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BIRKBECK COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

HISTORICAL USES OF THE SECRET CHANCERY IN EARLY
MODERN VENICE: ARCHIVING, RESEARCHING AND
REPRESENTING THE RECORDS OF STATE

THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
FABIO ANTONINI

Declaration

This is to certify that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used.

Signed:

(Fabio Antonini)

Abstract

For many historians today, the consultation of archival documents is an indispensable aspect of the research underlying their work, yet little is still known of the relationship between the two before the emergence of the national archives as centres of scholarship during the nineteenth century. In the case of the Republic of Venice, an early modern government well known for its programme of official state historiography based around a privileged access to the records of its secret chancery, there remains a significant gap in our understanding of how the use of this collection actually shaped the narratives and writing styles of those who were permitted to access it.

Drawing upon the recent ‘archival turn’ in historical studies, this thesis is a re-examination of the historian’s craft in early modern Venice from the perspective of the physical collection of diplomatic and governmental papers with which a growing number were beginning to be confronted. After establishing that the historians of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were well aware of the methodological importance of the archive as a site of authentic and authoritative historical information, this study will consider the ways in which the archive of the Venetian secret chancery was increasingly organised as a historical monument to the recent and distant affairs of the Republic, before constructing a detailed account of how its historians accessed, consulted and extracted material from this constantly evolving archival institution. Concluding with a series of case studies which illustrate that the registers, indexes and research assistants of the chancery did indeed have a significant impact upon the narratives and historical identity of the city during this period, this thesis posits the idea that early modern record-keepers had a far more influential role in contemporary historiography than has hitherto been acknowledged.

Acknowledgements

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List of Abbreviations

ASVe – Venice, Archivio di Stato

Albus – *Pacta e Aggregati, Liber Albus*

Arc. Cont. – *Archivio Proprio di Giacomo Contarini*

Arc. Trev. – *Archivio Proprio Trevisan*

Canc. Atti – *Cancellier Grande, Atti*

CCX Not. – *Capi del Consiglio di Dieci, Notatorio*

CX Com. – *Consiglio di Dieci, Deliberazioni, Comuni*

CX Mist. – *Consiglio di Dieci, Deliberazioni, Miste*

CX Rom. – *Consiglio di Dieci, Deliberazioni, Roma, Filze*

CX Sec. – *Consiglio di Dieci, Deliberazioni, Segrete*

CX Cod. – *Consiglio di Dieci, Miscellanea Codici*

Ind. Sec. – *Senato e Collegio, Miscellanea, Indici della Segreta*

IS – *Inquisitori di Stato*

MC – *Maggior Consiglio, Deliberazioni*

MADM – *Miscellanea atti diversi manoscritti*

MCNAA – *Miscellanea di carte non appartenenti ad alcun archivio*

MCod. – *Miscellanea Codici*

MMN – *Miscellanea materie miste e notabile*

Pacta – *Pacta e Aggregati, Pacta*

Proc. Sup. – *Procuratori di San Marco, Procuratori 'de supra', Chiesa, Registri*

Prov. Sal – *Provveditori al sal*

QC – *Quarantia Criminal*

Sen. Cost. – *Senato, Deliberazioni, Costantinopoli*

Sen. Disp. Cost. – *Senato, Dispacci, Dispacci degli ambasciatori e resedenti, Costantinopoli. Filze*

Sen. Rom. – *Senato, Deliberazioni, Roma Ordinaria*

Sen. Sec. – *Senato, Deliberazioni, Segreti*

Sen. Ter. – *Senato, Deliberazioni, Terra*

BL – London, British Library

Add. – Additional Manuscripts

Kings – Kings Manuscripts

BMC – Venice, Biblioteca Museo Correr

Cicogna – *Manoscritti Emmanuele Antonio Cicogna*

Donà – *Manoscritti Donà della Rose*

Gradenigo – *Manoscritti Gradenigo*

P.D. – *Manoscritti provenienza diverse*

Malvezzi – *Manoscritti Malvezzi*

BNM – Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana

Cod. It. – *Codici Italiani*

Cod. Lat. – *Codici Latini*

Other

DBI – *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*

reg. – *registro*

b. – *busta* (usually pertaining to the archival subseries ‘*Filze*’)

m.v. – *More Veneto* (Venetian calendar system in which the new year begins on 1 March. All other dates correspond with modern calendars unless categorised in this way.)

A note on translations and referencing

All archival and literary translations are mine unless otherwise stated. In cases where the original phrasing, terminology or administrative language of the text is of particular interest or importance, a transcript is provided in the footnotes, with expanded sections *in Italics*.

All literary references in the footnotes are given in short-title format. Full references are available in the Bibliography.

Introduction

In August 1635, a report was presented to the government of the Venetian Republic by two of its legal consultants, Scipione Famosca and Ludovico Baitelli, concerning the current state of the archive of the city's secret chancery. This collection of state records, which was comprised principally of diplomatic dispatches and the registers of government deliberations, had undergone a series of structural reforms since the end of the sixteenth century, during which time it had been physically relocated to a new archival chamber behind the Senate assembly rooms in the city's Ducal Palace. Famosca and Baitelli's report was one of dozens submitted to the government since the relocation of the archive a few decades earlier, the majority of which concentrated on the technical business of its organisation, indexing and preservation. However, the opening statement of this particular report took a step back to consider the wider cultural significance of this most secretive collection:

One can find in this Secret Chancery an almost inestimable treasure of records, and although the impositions of fire have taken much of it away, that which remains is of incredible value. Here resides the source of our history (*la matrice dell'Historia*). Here are reserved the ancient and admirable forms of governance, which if followed through time can guarantee the felicity of this state in perpetuity.¹

Since its inception in the early fifteenth century, the secret chancery of the Republic had been perceived as an invaluable tool of governance, from which the state could derive the authority of its laws, the legitimacy of its jurisdiction, and the basis of its territorial rights. In 1456, the city's Council of Ten, who oversaw much of the government's more secretive affairs, famously described the collection as 'the heart of our state.'² This statement however, poses an important and hitherto unappreciated question concerning the record-keeping practices of the early modern Republic. Did the archive of the secret chancery, containing records and registers dating back as far as the ninth century, serve not only as the heart of the state, but also as its mind and its memory, a source of scholarly information for the now millennium-long history of the city and its government?

¹ 'Nella Cancelleria Secreta di *Vostra Serenità* come habbiamo in molte occasioni sperimentato si trova un quasi inestimabile Tesoro di Ragioni, et se bene gl'impostarij de gl'Incendij si hanno secco portato qualche parte, quello pero che rimane è di prezzo incredibile. Qui reside la matrice dell'Historia. Qui si riservanno le antiche non meno, che ammirabile forme del Governo, che seguitate per i tempi possono assicurare la felicità di questo Dominio alla perpetuità' (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 40, 23 August 1635). Famosca and Baitelli's use of the term '*matrice*', and its implications for the contemporary perceptions of the archive, will be discussed below.

² De Vivo, 'Cœur de l'état, lieu de tension', p. 718.

The remarks of the two consultants, brought into the chancery archive in order to investigate documents relevant to the Republic's various diplomatic and territorial disputes, were likely inspired by the activities of another group of scholars who had been working alongside them amongst the state records. For over a century before the two completed their report, the Venetian government had been admitting a succession of patrician historiographers into the secret chancery for the purpose of compiling official accounts of the city's recent affairs for wider publication, having been given unprecedented liberty to 'look through the books, files and secret letters' of the various government councils contained within its chests and cabinets.³ In the wider context of archival practice across Europe during this period, this had been a significant development, as access to this collection of sensitive political and diplomatic records, like many others across the continent, had previously been reserved for only the very highest echelons of the city's governing elite. As such, even the patricians appointed to the office of historiographer required special dispensation to enter the collection, and thus were a privileged group within the political class of the Republic. In the twelve decades between the first recorded grant of access for a patrician historian in 1515 and the declaration of the chancery archive as a font of the city's history in 1635, the practices of state record-keeping and state historiography had both undergone substantial change and become increasingly intertwined, culminating in the decision to entrust the oversight of the collection to the historian himself at the turn of the seventeenth century.

However, although these details have been briefly acknowledged in recent historiography,⁴ the relationship between the Venetian state historians and the archive to which they were admitted during this period has yet to be examined as a phenomenon in its own right. For the most part, the histories of the city's chancery and the histories of its scholars have predominantly been approached as separate entities, meaning that the role of the chancery archive itself as a site of historical study has so far remained unappreciated in full. Did the city's historians consider the records of the chancery to be a valuable or authoritative source of information for past affairs, and was the chancery itself actively administered for the benefit of historical scholarship? What were the experiences of the visiting historians once inside the archive itself, and how did the physical arrangement and availability of material influence the details and chronologies which they then entered into their histories? In short, can we consider Faramosca and Baitelli's comments as indicative of

³ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 12, ff. 39r-v.

⁴ For references to Venice's decision to admit its state historians into the secret chancery, often introduced at differing points in the history of the office, see: Cozzi, 'Cultura politica e religion nella 'pubblica storiografia' Veneziana del '500', p. 264; Gaeta, 'Storiografia, coscienza nazionale e politica culturale', pp. 80-81; Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, p. 229; Benzoni and Zanato (eds.), *Storici e politici veneti*, p. xxxiv; de Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice*, p. 49.

a wider trend in the use of archival records as sources for Venetian historiography during the early modern period?

For states such as Venice, in which the writing of history had become increasingly tied into wider issues of civic identity and international polemic during this period,⁵ the bureaucratic origins of its historians' accounts are an important, yet largely neglected, subject of study, especially as many of the narratives created during this period continue to shape our understanding of the city's past today. Beyond the confines of Venice's Ducal Palace, moreover, governments across Europe were increasingly beginning to arrange their papers into centralised archival spaces, occasionally permitting a small number of historians to consult the resulting collections in a similar way.⁶ Much like the secret chancery of Venice, the consultation of most of these institutions – ranging in stature from the Vatican Secret Archive and the Spanish Royal Archive at Simancas to the individual chanceries of the Italian city states – for the purposes of contemporary historiography was only their secondary purpose, and thus their scholarly visitors were dictated by the organisation and restrictions necessary for the archive's primary role as a tool of governance. By examining the ways in which Venice's bureaucracy helped to shape the scholarly practices of its state historians, we are thus provided with both a greater insight into the city's own historical identity and a new model for examining the practicalities of an emerging archival scholarship in chanceries and record offices across the continent.

In order to better understand how bureaucratic institutions such as the Venetian secret chancery impacted upon the wider intellectual sphere, this thesis will examine in detail how the relationship between the historian and the archive in early modern Venice developed from the first admissions of a patrician historiographer into the secret chancery in the early sixteenth century to the emergence of a recognised 'historical' archive towards the middle of the seventeenth. Through the use of previously unstudied administrative documents, as well as the first extensive comparison to date between the records of the Venetian chancery and the texts of its early modern historians, it will seek to establish the ways in which record-keeping techniques and scholarly practices interacted and impacted upon each other within the archival chambers of the Ducal Palace, shaping and influencing the historical identity of the Republic as it did so. In order to build a more comprehensive account of the historian at work in the archive during this period, this study will draw upon and bring together three distinct branches of recent literature: the history of early modern historiography, the history

⁵ A phenomenon most clearly outlined by Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty*, pp. 163-227, 556-623.

⁶ A phenomenon which has been briefly outlined in Blouin, *Processing the Past*, p. 18, and will be returned to at various points throughout this study.

of early modern archival practice and the material and social histories of early modern scholarship – tracing through each the transition of the archival document from its creation as a political tool to its storage, retrieval and finally use as an historical artefact. By considering the development of Venetian historiography from the perspective of the institutional history of the archive – its contents, physical structure and even its secretarial staff – this thesis will thus propose a new interpretation of the historian’s craft throughout early modern Europe, one which was just as dependent upon the practicalities of archival research and the accessibility of documentary sources as it is today.

Archival access, political historians and state-sponsored historiography in early modern Venice and Europe

Over the last few decades, the histories of government-sponsored historiography across Renaissance Europe have provided only a cursory examination the role of the various record collections into which historians were admitted as part of their patronage by the state. Certainly, the relationship between the historian and the state during this period has been well established. As Eric Cochrane argues in his vast 1981 monograph *Historians and Historiography in Renaissance Italy*, humanist historiography ‘was born fully grown’ during the fifteenth century from the panegyric writings of the ancient civic historians, whose main subject of interest was the politics and military fortunes of the author’s *patria*,⁷ whilst Richard Kagan’s 2009 study of court historians in early modern Spain defined their role as one of creating ‘a historical record that favours the interests and concerns of the ruler’, and which speaks as much to the present image and power of the Prince as to posterity.⁸ As the Reformation ravaged the continent in later decades, a new form of historical polemic emerged on the subject of ecclesiastical history, in which loyalty to one’s *patria* was replaced by confessional divides.⁹ As part of this development, an increasing number of record collections across the continent were being made accessible to a small number of privileged historians – although rarely with the same frequency as within the secret chancery of the Venetian Republic – a process which has been considered in studies such as Gary Ianziti’s ‘A Humanist Historian and His Documents’ (in the case of Milan), Daniel Woolf’s

⁷ Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, pp. 3-9 (see also: Bastia and Bolognani (eds.), *La Memoria e la Città*).

⁸ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, p. 3.

⁹ Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, pp. 445-478; Kelly, ‘Johann Sleidan and the Origins of History as a Profession’; Ditchfield, *Liturgy, Sanctity and History in Tridentine Italy*; van Liere, Ditchfield and Howard (eds.), *Sacred History: Uses of the Christian Past in the Renaissance World*.

The Idea of History in early Stuart England, Caroline Callard's *Le Prince et la République* (Florence), and Richard Kagan's *Clio and the Crown* (Spain).¹⁰

However, as many of these studies have justly pointed out, we must be wary of anachronism when considering the contemporary use of government records, as their motives and practices cannot be easily equated to those with which we are familiar today.¹¹ For the most part, these early examples of archival access should first be considered as a form of political control over the discipline, or else as a corollary of the historian's career in government. As Daniel Woolf argues in the case of England, for instance:

The introduction of extensive documentation into English historiography in such works as Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* and Selden's *Historie of Tithes* owes less to a spirit of impartial, critical enquiry and to the growth of modern standards of scholarship than it does to the requirements of polemic and to the infiltration of history by the controversial mode and argumentative techniques long associated with debates over religious issues.¹²

'References to archival documents,' argued Anthony Grafton in his 1997 *The Footnote: A Curious History*, 'often reveal less a disinterested search for truth than a deliberate effort to create a favourable impression about the historian's employer',¹³ whilst Felix Gilbert's 1965 study of Florentine historiography had already noted that 'the historians who used documentary sources were not considered to be innovators, nor did they claim to be.'¹⁴ The use of the chancery by the humanist historians of the Renaissance, argued Ianziti in his 1988 *Humanistic Historiography under the Sforzas*, was thus simply a facet of state propaganda, a political tool for controlling the historical image of the state.¹⁵

In addition, a traditionally overwhelming emphasis on the literary nature of the historian's craft in Renaissance Europe has also contributed to a relative disinterest in the role of the archive as a source of information for its authors. Thanks to the prominence of the great humanist historians during this period, a great deal of emphasis has been placed

¹⁰ Ianziti, 'A Humanist Historian and His Documents'; Woolf, *The Idea of History in Early Stuart England*, pp. 221, 255-256; Callard, *Le prince et la république*; Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, pp. 96-104

¹¹ Michael Clanchy, in his seminal study *From Memory to Written Record: England, 1066-1307* (p. 184), also advised similar caution in the context of the medieval archivists and their visitors.

¹² Woolf, *The Idea of History in Early Stuart England*, pp. 255-256.

¹³ Grafton, *The Footnote: a Curious History*, p. 126. For an introduction to the issue of historical patronage and the archive, see d'Addario, 'Origini e sviluppo della dottrina archivistica', in idem. (ed.), p. 33.

¹⁴ Gilbert, *Machiavelli and Guicciardini*, p. 221.

¹⁵ Ianziti, *Humanistic Historiography under the Sforzas*, pp. 70-80.

upon topics such as such as the role of rhetoric,¹⁶ narrative¹⁷ or characterisation¹⁸ in forming written accounts of the past, alongside the relationship between the historians of the Renaissance and those of antiquity.¹⁹ As these studies have long established, the rise of historical writing in the humanist sphere – outlined most comprehensively in Cochrane's *Historians and Historiography* – had resulted in a genre of historiography predicated above all on eloquence, didactics and rhetorical skill.²⁰ For those wishing to uncover the documentary sources and archival investigations underlying these texts, this literary style presents a significant problem. As Anthony Grafton noted in his 1997 study *The Footnote – a Curious History*:

Under some of the smoothly classical texts of humanist history, with their gleaming marble facades of unfootnoted Latin and their elegantly arched niches in which medieval Italian and French orators incongruously spouted Ciceronian periods, lay massive foundations carved from the historical granite of archival documentation and detailed, pertinacious interviewing.²¹

According to Grafton's analogy, such foundations were unfortunately intended to remain hidden. As Gary Ianziti argued in a previous study on the humanist historians of Milan: 'very little work has been carried out on the humanists' use of archival sources, for the simple reason that such records are frequently difficult, if not impossible, to retrace.'²² In order to better establish the relationship between the historian and the archive during this period, this study will thus consider the ways in which we can trace the use of archival sources beyond the texts of the historians themselves, reticent as they were to leave records of their research methods for posterity.

At first glance, the state historians of the Republic of Venice, who were appointed primarily for their literary prowess in an attempt to emulate the successful civic

¹⁶ Fryde, 'The Beginnings of Italian Humanist Historiography'; Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*.

¹⁷ For a wider survey of the notion of historical narrative from antiquity to the Early Modern period, including a series of definitions for the ancient terms which summarised it, see: MacPhail, 'The Plot of History from Antiquity to the Renaissance'; Grafton, 'Dating History'; Wilcox, *The Measure of Times Past*.

¹⁸ Phillips, 'Barefoot Boy Makes Good'; Jurđjević, 'Machiavelli's Sketches of Francesco Valori'.

¹⁹ Burke, 'A Survey of the Popularity of Ancient Historians, 1450-1700'; Momigliano, *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography*, pp. 82-108; Soll, 'Amelot de La Houssaye (1634-1706) Annotates Tacitus'.

²⁰ Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, pp. 5-6.

²¹ Grafton, *The Footnote: a Curious History*, p. 128.

²² Ianziti, 'A Humanist Historian and His Documents', p. 492.

historiography programmes in place across the rest of Italy during the previous century,²³ present us with the same set of dilemmas discussed above. For one, these too were a series of scholars appointed by the government for the purposes of creating historical propaganda, all selected from the ranks of the city's political class: Andrea Navagero (appointed 1515), Pietro Bembo (1529), Pietro Giustiniani (1562),²⁴ Alvise Contarini (1577), Paolo Paruta (1580), Andrea Morosini (1598), Nicolò Contarini (1619), Paolo Morosini (1635), Giacomo Marcello (1637), Alvise Contarini (1650), and Battista Nani (1651). As we will examine below, the historiographer's office itself emerged at a time of both acute political crisis and civic renewal – the so-called *Renovatio Urbis*²⁵ – for which access to the state records was initially intended as a means to assist in the construction of literary monuments in defence of the city's conduct during the recent War of the League of Cambrai. Over the course of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the city's patrician historiographers, alongside a small number of scholars with access to the state records by other means, made significant contributions to the historical image of the Republic itself.²⁶

As studies of the city's historiography such as those by Gino Benzoni, Gaetano Cozzi and Franco Gaeta have long since noted, the creation of this office constituted a significant development in the relationship between history-writing and contemporary politics, as its holders were now considered literary mouthpieces for the state, responsible for producing eloquent monuments to its recent affairs in the style of the ancients.²⁷ As such, their works have been predominantly examined as indications of the ways in which Venice both perceived itself and promoted its image abroad; the strengths of its foreign policy, its military triumphs, and its internal serenity.²⁸ As James Grubb has argued, the historical interests of the Venetian patriciate were ultimately tied in to the larger image of the Republic

²³ Cozzi, 'Cultura politica e religione', pp. 224-226; Gaeta, 'Storiografia, coscienza nazionale e politica culturale', pp. 25-75.

²⁴ The full details of each of the historiographers listed here are given in Tables 4 and 5.

²⁵ The relationship between the *Renovatio Urbis* and the evolution of the secret chancery will be examined in detail in Chapter 2.3.

²⁶ It should be noted that as this study will be focussing primarily on the histories of Venice produced during this period, rather than the wider body of European history produced within the city as a whole, scholarly figures such as the Servite friar and legal consultant Paolo Sarpi – whose contribution to European historiography has already been well-recounted in recent scholarship – will only receive brief examination in the following account. Instead, the implications of this study for the better understanding of European historiography will be considered in greater detail in the Conclusion to this thesis.

²⁷ Benzoni, 'Scritti storico-politici', pp. 759-765. Over the course of the fifteenth century, similar attempts at such literary monuments were attempted by various independent historians (Fabbri, 'La Storiografia Veneziana del Quattrocento', pp. 347-398; Labalme, *Bernardo Giustiniani*, pp. 247-304), whilst the city had boasted a long chronicling tradition throughout the Middle Ages with a similar array of formative accounts of the Republic (Carile, 'Aspetti della Cronachistica Veneziana', pp. 75-126), but it was only with the introduction of the state historiography office that the genre was combined with access to the chancery as a matter of government policy.

²⁸ Cozzi, 'Cultura politica e religione'; Gilbert, 'Venetian Diplomacy before Pavia'; Tenenti, 'The Sense of Space and Time in the Venetian World'.

itself, rather than to the fortunes of the individual family.²⁹ In particular, the historians of the Republic have frequently been considered as contributors to the ongoing polemical battles between Venice and the princes of Europe, especially as the deeds of the city became the subject of hostile criticism by foreign writers.³⁰ In addition, the narratives of prominent state historians such as Paolo Paruta, Andrea Morosini and Nicolò Contarini have been examined as reflections upon their careers and political thought.³¹ Moreover, the humanistic prose employed by many of the office holders left little room for any clear references to the records of the chancery in their texts, which thus provide few indications of the institution's role in forming their accounts. As a result, although some modern scholars of Venetian historiography have been able to identify a small number of literary, epistolary or oral sources used by the historiographers,³² the majority have thus far relegated the role of the chancery to a series of cursory references illustrating the historian's patronage by the state.³³

However, studies such as Gary Ianziti's aforementioned *Humanistic Historiography under the Sforzas* have demonstrated that there still remains considerable scope to examine the actual role of chancery systems as tools of propagandistic state historiography, a notion which has yet to receive satisfactory attention from the scholars of Venetian historiography. How did the discovery or availability of certain documents impact upon the historical image of the city? Did the details contained within the archive ever conflict with the ideal image of the state, and, above all, did the accounts of the patrician historiographers reflect the privilege of their archival access through the information and detail which they alone were able to consult? Venice's state historiography programme was largely unique amongst the official historians of Renaissance Europe, as it constituted a series of fully salaried public officials rather than individually patronised private scholars, and has thus been considered as providing one of the closest examples of a 'professional' historian in an age before the discipline had become a sole occupation amongst scholars.³⁴ As such, the historiographers of

²⁹ Grubb, 'Memory and Identity: Why Venetians Didn't Keep Ricordanze', pp. 380-385.

³⁰ De Vivo, 'Historical Justifications of Venetian Power in the Adriatic'; Barzazi, 'Fra Venezia e Roma: l'Interdetto, Sarpi, i Serviti'.

³¹ Cozzi, *Il Doge Nicolò Contarini*, pp. 197-227; Trebbi, 'Venezia tra '500 e '600 nell'opera storica di Andrea Morosini'; Dorit Raines, 'La storiografia pubblica allo specchio'.

³² Lagomaggiore, 'L'Istoria Viniziana' di M. Pietro Bembo', pp. 43-44; Bersi, 'Le fonti della prima Decade delle *Historiae Rerum Venetarum* di Marcantonio Sabellico'; Clough, 'Le "Lettere Storiche" di Luigi da Porto fonte della "Istoria Viniziana" di P. Bembo'; Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, p. 83.

³³ See note 4 above; Gino Benzoni and Tiziano Zanato, in particular, compiled a substantial overview of the development of Venetian historiography in 1982 with only a handful of cursory references to the opening of the chancery (*Storici e politici veneti*, pp. xxxiv, lii).

³⁴ Gaeta, 'Storiografia, coscienza nazionale e politica culturale', pp. 25-27; Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought*, pp. 7, 260. As Eric Cochrane has argued in an accompanying essay to his 1981 monograph *Historians and Historiography in the Italian Renaissance*, the majority of early modern authors of history were likely following a vocation rather than a specific career path, as a dearth in funding meant that individuals would likely need to be members of the political elite or

the Republic serve as a particularly useful case study in which to address these questions. Tied into the bureaucratic systems of the chancery through the terms of their appointment, their access to the state records continued to form a defining feature of the historiographer's office until shortly before the fall of the Republic itself in 1797,³⁵ and thus this succession of historians provides an important opportunity to analyse and compare their experiences and writings within the archive over time. In addition, the privileged access afforded to the holders of this office allows us to contrast their works with those written without the benefit of the state records as a source, whilst their connections to the secretaries of the chancery and other scholars admitted to the collection also allow us to consider other historical works based in the chancery around the same time.

The Venetian secret chancery archive: a branch of government and embodiment of the state

Just as the development of early modern historiography has traditionally been approached as a vantage point for the study of contemporary politics and the identity of the state, the study of early modern record-keeping and archival management has also been considered a mirror for the shape and function of contemporary government. In recent Italian scholarship, this has led to a growth in the so-called 'documentary history of institutions', in which government record-keeping practices are examined as a vital tool of late medieval and early modern statecraft.³⁶ In cases such as Venice, this turn towards the history of government bureaucracy has furnished a far greater understanding of the archival systems in place at the time of the official historiographers.

The development of Venetian state record-keeping practices, from their first-millennium origins to the chancery systems of the early modern period, has been well recounted in a series of studies dating from the late nineteenth century to the present day, and is traditionally marked by two significant periods of innovation. The first of these took place during the second half of the thirteenth century, in which many of the previously disparate record collections of the city's various councils and magistrates were first brought together under a bipartite chancery system – split between the public and notarial records of

else perform a number of other occupations simultaneously (Cochrane, 'The Profession of the Historian in the Italian Renaissance').

³⁵ For the use of the state records by the historiographers of the eighteenth century, see Vianello, *Gli archivi del Consiglio dei dieci*, pp. 126-140.

³⁶ Head, 'Knowing Like a State'; Covini, 'Scrivere al principe'; Klein, 'Costruzione dello stato e costruzione d'archivio'; Varanini, 'Public written records'.

the *Cancellaria Inferiore*³⁷ and the government deliberations, dispatches and contracts of the *Cancellaria Ducale*. Held within the governmental chambers of the city's Ducal Palace, these new collections were overseen by the newly created office of Grand Chancellor from 1261, and from the 1290s contained the first major series of cartularies for the long-term preservation of civic and diplomatic records, the *Commemoriali* and *Liber Pactorum*. The second significant development took place over the course of the fifteenth century, as a third denomination of the chancery, the *Cancellaria Segreta*, was slowly applied to the most politically sensitive governmental records within the *Ducale*. Although initially little more than an administrative term for the deliberative registers of the city's major councils, from the Grand Council at the foot of the government pyramid to the College at the top, as well as the growing body of ambassadorial dispatches arriving from abroad, from 1459 onwards the contents of secret chancery were physically isolated from the rest of the collection within a series of fastened chests, and would later go on to form a distinct archival space within the chambers of the Palace.³⁸

The secret chancery of the Republic was thus one of many record-keeping institutions operating within the Ducal Palace during the early modern period. Beyond the tripartite system of the *Inferiore*, *Ducale* and *Segreta*, other administrative and financial bodies continued to keep custody of their own records, including most notably the Council of Ten.³⁹ For the purposes of our study of Venetian historiography, however, it was the secret chancery which held the most contemporary relevance. Not only was this the principal body of material to which the state historiographers were granted access, but unlike the private record collections of monarchies throughout other parts of Europe,⁴⁰ the chancery was also commonly regarded as the documentary embodiment of the Republic itself. Long after the government's oft-cited 'heart of our state' declaration of 1456, Faramosca and Baitelli's report noted that 'one can find here affairs of our entire state, both on land and sea, on matters of war and peace, treatises and negotiations with all the other Princes, communications and decrees; in a word, the whole of government.'⁴¹ After its contents were seized following conquest of the city by Napoleon's troops in 1797, the chancery was subsequently pieced together once again during the mid-nineteenth century as part of the *Archivio di Stato* at the Basilica dei Frari. This was facilitated by its erstwhile resemblance

³⁷ Named as such for its position below the other chancery halls of the Palace.

³⁸ The only exception to this was the papers of the Council of Ten itself, kept amongst its own office rooms in the Palace. For a history of the chancery's development, see: Baschet, *Les archives de Venise*; Cecchetti, 'Costituzione storica degli archivi Veneti'; Pozza, 'La cancelleria'; Salmini, 'Buildings, Furnishings, Access and Use'; de Vivo, 'Ordering the Archive'.

³⁹ For a full list of the other administrative and financial record collections of the Republic, see d'Angiolini, Pavone and Carucci (eds.), *Guida generale*, vol. IV, pp. 860-862.

⁴⁰ For a comparative example, see for instance: Riordan, 'The King's Library of Manuscripts'.

⁴¹ ASVe, CX Sec., b. 40 (23 August 1635).

to the consiliar makeup of the former Republic, whereupon more recent scholarship has used the structure of the collection as a template for examining the makeup of the Venetian constitution itself.⁴² The basic constitutional structure of the former chancery, in which the Republic's deliberative councils formed the principal subdivisions of registers into which documents were transcribed, has largely translated into the arrangement of the modern *Archivio di Stato*,⁴³ thus providing a useful point of reference for the collection as it was encountered at the time.

It was shortly after this restoration of the government records, fronted by Venetian scholars such as Jacopo Chiodo and Tommaso Gar, that the state archive most famously became a site of intense historical interest, as scholars from across Europe began to extrapolate not only the history of the city itself, but the wider history of the continent as recorded by its many diplomats throughout the centuries. Venice's archives held a particular significance in the emergence of nineteenth-century historical positivism, as it was amongst its records that historians such as Leopold von Ranke first posited that 'the archive was the only proper site for the production of historical knowledge.'⁴⁴ From then on, the newly reconstructed state archive became the centre of what Eric Dursteler has called the 'fetishism of the document' in Venetian historiography,⁴⁵ facilitating the great empiricist studies of, amongst many, Samuel Romanin, Rawdon Brown and Pompeo Molmenti.⁴⁶

For those consulting the collection before the fall of the Republic, however, the status of the secret chancery as the historical archive of the Republic was perhaps less self-evident. Whilst modern archival science, which first emerged in its current incarnation alongside the national archives of the nineteenth century, makes a clear distinction between contemporary record-keeping practices and the fixed repositories of historical source material – defined in the Italian tradition as *archivi correnti* and *archivi storici*, with the *archivio di deposito* as an intermediate storage facility⁴⁷ – the chanceries of early modern Europe were often a more obscure amalgam of current administration and historical documentation. In the case of Venice, argues Claudia Salmini, the centuries of continuous, unbroken Republican government meant that such a blurred distinction between past and

⁴² Baschet, *Les archives de Venise*; Brown, 'The Constitution of the Venetian Republic and the State Archives'; da Mosto, *L'Archivio di Stato di Venezia*.

⁴³ Which has been outlined in exhaustive detail in both histories of the institution and guides to the modern *Archivio di Stato* (Cecchetti, 'Costituzione storica degli archivi Veneti'; da Mosto, *L'Archivio di Stato di Venezia*; d'Angiolini, Pavone and Carucci (eds.), *Guida generale*, vol. IV, pp. 869-1004.

⁴⁴ Eskildsen, 'Leopold von Ranke's Archival Turn', p. 437.

⁴⁵ Dursteler, 'A Brief Survey of the Histories of Venice', p. 10.

⁴⁶ Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*; Povolo, 'The Creation of Venetian Historiography'; dal Borgo, 'The Archive of the Former Serenissima Repubblica and Foreign Scholars'.

⁴⁷ Carucci, *Le fonti archivistiche, ordinamento e conservazione*, pp. 21-23; Lodolini, *Archivistica: principi e problemi*, p. 62.

present was particularly endemic amongst the records of state, and that the full emergence of the chancery as a historical relic thus came only with the collapse of the state itself.⁴⁸ Until then, the chancery of the Republic was at once a site for the creation, preservation and consultation of state records, which could be transferred to various locations throughout the Palace during their life.⁴⁹ This ambiguity was in fact reflected in Famosca and Baitelli's description of the chancery as the *matrice* of history, a term which at the time could be used to refer simultaneously to a document's conception, registering or use as a source of information.⁵⁰

In R.H. Bautier's 1968 essay on the history of archives in Europe, the chanceries and record-keeping systems of the early modern period were defined as an 'arsenal de l'autorité' – administrative tools which allowed the governments who held them to wield their power and influence in a better organised and efficient manner. Instead, the emergence of state archives as open repositories of historical knowledge – the 'laboratoire de l'histoire' as Bautier put it – was largely characterised as a post-Enlightenment phenomenon, linked with the fall of the secretive bureaucracies of the *ancien régime* and rise of the nation-state.⁵¹ This periodization is still evident in subsequent scholarship on the history of record-keeping, which continues to assert, as does Stefan Berger, that 'older archives had not necessarily been for historians; they were far more important for state administrations and legal purposes.'⁵² In the case of Venice, this has led to a particular focus in recent years on the secret chancery as a focal point of political secrecy and information control,⁵³ on its status as a site of contested jurisdiction within the Republic itself,⁵⁴ and on the secretarial class which registered and facilitated the actions of the government.⁵⁵ By contrast, just as the role of the archive has been largely neglected in histories of the city's historiography, the role of

⁴⁸ An assertion which will be challenged in Chapter Two, as we can see the beginnings of this development long before this political rupture (Salmini, 'Buildings, Furnishings, Access and Use', p. 108).

⁴⁹ De Vivo, 'Ordering the Archive', pp. 233-238.

⁵⁰ Derived from the Latin genitive term '*matricis*', the term was most commonly defined in Italian lexicography as either the literal ('womb') or figurative ('source') origins of a creature or concept (*Vocabolario della Crusca*, p. 503). However, administrative treatises dating from this period also used the term in a very specific archival context, in which *matrice* denoted the process and product of registering documentary material into a codex (Cantini, *Legislazione toscana*, vol. XII, pp. 237-240). The various interpretations of this phrase in Famosca and Baitelli's report will be returned to in the Conclusion to this thesis.

⁵¹ Bautier, 'La phase cruciale del'histoire des archives', p. 140. For a comprehensive series of case studies concerning this later period, see: Cotta and Manno Tolu (eds.), *Archivi e storia nell'Europa del XIX secolo*.

⁵² Berger, 'The Role of National Archives', p. 6. See also Levine, 'History in the Archives', and for a wider European survey, Grafton, 'The Footnote from De Thou to Ranke'.

⁵³ Davidson, 'The Inquisition in Venice and its documents', pp. 117-125; Preto, *I servizi segreti di Venezia*, pp. 55-75, 268-278; de Vivo, *Information and Communication*, pp. 48-53.

⁵⁴ Trebbi, 'Il segretario Veneziano', pp. 66-73; de Vivo, 'Cœur de l'état, lieu de tension'.

⁵⁵ Casini, 'Realtà e simboli del Cancellier Grande Veneziano'; Trebbi, 'La Cancelleria Veneta nei secoli XVI e XVII'; Zannini, *Burocrazia e burocrati a Venezia*.

contemporary scholarship has thus been given only a cursory consideration in the histories of its archives.

However, the prominence of the early modern archive as a centre for political administration does not negate a possible secondary use as a site for historical scholarship, of which the emergence of the state historians serves as an important example. As Elio Lodolini stated in his history of Italian archival practice, as far back as the Middle Ages, ‘the purpose of conserving documents was [...] essentially juridical, yet scholarly uses of the archives were not completely absent, even if, for the most part, in works by the institutions themselves, or those who held office within them.’⁵⁶ One of the principal challenges confronted within this study, therefore, is to reconcile the scholarly activity undertaken within the early modern chancery archive with the primary, political function of the institution as an arm of government. The traditional view of the chancery as a tool of political secrecy, for instance, has been of a draconian fortress of sensitive information, strictly regulated by government decree and thus by extension a severe impediment for contemporary scholarship.⁵⁷

However, as Filippo de Vivo’s 2007 *Information and Communication in Venice* has aptly demonstrated, these restrictions were seldom enforced in their entirety, and instead the chancery was at the centre of a substantial political network of information exchange.⁵⁸ In this respect, we may consider here how a similar network of historiographical activity was able to form between both visiting historians and the secretaries who compiled and oversaw the chancery – a social class whose lives, careers and scholarly interests are becoming more greatly appreciated in recent scholarship.⁵⁹ As we will see, these government officials were not simply enforcers of government regulation within its archive, but were research assistants and historical experts in their own right, playing an active role in the circulation of historical data amongst a privileged scholarly elite.

Recent developments in the history of historical scholarship and the ‘archival turn’

Considered in isolation, recent scholarship on the record-keeping practices and official historiography of early modern Venice and beyond has indicated that the archives of Europe were predominantly centres of political administration, whose occasional scholarly visitors

⁵⁶ Lodolini, *Lineamenti di storia dell’archivistica italiana*, p. 45.

⁵⁷ Bartolomeo Cecchetti, *Gli archivi della Repubblica Veneta dal secolo XIII al XIX*, pp. 11-31; Fulin, ‘Gl’Inquisitori dei Dieci’, pp. 298–310, 357–391.

⁵⁸ De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, pp. 48-70.

⁵⁹ Biow, *Doctors, Ambassadors, Secretaries*, pp. 155-180; Simonetta, *Rinascimento segreto: il mondo del segretario*; de Vivo, Silvestri and Guidi (eds.), *Archivi e archivisti in Italia tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna*.

were primarily directed by the polemical interests of the state. Nevertheless, as we have seen, both interpretations have provided an incomplete picture of the exact extent and nature of the historian's experience of the archive in practice and its influence upon their actual texts. In order to address these issues in full, we must look beyond the traditional narratives of Venice's historiography and bureaucracy, and instead consider the many recent developments in the study of early modern scholarship and record-keeping practices which may offer a new approach to the subject of the historian in the chancery.

In recent years, scholars of early modern historiography have begun to look increasingly beyond the literary realm of humanist historiography and towards the wider question of how contemporaries approached the study and recollection of past events, both socially and academically.⁶⁰ In this recent body of literature, 'History' is now considered as an epistemic model rather than simply a literary exercise, which in turn has prompted a forensic re-examination of the relationship between contemporary historians and their sources. For one, scholars such as Donald Kelley and Anthony Grafton have meticulously outlined the role of parallel disciplines such as law, philology and antiquarianism in developing the historian's method from a literary, rhetorical exercise into an erudite branch of scholarship based on primary research, with a strong awareness of issues such as reliability, authenticity and anachronism.⁶¹ In a similar manner, early modern scholars seeking to make advances in subjects such as territorial politics, genealogy, and in particular ecclesiastical history, began to turn increasingly towards both physical and documentary remnants of the more distant past in order to demonstrate the validity of their accounts.⁶² These new genres of study, along with the emergence of a new branch of historical philosophy known as the *Ars Historica*, precipitated a level of source criticism and historical investigation across early modern Europe which, according to Grafton, 'might astonish modern scholars who see humanists as modest, sheep like creatures placidly grazing on their

⁶⁰ For recent literature on the social transmission of history, see: Fortini Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio*; idem., *Venice & Antiquity: The Venetian Sense of the Past*; Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past*; Fenlon, *The Ceremonial City: History, Memory and Myth in Renaissance Venice*; Kuijpers, Pollmann, Müller and van der Steen (eds.), *Memory before modernity. Practices of memory in early modern Europe*.

⁶¹ Spini, 'The Art of History in the Italian Counter Reformation'; Kelley, *Foundations of Modern Historical Scholarship*; Huppert, *The Idea of Perfect History*; Grafton, 'The Footnote from De Thou to Ranke'; Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History*, pp. 122-148; Pomata Siraisi (eds.), *Historia: Empiricism and Erudition in Early Modern Europe*; Grafton, *What Was History?*; Popper, 'An Ocean of Lies: The Problem of Historical Evidence in the Sixteenth Century'.

⁶² Collinson, 'Truth, Lies and Fiction in Sixteenth-Century Protestant Historiography', pp. 37-38; Lyon, 'Baudouin, Flacius, and the Plan for the Magdeburg Centuries', pp. 264-268; Barzazi, 'Consultori in Iure e feudalità nella prima metà del Seicento'; Zen, 'Relazioni europee di Baronio', pp. 31-50; Bizzocchi, *Genealogie incredibili: scritti di storia nell'Europa moderna*, pp. 183-211.

classical texts.⁶³ This has prompted a recent reconsideration of the extent to which we might trace the origins of historical erudition in the archives before the positivists of the nineteenth century.⁶⁴ Inversely, the role of the document itself as an object of cultural and historical value to both contemporary governments and scholars has also received much attention in recent years, both in the ‘documentary history of institutions’ cited above and in wider historical studies such as Michael Clanchy’s 1979 *From Memory to Written Record*, through which the fields of palaeography and diplomatics have been tied into a wider context of political power and intellectual culture.⁶⁵

These new approaches to early modern scholarship have also prompted a reconsideration of how, as Margaret Meserve put it, ‘Renaissance humanist historians went about their work.’⁶⁶ In 2012, Gary Ianziti’s *Writing History in Renaissance Italy* sought to approach the production of Renaissance historiography, focussing in particular on the case of Leonardo Bruni, from the perspective of the careers and experiences of the authors themselves rather than an exegesis of the texts which they produced. ‘Our initial task’, he argued, ‘is to try to fathom how history-writing was understood [by contemporaries], under what conditions historians worked, with what materials, and according to what standards and expectations.’⁶⁷ Similarly, John Gagné argued in 2014 that the recent fixation upon the role of literary humanism by historians such as Cochrane – for whom the emergence of new historical genres and theories during the sixteenth century constituted a period of crisis in the discipline⁶⁸ – has hitherto impeded our understanding of the source material underlying the

⁶³ Grafton, *What Was History?*, pp. 26-27. Peter Burke, in his preface to a modern edition of Paolo Sarpi’s *History of the Council of Trent*, referred to this phenomenon as a rise in ‘pragmatic’, investigative history, unburdened by the traditional narrative device of divine providence and instead driven to investigation of cause (Sarpi, *History of Benefices*, p. xxviii), whilst Joseph Preston noted ‘a change from obsession with metaphysical truth, before which facts pale in significance, to secular concern which displays a devotion to both facts and generalization [and a] growing insistence on the importance of original documents’, although also warned that such a conclusion was ‘exceedingly broad’ (Preston, ‘Was There an Historical Revolution?’, pp. 355-356).

⁶⁴ The historical uses of archives before the nineteenth century will be illustrated in a forthcoming special issue of *Storia della Storiografia*, 68.2 (2015), including an article which I have authored, entitled: “‘Kept within their chests for the benefit of their histories’”: Archival reform and the rise of historical scholarship amongst the state records of early modern Venice’. See also: Huppert, ‘The Renaissance Background of Historicism’, p. 53; Bertelli, ‘Storiografia, eruditi, antiquari e politici’, p. 322; Fryde, ‘The Revival of a “Scientific” and Erudite Historiography in the Early Renaissance’; Soll, ‘Empirical History and the Transformation of Political Criticism’.

⁶⁵ For other recent studies on the role of the document in political and legal cultures, see Head, ‘Documents, Archives, and Proof Around 1700’; Sternberg, ‘Manipulating Information in the Ancien Régime’.

⁶⁶ Meserve, *Empires of Islam*, p. 7.

⁶⁷ Ianziti, *Writing History in Renaissance Italy*, p. 3.

⁶⁸ Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, pp. 479-486. Reviews of Cochrane’s substantial monograph have brought this interpretation of a ‘demise’ in Renaissance historiography into significant doubt, suggesting instead that the emergence of new models for historical investigation and source criticism helped to develop the genre from its largely rhetorical origins (Burke, ‘Historians and Historiography in the Italian Renaissance, by Eric Cochrane’).

writings of contemporary historians.⁶⁹ As he states: ‘while we should not stop thinking about paradigms of historiographical theory, we must also attend to the indexical clues within the texts: elements that point to local and regional political context, and the availability, access to and use of sources.’⁷⁰

As historians have become far more conscious in recent years of the ways in which our own understanding of the past is inescapably shaped and directed by the archival institutions responsible for preserving its written traces, the archive has developed from a site for the extraction of information into a subject of study in its own right.⁷¹ This ‘archival turn’, as it is known, has subsequently driven a new series of examinations into the record-keeping practices of early modern Europe and beyond; not only in the sphere of political history, as discussed above, but as case studies in material culture, sociological structures and intellectual development.⁷² In the case of the latter, the archive has been incorporated into the so-called ‘social history of knowledge’, the study of scholarly networks and the processes of information management.⁷³ ‘In recent years,’ argues Ann Blair, ‘cultural historians have pointed to archives, alongside museums and libraries, as sites in which to examine conceptions about knowledge, its order and management, and control by the state.’⁷⁴ In this respect, the organisational and indexing systems of information repositories – from government archives to private notebooks – have come to be examined as epistemological artefacts; reminders that, as Clanchy put it, ‘ordering things on the page was directly related to ordering them in the mind.’⁷⁵

The present study will seek to expand upon these recent developments in the history of early modern scholarship by reconsidering the works of the Venetian state historiographers from the perspective of the practical conditions within which they worked amongst the papers and registers of the city’s secret chancery archive, as well as the ways in which they interacted with an increasingly historically-minded secretarial class responsible

⁶⁹ Gagné, ‘After the Sforza: Making History in Milan during the Italian Wars’, pp. 36-37.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁷¹ Blouin and Rosenberg (eds.), *Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Social Memory*, pp. 85-88 (Introduction to section ‘Archives in the Production of Knowledge’).

⁷² My research for this thesis has been conducted as part of a larger ERC-funded project, ‘ARCHIVES: A Comparative History of Archives in Late Medieval and Early Modern Italy’, which has endeavoured to incorporate each of these different approaches to the history of the archive within a much larger comparative framework. For recent literature on material and social histories of the archive, see: Lazzarini, ‘Materiali per una didattica delle scritture pubbliche’; Signaroli, ‘Nota sull’origine del Cassone ferrato dell’antico archivio comunale di Brescia’, pp. 835-837; Silvestri, ‘Produzione e conservazione delle scritture nei regni di Napoli e Sicilia’, alongside those cited above.

⁷³ Burke, *A Social History of Knowledge*, pp. 116-148; Friedrich, ‘Government and Information-Management in Early Modern Europe’; Soll, *The Information Master: Jean-Baptiste Colbert's Secret State Intelligence System*; Brendecke, *Imperio e información: funciones del saber en el dominio colonial español*; Friedrich, *Die Geburt des Archivs*, pp. 231-269.

⁷⁴ Blair, *Too Much to Know*, p. 290.

⁷⁵ Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, p. 174.

for their maintenance. Whilst previous studies of historical erudition in early modern Europe have tended to focus on the role of the individual document, here we will consider the overall structure and accessibility of the chancery institution which both facilitated and restricted their retrieval and consultation.

Research questions, sources and thesis outline

As suggested by Ianziti above, any attempt to trace the history of archival use in early modern Europe is inevitably hampered by the paucity of traces linking the historian to his documents. Unfortunately, this is not only a problem which concerns the texts of the historian, as the documents which they potentially used may also have been lost over the centuries.⁷⁶ In addition, records pertaining to the administration and functioning of the archive itself prior to the eighteenth century were seldom preserved as diligently as the state records it contained, with many now lost or disbanded amongst a series of miscellanea within the modern *Archivio di Stato*, often at the cost of potentially vital information.⁷⁷ For instance, although the secretaries of the chancery were responsible for keeping detailed logs of its visitors and their activity during this period – a form of record-keeping which allowed C.O. Tosi to conduct a detailed reconstruction of the research carried out by two sixteenth-century historians of Siena as early as 1896⁷⁸ – only two fragments of this series have since survived.⁷⁹

Nevertheless, there remains a previously untapped wealth of information concerning the historian-archive relationship in Venice during this period if we examine the subject

⁷⁶ This is an issue which has arisen in previous attempts to trace the sources of early modern historians, as stated in Marin, 'Venetian and Non-Venetian Crusaders in the Fourth Crusade' p. 124, and Ianziti, *Humanistic Historiography under the Sforzas*, pp. 94-102.

⁷⁷ Those fragments of indexes and administrative records which have survived are today largely concentrated in the series ASVe, Senato e Collegio. Miscellanea, *Indici della Secreta* and ASVe, *Cancellier Grande*, although other miscellaneous series have preserved a small number of useful artefacts of the chancery's past. In addition, the archival registers of the Senate and Council of Ten contain many of the governmental deliberations pertaining to the administration of the state records (a series of which have previously been published by Lorenzi, *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo Ducale di Venezia*), and will form much of the principal source material for this study.

⁷⁸ Tosi, 'I documenti consultati dagli storici Malavolti e Tommasi per scrivere la storia di Siena', pp. 25-29.

⁷⁹ These two fragments date from the mid sixteenth century (ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 4, *Alphabetum*) and the late seventeenth century (ASVe, IS, b. 924, 'Nota de Senatori, che sono state a legger in Secreta, il mese di Settembre 1698'), and will be examined in Chapter Three as indicators of the general accessibility of the chancery archive during their respective periods. Even after the documentary losses incurred shortly after the fall of the Republic in 1797, other manuscript indexes and descriptions of the chancery – most notably a 1610 index compiled by the Grand Chancellor Bonifacio Antelmi and a 1647 treatise on the administration of the chancery by Fortunato Olmo – are now no longer retrievable at the time of writing despite being included in inventories of the *Archivio di Stato* dating from the nineteenth century.

from a much wider series of perspectives. As we have seen, recent developments in both scholarly and archival historiography have presented a variety of different approaches to the creation and dissemination of historical knowledge in early modern Europe, from private note taking practices to public commemoration, and from intellectual theory to institutional administration. In order to better understand the process by which the records of state came to shape the historiography of the early modern Republic, we must therefore consider a variety of intertwining factors: the attitudes of the historian towards the archive, the structure of the institution itself, the practical experiences of the visiting scholar, and finally the impact of all three upon their actual texts. Each of these various aspects of the historian-archive relationship can be summarised within the following research questions, which will form the basis for the structure of this thesis:

1. What was the perception of archives and state records as an historical source during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries?
2. To what extent were the archival systems of the Venetian secret chancery organised for the preservation and use of historical information?
3. How did developments in the chancery's physical structure and day to day administration, as well as the secretarial staff responsible for the cataloguing and retrieval of its contents, affect its accessibility and the use of its contents by the visiting state historians?
4. How did the state historians incorporate the texts and details of the chancery records into their written accounts, and how did they reconcile their widely circulated narratives of recent Venetian affairs with the secretive nature of the state records themselves?
5. Were the records of the chancery used only as points of information for the visiting historians alone, or did they also become objects of scholarly examination in their own right, to be presented in their texts and discussed with their readers as evidence for their accounts?

In all, these five research questions will explore the ways in which the changing structure and administration of the archive itself influenced the type of material being consulted by the historians in the chancery, and the impact this had on the narratives which they subsequently produced. By examining the interactions between the historian and the archive from these different perspectives, this thesis will illustrate how, in a period long before the emergence of archival research as a defining characteristic of the historian's method, record-keeping institutions such as the Venetian chancery were beginning to emerge as sites in which contemporary scholarship and bureaucracy were mutually shaped and influenced by the other.

Rather than adhering to a strict chronological structure over the course of the thesis, the following chapters will address each of these five research themes in turn, examining the changes in each aspect of the historian-archive relationship over the course of the period 1515-1650. In this respect, the overall structure of this thesis will mirror the lifespan of the archival document as it transitions from a government record to a historical source: its creation and storage, its consultation by historians, and finally its incorporation into the historical narrative and use as an historical artefact. We will begin by examining the development of two corresponding phenomena – the growing perception of the archive as a source of authoritative information within the scholarly community of Venice, and the emergence of the secret chancery archive itself as a site designed to facilitate the production of Venetian historiography. We will then assess the changing experience of the historian in the archive – how they were able to locate, retrieve and extrapolate information in practice – before finally considering how these developments in the chancery’s accessibility and use shaped the construction of historical narratives concerning both contemporary affairs and the Republic’s more distant past.

Through these five distinct examinations, this study will therefore bring together, for the first time, the three areas of scholarship which until recently have approached the question of the historiographical uses of early modern archives in relative isolation:⁸⁰ the history of archives and archival theory (Chapters One and Two), the history of note-taking and information management (Chapter Three), and the history of historiography and the image of the state (Chapters Four and Five). In Chapter One, we will begin by establishing the fact that archival sources, and in particular the Venetian secret chancery, were increasingly under discussion as important aspects of the historian’s method over the course of the sixteenth century and beyond, as is evident in the writings of various historical philosophers, the reflections and correspondences of historians themselves, and essayists on the subject of archival management. Chapter Two will then reassess the history of the chancery archive itself during this period – its registering and indexing systems, its physical preservation, as well as its staffing and maintenance – from the perspective of its newly established role as a site for historical research. Through this account, based predominantly on the administrative records of the institution itself, we will begin to see a chancery system gradually recognising the cultural significance of its contents, and thus reforming its

⁸⁰ As Ann Blair and Jennifer Milligan argue, there has been an emerging and necessary interdisciplinarity regarding the cultural history of archives in recent years: ‘Since the 1980s the development of the history of the book as an interdisciplinary field of research has helped to open channels of communication between historians and book professionals [...] More recently archives have begun to receive similar interdisciplinary scholarly attention, with archivists, anthropologists, and literary scholars leading the charge, and historians joining the conversation lately’ (Blair and Milligan, ‘Introduction’, p. 289).

structure and administration in order to better accommodate its role as an historical monument to the Republic.

In Chapter Three, we will assess the experiences of each of the Republic's major state historians upon visiting the chancery archive. It is here that the loss of administrative records such as the visitor logs is of the greatest concern, yet we are able to piece together the changing nature of the chancery's use through the notes and correspondences of individual historians, as well as the government decrees concerning its construction, maintenance, and regulation by its secretarial staff. Although the succession of state historians enjoyed largely varied relationships with the collection depending on their individual circumstances, there existed a notable development in the historian's *modus operandi* within the archive over time – from an initial reliance on the intercession of secretaries and pre-existing compendia of records towards a far greater autonomy in perusing and extracting the wider contents of the collection.

In the final two chapters, we will examine the impact of these developments on the works of the historians themselves. In Chapter Four, we will consider the role of the chancery registers in providing a narrative structure of recent affairs around which visiting historians could construct their accounts. Focussing on the case study of the diplomacy surrounding the outbreak of the War of Cyprus in 1570, we will consider how the state historians were able not only to narrate hitherto unknown details of Venetian affairs, without contravening the secrecy of its records, but also to use the arrangement of the government registers as a way of explaining and better contextualising the actions of the Republic during this perilous moment in their relationship with the Ottoman Empire. Chapter Five, instead, will look at the role of Venice's more ancient documentation, uncovered by the historians in the chancery over the turn of the seventeenth century, in forming new accounts of two contentious incidents within the city's distant past: the capture of Constantinople in 1204 and the foundation of the Council of Ten in 1310, both of which had a particular relevance to the contemporary image of the Republic. Unlike the accounts of more recent affairs, in which the influence of the chancery remained largely unstated, here we can see the beginning of a new form of history-writing, in which the chancery records were transcribed and cited as authoritative sources for a detailed revision of two well established historical episodes. In each of these cases, moreover, the new historical accounts furnished by the chancery were to have a significant bearing on Venice's wider political and cultural identity, as each incident carried important connotations for the image of the Republic at moments of crisis both at home and abroad.

As we will see throughout these five chapters, there existed a mutual influence between the record-keeping practices of the Venetian Republic and the construction of its government sponsored historiography, at a time when both practices were highly malleable. Although the secret chancery remained above all a site for the preservation of political secrets, the collection also played an important role in shaping the historical and political image of the Republic throughout a succession of military and diplomatic crises, as its constantly evolving archival chamber slowly emerged as a site for erudite investigation for a small group of privileged scholars. Above all, this thesis will illustrate that the early modern historian was by no means consigned to their private study when constructing their account, but was instead reliant upon and collaborated with the institutions and staff which preserved and made accessible the records of the past.

Chapter One: History and the ‘archive’ in early modern Venetian thought

1.1: Introduction

When admitting the first of its historians to consult the registers and files of the secret chancery in 1515, the Council of Ten declared that ‘it is necessary for the truth of things, which is the central element of History, to consult the books, letters and records of our Chancery.’¹ Such a statement appears to have resonated with an emerging trend in Renaissance historiographical thought, in which physical and documentary relics were increasingly scrutinised as authentic witnesses to the past. On the one hand, the growth of the humanist historians during the fifteenth century had served to reinforce the ancient notion that the ‘truth’ of history was predicated on the author’s own linguistic and rhetorical skill. Yet, as numerous studies of early modern scholarship have indicated, the humanist movement also gave rise to a new set of textual criticisms, used most famously to expose the forgeries of historical artefacts such as the Donation of Constantine and the writings of Annianus of Viterbo, which formed the basis of an unprecedented interest in the documentary sources of the past.² In later centuries, these practices of source interrogation were developed into the school of ‘diplomacy’, first pioneered by the Benedictine monk Jean Mabillon, which would later become an important auxiliary discipline to the practice of modern historiography.³

Before we can examine the structure and use of the secret chancery first opened to Venice’s historiographers in 1515, we must first consider how such archival institutions were perceived in contemporary historical theory. As discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, histories of archival practice have tended to place the emergence of ‘archives-based’ historiography towards the end of the eighteenth century, whilst early modernists have often focussed instead on the relationship between the historian and the individual record. However, might the comments of the Council of Ten, that access to their state records was

¹ ‘Sitque ei necessarium pro veritate rerum, qui in hystorijs ist pars potissima: videre libros, litteras, et Scripturas Cancellarie nostre et ad id consilium X re tunc proposita voce annuerit quantum esset ab annis circiter tribus supra tantum’ (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 4, f. 59v, 28 June 1515).

² Burke, *The Renaissance Sense of the Past*, pp. 20-28; Janik, ‘Lorenzo Valla: the primacy of rhetoric and the demoralization of history’; Grafton, *Defenders of the Text*, pp. 76-103; Grafton, *What Was History?*, pp. 91-104; Popper, ‘An Ocean of Lies: The Problem of Historical Evidence in the Sixteenth Century’, pp. 378-388; Cheng, *Historiography: An Introductory Guide*, pp. 9-10; Bod, *A New History of the Humanities*, pp. 167-172.

³ Williams, ‘Diplomatic Attitudes: From Mabillon to Metadata’; Blouin, *Processing the Past*, pp. 17-18.

‘necessary’ for the production of truthful historiography, indicate an earlier relationship between the preservation and use of public records and the authority of the historian? Did the political and diplomatic records of the Republic constitute a significant part of the historian’s method during the long sixteenth century, and how did their provenance within an archival space influence the contemporary perceptions of their authority?

As we have already seen, both the office of state historiographer and the opening of the secret chancery in Venice were primarily driven by the polemical interests of the state, thus suggesting that the Ten’s claims of promoting ‘truthful’ historiography should perhaps be met with some scepticism.⁴ Nevertheless, the period in which the chancery was first consulted by the historiographers of the Republic witnessed an important intellectual shift concerning the role of such institutions as preservers of authentic historical testimony as well as the laws and contracts of the state. In Donald Kelley’s 1970 *Foundations of Modern Historical Scholarship*, the historian looks to the influence of legal theory concerning the government archives upon the practices of the historians of early modern France, illustrating the importance of history’s auxiliary disciplines upon the emergence of archival scholarship during this period.⁵ In a similar way, this opening study will examine the ways in which three distinct strands of Venetian scholarship – the historical philosophy of the *Ars Historica*, the emerging genre of juridical treatises on chancery management, and the writings of the Republic’s historians themselves – all contributed a new perspective on the authority of the chancery record as a historical source, due to its role as a physical eyewitness to past events, its creation by trusted and knowledgeable public ministers, and its physical preservation within a well-protected archival space. Although these commentaries were yet to come together as an established methodology within the discipline, they serve to illustrate that the historians entering the secret chancery of the Republic were most likely aware and appreciative of the privileged research tool to which they had been granted access, which in turn was to have a significant impact upon its later administration and use.

1.2: Public records and notions of historical authority in the *Ars Historica*

The sixteenth century, as various historians have emphasised in recent years, marked an important period of transition regarding the notion of truth and authenticity in history-

⁴ The political origins of the state historiographer office will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 3.2, whilst the role of the chancery itself in forging a favourable image of the state is examined in Chapters Four and Five.

⁵ Kelley, *Foundations of Modern Historical Scholarship*, pp. 215-238.

writing throughout Europe.⁶ Since antiquity, the authority of the historian had centred around two fundamental precepts: *autopsia*, the historian's proximity to events, and *enargeia*, his ability to relay this experience to the reader in a manner which allows them to empathise with, and thus better comprehend, events through the vividness and spirit of their verse.⁷ The legacy of the ancient historiography,⁸ and the long-held perception of history-writing as a branch of rhetoric,⁹ was that 'authority' – a term which in part derived its meaning from creation, invention, and inspiring faith in one's testimony¹⁰ – was predicated on 'the strategic use of language' to recreate the truth of the past.¹¹ Although historians of antiquity occasionally used archival evidence in their works,¹² authors such as Polybius noted that those who relied too heavily on the writings of others were significantly compromised in their ability to narrate the true succession of events:

Inquiries from books may be made without any danger or hardship, provided only that one takes care to have access to a town rich in documents or to have a library near at hand. After that one has only to pursue one's researches in perfect repose and compare the accounts of different writers without exposing oneself to any hardship. Personal inquiry, on the contrary, requires severe labour and great expense, but is exceedingly valuable and is the most important part of history.¹³

⁶ For an overview of the principal developments in the post-Renaissance historical method, see: Franklin, *Jean Bodin and the Sixteenth Century Revolution in the Methodology of Law and History*; Borghero, *La certezza e la storia*; Spini, 'The Art of History in the Italian Counter Reformation'; Connell, 'Italian Renaissance Historical Narrative'.

⁷ As Polybius stated in his *Histories*: 'To see an operation with one's eyes is not like merely hearing a description of it; it is, indeed, quite another thing; and the confidence which such vivid experience gives is always greatly advantageous.' (Polybius, *The Histories*, 2:261). It is from here that the classical tropes of giving introductory descriptions of location and character first emerged (Ginzburg, *Threads and Traces*, pp. 9-11).

⁸ Fehling, *Herodotus and His "Sources"*; Bosworth, 'Plus ça Change: Ancient Historians and Their Sources'.

⁹ As Donald Kelley states: 'Inside and outside the arts faculty history had at best an ancillary position, furnishing literary models or vicarious experience, moral exempla or legal precedents. Although it might be placed in the service of one of the "practical" sciences (especially politics or ethics), it could hardly be regarded as *scientia* because it lacked a sufficiently methodical arrangement; and although it might be subsumed under grammar or rhetoric, it did not qualify as a liberal art either' (Kelley, 'Historia Integra: François Baudouin and His Conception of History', pp. 39-40).

¹⁰ Ascoli, 'The Vowels of Authority', pp. 25-27.

¹¹ The importance of language for the transmission of verisimilar history is outlined in greater detail in Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, p. 534, and Struever, *The Language of History in the Renaissance*, p. 3.

¹² See for instance Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, 8.5.3 (p. 293) and 9.14.2. 'There is near-general agreement,' state the editors of a recent translation of Polybius' *Histories*, 'that he had access to archives at Rome and at Rhodes and to the documents of the Achaean League' (Polybius, *The Histories*, pp. xvii-xviii).

¹³ *Ibid.*, 12.27.4-7.

Perhaps more damning was the notion that second-hand documentation served mainly to indicate the detachment of the historian from his subject matter. In 1526, Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa wrote in his *Vanity of the Sciences and Arts* that historians should be considered ‘the greatest liars in the world [...] because they were not living at the same time, or were not present at the actions, or conversant with the persons, taking [instead] their relations upon trust at the second hand, [and therefore] missing the chief scope of truth and certainty.’¹⁴

However, as recent studies such as those of Anthony Grafton and Donald Kelley have aptly demonstrated, the historians of the sixteenth century were also drawn towards the examination of primary source material. Thanks to the emergence of a new genre of historical philosophy, the *Ars Historica*, the discipline had been raised above its previous status as an auxiliary subject to poetry and rhetoric, and instead redefined as an exercise in source criticism and investigation which ‘required skill in inquiry as well as eloquence in expression.’¹⁵ This emerging genre of historical philosophy, heavily influenced by the disciplines of philology, law and antiquarianism, ‘insisted that history could not be found in any single narrative, but must be reconstructed by collecting all the information yielded by all potentially relevant sources.’ To them, argued Grafton, history was ‘a critical discipline based on the distinction between primary and secondary sources.’¹⁶ The role of the *Ars Historica* authors in shifting early modern perceptions of source material and authenticity in history-writing has thus been well documented, yet the impact of the movement upon contemporary notions of government archives and the records of state is still to be examined in its own right.

Many of the early *Ars Historica* treatises, a branch of scholarship to which both Venice and its neighbouring university at Padua were key contributors, concerned themselves with re-examining the definitions of ‘history’, as a genre distinct from poetry or chronicle, or else turned to the classical uses of archaeological evidence as a precedent for more erudite, source-based history-writing.¹⁷ More significantly in terms of the archive, however, early authors of the *Ars Historica* also began to reappraise the value of the ‘annals’. Since antiquity, the term *annali* – or *Annales* – most often signified a chronological record of events, which in reality could be manifest in either chronicle form, or indeed the

¹⁴ Agrippa von Nettesheim, *The Vanity of Arts and Sciences*, p. 27.

¹⁵ Grafton, *What Was History?*, p. 24. For a concise overview of the emergence of ‘history’ as an empirical science, see Kelley, ‘Between History and System’, pp. 215-225.

¹⁶ Grafton, *What Was History?*, p. 68.

¹⁷ Cotroneo, *I trattatisti dell’Ars Historica*; Witschi-Bernz, ‘Main Trends in Historical-Method Literature’; Kelley, ‘Historia Integra: François Baudouin and His Conception of History’; Grafton, *What Was History?*; Franklin, *Jean Bodin and the Sixteenth Century Revolution*; Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, pp. 479-496; Bod, *A New History of the Humanities*, pp. 168-169.

‘public record’, held for posterity in civic buildings or temples.¹⁸ As a medium for recording the past, they were often seen as inferior to ‘History’, in that they were simply a record of events with no structure or narrative. ‘All that is written in and of our own time may not be considered History,’ wrote Dionigi Atanagi in his 1559 *Ragionamento de la eccellentia, et perfettion de la historia*, ‘the *annali* contain all that is History, but History is not all that which is contained in the *annali*.’¹⁹ Around the same time,²⁰ the Paduan humanist Sperone Speroni stated in his *Dialogo della Istoria*:

I also think that the *annali* must remain hidden, but for a different reason, on account of being so base and inferior in their writings that they are unworthy of being seen. I do not however deny that the *annali* are useful to the Republic, as many of the mechanical arts are. One may use any type of animal skin in order to drive the cold from our bodies, yet the nobleman does not simply dress in any skin during the winter. Just as the fur coat is to the sheepskin, so too is history to the annals; the history does not concern itself with every fact, only the most worthy, whilst the annals narrate everything.²¹

Nevertheless, the same author recognised that the literary defects of annalistic material did not negate their usefulness as a source. Elsewhere in his *Dialogo*, Speroni argued that the

¹⁸ As well as its traditional definition as a chronological record of events, the term *annales* was often associated with the material of state and the public record. In a 1600 English edition of Livy’s *Roman Histories*, for instance, the translator, Philemon Holland, provides a glossary at the end, ‘containing the exposition of those tearmes in Livie which are not yet familiar in English ... Whereunto the reader may have recourse, when hee meeteth with any such difficultie in the historie.’ Under the term ‘Annales’, he states: ‘Briefe memorials, Chronicles, or commentaries, *containing the names of Consuls every yeere, the date of times, and all memorable occurrents happening therein* [my Italics] (Livy, *The Romane Historie*, pp. 1423-1424). The use of this terminology in the Venetian secret chancery will be assessed in Chapter 2.3.

¹⁹ ‘Gli annali sono ben del tutto quel che sono le historie, ma le historie non sono già del tutto quel che sono gli annali ... Gli annali, come appresso segue, dimostrano solamente le cose fatte di più anni, osservando l’ordine di ciascun’anno, senza render conto de’ consigli, et de le ragioni, perche fur fatte; si come l’efemeridi, o i diarij, che noi possiamo chiamar giornali, dimostrano quelli di ciascun giorno’ (Atanagi, *Ragionamento della eccellentia, et perfettion de la historia*, p. 3v).

²⁰ The *Dialogo* was a work on which Speroni was continually working up to his death in 1588, thus several versions and editions consequently exist, including a 1740 extract published by Natale delle Laste and Marco Forcellini (Ginzburg, *Threads and Traces*, p. 236, §47).

²¹ ‘Li quali annali, confesso anche io similmente, quanto allo effetto, che debbano esser celati; ma per un’altra cagione, cioè per esser sì bassa cosa la lor scrittura, che siano indegni d’esser veduti. Nè però niego che tali annali non siano utili alla repubblica, come son molte dell’arti vili e meccaniche. Con ogni pelle si caccia il freddo dei nostri corpi; ma il nobile animo signorile non veste il verno ogni pelle. E nel vero tale è la istoria allo annale, quale alla pecora il zibellino; sendo l’istoria non d’ogni fatto, ma de’ più eletti, che narri tutto l’annale.’ (Speroni, *Opere tratte da’ MSS. originali*, vol. II, p. 348).

annali were ‘the most faithful, most useful and most honoured narrative that the human hand can record’:²²

The truth which is recorded in the *annali* is naturally formed, without flourish or embellishment, like the solidity of the mountains, standing firmly by itself [...] These are the reasons that make Peretto certain that the truth is more nobly known through the *annali*, made without artifice, than through the Histories, which depend upon the *annali* as does the plant on its roots.²³

This distinction between ‘natural’ and ‘artificial’ narratives of the past bears a striking resemblance to Arnaldo Momigliano’s famous distinction between the literary genre of ‘History’ and its ‘non-derivative’ sources: ‘statements by eye-witnesses, or documents, and other material remains, that are contemporary with the events which they attest.’²⁴ In Jean Bodin’s 1566 ‘Method for the Easy Comprehension of History’, the notion that ‘annals’ might provide the truth of things upon which historians later embellish was expanded upon to explicitly praise the value of the public records themselves:

The actual historical truth ought not to be sought from the commentaries of kings, since they are boastful about their many exploits, but we should investigate only those matters which in no way [...] pertain to their praise or their blame, such as the sequence of time, provinces, governments, ages of kings, lineage, and public accounts (*publicae rationes*) as a whole, in which the secrets of the state lie hidden.²⁵

The ‘natural’ authority of public records espoused by Speroni and Bodin was akin to both the *autopsia* of Hellenic historiography and the ‘non-derivative’ authority of today,²⁶ as these records emanated from the events themselves, rather than being constructed narratives of them.

In Venice, this notion was first introduced by the Dalmatian philosopher Francesco Patrizi da Cherso in his 1560 treatise, *Della historia dieci dialoghi*, a work which is rarely

²² (Speroni, *Dialoghi di nuovo ricorreti*, p. 392). See also Ginzburg, *Threads and Traces*, p. 17.

²³ ‘In somma la verità, che nelli Annali senz’arte scritti è notata, è molto simile alla saldezza delle Montagne, naturalmente formate, et ferme stanti da se [...] Queste son le ragioni, che certo fanno il Peretto, che la verità nelli Annali senz’arte fatti più nobilmente sia conosciuta, che non si fa nelle Historie, che dalli Annali dipendono, come la pianta dalle radici.’ (Speroni, *Dialoghi*, p. 390). Given that these comments date from, most likely, a later version of the *Dialogo*, it is possible that Speroni had refined his views on the annals between editions.

²⁴ Momigliano, ‘Ancient History and the Antiquarian’, p. 286.

²⁵ Bodin, *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History* – trans. Beatrice Reynolds, p. 46.

²⁶ Marc Bloch in fact referred to this type of source as ‘witnesses [to the past] in spite of themselves’ (Bloch, *The Historian’s Craft*, p. 51).

omitted from histories of the *Ars Historica* as having presented the first major challenge to the orthodox, Ciceronian notions of history.²⁷ A resident scholar at Padua, Patrizi was a central figure in the intellectual life of the Republic,²⁸ and had a strong background in antiquarian studies.²⁹ As such, he too espoused the belief that history could be based on physical evidence of the past, such as engravings and coins; as Grafton argues, he thus saw the writing of history ‘as thick description rather than taut narrative.’³⁰ In his fifth dialogue on the ‘truth’ of history, Patrizi stated that:

When the Prince wishes that history be written truthfully, he makes available the consultations, deliberations, laws, public letters, commissions, notices and all other writings which occur in the process of a negotiation, war, or attempts at a peace [...] from all these things may the historian determine the truth of things and recount them.³¹

Patrizi’s praise of the public records – which he termed the *scritture pubbliche* – as an authoritative source was based not only on their *autopsia*, but on their usefulness and detail. Elsewhere in the dialogue he noted that the state papers ‘narrate to us the designs and councils of the Prince,’³² and contain all details of government and public affairs which ‘are necessary for the sustenance of both City and the Empire; it is therefore necessary that the accomplished work of history seeks to comprehend them.’³³ Drawing upon the recent discoveries of the pre-Columbian civilisations of the New World, he asks rhetorically where those cultures which have no ancient historical authorities can turn for their knowledge of the

²⁷ For a summary of the Ciceronian, Quintilian, and Aristotelian orthodoxies of history as branches of rhetoric and poetry, see Spini, ‘The Art of History in the Italian Counter Reformation’, pp. 94-97. For summaries of the significance of Patrizi within the wider historiographical sphere, see: Diffley, *Paolo Beni: A Biographical and Critical Study*, pp. 207-208; Spini, ‘The Art of History in the Italian Counter Reformation’, pp. 105; Grafton, *What Was History?*, pp. 125-141.

²⁸ Patrizi was, for instance, a member of the *Accademia Veneziana ‘della Fama’*, a short lived project to create a scholarly-political community within the city between 1557 and 1561 (Rose, ‘The Accademia Venetiana’, p. 224). Lina Bolzoni argues that Patrizi’s later work was inspired by its ‘encyclopaedic’ vision of an active and contemplative political class (Bolzoni, ‘Rendere Visibile Il Sapere’, p. 75).

²⁹ Patrizi, *La milizia romana*; idem., *Paralleli militari*.

³⁰ Grafton, *What Was History?*, p. 131.

³¹ ‘Quando il Principe vuole, che ella si scriva vera [...] egli allora vi pon in mano, le consulte, le diliberationi, le leggi, le lettere pubbliche, le commissioni, gli avisi, et l’altre tutte scritture corse nel passare un negotio, o di guerra, o di pace che egli si sia, o d’altro [...] Si che da tutte le predette cose puote l’historico tutta la verità di quel fatto trarre, et raccontarla’ (Patrizi, *Della historia diece dialoghi*, p. 29r).

³² ‘Et di più vi narra i suoi disegni, et i suoi consigli’ (Ibid., p. 29r).

³³ ‘Però che pare a me, se elle non vi sono, o sparse, o altramente raccontate, che niun frutto, o poco, ci possa l’historia recare, et queste sono quattro. I viveri di alcuna città; l’entrate pubbliche, le forze, et il modo del governo. Delle quali, le due primiere, sono da tutti gli historici, con silentio trapassate. Et l’altre poco ricordate. Et io porto opinione, che sieno necessarie a raccontarsi, se non con gran discorso di parole, almeno sparsamente, et per trascorso. Percio che si come sono alla città, et all’imperio necessarie, per lo mantenimento della lor vita, così è necessario, che la compiuta historia le comprenda’ (Ibid., p. 34v).

past. These people, he continues, have no option but to consult those records which ‘all the lineages of men have made of their deeds’, and which ‘can be observed in the *scrittura publiche*.’³⁴ The public record thus served as both an avenue for detailed information and an account of events which would have otherwise gone unrecorded. In addition, Patrizi even expanded upon the notion of documentary *autopsia* on a more conceptual level by stating that the physical act of writing documents fixes the memory of an event in time, so that it may serve as an authoritative witness for future generations. Without such artefacts, he argued, ‘time itself would swallow up events after a few years, just as in ancient times Saturn devoured his own children.’³⁵

1.3: The historian’s perspective – Agostino Valier on the theory and practice of archival research

Despite the emergence of these early roots of primary source appreciation, the relationship between historical theory, which belonged primarily to the disciplines of philosophy and law, and actual historical practice were often rather tenuous during this period.³⁶ In order to assess how the notion of the public record as a source of *autopsia* translated into the historical sphere itself, we must now consider the reflections of the historians themselves.

Perhaps the best example of a discussion amongst historians concerning the use of the public record can be found in the writings of the Venetian-born Bishop of Verona, Agostino Valier, who in 1577 composed a manual for writing the history of Venice to advise one of his students. Within his writings, we can identify a more practical appreciation of the importance of the archive for practicing historians. Most renowned for his links to Cardinal Borromeo and the theologies of the Counter Reformation,³⁷ Valier became Bishop of Verona

³⁴ ‘Da questo, soggiunsi io, con qual modo deano notare i tempi nell’historie loro, i Turchi, o gli Indiani, o quella dal mondo nuovo, se lor venisse voglia di comporre historia? O, cotesto ci era, quasi guizzato delle mani. Et mostra qui, che essi dovesser’ osservarlo alla maniera appunto che appo loro, s’osservasse nelle scritture publiche. Percioche egli è da credere, che tutti i lignaggi degli huomini n’habbian di cosi fatte’ (Ibid., p. 42r).

³⁵ ‘Percioche oltre, ch’è si leverebbe a l’attione, ciò, senza che ella non puo farsi a verun modo: essi rimarrebbero in oscuro. Consciosia che il tempo stesso produttore di quelle attioni, dopo qualch’anno le si manicherebbe nella guise, che Saturno al tempo antico si trangugiò i proprij figliuoli’ (Patrizi, *Della historia diece dialoghi*, p. 42r; Blum, ‘Francesco Patrizi in the ‘Time-Sack’, p. 71). The choice of Saturn devouring his children was likely a conscious link to the myths of antiquity, in which *Chronus* (Saturn) became an allegory for *chronos* (time), and thus the story of the devouring a further allegory for the ‘ravishes’ of time itself (Plutarch, *Plutarch’s de Iside et Osiride*, p. 167 [§32D]).

³⁶ Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, pp. 486-487; Kelley, ‘Historia Integra: François Baudouin and His Conception of History’, p. 43.

³⁷ For a biography of Valier, see: Pullapilly, ‘Agostino Valier and the Conceptual Basis of the Catholic Reformation’.

in 1565 and a Cardinal from 1583, and retained several notable contacts with the city, and its historiographical sphere, through his tenure as a teacher of philosophy at the *Scuola di Rialto*. This included two candidates for the post of official historiographer, Alvise Contarini and Daniele Barbaro.³⁸ Andrea Morosini, a more notable historian of the Republic, also attended his lectures at the Rialto school, and praised him highly as a historical figure for his devotion and piety.³⁹ He is also likely to have been an associate of Patrizi, as Valier was named as the fictional interlocutor in the Dalmatian's eighth dialogue, on history and biography. However, it was for his protégé, Alvise Contarini, that the real Valier reflected upon the practice of history, when in 1577 – shortly after Contarini was appointed as the state historiographer⁴⁰ – he composed his 'Considerations' (*Ricordi*) for writing the history of the Republic of Venice. This was a culmination of Valier's wider instructions for Contarini, who had initially asked him to help grow his knowledge of literature and of the Republic.

In his address to Contarini, Valier attempted to identify the characteristics of the perfect historian, just as Plato had encapsulated the perfect philosopher and Cicero the perfect orator. In some respects, this search relied upon the long held maxims of antiquity, including Cicero's famous definition of history as 'life's teacher' (*historia magistra vitae est*), yet Valier's key contribution was to reflect the recent developments of the *Ars Historica* by espousing history as a primarily investigative exercise. It should not seek to include superfluous rhetorical flourishes, or be willing to state uncertainties as fact for the sake of expediency. The aim of history was not to fabricate tragedy or deliberately evoke an emotional response in the reader, but to express the truth through clear and simple prose. 'In short,' he states, 'a historiographer should content himself with being a historiographer, not a poet, an orator or a philosopher.'⁴¹

Unlike the published authors of the *Ars Historica*, however, his *Ricordi* were written as a vernacular address to Contarini, the official historian of the state, alone, rather than as an ornate Latin treatise.⁴² At several points in his writing, Valier acknowledges the need of his reader to 'receive council for succeeding in this honoured task, and for proving yourself a worthy historiographer to the Venetian Republic, and to rise to the expectations which the

³⁸ Cozzi, 'Cultura politica e religione', p. 245.

³⁹ The two men, alongside Morosini's well-known associate Bishop Alvise Lollino, were also members of the Paduan *Accademia dei Ricovrati* (Trebbi, 'Venezia tra '500 e '600 nell'opera storica di Andrea Morosini', pp. 84-91).

⁴⁰ See Chapter 3.3.2 (Cozzi, 'Cultura politica e religione', pp. 247-249).

⁴¹ Valier, 'Ricordi per scrivere le istorie della Repubblica di Venezia', p. 175.

⁴² The vernacular authorship of Valier's original text, later reproduced within the Latin compendium cited above, is attested in a preface to the eighteenth-century manuscript copy made by the monastic scholar Carlo Lodoli (BNM, Cod. It. VII, 415).

Most Excellent Heads of the Council of Ten have shown themselves to have of you.’⁴³ Consequently, he was able to reflect on the unique archival opportunity not enjoyed by others. ‘There are many,’ begins Valier, ‘who have thought that it is easy to write history [...] and who say that there is not much need for the historian to have much intelligence, or creativity, because the events have already been given out to him by the actions of men, and of the succession of deeds in those times.’ But the true task of the historian is to investigate the truth, and display it before the eyes of other men. ‘The great part of that difficulty,’ he continues, ‘is relieved by being a man of good faith, by having the truth before your own eyes, by searching for it diligently.’ You will not be found wanting in this task, he tells Contarini, ‘as you have so many benefactors, friends, numerous others of your Patria, and God himself, who has given you sufficient faculties and commodities to be able to narrate to other learned men, and to obtain truthful information.’ The first and principle of these commodities is the ‘information provided in the archive (*archivio*) of the Senate, which is truly of great authority, and worthy of being put in great consideration.’⁴⁴

Valier’s recommendation of the archive, however, was specific to Contarini’s circumstances alone, rather than being a general reflection on the historian’s method.⁴⁵ As we will see throughout this thesis, archival institutions were not yet a universal point of access or reference – the French *Ars Historica* author Lancelot-Voisin la Popelinière, for instance, bemoaned the fact that they remained closed to the majority of scholars⁴⁶ – and thus were of less interest to the historical method than the material they contained, which was potentially accessible through other means. At the time, Contarini would have been only one of a few men in Venice for whom a recommendation of the ‘archivio del Senato’ would have been relevant.

⁴³ ‘Se veramente è difficile scriver historie; come si possano levar queste difficoltà; se la lettione, e imitazione degli altri historici e via sicura, et finalmente vedendo al particolare dell’historia di questi tempi, da quai scogli vi debbiare guardare, et d’onde possiate ricever lume per riuscire in questa impresa honorata, et per dimostrarvi degno historiografo della Republica Veneta, rispondendo alla aspettazione, che hanno dimostrato haver di voi quei Eccellentissimi Padri del Consiglio de Dieci’ (Valier, ‘Ricordi per scrivere le istorie della Repubblica di Venezia’, pp. 182-183).

⁴⁴ ‘Onde gran parte delle difficoltà, che sogliono impedir il scriver ben historie, si levano con l’esser huomo da bene, con haver la verità inanzi gli occhi, cercarla diligentemente, non haver fine di Gloria propria, ne tam poco di aquistarsi amici, et voi le havete tolte tutte queste difficoltà, perche et sete da vero, et sete anco stimato grand’Uomo da bene, et senza alcun interesse, ne havete bisogno d’aquistarvi amici con la historia, havendo voi tanti Parenti, et Amici, quanti alcun altro della vostra Patria, et il Signor Dio vi ha dato delle facultà a bastanza, et commodità di poter trattener delle persone buone, et dotte, et prender informatione della verità. Sopra che mi pare, che sii a proposito dirvi, che le informazioni, che si servono nell’archivio del Senato, son veramente di grand’auttorità, et degne di esser poste in consideration grande’ (Valier, ‘Ricordi per scrivere le istorie della Repubblica di Venezia’, p. 183).

⁴⁵ Moreover, the *Ricordi* themselves were not published until 1757, and were unlikely to have been an attempt to contribute to the *Ars* genre.

⁴⁶ Kelley, ‘Historia Integra: François Baudouin and His Conception of History’, p. 45.

These instructions were reflected in Valier's own attempt to write a history of the city after the sudden death of his protégé in 1579, having left behind only an unfinished manuscript. He had remained unsatisfied with the lack of religious example in the city's historiography, and thus compiled a complete account of Venice's development from its inception to the present day,⁴⁷ divided into small chapters and each containing an incident from the city's past as an example of the virtue, piety and prudence of its citizens and leaders. The history, entitled *Dell'utilità che si può ritrarre dalle cose operate dai Veneziani* and written around 1580⁴⁸ was not a work worthy of the official historian of state, as Valier himself acknowledged,⁴⁹ but its intention was to educate his descendants⁵⁰ through simple and truthful recollections of the piety and grace of the Republic and its citizens. Part of this truthfulness – favoured over eloquence and rhetorical devices – was the inclusion of primary source material, from both oral and written testimonies. In his preface, he stated that:

I have gathered together several documents, from the *pubblici ragionamenti*,⁵¹ from the discussions held with participants in affairs, and occasionally from their letters, because from the example of your elders you may benefit throughout the course of your life.⁵²

Like most of his published contemporaries, and the *Ars Historica* discussed above, Valier publically refers to the documents themselves rather than their provenance, in stark contrast to his previous discussion of the *archivio* of the Senate in his private correspondence with Contarini.

Like Bodin and Patrizi before him, it was the authoritative testimony of the original document which interested Valier more than its archival provenance, as illustrated by the caution given in the *Ricordi* against those chancery records which were written by ministers

⁴⁷ The volume in fact finishes with the fire which struck the Ducal Palace in 1574.

⁴⁸ The original Latin text is held in BNM, Cod. Lat. X, 14, *De utilitate capienda ex rebus a Venetis gestis*, and was first published in Italian 1787 (*Dell'utilità che si può ritrarre dalle cose operate dai Veneziani*).

⁴⁹ 'Io non sono, nè voglio esser tenuto, e neppur mai nominato per Istorico' (Ibid., p. 405).

⁵⁰ The history was dedicated to his nephews.

⁵¹ A loose translation from the Latin term 'rationes', which Bodin also employed (Bodin, *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem*, pp. 41-42), and could be used to refer to various legal or administrative records.

⁵² 'Dalle memorie per tanto degli antichi Veneti, dalla serie dei fatti memorabili seguiti, e lodati da celebri Scrittori egli Annali, che quando io era in Repubblica ho esaminati; da fatti, che molti amplissimi Senatori mi narrano, e mi giunsero a notizia negli anni avanti; da pubblici ragionamenti, da discorsi tenuti con gravissimi Soggetti, e talvolta ancora delle lettere di essi, ho raccolto alcuni documenti, perchè ad esempio de' vostri Maggiori possiate approfittarne in tutto il corso di vostra vita' (Valier, *Dell'utilità che si può ritrarre dalle cose operate dai Veneziani*, p. xv). It is interesting to note that the fictional Valier of Patrizi's eighth dialogue echoes this sentiment, that history provides men with a knowledge which can greatly benefit their own happiness (Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defence of Republican Liberty*, p. 167).

and secretaries too far detached from events to have recounted them faithfully.⁵³ Instead, he suggests, ‘it would be more prudent to approach these principal events through the testimonies of others, those who found themselves present, and better still to engage them in conversation.’ He then gives an example which would be pertinent to a historian of the day; if you want to know of the events at the Battle of Lepanto, he argues, look to Paolo Tiepolo, the ambassador present at the signing of the treaty against the Turks.⁵⁴ ‘You should profess no greater faith than to the reports (*relazioni*) of the public representatives,’ he concludes, especially if you yourself have never seen the field of battle, nor experienced the perils of sea – ‘in short, if you do not possess a military spirit’ – and thus will be unable to express either the right terminology or the atmosphere to the reader.⁵⁵ The most authoritative documents to consult, according to Valier, are those which possess the same type of *autopsia* as proposed by Speroni and Bodin – that is, having emanated from the participants themselves. The reason Valier proposes the use of the Senate archives, in this case, was that it had been the repository for many of the *relazioni* of ambassadors throughout the sixteenth century.⁵⁶ Thus, the institution of the archive is discussed in his *Ricordi* largely as the place where they could be consulted, whilst the authority of the institution itself remained largely circumstantial.

Valier’s comments to his student, contrasted to those of his own history, illustrate a key difference between the ‘public record’, the form of ‘natural’ primary source espoused by the authors of the *Ars Historica*, and the archival institution itself. Such a distinction in terminology is not moot; elsewhere historians of Venice such as Andrea Morosini and Andrea Mocenigo⁵⁷ also made reference to the public record – or *publici commentarii* in

⁵³ ‘Li Ministri di questa Republica essi ancora sono huomeni, et adoperano molte volte i loro Secretarii, li quali non compitamente ben informati, possono riferir cose, che non siano così in tutto vere’ (Valier, ‘Ricordi per scrivere le istorie della Repubblica di Venezia’, p. 183). Patrizi’s counterpart in his fifth dialogue in fact reiterates this point, that the *annali* cannot always be the preserver of the whole truth, as in their basic recollections of events and their dates are missing the ‘other circumstances which ... always accompany our actions’ (Patrizi, *Della historia dieci dialoghi*, p. 29v; Vasoli, *Francesco Patrizi da Cherso*, p. 65).

⁵⁴ ‘Potrete ricever gran lume in parte dell’historia, che haverete da scriver della Lega, che si fece contra il Turco, dal Clarissimo *Signore* Paolo Tiepolo Procurator, il qual, come ho inteso, ha scritto distesamente il successo di tutta la guerra ultima, et essendo egli gran Senatore, huomo veramente di fino giudicio, haverà scritto la verità delle cose, et narrate le cause vere delle attione, che non successe’ (Valier, ‘Ricordi per scrivere le istorie della Repubblica di Venezia’, pp. 183-184).

⁵⁵ ‘È vero, che a nissuna relatione devesi dar maggior fede, che alle relationi delli Rappresentanti publici con sue lettere, o al suo ritorno in Senato; non dimeno vi aquierete più l’animo, et potrete venir in cognition di qualche particular di più, se ragionerete con li medesimi, che hann dato le informazioni, et con qualche altro, che si sarà trovato sul fatto. Qualche difficoltà apporta a scriver historie, non haver veduto eserciti in campo, ne haver pratica della peritia navale, in una parola, non haver animo militare’ (Ibid., p. 184). The precise influence of the diplomatic reports preserved in the secret chancery archive upon the texts of the historiographers will be examined in Chapter 4.3.

⁵⁶ Queller, ‘The Development of Ambassadorial *Relazioni*’, pp. 186-187.

⁵⁷ Both of whom were granted access to the secret chancery for their research, as we will see in Chapter Three.

Morosini's words⁵⁸ – rather than to its preservation or point of consultation. Mocenigo's comments in particular, given in the preface to his history of the War of Cambrai at the beginning of the sixteenth century, demonstrate how the authority of the public record stemmed from their *autopsia*:

I have attempted, with all due diligence, to have all that which was recounted in council both in Venice and on the battlefield, and that which our ambassadors – who found themselves around the other Kings and Princes – reported back to the Senate. From these I have, at great pains, been able to extract the truth, because the same thing is variously narrated by those who were present [at events].⁵⁹

Around the same time as historical theorists were beginning to re-evaluate the public record as a source, the historians of Venice were also beginning to demonstrate a similar awareness of the authority of the primary source, and its role as a preserver of authentic eyewitness testimony.

1.4: The archival perspective – Baldassare Bonifacio, Albertino Barisoni and the scholarly implications of early modern juridical treatises

The distinction between the 'public records' and the 'archive' in Valier's writings was a significant one. As modern archival theory will attest, the 'archive' is not simply an amalgam of its contents. It is instead a physical, inviolate space through whose provenance records are granted their authority as evidence of the past.⁶⁰ Far from being a modern invention,

⁵⁸ In Morosini's own original Latin, published in 1623, the term is *publici commentarii*, which was later translated into Italian in 1782 by Girolamo Ascanio Molino as 'pubblici registri'. The translation between the two is by and large consistent; the *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca* states under the entry for 'Registro' – defined as 'Libro, ove sono scritti, e registrati gli atti pubblici' – that it can be found in Latin as 'commentarius'. The term *commentarii* was used in antiquity to refer to 'memoranda: official and unofficial records and notes of any kind kept by private individuals and groups' (Bagnall, Brodersen, Champion, Erskine, and Huebner (eds.), *The Encyclopaedia of Ancient History*, vol. IV, p. 1689). The passage in which Morosini declares his consultation of the public records, in his account of the War of Cyprus, will be examined in greater detail in Chapter 5.1.

⁵⁹ 'Io con ogni mio studio ho cercato d'havere tutto cio, che nel consiglio in Vinegia, et a la guerra si trattava, e quello che riferivano al Senato i nostri ambasciatori, che si trovavano presso a Re e' Principi, e tuttavia apena ho potuto cavare il vero, perche la medesima cosa da chi erano stati presenti variamente si narrava' (Mocenigo, *La guerra di cambrai*, pp. 3-4).

⁶⁰ Van Albada, 'Archives: Particles of Memory or More?', p. 217; Duranti and Franks, *Encyclopedia of Archival Science*, p. 120. In a more historiographical context, Laura Stoler's 'Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance' (pp. 87-92), which emphasises the fact that archives can no longer simply be considered mines of information; instead, we should look to 'archiving as a process, rather than archives as things', and 'as epistemological experiments rather than sources.'

however, this notion dates back to the legal codes of the Roman emperor Justinian, who defined the archive ‘locus publicus in quo instrumenta deponuntur, quatenus incorrupta maneant, fidem faciant, et perpetua rei memoria sit’.⁶¹ In this definition lie the principal characteristics which permeate archival literature to this day; inviolability, authority, and memory. In the legal tradition which stretched back to the times of the Emperor Justinian, the *publica fides* of the law was inextricably tied to the preservation of the records upon which it was based within a physical, uncontaminated space; ‘the place,’ as Luciana Duranti explains, ‘that provided the records with trustworthiness.’⁶² The physicality of the archive was tantamount to this *fides*; as Elio Lodolini observes, the etymological root of nearly all variants of the term ‘archive’ derive from *archa* – that is, containment, isolation, or keeping secret.⁶³ For Valier, however, this definition was not apparent. The archive of the Venetian Senate was simply a repository and place of consultation for the public records, which remained authoritative historical sources on their own merit. In a similar manner, the two great French authors of the *Ars Historica*, François Baudouin and Lancelot du Voisin de La Popelinière, both acknowledged the existence of the ‘archive’ as a potential source of lost information and historical treasures, without expanding on the role of the institution itself as a scholarly resource.⁶⁴

However, the question of the authority of the archive as an institution was beginning to be reassessed just beyond the historical sphere itself. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, a new genre of treatises on archival management was emerging throughout Europe, often as an attempt to support the legal privileges of a specific state by instructing rulers on how to better preserve and utilise the written records of their territorial, dynastic and patrimonial rights.⁶⁵ The early development of this genre of archival literature, and in particular its implications for the art of governance, has been well noted elsewhere, often as the foundations of modern archival science.⁶⁶ However, within a number of these texts, we can also see early suggestions of the implications of an authoritative, well-ordered archival institution for the practice of history.

⁶¹ Justinian, *Corpus Juris Civilis*, Novella 15 'De Defensoribus civitatum', 'Et a defensoribus', Digestum 48, no. 19 'De Poenis', Codex I, no. 4 'De episcopali audientia'. This summary quotation of the Justinian concept of the archive is given in Duranti, 'Archives as a Place', p. 243.

⁶² Duranti, 'Medieval Universities and Archives', p. 41.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁶⁴ Baudouin, 'De Institutione historiae universae', p. 653; de la Popelinière, *L'histoire des histoires*, p. 256.

⁶⁵ Duranti, 'Medieval Universities and Archives', pp. 4-5.

⁶⁶ Examples of this historical context in the Italian archival tradition include: d'Addario, 'Origini e sviluppo della dottrina archivistica'; Lodolini, *Lineamenti di storia dell'archivistica italiana*, pp. 59-63; Angelucci, *Breve storia degli archivi e dell'archivistica*, pp. 65-70; in the English tradition: Duranti, 'The Future of Archival Scholarship'; in the Spanish: de las Nieves and Graner, 'El archivo como espacio del saber', pp. 249-250.

Early treatises on archival practice, such as the 1571 *Von der Registratur und jren Gebäwen und Regimenten*⁶⁷ by the Augsburg registrar Joseph von Rammingen, were more concerned with the technical practices of the author's chancery or registry system, rather than with conceptualising the notion of the 'archive' as a repository of historical information.⁶⁸ 'Our registry,' states von Rammingen at the beginning of his treatise, 'is actually a way of ruling. Supremacy and authority keep and maintain their letters and writings in a good and well-arranged order, preserving and storing them thus.'⁶⁹ Instead, it was two Venetian scholars, Baldassare Bonifacio and Albertino Barisoni, who first approached the subject of archival management from the perspective of its scholarly implications. Both men were accomplished jurists and scholars, with ties to both the neighbouring university at Padua⁷⁰ and the Venetian ruling class,⁷¹ and compiled their essays – the *De archivis liber* and *De archivis commentarius* respectively – towards the end of the 1620s.⁷²

Like von Rammingen before them, both treatises sought to distinguish the 'archive' as a physical space from the registers and files of the chancery. According to Barisoni, for instance, 'the archive is not the storage chest, but the place in which the chests are assembled'.⁷³ Unlike von Rammingen, their intention was instead to focus on the archive as a place of preservation and memory, rather than as a tool of governance. In particular, two chapters entitled 'De utilitate archivorum' (Bonifacio) and 'Archivorum finis, utilitas, et necessitas' (Barisoni), made explicit connections between the preservation of state papers in a well-defined space and the ability of future generations to fully comprehend the past which they record:

There is nothing more useful for instructing and teaching men, nothing more necessary for clearing up and illustrating obscure matters, nothing more necessary for conserving patrimonies and thrones, all things public

⁶⁷ 'Concerning the registry, its construction and governance'.

⁶⁸ Stromberg (ed.), *The Earliest Predecessors of Archival Science*, p. 35.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁷⁰ Barisoni, later Bishop of Ceneda, as Canon to the city's Cathedral (Born, 'The 'De Archivis Commentarius' of Alberto Barisoni', p. 14) and Bonifacio as Professor of Greek and Latin (Born, 'Baldassare Bonifacio and His Essay de Archivis', p. 222).

⁷¹ In the case of Bonifacio, his patronage came from a Venetian Senator, Domenico Molino, who at the time was involved in reorganising the records of the *Accademia dei Nobili* (Sandri, 'Il De Archivis di Baldassare Bonifacio', p. 97). Furthermore, both were members of the Roman *Accademia degli Umoristi*.

⁷² Born, 'The 'De Archivis Commentarius' of Alberto Barisoni', pp. 16-18.

⁷³ 'Archium non est armarium, sed locus ubi Armaria collocantur' (Albertino Barisoni, *De archivis commentarius* (Venetiis, 1737), p. 5). Bonifacio in particular traced in detail the uses of different terminologies as they appeared from antiquity to the present day, to demonstrate that the idea of preserving records had a long and established precedent (Born, 'Baldassare Bonifacio and His Essay de Archivis', pp. 227-229).

and private, than a well constituted store of volumes and documents and records - as much better than navy yards, as much more efficacious than munition factories, as it is finer to win by reason rather than by violence, by right rather than by wrong. And we will not attain a knowledge of antiquity except through archives and libraries.⁷⁴

Elsewhere, Bonifacio expanded his argument to discuss the necessity of documentary preservation for scholarship:

If we had been completely deprived of these precious crumbs [of antiquity], we should all be compelled to grope in the dark, to feel our way with our hands, not only in history, but also in all the other disciplines.⁷⁵

Barisoni, in his reflection, developed this idea further still, stating that the institution of the archive imposes historical authority upon otherwise uncertain and unverifiable sources:

History abounds in falsehoods because of the ignorance of writers, the whims of flatterers, wrath, hatred, and, especially, hope or fear. Not solely on the causes of things, but also their occurrences, do the students of history not only disagree but attack each other. Therefore faith is found only in public acts and records. As the Emperor Justinian has said, 'where there is no archive records either perish or are deserving of no credence, and they fall to such a level that they really are not acts.'⁷⁶

Unlike the technical manuals on archival management which preceded them, the two essays also attempted to explain how archives were not only preservers of written texts, but also of historical memory. To do so, the two authors moved away from the chanceries of contemporary Europe, to consider the different forms of archival preservation throughout history. In Bonifacio's second chapter, 'Quando instituta sint archiva', the author cites the

⁷⁴ Born, 'Baldassare Bonifacio and His Essay de Archivis', p. 234.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 233.

⁷⁶ 'Historiae, inscitia scribentium, assentandi libidine, ira, et odio, sed spe praecipue aut metu plerumque mendaciis scatent. Quare nedum consilia sed ipsi rerum eventus pro historicorum studiis nedum invicem discrepant, sed repugnant. Sola igitur penes publica acta, et monumenta fides reperitur: haec vero, ut ait idem Imperator [Justinian], *ubi nullum est Archivum, vel pereunt vel nulla fide sunt digna, et in tantum cadunt, ut in similitudinem non actorum sint*' [my Italics] (Barisoni, *De Archivis Commentarius*, p. 48). An English translation is quoted in Born, 'The 'De Archivis Commentarius' of Alberto Barisoni', p. 21.

tale in Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* of the two pillars erected by the children of Seth⁷⁷ on which were inscribed all their wisdoms to be transmitted to mankind after the cataclysm. Whilst notably different from the record-keeping practices of his own day, the author declared: 'I believe that these towers were nothing else than archives.'⁷⁸ In addition, the dedicatory preface to his patron, the Venetian senator Domenico Molin, made a clear definition of the 'archive' as a unit of memory:

Cardinal Cleselius⁷⁹ once said to me, when I met him as he was returning to Germany, that he was a sort of living archive of the Austrian House, because he had served four emperors of that family in the course of nearly sixty years. But you, best and wisest of senators, who have not only read through the annals of our fathers and all the secret records of this most favoured state, but have committed them to faithful memory, we will, with much greater truth, call the living archive of Venice.⁸⁰

Barisoni too, in his fifth chapter 'De barbarorum archivis', cited the Inca practice of knotted threads, or *quipu*, as possessing the qualities of archives, as from them, 'the memorable deeds which may occur at any time or place may be recounted freely and in detail.'⁸¹

As the century progressed, discussions of the practice of record-keeping in terms of preserving historical memory became a commonplace of archival literature. In 1664, for instance, the German jurist Ahasverus Fritsch, in his *De jure archivi et Cancellariae*, stated the function of archives to be: 'that the necessary evidence of the achievements of men are not lost for posterity.'⁸² As with the historical theorists, the innovation in their thought came when the record-keeping practices of the Prince and the writing of history were each considered from the perspective of the other. For Bonifacio and Barisoni, the public authority, or *publica fides*, of the state archives as an historical source derived from the fact that the memories they preserved were protected by the rule of law:

⁷⁷ One of brick, one of stone, to counter the prediction of Adam that the world would be destroyed once by fire and once by water (Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, 1.2.3).

⁷⁸ Born, 'Baldassare Bonifacio and His Essay de Archivis', p. 229.

⁷⁹ Leopoldo Sandri notes that Cardinal Cleselius, one of Bonifacio's associates from time spent in Germany, had been a Chancellor in the Imperial court, and that this experience may have had some input into the inception of his essay (Sandri, 'Il De Archivis di Baldassare Bonifacio', p. 97).

⁸⁰ Born, 'Baldassare Bonifacio and His Essay de Archivis', p. 227.

⁸¹ Lodolini, *Lineamenti di storia dell'archivistica italiana*, p. 61. When historians occasionally discussed the history of archives, as did Cesare Baronio in his *Annales Ecclesiastici*, they too gave a similar definition: 'it was the *Chartophylacium*,' he stated, 'or *Archivum* as they say in Latin, which was the place where public writings were kept for perpetual memory [*perpetuam memoriam*]' (Baronio, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, vol. VIII, p. 26).

⁸² 'Cum enim memoria hominum valdè labilis sit, et ut ait Imp. Justin. *omnium meminisse, potius divinitatis, quam humanitatis sit* [my Italics]: ne probationes rerum gestarum in futurum necessariae depereant, hac via consulendum fuit tam publicae quam singulorum civium utilitati' (Fritsch, *Tractat. de jure archivi et cancellariae*, p. 44).

It is permissible to call archives inviolate, especially since they have acquired public authority and the protection of the prince under whose patronage public places now are, with the result that violators of archives are charged not only with sacrilege but also with treason, and, according to the constitutions of the Roman Pontiffs, are struck down with anathema.⁸³

Within this new genre of archival theory, therefore, the relationship between ‘public records’ and historical veracity was founded not solely on the authority of the individual record, as had been posited amongst the authors of the *Ars Historica*, but on the institutional structure within which the record had been preserved.

1.5: Conclusion – The *publica fides* of the archive in Venetian historiography

It should be noted that the *publica fides* of the archive as espoused by the jurists, and the *autopsia* of the public record as espoused by the historical theorists, were largely independent developments, whose direct influence upon each other was rarely acknowledged by the authors themselves. Neither Valier’s nor Barisoni’s essays, for instance, were widely circulated until the early eighteenth century, whilst archival theorists writing towards the end of the seventeenth century, such as Nicolò Giussani, approached the subject in the belief ‘that he was the first to have spoken of the archives.’⁸⁴ Moreover, both Barisoni and Bonifacio tended to discuss the archives as the closed, abstract institutions of ancient civilisations rather than refer to the living record collections of their own day.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, as historians such as Arnaldo d’Addario, Markus Friedrich and Randolph Head have aptly demonstrated, the emergence of new archival treatises across the continent over the course of the seventeenth century was to have a profound effect upon the practice of contemporary legal scholarship, as the documents which they preserved were increasingly considered as historical ‘proofs’ as well as governmental tools.⁸⁶

In the case of Venice, the scholarly implications of the archive’s *publica fides* were beginning to appear amongst the writings of its own historians. For instance, in 1584 the

⁸³ Born, ‘Baldassare Bonifacio and His Essay de Archivis’, p. 236.

⁸⁴ Sandri, ‘Nicolò Giussani e il suo “Methodus archivorum seu modus eadem texendi ac disponendi”’, p. 333. The eighteenth-century reception of theorists such as Valier will be discussed on p. 199.

⁸⁵ Lodolini, *Lineamenti di storia dell’archivistica italiana*, p. 61. Neither Bonifacio or Barisoni, for instance, mention the Venetian *Cancellaria* by name.

⁸⁶ D’Addario, ‘Origini e sviluppo della dottrina archivistica’, pp. 9-15; Friedrich, *Die Geburt des Archivs*, pp. 231-269; Head, ‘Documents, Archives, and Proof’, pp. 921-929.

Florentine monk Girolamo Bardi, who had been commissioned to work on the reconstruction of the Great Council hall after it had been struck by fire in 1577,⁸⁷ published a historical defence of the Venetian role in the 1177 peace between Pope Alexander III and Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. The long held Venetian account of this incident – which emphasised the city’s central role as mediator – started to be challenged by the Republic’s detractors, and Bardi’s was one of a number of works gathering evidence in support of the traditional narrative. As we will see in Chapter Five, histories of a more bygone era were the most likely during this period to defer to the archival source, especially as they were clearly lacking in the proximity to events still favoured by historians, and Bardi’s own comments on the matter were particularly indicative of the archival consciousness applied to contemporary historiography:

Undoubted faith must be given to those Histories which have been authenticated by the testimonies of the major archives (*archivi*) of Italy [...] but if we must trust those who have taken such diligence to verify their accounts in these Archives, which have been repeatedly pillaged by the most barbarous peoples of the world, then it is far more reasonable that we must put our faith in the Archive of the Venetians, which by the grace of God has remained intact from the interests of barbarians and foreigners, and even the Italians, as one cannot read of any incident in which Venice was pillaged by any other nation.⁸⁸

Of all the nations’ archives, the inviolate nature of the Ducal Chancery bestowed upon it the greatest credibility. Far from reflecting on the veracity of the individual document, as we have previously seen, Bardi confers the notion of authority upon the archive as an institution – his choice of the term *archivio* distinguishing it from the administrative language of the *tabularium*, *chartophylakion* or *pubbliche scritture* – which renders more accurate sources by isolating texts from the corruption of outside events. Elsewhere, too, historians such as Paolo Ramusio were beginning to state that their accounts were informed not only from ‘the most clarifying light of authority of the documents,’ but that they were ‘taken from the

⁸⁷ See pp. 63-64 below. Ten years later, Bardi published a full historical account of the paintings which then lined the hall (de Vivo, ‘Historical Justifications of Venetian Power in the Adriatic’, p. 168).

⁸⁸ ‘Doversi prestare indubitata fede alle Historie loro, per esser state authenticate dalle testimonianze di tutti gli Archivi migliori d’Italia ... Conciosia, che se per simil rispetto bisogna a questi tali prestar tanta fede, havendo fatta cosi essatta diligenza per comprobarle le cose loro in quelli Archivi, che sono state infinite volte depredati, dalle piu barbare nationi, che habbia haute il mondo; che par molto piu ragionevole doversi credere allo Archivio de Venetiani, intatto per particular gratia di Dio dalla barbarie de forestieri, et de medesimi Italiani, essendo, che non si legga che in alcun tempo mai Venetia sia stata depredata da nazione alcuna’ (Bardi, *Vittoria nauale ottenuta dalla Repubblica Venetiana*, p. 135). For a full account of the 1177 affair in Venetian historiography, see pp. 201-205 below.

Public Archive’ – which, reflecting the later writings of Bonifacio and Barisoni, constituted the ‘memory’ of the Republic.⁸⁹ Both of these authors, unlike Valier, had a greater connection to the *Cancellaria* as an institution; Bardi through his work in the Ducal Palace, and Ramusio, as discussed in Chapter 5.2.2 as the member of a prominent secretarial family. It was through these scholarly-administrative ties that an appreciation of the archive as a scholarly tool seems to have first emerged within Venetian historical thought.

Although perhaps too late to have influenced the statement of the Council of Ten in 1515, the sixteenth century witnessed a number of signs that the *publica fides* of the archive was becoming ever more deeply entrenched into contemporary historical thought. Influenced by the defences of the public record by historians and historical theorists alike on the one hand, and on the other by an emerging sense amongst archival theorists that the legal status of the archival document may also be applicable to scholarship, a number of historians were beginning to defer to the unique authority of the city’s secret chancery, as a preserver of uncorrupted historical memory, as part of their own methodology. Doubtless, these notions were still very much in their infancy, and did not yet represent a radical shift in the practices of history more akin to those of the modern era. Nevertheless, the comments of historians such as Bardi and Ramusio allow us a rare glimpse behind the curtain, and indicate that the early historiographers of the Republic may well have engaged with the state records to a far greater extent than their absence in their texts suggests. This possibility has significant implications for our understanding of the relationship between history and the chancery during this period. If the patrician historiographers of the Republic valued the newly opened chancery as an authoritative historical source, to what extent did they take advantage of their privileged access in preparing their texts, and to what extent was the chancery itself designed to facilitate their work? Whilst the former question will be considered in the final chapters of this thesis, it is to the latter which we now turn, in order to build a better idea of how these theoretical foundations transferred into the actual practice of historical study.

⁸⁹ Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, unnumbered preface and p. 117 (‘ritrar dal vivo l’effigie di quella memorabile, et singolarissima impresa, co’ finissimi colori, et chiarissimi lumi d’auttorità, di documenti, et di leggi, tratte dall’Archivo publico’). Ramusio’s work, and the details of his proximity to the archives, will also be returned to in greater detail in Chapter 5.2.2.

Chapter Two: Historical consciousness in the administration of Venice's early modern secret chancery archive

2.1: Introduction

In Famosca and Baitelli's 1635 audit of the secret chancery archive, the initial praise for the cultural value of the collection as the *matrice dell'istoria* was quickly tempered by a set of very practical concerns. Such was the volume and disorder of this mass of ancient and recent papers, they noted, that the vast majority remained hidden to those wishing to draw from it the lessons and history of the state, having previously 'been handled by those whose customs did not value their delicacy and good order'.¹ This was not a problem which could be rectified simply by the compilation of better indexes, they continued, but instead was one which required a complete overhaul of the way in which the records themselves, traditionally divided between the various councils in which they had been created, were physically arranged. The new system which they proposed involved three stages of allocation, in which records are first divided between different states and provinces, then subdivided by subject matter – treatises, diplomatic dispatches, contracts, and so on – before finally being arranged chronologically according to the successive rulers of each state. The present arrangement of the archive, by contrast, had resulted in many of its papers 'remaining buried amongst the mass of writings, almost as if the government had not held them at all.'²

Despite being the first of its kind amongst the administrative records of the chancery, Famosca and Baitelli's proposal was not without precedent. Just three years before their submission, the archival theorist Baldassare Bonifacio wrote a strikingly similar passage in the ninth chapter of his essay *De Archiviis*:

That order is certainly to be kept in archives is demonstrated to everyone by Nature herself: first it is proper to divide up locations, then affairs, and finally times [...] First then, for example, let us separate what pertains to the city of cities, Venice, then what pertains to Padua, then to Verona. After that let us divide up the individual items of business of the

¹ 'Molte delle scritture più Antiche passate per mani di chi viveva ne' secoli andati perche il costume di quei tempi non haveva giustata la delicatezza, et *commodità* dell'ordine, non hanno Indice alcuno' (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 40, 23 August 1635).

² 'le Pubbliche Ragioni, le quali nella varsità delle cose restando sepolte, riescono ben spesso infruttuose, et come se la *Serenità Vostra* non se avesse' (Ibid.).

individual cities, so that in one place we may dispose the wills, in another the matters of trade, in another the contracts. Then, starting from the most ancient times, let us proceed through the sequence of years and months to the most recent dates.³

Throughout the previous chapter, we sought to identify and characterise a growing appreciation of the role of the archive in Venetian historiography, an important consideration when we come to examine the practical experiences of the historian in the chancery in Chapter Three. However, we must first consider how the emerging recognition of the archive as a site of historical research impacted upon the administration of the secret chancery itself; whether, as suggested by the relationship between Bonifacio's essay and the report of Faramosca and Baitelli, there existed within the chancery a 'historical consciousness'⁴ of preserving public records as cultural artefacts with a view towards posterity. Were the records of decades and centuries past preserved with a view towards the historical memory of the Republic, as well as a tool for law making and the jurisdiction of the state? Did the structure and organisation of the chancery adapt to, or reflect, its growing perception as a site of cultural significance? Above all, was there a perception within the institution itself that its contents could be used as historical artefacts and subjects of scholarship?

In order to address these questions, this chapter will attempt to re-examine the history and development of the early modern secret chancery archive, a narrative which has already been well recounted by historians of Venetian politics and statecraft,⁵ from the perspective of its role in transforming the records of state into historical artefacts; a physical process of accession, storage and classification known since antiquity as the 'archival threshold' (*archii limes*).⁶ As discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, the notion of the archive as a repository of historical memory – loosely defined as containing 'documents no longer useful in the sphere of governance, which are of interest primarily to historians'⁷ – is generally considered as a product of the eighteenth century and beyond, as state record

³ Born, 'Baldassare Bonifacio and His Essay de Archivis', p. 236.

⁴ The term 'historical consciousness' has appeared in modern archival theory as a way of describing the archive as a site for the preservation of cultural heritage (Duranti and Franks, *Encyclopedia of Archival Science*, p. 72). In 1939, the American historian Robert Binkley declared that 'the objective of archival policy in a democratic country cannot be the mere saving of paper; it must be nothing less than the enriching of the complete historical consciousness of the people as a whole' (Binkley, 'Strategic Objectives in Archival Policy', p. 168).

⁵ Baschet, *Les archives de Venise*; Cecchetti, 'Costituzione storica degli archivi Veneti'; Pozza, 'La cancelleria'; Trebbi, 'La Cancelleria Veneta'; Salmi, 'Buildings, Furnishings, Access and Use; de Vivo, 'Ordering the Archive'.

⁶ Luciana Duranti, 'Archives as a Place', p. 244; Duranti and Franks, *Encyclopedia of Archival Science*, pp. 36-37.

⁷ Head, 'Mirroring Governance: Archives, Inventories and Political Knowledge', p. 318.

collections began to appear alongside libraries in contemporary discourse on cultural heritage.⁸ Nevertheless, there existed a number of cases throughout early modern Europe which suggest that the emergence of the archive as a site of research was not solely a post-Enlightenment phenomenon. ‘As European fiefdoms gave way to more modern states,’ argue Francis Blouin and William Rosenberg, ‘records were increasingly gathered together in organized archival repositories’, whose increasingly sophisticated protocols for the preservation and indexing of past records meant that the authenticity of the document could now derive from the simple fact of its consignment within an archival depository, rather than rely on detailed philological examination.⁹ Several of these new institutions, such as the Vatican Secret Archive in Rome and the Spanish Royal Archive at Simancas – established, according to government decree, for ‘the purpose of providing historians with the materials necessary to write "true and precise memories" of the past’ – subsequently emerged as the focal point for scholarly activity in their respective states.¹⁰

As we have already seen in the case of Venice, the state papers of the Republic would not undergo the same relocation until the fall of the Republic in 1797, before which time the records of its current administration and those of its distant past remained together in the Ducal Palace.¹¹ The record-keeping practices of the Republic were ultimately dictated by the political and administrative needs of the government of the day; just eight months after Famosca and Baitelli’s report was submitted, another audit of the chancery archive criticised their proposed restructuring of the collection as wildly impractical and disruptive to the functioning of government if put into practice, and the idea was thus quickly abandoned.¹² However, as we will see throughout this chapter, the archival depositories of the Palace did undergo an important series of administrative reforms and physical refurbishments during the period of the early historiographers, which served to establish a far clearer distinction between the ‘documents’ which served as administrative tools and the ‘monuments’ of Venice’s past affairs.¹³ In addition, the historiographers of the Republic themselves – increasingly influenced by the growing appreciation of the archive discussed in the previous chapter – also played a significant role in redefining the purpose and value of the secret chancery as an historical monument to the state. Over the course of this period, as

⁸ Ketelaar, ‘Muniments and Monuments’, pp. 343-352; Berger, ‘The Role of National Archives’, p. 6; Levine, ‘History in the Archives’, pp. 23-24.

⁹ Blouin, *Processing the Past*, pp. 18-19; Blouin and Coombs (eds.) *Vatican Archives: An Inventory and Guide*, pp. xix-xx.

¹⁰ Royal *cédula* of Phillip II cited in Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, pp. 96-104. For the use of the Vatican archives in the contemporary historiography of both Venice and Rome, see pp. 201-205 below.

¹¹ As discussed on pp. 18-19 of the Introduction.

¹² ASVe, CX Sec., b. 40 (14 April 1636).

¹³ The distinction between these two definitions of the same textual object, and its evolution within modern historiographical practice, is discussed in Jacques Le Goff’s seminal essay: ‘Documento/monumento’, pp. 38-48.

we will see, the Venetian historians admitted to the secret chancery were increasingly encountered by a record-keeping system which bore a greater resemblance to the scholarly archives of later centuries – a fixed depository of historical artefacts which, to quote a more modern definition, ‘represented historically the institution that it served.’¹⁴

2.2: The chancery systems of the Ducal Palace and the physical dispersal of historical records

The notion of a secret chancery for the Republic, the so called *Cancelleria Segreta*, was first introduced by the Great Council in April 1402.¹⁵ It was intended as the third arm of a chancery system which had first emerged towards the end of the thirteenth century, with the creation of the office of Grand Chancellor in 1261 and the division of the Palace records between the public and notary documents of the *Cancelleria Inferiore* and the political and diplomatic records of the *Cancelleria Ducale* – later known as the *Cancelleria Superiore* after the erection of a new chancery hall above the council assembly rooms – in 1287.¹⁶ In 1291, the first major cartularies of the Republic were also commissioned within the chancery; the *Liber Pactorum*, which contained the treatises and major records of Venetian diplomacy, and the *Commemoriali*, which contained civil and military contracts, alongside the lesser diplomatic papers.¹⁷ The added division of records into the *Cancelleria Segreta* was intended to further isolate and protect the most secretive state records, predominantly the deliberative and diplomatic papers of the Senate and College, from the larger collection of state records in the *Ducale*, and was famously referred to by the Council of Ten in 1453 as the ‘heart of our state.’¹⁸ However, in a 2013 article which revisited the history of the secret chancery, Filippo de Vivo argued that the notion of this new series as an ‘archive’ within the Palace should be reconsidered. Despite being intended for greater secrecy and isolation, the furniture housing the new *Segreta* collection remained together with the rest until 1459, and for decades the distinction between this collection and others remained conceptual rather than physical. As de Vivo argues, rather than view the establishment of the *Segreta* as a single, physical act, it is instead more useful to consider it as ‘a long-term process defining the boundaries between secret and other records and so reflecting changing perceptions of political sensitivity in response to inside and outside events.’¹⁹

¹⁴ Riordan, ‘The King’s Library of Manuscripts’, p. 183.

¹⁵ Baschet, *Les archives de Venise*, pp. 155-156.

¹⁶ Pozza, ‘La cancelleria’, p. 367; Franzoi, *Itinerari segreti nel Palazzo Ducale di Venezia*, pp. 62-67.

¹⁷ Predelli (ed.), *I libri commemoriali della Repubblica di Venezia*, vol. 1, p. vii.

¹⁸ De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, p. 49.

¹⁹ De Vivo, ‘Cœur de l’état, lieu de tension’, p. 618.

Within this multifaceted system of record-keeping held throughout the chambers of the Ducal Palace, there existed no single, unified process for the accession of documents no longer in use into a fixed depository – the process by which record collections become ‘archives’. As studies of the chancery by Claudia Salmini and Umberto Franzoi have demonstrated, old records were deposited in chests, cupboards and sacks throughout various rooms of the Palace.²⁰ For much of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, government deliberations on its record-keeping systems refer in particular to the attic rooms of the Palace as the most common storage space for old containers.²¹ The earliest surviving indexes of the *Cancellaria Segreta* itself, such as the mid-sixteenth-century *Index Librorum Cancellariae*, suggest that the principal components of its chests were the transcription registers of the Senate, College and Great Council, alongside the other minor administrative bodies and diplomatic cartularies, whilst the original files, or *filze*, upon which they were based were divided elsewhere between a series of loose containers.²²

This dispersal of state papers throughout the rooms of the Ducal Palace was largely a result of the constantly shifting jurisdictions over their accession and storage. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, many of the most important state records – papal bulls, civil contracts and diplomatic exchanges – had been entrusted to the offices of the Grand Chancellor and the Procurators of Saint Mark by the Senate, leaving a significant number of medieval papers in miscellaneous chests in both the Palace and its adjacent Basilica.²³ Towards the turn of the sixteenth century, the Council of Ten began to accrue greater authority over the custody and dispersal of incoming records, having decreed in 1518 that all the papers held by returning ambassadors should be surrendered to them, to be distributed amongst the various depositories of the Palace according to their perceived sensitivity.²⁴ As well as keeping their own deliberative records separate from the Senate and College records of the *Segreta*, the Ten also amassed a substantial number of administrative and diplomatic records in containers scattered throughout its office rooms and attics.²⁵ The largest of these containers was known as the *Cassa Bianca*, which inventories taken during the 1530s, 1570s

²⁰ Salmini, ‘Buildings, Furnishings, Access and Use’, pp. 99-101; Franzoi, *Itinerari segreti nel Palazzo Ducale*, pp. 49-50, 76-77.

²¹ Examples of government deliberations concerning the collections can be found in Lorenzi, *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo Ducale*, pp. 257, 296, 366-367.

²² Two bound copies of the *Index Librorum Cancellariae*, dating from the mid 1540s, can be found in ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 4 (see Appendix Figure 3), whilst surviving fragments of inventories taken of other containers of loose material can be seen in *Ibid.*, b.5. The structure of the early sixteenth-century chancery as reflected in the *Index* is also discussed in Chapter 3.2.

²³ This arrangement is briefly discussed in Salmini, ‘Buildings, Furnishings, Access and Use’, pp. 105-106, and will be examined in further detail in Section 2.5 below.

²⁴ Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, vol. VI, p. 119 (‘1518 30 Giugno in CX’).

²⁵ Baschet, *Les archives de Venise*, p. 163; Lorenzi, *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo Ducale*, p. 54.

and 1580s listed as containing various Papal Bulls, copies of the city's oldest cartularies, and much of the documentation concerning recent military campaigns.²⁶

In Chapter IX of his *De Archiviis*, Bonifacio stated that 'the soul of the archives is nothing else than order,' a quality which 'itself is something divine.' 'Writings of all sorts,' he continued, 'if you have them confused and badly mixed, are of no use.'²⁷ By dividing its diplomatic and political records amongst a series of depositories during the sixteenth century, of which the chests of transcribed codices which formed the *Cancellaria Segreta* itself were just one of many, the Venetian government had yet to establish a unified or coherent system for preserving the memory of the state. This was reflected in the language of the chancery administration during this time; whilst the singular term *archivio* was used in government deliberations to refer to other chancery institutions outside the city,²⁸ the records of the Palace itself tended to be categorised instead by the collective term *scrittura*.

2.3: The mid-sixteenth-century *Renovatio Archivi* and the creation of the *Annali*

As the proliferation of diplomatic and political records within the chancery continued to grow across the turn of the sixteenth century, their dispersal and continuous relocation throughout the various halls and attics of the Palace inevitably led to disorder, loss and confusion. This was not only a problem for a government attempting to use the records of past activity as precedent for current administration, but also a significant drawback to the aims of preserving the memory of the state. In response to this growing concern, the sixteenth century witnessed a variety of new initiatives to better organise and index the state records. Council registers were increasingly subdivided into new categories according to subject, geography and levels of secrecy, new indexes and *rubriche* were compiled to assist in the location of individual entries, and previously deteriorating codices were submitted to greater levels of preservation. These reforms have previously been considered as a response to political necessity; as the Republic faced a succession of military, territorial and polemical crises during this century, argued de Vivo, 'negotiations and treatises were now to be Venice's new weapons, and for that reason they had to be kept in full order.'²⁹ However, we can also consider these developments from the perspective of a shifting perception of the chancery itself, as the opening of the collection to the first patrician historiographers in 1515

²⁶ The various inventories of the *Cassa Bianca* are held in ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 5, and are listed in Table 1 of the Appendix.

²⁷ Born, 'Baldassare Bonifacio and His Essay de Archivis', p. 235.

²⁸ ASVe, CX Rom., b. 4, 1598 5 Marzo; CX Sec., reg. 15, f. 68r.

²⁹ De Vivo, 'Ordering the Archive', p. 242.

meant that the state records were now intended as a tool for commemorating the history of the state.

The earliest indications of an emerging historical monument in the chancery were evident during the reign of the Grand Chancellor Andrea de Franceschi (1529-1551), who brought in a number of reforms to order and preserve the more ancient records of the collection. Under his stewardship, for instance, a series of diplomatic records from previous centuries, which had previously been lying loose in one of the attic depositories, were collated together, indexed and preserved in a newly constructed series of chests held in the Chancellor's office under the *Cancellaria Superiore*.³⁰ In addition, one of de Franceschi's secretaries, Pietro Bressano, was tasked in 1538 with indexing and creating new copies of the two most ancient cartularies, the *Liber Pactorum* and *Commemoriali*.³¹ This, argued Salmini, was a project which emulated the architectural reconstruction underway throughout the city during this period, the so called *Renovatio urbis*, in which the archive itself was increasingly shaped into a civic monument, and has thus been labelled as the *Renovatio archivii*.³² This was evident in the frontispiece to Bressano's index of the *Liber Pactorum*, which presented the volumes in the form of Romanesque tablets and figures,³³ but it was also highlighted by the Council of Ten themselves, who commissioned the secretary to create a new compendium of extracts from these ancient registers which documented the city's relationship with the Papacy. In addition, they stated that these projects would ensure that 'all the deeds of past times undertaken between our city and the other Princes may be more easily and swiftly understood [...] such that their knowledge shall be open and clear to all, for the honour and benefit of our Republic in every time and occasion.'³⁴

³⁰ The index exists in two copies: ASVe, Ind. Sec., bb. 2 and 4, and is listed in Table 1 of the Appendix under 'Canon Inveneniendi Scripturas Omnes'. In addition, b. 5 of this series contains an index of chests which contained similar material and dating from the same period, the location of which is unstated.

³¹ Lazzarini, 'Materiali per una didattica delle scritture pubbliche', pp. 236-238 (see Table 1 for the *Pacta* index).

³² Salmini, 'Buildings, Furnishings, Access and Use', pp. 101-106. This was not the first time that a compendium of historical material had been created within the chancery; the fourteenth-century chronicler-Doge Andrea Dandolo, for instance, had compiled a collection of government records to serve as the basis of his Venetian history (Genuardi, 'La 'Summula Statutorum Floridorum Veneciarum' di Andrea Dandolo'; Arnaldi, 'Andrea Dandolo Doge-cronista', p. 147), whilst a late fifteenth collection of state records pertaining to the recent conflict with Ferrara had also been compiled by a group of legal consultants within the chancery (ASVe, CX Cod., 106; Neff, 'A Citizen in the Service of the Patrician State: The Career of Zaccaria de' Freschi', pp. 33-63). However, Bressano's indexes were amongst the first to be created within the bureaucratic practices of the chancery itself.

³³ An image of this frontispiece is available in Salmini, 'Buildings, Furnishings, Access and Use', p. 103.

³⁴ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 16, f. 111 (10 January 1544 m.v.); Lorenzi, *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo Ducale*, p. 250.

Shortly after Franceschi's death in 1551, the more recent records of the chancery also began to undergo a similar transformation, as the Council of Ten decreed in December of that year that a new series of transcription registers were to be compiled within the chancery:

One of the Secretaries of the Senate will be elected to the office of writing our *Annali* in the vernacular language, to be held for three consecutive, years noting from time to time all of the propositions made by other Princes, both to our Signory and to our ambassadors, as well as all of our responses and deliberations, commemorating the occurrences of both war and peace ... and all other things worthy of memory, separating each with an index. It is necessary to recount everything which is pertinent to the jurisdiction of our Signory, and that which is worthy of distinct and particular memory.³⁵

This series of volumes, which retained the given title of *Annali*, became a mainstay of Venetian archival practice until the eighteenth century. In each volume, the most important political and diplomatic records of the Senate, College, and occasionally the Ten themselves, were copied or summarised. Although already recorded in the registers of the various councils, these records were rearranged and transcribed together so as to present them in such a way that they provided a documentary narrative of the recent history of the Republic, recounting the major decisions of government in their proper context, rather than recording them in a strict chronological order. As such, the introduction and maintenance of this new series within the *Segreta*, the structure and perceptions of which will be examined below, came to embody the notion that the archive could contain a singular historical narrative of the Republic, for the benefit of later readers. Moreover, as demonstrated in later chapters, the registers themselves became the focal point of research for many of the historians of the city, and the narratives which they provided came to have a notable influence on those later published and disseminated in Venetian historiography.

The newly created office of composing the *Annali* was to be held in high esteem, and distinct from the traditional roles entrusted to the secretaries of the Republic. As established in the decree of 1551, the task of compiling the *Annali* was to be delegated to a secretary of the Senate, elected by the College with the assistance of the Heads of the Council of Ten. The office itself would last for a three-year term, after which point new elections were to be held in the case of retirement or the death of the secretary. The secretaries were tasked with identifying, reordering and transcribing the most important

³⁵ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 20, ff. 72-73, 18 December 1551.

records of state, the majority of which were either internal deliberations or dispatches from abroad and thus predominantly recounted the occurrences of Venetian foreign affairs.³⁶ At the end of his tenure, the appointed secretary – whose progress was to be overseen by a member of the College – would be ‘granted by this Council the reward which will be considered according to his efforts.’³⁷ By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the salary of the *annalisti* was set at sixty ducats every six months, on its own higher than the average wage of secretaries of the Senate at the time, and thus reflected the scale of the task and the regard in which it was held.³⁸ In 1571, moreover, the Ten redefined the obligations of the post, stating that its holders were forbidden from leaving the city without prior permission from the College, ‘so that this most useful, necessary and truly worthwhile task ... may not be interrupted in any way.’³⁹

Although the foundation of the series has been considered in previous historiography,⁴⁰ its origins and early design have not yet received due attention. Despite the election of four different secretaries to the post in the project’s first decade,⁴¹ the modern ASVe series begins only with the first volume produced after 1571 by the secretary Ambrosio Ottobon.⁴² However, the first surviving index of the collection, compiled in the second half of the seventeenth century, lists four additional volumes preceding the first.⁴³ Presumed to be lost after the dispersal and reconstruction of the state archive after the fall of the Republic, three of these in fact can today be consulted in the modern *Archivio di Stato*, under the series *Collegio, Pandette*. Compiled by both Ottobon and his predecessor, Alvise Borghi,⁴⁴ these early volumes offer hitherto unappreciated insight into the origins and

³⁶ As discussed in Chapter 4.3.4, and illustrated in Table 10 of the appendix, the *Annali* were constructed primarily from the deliberations and ambassadorial dispatches of the Senate and College, alongside the records of audiences held by foreign ministers, known as the *Esposizioni*.

³⁷ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 20, ff. 72-73 (18 December 1551).

³⁸ Surviving figures for secretary pay are not comprehensive, and the reasons for their discrepancies have yet to be studied in full (Zannini, *Burocrazia e burocrati a Venezia*, pp. 138-140), but one invoice dating from the late 1580s has the average salary for a secretary of the Senate as 107 ducats a year. Secretaries without commissions to create register series could expect to be paid considerably lower than this, and vice versa (Biblioteca Museo BMC, Malvezzi 138, ff. 75v-78r).

³⁹ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 30, f. 71v (29 November 1571).

⁴⁰ Brown, *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts*, vol. 1, pp. xviii, xxi; Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, pp. 230-231; de Vivo, ‘Ordering the Archive’, p. 244.

⁴¹ The first secretaries appointed to the role were Girolamo Polverini (29th December 1551), Alvise Borghi (12th August 1552), and Febo Capella (18th July 1556). All three names were recorded in the first deliberation concerning the *Annali* (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 20, f. 73r). For a full list of the *segretari annalisti* during this period, see Appendix Table 7.

⁴² ASVe, *Annali*, 3 (Although today labelled as ‘Pezzo 3’ in the ASVe, the title of an inserted folio within this volume refers to it as ‘the first book of the *Annali*’ – thus we can suppose that the beginning of this series in 1566 was recognised by contemporaries as well.).

⁴³ As demonstrated in Table 2 of the Appendix.

⁴⁴ Borghi’s authorship of the three volumes is explained in the preface to a history of the Republic which he had also compiled around the time of his election (see below), in which he declared that ‘I will also register the deliberations of the state, the treatises and confederations made between the other Princes, alongside every type of important document, with a useful and copious index. Because

purpose of this new chancery project, which in its full succession from 1551-1713 served to collate the once disparate records of the collection into both a monument and reference guide to the recent history of the Republic.

From a record-keeping perspective, the introduction of the *Annali* as a series of transcription registers was a continuation of common practices within the chancery. Chanceries throughout Europe had used this method of preservation for centuries; as Duranti argues, these cartularies helped to preserve the ‘authentic’ documents on which they were based as they could then be locked away safely whilst the copies were consulted by visitors.⁴⁵ The Venetian chanceries already had several such series of registers, such as the *Liber Pactorum* and *Commemoriali*, which had preserved both civic and diplomatic records since the 1290s.⁴⁶ In addition, the majority of the contents of the new *Annali* series – Senate deliberations, ambassadorial dispatches, and correspondences with foreign ministers – were already available as copies within the volumes of the *Segreta*. In this respect, de Vivo has argued that the *Annali*’s function was to serve as an organisational tool, analogous to the emerging indexes of the *Segreta*, acting as a calendar of documents relating to important events, and a ‘useful guide to past records.’⁴⁷

However, the *Annali* registers differed fundamentally from the other volumes of the *Segreta* in their content, structure and composition. As the Ten’s original commission of 1551 suggested, their purpose was not simply to index chancery records, but to present, or ‘commemorate’, through them the past deeds of the Republic. The contexts of both the 1551 and 1571 decrees reflect this intention; in 1551 the government had initiated the project as a substitute for the state historiographer office left vacant by the death of Pietro Bembo,⁴⁸ whilst the 1571 decree came just weeks after the famous Christian victory at Lepanto, a point at which public commemoration within the city was at its most intense.⁴⁹ Whereas the purpose of older cartularies such as the *Commemoriali* and *Liber Pactorum* had been to

of the things I have said these books will contain, they will be called the *Pandette*’ (ASVe, MMN, reg. 68, pp. 4-5). Moreover, the handwriting, a distinct form of secretary script, is consistent between his scholarly work and that of the volumes up to his death. After this point, the *Pandette* are continued by the secretaries Antonio Mazza and the later *annalisti* Ambrosio Ottobon, as explained in a letter by the historian Paolo Paruta (ASVe, CX Com., b. 180, 12 Ottobre 1589).

⁴⁵ Duranti, ‘Archives as a Place’, pp. 245-246.

⁴⁶ For an account of the origins of these two series, see Predelli, *I libri commemoriali*, vol. I, pp. vii-ix.

⁴⁷ De Vivo, ‘Ordering the Archive’, p. 244. In the decree of 1551 which founded the project, the Ten stated that ‘delle più utile cose, che siano al bon governo de stado, è la cognition delle cose passate, con la quale si cognosce facilmente qual cosa sia da seguire, et qual da fugire’ (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 20, 18 Dicembre 1551, ff. 72-73).

⁴⁸ Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, pp. 230-231. In Chapter 3.3.1, we will reconsider the notion, commonly posited in recent historiography, that the historiographer’s office remained vacant for nearly thirty years after Bembo’s death.

⁴⁹ For an account of the cultural aftermath of this conflict, see pp. 132-133 below.

preserve the ‘products’ of Venetian politics and diplomacy – including documents such as treatises, Papal Bulls and dispatches from foreign princes, as well as civic and military contracts,⁵⁰ the *Annali* recorded all the deliberations, decrees and ambassadorial exchanges which preceded them. Not only did the *Annali* thus contain a substantially greater number of entries – whilst the *Commemoriali* volume spanning the years 1550-1574 contained on average just 7.5 entries per year,⁵¹ for instance, the corresponding *Annali* volume contained a monthly average of just under 50 entries during the year 1570⁵² – they also gave a far greater representation of the entire activity of the state than any chancery volume before them, bringing together the most important entries from the otherwise separate registers of the Senate, College and Council of Ten into a single, easily consultable point of reference.

Those consulting the *Annali* registers would be instantly struck by the carefully arranged thematic and chronological structure in which its entries were transcribed. Whereas the earlier cartularies of the chancery had given little attention to the order of its copies, most likely entered as and when material was made available to the secretary in charge,⁵³ the surviving drafts of this new series illustrate how the *annalisti* listed the order of their records – often dividing them between the foreign courts to which they pertained – in advance of compiling the finished volume.⁵⁴ In part, this was a useful method for bringing order to such a substantial mass of material, but it also meant that the volumes of the *Annali* followed a kind of narrative arc, in which deliberations followed news from abroad and vice versa, and through which individual records served to contextualise each other. As a result, the registers could be said to have an ‘episodic’ structure, focusing on individual incidents as though chapters in a book, in a manner not dissimilar to that for which some of the great historians of the Renaissance have been praised by modern scholarship.⁵⁵ In some cases, this structure was made apparent by the secretaries themselves; the second volume of the *Pandette*, for instance, was divided into ten distinct chapter-like headings relating to specific events in the

⁵⁰ Predelli (ed.), *I libri commemoriali*, vol. 1, p. vii.

⁵¹ ASVe, *Commemoriali*, reg. 23 – figures taken from Predelli’s calendar (*I libri commemoriali*, vol. 11, pp. 271-334).

⁵² This monthly average of 48.75 entries was taken from the register ASVe, *Annali*, 3, covering the year 1570 m.v. In part, this reflected the sheer growth of written correspondences and deliberations within the chancery between the centuries in which the two series were founded (de Vivo, ‘Ordering the Archive’, p. 234). In terms of scope and content, the two series were very much products of their respective centuries; the *Commemoriali* conceived in an age of parchment, the *Annali* in an age of paper.

⁵³ As Predelli’s calendar, which indexes the entries in chronological rather than page order, demonstrates, there was previously little structure to the order in which documents were transcribed.

⁵⁴ The volumes of drafts can be found in ASVe, *Annali*, *Minute e Abbozzi*.

⁵⁵ See for instance Phillips, *Francesco Guicciardini: The Historian’s Craft*, p. 150.

recent diplomatic and military history of the city,⁵⁶ whilst the first volume of the *Annali* compiled after 1571 gave a clear outline of its subject matter towards the end:

Summary of the *Annali* of Venice, beginning with the occurrences between the Republic and the Signory of the Turks concerning the island of Cyprus after the entrance of the Sultan Selim to the [Turkish] Empire in 1566, and then continuing with more universal affairs from 1571, according to the decree of the Most Illustrious Council of Ten 30th November 1571.⁵⁷

Although later volumes of the *Annali* did not employ the same descriptive titles above each section, the indexes compiled at the beginning of each demonstrate that this episodic structure remained an observable pattern, as documents relating particular incidents were often grouped together in distinct blocks. On occasion, the *annalisti* would even act as authors themselves, adding their own comments to provide necessary historical context to their transcripts, such as the diplomatic activities of other princes during their negotiations with the Republic and even the outbreaks of fire and plague which forced the government into new legislation.⁵⁸

As discussed in the previous chapter, the treatises of the *Ars Historica* were beginning to define the historian as one who retrospectively selects and imposes an order upon significant events, rather than record all that happens in succession – a process commonly referred to in modern historiographical theory as ‘emplotment’.⁵⁹ In this respect, although recent scholarship has tended to view the registers as a series of archival ‘chronicles’,⁶⁰ the secretaries responsible for compiling the *Annali* were in fact engaged in a form of historical discipline. This notion was not lost upon the first author of the volumes, Alvise Borghi, who was appointed to the role in August 1552.⁶¹ Author of the first two volumes of this nascent series, Borghi’s choice of title – most likely inspired by the ‘Pandects’ of Roman law compiled under the Emperor Justinian – illustrated that the secretary viewed his task as one of commemorating the recent activity of the Venetian state for posterity.⁶² In particular, Borghi aspired to expand his secretarial activity into a series of

⁵⁶ ASVe, *Collegio, Pandette*, reg. 2 (see Table 3 of the Appendix for an overview of the titles used in each section).

⁵⁷ The date on which Ottobon was appointed to office (ASVe, *Annali*, 3). The role of this volume in contemporary Venetian historiography will be discussed in Chapter 4.3.4.

⁵⁸ See for instance ASVe, *Annali*, 6, f. 135r, 168v, 209r.

⁵⁹ Fulbrook, *Historical Theory*, p. 63; Korhonen, *Tropes for the Past*, p. 13.

⁶⁰ Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, p. 231.

⁶¹ See note 41 above.

⁶² The term was defined by Thomas Blount’s *Glossographia* (1656) as ‘books which contain all matters, or comprehend all parts of the subject, whereof they entreat.’

historical monuments to the Republic, compiling two separate histories of the city based on the material he had been arranging in preparation for the *Pandette*. The first of these, held in the chancery archives as an incomplete draft, ran parallel with the first volume of the series from 1550 to 1553, and was considered by the author to be part of the office bestowed upon him by the Council of Ten.⁶³ The second, which Borghi presented as an ornate manuscript to Doge Francesco Venier in 1554, was a similar history of the years immediately following the end of Pietro Bembo's *Historia Vinitiana* from 1513 to 1516, entitled *Della historia Vinitiana secreta*.⁶⁴ In both, the author had inserted a series of marginal citations to the chancery records upon which his accounts were based, in the same format to that used throughout the registers of the *Segreta* when the secretaries wished to cross reference one entry with another.⁶⁵

Given his new position within the secretary hierarchy, Borghi was thus able to intertwine historical prose with the archival practices of the secret chancery. In a dedicatory preface addressed to Venier, the secretary remarked that it had been his responsibility to construct a narrative of Venice's recent foreign affairs from the raw material of the *Segreta*, so that future historians may use it as the basis of their great works of literature.⁶⁶ As we will see in Chapters Three and Four, the *Annali* and *Pandette* – a fully indexed, episodically structured and comprehensive account of Venetian diplomacy and politics – soon became a primary point of reference for the visiting historian, and played a significant role in shaping the narratives of Venetian historiography in the decades which followed. Nearly eighty-five years after the series was first commissioned, the state historian Paolo Morosini described

⁶³ ASVe, *Annali, Minute e Abbozzi*, reg. 1, ff. 208r, 214r.

⁶⁴ ASVe, MMN, reg. 68. Both of Borghi's manuscripts, initially held in the chancery archives, were copied in a secretary hand at the behest of the Venetian scholar and manuscript collector Giacomo Contarini (whose role in facilitating the historians of the city is discussed further on pp. 133-134 below), and subsequently circulated throughout a series of private collections in the decades following his death (BNM, Cod. It. VI, 53 (5797); BNM, Cod. It. Z, 22a-22b; BMC, Donà 54, Cicogna 1500/23, 2814). Borghi's authorship of the first of these manuscripts, a copy of his incomplete 1550-1553 history, has yet to be recognised in the catalogues of the *Marciana*.

⁶⁵ The citations in Borghi's original manuscripts had not been copied in any of the manuscripts circulating beyond the chancery, where Borghi had wished his work to be consigned (ASVe, MMN, reg. 68, 'Al Serenissimo et Eccellentissimo Signor Francesco Venier Principe di Vinetia humil servo Alvise Borghi', f. 1). As a result, the true significance of his work as an early example of archival scholarship has been overlooked in modern scholarship, which has failed to consult the secretary's autograph writings held at the *Archivio di Stato*, and which has even on occasion accused the author of plagiarising the works of others, neglecting the documentary origins of his account (Gar (ed.), 'Storia Veneziana, dall'anno 1512 al 1515', pp. xi-xiii). Borghi's recent entry in the DBI disputes this claim solely on the basis that the secretary would not have dared to present a plagiarised work to the Doge himself (Giovanni Pillini, 'Borghi, Luigi', DBI, vol. 12 [1971]).

⁶⁶ Borghi outlined this in a preface to his 1554 *Della historia Vinitiana secreta* (ASVe, MMN, reg. 68, ff. 2-4).

the volumes as ‘the very soul of the *Segreta*’,⁶⁷ and the series would continue to serve as an intelligible narrative of Venetian affairs until the early decades of the eighteenth century.⁶⁸

2.4: Fire, reconstruction and an archival system under the direction of the state historians

As well as serving as a reference tool for visiting historians, the creation of the *Annali* as a historical artefact amongst the registers of the chancery helped to better define the threshold between document and monument within the state records. During the second half of the sixteenth century, there were emerging signs that a similar threshold was beginning to be set elsewhere. In June 1570, for instance, the Heads of the Ten ordered that the records previously scattered across the rooms surrounding their offices be divided along strict chronological parameters and locked away accordingly:

The codices which serve up to 1520 are to be taken to the higher cupboards [of their offices] alongside the *libri secreti*, the files up to 1565 are to be placed in the attic with the rest, and those codices and files which remain are to be placed in the cupboard below.⁶⁹

This ‘accession’ of documents after a certain age was also reflected in the parameters set for the state historians during this time, as discussed in Chapter Three, in which records were deemed unsuitable for scholarly use during the first five to seven years of their creation.⁷⁰

Despite these minor reforms, the physical threshold between contemporary and historical records within the *Segreta* collection itself remained relatively blurred. As well as the dispersal of papers beyond the walls of the *Cancellaria Superiore*, the continuity of the Republic itself meant that a distinct boundry between ancient and contemporary was singularly difficult to identify.⁷¹ In the case of Venice, however, the chancery systems of the Ducal Palace were to undergo their first significant rupture since their establishment in the thirteenth century, which facilitated a complete overhaul of its archival depositories. Unlike in cases such as Florence or Spain, where similar ruptures had been precipitated by major political and bureaucratic upheaval,⁷² the Venetian archives were subject to physical

⁶⁷ ASVe, CX Sec., b. 40 (26 February 1634 m.v.).

⁶⁸ The fate of this series beyond the period discussed in this thesis is addressed on p. 199 below.

⁶⁹ ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 28, f. 45 (20 June 1570); Lorenzi, *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo Ducale*, pp. 366-367.

⁷⁰ This policy is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.3.2.

⁷¹ As discussed on pp. 19-20 of the Introduction.

⁷² As discussed in a forthcoming article by Andrea Guidi, ‘The Florentine Archives in Transition’; see also Kagan, *Clio and the Crown*, p. 97.

catastrophe, as on 11 May 1574 and again on 20 December 1577, two substantial fires struck the Ducal Palace, gutting much of its interior structure. Although neither fully engulfed the main hall of the *Cancelleria Superiore* itself, the first was said to have reached its attics, wherein all the cupboards and chests of records were destroyed,⁷³ whilst the second scaled the length of the Palace and destroyed large parts of the notary records held in the lower floors.⁷⁴ According to contemporary accounts, much of the contents of the *Segreta* collection deposited around the *Superiore* were evacuated by patricians, secretaries and citizens alike on both occasions, and transferred to both private properties and other public buildings in the Piazza.⁷⁵

The loss of records from the *Segreta* collection was thus not as substantial as that which had occurred in the fires of previous centuries, which had purportedly erased significant portions of the Republic's documentary past,⁷⁶ although secretaries did note in the aftermath that there was a dearth of papers to transcribe from the early 1570s as a result.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, the near destruction of their collections, 'a dramatic chapter in the history of the *Segreta*' as Baschet described it,⁷⁸ prompted the Venetian government to reconsider how records should be preserved after their use. In 1584, having demanded the return of any salvaged papers kept in private residences under pain of death,⁷⁹ the College decided that the previous storage rooms surrounding the *Cancelleria Superiore*, situated at the centre of the Palace above the main atrium, were too far detached from the chambers of the councils who created their content. Moreover, they were largely inadequate for the long term preservation of records, which often spilled over into other rooms, especially given 'the risk of loss which occurs in the occasion of fire, as has happened in recent times.'⁸⁰

As part of the wider reconstruction of the Palace, the government thus took the opportunity to redesign the depositories for the *Segreta* collection, commissioning three *Proveditori* in 1584 for the building of the Palace to find a suitable location. The three

⁷³ Cadorin, *Pareri di 15 architetti e notizie storiche intorno al palazzo ducale*, pp. 169-173.

⁷⁴ ASVe, *Collegio, Cerimoniali, Registri*, 1, f. 64v; Lorenzi, *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo Ducale*, pp. 413-415.

⁷⁵ These locations included the base of the *campanile*, the Ducal apartments and sacristy of San Marco, and in 1574 the house of a Procurator of Saint Mark resident in the Piazza, Giovanni da Leze (BNM, Cod. It VII, 553, 'Memorie di Francesco Molin (1558-1598)', f. 53; Baschet, *Les archives de Venise*, p. 162). Particular praise was given to the Grand Chancellor Andrea Frizier, who refused to vacate his office at the foot of the staircase leading to the chancery until all the records in his care were extracted and safely ensconced in his home (ASVe, *Collegio, Cerimoniali, Registri*, 1, f. 64v).

⁷⁶ Pozza, 'La cancelleria', pp. 363-364.

⁷⁷ ASVe, *Annali*, reg. 5, f. 322v.

⁷⁸ Baschet, *Les archives de Venise*, p. 161.

⁷⁹ Franzoi, *Itinerari segreti nel Palazzo Ducale di Venezia*, p. 79.

⁸⁰ Lorenzi, *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo Ducale*, p. 491.

Proveditori – amongst them the current state historian Paolo Paruta⁸¹ – initially recommended a series of small rooms above the College chamber, which formed part of the Ducal chapel adjacent to the Basilica. Three years later, the Senate set aside two thousand ducats to furnish these chapel rooms ready for the ‘custodia’ of the secret records, and after receiving a structural survey of the rooms in 1587 from the architect Antonio da Ponte, expanded their plans to include a former cloakroom for the sacristy of that chapel.⁸² Having been furnished with the necessary cupboards, doors and locks,⁸³ the new *Segreta* depository was deemed ready to house the *Segreta* collection in 1588.⁸⁴

Unfortunately, few records remain of the process by which the newly constructed chamber was filled with the contents of the *Segreta* collection over the following months and years, although it is likely that the records were transported in a series of portable containers which the Ten had commissioned as a temporary storage measure after the fire.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the physical separation of the *Segreta* depository from the main hall of the *Cancelleria Superiore* – which continued to house much of the secretarial activity of the Palace⁸⁶ – marked a significant change in the accession and storage archival management of the state records. For one, the furniture within the new chamber was intended to be more permanent than the chests which had previously housed the collection, and established a more physical distinction between the contemporary activity of the chancery and the preservation of its contents. In contrast to the *Superiore*, where tables and cupboards sat amongst each other in the main hall, the chamber itself was divided by a mezzanine vault, which separated the storage units from view and distinguished the depository from the workspace of its staff and visitors.⁸⁷ Further attempts to ensure the architectural durability of the depository were taken in 1602, when the *Proveditori* were commissioned to secure all of the ovens operating in the vicinity of the *Segreta* against any future fire hazard,⁸⁸ and again in 1631, when the wooden staircase between the two vaults was replaced with stone.⁸⁹ In

⁸¹ Paruta’s proximity to the reconstruction of the *Segreta* is discussed on pp. 100-101 below. The other two *Proveditori* were Francesco Foscarini and Zuanne Moro.

⁸² Lorenzi, *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo Ducale*, pp. 495, 503.

⁸³ Unfortunately, little is known of the interior design of the newly constructed *Segreta* chamber, but the few physical details which remain are discussed on pp. 104-105 below.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 506-507, 509 – a floorplan of the new archival structure in the Palace can be seen in Figure 9 of the Appendix.

⁸⁵ As discussed on p. 100 below.

⁸⁶ This is the only section of the Palace’s chancery rooms to have maintained its structure and furniture to this day, and can be seen in Salmi, ‘Buildings, Furnishings, Access and Use’, p. 96.

⁸⁷ The original proposal by the three *proveditori* in 1583 recommended the chapel rooms on the grounds that this division already existed (Lorenzi, *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo Ducale*, p. 491), whilst in 1586 an itemised plan for the construction of the new *Segreta* by the architect Antonio da Ponte included the erection of an additional floor level twelve feet above the existing structure for the same purpose (*Ibid.*, p. 504).

⁸⁸ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 52, f. 56r (12 June 1602).

⁸⁹ ASVe, Sen. Ter., reg. 104, f. 531v (8 January 1630 m.v.).

addition, the maintenance and security of the depository was entrusted to a small group of specialised secretaries of the Senate, who compiled the principal register series of the collection from the *filze* as they arrived into the chamber.⁹⁰ The doors of the new *Segreta* chamber, therefore, constituted one of the most clearly defined archival ‘thresholds’ in the chancery system since its medieval origins.

The creation of a fixed depository in the former Ducal sacristy, a structure which was noted by da Ponte as having walls strong enough to hold the expected influx of material and furniture and to ensure ‘the conservation and security of our secret records’,⁹¹ precipitated a long process of collation and unification amongst the previously disparate political and diplomatic records of the Palace. In 1599, for instance, the Council of Ten deliberated on the state of its current record-keeping practices:

Due to the lack of space, various books, papers and boxes of records have been placed in the attic under the prisons and above the rooms of this Council, as well as many in a handful of cupboards, and many others in loose piles. [These were] confusingly placed around the time of the Palace fires, and due to the humidity are deteriorating more every day.⁹²

In response, two patricians were elected to oversee the reorganisation and cataloguing of its miscellaneous files, including the contents of the *Cassa Bianca*, to be replaced within a series of cupboards inscribed with the dates and subject of each.⁹³ Deeming their offices insufficient to house this new furniture in the long term, the two overseers were charged with finding a suitable room nearby for that purpose.⁹⁴ As part of this new archival project, the Council of Ten also began to transfer more relevant material into the *Segreta* itself, as jurisdiction over the consignment of incoming records was delegated to the Grand Chancellor and secretaries of the Senate.⁹⁵ In 1628, it decreed that the custodians of the records retrieved from the attics should identify and separate those ‘of major importance, in

⁹⁰ See p. 111 below.

⁹¹ Franzoi, *Itinerari segreti nel Palazzo Ducale di Venezia*, p. 80.

⁹² ‘Per mancamento di luogo sono stati più volte posti nella soffitta sotto li Piombi, sopra le sale di questo Consiglio diversi libri, carti, et Casselle di scritture, dove anco se ne trovano molte in alcuni amari, et molte altre in terza in monte porte confusamente in tempo dei fuoghi del Palazzo, le quali per la humidità si vanno anco ammarcendo ogni giorno più’ (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 14, f. 34v, 15 March 1599).

⁹³ The names of the two elected overseers were not recorded, although in 1605 Alessandro Zorzi and Gian Giacomo Zane were elected to review and create inventories for the finished project, the latter of which was to work with Nicolò Contarini on the creation of new finding aids for the Ten’s archive, as we will see in Chapter Six. In February 1606, it was decided that the nominees should be restricted from holding any other office for two years until the task was completed (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 14, ff. 130v–131r).

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 34v.

⁹⁵ Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, vol. VI, pp. 134-136 (‘1596, 29 Luglio in Consilio X’).

authentic form, which deserve to be kept under singular secrecy and security,' and ensure that they were transcribed into the *Commemoriali*.⁹⁶ One year later, it was also decreed that any relevant papers surrendered by returning diplomats should be similarly copied into the *Commemoriali* before being locked away elsewhere,⁹⁷ whilst in 1631, the Grand Chancellor was commissioned to review all the files of the city's various chanceries over ten years old and consign them to the *Segreta* for storage and registering.⁹⁸

Although the original copies of various records remained within the collections of both the Grand Chancellor and the Ten, such measures were intended so that the *Segreta* depository was the principal point of reference for the political and diplomatic material of the state. This was indicated by the wording of the Council of Ten decree in 1628, which stated that the criterion for selecting material to be relocated or transcribed into the *Segreta* was that from them 'that which is to be followed in future times can be better understood.'⁹⁹ As examined in the following chapter, this was also signified by an attempt to create a single series of indexes to incorporate the historical material of the Republic as a whole, the so-called *Indice Generale della Segreta*.¹⁰⁰ The emergence of the new *Segreta* chamber as a unified depository, with its registers and indexes serving as a more comprehensive reference point for information on the Republic's past, was particularly evident in the decision taken in 1601 to appoint the state historian Andrea Morosini as 'superintendent' of the secret chancery (*sopraintendente della Segreta*), a fully salaried office which was subsequently held by the majority of the historiographers to follow.¹⁰¹ Following on from Paruta's involvement in the reconstruction of the chancery archive two decades earlier, the appointment of the state historians as *sopraintendenti* of the secret chancery archive meant that they were now officially charged with overseeing the production of new registers and cartularies by the secretaries of the Senate, and with producing regular reports on the state of the reconstructed collection.¹⁰² With the records now finally housed together in a permanent location, the purpose of the superintendent was to identify any gaps in the collection, especially in the register series of decades past, and have them retrospectively compiled by their secretaries, thus completing the collection as a consultable archive. In 1619, for

⁹⁶ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 18, f. 94r. The originals were to be locked in a chest under the custody of the Grand Chancellor.

⁹⁷ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 18, ff. 97v-98r (28 May 1629).

⁹⁸ BMC, Gradenigo 192, f. 201r ('1631 6 Settembre in Pregadi').

⁹⁹ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 18, f. 94r.

¹⁰⁰ See p. 107 below.

¹⁰¹ A full list of the *sopraintendenti* during this period is provided in Appendix Table 5, whilst the exact terms and responsibilities of the post are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.4.

¹⁰² This was to be distinguished from the staff management carried out by the Grand Chancellor and the *reggente* of the chancery, who were more generally concerned with the appointment, delegation and payment of secretaries throughout the Palace, as well as recording their daily attendance (Zannini, *Burocrazia e burocrati a Venezia*, p. 125).

instance, the superintendent Nicolò Contarini was tasked with overseeing a project to identify and burn any records which existed in duplicate, in order to create a single, coherent series of bound registers and files.¹⁰³

During the early decades of the reconstructed and historian-led *Segreta* depository, the process of indexing and preserving the collection began to look increasingly backwards in time. In 1612, for instance, it was noted that the records of the *Segreta* contained ambassadorial dispatches which had not been catalogued for up to seventy-five years, and that the ever-increasing consignment of diplomatic records would soon render this collection of older records inaccessible. As well as establishing a new series of *rubriche* for the indexing of new material, therefore, the Ten absolved two of the secretaries of the Senate from all other obligations in the chancery until they had catalogued every ambassadorial letter in the *Segreta*.¹⁰⁴ In 1626, Contarini went back even further when he reported to the Council of Ten that the oldest registers of the chancery, including the *Commemoriali*, *Liber Pactorum*, and deliberations of the Great Council, were corroding beyond the point of reasonable use. These registers, claimed Contarini, held a unique historical value, and needed to be preserved ‘for perpetual memory’:

These books, which we are attempting to return to the light, and remove from the darkness in which they have been buried, contain much of the great pre-eminence of the Republic: many testaments of Popes, Emperors and other Princes, the egregious deeds of our predecessors, many deliberations of great importance made by the Councils, the jurisdictions bequeathed by the Papacy and the many privileges which the Most Serene Dominion holds in various countries and cities. And yet these innumerable, precious things have been subsumed into oblivion.¹⁰⁵

As a result, the Ten commissioned a small team of secretaries, with a requisite experience in reading and transcribing the Latin palaeography used in these registers, to produce a new series of copies in order to preserve the memory of their records.¹⁰⁶ Seven years later, this

¹⁰³ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 69, ff. 100v-101r (29 July 1619), 113v (20 August 1619).

¹⁰⁴ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 15, ff. 72v-73r.

¹⁰⁵ ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 5, 3 December 1626.

¹⁰⁶ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 76, f. 227v (14 October) 1626. The first two secretaries appointed to the project were Alvisè Zancaruol and Zorzi Porro, who was replaced by the *cittadino*, Latinist and man of ‘buonissimo carattere di scrivere’, Antonio Balanzan after his death in 1630 (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 79, f. 232v, 13 February 1629 m.v.). Evidence of their work, in the form of four (now damaged) registers of transcriptions attributed to Zancaruol and Porro, can be found in ASVe, MADM, b. 124.

transcription project was expanded under Contarini's successor, Girolamo Corner, in order to preserve a far greater array of ancient chancery registers for posterity.¹⁰⁷

As the newly housed collection of political and diplomatic records which formed the *Cancellaria Segreta* began to develop as a better indexed, preserved and unified depository for the records of state, the singular term *archivio* – a phrase which had already appeared several times within the sixteenth-century scholarly discourse concerning the collection¹⁰⁸ – began to emerge as an administrative term for the chancery alongside the more traditional references to the collective *scritture*. Perhaps tellingly, this largely coincided with the introduction of the state historians into administrative parlance; in 1602, for instance, Andrea Morosini made one of the first references to the 'importance of this archive (*Archivio*)' in an early report to the Ten.¹⁰⁹ A few decades later, this was mirrored by the Council itself, in a decree responding to another report by the superintendent Giacomo Marcello with plans to reorder the 'precious archive' (*pretioso Archivio*) under his care,¹¹⁰ whilst in 1651 the superintendent Battista Nani described the collection as 'an archive so precious that one may call it the Treasure of Government.'¹¹¹ In addition, the value of the collection as an historical artefact was also emerging beyond the walls of the chancery itself; in Fulgenzio Micanzio's famous praise of the archival research carried out by legal consultant and historian Paolo Sarpi,¹¹² the author extends his praise to the collection itself:

In these *secrete*, alongside the *publiche ragoni* of the whole state, the fundamental laws of the city, the treatises of war and peace, truces, allegiances, and all that which can relate to such a grand state, there are also all the major dealings of the whole of Europe, spanning many hundreds of years – the vicissitudes, conflicts and relations of all of Christendom [...] in ancient books and letters of centuries past [...] And if two great fires hadn't robbed us of part of this treasure, I dare say that this [collection] would be one of the most valuable things in the world.¹¹³

¹⁰⁷ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 83, f. 92v (13 June 1633).

¹⁰⁸ See for instance the writings of Agostino Valier and Girolamo Bardi discussed in Chapters 1.3 and 1.5.

¹⁰⁹ Morosini's report is quoted in Reumont, *Della diplomazia Italiana*, p. 332.

¹¹⁰ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, f. 56r (23 February 1638 m.v.).

¹¹¹ ASVe, CX Sec., b. 44 (4 August 1651).

¹¹² Such that, as has been frequently quoted in recent historiography, 'his mind mirrored the *Segreta* itself' (de Vivo, *Information and Communication*, p. 53).

¹¹³ Fulgenzio Micanzio, 'Vita del padre Paolo,' in Vivanti (ed.), *Paolo Sarpi. Istoria del concilio trentino*, p. 1375.

In 1636, the superintendents Paolo Morosini and Giacomo Marcello attempted to distinguish the *Segreta* depository even further from the rest of the contemporary chancery, suggesting that a proportion of the less significant governmental files be transferred to the ‘Cancellaria ordinaria’ on the floor above. In addition, the two proposed that the production and copying of contemporary documents should be carried out in another room of the Palace altogether, which Morosini himself had located.¹¹⁴ Tucked away in a small corner of the Palace, the former Ducal sacristy had thus fully emerged as the historical archive of the *Cancellaria Segreta* during the early decades of the seventeenth century, both physically and conceptually isolated from the contemporary activity of the Venetian chancery. As we will see in Chapters Four and Five, this physical reconstruction, and the shifting perceptions of the collection which it precipitated, was to have a significant impact on its use by the state historians now responsible for its maintenance.

2.5: ‘Kept within their chests for the benefit and clarity of the histories of Venice’ – Fortunato Olmo re-archives the Republic’s distant past

As a reference guide for the politics and diplomacy of medieval Venice, the seventeenth-century restoration of chancery registers such as the *Liber Pactorum* and *Commemoriali* marked a significant step in the archival preservation of past government records. However, although the copies of these codices in a more recognisable and contemporary secretary hand had provided a useful point of reference for the ancient documentation of the chancery, the original records upon which the early cartularies had been based – whose physical and palaeographic ‘authenticity’ remained a fundamental aspect of their perceived usefulness as a historical source¹¹⁵ – had only survived in small numbers. Visitors to the modern *Archivio di Stato* today will note that the few surviving examples of these original documents are largely consigned to a small series of miscellanea, which have been reassembled from various private collections in the years following the Napoleonic seizure of the Ducal Palace.¹¹⁶ A similar scenario would likely have faced early modern visitors to the secret chancery, due to the fact that the most important records of the medieval Republic –

¹¹⁴ ASVe, CX Sec., b. 40 (14 April 1636).

¹¹⁵ As discussed in Chapter 1.2. This issue of ‘authenticity’ in copied records has parallels to an emerging debate in modern archival literature, concerning the development of digital transcription and storage technologies which render the archival document more accessible and better preserve its text, but potentially compromise its status as a physical artefact of the period in which it was created (Koltun, ‘The Promise and Threat of Digital Options in an Archival Age’; Brodie, ‘Authenticity, Preservation and Access in Digital Collections’; Vajcner, ‘The Importance of Context for Digitized Archival Collections’).

¹¹⁶ These miscellanea include: ASVe, *Miscellanea atti diplomatici e privati*; *Miscellanea atti diversi manoscritti (MADM)*; *Miscellanea ducali e atti diplomatici*.

including contracts, treatises and diplomatic correspondences – had been consigned to the treasuries of the adjacent Basilica of Saint Mark after they had been copied into the relevant chancery registers.¹¹⁷ Despite the opening and unification of the secret chancery chamber over the turn of the seventeenth century, a significant portion of the city’s cultural heritage thus remained beyond the confines of the city’s emerging historical archive.

In August 1632, however, the Procurators of Saint Mark, the body of patricians responsible for the administration of the Basilica, made an important deliberation concerning the state of the ancient state records in their custody:

There have been found in the room numerous and diverse records, in boxes and chests, which are in a state of confusion and decay. They are to be transported to a more suitable location, so that they may be repaired and organised according to their contents, in matters both public and private.¹¹⁸

The Procurators’ jurisdiction over certain state records had been established in a Senate decree from March 1383, in which it was decided that all ‘authentic’ copies of the treatises, contracts or other privileges arriving at the Palace were to be kept under lock and key in the Basilica once they had been transcribed into the registers of the *Cancellaria*.¹¹⁹ Although it is unclear whether this practice continued after the creation of the *Segreta* itself, by the seventeenth century the Procurators had amassed a considerable body of papers which, according to their deliberation of 1632, were being stored in a small room above the main corridor of the Basilica.

Although no explanation was given for the decision to initiate a project to reverse the disorder in the Basilica at this particular time, one possible factor was the election of Girolamo Corner to the office of Procurator around this time. At the time of the deliberation, Corner was also the superintendent of the secret chancery, and thus in a position to expand the various projects of archival reform then underway in the Palace to include the adjacent depositories in the church. His decision to restore, reorganise and index this ancient and decaying collection into a more manageable archival series required the services of an ‘apt, faithful and sufficient person’, for which the Procurators called upon the renowned scholar and Benedictine monk Fortunato Olmo.¹²⁰ Having joined the monastery of San Giorgio Maggiore in 1595 at the age of twenty-eight, Olmo’s reputation as a scholar in Greek, Latin

¹¹⁷ Salmini, ‘Buildings, Furnishings, Access and Use,’ p. 93.

¹¹⁸ ASVe, Proc. Sup., reg. 143, f. 54v (16 August 1632).

¹¹⁹ ASVe, *Senato, Deliberazioni, Misti*, reg. 38, f. 14r (27 March 1383).

¹²⁰ Olmo’s appointment was not recorded in the original deliberation, but in a list of salaries and expenses recorded a few years later (ASVe, Proc. Sup., reg. 143, f. 132r, 24 February 1635 m.v.).

and theology saw him appointed as the master of the novices in 1615,¹²¹ whilst his numerous erudite writings had attracted the patronage and support of a series of prominent political figures within the Republic.¹²² As attested by his own autobiographical remarks, the historian was brought into the chancery as a legal consultant during the 1620s to conduct research into the city's territorial disputes with the Duchy of Ferrara,¹²³ where there is also evidence to suggest that he worked alongside Nicolò Contarini in the superintendent's project to transcribe the ancient registers of the Republic.¹²⁴ Alongside his appointment by the Procurators, he was chosen by the Senate in 1634 to review and catalogue the Petrarchan manuscripts held by the Republic.¹²⁵ Towards the end of his life, as we will see in Chapter Five, Olmo made a significant scholarly contribution to the historical debates concerning Venice's former maritime empire, and compiled copious studies of the religious life of the city.¹²⁶

Perhaps the most widely recognised of Olmo's contributions to the chancery practices of the Republic was a 1643 treatise on the art of archival management, the *Direttorio et arte per intendere le pubbliche scritture*.¹²⁷ Yet it was his work within the attics of the Basilica, somewhat less appreciated in recent historiography,¹²⁸ which best illustrate the changing perspective of state records as an 'archive,' a place of learning and a site of cultural heritage. Olmo outlined the progress of his work restoring, reorganising and cataloguing the ancient records of the Basilica in three reports submitted to the Procurators in December 1640,¹²⁹ February 1641,¹³⁰ and January 1643,¹³¹ alongside another addressed to

¹²¹ Baldan, 'La storia del monastero di S. Giorgio Maggiore', p. 352.

¹²² In 1632 Olmo personally requested the patrician and patron of Baldassare Bonifacio, Domenico Molin, to edit and review a manuscript history which he had submitted to the Council of Ten (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 18, f. 150r), whilst there is also evidence to suggest that he had been commissioned to conduct research into the Molin family history amongst the records of the Republic (BNM, Cod. Lat. XIV, 37). In 1630, Olmo wrote a short work in praise of the patricians Nicolò Barberigo and Marco Trevisan (Baldan, 'La storia del monastero di S. Giorgio Maggiore', p. 353).

¹²³ ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9, 'Commissione di Henrico Dandolo Doge di Venetia data a' doi Ambasciatori, mandati ad Alessio Angelo, Imperatore di Costantinopoli nel 1200', f. 7, and ASVe, *Consultori in Jure*, reg. 543, f. 717.

¹²⁴ Evidence of Olmo's handwriting in a list of registers yet to be transcribed can be seen in ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 5.

¹²⁵ Baldan, 'La storia del monastero di S. Giorgio Maggiore', pp. 352-353.

¹²⁶ See Chapter 5.2.4.

¹²⁷ Although this treatise has been cited alongside the work of Bonifacio and Barisoni as part of the early modern emergence of European archival science (d'Addario, 'Origini e sviluppo della dottrina archivistica', pp. 9-10; Angelucci, *Breve storia degli archivi e dell'archivistica*, pp. 65-70), the text itself has yet to be studied in full (the only full quotation of its title page was given by Leopold Sandri in his article 'Nicolò Giussani e il suo 'Methodus Archivorum Seu Modus Eadem Texendi Ac Disponendi,' pp. 330-331), whilst the original manuscript is now purportedly no longer retrievable within its last known location in the ASVe.

¹²⁸ A brief overview of his commission is given by Salmi, 'Buildings, Furnishings, Access and Use,' p. 106.

¹²⁹ BNM, Cod. It VII, 374 (7781), ff. 2r-15v ('Relatione del Registro delle scritture tutte in Camerone di Chiesa di S Marco – 1640 Decembre').

the Heads of the Council of Ten later that year.¹³² Within them, Olmo spoke of the crippling disarray and deterioration of these papers before his arrival:

I had initially thought only to remove those documents which I had seen from the dust and the dirt in which they had been buried, but instead I found a further great number of texts (which I had never seen before), corroded and malformed from the rain and other misfortunes, left to rot in the stench of the room. Such was their number that my efforts alone were not enough to recover them; rags were needed to clean them off, but even this was impossible to do completely ... two boats would not have been enough to take away the filth.¹³³

Elsewhere, Olmo spoke of finding chests and cupboards for which the keys had been lost, and instead the locks forcibly opened and rendered useless,¹³⁴ of ‘hundreds of texts [...] stolen by thieves through the open window of the chamber’,¹³⁵ and of having to employ extra cleaning equipment and staff in order to clean and repair the papers and their furniture, taking personal custody of the ancient manuscripts whilst this was underway.¹³⁶ In response, Olmo was highly critical of the mistreatment and neglect displayed by the Procurators themselves, stating that ‘the custody [of these documents] was not laid down by your predecessors so that they may be hidden in this chamber to fall into disuse, but that they would be kept secure as though in a holy place, so that not one of them would be lost in any way.’¹³⁷

In order to determine which of the records were most worthy of preservation, Olmo divided the principal contents of the collection into three distinct categories: those records which concerned the administration of the Basilica and the jurisdiction of the Procurators,

¹³⁰ ASVe, IS, b. 927 (1 February 1640 m.v.).

¹³¹ Ibid. (7 January 1642 m.v.).

¹³² Ibid. (22 June 1643).

¹³³ ‘Io pensavo d’haver solo a liberar quelle, che io vedevo, dalla polvere, e dall’immonditie, che le tenevano in gran parte sepolte. Trovai ancora (quel ch’io non havevo osservato da principio) altro maggior numero di esse scritture guaste, e mal condotte dalla pioggia, e da altri accidenti in maniera, et parevano impetrate nel lezzo; cosi che non bastò l’opera mia nello rivoltarle, che bisognò adoperai gli straccij, e gli scouoli per nettarle; il che anco fu impossibile di conseguir perfettamente ... due barche non bastarono a portare vie le immoditie’ (Ibid., 7 January 1642 m.v.).

¹³⁴ BNM, Cod. It VII, 374, f. 6r.

¹³⁵ ASVe, IS, b. 927 (22 June 1643).

¹³⁶ ‘Nelli quali tutte fatture de Mastri, quando si lavorò, fu necessario ogni intiero giorno, ch’io fossi assistente per la buona guardia delle scritture, mai da me abandonata, e col mio divoto buon zelo, come dovevo, custodite’ (BNM, Cod. It VII, 374, f. 4r). See also: ASVe, Proc. Sup., reg. 143, f. 132r (24 February 1635 m.v.).

¹³⁷ ‘Le qual tutela non fu intimate già da suoi predecessori, che in questa gran camera di chiesa fossero riposte per disusele: ma che fossero qua assicurare come in un sacrario, acciò in modo alcuno non penesse pur uno d’esse’ (ASVe, IS, b. 927, 1 February 1640 m.v.).

those which concerned the political and financial interests of Venetian families and individuals, and finally those which concerned the public interest and the history of the state.¹³⁸ This was not a straightforward task, as a combination of physical decay, illegible scripts and a lack of comprehensible dating meant that many were almost impossible to identify.¹³⁹ Having appraised those records deemed worthy of constituting a new Basilica archive, whilst consigning the rest to the flames,¹⁴⁰ Olmo explained not only that the Venetian government had been deprived of numerous property rights and contracts thanks to their previous mismanagement,¹⁴¹ but that a vast body of important historical information had been isolated and lost amongst the deluge.¹⁴² A keen student of Venetian history, who had already been using the records of the chancery as a means of revising and clarifying the narratives of the city's past affairs,¹⁴³ Olmo was particularly well equipped to identify those records which pertained to particularly important incidents or figures, especially those concerning its diplomacy and foreign affairs, of which he drafted several inventories over the course of his restoration work.¹⁴⁴ As he explained in 1640: 'I have been able to decipher those more obscure writings through the advice of the histories, and have assigned to some of them the dates which they were lacking.'¹⁴⁵

Olmo's dismay at the previous state of this collection, which he claimed was 'to be deplored for all eternity',¹⁴⁶ was primarily driven by the amount of historical information which had hitherto remained unrecorded within Venetian historiography as a result of its inaccessibility. In order to demonstrate the extent of the historical treasure which he had unearthed, Olmo scoured the archive of the secret chancery to identify where this previous

¹³⁸ BNM, Cod. It VII, 374, f. 2r.

¹³⁹ 'Non è possibile comprendere i sudori, et gli stenti nel legger, et registrar quelle scritture per la maggiore parte difficili ad intendersi; et maneggiarsi; massime stando la confusion, in che lo ritrovai, et la inesperienza, per non dir ignoranza, che mi rendeva nuovo ad'ogni benche minima attione' (ASVe, IS, b. 927, 7 January 1642 m.v.).

¹⁴⁰ 'Il che basti quanto alle scritture d'importanza, perche se in questo mentre in tra anco in infinito numero di altre scritture disutilissime, le ho tutte diligentemente considerate, et mandate al fuoco' (Ibid., 1 February 1640 m.v.).

¹⁴¹ 'Non a me toccando il sapere, ciò che sia delle scritture del Reverendo protonotario Girolamo Barbo, quanto alle case di Murano, mai godute dalla procuratia, conciosia nondimeno, che tanto nell'autentica di lui donatione, e testamento in camera, quanto che nel catastico in procuratia si vede, che donò alcune case di Murano alla chiesa di San Marco. Ne a me tocca il procurator il possesso delle case, ma Regular, et inventariar le scritture della camera di chiesa, officio a me commesso' (Ibid., 1 February 1640 m.v.).

¹⁴² BNM, Cod. It VII, 374, f. 8r.

¹⁴³ Olmo's interest in revisiting the history of the city through the records of the chancery is evident, for instance, in a fifteenth-century manuscript chronicle, the *Cronaca Zancaruola*, whose details had been corrected by the Benedictine in a series of marginal notes (BMN, Cicogna 592, ff. 14v, 64v, 68r, 71r).

¹⁴⁴ Copies of which can be found in: ASVe, IS, b. 927, and BNM, Cod. It VII, 374, ff. 19-43.

¹⁴⁵ 'Le quali scritture quando sono oscure, vengono da me esplicate coll'aviso dell'histoire, et assignategli quei tempi, di quali alcune sono manchevoli' (Ibid., ff. 8r-8v).

¹⁴⁶ ASVe, IS, b. 927 (7 January 1642 m.v.).

mismanagement had left significant gaps in the city's documented past. 'And who will not be amazed', he noted, 'that the records and treaties of Domenico Michiele, glorious Doge, who in 1132 shattered the Saracen army in the Holy Land, are not available to us in the chancery, and that it was necessary instead to send me copies of the text of William of Tyre to be informed on this matter.'¹⁴⁷ Elsewhere, Olmo had uncovered Papal briefs which had remained unexamined by even the most recent historians of the Republic,¹⁴⁸ as well as numerous other writings 'with curious notices for the history of Venice regarding the wars in Romania, Istria, Trieste [...] and the various cities of Dalmatia.'¹⁴⁹

Perhaps most significantly, however, Olmo uncovered a series of correspondences from Doge Enrico Dandolo, one of the principal leaders of the Fourth Crusade and the capture of Constantinople in 1204, which was to have profound implications for the historical understanding of the conflict. As Olmo himself stated, the documents were 'full of a number of highly important statements with respect to our relationship with the Emperors of Greece, the knowledge of which would be of great benefit for the clarity of the histories of Venice, as I have illustrated with diligent annotations.'¹⁵⁰ The precise scholarly implications of Olmo's discoveries will be examined in detail in Chapter 5.2.4, yet they also illustrate the Benedictine's principal interest amongst the newly salvaged records of state. By emphasising what could be learned from the collection, rather than simply used as a tool of government, Olmo thus presented the Basilica archive as a site of cultural and historical significance; through which could be understood 'countless curious things worthy of eternal memory,'¹⁵¹ and which had the potential to be 'one of the most precious archives in the city' once restored.¹⁵²

In order to bring this historical collection to order, Olmo's reports offered a series of suggestions to the Procurators concerning its future management, which reflected many of the emerging archival theories discussed in the previous chapter. The Benedictine's work, he noted, had been deemed irrelevant by some because the government had already kept registers of the documents he had been recovering. Not only had his research in the chancery

¹⁴⁷ 'E chi non si maraviglierà che la scrittura de patti di Domenico Michiele, glorioso Doge, che nel 1132 fracastò al suo animo in Terra Santa l'armata saracena: non era presso noi in Cancellaria; e che ci era necessario mandarme la copia dalla stampa di Guglielmo Archivescovo di Tiro l'istesso accade di tant'altre d'importantissimo delle quali non vi è ne copia ne notitia in detta Cancellaria' (BNM, Cod. It VII, 374, f. 8v).

¹⁴⁸ BNM, Cod. It VII, 374, f. 10v.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 8v.

¹⁵⁰ 'Pregna di molti capi importantissimi spettanti a negotij con gli Greci Imperatori, di cognitione molto giovevole per la chiarezza delle Venete historie: da me con diligentissime annotatione illustrata' (ASVe, IS, b. 927, 22 June 1643).

¹⁵¹ BNM, Cod. It VII, 374, f. 14r.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, f. 3v.

shown this to be demonstrably untrue,¹⁵³ he argued, but the authority of the archive itself could not depend solely on transcriptions if the ‘authentic’ originals had been allowed to decay. These originals, he continued, were ‘the body’ of the archive, whilst ‘the registers are merely the shadow; every good archive has both the *scritture* in the bags, and the registers on the tables; the latter for ease of use, the former as their foundation.’¹⁵⁴ Echoing the comments of Patrizi, Bonifacio and Barisoni discussed in the previous chapter, Olmo instructed the Procurators to set up their own organised chancery system, into which the authentic memories of the past which he had recovered could be preserved for posterity, and thus ‘bestow eternal memory upon that which has been ordered here, and which will be of use in the future.’¹⁵⁵

Towards the end of his life, however, Olmo had grown increasingly sceptical of the Procurators as future custodians of this most precious collection. Despite the initial assurances of financial and technical support from the immense wealth and resources of the Procurators, Olmo had failed to receive any of his salary by the time he had come to compile his reports, which often ended with a plea to his employers to reinvest in his project, hitherto neglected ‘under the false pretences that it concerned documents of no worth or gain, and that it was not the least bit necessary.’¹⁵⁶ Instead, Olmo’s work within the Basilica had become something of a personal passion, for which the historian had even moved away from his monastery in order to be closer to the collection. Now approaching the age of sixty-five, Olmo’s finally deferred to the Heads of the Council of Ten with more immediate concerns about the fate of his collection upon his death, that ‘it may return altogether into perpetual oblivion, or worse, pass into the hands of another with the same most terrible prejudice as before.’¹⁵⁷ By this time, Olmo had catalogued roughly three hundred documents of particular historical interest to the Republic, which he now believed should be transferred from the Basilica to the more secure custody of the secret chancery archive, where they may ‘be more diligently kept within its chests, as though sacrosanct.’¹⁵⁸ At the Ten’s command, he

¹⁵³ ‘Io so, che per contraposto fu disseminato da quel medesimo disamorevole ... che questa fosse opera gettata via, perche bastassero i castatici, e che ella potesse, e dovesse in pochi mesi perfettionarsi ... Ma si come, per quanto ho già sinceramente esposto, et il fatto medesimo dimostra, non tutte le scritture si trovano nei Catastici, ... cosi io confesso bene d’haver preso diletto nelle fatiche’ (ASVe, IS, b. 927, 7 January 1642 m.v.).

¹⁵⁴ ‘Non importando, che vi sijno i castatici in procuratia nova, li quali da me letti, anzi confermano i miei inventarij delle autentiche di chiesa. Et quelle scritture autentiche, che sono nei sachetti in procuratia: non saranno quelle, che in Camera di chiesa: le quali sono il corpo, i castatici l’umbra. Et ha ogni buon archivio le scritture nei sachetti, e castatici sopra la tavola: questi per facilità, quelle per fondamento’ (Ibid., 1 February 1640 m.v.).

¹⁵⁵ Ibid. (7 January 1642 m.v.).

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. (22 June 1643). The unfortunate fate of Olmo’s career as an archival scholar will be discussed further in the Conclusion to this thesis (pp. 204-205).

¹⁵⁷ ASVe, IS, b. 927 (22 June 1643).

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. (22 June 1643).

continued, he would assist wholeheartedly in the transferral of these records to the location which most befitted their status as historical artefacts – which Olmo demonstrated to the Ten by attaching an annotated copy of Dandolo’s letters¹⁵⁹ – leaving the Procurators with the administrative papers necessary for their own governance whilst completing the gaps in the Republic’s cultural heritage within the newly historicised secret chancery archive.

Unfortunately for Olmo, his reports on the state of the city’s record-keeping systems were not held in the same esteem as those of the patrician historian-superintendents. Whilst the Ten’s response to his supplication was not fully recorded, the contents of the Benedictine’s historical inventory remain outside the state archives to this day, and were kept under the custody of the Procurators until their eventual consignment within the *Biblioteca Marciana* in 1786.¹⁶⁰ Nevertheless, their very survival – as part a newly established ‘tabularium’ within the Basilica – attests to the importance of Olmo’s work for the preservation and, in many cases, rediscovery of some of the city’s most ancient documentary artefacts; a voluntary project driven by the recognition of their cultural and scholarly value as sources of historical information, and by the desire to use contemporary chancery practice to create a historical monument to the state.

2.6: Conclusion – a new index for a new archival system

In 1669, nearly a century after the partial destruction of the Ducal Palace had forced a complete reconstruction of the secret chancery, the first comprehensive and fully systematised index of the collection was finally completed by the secretary Antonio di Negri.¹⁶¹ This substantial and ornate manuscript – produced by the calligrapher Zuanne Gasparini – was a product of a decade long attempt to reorder the contents of the *Segreta* archive chamber under the stewardship of the superintendent Battista Nani, and has thus unfortunately erased the memory of the archive’s structure during the early decades of the seventeenth century. Nevertheless, the index serves as a useful artefact of the emerging

¹⁵⁹ As we will see in Chapter 5.2.4, the annotated copies of Olmo’s discoveries were eventually consigned to a series of miscellanea, and can now be seen in: ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9.

¹⁶⁰ A series of these authentic documents can now be seen in BNM, Cod. Lat. XIV, 71-72, ‘Acta Veneta quaedam ab anno MCXXIII ad annum MCCCCXXXIX ex Tabulario Procuratorum Ecclesiae S. Marci in Bibliothecum translata anno MDCCLXXXVI. Index singulorum Actuum ad initium Codicis est’. The transferral of this codex was part of a much wider project underway during this period to relocate many of the manuscripts held in other government collections and archives into the city’s public library (Zorzi, *La libreria di San Marco*, pp. 296-303).

¹⁶¹ Although the pace of reorganisation over the preceding decades is not fully recorded, di Negri claimed to have created the final distinction between the different cupboards, 75 in total, in the process of compiling the index (ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 6, ‘Indice della Segreta fatto in tempo del Serenissimo Principe Dominico Contarini’, p. 1 of preface – see Table 1 of the Appendix).

perception of the secret chancery as a cultural monument to the Republic. In his dedicatory preface to Doge Domenico Contarini, for instance, di Negri reiterated the role of the *Segreta* as a repository of historical information:

In this index the keen eye of Your Excellency will see the glorious memories of your wisest predecessors, who have conserved and magnified this immortal Republic with sense, zeal and piety [...] as a model of good governance and political norms for centuries to come.¹⁶²

In addition, the composition of the index itself reflected the emergence of the *Segreta* as a fixed archival depository designed for the preservation of records for posterity. For the first time, lists of registers were followed by the *buste* of loose files on which they were based,¹⁶³ whilst di Negri had intentionally left blank sections in the volume to accommodate future deposits of registers and *filze*, so that the ever increasing mass of contemporary material did not leave the deposits in the same state of confusion as before.¹⁶⁴ Moreover, two of the cupboards were reserved for ‘Materie diverse notabili’, which as well as miscellaneous files of political importance contained numerous scholarly writings and manuscript histories.¹⁶⁵ Some of the miscellanea dating from the turn of the seventeenth century had in fact been transferred from the depositories of the Ten, thus demonstrating that the *Segreta* now acted as an archive for historical material once held separately from the collection for the purposes of political administration.¹⁶⁶

In recent historiography, the creation of the superintendent’s office in 1601 has been highlighted as a significant turning point in the history and development of the chancery, ‘justly famous as the first time a historian took charge of a governmental archive.’¹⁶⁷ As we have seen, however, the establishment of this post can instead be considered as part of a wider historical process, which had begun half a century earlier with the creation of the

¹⁶² ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 6, p. 1 of preface.

¹⁶³ This in turn relates to the comments on the authenticity of records made in the previous chapter. In 1651, Battista Nani referred to the *filze* of the collection as the ‘radice d’ogni scrittura e registro’ (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 44, 4 August 1651).

¹⁶⁴ To aid future visitors locate ancient material, di Negri listed the names and dates of every Doge as a context for the period they sought to identify (ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 6, p. 2 of preface).

¹⁶⁵ These were not the manuscripts of the state historiographers, which were still kept in the archives of the Ten, but instead independent works such as the history of the Fourth Crusade by Paolo Ramusio, a history of the Republic by Alvise Borghi, as well as histories and polemics concerning the Interdict of 1606.

¹⁶⁶ Three entries in particular demonstrate this transferral, all dating from the late sixteenth century and registered in the Council of Ten inventory ‘de tutte le scritture che si trovano nell’armer di sopra’ (ASVe, Ind. Sec., b.2, formerly MCod., 427): a volume of writings concerning the Venetian artillery by Sigismondo Alberghetti (ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 6, ‘Indice della Segreta’, f. 223, #38), two volumes of treatises regarding the Swiss Grisons (Ibid., f. 228v, #146, 147), and five bound volumes of material concerning the fortifications of Friuli, Padua, and Udine (Ibid., f. 221v, #16-20).

¹⁶⁷ De Vivo, ‘Ordering the Archive’, p. 243; Callard, ‘L’histoire comme art de gouverner’, p. 46.

Annali and which half a century later had allowed the chamber of the *Cancellaria Segreta* to be recognised as an historical ‘archive’ in its own right. Certainly, the issue of dispersal and disorder, which had disrupted the presence of a singular historical archive, remained; the Republic’s historical records were still split between the *Segreta*, the archives of the Ten, the office of the Grand Chancellor and those of the Procurators of Saint Mark. Ultimately, argues Salmini, these issues would remain in place until the fall of the Republic itself, at which point the chancery archive was finally distinguished as the historical relic of a bygone era.¹⁶⁸

Nevertheless, through a series of reforms and reconstructions, the records of the secret chancery were beginning to be increasingly defined as the historical memory of the Republic within the wider chancery systems of the Palace: collated together within a fixed, isolated depository with its own distinct archival ‘threshold’, and forming the basis of a new series of volumes commemorating the recent history of the state. As we will see in the following chapters, these reforms were to have a significant impact upon the subsequent use of the collection by the city’s historiographers, as well as its role in shaping the historical image of the Republic itself.

¹⁶⁸ Salmini, ‘Buildings, Furnishings, Access and Use’, pp. 107-108.

Chapter Three: The historian in the archive – access, retrieval and note taking in the *Cancellaria Segreta*

3.1: Introduction

In the frontispieces of two historical texts printed during the sixteenth century, Bernardino Corio's 1503 *Storia di Milano* and Bernardino Cirillo's 1570 *Annali della città d'Aquila*, we are provided with the prevailing image of the historian at work during the early modern period – surrounded by bound manuscripts and writing implements on the shelves and tables of their private studies.¹ Such images mirror the contemporary perception of the work of the historian, as discussed in the Introduction: literary, rhetorical, and based on the consumption and re-presentation of the works of their predecessors. However, the previous two chapters have illustrated that the early modern historian was also well aware of a more public workspace in which they could compile their accounts through the consultation of contemporary records. In the case of Venice, this was embodied in the depositories of the *Cancellaria Segreta*, which were increasingly beginning to function as a scholarly tool and monument to the history of the Republic.

Given our new understanding of the archival and historical consciousness which drove Venice's historiography and chancery practice respectively during this period, can we reconstruct an image of the historian at work in the archive to complement those of Corio and Cirillo? Recent studies of Venetian historiography have long emphasised the fact that the city's state historians had been granted access to the collection since the office was first established in 1516,² yet beyond this little attention has been given to the question of how this access was actually put to use. What was the experience of the state historian in locating, retrieving and extrapolating the sources for their accounts within the chancery halls of the Ducal Palace? What kind of information were they looking for once inside, and how did these scholarly visitors negotiate the secrecy and restrictions of a still functioning political institution? Such questions have tended to be overlooked in recent scholarship not only due to the focus on the finished texts of the historians, which have left few traces of

¹ See Figures 1-2 of the Appendix (These images have been reproduced in Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study*, pp. 7, 13).

² Although the majority of these accounts introduce the beginning of the archive's use at different points in their narratives, and very few trace it back to the earliest historiographers (Benzoni and Zanato (eds.), *Storici e politici veneti*, p. xxiv; Cozzi, 'Cultura politica e religione', p. 264; Gaeta, 'Storiografia, coscienza nazionale e politica culturale', pp. 78-80; Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, pp. 228-230; Callard, 'L'histoire comme art de gouverner', p. 37).

their archival origins, but also due to the undue focus on the grants of access recorded in the registers of the Council of Ten, which say little of the research activity which followed.

In order to build a more comprehensive picture of the use of the chancery as a tool for historical research during this period, this chapter will pursue a different perspective upon the development of Venice's official historiography and its relationship with the secret chancery. Building upon recent studies of the early modern library as a site of scholarship and information exchange – such as Marino Zorzi's detailed history of the *Biblioteca Marciana* in Venice,³ Kimberly Skelton's account of readership and furniture in Oxford,⁴ and Warren Boutcher's study of the administrative impact of Gabriel Naudé's library manuals⁵ – it will consider the depositories of the *Cancellaria Segreta* as a physical space within which historical research could take place. Through the use of hitherto unexamined material concerning the construction and administration of the chancery during this period, it will examine how its constantly changing structure, finding aids and staffing impacted upon the experiences of those who visited the collection. Although it has been noted in the Introduction to this thesis that much of the material concerning the physicality of the *Segreta*, not least the visitor logs which would have provided an invaluable insight into its use, is fragmentary and inconsistent, that which remains can still be used to reconstruct the processes of identification, retrieval, and copying which dictated the experience of the historian over time.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the history of the secret chancery during the first century and a half of the state historiography programme can be loosely divided into three distinct periods: the scattered depositories of the early sixteenth century, the creation of the *Annali* and the post-fire reconstruction during the second half of the century, and the internal reorganisation led by the newly appointed historian-superintendents during the early seventeenth. As the structure and accessibility of the depositories substantially altered between these three periods, so too did the experience of the visiting historian, whose interaction with the collection was greatly impacted by the ever-changing processes of identifying, retrieving and extracting historical material brought about by these reforms. As this chapter will demonstrate, this was a period of significant change in both archival and historical practices in Venice, the developments of which set the foundations for the practice of archival research in later decades and centuries. Nevertheless, it was also characterised by a number of continuities, both in terms of the type of material consulted by successive

³ Zorzi, *La libreria di San Marco*.

⁴ Skelton, 'The Malleable Early Modern Reader'.

⁵ Boutcher, 'Collecting Manuscripts and Printed Books in the Late Renaissance', pp. 211-216; see also: Kelley, *History and the Disciplines*, pp. 41-57.

historians, and in their relationships with the archival staff. In examining these continuities in the experience of the historian in the chancery, we can better understand how their research informed and directed the works which they produced, as discussed in the final chapters of this thesis.

3.2: 1515-1551: The first grants of access

As discussed in Chapter One, historians had been sporadically using diplomatic and governmental records as source material for their accounts as far back as antiquity, yet seldom developed the notion of visiting an archival depository or record collection as a distinct methodology for their research. As the chanceries of Medieval Europe began to develop into functioning institutions, the increasing scholarly interests of their secretaries and chancellors facilitated a rise in chronicles and histories furnished with state records – a trend embodied in Venice by the fourteenth-century chronicles of Andrea Dandolo and Raffaele Caresini.⁶ Beyond this, however, the restrictions upon accessing the records of state imposed by numerous governments upon all but a privileged few meant that the majority of chroniclers and historians were largely reliant on ecclesiastic archives, private manuscript collections and the works of their predecessors for written information about past affairs.⁷

Like many of the chanceries of late medieval and early modern Europe, the *Cancelleria Segreta* of Venice was designed to be an isolated depository for the most sensitive political and diplomatic material of the Republic's major deliberative councils, and was widely regarded as a stronghold of state secrecy by both contemporary and recent commentators.⁸ In 1459, the Council of Ten appointed one secretary to maintain sole custody of the collection – then held within the already isolated chamber of the *Cancelleria Superiore* – under a single key, permitting only members of the College and those with special dispensation from the state to access and consult its contents.⁹ Over the following centuries, access was primarily granted for three purposes: instructing the current government concerning legal precedent and previous deliberations, preparing material to

⁶ Arnaldi, 'La cancelleria ducale fra culto della 'legalitas' e nuova cultura umanistica', pp. 874-879; Kuha, 'Note intorno alla tradizione manoscritta di *Chronica Venetiarum* di Benintendi de' Ravagnani', p. 87.

⁷ For an account of the relationship between notary practice and documentary history, see de Caprio, *Scrivere la storia a Napoli*, pp. 158-160. In Venice, late Medieval historians such as Lorenzo de Monacis were able to base their accounts on state records after having worked in the chancery (Benzoni, 'Scritti storico-politici', pp. 758). For an account of the use of state records before the establishment of the Ducal chanceries, see Monticolo, 'I manoscritti e le fonti della cronaca del Diacono Giovanni', pp. 200-219.

⁸ See for instance: de Vivo, 'Cœur de l'état, lieu de tension', pp. 699-728.

⁹ ASVe, CX Mist., reg. 15, f. 191r.

present in the Senate chamber, and briefing ambassadors on the affairs of the court to which they were about to depart.¹⁰ In June 1515, however, the Council of Ten made an unprecedented exception, allowing the patrician Andrea Mocenigo access to consult the ‘books, letters and records’ of the secret chancery, alongside their own papers, for the purposes of writing a history of the city.¹¹ Two months later, a similar concession was made, this time to the patrician Marin Sanudo,¹² whilst in January 1516 the poet and diplomat Andrea Navagero was appointed as the first state historian by the Council of Ten.¹³ Navagero’s grant of access to the chancery, which although absent from the registers of the Ten was recorded in the diaries of Sanudo,¹⁴ signalled the beginning of a near-continuous succession of patrician historiographers admitted to the Venetian secret chancery over the following centuries, as the office of historiographer became increasingly intertwined with the administration of the collection itself.

The circumstances of this sudden change in admissions policy had a profound influence upon the use of the secret chancery as a source for Venetian historiography throughout the remainder of this period. As has been recounted elsewhere, the foundation of the historiographer’s office was set against the backdrop of considerable crisis for the Republic, as a near-catastrophic defeat at Agnadello in 1509 at the hands of the League of Cambrai – a conflict through which Venice had lost the majority of its mainland territories to the anti-Venetian alliance of Pope Julius II, Emperor Maximilian I, Louis XII of France and Ferdinand II of Aragon¹⁵ – had left the city in a desperate and costly scramble to reclaim both its foothold on the Italian mainland and its image on the European stage.¹⁶ Both Mocenigo and Sanudo had initially appealed to the Ten for access to the collection in order to write accounts of this recent conflict,¹⁷ with the Council eager to commission a historical defence of the city’s conduct during this period following the success of its last great

¹⁰ Salmini, ‘Buildings, Furnishings, Access and Use’, pp. 106-107; de Vivo, ‘Le arme dell’ambasciatore’, pp. 193-195; idem., *Information and Communication*, pp. 54-59. The entry logs which survive from between September and December 1698 suggest that the majority of visitors to the *Segreta* had consulted primarily diplomatic material (ASVe, IS, b. 924). Notes from the records of the chancery were for instance taken by the *Savio agli Ordini*, Agostino Trevisan, as part of a draft for his audience in the Senate in 1588 (ASVe, Arc. Trev., 14, 21r).

¹¹ ‘Sitque ei necessarium pro veritate rerum, qui in hystorijs ist pars potissima: videre libros, litteras, et Scripturas Cancellarie n.re et ad id consilium X re tunc proposita voce annuerit quantum esset ab annis circiter tribus supra tantum’ (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 4, f. 59v, 28 June 1515).

¹² Sanudo’s grant of access is quoted in: Fulin, ‘Documenti per servire alla storia della tipografia Veneziana’, p. 184.

¹³ ASVe, CX Mist., b. 36 (30 January 1515 m.v.); reprinted in Lagomaggiore, ‘L’Istoria Viniziana’ di M. Pietro Bembo’, pp. 331-332.

¹⁴ Brown, *Ragguagli sulla vita e sulle opere di Marin Sanuto*, pp. 16-17.

¹⁵ For a more detailed account of this conflict and its aftermath, see: Gilbert, ‘Venice in the Crisis of the League of Cambrai’.

¹⁶ Libby, ‘Venetian History and Political Thought after 1509’, pp. 30-33; Davidson, ‘Hispanophobia in the Venetian Republic’, p. 29.

¹⁷ Sanudo, *I Diarii*, vol. XX, p. 532 (17 August 1515).

historian, Marc' Antonio Sabellico.¹⁸ Over the course of the fifteenth century, Venice had already tried and failed to establish the system of scholarly patronage which had facilitated the writing of history throughout Renaissance Europe, whilst the temporary closure of its neighbouring university at Padua by the military turmoil on the mainland meant that it was unable to rely upon its faculties to provide a literary champion.¹⁹ In response, argues Felix Gilbert, the Republic created a scholarly office within the bureaucracy of the Venetian state, offering a regular salary to an elected patrician on conditions which would be determined by government decree. The opening of the archive for scholarship at this time – an aspect of the newly created office which is largely overlooked in Gilbert's account – was an important corollary of this decision, as the secrets of the archive would be entrusted to members of the Venetian patriciate rather than to scholars appointed from abroad. In these earliest grants of access, the Ten expressed their desire to have their recent history extracted from the registers of the chancery 'pro pleniori rerum veritate'²⁰ – albeit a truth which was favourable to the image of the Venetian state, based on their own record of events, written by authors sympathetic to the Republic, and reviewed by government censors before publication.²¹ In this respect, the opening of the secret chancery for the purposes of historical scholarship can be considered amongst the numerous innovations in Renaissance historiography which arose from the calamity of the Italian Wars.²²

3.2.1: Marin Sanudo and the early use of the collection

Unfortunately, there are few surviving traces of how these first grants of access were actually capitalised upon during the early decades of the sixteenth century. In September 1521, the Ten rescinded the access granted to all three historians, with both Moceningo and Sanudo having completed the texts for which they were commissioned and their state

¹⁸ Benzoni, 'Scritti Storico-Politici', pp. 764-765.

¹⁹ Such measures had largely failed during the fifteenth century, such as the attempt to bring in the Roman historian Flavio Biondo, or the set up a stipendiary historian at the *Scuola di Rialto* (Gaeta, 'Storiografia, coscienza nazionale e politica culturale', pp. 27-45; Gilbert, 'Biondo, Sabellico, and the Beginnings of Venetian Official Historiography', pp. 277-281; Marin, 'Flavio Biondo's Venetian History and the Debatable Beginnings of 'Public Historiography' in Venice'). As for Sabellico, there is little evidence to suggest that he was able to use the chancery for his own research, and was instead reliant on existing chronicles and oral testimonies (Bersi, 'Le fonti della prima Decade', p. 445).

²⁰ Fulin, 'Documenti per servire alla storia della tipografia Veneziana', p. 184.

²¹ ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 4, f. 59v (28 June 1515). Mocenigo submitted his drafts in November 1518 (Fulin, 'Documenti per servire alla storia della tipografia Veneziana', p. 192).

²² For accounts of how the experience of the Italian Wars shaped Renaissance historiography, see Gilbert, *Machiavelli and Guicciardini*; Phillips, *Francesco Guicciardini: The Historian's Craft*, pp. 198-211.

historian now serving as an ambassador in Spain.²³ Eight years later, Navagero ordered the destruction of all his unfinished texts upon his deathbed, leaving only minute fragments of his historical studies and no indication of how they were informed by his use of the chancery.²⁴ However, the detailed notes made by Sanudo, the renowned diarist and collector, whilst in the chancery give some indication of the ways in which the first scholarly visitors approached the collection. The notes which he compiled – the majority of which had been subsequently re-assimilated into the state archives²⁵ – were made on a series of loose fascicles, whose blank pages and occasional changes in ink suggest a large number of separate visits to the chancery over time.²⁶ The notes themselves varied from a list of single line summaries of records to a full transcription of their contents, each accompanied by a date and full citation of the register series, volume and page number.

The compilation of Sanudo's notes, by far the most comprehensive series which have survived from this period, illustrates many of the features which would come to characterise the practice of historical research in the chancery in years to come. For one, the entries were almost exclusively taken from the registers of transcribed documents held in the chests of the *Segreta*, rather than from the original records on which they were based. As discussed in the previous chapter, it would be a number of decades before the loose papers of the chancery were coordinated into a single, organised depository;²⁷ instead, the chests held within the *Superiore* – where the historian most likely conducted his research – were largely comprised of a series of codices, which had yet to be indexed as a coherent collection.²⁸ The organisation of these registers, in which diplomatic and deliberative records were usually transcribed chronologically with a rudimentary index at the beginning of each

²³ Whilst this decision is not recorded by the Ten themselves, it was noted by Sanudo in his diaries, which also stated that a fourth scholar, the Paduan jurist Marin Bizielemi, was similarly excluded from the collection (Brown, *Ragguagli sulla vita e sulle opere di Marin Sanuto*, pp. 16-17).

²⁴ Perocco, 'Uno storico mancato, un viaggiatore involontario: il caso di Andrea Navagero', pp. 333-335. According to recent studies of the historian, the style and content of his solitary remaining fragment suggests that whilst the author possessed the necessary rhetorical skill, he arguably lacked the level of research and attention to detail required for history-writing (Griggio, 'Il frammento della storia veneta di Andrea Navagero', p. 98).

²⁵ The largest of Sanudo's volumes can be found today in: ASVe, QC, 14bis; ASVe, *Cassiere della Bolla Ducale, Marin Sanudo, Estratti dalle Grazie*, whilst other fragments are consultable in: BNM, Cod. Lat. X, 291; BNM, Cod. It. 375, ff. 43-51; BNM, Cod. It. 762. See Appendix Figure 5 for an example.

²⁶ These were most likely brought in by the historian himself, who in a letter to the Heads of the Ten complained of the high costs of acquiring these materials to carry out his work (BNM, Cod. It. VII, 375, ff. 11-12).

²⁷ Although secretaries had long been making inventories of certain chests, especially those containing diplomatic records, these were both far from comprehensive and unlikely to have been made available to visitors. Examples of these, including a series of booklets, can be found in ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 5. In addition, there existed a number of attempts to catalogue the city's oldest laws, which may have been of limited use (see for instance ASVe, MADM, 54).

²⁸ According to the *Index Librorum Cancellariae* (ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 4), the secret registers of the *Superiore* were divided between four different chests during the first half of the sixteenth century.

volume,²⁹ allowed the historian both to create a timeline of governmental activity from the records of the major councils of the day,³⁰ and to search for specific information within the other cartularies of the collection. Whether he was able to consult different registers at the same time is unclear, but occasional changes in ink within the same fascicle suggest that he may have returned to old notes to add newly found references from a different register at a later date.³¹

Despite his exclusion from the chancery in 1521, and the fact that he had only been commissioned to narrate the history of Charles VIII's descent into Italy in 1494,³² the historian boasted in his diaries two years later that he had been able to consult 'every register in the chancery' during his brief period of access,³³ and had subsequently noted the history of the city as far back as the early fourteenth century.³⁴ In particular, Sanudo was interested in tracing the expansion of Venice's noble families after the great *Serrata* of the Venetian oligarchy in 1297, using both this study and his larger series of timelines as the basis of a far more substantial history of the city, the *Vite dei Dogi*.³⁵ As we will see in Chapter Five, the historian's use of the archive for material beyond the terms of his original commission would later re-emerge as a defining characteristic of the historian-superintendents of the seventeenth century.

Finally, however, Sanudo's notes also highlight the myriad challenges which would confront the state historians as they attempted to navigate the collection. As noted by Giovanni Monticolo, who edited the first volume of the *Vite* for the *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores* in 1900, the historian made numerous errors in his account which arose from his note taking in the chancery, from incorrect dates to inaccuracies in his transcriptions, as well as a basic misunderstanding of the processes by which the Venetian state granted nobility.³⁶ For a historian visiting the chancery in the early sixteenth century, the inherent difficulties in extrapolating and correctly interpreting historical material³⁷ would have been greatly compounded by the general state of the collection – disparate, uncatalogued and without a clearly defined workspace in which to conduct one's research – an issue which would continue to shape the experience of the state historians for the remainder of the century.

²⁹ These were either written into the pages of the volume itself, or else produced as a separate *fascicolo* and bound together the main register. Many of these were kept separately by the College and Council of Ten (de Vivo, 'Ordering the Archive', pp. 239-241).

³⁰ This is particularly evident within the larger volume of notes: ASVe, QC, 14bis.

³¹ See for instance BNM, Cod. Lat. X, 291, ff. 21r-22v.

³² Which he did in fact also write (see Chambers, 'The Diaries of Marin Sanudo', pp. 2-6).

³³ Sanudo, *I Diarii*, vol. XXXIV, p. 1.

³⁴ ASVe, QC, 14bis.

³⁵ Sanudo, *Le Vite dei Dogi*, pp. 48-75.

³⁶ As Monticolo notes in his edition of the *Vite* (*Ibid.*, p. 75 ff. 2).

³⁷ This, as discussed on p. 197, was evident in the occasional mistakes in transcription and other misinterpretations of specific phrases, especially in more ancient Latin records.

3.2.2: Pietro Bembo and his secretary assistants

Despite his difficulties in reading the archive, and his exclusion from it altogether after 1521, Sanudo had collated enough material to compile a series of historical works, alongside his voluminous diaries which he continued to furnish from a variety of other sources.³⁸ The closure of the *Segreta* to the three earliest visitors precipitated a period of relative inactivity amongst scholars within the collection, with the exception of the chronicle produced by the secretary Gian Giacomo Caroldo, who claimed to have ‘recounted the deeds of the Republic firstly using the chronicle of Doge Andrea Dandolo and, after that, through the registers of the Venetian chancery.’³⁹ Ten years later, however, the diarist and historian was readmitted to the chancery under a new set of conditions; rather than being granted the freedom of the registers and chests of the *Cancellaria Superiore*, Sanudo was to be shown only the most recent letters arriving into the chancery by the secretary responsible for their maintenance, so that he might ‘compile his diaries with greater accuracy.’⁴⁰ This sudden re-emergence of Venice’s interest in the composition of Sanudo’s diaries was in fact tied to the use of his own work as a research tool for the newly appointed state historian, Pietro Bembo. Whilst the relationship between the two historians has been well noted in studies of Venetian historiography,⁴¹ and will also be addressed below, it is the place of the secretary in these new terms of access which highlight a hitherto underappreciated aspect of the early research experiences in the secret chancery.

Pietro Bembo, a renowned humanist and former papal secretary, was elected as the replacement to the unproductive Andrea Navagero in September 1530. The declaration of his appointment contained the same conditions as in 1516, but this time made explicit reference to the use of the chancery itself:

As it will be necessary to come and remain in the city to consult the letters and registers in our Chancery, in order to be informed of our history, [...] it has been decided that, alongside the salary which was paid

³⁸ Sanudo was said to be ‘most content’ with this decision (Brown, *Ragguagli sulla vita e sulle opere di Marin Sanuto*, pp. 16-17), thanks in part to the vast networks of information he possessed elsewhere (Neerfeld, “*Historia per forma di diaria*”, pp. 137-144), which included contacts amongst the secretary class (Chambers, *The Diaries of Marin Sanudo*, p. 12). It is also possible that he had even had unrecorded access to the chancery before 1515, such as an entry from June 1513, listing the nobleman serving in military roles on the mainland, which ‘ho visto notadi sul Notatorio in canzelaria’ (Sanudo, *I Diarii*, XVI, 568-569).

³⁹ BL, Kings 147, f. 1v.

⁴⁰ BNM, Cod. It VII, 375, f. 8r (26 September 1531).

⁴¹ Gaeta, ‘Storiografia, coscienza nazionale e politica culturale’, pp. 85-89; Benzoni, ‘Scritti storico-politici’, pp. 766-777.

to the nobleman Andrea Navagero, [Bembo] is to be given sixty ducats per year to pay for the renting of a house.⁴²

As the final clause of this arrangement stipulated, Bembo's access to the secret chancery was deemed worthy of an additional investment in his expenses, as the historian had not been resident in the city prior to his appointment. Faced with the daunting imposition of this new office, Bembo wrote to an associate in October 1530 that he would shortly be arriving in the city, 'where I will have to stay for at least a month, perhaps two, to gather together everything I will need to write [my history].'⁴³ From December 1530 to January 1531, Bembo was a brief resident in his country of birth, staying at an inn whilst conducting his preliminary research.⁴⁴

Few indications remain of the extent to which Bembo spent these two months within the walls of the *Cancellaria Superiore* itself, or how he read and comprehended the materials with which he was confronted. Whatever his experience in attempting to piece together the recent history of the city, however, it soon became apparent that he was not suited to the life of the researcher. As many biographers, as well as Bembo himself, have recognised, he was a reluctant holder of the historian's office in general, happy to write an account which glorified the Republic, but conceding that the arduous task of research should be left to those with the benefit of youth and experience of government.⁴⁵ In December 1531, he wrote to a friend complaining of the workload presented by the task of historical research: 'I have finished the first book of my history, for which I have spent only a few days writing; the rest of the time I have spent gathering the information on which to write.'⁴⁶ Despite his salary, and offer of subsidised accommodation in the city,⁴⁷ Bembo spent the majority of his early years in the office only intermittently within the city, before finally settling in a more congenial academic environment at Padua.⁴⁸ From this remote location, his preferred method for gathering information was to request copies of other works of history from his vast network of acquaintances. These included the histories of Pietro Marcello and Bernardo

⁴² 'Et perchè li sarà necessario per il legger de le lettere et libri in la Cancellaria nostra dove l'havera da informarsi de ditta historia venir a star in questa nostra Città [...] sia preso, che delli denari delli quali si pagava il *Nobel Huomo* Andrea Navaier [...] li sieno dati ogni anno ducati sesanta per pagar il fitto de una casa' (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 6, f. 72r; Lagomaggiore, 'L'Istoria Viniziana' Di M. Pietro Bembo', p. 334).

⁴³ Bembo, *Lettere*, vol. III, #1168.

⁴⁴ Kidwell, *Pietro Bembo: Lover, Linguist, Cardinal*, p. 361.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 359. In a letter to his secretary-associate Gian Battista Ramusio (see below), Bembo conceded that 'sono assai rimoto da quella vita e da quelle azioni pubbliche che sono in gran parte materia della istoria' (quoted in Angaran-Porto, *Lettere di nobili Veneziani*, p. 37), a sentiment also expressed by Sanudo, his frustrated rival for the post (BNM, Cod. It. VII, 375, ff. 11-12).

⁴⁶ Bembo, *Lettere*, vol. III, #1317.

⁴⁷ Which he had refused (Kidwell, *Pietro Bembo: Lover, Linguist, Cardinal*, p. 359).

⁴⁸ Kidwell, *Pietro Bembo: Lover, Linguist, Cardinal*, p. 277.

Giustiniani, the research notes inherited by Bartolomeo Navagero from his brother Andrea,⁴⁹ and the papers of his friend Luigi da Porto. On one occasion in 1536, Bembo even wrote that he was planning to speak to Doge Andrea Gritti about his experience of the War of Cambrai.⁵⁰ As numerous studies of his subsequent histories have shown, it was this secondary literature which often informed his later narrative, and which in fact led him to overindulge in apocryphal details and contradictory accounts.⁵¹

It was within this accumulated collection of historical sources that the diaries of Sanudo, which had been regularly interspersed with copies of contemporary state records,⁵² first became a major source for Venetian historiography. In August 1531, one month before Sanudo's readmission, the historian wrote directly to Doge Andrea Gritti requesting the diarist's vast compendia of writings, arguing that they were an ideal substitute for the insurmountable task of extracting the history of the city from the registers of the chancery itself:

I now find that I will need to consult the public letters of the government in order to comprehend the numerous details which are not contained in the books of the Senate, which are highly necessary for a true understanding of the deeds of this most illustrious state. Such an effort will be impossible to me, and even on occasions where it is possible, it would be infinite.⁵³

If the task of consulting the Senate registers was time consuming, argued the historian, then that of consulting the loose papers which had not been transcribed, for which there existed no satisfactory index, was simply untenable. For their part, the Council of Ten, to whom Bembo petitioned just a few weeks later,⁵⁴ agreed, and commanded the diarist to surrender

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 361; Bembo, *Lettere*, vol. III, #1291, #1296.

⁵⁰ BNM, Cod. It. X., 142, f. 9r (31 September 1536).

⁵¹ Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, pp. 230-231. As Cecil Clough has demonstrated, da Porto's letters were an important source of information for military campaigns which omitted by Sanudo (Clough, 'Le "Lettere Storiche" di Luigi da Porto'), whilst Bembo was also able to devote an entire section in Book Six to the discovery of the New World thanks to his reading of the Spanish historian Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo (Danzi, *La biblioteca del Cardinal Pietro Bembo*, pp. 316-317).

⁵² Neerfeld, "*Historia per forma di diaria*", pp. 137-144.

⁵³ 'Ora trovo, che se a me bisognerà veder le lettere pubbliche di Vostra Serenità per intelligenza di molte cose che non contengono i libri del Vostro Senato, et son molto necessarie per la vera scienza delle cose fatte da questo Illustrissimo Dominio: quella fatica sarà impossibile a me: et quando fosse possibile, sarebbe infinita' (BNM, Cod. It. X, 22, f. 73). Bembo's surviving letters within the same volume illustrate the historian was already a correspondent with the Doge, and was thus in a position to petition him directly.

⁵⁴ Kidwell, *Pietro Bembo: Lover, Linguist, Cardinal*, p. 339.

his work ‘both in order to obtain the truth of things, and also so that he does not exhaust his time in looking through the books, letters and records of our chancery.’⁵⁵

Sanudo’s response to this summons was particularly scathing. Having once again lost out on the historiographer’s office to a candidate whom he argued had no relevant experience in the affairs of state, he was deeply lachrymose about the fruitlessness of his own painstaking research.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, he too accepted that his diaries were an adequate substitute for archival research, and accepted the stipend offered to him for his volumes.⁵⁷ Copies of Sanudo’s manuscripts were delivered to the state historian one by one over the course of the following decade – a process which Bembo himself outlines in his correspondences with the secretary responsible⁵⁸ – and likely had a significant influence upon the structure and detail of his subsequent narrative.⁵⁹ After his death in 1536, the volumes were consigned to the archives of the Ten, where they remained until the late eighteenth century.⁶⁰ For those visiting the Palace archives to research the early decades of the sixteenth century, Sanudo’s volumes thus remained a pivotal point of reference for contemporary affairs, and may even have inspired the creation of the *Annali* registers fifteen years after the author’s death.⁶¹

After his sojourn in the winter of 1530-1531, we have little indication of whether Bembo ever set foot in the chambers of the *Cancellaria Superiore* again. The option to have his archival research conducted by proxy through Sanudo’s diaries, which after 1531 had once again been furnished with material direct from the chancery, was seemingly a fitting solution to both the historian’s need for information and the government’s desire to dictate the use of its records. However, as the historian first entered the chancery in December 1530, the Council of Ten had initially formulated a different approach to the question of his access:

As it is necessary to read the letters and registers of our Chancery in order to be informed of our history [...] we command to you, prudent

⁵⁵ Kidwell, *Pietro Bembo: Lover, Linguist, Cardinal*, p. 340.

⁵⁶ Chambers, ‘The Diaries of Marin Sanudo’, p. 32.

⁵⁷ ‘Et dirò cussì, et questo è certissimo niun scrittore mai farà cosa bona delle historie moderne, non vedando la mia diaria [...] Et anchora mi offerisco andar seguitando nel scriver la Diaria domente [sic] che viverò, acio quelli scrivera la historia latina dappoi questi tempi, possa con facilità seguire il testo, trovando il tuto descritto senza perder tempo in veder libri, lettere, e scritte della vostra Cancellaria’ (BNM, Cod. It. VII, 375, f. 12).

⁵⁸ BNM, Cod. It. X, 143, ff. 24, 29.

⁵⁹ Sanudo’s role in shaping the first complete official history of the city has yet to be examined in full, and is briefly addressed in Chapter 4.2.

⁶⁰ The diaries appear, for instance, in an index of the Ten’s archive compiled in 1786 by Giuseppe Francesco Olivieri (ASVe, CX Cod., 93, f. 90v).

⁶¹ As suggested in Gaeta, ‘Storiografia, coscienza nazionale e politica culturale’, pp. 90-91).

secretaries of the College Pietro Bressano, who compiles the secret registers of the Senate, and Ludovico Spinelli, who keeps the letters of the College and Senate, to present the deliberations made in this Council, and the letters written from 1485 onwards, to the Most Reverend Pietro Bembo, and allow him to consult them. It must not be permitted that he take any of these records out of the Chancery, but only make those notes and recollections which he may deem necessary to make his history truthful and accurate.⁶²

This decree had certain similarities with those which had been passed after 1515, defining ‘truthful’ history as that which was based upon the records of state and stating that their earliest visiting historians were to be shown (*ostendantur*) the state records ‘per omnes de cancellaria’.⁶³ Here, however, the Ten placed a far greater onus upon the role of the two secretaries in charge of the collection to facilitate and direct the research activity of their visiting scholars. Unlike Sanudo, whose notes suggest a far freer consultation of the entire body of the *Segreta*, Bembo was to be shown only the most recent documents pertaining to the period for which he had been commissioned to write. As a result of their intervention, Bembo’s research was thus focussed more narrowly on the registers and letters of the Senate compiled in the previous half century.

In one respect, this intervention was intended as a form of supervision, to maintain proper conduct within the chancery and ensure that these politically sensitive records remained within its walls. However, the intercession of Bressano and Spinelli – the latter also being called upon in the readmission of Sanudo – signalled the growing role of the secretary class within the composition and research of Venice’s early modern historiography. As discussed in Chapter 4.1, the ties between secretarial practice and the writing of history-writing had been evident in Venice since the Middle Ages, but over the course of the early sixteenth century a series of archival reforms began to transform the historical expertise of the chancery staff into an official component of their profession. In 1536, the Council of Ten instituted a new compulsory training programme for the ordinary

⁶² ‘Esserli necessario per informarsi della ditta historia lezer le lettere, et libri nella Cancellaria nostra [...] comandiamo a voi prudenti secretarii de collegio Piero Brexan che scrive il libro delle cose secrete de Pregadi et Ludovico Spinelli che tien le lettere scritte de Collegio et de Pregadi che debbiare monstrar et lassar leger al [storico] R.D. Pietro Bembo le deliberation fatte in ditto Consiglio, et lettere scritte dal 1485 in qua, non permettendo perhò che sua Signoria porti fuori de Cancellaria alcuna de ditte scritte, ma faci quelle memorie et recolte che li parera a fine che sua Signoria far possi ditta historia particular e veridicamente’ (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 8, f. 165, 18 December 1530).

⁶³ ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 4 (marginal note to decree 20 August 1515, dated 27 September 1516).

notaries, those yet to be appointed to serve the Senate,⁶⁴ to complement the instruction they had previously received in Latin and calligraphy. Each notary ‘must be adept in the material and study of our laws’, as examined by the three Heads of the Ten, and from their number two were to be nominated *segretari delle leggi*, responsible for instructing the government on the historical precedents for their current deliberations, and compiling a repertory of all the major registers of the state ‘for the clear intelligence of all.’⁶⁵ Over the following decades, the conditions of this office became more clearly defined; the *leggisti* were required to study the public records for a period of two years, in which time they could hold no other responsibilities in the chancery,⁶⁶ and assumed the responsibility for tutoring the new group of secretaries to follow.⁶⁷

The purpose of training certain secretaries as *leggisti* was to provide the government with a series of advisors on the affairs and deliberations of their predecessors. In this respect, the office has previously been considered as part of the wider reorganisation of the chancery archive as a tool of governance.⁶⁸ By necessity, however, the *leggisti* also required a large degree of historical expertise, especially as the governance of the Republic was heavily dependent on locating and citing legal precedent,⁶⁹ and were thus increasingly involved in the ordering and historicising of the collection discussed in the previous chapter. Two *leggisti*, for instance, Alvise Saitta and Paolo Ciera, authored two of the newly formed transcription registers of historical material, the *Annali* and *Cerimoniali* respectively, towards the end of the sixteenth century.⁷⁰ After the construction of the new *Segreta* chamber, *leggisti* such as Zuanne Rizzardo became heavily involved in the indexing of the reconstructed collection, assisting in the compiling of the new *Rubriche Generali* from

⁶⁴ The extensive body of staff within the chancery was divided amongst a five tiered hierarchy. The first two tiers consisted of junior notaries (*straordinari* and *ordinari*), who after a series of examinations could be appointed to the ranks of the secretaries of the Senate. It was from this third tier that the majority of the staff within the *Segreta* itself were delegated (for an example of this division of labour, see ASVe, Canc. Atti, b. 14, ‘20 February 1576 m.v. in CX’), and from their number four were elected to serve the Council of Ten. Of these four, elections would be taken to appoint a new Grand Chancellor upon the death of the incumbent (de Vivo, ‘Ordering the Archive’, p. 235).

⁶⁵ ASVe, Canc. Atti, b. 14, decree dated 18 November 1536.

⁶⁶ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 34, f. 137v, 19 August 1571.

⁶⁷ BMC, Gradenigo 192, ff. 151r-152v, decree dated 24 October 1607. In 1594, a similar office was created within the ranks of the secretaries of the Ten itself (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 44, 63r). See Appendix 3, Table 1 for a list of the office holders.

⁶⁸ De Vivo, ‘Ordering the Archive’, p. 244. For an updated table of the succession of *leggisti*, see Table 6 of the Appendix.

⁶⁹ Salmini, ‘Buildings, Furnishings, Access and Use’, pp. 96-97.

⁷⁰ For Saitta’s appointment as *annalista*, a secretarial office discussed in Chapter 2.3, see: ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 14, ff. 75r. The *Cerimoniali*, instead, were a series of records concerning public ceremonies and ambassadorial visits, which Ciera had traced back in the archive as far back as the fifteenth century (ASVe, *Collegio, Cerimoniali*, reg. 1, note on inside cover, 12 February 1593 m.v.).

1614,⁷¹ and in 1626 being commissioned to ‘summarise within a single volume all the registers, letters and papers of the secret chamber, as well as all that which can be found within the open cupboards and under lock and key.’⁷² As a result, these secretaries, alongside many others with a detailed knowledge of the *Segreta*, were also an important resource for the early visiting historians, as they provided a personal gateway to navigating the collection in the absence of any comprehensive system of indexes and finding aids. In the case of Bembo, who had attempted to conduct research in the chancery even before the compilation of Andrea de Franceschi’s *Index Librorum Cancellariae*, the two secretaries assigned to assist the historian were both important and early members of this emerging bureaucratic class. Bressano, for instance, would later assist the Grand Chancellor Franceschi in indexing and transcribing the ancient records of the chancery,⁷³ whilst Spinelli would go on to be given the task of inventorying the entire collection of diplomatic records held by the Council of Ten.⁷⁴

However, with seemingly little interaction between the historian and his designated secretary assistants, it was through his own personal contacts within the chancery that Bembo was able to continue his research from abroad. In particular, one of the historian’s most regular correspondents was Gian Battista Ramusio, secretary to the Council of Ten and thus a more senior figure within the hierarchy of the Venetian chancery. Ramusio had long held social ties with the early historiographers of the Republic,⁷⁵ but in December 1543 the secretary received a specific request for information from an increasingly beleaguered Bembo, now resident in Perugia:

I have wished to continue compiling my History up to the election of Pope Leo [X],⁷⁶ and have so far written up to the capture of Prato in 1512, after the fall of Ravenna. The actions of our Republic from here to that election, however, still elude me, which I would say amounts to nearly six months. I would be pleased if both you and [Benedetto] Ramberti⁷⁷ could

⁷¹ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 64, f. 151, 18 December 1614.

⁷² BMC, P.D. 169c, XXIV (28 May 1626).

⁷³ See p. 56 above.

⁷⁴ BMC, P.D. 172c, ‘29 Septembre 1557 in CX’.

⁷⁵ Correspondence between Bembo and Ramusio dates back to at least 1508 (BNM, Cod. It. X, 143). In June 1529, Ramusio wrote to a reluctant Bembo in order to convince him to accept the historiographer’s post (Gaeta, ‘Storiografia, coscienza nazionale e politica culturale’, p. 87). The two continued to work together in the administration of the Bessarion manuscript collection, of which, as with Navagero, Bembo had been given custody as part of the historiographer’s office (Castellani, ‘Pietro Bembo bibliotecario della libreria di S. Marco’).

⁷⁶ For whom Bembo had previously served as a secretary.

⁷⁷ Ramberti, another secretary of the Republic, had also worked alongside Bembo and Ramusio in the Bessarion manuscript collection, to which he would later be delegated custody by the historian in his absence.

look through the registers of the Senate covering this period, which perhaps will only be the one, and extract from them all those deliberations which you deem to be necessary and fulfilling to my needs, and send them – or at least their summaries – to me, so that I may furnish my History as soon as possible and be troubled by it no longer.⁷⁸

The nature of Bembo's request – which left all matters of identifying, summarising and delivering relevant material entirely to the discretion of the secretary – was not only indicative of the historian's willingness to delegate the task of compiling his accounts, but also the extent to which the secretaries of the Republic were called upon to provide the material basis of Venetian historiography throughout this period. This was particularly evident in the writings of secretaries such as Alvise Borghi, who had attempted to complement the early volumes of the *Annali* with a reference guide to Venetian history for future scholars to consult,⁷⁹ but also in the works of historians such as Paolo Ramusio, son of Gian Battista, who in 1557 was commissioned to edit a French manuscript history of the Fourth Crusade for publication. As we will examine in Chapter 5.2.2, this new edition was furnished with a number of records taken from the registers of the chancery, for which the historian credited three of his secretary contacts by name: his father,⁸⁰ the Grand Chancellor Gian Francesco Ottobon,⁸¹ and the *leggista* Lorenzo Massa, a 'uomo dottissimo'⁸² and one of the archival experts responsible for a growing number of indexes concerning the oldest registers in the *Segreta*.⁸³

Above all, Bembo's was a request for information forged across informal channels, approached in the same manner as his other attempts to gather material from libraries and private manuscript collections rather than through the official points of contact designated to the historian by the Council of Ten. Could such a request, however, have been realistically carried out in such an unofficial capacity, given the stringent controls already in place to ensure that no sensitive information be allowed to leave the chancery, including the recent

⁷⁸ 'Io volevo proseguire et condurre [la mia Istoria] infino alla creation di [Papa] Leone. Honne in fato infino alla presa di Prato [nel 1512], che fu molto doppo la rotta di Ravenna. Mancanomi le attioni della nostra Repubblica infino a questa creation, ch'io dico che podettero essere da circa mesi sei. Vorrei che tra voi e il nostro [Benedetto] Ramberti vedeste i libri del Senato che sono di quel tempo; forse non ne bisognerà veder che uno, et trar fuori di loro quelle parti che vi paressero necessarie et opportune al mio bisogno, o almeno la summa et substantia di loro, et me le mandaste, ch'io subito fornirei la detta mia Istoria et non me ne travelierei più' (Bembo, *Lettere*, vol. IV, #2404; BNM, Cod. It. X, 143, f. 29r).

⁷⁹ As discussed in Chapter 2.3.

⁸⁰ Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, p. 84.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 117 (Ottobon was Grand Chancellor between 1559 and 1575.).

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 165.

⁸³ ASVe, MADM, b. 50, 'Summari di Decreti tratti dalli Libri del Maggior *Consiglio*'. An equivalent for the laws of the Ten was also compiled around this time, with their contents summarised, reorganised and listed by subject (ASVe, CX Cod., 39).

establishment of the three Inquisitors of State?⁸⁴ Only one year earlier, for instance, one secretary was executed between the columns at San Marco, and another exiled for life, for their role in leaking archival information to an Ottoman spy.⁸⁵ In the aftermath of this scandal, the Senate lamented that the free movement of patricians, ambassadors and even military personnel throughout their assembly chambers allowed for unchecked consultation of ‘our deliberations, and all the public registers and records, not only with malicious intent but with disregard for the Senate itself’, and thus forbade visitors to the Palace from even ascending the staircase to the assembly chambers without prior invitation.⁸⁶

Despite this, the systems of retrieval and consultation within the chambers of the *Cancellaria Superiore* itself, as illustrated by one of the few surviving registers of access to the collection, may have allowed some room for manoeuvre. The register itself was a small, leather bound booklet, entitled the *Alphabetum*, which recorded access to the *Segreta* registers, according to name, date and volume consulted, during the late 1540s and 1550s. The majority of the entries recorded two dates, one on which the register was consulted, and one on which it was returned (*restituit*). In many cases, the original entry date and that of the return of the register were months, or even years, apart, suggesting that both secretaries, high ranking patricians and ambassadors alike may have had long term access to certain registers before they were placed back in their chests.⁸⁷ These included Bressano’s recently created copies of the *Commemoriali*, various Ducal *Promissioni*, and even the diaries of Marin Sanudo.⁸⁸ Although it is highly unlikely that these volumes could have been consulted or held beyond the confines of the *Superiore* chamber,⁸⁹ this system of retrieval and reservation had notable parallels with the early storage and loaning of the Bessarion manuscript collection before the construction of the future *Biblioteca Marciana* in 1560, whose chests had recently been moved to a room within St Mark’s Basilica under the stewardship of

⁸⁴ Founded in 1539, the three Inquisitors were responsible for reviewing all transgressions against the secrecy of government business (Romanin, *Storia Documentata*, vol. 6, pp. 122-123). For a discussion of the Ten’s attempts to regulate the handling of secrets by secretaries, see de Vivo, ‘Cœur de l’état, lieu de tension’, pp. 721-722.

⁸⁵ During the investigation into this leak, all secretaries, including the Grand Chancellor, were excluded from the chancery and other sensitive offices (BNM, Cod. It. VII, 785, ff. 111-117; BNM, Cod. It. VII, 1995, f. 280; Preto, *I servizi segreti di Venezia*, pp. 76-79).

⁸⁶ ‘Vanno liberamente alla Cancellaria Ducal, et nell’off.o delli Rasonati nostri, et hanno commodità di veder le deliberation nostre, et tutte le scritture et libri publici non solamente con maleficio, ma con poca reputation del Senato nostro’ (ASVe, *Compilazione Leggi*, b. 336, f. 341, 17 November 1542).

⁸⁷ In addition, the entry was crossed out altogether upon return (ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 4, *Alphabetum*).

⁸⁸ Sanudo was for instance consulted by the ambassador Francesco Contarini, whose own particular role in the city’s historiography will be discussed in Chapter 5.2.1 (Ibid., tab ‘F’ – see Appendix Figure 4).

⁸⁹ This in fact had been forbidden in a decree dating from 1413 (quoted in Cecchetti, *Gli archivi della Repubblica Veneta*, p. 19).

Bembo himself, where they could be more easily consulted in situ.⁹⁰ Although too early to be recorded in the *Alphabetum*, Bembo's request would thus most likely have been tenable within this system of retrieval, consultation and reservation, whilst any notes and summaries of historic Senate deliberations could simply have accompanied the copies of Sanudo he had asked for in the very same letter. In addition, his *Historia Vinitiana* concluded with the very events of which he had been enquiring, thus indicating that he did obtain this material in some form or another.⁹¹

Upon his death in 1547, Bembo's work was finally submitted to the Council of Ten for revision.⁹² After a series of edits to his text, which we will examine in the following chapter the first fully published volumes of Venice's official historiography were released in 1551 in Latin and 1552 in the vernacular. Ramusio and Ramberti's assistance in bringing his narrative to an end is a useful indication of the use of the chancery during the early years of Venice's official historiography programme. At this time, informal information networks and pre-existing compendia of material were a greater resource to the patrician historians than the hall of the *Cancellaria Superiore* as a place of study; a situation which was soon to change over the following decades as the chancery itself underwent the substantial administrative and structural reforms introduced in the previous chapter.

3.3: 1552-1598: The archive on the move

3.3.1: A mid-century hiatus?

In recent accounts of Venetian historiography, the decades following the publication of Bembo's *Historia Vinitiana* have been portrayed as something of a hiatus in the production of state-sponsored history, ending only with the appointment of Alvise Contarini in 1577.⁹³ In the meantime, it has been argued, the city saw only a few minor works of history being produced, as the government became disillusioned with the efforts of their recent appointments to the role. However, this notion is not reflected in the research activity which continued to be undertaken within the chancery throughout this period, especially by

⁹⁰ Castellani, 'Il prestito dei codici manoscritti della Biblioteca di S Marco'; Pesenti, 'La Biblioteca Marciana nella sua storiografia', pp. 146-148; Zorzi, 'La circolazione del libro a Venezia nel cinquecento'

⁹¹ Bembo, *Della historia Vinitiana*, pp. 178r-179r

⁹² For a discussion of this revision process, which included further recourse to the chancery archive, see pp. 126-129 below.

⁹³ Cozzi, 'Cultura politica e religione', p. 236; Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, pp. 230-231. Gaeta considers the reintroduction of the post as 'symptomatic' of a new Venetian politics to emerge after the crises earlier in the decade (Gaeta, 'Storiografia, coscienza nazionale e politica culturale', p. 90).

secretaries such as Borghi, Ramusio and the compilers of the *Annali*, for whom this was in fact a period of intense productivity and individual initiative within the archive.

Neither were the government intent on abandoning their attempts to commission a document-led historical monument to the city. In May 1552, the Council of Ten in fact reissued the same deliberation for finding a successor to Bembo, this time confident that the office of historiographer was now highly desirable. As they stated: ‘this office, as far as we understand, will be willingly accepted by many of our honourable and worthy noblemen without any expense to the state.’⁹⁴ Certainly, aspiring historians such as Borghi and Ramusio illustrate that this was indeed the case, as did the attempts to produce a history of the city by the respected patrician scholar Daniele Barbaro. However, it was the aspirations of another patrician historian, Pietro Giustiniani, which formed the greatest link between history-writing and the chancery during this period. In 1560, the Senator, and future Head of the Ten, published what he considered a complete history of the Republic, the *Rerum Venetarum ab urbe condita historia*, intended ‘for great public honour and benefit.’⁹⁵ As he stated in the preface to his work, Giustiniani had been working on these volumes for six years, and had based his account on ‘that which has been narrated to me by our elders, alongside that which I myself have been able to see.’⁹⁶ Giustiniani submitted the work he had completed thus far to the Ten as an application for the office of historiographer. He petitioned for an annual stipend of one hundred and twenty ducats to continue his writings, as those before him had enjoyed, and in January 1562 was officially in the Republic’s employ as a historian.⁹⁷ Just one month later, however, Giustiniani’s suitability for the office was placed under heavy scrutiny, as concerns were raised that sections of his work had dishonoured an important noble family in the Venetian territory of Cyprus.⁹⁸ The Ten quickly turned against their historian, referring to him as ‘poorly informed of the events of this period’, and ordered that all copies of his work be recalled, and the author’s stipend suspended, until it could be properly reviewed by a panel of government-appointed patricians.⁹⁹

The panel’s report on Giustiniani’s work was submitted in September that year, and listed not only mistakes in the historian’s account, but also a number of serious omissions.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 20, f. 116v, 21 May 1552.

⁹⁵ Quoted in Gino Benzoni, ‘Giustinian, Pietro’, DBI, vol. 57 (2001).

⁹⁶ Giustiniani, *Rerum Venetarum ab urbe condita historia* (Venetiis, 1560), p. xxvi.

⁹⁷ Benzoni, ‘Giustinian, Pietro’.

⁹⁸ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 25, ff. 79v-80r (19 February 1561 m.v.).

⁹⁹ These were elected in March: Thomas Contarini, Bernardo Zorzi, Melichior Natali, and Pietro Minoto (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 25, f. 87v, 6 March 1562).

¹⁰⁰ In particular, they noted, Giustiniani left out crucial details regarding the backdrop of the Italian Wars (ASVe, CX Com., b. 85, 18 September 1562).

Such mistakes, they argued, ‘always occur to those historians who do not find themselves present at the events of which they write, or else have no way of seeing the secrets or archives of the Prince or the Republic.’¹⁰¹ This statement, written only a few years after the publication of Patrizi’s *Della historia dieci dialoghi*, thus built upon the philosopher’s notion of archival research as a surrogate for eyewitness testimony,¹⁰² and was the basis of their subsequent recommendations:

He must take instruction of these noteworthy events from the letters and acts of the Senate, from the *avvisi* of the orators and other public ministers which are in the *Secreto* [...] so that his description of our past deeds will be compiled with greater illumination and foundation.¹⁰³

The Ten heeded their advice, and decreed on the very same day that Giustiniani:

May see the registers of the deliberations of the Senate, similarly the letters of our ambassadors and other public representatives delivered to our government, and other records which concern the Senate, first declaring to the Heads of this Council that which he would like to see [...] so that with good and true information he may reform the books of his history, already brought to light, with the necessary corrections and additions, and to continue his work for the honour of our state.¹⁰⁴

On this condition, his suspension was rescinded, and Giustiniani retained his office until his death in 1577, having published a new edition of his work just a year earlier in 1576.

3.3.2: Alvise Contarini

The attempt to replace Bembo as state historian had thus been a highly informative process for the Ten. Despite the ‘flourishing and well-presented literary style’ with which

¹⁰¹ ‘Esser avvenute ad esso Giustinian quello, che sempre avviene a quelli, che non si ritrovono presenti nelle fatti, et gesti descritti, over non hanno modo di veder li secreti et archivi de Principi, o repubbliche’ (Ibid.).

¹⁰² As discussed in Chapter 1.2.

¹⁰³ ‘Prendesse istruzione delli cose occorse degne di memoria dalle *lettere*, et atti del Senato, et dagl’*avvisi* deli Oratori, et altri Ministri publici che sono nel secreto, [...] che cose facendo la descriptione delle cose nostre sarà con maggior lume et co’ più sodo fondamento’ (ASVe, CX Com., b. 85, 18 September 1562).

¹⁰⁴ ‘Sia concesso, che’l posser veder i libri delle parte del senato, et similmente le *lettere* dell’ *ambasciatori priori* et altri *nostre* representanti, indricciate al *Dominio nostro*, et altre scritte, al detto senato pertinenti, dichiarando prima a i capi di questo *consiglio* quello, che vorrà veder [...] accioche con buona, et vera informatione possa riformar i libri delle dette sue historie, già date in luce, con le correzioni, et additione, che saranno necessarie, et proseguir l’opera con la debita instructione, per honor del stato *nostro*’ (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 25, f. 119, 18 September 1562).

Giustiniani had compiled his history as an independent exercise,¹⁰⁵ it was only after the government had opened the archives to him that the historian could produce a work suitable for publication.¹⁰⁶ Giustiniani's admission to the *Segreta* was indicative of the increasing centrality of the collection as the basis of Venice's official historical narratives, as discussed in the following chapter. Consequently, when the Ten came to appoint their next historiographer in March 1577, just four months after Giustiniani's death, their deliberations gave even greater attention to the terms of this access:

Our dear nobleman Ser Alvisè Contarini, elected by this council to the office of writing the history of our Republic, desiring to do so with every diligence, and to give life to what he will write with the spirit of truth, has requested that he be given liberty to see the secret deeds of the Senate and of this council from such number of years previous as he sees fit. His request being appropriate, all the more so because for these materials, which whilst ongoing must remain of the utmost secrecy, after a certain number of years such secrecy is no longer necessary.

Let it be passed, therefore, that ser Alvisè Contarini, to said ends of his history-writing, be given liberty to see in the registers, files and secret letters both of this council and of the Senate that material which he considers worthy of being put in his history, but only those which have been passed from 1570 and earlier. In addition, he may not see said registers, files and letters, in any place other than that in which they are currently being stored.¹⁰⁷

Although Contarini's request, made two months after his initial appointment, suggests that access to the chancery was still to be obtained at the initiative of the historian himself, the

¹⁰⁵ Giustiniani's 'acconcio, et accommodato stile' was praised in the report cited above.

¹⁰⁶ Giustiniani's history was highly praised by Paolo Ramusio in his dedicatory preface to the historian as one of the three Heads of the Ten, and earned him the title of *Polyhistor* (Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, pp. ii-iii 'Agl' Illustrissimi et Eccellentissimi Signori'). The notion of the historian's suitability for print in relation to their use of the archive will be discussed in the following chapter.

¹⁰⁷ 'Il Diletto Nobel Nostro Alvisè Contarini Cavallier, eletto per questo consegio al carico del scriver l'istoria della Republica Nostra, desideroso di attendervi con ogni diligentia, et di dar vita a' quanto scriverà, con l'anima della verità, ne ha ricercati a' darle libertà di veder le cose segrete di questo Conseglio, et del Senato, passate da quel numero de anni in la che ne parerà, la qual sua richiesta essendo conveniente, et tanto più, quanto che le materie, le quali mentre si trattano, deveno star secretissime, passato qualche numero di anni, non è più necessaria tal segretezza.

L'anderà parte, che sia data libertà al predetto ser Alvisè Contarini Cavallier, che per il sudetto effetto del scriver l'istoria possa veder n i libri, filze, et lettere segrete, così di questo Conseglio, come del Senato quelle materie che le parerà degne di esser poste nell'istoria, quelle però solamente che sono state spedite dal 1570 in là, non potendo veder li ditti libri, filze, et lettere in altro locho, che dove al presente si tengono.' (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 20, 9 May 1577).

grant itself set a much clearer format for how historical research would be conducted in the chancery from here on.¹⁰⁸ In particular, the classification of the most recent and sensitive material meant that the historian could consult the remainder of the collection – including the separate archives of the Ten¹⁰⁹ – without the direct intervention and supervision of its secretaries, as had previously been the case.

Although less obliged to liaise with the secretaries of the chancery as a matter of policy, historians such as Contarini were still seemingly reliant on their expertise in locating relevant material, especially in the wake of the two substantial fires which had already disrupted much of the collection and its order.¹¹⁰ With the contents of the *Segreta* having been scattered throughout the Palace and beyond in a hastily arranged attempt to save it from the flames, its staff would have provided the only real opportunity to navigate its surviving papers. In August 1578, for instance, one secretary wrote that they had recently uncovered ‘twenty-nine diverse registers and booklets’ amongst the loose containers of the Palace, alongside two volumes of Bembo’s drafted history found in a separate cupboard, which were ‘to be shown to Ser Alvise Contarini, who holds the office of writing our history.’¹¹¹ Contarini’s short tenure as historiographer, which ended with his death in November 1579, was thus dictated as much by practical circumstance as state secrecy.

3.3.3: Paolo Paruta

Appointed as Contarini’s successor in February 1580,¹¹² and admitted to the chancery upon request just a few weeks later,¹¹³ the noted diplomat and political philosopher Paolo Paruta first entered the chancery in a similar state of turmoil. In May 1579, the Council of Ten had made one of its earliest attempts to bring order to the collection whilst a new archival chamber was being constructed, decreeing that, whilst a new home for the *Segreta* was being located, its papers should be relocated into a series of small cupboards ‘which can be carried by a single person over their shoulder’, each with their own lock and key.¹¹⁴ The experience of the 1577 fire had taught that housing records in heavy chests throughout the building was a significant risk factor, and so a hundred ducats were spent on these more portable

¹⁰⁸ A format which was followed in the majority of later grants, as discussed below.

¹⁰⁹ Which, as discussed on p. 66 above, were themselves being reorganised and preserved in cupboards and chambers adjacent to their offices.

¹¹⁰ See pp. 63-64 below.

¹¹¹ ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 5.

¹¹² ASVe, CX Com., reg. 34, ff. 193-194, 18 Feb 1579 m.v.

¹¹³ In this case, the date of declassification was moved up to 1575 (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 12, f. 39, 21 March 1580).

¹¹⁴ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 34, f. 98v, 5 May 1579.

containers.¹¹⁵ By the time the new archival chamber had been opened behind the Senate assembly hall in 1588,¹¹⁶ Paruta had already submitted the first three books of his history,¹¹⁷ alongside his detailed account of the recent War of Cyprus,¹¹⁸ for which he would have had to conduct his research within this temporary, unfixed archival space.

As in the case of his predecessor, the loss of the *Segreta*'s previous structure would have been a significant obstacle to the location and retrieval of relevant material. It was not until 1586, for instance, that the Ten deliberated over the first index of the collection after its partial destruction, in which they stated that even the secretaries had been struggling to find necessary material for government affairs.¹¹⁹ To a certain extent, the historian would have been able to capitalise on his own personal connections to the chancery and its staff. In January 1584, for instance, he had been one of the three *Proveditori* for the construction of the Palace who would compile the report recommending the former Ducal chapel as the new permanent home for the collection.¹²⁰ Five years later, Paruta wrote to the Ten in defence of a secretary of the Senate, Ambrosio Ottobon, over a pay dispute, in which he expressed both a detailed understanding, and a long standing admiration, of the secretary's career within the chancery.¹²¹

Doubtless, these personal and professional ties would have been invaluable in the historian's attempt to build up a working knowledge of an archive in relative disarray. Of far greater importance, however, was the new series of reference guides to the collection which secretaries such as Ottobon had been compiling throughout the course of this upheaval. At the time of Paruta's letter in 1589, the series of *Annali* and *Pandette* registers now comprised at least nine complete volumes, each containing transcriptions of both diplomatic and deliberative records and narrating the major events of Venetian history since 1551.¹²²

¹¹⁵ ASVe, *Provveditori al sal*, reg. 10, f. 30v, 26 May 1579.

¹¹⁶ As discussed on p. 104 below, and in Chapter 2.4.

¹¹⁷ In accordance with the new conditions set out by the Ten (as examined in the following chapter), Book 1 was submitted in 1580 (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 35, f. 140, 22 February 1580 m.v.; BNM, Cod. Lat. X, 77), and Books 2 and 3 were submitted together in 1583 (BNM, Cod. Lat. X, 78).

¹¹⁸ Paruta had intended to incorporate this into his wider history (BNM, Cod. It. VII, 532; Benzoni and Zanato (eds.), *Storici e politici veneti*, pp. 877-881). Its compilation, and relationship with the archive, will be examined in more detail in Chapter Four.

¹¹⁹ This deliberation is quoted in Baschet, *Les archives de Venise*, p. 167. The indexes were to be compiled by the two *Savi del Collegio* responsible for overseeing the production of the *Annali* registers, but unfortunately no clear trace of this work survives today.

¹²⁰ Lorenzi, *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo Ducale di Venezia*, p. 491.

¹²¹ Paruta accredited the secretary with all six volumes of the *Annali* to date, as well as the third volume of the *Pandette*, which was also attributed to Borghi and another secretary, Antonio Mazza. Paruta even noted a series of registers authored by Ottobon, in which all the major events in Europe and the East in recent years had been written down and organised by state (ASVe, CX Com., b. 180, 12 October 1589).

¹²² See Appendix Table 2 for a list of the early *Annali* series.

Ottobon, who had been appointed as the *Annalista* in 1571,¹²³ had spent much of the previous two decades condensing the scattered *Segreta* collection into a unified series of codices, and as such was praised by the historian for having conducted a vital public service. ‘Through his efforts,’ Paruta argued, ‘one may read the deeds of these times in a well ordered and distinct manner, which has not been possible in ages past.’¹²⁴ In addition, Paruta’s letter described the *Pandette* – a series to which Ottobon had contributed before his official appointment in 1571 – as ‘the most useful books within the *Segreta*, as they contain the most important negotiations passed between this Republic and the other princes during the period in which they were written,’ and continued by praising the *Annali* series as a whole:

[They] contain all the events occurring in the Republic in these times – the deliberations of the Senate, the treatises made at the courts of other Princes, and in this city, by their ambassadors, and every other memorable deed [...] as well as an index, through which one can easily locate all the material contained within.¹²⁵

In a period of relative disorder, the arrangement of the *Annali* thus served as a microcosm of the *Segreta* itself, and replaced volumes such as Sanudo’s diaries as a surrogate for browsing the rest of the collection.

The use of the *Annali* as a principal point of reference for understanding Venetian history within the chancery is illustrated by a variety of notes which have survived in private collections, written in the hands of both secretaries and visitors alike. These papers follow a similar format to those compiled by Sanudo earlier in the century, in which the structure of the registers was used to form summary timelines of Venetian affairs before later adding fuller transcriptions of individual documents whenever more detail was required.¹²⁶ Paruta’s own reliance on this series as the basis of his research was further reiterated in a letter to the Ten in 1594, recounting the progress of his historical writings whilst on diplomatic duty in

¹²³ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 30, f. 71v, 29 November 1571 (election dated 30 Novembris in *Collegio*).

¹²⁴ ASVe, CX Com., b. 180 (12 October 1589).

¹²⁵ ‘Sono questi de’ migliori et più utili libri che siano nella secreta, poiché in essi contengono i negotii più importanti passati tra questa Republica et altri principi per il corso di quel tempo nel quale sono scritti, ch’è dal 1550 fino all’anno 1567 [...] Si contengono tutte le cose successe alla Republica in questi tempi, le deliberationi del Senato, le trattationi fatte alle corti de’ principi et in questa città da’ loro ambasciatori et ogni altra cosa più memorabile, [...] ne’ quali libri sono anco fatte le sue rubriche, sì che con facilità si ponno ritrovare tutto le materie che in essi si contengono’ (Ibid.).

¹²⁶ Copies and summaries extracted from the *Annali* can be found in BNM, Cod. It, VII, 410 and 2586, and BMC, Cicogna 3281.4, #49. The second of these is a full codex of transcriptions, whilst the other two are only loose fragments of notes. Nevertheless, contemporary pagination on the third suggests that it was part of a much larger volume (Appendix Figure 6). All three are anonymous, but seem to include secretary hand as well as others, suggesting that the notes were made by the chancery staff and later distributed.

Rome. In it, Paruta petitioned the Ten to send him any material which would help him to continue his narrative beyond the events of the War of Cyprus, arguing that:

This period will be much easier [to research] than the one before, which has been extremely difficult due to the confusion within the older records, as within the *Segreta* are found the *Annali* compiled by Ambrosio Ottobon, in which have been summarily recounted the most important and noteworthy events of these times. Such volumes would help me at the very least in ordering the thread of the historical narrative, in which lies the greatest difficulty, after which I will be able, through reading the letters [which they contain], to give perfection to that which I have already written.¹²⁷

According to Paruta, the *Annali* served to provide both a narrative structure and a set of important details to the account which he had already written, and he was thus dependent on the remainder of the series to continue his account beyond 1573, the date of the last volume which he had consulted. However, despite his assurances that he would replace the volumes, or any copies thereof, upon his return,¹²⁸ this request was one privilege too far for the state historian, as both the *Annali* and their authors had been already forbidden from leaving the city.¹²⁹ Unable to procure this crucial research tool during his time abroad, Paruta subsequently failed to piece together a sufficient chronology of the events of the previous two decades. Upon his death in 1598, his work had thus concluded at the very same point as the *Annali* which he had been able to consult whilst in the city.¹³⁰

The second half of the sixteenth century constituted a period of transition for the secret chancery as a tool of historical research. Even less able to rely on the disrupted organisation of the collection than their predecessors, the visiting historians instead began to turn once again to the expertise of its secretaries, this time through the new series of narrative cartularies to which some had devoted decades of service. Far from replacing the

¹²⁷ 'Sarà molto più facile; ove per l' addietro, per la confusione delle scritture pubbliche più antiche, è stato difficilissimo. Perocchè si ritrovano in quella secreta alcuni annali fatti da missier Ambrogio Ottobono di buona memoria, ne' quali essendo sommariamente raccolte le cose più importanti di questi tempi e più degne i notizia, mi potrebbe tale fatica servire almeno per ordire tutto il filo della narrazione istorica, nel che consiste la maggiore difficoltà; per dovere poi con la lettura delle medesime lettere dare perfezione a quanto io avessi qui già scritto' (Paruta, *La legazione di Roma*, p. 212, 'Roma, 22 May 1593').

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

¹²⁹ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 30, f. 71v (29 November 1571).

¹³⁰ Paruta, *La legazione di Roma*, p. 213. Cozzi's account suggests that Paruta, like Bembo before him, may have also based his early accounts on Sanudo's diaries (Cozzi, 'Cultura politica e religione', p. 264), the prototype transcription registers for the *Segreta*. This would certainly have been possible, as the new grant of access had allowed the historian into the collections of the Ten, where the diaries were being stored.

official historiography project after the death of Bembo, as some historians have suggested,¹³¹ the *Annali* registers helped to facilitate the work of the historiographers throughout this period of substantial reconstruction within the rest of the collection. As examined in the following chapter, this new resource was to have a significant impact upon the works of the historians themselves, and continued to do so as the newly constructed *Segreta* chamber began to develop as a fully dedicated archival workspace over the turn of the seventeenth century.

3.4: 1599-1651: The archive under the historian-superintendents

By the end of Paruta's tenure as historian, the majority of the refurbishment of the former Ducal chapel, the new home of the *Cancelleria Segreta*, had been completed. Located on the north-east corner of the Palace's second floor, the chamber itself had two distinct entrances. The first was in the Senate chamber itself, in which two concealed doors either side of the rear platform led to the Ducal chapel and its recently refurbished sacristy. The second entrance ran through the Ducal apartments on the floor below, from which a set of 'somewhat tight and poorly formed stairs' led to a complex of small rooms before the archive chamber itself.¹³² Unfortunately, unlike the chamber of the *Cancelleria Superiore*, which still survives with much of its original furniture today, little is recorded of the actual structure and furnishings of the *Segreta*'s new interior, although one nineteenth-century commentary described a series of open shelves made of strong larch wood.¹³³ The expenses listed by the architect Antonio da Ponte in 1586 specify that the chamber was to be divided into two vaults by a new ceiling constructed at a height of twelve feet, measuring 25'x23', with a stone staircase connecting the two, and two windows running along the tops of the walls.¹³⁴ In addition, the Senate set aside four hundred ducats for the purchase of new cupboards and other furniture in 1588.¹³⁵

Most importantly, the new archival chamber had a clearly defined workspace and place of consultation, in the form of an antechamber (the *antesegreta*) located at its entrance. Although again few records of its construction survive today, subsequent references to the

¹³¹ Cozzi, 'Cultura politica e religione', p. 236; Gaeta, 'Storiografia, coscienza nazionale e politica culturale', p. 90; Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, p. 231.

¹³² Cicognara, *Le fabbriche e i monumenti cospicui di Venezia*, tav. 21 (Figure 9 of the Appendix); Baschet, *Les archives de Venise*, p. 174.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

¹³⁴ Lorenzi, *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo Ducale di Venezia*, p. 504 (17 April 1586).

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 506 (22 April 1588). Although not listed, a later invoice for furniture purchased by the Ten suggests that the cupboards and tables would have been made from either walnut or pine, decorated with metallic ornaments or emblems (*Ibid.*, pp. 534-535, 5 July 1593).

chamber indicate that its purpose was to act as a workspace for visitors in order to separate both patricians and secretaries from the main archival depository.¹³⁶ Whilst largely intended as a matter of security, for which the Heads of the Ten invested additional revenue in the erection of new front gates,¹³⁷ the furnishings of this new reading room provided a far more fitting working environment for the status of the patrician historiographers, with reports on the early *antesegeta* describing the same array of portraiture and cosmographies lining its walls as could be found throughout the other major halls of the Palace.¹³⁸

The first historian to be commissioned after the reconstruction, Andrea Morosini, did not immediately make use of the new archival workspace available to him. Appointed as the successor to his long-time associate Paruta in December 1598, Morosini did not submit his request for access to the collection until nearly a year into his new office.¹³⁹ Instead, according to the report of his first salary payment in December 1599, he had spent his first year ‘making voluminous efforts around which he plans to construct his History, and continuously transcribing the materials which will be put together’, presumably from other manuscript and oral sources.¹⁴⁰ However, Morosini’s relationship with the secret chancery was to be substantially altered just three years into his tenure by the creation, as mentioned in Chapter 2.4 above, of the superintendent’s office in September 1601. This new office, held for an annual salary of one hundred ducats, gave the state historians direct responsibility for delegating, supervising and reporting upon the work of the secretaries with the secret chancery, thus fundamentally shifting the dynamic between the two.¹⁴¹ Whereas previous historians had been occasional visitors to the *Segreta*, dependent on the blessing of

¹³⁶ As discussed below, even the majority of secretaries were required to work outside the main depository. In 1619, and again in 1639, the Ten appointed temporary staff from the lower rungs of the secretary hierarchy to transcribe the recent secret registers, on the strict condition that they did so only in the antechamber, and left their finished work in a container to be archived by the staff of the *Segreta* proper (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 32, 18 January 1618 m.v.; ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, f. 59, 5 April 1639). On some occasions, the demands of political secrecy required the use of the *Segreta* chamber itself, such as in a 1605 decree which stated that secretaries appointed to the secret ciphers, or *ziffre*, could only compile or translate coded letters in the main hall. However, the decree also stipulated that *ziffristi* could work in the *antesegeta* if they ensured the door was shut whilst doing so (BMC, P.D. 169c, XXI, 31 August 1605).

¹³⁷ Later in 1605, the Heads of the Ten set aside sixty-four *soldi* for the construction of new gates for its entrance (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 33, f. 116v, 28 November 1605).

¹³⁸ In 1605 a series of ancient paintings discovered in the storage rooms of the Ducal apartments were donated by the Ten to adorn its walls (ASVe, *Compilazione delle leggi*, b. 301, 2 September 1605), alongside the offices of the Heads of the Ten and the chapel itself. In addition, a 1636 inventory of books inherited from the patrician Domenico Molin cited a series of *Cosmografia* which had been used to create decorative charts for the walls of the antechamber (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 40, 4 September 1636). This adornment was carried out in tandem with the refurbishment of the *Cancellaria Inferiore* below, in which artworks and sculptures were commissioned to decorate the chamber (ASVe, *Provveditori al Sal*, b. 413).

¹³⁹ The date of declassification for the chancery records on this occasion was 1595 (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 27, 12 November 1599).

¹⁴⁰ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 49, f. 95r (29 December 1599).

¹⁴¹ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 14, ff. 74-75 (17 September 1601).

the state for access and the intercession of secretaries for their consultation, now they too were fully salaried archival staff, given the privilege of determining their own research activity within the collection whilst bearing the responsibility of regularly attending to its administration. This responsibility was reflected in the recruitment of historians by the Ten from here on, as Morosini's successors were appointed almost exclusively from their own number.¹⁴² Many of the candidates possessed few of the literary credentials shared by their earlier counterparts,¹⁴³ and some instead were appointed after having already worked in the archives on government business.¹⁴⁴ In this respect, the office of historiographer was now as much an administrative role as it was scholarly.

The appointment of the patrician *soprintendenti* was an unprecedented addition to the hierarchy of the secretarial class which had traditionally staffed the chanceries of the Ducal Palace. Nevertheless, their creation was precipitated by an all too familiar problem, that of disorder and disruption within the collection. In April 1600, a report by Zaccaria Rosso, one of the secretaries responsible for the custody of the new *Segreta* depository, stated that a shortage of manpower and organisation during the relocation of the collection during the previous decade meant that many of the most important registers of the Senate and College had remained incomplete over recent months and years, whilst the general index of the collection had remained blank since 1554. In the absence of any registers for the instruction of current affairs, the government's secretaries had instead been consulting the original *filze*, which were eroding away as a result.¹⁴⁵ In his first report as superintendent, Andrea Morosini elaborated on Rosso's concerns, stating that whilst the registers of Senate deliberations had largely been updated to the previous year, many of the indexes of diplomatic records had been left incomplete since the late 1580s,¹⁴⁶ whilst the registers of audiences made before the Doge had not been compiled since the 1570s.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² Of the historians appointed between 1598 and 1651, four featured prominently in the election registers of the Ten (Andrea Morosini, Nicolò Contarini, Paolo Morosini and Battista Nani), alongside two future superintendents of the archive, Girolamo Corner and Giacomo Marcello (di Andrea) (ASVe, CX Cod., 60).

¹⁴³ Cozzi, 'Cultura politica e religione', pp. 223-224. This may explain why so many historians, including Nicolò Contarini, Paolo Morosini, Giacomo Marcello and Alvise Contarini, failed to fulfil the terms of their office during the seventeenth century.

¹⁴⁴ As discussed in the previous chapter, Nicolò Contarini had long been involved in projects to reorder and index the archives of the Ten before he succeeded Andrea Morosini as superintendent in 1618. In 1621, Contarini then nominated his cousin, Paolo Morosini, as a deputy superintendent whilst he was on military duty away from the city (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 71, ff. 11v-12r, 10 March 1621). Morosini would later be appointed to succeed Contarini as historian after his death ten years later.

¹⁴⁵ Reumont, *Della diplomazia Italiana*, p. 319.

¹⁴⁶ ASVe, CX Sec. b. 27 (17 September 1601).

¹⁴⁷ Reumont, *Della Diplomazia Italiana*, p. 325 ('Relazione dello Storico Andrea Morosini intorno alla Cancelleria segreta').

As a result of these concerns, the early decades of the seventeenth century were subsequently dominated by attempts to create a comprehensive index of the newly reconstructed collection, a process which has been well recounted by historians such as de Vivo as an attempt to better organise the government records as a legal and diplomatic weapon of state.¹⁴⁸ However, such a task soon proved to be untenable, not least due to the vast amount of loose historical material which had yet to be accounted for.¹⁴⁹ The principal aim of the Ten and its archival staff was to produce a ‘general index’ of the *Segreta*, which would not only list the registers within the collection, but also combine the various *rubriche* of each to form a single, comprehensive calendar of their contents. However, despite numerous attempts to compile them, the surviving incomplete drafts merely serve to illustrate the insurmountable scale of the task, to which only one or two secretaries were appointed at any one time.¹⁵⁰ The most successful attempt to create a coherent series of indexes began in 1600, when the secretaries of the Senate compiled the *Indice Generale della Segreta*. The structure of these new finding aids was markedly different from those which had gone before; whereas older indexes had largely constituted an anthology of the city’s major laws, these listed both the registers and files of recent affairs in a thematic and chronological order, mirroring to a certain extent the transcriptions in the *Annali* and thus further illustrating the growing historicisation of the archive discussed in the previous chapter.¹⁵¹ By 1616, however the *Indici* were largely empty, save for the templates of subject headings which had been drawn up in advance, and the series ceased altogether after 1619.¹⁵²

It was for this reason that the *Annali* and *Pandette*, the ‘very soul of the *Segreta*’,¹⁵³ and so central to Paruta’s research in a disorganised archive, continued to dominate the experience of historians into the seventeenth century. In the case of Morosini, his surviving notes demonstrate their role as a primary point of reference. The first of these can be found in the early volumes of his own political diaries, retrospectively narrating the three decades before the author’s entry into government, which were primarily composed from extracts

¹⁴⁸ As discussed on p. 55 above.

¹⁴⁹ As discussed on p. 68 above.

¹⁵⁰ One such draft can be found in ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 5, #209 (‘Rubricario, 1612 [...] 1619’). This loosely bound series of *fascicoli*, which has since been heavily damaged, attempted to list the contents of the secret registers, most likely from the Senate, pertaining to foreign ministers.

¹⁵¹ ASVe, *Indice Generale della Segreta* (this series, consisting of ten volumes, has yet to be given a full *collocazione* in the archive today). For a comparison with the surviving sixteenth-century indexes of the *Segreta*, see ASVe, Senato e Collegio. Miscellanea, ‘Indice Segreta’ (listed in Appendix Table 1).

¹⁵² Attempts to compile the indexes had not ceased altogether, as a series of similar drafts dating from 1620 suggest (ASVe, MADM, b. 50), but once again the task seemed to have been insurmountable for only a small number of secretaries. The long term gaps in the series were noted ten years later (BMC P.D. 169c, XXIV, 28 May 1626).

¹⁵³ As discussed in Chapter 2.3.

and summaries of the three *Pandette* volumes.¹⁵⁴ The second set of notes, a small series of fascicles with alphabetised tabs later bound together as part of a larger manuscript, illustrate that Morosini also made similar notes for individual years or major events later in the century.¹⁵⁵ Both sets of notes were structured in a similar manner to those taken during the previous decades; a combination of summary timelines and verbatim extracts which allowed the historian both to visualise the chronology of recent affairs and complete any gaps in their knowledge of relevant detail. A similar set of chronologies based on the *Annali* were also compiled by the historian and *Consultore* Paolo Sarpi – long assumed to have exploited his access to the *Segreta* whilst writing his seminal histories of the Church¹⁵⁶ – who used the registers to better comprehend Venice’s diplomatic activity during the Interdict Crisis of 1606.¹⁵⁷

To a certain extent, the continuing disorder throughout the rest of the collection is reflected in the fact that the official historiography of the city suffered a similar hiatus between the posthumous publication of Morosini’s *Historia Veneta* in 1623, and the first edition of Battista Nani’s *Historia Della Repubblica Veneta* in 1662. In the meantime, successive state historians had failed to meet the terms of their office. After Morosini’s death in 1618, the works of both Nicolò Contarini and Paolo Morosini were overlooked by the Ten as products of their official historiography programme, whilst those of Giacomo Marcello and Alvise Contarini remained incomplete upon their deaths, the former having ordered his unfinished drafts to be burned like Navagero before him.¹⁵⁸ Moreover, the dual responsibilities of historical research and archival management were often too arduous for a single patrician to undertake alone. In 1635, Paolo Morosini tendered his resignation from the superintendent’s post, citing the insurmountable number of reforms needed to rectify the collection, which would be better entrusted to another with more energy.¹⁵⁹ Despite the Ten’s insistence that the two posts must always be held together,¹⁶⁰ and the promise of an

¹⁵⁴ BMC, M.S. Cicogna 2560, ff. 1-46. The authorship of these series of notes, and those discussed below, was first confirmed in the nineteenth century by Emmanuele Cicogna in his *Delle iscrizioni Veneziane* (vol. IV, pp. 480-481).

¹⁵⁵ The fragments of these notes had seemingly formed part of a larger notebook, which had alphabetically tabbed pages (BMC, Malvezzi 136, ff. 458-459).

¹⁵⁶ De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, p. 53.

¹⁵⁷ As with the notes compiled by Morosini, these were divided by month, and contained occasional marginal notes specifying the country to which certain entries pertained (ASVe, *Consultore in Jure*, b. 23, ff. 48-76 – Appendix, Fig. 8).

¹⁵⁸ ASVe, CX Sec. b. 43 (14 January 1650 m.v.).

¹⁵⁹ ASVe, CX Sec. b. 40 (18 April 1635).

¹⁶⁰ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, f. 4r (18 April 1635); Callard, ‘L’histoire comme art de gouverner’, p. 48.

assistant for Morosini,¹⁶¹ they were later held by two separate patricians after his death, and only effectively brought back together by Nani's appointment in 1651.¹⁶²

Despite this, however, the new administrative ties between the historian and the archive during this period led to a greater level of personal expertise amongst the scholars themselves. As a succession of superintendents grappled with the attempts to bring the collection to order, their reports and proposals illustrate not only a frequent attendance at the *Segreta* chamber, but a strong working knowledge of the contents and their arrangement, and even an awareness of the careers and personal circumstances of the secretaries under their charge.¹⁶³ As well as reporting back to the Ten on the state of the collection and its custodians, the historian was also charged with confirming to the government that ambassadorial secretaries had returned all relevant materials to the archive after each mission,¹⁶⁴ delegating tasks amongst secretaries according to his own knowledge of their particular strengths,¹⁶⁵ and overseeing the creation of the *rubriche* of the collection and its various register series.¹⁶⁶ In addition, many of the superintendents were even brought in to reform the archives of the Ten, as the Council strove to create more detailed indexes and capitulars of their ancient laws and jurisdictions.¹⁶⁷

As already seen in the case of Nicolò Contarini's attempt to preserve the ancient registers of the collection in 1626,¹⁶⁸ reform within the chancery was driven by the personal initiative of the historiographers. In 1636, Paolo Morosini's complaints regarding the difficulties of indexing diplomatic records led to a change in practice for binding together ambassadorial letters, which ensured that loose returning files were stored together as small

¹⁶¹ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, f. 13r (20 February 1635 m.v.).

¹⁶² Despite the Ten's commitment, the two posts were indeed separated in December 1637 after Morosini's death, upon which a different patrician, albeit also named Giacomo Marcello (di Antonio), was appointed as historian, and Morosini's assistant Marcello (di Andrea) as superintendent (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, f. 33, 23 December 1637). The Heads of the Ten later returned to what they considered to be the right and lawful state of affairs in August 1648 when, upon the death of Giacomo Marcello di Andrea, the historian Marcello di Antonio was appointed to the superintendent's post, complete with the requisite salary (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 42, f. 79v, 7 August 1648).

¹⁶³ For examples of some of the most detailed reports, see: ASVe, CX Sec., b. 28 (27 January 1604 m.v.); *ibid.*, b. 32 (19 April 1617); *ibid.*, b. 42 (7 June 1641); *ibid.*, b. 44 (4 August 1651).

¹⁶⁴ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 64, f. 152 (18 December 1614).

¹⁶⁵ ASVe, CX Sec., b. 28 (27 January 1604 m.v.).

¹⁶⁶ ASVe, CX Sec., b. 33 (21 June 1619).

¹⁶⁷ As detailed in an eighteenth-century copy of the decrees and reports pertaining to these projects, the superintendents Nicolò Contarini, Andrea Morosini and Giacomo Marcello were all appointed to attend the Ten's archives in turn (ASVe, CX Cod., 80). As we will see in Chapter 5.4.2 (p. 187), this was an important context for the internal disputes concerning the authority of the Ten itself during this time, which subsequently became a subject of erudite study for the Venetian historian Gian Antonio Venier. Morosini in particular repeatedly served as an archival advisor to the Ten regarding its own records, such as in 1611 when he was tasked with relaying to the *Savi di Collegio* all the archival material concerning the governance of the lagoon (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 61, f. 20, 6 April 1611).

¹⁶⁸ See Chapter 2.4.

booklets which could be more easily collated together as a single *busta*.¹⁶⁹ Morosini's assistant and successor, Giacomo Marcello, oversaw the employment of more secretaries to staff the archive and assist in the production of its registers.¹⁷⁰ Only a few months into his tenure as superintendent, the historiographer Battista Nani proposed a substantial overhaul of the process by which deliberative and diplomatic files – ‘che sono la radice d’ogni scrittura’ – were accessioned into the cupboards of the *Segreta*, stating that their constant movement between secretaries before being transcribed into the relevant registers was the most significant factor in the disorder of the collection.¹⁷¹ As a result, the secretaries of the chancery were made responsible for consigning material arriving at the Palace to the custodians of the *Segreta* at the first possible opportunity,¹⁷² whilst the cupboards designated for their storage were indexed for the first time by di Negri just ten years later.¹⁷³ This unprecedented interaction with the *Segreta* as an archival institution is likely to have afforded the historian a far greater working knowledge of its structure than before, which would have greatly aided the location of relevant material despite the gaps in its indexing.¹⁷⁴ Now responsible for the oversight of its staff, the relationship between superintendent and secretary was thus based on cooperative administration and research within the collection, rather than a dependence on the latter to locate and present the material which they needed.¹⁷⁵

The historian-superintendents were thus unique amongst the other patrician visitors to the archive. Able to negotiate the structure of the collection through their own experience as well as their relationship with the secretaries, the dearth of comprehensive indexing systems within the *Segreta* was far less restricting to the conduct of research than had been the case during the previous century. This is evident in the notes and writings of the historians themselves. Unlike his predecessor, for instance, Andrea Morosini was less reliant on the *Annali* as the sole repository of information concerning Venice's recent diplomacy,

¹⁶⁹ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, f. 15 (21 May 1636).

¹⁷⁰ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, ff. 56-57 (23 February 1638 m.v.); *ibid.*, 90v-91v (10 July 1641); *ibid.*, ff. 157v-159r (8 July 1647).

¹⁷¹ ASVe, CX Sec., b. 44 (4 August 1651).

¹⁷² ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, ff. 203v-205f (23 August 1651).

¹⁷³ As discussed in Chapter 2.6.

¹⁷⁴ Morosini, for his part, even demonstrated an awareness of the history of the *Segreta* itself, from its unguarded storage in the *Ducale* prior to 1419 up to the election of the new custodians in 1600 (Reumont, *Della Diplomazia Italiana*, p. 323).

¹⁷⁵ This did not mean that secretaries ceased to be advisors to visiting scholars; on the contrary, the custodians were called upon to assist the research of the *Consultori in Jure* (see below; ASVe, *Compilazione delle Leggi*, b. 151, #80 (3 August 1641), and were accredited for aiding the compilation of indexes by historian-superintendents such as Andrea Morosini (ASVe, CX Cod., 80, f. 13v). As we will see in Chapter 5.3 (p. 181), they were also on occasion members of patrician social circles, whilst custodians such as Valerio Antelmi continued to hold correspondence with historians such as Morosini long after their tenure (see for instance BMC, Cicogna 3204/68, f. 2r, 11 August 1612).

but instead took notes and transcriptions from a wider variety of registers and files within the collection.¹⁷⁶ On some occasions, as discussed in the final two chapters of this thesis, the historian was even able to use this wider array of source material to revise and augment the accounts written by Paruta.¹⁷⁷ In addition, as we will see in Chapter Five, this more holistic understanding of the archive as a source of information led to a new wave of historical investigations into Venice's more distant past, and greatly influenced the role of the city's historiography as a monument to the image of the Republic.

3.5: Access, privilege and secrecy: Conducting historical research in a political archive

In April and October 1600, the Council of Ten made their first substantial deliberations on the conduct and daily maintenance of the secret chancery archive in nearly a century and a half. The arrangement set out in the previous decree of 1459, in which a single secretary was responsible for both supervising and compiling the registers of the secret chancery under a single lock and key,¹⁷⁸ had been rendered insufficient by the erection of a vast archival chamber in which to house it – especially as the one secretary appointed to the role since the late 1570s, Alvise Agostini, was now too infirm to continue unassisted.¹⁷⁹ Instead, two secretaries to the Senate were now to bear the title of custodian together.¹⁸⁰ Now with an entire chamber to supervise rather than a lone series of chests, the two custodians were entrusted with its daily opening and closure, with at least one to be physically present within it at all times.¹⁸¹ Whilst at their post, they were tasked with the compilation of the Senate registers, the volumes of ambassadorial addresses,¹⁸² and the indexes of the collection. In addition, they were personally charged with logging and reporting any visitors to the chamber on a daily basis, with gathering necessary material for departing ambassadors, and with retrieving and re-shelving archival documents surrendered to the government.¹⁸³ The two custodians were exempt from all other responsibilities during their tenure, and were granted an additional stipend of forty ducats a year.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁶ See for instance BMC, Malvezzi 136, ff. 37-38, 458r (Appendix Figure 7).

¹⁷⁷ As we will see in Chapter 5.1.

¹⁷⁸ As discussed above on p. 82 (ASVe, CX Mist., reg. 15, f. 191r).

¹⁷⁹ See Appendix Table 8 for details of the secretary custodians.

¹⁸⁰ To that end, Zaccharia Rosso was appointed to assist the incumbent Agostini (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 50, ff. 16v-17r, 21 April 1600; *ibid.*, ff. 90v-91r, 30 October 1600).

¹⁸¹ The opening hours of the chamber were set between nine o'clock in the morning until the close of College assembly (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 50, ff. 91r, 30 October 1600).

¹⁸² See p. 141 below for more details concerning this series.

¹⁸³ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 55, ff. 50r-51r (23 June 1605).

¹⁸⁴ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 50, ff. 16v-17r (21 April 1600); *ibid.*, ff. 90v-91r (30 October 1600).

With the creation of a new system for the custody and management of the archive, as well as the designation and furnishing of a newly constructed reading room in its antechamber, the *Cancellaria Segreta* had established itself as a more distinct, functioning repository of information than the series of chests which housed the collection half a century earlier. Alongside the changing perceptions of the collection discussed in the previous chapter, the archive was also emerging as a recognised site for historical research, which thanks to a clause in the October 1600 decree now permitted members of the Senate into its walls for the very first time.¹⁸⁵ However, as discussed in the previous chapter, the chancery remained above all a site of secrecy and information control, with a series of strict regulations imposed upon its visitors as a result.¹⁸⁶

In April 1600, for instance, the custodians were charged with ensuring that no copying or note taking with any sort of writing implement was permissible in the *Segreta* chamber.¹⁸⁷ In 1611, the Senate itself decreed that the secretaries within the *Segreta* chamber must supervise the consultation of visitors at all times, and in 1612 the College declared that requests by patricians for copies, which had once been simply granted *in voce*, must now be recorded in writing.¹⁸⁸ Similar versions of these decrees were reiterated in May 1624 and January 1632,¹⁸⁹ with copies of their regulations often being pinned to the furniture of the *Segreta* itself, for the clarity of all visitors and secretaries.¹⁹⁰ At the same time, the Venetian government strove to tighten the physical security of both the *Segreta* chamber and its surrounding rooms, with architectural reports from 1614, 1620 and again in 1660 highlighting the structural weaknesses in the surrounding rooms of the Palace through which individuals could potentially break in to procure state secrets.¹⁹¹ In the event of such transgressions, especially those concerning acutely sensitive political material and carried

¹⁸⁵ The two surviving visitor logs from this period, dating from either side of the archive's relocation, indicate that the new chancery archive was subsequently consulted on a far more regular basis than ever before, with some Senators and ambassadors spending consecutive days in its reading room by the end of the seventeenth century (ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 4, 'Alphabetum'; ASVe, IS, b. 924, 'Nota de Senatori, che sono state a legger in Secreta, il mese di Settembre 1698').

¹⁸⁶ This has been well noted in recent literature, from Cecchetti, *Gli archivi della Repubblica Veneta*, pp. 11-31 to de Vivo, *Information and Communication*, pp. 48-53.

¹⁸⁷ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 50, ff. 90v-91r.

¹⁸⁸ Cecchetti, *Gli archivi della Repubblica Veneta*, pp. 17-18. Written requests for copies of state by foreign ministers were subsequently recorded on occasion (see for instance ASVe, *Serenissima Signoria, Lettere Sottoscritte, Terra, Filza*, b. 71), but this is unlikely to have been extensive.

¹⁸⁹ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 74, ff. 85-86 (30 May 1624); ASVe, CX Com., reg. 81, f. 280 (29 January 1631 m.v.) As discussed above, all but a small number of these registers (dated 1698) have since been lost.

¹⁹⁰ De Vivo, 'Ordering the Archive', p. 237.

¹⁹¹ ASVe, CX Sec., b. 31 (12 November 1614); ASVe, *Provveditori al sal*, b. 413, fasc. 30 (31 July 1620); ASVe, CX Sec., b. 46 (27 September 1660).

out for material gain, retribution could be as severe as loss of public office, imprisonment or even death.¹⁹²

Access and retrieval in the new *Segreta* chamber was thus in stark contrast to the more open-shelf arrangement of the previous century. Whereas registers could be held outside their chests in the *Cancellaria Superiore* for an indeterminate amount of time, the surviving visitor logs from the former sacristy suggest that material was retrieved and restored by the secretaries on a daily basis, readership and use were constantly supervised, and there was a physical distinction between reading room and depository. Were these restrictions, designed to protect the integrity of a collection whose contents continued to have an enduring political and diplomatic sensitivity, incompatible with the practice of historical research? For the state historians, now the administrators of the archive rather than its visitors, it is likely that these restrictions did not apply in quite the same way, as is attested by the notes which we know to have been copied and extracted from the registers of the collection, as well as the fact that the detail in their reports suggests that they were not restricted to the antechamber. Although the entry logs for this period have since been lost, fragments from the end of the seventeenth century suggest that their presence in the archive, in contrast to the visiting Senators and ambassadors, did not even need to be registered.¹⁹³ Moreover, as recent studies by Filippo de Vivo and Dorit Raines have demonstrated, the tight controls recorded in governmental decrees did not necessarily reflect the realities of accessing and consulting archival material.¹⁹⁴ Instead, as we will see in the following chapters, scholarly texts continued to be informed both by unrecorded consultations of the chancery registers, and by the private circulation of records which were meant to be consigned exclusively to the collection.

The failure of the Venetian government to maintain a monopoly over its own documented secrets may in part have stemmed from its delegation of their custody to the small group of secretaries who staffed the collection itself. It was upon these figures, who were responsible for retrieving and re-shelving the secret records, logging their use and obtaining authorisation for copies to be made in the *antesegeta*,¹⁹⁵ that the Ten and their Inquisitors depended for reports of any abuse. Although those who failed to inform the

¹⁹² According to the first complete set of rules concerning the *Segreta*, posted in 1647 (see Appendix Document 1), unauthorised copying could result in loss of government offices for life.

¹⁹³ Although only running between September and December 1698, the surviving entry logs under the *soprintendenza* of the historian Pietro Garzoni do not record his name (ASVe, IS, b. 924).

¹⁹⁴ De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, pp. 48-57. As Dorit Raines argues, the growth in archival consultation and note taking amongst the patriciate can be attributed to both the rise in the number of transcription registers within the collection, and the increasing affordability of paper itself (Raines, 'The Private Political Archives of the Venetian Patriciate', pp. 136-139).

¹⁹⁵ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 74, ff. 85r-86r (30 May 1624).

government of any such discretion were themselves liable to a fine,¹⁹⁶ this increased autonomy meant that the same informal channels through which Pietro Bembo obtained his archival information would likely have continued throughout this period.

In February 1619, three of the secretaries of the Senate were brought before the Inquisitors of State to answer questions concerning the distribution of papers pertaining to the former ambassador in Turin, Antonio Donà, who was currently under investigation on charges of embezzeling state funds intended for the Duke of Savoy.¹⁹⁷ One of Donà's letters from his residence, which was still being stored in the cupboards of the College chamber before consignment to the archive, had been transcribed and given to his supporters and members of his family for consultation, without proper authorization by the government. The inquisitorial records of each secretary, which outlined the circulation of the record in extensive detail, suggested that documents could still pass from individual to individual across the chancery with only spoken confirmations of what was required and what was permitted.¹⁹⁸ Later that year, the two custodians of the archive, Horatio Ziliol and Gian Francesco Secco, were called before of the Heads of the Ten to answer accusations that they had allowed into the *Segreta* 'not only those who were not Senators, but diverse subjects and even foreigners', and that visiting Senators had been able to bring non-authorized personnel with them into the chamber.¹⁹⁹

Alternatively, those entering the archives for the purposes of scholarship, especially that intended to further the image of the Republic, may well have enjoyed a greater degree of leniency regarding their use of the collection. Favoured servants of the state such as Paolo Sarpi collated vast compendia of transcribed documents during their career, which were then posthumously restored to the archive from private residences.²⁰⁰ In June 1599, an Udinese scholar called Cornelio Frangipane, who had been employed as a consultant by the Venetian government to locate documents relevant to political or territorial disputes from archives both within Venice and the *Terraferma*,²⁰¹ stood accused of extracting illicit copies from the

¹⁹⁶ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 81, f. 280 (29 January 1631 m.v.).

¹⁹⁷ Roberto Zago, 'Dona, Antonio', DBI, vol. 40 (1991).

¹⁹⁸ ASVe, IS, b. 522 (5 February 1618 m.v.) – the secretaries interrogated were: Domenico Dominici on the 5th, Alessandro Busenello on the 9th, and Valerio Antelmi on the 19th.

¹⁹⁹ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 69, ff. 167v-168r, 13 November 1619; despite this accusation, the two had remained custodians of the collection two years on (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 38v, 51v).

²⁰⁰ Pin, 'Le scritture pubbliche trovate alla morte di Fra Paolo Sarpi', p. 316.

²⁰¹ During the 1590s, Frangipane and his colleague, Benetto da Taiapiera, had worked in the palace and ecclesiastical archives of Venice, Adria and Rovigo, and produced numerous reports and inventories concerning the historical records they had uncovered in the service of the state (ASVe, CX Rom., b. 4, 5 March 1598; 1 February 1597 m.v.; 16 September 1598; 30 March 1599). The secretary Gian Battista Padavin was also named as a consultant and archivist for these projects.

registers of the *Segreta*. Having failed to present himself to the Inquisitors for questioning,²⁰² Frangipane was exiled in perpetuity to Treviso and stripped of all offices and salaries.²⁰³ Despite this condemnation *in absentia*, however, Frangipane was repeatedly granted safe conduct to travel and continue his work over subsequent years, during which time he made numerous appeals to the government in his defence.²⁰⁴

The incriminating document was a small booklet in which had been copied a number of entries from the thirteenth volume of the *Commemoriali*, ‘containing various confederations with the Princes up to the year 1437.’²⁰⁵ According to Frangipane’s own testimony, he had found the booklet within a larger bundle of papers held at the Priory of the Holy Trinity, a convent which had been granted to the Teutonic Knights in return for their military service during the thirteenth century.²⁰⁶ A keen student of history himself,²⁰⁷ and concerned that these sensitive documents would fall into the hands of Maximilian III, Archduke of Austria and Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, Frangipane had confiscated the bundle of papers in order to return them to the Palace. Instead of reward, however, his ownership of these records was misinterpreted and condemned, and he had spent the next two decades in exile as a result.²⁰⁸

In September 1619, in response to the latest plea from exile to clear his name, Nicolò Contarini was invited to substantiate the doctor’s claims of innocence. The historian-superintendent noted that, despite being one of the Heads of the Ten who had originally condemned Frangipane, his subsequent knowledge of the chancery itself had forced him to reconsider whether Frangipane’s possession of the booklet at the time was in fact sufficient evidence of his role in its removal from the archive. In fact, the historian had found evidence to the contrary within the original *Commemoriali* register itself, in a marginal note added to the document which had been copied. Written in the hand of a previous Grand Chancellor, Andrea Frizier, it records that the copied booklet had in fact been commissioned in December 1548 in order that those particular records could also be stored amongst the

²⁰² Which, as Frangipane himself claimed in a letter from Ferrara in July 1599, had been due to his illness and fatigue whilst abroad (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 27, 7 July 1599).

²⁰³ The confirmation of Frangipane’s exile, dated 28 July 1599, can be found within a bundle of papers dating from his appeal twenty years later (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 33, 5 September 1619).

²⁰⁴ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 50, ff. 11v, 28v, 54r, 117r (1600); *Ibid.*, reg. 55, f. 60v (12 Luglio 1605); ASVe, CX Rom., b. 4 (20 December 1601, 12 July 1605).

²⁰⁵ ASVe, CX Sec., b. 33 (5 September 1619).

²⁰⁶ Archivio di Stato di Venezia, *La guida al patrimonio documentario*, ‘Soggetti produttori – enti, SS. Trinità’ (<http://www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/siasve/cgi-bin/pagina.pl?Tipo=ente&Chiave=711> – last accessed October 2015).

²⁰⁷ This is evidenced by the notes made in his *zibaldone* (BNM, Cod. Lat. XIII, 73-74), and by his riposte to the anti-Venetian allegations made in Cesare Baronio’s *Annales Ecclesiastici* (see pp. 202-203).

²⁰⁸ ASVe, IS, b. 522 (31 August 1635).

registers of the Ten.²⁰⁹ Although he could not vouch for Frangipane's claim that it had ended up in the Teutonic Priory, he could safely conclude that the doctor, born five years after that note was made, could not have extracted it himself from the *Commemoriali*.²¹⁰

Thanks to the ever-increasing archival expertise of the historian-superintendents, Frangipane was exonerated in 1621,²¹¹ and in 1628 was given full compensation of the salary he had lost whilst in exile.²¹² He subsequently resumed his post as a consultant for the government long after his pardon, and continued to cite documents from the same archive which had previously threatened 'the almost entire destruction of my house.'²¹³ The nuanced circumstances of Frangipane's successful appeal, which have largely been overlooked by recent studies of his career,²¹⁴ is at odds with the pervasive image of the Ten as the draconian guardians of state secrets – a product of the 'Black Myth' of Venice formulated after its fall which continues to influence historiography today.²¹⁵ Instead, it suggests that the use of the secret chancery for the purposes of scholarship required a complex and mutual understanding between the individual and the state. In light of the evidence which needed to be uncovered in order to finally exonerate Frangipane, one could argue that the increased security measures introduced by the government during the early seventeenth century, from the constant supervision of secretaries to the keeping of detailed entry logs, were as much an insurance policy for the visitors themselves as they were for the Venetian government. For the state historians, this may also explain the prevalence of summary timelines taken from the archive rather than large quantities of verbatim transcripts, as the privileged visitors to the collection sought to respect the sensitivity of its contents.

3.6: Conclusion

In July 1647, the Council of Ten turned their attention to the governance and regulations of the *Segreta* archive once again, laying out new stipulations regarding the care of the collection. The two custodians must report to the State Inquisitors every week with reports of those who had entered the chamber and what they had viewed, whilst it was now the

²⁰⁹ Strangely, a second marginal note on the very same page recorded the fact that the then confiscated booklet had been consigned to the *Cassa Bianca* in September 1599 (ASVe, *Commemoriali. Registri*, 13, f. 25r). The secretary responsible for this later entry was presumably unaware of the case surrounding the booklet's consignment, or else was simply disinterested in the adjacent evidence which would have exonerated Frangipane from his plight.

²¹⁰ ASVe, CX Sec., b. 33 (5 September 1619, letter from 16 September 1619). The case itself was opened in April that year, when the Ten requested the original files of his condemnation for reconsideration at his request (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 69, f. 21r, 9 April 1619).

²¹¹ ASVe, CX Com., reg. 71, ff. 169v-170r (20 September 1621).

²¹² BMC, Cicogna 2505, fasc. 40.

²¹³ ASVe, IS, b. 522 (31 August 1635).

²¹⁴ Maristella Cavazza, 'Cornelio Frangipane', DBI, vol. 50 (1998); de Vivo, *Information and Communication*, p. 54.

²¹⁵ Most recently discussed in Barnes, *The Venice Myth*, pp. 15-19.

responsibility of the *leggisti* to record and seek authorisation for any requests for copies made by the visitors. Any visiting Senator wishing to have a copy made must have the register in question brought before the Council for deliberation. In addition, one of these secretaries was to draw up a list of rules and responsibilities for each of the groups within the archive – secretaries, visiting patricians and superintendents – to be affixed to the tables of the chamber so that none may plead ignorance.²¹⁶ The compilation of these rules,²¹⁷ followed by the compilation of di Negri's index some fifteen years later,²¹⁸ marked the point at which the *Segreta* archive had reached its maturity as a fully functioning institution, after decades of both physical and structural rearrangement and reform.

During the first century and a half of Venice's state historiography programme, the succession of patrician scholars admitted to consult the records of the *Cancellaria Segreta* had witnessed a comprehensive transformation from a scattered series of chests to an automated, clearly defined archival workspace. The impact of the two great Palace fires during the 1570s, although a significant disruption in the short term, eventually led to a necessary overhaul of the storage and retrieval systems governing the political and diplomatic records of the Republic, whilst a succession of new indexes and register series rendered the basic structure and organisation of the collection almost unrecognisable from the tenure of one historiographer to the next. Nevertheless, the research experience of the state historians had been characterised by a series of continuities throughout this period of transition. Chief amongst these was the continuing importance of the transcription register, from Sanudo's diaries to the *Annali* and *Pandette*, as a primary point of reference for historians attempting to piece together a comprehensive chronology of Venetian politics and diplomacy. In this respect, the contemporary image of the historian in his study, surrounded by codices rather than files, is one which could readily be extended to the chambers of the Ducal Palace. Throughout this period, the process of identification and retrieval was repeatedly dictated by personal expertise, from the rise of the secretarial research assistant to the curatorship of the historian-superintendents. It has long been noted by proponents of Paolo Sarpi, beginning with his biographer Micanzio, that the historian and *Consultore* possessed 'a mind which mirrored the *Segreta* itself.'²¹⁹ However, in the absence of a comprehensive indexing system during this period, Sarpi's ability to navigate the collection based on personal experience was likely shared by many of his contemporaries.

²¹⁶ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, ff. 157v-159r (8 July 1647).

²¹⁷ See Appendix Document 1.

²¹⁸ See Chapter 2.6.

²¹⁹ De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, p. 53.

Above all, those using the *Segreta* archive for the purposes of historical scholarship continued to enjoy a greater degree of leniency and autonomy than many of their peers, from Sanudo's prolonged readership of the chancery registers to the independent research projects of the historiographers entrusted with the care of the collection itself from 1601. Although this liberty was far from absolute, as we have seen, it appears that whilst the unification and reform of the *Segreta* archive was designed to isolate sensitive material even further from all but the most privileged elite, this created a greater opportunity for historians and their secretarial contacts to collaborate in the production of ever more detailed research notes and transcriptions. This was perhaps the most important legacy of the decision to appoint the state historians from within the Venetian patriciate in 1516, which allowed the production of the city's historiography to be intimately tied to the bureaucracy of the Republic whilst continuing to preserve the integrity of its political secrets as far as possible. In order to better appreciate this phenomenon, we will now turn to the question of how the historiographers of Venice attempted to reproduce the records they had consulted in the chancery within their wider narratives; once again navigating the potentially perilous boundary between sensitive government material and authoritative historical sources.

Chapter Four: Secrecy, diplomacy and crisis – the role of the chancery in forming contemporary historical narratives

4.1: Introduction

As alluded to in the previous chapters, the opening of the secret chancery to the state historians in 1515 was by no means the first time that the records of state had been consulted for the purposes of historical writing. For several centuries, in fact, Venice's chronicling tradition had been inextricably intertwined with the record-keeping practices of the chancery, often due to the overlapping interests of those who staffed the state record collections themselves. Throughout the formative centuries of the chancery systems of the Ducal Palace, there was a notable exchange of both archival records transcribed into chronicles and extracts from chronicles preserved within archival registers, as exemplified in the case of the Doge, chronicler and chancery reformer Andrea Dandolo.¹ As various historians have noted, this was a common phenomenon throughout the Italian peninsula,² with Girolamo Arnaldi arguing that medieval chronicles would often serve as the 'scaffolding' around which state records could be catalogued and preserved,³ and Giorgio Cencetti highlighting the authoritative status afforded to those chronicles consigned to the *camera actorum* of cities such as Bologna.⁴ Even after the introduction of humanist historiography to the city, secretaries and patricians alike continued to reproduce archival records within their chronicles, 'as they appear in the chancery,'⁵ throughout the sixteenth century and beyond.

However, the introduction of the state sponsored patrician historians to the chancery appears at first glance to have constituted a significant break in this long held relationship

¹ Arnaldi, 'Andrea Dandolo Doge-cronista', pp. 156-157; idem., 'La cancelleria ducale fra culto della 'legalitas' e nuova cultura umanistica', pp. 868-873.

² Most notably in the humanist chancellors of the fifteenth century; see for instance Ianziti, 'Leonardo Bruni, the Medici, and the Florentine Histories'.

³ Arnaldi, 'Cronache con documenti, cronache autentiche e pubblica storiografia', p. 119.

⁴ Cencetti, *Scritti archivistici*, p. 277.

⁵ Such transcriptions, and the use of 'come appare', can be seen in the *Vite dei Dogi* of Marin Sanudo (London, British Library, MS. Add. 8575, f. 139v), and the *Istoria Veneziana* of the late sixteenth-century secretary Agostino degli Agostini (Venezia, Biblioteca Querini Stampalia, MS. IV, 16, f. 39v). Another late sixteenth-century chronicle, the anonymous *Storia documentata del governo di Venezia dalle origini al 1296*, combined citations and transcriptions of chancery documents, manuscript chronicles, and even the printed history of Paolo Ramusio (BNM, Cod. It. VII, 551), whilst the appearance of chancery records in the late sixteenth century chronicles of Giovanni Tiepolo are discussed in a recent edition by Emilio Aleo, *Cronica di Venezia di Giovanni Tiepolo*, vol. II, p. 643 (in volume I, pp. xlii-xliii, lxxxvi, Aleo discusses Tiepolo's possible means for accessing the chancery, including the intervention of secretary assistants).

between state records and historical texts. Rather than facilitating a further trend towards documentary histories of the Republic, the creation of the historiographer office instead saw a near-disappearance of the archive from the works of Venice's most prestigious historians for nearly a century.⁶ As discussed in the Introduction to the thesis, this phenomenon has resulted in something of a disparity amongst more recent studies of the city's historiography; whilst historians have made repeated note of the opening of the chancery to the state historians, they have generally tended to overlook its actual role in shaping and informing their actual texts. Indeed, Gaetano Cozzi's 1963 study of the historiographers has stated that, despite the clear evidence of their proximity to the archive, historians such as Paruta 'certainly drew no inspiration to report on events with any particular accuracy as a result of their consultation of the *Annali*, or the [now archived] diaries of Sanudo.'⁷ This disparity has yet to be addressed in any particular detail; how could the opening of the Venetian chancery to historians have produced so few tangible results in the narratives and representations of the state which they later produced?

To a certain extent, the format in which the newly admitted state historians were required to produce their accounts provides some explanation for this apparent 'disappearance' of the archive during the sixteenth century. In 1516, the Ten's first appointment of a state historian noted that it was the prerogative of any government to have its deeds and reputation preserved 'not by means of summary, vague and crude chronicles and annals, but through authentic, elegant and flourishing histories, adorned with elegance and eloquence by authors of great renown, but without any alteration of the truth.'⁸ In part, this involved a strong adherence to the resurgent literary models of antiquity – a precedent firmly set in Venice, according to Gino Benzoni, by the emergence of Marc' Antonio Sabellico as Venice's equivalent to Livy in the late fifteenth century.⁹ As discussed in Chapter One, the prevailing models for contemporary history-writing in sixteenth-century Europe often had generally prioritised the experience and eloquence of the author rather than his erudition. As Anthony Grafton argues: 'cited documents necessarily suggested that a problem could be solved in ways other than that chosen by the historian', and were often interpreted by readers as plagiarism rather than proof.¹⁰ Unlike the texts of the chroniclers, which could act as registers for the preservation of transcribed documents, such practices

⁶ For the first appearance of the chancery as a reference within the texts of the official historiographers, see Chapter 5.1.

⁷ Cozzi, 'Cultura politica e religione', p. 264.

⁸ 'Non cum el mezzo de compendiose incerte varie et rude cornice et annali, ma de certe autentice elegante et floride historie, le quale quanto più sono state dai scrittori cum gran premio doro a ciò conducti orname de elegancia et eloquentia, da le qual do parte etiam senza alcuna alteration de la verità le cose narrate' (ASVe, CX Mist., b. 36, 30 January 1515 m.v.).

⁹ Benzoni, 'Scritti storico-politici', p. 764.

¹⁰ Grafton, *The Footnote*, pp. 142-143.

would have been incompatible with the ‘authentic, elegant and flourishing histories’ expected of the state historians. This issue was briefly acknowledged by Pietro Giustiniani, who stated at the end of a rare documentary extract that his narrative had been ‘interrupted’ by the record which he had just inserted.¹¹

However, in the context of the secret chancery’s role as a scholarly tool examined in the previous chapter, we can perhaps take a different approach to the relationship between the works of the historiographers and the state records to which they had access. As we have seen, the surviving notes and commentaries of the historians in the chancery indicate that the collection was predominantly consulted in order to illuminate specific pieces of information, or else to construct and comprehend a general timeline of the period, especially after the formation of the *Annali*. In this respect, the true influence of the archive can perhaps be identified instead amongst the detail and structure of their narratives, as they translated what they had read into their own works of prose. In this chapter, we will examine how the experience of the historian in the archive shaped and directed the texts of their literary histories in far more diverse and subtle ways than have been appreciated by recent historiography. It will begin by considering the extent to which the historical representation of state records was compatible with the demands of secrecy, censorship and governmental self-fashioning which dictated the conditions of their office. In order to illustrate how certain chancery registers subsequently shaped the accounts of historiographers in practice, we will then consider the official narratives of one of the most significant events in contemporary Venetian history, the outbreak of the War of Cyprus, as written by both Paolo Paruta and Andrea Morosini. As this case will demonstrate, a closer examination of the texts of the historiographers in relation to the arrangement of the registers they consulted can help to better identify how these historians had benefited from their access to the secrets of state, and how they were able to translate this information into new interpretations of the recent history of the Republic.

4.2: Secrecy, censorship and the role of the archive in historical self-fashioning

As discussed in the previous chapter, the opening of the secret chancery archive to historians created a potentially conflicting dual purpose for the collection – to maintain secrecy and exercise information control on the one hand, whilst also serving as a source of information for the city’s intellectual sphere on the other. To a certain extent, a useful compromise

¹¹ ‘Ma seguitiamo la nostra historia, la quale interrotta dalle lettere Apostoliche, ha ritenuto il suo corso per infin qui’ (Giustiniani, *Le historie Venetiane*, p. 157r).

between the two had been established through the classification of sensitive material created in recent years. Nevertheless, at a time in which the rapidly expanding market for printed historical texts had seen a sevenfold increase in the number of editions produced in Venice every year,¹² the use of state secrets for narrating contemporary affairs still remained a highly pertinent issue. This had been anticipated in both the opening of the archive and the creation of the historiographer's office in 1515-1516, as the first historians were required to submit their works to the Council of Ten for revision before they could be published, a condition which would later even determine the payment of their salary.¹³ In later decades, the revision and censorship of Venice's official historiography – along with all other printed works – was delegated to the *Riformatori dello Studio di Padova*, three Senators appointed to the administration of the Republic's neighbouring university.¹⁴

As numerous historians have recently illustrated, this was a period which had witnessed a growing climate for religious and political censorship on an international scale, to which some of the more contentious works of Venetian historiography had fallen victim.¹⁵ Nevertheless, in Venice itself, in which the offices of historiographer and *Riformatori* often overlapped,¹⁶ few traces remain of the impact of the city's own censors upon the works of their historians during this period.¹⁷ One of the few notable exceptions to this was the case of Nicolò Contarini, whose unfinished history of the city was submitted to the Ten in 1638 by his brother and nephew, seven years after his death at the hands of the plague. The subsequent fate of Contarini's work has been well recounted in recent years; both the

¹² This trend was calculated from the average figures taken from the short title catalogues of the British Library, 'Universal Short Title Catalogue' (www.ustc.ac.uk), and 'Edit16' (http://edit16.iccu.sbn.it/web_iccu/ihome.htm, both last accessed October 2015) for the period 1470-1574. For a study of some of the key trends in the sixteenth-century market for historical texts, see Grendler, 'Francesco Sansovino and Italian Popular History 1560-1600', pp. 164-170.

¹³ ASVe, *Consiglio dei Dieci, Deliberazioni, Comuni*, reg. 33, f. 4r.

¹⁴ For the role of the *Riformatori* in the censorship of the Venetian press, see Grendler, *The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press, 1540-1605*, pp. 151-154; Witcombe, *Copyright in the Renaissance*, pp. 64-65.

¹⁵ As is evident in the works of Paolo Sarpi and Andrea Morosini, both of which had been placed on the Roman Index of Prohibited Books (Benzoni and Zanato (eds.), *Storici e politici veneti*, pp. xxxviii-xxxix; Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty*, pp. 622-623).

¹⁶ De Bernadin, 'I Riformatori dello Studio', p. 64. Responsibility for the revision of submitted manuscripts had initially been bestowed upon the city's first official historiographer, Andrea Navagero, in 1516, as Venice's neighbouring university had remained closed by military turmoil on the mainland (ASVe, CX Mist., reg. 39, f. 39v).

¹⁷ This, in part, is a product of contemporary record-keeping, as the papers and reports of the *Riformatori* (in the ASVe series of the same name) survive only in fragments until the end of the seventeenth century. For the most recent account of press censorship and the scholarly image of the state, which makes only brief allusions to the city's official historiography, see Infelise, *I padroni dei libri*, especially pp. 91-93 for Andrea Morosini and the Roman Index.

Riformatori and the *Consultori in Jure*¹⁸ were called upon to assess the work, and concluded that:

The style of this history, both in its descriptions of foreign princes and of the Church, is very unrestrained. It contains many secrets of the government, which in truth we are not sure it would be wise to divulge. It discusses the [negotiations] made with other princes, and examines and critiques their reasons and motives. Finally, it ventures into some very intimate material, which concerns the most important aspects of the state, which we know even from our limited experience is not something that the Most Excellent Senate wishes to see discussed so openly.¹⁹

Six years later, a second attempt was made to pass the manuscripts through the censors, only to be met with an identical response.²⁰ At the recommendation of the two reports, no licence was granted for publication. Contarini's drafts were confiscated by the Ten, and have remained unpublished to this day.²¹

However, whilst recent studies of Contarini's work have noted the censors' reports as indicative of the historian's unsuitable style and presentation, the question of whether his supposed use of the 'intimate material of state' was in itself a cause for government censorship has yet to be addressed in the wider context of the historian-archive relationship. For one, we know that the government had previously imposed measures to ensure that the state historians did not consult the most recent, and thus more sensitive, materials within the chancery, as discussed in the previous chapter. Moreover, there is little to suggest that his use of the chancery was considered as a propagation of state secrets in the same manner as in the case of Cornelio Frangipane.²² In fact, the historian's use of the archive was actually praised by the censors, as the *Consultori* argued that his account had been 'extracted from the uncontaminated source of the Republic's archives, and thus has the truth as its

¹⁸ These were the same two *Consultori*, Scipione Faramosca and Ludovico Baitello, who had proposed the chancery reforms discussed at the beginnings of the Introduction and Chapter Two.

¹⁹ 'Lo stile di questa istoria è libero, anco dove si tratta di prencipi Grandi, lo stesso dove si tratta di religiosi, e della chiesa. Contiene massime molto intime del Governo che per verità non sappiamo se stia bene divulgarle. Discorre di confine con altri principi; e negli stati loro esamina e confuta, si può dire, le loro ragioni; entra finalmente in alcune materie molto gelose, e che concernono le parti più principali dello stato; che per quella poca esperienza che abbiamo non ama l'ecellentissimo senato che palesemente se ne tratti' (ASVe, CX Com., b. 509, 27 Aprile 1645, report dated 30 December).

²⁰ ASVe, CX Com., b. 509, 27 Aprile 1645 (report dated 16 January 1644 m.v.).

²¹ Save for brief extracts published by Gaetano Cozzi (*Il Doge Nicolò Contarini*, pp. 308-380) and in Benzoni and Zanato (eds.), *Storici e politici veneti*, pp. 151-442).

²² See pp. 114-116.

inseparable companion.’²³ Both the *Consultori* and *Riformatori* suggested that his manuscripts could serve as a reference guide to the secret chancery itself, in a similar manner to the chronicles and cartularies of Andrea Dandolo, the diaries of Marin Sanudo, and even the *Annali* of the late sixteenth century.²⁴ In addition, the concerns of the censors do not seem to correlate with the reception of Contarini’s predecessors, who had in fact been lauded by contemporary readers for many of the same characteristics quoted above.²⁵ A far more pressing issue, it would seem, was instead the way in which Contarini and his editors had portrayed the activity of the state itself. As Gaetano Cozzi’s study of the historian has aptly illustrated, the works submitted to the Ten had been a loose, unstructured and pessimistic narrative of the city’s decline ‘from a period of prosperous tranquillity to one of uncertainty and great squander in its military affairs’²⁶ on the wider stage of Europe’s calamitous descent into religious conflict,²⁷ whose open criticisms of the Republic’s weaknesses and ‘contrarie fluttuazioni’ in international affairs alongside those of the other heads of state were deemed particularly inappropriate coming from a former Doge.²⁸ Ultimately, it was the historian’s tact in presenting the intimate details of domestic and foreign affairs which concerned the government censors, as ‘whatever is contained in this history concerning the other princes will be considered as the opinions of the Republic itself.’²⁹

Even without access to the records of the chancery, writing the history of contemporary Venice included the potential to reveal sensitive information about

²³ ‘Questa istoria si vede cavata dai puri fonti delli Archivii della serenissima Repubb. et perciò ha per compagna inseparabile la verità’ (ASVe, CX Com., b. 509, 27 April 1645, report dated 30 December 1638).

²⁴ ASVe, CX Com., b. 509, 27 Aprile 1645 (report dated 1638 30 December). In addition, Contarini’s heirs were finally rewarded for their efforts with a lump sum of six hundred ducats (Ibid., report dated 16 January 1644 m.v.).

²⁵ Andrea Morosini, for instance, was praised in a preface to his 1623 edition for his use of Senate documents by his erstwhile associate Bishop Alvise Lollino (Morosini, *Historia Veneta*, ‘A. Mauroceni vita, autore A. Lollino’ p. 11), whilst Paruta’s account was praised by his English translator, Henry Earl of of Monmouth for being ‘delightfully intermix’d with Negotiations, Treaties of Warre, and Peace, Leagues, Confederacies made between Christian Princes’ (Paruta, *The History of Venice*, ‘To the Reader’).

²⁶ ‘Per la quale cosa alla Republica convenne, dopo questo tempo, di necessità sempre passare o con aperte guerre o con pericolissimi sospetti, peggiori per lo più delle guerre stesse, e così, dalla maniera con la qual finora era vissuta longamente con felicissima tranquillità, mutarsi ad altro partitio et essere continuamente intenta al proceder altrui, guardanga nelle cose sue, e star armata, et a tempo profonder immensa quantità d’oro, maneggiar l’armi per non incappar nei danni over insidie altrui’ (extract taken from Benzoni and Zanato (eds.), *Storici e politici veneti*, p. 152).

²⁷ Cozzi, *Il Doge Nicolò Contarini*, pp. 205-221; Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, p. 238.

²⁸ It perhaps was for this reason, they continued, that the chronicles of Doge Andrea Dandolo had never been printed (ASVe, CX Com., b. 509, 27 April 1645, report dated 30 December 1638). Benzoni and Zanato (eds.), *Storici e politici veneti*, p. 151.

²⁹ ‘Onde qualsiasi cosa che si contenga in un’istoria di un prencipe puo parere che sia voce e sentimento della stessa Repubblica’ (ASVe, CX Com., b. 509, 27 April 1645, report dated 30 December 1638).

government affairs, and in particular its relationship with still living heads of state. In fact, the licenses issued by the *Riformatori* gave greatest emphasis to the fact that a work contained nothing ‘contrary to the Holy Catholic Faith, to the Princes, or to good morals.’³⁰ This had been an issue throughout the previous century; in 1511, for instance, the diarist Girolamo Priuli – who, like Sanudo, had transcribed a number of contemporary records into his accounts – conceded that ‘my *signori* would not wish these volumes copied or distributed as they might encourage the ire of the many princes of Christendom and beyond’, and instead considered it better to keep his texts under lock and key until they reached a more appropriate age.³¹ Similarly, as we have already seen in Chapter Three, the first edition of Pietro Giustiniani’s *Rerum Venetarum* was withdrawn from circulation due to concerns that his depiction of a noble family in Cyprus would cause significant offence to the island’s ruling elite.³²

However, as we have seen, the response of the government censors in this case was not to restrict the historian’s access to political information, but to expand it, so that Giustiniani would be able to ‘correct’ his misinterpretations through consultation of the records of state. As we have seen in Chapter Two, the Venetian government and its administrators were well aware of the role of the chancery in fashioning the image of the state for posterity, a practice which has also been noted elsewhere in Europe.³³ On the one hand, this was evident in the destruction and alteration of records by the Ten and their secretaries for the purposes of erasing certain details of the government’s activity – perhaps best exemplified by the preference for recording the results rather than the conduct of debates in the council chambers.³⁴ Inversely, however, the government was also in a position to positively shape its own historical image through the composition and arrangement of its papers. In this respect, as has been suggested by Caroline Callard, the opening of the chancery to a small group of trusted historians ‘did not signify an “opening” of state secrets within public historiography’,³⁵ but rather an opportunity to shape the historical image of the Republic in literature through careful use of the sources it had created. This notion is worthy of greater consideration in the context of the Venetian state historians, for whom the privilege of their access coupled with the responsibilities of their office rendered them ‘like

³⁰ For an example of the phrase ‘contraria alla Santa Fede Catholica, Prencipi, o buoni costume’ in the records, see ASVe, CCX Not., b. 16 (1 July 1604).

³¹ ‘Questi miei libri per diversi rispetti da li sapienti nostri padri non voranno siano acopiati né dimostrati per non conturbare li signori del mondo christiani et ultramontani’ (quoted in Neerfeld, *Historia per forma di diaria*, p. 198, § 71).

³² See pp. 97-98 above.

³³ Kagan, *Clio and the Crown*, pp. 96-98; Head, ‘Knowing Like a State’, p. 749.

³⁴ De Vivo, *Information and Communication in*, pp. 18-19.

³⁵ Callard, ‘L’histoire comme art de gouverner’, p. 48.

Hermes, charged with drawing the line between the public account of the affairs of state and that which was to remain secret',³⁶ and will thus be examined throughout this chapter.

A useful example of this intention in practice can in fact be found in one of the few surviving recorded corrections made to a work of Venetian state history during this period. Shortly before his death in 1547, the manuscripts of Pietro Bembo's Latin and vernacular drafts of the *Historia Vinitiana* were submitted to the *Riformatori* for correction, who were given the authority 'to remove any sections which they deem necessary to remove insofar as they relate to the state and the peace of our Republic.'³⁷ According to the registers of the Ten, each of the *Riformatori*'s suggestions was to be deliberated upon in turn by the Council, and verified by one of their secretaries.³⁸ The records of their editorial decisions were to be held in the Ten's archives so as to be kept from public knowledge.³⁹ Although the two texts were eventually published in 1551 and 1552 respectively, it has been well noted in recent historiography that the Venetian government was generally underwhelmed by the quality, content and tone of the Cardinal's work, which had become bogged down in extraneous detail and character assassinations of those he held in disdain.⁴⁰ In particular, the censorship and alterations detailed in the records of the Ten were placed under close examination in 1888 by Emilio Teza, who compared the texts of the revised 1552 Italian edition of the *Historia Vinitiana* to an edition printed in 1790, based on the historian's original manuscript, in order to identify how the account of the historian had been altered by the *Riformatori*.⁴¹

Teza's comparisons – based on the list of corrections deliberated upon in 1548 – predominantly focussed on the edits made to the historian's phrasing, or else the information excised from his account by the *Riformatori*. Many of these included sensitive or defamatory details concerning the actions of various public figures, but were more concerned with the way in which the historian portrayed this information – especially if his language spoke 'against the dignity of the city'⁴² – than with the details themselves. For instance, in 1508 the Council of Ten issued a decree aimed at countering the corruption and bribery surrounding the elections to the Great Council,⁴³ a decision which Bembo summarised in precise detail:

³⁶ Callard, 'L'histoire comme art de gouverner', p. 48.

³⁷ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 6, f. 23 (16 May 1548).

³⁸ Ibid., f. 34v. As is evident in the records of the *Riformatori* themselves, the secretaries of the Senate were often called upon to oversee and confirm the revision of texts.

³⁹ Ibid., f. 23.

⁴⁰ Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography*, pp. 229-231; Cozzi, 'Cultura politica e religione', p. 234.

⁴¹ Teza, 'Correzioni alla Istoria Viniziana di P. Bembo', pp. 75-77.

⁴² ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 6, ff. 27-28v.

⁴³ Queller, *Two Studies on Venetian Government*, p. 132.

At the end of the summer the Ten passed a law in the following manner. Any citizen who has donated money, or any other thing, to the electors of the Grand Council in order to be appointed to such magistracy must be exiled to an island of the Ten's choosing. If he leaves this place, he is to live out his days in the city's foulest prison.⁴⁴

In their corrections to the historian's account, Bembo's abridgement of this governmental decree, originally recorded in the registers of the Ten but paraphrased from the diaries of Sanudo as discussed below,⁴⁵ remained largely unaltered. Of greater concern instead was the historian's initial prelude to the decree, describing said corruption as endemic within the city, which was altered to suggest instead that such practices were only in the minority.⁴⁶

However, perhaps a more revealing interpretation of the censor's work, largely overlooked in both Teza's original analysis and subsequent scholarship, concerns the information inserted into the finished text in order to improve the image of the state. As discussed in Chapter Three, the historian had largely turned to Sanudo's diaries and compendia of records as a source for his account, especially as he had professed a significant personal detachment from the recent affairs of the city.⁴⁷ His access to these manuscripts had been intended to lessen Bembo's reliance upon the registers of the chancery, but it had also meant that his interpretation of government activity had been shaped by the diarist's own judgements and observations. This was particularly evident in the corrections concerning his account of the War of the League of Cambrai, which the *Riformatori* considered to have emphasised too greatly the 'pain and despair' felt by the Republic in the wake of its catastrophic defeat at Agnadello,⁴⁸ whilst failing to fully explain the city's own diplomatic activity during this period of crisis. For instance, in July 1511, as the Republic was attempting to reclaim the mainland territories it had lost to the League, the Venetian ambassador Antonio Giustinian was sent to the court of Emperor Maximilian with the intention of brokering a peace. Bembo had originally noted that Giustinian was to offer the Emperor a total of forty thousand gold pounds, with an additional two hundred paid every year in perpetuity, for the return of Verona to the Republic. This figure was to be halved if the Emperor was unwilling to surrender the city, a detail which the censors had excised in favour of a 'promise that the Republic would give him a certain sum of money.'⁴⁹ In

⁴⁴ Morelli (ed.), *Della istoria Viniziana di M. Pietro Bembo*, vol. II, p. 40.

⁴⁵ ASVe, CX Mist., reg. 32, 30v; Sanudo, *I Diarii*, vol. VII, p. 619.

⁴⁶ Bembo, *Della historia Vinitiana*, p. 99r; Teza, 'Correzioni alla Istoria Viniziana di P. Bembo', p. 85

⁴⁷ See Chapter 3.2.2 (pp. 88-90).

⁴⁸ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 6, ff. 27-28v.

⁴⁹ Bembo, *Della historia Vinitiana*, p. 161v; Morelli (ed.), *Della istoria Viniziana di M. Pietro Bembo*, vol. II, p. 272; Teza, 'Correzioni alla Istoria Viniziana di P. Bembo', p. 91. See also Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty*, p. 138.

addition, Bembo noted, Giustinian was instructed to forgo his attempt to negotiate the return of Vicenza from the Emperor if absolutely necessary.⁵⁰

As far as the government censors were concerned, this was an unsubstantiated interpretation of Giustinian's instructions, borrowed from the accounts of Sanudo,⁵¹ which introduced the problematic notion that certain former territories would have been abandoned in pursuit of an accord with the Emperor.⁵² Instead, these instructions were altered to read: '[the Senate] had written to Giustinian that if anything came to his attention which would obstruct the early conclusion of an agreement between Maximilian and the Republic, he was to exert himself by every means at his disposal to have any impediment removed, whatever it might be.'⁵³ This was a deliberately ambiguous request, which in fact mirrored the original dispatch from the Senate, in which Giustinian was told:

Should it occur that any of these matters [referring to the payments offered to the Emperor] contain difficulties which delay the conclusion [of this peace], we leave it at your prudent discretion to do whatever you consider necessary to forgo any such prolongation of the negotiations.⁵⁴

As discussed in the following chapter, we know that the *Riformatori* were given access to the chancery during this period,⁵⁵ and it seems likely that the more approved interpretation of Giustinian's mission was in fact derived from the state records. This also appears to be the case in another edit made in the account of a diplomatic mission shortly before the formation of the League, in which the Imperial ambassador Johann Räßler had attempted to convince the Republic to break from their ten-year alliance with Louis XII of France. The *Riformatori* had removed the historian's suggestion that Räßler had secretly warned of Louis' intention to betray the Republic,⁵⁶ replacing it instead with an abridged version of the Senate's documented instructions to their ambassador in France, Antonio Condulmier, to inform the court of Räßler's arrival and of their continuing commitment of the Franco-Venetian

⁵⁰ Morelli (ed.), *Della istoria Viniziana di M. Pietro Bembo*, vol. II, p. 274.

⁵¹ Sanudo, *I Diarii*, vol. XII, p. 330.

⁵² Both cities were in fact later recaptured as the Imperial forces in that region began to recede (Mallett and Hale, *The Military Organisation of a Renaissance State*, p. 223).

⁵³ Bembo, *Della historia Vinitiana*, p. 162r; Teza, 'Correzioni alla Istoria Viniziana di P. Bembo', p. 91.

⁵⁴ 'Et perche suol accader che in queste materie ge nascono difficulta che retardano la conclusione, perho cognoscendo prudentie, et ben advertido lassamo in arbitrio vostro per non pertermetter aliquid intentatum, che vi pari opportune getiati inanci che essendo necessario il tractamenti' (ASVe, Sen. Sec., reg. 44, f. 41v).

⁵⁵ See p. 162 above.

⁵⁶ Morelli (ed.), *Della istoria Viniziana di M. Pietro Bembo*, vol. II, p. 41; Teza, 'Correzioni alla Istoria Viniziana di P. Bembo', p. 86.

accord.⁵⁷ The Republic, they added, had been ‘duty bound to do so by the ties of friendship and the terms of the treaty it had struck with the kings.’⁵⁸

This was a notably different approach to the censorship of the city’s official historiography than perhaps might be expected. Instead of excising government secrets taken from the chancery, the *Riformatori* had in fact inserted passages from the government’s own accounts of its activity, in order to forge a suitable image of the Republic as the innocent victim of Louis’ betrayal at Cambrai, and subsequently as a successful defender of their mainland territories. In this respect, we can perhaps consider the texts of the state historians as a pivotal tool for a government wishing to disseminate the details of its previously secretive activity in its own terms, and thus the paraphrasing and summary of archival records by its patrician historians was very much compatible with the construction of a favourable historiography. Although the influence of the secret chancery as a source was not intended to be apparent, cases such as Bembo’s corrections offer an important insight into the potential relationship between Venice’s secret chancery and its official historiography. In order to examine this possibility in further detail, we will now turn to a more illustrative case study of the archive’s role in forming the city’s historical image, as two of Bembo’s successors sought to narrate the next significant conflict to strike the Republic.

4.3: A diplomatic narrative in the archive – constructing histories of the War of Cyprus from the secret chancery

In our account of the chancery and its historical uses thus far, the fifteen year period between the admission of Pietro Giustiniani and the great fire of 1577 was seemingly one of relative inactivity; even the production of the *Pandette* and *Annali*, for instance, appears to have undergone a ten year hiatus following the death of Alvise Borghi. As if by design, however, this period was dominated instead by the unfolding of what would later become one of the city’s most pivotal subjects of historical writing and archival study, as the Venetians and their European allies attempted to halt a substantial Ottoman naval advance which had begun with the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1570. The roots of this conflict stretched far back into the continuing territorial disputes between Venice and Constantinople across the Eastern Mediterranean, which had culminated in an uneasy truce and tributary arrangement by the time Sultan Selim II ascended to the Imperial throne in 1566. Selim’s attempt to reclaim the

⁵⁷ Bembo, *Della historia Vinitiana*, pp. 99r-99v; ASVe, Sen. Sec., reg. 41, ff. 133v-134r.

⁵⁸ Bembo, *History of Venice*, vol. II, p. 239. Bembo later went on to note that Louis used their knowledge of Rähler’s visit as a means to turn the Emperor further against the Venetians and involve him in the League (Ibid., vol II, p. 241).

island, the last of the Latin-held Crusader states, has been subsequently attributed to a combination of financial, territorial and personal factors alike, and it is generally agreed that his decision to begin naval preparations for the conquest in 1569 were an opportunistic response to another great fire which significantly damaged the Venetian Arsenal during that year. By early 1570, the Sultan had gathered enough legal and territorial justifications to demand that the Venetian surrender the island or face open conflict, and by the time a peace was finally brokered in 1573, the Republic had lost one of the most treasured maritime colonies for good.

In the three years following the Sultan's demand, the conflict had become almost global in its geographic and symbolic scale, with the 1571 Battle of Lepanto in particular coming to be seen as one of the most significant moments in the balance of power between East and West in both popular imagination and subsequent historiography. The causes, conduct and outcome of the conflict have long been a subject of interest for historians from both sides of the Mediterranean,⁵⁹ with the Republic itself having made a significant contribution to this historiographical tradition. As befitting an event of such magnitude, the aftermath of the War of Cyprus was met with a plethora of historical accounts written by contemporary Venetians, before attracting the attention of three separate state historians: Alvise Contarini, whose account was interrupted by his death two years into office,⁶⁰ Paolo Paruta, who had narrated the affair separately to his official history (possibly in the hope of connecting the two at a later date),⁶¹ and Andrea Morosini, who devoted an entire chapter of his *Historia Veneta* to the subject.⁶² Soon after their publications in 1605 and 1623 respectively, the histories of Paruta and Morosini were established as the two of the most authoritative accounts of the conflict, and have continued to form the basis of much of the recent historiography surrounding the affair.⁶³ Similarly, the Venetian state archive has also been a focal point for modern historians of the conflict, as it has preserved a vast wealth of military and political documentation concerning Venetian, Ottoman and European activities alike. Despite this, however, the potential link between Venice's two great contributions to the memory of the conflict – its archives and its historical literature – has yet to be examined

⁵⁹ For a more detailed examination of the conflict in full, see: Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, vol. IV, pp. 932-954; Barbero, *Lepanto: la battaglia dei tre imperi*; Yildirim, 'The Battle of Lepanto and Its Impact on Ottoman History and Historiography'.

⁶⁰ BNM Cod. Lat. X, 285, 116r-121r.

⁶¹ Paruta, *Historia Venetiana – parte seconda*.

⁶² Morosini, *Historia Veneta*, Libro IX.

⁶³ Hugh Bicheno, for instance, describes Paruta as 'the single most influential source for all accounts of the Cyprus War' (Bicheno, *Crescent and Cross: The Battle of Lepanto 1571*, p. 325, § 9), whilst George Francis Hill referred to Morosini as 'an all but primary authority', not least due to his access to the official records (Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, vol. III, p. 1152).

in its own right;⁶⁴ instead, the incident has been used solely to highlight the political leanings of its respective authors.⁶⁵

Given the significance and complexity of the Ottoman conflict as both a military and diplomatic episode, the documentation of which was soon to benefit from a significant period of chancery reform,⁶⁶ the War of Cyprus provides us with an ideal case study for identifying the link between the records of the state and its official historiography. For one, the wide range of contemporary accounts of the war allows us to consider the types of information already widely circulating beyond the chancery. This can then be contrasted to the new information added retrospectively by the state historians, which in certain cases can be traced back to the chancery registers through a comparison of text and source.⁶⁷ As we will see, one of the most significant passages which the two historians appeared to have uncovered and extracted from the chancery concerned the city's diplomatic activity in the weeks preceding the conflict, as the dispatches consigned to the archive from Venice's vast ambassadorial network recounted a previously untold story of Venice's response to the Ottoman threat in the early months of 1570. In translating the details and structures of these records into a historical narrative, greatly facilitated by the arrangement of the *Annali*, Paruta and Morosini had forged an entirely new interpretation of the outbreak of the conflict, which would continue to form the basis of our understanding of the period today.

4.3.1: News becomes history – constructing narratives of the conflict outside the chancery

By the time news of the victory at Lepanto reached Venice in October 1571, the War of Cyprus had already captured both the public and scholarly imagination in Venice to an almost unprecedented extent, as the city became awash with ceremonial and artistic celebration.⁶⁸ As part of this growing trend, the years following the Christian fleet's successful defence of the Mediterranean saw an abundance of historical accounts of the

⁶⁴ The closest link between the two was made by Sarah Phillips in her study of Paruta (Phillips, *Paolo Paruta as an historian*, pp. 21-23). However, rather than examine the relationship between the two in any detail, the author in fact once again dismisses any links between the chancery and historiography, stating that whilst the state records 'often support Paruta's narrative, there is little evidence which proves conclusively that they were Paruta's direct source of information in any given case' (Ibid., p. 29).

⁶⁵ Raines, 'La storiografia pubblica allo specchio', pp. 167-175; Preto, *Venezia e i Turchi*, pp. 302-313.

⁶⁶ As we have seen in Chapters 3.3.3-3.4.

⁶⁷ A similar approach has for instance been taken in Ianziti, 'A Humanist Historian and His Documents', pp. 502-514.

⁶⁸ See for instance: Gombrich, 'Celebrations in Venice of the Holy League and of the victory of Lepanto'; Rhodes, 'La battaglia di Lepanto e la stampa popolare a Venezia'; Stouraiti, 'Costruendo un luogo della memoria: Lepanto'; Wilson, *The World in Venice*, pp. 140-163. For a contemporary account of the celebrations, see Benedetti, *Ragguaglio delle allegrezze, solennità, e feste*.

onset and fortunes of the conflict, which long predated the arrival of the state historians into the secret chancery. As befitted the traditional models of history-writing discussed in Chapter One, the majority of these contemporary authors could claim some degree of proximity to the events themselves, such as the secretary Fedele Fedeli,⁶⁹ the ambassador Paolo Tiepolo,⁷⁰ and other members of the ruling elite at the time such as Federico Sanudo, Nicolò Longo and Gian Pietro Contarini.⁷¹ As part of their proximity, many were also able to take advantage of the Republic's place as a centre of news and information surrounding the conflict. As historians such as Peter Burke, Mario Infelise and Rosa Salzberg have aptly demonstrated, the Republic had long grown from a mercantile hub of economic speculation to a centre of political, religious and scholarly exchange, where news and ideas from across the globe could circulate and where the emerging technology of print had fostered a 'commercialization of information.'⁷²

This constant exchange of written and oral information throughout the city had been of great importance to Venetian historiography for a number of decades, as has been demonstrated in studies of chroniclers such as Antonio Morosini⁷³ and Marin Sanudo,⁷⁴ but the exponential growth of manuscript and printed newsletters and dispatches throughout Europe during this time meant that information on the progress of the Ottoman conflict was now even more accessible to well-connected contemporary historians.⁷⁵ Perhaps the best example of this was a letter from the *Consigliere a Corfu*, Girolamo Diedo, to the Venetian ambassador in Constantinople,⁷⁶ recounting the news of the victory at Lepanto in 1571. Copies of this substantial account of the battle began to circulate amongst private collections

⁶⁹ Fedeli, *Storia della guerra de' Turchi contra Venetia, 1570-1573*, (BNM, Cod. It. VII, 1576) (biographical information on this secretary-historian, and thus how he came to construct his account, is relatively sparse, but his place amongst this group of contemporary authors is recorded in Foscarini, *Della letteratura veneziana*, p. 304).

⁷⁰ Tiepolo, *Storia della guerra di Cipro (1569-1574)* (BNM Cod. It. VII, 224).

⁷¹ Contarini, *Historia delle cose successe*; Longo, *Storia della Guerra di Cipro* (BMC, Cicogna 3185); Sanudo, *Descrittione della Guerra contro Selim* (BMC, Cicogna 3757). As well as being Savio di Terra Ferma at the time of the conflict, Sanudo also had ties to the family of the Venetian ambassador in Constantinople, whose case is discussed below (Foscarini, *Della letteratura veneziana*, p. 305). His contemporary account of the government's diplomatic activity shortly before the outbreak of conflict is the most consistent with those later extracted from the chancery and other private documentation.

⁷² Burke, 'Early Modern Venice as a Center of Information and Communication', p. 396; Infelise, 'News Networks between Italy and Europe', p. 53; Salzberg, *Ephemeral City*. For a wider consideration of the importance of extra-archival documents in forming contemporary European historiography, see: Gagné, 'After the Sforza', pp. 48-53.

⁷³ Georg Christ, 'A Newsletter in 1419?'

⁷⁴ Neerfeld, *Historia per forma di diaria*, pp. 138-142.

⁷⁵ Barbarics and Pieper, for instance, have produced a case study of manuscript *avvisi* circulating in Europe in the wake of Lepanto, which demonstrates the centrality of the Republic and the availability of information which has allowed the battle to remain well narrated even in historiography today (Barbarics and Pieper, 'Handwritten Newsletters as a Means of Communication in Early Modern Europe', pp. 72-79).

⁷⁶ Whose role in forming the historiography of the war will be addressed in the next section.

and historical writings to such an extent that the author eventually decided to publish the original under his own volition.⁷⁷

In addition, the exchange and circulation of political and military information during this period included a significant body of intelligence which the Venetian government had intended to remain within the walls of its chancery collections. Despite the best intentions of the Ten and the State Inquisitors, a combination of factors such as the market for state secrets, the compilation of private libraries and compendia, and even the ‘permeability of the archive’ itself, all conspired to ensure that the secret chancery did not serve as the only point of reference for those interested in investigating this recent conflict. In the case of the War of Cyprus, a subject of intense interest for most of Europe at the time, documentation pertaining to the conflict soon circulated amongst libraries and private collections throughout the continent. This was particularly the case with documents such as the Venetian *relazione*, for which de Vivo has already demonstrated a large contemporary market,⁷⁸ and which appeared in both manuscript and printed compendia alike, alongside other significant documents such as the formation of the Holy League in 1571.⁷⁹

In Venice itself, the accessibility of detailed information on the conduct of the war was particularly evident in the transcriptions of military and administrative records which appeared in a number of contemporary histories, including a well-circulated inventory of states and individuals who provided financial and military assistance to the Republic, and a list of Venetian naval commanders and formations at the onset of the conflict.⁸⁰ Although their exact provenance is often unclear,⁸¹ we do have evidence of two prominent scholarly collectors of documents pertaining to the conflict, Giacomo Contarini and Gian Vincenzo Pinelli. Contarini, who was credited by Francesco Sansovino as having collected ‘all the printed and manuscript histories of the city’,⁸² was a central figure within the city’s intellectual sphere during the second half of the sixteenth century, whose vast series of books and papers formed the basis of numerous library and archival collections after his

⁷⁷ As explained in a preface to the 1588 edition of the text written by the Ziletti family printing house (Diedo, *Lettera, tolta dal secondo libro delle Lettere de’ principi*). A full transcript of the letter, dating from December 1571, can be found in Girolamo Bardi’s account of the conflict (Bardi, *Sommario ouero età del mondo chronologiche*, Quarta Parte, pp. 1944-1980).

⁷⁸ De Vivo, ‘How to Read Venetian Relazioni’, pp. 42-47.

⁷⁹ See for instance: BL, Add. 8588, ff. 6-75v, 83-90v; Add. 8633, ff. 1-32v; Add. 14099, ff. 22-145.

⁸⁰ Contarini, *Historia Delle Cose Successe*, pp. 6-7; Sanudo, *Descrittione della Guerra* (BL, Add. 10831, ff. 11-14). See also BL, MS. Add. 10815, f. 112r for the inclusion of the list of payments in a draft chronicle of the conflict.

⁸¹ Although the records of military formations could be found in private copies of the *Segretario alle Voci* registers (BMC, Malvezzi 1, f. 48r), the circulation of which has been aptly demonstrated by Dorit Raines (‘Office Seeking, ‘Broglie’, and the Pocket Political Guidebook’, pp. 144-160).

⁸² Rose, ‘Jacomo Contarini’, p. 120.

death.⁸³ Alongside his vast private library at San Samuele, Contarini also had significant ties to the administration of the state records in the immediate aftermath of the conflict, as from 1575 onwards he had assumed the newly created office of *Regolatore alla Scrittura*, entrusted with the collection and organisation of all the financial and military information yet to be gathered from various public officials after the war.⁸⁴

Amongst these newly collated records, many of which were seemingly assimilated into the secret chancery only after Contarini's death,⁸⁵ were papers concerning the Holy League which had been surrendered by the Venetian diplomat Paolo Tiepolo over five years after its occurrence,⁸⁶ a register of naval and military documents,⁸⁷ and a series of other governmental records dating from the period.⁸⁸ Pinelli, for his part, had demonstrated through his own vast collection 'an exceptional ability to retain even the slightest products of everyday writing, because he was already aware of the value that ephemeral and occasional documents acquire over time.'⁸⁹ To an even greater extent than Contarini, argues Angela Nuovo, Pinelli's manuscript and documentary collection at Padua was a comprehensive and systematised point of reference for the political news and information of the day, as was evident in the Council of Ten's partial confiscation of its more sensitive contents in 1601.⁹⁰ As listed in the Ten's inventory of Pinelli's seized papers, the scholar and bibliophile had also amassed a substantial collection of papers pertaining to the war, including details of the fortifications of the island, reports from some of the major events of the conflict, and even the household diaries of the Venetian ambassador in Constantinople, Marc' Antonio Barbaro.⁹¹ In order to examine the role of such private collections in shaping the historiography of the war, it is the case of the latter to which we will now turn.

⁸³ Zorzi, *La libreria di San Marco*, p. 187.

⁸⁴ For details of this office, see d'Angiolini, Pavone and Carucci (eds.), *Guida generale*, vol. IV p. 948 (need to cite where it says he was one). In addition, Rose notes that the collector himself, as a keen mathematician and engineer, also had a strong private interest in the military and naval arrangements of the war (Rose, 'Jacomo Contarini', p. 118). Finally, we also know that Contarini had decent connections with the chancery itself; amongst his collections were the indexes of laws compiled by Bartolomeo Zamberti (Zorzi, *La Libreria di San Marco*, pp. 185-187), as well as copies of Borghi's *Historia venetiana Secreta* obtained from the archive (BNM, Cod. It. Z, 22^a-22^b), and the collector is cited by Girolamo Bardi as the source of his archival research on the 1177 Peace of Venice, as discussed in the following chapter.

⁸⁵ As outlined in the ASVe index to the series *Archivio Proprio di Giacomo Contarini (a cura di Maria Francesca Tiepolo)*, p. ii.

⁸⁶ ASVe, *Miscellanea Materie Miste e Notabili*, regg. 123bis-123ter.

⁸⁷ ASVe, Arc. Cont., reg. 12.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, reg. 13.

⁸⁹ Nuovo, 'Manuscript Writings on Politics and Current Affairs in the Collection of Gian Vincenzo Pinelli', p. 196.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 203-205.

⁹¹ ASVe, CX Com., b. 233 (31 August 1601).

4.3.2: *Private documentation and the diplomatic mission of Marc' Antonio Barbaro*

In one of the most important diplomatic and strategic incidents in the prelude to the conflict, we are given a perfect example of how the circulation of written correspondences shaped both the outcome and historical legacy of certain events. In March 1570, the Venetian Senate received news that a Turkish emissary, or *çavuş*, was making his way to the city from Constantinople, from their ambassador (or *Bailo*) in the Ottoman capital. The *çavuş*, he noted, was travelling with two letters, one from Sultan Selim and one from the Grand Vizier, Sokollu Mehmet Pasha, which set out and justified their demand for Venice to relinquish its hold over Cyprus to the Ottomans. Their quarrels with the Venetians were threefold. Firstly, the Republic had begun to trespass over the territorial confines set out in the peace treaty which followed the previous war of 1537-1540, having built castles and sold land in areas over which they had no dominion. Secondly, there were repeated reports of Turkish cargo trains suffering heavy losses in Dalmatia where Venetian merchants could move freely and undisturbed. Most significantly, however, the two accused the Venetians of encouraging western piracy against Muslim ships by allowing the island of Cyprus to be used as a naval base, where many remained free from arrest despite the substantial body of written testimonies against them.⁹²

Thanks to the efforts of the *Bailo*, Marc' Antonio Barbaro, these three arguments, which formed the basis of the Sultan's ultimatum, were already well known to the Venetian government by the time the *çavuş* had arrived at the Ducal Palace at the end of the month. According to Barbaro's letters, the ambassador had successfully employed his contacts within the Ottoman court, where he had been posted since 1568, to obtain copies of the two letters before the departure of the *çavuş* in early February. In order to ensure that news of the *çavuş*'s dispatch, including the details of the demands he intended to relay, reached the Senate in advance and without interception, Barbaro placed his copies in the hand of his secretary, Alvise Buonrizzo, whom he had persuaded the Vizier to let travel with the *çavuş* to accompany the safe return of Barbaro's son, Luigi, from the Ottoman capital. A few weeks later, once the mission had reached the island of Ragusa, Buonrizzo had successfully dispatched the *Bailo*'s written warnings to the Republic, where they arrived two weeks ahead of the secretary and his party.⁹³

The basic details of Barbaro's ruse, which allowed the Republic to orchestrate their response to the Sultan's demands well in advance of the *çavuş*'s arrival,⁹⁴ was similarly well established amongst the contemporary accounts, almost all of which make reference to the

⁹² Pedani Fabris, 'Some Remarks upon the Ottoman Geo-Political Vision', pp. 22-23.

⁹³ Barbero, *Lepanto*, pp. 84-85.

⁹⁴ As examined in the following section.

plans of the *Bailo*, and the claims of the Sultan which he had sent, at varying length.⁹⁵ Much of this information would have been widely circulated amongst the political elite at the time, but it was also thanks to the *Bailo*'s own record-keeping practices that the details of his espionage could be recounted by historians. In the years following the ambassador's return, many of his writings had been widely disseminated throughout Venice and the continent, such as the household papers later held by Pinelli and a *relazione* report from 1573, detailing the Ottoman designs and the politics of the court during the conflict, which appeared in both manuscript and print.⁹⁶

In addition, Barbaro and his secretary had also kept copybooks of the various letters dispatched from Constantinople both before and after the departure of the *çavuş*, in which the *Bailo* had outlined the military preparations taking place at the Turkish capital and its surrounding coastline. These had been kept as part of the ambassador's covert channel of communication between Venice and Constantinople during the turbulent early months of 1570, and included the keys to his ciphers and details of the methods by which he ensured his letters were not intercepted. One such copy of this volume, which Barbaro likely kept upon his person after his return,⁹⁷ was later donated to the *Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana* in 1816 from the historical and diplomatic collection of Zuan Antonio Ruzzini.⁹⁸ Even before these copies began to circulate privately after his death, however, there has been a strong suggestion that these copybooks formed the basis of one contemporary account in particular, a chapter in the *Historie de' suoi tempi* written by the Paduan scholar Natale Conti towards the end of the 1570s and first published in the vernacular in 1589. As Emmanuele Cicogna first noted in a brief section of the second volume of his *Delle iscrizioni Veneziane*, Conti demonstrated a detailed understanding of the letter writing techniques used, and explained, by the ambassador in his secret communications with the Republic – including ciphers, miniscule writing between lines of text, and even a form of invisible ink⁹⁹ – which led him to conclude that the historian 'must have had these volumes to hand.'¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ The most detailed contemporary account is given by Tiepolo, *Storia della guerra*, ff. 9-10 (see also: Contarini, *Historia Delle Cose Successe*, p. 4r; Longo, *Storia della Guerra*, f. 13v; Sanudo, *Descrittione della Guerra*, f. 3v [173v]).

⁹⁶ Barbaro, 'Relatione di Costantinopoli', pp. 89–111.

⁹⁷ This was in direct contravention of the regulations imposed upon Venetian ambassadors a few decades later, as discussed in de Vivo, *Information and Communication*, pp. 54-59, and was perhaps one of the cases which precipitated these new laws.

⁹⁸ BNM, Cod. It. VII, 390-391 (for further details of Ruzzini as a collector, see Campana, *Cronache di Venezia in volgare della Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana*, p. 186.)

⁹⁹ Conti, *Delle historie de' suoi tempi*, vol. II, pp. 56r, 74r. Barbaro's role as an informant within the nascent system of espionage between Venice and Constantinople is discussed by Preto, *I servizi segreti di Venezia*, pp. 250-253, 281.

¹⁰⁰ 'Abbia avuti sott'occhio questi volumi' (Cicogna, *Delle iscrizioni Veneziane*, vol. II, p. 366). As well as containing transcriptions of the the ambassador's written ciphers themselves (see for instance

Such a hypothesis is certainly feasible, as Barbaro had become increasingly tied to the city's intellectual sphere upon his return to the city,¹⁰¹ and merits further examination here. In his wider account of the outbreak of the conflict, for instance, Conti recounted a substantial amount of Barbaro's activity in the Ottoman capital, much of which follows the succession of the *Bailo*'s reports to the government. This began with the ambassador's long negotiations with senior members of the Ottoman court, including Ibrahim Bei, the chief interpreter for the Sultan, and Sokollu Mehmet, the Grand Vizier.¹⁰² In their discussions, the two had repeatedly attempted to convince the *Bailo* that the amassing fleet, contrary to popular opinion, was not intended against Venetian territories, as the Sultan would have no reason to break the terms of their peace, but instead was to be used in aid of the Morisco rebellion in Granada.¹⁰³ In his reports, and the subsequent account by Conti, Barbaro was intensely suspicious of these overtures, and continued to advise the Senate of the growing Ottoman threat to their maritime dominions.¹⁰⁴

Similarly, once Kubad had returned to Constantinople with the Senate's refusal to surrender the island, and the hostilities between the two states had begun in earnest, Barbaro was detained by a small Turkish host at his residence just north of the capital in Pera (modern day Beyoğlu). This fact was well established by contemporary writers,¹⁰⁵ yet Natale Conti was also able to elaborate on the conditions of the *Bailo*'s captivity in far greater detail, based on the written testimony of the ambassador himself. Despite his incarceration, he had written, the *Bailo* was still favoured by many at the court; the Grand Vizier had petitioned the Sultan for house arrest rather than outright imprisonment, his guards had sought to reassure him that he had not been held responsible for the failure of their diplomacy with the Republic,¹⁰⁶ and the ambassador had even been able to successfully negotiate the release of those Venetian merchants held at the capital and continue to inform the government of Turkish military preparations.¹⁰⁷ Nevertheless, the ambassador had been placed in an uncomfortable situation by the Venetian response to the *çavuş*. Having written that he had been forced to defend the Republic's insults against both the emissary and the

BNM, Cod. It. VII, f. 341r), Barbaro's *copialettere* also contained keys for their decoding elsewhere in the volume (Ibid., ff. 298r, 340r).

¹⁰¹ As discussed below on p. 138.

¹⁰² Conti, *Delle historie de' suoi tempi*, vol. II, p. 56r.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 56v.

¹⁰⁴ BNM, Cod. It. VII, 390, ff. 265r-272v (Letters dated 12 January 1569 m.v.).

¹⁰⁵ Contarini, *Historia delle cose successe*, p. 6v.

¹⁰⁶ Conti, *Delle historie de' suoi tempi*, vol. II, p. 65r; BNM, Cod. It. VII, 391, ff. 27r-28r (7 May 1570).

¹⁰⁷ Conti, *Delle historie de' suoi tempi*, vol. II, pp. 65v-66r; BNM, Cod. It. VII, 391, ff. 27r-28r (7 May 1570) This process had in fact begun before the *çavuş*' return (Ibid., ff. 2r-2v, 4 April 1570). The information concerning the Ottoman preparations for war continued in letters dating from 13 and 16 May.

Sultan,¹⁰⁸ he noted that his comparatively favourable treatment by the Ottomans did much damage to the image of the city,¹⁰⁹ whilst his repeated pleas for instructions from the Senate,¹¹⁰ from whom ‘he had not received any notice of recent affairs’, suggested that he had been left abandoned ‘with a troubled spirit’ in the Turkish capital.¹¹¹

Whilst we cannot be certain of the exact channels which may have brought the ambassador’s letters to Conti’s attention, we do know from one set of anonymous notes that his correspondences had formed the basis of research into the conflict at the time.¹¹² Moreover, it is certainly possible that the former ambassador himself, a patron of arts and scholarship with ties to Conti’s alma mater at Padua,¹¹³ may well have encouraged the reading of his papers for the purpose of establishing his image for posterity. This is evident in the subsequent depiction of the *Bailo* by Conti himself, as the ambassador became very much the protagonist of the historian’s early account. Throughout his account, Barbaro was described as a ‘uomo d’invocchiata prudenza’, capable of using intelligence and artifice to extract information for the Republic,¹¹⁴ and as one who was too shrewd to be misled by the reassurances of the Turkish court.¹¹⁵ In particular, as Conti explained, the ambassador’s intentions in persuading the Grand Vizier to send an emissary to the Republic was to delay the Turkish readiness for war by any means necessary, and to allow the Venetians time to act upon his secret warnings by amassing their own armies and organising their navy.¹¹⁶ That the ambassador continued to inform, defend and prepare the Republic in the midst of such a hostile environment led the historian to compare him to Marcus Attilius Regulus, the Roman general who had refused to put his own safety above the interests of the state when captured by the Carthaginians during the First Punic War. Like Regulus, Barbaro had not taken the opportunity to free himself from the perilous environment of the Turkish court, but rather remained in a position to reveal their true motives to the Venetian Senate.¹¹⁷

¹⁰⁸ Conti, *Delle historie de’ suoi tempi*, vol. II, p. 67r; BNM, Cod. It. VII, 391, ff. 33v-35r (16 May 1570).

¹⁰⁹ Conti, *Delle historie de’ suoi tempi*, vol. II, p. 64v; BNM, Cod. It. VII, 391, ff. 28r-29v (8 May 1570).

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, ff. 29v-30v (9 May 1570).

¹¹¹ Conti, *Delle historie de’ suoi tempi*, vol. II, p. 64v. This anxiousness and sense of isolation is particularly evident in a letter dating from 9th April 1570, which concludes with the ambassador’s displeasure at the fact that it took over a month for news of his secretary’s safe arrival at Ragusa to reach him (BNM, Cod. It. VII, 390, ff. 360v-364).

¹¹² BNM, Cod. It. VII, 410, ‘*Estratti di lettere al Consiglio de X con la zonta del bailo Barbaro*’.

¹¹³ Yriarte, *La vie d’un patricien de Venise au seizième siècle*, p. 236.

¹¹⁴ Conti, *Delle historie de’ suoi tempi*, vol. II, p. 56r.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 60v. Recent historiography has been less driven by Barbaro’s account in isolation, and considered instead his likely manipulation by the Turkish court into facilitating the conflict. Bicheno, for instance, has argued that Barbaro ‘had a personal interest in concealing the embarrassing fact that Grand Vizier Mehmet Sokolli had played him like a violin’ (Bicheno, *Crescent and Cross*, p. 183).

¹¹⁶ Conti, *Delle historie de’ suoi tempi*, vol. II, p. 64r.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 56v.

4.3.3: Oral diplomacy in the archive – official accounts of the arrival of Kubad *çavuş*

Whilst the private circulation of information regarding this mission had helped to construct a handful of early accounts, other details remained obscure, only to be expanded upon during the first research visits to the secret chancery over the following decades. During the spring of 1570, Barbaro waited anxiously in Constantinople for news of the Ottoman emissary.¹¹⁸ Upon his return to the capital, the *çavuş*, known only as Kubad in Western historiography, visited the *Bailo* to report on his audience with the Doge.¹¹⁹ On March 28th, Kubad had finally reached the Ducal Palace to present the Sultan's now long anticipated demands to the Doge and his councillors, after having made his way through the hostile crowds which had assembled to jeer their new awaited enemy. Once inside the Palace, Kubad presented his two letters to the Doge and his councillors, expecting to enter into negotiations over the fate of the island. Instead, the *çavuş* was dismissed almost immediately, having been given a pre-written response to deliver to the Sultan upon his return, refusing his master's demands and promising to defend the island against his unjustified aggression.¹²⁰

For the Venetians, Kubad's arrival had constituted one of the most public diplomatic incidents in the prelude to the war. Although some recent historians have tended to diminish its significance in favour of the diplomatic arrangements which had preceded it,¹²¹ the encounter was regularly presented as a pivotal moment in the contemporary accounts of the war.¹²² However, despite being a thousand miles from the Ducal Palace at the time of the event, Barbaro's later conversation with the *çavuş* had rendered him better informed of the exact details of that audience than the majority of his fellow countrymen. Contrary to some contemporary accounts, Kubad addressed the Venetian College, rather than the much larger Senate, and as such had presented the Sultan's demands to a far more secretive and exclusive audience. Although Barbaro's copies of the two Turkish letters had allowed many contemporary commentators a basic understanding of the *çavuş*'s intentions, most were reliant on word of mouth and speculation to reconstruct the details of the emissary's oral address as it actually happened.¹²³ For instance, in Emilio Maria Manolesso's 1572 history

¹¹⁸ This anxiousness and lack of information was reflected in his letters during this period.

¹¹⁹ Kubad even thanked Barbaro for the honourable treatment he was given by the ambassador's son Luigi on their journey to Venice (BNM, Cod. It. VII, 390-391, letter dated 9 May 1570).

¹²⁰ Barbero, *Lepanto*, pp. 86-89.

¹²¹ Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, vol. IV, pp. 953-954.

¹²² Giustiniani, *Le historie Venetiane*, p. 330r; Contarini, *Historia delle cose successe*, p. 5r; Tiepolo, *Storia della guerra*, f. 11; Longo, *Storia della Guerra*, ff. 17v-18v; Sanudo, *Descrittione della Guerra*, ff. 4r-4v (174r-174v).

¹²³ This practice was not restricted wholly to contemporaries. For instance, Hill's *A History of Cyprus* (vol. III, p. 888) recounts an alleged declaration spoken by the *çavuş* which was taken from a contemporary 'copy' of the Sultan's letter held in the National Archives at Kew (PRO 30/25/4, fo. 210), a document which bears little resemblance to the account held in the Venetian archives.

of the war, the historian had fabricated a customary opening address for his character of the *çavuş* to use:

Kubad approached the doors of the College alongside [Barbaro's] secretary Bonrizzo, and Michiel Membre, the Turkish interpreter. He first sat beside the Doge, Pietro Loredan, and then standing in pensive manner, addressed them as follows: "Most Serene Prince, Most Illustrious Sers, I declare myself a friend of this most Glorious Republic [...] It is with great displeasure that today I make the statement with which my Supreme *Signore* has commissioned me. If this brings you consternation, I hope that with your great prudence you will understand that I cannot but obey the commandments of his Highness, and that you will excuse me. I pray to the Lord, that he gives me grace to bring this negotiation to an end to the satisfaction of all."¹²⁴

Natale Conti, by contrast, staged a damning indictment by the ambassador upon his exit: 'as he left, pulling at his beard, he declared: "My Lord has been betrayed!"'¹²⁵

As recent studies in the practice of oration in Venetian political life have illustrated, the portrayal of speeches and debates conducted in the Senate chamber were not solely an exercise in rhetoric and fabrication,¹²⁶ as the private circulation of drafted and secretly recorded addresses may well have formed the basis of many historians' accounts.¹²⁷ The more exclusive audiences of foreign ambassadors before the College, however, had rarely been reported by historians in a similar way, but the story of Kubad's arrival was soon to benefit from a major development in the record-keeping systems of the chancery around the same time, as the secretaries of the College began to note down the proceedings of audiences

¹²⁴ 'Quanto Serenissimo Prencipe, Illustrissimi signori buono amico io sia de questa inclita *Republica* tua Serenità, et le vostre Signorie l'hanno potuto conoscere dal negotio de li Hebrei per opera, e diligenza mia acquietato, onde da se stesse puono congettuare, con quanto despiaciere faccia hora l'ufficio dal mio soprano signore commessomi, el che se bene le sara molesto, pure spero, che con la sua prudenza conoscendo, ch'io non posso mancare de ubedire alli commandamenti de sua Altezza, haranno me per iscusato, prego bene Iddio, che doni a me gratia de por fine con quella sua sodisfattione a questo negotio, con la quale all'altro' (Manolesso, *Historia nova*, p. 19v).

¹²⁵ Conti, *Delle historie de' suoi tempi*, vol. II, p. 63v.

¹²⁶ As suggested by Gilbert, 'Venetian Diplomacy before Pavia', p. 110-115.

¹²⁷ De Vivo, 'Rhetoric and Government in Sixteenth Century Venice', p. 194; Raines, 'L'archivio familiare strumento di formazione politica del patriziato Veneziano'. For an example of such drafts within a private manuscript collection, see ASVe, Arc. Trev., reg. 14. In the case of Francesco Guicciardini, moreover, Robert Finlay has also argued that 'following humanistic models, the orations in Guicciardini's *History* are literary constructions, not depictions of actual incidents. As functional devices for integrating analysis and motivation into a narrative, they evaluate a situation, emphasize the significance of events, and indicate alternative courses of action. The speeches are not wholly invented, however, for Guicciardini based them on substantial historical research and always framed them within an appropriate and plausible historical context' (Finlay, 'The Myth of Venice in Guicciardini's History of Italy').

held by foreign ambassadors in the chamber. This new type of oral record, known as the *esposizioni*, included transcripts of first person speech alongside general summaries of the meeting, its conclusions, and any items or letters exchanged between the two parties. The earliest copies of these records, which date back to the early sixteenth century, were originally kept loose alongside the papers presented by the visiting dignitary, before being registered for the first time in the *Pandette* volumes of the 1550s. After the *Annali* registers were re-commissioned in 1571,¹²⁸ the *esposizioni* records continued to be transcribed in this manner, and were finally collated into their own series of registers towards the end of the decade.¹²⁹

Amongst the earliest to be registered in both the new *Esposizioni* and *Annali* volumes was the report of Kubad's infamous exchange with the College in March 1570. For subsequent visitors to the chancery, such as Paruta and Morosini, the simple availability of such a report had a significant influence upon their own portrayal of the incident in literature. As examined in the previous chapter, both historians demonstrated a strong appreciation of the *Annali* registers as a source of information within the chancery,¹³⁰ and although neither historian recounted the details of Kubad's *esposizione* record verbatim, both followed its structure and phrasing to a notable degree. The two historians' adherence to this official record is evident through a comparison of the three accounts in turn, beginning with the opening display of formalities by the *çavuş* upon his arrival in the College chamber:¹³¹

ASVe, Annali, reg. 3, f. 78v	Paruta, <i>Historia Vinetiana</i> – <i>parte seconda</i> , p. 42	Morosini, <i>Historia Veneta</i> , p. 359
The Ambassador Kubad, sent by the Turks, arrived in the College. Having made his reverences to the Most	Having introduced himself to this audience, kissed the robes of the Prince, and after giving all due reverence sat	Having greeted the Prince and the other patricians with a bowed head, kissed the Doge's vestments, and sat

¹²⁸ As discussed in Chapter 2.3.

¹²⁹ ASVe, *Collegio, Esposizioni Principi*. The audiences of ambassadors from the Papal court were arranged in a separate series of volumes, the *Esposizioni Roma*. A detailed account of the series' early development is given in a forthcoming article by de Vivo: 'Archives of speech: recording diplomatic negotiation in late medieval and early modern Italy'.

¹³⁰ It is worth noting that many recent studies of Paruta have dated the composition of the *Guerra di Cipro* to before the patrician's appointment as historiographer in 1580, with Sarah Phillips suggesting that he may even have had access to the state records before this date as well (Phillips, *Paolo Paruta as an historian*, pp. 22-23). Given the substantial lack of documentation surrounding chancery admissions during this period, this may well be true. Nevertheless, one of the original manuscripts of Paruta's account, as catalogued by Marco Giani (*Paolo Paruta: il lessico della politica*, pp. 66-67), is dated 1585, suggesting that there was at least an overlap in the historian's composition of the text and his access to the chancery as recorded by the Ten.

¹³¹ A full comparison of the three original texts is provided in Table 9 of the Appendix.

Serene Prince, and all the himself down, Kubad himself down, Kubad College, and having kissed presented a bag of gold handed over the letters from the robes of the Doge, he fabric, which in accordance Selim and Mehemet, which went to stand at the usual to his nation's custom he said contained the position reserved for the contained the letters from thoughts of his Lord, and Ambassadors sent from Selim, and said: 'This, Most that which he had Constantinople, and drew Serene Prince, is a letter demanded. from his breast two letters, from my Lord, and since it saying that the first was from explains all that he demands, his Lord, and the second I will wait upon the response from the Grand Vizier, and given to me.' that in them was written all that which had recently come to pass.

Having been brought into the assembly chamber 'without any of the honours usually reserved for the diplomats who come to the city',¹³² Kubad 'was told that he would be given their letters in response, and that then he may leave.'¹³³ It was here that the *çavuş*, faced with the realisation that his mission would very likely come to nothing, proceeded to plead his master's case:

ASVe, Annali, reg. 3, f. 79r	Paruta, <i>Historia Vinetiana</i> – <i>parte seconda</i> , p. 42	Morosini, <i>Historia Veneta</i> , p. 359
The Ambassador, now with a pale face, and a trembling voice, said: 'The Grand Vizier has told me himself that eleven of the ships belonging to the subjects of the Sultan have been taken around Cyprus this year; that the enemies of his Majesty use the island to resupply; that there have been	With nothing else being said, Kubad, now with a troubled spirit, continued: 'Sirs, Mehemet Pasha has instructed me to inform you that there has emerged new reason to break our peace, which he deeply regrets, as he has always endeavoured to preserve it. However, the complaints which frequently	Kubad was struck pale in astonishment, and having presented his opening address alongside the letters of the Sultan and the Grand Vizier, he proceeded to explain that which had induced Selim to demand Cyprus.

¹³² Paruta, *Historia Vinetiana* – *parte seconda*, p. 42.

¹³³ A variation of this phrase appears in all three accounts.

numerous such trespasses at reach our court from all the confines of our directions – [...] that territories, and that although Western corsairs have been all of this has been made given favour in Cyprus, with clear, we have not yet great damage inflicted upon received any responses to Muslims as a result – have our letters, nor has the *Bailo* made a great impression on proposed any resolution. It is the spirit of our Lord, and in the face of this disrespect agitated his anger towards that my Lord has demanded this state, because he has the island of Cyprus.’ seen that the many negotiations with the *Baili* have so far proved fruitless.’

‘Having finished speaking, interpreted by the Turkish translator Michele Membre’, stated the report, ‘Kubad was read the response deliberated upon yesterday in the Senate, which again was interpreted piece by piece by the aforementioned Membre.’ Although the precise details of this reply were not recorded in the *esposizione* record itself, Paruta had paraphrased a copy of the Senate’s written response to the Sultan, which had also been transcribed into the *Annali*, as the basis of their address to the emissary.¹³⁴ The interpreter, he stated, told the emissary that Venice too had suffered the effects of Mediterranean piracy, which the Turks had also encouraged, but had not let this disrupt the peace which had been held by the two states for decades, and most recently confirmed by solemn vow by the Sultan himself. Instead, Selim was moving his troops against Venetian territory, over which they had held legitimate dominion for many years, with no justifiable cause, and so they would defend the island ‘with the help of Lord God, protector of the just’.¹³⁵

Morosini, by contrast, continued to follow the details of the exchange as outlined in the original *esposizione* record. Unmoved by the ambassador’s opening claims, the College ‘read him the decree from the day before, translated into Turkish by Michiel Membre, interpreter for the Republic.’ In a final attempt to enter into negotiations, the *çavuş* spoke on behalf of the Grand Vizier:

¹³⁴ In the letters sent by the Senate to Constantinople, moreover, it was explicitly stated that Kubad had been read their response during his audience (ASVe, *Annali*, reg. 3, ff. 77r-78r).

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 77r.

Kubad asked if he could speak, and having been told he could, he said: ‘The Grand Vizier, who is a friend of Your Serenity, has commanded me to inform you that the Great Emperor can send out a thousand ships, but that he [the Vizier] would always make every effort to intercede and return Your Serenity to peace with his Lord.’

Kubad asked if he was permitted to speak, and having been told that he was, he added that Mehemet had commanded him to inform the Republic that the Sultan could dispatch an armada of a thousand ships from Hellespont, but that he would be able to intercede to renew the peace.

With no further response from the College, and in anticipation of his dismissal from the chamber, the ambassador made his final plea for safe passage from the city, before making a subdued exit from the Palace.

In reproducing this archival record within the literary prose of their histories, both authors needed to edit its content for the benefit of the wider reading public. Although we know that the works of Venice’s chroniclers and historians were often found within the libraries and private collections of the city’s political classes,¹³⁶ the majority of these and other readers would have gained little insight from a verbatim transcript of the original *esposizione* record. Instead, the two historians needed to insert important contextual information missing from the original text, especially that regarding the written correspondence between Selim and the Senate, as well as adapting the original phrasing and terminology used by the secretaries, in order to make it accessible to those without prior experience of the language of Venice’s administrative sphere.¹³⁷ For Morosini, who eventually compiled his account in Latin, there was also the significant issue of producing a suitable translation of this text.¹³⁸ In this respect, the Kubad affair serves as a useful explanation for the absence of verbatim records inserted into the texts of the historiographers. Nevertheless, the influence of this memorandum is evident in the accounts of the two historians, whose adherence to its structure and format had a notable impact upon

¹³⁶ As illustrated by the indexes of contemporary collections belonging to Leonardo Donà (BMC, M.S. P.D. c/2735/2; Zorzi, ‘La circolazione del libro’, pp. 130-132) and Giacomo Contarini (BNM, Cod. Lat. XIV, 21). Monastic libraries also held copies of the great Venetian historians, such as that held at the Benedictine monastery at San Giorgio Maggiore, home of Fortunato Olmo (Ravegnani, *Le biblioteche del monastero di San Giorgio Maggiore*, pp. 73-80).

¹³⁷ Paruta himself, it should be noted, stated in his political treatise *Della perfezione della vita politica* that the task of the historian was to insert rhetorical speech and philosophical precepts in such a way that it does not detract from the ‘simple narration through which one’s readers can most easily comprehend those lessons which are the true purpose of History’ (Paruta, *Della perfezione della vita politica*, pp. 214-215).

¹³⁸ In a recent study of the historian Giuseppe Trebbi has noted that Morosini’s use of state records is particularly interesting in that they had been incorporated into a work of humanistic, Livian prose (Trebbi, ‘Venezia tra ’500 e ’600 nell’opera storica di Andrea Morosini’, p. 113).

their presentation of the exchange itself. Rather than construct a long exchange of orations which had been recurrent throughout the remainder of their accounts, here the chancery record forms the basis of a shorter, more naturalistic dialogue – a ‘sense of colloquial immediacy’ which was common within the early *esposizioni*¹³⁹ – in which the tone of the room and the gestures of the participants received as much attention as the words which they spoke. The recollection of this exchange in the truncated, almost curt manner of the original document shifted the perception of the *çavuş* himself. Whilst previous accounts had tended to portray the emissary as a foreign aggressor, whose presence in the city had drawn the ire of the awaiting crowds outside the Palace, here we are presented with an aspiring mediator between the Sultan and the Republic, speaking on behalf of the less belligerent Grand Vizier. This is an image of the emissary and his mission which better corresponded with the reports sent by Barbaro: that certain members of the Ottoman court had been hoping to avoid a potentially costly conflict by means of diplomacy, as illustrated by Sokollu’s attempt to moderate and justify the Sultan’s ultimatum.

4.3.4: The outbreak of the conflict in a historical context – narratives of Venice’s European diplomacy in the Annali

As well as making important links between Kubad’s mission and the intentions of the Ottoman court, Paruta and Morosini’s archival-based depiction of a pallid and frustrated ambassador – who at one stage even asked his interpreter if his master’s message had been correctly translated – threw his curt dismissal by the Venetians into even sharper focus. Kubad, for his part, had previously enjoyed a favourable reception during his previous visit to the city in 1567, shortly after the accession of Selim II,¹⁴⁰ and was thus well placed to act as mediator in this particularly sensitive matter. Nevertheless, the Doge and his councillors made no attempt to accommodate the possibility of a peaceful outcome to the crisis, despite the fact that, only a few weeks earlier, there had still been serious divisions amongst the Senate over whether to engage in a full conflict with the Turks. To aggravate the matter even further, the letter which the Senate delivered to Selim through his ambassador excluded all the usual titles and courtesies reserved for communications with the Sultan, a fact which was taken as a great insult upon Kubad’s return to the capital.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ As de Vivo demonstrates in his forthcoming article, the formatting of the early *esposizioni* was very much dictated by the note taking techniques of the secretaries themselves, who remained anonymous in their transcriptions until the 1620s. The first attempt to formalise the formatting and language of the memoranda was not taken until years after the *çavuş*’s fruitless address (de Vivo, ‘Archives of speech’, *forthcoming*).

¹⁴⁰ Arbel, *Trading Nations*, pp. 133-140.

¹⁴¹ A move which Barbaro himself had to defend on behalf of the Senate (BNM, Cod. It. VII, 390-391, letter dated 16 May 1570).

However, although there had been growing signs of a Venetian acceptance of the inevitable conflict, ranging from the arrests of Ottoman merchants to the imprisonment of another *çavuş* on his way to France,¹⁴² the decision to dismiss the ambassador in this manner had not yet been fully examined by contemporary accounts of the conflict. To a certain extent, Barbaro's intercession in pre-empting the Sultan's message provided the majority of historians with some form of explanation, which they then augmented with a patriotic defence of the Republic's intentions. According to Gian Pietro Contarini, for instance, the Senate had decided in the time between the receipt of Barbaro's warning and the arrival of the *çavuş*: 'that it would be better for the dignity and greatness of the Republic to defend Cyprus against the Turks in open war.'¹⁴³ Emilio Maria Manolesso gave a similar interpretation, noting that the Republic had resolved 'de non cieder ponto all'arroganza Turchesca', or else risk the eternal opprobrium of having been intimidated into surrendering the territories which their ancestors had endeavoured to defend.¹⁴⁴

However, the prevailing focus on Venice's relationship with Constantinople, alongside the virtuous public service of Barbaro and his secretary, meant that a crucial context in Venice's decision to accept the coming conflict was almost completely overlooked by these early historians. As numerous recent studies have attested, Venice's initial reluctance to commit to Pope Pius V's proposed anti-Turkish alliance after the aborted siege of Malta in 1565 was eventually diminished by the growing threat of a Turkish assault on Cyprus. As Barbaro's increasingly immediate warnings began to arrive from Constantinople at the beginning of 1570, Venetian ambassadors in the major courts of Europe were finally instructed to begin the negotiations which would later culminate in the so-called Holy League of naval forces which, although unsuccessful in defending Cyprus itself, eventually triumphed at Lepanto.¹⁴⁵ Unlike Barbaro's dispatches from Constantinople, the majority of these communications had been successfully consigned to the chancery without widespread dissemination across the political sphere, and thus their accounts of Venice's complex network of European negotiations were far less accessible to the majority of contemporary authors.

However, thanks to the recommissioning of the *Annali* transcription registers in November 1571, the reports and deliberations concerning Venice's position in Europe in the weeks preceding the *çavuş*' arrival had already been arranged into a detailed narrative by the secretary Ambrosio Ottobon by the time the two state historians first entered the chancery in

¹⁴² ASVe, *Annali*, reg. 3, ff. 81r-86v.

¹⁴³ Contarini, *Historia delle cose successe*, p. 4v.

¹⁴⁴ Manolesso, *Historia nova*, p. 20v.

¹⁴⁵ Barbero, *Lepanto*, pp. 126-131; Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, vol. IV, pp. 932-935, 950-954.

1580 and 1599 respectively. Through their reading of the succession of dispatches and reports both arriving into and leaving the Palace, Paruta and Morosini were able to construct an entirely new account of Venice's attempt to negotiate an anti-Turkish alliance, which reflected the structure and phrasing of this section of the register in much the same way as the two historians had recreated the record of Kubad's *esposizione*. The structural similarities in the accounts of Paruta, Morosini and the *Annali*, in which negotiations of the Venetian ambassadors in Europe are paraphrased and outlined in unprecedented detail, can easily be seen in a comparative reading of the three texts,¹⁴⁶ and have also been summarised in Table 10 of the Appendix.

By closely following the succession of events as arranged by the secretary Ottobon, Paruta and Morosini's accounts placed a far greater emphasis on the hitherto secretive details of Venice's attempt to garner military support in anticipation of an Ottoman attack. Taken from the records inserted into the *Annali*, their subsequent narratives provided new information about the reticence of certain governments to provide direct financial assistance to the defence of the island, the Pope's own desire instead to manufacture an anti-Turkish League with Spain, and the plan to have Imperial and Baltic troops occupy the Turkish forces on the mainland. As Paruta highlighted in his later defence of the *Annali* as a research tool, this narrative framework could then be augmented with details taken from other sources, both within and beyond the chancery archive. For instance, the registers of the Senate and Council of Ten – both of which were accessible to the historiographers – contained further information on the dispatch of the Venetian secretary Vincenzo degli Alessandri as an envoy to the Persian court in order to encourage support from another enemy of the Turks, the diplomatic missions of the Papal legate Ludovico Torres, and even the number of ballots attached to Venice's rejection of the Sultan's demands.¹⁴⁷ Meanwhile, the election registers of the *Segretario alle Voci*, copies of which were widely circulated amongst the patrician class,¹⁴⁸ provided the names of the relevant ambassadors not recorded

¹⁴⁶ Paruta, *Historia Vinetiana – parte seconda*, pp. 23-37; Morosini, *Historia Veneta*, pp. 353-358; ASVe, *Annali*, reg. 3, ff. 42r-78v.

¹⁴⁷ For details of Alessandri in Persia, see ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 9, ff. 94v-98r, whilst references to Torres as Papal envoy to the King of Portugal are recorded in ASVe, Sen. Rom., reg. 2, f. 93v. Although omitted from the *Annali*, the votes attached to the two Venetian letters written in advance of Kubad's arrival (199 for, 5 against and 16 abstentions for the letter to the Sultan, and 202 for, 4 against and 10 abstentions for the letter to the Grand Vizier), were recorded in: ASVe, Sen. Cost., reg. 4, ff. 24r-25r (27 March 1570). An aggregate of these results were subsequently recounted by Morosini (*Historia Veneta*, pp. 359-360).

¹⁴⁸ See note 81 above.

in the *Annali*,¹⁴⁹ whilst other, less secretive details of the affair would have been available through the authors' own proximity to events and their participants.¹⁵⁰

For the most part, however, the arrangement of the *Annali* register provided a new narrative structure, in which the historians could move between the preparations in Venice, Europe and Constantinople as they occurred,¹⁵¹ rather than being dealt with as separate subjects. As discussed in Chapter Two, the principal benefit of this new archival arrangement was that the various records and dispatches coming to and from the city could subsequently be narrated in the context of each other. For instance, in one of the more detailed contemporary accounts written by the secretary Fedele Fedeli, Venice's European negotiations only began in earnest after the arrival of Kubad.¹⁵² By contrast, Paruta and Morosini illustrated that not only had they been well underway alongside Barbaro's warnings of the *çavuş*' departure, but they had in fact played a crucial role in explaining why the Venetian government received him as they did. Having established the precarious nature of the city's early negotiations of an anti-Turkish League during the early months of 1570, in which the Senate had to continually inform the Pope, Emperor and King of Spain of their activities throughout the rest of Europe, the two historians noted that the impending arrival of the Ottoman ambassador presented a far greater problem than the demands of the Sultan himself:

The doubt arose, that the [Christian] Princes might grow suspicious, that the Venetians would negotiate an agreement with the Turks, if they should return a slower and more positive answer to this emissary. Hence it was feared that the treaty of the League, which the Venetians did so much desire, and which had begun with so much hope, might be interrupted. And yet it is most certain, that when news of the *çavuş*' coming was brought to Rome, those who treated of the League for the Catholic King, began to show themselves more prone and forthcoming in this negotiation, and afterwards it was more clearly known, that these

¹⁴⁹ ASVe, *Segretario alle Voci, Elezioni Pregadi*, reg. 4.

¹⁵⁰ In particular, Phillips has illustrated the significant personal ties held by Paruta, still an active political figure at the time, to the events of the conflict (Phillips, *Paolo Paruta as an historian*, pp. 20-21), as illustrated in his two previous writings – the *Orazione Funebre* in commemoration of Lepanto, and the *Discorso sopra la pace de' Veneziani co' Turchi*. In addition, the private archive of Giacomo Contarini specifies that Paruta was also one of the *Regolatori alla Scrittura* in the years immediately following the conflict (ASVe, Arc. Cont., reg. 13), and thus may have had access to certain military and financial documentation even before his appointment as historiographer.

¹⁵¹ See pp. 60-61 above for a discussion of this phenomenon – the narrative 'meanwhile' – occurring in both the *Annali* registers and the works of the great Renaissance historians such as Guicciardini.

¹⁵² Fedeli, *Storia della guerra de' Turchi* (BL, Add. MS 10727), f. 8r for Kubad's arrival, f. 13v for an account of Venice and Europe.

jealousies and suspicions, more than any other reason, removed many difficulties which arose in this agreement.¹⁵³

It was here that the wider of context of Venice's European diplomacy, as recorded in the *Annali*, served to explain the actions of the Republic. As Paruta indicated in this passage, the final confirmation that the Republic would be held in suspicion if it entertained the Turkish ambassador came in a dispatch from Michele Surian, the Venetian ambassador in Rome, just two days before the *çavuş*' arrival. As well as recounting the negative reaction of the Spanish contingent, Surian also relayed a cautionary message from the Pope himself:

The Pope said that he understood from the writings of the nuncio that the Republic will respond [to the *çavuş*] with such courage as is necessary, and that he believed they would do so, so as to not be fooled by the promises of the Turk [...]; to not lose the reputation which they had gained throughout the world for their strong and rapid defences [...]; to not mislead the Christian Princes who are coming together in this common task; and to not risk losing any of the alliances of which they may have need in the future.¹⁵⁴

In the very next entries in the *Annali*, the College and Senate immediately set out their prepared response to the *çavuş* upon his arrival, even to the extent of determining his physical reception in the assembly chamber, in direct response to the Pope's advice:

We must not entertain the expedition of the Ambassador sent by the Turks to our *Signoria*, so as to give no suspicion to the other Princes that we are to enter into any agreements with him. [...] Not one member of the College will stand at his arrival, nor give any recognition towards him [...] Should the *çavuş* not speak himself, but rather present the letters of

¹⁵³ 'Poneva innanzi il dubbio, che generar si potesse nell'animo de' Principi alcun sospetto, di voler trattare con Turchi negozio d'accordo, quando con men presta, et risoluta risposta si fosse ispedita questa legatione; onde temevasi, che per ciò si venisse a rompere il negozio della lega, cosa grandamente da' Vinetiani bramata, alla quale pareva, che con molte speranze si fosse dato principio. Nondimeno certa cosa è, che publicata in Roma la nuova della venuta del Chiaus, quelli, che per lo Re Catholico trattavano la lega, cominciarono a dimostrarsi in questo negozio più facili, et più ardenti, et da poi più chiaramente si conobbe, questa gelosia, et questi sospetti più, che altra ragione esser stati potenti a troncare infinite difficoltà, che nascevano in tale accordo' (Paruta, *Historia Vinetiana – parte seconda*, p. 41; see also: Morosini, *Historia Veneta*, p. 358).

¹⁵⁴ 'Sua Santità disse che l'ha inteso quello che'l noncio gli ha scritto, che la *Serenità Vostra* gli fara risposta con quella generosita che si conviene, et che ella crede che la sia per far, così per non lassar inganarsi da promesse de Turchi [...]; et per non perder la riputatione che si ha acquistato con tutto'l mondo con le preparation tanto gagliarde, et preste [...]; et per non inganar *Sua Serenità* negl'altri Principi Christiani che si tratta di unir seco a questa impresa; et per non perder tutti gl'amici de quali potesse haver bisogno in altro tempo' (ASVe, *Annali*, reg. 3, f. 76v, report from the Venetian ambassador in Rome, 26 March 1570).

his Sultan, and the Pasha, he will be told that the letters will be translated and responded to immediately, after which he will be sent back to his Lord.¹⁵⁵

When Kubad reached the city on the very next day, therefore, he entered not into a negotiation but into a carefully choreographed declaration of Venice's animosity towards the Turks, a move which both the Republic and its state historians could use to demonstrate their fidelity to the Christian cause.

Following his reconstruction of the Ottoman ambassador's *esposizione*, Paruta and Morosini turned their attention to the debate which surrounded the decision to receive the *çavuş* in this dismissive manner. A small number of Senators, they noted, had in fact counselled the government to accept negotiations with the Grand Vizier's emissary, especially as the Sultan's intentions towards the island were based on nothing more than personal desire, from which he may still be dissuaded by his advisors. Citing the disastrous conflict with the League of Cambrai earlier in the century, they argued that the Republic had previously suffered from their hasty acceptance of war as an inevitability, and urged their colleagues not to repeat this mistake. By contrast, however, a greater number of Senators rejoiced in the fact that the government had taken the courageous, opportune, and above all necessary decision to engage the princes of Europe against their common enemy in response to this ultimatum.¹⁵⁶ In the retrospective knowledge of Venice's eventual losses, for which Paruta's 1574 *Discorso sopra la pace fatta dai signori veneziani col Turco* had already decried the long term effectiveness of the League and the European response to the Ottoman threat,¹⁵⁷ Morosini commented that the eager acceptance of 'such a difficult and atrocious war against a most powerful enemy' with such relish was no more than an 'incredible occurrence.'¹⁵⁸ Nevertheless, their interpretation of Venice's diplomatic position at the time, extracted from the *Annali* registers of the chancery, served to illustrate the unfortunate necessity of such a decision at the time, adding some much needed political context to a previously bellicose and celebratory narrative of the outbreak of the war.

¹⁵⁵ 'Non dovendosi intertener ponto l'espeditio del Chiaus mandato dal Turco alla Signoria nostra per non dar sospicione alli Principi che siamo per entrar in alcuna trattatione con lui ... ne alcun'altro di collegio levarsi in piedi, o, far altro segno verso di lui ... In case veramente ch'l sopradetto Chiaus non parlasse, ma si reportasse alle lettere del suo Signor, et del Bassa, gli sia risposto che si fara tradur le lettere, et se gli fara risposta immediate, et se gli mandara le lettere, con le quali havera da partirsi per retornar al suo signor' (ASVe, *Annali*, reg. 3, ff. 78r-78v, 27 March 1570).

¹⁵⁶ Paruta, *Historia Venetiana – parte seconda*, pp. 43-44; Morosini, *Historia Veneta*, pp. 359-360. Bicheno (*Crescent and Cross*, p. 174) argues that the decision may also have been based on the confidence gained from the recent military displays of strength against Ottoman raiding forces.

¹⁵⁷ Monzani, *Opere politiche di Paolo Paruta*, vol. I, pp. 433-439; Marco Giani, 'A Hard Defence of a Shameful Peace'.

¹⁵⁸ Morosini, *Historia Veneta*, pp. 359-360.

4.4: Conclusion

In 1597, shortly before his death, Paolo Paruta received a written plea from another aspiring historian at Padua, Antonio Riccoboni. In it, the professor of rhetoric, who had already contributed a long treatise to the *Ars Historica*,¹⁵⁹ explained that he had hoped to publish his own history of the city – including an account of the War of Cyprus – through a company in Frankfurt, but was first obliged to seek the permission of the Republic’s official historian as their accounts were due to overlap.¹⁶⁰ In a frank account of his current fortunes as historiographer, Paruta revealed that he had long been suspected of not fulfilling the duties of his post,¹⁶¹ and thus implored Riccoboni not to publish a competing account produced at no expense to the Council of Ten. As part of his reasoning, the historian claimed that only the official historiographer could produce an authoritative account of the city’s affairs:

Know that those who do not have the support and favour of the Prince cannot write history with proper foundation or truth [...] The Republic has desired that the heart of its greatest secrets remain open to those who are granted this office, allowing them to freely enter the secret chancery and see all the public records, a licence which is not even conceded to its Senators.¹⁶²

Paruta’s exchange with his competitor provides a rare insight into the contemporary perceptions of the secret chancery as an authoritative source for the comprehension and construction of the city’s recent past. In addition, the historian’s comments highlight the dual privilege and responsibility conferred upon the historiographer, which had justified the Ten’s decision to appoint their own patricians rather than foreign scholars such as Riccoboni. On the one hand, Paruta’s access to the state records allowed him a unique

¹⁵⁹ A genre of historical philosophy which has been examined in Chapter 1.2 (Riccoboni, *De historia commentarius*).

¹⁶⁰ Written over the course of some twenty six years, and comprising thirteen volumes, Riccoboni’s account had in fact begun from where Bembo’s had ended.

¹⁶¹ As Sarah Phillips’ study of the historian has illustrated, Paruta had failed to submit a viable copy of his work for revision by the *Riformatori*, as per the terms of his office, since 1585, preferring instead to discuss his progress with his own patrician contacts. In addition, despite his favourable portrayal of the Republic during the outbreak of the War of Cyprus, the Council of Ten strongly disapproved of his account of the city’s role in the Italian Wars of the 1520s (Phillips, ‘Paolo Paruta as an historian’, pp. 156-167). The subsequent fate of the historian’s work is discussed at the beginning of the following chapter.

¹⁶² ‘Sappi molto bene che non può scrivere historia con fondamento o verità chi non ha il braccio et favore d’un Principe [...] a chi ha dato questo carico, ha volute che stia insieme aperto il seno di tutti i suoi maggiori secreti, concedendogli quella licenza, che a’ senatori istessi non è concessa, di poter sempre andare nella Cancellaria secreta et vedere tutte le scritture pubbliche’ (Favaro, ‘Lettere passate tra Antonio Riccobono et il Procurator Paruta d’intorno allo scrivere le historie Venete’, pp. 173-174). As discussed on pp. 111-112 above, it would be another three years until Senators were given free access to the chancery archive.

understanding of ‘the causes and motives’ of major events – which, as we have seen, was very much evident in his account of the outbreak of war against the Turks. In turn, however, the state historian was to be entrusted with representing and disseminating the secrets of government affairs within a well-crafted literary monument to the state. ‘Just as Alexander the Great had not seen fit to allow every painter and sculptor to construct his effigy,’ Paruta continued, ‘so too it is reasonable for the Princes to entrust the depiction of their affairs only to whom they please.’¹⁶³

The use of both the *Annali* registers and Sanudo’s archival diaries by the early state historians serves to further demonstrate the importance of the sixteenth-century chancery collection as a site for the better comprehension of recent historical events, as the structure of the volumes were able to provide a more coherent sense of narrative than contemporary knowledge of events alone. In addition, successive archival reforms and the creation of new historical compendia within the chancery over the course of the century had also illustrated the increasing ability of the Republic to dictate its own historical image. Whilst Bembo’s reading of Sanudo’s ad hoc arrangement of contemporary documentation and political commentaries required the re-examination of original chancery records in order to be rectified,¹⁶⁴ the newly commissioned *Annali* registers provided an intimate account of Venetian diplomacy and strategy whilst simultaneously emphasising those records which demonstrated the cunning and Christian piety of the government in the face of an inescapable Ottoman threat to its territories. Those which didn’t, such as the sections of Barbaro’s dispatches pleading with the Republic to send news of Kubad’s mission whilst isolated in Constantinople, could be carefully excised from the final volume.¹⁶⁵ Even the records of the *esposizioni*, which had allowed visiting ambassadors to be given a voice for the very first time in Venetian historiography, were retrospectively edited and manipulated by the secretaries before being preserved in the registers of the chancery.¹⁶⁶ In this respect, the reproduction of state secrets extracted from the registers of the chancery was by no means incompatible with the creation of a positive historical image for the Republic,

¹⁶³ Favaro, ‘Lettere passate tra Antonio Riccobono et il Procurator Paruta d’intorno allo scrivere le historie Venete’, p. 174.

¹⁶⁴ And thus not quite the successful surrogate for the chancery itself as intended by the Council of Ten (see p. 90 above).

¹⁶⁵ The edits made to Barbaro’s writings in the *Annali* can be seen through comparison of his original papers (ASVe, Sen. Disp. Cost., b. 5, in particular 8 March 1570 and 9 April 1570), to their subsequent transcriptions (ASVe, *Annali*, reg. 3, ff. 105r, 112r). These edits may for instance explain why Conti, who likely had access to the copybooks of the original dispatches, emphasised Barbaro’s plight in Constantinople, whilst both Paruta and Morosini, who were unlikely to have sifted through the original *filze* thanks to the availability of the *Annali* transcripts, failed to do so.

¹⁶⁶ Although there are few signs of corrections made to Kubad’s address in March 1570 (ASVe, *Collegio, Esposizioni Principi, Filze*, b. 1), de Vivo has noted several examples of this correction process, by which the Venetian chancery dictated the image of numerous foreign ambassadors for posterity (de Vivo, ‘Archives of speech’, *forthcoming*).

especially as the government and its secretaries were able to shape the records of its activity for its historians to follow.

Given the vast scale of potential sources available both within and beyond the chancery, as well as the reticence of the state historians to indicate the provenance of their information, it would be far beyond the scope of this thesis to establish the full extent of the influence which register series such as the *Annali* had upon their wider narratives. Nevertheless, case studies such as this, alongside the surviving notes and commentaries which have directed us towards the chancery as a primary source of information, indicate that there may well be a much larger number of contemporary narratives of Venice's early modern history which had been initially pieced together by the secretaries of the Republic, before being reinterpreted by its historians. Contrary to the assessments of recent historiography, therefore, cases such as the War of Cyprus provide ample evidence to suggest that the registers of the chancery served as a direct source of information for the detail and structure of the Republic's official histories.

Chapter Five: From record to source – archival investigation, documentary evidence and new interpretations of Venice’s distant past in the secret chancery archive

5.1: Introduction – the adoption of archival citation by the historian-superintendents

Between the two accounts of the origins of the recent War of Cyprus extrapolated and compiled from the *Annali* transcription registers of the chancery by the state historiographers Paolo Paruta and Andrea Morosini, there existed one significant discrepancy. Andrea Morosini, writing at least two decades after his predecessor and three after the end of the conflict itself, prefaced his account by acknowledging the ‘great eloquence and clarity with which these events have already been narrated’, especially by his predecessor, and that he himself had been too young at the time of this tumultuous event to provide an authoritative testimony of its causes and vicissitudes. Nevertheless, he continued, these events were too significant to be overlooked for this reason alone, and thus the historian declared that his own account would be taken ‘from the public registers, the writings of the most diligent still living commentators, and the accounts of those who were involved.’¹ Upon the posthumous publication of Morosini’s history in 1623, this became the first explicit statement of the chancery’s role in forming the official historiography of the Republic to appear in print.

The account which followed subsequently contained a number of additional details omitted by Paruta, most likely taken from the registers of the Senate in order to augment the records of the *Annali*, including instructions to the Venetian envoy in Constantinople to congratulate and secure terms with Sultan Selim upon his ascension in 1567, the unsuccessful attempt by ambassador Alvise Contarini to garner military support from Charles IX of France, and the number of votes in favour of Venice’s response to the Sultan in March 1570.² Even beyond Morosini’s history of the war, we can see evidence of the historian’s return to the archive in passages dating back to the 1526 anti-Spanish Treaty of

¹ ‘ex publicis commentarijs, ex diligentissimorum vivorum scriptis, atque ex ijs, qui rebus interfuere, narrationibus (Morosini, *Historia Veneta*, p. 348). The archival implications of Morosini’s use of the term *publicis commentariis* are discussed in Chapter 1.3.

² Marin de Cavalli’s mission to maintain the terms of the Veneto-Ottoman peace in 1566 (Ibid., p. 350) is recorded in ASVe, Sen. Cost., reg. 3, ff. 63v-64r (19 February 1566 m.v.). The instructions to Contarini to procure support from the King of France in 1570 (Morosini, *Historia Veneta*, pp. 355-356), is recorded in ASVe, Sen. Sec., reg. 76, f. 58v (11 March 1570), whilst the ballot results for the letters later that month are discussed above on p. 147.

Cognac and the 1529 pro-Spanish Treaty of Bologna, whose clauses Morosini had paraphrased in far greater detail than in the account of his predecessor.³

With this first overlap in the printed accounts of the city's historiographers,⁴ over a century of relative silence concerning the historian's use of the secret chancery had finally come to an end. The historian-superintendent endeavoured to indicate the originality and accountability of his account against the previously well-established series of events from which he had been personally detached, using a reference to the archive as a source which was to become a wider trend within Venetian historiography throughout the early decades of the seventeenth century, as its authors increasingly began to turn their attention towards events which long predated the periods for which they had originally been commissioned to write. Alongside his substantial history of Venice in the sixteenth century, Andrea Morosini also drafted a series of brief historical case studies of incidents from past centuries – including the Peace of Venice of 1177, the role of the Republic in various crusades, and the execution of the ill-fated *condottiere* Francesco Carmagnola in 1432⁵ – which contained transcripts of previously unseen chancery records. His aim, as he stated in one of his prefaces, was to 'revisit the actions of our ancestors, and that which we know from the ancient and public records, to renew and illustrate their memory, which we will recount with such diligence and effort that they can no longer remain forgotten and buried in obscurity.'⁶ His successor, Nicolò Contarini, inserted contextual information from Venice's medieval history into his account of its recent affairs, the as yet unpublished *Historie Venete*, highlighting its archival provenance in order to indicate 'those events which cannot be contradicted by anyone, as they can be found in the ancient records of the Republic.'⁷

³ Morosini's summaries of these two treatises (Morosini, *Historia Veneta*, pp. 64-65, 136-137), especially relating to the signatories at the end which were omitted by Paruta (Ibid., pp. 326-327), correlate precisely with the relevant entries in ASVe, *Commemoriali*, reg. 21, f. 5v, and f. 94 respectively; a series from which Morosini had taken extensive transcriptions amongst his notes (BMC, Malvezzi 136, ff. 37-42).

⁴ This was partly a consequence of Paruta's fall from favour by the end of his career (see p. 151, note 161 above), which meant that the historian's work could only be published through a private printing press of the Nicolini family, at the behest of his son, eight years after his death. For the first seven years of Morosini's tenure, therefore, there had been no official account of the city's history since the conclusion of Bembo's *Historia Vinitiana* in 1513, thus leaving the new superintendent to recommence the narrative at the same point in time.

⁵ These two studies, however, remained unpublished and thus likely received less attention than his printed history of the Crusades discussed below (BMC, Malvezzi 136, 'De rebus a Venetis gestis Alexandro III pontefice'; BMC, Cicogna 1773, 'De rebus gestis, ac nece Francisci Carmaniole commentarius').

⁶ 'Riandando le attioni de' nostri maggiori, et quello che habbiamo da antichissime, e publiche scritture, per rinovar, et illustrar la memoria loro, con somma diligenza, e fatica, raccolte, non lasceremo, che rimanghino più lungamente dimenticate, e nell'oblivione sepolte' (Morosini, *L'imprese et espeditioni di Terra Santa*, p. 2).

⁷ Contarini, *Historie Venete* (BL, Kings 151, f. 58r).

Contarini's references to the public records – which despite 'wanting to infect his readers with the same enthusiasm for his discoveries by inviting them to examine them at source', according to Benzoni and Zanato,⁸ often failed to provide his readers with the provenance or transcriptions necessary to do so – were subsequently developed by his successor, cousin, and former deputy-superintendent of the archive, Paolo Morosini, who decided to forgo contemporary events altogether in favour of re-examining the city's more distant past. As stated in the preface to his *Historia della città e Repubblica di Venetia*, published in 1637, Morosini had decided to turn his attention towards the years predating the accounts of the previous historiographers, a period which he believed had not yet benefitted from the opening of the secret chancery. Having turned his efforts towards various primary sources, including 'the once hidden and secret archives of the Republic, for which it is now lawful to consult', Morosini declared 'that there are no writers who have adequately represented the great diligence and prudence used in the constitution of the city's laws, its ingenuity in negotiation, and the piety and wisdom of its decrees, due to their lack of well-founded information.'⁹ As the early history of the Republic had been ungrounded in diligent, documentary research, Morosini thus considered it his responsibility as state historian to do so. Although large sections of his account, which covered over a millennium of Venetian history from its fifth-century origins, were based upon those of his predecessors,¹⁰ these were interspersed with both transcriptions and direct references to material which he had personally uncovered within the chancery. For the most part, these were documents and information which had yet to appear in the city's historiographical tradition; amongst them, a thirteenth-century law on Venetian property rights in the *Stato da Mar*, the text of Francesco Petrarca's donation of manuscripts to the Republic in 1362, and new details of the European diplomacy surrounding the first Venetian-Ottoman war in 1463.¹¹

As discussed in the previous chapter, the appearance of archival records amongst the pages of Venetian historiography was not in itself a new phenomenon, thanks to the symbiotic relationship between chronicling and record-keeping which had characterised the

⁸ 'Sembra voler contagiare dell'entusiasmo della scoperta i suoi ipotetici lettori, invitarli all'esame delle fonti' (Benzoni and Zanato (eds.), *Storici e politici veneti*, p. 143).

⁹ 'li Archivij più riposti, et segreti della Republica, che è stato lecito di vedere, dalli quali ho chiaramente conosciuto non essere li nostri storici per mancamento di fondata informatione arivati a segno che non si possi con diligenza maggiore nel rapresentare la prudenza usata nella costituzione delli leggi, la desterità nelle tratatione de negotij, la Pietà et maturità de dechretti' (BMC, Malvezzi 93, f. 1). This quote is taken from the historian's original draft; the exact phrasing of this statement was edited slightly for the 1637 publication, but here reveals more of the historian's intention.

¹⁰ In fact, previous examinations of Morosini's work have found it to be largely a 'popularisation' of Sabellico's *Historia Rerum Venetarum* (de Vivo, 'Historical Justifications of Venetian Power in the Adriatic', p. 170).

¹¹ The documents transcribed and cited by Morosini, the majority of which were taken from the registers of the Great Council and the *Commemoriali*, are recounted in full in Appendix Table 11.

chronicling traditions of Venice and beyond during the Middle Ages.¹² However, the state historians of the early seventeenth century were beginning to present the chancery archive from an altogether new perspective, as a site for the discovery of previously unseen documentary evidence concerning the affairs of the Republic's distant past. To a certain extent, these historians may have been influenced by their European counterparts, many of whom – especially the ecclesiastical historians of the Counter Reformation – were already well known in Venice for conducting documentary enquiries into the affairs of distant centuries. Perhaps the best known example of this was concerned the historical controversy between the historians of Venice and Rome over the Republic's role in facilitating the 1177 peace between Pope Alexander III and Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, which had forced the city's scholars to engage with the document-laden narratives of authors such as Carlo Sigonio and Cesare Baronio.¹³ In addition, historians such as Paolo Morosini may also have been influenced by the methodological statements of foreign authors such as Cherubino Ghirardacci, whose late sixteenth-century history of Bologna declared that: 'as I am writing of events which have been concealed from the knowledge of men for a significant time, and which differ greatly in detail from that which has been previously written, how may I, a man of little regard, demonstrate the truth of these things without citing the records which testify to them?'¹⁴

Closer to home, however, it is also highly likely that the institutional changes within the archive itself also played a significant role in shaping this new historiographical approach. As we have seen in the previous chapters, however, this was also a period in which the historiographers of the Republic were placed in charge of the regeneration of the recently relocated chancery archive, auditing and overseeing not only the registration and indexing of the most recent government records, but also the preservation and transcription of cartularies whose contents dated back as far as the ninth century. As the practice of archival research amongst the historiographers shifted away from the intercession of secretary research assistants and towards a more independent consultation of the *Secreta* registers, a new interest in the oldest artefacts of the collection began to emerge. Andrea Morosini's notebook of archival findings, for instance, included entries from the fourteenth-century *Commemoriali* and *Liber Pactorum* as well as the *Annali* and *Pandette* of his own day.¹⁵ Moreover, the opening of the chancery archive in 1600 to a far wider section of

¹² See Chapter 4.1.

¹³ The significance of this particular affair in the wider context of Venetian historiography in the archives will be discussed as the concluding case study of this thesis (pp. 201-205).

¹⁴ Ghirardacci, *Della Historia di Bologna*, vol. I, 'ai Lettori' p. ii (Morosini's readership of Ghirardacci is confirmed in the marginal notes to his draft of the historian's 1637 history of Venice).

¹⁵ See for instance: BMC, Malvezzi 136, ff. 457-458.

Venice's patrician class¹⁶ meant that references to its contents could be used for the first time in lieu of lengthy and potentially sensitive transcriptions of secret material. Paolo Morosini, for his part, was able to include references to the exact register and page number of certain documents which can still be followed in the modern *Archivio di Stato* today, and may reasonably be considered the first full archival citations in a printed work of Venetian history.¹⁷

In this final chapter, we will consider how some of the major developments in the structure and administration of the secret chancery archive – the historical expertise of its secretaries, the appointment of the historian-superintendents, the greater preservation of its documentary artefacts, and even its wider accessibility to the city's patrician class – encouraged a new genre of erudite historical investigation within its walls. As the chancery archive became a more favourable space in which to carry out research, having been better constructed, indexed and staffed by the turn of the seventeenth century, the historians and scholars brought in to manage and consult the collection were better able to locate, interpret and reproduce its records within a series of historical studies, reigniting an interest in the city's more distant past as they did so.

In order to illustrate this, we will focus on the contemporary study of two instances from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries which continued to hold a particular significance for the city's contemporary politics and image both at home and abroad: the Fourth Crusade and Sack of Constantinople in 1204, and the foundation of the Council of Ten in 1310. In both cases, the records of the chancery formed the basis of a new series of interpretations concerning these two previously well-established historical narratives, and were subsequently presented as authoritative historical evidence by their respective authors, each of whom presented the records of state according to their varied relationship with the chancery itself: the son of a secretary Paolo Ramusio, the patrician historiographer Andrea Morosini, and the Benedictine scholar Fortunato Olmo in the case of 1204, and the patrician political commentator Gian Antonio Venier in the case of 1310. In contrast to the blueprint histories available through the contemporary *Annali* registers, here the archival preservation of the chancery provided Venice's historians with the authoritative evidence they needed to defend and reinterpret the historical image of the state.

¹⁶ See pp. 111-112 above.

¹⁷ As outlined in Table 11 of the Appendix.

5.2 – Archival discoveries and the re-examination of the Fourth Crusade

As we have already seen in the Council of Ten's decision to open the archive for the newly established office of state historiographer in 1515-1516, the historical image of the city as a serene and pious Republic was fundamental to both its international standing and its internal governance. This cultural and political tradition not only focussed on the recent affairs of the state, but on incidents within the city's more distant past which had subsequently become embroidered within the cultural identity of the Republic. Amongst the most important of these was Venice's role in diverting the Christian forces of the Fourth Crusade, first called by Pope Innocent III in 1198, away from its intended expedition in Egypt and towards the capture of Constantinople in 1204, an event which was as formative to the image and status of the Republic as it had been a subject of controversy throughout the rest of Europe.¹⁸ On the one hand, the images and symbolism of this Venetian-led conquest sat at the heart of the city's dual Christian and Byzantine heritage inscribed throughout the city,¹⁹ and had also been a consistent feature of the Venetian chronicling tradition. This, as historians such as Antonio Carile and Serban Marin have recounted in exhaustive detail, had long established a narrative of victorious conflict, the liberation of Constantinople from the 'tyranny' of Byzantine rule, and the personal piety of Dandolo himself.²⁰ On the other hand, however, critical eyewitness testimonies such as the chronicle of the Byzantine Senator, Nicetas Choniates, forged a legacy for Dandolo and the Venetians as opportunistic manipulators who diverted the Christian mission to reclaim the Holy Land in order to further its own commercial interests in the East.²¹ This long established historical tradition, however, was to undergo a significant re-examination towards the end of the sixteenth century, as a recently rediscovered cultural artefact was introduced into the bureaucratic systems of the Venetian secret chancery.

5.2.1: *The chronicle of Villehardouin and a new perspective on the Crusade*

In 1541, the returning Venetian ambassador to the court of Charles V, Francesco Contarini, brought back the ancient manuscript of a thirteenth-century French chronicle which he had

¹⁸ Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, vol. I, pp. 6-15. A more detailed timeline of this campaign, and the documents used to re-evaluate it during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, is available for reference in Table 12.

¹⁹ As discussed from the perspective of artistic and public symbolism by Pincus, 'Venice and the Two Romes', and more recently in Dale, 'Cultural Hybridity in Medieval Venice'.

²⁰ For studies of the representation of the Crusade and its aftermath in the chronicling tradition, see Thiriet, *La Romanie Vénitienne au Moyen Age*, pp. 15-19, 63-69; Carile, *La cronachistica veneziana-secoli XIII-XVI-di fronte alla spartizione della Romania nel 1204*, pp. 176-185; Marin, 'Venetian and Non-Venetian Crusaders'; Ibid., 'Between Justification and Glory: The Venetian Chronicles' View of the Fourth Crusade'; Madden, 'The Venetian Version of the Fourth Crusade'.

²¹ Madden, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice*, p.118.

recovered from a monastic library in Brussels.²² The author, Geoffrey of Villehardouin, had been a marshal of the French crusading troops during the Fourth Crusade, a key eyewitness to the Sack of Constantinople in 1204, and a trusted confidant to the leaders of the campaign. As a companion to the Doge throughout the campaign, Villehardouin had written a largely favourable account of Venice's conduct as a crusading state, and his account was thus of significant cultural value to the Republic. Although Contarini's own dispatches from the time say little of the circumstances surrounding his discovery, the ambassador was acknowledged by later editors of the text as having ensured that 'such an honourable history of the Republic did not remain forever concealed in a single manuscript, hidden in a library in Flanders.'²³

In the decades following Contarini's discovery, interest in the Fourth Crusade was given a new lease of life as a subject of historical study. As Niccolò Zorzi has previously illustrated, the rediscovery of Villehardouin's chronicle, which brought an entirely new perspective to that built up in Venice during earlier centuries, came at a time when the image and lessons of Venice's participation in the Fourth Crusade were beginning to acquire a new contemporary significance. For one, the outbreak of war against the Turks in 1570 had brought the notion of a Christian re-conquest of Constantinople back into the popular imagination. According to the sixteenth-century Venetian translator of the French chronicler, Paolo Ramusio:

We must not overlook the lessons from Villehardouin but rather aspire to replicate the virtue of our elders [which he narrates], so that we can reasonably hope that in our own times, when the Christian people are once again engaged with Constantinople, we may destroy our common enemy and enjoy amongst ourselves the true peace which will come from such an illustrious victory.²⁴

Around the same time, the two great Palace fires, and the subsequent re-commissioning of the historical portraits which had adorned the hall of the Great Council, had reintroduced a critical examination of the Republic's past.²⁵ The newly translated chronicle, still consigned to the secret chancery, had in fact served as the basis for one of the few substantial

²² Zorzi, 'Per la storiografia sulla Quarta Crociata', p. 695.

²³ Original text quoted in *Ibid.*, p 695.

²⁴ Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, p. 4.

²⁵ Zorzi, 'Per la storiografia sulla Quarta Crociata', pp. 608-702.

reconstructions of the city's historical image as depicted in the chamber, with six new scenes being commissioned to match the six chapters of the chronicle.²⁶

However, these contemporary links between the Fourth Crusade and the religious conflicts of the sixteenth century largely emerged as the first translation of Villehardouin's chronicle was well underway. Instead, the initial impetus behind the project first developed from within the secret chancery, at a time when, as we have seen, the bureaucracy and historical image of the Republic were beginning to intertwine once again. Upon its arrival in the city, Villehardouin's French manuscript was consigned to the archives of the Council of Ten, where in 1556 it was consulted by one of their secretaries, Gian Battista Ramusio, the former associate and research assistant of Pietro Bembo.²⁷ Ramusio, himself a well-established scholarly figure and thus one of the few able to both access and comprehend this ancient text in its entirety at the time,²⁸ was the first to address its potential value as a historical monument to the Republic. In a letter to his employers that same year, Ramusio suggested that the details of this chronicle, which defended the historical titles of the Doge and espoused the 'greatness of our state during this grand and illustrious campaign', had not yet been recounted by any of the great Venetian historians. Ramusio thus petitioned the Ten for its text to be translated into Latin and made available to the rest of the world.²⁹

Certainly, Ramusio was not alone in his beliefs. In response to Contarini's discovery, Villehardouin's chronicle began to be published in new vernacular translations across the rest of Europe over the following decades.³⁰ However, Ramusio's ties to the chancery provided the Venetian project to translate the text with an additional focus, as the secretary also noted that the eyewitness testimony provided by Villehardouin could be developed by including further details of the affair which were held in the registers of the *Segreta*.³¹ In his petition to the Ten, Ramusio noted that he had already consulted parts of the collection to corroborate the chronicler's status as an eyewitness, stating that his presence in

²⁶ Veneri, *Geografia di stato*, p. 124. The six scenes, from the arrival of the crusading envoys in Venice to the crowing of the new Latin Emperor in Constantinople, described in greater detail by Girolamo Bardi in 1587 (Bardi, *Dichiaratione di tutte le istorie*, pp. 39v-45r). For a modern account of the six frames, see: Franzoi, *Storia e leggenda del Palazzo ducale di Venezia*, pp. 255-259.

²⁷ See Chapter 3.2.3.

²⁸ Pasini, 'Sulla versione Ramusiana della cronaca di Villehardouin', p. 266. Gian Battista also produced an Italian translation of the original chronicle, possibly as a reference guide for his son to use (BNM, Cod. It. VII, 138).

²⁹ The text of this decree is transcribed in Veneri, *Geografia di stato*, pp. 363-364 (26 January 1556 m.v.).

³⁰ As recent historiography has established, the text of the ancient manuscript was in fact exchanged within a diplomatic and intellectual network between Venice and France, which included Paolo Ramusio's son, publisher and secretary to the Senate, Girolamo (Veneri, *Geografia di stato*, pp. 126-127; Rickard, 'Blaise de Vigenère's Translation of Villehardouin', pp. 12-13). A 1601 publication of the chronicle in Lyon stated in its title that it had been furnished from a copy held in 'les anciens archives de la Serenissime Republique de Venise' (Villehardouin, *L'histoire*, title and frontispiece).

³¹ Veneri, *Geografia di stato*, p. 363.

the city as one of the six crusading envoys to the Doge in 1201 was confirmed by ‘agreements and treatises registered in the chancery within the first volume of the *Liber Pactorum*.’³² This research was continued soon after by the *Riformatori dello Studio di Padova*, who had been commissioned to assess the validity of Ramusio’s proposal. In their report on the chronicle, the *Riformatori* noted that:

It is to be believed that Villehardouin wrote truthfully, as we have seen registered within the first book of the *patti* in our chancery the letters of the same princes and the names and titles of their ambassadors, just as they appear in his history. So too are registered the same diplomatic arrangements for this campaign, as well as the division of the Latin Empire. Thus we can conclude for certain that this history is most truthful.³³

The dissemination of Villehardouin’s rediscovered chronicle into a new genre of crusading historiography was thus grounded in chancery research from its very inception. Ramusio’s attempt to corroborate this contemporary account with archival testimony was subsequently emulated by later historians of the period, as the surviving documentation surrounding the Crusade became an increasingly valued subject of study. Although the three most important historians of the Crusade during this period – Paolo Ramusio, Andrea Morosini and Fortunato Olmo – have all been recognised in passing for the use of chancery records within their narratives,³⁴ the significance of their archival research for the formation and conclusions of their accounts has yet to be examined in its own right.

Although documentary information regarding the conflict itself was relatively scarce, that which was available in the chancery registers provided historians with a new perspective on the affair, as they were able to present and examine newly uncovered details regarding the diplomacy and statecraft surrounding the fall of the Byzantine capital in a way which many of the city’s chroniclers had been unable to address.³⁵ In so doing, the three principal historians of the Crusade were each able to develop new interpretations of the motives and mechanics behind this momentous event in the history of the Republic, and thus defend the role of Dandolo and his councillors in its execution.

³² ‘Geoffredo di villa arduin Marascalco di Campagna, che fu uno delli sei oratori, che vennero a Venezia per nome delli sopradetti signori a far l’accordo le lettere credentiali dei quali insieme con tutte le conventioni, et patti si trovano registrate in Cancellaria nel libro chiamato il patto primo’ (Ibid., p. 363). Villehardouin is in fact referenced as ‘Gaufredum Marescalcum’ in this register (ASVe, *Pacta*, reg. 1, f. 92v).

³³ Original text quoted in Veneri, *Geografia di stato*, p. 364.

³⁴ Carile, ‘La Partitio Terrarum Imperii Romanie del 1204 nella tradizione storica dei Veneziani’; Zorzi, ‘Per la storiografia sulla Quarta Crociata’, pp. 696-697; Veneri, *Geografia di stato*, p. 135.

³⁵ Carile, *La cronachistica veneziana*, p. 172.

5.2.2: Paolo Ramusio's *De Bello Constantinopolitano*

At Ramusio's request, the Ten had commissioned his own son, Paolo, as the translator of Villehardouin's ancient text into Latin.³⁶ Paolo, a prominent linguist and orator with ties to numerous historians and scholars through membership of the Venetian *Accademia della Fama*,³⁷ was given an annual stipend of one hundred and fifty ducats to carry out his translation, which he submitted to the Ten in 1572.³⁸ Shortly after his death in December 1600, his manuscript was finally translated and published in the vernacular by his son Girolamo, himself a secretary to the Senate, upon the fourth centenary of the conquest in 1604.³⁹ Echoing the statements of his father and the *Riformatori*, Ramusio stated in his dedicatory preface to Council of Ten that he had 'transposed Villehardouin's chronicle into Latin, and augmented it throughout with records from the archive of the Republic,' thanking the Council for their support in this regard.⁴⁰

Although we do not know whether Ramusio had personally entered the chancery as part of his research, particularly as the author instead made specific reference to the secretaries who compiled copies of relevant documents on his behalf,⁴¹ his own notes and annotations indicate that he was nonetheless aware of their exact provenance within the *Liber Pactorum*.⁴² As both the secretaries and the *Riformatori* had noted, it was in these registers that the majority of the surviving documentation from the Crusade had been transcribed, sometime towards the end of the thirteenth century,⁴³ before being copied once again into the *Liber Albus* – the cartulary of diplomatic papers pertaining to extra-European affairs – a few decades later, under the dogeship of Andrea Dandolo.⁴⁴ In part, the task of

³⁶ A fact which he had proudly stated in a commentary on Marco Polo shortly before his death (Ramusio, *Navigazioni e viaggi*; vol. III, pp. 52-53).

³⁷ Veneri, *Geografia di stato*, p. 124. A short biography of Ramusio was first provided by his son and editor, Girolamo, in a manuscript family chronicle (BNM, Cod. It. VII, 325, f. 5v). For details of the *Accademia della Fama*, see p. 36, note 28.

³⁸ Veneri, *Geografia di stato*, pp. 365-366.

³⁹ Until Girolamo Ramusio gained permission to print the manuscript in June 1604 (ASVe, CCX Not., b. 16, 26 Giugno 1604), the work was held by the Council of Ten, where, according to Veneri, it served as a reference guide for Bardi's redecoration project in the Great Council chamber (Veneri, *Geografia di stato*, pp. 122-124). An edition of the original Latin text was published in Venice five years later.

⁴⁰ Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, p. xxiv.

⁴¹ As discussed in Chapter 3.2.2, and in Appendix Table 12.

⁴² This is demonstrated in a marginal note made by the historian in a copy of a recent French edition of the chronicle held at the Marciana, in which Ramusio challenges the compiler's spelling of the crusader Miles of Brabant: 'sed in *Libro pactorum* in *Tabulario Reip. scriptum* M. Milanis Brabatij provini nomen' (Vigenere, *L'histoire de Geoffroy de Villehardouyn*, p. 2).

⁴³ The body of documents pertaining to the Crusade were transcribed on four different occasions within the two oldest volumes of the series (ASVe, *Pacta*, reg. 1, ff. 96-102, 152-159; *Ibid.*, reg. 2, ff. 130-133, 171).

⁴⁴ As a result, a small proportion had subsequently been inserted into the earlier versions of the Doge's fourteenth-century chronicle (Muratori (ed.), *Andrea Danduli ... Chronicon Venetum*, pp. 324-330), which had been accredited as a source for Ramusio's account in bibliography (see Appendix Figure 10). However, although numerous manuscript copies of this chronicle circulated

conducting this documentary research itself had been greatly facilitated by the substantial index of the *Pacta* registers compiled by Pietro Bressano just a few decades earlier, which listed the entries pertaining to the crusade under a single heading.⁴⁵

As recent historians of the Crusade have highlighted, the surviving documentation in the archive gives little attention to the military preparations for the campaign, and includes no contemporary Venetian accounts of the actual conflict.⁴⁶ For these matters, the city's historians were required to turn instead to the large body of eyewitness and chronicle accounts already in circulation – such as that written by Villehardouin himself – as illustrated by the bibliography inserted by his editors of his 1604 Italian edition.⁴⁷ Those documents which had survived in the chancery archives – which Ramusio acknowledged in his bibliography under the title of *Publico Archivio* – concerned instead the diplomatic arrangements surrounding the conflict, a theme which was subsequently reflected in the five documents which the author had cited and paraphrased within his translation of the chronicle. Set either side of the military capture of Constantinople in April 1204, these documents concerned the agreements made between the crusaders over the division of spoils and the election of a new Emperor in Constantinople in March 1204, the appointment of new ministers after the Imperial coronation of Count Baldwin of Flanders in May, the October Treaty of Partition for the conquered Byzantine lands between the crusader states and the sale of Crete to the Venetians by Marquis Boniface of Montferrat after his failed rebellion earlier that summer, and finally the terms of Venetian vassalage to the new Latin Emperor agreed in October 1205.⁴⁸

Although Ramusio has been widely praised in recent historiography for his extensive and as yet unparalleled use of Greek and Byzantine sources in order to corroborate his account, the impact of these newly uncovered chancery records upon the author's

throughout the city during this time, only a small number actually contained these documentary transcripts (as outlined by Carile, *La cronachistica veneziana-secoli XIII-XVI*, pp. 45-63, and in the footnotes of Muratori's edition of the text: *Andreae Danduli ... Chronicon Venetum*, pp. 324-330). Alongside Ramusio's explicit reference to the archival provenance of this source, we may thus reasonably discount the possibility that these were simply taken second-hand from a previous author.

⁴⁵ As discussed in Section 2.3 (ASVe, *Pacta e aggregati, Indici*, reg. 3, ff 163v-167r).

⁴⁶ Madden, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice*, p. 130; Phillips, *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople*, p. xvii. As discussed in the Introduction to this thesis (see p. 25 above), Serban Marin has previously posited the suggestion that there may have been other documents available to the early modern historian which have since been lost, a possibility which is certainly evident in a number of Paolo Morosini's archival citations (see Appendix Table 11).

⁴⁷ See Figure 10 of the Appendix for a copy of this list, which does not appear in either the Latin (BNM, Cod. Lat. X, 79) or Italian (BNM, Cod. It. VII, 188) manuscript drafts of the historian's work, and was thus likely assembled from the author's copious references to previous authors made in the text itself, as well as his son Girolamo's own knowledge of his father's work).

⁴⁸ The provenance of each of these documents in both the chancery registers and Ramusio's text, as well as a wider chronology of the events surrounding them, is given in Appendix Table 12.

updated narrative has yet to receive similar recognition.⁴⁹ As the historian himself explained, the purpose of each documentary extract – the precise wording of which was paraphrased to fit within both the Latin and Italian editions of his text – was to both corroborate and augment the details of those diplomatic incidents which had already been noted by the contemporary chroniclers. Elsewhere in his preface, and as quoted on pages 48-49 above, the historian claimed to be ‘adorning this chronicle with truthful testimony of the many things I have observed in the public archive, and inserting many important details from them into my account.’⁵⁰ For instance, Ramusio stated in his preface to the March 1204 contract between Venice and the crusaders, drawn up in advance of the capture of Constantinople from the Greek rebels who had overthrown Alexius IV earlier in the year:

These are the terms of the arrangement, extracted from Villehardouin’s account. As they are written in the manner of laws, we will thus present them as they were transcribed from the secret archive of the Republic, for the better clarity of this History.⁵¹

Whilst both Villehardouin and the Venetian chroniclers had noted that the crusaders agreed on the process of dividing lands and electing a new emperor after the fall of the city,⁵² Ramusio proceeded to recount the exact details of these arrangements as recorded in the treaty itself. These included the division of spoils from the seizure of the capital, the ecclesiastical properties and offices due to the loser of the imperial election, a commitment between the French and Venetians to defend each other’s interests in the region, and a clause which ensured that the Pope himself would need to ratify their terms.⁵³ The exact terms of the August 1204 and October 1205 treatises with Boniface of Montferrat and Baldwin’s brother and Imperial successor Henry, paraphrased from the *Liber Pactorum* ‘for the contemplation of curious readers’ as neither had been mentioned by the original chronicler,⁵⁴ were also recounted in similar detail.

The clearest demonstration of the archive’s informative value was given in the presentation of Ramusio’s third document, the Treaty of Partition in October 1204, which set

⁴⁹ Pertusi, *Bisanzio e i Turchi*, pp. 61-62; Zorzi, ‘Per la storiografia sulla Quarta Crociata’, pp. 711-720; Veneri, *Geografia di stato*, pp. 133-134.

⁵⁰ Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, p. xxiv.

⁵¹ ‘Queste sono le capitulationi, cavate da’ Commentarii del Villardouin: le quali, perche sono a guisa di leggi, le registreremo qui nel modo appunto, che sono state trascritte dall’Archivio secreto della Repub: per maggior chiarezza di questa Historia’ (Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, p. 84).

⁵² Smith (ed.), *Joinville and Villehardouin*, pp. 62-63; Marin, ‘The Venetian ‘Empire’ in the East’.

⁵³ Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, pp. 84-86; ASVe, *Pacta*, reg. 1, f. 96.

⁵⁴ Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, p. 125. For Villehardouin’s account of the summer of 1204, see Caroline Smith (ed.), *Joinville and Villehardouin – Chronicles of the Crusades; Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Caroline Smith* (Penguin Classics. London: Penguin, 2008), pp. 76-81.

out the confines of the newly divided Byzantine Empire between the Crusading states.⁵⁵ The extract opened the fourth book of Ramusio's history, which began from a rare moment of peace within the story of conquest. Constantinople had been successfully taken, a crusader sat upon the Imperial throne, and the potentially ruinous infighting amongst the new occupying forces had momentarily abated. The opportunity thus arose to arrange the division of the newly conquered lands, for which a body of electors was called by both Baldwin and Dandolo.⁵⁶ Having introduced this scenario, Ramusio broke away from his narrative to argue that the chronicle of Villehardouin has recounted this significant event only summarily, and that in general few sufficient details of the division had been yet recounted by the chroniclers.⁵⁷ In order to rectify this, Ramusio stated that he would reconstruct the arrangement of the divided lands, *parola in parola*, from a copy taken from the archive by the Grand Chancellor himself, Gian Francesco Ottobon.⁵⁸

The format of the document itself, of which only the section listing the regions within the three divided territories remained in the archive,⁵⁹ posed a particular problem for the author hoping to relay its contents to the reader. As Ramusio himself noted, the ancient names of the region's cities and island may no longer correspond to the present day, 'either due to losses of this information over time, the movement of peoples and foreign invasions, or else the absence of any Greek or Latin authors who may have recorded this geography using more recent terms.'⁶⁰ The archaic nomenclature contained in this document was not solely a sixteenth-century issue; in fact, even more recent editions of the text have continued to debate its proper translation.⁶¹ Wanting to ensure that he remained 'faithful to the public records'⁶² in his translation, however, Ramusio instead decided to break down the text of the Treaty in order to contextualise each of the different regions through various other

⁵⁵ Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, p. 117; ASVe, *Pacta*, reg. 1, 158v. As such, this document has been well studied by recent historiography; see for instance: Carile, 'Partitio Terrarum Imperii Romaniae'; Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, vol. I, pp. 18-19.

⁵⁶ Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, pp. 115-117.

⁵⁷ Although Ramusio recounted the terms of the agreement in unparalleled detail, the general document itself had been well recounted throughout the earlier chronicles, as illustrated by a recent online database of Venetian chronicles edited by Antonio Carile (<http://www.cronachevenezianeravennati.it/ricerca/tema.jsp> - last accessed October 2015), under the search term 'Partitio terrarum imperii Romaniae'. See also: Serban Marin, "Dominus Quartae Partis et Dimidia Totius Imperii Romaniae".

⁵⁸ Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, p. 117.

⁵⁹ For an account of the document's survival and transmission beyond the thirteenth century, see: Carile, 'La Partitio Terrarum Imperii Romaniae', pp. 170-171; Pozza (ed.), *I patti con l'impero latino*, pp. 33-34.

⁶⁰ 'Per esser mancati i vecchi, insieme con la partita delle vecchie genti, et con la venuta de' barbari, et per non haverli trovati presso auctori, ne Latini, ne Greci, gli habbiamo notati, et descritti co' nomi nuovi' (Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, p. 118).

⁶¹ Thomas and Tafel (eds.), *Urkunden zur älteren handels*, vol. I, pp. 452-488.

⁶² 'Traducendo parola per parola in modo, che mentre seguitiamo la fede delle Scritture pubbliche, non pare, c'habbiamo punto alterate le voci' (Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, p. 118).

references to their culture and history, so that modern readers may be able to visualise the geography of the new empires even if they were unable to recognise their names. As such, the text of the Partition spanned several pages in his account, as we learn that Venice's new dominions included the lands previously known as Sparta, the home of the Delphic Oracle, Mount Parnassus, and the site of the Battle of Actium which heralded the birth of the Roman Emperors.⁶³ In addition, he continued, contemporary readers would recognise the newly acquired Venetian territories around the Echinades (or *Curzolari*) as the site of the great naval victory at Lepanto which had taken place just as the historian was approaching the completion of his work.⁶⁴

Ramusio's reading and presentation of the Treaty of Partition demonstrated a new approach to the interpretation and use of archival records within a work of history. By stating the provenance of his source, the historian was able to authoritatively demonstrate the true extent of the Venetian empire in the East after the sack, whilst manipulating the document itself to fit within what Serban Marin referred to as his 'humanistic vision' of the crusade as an extension of the region's ancient history.⁶⁵ Moreover, Ramusio's emphasis on the documents themselves allowed the historian to present the partition of the Latin Empire in a more mechanical and dispassionate manner than the original chronicler, who viewed the event as an example of the greed and avarice of the crusading states.⁶⁶ In all, the exercise of corroborating eyewitness testimony with official records gave an early indication of the critical engagement with archival evidence, and the lessons they provided, which was to be followed and expanded upon by later historians.

5.2.3: Andrea Morosini's Imprese et Espeditioni di Terra Santa

With Villehardouin's chronicle successfully translated and furnished with additional documentary material by the Ramusio family, the next historian to address the incident looked to do so within the wider context of Venice's history as a crusading state. As discussed above, Andrea Morosini's account of the Fourth Crusade, put to print by his brother in 1627,⁶⁷ was set alongside a series of other notes and drafts concerning the issue as

⁶³ Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, pp. 121-122.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

⁶⁵ Marin, 'A Humanistic Vision Regarding the Fourth Crusade', pp. 98-102.

⁶⁶ Smith (ed.), *Joinville and Villehardouin*, p. 82. By contrast, Ramusio presented the partition as the beginning of process of repeated competition and exchange concerning the actual accumulation of lands by the crusaders, of which Boniface's rebellion was merely the first (Ramusio, *Della guerra di Costantinopoli*, p.124).

⁶⁷ Morosini's publication was comprised of two separate studies, of which his account of the Fourth Crusade was only the second. The first was an account of the Venetian Crusade and the conquest of Tyre in 1124, which also drew upon a combination of chancery and chronicle sources.

a whole, and was compiled at a time when the city's role in the conflict had once again become a subject of contemporary interest. As Zorzi has suggested, the posthumous publication of Ramusio's Latin and Italian editions coincided with a growing Francophile sentiment within the city, as the Republic's immediate recognition of Henry IV, combined with the growing tensions between Venice and the Catholic powers of Europe, had drawn attention to the historic alliance between the two states as exemplified by their seizure of the Byzantine capital four centuries earlier.⁶⁸

As with the secretary Gian Battista Ramusio before him, Morosini's decision to focus his attention towards narrating the Crusade was also driven by the unexploited memories he knew to be present in the chancery through his capacity as superintendent. In the preface to his account, the historian praised the Republic of the day for its dedication to preserving the memories of its actions for posterity through its records and letters, 'from which we may take useful teachings and notable precepts for the benefit of our own lives today.'⁶⁹ As the patrician historian of state, Morosini was primarily concerned with two facets of this momentous event, which his 'opportunity to consult the various records hidden within the public archives' allowed him to address.⁷⁰ The first was that this campaign was highly significant for the image and glory of the Republic, 'driven by the affection for Christian piety and religion', especially due to the titles, lands and dominions bestowed upon it as a consequence.⁷¹ The second, however, was that no historian had adequately attempted to actually explain the motives, actions and successes of the Venetians during this time, something which Morosini hoped to rectify through his privileged access to this larger body of contemporary material.⁷²

In attempting to delve further into the origins and consequences of the Crusade, Morosini turned once again to the relevant sections of the *Liber Pactorum*, and introduced two sets of documents in particular which sat either side of those used by Ramusio to augment the account of 1204 itself. The first concerned the arrangement made between the Doge and the French crusading Barons in advance of their departure from Venice in 1201, a long Latin extract of which followed the historian's own summary of its terms.⁷³ The second, with which Morosini concluded his account, detailed the election and reforms of the Venetian *Podestà* in Constantinople, Marino Zeno, following the death of Enrico Dandolo in

⁶⁸ Morosini, *L'imprese et espeditioni di Terra Santa*, p. 701.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

⁷⁰ 'Io havendo osservato diligentemente li scritti al mondo publicati in questa materia, et havuto opportunità di vedere diverse scritte recondite ne gli publici Archivii, ne quali si conserva memoria delle publiche attioni' (*Ibid.*, p. 91).

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 91-92.

⁷³ Appendix Table 12, April 1201.

1205. In two separate records dating from that year, Zeno confirmed the military commitments of the Venetian troops in Romania with the Emperor, and ensured that no Venetian property in the newly divided territories could be subsequently possessed by anyone other than a fellow countryman.⁷⁴

Unlike Ramusio, who had summarised and abridged his archival sources in order to fit in with his prose, Morosini opted to present verbatim transcripts of the documents themselves in quotation marks, which in print were set against the main body of his text by a change in font.⁷⁵ In part, their inclusion was intended as evidence of the occurrence of certain events, as discussed above, but it was the specificity of the clauses and details contained within these records which interested Morosini the most, as they allowed him to present new interpretations of the political and diplomatic arrangements which bookended the conquest. For instance, the text of the 1201 contract both outlined and quantified the exact commitments made by both sides to fund, man and maintain the crusading forces, details which had only been touched upon by Ramusio, and for which the earlier chronicles had been an unreliable source.⁷⁶ Moreover, additional clauses had been added to ensure that both sides of the contract were adhered to, and that the Pope remained informed of the progress of their alliance.⁷⁷ This was an important context for the narrative to follow, as the failure of the crusading troops to meet the agreed terms led to the subsequent renegotiations – well recounted by the contemporary chroniclers – which resulted in their assistance in the recapture of the rebellious Dalmatian city of Zara as recompense, whereupon the recently escaped nephew of Alexius III petitioned the crusaders to direct their attention to Constantinople.⁷⁸

Similarly, Morosini's transcription of Zeno's 1205 decree on Venetian property rights not only corroborated the traditional account of Venice's attempt to establish their territorial dominance of the new Latin Empire, but also provided important information about the structure and good governance of the new Venetian dominions in the Latin Empire from its seat in Constantinople. As Morosini argued, the *Podestà* established a series of ministers which exactly mirrored the structure of the Republic itself at this time, from the

⁷⁴ Appendix Table 12, June-October 1205; Wolff, 'A New Document from the Period of the Latin Empire', p. 545.

⁷⁵ Sections of Morosini's draft can be found in BMC, Malvezzi 136, ff. 515-629, with an example of his quotation marks on f. 557r.

⁷⁶ In Francesco Sansovino's abridged translation of Choniates' chronicle, published in Italian in 1562, the author notes that various chroniclers had given differing figures for the size of the combined crusading forces, the majority of which did not correspond to the figures presented by Morosini through the archival record (Sansovino (ed.), *Della historia di Niceta Coniate*, p. 85v).

⁷⁷ Morosini, *L'imprese et espeditioni di Terra Santa*, pp. 107-110.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 114-116; Madden, 'Vows and Contracts in the Fourth Crusade', p. 441.

advisers to the *Podestà* himself,⁷⁹ including the administrators of justice and finance and a constable for the local militia.⁸⁰ ‘The truth of these things’, he continued, ‘can be clearly gathered from the signatories to the above document’, and thus he also transcribed the signatories to the 1205 decree as evidence for the new Venetian power structure in the East.⁸¹ ‘In this manner,’ Morosini concludes, ‘the governance of Constantinople was fully reorganised, with the interests of the various territories united to that of the Empire within what could thus be considered a single government body.’⁸² Despite the fact that, as Morosini conceded at the very end of his text, the Latin Empire in Constantinople lasted little more than half a century before being recaptured by the Byzantines,⁸³ the historian had presented and reinterpreted the surviving state records to illustrate the role which Venice successfully played in both directing its capture and shaping its governance either side of the conflict itself.

By transcribing the records of the chancery as a point of reference for his readers to examine, Morosini could subsequently refer to his sources at various points throughout his text. For instance, at the beginning of his account of the conflict itself, for which only chronicle sources were available, the historian began by stating that ‘no one who has read the details which we have extracted from the public records can fail to be amazed by, or enquire as to the causes of the ease with which the seat of the Roman Empire was subsequently invaded and placed under new laws and governance’ by the European crusaders.⁸⁴ Given that the text and fate of the 1201 agreement, some forty pages earlier, had indicated a relatively inauspicious start to proceedings, the historian set out to examine the question of how the campaign against Byzantium had been so successful. Similarly, Morosini discussed the clauses of the March 1204 pact – ‘taken from the authentic and truthful documents’⁸⁵ – in terms of its role in the aftermath of the fall of Constantinople, rather than in his account of that month. Firstly, Morosini concluded that one of the final

⁷⁹ A figure whom Morosini likened to the Doge himself (Ibid., p. 277).

⁸⁰ This was in fact something which initially sparked suspicion back in Venice that Zeno’s government in Constantinople had assumed too much autonomy, forcing the *Podestà* to defend the fact that he was still acting in the Republic’s own interests (Wolff, ‘A New Document from the Period of the Latin Empire’, p. 545).

⁸¹ ‘La verità delle quale cose si raccoglie evidentemente dalle sottoscrizioni dell’Instrumento di sopra in parte descritto’ (Morosini, *L’imprese et spedizioni di Terra Santa*, p. 278).

⁸² ‘In questa maniera restarono riordinate le cose di Constantinopoli, et insieme reso così unito l’interesse de confederati con quello dell’Imperio, che poteva propriamente esser detto, et stimato quel governo un corpo solo’ (Ibid., p. 279).

⁸³ Ibid., p. 279.

⁸⁴ ‘Non è alcuno, che nel leggere questi successi, che tratti dalle memorie Publiche andiamo esponendo, non sia per maravigliarsi, e cercar le cause per le quali si potè con tanta facilità invader la Sede dell’Imperio Romano, e ridurlo sotto nuova forma di leggi, e di governo’ (Morosini, *L’imprese et spedizioni di Terra Santa*, p. 153).

⁸⁵ ‘Tratti da autentichi, e veridichi documenti, sopra li quali fu fatto solenne, e publico instrumento’ (Ibid., p. 190).

points of the agreement, that the Doge as ruler of the Venetian portion of the empire was not to be subservient to the Emperor himself, was ‘highly important for the greatness and dignity of the Venetian Republic’, as it ensured the long term continuation of Venetian sovereignty in the East over the following decades.⁸⁶

In addition, the clauses of the pact relating to the mechanics of the Imperial election were returned to in the following book of his account, concerning Count Baldwin’s accession to the throne two months later. By way of introduction, Morosini argued that this significant event, in which the succession of the ancient Roman Emperors was once more promulgated by the West, needed to be re-examined and recounted in terms which conformed both to the truth and, more specifically, to the *publiche memorie*.⁸⁷ As such, he continued, a number of mistakes needed to be rectified. The first, he claimed, was made by the contemporary chronicler Nicetas Choniates, who recounted that the new Emperor had been nominated in the Church of the Apostles through a customary form of drawing lots: each party selected four chalices, and he who chose the chalice containing the Blessed Sacrament was appointed to the throne.⁸⁸ This, argued Morosini, was contradicted by the terms of the conquest as recorded in the archive. If the contracts drawn up before the Sack were to be believed, and their authentications leave us in no doubt in that regard, then the appointment was carried out instead by a committee of French and Venetian electors. Likewise, previous historians such as Biondo and Sabellico had mistakenly claimed, through their unfounded testimonies, that there had been fifteen electors divided between the Venetian, French and Lombard parties, rather than the twelve divided between Venice and France alone as we are informed by this record. Morosini, not willing to commit any similar errors, refrained from attempting to name the six Venetian electors as he ‘was unable to find any trustworthy memory of these details.’⁸⁹

These corrections were far from trivial, as they had a significant bearing upon the historian’s interpretation and presentation of wider events. For one, they allowed Morosini to raise the question of Choniates’s credibility in certain respects, having clearly been too far removed, or else grossly misinformed, to be considered a reliable source for these events.⁹⁰ This was an important caveat to add amongst the historian’s otherwise frequent citations of the contemporary Greek text, as the author had been a critical voice regarding the conduct of

⁸⁶ Morosini, *L'imprese et espeditioni di Terra Santa*, p. 207. This was also acknowledged by Antonio Carile in his account of the Partition in Venetian historiography (Carile, ‘La Partitio Terrarum Imperii Romanie’, pp. 175-176).

⁸⁷ Morosini, *L'imprese et espeditioni di Terra Santa*, p. 190.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 207-208.

⁸⁹ ASVe, *Pacta*, reg. 1, f. 96; Morosini, *L'imprese et espeditioni di Terra Santa*, p. 208.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 208. As discussed below, however, it is possible that Morosini exaggerated the extent of Choniates’ claim in order to challenge his credibility.

the crusaders, and of Dandolo in particular, during the conquest of the city.⁹¹ More importantly, however, by demonstrating that Venice had a near-majority voice in the election, by virtue of the March agreement, Morosini argued that ‘this election thus principally depended, by common consensus, upon Doge Dandolo.’⁹² As such, he continued, although he was unable to know the mind of the Doge himself, he could conclude that the appointment of the new Emperor had been predicated upon the best interests of the Venetians back in Europe; principally, that Boniface, as a rival power in Lombardy with ties to the Genoese, would have been too great a threat to Venice’s interests in the region if appointed to the Imperial seat.⁹³ Whilst Dandolo’s motives were well known to previous historiography,⁹⁴ the treaty arranged a few months before illustrated the manner in which the Doge had manoeuvred himself into a position to enforce them.

Morosini’s use of chancery records in his account thus differed notably from that of Ramusio, in that the significance of the various agreements lay in their wider long-term impact upon the campaign and its aftermath, rather than their corroboration of an existing eyewitness account. This is particularly evident in the two authors’ approaches to the text of the October Treaty of Partition. Whereas Ramusio had taken the opportunity to reconstruct the geographic scope of the new crusader territories, Morosini acknowledged that the now archaic nomenclatures of the provinces were too anachronistic to recount verbatim, noting that ‘they would bring far more confusion than understanding’.⁹⁵ Instead, the historian noted that the long-term consequences of the treaty – ‘without doubt one of the most important negotiations carried out in past times’⁹⁶ – could be found in the subsequent prestige of the Doge himself: that ‘Enrico Dandolo assumed for himself and his successors the title of *Dux Venetiarum, Dalmatiae, et Croatiae, Dominus quartae partis, et dimidie totius Imperij Romaniae*, as one can see in numerous authentic documents and statutes belonging to the Republic.’⁹⁷ By presenting this uncovered archival documentation beyond the strict chronological confines of its creation – a technique largely unparalleled by either Ramusio

⁹¹ This was particularly evident in Choniates’ account of the Sack itself (see for instance *Ibid.*, p. 200). As Marino Zorzi has previously noted, the historian was willing to quote and paraphrase sections from the Greek chroniclers as it suited his historical defence of the Republic (Zorzi, ‘Per la storiografia sulla Quarta Crociata’, pp. 721-723).

⁹² ‘Questa elettione per commun consenso principalmente dependè dal Doge Dandolo’ (Morosini, *L’imprese et espeditioni di Terra Santa*, p. 210).

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 211-214; Phillips, *The Fourth Crusade*, pp. 272-273.

⁹⁴ Magoulias (ed.), *O City of Byzantium*, p. 328.

⁹⁵ Morosini, *L’imprese et espeditioni di Terra Santa*, p. 216.

⁹⁶ ‘Fra li più importanti negotij, che per le conventioni passate si dovevano essequire era senza dubbio la divisione, e sortitione delle provincie, che s’havevano a racquistare, la qual segui come appunto in esse si legge espresso’ (Morosini, *L’imprese et espeditioni di Terra Santa*, pp. 214-215).

⁹⁷ ‘Henrico Dandolo assunse il titolo per se, e successori suoi, oltre il solito, che diceva *Dux Venetiarum, Dalmatiae, et Croatiae, Dominus quartae partis, et dimidie totius Imperij Romaniae*, come si vede in molti autentici instrumenti, e nelli Statuti della Republica’ (*Ibid.*, p. 215).

or his chronicling predecessors – Morosini was thus better able to demonstrate the long-term impact of the diplomacy and statecraft surrounding the Crusade. Shortly after the publication of Morosini's account, this approach was to be expanded even further by the next historian of the Crusade, with significant consequences for the interpretation of Venice's role within the conflict itself.

5.2.4 – Fortunato Olmo uncovers new evidence in the Basilica

In the decades following the publication of Morosini's *L'Imprese di Terra Santa*, the documentary research into the Fourth Crusade was given a new impetus and direction through the archival consultancy of Fortunato Olmo, the Benedictine monk and consultant to the Republic who had been commissioned by the Procurators of Saint Mark to restore the ancient state records held in the Basilica. As discussed in Chapter Two, Olmo had attempted to gain support for his work, now long since neglected by his original employers, from the Heads of the Council of Ten in 1643 by submitting an annotated document which he believed would demonstrate the cultural value of his work. The document he chose, dating from around 1200, was an instruction given by Doge Enrico Dandolo to two of his ambassadors at the Byzantine court, which the historian claimed contained important details of the wider relationship between Venice and Byzantium in the years leading up to the conflict.⁹⁸ Olmo's choice of document was not solely an academic matter, as renewed tensions with the Ottoman court during the late 1630s – culminating in a Turkish assault on the Venetian-held island of Crete in 1645, just two years after Olmo's address – had once again rendered Venice's relationship with Constantinople a subject of acute contemporary interest for the government.⁹⁹ Yet the historian's interest in the record was also driven by his own attempts to re-examine the traditional narratives of the Crusade through the records which he had personally uncovered.

Having taken personal custody over what he considered the most important historical artefacts within the Basilica attics during the 1630s, Olmo needed to investigate the historical context for each of his documents in order to provide a date and title, often missing from the text itself, for his newly constructed inventory.¹⁰⁰ This, as he complained in his reports to the Procurators, was a task which should have been completed upon the

⁹⁸ ASVe, IS, b. 927 (22 June 1643).

⁹⁹ Setton, *Venice, Austria and the Turks in the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 106-117.

¹⁰⁰ As discussed on p. 74 above. Although Olmo's annotations are dated from the mid-1640s, it is possible that his study of the period and its records dated back even further. In a comment on the role of the Venetians as a naval force for hire in the Aegean at the time of the Crusade, the historian noted that he had been advised on the context of the 1200 commission by the Senator and scholar Domenico Molino, who had in fact died in 1636 (ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9, 'Commissione di Henrico Dandolo Doge', f. 7).

record's original accession, but it also allowed the historian to treat each document as a subject of detailed historical investigation, carefully annotating a transcript of the text with a series of endnotes explaining each of its clauses with reference to other literary or archival sources. Three such examples of these transcripts and notes, which could at times reach up to fifty pages in length, are today held amongst a miscellaneous collection of the historian's papers in the *Archivio di Stato*,¹⁰¹ all pertaining to the subject of Venice's relationship with Constantinople both before and after the Crusade: an 1194 dispatch from Doge Enrico Dandolo to his two ambassadors at the court of Emperor Isaac II in 1194, a second dispatch to the court of his usurper, Alexius III, in 1200,¹⁰² and finally a letter from the Venetian *Podestà* in Constantinople, Jacopo Tiepolo, to Doge Pietro Ziani in 1219.¹⁰³ Also amongst these transcriptions were annotated copies of the October 1204 partition, alongside the historian's reflections upon the Venetian purchase of Crete from Boniface of Montferrat.¹⁰⁴ Previous studies of Olmo's private collection have tended to focus on the passages of text which suggest that the historian was preparing a draft history of Venice's relationship with the East.¹⁰⁵ However, these incomplete drafts reveal much less of the Benedictine's archival discoveries than the detailed annotations of his newly uncovered records, which as we will see played a far greater role in forming a new perspective on the causes and aftermath of the Crusade.

Olmo's interest in his newly discovered correspondences between Venice and Constantinople were not so much based on the subject of the dispatch itself, but on what its details and clauses could tell us about the wider context of the period. For instance, the 1219 letter from Tiepolo, in which the *Podestà* urged Ziani to increase Venetian military presence in the region,¹⁰⁶ opened with an address which confirmed the Doge's new title of *Venetie, Dalmatie atque Chroatie Ducis, et quarte partis, et dimidie totius imperij Romanie Domino*. Like Morosini before him, Olmo was particularly interested in this evidence of Venice's new position in the East, founded after the Treaty of Partition, and dedicated much of his annotations to examining his predecessor's assertion that this title had become a recurrent

¹⁰¹ ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9, 'Commissione di Henrico Dandolo Doge.' It is unclear whether these were submitted to the Ten, as they include the document referred to in his supplication of 1643, or else confiscated upon his death.

¹⁰² Titled, in full: 'Commissione di Henrico Dandolo Doge di Venetia data a' doi Ambasciatori, mandati ad Alessio Angelo, Imperatore di Costantinopoli nel 1200'.

¹⁰³ On dorso: 'Scritture di Costantinopoli – 1219'.

¹⁰⁴ See Appendix Table 12, August 1204.

¹⁰⁵ Carile, *Per una storia dell' impero latino di Costantinopoli*, p. 306; Veneri, *Geografia di stato*, pp. 132-133. Olmo's collection did include a handful of drafts concerning the history of the Roman Empire in the East (see for instance ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9, 'Introdottione alle cose di Costantinopoli'), which made occasional reference to the historian's archival research, as well as a series of attempted chronicles of the Republic's early history in ASVe, IS, b. 927, and BNM, Cod. It VII, 374, ff. 58r-60v.

¹⁰⁶ Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, p. 164.

feature of the city's official correspondence after 1204. Olmo began his study by tracing the occurrence of the first two ducal titles – *Dominator del Regno di Dalmatia et Croatia* – within official records dating back to the tenth century, which he had found in both the chancery registers to which he had access through his work as an archival consultant, and the archives of his own monastery.¹⁰⁷ Following this, he discussed how the title of *Signore o Dominatore sopra la quarta parte e meza dell'Imperio di Romania*, introduced after the Partition, had evolved in Ducal records throughout the thirteenth century in response to further acquisitions and setbacks in the East.¹⁰⁸ Finally, Olmo considered the fate of the title after the recapture of Constantinople by the Byzantine leader Michael Palaeologus in 1261. The Doge at the time, Rhenier Zen, had objected to his address by Palaeologus in a treaty of 1265 as *Dominator Chroatie et Dalmatie, et Dominium aliarum terrarum, et insularum sue Dominationi summissarum*, and strove to ensure Venice's continued power and influence in the region – which was confirmed in the terms of the peace itself.¹⁰⁹ Having achieved this beneficial arrangement for Venetian commercial interests in the East, Olmo concluded, official records show that successive Doges began to alternate between the two titles long into the following century.¹¹⁰

However, it was the contents of the newly uncovered dispatch from 1200 – the subject of Olmo's petition to the Council of Ten in 1643 – which allowed the historian to examine the origins of the Crusade and its aftermath in greater detail. Enrico Dandolo's address to his two ambassadors in Constantinople had been given in response to a contract drawn up between the Venetians and Alexius III just over a year before, in which the Republic confirmed and expanded its territorial and commercial privileges in the Adriatic in return for a commitment to defend Byzantium in the event of an attack by the Holy Roman Emperor in Europe.¹¹¹ The two ambassadors had been instructed to confirm this arrangement, but only once they had negotiated the conclusion of the vast financial and territorial remunerations which they had been owed by Constantinople for a number of years.¹¹² The details of the original treaty, outlined in a Byzantine *chrysobull* from 1199, had already been recorded in the registers of the chancery.¹¹³ Nevertheless, Venice's position of strength during these negotiations, as demonstrated by this previously unknown record,

¹⁰⁷ ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9, 'Scritture di Costantinopoli – 1219', ff. 7-10.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., ff. 11-19.

¹⁰⁹ 'Scritture di Costantinopoli – 1219', f. 21; Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, p. 182. In another draft of his annotations, Olmo also included a genealogy of the Latin Emperors before the fall of the city (ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9, 'Scritture di Costantinopoli – 1219', f. 17).

¹¹⁰ Ibid., ff. 24-27. The final recorded reference to the 'three-eighths of the Roman Empire' was in fact made in 1358 (Lazzarini, 'I titoli dei Dogi de Venezia', p. 300).

¹¹¹ Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, p. 121.

¹¹² In this respect, the instructions echoed that of a similar mission to Constantinople in 1197 which precipitated the agreement (Ibid., p. 120-121).

¹¹³ Tafel and Thomas (eds.), *Urkunden zur älteren handels*, vol. I, p. 246 (ASVe, *Albus*, f. 17).

prompted the historian to consider the wider history of Venice's relationship with the Roman Empire in Constantinople, and the special privileges it had built up in the Adriatic as a result.¹¹⁴ The historian devoted ten pages of his annotations to this subject, in a historical study which stretched from the foundation of the Republic to the onset of the crusade. Initially, his account relied on citations of ancient and medieval historians, as successive fires in the Palace had apparently destroyed all documentary memory of their relationship before 1081.¹¹⁵ From the twelfth century onwards, however, the Venetian-Byzantine agreements in the decades leading up to the conflict were retraced instead through the ancient records and *chrysobulls* preserved by Andrea Dandolo in the *Liber Albus*.¹¹⁶

As Olmo recounted, these documents gave an account of not only the strong relationship between the two states throughout their history, through which the Republic had gained numerous territorial and commercial privileges in the region, but also of the continued failure by the Byzantines to meet the financial terms of their long standing partnership. By the turn of the thirteenth century, Constantinople had amassed a far greater debt to the Republic than the privileges confirmed in the latest *chrysobull* could reasonably satisfy.¹¹⁷ As he concluded, the Byzantine Emperors remained indebted to the Venetians to the sum of 540,000 *scudi*, causing great offence to the Republic and eventually bringing about the capture of the city and empire of Constantinople.¹¹⁸ Olmo's defence of the Republic's subsequent plunder of the Byzantine Empire thus demonstrated notable parallels with Morosini's justifications of Venice's redirection of the crusade to Zara in 1202, in that the state records illustrated the terms of an accord which neither of the city's two allies had subsequently honoured. This was an important context for understanding Venice's subsequent alliance with the young Alexius IV, son of the deposed Isaac II, to overthrow the Emperor they had promised to protect in this very document.¹¹⁹ Such a shift in allegiances, as Olmo was keen to illustrate, had not been the product of Venetian malice towards the Byzantine Empire itself; indeed, the historian argued that 'those who read the *Liber Albus* cannot but say that the Venetians had every reason to maintain a close friendship with the

¹¹⁴ ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9, 'Commissione di Henrico Dandolo Doge', ff. 20-21.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., f. 23.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., f. 25.

¹¹⁷ In particular, this was related to the remunerations for the substantial seizure of Venetian goods which had occurred during a disastrous conflict between the two states in 1171 (ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9, 'Commissione di Henrico Dandolo Doge', f. 27; Madden, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice*, p. 52-54, 148).

¹¹⁸ 'Restavano debitori a' Venetiani (cioè di un milione e cinquecento quaranta mille scudi d'oro) gli havessero sdegnati, e cagionato, che poi nel 1204 prendessero la città, et Imperio tutto Costantinopolitano' (MCNAA, b. 9, 'Commissione di Henrico Dandolo Doge', f. 29).

¹¹⁹ MCNAA, b. 9, 'Commissione di Henrico Dandolo Doge', p. 33.

Byzantine Emperors, from whom the Doge was honoured and enriched in every way.’¹²⁰ Instead, by the time the young claimant to the Imperial throne had petitioned the crusaders for assistance in toppling his tyrannical uncle at Zara in 1203, the growing threat to Venetian commercial interests in the East had given the Republic legitimate cause to enforce a regime change in the region.¹²¹

Olmo’s interpretation was further supported by the final section of the 1200 ambassadorial dispatch which, he argued, provided the most significant and hitherto unknown context for the state of Venetian-Byzantine relations at the onset of the Crusade. Having made their stipulations concerning the conclusion of the 1199 accord between Dandolo and Alexius III, the two ambassadors were to give the following statement:

You shall respond [to the Emperor] as we have instructed you regarding Philip [of Swabia], Count Walter of Brienne, kin to the King of France, and Theobald Count of Champagne. Likewise, you will respond as has been said regarding Markward [of Anweiler] and the Archbishop of Reims.¹²²

Although Dandolo’s exact instructions are not recorded, Olmo was able to infer from the context of this time the reason why these names would be of particular significance to Emperor Alexius, who would likely have held a keen interest in the affairs of his enemies in Europe during this period. As Olmo noted, Philip of Swabia – whose brother, Emperor Henry VI, had previously threatened to launch a crusade against Byzantium as a result of the Alexius’ deposition of his brother Isaac five years earlier¹²³ – was brother in law to Isaac’s imprisoned son, and would later become his first point of contact with Dandolo the crusaders

¹²⁰ ‘Chi leggerà nel libro Albus non potrà non dire che veramente havevano Venetiani occasione di tenersi molto care l’amicitia di cotal imperatori: da quali erano per ogni verso gratiati, arricchiti, et sommamente honorato il loro Doge’ (‘Commissione di Henrico Dandolo Doge’, p. 14). Moreover, as Olmo noted elsewhere, the wording of the 1199 pact gave no suggestion that anything had changed in the cordial relationship between the two states (Ibid., pp. 40-41).

¹²¹ Ibid., ff. 34-38. Whilst more recent historiography has argued that financial interests were indeed at the heart of Venice’s decision to redirect the Crusade (Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, vol. 1, pp. 5-6), it has also been noted that, in reality, Venice had been able to recoup up to eighty-five percent of their debt from Constantinople by 1203, thus in fact making the decision to back Alexius the younger a considerable financial risk (Madden, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice*, pp. 148-149).

¹²² ‘De novis si vos requisierit: Respondebitis, sicut diximus vobis, et de Philippo, et de Comite Vualtero de Brienne consanguinito Regis Francie, et Comitibus de Campania Theobaldo: et Archiepiscopi de Rens, et de Marquando similiter respondebitis ut est dictum’ (ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9, ‘Commissione di Henrico Dandolo Doge’, f. 4).

¹²³ Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, p. 118. Alexius had in fact hoped to find a common enemy in Philip with the Pope during this period, who had in turn had been chastising the Patriarch in Constantinople for their rejection of the universal authority of the Church at a time of such great threat in the East (Ibid., p. 127). According to Olmo, Venice’s state records from this time suggest that the Republic had in fact favoured Philip’s brother, and rival for the Imperial crown, Otto of Brunswick (ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9, ‘Commissione di Henrico Dandolo Doge’, ff. 58-59).

after his escape from Constantinople.¹²⁴ Meanwhile, Philip's ward, Markwand of Anweiler, and Walter of Brienne were both occupying the Pope – who had only recently called for the crusade against Egypt under the leadership of Theobald of Champagne¹²⁵ – in respective military campaigns in Sicily and Rome.¹²⁶ That Dandolo had instructed his ambassadors to inform the Emperor of such important European affairs, Olmo argued, was evidence of the continued good faith between the two in the years immediately predating the conflict, and as such rendered the new information uncovered in this document 'necessary to form a more perfect history of the capture of Constantinople.'¹²⁷

Olmo's approach to the archive as a historical source differed substantially from that of his predecessors. Rather than embedding them within a work of historical prose, the historian was principally focussed on examining the contents of his records through their relationship with other sources. Indeed, his annotations read in a similar fashion to the reports of the *Consultori in Jure*, the legal consultants to the Republic who compiled detailed treatises on the Venice's historic jurisdictions and possessions, presenting within them short extracts of official records as evidence for their claims rather than forming part of a wider narrative.¹²⁸ This was a manner of writing to which Olmo was more accustomed, as he had previously produced similar compendia concerning the historical controversy surrounding the 1177 Peace of Venice,¹²⁹ the origins of the Republic as an sovereign state, and the historical foundations of its maritime jurisdictions. Each of these focussed on individual items of documentary and manuscript evidence within their wider historical context.¹³⁰

With a far readership restricted largely to his employers and a small group of friends and patrons,¹³¹ Olmo was free to focus on the language and content of each record in detail without the need to translate, paraphrase or abridge their texts. This in turn allowed the historian to reinterpret some of the documents which had appeared in the accounts of his

¹²⁴ ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9, 'Commissione di Henrico Dandolo Doge', pp. 57-59; Madden, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice*, p. 146. It was these set of circumstances, Olmo noted, which allowed him to date this document to 1200, alongside the context of the 1199 accord ('Commissione di Henrico Dandolo Doge', f. 63).

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60.

¹²⁶ Slack, *Historical Dictionary of the Crusades*, pp. 197-198.

¹²⁷ 'Commissione di Henrico Dandolo Doge', p. 65.

¹²⁸ For the work of the *Consultori* in the archive during the seventeenth century, see Pin, 'Le scritture pubbliche trovate alla morte di Fra Paolo Sarpi', pp. 315-320; Barzazi, *Gli affanni dell'erudizione*, pp. 333-351.

¹²⁹ As discussed on pp. 201-205.

¹³⁰ These last two treatises can be seen in: BL, Add. 10,780-10,785 ('Risposta di Don Fortunato Olmo, Venetiano, abbate Cassinense, ad un libello, intitolato Squitino della libertà Veneta'); ASVe, *Consultori in Jure*, regg. 543-544 ('Historia del Dominio della Serenissima Repubblica di Venetia sopra il Mare Adriatico').

¹³¹ As well as submitting his text to the Ten, Olmo also sent a copy to the patrician and diplomat Angelo Contarini (BMC, Cicogna 2532).

predecessors, most notably in the case of the Venetian purchase of Crete – a subject which had gained a new immediacy at the time due to the impending Ottoman assault on the island¹³² – and the subsequent Treaty of Partition in 1204. Critical of the manner in which Ramusio had simply altered or omitted sections of the Partition in order to fit within his Latin prose, whilst Morosini had decided to forgo the task altogether, Olmo attempted instead to provide his own translation of the divided territories into contemporary nomenclature, remaining as faithful as possible to what he described as ‘the authentic record.’¹³³ In addition, the historian attempted to link the contents of the Partition to the Venetian purchase of Crete, finalised after the failure of Boniface’s rebellion against the newly crowned Latin Emperor Baldwin, just two months earlier, something which neither Ramusio or Morosini’s narratives had been able to do. Having noted that the territories entrusted to the Doge by Boniface in exchange for financial and military protection were not included in the later Partition, Olmo argued that the division of the former Byzantine lands was a far more fluid process than suggested by the finished document of October 1204;¹³⁴ a conclusion which, as other sources helpfully indicated, was supported by the fact that Venice did not actually occupy the island of Crete for another six years.¹³⁵

By allowing his studies to be driven by the document itself, rather than incorporating selected passages it into a wider body of historical prose, Olmo had successfully pre-empted the current historiographical interpretation of the division of the Latin Empire amongst the Crusaders by at least four centuries.¹³⁶ Although the historian’s work did not receive due recognition at the time,¹³⁷ it nevertheless illustrates the significant steps which were being made amongst the papers of the Republic towards a form of document-led historiography, and the new interpretations of the city’s past affairs which were being generated as a result.

To a certain extent, the varied use and presentation of Venice’s diplomatic records as sources and evidence for the history of the Crusade neatly reflected the scholarly practices and narrative techniques of the authors themselves. For Ramusio, a Latinist rhetorician commissioned to produce an ornate translation of a medieval chronicle, the records of the

¹³² In addition, as noted by G.B. Cervellini, the terms of the sale were still being studied and debated by officials concerned with defending the legitimacy of Venice’s claim to the island as recently as the end of the sixteenth century, whilst the text itself had long circulated in archives and libraries in both Venice and Crete itself (Cervellini, ‘Come i Veneziani acquistarono Creta’, pp. 262-267, 272-275).

¹³³ ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9, ‘Hec est pars Terrarum Domini Ducis et Communis Venetiarum’.

¹³⁴ Ibid., ‘Delle pretensioni del Marchese Bonifacio sopra l’Isola di Candia’, ff. 3-4.

¹³⁵ Ibid., ‘Acquisto di Candia fatto dalla Repubblica di Venetia nel 1204’, p. 7; Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, p. 149.

¹³⁶ For a similar interpretation, see: Madden, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice*, pp. 189-190; McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, pp. 21-22.

¹³⁷ As discussed on p. 77, the documents which he uncovered in the Basilica were not deposited into the archive of the secret chancery after his death.

Liber Pactorum were used to illustrate the author's humanistic vision of an ancient kingdom coming under the dominion of the Venetian Republic – details which the contemporary chronicler had failed to record – and could thus be summarised or abridged to suit the quality of his prose. Morosini, meanwhile, was a seasoned historiographer of the Republic attempting to defend the image of Dandolo and his crusaders by demonstrating the fidelity of their diplomacy and the good governance of their newly acquired territories, and thus presented the verbatim transcripts of his newly uncovered documents as evidence for his account, occasionally lifting them above the confines of their immediate chronology in order to do so. Olmo, as a legal consultant rather than an author of narrative historical prose, approached the document itself as the very centre of his historical examinations, highlighting the wider context of individual clauses to illustrate the precise state of Veneto-Byzantine relationships at the onset of the conflict itself.

In addition, the newly uncovered documentary evidence from the chancery could easily be manipulated within the historian's study in order to maintain a positive image of the Republic's role in the campaign and its aftermath. Andrea Morosini, for instance, seems to have wilfully misrepresented Choniates' account of the Imperial election of Count Baldwin in order to provide a point of contrast to the details of the March 1204 agreement.¹³⁸ In addition, Antonio Carile has previously accused Fortunato Olmo of 'vangloria campanilistica' in his misinterpretation of the the 1204 Treaty of Partition; that the Doge, as lord of the largest proportion of the newly divided Latin Empire, 'was thus more of an emperor than Baldwin himself.'¹³⁹

Above all, however, it was the renewed availability of the chancery records themselves, thanks to the scholarly interests of its secretaries and improvements in the indexing of its oldest cartularies, the creation of the superintendent's office and the drive to preserve the decaying papers of the Basilica, which both facilitated and subsequently shaped the research efforts of the three archival scholars, as each were able to make successive discoveries amongst the state papers due to the varying circumstances of their proximity. As we will see in our final case study, it was this same combination of documentary availability and a contemporary political interest in the affairs of the distant past which was to shape one of the most detailed archival investigations into Venice's medieval past during this period – the birth and rise of the Council of Ten.

¹³⁸ Despite stating that election by lots, as recounted by Morosini, was the custom in Byzantium, Choniates does in fact state that the appointment of Baldwin was decided by ballot – criticising Dandolo for his interference rather than praising him, as does Morosini, for his protection of Venetian interests (Magoulias (ed.), *O City of Byzantium*, pp. 327-328).

¹³⁹ Carile, 'La Partitio Terrarum Imperii Romanie', pp. 176-177.

5.3 – Gian Antonio Venier and the constitutional history of the Council of Ten

Each of the three historians examined above had enjoyed differing connections to the secret chancery archive – Ramusio to its secretaries, Morosini to the office of historian-superintendent, and Olmo to the role of archival consultant – which were reflected in their varied approaches to defending the historical image of Dandolo and the crusading Venetians. Over the turn of the seventeenth century, these three groups were beginning to coalesce throughout the city, thanks to social and intellectual circles such as the famous *Ridotto Morosini*, in which Andrea and his brother Paolo played host to a series of patrician historians such as Paolo Paruta, Nicolò Contarini, high-ranking secretaries such as Gian Battista Padavin and Agostino Dolce,¹⁴⁰ and archival consultants such as the Servite Paolo Sarpi.¹⁴¹ Many of the members of this group were contemporaneous in the production of Venetian historiography within the secret chancery during this period, and it is possible that much of the archival expertise and research practices discussed throughout this thesis were passed along the succession of state historians through such social gatherings. As historians such as Gaetano Cozzi, Giuseppe Trebbi and Peter Miller have previously demonstrated, the politics of early seventeenth-century Venice continued to be shaped by these social and intellectual ties between the patrician and secretarial classes, as political parties and networks of patronage began to permeate even the lower echelons of the city's ruling elite, whilst the influence of certain high-ranking secretaries was beginning to emerge as a significant point of tension within the government.¹⁴²

At the height of his movement against the overreaching power of the Council of Ten in 1628, the patrician reformer Rhenier Zen stated in a speech that its secretaries, appointed for life from the ranks of the chancery:

Take too much pleasure from their authority [...]at present the secretary is councillor to the councillors, to the Heads and Inquisitors [...] for just as the laws govern the state, so too is the secretary the governor of the

¹⁴⁰ Padavin, a future Grand Chancellor between 1630 and 1639, was a regular assistant to the *Consultori* in their search for historical records (see for instance p. 114, note 201 above, as well as an acknowledgement made by Scipione Famosca in ASVe, *Consultori in Jure*, reg. 79bis, 13 November 1641), whilst Dolce, as one of the secretaries responsible for reviewing manuscripts submitted to the *Riformatori*, had signed his approval for the publication of Andrea Morosini's *Historia Veneta* (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 37, ff. 130v, 162r).

¹⁴¹ For a list of the *Ridotto*'s most prominent members, see: Favaro, 'Un ridotto scientifico in Venezia al tempo di Galileo Galilei', p. 205.

¹⁴² Cozzi, 'Una vicenda della Venezia Barocca'; Trebbi, 'Il segretario Veneziano', pp. 68-73; Miller, 'Friendship and Conversation in Seventeenth-Century Venice'.

laws, and even more than governor, because one finds or does not find [the laws] according to the wishes of the secretary.¹⁴³

The political elitism of the Venetian chancery, which for so long had provided the patrician historiographers with an exclusive perspective upon the recent and distant affairs of the Republic, was now itself at the centre of a significant moment in the history of the city, as Zen's challenge to the power and jurisdiction of Venice's information-masters marked a significant turning point for the constitutional structure of the Republic.

The fortunes of Zen's reform movement were documented for posterity by a young patrician named Gian Antonio Venier, a keen historical scholar with his own social links to both the key protagonists of the affair and the senior members of the former *Ridotto Morosini*.¹⁴⁴ Venier's detailed manuscript accounts of the 1628 campaign have since formed the basis of numerous modern studies of the period, as we will see below. Yet the historian's own consultation of the chancery registers in search of crucial historical context for the politics of his own day has yet to be fully appreciated in its own right. By turning to the original documentation pertaining to the history of the Council of Ten available through the chancery, Venier was able to provide an important new perspective on the constitutional debate over its authority which had raged since the final decades of the previous century, and demonstrated once again the growing significance of erudite historical research for the contemporary image of the Republic itself.

5.3.1: 'Zen against the Ten' – Venier's Origine delle cose occorse l'anno 1628

Tragically cut short by the great plague of 1631, Gian Antonio Venier's fledgling career within Venice's political and intellectual elite had already singled out the patrician as a keen book collector, a student of the Greek and Roman historians and an ardent supporter of the political party formed around the great Venetian scholar Paolo Sarpi.¹⁴⁵ Shortly before his death, the historian's proximity to the major political factions of the day allowed him to record the development of one of the most significant internal crises to face the Republic

¹⁴³ 'Prendono troppo amore alla loro autorità, che sa, che al presente il Secretario è consigliere de' Consiglieri, delli Capi, degl'inquisitori [...] perche essendo le leggi quelle, che dominano lo stato, il Secretario è dominatore delle Leggi, e piu ancora di Dominatore, perche secondo li suoi affetti si trova, e non trova' (ASVe, MCod., I, reg. 82 ('Relatione delli moti interni della Republica dal 1616 sino il 1630'), f. 198); Trebbi, 'Il segretario Veneziano', p. 58.

¹⁴⁴ As outlined in Cozzi, 'Una vicenda della Venezia Barocca', pp. 107-120; Miller, 'Friendship and Conversation', pp. 5, 16.

¹⁴⁵ Cozzi, *Il Doge Nicolò Contarini*, p. 230; Miller, 'Friendship and Conversation', p. 5. The historian's collection of print and manuscript texts forms the principal commodity of his will in 1629 (BMC, P.D. 2243/I, f. 86), whilst his reading of ancient historiography is evident in his published work *De oraculis et diuinationibus antiquorum*.

during its long history, as a movement of low-status patricians headed by Zen attempted to push forward a series of corrections to the Council of Ten, first introduced in 1582 in response to growing fears and accusations of corruption and oligarchy amongst the Republic's political elite.

The simmering unrest amongst the lower echelons of the patrician class first came to a head in 1627. Rhenier Zen, at this point himself one of the three Heads of the Council itself, attempted to uncover the constitutional abuse committed by Doge Giovanni Corner in favour of his son, Federico, who had been awarded substantial ecclesiastical benefices in direct contravention of the Ducal *Promissione*, an attempt which brought him into open conflict with the Doge and his Council. By the end of the year, factional rivalry between the *Cornisti* and their detractors had reached the point of violence and vendetta, as Zen himself was both attacked and outlawed by supporters of the former, but had nevertheless amassed a substantial and loyal following within the city. Concerned that the growing enmity between the two factions was becoming unmanageable, and keen to find a resolution before Zen returned from exile to galvanise the reformers, the Venetian *Signoria* commissioned a body of five 'Correctors' to address the subject of a possible set of reforms – amongst them, Nicolò Contarini himself.¹⁴⁶ This was a useful compromise; the reports of the Correctors had been produced and debated by late September 1628, and although they had resulted in a series of curbs to the Ten's absolute authority over matters of law, finance and administration, the legitimacy of the Council itself remained ultimately unchallenged.

The story of 'Zen against the Ten' – as the incident was titled by John Julius Norwich¹⁴⁷ – has been well recounted in recent political histories of the Republic as both a sign of growing social and political divisions within a previously unchallenged Venetian oligarchy, and as an unresolved moment of crisis and challenge for the mixed constitution of the Republic.¹⁴⁸ However, Zen's campaign also had a significant influence on the development of the city's state records as the subject of historical research, as the Venetian chancery itself – as the institution in which the legal basis for the Venetian constitution was preserved – became the battleground for the contested jurisdiction of the Republic's various bodies. The debate concerning the authority and jurisdictions of the Ten was heavily

¹⁴⁶ Cozzi, *Il Doge Nicolò Contarini*, pp. 259-260.

¹⁴⁷ Norwich, *A History of Venice*, p. 530.

¹⁴⁸ For the most comprehensive account of the affair to date, see Cozzi, *Il Doge Nicolò Contarini*, pp. 229-283. See also: Cozzi, 'Una vicenda della Venezia Barocca', pp. 83-90; Rose, 'Marc Antonio Venier, Renier Zeno and "The Myth of Venice"'; Ventura, 'Politica del diritto e amministrazione della giustizia nella Repubblica Veneta', pp. 596-597; Trebbi, 'Il segretario Veneziano', pp. 68-73; Miller, 'Friendship and Conversation in Seventeenth-Century Venice', pp. 5-12. For an account of the Zen affair in the context of the fortunes of the Ten, see Macchi, *Istoria del Consiglio dei Dieci*, vol. II, p. 223.

predicated on the laws which had been recorded in the registers of the chancery since the early fourteenth century, cited by the defenders of the Council and investigated by the five Correctors. As we will see, this was subsequently reflected in the account of Venier himself, dubbed ‘lo storico del movimento’ by Gaetano Cozzi,¹⁴⁹ who, like Contarini before him, recounted this affair within its much wider historical context. Venier was able to illustrate his account through the same chancery records which had become the central point of examination during those turbulent weeks in 1628.

Venier’s principal text, which although unpublished was circulated in a great many manuscript copies, was a historical narrative of the campaign itself, beginning in the early 1620s with details of Zen’s career as a Venetian diplomat before progressing into his involvement in the events which were to shape his reformist movement. It is this account which has subsequently been used by numerous modern studies as the most detailed contemporary source.¹⁵⁰ However, the earliest editions of this account came towards the end of a much larger compendium of his notes and writings on the subject.¹⁵¹ These, as examined below, demonstrate the historian’s strong reliance upon the consultation and interpretation of chancery records as the basis of his account. The narrative itself was interspersed with transcriptions of letters, deliberations and decrees – often including the results of individual ballots – which provided important details of the actions of Zen and his opponents.¹⁵² For the most part, these were not presented as evidence for his account, nor discussed in terms of their archival provenance, with the one exception of a brief first-person aside given before a transcript concerning the mission of an extraordinary Venetian ambassador to Rome in June 1623.¹⁵³ Moreover, like many of the city’s earlier chroniclers, who had often recollected documents from their own day rather than those from an earlier age,¹⁵⁴ Venier’s account was most likely constructed from records which had not yet been consigned to the secret chancery – copies of which would have likely been available through his proximity to

¹⁴⁹ Cozzi, ‘Una vicenda della Venezia Barocca’, p. 113. Cozzi also notes that correspondence between Zen and Venier dates back to 1623 (Ibid., p. 108), whilst Peter Miller has demonstrated that Venier was a member of a substantial network of young patricians operating in Venice at the time (Miller, ‘Friendship and Conversation’, p. 16).

¹⁵⁰ The chronicle is, for instance, the principal source for the studies of Cozzi, Rose, Trebbi and Miller, all referenced above.

¹⁵¹ Although it is not known whether any of the surviving manuscripts are autograph, the historian does name himself in the text itself, as demonstrated below. The oldest known copy of the text is in BMC, Cicogna 3762, with numerous other eighteenth-century copies circulating throughout Europe (including BL, Additional MS 8586, ff. 368r-520r).

¹⁵² These included Zen’s own correspondences with the Venetian government (BMC, Cicogna 3762, ff. 95-96).

¹⁵³ BMC, Cicogna 3762, p. 90.

¹⁵⁴ As discussed in the introduction to this chapter.

events— as well as those which had been published throughout the city as part of the campaign against the reformers.¹⁵⁵

Nevertheless, the structure of Venier's account placed a significant emphasis on the records themselves as the driving force of his narrative. As well as the numerous transcriptions of documents pertaining to the legal case against Zen, and the elections to the Council which were attempted to derail his campaign, Venier devoted a significant section of his text to both transcribing and summarising the reports produced by the five Correctors, entered into the registers Great Council shortly after they were submitted. In these reports, the jurisdictions of the Ten over matters of justice, government administration and military organisation were scrutinised and debated alongside the decrees upon which their authority was claimed to be founded.¹⁵⁶ In addition, Venier's account noted that the actions of the two parties were also partly driven by their recognition of the chancery's role in preserving their deeds for posterity. As discussed in Chapter Two, the administration of the chancery had become increasingly conscious of its role in shaping historical memory, a notion which was now also ingrained within the activity of the wider political class itself. Venier acknowledged this on two occasions: firstly in September 1627, when Zen – as one of the Heads of the Ten – attempted to place his admonition of the abuses carried out by the Corner family into the registers of the chancery, and was hastily opposed by his own colleagues in support of the Doge. As the historian explained:

This was greatly displeasing to the Doge, as in this way his confession would have been divulged to the entire world, because that which is registered in the Ducal Chancery is made clear to all who have access to consult and make copies of it. Thus before long the reprimand would have passed not only throughout the nobles in the *piazze*, but also through the *ridotti* and subsequently to all manner of people, with significant damage to the reputation of the Doge himself. Worse still, this unpleasant memory of his office would also pass into posterity.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ Such as in the case of the Ten's commitment to bring to justice a group of patricians who attacked Zen in the street during the dispute (Ibid., ff. 126-129, decree dated 31 Dicembre 1627). A copy of this decree in print was in fact inserted at the end of this section in a later version of Venier's text held in the British Library (BL, Add. 8586, ff. 443-446).

¹⁵⁶ BMC, Cicogna 3762, section begins f. 168; ASVe, MC, reg. 37 (Ottobonus Filius), ff. 97-111.

¹⁵⁷ 'Questa nota spiacque fuor di modo al Doge, vedendo che in tale maniera si divulgava, per tutto il mondo lui esser stato ammonito, perche le cose registrata in Cancelleria Ducale sono palese ad ogn'uno, può andare a leggerle, e trarne copia, onde tra pochi giorni l'ammonitione sarebbe andata intorno, non solo per le Piazze tra' nobili, ma per li ridotti, et per le barbarie tra ogni genere di persone con molta diminutione della reputation di Suo Serenità, et quel che è peggio passerebbe nei posterì, non ottima memoria del suo Prencipato' (BMC, Cicogna 3762, f. 114).

It was for this reason that the other two Heads of the Ten, Bartolomeo Gradenigo and Zuanne Pesaro, first called upon the legal precedents, in this case a law from 1458, that only they had the authority to admonish the Doge in writing. As a result, they called upon Zen to surrender these papers, ‘so that they may be brought to perpetual silence.’¹⁵⁸ Later on in the narratives, during the debates over the proposals of the five Correctors, Venier relayed Zen’s own justification for his current outspoken behaviour, despite having previously negotiated with the Correctors in private:

He would gladly have stayed silent [on these reforms], but opposed the idea that to do so wouldn’t be tantamount to tacit assent. Moreover, [he spoke in opposition] so that the historians couldn’t claim that Rhenier Zen had been in agreement with those who wanted to give the Council of Ten all the authority which had been conceded to them by the law of 1458.¹⁵⁹

Venier’s account thus suggests that the relationship between archival management and historical image in seventeenth-century Venice, discussed in Chapter Two, was beginning to influence even contemporary affairs.

5.3.2: A document-led history of the Ten – Venier’s *Creatio Consilii Decem*

Within the wider context of this political controversy, the records of the chancery were therefore a site of significant contention, and so the historian turned to its registers in order to examine the historical basis of this constitutional debate. Venier’s notes and writings preceding his narrative of the affair began with an extract from the chronicle of Gian Giacomo Caroldo, secretary to the Council of Ten during the early sixteenth century, who recounted the foundations of the Council as an emergency institution in the wake of the aborted conspiracy to overthrow the Doge and the Great Council by Baiamonte Tiepolo and Marco Querini in 1310.¹⁶⁰ Caroldo’s account, Venier argued, had stated that this emergency council was given the authority to override the decrees of other bodies within the Republican government.¹⁶¹ This was a claim which the secretary was likely to have taken from the records of the Great Council dating from that time – that the Council of Ten could revoke

¹⁵⁸ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 18, ff. 76v-77r, 29 Ottobre 1627. Only a week later, it was decreed in the Great Council that a single member of the *Capi* could indeed admonish the Doge in writing, and thus the Ten were forced to renege on their deliberation to destroy Zen’s papers (Ibid., f. 77v, 5 November 1627).

¹⁵⁹ ‘Egli volentieri haverebbe tacciato, ma si opponeva accio’ che tacendo non mostrare di assertire alle Parti proposto, et perche i scrittori delle Historie non scrivino che il Cavallier Zeno sia stato d’accordo con quelli che hanno volute dar al Consiglio de dieci maggior autorità di quella concessali dalla legge 1458’ (BMC, Cicogna 3762, ff. 218-219).

¹⁶⁰ BMC, Cicogna 3762, ff. 1-17.

¹⁶¹ BL, Add. MS 8586, f. 376v.

any law which had not been passed by an extraordinary ballot (*revocare consilia non ligata*)¹⁶² – which in subsequent decades was interpreted to mean the ability to wield authority over the Great Council itself.¹⁶³

This, Venier continued, was the historical assumption which Zen had been attempting to challenge in his campaign against the Ten.¹⁶⁴ As the reports of the Correctors and the later narrative of the historian had both illustrated, the battleground of this constitutional war of words between the Ten and the minor nobility was in fact the capitulars of the Council itself, in which their laws and jurisdictions had been preserved for the consultation of future members. In the decades leading up to the controversy, the Ten, increasingly concerned that the inability to locate and their laws amongst the records was inhibiting the swift decision making which defined its role in government, commissioned historians and scholars such as Nicolò Contarini, Andrea Morosini, Domenico Molin and Giacomo Marcello to produce indexes of the decrees pertaining to their jurisdiction over the centuries.¹⁶⁵ This process, spanning several decades of research amongst the Council records, helped to facilitate a greater number of chancery records within the capitulars themselves, cited and transcribed as evidence of the Council's authority.

According to Venier, during the debates which followed the submission of the Corrector's reports on the Ten's jurisdictions over the justice system,¹⁶⁶ Zen argued that the use of this ancient phrasing had only been a recent addition to the capitulars, and as such had been completely taken out of its proper archival and historical context – a claim to which the surviving capitulars from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century certainly attest.¹⁶⁷ Venice's ruling elite, he continued, could not simply cite in their capitulars this one historic phrase from 1310 out of context, and that they must instead consider the fact that the

¹⁶² In Venetian legal discourse, the phrase *ligata* referred to those laws which, due to their significance or immediacy, required not simply a majority vote in order to be ratified, but a pre-determined approval of two-thirds, three-quarters or four-fifths of the ballot (Tiepolo, *Discorsi sulla storia veneta*, vol. II, p. 29).

¹⁶³ BMC, Cicogna 3762, f. 17.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁶⁵ Details of the Ten's various projects to reorganise, index and codify the laws and papers of their archive are recorded in ASVe, *Consiglio dei Dieci*, MCod., reg. 80, with their intentions for the programme outlined in ff. 18v-23v (see also Walker, 'Legal and Political Discourse in Seventeenth Century Venice', pp. 810-811). A typical example of the indexes and finding aids which these scholars and patricians produced can be seen in ASVe, *Consiglio dei Dieci*, MCod., reg. 10.

¹⁶⁶ The text of which was recorded both by the historian (BL, Add. 8586, ff. 494v-495r), and in the registers of the Great Council (ASVe, MC, reg. 37 (Ottobonus), f. 101v, 21 September 1628).

¹⁶⁷ BL, Add. 8586, ff. 497v-499r. Surviving copies of the capitulars themselves, which are now held in the state archive, developed between the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries from a list of responsibilities of office, intended to be sworn upon by newly elected members on the first day of October (ASVe, CX Cod., reg. 51) to a compendium of archival citations and transcriptions which corroborate the terms of office (*Ibid.*, reg. 48). It is to the latter, under *capitolo XVIII*, that the 1310 decree which formed the basis of the debate was added (*Ibid.*, reg. 48, f. 15v).

Republic ‘used a different form of governance’ at that time, in which the state would often instigate smaller, temporary councils in times of crisis, who could act independently from the Great Council in all matters apart from the conclusion of foreign treaties. Moreover, the precise definition of ‘unattached’ councils, those which the emergency Council of Ten had the authority to overrule, was in fact those whose authority to act was reliant on the Great Council itself, and thus it had never been the Great Council’s intention to create an institution which could undermine its own power and influence.¹⁶⁸

Zen’s campaign was an argument against Venice’s very own historiographical traditions. In another account of his speech, the author of which has remained anonymous,¹⁶⁹ the reformer made a direct reference to the fact that Marc’ Antonio Sabellico had falsely represented the consequences of the Tiepolo affair – that the Ten had been established to mete out punishments to the conspirators – and had ignored the wider context of the small emergency councils which had been common during this period.¹⁷⁰ Instead, as one can see in the *libri publici*, the formation of the Ten by the Great Council, on the 10th July 1310, came a few weeks after the original sentences passed down to the conspirators. This new small council was in fact established to deal with the mass of appeals likely to be generated by the large number of patricians now in exile. The original intention, as these decrees demonstrate, was to form a council of fifteen, as was the custom in these occasions, whilst the creation of an even smaller council was only due to the omission of the Procurators of Saint Mark in this one instance.¹⁷¹ Once again, its tenure was only intended to be temporary, whilst the wording of the phrase *revocari Consilia* referred only to those decrees taken in the minor councils, rather than the Great Council itself.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸ BMC, Cicogna 3762, f. 17.

¹⁶⁹ Although the account itself is heavily based on that written by Venier, if not actually penned by the historian himself (Anon., ‘Relatione delli moti interni della Republica dal 1616 sino il 1630’, Venice, *Biblioteca Fondazione Querini Stampalia*, MS. Classe IV, 60).

¹⁷⁰ Despite the assertions of the author, it does not appear that Sabellico actually referenced the foundation of the Ten in his account of the conspiracy (Sabellico, *Le historie Vinitiane*, p. 87). Nevertheless, this interpretation was in fact proposed by other authors, such as Pietro Giustiniani, who claimed that ‘le publiche inscriptione fanno fede che fusse per cagion di questa congiura, creato il Magistrato del Consiglio de’ dieci, nelle quali si legge. Che l’anno mille e trecento, a sedici di Giugno, che s’elessero dieci Senatori prudentissimi sopra i tradimenti, che havessero autorità di sciogliere le cose legate, et legar le sciolte, per conservatione della Republica’ (Giustiniani, *Le historie Venetiane*, pp. 66r-v).

¹⁷¹ Anon., ‘Relatione delli moti interni’, pp. 89v-90r.

¹⁷² This claim was actually questioned by the anonymous author of this contemporary account, which had been at least largely based upon Venier’s own narrative, if not necessarily compiled by the historian himself: ‘Io credo, che il medesimo Cavalier [Zeno] s’ignanni, perche il nome di Consilia, fu nome generale di tutti li Decreti, a’ consiliando, perche non sono promulgate da un solo: ma proposti da molti, che prima gl’hanno consigliati insieme, onde ben spesso si vede nelli Decreti vecchi del Maggior Consiglio, che in somma dicono, e si Consilium est contra – restri revocato perche volevano, che havesse forza quello, che proponevano, revocando ogn’altra Parte gia presa in contrario’ (Anon., ‘Relatione delli moti interni’, pp. 90v-91r).

Venier followed the argument set out by Zen by recounting the documentary traces of the Ten's foundation himself, in order to investigate exactly how its authority had been established. After introducing the flawed interpretation of Caroldo at the beginning of his volume, the historian compiled a comprehensive index of the decrees relating to the foundation of the Ten which he had extracted from the *Liber Presbyter* of the Great Council; the register of deliberations dating from the turn of the fourteenth century. As in the case of Ramusio before him, we do not know for certain whether Venier, who only held a small number of minor political offices during his short career, personally entered the archival chamber of the chancery, especially as some of the most pertinent records concerning the history of the Ten had been available to consult elsewhere. As we have seen, previous compendia of Venice's laws regarding the jurisdiction of the Ten had already been circulating thanks to archival projects commissioned by the Ten over the turn of the seventeenth century,¹⁷³ whilst others had been recently compiled by sixteenth-century chroniclers such as the patrician Giovanni Tiepolo.¹⁷⁴ Nevertheless, Venier's exhaustive list of chancery records, the majority of which had not yet appeared together in a single location whilst others were claimed to have been personally uncovered by the author himself, certainly suggests that he was familiar with the collection and its registers; perhaps facilitated by his own political office-holding or else his personal ties to the patrician-secretarial circles of the period. In this initial section of Venier's history, entitled *Creatio Consilii X ex Libro Presbiter*, the historian transcribed and paraphrased a series of decrees which did indeed show that the early years of the council were characterised by successive renewals, reductions and alterations. During these early years, the time limit imposed on each renewed council steadily increased from a few weeks to a whole decade, with the first mention of a permanent assembly coming in 1335.¹⁷⁵

Having traced the origins of the Ten amongst the public records, Venier proceeded to narrate the subsequent history of conspiracies and internal crises within the Republic, each instance of which furnished the emergency council with even greater authority. Within these brief narratives, Venier continued to transcribe chancery records which demonstrated the ways in which the Ten and its rivals exerted their power and influence in response to moments of crisis within the Republic, including the failed conspiracies of Doge Marin Falier in 1355, Marin Cicogna in 1432, and the scandals which eventually led to the abdication of Doge Francesco Foscari in 1457; 'extracted,' as he put it, 'from the annals of

¹⁷³ For instance, despite the Ten's insistence that the capitulars issued to its new members be kept secret and returned to its archives after use, copies of their contents appeared in private collections such as that confiscated from Gian Vincenzo Pinelli (see pp. 133-134 above).

¹⁷⁴ Aleo (ed.), *Cronica di Venezia di Giovanni Tiepolo*, vol. I, pp. 240-278.

¹⁷⁵ BL, Add. 8586, ff. 377v-379v (10v-12v).

the Senate.’¹⁷⁶ These records were used to corroborate the details of previous authors, rather than rely solely on previous historiography. On occasion, Venier was even able to use these records to correct his predecessors on certain details. For instance, previous accounts of Foscari’s son, Giacomo, whose repeated misdemeanours and abuses of power eventually led to the Ten’s successful removal of the Doge himself, claimed that the Doge’s son was exiled to Nauplia in Greece in 1446 after accusations of accepting funds from the Duke of Milan. However, Venier claimed to have consulted and transcribed a decree from that time which demonstrated that Foscari had initially remained in Trieste, having apparently fallen ill, in defiance of the terms of his condemnation.¹⁷⁷ In addition, Venier had also argued that, contrary to the accounts of historians as recent as Pietro Giustinian and Gian Battista Egnazio, the nobleman which Foscari was said to have murdered in 1450, Ermolao Donato, had not been a member of the Ten at the time of his death, but rather at the time of Foscari’s original exile, as was recorded in the registers of the chancery.¹⁷⁸ Having recounted the history of Venetian plots and conspiracies, Venier continued with transcriptions of the decrees which further solidified the power and privileges of the Ten between the mid fifteenth century and the first major attempt at reforming the Council in 1582.¹⁷⁹

Between his compendium of chancery records outlining the foundations and development of the Ten, and his narrative of the Zen campaign itself, Venier set out his own conclusions on the lessons of his historical account, and its significance for the contemporary controversy. The history of the Ten, he argued, was one of a government body which had gradually accumulated its permanence and authority in response to successive internal crises, rather than one which was fully established in a single decree. Having been brought into being to protect the stable, aristocratic Republican government against the Tiepolo conspirators – rather than rely on a military general as had the Romans – the Council was never meant as a permanent body, but rather was subsequently expanded and solidified as needed, with the first fixed additions to its body of members after the Falier conspiracy of 1355.¹⁸⁰ It was only towards the end of the fifteenth century, he continued, that the successive accumulation of jurisdictional responsibility over the military, finances and

¹⁷⁶ BMC, Cicogna 3762, f. 26 (section covers pp. 20-44).

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 30 (the decree itself was recorded in: ASVe, MC, reg. 22 (Ursa), f. 159v, 25 November 1446). Interestingly, Denis Romano’s recent account of the affair considered this defiance of the Ten’s orders to be the basis of a significant crisis of authority, a fact which would have been of particular interest to Venier’s narrative (Romano, *The Likeness of Venice*, pp. 196-197). However, the historian at the time reached no such conclusion.

¹⁷⁸ Venier argued that shortly after Donato’s death, a new election was made to replace him as *Savio del Consiglio* (BMC, Cicogna 3762, f. 30). Venier’s reading of this record is perhaps a little confused; contemporary accounts had made more significance of the fact that Donato was one of the men who had initially condemned him, and it is on these which modern studies of this incident remain grounded (Romano, *The Likeness of Venice*, p. 216).

¹⁷⁹ BMC, Cicogna 3762, ff. 45-55.

¹⁸⁰ BL, Add. 8586, ff. 410v-411v (43-44).

even the chanceries of the government had placed powers of the Ten in direct opposition to those of the Senate and Great Council. Citing two examples which are still employed by scholars of the constitutional controversy today,¹⁸¹ Venier noted that this was first acknowledged by the Great Council in a decree of 1468, and that during the sixteenth century the Ten had even led the peace negotiations after war with the Turks.¹⁸² As Venier concluded, such was the pattern of history, ‘that in a Republic, the few most powerful may easily, and without warning, usurp authority from the rest under the guise of the public good.’¹⁸³

Venier’s model of the Ten’s power and jurisdiction throughout its history allowed him to subsequently reinterpret the position of its opponents in his own day. For instance, he noted that at the height of the controversy in August 1628, the Heads of the *Quarantia Criminale* attempted to push through a reform in their own council which would allow them to dictate the hours of their own assembly without the intervention of the Ten, who had forbidden the assembly of other councils in their absence in a decree dating from December 1438.¹⁸⁴ As Venier recounted, the councillors of the *Quarantia* dissuaded their Heads from provoking any unnecessary hostilities by contravening the laws of the Ten.¹⁸⁵ Yet the historian subsequently noted that the 1438 decree was simply a rephrasing of an emergency law set out by the Great Council in December 1313, some twenty-five years before the transformation of the Ten into a permanent executive body, and thus the Heads of the *Quarantia* would have been justified in challenging the Ten’s authority to dictate their activities.¹⁸⁶

Unlike his radical protagonist, Venier’s account of the campaign for reform echoed the calls for moderation which eventually prevailed. Although applauding Zen’s ability to rise above the corruption which had so often burdened Venetian politics, and which the domination of the Ten by only the richest patricians had helped to foster,¹⁸⁷ the historian nevertheless rejected the idea that their authority should be stripped away in favour of ancient magistracies such as the *Quarantia Criminale*, as to do so would be to sacrifice the strength of the Republic itself.¹⁸⁸ Nevertheless, in following Zen’s claim, that the long-

¹⁸¹ Lowry, ‘The Reform of the Council of Ten, 1582-3’, pp. 280-282; de Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice*, p. 33.

¹⁸² BL, Add. 8586, ff. 411v-412v (44-45).

¹⁸³ ‘Che nelle Republiche sotto copperta del publico bene, i pochi potenti facilmente si usurpano ogni autorità spogliandone a fatto li altri, se essi non sonno avertiti’ (Ibid., f. 410 [43]).

¹⁸⁴ BMC, Cicogna 3762, f. 163 (the decree itself is transcribed in an earlier section of the historian’s notes, entitled ‘Diverse cose spettanti al Consiglio di X.ci et alla giunta di esso’ ff. 45-55).

¹⁸⁵ BMC, Cicogna 3762Ibid., p. 163.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 163.

¹⁸⁷ Rose, ‘Marc Antonio Venier’, pp. 493-494.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 496.

term formation of the Council was in fact an accident of history which formed an important and mitigating context to the decrees underwriting its authority, the historian had successfully managed to uncover the gradual process by which it had established itself as a permanent feature of the Republican constitution.

In framing the constitutional debate through a wider historical account of legal reform in response to political crisis, Venier had presented an important model for the use of archival records in a historical context. By contrast, the previous chronicle accounts of the Tiepolo coup, many of which had presented their own transcriptions of state records, had preferred to focus on the fate of conspirators rather than their long-term impact upon the city's governance,¹⁸⁹ whilst the first official historian to recount the Zen affair during the second half of the seventeenth century, Battista Nani, would later prefer to emphasise the role and diligence of the Correctors rather than discuss the historical and archival precedents with which they had to contend.¹⁹⁰ Although only manuscript copies of his narrative remained after the historian's untimely death shortly after the events of which he wrote,¹⁹¹ its influence was clear in other accounts of the affair,¹⁹² and later in the century was copied into larger compendia of Venetian political histories.¹⁹³ As the Ten continued to encounter checks to their authority over the subsequent decades, Venier's model for writing a history of the Council based on archival records was increasingly emulated by later authors, and over the course of the following century almost developed into a distinct genre of Venetian historiography.¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁹ Caroldo, for his part, noted that punishment of the conspirators 'sono annotate nelli libri del detto Consiglio [dei x]' (BL, Kings MS 147, f. 131r), whilst the secretary chronicler Agostino degli Agostini opted to transcribe these records in greater detail (BMC, Cicogna 2852, ff. 69v-76r).

¹⁹⁰ Nani, *Historia della Repubblica Veneta* (1676), p. 460.

¹⁹¹ Venier died in 1631, aged 37, during the same plague epidemic which took the life of Nicolò Contarini (Miller, 'Friendship and Conversation', p. 6).

¹⁹² This is particular evident in the anonymous 'Relatione delli moti interni' (for other examples of Venier's influence, see Miller, 'Friendship and Conversation', p. 19).

¹⁹³ As well as the late seventeenth and eighteenth-century manuscript copies which demonstrate the readership of this account (including BL, Add. 8586 as cited above, as well as BMC, Cicogna 3274/II, 3729, 1761), Venier's text was also transcribed into a larger compendium of histories of the Ten dating from the end of the seventeenth century (BMC, Cicogna 3729, 'Origine del Consiglio de' Dieci e sue correzioni, della libreria della Casa Barbaro').

¹⁹⁴ For a series of seventeenth and eighteenth-century histories of the Ten, written by secretaries and founded on chancery records, see ASVe, MCod., I, regg. 84-90.

5.4: Conclusion

In stark contrast to the paraphrasing and narrative structures taken from the archive for the purposes of writing contemporary historiography, the works examined in this chapter illustrate the variety of ways in which the historians of early modern Venice were also able to reproduce the records of state as sources of information concerning the distant affairs of the Republic. From Paolo Ramusio's abridged documentation within an edited chronicle, to Fortunato Olmo's erudite annotations of newly discovered records, the records of the *Segreta* were increasingly forming the basis of a new set of interpretations for previously well established narratives, presented as authoritative artefacts of the past in accordance with the emerging historical theories of the archive discussed in Chapter One. At a time when the medieval history of the Republic had become a subject of internal and international controversy, its ancient documentation was used to clarify and better contextualise its motives and machinations in both civic governance and diplomacy. In the case of the Fourth Crusade, a succession of discoveries within the volumes of the *Liber Pactorum* and the depositories of the Basilica had served to demonstrate Venice's contractual arrangements with the European barons, its legitimate role as kingmaker in the establishment of the Latin Empire, and the roots of its territorial empire in the Adriatic. Moreover, in the aftermath of Rhenier Zen's anti-oligarchic movement, Venier's constitutional history of the Ten, as told through government papers, ensured that the story of the campaign would be recorded from a moderate perspective, supporting the legitimacy of Zen's claims whilst defending the structure of the Venetian constitution.

Unlike many of the prominent historians of the Counter Reformation discussed in the introduction to this chapter, Venetian historiography had not developed a standardised format for reproducing the records of the chancery on the page during this period. Instead, the way in which archival sources were presented to the reader was largely dependent on the historian's individual circumstances and relationship with the chancery as it evolved over time. Ramusio, brought in as a salaried translator of an ancient text, was largely reliant on his family's secretarial contacts in order to identify records pertaining to the Crusade, whilst Morosini, able to peruse the ancient registers in his capacity as superintendent of the newly constructed archival chamber, subsequently uncovered new information and reproduced it verbatim for posterity. Olmo, by contrast, was directed to his discoveries in the Basilica by the interests in preservation and restoration held by Morosini's successors, but was later forced to illustrate the historical relevance of his uncovered documents in minute detail in order to receive financial remuneration for his work. In the case of Venier, the historian's re-examination of the evolution of the Ten within the Venetian constitution was precipitated by the Council's own archival reform and the compilation of new capitulars, as well as its failed

attempts to exert its authority over the record-keeping practices of the *Segreta* itself. The emergence of archival erudition amongst the historians of the Republic was thus partly driven from within its own internal bureaucracy.

Conclusion

The historian and the archive in sixteenth and early seventeenth-century Venice: a turning point in early modern scholarship?

Far from being a fleeting reflection in the preface to an otherwise dry and technical report on the state of the secret chancery archive, Scipione Famosca and Ludovico Baitelli's description of the collection as the *matrice dell'istoria* in 1635 – the statement with which we began this study – reflected the now well-established role of the chancery as a focal point for the production of Venetian historiography, following a period of substantial development in both the bureaucracy and scholarship of the Republic. As have seen in the first three chapters of this thesis, the decades following the opening of the chancery to historians in 1515 witnessed a gradual emergence of historical theory on the value of archival documentation, complemented by the evolution of the chancery itself as both a physical workspace and a point of reference for the political and diplomatic activity of the Republic. This in turn led to a consistent and increasingly detailed consultation of its contents by the succession of historiographers admitted at the behest of the government.

As the historians of Venice became more closely acquainted with the structure and administration of the state records, even to the point of being personally entrusted with their registration and maintenance, the works which they produced began to uncover and present a greater amount of privileged information, context and explanation for the actions of the Republic, as examined in Chapter Four. During the early decades of the seventeenth century, as we have seen in Chapter Five, the historians in the archive were also able to develop a new form of evidence-based historiography which sought to amend the details of some of the city's most well-established historical narratives. By the turn of the seventeenth century, therefore, a culture of erudite historical research had been firmly established within the walls of the newly reconstructed secret chancery archive. Having crossed the archival threshold from contemporary document to historical artefact in a far shorter transition than has been previously recognised, the records of the chancery quickly emerged as both points of reference and authoritative evidence for both the recent and distant affairs of the Republic.

As we have seen, this emerging scholarly activity was by no means incompatible with the chancery's primary function as the secretive jurisdictional arm of contemporary government. For one, the administration of the chancery itself during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, as recounted in Chapter Two, indicated a strong awareness amongst the government and its secretaries of its potential as a historical monument to the Republic.

Successive reforms to the structure, indexing and preservation of the collection thus began to increasingly present the records of state as a reference point for the activity of the state, as well as its laws and territories. Having made a more conscious intervention into the ways in which its recent activity was recorded and presented in the archives, the Council of Ten – so often seen as the jealous gatekeepers of government secrecy – was subsequently better able to permit their patrician historiographers to take notes and copies from the state records so that they may be re-presented as a form of historical prose in defence of the Republic. In cases such as the War of Cyprus and the historical image of the Fourth Crusade, the government was certainly justified in this decision, as the secret diplomatic activities of both the recent and ancient Republic were paraphrased and cited as evidence of the city's strength, tact and Christian piety on an international stage.

Given the right relationship between the papers of the archive and the text of the historian, as discussed in both Chapters Four and Five, the secrecy of the chancery was by no means absolute during this period. In this respect, the simple periodisation between the archive as an *arsenal de l'autorité* for the early modern state and a *laboratoire* for the nineteenth-century historian is not quite as definitive as that proposed by Bautier in 1968 and generally accepted in modern histories of history-writing.¹ Instead, Famosca and Baitelli's description of the chancery as the *matrice* of history – a term which at the time could mean both a point of conception and a source of consultation for the archival document² – is perhaps a more useful synthesis of the archive's role in both shaping the contemporary affairs of the early modern Republic and preserving its memory for future scholarship.

Recent historiography on the relationship between record-keeping and history-writing in early modern Europe has largely been wary of imposing a sense of progress and long term development upon the historians' use of archives during this period; not least because few contemporary historians would have actually considered themselves innovators in that regard.³ Instead, the notion of 'the historian in the archive' has hitherto been considered as an individualistic and circumstantial phenomenon throughout this period, with little sign of a wider methodological 'trend' for archival research until the turn of the nineteenth century. Yet again, however, such rigid periodisation should perhaps be reconsidered in light of the evidence presented in this study. Certainly, this was far from a period of objective historical inquiry. From the careful construction of chancery registers by

¹ Wright, 'Historical Thought in the Era of the Enlightenment', p. 140 (For Bautier's periodisation, see above, p. 20).

² See p. 20, note 50 above.

³ As discussed above on p. 13.

the Republic's secretaries to the favourable interpretation of their contents given by the official historiographers who consulted them, the early modern notion of searching for 'the truth of things'⁴ within the archive was much more an exercise in promoting the historical image of the Republic than an attempt to conduct the same kind of impartial scholarship largely expected of historians today. Moreover, despite the emerging historical theory concerning the authenticity and authority of the original document, most of the historians addressed in this study opted to consult the far more accessible registers and calendars of state papers wherever possible – or else delegate the task of archival research altogether – sometimes at the expense of important information and context. These, however, were not the expectations of the historian at the time, a servant of the state invited to work within an archival collection whose papers had yet to be fully catalogued and systematised, often confronted by texts for which they had little frame of reference or ability to decipher without the intervention of the secretaries.

To an extent which has yet to be fully appreciated in recent scholarship on the early modern historian's craft, the historian in the chancery was required to navigate complex and varying systems of location, retrieval and note taking within a physical archival space. On the one hand, this is evident in the various mistakes, frustrations and shortcuts encountered by those who visited the chancery for their research,⁵ yet despite these challenges we have also seen a steady progression in historian's ability to gather, interpret and utilise historical data within the archive. As we have seen, this was in direct response of the changing shape and administration of the physical archival space with which he was confronted. The late sixteenth century in particular witnessed three significant developments in the history of the archive which served as a turning point for the practice of contemporary historiography, as discussed in Chapter Three: the formation of the *Annali* as a narrative template for the politics and diplomacy of recent affairs, the physical reconstruction of the chancery's archival chamber as a more clearly defined retrieval system and workspace for the visiting historian, and the greater involvement of the historian himself in the arrangement of the collection thanks to the creation of the office of *soprintendente* in 1601. Alongside the presence of a small caste of secretarial staff within the archive itself, these innovations provided a far greater sense of continuity between the experiences of the state

⁴ As the Council of Ten termed it in 1515 (see p. 30 above).

⁵ In the case of the documentation surrounding the Fourth Crusade, for instance, we can identify incidents of misreading in the chancery which led to mistakes in the historians' texts. In Andrea Morosini's *L'impresa et espeditioni di Terra Santa*, one transcript from the *Liber Pactorum* has accidentally skipped a line from the original text (Morosini, *L'impresa et espeditioni di Terra Santa*, p. 273; ASVe, *Pacta*, reg. 1, f. 90r), whilst Thomas Madden has previously indicated that Paolo Ramusio may have mistaken the Venetian naval commander Vitale Dandolo as admiral of the crusader fleet due to a misreading of a document which bears his name (Madden, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice*, p. 253, § 132).

historiographers over the turn of the seventeenth century and beyond, who were subsequently able to delve even further into the collection and produce a new series of historical studies into the city's distant past alongside the official narratives of contemporary affairs for which they had originally been commissioned.

In stark contrast to the relative disinterest of the early historiographers – appointed for their literary prowess rather than their aptitude for research – in the chests of the *Cancellaria Superiore*, the historian-superintendents at the turn of the seventeenth century began to practice a more erudite and investigative form of scholarship, centred ever more closely around the secret archives of the early modern Republic. This was reflected in both a new genre of document-led historical writing, often attempting to revisit the events of past centuries in the light of newly uncovered chancery records, as well as in the rapidly evolving perception of the chancery itself in the discourse of the city's intellectual sphere. As we have seen, the chancery archive was initially considered as simply another source of information for any gaps in the historian's knowledge, indistinguishable from and interchangeable with the diaries, manuscript libraries and other private collections available throughout the city, whilst the authority of the historian remained rooted in their proximity to and experience of the events depicted in the narrative. However, during the second half of the sixteenth century the chancery was becoming frequently acknowledged in private correspondences as an authoritative source of information for the causes and motives of government affairs, and by the end of the century both the archive and its contents were explicitly appearing in print as proofs and evidence to supplement or even replace the personal authority of the author. In accordance with the emerging historical philosophy of the archival document as an authentic and authoritative witness to the past, as discussed in Chapter One, references to the state records of the Republic were gradually becoming an established trope within the otherwise ornate and humanistic literary styles of the Venetian historiographers.

Certainly, the innovations of the early seventeenth century are unlikely to have led directly to the historical scholarship undertaken in the national archives of the nineteenth century and beyond. In this respect, this study can be considered as a pre-history to the modern historian's craft rather than as a search for its origins. Nevertheless, the research practices of the early historian-superintendents did set an important precedent for the city's historiographical traditions in the decades which followed. For instance, in the preface to Battista Nani's *Historia della repubblica veneta*, published between 1662 and 1679, the state historian became the first to explicitly cite his 'access to the public archives' alongside his own experience as the basis of his official history of contemporary Venice, through which he

had ‘learned of affairs both foreign and domestic.’⁶ Around the same time as Antonio di Negri was constructing his 1669 index of the chancery archive,⁷ the Venetian Senate instituted a series of reforms concerning the compilation of the *Annali* register series, which had begun to fall into decline over previous decades as the task of its compilation had become too great for one secretary to handle alone.⁸ As well as ensuring that the registers were compiled in full from the present day, from 1665 onwards the Senate also appointed a second secretary to revisit and complete any historical gaps in the series,⁹ stating that ‘it is necessary to renew the efforts to bring to perfection the *Annali*, which for many years now have been defective, and have thus rendered the *Segreta* itself lacking such a necessary illumination for the deeds of the past.’¹⁰

As the office of historiographer continued into the eighteenth century, the sixteenth and seventeenth-century perceptions of the chancery archive continued to dominate contemporary discourse, thanks in part to the rediscovery and publication of authors such as Agostino Valier and Albertino Barisoni.¹¹ In a 1781 letter to the Council of Ten by the very last historiographer of the Republic, Francesco Donà, in which the depiction of his experiences in the archive closely mirrors those of his distant predecessors, the historian reflected that ‘a government which registers and preserves the documentary traces of its activities will thus find no better source from which to recount its history.’¹²

In the case of Venice, therefore, the opening and reform of the chancery archive during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries constituted a significant turning point in the construction of the city’s civic historiography in the decades to follow. Beyond the immediate context of the Republic itself, however, it is finally worth considering how future

⁶ Nani, *Historia della Repubblica Veneta* (1686), pp. ii-iii.

⁷ As discussed in Chapter 2.6.

⁸ Paolo Morosini, for instance, had warned of this possibility as early as 1635 (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 40, 26 February 1634 m.v.).

⁹ These two deliberations can be seen in: BMC, Gradenigo 192, f. 268r (28 October 1665); ASVe, Compilazione delle Leggi, 108, f. 514 (27 May 1679).

¹⁰ ‘Necessario è con tal’occasione rinovarsi gl’eccitamenti per la continuatione, e perfettione degl’Annali, che essendo di molti anni diffettivi, si rende la Secreta medesima priva d’un necessario lume delle cose passate’ (decree dated 23 November 1669, quoted in the preface to ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 6).

¹¹ A copy of Valier’s *Ricordi* to Alvise Contarini was discovered by the erudite friar Carlo Lodoli in a manuscript library in 1725 (BNM Cod. It. VII, 415), whilst manuscript of Barisoni’s *De archivis commentarius* was first published by the Marquis Giovanni Poleni in 1737, from the autograph donated by the author’s grandnephew (Born, ‘The ‘De Archivis Commentarius’ of Alberto Barisoni’, p. 15). See Chapters 1.3 and 1.4 for a discussion of the two authors.

¹² Donà’s address to the Ten, a copy of which is included as an appendix to a calendar of documents taken from the chancery archive around the same time (ASVe, MCod., IV, reg. 9, ff. 119r-121r), discusses the importance of the Venetian archive for the construction of his narrative, the role of its documents in providing evidence for his account, and even the importance of its secretaries for locating and deciphering relevant material. For a wider account of Donà’s historiography, see Vianello, *Gli archivi del Consiglio dei dieci*, pp. 126-140.

studies, such as that presented in this thesis, might better illuminate the wider practice of historical scholarship in the archives across early modern Europe.

Beyond the Venetian chancery: the 1177 controversy and the history of archival scholarship in a wider European context

As discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, any attempt to retrace the relationship between the early modern historian and the archives to which they were admitted is inevitably faced – in a cruel twist of fate – with the problem of documentary loss. Although tasked with preserving and representing the documentary history of the state, both the secretaries of the chancery and the patrician historiographers were far less concerned with the survival of their own records and the written traces of their activity within the archive, leaving us with only a few fragments upon which to base our accounts today. In order to address this issue, the present study has focussed on one specific case, the Republic of Venice, in order to identify and piece together as much information concerning the functionality and use of the early modern chancery as can be found across the city's various archival and manuscript collections. By drawing upon a microhistorical study of Venice's state historiography programme, this thesis has been able to trace in detail the development of the historian's research methods in response to the gradual reform of the city's bureaucracy over the course of several decades, to assess the precise extent of their privilege in having access to archival records in contrast to those scholars forced to rely on other sources, and above all to highlight the vast network of secretaries and independent scholars which was instrumental in facilitating the work of Venice's more widely studied intellectual elite.

Beyond this microscopic focus, however, it must be noted that the archival research of the Venetian historiographers was not an isolated and self-contained phenomenon within the wider history of early modern European scholarship, a fact which merits brief consideration in this closing discussion. Certainly, Venice was not alone in admitting a small group of historians into its state record collections for the purpose of civic historiography during this period,¹³ nor was it alone in 'monumentalising' the records of its past through the creation of new archival registers and indexes. The *Annali*, for instance, had its parallels elsewhere in Europe, when in 1588 the ordinances of the recently constructed Spanish Royal Archive at Simancas declared that its secretaries must create 'a book of the curious and memorable deeds with are contained in this archive, which though reading one may be able

¹³ This will be illustrated, for instance, in the forthcoming special issue of *Storia della Storiografia*, 68.2 (2015), as cited on p. 23, note 64 of the Introduction to this thesis.

to comprehend the essence of things as though reading a history,'¹⁴ whilst the Portuguese crown had already long invested in commemorative compendia of chancery records, the *Leitura Nova*, several decades earlier.¹⁵ From the perspective of the historian-superintendents, the emergence of document-led historiography in Venice may well have been influenced, as alluded to in Chapters One and Five, by intellectual developments occurring elsewhere across the continent, from the publication of Bodin's *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem* – which stated that 'the best writers say that they have collected their material from the official records, to obtain more credit for their writings'¹⁶ – to the substantial volumes of archival scholarship being produced by the historians of the Counter Reformation.

From a political perspective, moreover, Venice's early modern historiography was inexorably tied to the fortunes and perceptions of the Republic on an international stage. In this thesis, we have seen how the Venetian government was able to shape its own historical image by controlling and manipulating the information to which its patrician historiographers were given privileged access; yet, as numerous historians have illustrated in recent years, the growing interests of foreign scholars in Venetian affairs meant that the Republic often had to compete with critical counter-narratives from abroad.¹⁷ One of the best known examples of this was the controversy which emerged between Venice and Rome concerning the details of the 1177 peace between Pope Alexander III and Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. In 1574 and again in 1609, Venice's long standing chronicle tradition of this momentous event – in which the Republic protected a fleeing Alexander against the Imperial fleet sent to capture him, before successfully forging a ceasefire between the two opposing powers – was brought into significant doubt by two of the great historians of the Counter Reformation, Carlo Sigonio and Cesare Baronio.¹⁸ Fearing that this traditional narrative, which had now become deeply entrenched within Venice's political and civic identity,

¹⁴ The volumes themselves were to be entitled 'Relacion de cosas memorables y curiosas' (Rodríguez de Diego, *Instrucción para el gobierno del Archivo de Simancas*, p. 105, section 8: 'Mandamos que se otro tercero libro de las cosas curiosas y memorables que ay y huuiere en el dicho archiuo, de que tambien se podria sacar sustancia leyendo en él como en historia'). See also: Kagan, *Clio and the Crown*, p. 133.

¹⁵ Randolph Head, 'Recreating an *archivum* in Books: The Lisbon *Leitura Nova*, 1504 – 1552, in the Context of European Chancelleries and Their Practices' (paper given at Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, Cincinnati, 26 October 2012).

¹⁶ Bodin, *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History*, trans. Beatrice Reynolds, p. 47.

¹⁷ Venice's early modern struggle with the portrayal of its historical affairs abroad has been well recounted in recent literature. See for instance: Cozzi, 'Cultura politica e religione', pp. 284-294; Gilbert, 'The Venetian Constitution in Florentine Political Thought'; Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty*, pp. 556-623; Benzoni and Zanato (eds.), *Storici e politici veneti*, pp. lviii-lxvii; Trebbi, 'Venezia tra '500 e '600 nell'opera storica di Andrea Morosini', pp. 117-129; Barzani, 'Fra Venezia e Roma'; de Vivo, *Information and Communication*, p. 159; Andretta, 'Cesare Baronio e Venezia'.

¹⁸ De Vivo, 'Historical Justifications of Venetian Power in the Adriatic', pp. 160-161.

would form a dangerous example for Protestant histories of the Church,¹⁹ the two historians cited and transcribed a substantial collection of documentary and manuscript evidence which they had uncovered within the archives of Rome and Bologna, and which illustrated that the Pope and the Emperor had in fact been negotiating an accord long before the former's entry into the city.²⁰

After centuries of Venetian cultural identity as one of the great protectors of the Medieval Roman Church, Sigonio and Baronio's new accounts of the Peace had relegated Venice's role to merely the neutral ground upon which the treaty was finally signed. In response, a great number of Venice's historians, including several previously addressed in this thesis, compiled similar compendia of written and pictorial evidence in support of the traditional narrative.²¹ The most comprehensive of these was produced by Fortunato Olmo in 1629, who not only provided a small number of chancery documents in favour of the city's chronicle accounts, but also demonstrated how the documentary evidence presented by historians such as Sigonio – whom Olmo conceded to be 'a diligent investigator of the archives and their ancient writings' – was in fact often inconsistent with the narratives within which they had been placed.²²

Much of the detail concerning the polemical exchange between the historians of the Republic and the Papacy has been recounted in extensive detail in previous scholarship, and does not bear repeating here. Far more significant, however, is the role of this controversy in expanding the horizons of Venice's archival scholarship towards the middle of the seventeenth century, as the city's historians began to exhaust the resources of its own government archives. Just three years after Olmo's detailed rebuttal of Sigonio and Baronio in 1629, the custodian of the Vatican Secret Archive, Felice Contelori, published yet another substantial body of the Papal documentation under his care, 'diligently transcribed from the volumes of the Vatican.'²³ Once again, these supported the counter-narrative of Alexander and Frederick having reached an accord long before the arrival of the former into Venice in 1177.²⁴ The success of Contelori's work, which prompted Pope Urban VIII to cause a major

¹⁹ Cozzi, 'La venuta di Alessandro III', p. 129.

²⁰ Sigonio, *Historiarum de regno Italiae libri quindecim*, pp. 549-550; Baronio, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, vol. XII, pp. 850-896. A more considered narrative of Alexander's movements during that year, which incorporates elements of both historiographical traditions, is given by Madden, 'Alexander III and Venice', pp. 332-337).

²¹ Bardi, *Vittoria nauale ottenuta dalla Repubblica Venetiana* (see p. 48 above for Bardi's comment on the archival authority of his work); Cornelio Frangipane, *Per la historia di Papa Alessandro III*; Andrea Morosini *De rebus a Venetis gestis Alexandro III pontefice* (BMC, Malvezzi 136, f. 332v). See also the draft of Paolo's history of the city (BMN, MS. Malevezzi 93, ff. 212-214).

²² Olmo, *Historia della Venuta*, pp. 172-174.

²³ Contelori, *Concordiae inter Alexandrum III et Fridericum I*, p. 165.

²⁴ Contelori's point by point rebuttal of Olmo covers pp. 1-164, whilst the transcriptions of his supporting documents are presented on pp. 165-237.

diplomatic incident between the two cities by expunging the contribution of the Republic from the eulogy of Alexander III on the walls of the Papal Palace's *Sala Regia* in 1635,²⁵ prompted yet another wave of scholarly investigation back in Venice. Commenting on this recent development in 1637, the *Consultore in Jure* Fulgenzio Micanzio stated that the defence of the Republic would now need to rely upon 'the proofs and documents brought forward by our historians,' of whom 'the most credible are those whose accounts correspond with the authentic records of the Archives.' More importantly, he added, the Republic's historians would also need to uncover documentary evidence 'hitherto unknown by others' in order to provide a plausible riposte to Contelori and his predecessors.²⁶

Such new discoveries, however, were not forthcoming. Having already exhausted the small number of records dating from this period in the chancery's *Liber Pactorum* for his original account,²⁷ Fortunato Olmo was dismayed to find that the deteriorating record collections of the Basilica – to which he had been given access in 1632²⁸ – had contrived to lose any further documentation which may have provided evidence for a second edition of his history of the 1177 Peace.²⁹ On this occasion, the record-keeping practices of the Republican government, so often the driving force behind the development of Venetian historiography during this period, had proved to be its undoing. However, the historian remained optimistic that new evidence would eventually be unearthed in other locations, a notion which he had already reflected upon in the first edition of his history:

We know that the Venetians must also have composed letters to the Emperor [in the months leading up to the peace], according to what [the chroniclers] tell us, but these have yet to come to our attention. And perhaps there are numerous other records which are still held in the archives, like precious treasures, which will one day come to light. Numerous other events have been illustrated in this way, illuminated little

²⁵ De Jong, *The Power and the Glorification*, pp. 132-133.

²⁶ 'Le prove, et documenti, che apportano; perche in tanto son creti li scrittori, in quanto la loro racconti convengono con le scritture autentiche delli Archivi con la conditione dei tempi, de stati, di Principi, et col resto dell'istoria [...] Se dalli Archivi, dalle librerie, dalla secrete uno havesse potuto ritrovar scritte, o documenti per ancora incogniti alli altri, et questo è il più importante capo, perche potrebbe esser tal documento, che non solo facesse veresimiltudine, ma convincesse l'una delle opinione di falso, et stabilise la verita dell'altra' (ASVe, IS, b. 884, 2 March 1637).

²⁷ These documents, which were already well known to Venetian historiography having been transcribed in the chronicles of Andrea Dandolo and Marin Sanudo (Muratori (ed.), *Andreae Danduli ... Chronicon Venetum*, pp. 304-306; Sanudo, *Vite dei Dogi*, pp. 302-338), included Papal indulgences for Venetian churches, a peace treaty between the Republic and Barbarossa signed in September 1177 (and presented by Olmo as proof that there must have been a naval battle earlier in the year; Olmo, *Historia della Venuta*, pp. 282-288) and several substantial chronicle accounts dating from around the period which supported the Venetian narrative.

²⁸ See Chapter 2.5.

²⁹ BNM, Cod. It. VII, 374, f. 8r.

by little by various records, which perhaps may never have been recounted had the opportunity not been taken to extract them from obscurity and present them in print for the benefit of true scholarship.³⁰

Having already worked within the city's other ecclesiastical archives whilst compiling the history of his monastery at San Giorgio,³¹ Olmo was willing to venture far beyond the chancery and Basilica to locate his sources. The second edition of his history, which included an even greater body of documentary and manuscript texts, subsequently included references to the monastic archives of Ravenna amongst the registers of the Venetian secret chancery.³²

The investigations of Venice's scholars beyond the walls of the chancery even reached the archives of the Papacy itself, when in 1637 the Venetian cleric Carlo Querini – who had been scouring the document and manuscript collections of Rome in search of material relating to Alexander III – delivered a calendar entry for a very important document to the Venetian government. The document in question, an autograph testament by Alexander himself written shortly before his death in 1181, purportedly narrated the Pope's flight to Venice, the role of the Republic in combating and negotiating with the Emperor on his behalf, and the privileges and titles bestowed upon the Doge and his government as a result. The summary of this document, Querini explained, had been given to him by a secretary who had recognised its significance within the controversy between the two cities, and who had offered to make a full copy available to the Venetian government on request to use as a further scholarly weapon against the historians of Rome.³³

Unfortunately for both Olmo and Querini, the wider political circumstances of the 1177 controversy meant that their discoveries were quickly forgotten. Around the same time as the government was receiving news of Querini's efforts in Rome, its ambassadors were advising that the Republic should cease its quarrels with the Papacy over this issue

³⁰ 'Sappiamo anco che gli Veneti dovettero formare la loro lettera a favore de gli Imperiali, conforme a quanto ci dice Obone, ma non ci sono tutte le cose pervenute a notitia. E molt'altre scritte forse, che stanno hore ne gli Archivi conservate, come cari tesori, uscirano un giorno alla luce. Com'è avvenuto a poco a poco in occorrenza dell'illustrare molte cose, le quali hanno pigliato lume di diverse scritte, che non sarebbero mai state prodotte, se l'occasione non invitava che le cavò delle tenebre, a farne parte col mezo delle stampe a gli studiosi del vero' (Olmo, *Historia della venuta*, p. 288).

³¹ Baldan, 'La storia del monastero di S. Giorgio Maggiore', p. 355 (a likely fragment of Olmo's notes from the archives of San Giorgio can be seen in ASVe, MADM, 60g).

³² References to monastic archives in Ravenna, as corroborating evidence to the more minor details of Olmo's annotations which did not appear in his 1629 publication, can be seen in BNM, Cod. It. VII, 221, ff. 73, 78, 80. As Maria Francesco Tiepolo's recent catalogue of artefacts from the Peace suggests, the historian was certainly justified in his decision to search the ecclesiastical archives of Venice and beyond, as the majority of relevant documents in the ASVe today were subsequently transferred from these locations (Tiepolo, *1177 Pace di Venezia, storia, leggenda, e mito*, pp. 10-12).

³³ ASVe, IS, b. 884, 21 February 1637.

altogether, whilst the restoration of the *Sala Regia* eulogy as a sign of faith by Urban's successor in 1644 effectively brought the matter to a close. The manuscript of Olmo's vast second edition was held in secrecy by the Council of Ten for over a century, and the historian himself died in abject poverty in 1648, with little recognition for the significant contribution he had made to the city's historiography during this career. As for Querini, who had been attempting to gain favour from the Republic through his research efforts in Rome after his exile for his part in the Corner controversy a decade earlier,³⁴ the order to have his newly discovered document sent to Venice seemingly never arrived. Nevertheless, the case of the 1177 controversy, as one which could not be addressed through recourse to the archive of the secret chancery alone, serves as an important example of Venice's place within a much wider spectrum of archival scholarship across Europe during this time.

As the two Venetian scholars attempted to extract historical information from the archives of Rome and Ravenna, they would have been confronted with the very same issues of navigating the structure, indexing and regulation of the collection as those faced by their predecessors within the archive of the city's secret chancery. Just as we have seen throughout this thesis in the case of Venice, it was these institutional circumstances which ultimately dictated the historian's ability to gather and represent his sources. In the case of Querini, for instance, the discovery of Alexander's 1181 testament was only made possible thanks to the ongoing transferral of Papal documents from their former depository at Castel San Angelo to the recently constructed *Archivio Segreto Vaticano* at the Belvedere Palace, as the document had only just appeared in an index of the old collection made by one of its secretaries.³⁵ As further developments in the 'archival turn' and the 'documentary history of institutions' come to better inform us of the institutional and administrative structures of the archives and record collections of early modern Europe, we will be in a far stronger position to examine and compare the ways in which various government record keeping practices impacted upon the production of contemporary historiography, as well as the roles played by each in providing source material for the exchange of historical polemic between competing states and religious institutions.

³⁴ See Chapter 5.3.1, p. 183 (Cozzi, *Il Doge Nicolò Contarini*, p. 243).

³⁵ This is according to the account given by Querini in his address to the Venetian government (ASVe, IS, b. 884, 21 February 1637); for details of this archival relocation, which was still in progress by the time of Querini's address, see: Blouin and Coombs (eds.), *Vatican Archives*, p. xx.

Record keepers, information networks and a new perspective on the early modern historian's craft

The circumstances of Carlo Querini's somewhat fortuitous discovery of Alexander III's 1181 testament in 1637 – made possible only through the intercession of a single rogue notary who had personally sought out the cleric to offer his assistance to the Venetian cause from within the former Vatican archive – illustrate the final major theme present throughout this thesis. Far from being an isolated intellectual figure, compiling his account within the confines of his study as depicted by Corio and Cirillo, the early modern historian procured his source material through a substantial network of scholarly peers, political patrons and, above all, the keepers of the records themselves. Even if, as Mark Phillips has previously claimed in his seminal study *Francesco Guicciardini: The Historian's Craft*, 'it seems dubious that any historian before the modern age of professionalism was motivated primarily or even largely by questions of research technique,'³⁶ the construction of early modern historiography was inescapably tied to the physical, logistical and collaborative process of gathering data – be it archival, manuscript or even oral. Such processes are often poorly represented by the literary texts and intellectual treatises of the historians alone,³⁷ and instead require a wider examination of the individuals and institutions which surrounded and facilitated the work of the historian before they began to put pen to paper.

In the case of Venice, for instance, the secretaries of the chancery played a far greater role in shaping the city's historiography than has been previously acknowledged; serving not only as archival experts, research assistants and copyists for the visiting historian, but also driven by their own sense of historical consciousness to compile the documents under their care in a series of historical narratives for the benefit of future scholarship. Previous historiography has tended to focus instead on the role of the secretary-as-author. In her recent study of history-writing in Renaissance Naples, for instance, Chiara di Caprio suggests that the professional attributes of the secretary – 'scribal abilities, familiarity with the records, and an ability to produce and conserve a documentary memory imbued with *publica fides*' – rendered this group uniquely adept at constructing historical narratives,³⁸ whilst Donald Kelley and Jacob Soll have also focussed on the scholarly interests of the secretary in their respective studies of the archive in France.³⁹ However, the role of the secretary, and similarly of the librarian and private record collector, as the

³⁶ Phillips, *Francesco Guicciardini: The Historian's Craft*, p. 96.

³⁷ It is perhaps telling, for instance, that the only author to explicitly acknowledge their input in print during this period, Paolo Ramusio, was both a son and father to two of the Republic's archival staff.

³⁸ De Caprio, *Scrivere la storia a Napoli*, p. 159.

³⁹ Kelley, *Foundations of Modern Historical Scholarship*, pp. 220-230; Soll, *Publishing the Prince*, pp. 52-55. See also: Saletti, 'Registri perduti della Camera Ducale estense'.

gatekeepers of historical knowledge deserves far greater attention in future European scholarship. The notes, calendars and various copies of archival records circulating beyond the chancery in the case of Venice, many of them produced in a secretary hand, illustrates the role of the archive as an important node within the scholarly information networks of the day.

As Querini himself suggested in his correspondence from Rome, this information exchange was often carried out in spite of the strict regulations supposedly in place around the secrets of state, a notion which has in fact appeared in several case studies across the rest of Europe. In Florence, for instance, it has long been noted that Francesco Guicciardini was granted permission to extract the records of the former Republic for consultation and storage within his own private study;⁴⁰ an arrangement also noted by John Gagné in the case of Milan and by C.O. Tosi in the case of Siena.⁴¹ On occasion, this freedom to shape and exploit the contents of the archive – a phenomenon largely at odds with the historian’s experience today – could even result in somewhat nefarious scholarly practices. It has previously been suggested, for instance, that the Protestant historian John Foxe had torn out pages from ecclesiastical registers which contradicted his Protestant history of the English martyrs, ‘effectively removing them from the public domain’.⁴² More than a century later, Venice famously suffered an inversion of its state historiography programme during the 1670s when the ambassadorial secretary Abraham Nicolas Amelot de la Houssaye was able to access a selection of chancery records for the purposes of compiling a history of Venetian tyranny throughout the ages.⁴³

As European historiography, especially that concerning the history of the Church, began to take an increasingly international approach over the course of the seventeenth century, such information networks become vital for our understanding of the historian’s craft. Recent scholarship has begun to consider the impact of the private circulation of historical sources during this period, from the manuscript libraries and printed compendia of diplomatic reports to the great collaborative projects of Huguenot and Jesuit historiography.⁴⁴ In the case of Venice, this new approach to the historian’s method may

⁴⁰ Ridolfi, *L’archivio della famiglia Guicciardini*, pp. 7, 65-66; Guicciardini, *Le cose fiorentine*, p. xvii-xviii; Phillips, *Francesco Guicciardini: The Historian’s Craft*, pp. 94-97. Francesca Klein has also noted that historians such as Scipione Ammirato were able to actively create new archival series within the documents of the Medici for the benefit of his own historical studies (Klein, *Scritture e governo dello stato a Firenze*, pp. 252-253).

⁴¹ Gagné, ‘After the Sforza’, p. 43; Tosi, ‘I documenti consultati dagli storici Malavolti e Tommasi’, pp. 24-25.

⁴² Collinson, ‘Truth, Lies and Fiction’, p. 51.

⁴³ Soll, *Publishing the Prince*, pp. 62-63.

⁴⁴ For the role of ecclesiastical history in this phenomenon, see: Lyon ‘Baudouin, Flacius, and the Plan for the Magdeburg Centuries’; Dolbeau, ‘Les sources manuscrites des Acta Sanctorum et leur

help to offer a new perspective on the complex and extensive scholarly career of the Servite friar Paolo Sarpi, for whom tracing the primary sources of his copious historical writings has traditionally been seen as ‘a particularly difficult field of study.’ Previous studies of the historian’s career have been able to identify isolated examples of the contacts and record collections in Venice and beyond through which the historian was able to gather information for both his histories of the Church and of the Republic, including most recently an account of the channels through which Sarpi was able to convincingly establish the narrative of an alleged Spanish conspiracy against the Republic in 1618.⁴⁵ However, a better understanding of the record-keeping institutions which sat within the vast political and social network over which Sarpi presided, as recounted in detail in a recent biography by Jaska Kainulainen,⁴⁶ may shed even greater light on the research methods of one of the great early erudite historians.

In recent years, new digital technologies and systems of information management have raised profound questions over the relationship between the historian and the archive in the modern era. Writing in 2011, Francis X. Blouin and William Rosenberg called for a greater dialogue between historians and archivists concerning how the record-keeping institutions in which they study actively shape the scholarship which they are able to produce. ‘To write good history,’ they stated, ‘scholars must bridge the archival divide by acquiring specific knowledge about archival processes, reading their archives as well as their documents, and by once again understanding what their now distant archivist colleagues actually do.’⁴⁷ The historians of early modern Venice, as this thesis has attempted to demonstrate, appreciated this sentiment as much as, if not perhaps more than, many of their modern counterparts, translating their record-keeping knowledge and institutional relationships into new narratives and genres of historical-writing. In order to understand the historian’s craft in early modern Europe, we too must consider the institutions and information networks which facilitated their research. In addition, it would perhaps benefit our own scholarly practices if we were to reflect more substantially upon the ways in which the historical memories of our predecessors were archived, researched and represented by the scholars and conservators to whom they were entrusted.

collecte’, pp. 123-127; van der Linden, *Experiencing Exile*, pp. 200-207. For the role of diplomatic libraries and *tesori*, see: de Vivo, ‘How to Read Venetian Relazioni’, pp. 42-47, and a forthcoming essay by Diego Pirillo (‘Reading Diplomacy: how the Italian Reformers used their Venetian Relazioni’, in Sowerby and Craigwood (eds.), *Cultures of Diplomacy and Literary Writing in the Early Modern World: New Approaches* [2016]).

⁴⁵ Vivanti (ed.), *Paolo Sarpi. Istoria del Concilio Tridentino*, vol. I, pp. lxxxii-lxxxiii; Asor Rosa, ‘Istoria del Concilio Tridentino di Paolo Sarpi’, pp. 848-851. For Sarpi’s construction of the 1618 account, see Tarpley, ‘Paolo Sarpi, His Networks, Venice and the Coming of the Thirty Years’ War’, Chapter Six; Davidson, ‘Hispanophobia in the Venetian Republic’, p. 34.

⁴⁶ Kainulainen, *Paolo Sarpi: A Servant of God and State*, pp. 13-55.

⁴⁷ Blouin and Rosenberg, *Processing the Past*, p. 210.

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Appendix

Table 1 – Indexes of the Venetian secret chancery (16th – 17th centuries)

Reference	Title	Date of formation	Date range	Notes
ASVe, <i>Secreta Indici</i>, b. 5	Scripturae in scatola notata	1510s-1520s	14 th to early 16 th centuries	A collection of inventories (loose binding) detailing the diplomatic correspondences and treatises contained within a series of around twenty-five chests (no specific location within the Palace given). Inventories divided by state.
BMC, Cicogna 186	Indici ed estratti di leggi Veneti	c. 1520	13 th to early 16 th centuries	Primarily an index of the Republic's major laws, which on occasion reference the relevant entries in the chancery directly, the volume concludes with a comprehensive catalogue of the principal register series of the secret chancery. Most significantly, this was a privately held manuscript (provenance unstated), suggesting that knowledge of the archive's structure was being circulated beyond the Palace even at this early stage. Includes a list of Doges ending with Leonardo Loredan (d. 1521)
MADM, 54	Collectaneum, et ordinum non nullorum Venete Reipublice sumptorum ex libris Cancellarie Illustrissimi Duci Domini Venetorum: et per alphabetum concise in hoc volumine digestorum per Bartholameum Zambertum Venetum notarium, et consulum cancellarium	1520s	13 th to early 16 th centuries	An index of the laws contained in this volume is given at the beginning. Contains entries from the <i>Maggior Consiglio</i> registers from 'Liber Presbyter' (1308-1315) onwards, the <i>Liber Factorum</i> and <i>Commemoriali</i> , and the deliberative registers of the Senate, College and Council of Ten.

ASVe, <i>Secreta Indici</i>, b. 5	Inventarum librorum et scripturarum in capsula alba	1530s	12th to 16th centuries	Inventory of the <i>Cassa Bianca</i> , the attic depository of the Council of Ten, listing individual treatises and dispatches as far back as the Venetian-Imperial accord of September 1177 (see p. 203, note 27 above). Divided between over twenty different <i>armari</i> , the inventory is a useful indicator of the types of loose documentation kept by the Council of Ten before eventual consignment into the chancery. Arranged in loose fascicles.
ASVe, <i>Pacta e aggregati</i>, <i>Indici</i>, reg. 3	Elencus sive index orum quae IX hisce pactorum continentur libris quae quidem olim altissimis obsita tenebris sitque diuturno sepulta longis post seculis nunc primum in lucem edita sunt in usum Reip: Senatus q' Veneti Andreae Gritti Principis Sapientiss: auctoritate et auspiciis Andreae Franciscii Magni Cancellarii ope: et Petri Brixiani a secretis	1537	9 th to 15 th centuries	A copy of the volume's ornate frontispiece is available in Salmini, 'Buildings, Furnishings and Use', p. 103. A draft of Bressano's index, now in a poor condition, can be found in ASVe, <i>Secreta Indici</i> , b. 3, with an additional series of digests available in ASVe, <i>Secreta Indici</i> , b. 4.
ASVe, <i>Secreta Indici</i>, b. 4	Index Librorum Cancellariae	1540s	9 th to 16 th centuries	Two wood-bound indexes of the major register series of the secret chancery, at this point still in the four chests (or small cupboards) of the <i>Cancellaria Superiore</i> . The contents of each series are listed chronologically by register number (see Figure 3)
ASVe, <i>Secreta Indici</i>, bb. 2, 4	Canon Inveniendi Scripturas Omnes, quae in Salla Cancellariae Magni Venetiarum Cancellarij Iussu, et Scribae cuiusdam Diligentia Disposite Sunt. Anno MDXLVI	1546	13 th to 16 th centuries	An index of the ancient charters formerly held in the attics of the Ducal Palace, and now reorganised within cupboards held in the offices of the Grand Chancellor, Andrea de' Franceschi. The six cupboards of the newly arranged collection are divided as follows: 1. ORATORUM LITTERAE

				2. LITTERAE DIVERSAE 3. INSTRUMENTA ET LIBRI 4. LITTERAE DUCALES TERRES RES ET MARITIMAE 5. LITTERAE DUCALES TERRES RES ET MARITIMAE 6. RECTORUM TERRESTRUM ET MARITIMORUM LITTERARE Entries largely correspond with the modern ASVe series <i>Miscellanea Ducali e Atti Diplomatici</i> .
CX Cod., reg. 39	Libri Consilii X	1550s	1315-1550	A summary of the Council of Ten's deliberative registers, followed by an alphabetical index of its principal laws (archival binding).
ASVe, Senato e Collegio. Miscellanea, 'Indice Segreta'	Indice, per materie o voci, di vari registri della Cancelleria ducale	Mid-c16	9 th to 16 th centuries	Contents: Indice della promissione ducale Indice della Capitolar dei consiglieri Tariffe delle Corti di Palazzo Ordine delle professioni Dogi – cronologie Aggregati al <i>Maggior Consiglio</i> 1381 Aggregati al <i>Maggior Consiglio</i> per grazia Cancellieri grande Inventario dei registri della Cancelleria This final section (f. 156r onwards), lists the registers of the chancery in a similar manner to the <i>Index Librorum Cancellariae</i> , whilst the earlier sections are comprised of indexes and capitulars of many of the major laws of the various councils.
ASVe, Secreta Indici, b. 5	Inventario delli libri, che sono nella Cassa Bianca	1582	12th to 16th centuries	An updated inventory of the <i>Cassa Bianca</i> (loose fascicles).

ASVe, <i>Secreta Indici</i>, b. 2	Indice de tutte le scritture, che si trovano nell'armer di sopra et nel presente	1590s (with additions in early c17)	1580s-1600s	An inventory of loose material, tabulated in alphabetical order, purportedly found in the attics of the Palace and re-archived by the Council of Ten (see p. 66). Several of the entries, as indicated in a modern hand, were subsequently deposited in the series <i>Miscellanea Materie Miste e Notabili</i> during the indexing of Antonio di Negri, and thus illustrate the use of the secret chancery archive as a depository for loose historical material (see p. 78, note 166)
Modern provenance unknown	Revisione, regulatione ed indice formato da me Bonifacio Antelmi, Gran Cancellier, da tutti i libri, registri, filze, lettere et di ogni altra sorte di scritture che hora si trovano nella Cancelleria ducale, tanto nelli armari della camera che ho fatto accomodare et in quelli della soffitta vecchi	1610		Formerly of ASVe series <i>Miscellanea Codici, Vecchio Ordinamento</i> , reg. 430, but currently irretrievable. A full title and description of the index is given in Baschet, <i>Les archives de Venise</i> , p. 178
ASVe, <i>Indice Generale della Secreta</i>	<i>Indice Generale della Secreta</i>	1600-1619	1600-1619	10 vols., subdivided by date range and geography. Entries ordered thematically and chronologically, containing references to the registers and <i>filze</i> of the Senate and College, including the <i>Esposizioni Principi</i> . Final volumes mostly empty except for the templates of subject matter. Assorted drafts and catalogues of the material for these indexes can be found in ASVe, <i>Secreta Indici</i> , b. 5
MADM, 50	Summari di Decretoi tratti dalli Libri del Maggior <i>Consiglio</i> Stella, Deda, Diana, Novus, Roca, Archangelus, Frigerius, Surianus, Vicus et Antelmus	1610s-1620s	1480-1614	This <i>busta</i> contains several similar drafted indexes in loose fascicles, all likely to have been training exercises for the <i>Segretari Leggisti</i> .
ASVe, <i>Secreta</i>	Indice della Segreta fatto in tempo del	1669	9th to 17th	Wood-bound and with ornate frontispieces and

<i>Indici, b. 6</i>	Serenissimo Principe Domenico Contarini, et delli Illustrissimi et Eccellentissimi Signori Battista Nani Kavallier et Procurator soprintendente alla medesima, e Domenico Ballarin Cancellier Grande, dal circospetto segretario Antonio di Negri quondam Alberto, l'anno MDCLXVIII, scritto dal fedelissimo Zuanne Gasparini scrittor delle cose antiche	centuries	<p>dedicatory letters, this is the most ornate of the surviving chancery indexes.</p> <p>The registers, <i>buste</i> and loose documents are divided between 75 individual <i>armari</i> (a summary of the contents of each <i>armario</i>, as recounted by di Negri, is given in Baschet, <i>Les archives de Venise</i>, pp. 196-207).</p> <p>Di Negri states in his prefatory address that he has deliberately left blank space and pages within each <i>armario</i> entry, so that future additions to the chancery may be added to the index.</p>
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Table 2 – Catalogue of the early *Annali* registers of the Venetian secret chancery

List of <i>Annali</i> by Antonio di Negri (1669) ¹	Nineteenth century collocation after recovery of volumes ²	Modern collocation in ASVe	Dates
# ³		<i>Collegio, Pandette</i> , reg. 1	1551-1559
#	1 (Cod. 346) ⁴	<i>Collegio, Pandette</i> , reg. 2	1559-1562
#	2 (Cod. 366)	<i>Collegio, Pandette</i> , reg. 3	1564-1565
#1	3 (Cod. 368)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 3	1566-1570
#2	4 (Cod. 339)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 4	1571
#3	5 (Cod. 340)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 5	1572-1573
#			1573-1577
#4	6 (Cod. 369)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 6	1574-1579
#5	7 (Cod. 328)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 7	1580-1583
#6	8 (Cod. 326)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 8	1584-1590
#7	9 (Cod. 370)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 9	1591-1592
#8	10 (Cod. 387)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 10	
#9	11 (Cod. 359)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 11	1595-1598
#10			
#11	12 (Cod. 334)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 12	1601-1602
	13 (Cod. 321)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 13	1603-1605
	14 (Cod. 333)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 14	1603
#12			1604-1605
#13			1606 ⁵
#14	15 (Cod. 338)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 15	1607-1608
#15	16 (Cod. 374)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 16	1609-1611
#16	17 (Cod. 376)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 17	1612-1613
#17	18 (Cod. 361)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 18	1614-1615
#18	19 (Cod. 364)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 19	1616
#19	20 (Cod. 378)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 20	1617 (Mar-May)
#20	21 (Cod. 386)	<i>Annali</i> , reg. 21	1617 (Jun-Aug) ⁶

¹ ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 6, 'Indice della Segreta fatto in tempo del Serenissimo Principe Dominico Contarini', *Armario no. LVIII*.

² The volumes of the *Annali* were recovered from the libraries of Vienna and Milan between 1837 and 1842, during the reconstruction of the modern *Archivio di Stato*, and were initially catalogued amongst the other 'codici trasmessi a Vienna dalla Biblioteca di Brera in Milano, l'anno 1837' in *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 5 (1843), pp. 472-474). A more orderly index of the recovered series of volumes was subsequently presented in Brown, Rawdon, *L'archivio di Venezia*, pp. 315-318. See also: Cecchetti, 'Costituzione storica degli archivi Veneti antichi', p. 358.

³ The first three entries in this list were added in a later contemporary hand with no numbering, suggesting that the three *Pandette* volumes were retrospectively added to the *Annali* series around this time.

⁴ Numbering refers to the *vecchio ordinamento* of the ASVe series *Miscellanea Codici*, in which the volumes were held before being designated the modern ASVe series *Annali*.

⁵ These two volumes have since been lost, although the 1606 volume was summarised in the papers of Paolo Sarpi (ASVe, *Consultore in Jure*, b. 23, ff. 48-76), and may have formed the basis of another manuscript circulating beyond the chancery in subsequent centuries (*BNM, Cod. It. VII, 123*; Cornet, *Paolo V e la Repubblica Veneta*).

⁶ Brown's index of the collection continues for another thirty-four volumes up to the year 1718, with a number of notable lacunae. These may be the result of incomplete compilations towards the end of the seventeenth century (as discussed in Section One of the Conclusion to this thesis), or else the loss and destruction of volumes caused by the seizure of the archive after 1797.

Table 3: Examples of section headings in the *Pandette*

Page	Title
1r	MDLIX: Fatto successo sotto Durazzo intra le galee Vinitiane <i>providitore Signore</i> Pandolfo Contarini, et le fuste de corsair seguitate da dette galee fuggirono in quel porto.
7r	MDLIX: Successo della presa fatta dalle galee deputate alla custodia del Regno di Cipro, di una galeotta del Duca di Fiorenza.
18r	MDLX: Caso del nob. huomo <i>Marco Antonio</i> da Mulla Cavallier, il qual sendo ambasciator apresso il Pontifice fo creato vescovo di Verona, et poi <i>Cardinali</i> et deliberazioni del Senato per cio fatta contra di lui.
26r	MDLX: Proposte fatte al Doge dall'ambasciator di Savogia in materia di far lega intra il Doge et il Duca. Che dal Doge fossero al Duce agiuti per riemper Ginevra. Se paresse al Doge che'l Duca da avesse accettar il carico di Capitano generale a fere che da ogn'uno fossero osservate le deter.ni che si facessero nel Concilio. Di rinoncier al Doge le ragioni che pretende sopra il regno di Cipro. Item le risposte del Doge all'ambasciator.
33v	MDLX: Deliberationi del Senato di non dar lettere patenti a commisarij ap'lici per scoder le spoglie de vescovati et altri beneficij vacanti, ma lettere particolari a Rettori, ove accorrerano simil vacantie.
37r	MDLX: Del possesso del vescovato di Vicenza dato al Cardinal d'Urbino.
42r	MDLXI: Di nave Vinitiane Mazzona, et Avonale violate da galere del Duca di Savogia, et permessa del Duca di castigare i capitani di quelle, ma non essequita.
54r	MDLXI: Di nave Vinitiane Mazzona, et Avonale violate da galere del Duca di Savogia, et permessa del Duca di castigare i capitani di quelle, ma non essequita.
58v	MDLXI: Della differentia di precedentia intra gl'ambasciatori di Ferrara, et di Fiorenza.
77r	MDLXII: Qui sotto si contiene la diminda fatta dal Re Cristianissimo al <i>Dominio</i> , di esser dal <i>Dominio</i> sovenuto d'uno imprestito di ducentomille scoti per defendersi dalla Guerra de suoi ribelli, et l'imprestito fattogli di centomille.

(ASVe, *Collegio, Pandette*, reg. 2)

Tables 4-5 – The patrician historiographers and *Soprintendenti alla Segreta* (1515-1650)

Table 4 – State historians during the sixteenth century

Name	Appointment	Admission into secret chancery	Works produced (dates covered)
Andrea Navagero	1516, 30 January (ASVe, CX Mist., b. 36)	Not recorded	–
Pietro Bembo	1530, 26 September (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 6, f. 72r)	1530, 26 September (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 6, f. 72r)	<i>Historiae venetae</i> (1551); <i>Della historia Vinitiana</i> (1552): 1487-1513
Pietro Giustiniani	1562, 19 January ¹	1562, 18 September (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 25, f. 119)	<i>Rerum Venetarum ab urbe condita historia</i> (1560-1576); <i>Le historie Venetiane di nuovo rivedute</i> (1576): 421-1575
Alvise Contarini	1577, 13 March (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 33, f. 4r)	1577, 9 May (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 11, f. 130r)	<i>Delineatio historiae quae res gestas Venetorum complectitur</i> (BNM, Cod. Lat. X, 285): 1513-1570 (incomplete)
Paolo Paruta	1580, 18 February (Ibid., reg. 34, ff. 193v-194r)	1580, 21 March (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 12, f. 39)	<i>Historia Vinetiana</i> (1605): 1513-1551, 1570-1573

Table 5 – State historians and *Soprintendenti della Segreta*

Name	Appointment as historiographer	Appointment as <i>soprintendente</i>	Admission into secret chancery	Works produced
Andrea Morosini	1598, 18 December (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 48, f. 108r)	1601, 17 September (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 14, f. 74r)	1599, 12 November (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 27)	<i>Historia Veneta, ab anno MDXXI usque ad annum MDCXV</i> (1623) <i>L'imprese et espeditioni di Terra Santa, et</i>

¹ According to Giustiniani's entry in *DBI* (vol. 57, 2001), the historian petitioned the government for the same salary received by his predecessors (200 ducats a year in the case of Navagero and 120 a year for the rest), in return for the voluminous history of the city he had already produced. The Council of Ten agreed in turn a monthly stipend of 10 ducats to continue his work. This, alongside the archival access granted a few months later and the fact that a successor was appointed shortly after his death, qualifies Giustiniani for inclusion amongst the official historiographers of the Republic, despite the assertions in previous historiography that the office was vacant between 1551 and 1577 (see Chapter 3.3).

				<i>l'acquisto fatto dell'Imperio di Constantinopoli dalla Republica di Venetia</i> (1627)
Nicolò Contarini	Not recorded – first mention as historian-superintendent 1618, 18 December, six months after Morosini's death (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 32)	1620, 14 December (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 17, f. 34r)		<i>Historie Venete et altre a loro annesse</i> (1597-1604): 1597-1604 Unpublished; for a list of the manuscript editions of Contarini's edited text, see Zanato, 'Per l'edizione critica', pp. 130-141
Girolamo Corner	–	1630, 18 April (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 18, f. 124r)	–	–
Paolo Morosini	Not recorded (first reference in adjacent decree)	1635, 18 April (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, f. 4r) ²	–	<i>Historia della città e Republica di Venetia</i> (1637): 421-1485
Giacomo Marcello di Andrea	–	Appointed as Paolo Morosini's assistant in February 1636 (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, f. 13r)	–	–
Giacomo Marcello di Antonio	1637, 23 December (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, f. 33)	1648, 7 August (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 42, f. 79v)	–	–
Alvise Contarini	1651, 27 January (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, f. 197)	–	–	–
Battista Nani	1651, 17 March (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, f. 199)	First report dated 4 August 1651 (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 44)	–	<i>Historia della Republica Veneta</i> (1662-1679): 1613-1671

² Previously nominated to deputise Nicolò Contarini in March 1621 (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 71, ff. 11v-12r).

Tables 6-8 – Secretarial staff of the Venetian secret chancery

Table 6 – *Segretari Leggisti*

Name	Appointment/first mention
Lorenzo Massa	1572, 4 August (ASVe, <i>Cancellier Grandi, Atti</i> , b. 14) ¹
Francesco Maraveglia	1577, 20 February (Ibid.)
Lunardo Ottobon	1577, 20 February (Ibid.) ²
Paolo Ciera	1586 (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 38, f. 208r) ³
Alvise Saitta	1594 (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 44, ff. 74v-75r)
Camillo Ziliol	1601 (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 51, ff. 120v-121v)
Giulio Gerardi	1601 (Ibid.)
Andrea Alberti	1607 (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 64, f. 151)
Zuanne Rizzardo	1607 (Ibid.)
Anzolo Padavin	1614 (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 64 f. 171v)
Zuanne Battista Grattaruol	1641 (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 42) ⁴

¹ Died 1605 (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 55, f. 12v).

² Appointed Grand Chancellor in 1610.

³ Died 1609 (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 5, f. 147v).

⁴ In 1616, Grattaruol was appointed to take over Rizzardo's responsibilities for compiling the *rubriche generali* whilst still an ordinary notary, an early career experience which would see him hold the post for decades to come (Ibid., reg. 69, f. 115r).

Table 7 – *Segretari Annalisti*

Name	Appointment/first mention
Girolamo Polverini	1551, 29 December (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 20, f. 73r)
Alvise Borghi	1552, 12 August (Ibid.)
Febo Capella	1556, 18 July (Ibid.)
Ambrogio Ottobon	1571, 30 November (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 30, f. 71v)
Alvise Saitta	1590 (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 28, 27 January 1604 m.v.)
Giacomo Vendramin	1623, 24 January (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 38, f. 46r)
Andrea and Cristoforo Surian	1636 (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 40, 14 April 1636) 1641 (Ibid., b. 42, 7 June 1641)
Angelo Nicolosi and Alessandro Businello	1675 (BMC, MS. Gradenigo 192, f. 275r)
Angiolo Bon and Girolamo Alberti	1679 (Ibid.)

Table 8 – Custodians of the *Segreta*

Name	Years known to have held the position
Pietro Bressano	1531 ⁵
Alvise Agostini	1577 (ASVe, Cancellier Grandi, Atti, b. 14, 20 Febraio 1576 m.v.) – 1600 (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 33, f. 148v)
Zaccaria Rosso	1600 (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 50, f. 90v-91r) – 1606 (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 28, 11 Maggio 1606)
Valerio Antelmi	1601 (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 51, ff. 120v-121v) – 1605 (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 33, f. 24r)
Girolamo Ramusio	1601 ⁶
Zuane Marvegia	1601-1609 (ASVe, CX Com., reg. 59, f. 102r)
Pietro Bartoli	1604 (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 33, f. 28r) – 1605 (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 28, 27 Gennaio 1604 m.v.)
Zuane Francesco Secco	1605 (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 29, 26 Ottobre 1609) – 1623 (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 37, f. 170v)
Orazio Ziliol	1609-1624 (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 37, f. 195v)
Alvise Querini	1641 (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, ff. 91v-92r)– 1647 (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 42, f. 47)
Pier' Antonio Marioni	1641 (ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 19, ff. 91v-92r)
Girolamo Grattaruol	1651 (ASVe, CX Sec., b. 44, 4 Agosto 1651)

⁵ Referenced by the Council of Ten in their decree admitting Pietro Bembo to the chancery (ASVe, CCX Not., reg. 8, f. 165, 18 December 1530), it is likely that Bressano remained the custodian throughout this period.

⁶ Briefly deputising for the absent custodian Antelmi (Reumont, *Della diplomazia Italiana*, pp. 318-319).

Table 9 – The arrival of Kubad *çavuş* in March 1570 as recounted by the *Annali*, Paolo Paruta and Andrea Morosini¹

ASVe, <i>Annali</i>, reg. 3, ff. 78v-79r (and <i>Collegio, Esposizioni Principi</i>, reg. 2, ff. 4-5)	Paolo Paruta, <i>Historia Vinetiana – parte seconda</i>, pp. 41-43	Andrea Morosini, <i>Historia Veneta</i>²
<p>Venuto nell’<i>Eccellentissimo</i> Collegio Cubat Chiaus mandato dal Turco, dopo haver fatto riverentia al <i>Serenissimo</i> Prencipe, et tutto l’<i>Eccellentissimo</i> Collegio, et basciata la veste a Sua <i>Serenita</i>, andò a sentar al loco solito delli Chiaussi, che vengono dalla Porta, et si cavò di seno due lettere, dicendo, che la prima era del suo <i>Signor</i>, et la seconda del <i>Bassà</i>, et che in esse era scritto tutto quello, che accadeva. Gli fu risposto per il <i>Serenissimo</i> Prencipe, che si vederiano le lettere, et se gli faccia la risposta, la quale se gli manderia, et esso disse, che se dopo lette le lettere, sua <i>Serenita</i> volesse dimandargli cosa alcuna, esso risponderia.</p>	<p>Ma deliberata la risposta, et essendo già Cubat giunto al lito della Citta, ove s’haveva fatto fermare sopra l’istessa galea <i>Vinetiana</i>, che l’haveva da Ragugi condotto, vietatogli l’haveere con qual si sia persona commercio, fu dato ordine, che egli co’l solo <i>Secretario Buonrizzo</i>, et due <i>Dragomani</i>, senza quegli honori, che erano soliti di farsi a gli huomini, che per negocij pubblici da quella Corte venivano, fosse privatamente fatto venire nel Collegio; ma però concessogli il luogo consueto, cioè il lato destro presso alla sede del Prencipe. Introdotto egli dunque all’udienza, havendo basciata la veste al Prencipe, et dopo molte riverenze postosi a sedere, presentò una borsa di tessuto d’oro, nella quale, secondo l’usanza di quella natione, era rinchiusa la lettera di <i>Selino</i>, et disse. Questa, <i>Serenssimo</i> Prencipe, è una lettera del mio <i>Signore</i>: poiche da essa si sarà inteso, quanto egli richiede, aspettarò, che data me ne sia la risposta:</p>	<p>Cubate il dì seguente di gran matine attorniato da guardie pubbliche condiotto in una barchetta detta <i>Condola</i> della <i>Galera</i> nella <i>Piazza</i> per mezzo la popolare frequenza ascese nel palazzo, concorrendo a vederlo tutta la Citta attrata dalla curiosita, et dalla novità della cosa salutato il Principe, et i <i>Padri</i> con l’inclinare il <i>Capo</i>, basciata la veste del <i>Doge</i>, et messosi a sedere diede le <i>lettere</i> di <i>Selino</i>, et di <i>Meemeth</i>, nelle quali disse contenersi la mente del suo <i>Re</i>, et quelle che da lui era dimandato.</p>
<p>Gli fu detto, che se gli manderiano le lettere per risposta, perche potesse patrire. Il Chiaus allora con volto molto pallido, et con voce tramande, disse:</p>	<p>a che havendo il Prencipe risposto, che cosi si farebbe, stando egli alquanto sopra di se con l’animo travagliato, ne veggendo essergli altro detto, sogginuse:</p>	<p>Immediate gli fu risposto che tradotte che fussero le l’re nella <i>nostra</i> lingua haverebbono i <i>Padri</i> dato la risposta a <i>Selino</i>, e <i>Meemeth</i>, et accio che se ne potesse ritornar senza dimora haverebbono</p>

¹ Corresponding sections of the text have been divided between the various rows.

² Eighteenth-century Italian translation (BMC, Malvezzi 49, f. 222r).

		comandato che alla Galera gli fusse portata. Cubate ciò inteso preso da gran stupore impallidi, et havendo aggiunto alle lettere de' Re, et del Bassa la sua esposizione,
Quello, che'l Bassà mi ha detto a bocca, è, che questo anno intorno l'Isola di Cipro sono stati presi undici Navilij de sudditi del Signor, che li nimici di sua <i>Maestà</i> vanno in Cipro a far aqua; che alle confini sono state fatte delle usurpationi, che sebene haveano fatto intendere ogni cosa, non si havea mai havuto risposta alle lettere; ne dal Baylo alcuna risoluzione;	Signori, Mehemet Primo Bascia m'ha commesso, ch'io debba dirvi, che a lui grandemente rincresce, esser venuta occasione di romper quella pace, la quale egli ha sempre con ogni studio crecato di conservare; ma le querele venute alla porta tante volte, et da tante parti, de' poco amichevoli portamenti usati da' ministri di questo stato, et principalmente del ricapito, et favore dato in Cipro a' Corsari Ponentini, da' quali apunto questo stesso anno grandissimi danni sono stati inferiti a' Mussulmani, hanno fatto sì grande impressione nell'animo del Signore, et concitata in modo l'ira sua contra questo stato, veggendo, che gli officij fatti più volte con i Baili non hanno partorito alcun frutto,	esplicó quali cose havessero indotto Selino a dimandar Cipro.
Onde vedeano, che si faceva poca stima del suo Imperio; che per questo dimandava Cipro; et soggiunse, che esso Chiaus era amico, et servitor di sua <i>Serenità</i> , come sapevole Bayli, et come poteva far fede il segretario Bonriccio; mostrandolo con la mano; Che esso mal voluntierj faceva questo officio; ma che essendo quell ministro, che era del Signor, non havea potuto far di manco.	che l'auttorità di lui non è stata bastante ad impedire più lungamente, che non vi sia intimata la guerra: alle quale, perche conosce, che non potrete regger molto tempo contra la somma potenza d'un Prencipe cosi grande, come amico vi consiglia a dovere ogni altro partito più tosto eleggere, per liberarvi da tanti travagli, et pericoli; et per tale effetto ha procurato, ch'io sia mandato in questa Città, et s'offerisse in quanto potrà d'interporsi, perche si possa da voi schiffare questo gran colpo di fortuna, et continuare nell'antica amicitia co'l gran Signore:	
Finito che hebbe di parlare, interpretando il Membre Dragomano, fu letta la risposta deliberate heri nell' <i>Illustrissimo</i> Senato, et fatta interpretare a parte a parte dal <i>sopradetto</i> Membre,	et dette queste parole presentò appresso una lettera dell'istesso Bascia, nella quale si vide poi quasi il medesimo contenersi. Queste cose havendo il Chiaus esposte, gli fu dal Prencipe detto: essere stata dal Senato deliberata la risposta, la quale, perche egli meglio potesse	Dopo fattoli legere il Decreto del dì inanzi et quello nell'idioma Turchesco esplicato da Michiel Membre interprete della <i>Republica</i> ,

	intendere, et riferire, e conoscere quale appunto fosse la mente di lui, gli sarebbe con l'istesse parole fatta leggere, il quale ufficio fu commesso ad Antonio Milledonne uno de' Secretarij del Consiglio di Dieci, il quale con laude e singolare diligenza, et valore trattava allhora le cose più importanti; et fu la risposta tale. Havere con grandissima meraviglia il Senato inteso, che'l suo Signore non provocato da alcuna ingiuria volesse violare quel giuramento, co'l quale egli poco innanzi haveva sollemnemente confermata la pace, et prendesse per occasione di muovergli contra l'armi il dimandarli la cessione d'un Regno, che già tanti anni legitimamente, et quietamente la Republica possedeva, il quale poteva bene essere certo, che in nessun modo gli sarebbe stato concesso; ma poiche cosi gli era parso di procedere, che'l Senato Vinetiano non era per mancare mai alla difesa delle cose proprie, sperando di poterlo tanto meglio fare, quanto che l'honestà della sua causa gli impeterebbe ogni aiuto, et humano, et divino.	
et il Chiaus dopoi disse: sia sana la <i>Serenità Vostra</i> ; questa guerra non durerà sempre, si farà poi anco la pace.		
Et essendoli replicato, che se gli manderiano le lettere per risposta di quelle, che havea presentate perche potesse partire, et ritornare al suo <i>Signor</i> .	Gli fu appresso detto, che dopo tradotte le lettere del suo Signore si leggerebbono, et se gli mandarebbe la risposta: con che senza promuovere altro ragionamento fu il Chiaus licenziato.	
	<i>Here, Paruta finishes his account by summarising the contents of the letters written by the Sultan, the Grand Vizier and the Venetian Senate.</i>	
Esso dimandò se'l poteva parlare; Gli fu detto di si, et esso disse: Il Bassà, che è		domandò Cubate, se gli era permesso il parlare, et essendole detto di si, soggiunse haverle

<p>amico della <i>Serenita Vostra</i>, mi ha comandato, che le faccia sapere, che'l grande <i>Imperator</i> puo far mille vele; ma che lui <i>Bassà</i> faria sempre oni buon officio; et che si interponeria per far ritornar <i>Vostra Serenita</i> in pace col suo <i>Signor</i>.</p>		<p>commandate <i>Meemeth</i> che dovesse far saper alla <i>Republica</i> potere il <i>Re</i> trarre dall'esponto l'<i>Armata</i> de mile navigli, ma che egli sarebbe stato mezano per rinnovare la pace,</p>
<p>Et non essendogli detto altro, esso dimandò al <i>Membre</i>, se l'havea riferito quanto esso havea detto del poter del <i>Signor</i>, et della offerta del <i>Bassà</i>; et essendogli risposto dal <i>Membre</i>, che si, soggionse, che'l non havea potuto mancar di venir a far questo officio, essendogli cosi commandato; ma che l'era buon servitor di sua <i>Serenita</i> et che nel venir in qua, esso heava scavezzata la strada per andar al <i>San Zacco</i> di <i>Cherzego</i> per fargli intendere, che'l non facessen alcuna novità, ne alcun moto contra Sua <i>Serenita</i> fino che esso non fosse ritornato alla <i>Porta</i>. Al che fu detto, che non restavano a quelli confini di amazzare, et depredate.</p>		
<p>Disse poi il <i>Chiaus</i>, che al suo venir a palazzo non gli era stata fatta offesa alcuna, perche vedevano, che'l veniva a sua <i>Ser.ta</i>, ma che al tornar indietro pregava, che fosse fatta provisione, che'l potesse andare</p>		<p>et non gli essendo stato a questo niuna cosa risposte aggonse, che venendo egli a <i>Palazzo</i>, niuna ingiuria havea ricevuto dalla <i>Plebe</i>, perche veniva dal <i>Prencipe</i>, et da i <i>Padri</i>, ma havendo osservato premere la moltitudine, et essere stato</p>

<p>sicuro. Gli fu detto, che'l non dubitasse, perche erano stati dati buonj ordinj; et con questo si partì, facendo riverentia a Sua <i>Serenita</i>, et a tutto l'<i>Illustrissimo</i> Collegio.</p>		<p>riguardato con orchie torto da tutti, domandava che fosse provisto alla sicurezza del suo ritorno.</p> <p>E pertanto perche non incontrasse gl'opprobrij, et l'ingiurie della Plebe irata, parve ai Padri rimandarlo per la piu secreta porta, et immediategli furono mandate le <i>lettere</i>, che dovea seco portare a Costantinopoli.</p>
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Table 10 – Venice’s European diplomacy at the onset of the War of Cyprus as recounted by the *Annali*, Paolo Paruta and Andrea Morosini

Summary of the opening narratives in Paolo Paruta’s <i>Historia Vinetiana – parte seconda</i> (1605, pp. 23-37), and Andrea Morosini’s <i>Historia Veneta</i> (1623, pp. 353-358)	Corresponding documents transcribed in ASVe, <i>Annali</i> , reg. 3, ff. 42r-78v ¹	
At the beginning of 1570, Barbaro writes to the Senate concerning the deliberations to invade the island at the Ottoman court.	42r – 47r	Barbaro’s initial letters concerning the preparations in the Turkish capital are dated from 10-27 December 1569, and received from 19-27 January 1569 m.v.
The Senate deliberates over the rearmament of garrisons in Cyprus and other strategic locations, and new military and naval commanders are dispatched throughout Venetian strongholds. In addition, new commissions are made to the Arsenal for all possible haste in expanding and readying the Venetian fleet.	46r	(20 th January 1569 m.v.) The Senate deliberates to send 2,000 troops to Cyprus and 1,000 to Candia, as well as appointing a Captain and twelve Governors for twelve large vessels, and fifty other Governors for the minor vessels (25 th January 1569 m.v.) The <i>proveditori</i> of the Arsenal are instructed to use all possible haste in preparing the Venetian fleet.
The Senate, now certain of the Turkish intentions, sends out ambassadors ‘to almost all the Princes of Christendom’, in an attempt to gain support for their defence of the island. Michele Surian, the Republic’s ambassador at Rome, is first instructed to implore Pope Pius V to consider the common defence of Christendom, remind him of the assistance provided by previous Popes against the Turks, and that Venice itself is considered by all to be the bulwark against the Ottoman threat to Europe.	64v	(20 th February 1569 m.v.) The Venetian ambassador in Rome is requested by the Senate to inform the Pope of the letter received from Constantinople on the 14 th February, which detail the Sultan’s military preparations against Cyprus. He is instructed to implore the Pope to send military aid, reminding him that this is a matter of defending all of Christendom, and that his predecessor, Paul III, provided invaluable assistance in the previous war with the Ottoman Empire in 1537.
In turn, Pius declared his desire to engage in a collective conflict for the common good. However, given the previous role played by the Papacy in assisting Venice against the Turks, he asked to be	65v	(24 th February 1569 m.v.) The Venetian ambassador in Rome reports that the Pope, informed of intentions against Cyprus, wishes to assist the Republic in any way possible, but greatly desires that the Church was in

¹ It should be noted that the records concerning this period were transcribed in two separate sections in this volume, once at the beginning (across the pages stated above), and again towards the end. For the most part, the structure of the two is roughly the same, although it appears that the *annaliste* Ambrogio Ottobon made slight alterations in the process of drafting and arranging his entries. The first section has been calendared here as it alone is fully paginated in the original manuscript.

<p>pardoned from this particular responsibility, especially as the coffers of the Church are currently exhausted.</p>		<p>the same state to provide that help as in 1537 under Paul III. The Pope regrets that the current state of the Church in Europe is such that its financial resources are severely depleted, but he will discuss this matter with the College of Cardinals.</p>
<p>Pius moved to discuss the defence of the Republic with the Cardinals, who agreed upon a 100,000 ducat subsidy for military expenditure, taken from a tax on the Venetian clergy.²</p>	<p>66v</p>	<p>(27th February 1569 m.v. – received 3rd March 1570) The Venetian ambassador in Rome reports that the Cardinals had met and, under pressure from Pius himself, agreed to a 100,000 ducat subsidy, despite notable opposition concerning the general poverty of the Church. Thus a subsidy of money and troops has been agreed to, as well as a widespread enthusiasm for commencing discussions over an anti-Turkish League, especially amongst the Spanish representatives in the city, who have informed that the King can amass up to ninety vessels in a short space of time.</p>
<p>Pius also suggested that the Venetians seek a league with the King of Spain, who was in the strongest position to provide naval assistance to the Republic. Surian encouraged the Republic to assent to this proposition, and to entrust these negotiations to the Holy Father himself. The Senate replied that they would be well inclined to follow his authority in this matter.</p>	<p>65v</p>	<p>(24th February 1569 m.v.) In an addendum to his original report on Pius' response to the Venetians, the Venetian ambassador in Rome writes that Pius has suggested that the Republic engage with the King of Spain concerning the procurement of troops.</p>
	<p>66r</p>	<p>(2nd March 1570) In their instructions to the Venetian ambassador in Rome to further their plea for financial assistance, the Senate assent to the Pope's request, and will entrust the matter of negotiating Spanish involvement to his authority and position as the Holy Father.</p>
	<p>68r</p>	<p>(6th March 1570, received on the 9th) The Venetian ambassador in Rome reports that news of Venice's assent to Pius' proposal for a Spanish alliance was met with great delight, with the Pope promising swift action on this matter, and declaring that he would send a representative to the Spanish court to begin negotiations.</p>
<p>Pius sends Ludovico Torres, Clerk of the Apostolic Chamber, to</p>	<p>70v</p>	<p>(10 March 1570) The Venetian ambassador in Spain is instructed to relay</p>

² In Morosini's account, this detail was added slightly later in the narrative.

<p>treat with Phillip II, where he was assisted by the Venetian ambassador Sigismund de Cavalli. Despite encountering the logistical difficulties of the King's movements between the courts of Cordoba and Castile, for which Phillip initially delayed his response, the two ambassadors were eventually assured that Spain would provide ships and grain from Naples and Sicily in aid of the Venetian fleet.</p>		<p>the Senate's desire to follow the Pope's intentions for a Holy League, and to pass on copies of all their recent discussions with the Pope as evidence for the seriousness of their claims. As well as reiterating the fact that this endeavour is a defence of Christendom, the ambassador is instructed to request Spanish ships from Sicily to rendezvous with the Venetian fleet on its way to the Levant.</p>
	70v	<p>(10 March 1570) In a second dispatch, the Venetian ambassador in Spain is instructed to request the necessary amount of grain from Sicily or Puglia to maintain their forces.</p>
<p>After concluding his mission in Spain, Torres unsuccessfully attempts to broker a similar peace with the King of Portugal.</p>	–	<p><i>Recorded elsewhere – see p. 147 and ASVe, Sen. Rom., reg. 2, f. 93v</i></p>
<p>At this time, the Papacy was not in a strong position to negotiate the formation of a league with Emperor Maximilian II, due to its dealings with the Medici dukes of Florence, and so Pius recommended that Venice deal with the Imperial Court themselves.</p> <p>The Venetian ambassador to the Emperor, Giovanni Michiele, attempted to persuade Maximilian to seize the opportunity of a Turkish naval conflict to assault the Ottoman lands in Eastern Europe, thus occupying the Sultan on two fronts, that the Emperor would find little safety in a league with Constantinople should the Christian troops fall, and that he should instead trust in the Venetians to carry out their military plans. Maximilian declared his support for the Christian League, as would his brothers, the Archdukes of Austria and, he hoped, the King of Poland and the Duke of Moscow. As with Phillip, Maximilian also intended to</p>	68v	<p>(10 March 1570) Michele Surian is instructed to inform the Pope of the ongoing negotiations with the Imperial Court, in which their ambassador has been relaying the motives of the Turks. Surian is instructed to request that the Pope intercedes on Venice's behalf to convince the Emperor that the upcoming naval campaign will be an opportune moment to engage the Turkish troops in Hungary and reclaim his lands, an endeavour which would also be of great assistance to the Christian cause. In addition, the Senate hopes that the Emperor can in turn convince the King of Poland and the Duke of Moscow to also move against the Turks.</p>
	69v	<p>(10 March 1570) The Venetian ambassador at the Imperial Court is instructed to thank Maximilian for his support thus far, but to reiterate the threat of the Turkish forces in Dalmatia and the importance of his mainland campaign for the Christian cause, as well as to request that their message be extended to his Archduke brothers.</p>

wait for further news from the other Princes before fully committing to the League. ³	71r	(11 th March 1570) The ambassador is instructed to inform the Emperor of the city's current negotiations with Rome and Spain, and to implore him once again to engage the Turks in Eastern Europe.
Meanwhile, Pius attempted to bring Charles IX of France into the League, but is met with opposition from the Queen Mother, Catherine de Medici, as well as the internal strife currently afflicting the country.	–	<i>The instructions to Alvise Contarini by the Senate (recounted by Morosini and not Paruta, see p. 154), are recorded in ASVe, Sen. Sec., reg. 76, f. 58v.</i>
On the whole, the Italian Princes were well inclined to offer their support to the League, with the notable exception of the Duke of Ferrara, who cited his long standing territorial disputes with the Pope, which would be exacerbated by the large scale movement of troops across Italy by the League. This enraged the Pope, who stated that he would not tolerate such disobedience from a vassal of the Church, whilst the Venetian Senate sent a secretary, Giovanni Formento, to persuade the Duke to consider the common interests of the League at this particular time. 'Thus by the interposition of the Senate's authority, first with the Duke, and then with the Pope, that this fire was extinguished which was a kindling to the prejudice of Christendom.'	51v	(18 th February 1569 m.v.) The issue surrounding the Duke of Ferrara and the movement of troops through Papal territories is first mentioned at the end of a dispatch from the ambassador in Rome.
	52r	(25 th February 1569 m.v.) The Senate dispatches Giovanni Formento as an emissary to the Duke, with a message of reassurance that there are no designs against his territories, and that they wish to extend their friendship at this time of grave common threat in the East.
	53r	(2 nd March 1570) Formento writes from Ferrara, reporting of the Duke's continuing grievances against the Papacy.
In addition, Vincenzo d'Alessandri was sent as a Venetian envoy to King Tamas of Persia, in an attempt to solicit further enmity against Constantinople.	–	<i>According to the records of the Council of Ten, d'Alessandri (a notary of the Venetian chancery who had previously trained as a Turkish interpreter) was in fact dispatched to the Persian court in October 1570 in an attempt to lighten the number of Ottoman troops currently assaulting Venetian territories.⁴ On this occasion, it appears that the chronology of this event was altered to match that of the other Venetian envoys before the onset of the war.</i>
During this time, the Turks initiate hostilities against Venetian	67v	(6 th March 1570) The Senate decrees that all Turks and Levantine Jews are

³ Once again, Morosini add this detail at a later point in the narrative.

⁴ ASVe, CX Sec., reg. 9, ff. 94v-98r (see also Berchet, *La Repubblica di Venezia e la Persia*, p. 162 for copies of the Venetian letters to King Tamas).

ships in Constantinople, to which the Venetians replied in kind by ordering the arrest of all Turkish subjects in their city.		to be kept in custody and their assets confiscated.
This included the arrest of an Ottoman <i>çavuş</i> named Mahmud, who was residing in the city on his way to France. Although the French ambassador in Venice initially protested against this move, the matter soon abated as it transpired that the <i>çavuş</i> had little important business with his country, and Mahmud was detained at Verona until the end of the war.	68r	(6 th March 1570) The Senate receives confirmation that the <i>çavuş</i> Mahmud has been detained in his lodgings, and is currently being kept under guard.
	81r	(30 th March 1570) The French ambassador addresses the College to protest the treatment of the <i>çavuş</i> .
In Constantinople, the Venetian <i>Bailo</i> Marc' Antonio Barbaro became aware of the increasing Ottoman military preparations – including the number of galleys, camels and troops, the construction of new fortifications, and the destinations of recently dispatched ships – which he wished to relay back to the Venetian Senate.		<i>Barbaro's continued warnings about the Turkish preparations are interspersed throughout the previous section.</i>
Aware that the Grand Vizier was opposed to the conflict, the <i>Bailo</i> convinced him to dispatch a <i>çavuş</i> to issue an ultimatum to the Republic, thus allowing him to deliver his warnings through his secretary without risk of interception. The Vizier ensured that no military action would be taken until the return of their emissary.	73r – 74r	(2 nd and 10 th February 1569 m.v., both received 15 th March 1570) Barbaro explains his role in negotiating the details of the <i>çavuş</i> ' dispatch from Constantinople, the reasons why this mission is in the best interest of the Republic (including the assurance that all hostilities would be suspended in the interim), and how he was able to send copies of the two letters in advance in the hands of his secretary.
As Kubad, Buonrizzo and Barbaro's son made their way to Venice, news arrived at the city from Dalmatia, warning of renewed Turkish attacks on the region.	## ⁵	(7 th and 10 th March 1570) The Rectors of Dolcigno (Ulcinj) and Antivasi write of Turkish forces, up to 20,000 in number, laying siege to their towns and provinces.
Once Buonrizzo had reached Ragusa, he sent ahead Barbaro's warnings and the two Turkish letters demanding Cyprus. Upon	76r	(4 th March 1570, received 15 th March 1570) Buonrizzo writes to the Senate from Cattaro, requesting a ship to continue their journey and

⁵ This entry was only included in a similar section at the end of the volume, and as such remained unnumbered.

their receipt, the Senate began to consider their response, and decided that there would be no benefit to treating with the Turks in the hope of delaying the conflict. Instead, Venice's own commencement of hostilities should be prepared for immediately, and the <i>çavuş</i> dismissed upon arrival.		attaching the copies of the two letters, which are transcribed immediately before this entry. ⁶
Venice's fears that any attempt to negotiate with the Turks would threaten their attempts at forging a European League were confirmed when news of Kubad's dispatch was sent to Surian in Rome, whereupon the ambassadors for the King of Spain voiced their suspicions of the Republic's true intentions. It is thus decided that not only will the Sultan's demands be denied, but that the Ottoman envoy will not be engaged with during his audience.	76v	(22 nd March 1570, received 26 th March 1570) Surian writes from Rome of the Pope's warning to the Republic, and of the suspicions of the Spanish ambassadors.
	77r – 78v	(27 th March 1570) The Senate and College both deliberate on the planned response to the <i>çavuş</i> upon his arrival, and the two letters in response to the Sultan and Grand Vizier are drafted.
Kubad arrives at the Palace, delivers his message, and is hastily dismissed with the Senate's prewritten response to the Sultan. It was here that 'war was thus intimated to the Venetians', and the two historians go on to consider the differing receptions of the conflict within the Senate.	78v	(28 th March 1570) The <i>çavuş</i> makes his <i>esposizione</i> to the College (see Table 5).

⁶ Ambrogio Ottobon, when transcribing the translation of the two letters, notes half way through that he had switched from the translation provided by Barbaro to one made in the Palace itself based on the actual letters delivered by Kubad, noting that the translation sent by the ambassador contained too many errors (f. 74r).

Table 11 – References to the secret chancery archive in Paolo Morosini’s *Historia della città e repubblica di Venezia* (1637)

Page no.	Event	Morosini’s citation	Document
193	1274 – Venetian patricians are forbidden by law to hold lands on the mainland, a measure intended to ensure the Republic retains its territorial interests at sea. ¹	“ Habbiamo nel publico archivio che del 1274 a 31 di Marzo nel principio di questo Principato [di Giacomo Contarini] fu proibito per legge, che li venetiani non potessero far acquisto di terreni in terra ferma.”	ASVe, <i>Maggior Consiglio, Deliberazioni</i> , reg. 1 (Comunis), ff. 19v-20r
196	1286 – The Venetian government attempted to pass a measure restricting eligibility to hold office in the Senate and Great Council to members of already serving patrician families. ²	“ Habbiamo nel publico Archivio , che ne primi anni di questo Principato si regolasse la elettione del consiglio di Pregadi.”	ASVe, <i>Maggior Consiglio, Deliberazioni</i> , reg. 5 (Zaneta), ff. 81r
238-239	1346 – Transcript of a Papal Brief in which Clement VI praises the Republic for its role in the capture of Smyrna from the Turks, and rewards the government with a temporary concession of all ecclesiastical tithes levied within the city. ³	“Furono queste attioni così gradite dal Sommo Pontifice, che per dimostrarsne grato honorò la Republica di amplissimo Breve di concessione di Decime Ecclesiastiche da essere da lei essate così sopra li stati, che all’hora possedeva, come sopra quelli, che nell’avvenire havesse acquistato; con insigne attestato de’ meriti della medesima, come si vede dall’istesso breve, che intieramente riposto autentico nella publica Secreta , ha il seguente prohemio.”	Although this document appears to have now been lost, a second papal brief praising Doge Andrea Dandolo for his successful campaign in Smyrna can be found in ASVe, <i>Commemoriali</i> , reg. 4, f. 76v.
267	1356 – The Great Council votes to fix	“ Si ritrova nel publico archivio un decreto , che fu fatto in questa medesima	ASVe, <i>Maggior Consiglio</i> ,

¹ Tenenti, ‘Il senso del mare’, p. 7.

² Morosini failed to note that this attempt was ultimately overruled by the Doge himself (Rösch, ‘The Serrata of the Great Council and Venetian Society’, p. 73).

³ Norwich, *A History of Venice*, p. 215; Housley, *The Avignon Papacy and the Crusades*, p. 235.

	the <i>zonta</i> (additional members) of the Council of Ten, and grant it greater deliberative authority, in the wake of the failed conspiracy by Doge Marin Falier in 1355. ⁴	vacanza intorno alla elletione del consiglio di Dieci.”	<i>Deliberazioni</i> , reg. 19 (Novella), ff. 47r-47v
279	1362 – Morosini transcribes a decree concerning Francesco Petrarch’s (ultimately unsuccessful) donation of his manuscript library to the Republic. ⁵	“La deliberatione, che noi diciamo parte o decreto, che fu fatto, si ritrova nell'Archivio Secretto in un libro intitolato Novello a carte 85 et è la seguente.”	ASVe, <i>Maggior Consiglio, Deliberazioni</i> , reg. 19 (Novella), f. 85r, 4 September 1362
331	1379 – At the onset of the War of Chioggia, the Senate and Great Council promised to repay those who offered their services to the Republic with both financial rewards a substantial stipend and grants of nobility. ⁶	<i>In the drafts of Morosini’s history, the author inserted a transcript of this decree, stating that ‘perche non manchi alcuna cosa alla curiosità del lettore ho stimato bene registrare la medesima parte che si ritrova scritta nel seguente mode.’⁷ However, this transcript was omitted from the printed edition of his text, with the historian noting instead that ‘La nominatione et li voti, ch’hebbeno quelli che furono abbracciati et gli esclusi si possono facilmente vedere in piu croniche appresso di molti riservate.’⁸ As suggested in Chapter 5.1, this edit further suggests that the purpose of Morosini’s citations was to highlight previously undiscovered archival information.</i>	ASVe, <i>Senato, Deliberazioni, Misti</i> , reg. 36, f. 85v, 1 dicembre 1379 ASVe, <i>Commemoriali</i> , reg. 8, f. 42v (a list of the names of those rewarded under this decree, dated 4 September 1381)
361	1386 – In his account of the Venetian acquisition of Corfu, Morosini notes that the Republic had to wait a full fifteen years to gain full control over the island, citing a notarial act which he had personally uncovered which illustrated the fact that parts of the island continued	“L’Isola tuttavia non pervenne prima in potere della Republica, che a 9 di Giugno del 1386 nel qual tempo Giovanni Ciurano Capitano del Golfo da Riccardo Altavilla, e da Giovanni Alessio gli fu consignata, di che vi è l’instrumento celebrato nelli altri di Antonio Henrico Nodaro, da me nell’archivio recondito della Republica veduto, e letto. ”	ASVe, <i>Commemoriali</i> , reg. 8, ff. 118r-119v

⁴ Macchi, *Istoria del Consiglio dei Dieci*, vol. I, pp. 84-85.

⁵ Zorzi, *La libreria di San Marco*, pp. 9-22.

⁶ Todesco, ‘Andamento demografico della nobiltà Veneziana’, p. 133.

⁷ BMC, Malvezzi 93, f. 166r.

⁸ An example of this document already in circulation can be seen in Aleo (ed.), *Cronica di Venezia di Giovanni Tiepolo*, vol. I, pp. 468-471.

	to change hands even after its residents invited the Republic to rule in place of the King of Naples. ⁹		
364	1398 – Pietro Morosini is appointed General of the Papal forces in spite of an earlier Senate ban on Venetian citizens receiving office or payment from foreign princes. ¹⁰	Si ha nel publico Archivio essere in questi anni in così grande unione, e confidenza vivuta con sommi Pontefici la Republica, che Papa Urbano VI elesse Generale delle sue armi Pietro Moresini Cavalier figliuolo di Polo Cavalier, il quale havutone l’aviso, ne diede conto, e chiese licenza dal Senato di accettare la carica: onde essendovi decreto seguito l’anno 1356 a 27 Novembre, che vietava a Cittadini haver cariche, o provisioni da Principi stranieri, fu da’ Consiglieri del 1398 a 10 Settembre portato il negozio al Senato, perche decidesse se la prohibition si estendesse anco nel caso proposto, & essendo stato determinate con numerosi voti non essere compreso, gli fu la licenza conceduta, e da lui il carico accettato.	The decree from 1356 is recorded in ASVe, <i>Maggior Consiglio, Deliberazioni</i> , reg. 19 (Novella), f. 49r (60r)
416	1426 – Morosini lists the three jurists appointed from the University of Padua to oversee the terms of the city’s most recent peace with Milan. ¹¹	“Furono chiamati dal Senato per stabilimento di questom et di altri negotii, come si vede nel libro xi a carte 77, de commemoriali, che sono nell’Archivio segreto Raffael da Como, Raffael Fregoso, et Prodocimo Conte huomini stimati di gran dottrina, che con mille ducati de stipendio per ciascuno leggevano nel studio di Padova.”	ASVe, <i>Commemoriali</i> , reg. 11, f. 79r (77r vecch.)
552-553	1463 – At the onset of the first Venetian War against the Ottoman Empire, the Republic signs a treaty with both Rome and the Duke of Burgundy in October.	“È registrato questa unione, e lega nell’Archivio Secreto , do io medesimo l’ho veduta, e letta. Incomincia 1463 indictione 11 die 9 mensis Octobris Pontificatus Pij II anno sexto; et è intitolata, Conventio inter Summum Pontificem, Christoffarum Marum Ducem Venetiarum, et Philippum Ducem Burgundiae.”	ASVe, <i>Commemoriali</i> , reg. 15, ff. 91v-93r (19 October 1463)
554	1464 – En route to his campaign in Morea, Doge Cristoforo Moro meets with the College of Cardinals at Ancona, where Pope Pius II had recently died,	“A’ 15 entrò il Doge nella Città, et asceso sopra nobile cavallo, coperto di panno d’oro tolto nel mezo da quattro Cardinali, doi che lo precedevano, e doi che lo seguitavano, andò alla Chiesa del Vescovato, ove era il cadavere del Pontefice stato posto. Ridotto poi il Concistoro, introdotto il Doge, e fatto	Although not recorded in the <i>Commemoriali</i> , one of Moro’s correspondences dating

⁹ Gertwagen, ‘The Island of Corfu in Venetian Policy’, pp. 193-204.

¹⁰ Queller, *The Venetian Patriciate*, p. 185.

¹¹ Kohn, *Dictionary of Wars*, p. 515.

	thus temporarily halting the crusading effort. ¹²	sedere, come si vede nel pubblico Archivio. ”	from this period (21 August 1464) is today held in the series ASVe, <i>Miscellanea Ducali e atti Diplomatici</i> , b. 17
601	1480 – Venice gains the Dalmatian island of Veglia through the will of Giovanni Frangipane.	“Si vede ne’ statute di Veggia, che fino del 1355 armarono la galea, che erano obligati; altri dalla dipendenza, e fede della Republica declinando adherirono alli Re d’Ongaria fino che succedè Giovanni Frangipane fedelissimo al nome Venetiano, che per suo testamento registrato nel pubblico Archivio lasciò suoi figliuoli sotto la protezione del Senato.”	Francipane’s <i>testamento</i> , dated 2 March 1453, is recorded in ASVe, <i>Commemoriali</i> , reg. 14, ff. 163v-164v
630	1485 – The Senate deliberates to excavate the banks of the Grand Canal.	“In suo tempo a 22 di Luglio fu determinato di escavar il Canal maggiore, il qual come si può vedere nel primo capitolare del Magistrato delle acque , era in modo ristretto, che ne restavano non solo i navigli incomodati, ma l’aria non poco peggiorata.”	ASVe, <i>Savi ed esecutori alle acque</i> , reg. 342, ‘Partes Rogatorum’, 22 July 1485

¹² Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, vol. III, pp. 269-270; Housley, *Crusading and the Ottoman Threat*, p. 121.

Table 12 – Documents uncovered by Paolo Ramusio, Andrea Morosini and Fortunato Olmo pertaining to the history of the Fourth Crusade

Date	Incident	Use by the historian	Document
1198-1200	<p>In 1198, the newly appointed Pope Innocent III called for a new crusade in Egypt, a call which was answered by a series of French Barons.</p> <p>Around the same time, Doge Enrico Dandolo was in the process of negotiating a series of reparations from the Byzantine Emperor Alexius III, after a series of damaging conflicts during the previous century which had seen the expulsion of Venetian merchants in 1182.</p>	<p>These letters detailing these negotiations, some of which had been recorded in the <i>Liber Albus</i> cartularies of the chancery, were first fully examined by Fortunato Olmo after discovering three previously uncatalogued documents from that time in the attics of the Basilica.</p> <p>The movement of these early crusading leaders, Olmo discovered, had been relayed to Alexius by the Venetian ambassadors at Constantinople.</p>	<p>Enrico Dandolo's ambassadorial instructions in the years leading up to the Crusade, discovered by Olmo in the attics of Saint Mark's Basilica, were transcribed within the series: ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9.</p>
1200-1201	<p>In 1200, a consort of French envoys – amongst them, the commander and future chronicler Geoffrey of Villehardouin – were sent to Venice to negotiate the use of the city as a launching point for the crusading fleet.</p> <p>In 1201, the initial leader of the crusading forces, Thibault of Champagne, died and was succeeded by Boniface Marquis of Montferrat.</p>	<p>The details of the campaign itself were already well-documented in the various chronicles of the affair both at the time and during the subsequent centuries. For an indication of the types of authors consulted by the historians over the turn of the seventeenth century, see Ramusio's bibliography of sources (Figure 10 below).</p>	
April 1201	<p>A detailed commercial contract was drawn up between Venice and the crusading barons, in which the Republic committed to construct a suitable fleet for the crusading forces – around 35,000 in number – at a cost of around 85,000 silver marks. The contract also specified other</p>	<p>The first full examination of this contract, which had been briefly summarised by contemporary chroniclers, was provided by a transcript in Andrea Morosini's <i>L'imprese et espeditioni di Terra Santa</i>, presented to the reader 'come si vede dall'autentico conservato ne gli atti della</p>	<p>ASVe, <i>Pacta</i>, reg. 1, ff. 90r, 92r-93v</p>

	commitments to be made by both sides, including the provisions of food and military equipment. ¹	Republica ' (1627, p. 104), followed by extracts of the vows taken by its respective signatories (pp. 105-112).	
1203-1203	<p>As the crusading troops began to arrive at the city, housed on a series of surrounding islands, it soon became clear that the crusading leaders would be unable to meet the terms of their contract with the Venetians. Now in a position of strength, the Doge proposed an alternative arrangement; that the newly constructed fleet would first be used to subdue the rebellious Venetian town of Zara along the Dalmatian coast. The crusade was thus diverted in the autumn of 1202.</p> <p>Whilst the crusading troops wintered at Zara, a proposition reached them from the court of Montferrat's cousin, Philip of Swabia, concerning the exiled Byzantine Prince Alexius, whose father had been deposed by his brother, the current Emperor Alexius III. Alexius petitioned the crusaders to assist in overthrowing his rebellious uncle at Constantinople in exchange for a full repayment of the debt owed to the Venetians. With the military intervention of the crusaders, Alexius was placed on the Byzantine throne after a successful siege of Constantinople in July 1203.</p>		See Figure 10 below
March 1204	<p>Between January and February 1204, anti-Latin resentment amongst the population had led to the overthrowing and eventual murder of Alexius IV. Now faced with an unstable relationship with the new regime and no way to recuperate Alexius' debts, Dandolo and the Barons committed to sacking the city, dividing its spoils and installing a new Latin Emperor.</p> <p>The principal leaders of the crusade agreed upon the fate of the city and its territories in the 1204 Pact of March, the clauses of which addressed three principal concerns:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Committing each of its signatories to an attack on the city and the division of its property, of the Venetians – the principal creditors – were to receive the largest share. 2. The establishment of a council, comprising six Franks and six Venetians, to elect a new Emperor after the fall of the city, alongside the allotting of property rights and 	<p>Paolo Rannusio paraphrases the principal clauses of this treaty, which is preceded with the following citation:</p> <p>“Queste sono le capitulationi, cavate da' Commentarij del Villarduino: le quali, perche sono a guisa di leggi, le registreremo qui nel modo appunto, che sono state trascritte dall'Archivio Secreto della Republica per maggior chiarezza di questa Historia; havendone gli Eccellentissimi Signori Capi di Dieci conceduto licenza di trarne copia, ad intercessione di Giovan Battista Rannusio nostro Padre, Secretario di quel gravissimo Consiglio” (1604, p. 84).</p> <p>A shorter summary of the document, 'tratti da autentichi, e veridichi documenti', is given by Andrea</p>	ASVe, <i>Pacta</i> , reg. 1, ff. 96r-97v

¹ Madden, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice*, pp. 122-124.

	<p>other offices.</p> <p>3. Committing any Venetians who would hold land as a result of the conquest under the jurisdiction of the newly established Latin Empire.²</p>	Morosini (1627, p. 190).	
April 1204	With the March Pact agreed, Constantinople was successfully captured by the Crusaders, amidst cruelties and violence described in detail by contemporary chroniclers.	See Figure 10 below	
May 1204	<p>Having settled the first section of the March treaty through the division of treasures and palaces, the crusading leaders turned to the election of the new Emperor, with Baldwin of Flanders and Boniface of Montferrat as the principal contenders.</p> <p>In order to ensure that the defeated party did not abandon the crusaders and weaken the new empire, it had already been decided that he would receive as consolation all Byzantine lands east of Constantinople.</p> <p>Although there are no definitive sources concerning the actual conduct of the ballot, Baldwin finally emerged as the first Latin Emperor of Constantinople.³</p>	Paolo Rannusio's account of the Imperial election includes a brief reference to another chancery document concerning the appointment of other political offices within the city around the same time (1604, pp. 105-106).	See Figure 10 below
12 August 1204	<p>Having lost the Imperial election, and dissatisfied with the territories offered to him as compensation, Boniface rebels and attempts to capture the Kingdom of Thessalonica. During the negotiations which attempted to bring the Marquis back into the fold, held in the city of Adrianople, Boniface and Dandolo reached a separate agreement regarding the island of Crete, a territory which had been promised to Bonifacio by the erstwhile Emperor Alexius IV. As Thomas Madden has illustrated, this treaty did not simply</p>	<p>Ramusio, who following the narrative of Villehardouin had interpreted the sale of the island as a purely financial transaction in aid of the Marquis' campaigns in Asia Minor, paraphrased the clauses of this treaty, 'le quali noi a contemplation de' curiosi Lettori, trattele dall'Archivio della Republica registraremo qui volentieri' (1604, p. 125).</p> <p>Morosini, by contrasts, omits the terms of this deal, once</p>	ASVe, <i>Pacta</i> , reg. 1, ff. 113r-113v (and <i>ibid.</i> , reg. 2, f. 139)

² Madden, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice*, pp. 169-171.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 175-178.

	<p>constitute the sale of the island for a predetermined sum. Instead, Boniface placed his share of the former Byzantine territories under the name of the Venetians in exchange for the promise of protection and short term financial support. The treaty was in effect an attempt to reconcile Boniface with the crusaders with the Doge as an intermediary; the deal was only subsequently considered as the sale of Crete as it was the only tangible gain by the Venetians in the long term.⁴</p>	<p>again interpreting its absence from the later Treaty of Partition as evidence that it was simply a separate transaction (1627, p. 229).</p> <p>It was Fortunato Olmo, instead, who first considered the treaty in its full historical context, writing two short essays on the subject (ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9, <i>Acquisto di Candia fatto dalla Repubblica di Venetia nel 1204</i> and <i>Delle pretensioni del Marchese Bonifacio sopra l'Isola di Candia</i>) which linked the negotiations over the island to the later Treaty of Partition and illustrated that the process of dividing up the Latin Empire was far more fluid than the single document from October 1204 suggested (see p. 179 above)</p>	
October 1204	<p>With the peaceful solution to Boniface's rebellion, the council of the crusading leaders set out to formally establish the partition of the former Byzantine empire between the various states. As Boniface's partition had already been agreed during the summer, and was now under the name of the Doge, his name does not appear in the treaty; instead, the October Treaty of Partition is a tripartite division between the Emperor, Venice and the Franks. Venice's newly acquired territory lay largely to the west of the former Byzantine empire, along the Gulf of Corinth and the Morea, including a few more central Aegean islands.⁵</p>	<p>In his account of the Partition, Paolo Ramusio attempts to translate each of the locations included in the original archival document – 'come siamo stati informati da Giovanni Francesco Ottobono, Cancellier grande della medesima Republica, il quale anco con licenza de gli Eccellentissimi Signori Capi di X ce n'ha lasciato trar copia; il che sarà rappresentato da noi di parola in parola a maggior gusto di eruditi Lettori; affine che sappiano la portione, che toccò a ciascuno' – using both contemporary and classical references (1604, pp. 117-123).</p> <p>Andrea Morosini, instead, decides against recounting the contents of the treaty in detail, due to its anachronistic</p>	ASVe, <i>Pacta</i> , reg. 1, f. 158v

⁴ Madden, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice*, pp. 184-186; Idem., 'The Latin Empire of Constantinople's Fractured Foundation'.

⁵ Madden, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice*, pp. 187-189.

		<p>geography, and instead focuses on its legacy with regards to the titles of the Doge:</p> <p>“Henrico Dandolo assunse il titolo per se, e successori suoi, oltre il solito, che diceva <i>Dux Venetiarum, Dalmatiae, et Croatiae, Dominus quartae partis, et dimidie totius Imperij Romaniae</i>, come si vede in molti autentichi instrumenti, e nelli Statuti della Republica, benche per decreto publico hora non si dica se non, <i>Dux Venetiarum</i>; essendo stato per deliberatione espressa vietato, che non debba sottoscrivere il suo nome in altra maniera” (<i>L'imprese di Terra Santa</i>, pp. 214-215).</p> <p>As part of his studies into the newly discovered Ducal letters, Fortunato Olmo transcribes what he refers to as an ‘authentic’ copy of the treaty,⁶ carefully annotating each entry in order to translate each territory to its contemporary equivalent, and noting in particular where his predecessor Rannusio has misinterpreted the document (see Figure 12 below).</p>	
June – October 1205	A year after the division of the former Byzantine territories, the new Venetian <i>podestà</i> in Constantinople, Marino Zeno, and the new Latin Emperor Henry of Flanders signed two agreements to ratify the grants of land given to the Venetians in the region. Under the conditions of these agreements, these territories could not be sold to a non-Venetian citizen, whilst the landowners themselves were to fall under the jurisdiction of the new Imperial government rather than the	Paolo Rannusio once again paraphrases the conditions of both contracts – ‘le quali havendole noi tratte dall'Archivo della Republica con l'indirizzo di Lorenzo Massa, huomo dottissimo, et Secretario della stessa republica’ – when discussing the Imperial confirmation of Venetian territories in the East (1604, p. 165).	ASVe, <i>Pacta</i> , reg. 1, ff. 97v-98r, 101r-102r

⁶ Without specifying which copy he had used; the spellings of place names differ between each copy of the treaty, none of which surviving today can purport to be the original. If Olmo had truly been consulting the earliest version of the text, this is no longer available to compare.

	Republic, with a promise to provide military assistance to the Empire when necessary. ⁷	Andrea Morosini, by contrast, transcribes sections of the two documents individually, as evidence of both the confirmation itself and the structure of Venice's new provincial government. See Figure 11 below (1627, pp. 273-276).	
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⁷ Wolff, 'A New Document from the Period of the Latin Empire', pp. 547-548.

Document 1 – Rules of the *Segreta*, posted July 1647

Cancelleria Secreta, et Secretarij

Siano custoditi tutti li libri, scritture, et *deliberatione* della *cancelleria* secreta, sotto una sola chiave.

Non sia ad altri permesso l'ingresso in'essa, che a quelli del Collegio, et Senato, Consultori in iure, per veder le cose *necessarie*, et a quelli ordinarij, o *straordinari* della *cancelleria*, che havessero obbligo di registri in essa.

Siano deputati due *secretari* alla sua custodia, con salario di ducati sessando l'anno.

Habbino obbligo di registrare le *deliberatione* del Senato, et far la Rubrica *Generale*.

Debbando trattenersi in *Secreta*, sinche staranno ridotti li Savi.

Ai settimana in settimana riferiscano alli *Inquisitori* di Stato, et postino le note di quelle, che saranno andati a legger in *Secreta*, fatte in un libro.

Habbino cura *particularmente* della communicatione del CX et delle relatione.

Non siano occupati in altri carichi del Collegio, ma nelle sole ridduttioni del Senato.

Quelli, che saranno eletti *secretari* del Senato, sian' obligati un'anno dopo la loro *elettione*, far un registro per un anno, o tante rubiche *universali*, o *particularmente* a portione, come li sarà prescritto, ne possano haver salario, senza fede d'haver cio essequito.

Non possano li *secretarij* metter nelle filze alcuna *deliberatione*, che non sia di lor mano *propria*, ne possano metter alcuna minuta con postale.

Ambasciatori, Nobili, et Secretarij

Non possa alcun Senator di qualsivoglia qualità far copia delle scritture di *Secreta*, ne meno summarij, o note d'alcuna sorte, ne con penne, et inchiostro, ne co'l lapis, ne altrimenti, in pena di non poter più entrar nel Senato in vita loro; Occorendo far alcuna copia ad istanza di *particolare* sia portato il libro originale alla *presenza* dei *consiliatori*, et letto il passo, si facci nota del tempo, della *materia*, ad istanza di chi sia stata cavata essa copia, con le *prime* et ultime parole della *scrittura*, o pure se fosse a passi, debba nel modo stesso esser dichiarato in un libro, che dovrà essere custodito dal *secretario* deputato alle Leggi, per cui sola mano habbi a passer l'affare, et in sua assenza da altro *secretario*, che sarà deputato dalli *consoliari*, in pena, trasgredendo, di *privatione* del carico, in sua vita, et di tutte le prov.ni et salarij, da non esserle fatta gratia, se non con li 5/6 del CX.

Sotto le pene *medesime* non possano li *secretari* metter nelle filze alcuna *deliberatione*, che non sia di *propria* lor mano, ne poner tampoco alcuna minuta con postale.

Se alcun nobile del Senato volesse introdurre alcuna nella Cancelleria Secreta, debbano li *secretari* deputati avvertirlo ad astenersene, comminando la pubblica indignatione, dovendo darne conto alli Capi in caso d'inobedienza.

Cancellier Grande, Secretari, et Nodari di Cancelleria

Il Magnifico Cancellier Grande facci nota di quelli, che registeranno, per far le fedie necessarie senza le quali non possano conseguir il salario.

L'essecutione delli ordinari alli Secretari, et nodari della Cancelleria sia commessa alla Soprintendente alla Secreta, et al Cancellier Grande.

Due *secretari* siano deputati alli Annali.

Sian fatte le rubriche di lettere di Generali, ambasciatori, et residenti, estese in quinterneti di tempo in tempo.

Le scritte di legne, privilegi, et di Principi esteri, siano raccolte, et copiate in libro a parte con rubrica.

Siano continuati, et rubricati li Cerimoniali.

Siano rubricate le scritte di confini.

Tutti li Ordinari siano obligati registrar in secreta, ma senza salario, li Ordinari che fossero fuori, debbano al loro ritorno, occorendo, esser impiegati.

Sia fatto da due ord.ni il registro dell'espositioni d'Ambasciatori, con le sue rubriche, con obligo di formarne tre quinterneti il mese.

Nel modo stesso sia deputato un'ordinario alla rubriche di Costantinopoli.

Un'extraordinario di Cancelleria possa esser deputato al registro delle materie di banco del Ziro, che habbi obligo di far anco il registro di Cecca.

Occorendo valersi di giovani di Cancelleria per copie, debbano sriver nell'antisecreta.

Soprintendente alla Secreta

Sia eletto un soprintendente alla Cancelleria Secreta – debba rappresentar in scrittura alli Capi del CX, quando vi fosse bisogno, di provisione et mancasse alcuna cosa all'adempimento degl'oblighi di cadauno.

Solleciti li deputati a sodisfare alle proprie incombenze.

Due delli quattro deputati a scriver le cose secrete, debbano applicarsi a quei registri, che li saranno impost dal *sopraintendente*.

Possa deputar un' *extraordinario* di *Cancelleria* al registro del Ziffro, et di Cecca.

Senza la fede del *sopraintendente* non habbino salario li deputati a registrar in *Secreta*.

(ASVe, CX Sec., b. 43)

Figures 1-2 – Images of the early modern historian in their study



Figure 1 - Bernardino Corio (frontispiece), *Storia di Milano* (1503)

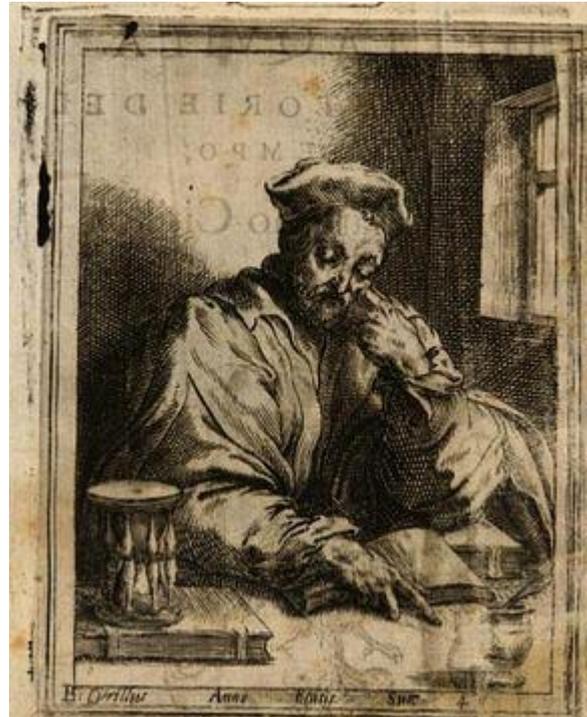


Figure 2 – Bernardino Cirillo (frontispiece), *Annali della città dell'Aquila* (1570)

Figures 3-4 – Samples of the *Index Librorum Cancellariae* and the *Alphabetum*

These images have been removed as the copyright is owned by another organisation.

Figure 3 - Sample page from the *Index Librorum Cancellariae* (1540s); ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 4

Figure 4 - Sample page from the *Alphabetum* visitor logs (mid c16); ASVe, Ind. Sec., b. 4

Figures 5-8 – Notes taken from the secret chancery archive

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Figure 5 - Marin Sanudo takes summaries and extracts from the Commemoriali (BNM, Cod. Lat. X, 291)

Figure 6 - Anonymous summary of the Annali (BMC, Cicogna 3281.4)

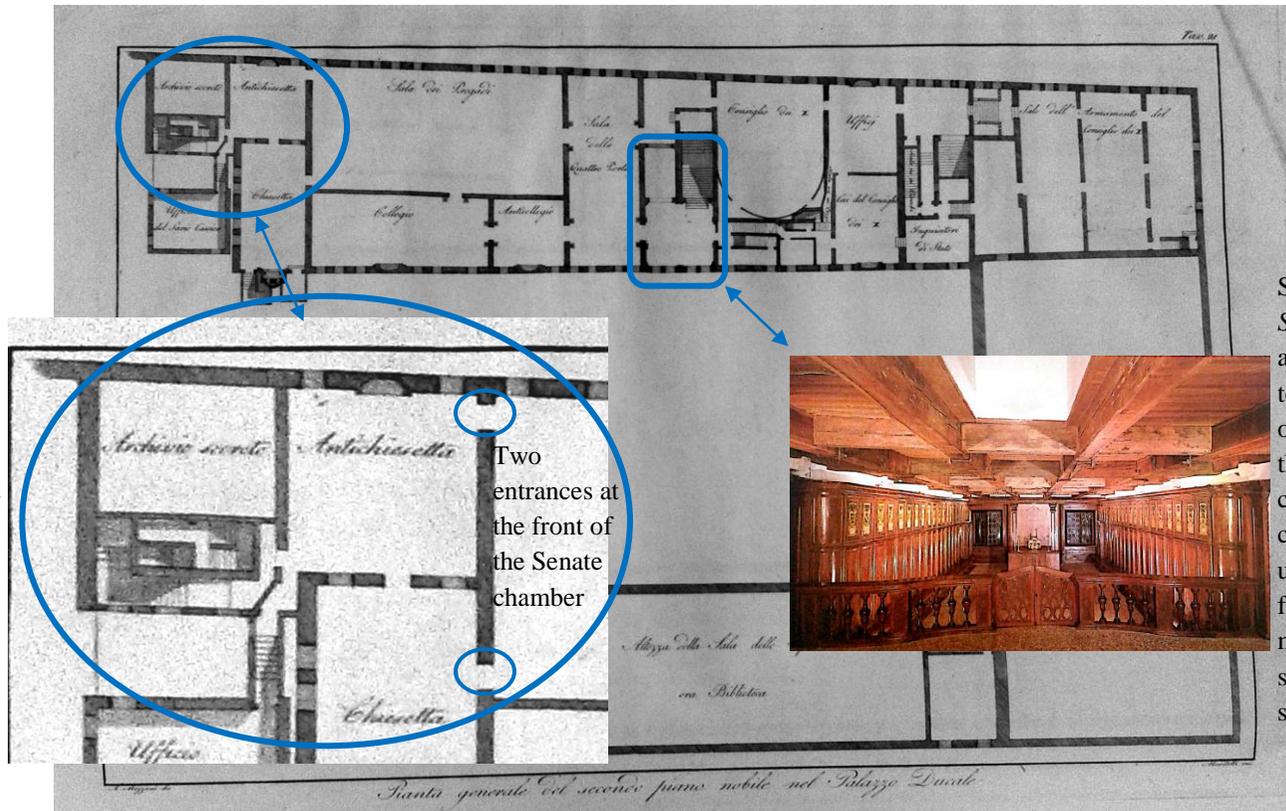
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Figure 7 - Extract from Andrea Morosini's archival notes, including summaries from the Annali and transcriptions from the Senate registers (BMC, Malvezzi 136)

Figure 8 - Paolo Sarpi's summary timeline of the Annali, 1606 (ASVe, Consultore in Jure, b. 23)

Figure 9 – Floor plan of the *Cancelleria Superiore* and the late sixteenth-century secret chancery archive

The newly constructed archival chamber for the secret chancery archive, housed in a former sacristy to the adjacent Ducal chapel. Finished in 1588, a decade after the second great fire in the Palace, its cupboards and tables were divided between two floors (a ceiling was constructed to divide them), and the antechamber at its entrance served as a separate reading room.



Site of the *Cancelleria Superiore* (in the mezzanine above and still accessible today in the *Itinerari Segreti* of the Ducal Palace) where the registers of the *Segreta* collection were kept in chests, under a single key, until the 1580s. Many of the files which would later make up the archive were stored loosely in surrounding attic rooms.

Figure 9 - Second floor of the Ducal Palace, nineteenth-century floor plan (Cicognara, *Le fabbriche e i monumenti cospicui di Venezia*, tavolo 21)

Figure 10 – Paolo Ramusio’s bibliography (taken from the 1604 Italian edition of his *Della Guerra di Costantinopoli*)

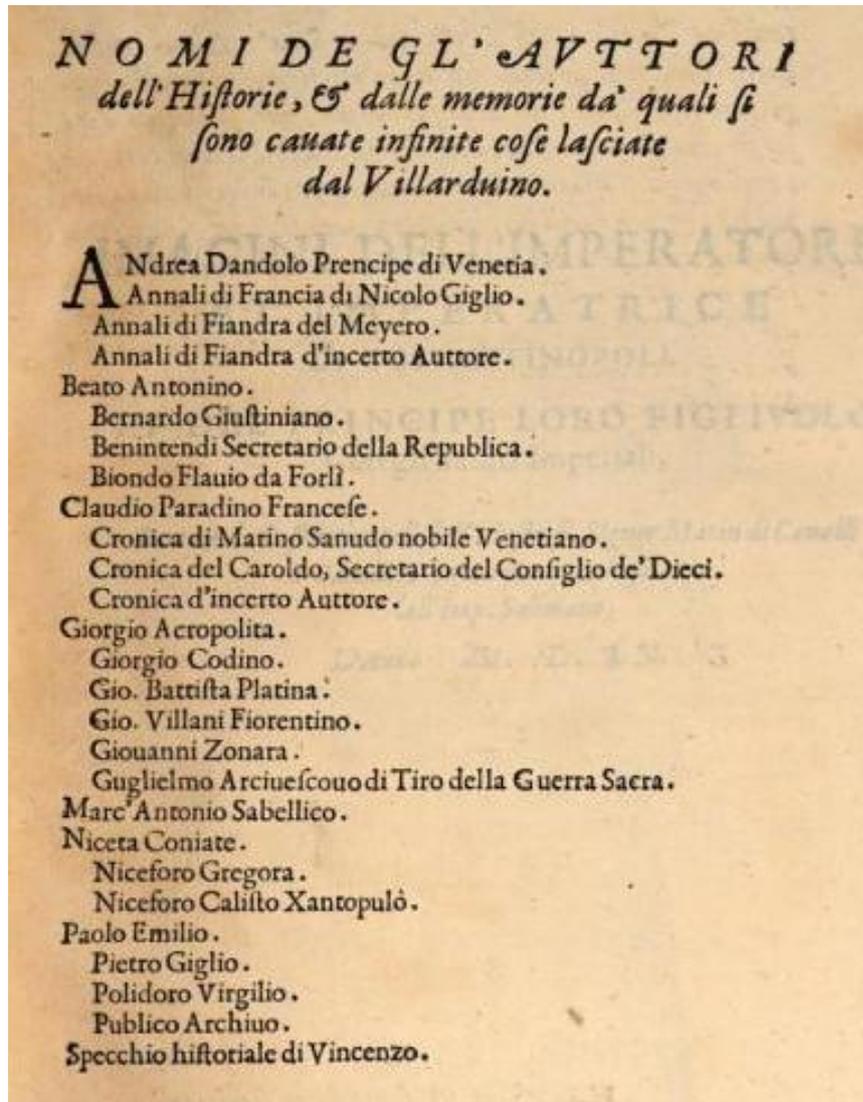


Figure 11 – Presentation of the Fourth Crusade documents by
Andrea Morosini

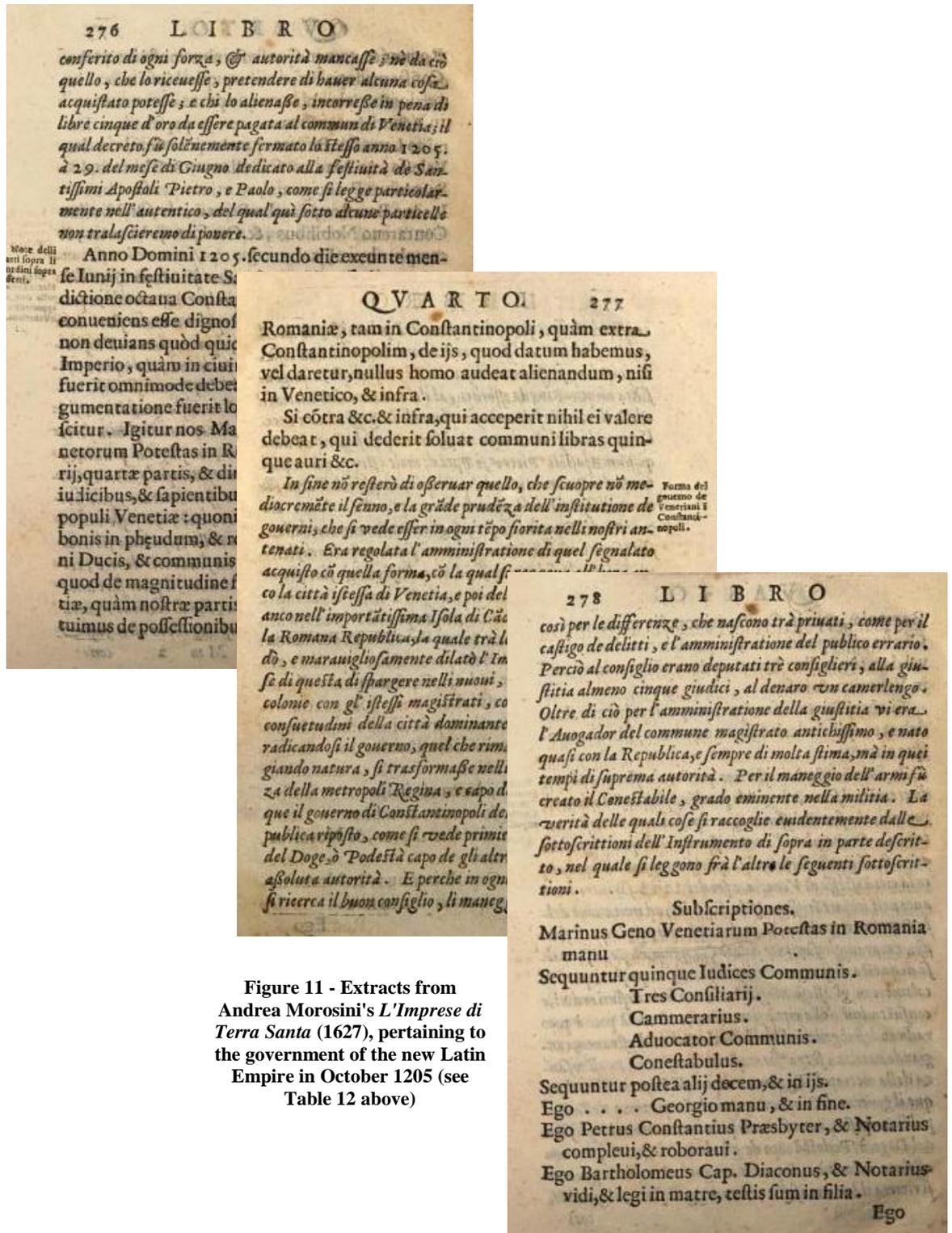


Figure 11 - Extracts from
Andrea Morosini's *L'Imprese di
Terra Santa* (1627), pertaining to
the government of the new Latin
Empire in October 1205 (see
Table 12 above)

Figure 12 – Fortunato Olmo annotates the text of the *Partitio Terrarum Imperii Romanie*

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Figure 12 - 'Haec est de secunda parti Ducis et Communis Venetiarum', complete with corrections of Paolo Ramusio's transcript and Olmo's own attempts at geographic translation (ASVe, MCNAA, b. 9)