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Table of Contents

Bernardino Branca

Introduction

pp. 1-2

Jaynie Anderson

Ferdinando Ongania's Unpublished Monograph on Giorgione (1896)

pp. 3-31

Bernardino Branca

Edgar Wind in Hamburg, 1930–33: Searching for 'the Essential Forces of the Human Mind and Its History'

pp. 32-64

Giulia Maria Paoletti

'Perhaps you who pronounce my sentence are in greater fear than I who receive it': Orthodoxy vs Philosophy: Edgar Wind, Giordano Bruno and Michael Psellos

pp. 65-81

Robert Pawlik

Animated Accessories or Poetical Trappings? Botticelli's *Primavera* Among Walter Pater, Aby Warburg and Edgar Wind

pp. 82-123

Ferdinando Ongania's Unpublished Monograph on Giorgione (1896)¹

Jaynie Anderson

Abstract

Ferdinando Ongania (1842-1911) was a publisher of exceptional books on Venetian art and architecture, known for his classic bestsellers. But on one occasion he composed a book, known in a single copy. It was the first object bequeathed to the museum at Castelfranco, created in Giorgione's name. The volume consists of an account of Giorgione's works, as attributed in 1896, with some surprises. Two watercolours by Zaccariah dal Bò after the lost frescoes on the Fondaco dei Tedeschi on the Merceria façade record images and details that are not adequately discussed in the innumerable accounts of the lost frescoes, that were the most celebrated works by Giorgione. This article discusses their significance. The Merceria façade is here reconstituted for the first time in the *relievo* of Rem Koolhaas, the montage prepared by Hugh Goad. These newly discovered images of an allegory of Peace and of patrician members of the Compagnia delle Calze suggest that the Fondaco may have been occasionally a venue for theatre.

Keywords

Ferdinando Ongania; Giorgione; Titian; Fondaco dei Tedeschi; Zaccariah dal Bò; Compagnie delle Calze

It is easy to underestimate the importance of a publisher who knows what art history books to commission at the right time. Such an editor was Ferdinando Ongania (1842-1911) who published 170 volumes on art and architecture over 40 years, that have all remained essential for historians of Venice (fig. 1). Ongania's business was a shop at 74 St Mark's Square, where he sold books and photographs of Venice, usually chromolithographs or photogravures, finely produced on thick paper. The books were for cultivated travellers, exemplified by the distinguished figures in the art world to whom he dedicated the elegantly bound objects. Ongania was in daily contact with a sophisticated,

¹ I am grateful to Dr Matteo Melchiorre, the director of the Library of Castelfranco Veneto, and of the Museo Casa di Giorgione for discussing Ongania and his book with me. I am delighted to publish the drawing by Rem Koolhaas of the Merceria façade of the Fondaco, and to Hugh Goad for his reconstruction of the lost imagery on that side. Anna Welch assisted with the State Library of Victoria's collection of Ongania's publications in Melbourne.

and multilingual public for whom he published books in four languages, for example, his facsimile of the Grimani Breviary, an important Flemish manuscript in the Biblioteca Marciana, that had belonged to Cardinal Domenico Grimani. It appeared in Italian, French, German and English, with an accompanying text, by the French historian, Louis de Mas de Latrie (1815-1897). The English edition was dedicated to Henry Walters (1848-1931), an American businessman and philanthropist who founded the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore. It was bound in red and gold velvet, a facsimile of the binding on the original manuscript. These details were given in his *Catalogue des Tableaux, Objets d'Art et de Curiosité en vente chez F. Ongania, Venice, Permanent exhibition on St Mark's Square*.²

Among Ongania's books were many best sellers, such as Paolo Paoletti's *Architettura e scultura del Rinascimento* (1897-1899), and Pompeo Molmenti's *La Storia di Venezia nella vita privata* (1880). He published the first monographs on Venetian artists, Molmenti's *Life and Works of Carpaccio* (1907), and his *G. B. Tiepolo*, as well as a specialist books on the frescoes at the Villa Valmarana, and the Tiepolo family as printmakers. Some were quintessentially Venetian subjects, such as his last book on Venetian well heads, the *Vere da Pozzo*, to be found in every Venetian square, dating from the earliest Byzantine period until the nineteenth century'. The luxurious volume was dedicated to J. Pierpoint Morgan, the text by Ongania himself.

Ongania was more than just a creator of luxury items for elite tourists. He carefully positioned his books to be bought by libraries, with a mandate to acquire significant works globally, rather than ephemeral tourist publications. For example, far from Venice, in Melbourne, the State Library of Victoria had a policy, 'to acquire the most approved editions of all standard works, and afterwards such books as by reason of the expenses attendant on the production and illustration of them, are highly valuable in yielding information of a special nature, in cultivating the taste and improving the intellectual refinement of the readers, but which by their cost are placed beyond the reach of individuals, professional men, and the general public'. The wealth produced by the Gold Rush gave the nascent colony the means to achieve this policy, thus making this library one of the best bought for libraries of the second half of the nineteenth century. The State Library has sixteen of Ongania's multi volumed titles, one being the sixteen volumes about St Mark's Church. Beautiful images of the highest quality introduced a distant audience to Venetian treasures to lie in wait for readers across the centuries. In Ongania's preface to the first volume of a periodical dedicated to the decorative arts in Italy, 1891, *Art italien décoratif et industriel revue publiée sous le patronage du Ministère de l'Agriculture de l'Industrie et du Commerce*, he wrote, that this is not only a luxurious publication that is meant to take its place on tables in salons or in libraries, but addresses itself to those who work in the decorative arts, providing models for their creations.

² Biblioteca Giorgio Cini, Venice.

Who was this exceptional publisher? A few facts are known from the contents of his books and obituaries.³ He entered the publishing business in his late teens, working for the Austrian publishers, Ermanno, Federico and Masimiliano Münster. When they left Venice in 1848, Ongania bought the company. He was a Venetian patriot, a Risorgimento figure. His first publications were reproductions of rare books like Giacomo Franco's costume book (*Habiti d'homemini et donne venetiane*, 1878), old drawings of Venetian lace, and illustrations of frescoes by Tiepolo in the Villa Valmarana, Vicenza. These were books that no one else published and for which he created a niche market. In 1878 he undertook a publication with which no one else had succeeded in achieving on the Basilica of San Marco, which the German Catholic printer Kreuz had tried to do in 1843. The work took ten years. Ongania spent a fortune. The result was sixteen volumes, with 391 exquisite plates illustrating every nook and cranny, in *La Basilica di San Marco illustrate nella storia e nell'arte* (Venice, 1878-93). A special bookcase was made; two of these bookcases survive one in the Biblioteca Marciana, the other in the Archivio di Stato, Venice.

Another favourite patrician writer, Giuseppe Urbani de Gelthof, at the beginning of his four-page picture book on Venetian ships, *Barche e Navi Antiche Veneziane* (1891), writes of Ongania as that intelligent publisher to whom no one can say no, when he proposed a book with illustrations of boats taken from manuscripts, early printed sources, and images of surviving boats.⁴ The artists who made the drawings after Venetian boats were the same team as those who produced the volume in Castelfranco.

An obituary for Ferdinando Ongania, published in *The Scotsman* Edinburgh, on Tuesday August 29th, 1911, gives a revealing glimpse of his life and friendship with John Ruskin:

Death of a celebrated Venetian Publisher

Venice, like Edinburgh today, was once a famous publishing and printing centre. Many of its houses had a world-wide celebrity. But under Austrian domination everyone was extinguished with the exception of Münster, himself German, who had his place of business in the Piazza di S. Marco. Associated with Münster was the Venetian Ongania, who also succeeded him, even before the Austrians went out in 1866. Signor Ongania was an enterprising publisher and was encouraged in his labours not a little by Mr Ruskin. It may be remembered that Mr Ruskin wrote to the *Times* soliciting subscriptions to have drawings taken of all the mosaics in St Mark's Church, as he did not know how soon they

³ Conferenza del Prof. Arturo Pompeati all'Ateneo Veneto. *Ferdinando Ongania editore nella ricorrenza del Centenario della nascita*, Venice, 1912. More recently, Paolo Costantini, 'Ferdinando Ongania and the Golden Basilica: A documentation programme in 19th-century Venice', *History of Photography*, 8:4 (1984), 315-328.

⁴ 'Ferdinando Ongania, l'intelligente editore, cui niuno potrà negare un mirabile spirito di attività e intraprendenza ha già pensato di raccogliere da parecchi anni una serie di riproduzioni di antiche barche e navi veneziane, tratte dai libri e manoscritti conservati nelle nostre biblioteche. Quella serie destinate ad essere arricchita di altri important esemplari, servirà ad illustrazione di un'opera grandiose che l'Ongania si propone fra breve di dare alla luce', from the preface to *Barche e Navi Antiche Veneziane Numero unico Ricordo del Varo della Corazzata "Sicilia"*, Venice, 1891.

might be on the floor. Austria stored her cannon in the Church, and her soldiers and officials used to kick the precious stones out of the crowns of Christ and the saints. Signor Ongania conceived the idea of reproducing on a large scale every mosaic in the Church. It was a great and a very costly undertaking. However, helped by Mr. Ruskin, an order for a copy was secured from every crowned head in Europe, and from every national library. The work was successfully done, so that a permanent record of these grand old bibliocal mosaics has been secured. Of course, St Mark's Church is now a national monument, and the fabric is maintained by the Government. Like the painting of the Forth Bridge, the work of keeping up the Church never ends, although it is the more costly work, for the outlay, annually is over 2000 pounds. Other works by Ongania which are in the hands of the public, and by which he is better known, are, *Calli e Canali* (the lanes and Canals of Venice), *Breviario Grimani* (a facsimile of the famous Grimani Breviary), *I Camini* (the chimneys, once highly ornamental), *Vecchi Merletti* (old laces of Venice). Last year he reached his jubilee as a publisher and commemorated it by the publication of *Raccolta delle Vere da Pozzo* (a collection of well heads). The marble cylinders or Gothic capitols that form the heads of the well shafts in the private houses and public campos of Venice are often of extreme beauty. There used to be thousands of them, but many have been sold to foreigners. After this work Commendatore Ongania thought to retire from the publishing world, leaving his son, who been associated with him for years in business to carry on the work. Ongania died in Switzerland unexpectedly in 1911 when holidaying at St Moritz. The business was discontinued after his death.

Ongania wanted to write a history of Venetian art, in celebration of his favourite artists, Carpaccio, Tiepolo and Giorgione, but without Titian. His publications on Carpaccio and Tiepolo are well known, but his Giorgione album is an unusual book in the Casa di Giorgione at Castelfranco, described by the author as an *'Esemplare Originale Inedito'*. It is an album with a frontispiece (fig. 2). It has some printed text but contains pages with pen and pencil drawings, watercolours, pasted in photographs by Alinari, signatures of those who subscribed to it, and the first readers. There are reproductions after all the works then believed to be by Giorgione in different materials, such as the finest chromolithographs of the *Castelfranco Altarpiece*, a photograph of Giorgione's house at Campo San Silvestro, engravings after paintings, drawings, and most importantly watercolours on cardboard after the lost frescoes on the Merceria façade of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, copies made by the Venetian impressionist Zaccaria del Bò (1872-1935). Del Bò's watercolours are conceived independently as copies, without any knowledge of Anton Maria Zanetti's eighteenth-century prints after the Fondaco in his book: *Varie pitture a fresco de' principali maestri veneziani*, Venice 1760. Zanetti recorded the vanishing frescoes on Venetian facades, and in some copies he hand-coloured the prints for greater accuracy, two of which have been identified

in the Biblioteca Hertziana⁵ and the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.⁶ On one of the last pages an inscription attributes some of the graphic work to V. Scarpa: 'Miniature, disegni a penna, scrittura di V. Scarpa' (miniatures, pen drawings and writing). Despite his famous surname V. Scarpa is only known as an artist who assisted Ongania. The volume has been discussed,⁷ but merits further study. This group of artists also worked on the book of ships, mentioned above (fig. 3).

In 1889 the album was the first donation to the newly founded Museum in Castelfranco, then a room in the municipal offices. As an object in a museum the album was a work of art. It is a singular monograph on their local hero: *Giorgione e Le Sue Opere, Venezia Ferd. Ongania Edit. M.DCCC.XCVI* (fig. 2), published by Ongania⁸ at the request of Dr Francesco Marta, Sindaco of Castelfranco and the first conservator of the museum, the surgeon Dr Giovanni Bodigioni (1851-1913), who later became the second conservator of the museum.⁹ The museum at Castelfranco had modest origins but admirable ambition.

This album is an exquisite object, in elaborate binding, proudly signed by V. de Toldo, with the coat of arms of Castelfranco on the front and the lion of St Mark on the reverse (Figs. 4-5). The works given to Giorgione range from well documented works like the Castelfranco Altarpiece, the *Tempesta*, to many other works that would now be doubted or contested. Some paintings have disappeared entirely, such as this painting of *David with a Harp*, that is described by Ongania as a self-portrait of Giorgione in an unknown collection: 'Ritratto di Giorgione ritenuto dipinto da se stesso – proprietà del sigr. Aug. Nob. Caruso Angeli, Cavamanara, Pavia' (fig. 6).

Most valuable are the watercolours by Zaccariah dal Bò after the lost frescoes on the Fondaco dei Tedeschi (figs.7-13). In Giorgione's lifetime these were his best known frescoes, but were left to decay until 1966 when some fragments were removed, notably

⁵ First published by Jaynie Anderson, 'Mito e Realtà di Giorgione nella storiografia artistica da Marcantonio Michiel ad Anton Maria Zanetti', in *Giorgione e l'umanesimo veneziano*, ed. R. Pallucchini (Florence, 1981), 629-31; and in Anderson, 'La Contribution de Giorgione au génie de Venise', *Revue de l'art*, 63 (1984), 59-68; more recently, Anderson, *Giorgione: The Painter of 'poetic brevity'* (New York and Paris: Flammarion, 1997), 282-3.

⁶ Chiara Piva, 'Le Copie a colori delle varie pitture a' fresco dei principali maestri veneziani di Anton Maria Zanetti', *Arte veneta*, 72 (2015), 155-165, who claims that the Vatican coloring is more subtle.

⁷ *Opere della civica collezione museale*, curated by Marco Mondini, an exhibition at the Casa di Giorgione – Galleria del Teatro Accademico, Castelfranco Veneto, 15 November 1997 – 25 January 1997. For a discussion of the Ongania volume, see 57-60, 191-192. Also see the online entry, <http://www.museocastelfrancoveneto.tv.it/artisti/30.htm> Accessed 20 May 2022. See also Francesca Cocchiara, catalogue entry, in *Giorgione*. Exhibition at Castelfranco Veneto, 12. December to 11 April 2010, ed L. Puppi and Enrico Maria dal Pozzuolo, 392-393.

⁸ The principal study is: *Ferdinanda Ongania 1842-1911: Editore in Venezia: Catalogo* (eds) Mariachiara Mazzarioli; with an essay by Neil Harris. Lineadacqua, Biblioteca Querini Stampalia, Venice, 2011. This book has no ISBN number and is printed in an edition of 150 copies, a rarity like the books published by Ongania himself.

⁹ 'Alla Sua Città Natia di Castelfranco per l'incipiente Museo Comunale fondato nell'anno 1889 dal Dr. Francesco MartaIl dottor Giovanni Bodigioni dedica'.

the figure of a female nude in flaming red (fig. 11). In 1899 Zaccariah, then a young recent graduate from the Accademia, copied the nude on the front façade on the Canal Grande, and his watercolour shows the grime that disfigured the fresco.

More important were Zaccariah's three watercolours described as an 'Affresco, frammento sulla facciata sopra la Calle del Fontego dei Tedeschi, pag. 34-36.' These three parts to the now lost fresco were on the Merceria façade, which Giorgio Vasari describes as the principal façade and entrance to the building. Both the two facades, the one facing the Canal Grande, and the façade of the principal entrance on the Merceria were important. As is well known there are several seventeenth and eighteenth-century copies after the lost frescoes on the Fondaco, but these watercolours reproduce previously unknown images, and two, one after Giorgione's nude female figure, and the other after Judith, relate to frescos that survive (figs. 12-13).

It is worth revisiting the documentary sources for the Fondaco frescoes to see what may result from an analysis of texts in relation to Ongania's copies. The document of the commission for the frescoes has been known in all the literature on Giorgione, although the second paragraph of that document was only published and discussed as late as 1978 by Ruggiero Maschio.¹⁰ In the original document of commission, the frescoes are commissioned from Giorgione, no other artist is mentioned. In the later dispute over payment Giorgione is the only name mentioned as the author of the frescoes. By 1550, Vasari mentions the frescoes as famous masterpieces by Giorgione, commissioned by the Senate to decorate the facades (*ordinarono che Giorgione dipignesse la facciate di fuori*) of the German trading post, the Fondaco dei Tedeschi.¹¹ When Vasari visited Venice for nine months in 1542,¹² slightly more than thirty years after Giorgione's death, he was a guest of the *Sempieterni*, one of the Compagnie delle Calze, to design sets for a play by Pietro Aretino, at which stage he must have gathered material on Giorgione, who is also connected with these confraternities.

In the Giunti edition (1568) Vasari's description of the Fondaco frescoes is longer. The life of Giorgione contains the new and often-quoted discussion of the difficulty Vasari experienced in the interpretation of Giorgione's subject matter, especially the famous analysis of the female figure above the principal entrance on the Merceria side, that is 'almost a Judith'. The Fondaco Judith is central to Vasari's analysis of Giorgione's works, although today most scholars attribute this fresco fragment to Titian. There is no suggestion in Vasari's text that the Judith/Justice fresco, prominently placed over the

¹⁰ Ruggiero Maschio, 'Per Giorgione. Una verifica dei documenti dell'archivio', *Antichità Viva*, 1978, 17, no 4-5, 5-11.

¹¹ Text from the Torrentino edition *Memofonte*, http://www.memofonte.it/home/files/pdf/vasari_vite_torrentiniana.pdf.

¹² Juergen Schulz, 'Vasari at Venice', *The Burlington Magazine*, 103 (1961), 500-511.

entrance is by Titian. On the contrary, for Vasari, it is the most difficult work by Giorgione to interpret.¹³

Towards the end of his *Life of Giorgione*, in the second edition, Vasari also mentions proudly that he owned a painted portrait drawing by Giorgione of a German merchant from the Fondaco, and other sketches by Giorgione in pen, in his book of drawings; Vasari's drawings by Giorgione remain unidentified.¹⁴ The Fondaco is again discussed in Vasari's biography of *Morto da Feltre*, who upon reaching Venice from Florence went to assist Giorgione 'facendo gli ornamenti di quell'opera'.

It is only later, in the life of Titian, in 1568, that Vasari credits Titian with some unspecified history paintings (*alcune storie*) on the Merceria façade of the Fondaco. Vasari quotes Titian's oral testimony (*secondo che egli stesse racconta*) and states that Giorgione became jealous of his achievement: 'Nella quale facciata non sapendo molti gentiluomini che Giorgione non vi lavorasse più, nè che la facesse Tiziano, il quale ne aveva scoperto una parte, scontrandosi in Giorgione, come amici si rallegravano seco, dicendo che si poteva meglio nella facciata di verso la Merceria che non aveva fatto in quella che è sopra il Canal Grande; della qual cosa sentiva tanto sdegno Giorgione, che infino che non ebbe finite Tiziano l'opera del tutto, e che non fu notissimo che esso Tiziano aveva fatta quella parte, non si lasciò molto vedere, e da indi in poi non volle che mai più Tiziano praticasse o fusse amico suo'. In 1557, Ludovico Dolce claims that the *Judith* is by Titian and that Giorgione was jealous of his pupil, presumably repeating what Titian told him. Should we believe Dolce and Titian as did every writer from the early seventeenth century, from when all the frescoes on the Merceria façade are attributed to Titian? Or should we believe the confused statements of Vasari, for whom the *Judith* is by Giorgione in the first edition?

A comparison of the surviving fresco fragment of *Judith* (Fig. 17) with the hand-coloured engraving after *Judith* by Anton Maria Zanetti (Fig. 18), shows that Zanetti

¹³ '....dove essendo cresciuto la fama di Giorgione, fu consultato et ordinato da chi ne aveva la cura che Giorgione lo dipingesse in fresco di colori secondo la sua fantasia purché e' mostrasse la virtù sua e che e' facesse un'opera eccellente, essendo ella nel più bel luogo e ne la maggior vista di quella città. Per il che messovi mano Giorgione, non pensò se non a farvi figure a sua fantasia per mostrar l'arte, ché nel vero non si ritrova storie che abbino ordine o che rappresentino i fatti di nessuna persona segnalata, o antica o moderna; et io per me non l'ho mai intese, né anche, per dimande che si sia fatta, ho trovato chi l'intenda, perchè dove è una donna, dove è un uomo in varie attitudini, chi ha una testa di liono appresso, altro con un angelo a guisa di Cupido, nè si giudica quell che si sia. **V'e bene sopra la porta principale che riesce in Merzeria una femina a sedere, c'ha sotto una testa d'un gigante morta, quasi in forma d'una Iuditta, ch'alza la testa con la spada e parla con un todesco, quale è abasso: né ho potuto interpretare per quell che se l'abbi fatta, se già non l'avesse voluta fare per una Germania.** Insomma e' si vede ben le figure sue esser molto insieme, e che andò sempre acquistando nel meglio; e vi sono teste e pezzi di figure molto ben fatte e colorite vivacissimamente, et attese in tutto quello che egli vi fece che traesse al segno de le cose vive e non a imitazione nessuna de la maniera. La quale opera è celebrata in Venezia e famosa non meno per quello che e' vi fece che per il comodo delle mercanzie et utilità del publico'. See the online text at: http://www.memofonte.it/home/files/pdf/vasari_vite_giuntina.pdf.

¹⁴ Even unidentified in the recent catalogue of Vasari's collection, *Giorgio Vasari Le Livre des Dessins. Destinées d'une collection mythique*, catalogue of an exhibition at the Louvre, 30 March to 18 July 2022, 203.

interpreted or ‘titianised’ the image, and noted in his text that Vasari gave the Judith to Giorgione ‘per sbaglio’. By contrast Dal Bo gives an impressionistic view of Judith as placed the façade, unaware of Zanetti.

This Merceria façade of the Fondaco has never been photographed in its entirety unlike the front façade that faces the Canal Grande, which appears in countless photographs and view paintings by Canaletto and others. The only art historian to have reproduced photographs of that side is Edgar Wind, in his monograph on Giorgione’s *Tempesta*, in his brief but original discussion, with four partial views of that facade.¹⁵ The *calle* is too narrow to allow a photographer to reproduce the entire façade even with the widest angled lens. It is the principal entrance to the building, and unlikely that Giorgione would have delegated such an important fresco to Titian. Most Venetian scholars consider that the program for the frescoes must have been a unified one for the entire building.¹⁶

Surprisingly, to date, there have been no comparative analyses of the techniques employed in the different frescoes that have been attributed to Giorgione, at Castelfranco, Montagnana and Venice, to assess traditional attributions and to determine whether they are technically coherent. Recent preliminary research in Castelfranco reveals that different hands worked on the friezes and that there is a complex restoration history, previously undefined. Despite the testimony of the early sources that reveal Giorgione to have emerged as a fresco painter in Castelfranco and to have worked throughout his career on monumental frescoes in the Veneto and Venice, there is only one attempt, by Adriano Mariuz to evaluate Giorgione as a fresco painter.¹⁷ Mariuz draws attention to the singular fact that Giorgione frescoed the exterior of his house at Campo San Silvestro to advertise his skill and details the numerous commissions recorded by Vasari and Carlo Ridolfi. How Giorgione began as a fresco painter in the Trevigiana remains difficult to understand, given the poor quality of surviving frescoes.

When Francesco Valcanover removed the remaining fragments from the Fondaco he published a montage of photographs of (unrestored) fragments from the Fondaco in the catalogue of the exhibition¹⁸ that was again reproduced in Paul Joannides book, *Titian to 1518*.¹⁹ They are illegible and difficult to understand. It would be invaluable if our colleagues in Venetian museums were able to re-examine them to see if more could be gleaned from the surviving fragments.

¹⁵ Edgar Wind, *Giorgione’s ‘Tempesta’ with comments on Giorgione’s poetic allegories* (Oxford: 1969), 11-15, 38-42, figs. 51-55.

¹⁶ See for example, Sandra Rossi, ‘Fondaco dei Tedeschi’, in *Giorgione. “Le meraviglie dell’arte”*, catalogue of an exhibition at the Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice, 1 November 2003 to 22 February 2004, 150-161.

¹⁷ Adriano Mariuz, ‘Giorgione pittore di affreschi’, in *Da Bellini a Veronese. Temi d’arte veneta*, ed. Gennaro Toscano and Francesco Valcanover, Venice, 2004, 299-367.

¹⁸ Francesco Valcanover, *Giorgione a Venezia*, catalogue of an exhibition at the Gallerie dell’Accademia, September to November 1978, 1978, 130-31.

¹⁹ Paul Joannides, *Titian to 1518* (London and New Haven, Yale University Press, 2001), 58-59.

To reconstruct the appearance of the Merceria façade for this article, the water-coloured images were placed on an architectural *relievo*, executed by the Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas for his renovation of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, made shortly before 2016. This was/is the first time that a view of the architectural façade of the Merceria had been created and published. The Melbourne architect Hugh Goad created the montage of where these frescoes would have been placed on the building on the Koolhaus *relievo* (fig. 16a-b).

These copies give vivid colour to the images and reveal previous unknown details, principally a German mercenary soldier (a Landsknecht), with his cap pulled over his face before an olive branch of peace (Fig. 16a-b). A second figure of a *compagno della calza*, may be compared to a rarely reproduced fragment (Figs. 13-14) from the Merceria facade. The copy shows the vibrant colours of the young man's flamboyant dress, a striped red and blue cape, and green striped hose. Themes of Peace and the Theatre are elsewhere in the program of the Fondaco, reinforced by their repetition here. Young men from the pleasure-loving confraternities of the hose, the Compagnie delle Calze, have been frequently identified in Giorgione's paintings, and elsewhere on the Fondaco.²⁰ Their repeated presence might suggest that the central courtyard of the custom's house could have been used for theatre, an ideal space (Fig. 14). Indeed, Marino Sanudo describes such a lavish theatrical performance there in 1517 to celebrate a German alliance with Venice.²¹ Festivities began in the morning and ended the next day at 3 am. The entertainment consisted of masked dancing, different kinds of ballet, comic interludes from the buffoon Zuan Polo, elaborate chariots with Cupid and other deities, marine animals and amorous nymphs. It is possible that the seemingly eclectic program of the Fondaco echoed celebrations of a similar event.

The reconstruction of the Merceria façade of the Fondaco, made from Dal Bò's watercolours, confirms the impression Vasari had, of a combination of figures that seem unrelated to one another. As Juergen Schulz discovered there is a sketchy record of a fresco on the extreme left of the Merceria façade, 'a young man, erect and nude, who grips a cloth in the manner of a sail', glimpsed in the proof of an anonymous engraving of *Il Famoso Ponte di Rialto*, but eliminated from the final engraving.²² Schulz convincingly argues that the lost figure is based on the left-handed horse tamer, a Graeco-Romano marble, on the Palazzo del Quirinale, Rome. Schulz may well be right that this is the hand of Titian on the Merceria façade, whereas some other frescoes are stylistically less dynamic and may be by Giorgione, from whom they were commissioned, according to the original document.

²⁰ See my lecture: 'Spectacle in sixteenth-century Venice: or how Carpaccio, Giorgione and Titian represented Patrician Youth Theatre', *Australian Academy of the Humanities, Proceedings*, 33 (2008) 109-29. More recently, Chriscinda Henry, *Playful Pictures. Art, Leisure, and Entertainment in the Venetian Renaissance Home*, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2021.

²¹ Marino Sanudo, *I Diarii*, XXIII, p. 583.

²² Juergen Schulz, 'Titian at the Fondaco dei Tedeschi', *The Burlington Magazine*, 143, (2001), 567-569.

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Fig. 1. Ferdinando Ongania (1842-1911). Photograph from Ferdinando Ongania editore in memoria. Venice 1912, Biblioteca della Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice. © Jaynie Anderson



Fig. 2. Frontispiece to Ferdinando Ongania's monograph: *Giorgione e le sue Opere*, Venice, 1896. Biblioteca Comunale, Castelfranco, Veneto, inv. OA. Scheda madre 271. © Biblioteca Comunale



Fig. 3. A page with illustrations of Venetian boats from the gondola to the Doge's ceremonial barge, from *Barche e Navi antiche veneziane numero unico ricordo del varo della corazzata "Sicilia"*, Venice, 1890. From the copy at the Caird Library, Royal Museums, Greenwich, London. © Jaynie Anderson



Fig. 4. V. de Toldo. Front binding with the coat of arms of Castelfranco, from Ongania's monograph on Giorgione.



Fig. 5. V. de Toldo, Lion of St Mark. Back binding from Ongania's monograph on Giorgione.



Fig. 6. David with a Harp, described by Ongania as a self-portrait of Giorgione: 'Ritratto di Giorgione ritenuto dipinto da se stesso – proprietà del sigr. Aug. Nob. Caruso Angeli, Cavamanara, Pavia'. Location unknown. © Jaynie Anderson



Fig. 7. Zaccariah dal Bò. Copy after Giorgione's female, from the canal façade of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi. Watercolour. From Ongania's monograph, 396 x 320 mm, p. 33.



Fig. 8. Giorgione. Nude female figure from the canal façade of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi. Fresco. 243 x 140 cm. Venice, Galleria dell'Accademia.



Fig. 9. Zaccariah dal Bò. Copy of the frescoes on the Merceria façade of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice, combat between men and monsters, from Ongania's monograph, 396 x 320 mm. Watercolour, and pen in black ink, p. 34.



Fig. 10. Zaccariah dal Bò. Watercolour on page 35 of Ongania's monograph. Copy after Giorgione's fresco of Judith and a childish monstrous being on the Merceria façade of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice. Signed: 'Dal Bò'.



Fig. 11. Zaccariah dal Bò. Watercolour on page 35 of Onagnia's monograph. p. 36.



Fig. 12. Zaccariah dal Bò. Watercolour. P. 35. Detail of fig. 11, allegory of peace.



Fig. 13. Zaccariah dal Bò. Watercolour. P. 36. Detail of fig. 11, compagno della calza.



Fig. 14. Relievo of the interior courtyard of the Fondaco.



Fig. 15. Fragment of a compagno della Calza from the Merceria façade of the Fondaco.



Fig. 16a. Composite view of the Merceria façade of the Fondaco positioning Zaccariah dal Bò's watercolours in the middle section of the façade on a rilievo by Rem Koolhaus.



Fig. 16b. Composite view of the Merceria façade of the Fondaco positioning Zaccariah dal Bò's watercolours in the middle section of the façade on a rilievo by Rem Koolhaus (detail).

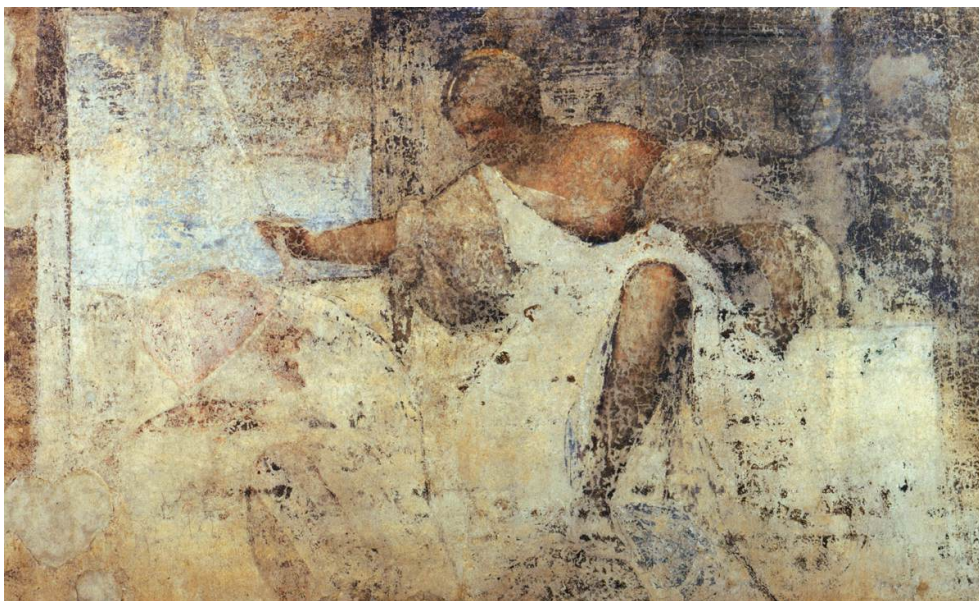


Fig. 17. *Judith*. Fresco from the Merceria facade of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi.



Fig. 18. Anton Maria Zanetti. Hand-coloured copy after the fresco of *Judith* from the Fondaco. In *Varie pitture a fresco* / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.