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**De Maria, Blake. Becoming Venetian: Immigrants and the Arts  
in Early Modern Venice**

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d'Ignace de Loyola, qu'on n'attendait pas sur cette galère, auraient nourri l'ardeur guerrière du XVI<sup>e</sup>, elle est tout bonnement indéfendable.

Qu'il nous soit permis de dire enfin que la toilette du texte n'a pas été bien faite. D'où des solécismes (par exemple, il faut remplacer, p. 12, *fecundas poetas*, par *fecundos poetas*). On ne comprend pas bien certaines traductions. « Licencié de la Sainte Page » : l'expression est-elle courante, à l'époque, pour désigner (c'est ainsi que nous comprenons) les licenciés dans la sainte Ecriture ? On regrette des fautes d'orthographe (« prophane » se trouve à plusieurs reprises) et des bévues : il faut vite remettre Bradamante sur son cheval pour qu'elle cède la place à Bramante (note 110, p. 141).

Yves Delègue a rendu un grand service à l'histoire de l'humanisme en plongeant, comme il l'a fait, dans cette querelle à la fois savante, violente et quelque peu pittoresque. L'essentiel a été fait, mais quelque peu compromis par les simplifications et les outrances de l'introduction et de certaines notes.

DANIEL MÉNAGER, *Université de Paris X-Nanterre*

**De Maria, Blake. *Becoming Venetian: Immigrants and the Arts in Early Modern Venice*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010. Pp. xi, 288. ISBN 978-0-300-14881-7 (hardcover) \$65.**

This is one of those rare academic gems — a beautifully written, meticulously researched and luxuriously illustrated work that makes an invaluable contribution to the study of art history. Blake De Maria's *Becoming Venetian* highlights the cultural contributions made by immigrants to Renaissance Venice who deployed artistic, architectural and literary patronage as part of an agenda to become official members of the Venetian *cittadino* class. By drawing attention to cultural patronage as a form of brokering among merchants and artists in their struggle for social and political identity, the book considerably broadens the scope of Renaissance patronage studies, which have typically focused on aristocratic court patronage and the cultural agendas of the patrician classes, who exercised their considerable cultural influence to visualize and perpetuate their narratives of class privilege and cultural domination. The Medici of Florence, Gonzaga of Mantua and d'Este of Ferrara might not have

been born princes or patricians, but they assumed princely power partially through their clever manipulation of the cultural and material currency of self-justification through the arts.

In Venice, the situation was somewhat different. After the Venetian *ser-rata* of 1297, admission to patrician status was 'closed' to all but those who were included among the existing ranks of the ruling classes and inscribed in Venice's so-called 'Golden Book,' the directory of the nobility. These families alone ruled Venice and participated in its Great Council. This closing of the ranks meant that the considerably diverse immigrant population who came to Venice to participate in its merchant trades (shipping, textile, cloth-dyeing and others) could only gradually earn admittance to the *cittadini* class through a slow progression from acceptance as a *cittadino de intus* (a tax-payer who could conduct business inside the city) to a *cittadino de intus et extra* (someone who could conduct business inside and outside the city). Focussing on interconnected families of such immigrants, de Maria provides valuable insights into these processes of 'becoming Venetian.'

To do so she opens the labyrinthine vaults of the Venetian archives (I've researched there but never quite penetrated them like the true Venetianists I know) to uncover a wealth of previously unpublished documents that she deftly weaves together in order to tell the stories of these families and their patronage connections to important art and architectural monuments, including the famous Scuola di San Rocco, family chapels in important churches like San Francesco della Vigna and San Salvador, and various others. The patronage of family chapels in newly rebuilt churches like San Salvador on the part of immigrant families like the Cornovi della Vecchia of Ancona, consolidated their reputations as solid Catholic citizens and earned them the right to be buried alongside Venetian patricians of the Dolfin, Priuli and Cornaro families. Acts of private domestic patronage were equally important to the processes of signalling citizenship. Examples include a commission by the d'Anna family, who hailed from the Netherlands, for an *Ecce Homo* by Titian to adorn their palace, and the family cycle painted by Veronese to adorn the palace of the Cuccina of Bergamo, prosperous cloth merchants. Celebrating their wealth and prestige in scenes, Veronese shows members of the family being presented to the Madonna and Child and attending the *Wedding Feast at Cana*. Works like these, painted by the most famous painters working in Venice at the time, embedded recognizable portraits of immigrant families, clothed in luxurious garments,

into religious narratives, emphasizing their importance to Venetian commercial society as well as their resolutely Catholic loyalties (although Veronese was not a native Venetian and, shortly after completing the Cuccina cycle, was famously brought before the Inquisition to defend his unorthodox choices in a *Last Supper* for the refectory of San Zanipolo, which he translated into the *Feast in the House of Levi* now in the Accademia — such were the dangers of being born outside the Serenissima). This examination of identity politics within the city of Venice is an important pendant to Eric Dursteler's investigation of Venetian identity abroad, in *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006). In Constantinople 'being Venetian' was a fluid definition that embraced a community of native and non-native merchants, diplomats and retainers who negotiated, on behalf of the Republic, several decades of peaceful coexistence with the Ottoman Turks.

The beautiful illustrations allow the reader to experience the complexities of Venice itself, from the 'eyewitness' paintings of Bellini and Carpaccio that so deftly capture the diversity of Renaissance Venice's urban population to the churches and palaces adorned by the families that De Maria brings to life through her prose. This book is a stunning scholarly accomplishment and is destined to become a fundamental read for students of Venetian art and history during the Renaissance, alongside works by Peter Humfrey, David Rosand, Paul Hills, Patricia Fortini Brown and Deborah Howard.

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**Ertlé-Perrier, Barbara. *Agrippa d'Aubigné, épistolier : des lettres à l'œuvre*, Paris : Honoré Champion, 2008, 565 p. ISBN 978-2-7453-1678-3 (relié) 85 €**

Tiré d'une thèse de doctorat, le livre de Barbara Ertlé-Perrier s'attache à montrer comment Aubigné par sa volonté de publier sa correspondance, soit d'en faire une œuvre littéraire à part entière, a participé, au moyen de ce geste original car encore inhabituel à son époque, à la création et la construction de son propre mythe. Plus précisément, en posant la question de savoir comment Aubigné s'est imaginé devant la postérité, cette étude invite le lecteur