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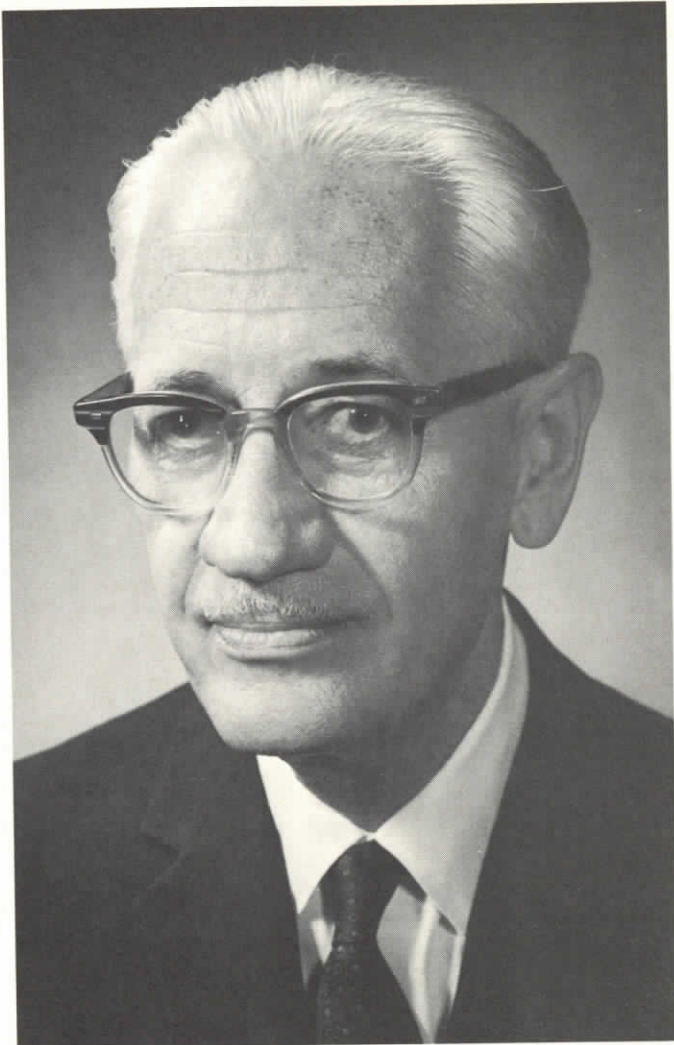
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Wallace K. Ferguson

FLORILEGIUM HISTORIALE

Essays
presented to
Wallace K. Ferguson

J.G. Rowe W.H. Stockdale

EDITORS

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The enlargement of
the great council of Venice

Frederic C. Lane

A crucial step in forming the basic governmental structure of the long-lived republic of Venice was the law of 1297 reforming the great council in a manner which is commonly called 'the Closing' (*la Serrata del Consiglio*) and is generally regarded as a triumph of an oligarchy over the people, of aristocratic over popular sovereignty. It will be here maintained, in contrast, that an aristocracy was in practical and unchallenged control in 1297, that there was in Venice at that time no class conflict between commoners and nobles, and that the so-called closing was in fact a widening of the ruling class in a fashion designed successfully to moderate the strife of factions. A restrictive policy was adopted a decade or two later, to be sure, but it was directed more against recent immigrants than against commoners. It found expression in considerable xenophobia and in heightened concern with determining who was really Venetian and who was not. It was part of the 'protectionist' movement which in 1302 repealed the liberal measures in commercial policy taken during the second Genoese war and which culminated in the institution, through the *Officiales de Navigantibus* in 1324, of restrictions on capital investment overseas. This tightening of restrictions, both politically and economically, came only after the membership of the great council had been widened by Doge Pietro Gradenigo.

I THE CHRONICLES

The interpretation of the reform of 1297 as a move to shut commoners out of the great council has no support in the oldest chronicles which report the admission of new families to the council at about that date. There are no Venetian chronicles written by contemporaries describing the life of the city between 1280 and 1320, nothing comparable to the accounts provided by Villani for Florence and Mussato for Padua. Andrea Dandolo, who about 1350 wrote the chronicle which was accepted by his countrymen as authoritative, terminated his full account, his *Chronica per extensum descripta*, in 1280. His *Chronica brevis* extended the story some decades, but the entries in the surviving copies are brief and of uncertain origin. Its only mention of a change in the great council refers not to closing but to the opposite. Referring to Doge Pietro Gradenigo, whom everyone regards as the leader in the reform, it says: 'This Doge with his Council ordered that some commoners be admitted to the Great Council.'¹ Almost as early, perhaps earlier, is the account in the Giustinian chronicle. It too describes not a closing but an opening and it associates

this with the arrival of refugees from the Levant after the fall of Acre in 1291. It reads: 'In January 1303, at the time of this doge [Pietro Gradenigo], the Lord Doge and other nobles determined to make [members] of the Great Council of the Venetians many descendants of Syrians who had escaped from Acre and its neighbourhood and had come to Venice to live and also many Venetian commoners who had conducted themselves bravely in the above mentioned war with Genoa [that of 1294-8].'²

Neither the Dandolo nor the Giustinian chronicle report directly the law of 1297 which changed the procedure in choosing members of the great council; the passages quoted merely refer to the use made of the procedure by the doge and his council.³ No reference by any chronicler to the change of procedure in choosing members of the great council can be surely dated before 1400, but the Trevisana chronicle contains two accounts, one of which may come from the Nicolò Trevisan who died in 1369 and wrote some sections.⁴ Its description of the change in procedures emphasizes that the new law assured continued membership to those already members and made provision for choosing new members when the doge and his council wished. The narrative is interrupted to list two hundred and fifteen names of persons voted on as candidates and adds that there were many who came later and, by claiming descent from someone once a member, secured admission. Then, after recounting the war of Ferrara, it lists fifteen names of families which had been considered nobles at Constantinople and were made part of the great council in Venice and ten names of similar families from Acre.⁵

While a number of families which had ranked as commoners were being made members of the great council – thus in effect moving up into the ranks of the nobility, since membership soon became the criterion of nobility – other commoners failed to receive that kind of recognition and were disgruntled at being passed over. Right after their reports of additions to the great council, the chroniclers report that a commoner named Marin Bocco or Bocconus conspired to kill the doge and was hanged with fellow conspirators. None of the earliest chronicles attribute his action to political principles, but the Trevisana chronicle, after first reporting Boccono's conspiracy without reference to any motive, refers to it again when reviewing the background of the greater conspiracy in 1310 and then connects Boccono's conspiracy with the general discontent with Doge Gradenigo, saying that Boccono resented being excluded from the great council, resented the election of the doge by the nobles only, and felt Gradenigo to be unworthy.⁶

It is in connection with its description of the much more important conspiracy of Bajamonte Tiepolo in 1310 that the Trevisana chronicle gives what seems to be the earliest general view of the policy of Doge Gradenigo and of a political programme opposed to it. The policy of the doge is stated in the following somewhat ambiguous language:

He wished to reform the Great Council, into which he wished to admit a larger number of families, so that they might be recognized as noble and equal to the others, and not that a few families [only] should be the chief and most revered of the city, taking away [at the same time, however] from the citizens and the common people the way that they used to have of being admitted to the Great Council. And the root of this innovation was the hate which he had towards the common people who before his election had acclaimed Doge Messer Giacomo Tiepolo ... and continued after his election to show their preference for the house of Tiepolo.⁷

This statement, written as early as two generations after the event, is the first to provide a basis for considering that the reform of 1297 was directed against 'the people' (*popolari*). It is noteworthy that it is equally explicit in saying that Doge Gradenigo desired to raise some of the commoners up to the same level as the already noble families.

Attribution to the conspirators of 1310 of an opposing policy appears in the speeches which the chronicler puts in their mouths. It is far from a clear programme, being interlarded with denunciation of the war then going on against the pope over Ferrara. Bajamonte Tiepolo is reported to have said that he and his associates were slighted whereas honours had been given to others who 'have nothing of manhood but the appearance nor of Venetian but the name.' That jibe may express hostility to Gradenigo's readiness to admit refugees from the east to the great council or it may refer to the election of the Dalmatian, Count Doimo of Veglia, to the ducal council. Tiepolo's Quirini allies had opposed this election as illegal, perhaps because they did not consider the count a real Venetian, but it had been put through by the dominant faction. The other leading conspirator, Marco Quirini, is reported to have said that Gradenigo was ruining the city in many ways, one of which was 'to close the *Maggior Consiglio* and prevent valiant and good commoners from arriving at the rights of the nobles of Venice,' which would, he said, lessen their devotion to the city and prevent immigration of foreigners, except those who came just to make money.⁸

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Although the Trevisana chronicle thus provides some basis for considering the opponents of Gradenigo as champions of excluded commoners, it also contains a suggestion of opposition to nobles who were considered not really Venetian and indicates that the main causes of the conspiracy were personal animosities, the war of Ferrara, the papal interdict, and the accompanying defeats and property losses of the Venetians. To this chronicler, as to Piero Giustinian and the contemporary chroniclers of other Italian cities, it was primarily an uprising attempted by Venetian Guelfs.⁹ Venetian historians have generally boasted that Venice never suffered from the rivalry of Guelf and Ghibelline and the accompanying feuds which weakened Genoa and most Italian cities. But the war of Ferrara, 1309-11, did produce temporarily just such a split among Venetian leading families. The Tiepolo, the Badoer, and a very important branch of the Querini had all voted against the decisions which had brought on the war with the pope over Venice's efforts to gain Ferrara and, when the papal nuncio threatened excommunication, Jacopo Querini had been the chief spokesman in the great council in favour of obeying the pope. At one point during the uprising adherents of Tiepolo went around demanding of all they met whether they were Guelf or Ghibelline and beating up those not willing to declare themselves Guelf. At least, that was the charge on which they were condemned.¹⁰

As in other cities, the 'Guelfs' of Venice had their personal grievances against those they called 'Ghibellines' and were moved more by these factional hates than by devotion to the papacy or any general principle. The grandfather and great-grandfather of Bajamonte Tiepolo had been doges and his father was the Jacopo Tiepolo who had been the popular candidate for the dogeship when the nobles had elected Pietro Gradenigo. The obvious reason for the nobles' opposition to Jacopo Tiepolo's election was that it might seem to give that family an hereditary claim to the office. Jacopo, a man of restrained ambition, withdrew from Venice to avoid a disturbance. His son Bajamonte was of a different temper, the kind of man who justified the fear of giving too much prestige to one family. When castellan at Modon he had entertained in princely fashion and claimed that that justified his illegal appropriation of funds there, an act for which he was condemned to a heavy fine.¹¹ According to the Trevisan chronicle, the affront to his honour figured largely in the grievances which he voiced in the discussions among the conspirators.¹²

Even more important in initiating the conspiracy was Marco Querini, a brother of the Jacopo Querini who had pleaded for obedience to the

pope, and the father-in-law of Bajamonte Tiepolo. Marco Querini was bitter particularly because he was blamed, unjustly he felt, for a defeat when in command at Ferrara. He and his relatives, supported by the Badoer, had, in opposing the election of Count Doimo to the ducal council, quarreled violently with the Giustiniana (who were relatives of the count), and Michiel even coming to blows in the council chamber. These Querini were also at odds with the Morosini family, which was in high favour and allied by marriage to the king of Hungary. A Morosini who was serving as a *signore di notte* tried, at the Rialto, to search a Querini to see if he was violating the law against concealed weapons, and was tripped up and humiliated. Others of the same branch of the Querini, known as those of the Big House ('Cà Mazor'), had a quarrel with a Dandolo who, when serving as state's attorney, had been zealous in prosecuting one of them on the charge of committing an outrage against a Jew in Negroponte.¹³

The third leader among the conspirators, Badoero Badoer, had large estates in Paduan territory and could almost be considered one of the Paduan Guelfs.¹⁴

The more careful later chroniclers of Venice followed the Trevisan account of the reasons for the Tiepolo conspiracy almost word for word even as late as the sixteenth century.¹⁵ On the other hand, the Trevisana's report of Gradenigo's resentment against 'the people' for the popular acclaim given Jacopo Tiepolo, and its reference to Querini's criticism of the doge's reform of the great council, seem to have been taken up and elaborated by some later writers, but they may have had independent sources for a tradition of popular opposition to Gradenigo.¹⁶ When in the fifteenth century a humanist, Marcantonio Sabellico, undertook to write a history of Venice he put into Venetian history echoes of the history of republican Rome and interpreted the dogeship of Piero Gradenigo in terms of a conflict between patricians and plebeians.¹⁷

In so doing the humanist was adopting the attitude which the Venetian nobility itself was adopting in the fifteenth century. By that time membership in the great council and nobility were identical. After the first decades of the fourteenth century practically no new families were added except for the admission in 1382, by extraordinary action, of thirty families in recognition of their services during the war of Chioggia.¹⁸ Further additions were refused. A proposal was made, to be sure, in 1403 by two of the *capi* of the *Quarantia*, Pietro Arimondo and Pietro Miani, to add to the great council a worthy family of native-born commoners

whenever one of the noble families died out. The proposal was killed by the ducal council.¹⁹ The rejection of this reform proposal of 1403 symbolizes a definitive change in the nature of the Venetian aristocracy. Earlier it had been a body which had readily absorbed new families; thereafter for more than two hundred years it was a closed caste fearful lest the admission of new men destroy its solidarity. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the Venetian nobility showed unwillingness to share with new families the honour and power of their status, and they read this sentiment back into the events of 1280 to 1320.

II OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The traditions recorded in the chronicles convincingly portray a split within the nobility at the beginning of the fourteenth century. On the one side, dominating the councils, were the Gradenigo, the Dandolo, the Morosini, the Giustiniani, and the Michiel; on the other the Tiepolo, the Querini di Cà Mazar, the Barozzi, and the Badoer.²⁰ If the conspirators had succeeded in seizing the piazza and the palace many more might have come forward to join them, for many stayed home while the issue was in doubt and the streets dangerous.²¹

The common people also were divided. Not only do the chroniclers say so explicitly but such is the necessary inference from the events they record. Bajamonte Tiepolo had behind him the great popularity of his grandfather, Lorenzo Tiepolo, an admiral and war hero, who had married a daughter of Boemondo di Brienne, king of Serbia and Rascia.²² In spite of his chivalric tastes he was on good relations with the Venetian guilds. Some historians have assumed that Bajamonte Tiepolo and the Querini di Cà Mazar also catered to the guilds and had guild support in their conspiracy.²³ But there is no evidence to that effect. Murano, the glass-making centre, is said to have been on the side of Tiepolo in 1310²⁴ while Chioggia and Torcello, shipping and fishing centres, supported the doge, but the only way in which any guild figures in the early accounts of the uprising is in the report of vigorous fighting by the painters' guild on the side of Gradenigo.²⁵

In the 1260s and 1270s guilds had presented a political problem. They represented craftsmen and local shopkeepers; there was at Venice no guild of merchants engaged in foreign trade, nothing comparable to the Calimala of Florence, for wholesale traders were in such firm control of the Venetian government that they had no need of a separate organiza-

tion. Also there was no guild of judges and notaries, so important at Padua. The seamen, the largest occupational group, also had no guild of their own, not at least until very much later, although in 1255 they were regulated by a new maritime code which required them to take an oath to report to the authorities any violations of the maritime statutes.²⁶ But among the shipyard workers and in some other building trades there were guilds which had many of the functions of trade unions, and even more powerful were the guilds which functioned like trade associations of manufacturers. Among the earliest and most important of these latter were the goldsmiths or jewellers, the iron smiths, the tailors, the apothecaries, the hemp spinners, and the dyers.²⁷ Compared to the merchant aristocracy, they represented a new and different kind of well-to-do businessmen.

When the guilds first developed out of religious fraternities, the ruling class placed no obstacle in the way of their formation but subjected them to regulation by officials called the *giustizieri* who had been created to have charge of weights, measures, and market regulation generally. They forbade the tailors in 1219 and the jewellers in 1233 to form price-fixing cartels.²⁸ In 1264-5 more sweeping prohibitions show that subversive activities in the guilds were feared in that decade.²⁹ It was a time of political danger. The first Genoese war was inflicting commercial losses even though Venice was winning the big battles. There are reports of a tax riot in 1265 of such violence that the doge, Renier Zeno, pretended to give in to the rioters, although he later hunted out and hanged the leaders, including one named Niccolo Bocco. At about the same time the antagonism between Dandolos and Tiepolos became so violent that Lorenzo Tiepolo was injured in the piazza by Giovanni Dandolo or one of his partisans. Commoners showed a tendency to line up either with the Dandolo or with the Tiepolo by displaying the arms of the faction which they favoured. To prevent such generalizing of factional alignment a law was passed forbidding commoners to display the arms of any noble house.³⁰ There is no direct evidence that guilds were actively involved in this family fight but the law forbidding them to form any covenants against the honour of the doge and commune showed that the rulers feared lest they become involved.

The danger was dissipated mainly through the leadership of Lorenzo Tiepolo. His dogeship, 1268-75, was a period of reconciliation. He was persuaded to patch up his quarrel with Giovanni Dandolo.³¹ To the guilds Lorenzo made it clear that the laws passed during the latter years of his

predecessor would not be used to destroy their organizations. His acceptance of the festival reception given him and the dogressa by the guilds symbolized recognition of the guilds as an integral and honoured part of Venetian society, but lacking in political power.³²

This position of the guilds was crystallized by the official revision of guild statutes which was effected under Doge Lorenzo Tiepolo. Between October and December 1271, at least eleven more guild statutes were added to the twelve which had been approved earlier. These statutes all included the anti-sedition law of 1265, but they left the guilds considerable self-government: the choice of their own *gastaldi*, two meetings a year at which they could suggest changes in their statutes for approval by the *giustizieri*, settlement by their own officials of disputes and violations involving minor sums, and freedom in making their own arrangements about the fraternal and devotional activity of their *scuole*.³³ Some guilds, like the masons, were even permitted to strike or boycott an employer who failed to pay masters their due.³⁴ This combination of subordination and limited self-government was to continue to be their status for the next five hundred years.

If any guildsmen were dissatisfied with this subordinate status it was probably the rich members of those guilds which were trade associations of employers. It has been noted that, at Padua, where the guilds were represented in the governing councils from the 1280s on, the shopkeepers and craftsmen of the *popolo minuto* did not rise through their guilds to be leaders of the republic; they were content to leave political leadership to other sections of the Paduan population, primarily to the lawyers.³⁵ And at Florence, where guilds became the all-important political constituencies, the small tradesmen and craftsmen did not compete for leadership with the old ruling class; the threats in the early fourteenth century came from its own divisions or from the ambitions of newly rich merchants of large affairs.³⁶ It is likely that any challenge from guildsmen to the Venetian ruling class came also from some of those who may be characterized as the new rich.

In the last years of Lorenzo's dogeship a plot against the government is reported as well as a new law against conspiracies, but there is no reason to connect this with the guilds.³⁷ Indeed it seems more likely that Tiepolo felt he could rely on the guilds and thought of summoning them to arms if necessary. But such an action would have given them political importance and it is significant that, in the revision of the ducal oath at his death (it was revised afresh for each new doge), the doge was forbid-

den to summon to arms the guilds or their *gastaldi* without the express approval of the ducal council.³⁸

The next doge, Jacopo Contarini, continued Lorenzo Tiepolo's policy of reconciliation. The guilds were neither abolished nor further restricted; on the contrary, their statutes were reaffirmed in 1278 by the *giustizieri* who collected them all into one register or codex.³⁹ The doge issued pardons to persons who had been exiled or had fled in fear after the tax riot of 1265 and persuaded many to return, in spite of the fact that another conspiracy had been discovered at the beginning of his term.⁴⁰ That plot of 1275 is the last conspiracy reported until the effort in 1299 or 1300 of the disgruntled commoner Marino Bocco or Boccono, apparently of the same family as the leader condemned for the tax riot of 1265.⁴¹ But there is no evidence connecting either affair with the guilds, and it seems a far-fetched supposition, in view of the way in which the status of the guilds had been clarified in the meantime, to assign to 1299 or 1300 the kind of situation implied by the anti-subversion law of 1265. The guilds as a whole seem to have been passive, while some of their members were probably on Gradenigo's side, some on the other.

Among the commoners who supported Doge Gradenigo were, naturally enough, those who under his programme had received permanent membership in the great council and who had thus been raised into the nobility, since the old line between commoners and nobles disappeared during the next generation and a new line took its place dividing those not members of the great council from those who were and were therefore considered nobles. After the suppression of the Tiepolo conspiracy some additional families of commoners were admitted to the council in reward for their support during the crisis.⁴² The size of the great council increased from less than 400 prior to 1297 to more than 1,100 by 1320.⁴³

To many Italian cities of the fourteenth century the rise of *il popolo* meant primarily the admission to the ruling class, not of humble craftsmen and shopkeepers, but of newly rich merchants. In Venice that process had been going on for a long time without producing civil war.⁴⁴ The old rich were sufficiently willing to extend political participation to the newly rich that the latter did not have to ally with craftsmen guilds in order to fight their way to a share of public office. The enlargement of the great council under doge Gradenigo merely continued the penetration of the new men into the ranks of the ruling class.

Perhaps the most convincing evidence of the lack of any class feeling pitting commoners and nobles against each other as self-conscious classes

appears in the distribution of commands in the war with Genoa which was in progress from 1294-9. Whereas the fleet which suffered a crushing defeat at Curzola in 1298 was commanded by a representative of what is considered the conservative wing of the nobility, a son of the late doge, Giovanni Dandolo, the naval hero of the war from Venice's point of view had the suggestively humble name of Domenico Schiavo.⁴⁵ In 1262, many years earlier, the Venetians when outfitting a fleet had begun to place a noble called the *sopracomito* in command of each galley above the *comito*, formerly the top post and one that continued to be filled by a commoner.⁴⁶ But in 1299, after the great defeat at the hand of the Genoese, the *sopracomiti* appointed on the galleys that Venice then armed to show the flag of San Marco in daring raids were commoners.⁴⁷ Such a reliance on commoners in posts of crucial military importance argues against class antagonism at that level.

Another sign of the lack of antagonism between commoners as such and nobles as such is the role given to both by the leading chroniclers. Martino da Canale, writing in the middle of the thirteenth century, constantly praised the knightly qualities of the Venetian nobles but sings the praise also of the people. Andrea Dandolo in the mid-fourteenth century emphasized the role which the commoners as well as the nobles had had in crucial moments of early Venetian history, such as in the choice of the first doge. All Venice's traditions placed the fount of authority with the people, meaning the whole community, but Dandolo went even beyond his sources in specifying the participation of the commoners (*plebei*).⁴⁸ If he had exaggerated the role of the people in the events of his own time, one might discount it by arguing that he and fellow nobles wished to keep them unaware of how completely real power had passed into the hands of an hereditary aristocracy. But he had no such motive for emphasizing the role of the common people at the turning points of Venetian history centuries earlier.

Of course there were conflicts between various interest groups in Venice, some arising from individual ambitions and hatreds and some from conflicting economic interests. Economic difficulties resulting from what might be called class struggle are evident in the first decade of the fourteenth century, particularly in the fleets. Seamen were losing status as fighting men and were being subjected to harsher discipline. Many of them were being imprisoned for debt and then let out of jail in order to work off their debts on the galleys. A sharper line was developing between shipowners on the one hand and sailors and oarsmen on the other. Travel-

ling merchants, who had been a numerous part of a ship's company and had shared authority with the captain, became less important with the use of commercial techniques favourable to resident merchants. All these developments created a widening gap between the mass of seafarers and the well-to-do merchant shipowners.⁴⁹ But there had never been any question of admitting ordinary seamen to the great council. That certainly was not the issue in 1297 or 1310. There was a social change going on which accentuated differences between a lower and an upper class in the navy and merchant marine, but its upper class contained both nobles and commoners. The reform of 1297 concerned the distribution of power and functions within this upper class.

Commoners and nobles were not two classes economically distinct.⁵⁰ It is an anachronism to consider a rivalry between nobles and commoners the key to the political development of that period and even more of an anachronism to assign to the one party an aristocratic ideology and to the other a more democratic ideology.⁵¹ The political ideals which affected action, so far as any did, were the beliefs current generally in Venice: that those in power held their power as representatives of the community, that tyranny was the pressing and dangerous evil to be avoided, and that the seed-bed of tyranny was the conflicts of factions. Quite secondary was the form of government, whether a rule by one man, or by a few, or by the many; although it may be significant that the only Venetian to write a treatise on government in that period, Fra Paolino, simplified Aristotle's description of the six forms of government by saying that the three perverted forms were government by a tyrant, by the rich, and by the poor, and that the three good forms were rule by one man alone, by a few men of virtue, and by the many who were rich.⁵² The essentials were peace and the rule of law. On that the influential political thinkers of the time, such as Thomas Aquinas, Dante Alighieri, Tolomeo of Lucca, and Marsiglio of Padua all agreed. They put less stress on class struggles than had Aristotle, from whom they took so much, and they pointed to factionalism as the danger that was destroying peace and creating tyranny in one Italian city after another.⁵³ The Venetian concern with the evils of factionalism are evident in a resolution voted to be read before each balloting in the great council. It bound every member when voting on nominations to vote for the best man and not aid their friends and injure their enemies.⁵⁴ The system perfected in 1268 of electing the doge through a long series of committees chosen partially by lot was specifically designed to confuse and moderate factional rivalries.⁵⁵ There are no grounds for believing

that Pietro Gradenigo and his colleagues were ideologues whose actions were guided by political doctrines, but in so far as they combined their self-interest with general political thinking, their frame of reference was probably not the superiority of the will of an aristocracy over the will of the people but the importance and the difficulties of preserving the peace of the city (as well as their own power) through moderating and controlling factionalism.

This view of the state of affairs is quite compatible as far as it goes with Roberto Cessi's interpretation of the so-called *serrata* as a mere technical administrative reform. After a lifetime of unrivalled familiarity with Venetian records, Cessi expounded the view that the aristocracy was firmly in the saddle long before 1280 and its position was not seriously threatened at the end of the century by any popular movement.⁵⁶ The problem in the 1280s and 1290s was merely that of finding for the great council a membership adapted to its functions. It had become in effect the supreme legislative body. Also it elected a growing number of officials and elected the members of the councils which had taken over the deliberative functions it had formerly exercised. Three other such councils were of prime importance: the ducal council of six plus the doge; the Forty – the *Quarantia*; and the sixty who composed the nucleus of what was to be called the senate (then called the *Consilium rogatorum* or *Consiglio dei pregadi*). All three met and voted with the great council in approving new legislation. Also there were at least a hundred other officials, the state attorneys (*Avvogadori di comun*), the treasurers (*Camerlinghi*), etc., who were chosen by and met with the great council. The election of one hundred members in addition to all these *ex officio* members required in the 1270s a total of over four hundred selections. Then the number fell until in 1295 it was only 257, for by that time, as Cessi explains it, the new offices and councils were stabilized. He attributes the earlier large number of elections to the great council to the fact that many of those originally named to the great council were elected to other posts so as to become *ex officio* members. When that happened, other men were nominated to take their places as ordinary members. After the number of new offices and councils was stabilized, there was less need for new elections. There then developed a conflict between elective and hereditary principles. On the one hand tradition required that the membership in a council which had such wide general authority as the great council should be elective. That way it better represented the whole community, as it should according to the ascending theory on which the Venetians based their

sense of legitimacy. On the other hand, tradition also required that certain families be represented and that men who had held high office be included.

To evaluate the technical or administrative problem and its possible implications it is necessary to inquire how the members of the great council were chosen before 1297 and how many of them there were. The procedure in choosing members seems surprisingly casual and uncertain in view of its importance. According to the general Venetian practice, what we loosely call election consisted of two parts: a first part that we would call nomination (although they called it *electio*) and a second part consisting of the approval or testing of the nomination (*approbatio*). In the early days, nominations were made by the ducal council, later generally by committees chosen by lot, and the nominating committees were ordered to conclude their nominations the same day they were named, before leaving the palace.⁵⁷ Obviously they were not supposed to consult friends but to use their individual judgment. Each member of a nominating committee was recorded as the proposer or guarantor of those whom he had suggested and who had been accepted by his colleagues.⁵⁸ For such positions as the very powerful ducal councillors, there were at least two nominating committees; they each submitted a name or list of names to the great council, and its vote approving one list or name constituted the real election.⁵⁹ However, in the thirteenth century there was only one slate nominated for the great council, and this list of a hundred men (or in some years one hundred and fifty), and subsequent lists of needed replacements, if voted on at all in the great council, seems to have been voted on as a whole. Practically speaking, the nominating committee did the electing, as is often true in a club or any society with by-laws that provide for a nominating committee and for no other way to make nominations.

The committees which made nominations for the great council were *ad hoc* committees. One, composed of men called electors for the year, was chosen in September to name one hundred regular members to serve for the ensuing twelve months. After the newly chosen great council met, new nominating committees were formed to serve for a half-year and to make additional nominations when the doge and his council said they were needed. Cessi implies that additional nominations were made only to the extent that the men named in the original one hundred were subsequently chosen for one of the positions which made them *ex officio* members.⁶⁰ If that was the case, then there was a positive correlation between the number nominated and the number serving, although the

totals would not be the same since many *ex officio* members would be named to the other offices directly and not appear on the lists of nominees for the great council.⁶¹ But there were probably other reasons also for new nominations. One was to replace men who had died or were hopelessly ill. Another may have been to replace those who resigned or refused to serve.⁶² Being a member of the council may have seemed a burden to some men for they were then subject to fines for failure to attend certain sessions.⁶³ As a general principle, no Venetian citizen was free to indulge his taste for idleness; all were obliged to serve in any office to which they were named, or lose political rights and pay heavy fines, *unless* excused by the doge and his council. A man who had undertaken obligations with a view to a trading voyage would be excused.⁶⁴ Many of the original hundred nominated by the electors may have been thus excused so that there was a large need for substitutes, especially in periods when trade was booming. In that case the number nominated would not indicate the number serving and tells little about the size of the council. Indeed, surviving records of the number voting on important occasions and the number nominated shows little correlation between the two figures. A well-attended meeting of the great council before 1297 consisted of about three hundred: the one hundred regular members; the forty of the *Quarantia*, and the sixty of the senate; and about one hundred who had rights of attendance because of their office and were also in Venice and free to attend.⁶⁵

The committees making nominations for the great council were small. The electors of the year consisted of at most twelve, more often three or four. To give to just three or four men the power to choose the membership of the supreme council would have been very unsettling if their power had really been arbitrary, that is, if they had not been limited in their choices – as were the censors of ancient Rome in the naming of senators – by some well-established customs. The electors were chosen from different *sestieri*, to be sure, and named men from their *sestieri*, but in addition there must have been an understanding concerning some leading families that had to be represented. On the other hand, there must have been an area of doubt also. Commoners as well as nobles were included in the great council; there was as yet no legal distinction between the political rights of the men called nobles and those called commoners.⁶⁶ The return of partially Venetian families from Romania and the crusaders' states in the late thirteenth century increased the uncertainties.

The declining number of selections about 1290 must have intensified concern about whom the electors of the year would include and whom they would leave out.

The uncertainty of the situation was all the greater because of the manner in which the electors of the year were chosen. As in the choice of other nominating committees, an element of chance was involved. The doge and his council named the electors, but in accordance with a system which rotated the function among experienced council members, giving a turn to men from each of thirty-odd election districts, the *trentacie*.⁶⁷ The 'electors' thus named had to be approved by a vote of the great council.⁶⁸ In 1293 only three of the four named were approved but they were authorized to go ahead and make the nominations, which, as has been explained, amounted to election.⁶⁹ Whether this somewhat haphazard system should be continued was a constantly open question, for the council ordinarily voted every September a new resolution to determine how the membership for the ensuing year would be chosen: whether by the traditional method just described, or with a different number of electors, or with electors differently chosen, or with the nominees of the electors subject to approval one by one by another council such as the *Quarantia*.⁷⁰ These uncertainties invited a reform that would stabilize the way of choosing the great council.

There can be no doubt that, as Cessi emphasized, there was a need to give the great council a membership appropriate to its functions. The existing uncertainty was also a good reason for reforming the rules determining its membership. But the way the problem was solved was sure to affect the interests and ambitions of all the groups competing for power and wealth within the society. The number of resolutions defeated and the provisional character of the first steps approved, not to mention the subsequent conspiracies, suggest that behind the provisions concerning procedure and machinery there were bitter conflicts for power.

Giorgio Cracco has recently made a new analysis of the economic interests of various groups associated with different aspects of Venetian policy. His delineation of the various interest groups is far superior to the old-fashioned simple contrast between 'nobles' and 'the people.' He makes clear that the line between nobles and commoners was not clear-cut, and not the same as that between rich and poor, nor that between old Venetian families and new families. He does not hesitate to speak of 'popoli nobili.'⁷¹ But he depicts a vigorous class struggle against what he

calls the *grandi* or *magnati*. They were Gradenigo's party and consisted of the families which had been rich and powerful in 1172 and had maintained their wealth and power ever since. Cracco believes that their leadership or control was threatened at the end of the thirteenth century because trade was becoming less profitable. The *grandi* could ride out the depressions but the middle class of traders could not, and they sought compensation by striving all the harder for political power which would enable them to enjoy the perquisites of office holding. Gradenigo's party triumphed over its opponents, Cracco says, and assured its own continued dominance by buying off a section of the middle class, the *borghesia* of old Venetian families. It did so in 1297 by giving them membership in the great council and thus access to political offices from which those not in the great council were excluded.⁷²

It would be hard to document Cracco's analysis of the economic situation, but there is at least evidence that office holding was becoming more popular and this may well have been one of the considerations which made reform of the great council urgent. This pressure, which Cracco chooses to call class struggle, seems to me only one of several factors involved.

III THE COURSE OF EVENTS

Among these factors, the following fears operating within the ruling class seem to me important in determining the course of events: (1) the fear of being excluded from political positions by a hostile faction; (2) the fear that factional fighting would weaken the republic and lead to tyranny; (3) the fear of foreigners as competitors for honours, jobs, and trade.

At the beginning of the efforts to reform the great council the fear of being excluded was most important. Four unsuccessful proposals for changing the rules concerning its membership were made, three in 1286 and one in 1296. Why were they defeated? None of them so far as we know made any provision for enlarging the size of the great council. All of them would have made the choices of the electors of the year subject one by one to a subsequent vote, either by the ducal council or the *Quarantia*, or the great council itself, or some combination of these councils, except that one proposal, that of 5 October 1286, would have excepted from the need of such approval those nominated who had a paternal ancestor who had been a member of some Venetian council. The fate of this

resolution of 5 October 1286 is the only one fully recorded. It was opposed by the doge, Giovanni Dandolo, and was defeated by a relatively small vote: eighty-two noes, forty-eight in favour, and ten neutral, only one hundred and forty altogether.⁷³ This vote is generally considered a rejection of an open avowal of the principle of heredity, although that principle was already largely followed in practice and the proposed law provided for exceptions. But why were other proposals which made no mention of ancestry also defeated or abandoned? The answer lies, I believe, in the fact that none gave any assurance, even to members of old and noble Venetian families, that they would be included in the great council in the future. What they all had in common was this: While leaving limited the number to be chosen by the electors of the year, these proposals made the nominations more subject than before to subsequent rejection by some council.⁷⁴ A faction controlling the council in question could have rejected members of hostile factions. The defeated reforms would have lessened the elements of chance and rotation which entered in the existing method of selection through the way the electors of the year were chosen, and in doing so would have made it easier for a party or faction to monopolize power and offices.

Although there were some commoners and some new men among the members of the great council when those votes were taken, they were a distinct minority. Most of the votes which defeated proposals for reform in those years must have been cast by nobles and members of old families. It is easy to imagine why they should have voted against reducing the element of chance in the selection of the membership and against increasing the possibility that a faction in control could exclude opposing factions from the great council and thus from any effective participation in political life. Nobles would be even more sensitive to fear of exclusion than commoners since they had more to lose, in honour and pride, even if not in wealth, if excluded. They could see in many other Italian cities, most notably in Genoa and Florence, seizures of power by one faction after another, each using its period of power to try to exclude permanently its opponents. It is true that at Venice the nobles, although they had indulged in violent family quarrels in earlier centuries, had since 1172 shown remarkable restraint in their rivalries and a willingness to subordinate family pride and ambition to communal patriotism in a way which aroused the envious admiration of contemporaries. But there were signs that the hundred years of restraint were coming to an end, as indeed was shortly to be proved true by the conspiracy of Bajamonte Tiepolo and Marco

Querini. Not only the rivalry of Dandolo and Tiepolo factions but also the events which Venetian nobles could see elsewhere in Italy at the end of the thirteenth century make it reasonable to suppose that many feared exclusion from all honours and offices by some ambitious clique which, having gained control, would resolve to complete and perpetuate its power.

If they had such fears, they were allayed by the reform which was passed in February 1297. That law assured that everyone who had been a member during the last four years could apply for membership on 29 September next and if he could then obtain as many as twelve favourable votes out of the forty of the *Quarantia* he would be a member of the great council. This opened the way to an indefinite increase in the size of the council. The law said nothing whatever about ancestry, but once the principle of perpetual membership was established it might have been expected to be extended from father to son.

The law of February 1297 also provided for the election to the council for the next year of men not members during the previous four years. They were to be chosen by three electors when the latter were called on to do so by the doge and his council, and would then be voted on one by one in the *Quarantia* and considered approved if they received twelve votes. Final clauses made it very difficult legally to change the operation of the law in any way before September 1298, and required that it be reconsidered at the beginning of that year.⁷⁵

Just what happened during these next two years, or between February 1297 and 1300, is difficult to determine in detail. The documentary records, the surviving minutes of the great council for those years, are fragmentary and confusing and may have been so even at the time.⁷⁶ Venice was in the middle of the second Genoese war, which was approaching its disastrous climax. Large fleets were being outfitted every year from 1296 to 1299. When the membership of the council was renewed in September 1297 many people who counted, or thought they ought to, may have been away with the fleets. In 1298, on 6 or 8 September, came the stunning defeat at Curzola in which Venetian dead were numbered at seven thousand and the prisoners were said to be even more numerous.⁷⁷ Since there is no hint of any rebellion in those years, one may assume that Doge Gradenigo's leadership was being accepted and that defeat caused the Venetians to subordinate factional ambitions in order to preserve their commune and its power against the threat of utter defeat by the Genoese rival. Under these circumstances the sequence of events described in the Trevisan chronicle seems likely. It says that when the new system introduced by

the law of February 1297 went into effect in September of that year, many applied and the proceedings became disorderly and full of controversy. As a result the doge decided to waive the annual balloting on those already members and make membership in the great council legally and formally permanent, so that on 11 September 1298 (which would have been during the week after the disastrous defeat) the great council voted that thereafter all who were members should continue to be members for life without any further voting.⁷⁸ This making permanent of membership in 1298 is what is called the 'Serar' or 'Serata' by Trevisan and later chroniclers who repeated his account.⁷⁹ Rather than translate it as the 'Closing' which implies exclusion or locking out, it would be better to translate it as the 'Locking in' of the great council, reassuring, in a moment of national emergency, all members already in the ruling class that they would not be left out in the future.

No law of exactly that kind is to be found in the surviving minutes of the great council. Indeed, all the records of decisions taken in September 1298 and September 1299 concerning the great council are in other than regular form.⁸⁰ These irregular entries say only that the law of February 1297 should be renewed.⁸¹ Nowhere is there a law stating that members of the great council should continue to be members as long as they lived.⁸² Yet it seems clear that that was what was decided in September 1298, just as the Trevisana chronicle reported. Technically, legally, their names had to be submitted each year to the *Quarantia* but, from 1298 on, the re-election of all those already members was a mere formality; the real action was on the addition of new names, either of young nobles who had reached the appropriate age or of men whose fathers were not or had not been in the council. It may seem surprising that the most basic right of the Venetian nobles was not spelled out in law, but there have been other instances when what was recorded in the minutes and what was settled in people's minds were different. Although as a legal technicality, yearly approval by the *Quarantia* was needed, after 1298 it was understood by those who formed the *Quarantia* and by all others concerned that membership in the great council was for life and was hereditary, and they voted accordingly.⁸³

A general understanding concerning the election to the great council of persons not already members was not reached so quickly. The only distinction made in the law of 1297 between old members and new members was that the names of the former came before the *Quarantia* automatically, whereas the names of new men had to be proposed by three electors who were called on by the doge and his council to nominate new

members. Under the law of 1297 both old and new men required only twelve votes from the *Quarantia*, but in September 1299 it was required that all those nominated by the electors for the great council or the senate must be voted on one by one in the *Quarantia* and receive a majority in their favour.⁸⁴ The next year, 1300, the doge and council were forbidden to propose new names to the electors without the approval of the *Quarantia*.⁸⁵

Such laws, placing the approval of new members more and more firmly in the hands of the *Quarantia*, provided the means of excluding new members who did not belong to old families. There was no mention of ancestry in the laws of 1297-1300 concerning the great council. Indeed, after the resounding defeat in 1286 of the proposal for a distinction on the basis of ancestry, ancestry was not specifically mentioned again in rules regarding membership in the great council until 1323.⁸⁶ But the Trevisana chronicle says that the vote on 11 September 1298 meant that 'all those *families* [italics mine] who were already admitted to the great council should continue to be so without having to be voted on each year.'⁸⁷ Certainly that was the effect and it may have been the effect intended. Control over the *Quarantia* was assured to the old families by a vote, in December 1298, that no one could be elected to the *Quarantia* unless he or his ancestors had been members of the great council.⁸⁸ Thus the hereditary principle, which was to become basic for the great council, but which was not yet openly avowed, was applied to the composition of the *Quarantia* at the same time as the *Quarantia* was being placed in a position to apply it in approving nominations for other councils.

In the war years, however, and in the first years after the war, the expansive and liberal aspects of the reform of 1297 prevailed. The early chronicles all agree that in those years Doge Gradenigo was the leader in a substantial enlargement of the Venetian ruling class, both through the acceptance of refugees from the Levant and by the addition of commoners to the great council. We have seen that the texts of the laws do not exclude that possibility, and that something of that kind was going on is implied by the law of 1300 cited above, which limited the initiative of the doge and his council regarding additions.

Doge Gradenigo's leadership in this enlargement of the great council is easily reconciled with the hatred he is said to have had for the common people who had shouted for Jacopo Tiepolo as doge at the time of his own election. Strengthening of the great council by enlarging it may well have seemed to him the best way to diminish the influence on the government

of the city mob and of the general assembly of all citizens, called the *arengo* or *concio*, which he may have considered little better than a street mob. Indeed, the *parlementum*, a general assembly in the main square, or possibly the main church, was traditionally considered in the Italian communes to be an expression of the sovereign people. In Venice, also, since the Venetians firmly held that the powers of the doge and all the councils derived from the community as a whole, a popular assembly in boats or in the piazza of San Marco had been treated as the ultimate authority. Although, since 1172 it had been regulated and managed by committees headed by the ducal council, the *arengo* was called to give approval to basic laws and to the choice of doge made by the authoritative nominating committee.⁸⁹ The way in which the general assembly in other cities was packed or purged by the violence of factions, gave Doge Gradenigo good grounds for fearing that the same might happen at Venice – and to his disadvantage, considering the popularity of the Tiepolos.⁹⁰

He did in fact succeed in strengthening the great council and in preventing factional fighting at Venice from becoming as severe as it might have been. Permanent membership in a council of unlimited size assured the existing leading families that they would not be excluded from the pleasures and perquisites of political office. Enough new families, or families on the edge of belonging to the old upper class, were added so that family rivalries were moderated by the sheer number of the families involved.⁹¹ The reforms obviously did not stop all such rivalries. At Venice as elsewhere it was a severe crisis in its external affairs, the war with the pope over Ferrara, which led one faction to attempt to seize power by open violence. But only a relatively small number of families were implicated in the conspiracy of 1310 and a relatively small number sent into exile. How they were prevented from forming any such government-in-exile or group of *fuorusciti*, as did the parties driven out of Genoa or Florence, is another story. Another story also is the gradual process by which the Venetian popular assembly (the *arengo*) faded into significance long before it was finally abolished altogether in 1423. There were no struggles, no recorded protests, over its passing. The great council had already for years taken over its function as the ultimate representative of the sovereign community.

Long before that stage in Venice's constitutional development the restrictive aspect of the reform of 1297 had become dominant. Prior to the reform of 1297, many persons not members of the great council were elected to various offices and, after being thus known and honoured, were

named by the electors to be regular members of the great council. Gradually it was required of one office after another that its holder be a member of the great council. It was made obligatory for senators in 1311.⁹² Meanwhile, the naming of new men by the electors lapsed, with the result that, after the admission of the commoners who were rewarded for their support during the conspiracy of 1310, practically no new families were admitted until the war of Chioggia about seventy years later. Election by the great council, through the process called *grazia*, was made extremely difficult, requiring in 1328 approval by five out of six ducal councillors, thirty of the *Quarantia*, including their three *Capi*, and two-thirds of the great council itself.⁹³ The importance of ancestry was implicitly recognized in the provisions of 1315 for registering births, nominally in order to prove the age of the applicant and his legitimate birth,⁹⁴ and was explicitly recognized in the resolution of 1323 declaring that a father's or forefather's membership in the great council was the essential for admission.⁹⁵ All those who could prove such parentage by proper registration at birth in what came to be called the 'Golden Book' could become members of the council automatically at twenty-five, without needing any vote of approval. Thirty were chosen by lot and admitted at twenty. All of the twenty-year-olds were formally certified as members of the nobility by being accepted at the drawing of lots, having proved their parentage.⁹⁶

A more restrictive commercial policy went hand in hand with the tightening of the restrictions of membership in the great council. Restrictions on the trade of foreigners at Venice had been repealed during the second Genoese war. From 1302, when trade was picking up again after the war and there was less need of foreigners and foreign capital to keep the wares moving, restrictions were restored.⁹⁷ At the same time officials called the *Provveditori di Comun*, who had been created at the end of the war to increase revenue and who were elected by the *Quarantia*, were especially charged with preventing any defrauding of the customs.⁹⁸ That gave them occasion to inquire as to who was a Venetian and who was really a foreigner. In enforcing the collection of tolls levied on foreigners they questioned the Venetian citizenship of some long-time residents of Venice, seizing the wares of one man who had been paying taxes at Venice for thirty-four years.⁹⁹ The proceedings of the *Provveditori di Comun* made proof of ancestry very important in one connection, while the policy of the *Quarantia* regarding membership in the great council was heightening its importance in another connection.

Stricter enforcement led to modification of the previous rules con-

cerning naturalization.¹⁰⁰ In 1305 naturalization was permitted of those who had lived in Venice or Venetian dominions and paid taxes to Venice for twenty-five years. If they had been there for ten years, they were to be permitted to stay and could acquire full citizenship rights fifteen years later. Meanwhile they could practise the craft or local trade by which they lived.¹⁰¹ Guided by these rules, the *Provveditori* busied themselves over the next decade in determining who should have the right to trade as Venetian and who should not.¹⁰²

While 'foreign' was thus being carefully defined, hostility to the competition of foreign merchants and capital was expressed in laws forbidding Venetians to conclude partnerships with foreigners or to act as 'fronts' handling their wares for them.¹⁰³ Imports to Venice by foreigners from many regions were almost entirely forbidden, especially from the eastern Mediterranean.¹⁰⁴ The climax of what has been called the protectionist movement was reached in 1324 with the creation of the *Officiali de Navigantibus*. These officials were charged with punishing by confiscation of merchandise any Venetian who imported from the Levant wares of a total value higher than the amount of his own wealth as assessed at the office through which the republic levied the forced loans used for emergency finance.¹⁰⁵ This was a way of preventing Venetians of limited funds from acting as stand-ins for foreigners or from borrowing foreign capital. This purpose was plainly referred to in connection with its enforcement.¹⁰⁶

To be sure, the *Officiali de Navigantibus* were in existence only a few years. There were waves of reaction to the policy of commercial restriction and the tight financial policy which accompanied it. A striking evidence of the xenophobic, inquisitorial interest in ancestry and of a reaction against that spirit is the *relazione* of Marco Minotto, *bailo* in Constantinople about 1320, and himself unquestionably a member of a distinguished noble family. He begins by remarking that some of those in positions of authority go to extremes in demanding proof of Venetian citizenship of all who present themselves as Venetian, inquiring not only about their fathers but their grandfathers and great-grandfathers until, says Minotto, they make him wonder whether he himself could meet the formal tests of proving himself Venetian; 'although not everyone knows whose son I am and who my father was ... yet I have always passed as Venetian wherever I went.' He contrasts the policy of the Genoese, who, he says, 'accept all readily regardless of who their father was, even those who were Venetian in person and in possessions.' Therefore, he says, 'in

Romania we continually grow smaller and the Genoese increase constantly because not only many Venetians but also Greeks have turned Genoese, when they see that they cannot enjoy the privileges and exercise the rights which their fathers and forefathers had had [as Venetians], so let your Excellency make provision in this matter for the good, honour, welfare, and utility of our commune and of the merchants who operate in Romania, because those who are many are more feared than those who are few ...¹⁰⁷

A less rigorous policy in deciding who was Venetian would no doubt have made the Venetians more numerous. That dictum could have been applied to the Venetian political community in Venice as well as to the commercial communities overseas. But comparisons with Genoa, which Minotto's report itself suggests, raises doubts whether it would have made Venice stronger at that time. Genoa was more open and made naturalization easier, and Genoa was repeatedly crippled politically by civil war. Florentines also attributed their excessive factionalism to diversity of origin in the population. The belief was voiced by Villani¹⁰⁸ and by Dante in the famous lines:

Sempre la confusion de le persone
Principio fu del mal della cittade
Come del vostro il cibo che s'appone.
Paradiso, xvi, 67-9

Fear of factions and fear of foreigners gradually fused at Venice. Hostility to foreigners and recent immigrants found expression in commercial policy and in closing the doors of political life against new men. The concern with factional rivalries, after working in favour of the increase of the membership of the great council between 1297 and 1310, became thereafter a reason for refusing any new admissions which might dilute the homogeneity of Venice's governing class.

Looked at with the advantages of hindsight, Doge Pietro Gradenigo's reform must be considered extraordinarily successful. At a time when other Italian communes were being torn by factions, Venice acquired a structure of government relatively able to resist that evil. Its base was the great council as enlarged by Gradenigo. This council was gradually accepted as sovereign, displacing in that role the general assembly of the people, a body much more easily manoeuvred by factions. By admitting to the Venetian nobility a certain number of refugees from the collapsing Latin states in the Levant, by admitting also a certain number of old Venetian families not hitherto considered noble, and above all by assur-

ing continued membership in the great council to nearly all those who were already part of the ruling class, broadly defined, his reforms moderated the fierceness of political rivalries.

NOTES

- 1 Andrea Dandolo, *Chronica Brevis*, in L. Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores* (old edition, hereinafter referred to as *RISS (1)*), xii [Milan 1728], c. 409. This sentence appears also in the copy in Paris, Bibl. nat., ms Latin 5875, f. 179v. It does not appear in the edition by Ester Pastorello, in L. Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores* (new edition, hereinafter referred to as *RISS(2)*), xii, 1 (Città di Castello 1938), p. 370. On the nature of the several texts and of the additions they contain, see Pastorello's introduction, pp. 333-42, and Heinrich Kretschmayr, *Geschichte von Venedig* (Gotha 1920), II, p. 537.
- 2 'In 1303 mese Januario istius ducis tempore multas proles Surianorum quae de Acon et illis partibus evaserant, et Venetiis habitare venerant, ac etiam multos populares Venetos, qui in guerra Januensi supradetta se geserant confidenter, dominus dux et alii nobiles de maiori Venetiarum consilio facere statuerunt.' London, BM, ms Kings 148, f. 89, and similarly in Paris, Bibl. nat., mss Latin 5877, f. 29. Two manuscripts at Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, ms Latin, Cl. x, cod. 36a, f. cxx and cod. 237, f. 60, contain a somewhat similar but slightly shortened passage which also states that some commoners were added to the great council. These manuscripts at the Marciana are the basis of Roberto Cessi and Fanny Bennato, eds., *Venetiarum Historia vulgo Petro Justiniano Justiniani filio adjudicata* (Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Venezie, *Monumenti Storici*, n.s., xviii [Venice 1964], cited hereafter as *Venetiarum Historia*). The passage cited is p. 205. Dandolo's *Chronica brevis* also refers to the arrival of refugees; indeed, it does so in the sentence immediately preceding that quoted above. Additions to the Venetian nobility after the fall of Acre are also mentioned by the anonymous chronicle of about 1400, Marciana, Cl. vii, cod. 2034, f. 198-9.

This article was essentially finished before I had the benefit of the studies of Antonio Carile, now published: *La cronachistica veneziana (secoli xiii-xvi) di fronte alla spartizione della Romania nel 1204, con una appendice di P.R.-J. Loenertz* (Fondazione Giorgio Gini, Centro di Cultura a Civiltà, Studi xxv, Florence: Olschki, 1969). Very generously, Dr Carile placed a typescript of his book at my disposal in 1968. That enabled me to supplement my earlier research, which had included examining the copies of the Giustinian chronicle in London and Paris, but I have not taken full advantage of his Herculean labour in comparing hundreds of chronicles to go through an equal number comparing what they say about 1297. Loenertz moved in that direction studying a different theme: R.J. Loenertz, 'Menego Schiavo, esclave, corsaire, seigneur d'Ion (1296-1310),' *Studi veneziani (già Bollettino dell'Istituto di Storia della Società e della*

Stato Veneziano of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini), ix (1967), 315-38. My interpretation is strengthened by Dr Carile's arguments for believing that the Latin ms Kings 148 in London and Latin ms 5877 in Paris are copies of the chronicle of Piero Giustinian who lived about 1350. He identifies as of different provenance the manuscript published by Cessi and Bennato under the title *Venetiarum Historia*, above cited.

With Dr Carile's guidance, I examined without finding any reference to changes in the great council at the end of the thirteenth century a group of manuscripts which he calls family A and which derived from a composition of about the same time as the *Chronica brevis* of Andrea Dandolo and the chronicle of Piero Giustinian: namely, Museo Civico Correr, Venice, P.D., 392c; Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Latin 14621 on microfilm at the Istituto di Storia della Società e dello Stato of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini; Bibl. Naz. Marciana, Venice, Cl. x, cod. 136 (3026); and A volgare, Marciana, ms Ital., Cl. vii, cod. 38 (8748). Similarly I examined some manuscripts of what Dr Carile calls family B, which are derived from the chronicle of Enrico Dandolo composed about 1360, namely: Museo Civico Correr, Cod. Cicogna 3423 (2831) and Bibl. Ambrosiana, Milan, n 85 inf., using the microfilm at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice.

S. Collodo, 'Temi e caratteri della cronichistica veneziana in volgare del Tre-Quattrocento (Enrico Dandolo),' *Studi veneziani*, ix (1967), 127-51, a survey of the political themes treated in the vernacular chronicles of the mid-fourteenth century, reports no comments on any 'serrata' in 1297.

- 3 As pointed out by Margarete Merores, 'Der grosse Rat von Venedig und die sogenannte Serrata von Jahre 1297,' *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, xxi (1928), 82.
- 4 Nicolò Trevisan, *Cronaca di Venezia, continuata da altro autore sino all'anno 1585*, Venice, Bibl. Naz. Marciana, ms Ital., Cl. vii, cod. 519 (Coll 8438), f. 86v. On its author, see Vittorio Lazzarini, *Marino Faliero* (Florence 1963), p. 98, and in *Nuovo archivio veneto*, xiii (1897), 8. The manuscript is a sixteenth-century copy which embodies Nicolò Trevisan's account of the Falieri conspiracy and the Cretan rebellion, matters about which he wrote from personal knowledge having been a member of the Council of Ten. Other parts are copied from other authors or chronicles, see Heinrich Kretschmayr, *Geschichte von Venedig*, II, p. 540; Carile, 'La chronachistica,' pp. 138-46, and 'Note di chronachistica veneziana: Piero Giustinian e Nicolo Trevisan,' *Studi veneziani*, ix (1967), 119-25.

The reform of 1297 is described twice. The first description (f.86) gives in the vernacular an accurate summary of the law and then the text in Latin, followed by the list of members approved, a list which the author says he copied from chancery records omitting some names which he found too faint to read. Some are marked with a cross, some not, and the author expresses doubt whether the cross meant that those without it were not approved. Then he says (f. 88) that the voting by the *Quarantia* as provided by the law went on year after year until the time of Doge Foscari (on the significance of such balloting see below, note 83). This first description is obviously the result of research which was made after

Francesco Foscari became Doge in 1423, as Merores noted: '*Der grosse Rat*,' p. 83.

The second description of the reform of 1297, of which Merores took no notice apparently, is inserted in a later point in the Trevisan chronicle, f. 89r, after a relatively terse account of the Tiepolo conspiracy as a part of an elaborate explanation of that conspiracy. It not only elaborates on the first account but in part contradicts it for, after again summarizing the content of the law, it says that on 11 September 1298 'fu statuito ne mazor conseio che nell' avenir el mazor conseio dovesse continuar estar come alora se atrovava, coie tutte quelle famigie che allora si trovavano esser adnese nel mazor conseio doveseno continuar senza la solitta balotatione che si facevano da San Michiel' (italics mine). This contradiction shows that the second account must have been derived from a different source than the first account. It is followed by speeches of the conspirators and a full second account of the fighting on the day of the revolt. It is this second account, ff. 89r-92, which may be thought to reflect a tradition, perhaps oral, perhaps written down much earlier.

Of the earliest fifteenth-century chronicles, that at the Museo Civico Correr, Cicogna, 2413, gives lists of old and new houses and says that the purpose of the *serrata* was to distinguish clearly 'gentiluomini' from others. Somewhat resembling Trevisan's account but differing by mistakes in important details is that in the Marciana, ms Ital., Cl. vii, cod. 2043, which says that the annual balloting on membership of the great council continues 'until today' ('in fina al d d'anchur') (f. 199, cf. 198r).

- 5 Trevisan *Cronaca*, ff. 86-8. The *Venetiarum Historia* notes in its list of noble families, pp. 255-76, some, such as the Pisani, p. 270, of whom it says that they had been *populares* and were made members of the great council at the time of Doge Gradenigo.
- 6 Trevisan *Cronaca*, f. 88r and 90; *Venetiarum Historia*, p. 205; Dandolo, *Chronica Brevis*, RISS(1), c. 409
- 7 '... ebe animo de reformar el gran conseio nelqual volse admeter mazor numero di famigie che fuseno reconosute nobele et equale a le altre et non che poche famigie esser dovesero le principale de la citta et piu reveride, tolendo alli cittadini et popolari il modo che avevano di esser adnese nel maggior cons[e]io; e la radice di tal novita era l'odio ch'el portava alli popolari, li qualli avanti la eletione sua avevano chiamato Doge Messer Jacomo Tiepolo ...' Trevisan *Cronaca*, f. 89r.
- 8 *Ibid.*, ff. 90-1
- 9 *Chronicon Giustiniani*, ms Kings 148, f. 91, and *Venetiarum Historia*, p. 208-10; Cf. Dandolo, *Chronica Brevis*, RISS(1), c. 410; Giovanni Villani, *Cronica*, ed. Francesco G. Dragmani (Florence 1845), II, 147-8; Albertino Mussatto, in *De gestis italicorum post mortem Henrici VII Cesaris*, in RISS(1), x (1727), c. 583.
- 10 *Historia Veneziana di Gio. Giacomo Caroldo, Secretario dell ecc. Consiglio di X*, (Museo Civico, Gradenigo 78, f. 432, and in the copy at the Marciana, ms Ital., Cl. vii, cod. 128a, coll. 8639, f. 148). Although writing in the sixteenth century, Caroldo had access to the records of the Council of Ten,

- as well as to earlier chronicles. *Venetiarum Historia*, p. 209, says the rebels aimed to kill all 'nobilibus gebelinis.'
- 11 *Cassiere della Bolla Ducale: Garzie - Novus Liber* (1299-1305), ed. Elena Favaro, in *Fonti per la Storia di Venezia*, Ser. I, *Archivi pubblici* (Venice: Comitato per la Pubblicazione delle fonti relative alla storia di Venezia, 1962), pp. 24, 55.
 - 12 Trevisan, *Cronaca*, f. 91
 - 13 *Ibid.*, f. 90; S. Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia* (2nd ed. Venice 1912-31), III, pp. 15-31
 - 14 J.K. Hyde, *Padua in the Age of Dante* (Manchester and New York 1966), pp. 58, 79, 202, 234-5, 252
 - 15 For example, Caroldo, *Historia*, Bibl. Marciana, ms Ital., Cl. VII, cod. 128a, f. 141^r, repeats the Trevisan *Cronaca*, Marciana, Coll. 8438, f. 89^r
 - 16 Merores, 'Der grosse Rat,' p. 83, said that the idea of a 'serrata' comes from the chronicle of Donato Contarini. The copy of Vienna, Nazionale Biblioteca, no. 6260, Fond Foscari (consulted on the microfilm at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini) does indeed contain this interpretation, f. 110, and a reference in the same paragraph to the election of Francesco Foscari dates its composition as mid-fifteenth century. In the copy in the Bibl. Naz. Marciana of what is also called the chronicle of Donato Contarini (Ital. Cl. VII, cod. 95, ff. 91-2) the treatment is quite different.
 - 17 Marco Antonio Sabellico, *Dell' Historia Venetiana libri xxxiii* (Venice 1678), pp. 148, 154, 156-7.
 - 18 Romanin, *Storia documentata*, III, pp. 300-1
 - 19 Archivio di Stato di Venezia (ASV), Notatorio di Collegio, reg. 3, f. 110^r, item 399
 - 20 *Venetiarum Historia*, pp. 208-9 BM, MS Kings 148, f. 91; Romanin, *Storia documentata*, III, p. 36n; Dandolo, *Chronica Brevis*, RISS(2), p. 371. Because some members of a family were involved does not mean, however, that all its members were implicated in the conspiracy of 1310.
 - 21 At the first meeting of the great council after the rebellion, on 17 June, only 377 attended; Romanin, *Storia documentata*, III, pp. 35-6. The membership at that time was over 900 and the relatively small vote on the decree exiling Bajamonte Tiepolo may have encouraged him and other conspirators to continue to plot in exile. Cristoforo Tentori, *Saggio sulla storia civile, politica, ecclesiastica e sulla corografia topografica degli stati della repubblica di Venezia* (Venice 1785-90), v, pp. 162, 218-20.
 - 22 Merores, 'Der grosse Rat,' 95, and Andrea da Mosto, *I Dogi di Venezia* (Milan 1960), pp. 90-2.
 - 23 Götz Freiherr von Pölnitz, *Venedig* (Munich 1951), pp. 211-12; Gino Luzzatto, *Storia economica di Venezia dall' xi al xvi secolo* (Venezia: Centro internazionale delle arti e del costume, 1961), pp. 117-18
 - 24 *Venetiarum Historia*, p. 209
 - 25 Romanin, *Storia documentata*, III, pp. 33-4
 - 26 *Gli statuti marittimi veneziani fin al 1255*, eds. R. Predelli and Adolfo Sacerdoti (Venice 1903) and in the *Nuovo Archivio veneto*, n.s., IV and V, *Statuto del R. Zeno*, cap. xl. A Scuola di San Nicolo di Marinieri existed in

- the seventeenth century, see ASV, Cinque Savii, n.s., busta 91; Prov. all'Armar, busta 10, ff. 85-91, and Bibl. Naz. Marciana, ms Ital., Cl. IV, cod. 300 (Coll. 5305), sect. 5.
- 27 *I capitolari delle arti veneziani sottoposte alla Giustizia e poi alla Giustizia Vecchia dalle origine al MCCCXXX*, ed. Giovanni Monticolo, in *Fonti per la Storia di Italia*, 26-28 (Rome 1896-1914), I
 - 28 Gunnar Mickwitz, *Die Kartellfunctionen der Zünfte und ihre Bedeutung bei der Entstehung des Zunftwesens* (Societas scientiarum Fennica, *Commentationes humanarum litterarum*, VIII, 3 [Helsingfors 1936]), p. 33; Monticolo, *I capitolari*, I, pp. 12-13 and 119-20
 - 29 *Ibid.*, II, p. 23, and repeated in other *capitolari*. Whereas the earlier prohibitions of 'conspirationem' concerned prices and purchases or sales (*ibid.*, I, p. 119), that of 1265 threatened those guilty of 'aliquid ordinamentum vel compagna seu comilitatem aut conspirationem per sacramentum vel per fidanciam aut per aliquam aliam promissionem contra honorem domini ducis et eius consilio ac comunis Veneciarum seu contra aliquam personam' and required anyone knowing of such to reveal it at once to the doge.
 - 30 Andrea Dandolo, *Chronica per extensum descripta* (hereinafter referred to as *Chronica*), RISS(2), p. 314; *Venetiarum historia*, p. 176; Marino Sanuto, *Vitae ducum venetorum*, RISS(1), XXII, c. 564
 - 31 Dandolo, *Chronica*, RISS(2), p. 316; Sanuto, *Vitae*, cc. 565-6
 - 32 The festivals are elaborately described in Martino da Canale, *Cronaca veneta*, eds. Filippo Luigi Polidori and Giovanni Galvani, *Archivio storico italiano*, VIII (1845), pp. 605-27, and are mentioned in *Venetiarum historia*, p. 179.
 - 33 *I capitolari* includes many regulations, for example the rules of 1222 for the *numeratori di tegoli* and those of 1229 concerning kilns making bricks, applying to men who had no guild, that is, no organized association with its own officers. In some cases, for example that of the bowmakers before 1300, the existence of a guild is doubtful; but the indications are that the following eleven guilds had their statutes approved in the last three months of 1271: the furriers, tanners, shoemakers, house carpenters, ship carpenters, caulkers, masons, mercers, coopers, ironsmiths, and painters; and that of the regulations approved earlier those for the following twelve applied to organized guilds: the tailors, the jacketmakers, the fishmongers, the hemp spinners and rope makers, the goldsmiths and jewellers, the apothecaries and retailers of spices, the dyers, the hoopmakers, the glassworkers, the barber surgeons and physicians, the sellers of oil and salt meats, and the silk weavers. At least a dozen other guilds were approved soon after 1271. The butchers, the bakers, and the woollen-cloth makers were not subject to the *Giustizieri Vecchi*; consequently the dates at which they became organized guilds cannot be determined from the statutes printed by Monticolo. A bakers' guild supervised by the *Ufficiali al Frumento* existed at least as early as 1333; ASV, Arti, buste 445-6, *Arte dei Pistori*.
 - 34 *I capitolari*, II, pp. 285, 295

- 35 J.K. Hyde, *Padua in the Age of Dante*, pp. 178-81, 212-13, 216, 243-51
- 36 Marvin B. Becker, 'An Essay on the "Novi Cives" and Florentine Politics,' *Medieval Studies*, xxiv (1962), 37-50; *Florence in Transition* (Baltimore 1967), i, 17-18, 26-7, 45-6
- 37 Dandolo, *Chronica*, *RISS*(2), p. 321; *Venetiarum historia*, p. 183; Sanuto, *Vitae*, c. 567; in MS Marciana, Ital. Cl. VII, cod. 800, f. 139; *Deliberazioni del Maggior Consiglio di Venezia*, ed. R. Cessi in *Atti delle assemblee costituzionali italiane dal medio evo al 1831* (published by the R. Accademia dei Lincei, series III, section I, vol. II [Bologna 1931]), p. 65, 6 Dec. 1274.
- 38 *I capitolari*, II, I, pp. xxvi-xxvii
- 39 *Ibid.*, I, introduction. Von Pölnitz, *Venedig*, p. 211, mistakenly speaks of 'Auflösung der Zünfte and Bruderschaften.' Giorgio Cracco, *Società e stato nel medioevo veneziano* (Civiltà veneziana: *Studi*, 22, Firenze; Olschki, for the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, 1967), pp. 247, 292, opines that the form in which statutes were codified in 1278 restricted the guilds so severely that those issued under Lorenzo Tiepolo must have been altered in being copied into the new codex. He apparently believes Lorenzo Tiepolo was so closely allied with the guilds that he would not have permitted the restrictive legislation passed by the great council in the 1260s to be written in their statutes. Cracco bases this opinion on two kinds of evidence. (1) He cites a sentence from Sanuto's *Vitae* written more than two centuries later which, however, says only that Lorenzo Tiepolo promises the people to let them form craft guilds ('promise al popolo tutte le scuole de suoi mestieri lasciar fare' in *RISS*(1), xxii, c. 565, and Marciana MS, Ital. Cl. VII, cod. 800, f. 130^v). The surviving form of the statutes is not inconsistent with such a promise. (2) Cracco finds strange the way in which the laws of the 1260s to restrict the political activities of guilds are in some cases tacked on separately instead of being integrated with other provisions. But it was common in guild statutes and in the statutes governing various offices to add the texts of laws passed after an earlier codification had been made. The way the provisions of the 1260s are introduced into some statutes, such as those of the barbers or the sellers of oils and fats, merely indicates that these trades had compiled by-laws of their own for their guilds before 1265, perhaps before they were given statutes officially approved by the *giustizieri*. What Cracco regards as a contradiction in the case of the barbers is not really a contradiction; it only implies that in an early form the by-laws had provided that members could be fined for not attending meetings called by the *gastaldo* and that in 1265 the government, without changing the earlier provisions giving him power to fine those absent without cause, limited the number of meetings the *gastaldo* could call. *I capitolari*, II, pp. 42, 48. In the statutes of the ironsmiths, approved under Lorenzo Tiepolo, the provisions concerning number of meetings and the fines for non-attendance are combined in the one chapter, chap. 34.
- 40 Sanuto, *Vitae*, cc. 570, 571; Dandolo, *Chronica*, *RISS*(2), p. 325
- 41 Sanuto, *Vitae*, c. 581, calls it the conspiracy of Marion Bocco, Giovanni Baldovino, and Michele Juda, and misdates it 1299. He says they conspired because they were left out of the great council. On Baldovino or Baldvino,

- see Vittorio Lazzarini, 'Aneddoti della congiura Quirini-Tiepolo,' *Nuovo archivio veneto*, x (1895), 85-9. The recurrence of the names Bocco and Baldovino in revolts almost a generation apart indicates a handful of plebeian (popular) families in which there was a tradition of discontent and rebellion, but I know of no evidence of a link between them and any guild. Giorgio Cracco, *Società e stato*, p. 340, although he depicts a political alliance of the guilds and Lorenzo Tiepolo, indicates that the guilds were politically inactive in 1310.
- 42 On the size of the great council see below, note 65
- 43 Merore, 'Der grosse Rat,' 90; *Deliberazioni*, I, xiii-xvi; Kretschmayr, *Geschichte von Venedig*, II, p. 72
- 44 Margarete Merore, 'Der venezianische Adel,' *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, xix (1926), 193-237; Gino Luzzatto, 'Les activités économiques du patriciat vénitien (x-xiv siècles),' in his *Storia di storia economica veneziana* (Padua 1954), pp. 125-66. Cracco, *Società e stato*, chap. 1, and part I of chap. 2. An extreme example of the social mobility at Venice in the twelfth century is given in Claude Cahen, 'Le commerce anatolien au début du XIII^e siècle,' in *Mélanges d'histoire du Moyen Age dédiés à la mémoire de Louis Halphen* (Paris 1951), pp. 100-1: Zaccaria Stanairio was descended from a Dalmatian slave who was freed in 1125 and became a commercial agent. His son was a mate and sailing master, and Zaccaria, the grandson, became rich enough to ally himself by marriage with a Trevisan who was a councillor of the patriarch of Constantinople.
- 45 *Venetiarum historia*, pp. 201, 203-4: Trevisan, *Cronaca*, ff. 85^v, 86; Camillo Manfroni, *Storia della marina italiana dal trattato di Ninfeo alla caduta di Costantinopoli* (Livorno 1902), I, p. 215; R.J. Loenertz, 'Menego Schiavo,' in *Studi veneziani*, xi (1967), 315-18
- 46 Alatheia Weil, *The Navy of Venice* (London 1910), p. 167; Dandolo, *Chronica*, *RISS*(2), p. 311; Camillo Manfroni, 'Cenni sugli ordinamenti della marina italiana nel Medioevo,' *Rivista marittima*, xxi, 4, (1898), pp. 465-89
- 47 *Chronicon Giustiniani*, BM, MS Kings 148, ff. 88^v; Trevisan, *Cronaca* (Marciana Coll. 8438), f. 86
- 48 Dandolo, *Chronica*, *RISS*(2), pp. 105-6, 139, 259; F.C. Lane, *Venice and History* (Baltimore 1966), p. 308. Cracco, *Società e stato*, pp. 408-36, recognizes the role that Dandolo gave the commoners, but finds it quite subordinate to the role that he gave the doges. He agrees that Dandolo is far from expressing any class feeling between commoners and nobles, but believes that Dandolo, reacting in 1350 against the bad government of the *grandi*, hoped for an all-powerful doge, a *signore*.
- 49 F.C. Lane, 'The Crossbow in the Nautical Revolution of the Middle Ages,' in *Economy, Society, and Government in Medieval Italy: Essays in Memory of Robert L. Reynolds*, ed. David Herlihy et al. (Kent, Ohio 1969), pp. 161-71, and *idem*, 'Venetian Seamen in the Nautical Revolution of the Middle Ages,' in 'Venezia e il Levante fino al 1500,' to be published by the Fondazione Cini; *idem*, 'Venetian Merchant Galleys, 1300-1334: Private

- and Communal Operation,' in *Speculum* xxxvii (1963), 198, and in *Venice and History*, pp. 219-20.
- 50 Merores, 'Der venezianische Adel,' 202-6, 224-8, and 'Der grosse Rat,' 64-71, 89-98; and 'Der venezianische Steuerkataster von 1379,' *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, xvi (1922), 416-17; Gino Luzzatto, *Storia economica di Venezia* (Venice 1961.), pp. 24-9, 79-93; 127-35, and especially p. 130.
- 51 Giuseppe Maranini, *La costituzione di Venezia dalle origine alla serrata de Maggior Consiglio* (Venice 1927; in a later printing [Rome 1932] it is vol. I of *La costituzione di Venezia* and is here so cited, although I used the 1927 printing). Maranini's basic interests were those of a constitutional lawyer, and his account seems to me distorted by his attributing to opposing parties constitutional conceptions of aristocratic or popular sovereignty. See pp. 174-6, 182-3. He ignores the extent to which 'populus' was used in early centuries to mean the whole community or the whole laity (p. 192), and he does not even attempt to distinguish occasions when it refers to the poor and occasions when it refers to the new rich. 'Popolare' seems to mean for him primarily what expresses the will of the people rather than the will of the aristocracy, and the existence of such a will as a constitutional principle is implied by his account. But in the reports of early chronicles the only recorded instance of a conflict between the will of the people and the will of their natural leaders (as Maranini himself calls the aristocracy, p. 354), is the refusal of the nobles to elect Jacopo Tiepolo doge. In recounting that episode Maranini suggests that a Tiepolo popular party was stirring up the people and ignores the fact that the only evidence about it is to the effect that Jacopo, instead of arousing supporters, withdrew from the city. He considers Giovanni Dandolo a leader of an anti-popular party, ignoring that fact that, as doge, he was the opponent of the restrictive reform proposed in 1297 (*ibid.*, pp. 332-43). On the other hand, Maranini emphasized, as I would, that Doge Gradenigo favoured a broad aristocracy, not a narrow oligarchy. See *idem*, *La costituzione di Venezia dopo la serrata del Maggior Consiglio* (Venice 1931), p. 8. (In the Rome 1932 reprinting it is: vol. II of *La costituzione di Venezia*.) Moreover, there is much that is appealing in his formulation: 'Altrove l'aristocrazia dei primi arrivati si difendeva come classe, e fu vinta. A Venezia si difese come Stato, e vinse in pieno la sua battaglia,' *La costituzione di Venezia*, I, p. 326. But this formula should be interpreted to allow for the readiness of the aristocracy during many centuries to admit new families, as shown by Merores in the articles above cited.
- 52 Fra Paolino Minorita, *Trattato de Regimine Rectoris*, ed. Adolfo Mussafia (Vienna and Florence 1868), chap. 67
- 53 F.C. Lane, 'Medieval Political Ideas and the Venetian Constitution,' in *Venice and History*, pp. 285-308
- 54 *Deliberazioni*, II, p. 87
- 55 Vettor Sandi, *Principii di storia civili della Repubblica di Venezia*, I (Venice 1758-72), II, pp. 631-2
- 56 Robert Cessi, *Storia della Repubblica di Venezia* (Milan and Messina

- 1946), I, pp. 265-70; *Deliberazioni*, I, pp. xi-xix. Merores, after the most thorough analysis of the sources yet made, also concluded that the nobles were in unchallenged control and the so-called *serrata* was of secondary importance. She even went so far as to conclude that the line between noble and commoner was clearly drawn on the basis of membership in the great council in the mid-thirteenth century and that the reform of 1297 merely formalized standards of nobility already established in practice and custom, 'Der grosse Rat,' 61, 88, 108.
- 57 *Deliberazioni*, I, pp. 263, 264; II, pp. 88-101, 225; III, pp. 244-5, 349-50; Enrico Besta, 'Intorno a due opere recenti sulla costituzione e sulla politica veneziana del medio evo,' *Nuovo archivio veneto*, n.s., XIV (1897), 207-9; Sandi, *Principii di Storia*, II, I, pp. 278-9
- 58 For example, Romanin, *Storia documentata*, III, p. 26, n.2; *Deliberazioni*, I, pp. 342-61; II, p. 89
- 59 At least after 1274, *Deliberazioni*, II, p. 93
- 60 *Deliberazioni*, I, pp. xii, 269, 341; III, pp. 9, 14, 51, 84, 85, 123, 125, 156, 365. Merores, 'Der grosse Rat,' 70, implies that the nominating committee (*electores*) had some freedom to use their discretion in naming members beyond the 100 which they were directed to name by the resolution creating the committee. Also, it is not clear that the doge and his council, who decided when additional nominations were needed, were necessarily limited by the occurrence of vacancies on the original list of 100.
- 61 Sandi, *Principii di Storia*, I, II, p. 701. A long list of officials with *ex officio* membership in the great council is given by Besta, as cited in *Nuovo archivio veneto*, n.s., XIV (1897), 204-6, but Besta, 202-3, expressed doubt about the reasons for choosing additional members during the year.
- 62 Giovanni Antonio Muazzo, 'Del antico governo della Repubblica di Venezia: Discorso storico-politico,' ms of which there are many copies, in Bibl. Naz. Marciana, ms Ital., Class VII, cod. 966 (7831) and in Biblioteca Correr at the Museo Civico, ms Cicogna 2000, f. 46; Tentori, *Saggio*, v, p. 162
- 63 *Deliberazioni*, II, p. 83; Merores, 'Der grosse Rat,' 79, says that before 1297 membership may have been considered by the busy businessman as merely a burdensome duty.
- 64 Vittorio Lazzarini, 'Obbligo di assumere pubblici uffici,' *Archivio veneto*, ser. 5, XIX (1936), 184-98
- 65 Figures on the number voting on important occasions are given in the same manuscript from which Cessi published the names of the nominees, Marciana, ms Ital., Cl. VII, cod. 551. It says (f. 149^r) that the number voting in 1275 was 275 although 577 nominees are listed for that year; in 1276 (ff. 149-50), 300 although 444 nominees were listed, by Cessi's count; in 1277 (f. 161^r), 268, 307, 292, and 304 voting although 465 nominees listed; in 1278 (f. 162^r, 167), 251 and 236 voting although 435 nominated; in 1283-4 (ff. 200-5), 220, 260, 277, 278, 316, and 344 voting. The number nominated in 1282 was 336; in 1293, 332; whereas in 1283-92 it is not recorded. In 1295 the number nominated had fallen to 257. In 1296 the record is incomplete; only 107 are recorded. *Deliberazioni*, I, p. xv.
- Maranini, *La costituzione di Venezia*, I, pp. 345, 350, says there were 366

voting in October 1286 and 588 voting in February 1297 (our style, 1296 Venetian style), a surprisingly large number in view of the lists published by Cessi. For these figures Maranini cites a 'Liber Fractus.' The only volume with that name mentioned in current catalogues and indices of the archive or in Cessi's description of the records of the great council contains neither folios nor dates corresponding to Maranini's references. A 'Liber Fractus' existing in the archives of the Avvogaria di Comun overlapping Bifrons and Cerberus is mentioned by Maximilian Claar, *Die Entwicklung der venetianischen Verfassung von Einsetzung bis zur Schliessung der grossen Rat (1172-1297)*, (Munich 1895), p. 149n. Maranini cited the same passages Claar had cited. Tentori, *Saggio*, ff. 172-3, also refers to a 'Liber Fractus dell' Avogaria' when he in fact is citing what is now called Zanetta, *copia*. Unless another volume called 'Fractus' can be found, all Maranini's references to 'Liber Fractus' are suspect. Merore, 'Der grosse Rat,' 34n, refers to Maranini's 'erfundene Zitate.'

Consistent with the large numbers he mentions as voting is Maranini's interpretation of a law concerning *ex officio* members passed 20 March 1288. He interpreted it to mean that all who had held certain offices were thereafter *ex officio* members of the great council for life. But the law as he prints it, *La costituzione di Venezia*, I, pp. 217, citing Bifrons, par. 38, is different from the text printed by Cessi (*Deliberazioni*, III, p. 200) citing Zanetta. Maranini reads 'sine quod eligantur' where Cessi reads 'usque ad sanctam Michaellem secundum quod eligantur.' In the context, Cessi's reading gives certain officials a year of *ex officio* membership in the great council the year after they retired.

- 66 Romanin, *Storia documentata*, II, p. 341; Roberto Cessi, *Le origini del ducato veneziano* (Naples 1951), p. 329
- 67 The sixty-odd Venetian parishes (*contrade*) were grouped into thirty districts, mostly of two parishes each. Canale, *Cronaca*, pp. 566-7, 572. These *trentacie* had served as election districts since the beginning of the thirteenth century. *Deliberazioni*, I, p. 263, and G. Cassandro, 'Concetto e struttura dello stato veneziano,' *Bergamum*, LVIII, 2 (1964), 37-42, a good brief summary. Exactly what rules the doge and his council were expected to follow in nominating the electors is not known, but it is possible that they had sufficient latitude, first in making up the list to be gone through, and then in deciding which members were at a given moment ineligible for one reason or another, e.g., absence, parentage, or debts, so that a clique which wished to perpetuate itself at all cost and which had control of the ducal council could, by using the electors of the year in much the way the Medici in Florence used the *Accoppiatori*, pack the great council and other councils and magistracies with their partisans. One advantage of the reform put through by Gradenigo was that it made impossible a narrowing of the ruling class by such methods.
- 68 *Deliberazioni*, I, pp. ix-xii; II, pp. 97, 100, 225; III, pp. 9, 156, 244-5, 365
- 69 *Ibid.*, III, p. 350
- 70 *Ibid.*, I, pp. ix-xii; II, p. 225; III, pp. 9, 14, 51, 84, 123, 156, 184-5, 349-50,

365. See also Besta as cited in *Nuovo archivio veneto*, n.s., XIV (1897), 201-2.

- 71 Cracco, *Società e stato*, pp. 104-11. But after showing how imprecise was the meaning of *nobile*, he continues to use *popolare* in opposition to *aristocratici*, as on pp. 120-1; and continues to call the Tiepolo *popolare* after three generations had held the highest offices.
- 72 *Ibid.*, pp. 337-50
- 73 Changes were proposed in 1286 on three days. On 3 October it was voted that those chosen by the electors for the senate and the great council should be voted on one by one and must be approved by a majority of the *Quarantia*. Two days later, on the 5th, there was a new motion which would have set up a different procedure. It provided that anyone who did not have a paternal ancestor who had been a member of the great council could not become a member unless approved by a majority of the ducal council and the great council. Opposing that proposal was a motion supported by the doge the content of which is reported only as 'stare firmi ad morem consuetum.' The doge's motion was that passed, 'de stare firmi.' On 17 October it was moved that the men nominated for the great council by the electors must be approved by majorities in the ducal council, the senate, and the *Quarantia*. This was defeated as it was again voted 'de stare firmi, or 'stare firmum.' *Deliberazioni*, III, pp. 156-7; ASV, Maggior Consiglio, *Deliberazioni*, Juna-Zanetta-Pilosus, f. 81. Although Cracco, *Società e stato*, p. 332, refers to the motion passed 3 October as valid thereafter, I believe it was repealed by the votes on 5 and 17 October to stand by customary procedure. This rather obvious interpretation is confirmed by the lack of any reference to approval of the nominees one by one in the resolution governing the electors passed in September 1287 (*Deliberazioni*, III, pp. 184-5) in 1293 (*ibid.*, III, pp. 349-50), in 1294 (*ibid.*, III, p. 365) and 1296 (Marciana, MS Ital. Cl. VII, cod. 551, f. 235 and 252).
- 74 The fourth defeated proposal was made 6 March 1296 and defeated by a motion to 'stare firmi.' The content of the motion is not given; that it was the same as the motion defeated 5 and 17 October in 1286 is mere assumption. *Deliberazioni*, III, p. 396.
- 75 *Deliberazioni*, III, pp. 417-18; Besta, in *Nuovo archivio veneto*, XIV, (1897), 216-18
- 76 Cessi, in printing the volume of minutes called Liber Pilosus, noted that the register was incomplete (*mutili*) and that it can be partly completed from the Liber Cerberus of ASV, Avvogaria di Comun. *Deliberazioni*, III, pp. v-vi. The *copia* of Pilosus in ASV, Maggior Consiglio, *Deliberazioni*, shows that some of the gaps were there centuries ago but some additional record of resolutions can be found in the Marciana MS, Ital. Cl. VII, cod. 551, in the copies embodied in the work of Muazzo, cited above, n. 62, and in the Gradenigo MS, busta 112 at the Biblioteca Correr in the Museo Civico, Venice. See below, n. 82. Maranini, *La costituzione di Venezia*, I, p. 345, cites the register Fractus for this period but the only register of that name in the present guides to the archives contains nothing beyond 1282

- and no folios of the high numbers cited by Maranini. The only explanation for his references seems to be that he used late copies and confused their references to their source.
- 77 Manfroni, *Storia*, I, pp. 207-14; Romanin, *Storia documentata*, II, p. 335; Georg Caro, *Genua und die Mächte am Mittelmeer* (Halle 1895-99), II, pp. 248-53
- 78 Trevisan chronicle (Marciana, 8438), ff. 89^v-90, in his second account: 'tutte quele famigie che allora si trovavano esser admese nel mazor conseio doveseno continuar senza la solitta balotazione che si faceva da San Michel et cusi se principio.' Repeated almost word for word by Gian Jacopo Caroldo, 'Historia di Venetia,' ms, Bibl. Naz. Marciana, Ital. Cl. VII, cod. 128a (8639), f. 141^v.
- 79 *Ibid.*, and Sanuto, *Vitae, RISSI*(1). XXII, 581, 583, 584
- 80 In the original record, ASV, Maggior Consiglio, Deliberazioni, Pilosus, f. 211, the law of September 1298 appears only as a footnote to the law of February 1297. In the authoritative record of the Avvogaria di Comun, Cerberus, f. 18^r, the law of September 1299, the earliest recorded on the subject, is in a different hand from the other entries.
- 81 The text of the motion of 11 September 1298 in Pilosus, f. 211 reads: 'Capta fuit pars quod consilium continens de Consilio Maiori fiendo sit deinceps sicut est modo.' The words after 'Capta fuit pars quod' are illegible except by ultra-violet rays and Cessi's edition, *Deliberazioni*, III, p. 418n, reads there 'ordo' instead of 'consilium continens,' but the reading given above and obtained by ultra-violet light is the same as that given in Giovanni Antonio Muazzo, 'Del governo antico della Repubblica di Venezia: Discorso storico politico,' Civico, ms Cicogna 2000, pp. 53-4.
- 82 The words 'sit deinceps sicut est modo' used in 1298 might be taken to imply permanent membership, but they refer to the procedure specified in February 1297, not to the membership. On 30 September 1299 it was voted that 'dictum consilium super electione maioris consilii debeat ad huc durare sicut ipsum continet.' ASV, Avvogaria di Comun, Deliberazioni del Maggior Consiglio, Cerberus, f. 18. Copies of a similar resolution dated February 1299 are given in Muazzo (Cicogna 2000) ff. 53-4, and in a collection of copies of laws passed during the dogeship of Pietro Gradenigo in Museo Civico-Correr, Gradenigo collection, busta 112. Tentori, *Saggio*, v, f. 185-6, says he found such laws for both 30 September 1298 and 30 September 1299. In 1300 and 1301 the great council passed motions confirming the membership lists for the great council approved by the *Quarantia*. That of 15 October 1301 reads: 'C.F.P. quod illi sint firmi sicut probati essent in festo Santi Michaelis ...' ASV, Avvogaria di Comun, Deliberazioni del Maggior Consiglio, Liber Magnus, f. 15.
- 83 On continued yearly balloting to determine membership, see Besta, *Nuovo archivio veneto*, n. s., XIV (1897), p. 221, and Tentori, *Saggio*, v, pp. 158-67, 180-6, and the chronicles cited above, note 4. Tentori argued convincingly by references to books of the *Quarantia*, now lost, that all the names of members for the next year were voted on each year by the *Quarantia*, that there was not yet any permanent membership. But while all

- those already members and still living were included in the list examined each year by the *Quarantia*, only the new names added presented real issues; the re-election was a mere formality. Practically speaking, a member once in was locked in. That the voting of the complete list was dispensed with in 1436, because it was a superfluous formality and because assembling all those to be voted in was considered a health hazard in time of plague, is reported by Tentori, *Saggio*, v, pp. 191-2.
- 84 ASV, Avvogaria di Comun, Deliberazioni del Maggior Consiglio, Cerberus, f. 18
- 85 *Ibid.*, Magnus et Capricornus, f. 6, new numbering
- 86 Muazzo, Cicogna 2000, ff. 58, 63, 67. Muazzo, in arguing for the great antiquity of all the Venetian nobility, maintained that the reform of 1297 did not open the way to any men who did not have distinguished Venetian ancestors, that it was understood that the electors in choosing men not members of the outgoing council would choose only those whose ancestors had held office. As far as the wording of the laws is concerned, that is quite possible. The reason for thinking some men of new families were added lies in the statements of the chronicles cited at the beginning of this article. In a law cited in Muazzo, Cicogna 2000, p. 70, a member who must have a majority in the *Quarantia* is called *hominem novum*. But this probably means merely a new member and implies nothing about ancestry for passages in a law of 1307 (quoted on the same page) refer to similar persons as 'illi qui dabuntur ad eligendum de novo de Majoris Consilio.'
- 87 See above, note 78
- 88 *Deliberazioni*, III, p. 446; ASV, Maggior Consiglio, Deliberazioni, Liber Pilosus, f. 222^v; Muazzo, Cicogna 2000, p. 59; Besta, *Nuovo archivio veneto*, n. s. XIV (1897), 219, dates this law in 1297
- 89 Giovanni Fiastrì, 'L'assemblea del popolo a Venezia come organo costituzionale dello State,' *Nuovo archivio veneto*, n. s., XXV (1913), 340-80
- 90 Cracco, *Società e stato*, pp. 240-1, describes how he imagines the Venetian general assembly to have been rigged in 1268. That time it was planned against the Tiepoleschi, but on another occasion it might be tried in their favour.
- 91 This point was emphasized in the fourteenth century by Bartolus in his favourable comment on the Venetian constitution, in his *Tractatus de regimine civitatis*, par. 15-19, 22, see Lane, *Venice and History*, p. 305.
- 92 Besta, *Nuovo archivio veneto*, n. s., XIV (1897), 218-20
- 93 *Ibid.*, p. 219. Although Tentori, *Saggio*, I, pp. 143-4, agrees in regard to the requirements for admission *per grazia*, he maintains that the electors continued to function until 1319, although only to nominate new members whose fathers or forefathers had been in the council.
- 94 Muazzo, Cicogna 2000, ff. 61-2, noted the indirect approach embodied in these laws.
- 95 Kretschmayr, *Geschichte von Venedig*, II, p. 75
- 96 *Ibid.* The age requirement and the arrangements for admitting at the age of twenty those who drew the gold balls from the urn were specified in 1319. Sandi, *Principi di storia civile*, II, I, pp. 15-17.

- 97 asv, Capitolare dei consoli dei mercanti, cap. 112; Avvogaria di Comun, Deliberazioni del Maggior Consiglio, Magnus, ff. 7, 8
- 98 *Ibid.*, Magnus, f. 53r-v. I am much indebted to Francis-Xavier Leduc for communicating to me the results of his researches into Venetian commercial administration in this period. He shows that the *Provveditori* were part of a general protectionist movement.
- 99 *Cassiere della bolla ducale, Grazie*, I, paragraph 400
- 100 *Ibid.*, paragraph 400, mentions that the *Provveditori* had been considering fifty-five years necessary. In the mid-thirteenth century, in contrast, the rules required only ten years, and there were many special grants by the great council. *Deliberazioni*, II, p. 145 and *passim*. A ducal bull of 1268 granting Venetian citizenship to a Jew, David of Negroponte, is mentioned by Pompeo Molmenti, *Storia, di Venezia nella vita privata* (Bergamo 1925-7), I, p. 79. Other special grants also are mentioned by Silvano Bor-sari, *Studi sulle colonie veneziane in Romania nel XIII secolo* (Naples 1966), p. 123n.
- 101 Avvogaria di Comun, Deliberazioni del Maggior Consiglio, Magnus, f. 10v. The law was vague concerning the trading rights of those allowed to continue to live in Venice after having done so for ten years, saying only 'possint morari Veneciis sicut possunt aliis veneti,' but these laws seem to be the basis for the distinction later called that of *cittadini de intus*, who had rights of trade only within the city, and *cittadini de extra*, who could export and import as Venetians, Molmenti, *Storia di Venezia*, I, p. 72.
- 102 asv, Provveditori di Comun, reg. I, ff. 6r, 8r, 11; R. Predelli, *Liber commemoriali registi* (in Deputazione Veneta di Storia Patria, *Monumenti storici*, serie I, [Venice 1876], I), Lib. I, paras. 250, 270, 276, and *passim*.
- 103 Avvogaria di Comun, Deliberazioni del Maggior Consiglio, Magnus, f. 7r; *Le deliberazioni del consiglio dei rogati (Senato), Serie mixtorum, I*, eds. R. Cessi and P. Sambin (Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Venezie, *Monumenti storici*, n.s., xv [Venice 1960]), pp. 95-6.
- 104 Avvogaria di Comun, Deliberazioni del Maggior Consiglio, Magnus 12r; Provveditori di Comune, reg. I, f. 11r
- 105 Roberto Cessi, 'L "Officium de Navigantibus" e i sistemi della politica commerciale veneziana nel secolo XIV,' in *idem, Politica e economica di Venezia nel Trecento*, (Storia et letteratura, XL [Rome 1952]), pp. 23-61, and in *Nuovo archivio veneto*, n.s., XXXII (1916).
- 106 Senato Misti, reg. 15-6 *copia*, f. 128 (2 March 1333)
- 107 asv, Libri Commemoriali, reg. 2, ff. 7-8; and in *Diplomatorium Veneto-Levanticum, 1300-1350*, ed. Georg M. Thomas (*Monumenti storici*, publ. deputazione Veneta di Storia Patria, serie I, v, [Venice 1880]), p. 104. Other references to Marco Minoto, in *Libri Commemoriali*, I, Lib. I, no. 329; Lib. II, nos. 172, 182, 269, 349; Lib. III, nos. 57, 89, show that he was a galley commander in 1307-8, at Constantinople in 1319, 1320, and 1322, *bailo* and *capitano* at Negroponte in 1326, and *Provveditore di Comun* in 1324.
- 108 Nicolai Rubinstein, 'The Beginnings of Political Thought in Florence,' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute*, v (1942), 198 ff.

Biondo, Sabellico,
and the beginnings of Venetian
official historiography

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