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Walking in the early modern city: Mobilizing the spatial turn.

The case of sixteenth-century Venice.

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Like breathing, walking is an unthinking act that we accomplish without consideration, at least as long as we are free to move. We feel our muscles only when we trek a long way; otherwise we just advance one foot after the other, in a reflex. Walking is also universal: humans have walked and learned to walk in much the same way since they became erect. And yet cultural critics, anthropologists, and geographers have shown how footwork has meanings and functions that change across space and time.¹ In the modern metropolis, walking has long been associated with intense sensual and intellectual stimulation. At the dawn of the twentieth century, Georg Simmel famously reflected on the psychological effects of crossing busy roads or encountering new environments around every street corner.² Later, Walter Benjamin and Michel de Certeau both described walking as a distinctive learning experience.³

These thinkers have greatly influenced the cultural history of early modern cities, yet walking has attracted relatively little historiographical attention, despite the fact that it was by far the most widespread form of urban mobility.⁴ Fascinating recent studies have shown how streets and squares acted as conduits for social transactions, as arenas for the display of personal or civic honour, and settings for elaborate practices of sociability.⁵ Yet people experienced this cultural vibrancy not by standing still, but mostly by and while moving – they heard, listened, felt, watched and were watched, talked, sang and sometimes even read, while their feet took

them around. Recently, art historians and historians of cartography have also emphasized how walking was regarded as a means of representing the early modern city, from New Spain to the Ottoman Empire.⁶ As other essays in this volume also suggest, for historians more generally the time may have come to venture another step beyond the spatial turn, to bring pace back into space: the hurry of business in some areas, the slower tempo of leisure in others. By studying physical motion we can capture the dynamism of early modern cities and, in all the rich meanings of the Italian active verb *movimentare*, move, mobilize, invigorate and enliven the history of early modern urban society and culture.⁷

Venice makes for a special case for this enquiry. Its peculiar geography presented particular challenges to walking but also made it prevalent, not least because animal transportation was negligible and boats were costly and could only ever take one some of the way. Moreover, as we shall see, the city's government had both political and economic reasons for protecting what urbanists today define as "walkability," the quality of the pedestrian environment.⁸ A wealth of scholarship grounds this study. Cultural historians have shown the importance of smells, sounds, and visual symbols inscribed in *calli*, *campi*, and the city's only *piazza*.⁹ Music and book historians have focused on outdoor spaces as stages for music, singing, street-theater, and the dissemination of cheap print.¹⁰ Finally, historians of communication have located the exchange of oral and written news, from gossip to intelligence, in public space.¹¹ In other words, as Dario Tessicini also underlines in this issue, Venetian streets were not just where the majority of people met but also where they exchanged information and generated knowledge.¹² How, then, did the experience of walking shape those interactions, and to what extent was walking itself a form of communication?

Because processions and pilgrimages have already inspired important works, I will focus less on ritual and spiritual, than on ordinary and worldly walking, functional to a variety of

professional and leisurely activities from street selling to strolling.¹³ *Camminare, scalpitare, passeggiare, vagare*: a rich vocabulary testifies to the range of modes and meanings of walking.¹⁴ My aim in this article is not only to recreate a sense of everyday life at the street level, but also to answer two more specific questions. First, how did walking connect the city logistically, socially, and symbolically? In emphasizing this aspect, I draw from the work of geographers Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift on “flow” as crucial to the life of the city.¹⁵ Echoing the liquid society of post-modern sociology, this notion seems particularly apt to a city built on water. My second question relates to harder issues of social and economic history. Did moving about crowded streets undermine class and gender hierarchies or were there ways of walking and choices of areas for walking that helped men and women maintain their status? Walking is the perfect example of those automatic gestures acquired by instinctively imitating social peers and instrumental in asserting class identity that Pierre Bourdieu defined as *habitus*.¹⁶ Indeed, as he remarked in his early anthropological research, the Kabyles of Algeria associated upright posture with leadership.¹⁷ In a pioneering work, Peter Burke suggested the same about early modern Venetian patricians, but we need to examine this point in greater depth.¹⁸ As we shall see, walking was not only a means of connecting with others but also a way of marking distance, one that changed over time.

The bird’s eye- and the street-view

Within the span of a few years at the turn of the sixteenth century, two representations of Venice differed significantly in the way they portrayed walking. Jacopo de Barbari’s famously detailed bird’s-eye view of the city, printed in 1500, depicts myriad vessels cutting through the lagoon, but the city is shown almost completely devoid of people. While the canals clearly divide the densely built environment, many streets are invisible. In this highly

symbolic depiction, which historians now agree was inspired less by realism than by an idealized vision of the city, maritime dynamism contrasts with the absence of earthbound motion. Perhaps de Barbari wished to convey the mythical serenity of Venice's politics with the stillness of its topography.¹⁹ By contrast, walking plays a crucial role in Marcantonio Sabellico's description of Venice written around 1492.²⁰ Composed in Latin by a foreign rhetorician in the government's pay, this text is sometimes dismissed as a piece of propaganda detached from the city's true life.²¹ In fact, we should pay more attention to Sabellico's desire to "express the most truthful image of the city, as if in a picture"²² – an image which included public buildings and churches, but also streets, shops, taverns and hostels, vegetable stalls, and the onion market. What is more, Sabellico did not stop at buildings but gave a sense of local customs, from dressing and speaking to walking.

Sabellico conceived of walking not only as an object of representation but also as a means of acquiring knowledge. The movement of feet through the city is the organizing principle of his description. At the beginning of the text, he asks himself how best to describe Venice. He imagines elevating the point of view to a high place, as if from a lookout ("eminentiore loco tamquam ex specola quadam"). From there, he says, the city with the Giudecca would look round. In explicit contrast with this neat configuration, Sabellico organizes his description in a continuously winding walking tour that connects the church of Santa Marta in the West to San Pietro in the East and ends in San Marco after touching upon every single parish of the city. He describes his route in such detail that it is largely possible to map it precisely (image 1). He signals side alleyways, curved streets, and narrow lanes and indicates many of the bridges and back gates he takes, recording whether the bridges are in wood or stone, the streets are paved or made of packed dirt, narrow or large, straight or winding ("like a snake"). If his directions are sometimes vague, this is typical of Venice's topography.

His indications are similar to those road signs that still point the way to a place with two opposite arrows (“duplici de via in divi Marci itur aream,” sig. C2)). He revels in the maze of streets and bridges, and he adds a sense of the walking experience, as he makes his way through the crowds of sailors seeking employment at Santa Giustina or sidesteps the fishing-nets hanging to dry over the bridges by San Nicolò.

There is no mistaking Sabellico’s celebratory aim. In his account, the busy-ness of the streets exalts Venice’s wealth, and the simple ability to reach every area on foot in a city built on water is itself awe-inspiring. As he notes at the end of his meticulous description, “to all these sites one can wonder on foot [because they are] built in brick.”²³ His is a celebration of connectivity by and through walking. But in the process, for all his promotional style, he dwells on the less than decorous details, from the tanners’ tents in peripheral Cannaregio to the building materials cluttering the canal banks near San Giovanni e Paolo.

De Barbari’s view, drawn from sketches taken atop bell towers, and Sabellico’s description, pieced together while walking at street level, recall the two ways of understanding urban space famously contrasted by Michel de Certeau. He compared the view from skyscrapers to the city-planner’s totalizing gaze, abstract because out of the city’s grasp. Instead, he described the knowledge drawn from everyday walking as intimate and creative, because familiar with features invisible from above and ready to cut through the city-planner’s grid.²⁴ In the same way, Sabellico indicated that the walker’s point of view allowed an organic description of the city that was also attentive to concrete details missing from de Barbari’s view, such as the passageways – “pervii fornices,” accurately translated in 1544 as “sottoportichi” – which allowed people to cross under buildings from one *calle* to the other.²⁵ In the course of the sixteenth century, the street view slowly disappeared from textual descriptions of Venice.²⁶ This can be seen most clearly in the evolution of the eulogies by the

prolific author Francesco Sansovino.²⁷ The earliest edition of *Delle cose notabili che sono in Venetia* (1556, but substantially expanded in 1561) takes the form of a spatially located dialogue between a local and a traveller. To illustrate the beauty of St Mark's square, the Venetian accompanies his interlocutor across it. "Turn this way," he invites the visitor, "and you shall see."²⁸ But the two only leave the square with their imagination ("col ragionamento").²⁹ The description of the rest of the city follows no clear order, and the narrative's flow follows the fiction of dialogic exchanges, not the physical continuity of real space. Later, Sansovino's encyclopedic *Venetia città nobilissima* (1581) abandoned even the pretence of street walking. Instead, he arranged the description around the six *sestieri* administrative units, described from East to West, as if looking at them from a boat or, say, from the bell tower of San Giorgio Maggiore. Sansovino eschewed all references to less than exalted aspects of urban space from his summation of the myth of Venice, just as his father Jacopo, one of the chief architects of Venice's urban renewal in the early sixteenth century, famously helped clear the city's center from market shacks.³⁰

This shift away from the walking experience towards an idealised view of the city culminated in Giovanni Botero with a revealing twist. His treatise on *Reason of State* (1589) and his *Relatione della Repubblica Venetiana* (dedicated to the doge in 1605) actually praised the obstacles to mobility posed by Venice's peculiar geography. To him, the narrowness of the streets and the ease with which bridges could be closed off guaranteed peace because they fragmented the city's population and made it difficult for rebels to join together.³¹ A century after Sabellico, Botero described walking as no longer a positive form of knowledge but rather as a negative threat to order. As we shall see, this change in representation may have reflected a growing ambivalence about the actual experience of street life.

Urban space and mobility

Venice was one of Europe's largest and busiest cities in the sixteenth century, with a population that grew from about 115,000 to 170,000 by the 1570s – a boom which was not substantially matched by expansion of the urban space. Topography meant that people needed to move all the time. The city was divided into areas for production and trade as a result of a long process of specialization that accelerated from the fifteenth century onwards.³² Manufacturing was concentrated in peripheral neighborhoods. The harbor covered most of the quays to the South, from the Arsenal all the way to the middle of the Grand Canal. Here, the Rialto area hosted the market for the principal commodities and a huge number of shops but few residential dwellings. Many people also went to work in the city's political center, San Marco, but few lived there.³³ The main bell that rang there at dusk to give the sign that laborers could go home must have provoked a massive rush hour.³⁴ How, then, did people circulate? Riding was not a viable form of mobility in the city's narrow *calli*. While some enjoyed it as a disruptive form of fun in the fourteenth century, later sources mention the odd horse as, precisely, odd.³⁵ As Sabellico emphasized, almost every part of the city could be reached by foot, but how prevalent was land movement over water transportation?

Many descriptions at the time emphasized the canals, naturally enough since Venice's unique situation is what immediately strikes anyone's imagination. Sansovino defined them as "our principal streets," although he elsewhere praised the "commodiousness of roads, bridges and canals" (in that order) and underlined the wealth of bridges, nearly 400 according to his calculation.³⁶ Travellers too tended to dwell on boats, but in fact they mostly walked, unless they were sufficiently rich or well-connected to rent a boat or hitch a ride, as Michel de Montaigne did in 1580 and Thomas Coryat in 1608.³⁷ The truth is that, as Venetian patrician

Marin Sanudo more accurately and emphatically wrote in his own description of the city in 1493, “in Venice one can go, and does go, in two ways: by foot on land, or by boat.”³⁸

Only the richest Venetians owned gondolas, a status symbol even amongst the nobility.³⁹ For example, the banker Girolamo Priuli, another patrician but much wealthier than Sanudo, had a boat with gondoliers.⁴⁰ But Sanudo walked daily from his house in San Giacomo dell’Orto to San Marco, as we know from his diary, and tended to keep to the same route through San Cassian and the Rialto.⁴¹ Occasionally, high tides made walking impossible, as contemporaries recorded in dismay, thereby indirectly showing the importance of movement on dry land.⁴² During a particularly harsh winter in 1522, Sanudo recorded the *acqua grandissima* that prevented many patricians from reaching the ducal palace; some squeezed eight in a boat (instead of the usual four), clearly because they had no readily available vessels.⁴³ Indeed, it may be possible to speak of a mobility differential. This can also be perceived in the city’s architecture. All rich palaces have both a canal gate (*porta d’acqua*) and a gate on the *calle*, whereas most other, cheaper dwellings were accessed from the street.⁴⁴

In fact, streets and canals constituted a single interconnected system of urban communication, bound together by ferries, the only boats the majority of people were likely to take. As the toponym *calle che va al traghetto* reminds us, ferries only allowed pedestrians to make a short crossings in between two longer walks. When one such street was enlarged, Sanudo approved the change, because “everyone knows how busy it is.”⁴⁵ In the late fifteenth century, there were 15 ferry points on the Grand Canal, 10 more in different locations, and 10 that connected the city with other islands and the mainland. Locating them on a map (as Guglielmo Zanelli has helpfully done) gives us a sense of Venice’s main thoroughfares.⁴⁶ Their regulations evoke the flow of pedestrian traffic: central ferries had more boats doing the rounds than peripheral ones and ran through the night; at some stops,

ferries were required to leave as soon as a passenger embarked, while at others they were allowed to wait for at least two.⁴⁷

Venice's unique natural environment meant that streets were not residual spaces; they had to be actively made by piling the lagoon floor, sucking out water, compacting precious soil with bricks or stones.⁴⁸ As we have seen in Sabellico's description, locals were proud that their streets were paved when elsewhere they were covered in mud, but the reasons were more structural than aesthetic.⁴⁹ Venetians may have thought their earliest ancestors had lived on water – as captured in the boats and stilt-houses represented in the background of Tintoretto's *Dream of St Mark* (1586-7, Gallerie dell'Accademia), which depicts one of the city's many foundation myths. But arguably this utopian past that combined purity, resilience, and egalitarianism could seem enticing precisely because it was safely gone. By 1500 “walkability” dominated the choices of the authorities in charge of public works.⁵⁰ Their records show a remarkable concern with enlarging streets and keeping them unencumbered, especially in commercial areas, to facilitate movement back and forth (“ad eundum et redeundum”).⁵¹ This also applied to Venice's extended harbor system. Canal banks were continually reinforced not only to allow for the embarkation and disembarkation of goods (to be transported to nearby warehouses on foot), but also to ensure that they doubled as pedestrian routes. Thus the long stretch of quays leading from Castello to San Marco – today's Riva degli Schiavoni, but often described at the time as *via*, or road – was to be kept clear to facilitate the passage of people.⁵²

Walking to work

The authorities were concerned with street mobility because it was essential to the city's commerce. Pilgrims, travellers, and traders all flocked to the Mercerie, the central maze of

streets lined with continuous rows of shops, attracted by the quantity and variety of goods that they thought were unmatched elsewhere.⁵³ Foreign dignitaries enjoyed the shopping too. They rowed in state to their first audience, but afterwards they often asked to disembark by the Rialto bridge and from there walked to San Marco through the Mercerie.⁵⁴ Sanudo thought it noteworthy to comment on an ambassador who had to be taken by boat all the way because he was old and gouty.⁵⁵ To affirm Venice's status as a mercantile centre, the authorities too were keen to show off the area, which they did by means of stately promenades for important personalities on official visits, invariably on foot.⁵⁶ On one occasion, Sanudo recorded a cardinal who insisted on going to the Mercerie despite the rain.⁵⁷

Beyond the opulence of trade in the center, concentrating on walking allows us to perceive other and less known aspects of the urban economy. The nineteenth-century *flâneurs* discussed by Benjamin saw walking as a form of leisure. But for most early modern city-dwellers, walking was a daily toil, one that played a crucial function in enabling the movement of goods and services.⁵⁸ I know of no Venetian equivalent to Ambrogio Brambilla's collection of prints depicting Roman street trades until Gaetano Zompini's *Le arti che vanno per via nella città di Venezia* (1785).⁵⁹ But peddlers, porters and itinerant artisans are included in Cesare Vecellio's 1590 *Habiti*.⁶⁰ Many more can be found, together with plenty of references to Venice, in Tommaso Garzoni's 1586 encyclopedic description of all the trades of the world, appropriately entitled *Piazza universale*. In fact this also included a humorous section on *oziosi* or idlers – the early modern equivalent of the *flâneurs* – who spent their life “eating, drinking, and strolling in the square.”⁶¹

Some petty retailers, including charlatans, set up temporary stalls in the busiest squares, but others walked the streets peddling their wares. If in France they were known as *colporteurs*

because they hung their wares on their neck, in Venice Zompini depicted one as crying out “My shop is on my back.” His missing foot reminds us that walking could be a curse as well as a means of livelihood.⁶² If some walked in search of customers, others looked for cheap clothes and objects to buy and re-sell, such as *barattieri*, *stracciaroli* and *strazze ferrut*. Walking makes one hungry, so it is no surprise that there were many itinerant food sellers specializing in different kinds of beverages and comestibles.⁶³ Peddling was especially important for the distribution of cheap commodities; for example, *rivendroli* or *tricoli* bought rotting fruits and vegetables from market-stalls in the centre and then sold them in the city’s poorer neighborhoods.⁶⁴

For many in what we would now call the service industry, walking itself was work. Porters must have been busy in a harbor city where there were no animal-driven carts. One is shown carrying a barrel in Carpaccio’s *Healing of the Madman* (c. 1496), while about a century later Leandro Bassano’s *Riva degli Schiavoni* depicts two transporting wicker baskets loaded with fish or vegetables.⁶⁵ Carriers can also be seen to the right of Giacomo Franco’s depiction of the Piazzetta (figure 2.) Carriers were generally known as *bastazzi*, possibly from *basto*, a word that in sixteenth-century Venetian meant the cloth which they wore on their heads or shoulders to protect themselves against injury from heavy loads.⁶⁶ They also went by other names reflecting their specialities, each requiring different containers: baskets, tubs, cages and poles.⁶⁷ Special porters carried purchases back from shops to the buyers’ homes, thus easing the walking of better-off people: “for two or three *soldi* they precede you, getting home before you and serving you as a gentleman.”⁶⁸ At a time when gout must have been widespread amongst the rich, there were also sedan-chair carriers, “portaseggette.” The elderly doge Leonardo Loredan had one, for example, though he used it “mal volentiera,” whether because it was uncomfortable, or for other reasons, as we shall see.⁶⁹

Other professions involved constant walking. Town criers read out decrees from the Rialto and San Marco but also went to a range of other locations such as parish *campi* and ferry stops. Their itineraries show that they chose places of transit where they knew they would find many passersby.⁷⁰ Finally, itinerant artisans went from house to house repairing objects. Some sat down to work at key passageways, as a basket-repairer who habitually sat by the Ponte della Paglia in San Marco in 1520.⁷¹ But others had to provide their services door to door, like chimney sweeps, tinkers, and knife grinders, who carried their stone on a wheelbarrow.⁷² Many peddlers doubled as artisans who repaired and then re-sold second-hand goods.⁷³ Cobblers only carried a small box for their tools and material, as represented in many depictions of their patron saint, St Anianus. A cobbler from Alexandria, Anianus discovered God when he pierced himself while repairing St Mark's sandal – itself broken from the evangelist's wanderings while proselytizing.⁷⁴

Special mention must be made of female workers. Contrary to earlier assumptions based on sources relating especially to elite women, Monica Chojnacka has shown that most women regularly moved about Venice to work, often far from their residential neighborhood.⁷⁵ There were also many female peddlers. Government records and iconography both refer to peasant women or *contadine* who came from the countryside to sell their produce – just as in Florence, according to Cecilia Hewlett's article in this issue.⁷⁶ Perhaps this was a family division of labor, while their men remained in the fields. Many other women walked around to provide services, from healing to midwifery (the latter went to their patients' houses accompanied by servants who carried their tools).⁷⁷ By contrast, despite a widespread assumption to the contrary, prostitutes did not walk the streets for business but rather worked from within establishments and advertised themselves “stand[ing] at their windows or even more at their doors and in the street.”⁷⁸ The regulation of prostitution changed in

this period. Until around 1500 the authorities tried to segregate it spatially, removing prostitutes from private houses, first to well-defined areas and then to licenced brothels. A century later, the authorities recognized that prostitutes moved about the city and tried to set them apart from respectable women through the imposition of dress codes or the limitation of the hours during which, for example, they could go to church.⁷⁹

Walking together

Walking played social and political functions too, as we can see once we move from the physical conditions and material purposes of movement to its perceived merits and meanings – or, as urbanists say, from hardware to software.⁸⁰ For most of the population, walking together helped assert social cohesion on special occasions. At city-wide level this must have been true especially for ritual processions, and at the level of neighbourhoods, for the marches of Castellani and Nicolotti, the residents of Venice’s Eastern and Western areas, who converged on their respective bridges to fight.⁸¹ Ordinary walking too could be a form of socialization. When the Spanish traveller Pero Tafur wrote in the 1430s that the streets’ cleanliness made the city “as clean for walking as a gracious chamber,” his image clearly pointed to the convivial nature of urban movement.⁸² Strolling together – walking as leisure with no specific destination – was a recognized pastime. In 1617 a Piedmontese scrivener living in Cannaregio described his habit of strolling with compatriots along the canal banks in that peripheral area, away from the hubbub of the centre (“mi trovo alle volte e andiamo a passeggiare insieme longamente sopra le fondamenta”).⁸³

The most striking case of walking as a form of social cohesion was that of patricians. Unlike other nobilities who would not dream of dismounting from their saddles, patricians were prepared to share the streets with commoners.⁸⁴ Foreign travellers often teased Venetians

about their inexperience with horses: one mentioned a patrician “who ready to take horse, asked how the wynde stood, as thinking he could no more ryde then sayle against the wynde.”⁸⁵ Many also commented on the fact that rich Venetians went to the market to do their shopping, and some sneered at such parsimoniousness. Arguably, however, they misunderstood the special meaning and functions of walking for patricians.⁸⁶

First, walking was a way of asserting republican difference from other nobilities. In 1528 Pietro Aretino captured this spirit with wit when, having moved to Venice, he presented his now useless horses to his old princely patron.⁸⁷ Two years later, the visiting Duke of Milan was offered a mule to tour the Arsenal, but he had to decline out of politeness to his patrician hosts, who all walked.⁸⁸ By taking a more lowly approach to physical movement, Venetian patricians put forward a higher sense of their nobility, or civility, which they contrasted with the haughtiness of foreign aristocrats. Thus in 1576 a Venetian ambassador disparaged Neapolitan nobles for their pompousness, which included spending “most of their time” on horseback.⁸⁹ In contrast, an unwillingness to walk was grounds for political criticism against fellow-Venetians. Sanudo thought it a sign of self-conceit that the haughty (and gouty) doge Andrea Gritti chose to avoid the mud by going by boat to his annual visit to the church of Santa Maria Formosa.⁹⁰

Secondly, patrician walking was meant to show a certain egalitarianism of class – as we shall see, it stopped short of including *popolano* walkers. The patricians’ identical robes were like uniforms: sumptuary laws regulated the size and shape of sleeves and the quantity of cloth to prevent richer patricians from humbling poorer ones.⁹¹ In describing patricians walking together at San Marco and the Rialto, Sansovino suggested that their quasi-identical dress made them look like a religious order.⁹² True, quality may have differed widely, but even expensive cloth is slightly lost in a narrow *calle* where it can hardly be seen and, on the whole,

walking affords fewer opportunities for conspicuous display.⁹³ Moreover, unlike other nobilities, patricians ordinarily walked without accompanying servants, a rarity which struck Montaigne.⁹⁴

Finally, walking was not only a sign of frugality. In a state ruled by elderly men, it was evidence of strength exerted in public service. Sanudo often remarked with admiration old patricians who went to council despite their age. Of one who had recently turned 87, he wrote that, “I have seen him walk home *gagliardo* through the Merceria.”⁹⁵ The physician Scipione Mercuri elaborated on the medical benefits of walking to the ducal palace and up its stairs as a way of combining “exercise” with “public affairs,” so long as the pace was brisk.⁹⁶ In reverse, Sanudo associated the indecisiveness of the ageing doge Loredan with his inability to walk even to the offices inside the palace. This may well explain why, as we saw above, Loredan did not use his sedan chair gladly. In 1521 Sanudo noted the relief that the doge’s succession brought to the city’s administrative and ceremonial life.⁹⁷ Thus, the ability to walk was tantamount to being fit for office.

If walking was a political and social statement, it was also instrumental to patrician ambitions as a practical activity. As Giovanni Maria Memmo wrote in 1563, the ideal city should have at its centre “a spacious square, where magistrates and citizens may comfortably gather to talk about [the city] and to stroll together.”⁹⁸ Talking informally about politics was better done while walking, as Memmo knew from real observation. In principle, decision-making was conducted by patricians sitting in council halls, and descriptions at the time remarked on the static majesty with which they voted while the ballot urn was passed around the benches.⁹⁹ But political leaders and hopeful office-seekers needed to canvas support before voting. Such electioneering was known as *broglio*, a word that originally referred to the orchard which once grew outside the ducal palace. It was there, in the Piazzetta, that

patricians met informally on council days, though some sources also refer to daily meetings of patricians in the Rialto.¹⁰⁰

Moving about was crucial to these regular gatherings, which may be why an English traveller described them as “the walking times.”¹⁰¹ First, in the absence of a court, it was necessary to gather in public, all the more so because the republic abhorred factionalism and would have found private meetings highly suspicious. As Sansovino explained, private *ridotti* might host reprehensible activities such as gambling, but the open-space location was a guarantee that patricians met “with no other aim than ... to get to know each other in order to preserve forever their union and concord.”¹⁰² Second, walking would increase the chances of winning over supporters. As a later manual for young patricians put it, “the true *broglio* does not consist in standing still in the Piazza all morning talking only to two other people.”¹⁰³ Finally, the reason why patricians strolled while chatting, as informers reported in the early seventeenth century, may be that they tried to shield their conversation from eavesdropping – indeed informers were generally able to report people’s names but not the subject of discussion.¹⁰⁴ It is not always easy to perceive movement from visual representations, but contemporary depictions of the Piazzetta often show patricians standing side by side, with arms projecting forward and looking in the same direction – a posture that is more natural for people talking together while walking than when they are stationary (figure 2).¹⁰⁵

Broglio walking was widely and increasingly discussed in the manuals of good conduct addressed to patricians – the republican equivalent of Castiglione’s *Courtier*. Francesco Sansovino in 1566 and his imitator Aldo Mannucci in 1584 both gave extensive practical advice about how to behave, which in 1623 Antonino Colluraffi elaborated in two chapters, no doubt drawing from his own expertise as a private tutor in patrician households.¹⁰⁶ The growing importance of open-space perambulation is reflected in these authors’ different

emphasis on the political importance of daily attendance at the palace (for Sansovino) and the *piazzæ* (for Mannucci), while Colluraffi is the first to use the word *broglia* (which his predecessors described more innocently as *pratica*).¹⁰⁷ When attending the *broglia* for the first time, a young patrician was to be accompanied by a choice group of relatives, walk up and down, and greet everyone; it was said that one would be able to foretell his career based on the *panache* (“*disinvoltura*”) with which he performed on that day.¹⁰⁸ All manuals recommended a studied informality in body language, and (as one put it) a mixture of gravity and joviality.¹⁰⁹ In the *broglia*, patricians should address peers of age, while presumably waiting to be addressed by seniors. They should show everyone equal respect, but without excessively deferential bows or other affected gestures; and they should not hurry from one group of people to the other.¹¹⁰

In describing this patrician declension of aristocratic etiquette, traveller Thomas Coryat emphasized its mobile nature: “when two acquaintances meete and talke together at the walking times of the day ... they give a mutuall kisse when they depart from each other... Likewise when they meete onely and not talke, they give a low congie to each other by very civill and courteous gestures, as by bending of their bodies, and clapping their right hand upon their breastes, without uncovering of their heads, which sometimes they use, but very seldome.”¹¹¹ Thus even in the absence of words, bodily deportment was an important form of communication as patricians saluted each other and so manifested their adherence to the common republican ideal. Equally, a certain manner of walking communicated defeat at the *broglia*, such as when, on the eve of the new doge’s election, a candidate was seen “to tread softly, to walk stoopingly, and to raise himself from benches ... with laborious and painful gesture, as arguments of no lasting man.”¹¹² Thus if many Renaissance Italians looked at

space as a barometer of political trends, Venetians had good reason to look for similar signs in the way in which people moved through space.¹¹³

Walking apart

So far I have discussed walking as a connective flow or, to use a different metaphor, a glue that held together the economy and society. But street movement also occasioned rivalry and division. This could have economic reasons. Shopkeepers saw peddling as unfair competition and resented the peasants who came from the countryside to sell their own produce. Invariably, they couched their grievances in terms of decorum and mobility, with reference to the *rivenduglioli* blocking streets. The authorities were bound to feel sympathetic to fixed businesses, which paid rents and taxes. Although they could never get rid of peddlers altogether, they made repeated attempts to limit their presence at the Rialto: first to only a few hours a day, then away from the bridge altogether, in an out-of-the-way campo.¹¹⁴ Fixed artisans also resented hawkers. For example, the shoemakers' guild repeatedly tried to halt the activities of itinerant cobblers in the sixteenth century. In turn, the cobblers suffered from the competition of even humbler *scarperotte*, who walked around the city to collect, repair, and resell unwanted shoes.¹¹⁵

Shopkeepers blamed the streets' confusion on wandering workers, but they too wanted to attract crowds. For example, Sanudo often described how people obstructed streets ("impazzavano le strade") in connection with special occasions.¹¹⁶ In 1522 a lottery operating near the Rialto drew so many ticket buyers that "it is impossible to pass through these places; there are so many people that it seems like the feast of the Ascension."¹¹⁷ As this implies, the press of people was welcome during fairs, but at normal times the authorities repeatedly legislated against businesses that cluttered the streets with goods, shutters, or

curtains. Shopkeepers, in turn, tried to extend their activities out of their generally small premises onto the street; as Evelyn Welch emphasizes, there were substantial continuities between indoor and outdoor shopping.¹¹⁸ What we see here, then, is the competition between different logics: that of the seller pressed for space and anxious to attract customers, and that of the buyer who needs to move in order to assess range and quality. The authorities had to steer a difficult course between the two.

Ambivalence also marked walking's social and political functions. *Broglia* provoked fears of corruption, as reflected in the word's double meaning – electoral gathering and intrigue.¹¹⁹ Some patricians expressed their criticism of politicking as a dislike for *broglia* walks. For example the rich and proud Priuli explained his refusal to stand for election in terms of unwillingness to *far brogiarie*, that is “to salute, pray and practice.”¹²⁰ Trifone Gabriel, who also refused to take part in political activity, retired to his countryside villa and condemned the places associated with open-space conversation amongst patricians: “commotion is not agreeable to me, but rather solitude, not the Rialto, San Marco and the piazzas.” A supporter of the Petrarchan ideal of contemplative life, he preferred garden walking.¹²¹ Once again, where to walk, or not to walk, was a political and cultural statement.

But the greatest anxiety arose out of the patricians' contacts with non-patricians in the city's crowded streets. Ambassadors, their agents, and a host of minor professionals of the city's intelligence industry also went to the *broglia*. It was their presence that moved the Inquisitors of State (established in 1537) to place their own informers there at the turn of the seventeenth century – informers who in turn often followed those foreigners about the city, walking at a safe distance.¹²² Important as it was, walking was increasingly seen as possibly conducive to situations that were both politically dangerous and socially demeaning. This ambivalence is clear in Sansovino's description of the Rialto. He began by defining it as “la

prima piazza dell'Europa" thanks to the gathering of merchants, but then went on to underscore social separation: merchants from all over the world mingled on one side, including Florentines, Genoese, Milanese, Spanish, and Turks, while patricians stayed on the other.¹²³ Representing patricians as distant from other people was a way of marking them off socially and politically and of asserting that foreigners in particular had no opportunity to spy.

We find a similar emphasis on the physical separation of socially different walkers in medical treatises. In sixteenth-century Italy, walking was increasingly recognized as a healthy bodily exercise, especially in the countryside, and more rarely in cities.¹²⁴ In Venice, as we have seen, Mercuri recommended brisk walking. But he also identified strolling in front of the bell tower at San Marco (along with the excessive consumption of salad!) as the cause of many illnesses and thus a boon for physicians. If patricians really could not do without *conversazione*, he thought that they ought at least to avoid the open piazza and instead gather under the shelter of its "most noble porches," where they could protect themselves from both the evening cold and the crowds.¹²⁵ The principle of social zoning inspired measures aimed at cleaning the Rialto from itinerant traders, which were invariably couched in terms of decorum. In 1518 the authorities gave special permission for five "pauperculae mulieres" to trade, ostensibly because "they have no other livelihood," but perhaps also because they were easier to set apart than men.¹²⁶ After protracted attempts, in 1514 the authorities managed to clear ferries and barges from a quay at the Rialto "for the embarkation of the nobles."¹²⁷ The major public works of beautification known as *renovatio urbis* – inspired by Andrea Gritti, the same doge who preferred to stay away from street mud – also included the removal of the food market from San Marco and into a specific area at the Rialto.¹²⁸

Pace as a sign of distinction

Because complete spatial separation was ultimately impossible, social distinction had to be affirmed in other ways. When discussing status symbols, we tend to think of consumption and goods such as clothing but, as Bourdieu discussed, deportment too can be fashioned to set classes apart.¹²⁹ In crowded spaces men and women of standing distinguished themselves through their pace or gait. The upright, slow bearing of the body while advancing was a sign of self-control and a mark of moral virtue. As Ottavia Niccoli has noted, sixteenth-century schools of Christian doctrine increasingly encouraged children to move slowly.¹³⁰ The dichotomy between *gravitas* and *celeritas* was first noted by the classicist Georges Dumézil with reference to Cicero, who instructed citizens to “take short steps,” neither too fast nor too slow, and associated running with slaves.¹³¹ The parallel with Rome is apt since the citizen rulers of republics may have regarded a stately gait as a mark of statesmanship.

Clothes enforced, and reinforced, certain bodily behaviors. Peter Burke suggested that the dresscode of the eminent *Procuratori di San Marco* may have induced a slow and solemn pace, as if patricians glided, their feet hidden by long robes that nearly reached the ground. Further study of the fabric would confirm this intuition, especially since the length, and weight, of the thickly embroidered sleeves increased with seniority.¹³² As we have seen, Sansovino noticed the sense of class unity exuding from the patricians walking together.¹³³ Sabellico too described the patrician gait (“icessus”) as “tacitus ac curiosus” – interestingly, half a century later, the first Italian translation dropped the ambivalent reference to curiosity and opted for a safer pensiveness (“caminano chetamente et da pensieri soprapresi”).¹³⁴ Manuals of good behavior which were so full of advice on *broglia* gave none on the manner of walking, perhaps because their authors regarded it as unnecessary, but they mentioned leaving home well dressed and clean, greeting back when greeted, and avoiding excessive

pomp and loudness when “going in the street.” Specifically, patricians should mark their distance from the rest of the population, avoiding “shouting to servants in public, getting upset with commoners in the squares... frequently greeting women on the streets, watching buffoons and charlatans too eagerly.”¹³⁵ The most prescriptive was Colluraffi, who wrote (quoting Cicero) that the ideal patrician “will seek a true appearance of authority and a secure norm of gravity, being neither slow nor fast in walking, because the former demonstrates arrogance, and the latter, inconstancy.”¹³⁶

Female walking attracted special attention. Working women walked as much as men and, contrary to earlier assumptions, patrician women also walked in crowded streets such as the Mercerie.¹³⁷ However, the latter provoked criticism in treatises such as Francesco Barbaro’s fifteenth-century *De re uxoria*. The first Italian translation (1548) of the text went even further, railing against women’s “voglia di uscir così spesso come fanno di casa... di andar tutto il dì qua e la zazzeando, senza saper dove.”¹³⁸ Later manuals of good behavior all stressed that (unlike men) women should only venture out accompanied, preferably by female servants whose deportment they did not comment on.¹³⁹ Even as they insisted on the benefits of walking for male patricians, most authors suggested that when forced to go out, women should take gondolas to protect their honour and their clothes.¹⁴⁰ Mercuri wrote that, like men, women too should avoid *ozio*, but described the latter as not getting out of bed altogether, and confined his recommendations to activities indoors or in the garden; pregnant women should avoid walking out altogether.¹⁴¹ Manuals were also more explicit in discussing the female than the male gait. As Helena Sanson noted, the tone was already set with Francesco da Barberino’s early fourteenth-century *Reggimento e costumi di donna*, which instructed women to walk with “small and equal steps, without looking ahead or at other people.” By the sixteenth century the same point was elaborated further, for example in

Lodovico Dolce's *Dialogo della istituzione delle donne*, set in Venice and full of references to local customs: to him, the pace of women should be "neither too hasty nor too slow, because the former is a sign of levity (*leggerezza*) and the latter of arrogance." This echoes the ancient counsel we have seen above for men, but emphasizes modesty rather than gravity. As Dolce added, women should not look at people while walking, nor generally look about, other than was strictly necessary to direct their steps.¹⁴²

Once outside, women were subject to a dresscode that was also meant to set them apart. Coryat reported that "it is the custome of these maydes when they walke in the streetes, to cover their faces with their vailes, *verecundiae causa*."¹⁴³ As Vecellio explained, this was particularly important while moving about, whereas women pulled the veil back once in church.¹⁴⁴ Shoes themselves played different roles as status symbols. In Vecellio's book, we are shown the clogs of working women, while rich ones have their feet covered by long skirts or trains when outside the home. Michelle Laughran and Andrea Vianello have noted that, like underwear, footwear was not supposed to be seen in early modern Italy, although some women might offer brief glimpses of their shoes "unwittingly, in play or through whatever cause."¹⁴⁵ My point here is that, whether or not it derived from prudery, concealing one's feet allowed for an impressive, gliding pace for women just as for men. Such concealment does not mean that shoes were unimportant or small, as we are reminded by the famous high-platform chopines, whose height was regarded as proportional to social status in the sixteenth century.¹⁴⁶ In this case, fashion made women's pace both imposing and limited, although chopines may have been more useful than is generally recognized given the dirt and dampness of streets.¹⁴⁷

Finally, the walking style of men also set women apart. We have already seen how men were taught to avoid talking with women in public. Precisely because of this, fleeting encounters

could take place while walking, as travellers noted when recording details of behavior that escape local sources. “[When] young Virgins of the Nobility [pass] the streete, ... gentlemen for a Curtesy would stop their way, standing still before them as amazed at their beauty, and they tooke pryde to declyne asyde with a smyle and light blushing.”¹⁴⁸ Ostentatiously giving way was meant to flatter, but could equally cause embarrassment. Either way, even as no words were being uttered and physical contact was avoided, the change in step sent a signal and established a form of communication, both to the woman and to others.

Patrician men and women marked a distance not only between each other, but also between themselves and the rest of the population among whom they walked. In contrast with the patrician gait, many descriptions at the time went out of their way to disparage the walking of the poor or the unruly. For example *bravi*, the violent louts who doubled as bodyguards, were also known as *tagliacantoni*, perhaps because they took short cuts and got under people’s feet.¹⁴⁹ A 1547 satirical poem joked that the word *facchino* derived from curtsying (*far l’inchino*) but then described rude porters hovering over potential customers and shouting to make passersby move out of the way.¹⁵⁰ According to Garzoni, as soon as one disembarked on the quay, “without asking you, stevedores rush over in droves, ... they take your sack, chest or bag, put it on their wheelbarrows ... they jump on board your boat as quick as cats.”¹⁵¹ If the patricians’ pace was to be almost super-human in its stateliness, the workers’ movement was represented as animal-like – not for nothing the same word *basto* indicated both the porters’ cloth (as we saw above) and the packsaddle for beasts of burden. But crowdedness and social promiscuity made for difficult situations that risked turning perambulating patricians themselves into animals. As one patrician recommended to his son in 1550, overly pompous robes should be avoided “because they attract scores of children and plebeians who come clamouring behind you, as if going to watch a giraffe or a bear.”¹⁵²

Conclusion

In early modern Venice, walking was imbued with special yet ambivalent significance as it both tied the city together and set people apart. Walking was the primary form of movement for most men and women, and it played crucial economic functions in facilitating the circulation of commodities. For many, especially among the poor, it was a vital means of livelihood and it provided access to goods that would otherwise have been out of bounds. In addition, social and political considerations made many rich people prefer to walk even when they could afford boats. To patricians in particular, walking was daily habit, a form of networking, and a sign of group egalitarianism. Critics of modern urban life such as Simmel, Benjamin, and de Certeau have described walking in the city as solitary because it takes place in a crowd of strangers. But walking in the early modern city was an intensely social activity. This was true of other Italian cities, perhaps especially of city-republics; for example, rich Florentines too went to the market in person.¹⁵³ But in Florence as in most other cities, the rich could ride horses, and in most princely capitals they could gather together in special places at court. By contrast, in Venice, the city's crowded space forced people together regardless of rank or gender in narrow streets cluttered by wares and trades of all kinds. The demographic boom of the sixteenth century increased density. Just as the importance of *broglia* walks increased in patrician political life, mixing with outsiders provoked growing anxieties, as shown in contemporary representations that shifted away from street life, in attempts at social zoning, and in recommendations about behavior that would set apart patricians, especially women. Precisely because they were physically surrounded, patricians tried to distinguish themselves by adopting a particularly solemn gait, while women were taught how to guard their movements out of modesty. Thus, walking together and walking

apart were equally part of the experience of moving around the early modern city. Walking was never simply a reflex; it was a socially specific and politically conscious act.

IMAGE LEGEND

Image 1. Filippo de Vivo, sketch of the approximate route followed in Marcantonio Sabellico's *De situ urbis Venetae* (1492) on the background of Jacopo de Barbari's bird's eye view of Venice (1500). The black dots indicate sites included in Sabellico's description. Real relative distances differ from the representation because of the perspective employed by de Barbari.

Image 2. View of the Piazzetta with small groups of patricians (identified by their long gowns and occasional sashes). Note the dynamic position of many of the figures, the food sellers and the basket carriers. From Giacomo Franco, *Habiti d'huomini et donne venetiane* (Venice, 1609), © British Library Board, C.48.h.11.

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¹ Rebecca Solnit, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (London, 2001), Joseph Amato, *On Foot: A History of Walking* (New York, 2004), Tim Ingold and Jo Lee Vergunst, eds., *Ways of walking: ethnography and practice on foot* (Aldershot, 2008), and Timothy Shortell and Evrick Brown, *Walking in the European City: Quotidian Mobility and Urban Ethnography* (Farnham, 2014).

² Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," in *Cities and Society: The Revised Reader in Urban Sociology*, ed. P.K. Hatt and A.J. Reiss (Glencoe, Ill, 1957), 635-46 (first published in 1903).

³ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project* (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1999); Michel de Certeau, "Walking in the City," in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Los Angeles and Berkeley, 1984), 91-109.

⁴ For eighteenth-century London, cf. Penelope Corfield, "Walking the City Streets: The Urban Odyssey in Eighteenth-Century England," *Journal of Urban History* 16 (1990): 132-74.

⁵ Riita Laitinen and Thomas Cohen, eds., "The cultural history of early modern streets," *Journal of Early Modern History* 12 (2008), Fabrizio Nevola and Georgia Clarke, eds., "Experiences of the Street in Early Modern Italy,"

I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance 16 (2013); cf. also Alex Cowan and Jill Steward, eds., *The City and the Senses: Urban Culture Since 1500* (Aldershot, 2007). Earlier studies include Arlette Farge, *Voir vivre dans la rue à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1979), Jean-Pierre Leguay, *La rue au Moyen Age* (Rennes, 1984), but cf. also the valuable reflections in Bernard Rudofsky, *Streets for People: A Primer for Americans* (Garden City, NY, 1969).

⁶ Diantha Steinhilper, “Mapping Identity: Defining Community in the Culhuacán Map of the *Relaciones Geográficas*,” *The Portolan: Journal of the Washington Map Society* 74 (2009): 11-34 and Çiğdem Kafescioğlu, “Viewing, Walking, Mapping Istanbul, ca. 1580,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 56 (2014): 16-35.

⁷ For references on the spatial turn, see the introduction to this special issue; for the “mobility turn” in the social sciences, see John Urry, *Mobilities* (Cambridge, 2007); for a recent demonstration of how today’s experience of a great capital of the Renaissance can be enhanced by walking sustained by digital technologies offering historical data, see Fabrizio Nevola and David Rosenthal, “Locating experience in the Renaissance city using mobile app technologies: the *Hidden Florence* project,” in *Mapping the Early Modern City: Digital Mapping as Tool and Template for Social and Cultural Analysis*, ed. Nicholas Terpstra (London, forthcoming); on a particular form of urban movement, see Daniel Jütte, “Entering a city: on a lost early modern practice”, *Urban History* 41 (2014): 204-227. Other articles in this special issue also emphasise movement, including those by Niall Atkinson, Marta Cacho, Yvonne Elet and Cecilia Hewlett.

⁸ Ria Hutabarat Lo, “Walkability: what is it?” *Journal of Urbanism* 2 (2009): 145-66.

⁹ Cf. Edward Muir and Ronald Weissman, “Social and Symbolic Places in Renaissance Venice and Florence,” in *The Power of Place: Bringing together geographical and sociological imaginations*, ed. John Agnew and James Duncan (Boston, 1989), 81-104; Joseph Wheeler, “Stench in sixteenth-century Venice,” in *The City and the Senses*, 25-38; Iain Fenlon, *Piazza San Marco* (London, 2009).

¹⁰ Iain Fenlon, *The Ceremonial City: History, Memory and Myth in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven and London, 2007); Massimo Rospocher and Rosa Salzberg, “An Evanescent Public Sphere: Voices, Spaces, and Publics in Venice during the Italian Wars,” in *Beyond the Public Sphere: Opinions, Publics, Spaces in Early Modern Europe (XVI-XVIII)*, ed. Massimo Rospocher (Bologna and Berlin, 2012), 93-114; Rosa Salzberg, *Ephemeral City: Cheap Print and Urban Culture in Renaissance Venice* (Manchester, 2014).

¹¹ Filippo de Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics* (Oxford, 2007); Jonathan Walker, *Pistols! Treason! Murder! The Rise and Fall of a Master Spy* (Melbourne, 2007); Elizabeth Horodowich, *Language and Statecraft in Early Modern Venice* (Cambridge, 2008); Alexander Cowan, “Gossip and Street Culture in Early Modern Venice,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 12 (2008): 313-333. For an attempt to map the sites of cultural production in the the period 1509-1530, see de Vivo, “I luoghi della cultura a Venezia nel primo Cinquecento,” in *Atlante della Letteratura Italiana*, ed. Sergio Luzzatto and Gabriele Pedullà, vol. 1 (Torino, 2010), 708-18.

¹² See Dario Tessicini’s article in this special issue.

¹³ On religious ceremonies, see Edward Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice* (Princeton: 1981); on pilgrims, Robert Davis and Garry Marvin, *Venice, the tourist maze: a cultural critique of the world's most touristed city* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: 2004), 11-29.

¹⁴ For a sixteenth-century list of walking terms, see Francesco Alunno, *Della fabrica del mondo* (Venice, 1548), 196r-202v.

¹⁵ Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift, *Cities: Reimagining the Urban* (Cambridge, 2002).

¹⁶ Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a theory of practice* (Cambridge, 1977).

¹⁷ Bourdieu, *Le Sens pratique* (Paris, 1980), ch. 4.

¹⁸ Peter Burke, *Venice and Amsterdam: A Study of Seventeenth-Century Elites* (London, 1974), 63 underlined the gravity arising from the patricians’ slow walking; on the analogy with Bourdieu’s observations, see the second edition (Cambridge, 1994), xviii, xxii.

¹⁹ Jürgen Schulz, “Jacopo de Barbari’s View of Venice: Map Making, City Views, and Moralized Geography Before the Year 1500,” *The Art Bulletin* 60 (1978): 425-74; Deborah Howard, “Venice as a Dolphin: Further Investigations Into Jacopo de Barbari’s View,” *Artibus et Historiae*, 18 (1997): 101-11; *A volo d’uccello. Jacopo de’ Barbari e le rappresentazioni di città nell’Europa del Rinascimento* (Venice, 1999).

²⁰ Marcantonio Sabellico, *De Venetae urbis situ. De praetoris officio. De latinae linguae reparatione seu de viris illustribus* [Venice, c. 1494-95], sigg. A4v–C5r.

²¹ But cf. Ruth Chavasse, “The *studia humanitatis* and the making of a humanist career: Marcantonio Sabellico’s exploitation of humanist literary genres,” *Renaissance Studies* 17 (2003): 27-38.

²² “Velut in tabula quadam simillimam illius expressisse imaginem,” Sabellico, *De Venetae urbis situ*, sig. A3v.

²³ “Tota ad haec quacumque pedibus peragratur lateribus munita,” *ibid.*, sig. C4v.

²⁴ De Certeau, “Walking in the City.”

²⁵ Sabellico, *De Venetae urbis situ*, sig. C3r and *La seconda parte de le historie del Biondo... Marc'Antonio Sabellico dell'antichità d'Aquileia, & del sito di Vinegia* (Venice, 1544), 261v.

²⁶ Intriguingly, instead, by the seventeenth century pedestrians appeared on many bird's eye views, such as Odoardo Fialetti's, which includes plenty of small figures walking along the canals, alone and in groups. Deborah Howard and Henrietta McBurney, eds., *The Image of Venice: Fialetti's View and Sir Henry Wotton*, (London, 2014). On the importance of representing people in the city's printed images, see Bronwen Wilson, *The World in Venice: Print, the City, and Early Modern Identity* (Toronto, 2005).

²⁷ Elena Bonora, *Ricerche su Francesco Sansovino imprenditore librario e letterato* (Venice, 1994); on city descriptions, see ch. 5.

²⁸ Francesco Sansovino, *Delle cose notabili che sono in Venetia* (Venice, 1561): “voltatevi in qua e vedrete assai delle sue cose” (19v); also “ma poi che noi siamo alla zecca, entriamo dentro” (23v); “andiamo cosi ragionando uerso casa mia” (43v).

²⁹ “Ma tempo è horamai ch'usciamo di Piazza col ragionamento, e ch'andiamo vagando per l'altre parti della Città,” *ibid.*, 27v.

³⁰ Deborah Howard, *Jacopo Sansovino: Architecture and Patronage in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven and London, 1975).

³¹ Giovanni Botero, *Della ragion di stato* (Venice, 1589), 156 and *Relatione della Republica Venetiana* (Venice, 1605), 84r.

³² See on the late middle ages Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan, *Sopra le acque salse: Espaces, pouvoir et société à Venise* (Rome, 1992); on the early modern period, Ennio Concina, *Venezia nell'età moderna. Struttura e funzioni* (Venice, 1989). For population figures, see Daniele Beltrami, *Storia della popolazione di Venezia dalla fine del secolo XVI alla caduta della Repubblica* (Padua, 1954).

³³ Laura Megna, “Comportamenti abitativi del patriziato veneziano (1582-1740),” *Studi veneziani* 22 (1991): 253-323, 254.

³⁴ Sanudo, *De origine*, 25

³⁵ Pompeo Molmenti, *La storia di Venezia nella vita privata dalle origini alla caduta della Repubblica*, 3 vols. (Bergamo, 1905-8), 1: 42, cf. *Canon Pietro Casola's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the Year 1494*, ed. Margaret Newett (Manchester, 1907), 125 and Thomas Coryat, *Coryat's Crudities*, 2 vols. (Glasgow, 1905), 1: 365.

³⁶ Sansovino, *Delle cose notabili*, 28r; the second quotation comes from the 1606 edition, p. 143. Cf. Roberto Berveghieri, *Le vie di Venezia. Canali lagunari e rii a Venezia: Inventori, brevetti, tecnologia e legislazione nei secoli XIII-XVII* (Sommacampagna, 1999).

³⁷ Michel de Montaigne, *Journal de voyage* (Paris, 1992), 69; Coryat, *Crudities*, 1: 332.

³⁸ Sanudo, *De origine*, 21.

³⁹ Dennis Romano, "The Gondola as a Marker of Station in Venetian Society," *Renaissance Studies* 8 (1994): 359-74, and Kate Lowe, "Black Gondoliers and Other Black Africans in Renaissance Venice," *Renaissance Quarterly*, 66 (2013): 412-52.

⁴⁰ Christiane Neerfeld, *Historia per forma di diaria: la cronachistica veneziana contemporanea a cavallo tra Quattro e Cinquecento* (Venezia, 2006), 146.

⁴¹ Sanudo, *Diarii*, 23: 343.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 32: 38, and 33: 496; also Priuli in Neerfeld, *Historia*, 146.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 32: 412, 420. On the usual number, Sanudo, *De origine*, 22.

⁴⁴ Cf. Crouzet-Pavan, *Sopra le acque salse*, 503.

⁴⁵ Sanudo, *Diarii*, 57: 274.

⁴⁶ Guglielmo Zanelli, *Traghetti veneziani: La gondola al servizio della città* (Venezia, 1997).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 31; Giovanni Caniato, "Gondole e gondolieri ultimi testimoni della Serenissima," *ibid.*, 13. Sabellico singled out the ferry at San Samuele as "omnium frequentissimum," Sabellico, *De Venetae urbis situ*, sig. C2r.

⁴⁸ Crouzet-Pavan, *Sopra le acque salse*, 141-65 and 194-216.

⁴⁹ Megna, "Comportamenti," 261; regular maintenance was required, cf. Roberto Cessi and Annibale Alberti, *Rialto. L'isola, il ponte, il mercato* (Bologna, 1934), 43, 46, 51, 69-70, 135-6.

⁵⁰ Crouzet-Pavan, *Sopra le acque salse*, 209; cf. above, note 8.

⁵¹ Cessi and Alberti, *Rialto*: 30, cf. Crouzet-Pavan, *Sopra le acque salse*: 198.

⁵² Crouzet-Pavan, *Sopra le acque salse*, 179, 182, 199.

⁵³ For contemporary descriptions, see David Chambers and Brian Pullan, eds., *Venice: A Documentary History, 1450-1630* (Oxford, 1992): 167-8.

⁵⁴ Eg. Sanudo, *Diarii*, 16: 233, 28: 377, 35: 194 and 460.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 28: 430 and 37: 266.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 2: 1003, 5: 30, 6: 515, 11: 581, 17: 551, 26: 152-53, 39: 42, 54: 69, 83; cf. Christina Neilson's description of arranged visits to Murano and the Arsenal in this special issue.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 28: 38.

⁵⁸ See Hewlett's article in this special issue and cf. Laurence Fontaine, *History of Peddlars in Europe* (Cambridge, 1996).

⁵⁹ Gaetano Zompini, *Le arti che vanno per via nella città di Venezia* (Venezia, 1785).

⁶⁰ *The clothing of the Renaissance world: Cesare Vecellio's Habiti Antichi et Moderni*, ed. Ann Rosalind Jones and Margaret F. Rosenthal (London, 2008), 203, 229-34.

⁶¹ "Gli oziosi che fanno il mestiero di Michelazzo, che consiste in mangiare, bere, e andare al solazzo, e spendono tutto il tempo di lor vita in passeggiar per piazza," Tomaso Garzoni, *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo*, ed. Paolo Cherchi and Beatrice Collina (Turin, 1996), 1294.

⁶² Zompini, *Le arti*, 18.

⁶³ A 1590 census reported peddlars of wine, sweetwine, and oil, Sylvie Favalier, "Le attività lavorative in una parrocchia del centro di Venezia (San Polo - secolo XVI)," *Studi veneziani* 9 (1985): 187-94; cf. Sanudo, *Diarii*, 32: 38 (selling from a boat). See Melissa Calaresu and Danielle van den Heuvel, eds., *Food Hawkers: Selling in the Street from Antiquity to the Present*, forthcoming.

⁶⁴ Garzoni, *Piazza*, 1371-3, cf. Fernand Braudel, *The Wheels of Commerce* (London, 1982), 78.

⁶⁵ Respectively in the Accademia (Venice) and the Real Academia (Madrid). Cf. also image 2.

⁶⁶ Manlio Cortelazzo, *Dizionario veneziano della lingua e della cultura popolare nel XVI secolo* (Padua, 2007). According to Garzoni, porters were known with the nickname *canonici* because the cloth resembled the gown worn by canons, *Piazza*, 1278.

⁶⁷ Other sources confirm the variety of portering specialisms: Sanudo, *Diarii*, 3: 444, 21: 108, 28: 196, 198, 35: 161. The "brentadori" or wine-carriers also had a guild, the *Arte dei travasadori e portadori da vin*.

⁶⁸ Garzoni, *Piazza*, 1278 and *Vecellio's Habiti*, 230; cf. Sanudo, *Diarii*, 46: 286 and Evelyn Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance: Consumer Cultures in Italy, 1400-1600* (New Haven and London, 2005), 217-20.

⁶⁹ Eg. Sanudo, *Diarii*, 20: 305, 29: 257 and 31: 30.

⁷⁰ *Vecellio's Habiti*, 163-5 and 169-70 and cf. De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, 128-36 and Claire Judde de Larivière, *La révolte des boules de neige. Murano, face à Venise, 1511* (Paris, 2014), 192-201.

⁷¹ Sanudo, *Diarii*, 29: 382.

⁷² Zompini, *Arti*, 21. On chimney-sweepers, see Anton Blok "Gli spazzacamini come mediatori simbolici," in *Quaderni storici*, 62 (1986): 537-60.

⁷³ Patricia Allerston, "Reconstructing the Second-hand Clothes Trade in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Venice," *Costume. The Journal of the Costume Society* 13 (1999): 46-56.

⁷⁴ Anianus' cult was a peculiarity of Venice, since elsewhere cobblers worshipped Crispinus and Crispinianus. See Cima da Conegliano's painting, reproduced on the cover of Andrea Vianello, *L'Arte dei Calegheri e Zavateri di Venezia tra XVII e XVIII secolo* (Venezia, 1993).

⁷⁵ Monica Chojnacka, *Working Women of Early Modern Venice* (Baltimore and London, 2001); cf. Dennis Romano, "Gender and the Urban Geography of Renaissance Venice," *Journal of Social History* 23 (1989): 339-53; and Robert Davis, "The Geography of Gender in the Renaissance" in *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Judith Brown and Robert Davis (London, 1998), 19-38.

⁷⁶ Cessi and Alberti, *Rialto*, 77 and *Vecellio's Habiti*, 203, 231, 233. Cecilia Hewlett, "Locating Contadini in the Renaissance City: food circulation and mobility in the marketplace," in this special issue.

⁷⁷ Giovanni Marangoni, *Associazioni di mestiere nella Repubblica Veneta* (Venice, 1974), 209, cf. Chojnacka, *Working Women*, 108-9.

⁷⁸ For contemporary descriptions, see *Vecellio's Habiti*, 190 and 198-9; for the legislation, see *Leggi e memorie venete sulla prostituzione fino alla caduta della Repubblica* (Venezia, 1870-72).

⁷⁹ For prostitution in the fifteenth century, see Paula C. Clarke, "The Business of Prostitution in Early Renaissance Venice," *Renaissance Quarterly*, 68 (2015): 419-464; for the sixteenth century, Giovanni Scarabello, "Per una storia della prostituzione a Venezia tra il XIII e il XVIII secolo," *Studi veneziani*, 47 (2004): 15-101.

⁸⁰ I take the difference between hardware and software from Maria Quvang, Harck Vestergaard, Mette Olesen and Pernille Falborg Helmer, “The act of walking: exemplifying Danish pedestrian culture,” in *Walking in the European City*, 41.

⁸¹ Robert C. Davis, *The War of the Fists. Popular Culture and Public Violence in Late Renaissance Venice* (Oxford, 1994).

⁸² Quoted in Peter Burke, ‘Urban Sensations: Attractive and Repulsive’, in Herman Roodenburg, ed. *A Cultural History of the Senses in the Renaissance* (London, 2014), 48.

⁸³ De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, 93; the original is in Archivio di Stato di Venezia, *Inquisitori di Stato*, b. 1213, fasc. 42 “Carnevali, Ottavio,” cc. nn.

⁸⁴ Daniel Roche, *La Culture équestre de l'Occident: XVIe-XIXe siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris, 2011), 2: *La gloire et la puissance: essai sur la distinction équestre*.

⁸⁵ Fynes Moryson, *Shakespeare's Europe. Unpublished chapters of Fynes Moryson's Itinerary*, ed. Charles Hughes (London, 1903), 467 and cf. Montaigne, *Essays*, ed. M. A. Screech (London, 2013), 366 (III.8).

⁸⁶ Peter Burke, *Venice and Amsterdam*, 71-2 and De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, 106-7.

⁸⁷ The letter, often republished, first appeared in Pietro Aretino, *De le lettere libro primo* (Venice, 1538), 7.

⁸⁸ Sanudo, *Diarii*, 54: 82; on occasional horse-riding in Venice, see Samuele Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, 10 vols. (Venice, 1857-61), 2: 39.

⁸⁹ Girolamo Lippomano, in *Corrispondenze diplomatiche veneziane da Napoli. Relazioni*, ed. Michele Fassina (Roma, 1992), 73.

⁹⁰ Sanudo, *Diarii*, 55: 424-5; he also had *podagra* (53: 223, 231, 332). On the procession, and its ritual requiring the doge to go with whatever weather, see Muir, *Civic Ritual*, 135-56

⁹¹ G. Bistort, *Il Magistrato alle Pompe nella Repubblica di Venezia* (Venice, 1912), 113-161 and cf. Allerston, “Clothing.”

⁹² Sansovino, *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare* (Venice, 1581), fo. 169r.

⁹³ Peter Burke, *The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge, 1987), 132-49.

⁹⁴ Montaigne, *Journal*, 69

⁹⁵ Sanudo *Diarii*, 57: 413, and cf. 45: 178; 46: 26; and 54: 412.

⁹⁶ Scipione Mercuri, *Degli errori popolari d'Italia* (Venice, 1604), 313v.

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- ⁹⁷ Ibid., 26: 86, 29: 257, 31: 30 and 62, and 32: 281.
- ⁹⁸ Giovanni Maria Memmo, *Dialogo nel quale dopo alcune filosofiche dispute, si forma un perfetto Principe, & una perfetta Republica, e parimente un Senatore, un Cittadino, un Soldato, & un Mercatante* (Venice, 1563), 74.
- ⁹⁹ De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, 25-7.
- ¹⁰⁰ The *piazzetta* is at the center of de Barbari's bird's eye view, above Neptune's head. On the *broglio* see Robert Finlay, *Politics in Renaissance Venice* (London, 1980), 22-3, 26-7 and the bibliography mentioned in de Vivo, *Information and Communication*, 47-8.
- ¹⁰¹ Coryat, *Crudities*, 1: 314, 318, 398-9.
- ¹⁰² Sansovino, *Venetia*, 133v, 169r-v.
- ¹⁰³ Academico Imperfetto, *Ricordi etici, economici, e politici. Alla gioventù patricia veneta* (Venice, 1674), 57.
- ¹⁰⁴ De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, 11, 47-8, 89, 123.
- ¹⁰⁵ Many such representations can be seen in Umberto Franzoi, *Il Palazzo Ducale di Venezia nella rappresentazione grafica dal XV al XIX secolo* (Treviso, 1989), eg. 68, 73-75, 83-89.
- ¹⁰⁶ Sansovino, *Dialogo del gentilhuomo venetiano* (Venice, 1566), 22r-23v; Aldo Mannucci, *Il perfetto gentil'huomo* (Venice, 1584), 48-9; Antonino Colluraffi, *Il nobile veneto* (Venice, 1623), 185-233.
- ¹⁰⁷ Sansovino, *Dialogo del gentilhuomo venetiano* (Venice, 1566), 23v; Aldo Mannucci, *Il perfetto gentil'huomo* (Venice, 1584), 48-9.
- ¹⁰⁸ Colluraffi, *Il nobile*, 186-7, Bistort, *Il Magistrato*, 277
- ¹⁰⁹ Sansovino, *Del gentilhuomo venetiano*, 22v; cf. Antonino Colluraffi, *Il nobile veneto* (Venice, 1623), 201.
- ¹¹⁰ Sansovino, *Del gentilhuomo venetiano*, 22r.
- ¹¹¹ Coryat, *Crudities*, 1: 398-9
- ¹¹² *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton*, ed. L.P. Smith, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1907), 2: 136.
- ¹¹³ See above, Roisin Cossar, Filippo de Vivo, and Christina Neilson, "Introduction".
- ¹¹⁴ Cessi and Alberti, *Rialto*, 28, 33, 48, 69, 119, 132, 245-7.
- ¹¹⁵ Andrea Vianello, *L'Arte*, 20, 95.
- ¹¹⁶ Sanudo, *Diarii*, 2: 1215 and 17: 463.
- ¹¹⁷ *Venice Città Excelentissima: Selections from the Renaissance Diaries of Marin Sanudo*, ed. Patricia Labalme and Laura Sanguineti White, transl. Linda Carroll (Baltimore, 2008), 348.

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- ¹¹⁸ Welch, *Shopping*: 123-30; cf. Cessi and Alberti, *Rialto*, 117, 119 and cf. Sanudo, *Diarii*, 49: 137.
- ¹¹⁹ Donald Queller, *The Venetian Patriariate: Reality versus Myth* (Urbana and Chicago, 1986), 57-75, 95-101.
- ¹²⁰ Neerfeld, *Historia*, 192; cf. also 149.
- ¹²¹ David R. Coffin, 'The Gardens of Venice', *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 21, no. 1 (2001): 4-9, 4.
- ¹²² De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, 70-112; for a spectacular reconstruction of a particular spy's pursuit, running through the San Lio area in 1622, cf. Walker, *Pistols! Treason! Murder!*: 107-21.
- ¹²³ Sansovino, *Venetia*, 133v.
- ¹²⁴ Sandra Cavallo and Tessa Storey, *Healthy living in late Renaissance Italy* (Oxford, 2013), 170-7.
- ¹²⁵ Mercuri, *Degli errori popolari*, 298v-299r.
- ¹²⁶ Cessi and Alberti, *Rialto*, 117n., 118.
- ¹²⁷ Cessi and Alberti, *Rialto*, 72 and 113.
- ¹²⁸ Manfredo Tafuri, ed., *Renovatio urbis. Venezia nell'età di Andrea Gritti (1523-1538)* (Rome, 1984).
- ¹²⁹ As discussed above, cf. also Patricia Allerston, "Clothing and Early Modern Venetian Society," *Continuity and Change* 15 (2000), 367-90.
- ¹³⁰ Ottavia Niccoli, "Creanza e disciplina: buone maniere per i fanciulli nell'italia della controriforma," in Paolo Prodi, ed., *Disciplina dell'anima, disciplina del corpo e disciplina della società tra medioevo ed età moderna* (Bologna, 1994), 952-4.
- ¹³¹ Augusto Frascchetti, "Roman Youth," in Giovanni Levi and Jean-Claude Schmitt, eds. *A History of Young People in the West* (Cambridge, Mass., 1997), 58-9.
- ¹³² Burke, *Venice and Amsterdam*, 72-3; on close attention to matter, cf. Ulinka Rublack, "Matter in the Material Renaissance," *Past & Present*, 219 (2013): 41-85.
- ¹³³ Sansovino, *Venetia*, fo. 169r.
- ¹³⁴ Sabellico, *De Venetae urbis situ*, sig. C4v and *Dell'antichità d'Aquileia, & del sito di Vinegia*, 264. For a range of terms meaning gait, see Alunno, *Della fabrica*, 197r-v.
- ¹³⁵ Sansovino, *Del gentilhuomo vinitiano*, 5v-6r, and Manuzio, *Perfetto gentilhuomo*, 11.
- ¹³⁶ "Procurerà... conforme all'avvertimento di Cicerone, una vera imagine d'auttorità, e certa norma di gravità esprimendo, sarà primieramente nè tardo, nè celere nel camminare, perché il primo superbia, il secondo incostanza dimostra." Colluraffi, *Il nobile veneto*, 126.

¹³⁷ Cf. the bibliography listed above, note 75; for some examples, cf. Sanudo, *Diarii*, 4: 23; 18: 229; 23: 152 and 25: 441.

¹³⁸ Francesco Barbaro, *De re uxoria* (Venice, 1513), sig. C8v and Id., *Prudentissimi et gravi documenti circa la eletion della moglie*, transl. Alberto Lollo (Venice, 1548), 49r-v.

¹³⁹ Cf. *Vecellio's Habiti*, 202, Bistort, *Il Magistrato*, 164-5, and cf. Dennis Romano, *Housecraft and Statecraft: Domestic Service in Renaissance Venice, 1400-1600* (Baltimore and London, 1996).

¹⁴⁰ Sansovino, *Delle cose notabili*, 29.

¹⁴¹ Mercuri, *Degli errori popolari*, 229, 233, 240.

¹⁴² Lodovico Dolce, *Dialogo della istituzione delle donne, secondo li tre stati che cadono nella vita umana* (Cambridge, 2015), 117-18, and Helena Sanson, *Donne, precettistica e lingua nell'Italia del Cinquecento: un contributo alla storia del pensiero linguistico* (Florence, 2007), especially 59-63.

¹⁴³ Coryat, *Crudities*, 399.

¹⁴⁴ *Vecellio's Habiti*, 177-80, 184-6, 188-9.

¹⁴⁵ Michelle A. Laughran and Andrea Vianello, "Grandissima Gratia: The Power of Italian Renaissance Shoes as Intimate Wear," in *Ornamentalism: The Art of Renaissance Accessories*, ed. Bella Mirabella (Ann Arbor, 2011), 273-4 (the remark comes from Castiglione). Recent research on other Italian cities suggests that women also owned more comfortable shoes, Cavallo and Storey, *Healthy Living*, p. 176.

¹⁴⁶ Laughran and Vianello, 'Grandissima Gratia', 273

¹⁴⁷ For a rich overview, see Giorgio Riello and Peter McNeil, eds., *Shoes: A History from Sandals to Sneakers* (Oxford and New York, 2006).

¹⁴⁸ Moryson, *Itinerary*, 462.

¹⁴⁹ *Vecellio's Habiti*, 217 and [Tommaso Buoni], *Della compagnia de' tagliacantoni, descrizione universale* (Venice 1601); cf. Jonathan Walker, "Bravi and Venetian Nobles, c.1550-1650," *Studi veneziani* 36 (1998): 85-114.

¹⁵⁰ [Pietro Nelli], *Il secondo libro delle satire alla charlona di messer Andrea da Bergamo* (In Venetia, 1547), published under the pseudonym of "Andrea, facchino da Bergamo."

¹⁵¹ Garzoni, *Piazza universale*, 1277-1279.

¹⁵² Marino Cavalli, *Informatione dell'offitio dell'ambasciatore* (Florence, 1935), 45.

¹⁵³ See Hewlett's paper in this special issue.

IMAGE LEGEND

Image 1. Filippo de Vivo, reconstruction of the approximate route followed by Marcantonio Sabellico in *De situ urbis Venetae* (1492) sketched onto Jacopo de Barbari's bird's eye view of Venice (1500). The black dots indicate places where Sabellico stopped to describe a site. Real distances differ from the representation because of the perspective employed by de Barbari.

Image 2. View of the Piazzetta. Small groups of patricians are identified by their long gowns and occasional sashes. Note the dynamic position of many of the figures, the food sellers and the basket carriers. From Giacomo Franco, *Habiti d'huomini et donne venetiane* (Venice, 1609), © British Library Board , C.48.h.11.

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