rich brothers aided their poor fellows. The *scuole* thus submerged, at least temporarily, differences of wealth, status, and residence in a spirit of brotherhood. By creating a sense of solidarity between persons from various parts of the city, the *scuole* helped to break down the parochial orientation of members. Indeed the bond between members was likely to be stronger than that between parishioners because it was reinforced by initiation ceremonies, acts of charity, and the fraternity's exclusive character. In addition, one had to actively seek membership. By contrast, the bond between parishioners depended on a sole and rather passive criterion—residence.³⁵

Confraternities and hospitals that catered to particular groups also developed in the fourteenth century. *Scuole* for the lame and the blind were founded; and around midcentury, the hospital of the Pietà was established. Its special mission was the relief of orphans.³⁶ These specialized institutions also served to weaken the parochial orientation of Venetians by making them aware of groups within society that were distinguished in one way or

another from their fellows. People were forced to look beyond their particular situation and consider the forces (war, famine, disease) that led to illness or imprisonment. Venetians responded to this new awareness by channeling more and more of their charity to these groups. Indeed, charitable motives themselves appear to have changed. The primary motive behind giving *caritadi* to the parish had been to benefit the testator's soul; now testators had the added motive of hoping to alleviate social problems with a citywide scope.³⁷ The development of institutions that drew their members from throughout the city and that responded to citywide problems thus helped to broaden the perspectives and donative horizons of *trecento* Venetians.

Government action aimed at dealing with these problems also may have contributed to the broadening of horizons.³⁸ The plague, in particular, called for coordinated citywide efforts. The government had to develop a policy for isolating victims, for stopping the flow of immigrants from the mainland, and for disposing of corpses.³⁹ Other problems, such as overcrowding in the city's jails, also called for solutions.⁴⁰ Sometimes these solutions led the government to intervene directly in the private lives of Venetians.⁴¹ There is even evidence that the government sought to direct the charitable activities of citizens. By 1431, if not earlier, the government was requiring notaries to inquire whether or not testators wished to make contributions to S. Lazzaro, "since there is no better form of charity."⁴²

It is difficult to measure the role that one factor as opposed to another played in undermining parochial solidarity. In his study *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*, Edward Muir emphasized the role of increased state activism. Muir believes that parish life was so disrupted by the crises of the fourteenth century, "that people sought to identify with a less personal but more stable entity such as the republic."⁴³ Furthermore, he suggests that the patrician government fostered this development by suppressing the parishes' participation in the festival of the *Marie*. By redesigning the processional route so that the focus was on S. Marco, the governmental center, the regime tried to undermine parochial loyalties that it viewed as a threat to the city's stability. According to Muir, "the elaborate evocations of *contrade*

loyalties. . . [were] displaced by the more sober political assertion of ducal preeminence."⁴⁴

But although government action focused more attention on the state it is unclear whether this policy was successful in shifting loyalties to the state and whether it was consciously designed to undermine parish loyalties. The evidence of charitable bequests, for example, suggests that the transformation of loyalties from the parish to the republic was very gradual and that the real beneficiaries of the new orientation were *scuole* and hospitals. For example, of the 333 testators examined, only two left bequests to the basilica of S. Marco that housed Venice's patron. One was nobleman Nicoletto Trevisan who bequeathed 12 *grossi*. Yet the money was not for S. Marco himself but "for the illumination of the Virgin Mary which is in S. Marco."⁴⁵ The other testator who left a bequest to the basilica was Bartolomeo Recovrati, the parish priest of S. Giacomo. Yet Bartolomeo had a special reason for remembering the basilica; his nephew was a canon there, and Bartolomeo wished to be remembered in the canons' prayers.⁴⁶ *Trecento* Venetians do not appear to have identified personally with S. Marco. Perhaps he seemed too removed, too official, too closely identified with the state for them to view him as their personal patron.⁴⁷

The evidence of charitable bequests also suggests a different interpretation for the decline of the Marian festival. The testamentary evidence suggests that parish solidarity was, in fact, too weak to support the festival. In 1323, for example, the government had to impose fines upon parishioners who fled the parishes of S. Giacomo dall'Orto and S. Giovanni Degola in order to avoid their responsibilities to the festival.⁴⁸ Rather than suppressing a lively ceremony that was a potential source of discord, it appears that the government merely delivered the *coup de grâce* to a custom that had outlived its significance. Although increasing state activism played a role in the decline in parochial loyalty, it appears that war and pestilence and the rise of new institutions within a citywide orbit did more to weaken local solidarities.

In the fourteenth century then, Venetians were passing through an intermediate stage between identification with the local community (the parish) and identification with the state. During

the fourteenth century special groups, including the sick and the imprisoned, came to be seen as more worthy of endowment than poor neighbors. This change reflects an increasing awareness of and identification with the world beyond the parish. But parishioners did not yet directly identify their own well-being with that of the state or their fellow citizens. The favored recipients of bequests were still groups that were distinguished in one way or another—by illness or imprisonment—from other Venetians.

The foregoing analysis of charitable bequests deepens our understanding of Venetian neighborhood life in several ways. First, it shows most clearly that there was some divergence between private and public notions of community and neighborhood. Parishioners did not view parishes in the same way the government did. Indeed the suspension of the festival of the *Marie* may be taken as the first acknowledgment on the part of the government that parishes were not the viable entities they wished them to be.⁴⁹ Second, this analysis indicates that parochialism was not a constant, unchanging factor in Venetian history. Rather the sentiments of parish loyalty ebbed and flowed as the economic and social structures of the city changed. Third, and perhaps most important, it raises doubts about the notion that parochialism and local loyalties fostered Venetian civic harmony. Indeed, an altogether different interpretation can be suggested. Perhaps it was the lack of strongly felt local loyalties and neighborhood-based particularism that contributed to Venice's social stability at a time when other Italian city-states with tight-knit neighborhoods were racked by civic strife.⁵⁰

NOTES

1. On the importance of ties to neighbors, see Christiane Klapisch, "'Parenti, amici e vicini': il territorio urbano d'una famiglia mercantile nel xv secolo," *Quaderni storici* 33 (1976): 953-982; Ronald F. E. Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence* (New York, 1982), pp. 16-19; and Lauro Martines, *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy* (New York, 1979), pp. 74-77.

On the importance of neighborhoods as power bases for various families in Florence, see Dale Kent, *The Rise of the Medici: Faction in Florence, 1426-1434* (Oxford, 1978), pp.

64-71; D. V. and F. W. Kent, "A Self-Disciplining Pact Made by the Peruzzi Family of Florence (June 1433)," *Renaissance Quarterly* 34 (1981): 347-348; Gene A. Brucker, *Renaissance Florence* (New York, 1969), p. 23; and F. W. Kent, *Household and Lineage in Renaissance Florence: The Family Life of the Capponi, Ginori and Rucellai* (Princeton, 1977), pp. 227-252.

No consensus has yet emerged on the significance of neighborhoods and parishes in Florentine history. Ronald Weissman believes that throughout the Renaissance, Florentine life revolved around the neighborhood; he argues that social networks "were concentrated in a restricted geographical area." Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, pp. 21-22. D. V. and F. W. Kent argue that in the mid-fifteenth century neighborhood life in the gonfalon of Lion Rosso was "necessarily intimate." See D. V. and F. W. Kent, *Neighbors and Neighborhood in Renaissance Florence: The District of the Red Lion in the Fifteenth Century* (Locust Valley, NY, 1982), p. 91, *passim*.

Using the evidence of marriages, Samuel Cohn argues that networks of association changed between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. During the fifteenth century, whereas patricians gave up their local orientation, the *popolo minuto* retreated into parochial bounds. See Samuel Kline Cohn, Jr., *The Laboring Classes in Renaissance Florence* (New York, 1980), especially ch. 5. Finally, Richard Trexler denies that parishes (or gonfalons) ever had any significance. See Richard C. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (New York, 1980), pp. 12-14.

For Genoa, see Diane Owen Hughes, "Kinsmen and Neighbors in Medieval Genoa," in Harry A. Miskimin, David Herlihy, and A. L. Udovitch, eds., *The Medieval City* (New York, 1977), pp. 95-112; Jacques Heers, "Urbanisme et structure sociale à Gênes au Moyen-Age" in *Société et économie à Gênes (xiv^e-xv^e siècles)* (London, 1979), pp. 371-412; and Ennio Polleggi, "Le contrade delle consorterie a Genova tra il xii e il xiii secolo," *Urbanistica* 42-43 (1965): 15-20.

2. Frederic C. Lane, *Venice: A Maritime Republic* (Baltimore, 1973), pp. 11-17, 98, 109, 271.

3. Three recent works that have adopted this view are, Edward Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice* (Princeton, 1981), pp. 3-8, 146, 298-301; Robert Finlay, *Politics in Renaissance Venice* (New Brunswick, 1980), pp. 44-59; and Elisabeth Pavan, "Recherches sur la nuit vénitienne à la fin du Moyen Age," *Journal of Medieval History* 7 (1981): 342-343.

4. For a summary of Venetian neighborhood administration, see my dissertation, "San Giacomo dall'Orto: Parish Life in Fourteenth-Century Venice" (Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1981), ch. 2.

5. See Lewis Mumford, *The City in History* (New York, 1961), pp. 321-328. In fairness to Lane, it is important to note that he recognizes some of the weaknesses in Mumford's exposition. See Lane, *Venice*, p. 462.

6. This is particularly the case in Lane's work.

7. See the works cited in note 1 above.

8. Among the numerous studies that analyze testamentary practices, see Kathryn L. Reyerson, "Changes in Testamentary Practices at Montpellier in the Era of the Black Death," *Church History* 47 (1978): 253-269; J.A.F. Thomson, "Piety and Charity in Late Medieval London," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 16 (1965): 178-195; Marie-Thérèse Lorcin, "Les clauses religieuses dans les testaments du plat pays lyonnais aux xiv^e et xv^e siècles," *Le Moyen Age* 78 (1972): 287-323; and Marvin B. Becker, *Medieval Italy: Constraints and Creativity* (Bloomington, 1981), pp. 37, 158, 167.

9. Of the seventy parishes listed in the *estimo* of 1379, S. Giacomo ranked thirty-sixth. The *estimo* was a survey of immovable property used for assessing loans during the Fourth Genoese War. For the *estimo*, see Gino Luzzatto, *I prestiti della Repubblica di Venezia (sec. XIII-XV)*, 2 vols in *Documenti finanziari della Repubblica di Venezia* (Padua, 1929), Vol. 1, pp. 138-195.

10. The larger number of women's wills is explained by the fact that the dangers of pregnancy led women to testate more frequently than men. See Stanley Chojnacki, "Dowries and Kinsmen in Early Renaissance Venice," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 4 (1975): 584-586.

11. For Zusto's will, see Andreina Bondi Sebellico, ed., *Felice de Merlis: prete e notaio in Venezia ed Ayas (1315-1348)*. *Fonti per la storia di Venezia*. 2 Vols. (Venice, 1972-1978), doc. 1079. Hereafter cited as *Felice*; for Loredan, see Archivio di Stato di Venezia (ASV), Notarile Testamenti (NT), Busta 335, notary Simeon, testament 134, 9 December 1366.

12. Local pride may especially have been a characteristic of the nobles. See V. Lazzarini, "Il testamento di Pantaleone Giustinian Patriarca di Costantinopoli," *Archivio Veneto*, 5th Series, 26 (1940): 80-88. However, Venetian nobles did not exhibit local pride to the degree that nobles in some other cities did. See Richard A. Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social History* (Baltimore, 1980), p. 13.

13. Franceschina, wife of Giacomello Tomassini, left two ducats to "mio parin de penitentia," the presbyter Pasquale. See ASV, Cancelleria Inferiore (CI), Busta 34, notary Giacomo Cavalier, protocol, 20 July 1389. Significantly, only one testator named a *patrinus* from outside the parish, yet he had a special reason for doing so. Presbyter Giacomo of S. Giacomo left a bequest of one ducat to his *patrinus*, presbyter Marco of the neighboring parish of S. Giovanni Degola. ASV, NT 566, notary Gerardo, protocol, testament 75, 20 June 1348.

14. It is unclear who was meant by the poor. See Richard C. Trexler, "Charity and the Defense of Urban Elites in the Italian Communes," in Frederic Cople Jaher, ed., *The Rich, the Well Born, and the Powerful* (Urbana, 1973), pp. 67-74.

15. ASV, CI 34, notary Giacomo Cavalier, protocol, 18 June 1389.

16. *Felice*, doc. 1127.

17. ASV, CI 130, notary Nicolò Nadal, protocol, 11 April 1380. The *isola* was one small part of the parish completely surrounded by water. See Giuseppe Tassini, *Curiosità veneziane*, 6th ed. (Venice, 1933), p. 361. See also the map of the parish in Giovanni Battista Paganuzzi, *Iconografia delle trenta parrocchie di Venezia* (Venice, 1821), no pagination.

18. The events of this period can be surveyed in Lane, *Venice*, and in Gino Luzzatto, *Storia economica di Venezia dall'XI al XVI secolo* (Venice, 1961).

19. The plague hospital (or Lazzaretto) was not founded until 1423, but it is likely that S. Lazzaro was handling plague victims before that date. Indeed, during the plague of 1348, one policy of the government was to "isolate" (place on islands in the lagoon) victims. See the catalogue prepared by Reinhold C. Mueller "Dalla reazione alla prevenzione," in *Venezia e la peste: 1348/1797* (Venice, 1979), pp. 84-86.

20. For methods of relief to prisoners in the sixteenth century, see Brian Pullan, "The Relief of Prisoners in Sixteenth-Century Venice," *Studi Veneziani* 10 (1968): 221-229.

21. For the reaction in Tuscany to the Black Death, see Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death*, Torchbook edition (New York, 1964), pp.

78-80. For usury in Venice, see Frederic C. Lane, "Investment and Usury" in *Venice and History: The Collected Papers of Frederic C. Lane* (Baltimore, MD, 1966), pp. 56-68.

22. I have not presented the figures on the basis of sex and social status, but there are a few significant variations. Notable is women's heavier endowment of S. Lazzaro (24.0% of the female testators versus 10.8% of the males) and the nobility's heavier endowment of S. Lazzaro and prisoners (29.4% and 38.2% respectively versus 18.6% and 7.4% respectively for commoners). Nobles also remembered the poor of the parish more frequently than commoners (17.7% versus 10.0%).

23. ASV, Procuratori di S. Marco de ultra (PSM de ultra), Miscellanea Testamenti, Busta 1-2, testament 58, 15 June 1309.

24. ASV, CI 34, notary Giacomo Cavalier, unbound testament 13, 30 July 1384; ASV, NT 1024, notary Donato Gibellino, testament 38, 3 April 1348.

25. For example, nobleman Nicoletto Moro left one *soldo* to each person in a hospital in Venice and Murano. He stipulated that the money be "good money" (*de zecha*), not counterfeit. See ASV, NT 1226, notary Fantin Rizzo, protocol, 2 dates, 12 January 1376 mv, 10 July 1378.

Angelo da Pesaro was not the only parishioner to endow a hospital. *Cittadino* Marco Disenove left money for the foundation of a five-bed hospital in Venice, Murano, or the Giudecca. The hospital was to have a prior and a servant, and it was supposed to serve first Marco's relatives and servants. He wanted it to be named "[the hospital] of the five poor of God, in honor of the five wounds to the body of our Lord Jesus Christ" ("deli V poveri de dio a honor dele V Plague del corpo del nostro signor iso cristo"). See ASV, PSM de ultra, *Commissarie*, Busta 57, Commissaria of Marco Disenove, testament, 3 October 1350. For increasing support of hospitals in other Italian cities, see David Herlihy, *Medieval and Renaissance Pistoia* (New Haven, 1967), pp. 246-250; and Enrico Fiumi, *Storia economica e sociale di San Gimignano* (Florence, 1961), pp. 220-223.

26. See Reinhold C. Mueller, "Peste e demografia: Medioevo e Rinascimento," in *Venezia e la peste: 1348/1797* (Venice, 1979), p. 94.

27. See Reinhold C. Mueller, "Aspetti sociali ed economici della peste a Venezia nel Medioevo," in *Venezia e la peste: 1348/1797* (Venice, 1979), pp. 71-76.

28. Brian Pulian, *Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice* (Cambridge, MA, 1971), p. 219.

29. For the plague and immigration, see Mario Brunetti, "Venezia durante la peste del 1348." *Ateneo Veneto* 32 (1909): I, 289-311, II, 5-42. See also Stephen R. E11, "Citizenship and Immigration in Venice, 1305-1500" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1976).

30. See the remarks on assimilation in E11, "Citizenship," pp. 70, 175. Evidence that some parishioners remained attached to their place of origin is the fact that they left legacies to them. For instance, Martino, son of Gabriele de Villa from the *burgo* of S. Tomassini of Treviso, asked to be buried at the church of S. Francesco of Treviso and left 100 *soldi* to the confraternity of S. Tomassini. See ASV, NT 1226, notary Fantin Rizzo, protocol, 17 November 1378. For problems with foreigners in Venice, see Stanley Chojnacki, "Crime, Punishment and the *Trecento* Venetian State," in Lauro Martines, ed., *Violence and Civil Disorder in Italian Cities, 1200-1500* (Berkeley, 1972), pp. 202-218.

31. For the impact of the war, see R. Cessi, "La finanza veneziana al tempo della Guerra di Chioggia," in *Politica ed economia di Venezia nel Trecento* (Rome, 1952), especially pp. 192-196. For the entry of the new families, see Stanley Chojnacki, "In Search of the Venetian Patriciate: Families and Factions in the Fourteenth Century," in J. R. Hale, ed., *Renaissance Venice*, (London, 1974), pp. 52-58.

32. The charter selling the property is reproduced in Luzzatto, *I prestiti*, vol. 1, doc. 178 and discussed on p. clxxi. For the *palazzo*, see Tassini, *Curiosità*, pp. 272-274.

33. Luzzatto, *I prestiti*, vol. 1, doc. 173 and discussion on p. clxxi. According to the *estimo*, Regia was the second wealthiest man in the parish, second only to the noble Badoer heirs.

34. See *Statutorum legum ac iurium de venetorum* (Venice, 1564), Book 6, chapter 3, fols. 87v-88v.

35. For the confraternities, see Pullan, *Rich and Poor*, pp. 33-187.

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 207.

37. This seems to have happened in Florence. Marvin Becker argues that between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in Florence there was a change in charity, "from the corporate to the communital." See Marvin B. Becker, "Aspects of Lay Piety in Early Renaissance Florence," in Charles Trinkaus and Heiko A. Oberman, eds., *The Pursuit of Holiness* (London, 1974), p. 194. And Gene Brucker argues that, "Florentines were channeling more of their resources into institutions which were specifically concerned with social problems." See Brucker, *Renaissance Florence*, p. 209.

38. For the increasing role of the state, see Guido Ruggiero, "Modernization and the Mythic State in Early Renaissance Venice: The Serrata Revisited," *Viator* 10 (1979): 245-256.

39. Brunetti, "Venezia durante," I, pp. 289-299.

40. For the problem of overcrowding in the jails, see Guido Ruggiero, "Law and Punishment in Early Renaissance Venice," *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 69 (1978): 248-249.

41. A good example is action taken by the government during the Black Death. During the plague the government discouraged the practice, common among the lower classes, of displaying corpses of loved ones in order to collect alms. The corpses posed a danger to public health. See Brunetti, "Venezia durante," I, p. 292.

42. "cum nulla melior eleemosina fieri possit." Quoted in Mueller, "Dalla reazione alla prevenzione," p. 85.

43. Muir, *Civic Ritual*, p. 154, note 43.

44. *Ibid.*, pp. 155-156.

45. "per aluminar la vergene Maria che se a Scen Marco." ASV, PSM de ultra, Commissarie, Busta 151, Commissaria of Nicolò Trevisan, quaderno with testament, 20 February 1325 mv.

46. ASV, PSM de ultra, Commissarie, Busta 220, Commissaria of Bartolomeo plebanus, testament.

47. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries bequests to S. Marco were more common. In nine testaments included in the volumes of documents edited by Raimondo Morozzo della Rocca and A. Lombardo, three include bequests to S. Marco, whereas two testators who were living overseas left bequests to churches dedicated to St. Mark in those places. See Raimondo Morozzo della Rocca and Antonino Lombardo, *Documenti del commercio veneziano nei secoli xi-xiii* 2 vols. (Turin, 1940), docs. 100, 246, 362, 535, 559, 636. Those not leaving bequests to St. Mark are docs. 595, 661, 731. It may also be noted that Doge Andrea Dandolo (d. 1354) was the last doge to be buried in the basilica. See Andrea da Mosto, *I dogi di Venezia nella vita pubblica e privata*, Reprint (Florence, 1977), p. 117.

48. For an incomplete compilation of the *Marie* regulations and this particular one, see ASV, Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, *Capitolare degli straordinari*, Register 22 ter, (olim Miscellanea Codice 132), fols. 41r-41v.

49. The second important recognition of this came in 1539 when a new system of recruitment for the fleet was substituted for the old parish based system. As Lane himself notes, "substituting guilds and confraternities for parishes as the units on which to place the responsibility for finding men was in accord with the fact that these professional and religious associations had more solidarity than the traditional divisions into neighborhoods." Lane, *Venice*, p. 367.

50. Unlike patrician families in Florence and Genoa, Venetian noble families did not create neighborhood based family enclaves. This may have contributed as well to the lack of particularism in neighborhood life. See Chojnacki, "In Search," pp. 60-61. I will consider this issue more fully in a study I am preparing on neighborhoods and social relations in early Renaissance Venice.