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Giovanni Andrea Vavassore and the Business of Print in Early Modern Venice

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Declaration

This is to certify that the work contained within this thesis is entirely my own. Due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used. No part of this thesis has been submitted for any other degree or qualification.

Signed: (Natalie Lussey)

Abstract

This thesis reconstructs the activities of a single print workshop, active from 1515 to 1593. By providing a microcosm of the Venetian print industry, it both challenges preconceived notions of the inherent competitiveness of the industry, and demonstrates the sheer variety of printed material available for purchase during the sixteenth century. Chapter One begins by reconstructing the life of Giovanni Andrea Vavassore, a woodcarver from a small Bergamasco town in the Venetian *terraferma*. By charting his integration into a new city and a new trade, it questions the role of religious and social institutions in enabling 'foreigners' to feel at home in Venice, and considers the push and pull factors at work among immigrants in the Renaissance. Chapter Two focuses closely on reconstructing the workshop's output, using a catalogue of works compiled for this thesis to demonstrate the quantity and variety of printed material sold in a sixteenth century printshop. It also gives an insight into the world of the Venetian *bottega* and the artisans who worked within it. Chapter Three highlights the importance of networking and collaboration in the world of Venetian print. By drawing on a selection of illustrations produced by Vavassore for other publishers, it demonstrates the close working relationships – and geographical proximity – that enabled new printers to enter the trade, and continued to support them in the decades that followed. Chapter Four nuances the idea of the network further, demonstrating the importance of copying, and the sharing of resources, in the workshop's production of maps. It also offers a new perspective on the purchasing habits of people in the Renaissance, questioning why large multi-sheet maps and prints were popular and how they were used. Chapter Five focuses on 'popular' books and pamphlets, relating printed material to the contemporary events, interests, and material objects that both inspired and were derived from it. Chapter Six reconstructs the workshop's interactions with the Venetian authorities, questioning why certain texts and images were protected by Senatorial privileges and others were not. Finally, Chapter Seven charts the impact of religious reform on the workshop across the eight decades of its activity. By focusing on specific case studies, it examines the devotional texts issued by the workshop in the years prior to, during, and after, the meetings of the Council of Trent; and demonstrates the extent to which the activities of a Renaissance printer and his shop were monitored and restricted by the Inquisition.

Lay Summary

This thesis focuses on the activity and production of a print workshop, active in Venice from 1515 to 1593. As well as reconstructing the life and work of the Renaissance printer Giovanni Andrea Vavassore, it draws on the much larger questions surrounding the production, sale, and consumption of books during this period. By using a variety of source material – including wills, parish records of births and marriages, heresy trials, and surviving books, pamphlets, maps, and printed images – it places this printshop within the urban fabric of sixteenth century Venice, and sheds light on the quantity and variety of printed material available for purchase at this time. Beginning with the man himself, this thesis works outwards from the individual and emphasises the importance of networking and collaboration in both entering a new trade and surviving in it. Active for over eight decades, I question why this workshop survived when so many of the shops owned by Vavassore's contemporaries did not. By creating a chronology of its activity, I examine the different types of material published by the workshop – from book illustrations to printed maps, popular pamphlets to academic textbooks, and self-help manuals to portable devotional texts – highlighting the interaction between print and contemporary events (including sieges, sacks, and wars), and the meanings attributed to books and pamphlets by their early modern consumers. Finally, I explore the various mechanisms imposed by the Venetian authorities to keep printed material in check. Whilst printers could seek out an early form of copyright protection for their own work, from the mid-sixteenth century the Holy Office – in the guise of both the Inquisition and the Index of Prohibited Books – began to closely monitor and control the kind of books issued from the presses of Venice. This thesis therefore follows the fortunes of a family-run firm in a period of considerable social and religious upheaval, drawing on previously overlooked material to both challenge and contribute to our knowledge of the print industry of Renaissance Venice.

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Abbreviations

Archives and Libraries

ASdP		Archivio Storico del Patriarcato, Venice
	SMM	San Moisè, Matrimoni
	SMB	San Moisè, Battesimi
ASV		Archivio di Stato, Venice
	CI	Cancelleria Inferiore
	CX	Consiglio dei Dieci
	ST	Senato Terra
	SU	Sant'Uffizio
IRE		Istituzioni di Ricovero e di Educazione Venezia, Venice
	CAT	Casa dei Catecumeni
TNA		The National Archives
	PRO	Public Records Office
BL		The British Library, London
BMCV		Biblioteca del Museo Correr, Venice
BM		The British Museum, London
BNF		Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris
Bodleian		The Bodleian Library, Oxford
Cini		Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice
FQS		Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice
Houghton		Houghton Library, Harvard University
Newberry		The Newberry Library, Chicago

Printed Publications and Databases

DMS	Diary of Marin Sanudo. Entries are presented by volume and column. M. Sanudo, *I diarii (1496-1533).* Edited by R. Fulin et al. 58 Vols. Venice: Visentini, 1879-1903.
DTEI	M. Menato, E. Sandal & G. Zappella (eds.) *Dizionario dei tipografi e degli editori italiani. Il Cinquecento.* Vol. 1: A-F. Milan: Editrice Bibliografia, 1997.
EDIT16	Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo Unico delle bibiolteche italiane e per le informazioni bibliografiche (ICCU). *Edit 16. Censimento Nazionale delle edizione italiane del XVI secolo.* (Website Accessed 24 June 2015)
GOR	*Guerre in Ottava Rima.* 4 vols. Ferrara: Istituto di Studi Rinascimentali; Modena: Edizioni Panini, 1989.
ONC	*Opera nova contemplativa…* Venice: Giovanni Andrea Vavassore, undated.
USTC	Universal Short Title Catalogue (Website Accessed 24 June 2015)
WGA	Web Gallery of Art. (Website Accessed 6 July 2015)

Other Abbreviations

b.	*busta*	lib.	*libro*
cat.	catalogue	MS	manuscript
f./ff.	folio/s	r.	*registro*
fasc.	fascicle	vol./vols.	volume/s
inv.	inventory		

Editing Criteria

Translations or transcriptions into English are my own unless otherwise stated. In the case of early modern texts I have, where appropriate, expanded abbreviations and added capital letters and spaces to separate words. Any uncertain transcriptions are indicated with square brackets. When referring to specific copies of books, pamphlets, and maps, I have included the shelfmark and location of the copy (or copies) I have consulted. Any biblical verses have been taken from the English Standard Version (ESV). Finally, I have adapted dates from the Venetian calendar – which began on 1 March – to the modern style.

Vavassore is variously referred to as 'Vavassore' and 'Valvassore.' Throughout this thesis, I have opted to use the former, simply because this spelling appears more frequently on the archival documents, and on a slightly larger percentage of the surviving texts included in Appendix 1.

Introduction

At some point before 1515 Giovanni Andrea Vavassore and his wife Samaritana arrived in Venice from the small town of Telgate. His brothers Giovanni Jacopo, Giuliano, and Giovanni Maria either made the journey with the couple, or settled in the lagoon at a later point.[1] Upon arrival, Vavassore was an outsider: just one of many immigrants from Bergamo, Brescia, and the other Venetian territories to flock to the lagoon in the hope of finding prosperity there.[2] It did not take him long to make the transition to well-connected and well-respected insider. By 1523, he had settled in the central parish of San Moisè and attended the meetings of a confraternity there; and by 1530, he was a member of the Painters' Guild that congregated regularly in the nearby church of San Luca.[3] In the intervening years, he not only managed to set up his workshop in premises on the Ponte dei Fuseri, but also to establish working relationships in support of his activities as a woodcutter, mapmaker, printer, publisher and seller of books.

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[1] Vavassore refers to his brothers as the "fraterna" in his first testament of 25 August 1523. It is possible to conclude that Giovanni Jacopo, Giuliano and Giovanni Maria all moved to Venice as their sons and daughters also lived in the parish of San Moisè. Their descendants are included in this parish's marriage records until 1602; see AdSP, San Moisè *Matrimoni* b.1, f.16 and f.44. The 1523 testament, preserved in the Archivio di Stato of Venice, is transcribed in A. M. Schulz, 'Giovanni Andrea Valvassore and His Family in Four Unpublished Testaments,' in *Artes Atque Humaniora: Studia Stanislao Mossakowski Sexagenerio dicata* (Warsaw, 1998) 120-1.

[2] On immigration to Venice in the Renaissance, see D. Calabi, 'Gli stranieri e la città,' in A. Tenenti & U. Tucci, *Storia di Venezia dale origini alla caduta della Serenissima* Vol. 5 *Il Rinascimento: società ad economia* (Rome, 1996) 913-46; B. de Maria, *Becoming Venetian: Immigrants and the Arts in Early Modern Venice* (New Haven, 2010); A. M. Schulz, *Woodcarving and Woodcarvers in Venice, 1350-1550* (Florence, 2011); E. Crouzet-Pavan, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of a Myth* (Baltimore, 2005) 229-270; and L. J. Olard, 'Venice-Babylon: Foreigners and Citizens in the Renaissance Period' in S. G. Ellis & L. Klusáková, *Imagining Frontiers, Contesting Identities* (Pisa, 2007) 155-74. An upcoming research project by Dr Rosa Salzberg also aims to explore the issue of immigrants and immigration by focusing on the spaces of arrival (inns, lodging houses, ferry stations) in early modern Venice.

[3] Vavassore declares his wish to be buried in the tomb of the confraternity at this church in his early testament: "Et quando me hac fungi contigerit volo cadaver meum tumulari is archis confraternitus Sancti Corporis in ecclesia S. Moysis." Schulz, 1998, 120-1. His name appears on the list of members of the Painters' Guild compiled in 1530, now transcribed in E. Favaro, *L'arte dei pittori in Venezia e i suoi statuti* (Florence, 1975) 137-44.

The history (and historiography) of print in Venice is littered with cases like that of Vavassore.[4] The fifteenth-century pioneers of the printing industry in Venice were almost all outsiders: non-Venetians who emigrated to the lagoon from France and Germany, refined their techniques, and exploited the city's favourable trading conditions – all with evident success. Thanks to the lure of the imagined wealth to be made from printing – and the apparent ease of achieving it – it had become a "boom industry" by the late fifteenth century.[5] The second generation of Italian printers quickly ensured that Venice achieved international renown for the quality and quantity of its printed wares, and established its position at the forefront of developing letters and types like Greek and Hebrew, as well as printing complex musical annotation. Even books produced in more conventional types – be they Latin or vernacular – embraced innovation, demanding clearer Roman typefaces and packaging them in smaller, more portable formats. The persistent influence of Nicholas Jenson's clear typefaces and the octavo format used by Aldus Manutius on our knowledge of Venetian print is evident in modern collections and exhibitions.[6]

Specialisation and exceptionalism have underpinned the study of print and the printing industry in Venice and beyond. By focusing on the production of specific *types* of book, book historians have formed a picture of a Venetian print industry largely characterised by the prodigious skill of typecutters and publishers, many of whom were breaking new ground. Martin Lowry's studies of Jenson and

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[4] Angela Nuovo provides a succinct summary and description of the activities of early printers like Johannes de Colonia, Johannes de Spira, Nicholas Jenson and Peter Ugelheimer in *The Book Trade in the Italian Renaissance* (Leiden, 2013) 21-34.

[5] On print as a "boom industry" see V. Scholderer, 'Printing at Venice to the End of 1481' in *Fifty Essays in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Bibliography*, ed. Dennis E. Rhodes (Amsterdam, 1966) 75; L. Gerulaitis, *Printing and Publishing in Fifteenth Century Venice* (London, 1976); and H.F. Brown, *The Venetian Printing Press: An Historical Study Based Upon Documents for the most part hitherto Unpublished* (London, 1891). There was a general consensus among contemporaries that printers were rich: Marin Sanudo wrote that Nicholas Jenson was '*richissimo*' in the 1470s: M. Lowry, *The World of Aldus Manutius: Business and Scholarship in Renaissance Venice* (Ithaca, 1979) 8.

[6] The John Rylands Library Aldine collection now numbers approximately 2,000 volumes, some of which were displayed in the 2015 exhibition 'Merchants of Print: From Venice to Manchester.' Similarly, note the exhibition in the British Library 'The Aldine Press, 500 years on.' On Jenson's Roman typeface and its (continuing) influence, see M. Lowry, *Venetian Printing: Nicolas Jenson and the Rise of the Roman Letterform* (Herning, 1989); A. Lawson, *Anatomy of a Typeface* (Jaffrey, NH, 1990); D. R. Carlson, 'Nicholas Jenson and the Form of the Renaissance Printed Page', in P. Stoicheff & A. Taylor (eds.) *The Future of the Page* (Toronto, 2004) and J. A. Dane, *Out of Sorts: On Typography and Print Culture* (Pennsylvania, 2011) 57-71.

Manutius effectively established this narrative and analytical framework.[7] Similarly, the investigation of the sixteenth-century vernacular presses of the Giolito family focused on their exceptional ability to establish and maintain satellite outputs across the Italian peninsula; whilst Melissa Conway's study of the short-lived but significant Ripoli press in Florence served to accent its singularity rather than to provide a model for considering other presses or workshops.[8]

Much as the scholarly focus has now moved away from a consideration of the works produced by specific individuals or institutions, it has moved towards a different kind of specialisation: the examination of particular genres of, or markets for, print. This approach is exemplified in Rosa Salzberg's recent work, which considers the previously neglected genre of 'cheap print': ephemeral items often distributed by *cantastorie* or *cantimbanchi* present in Renaissance Venice. In this way she has demonstrated the close relationship between oral and written (or printed) cultures.[9] Whilst our understanding of cheap print and its points of entry into the market – chiefly, through the hands of itinerant street sellers – continues to grow, focusing on a single genre of print also presents its own problems; chief of which is a lack of appreciation for the range and sheer variety of printed material available for consumption in the Renaissance. The study of the history of book and of printed material has, therefore, become somewhat polarised: at one extreme, there is a focus on the kind of highly prized volumes produced by renowned workshops using 'new' or innovative techniques; whilst at the other, there is a desire to reconstruct a world of cheap and disposable print that has left very few traces for the historian.

This study of the Vavassore workshop charts the middle course between these historiographical trends. The persistent focus on the renown of Jenson, Aldus, or even Giolito, has ensured that Vavassore's output has slipped under the radar of print scholars; meaning there has been no attempt to collect Vavassorian editions

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[7] Lowry, 1979; *idem*, *Nicholas Jensen and the Rise of Venetian Publishing in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford, 1991).

[8] On the Giolito of Venice, see S. Bongi, *Annali di Gabriel Giolito de'Ferrari da Trino di Monferrato, stampatore in Venezia* (Rome, 1890) and A. Nuovo & C. Coppens, *I Giolito e la stampa nell'Italia del XVI secolo* (Geneva, 2005); on the Ripoli press, see M. Conway, *The 'Diario' of the Printing Press of San Jacopo di Ripoli (1476-1484): Commentary and Transcription* (Florence, 1999).

[9] R. Salzberg, *Ephemeral City: Cheap Print and Urban Culture in Renaissance Venice* (Manchester, 2014). See also R. Salzberg & M. Rospocher, 'Street Singers in Italian Renaissance Urban Culture and Communication', *Cultural and Social History* 9:1 (2012) 9-26.

together, or indeed to display them, in the manner of the Aldines. The editions themselves can, at first glance, appear relatively unremarkable, but in fact they are a showcase for the adaptability of the workshop to changing tastes, markets, and legislations across eight decades of production. This study is thus concerned more with the access these editions provide to a wide variety of historical themes, contexts and contemporary events, as well as to a highly variegated group of buyers and sellers of print. Whilst focusing on a single workshop may not be a new framework in which to consider the sixteenth century print industry in Venice – or indeed the wider history of the book and print in early modern Europe – it provides a broad and valuable perspective that studies on innovatory techniques and specific genres do not. There have been many attempts to catalogue editions printed by individual and familial workshops, including Salvatore Bongi's 1890 annals of the Giolito press, a 1980 bibliography of the works issued by the Plantin Press in Antwerp and Leiden; and the more recent catalogue of Giunti editions compiled over a period of thirty years by William Pettas and published in 2012.[10] Thanks in part to the age of *annali* like Bongi's, this approach can appear outdated and old fashioned and would benefit greatly from being revisited and revived.

Rather than focusing on a single genre of print, or solely providing an exhaustive list of publications, this thesis focuses on the case study of the Vavassore workshop for the breadth of perspective it offers on the printing industry as a whole. Such a focus forces us to look at the wider picture of the production of printed material of all kinds; and enables us to understand the involvement of a single practitioner in the various stages of production that might previously have been considered the work of many different artisans. The ability of a printer to act under many guises, as Vavassore does, is not often recognised in scholarship, which instead has a tendency to neatly pigeonhole the production of different goods and consider them as separate from one another. As a maker of prints and maps, as well as a publisher, printer, and seller of books of all kinds, Vavassore emerges as a kind of printing *poligrafo*: a man willing to turn his hand to the production of printed

[10] See Bongi, 1890; W. A. Pettas, *The Giunti of Florence: A Printing and Publishing Family. A History of the Florentine Firm and a Catalogue of the Editions* (New Castle, DE: 2012); L. Voet & J. Voet-Grisolle, *The Plantin Press (1555-1589): A Bibliography of the Works of Christopher Plantin at Antwerp and Leiden* (Leiden, 1980: 6 vols); and R. M. Kingdon, 'The Plantin Breviaries: A Case Study in the Sixteenth-Century Business Operations of a Publishing House', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 22 (1960) 133-150.

wares of every kind, which are in turn characterised by the equally diverse range of genres and topics they address.[11] As a case study, the Vavassore workshop therefore serves as a valuable reminder of the need to avoid separating the production of books from printed images, maps, pamphlets, and illustrated books, but to consider the methods, skills, and markets demanded by and for each of these different types of production as intricately and intrinsically linked. This thesis recognises that diversity and variety in print production cannot be appreciated or analysed effectively when a study is restricted to a particular remit – whether of a genre, method of sale, or method of production. Instead, it offers a total history of printing on a microcosmic scale.

Vavassore and his publications have, until now, received only cursory attention from scholars. In 1920, the geographical historian Roberto Almagià made the first attempts to sum up his cartographic oeuvre; and in 1939 map specialist Leo Bagrow produced a descriptive list of Vavassore's maps, accompanied by a limited and largely speculative biographical account of his life and work.[12] The 1939 list of maps, as well as further examples subsequently identified by Leo Bagrow and Rodney Shirley, formed the discussion of Vavassore's cartographic output in David Woodward's *History of Cartography*.[13] The relative lack of interest in Vavassore's

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[11] On the Venetian *poligrafi*, a group of "literary odd-job men" who "at times appeared closer to courtesans as a group than to any other subset of Renaissance culture" see E. Horodowich, *Language and Statecraft in Early Modern Venice* (Cambridge, 2008) 188-97; G. Aquilecchia, 'Pietro Aretino e altri poligrafi a Venezia' in idem, *Nuove schede di italianistica* (Rome, 1994) 77-138; and P.F. Grendler, *Critics of the Italian World, 1530-1560* (Madison, 1969) 10-14.

[12] R. Almagià, 'Il mappomondo di G. A. Vavassore', *Rivista Geografica Italiana* 27 (1920) 17-30; see also idem, 'La carta d'Italia di G. A. Vavassore', *La Bibliofilia* 16 (1914) 3-4. L. Bagrow, *Giovanni Andrea Vavassore. A Venetian Cartographer of the 16th Century: A Descriptive List of His Maps* (Jenkintown, 1939). Bagrow's short catalogue was written prior to the discovery of Vavassore's testaments, and thus his biographical account is informed by publications and an earlier article by Charles Ephrussi, 'Zoan Andrea et ses Homonymes Parte 1', in *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 3 (1891) 225-44. Vavassore's maps are also included in Bagrow's foundational history of cartography first published in 1951, and now in a revised and enlarged edition; see L. Bagrow, *History of Cartography* revised and enlarged by R. A. Skelton (London, 2010).

[13] See D. Woodward, 'The Italian Map Trade, 1480-1650' and 'Techniques of Map Engraving, Printing, and Coloring in the European Renaissance' in idem. *The History of Cartography Volume 3: Cartography in the European Renaissance (Part 1)* (Chicago, 2007) 773-803; 591-610 respectively. Bagrow discovered a perspective plan of Trent in 1953, see G.H. Beans, 'A Note from the Tall Tree Library,' *Imago Mundi* 10 (1953) 14. For other cartographic discoveries after Bagrow's catalogue, see idem, 'Some Notes from the Tall Tree Library: Vavassore and Pagano', *Imago Mundi* 5 (1948) 73; and R.W. Shirley, 'Something Old, Something New from Paris and Nancy: Yet More Early and Rare Italiana,

non-cartographic work can be attributed in large part to the case of mistaken identity perpetrated by the first generation of print scholars; who for some years confused Giovanni Andrea Vavassore with Zoan Andrea, a copyist from Mantegna, thanks to the former's use of 'Z.A.' or 'Z.A.V' (Zoan Andrea in the Venetian dialect) on his publications.[14] Charles Ephrussi was the first to recognise that the two were different printmakers, but his article in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* also has its limitations: focusing almost exclusively on the very short period in which he published work in collaboration with his brother Florio, rather than on the entire period of the workshop's output from 1515 to 1593.[15]

Documents pertaining to Vavassore and his family, notably and perhaps most usefully the printer's own testaments dated 1523 and 1570, did not come to light until 1959. That year Franz Babinger reported finding Giovanni Andrea's later testament in the Venetian State Archives, but his reference to the document, as well as the few facts included in his announcement of its discovery, went largely unnoticed until 1998. In that year Anne Markham Schulz transcribed this document, alongside Vavassore's earlier testament of 1523 and two others recorded by his niece and nephew, for the first time.[16] The transcriptions of the original Latin and vernacular texts of the testaments of Giovanni Andrea, Samaritana, and Clemente Vavassore have been a crucial resource for this study of the printer and his workshop. Although Schulz provided a brief biography of Vavassore alongside her transcriptions, these documents can be further mined and contextualised. Her concern with providing a basic outline of the family and their position as immigrants from the Bergamasco eclipses much of the detail contained in these documents, and she relies on outdated scholarship in her attempt to establish the beginning of his

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including 14 Maps by Pagano or Vavassore', *International Map Collectors Society Journal* 67 (1996) 32-6.

[14] Chiefly responsible for this is F. Lippmann, *The Art of Wood Engraving in Italy in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1888) 108-11; and M. Bryan, *Dictionary of Painters and Engravers* Vol. 5 revised by G. C. Williamson (London, 1903) 270. This issue had largely been untangled when Massena and Sander were compiling their collections of Venetian illustrations; see V. Massena, *Les Livres à figures vénitiens de la fin du XVe siècle et du commencement du XVIe Parte 3* (Florence, 1914) 112-5 and M. Sander, *Le Livre à figures italien depuis 1467 jusqu'à 1530* Vol. 1 (Milan, 1942) 105.

[15] Ephrussi, 1891, 225-44. He also suggests that Vavassore began his career in 1522 with the view of *Rhodes*, see ibid., 228.

[16] Schulz, 1998, 117-25.

career.[17] Nonetheless, Schulz's article was the first to recognise Vavassore's printing career as playing an "important role in the intellectual life of Venice in the mid sixteenth century."[18]

Vavassore's name has also unwittingly graced the pages of a large number of books, articles, and catalogues on various topics, most of which have referenced his publications without knowledge of their origins or any desire to question their context and significance. Among exponents of the 'new wave' of scholarship on printing, Rosa Salzberg briefly noted his connections to other producers and sellers of cheap print or ephemera; whilst Bronwen Wilson considered several of his city views for the way they both condensed the world into pictures, and allowed individuals to understand their place within it.[19] Finally, Brian Richardson included Vavassore among a list of printers active in the mid-sixteenth century who competed with the Giolito press in publishing editions of Ludovico Ariosto's enormously popular poem *Orlando Furioso*.[20] Until this point, it seems fair to conclude that scholars have considered Vavassore only when he was part of a larger group engaged in printing a particular type of work – be it maps, ephemeral pamphlets, or editions of a particularly popular Renaissance title. Such an approach has effectively concealed the importance and value of the Vavassore workshop as a case study, for as will be shown, its output was enormously varied; and a single genre or title represents only a very small and relatively insignificant proportion of its much larger production. This thesis therefore represents the first attempt to reconcile all parts of Vavassore's activity into a single study. By establishing a firm chronology, it considers every aspect of the workshop's print production – images, maps, pamphlets, and books – and eschews the specific restrictions of genre and method of sale in favour of showcasing its hitherto unacknowledged capacity for variety, adaptability, and longevity.

Issues of adaptability and longevity are at the very heart of this research; which combines the need to reconstruct the market for printed works with an understanding of

[17] Schulz estimates that Vavassore was an "established master of the woodcut by 1518" when his signature appears on a frontispiece for a Thesaurus published by Niccolò Zoppino; Ibid. 117. However, a large woodcut of Marignano (discussed in Chapter 3, below) actually brings the date of his earliest activity back to 1515.
[18] Ibid. 117.
[19] See Salzberg, 2014; and B. Wilson, *The World in Venice: Print, The City, and Early Modern Identity* (Toronto, 2005).
[20] B. Richardson, *Print Culture in Renaissance Italy: The Editor and the Vernacular Text, 1470-1600* (Cambridge, 1994) 90 and 147-8.

the workshop as a business that needed to evolve in order to stay both afloat and relevant in the Venetian market. This approach has been pieced together from evidence of various kinds – from archival documents including wills, parish records, and investigations into heretical behaviour; to surviving copies of books, pamphlets, prints, and maps – all of which have much to offer to our ever-increasing knowledge of the world of print, and our more general understanding of small artisanal workshops and practices at this time. From the outset, the versatile Vavassore will be placed within both the Venetian context in which he lived and worked, as well as his wider network of collaborators and associates in Venice. In this way the case of the Vavassore workshop challenges the long-held conception of the Venetian print industry as "competitive."[21] From his close personal friendship and working relationship with Paolo Danza, a bookseller at Rialto, to evidence of the practice of sharing scrap paper with Matteo Pagano, Vavassore emerges as a collaborator and a networker. These (and other) instances explored in this thesis serve to demonstrate the reliance printers placed on one another throughout their careers; and this sense of collaboration is a key theme that runs throughout.

Despite the wealth of material on which I have been able to draw, investigating the Vavassore workshop has meant contending with several issues. The first of these is the perennial problem for all historians of print: the survival of material. Almost every example of the workshop's surviving cartographic output is extant in a single copy; and the majority of the short pamphlets published in the early decades of its activity have survived in similarly low numbers. Knowledge of news pamphlets and war poems like these, which were the kind of *fogli volanti* (flying sheets) that were probably never intended to be bound and kept, is owed for the most part to their discovery among the pages of composite volumes bound by contemporary (and later) print collectors.[22] The

[21] On the competitive nature of the print industry in Venice see, for example, N. Harris, 'Italy' in M.F. Suarez, S.J. Wooudhuysen & H.R. Wooudhuysen, *The Book: A Global History* (Oxford, 2013) 420-40; D. Landau & P. Parshall, *The Renaissance Print, 1470-1550* (New Haven, 1994) 35-8; M. Bury, *The Print in Italy: 1550-1620* (London, 2001) 11; A. Nuovo, *The Book Trade in the Italian Renaissance* (Leiden, 2013); B. Richardson, *Printing, Writers and Readers in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, 1999); D. del Puppo, 'All the World is a Book: Italian Renaissance Printing in a Global Perspective', *Textual Cultures* 6:2 (2011) 1-22; and J. Bernstein, *Music Printing in Renaissance Venice: The Scotto Press (1539-1572)* (Oxford, 1998) 117 and 157-8.

[22] On the *folgi volanti*, see U. Rozzo, *La strage ignorata. I folgi volanti a stampa nell'Italia dei secoli XV e XVI* (Udine, 2008). On composite volumes, see J. T. Knight, *Bound to Read: Compilations, Collections, and the Making of Renaissance Literature* (Pennsylvania,

lack of adequate cataloguing for printed ephemera is a problem raised by Rosa Salzberg in her study of cheap print, but it is one that continues to be a problem when considering more substantial volumes.[23] Although the vast majority of the extant books published by Vavassore in both quarto and octavo have a better survival rate than their more ephemeral counterparts, my knowledge of, and access to certain editions (notably various copies of the octavo blockbook considered in Chapter Seven) has been in some cases testament to a modern librarian's knowledge of their collection rather than to institutional catalogues, which have been incomplete.[24]

No ledger or account book has survived to attest to the number of books, pamphlets, maps and prints issued by the Vavassore workshop; and as such its output has proved to be the only continuous source of information about its activity.[25] We have to accept, therefore, that the conclusions informed by the extant works are representative of an unknowable total number of editions published during its lifetime. This is not, of course, just a problem for Vavassore: questions about the survival of printed material, or attempts to calculate the number of editions produced in Venice during the sixteenth century are fraught with many of the same issues.[26] Neil Harris has estimated, for example, that around fifty percent of sixteenth-century editions are completely lost to us.[27] He argues that titles were fundamentally less likely to survive if they were smaller and thinner, or published in the vernacular.[28] The majority of the surviving editions published by the Vavassore workshop conform to this outline: they are primarily printed in small octavo format, and are

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2013). See also P. F. Grendler, 'Form and Function in Italian Renaissance Popular Books', *Renaissance Quarterly* 46 (1993) 451-85.

[23] Salzberg, 2014, 3.

[24] Particular thanks go to Stephen Parkin and Denis Reidy at the British Library, and to John McQuillen at the Morgan Library.

[25] The same was true of Lowry's study of Jenson. Unlike the case of Aldus Manutius, the absence of an account book or other specific documentation relating specifically to the press meant that the physical development of Jenson's books (and types) were the only source of information on which he would draw. See Lowry, 1991, x-xi.

[26] Esther Pastorello's pioneering work, *Tipografia, editori, librai a Venezia nel secolo XV* (Florence, 1924) is based on a catalogue estimate of just 7,560 separate titles. This conservative figure was subsequently challenged by P. F. Grendler, *The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press* (Princeton, 1977) 8; and A. Quondam, '"Mercanzia d'onore/Mercanzia d'utile." Produzione libraria e lavoro intelletuale a Venezia nel Cinquecento' in A. Petrucci, *Libri, editori e pubblico nell'Europa Moderna: Guida storica e critica* (Bari, 1989) 51-104. Even larger numbers are discussed in Nuovo, 2013; and Bernstein, 1998.

[27] N. Harris, 'Marin Sanudo, Forerunner of Melzi', *La Bibliofilia* 95:1 (1993) 18-9.

[28] Ibid. 20-1.

overwhelmingly in Italian rather than Latin. The various case studies I have chosen to represent its production throughout this thesis are discussed, therefore, with the caveat that they represent only a small proportion of a body of work the size of which cannot be accurately calculated. Rather than a full picture, they represent a series of windows through which the operation of a Venetian print workshop and the demands of its sixteenth-century market can be glimpsed.

A reconstruction of Vavassore's market must first address the question of literacy. Calculations of those attaining full literacy through attendance at school – accounting for some 33% of boys, and around 13% of girls – would render books useless to the vast majority of the population.[29] However, scholars like Robert Darnton have argued that this was not the case: the complex connections between oral and written cultures at this time meant that for most people, books "were better heard than seen."[30] Again, among the surviving output of the Vavassore press are examples that both support and challenge this conclusion. Certainly the short pamphlets produced to commemorate the involvement of Venetian forces in battles and sieges were among those performed and sold by sellers in the streets and on the bridges; and are thus part of the oral culture now (at least for the most part) lost to the historian.[31] On the other hand, many of Vavassore's books were intended to be *seen* rather than, or as well as, heard. Pattern books of lace and embroidery, targeted towards a female market characterized by low literacy rates, contain little, if any, text at all. These are primarily picture books, but they nonetheless required certain skills to interpret and use. Seeing is also crucial to the many illustrated books published by the workshop, in which the woodcut images play as important a role as the text in conveying a message to the reader or viewer.

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[29] P. F. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300-1600* (Baltimore, 1989) 43-7. Grendler does suggest that a certain degree of 'functional literacy' probably extended to a relatively broad segment of the male population, especially in urban areas.

[30] R. Darnton, 'First Steps Towards a History of Reading', in *idem, The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History* (London, 1990) 169. On the connections between oral and literate cultures, see B. Richardson, 'Oral Culture in Early Modern Italy: Performance, Language, Religion,' *The Italianist* 34:3 (2014) 313-17; *idem, Printing, Writers and Readers in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, 1999) 142-52; and A. Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500-1700* (Oxford, 2000).

[31] R. Salzberg, '"Per le Piaza & Sopra il Ponte": Reconstructing the Geography of Popular Print in Sixteenth-Century Venice' in M. Ogborn & C. Withers (eds.) *Geographies of the Book* (Farnham, 2010) 111-32. See also Richardson, 2014.

The final 'problem' for consideration is that of the diversity of the market. Collectively their buying power had a profound impact on the activities of the sixteenth-century printer, whose chief concern – if he was to remain afloat in an often saturated market – must have been to read the needs of his market and respond to it accordingly. The success of a volume ultimately depended on its ability to sell, and this can be gauged effectively by looking at the surviving copies of certain volumes. Many of the titles discussed in this thesis are extant in a number of consecutive editions or states, offering concrete evidence of their potential to sell in relatively large numbers.[32]

Unusually high survival rates, as in the case of Vavassore's devotional blockbook, also raise a number of important questions. According to Harris' hypothesis, these illustrated octavo volumes, with text in the vernacular, had only a 50% chance of survival. Why are there so many surviving copies, and what can they tell us about the way the market used, or interacted with, the volumes they purchased? What was its appeal to the market? And what made this title successful enough to be reprinted? Here, I use 'successful' as a replacement for 'popular,' for the latter has become a loaded term that has too frequently associated low price with low quality, and in turn a lower standard of readership.[33] In reality, the relative 'popularity' of an edition can tell us much about the tastes and interests of the sixteenth-century market. Paul Grendler neatly summarised that the popular book is one that "exerts a very broad, nearly universal appeal," attracting the "interest and delight" of people who occupied various positions on the sliding scales of taste (refined-limited) and intellectual capacity (greater-lesser).[34]

In terms of its methodological approach, this reconstruction of the Vavassore workshop is firmly rooted in the field of microhistory. Since the beginnings of the discipline in the 1970s, microhistorians have focused on specific case studies for the insight they are able to offer into what cultural historians might call 'lived

[32] Grendler has suggested that by the 1540s, the Venetian print market was strong enough to support press runs that reached an average of one thousand copies. Grendler, 1977, 9. See also Nuovo, 2013, 102.
[33] Roger Chartier focused attention on the dangers of equating 'popular print' with a lower class of readership in 'Culture as Appropriation: Popular Cultural Uses in Early Modern France' in S. Kaplan, *Understanding Popular Culture: Europe from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century* (Berlin, 1984).
[34] Grendler, 1993, 453.

experience'.[35] At its heart, microhistory is an approach that attempts to uncover the experiences of those living within a particular time, to understand how these people saw themselves and their lives, and to seek out the meanings they attributed to things that happened to them. These questions have piqued particular interest in understanding the lives of Renaissance Italians, with Carlo Ginzburg and other early proponents of the discipline offering up descriptions of their lives and activities under the banner of *microstoria.*[36] As a sub-discipline of history, Microhistory is currently undergoing a kind of Renaissance of its own; with the recent volume *What is Microhistory?* demonstrating that the breadth of cultures and time periods now studied by those who define themselves as microhistorians has extended far beyond both the Italian peninsula and the Renaissance. Rather than a declining discipline that had begun in the 1970s and reached a peak in the 1990s, Magnùsson and Szijártó argue that microhistory "has a bright future… [it is] an approach that can both supply the explanations or social history and grasp the meanings of cultural history within a single very circumscribed investigation."[37] Although this microhistory of the Vavassore workshop echoes early examples of the discipline in its geographical focus and historical period, it also demonstrates some of the new directions of this burgeoning field. I will employ a microhistorical approach in my focus on the individual and his agency, in the focused use of archival documents and primary source material, and by drawing on larger questions about the significance of Vavassore and the books produced by his workshop within a much wider set of frameworks and contexts.

Accessing aspects of the social and cultural history of Venice is one of the main aims of my research into the Vavassore workshop. Rather than considering

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[35] Ronald Hoffman has described the process of probing individual life experiences for deeper meanings as "an endeavor to discern through the lives of individuals or families the broader contours of the social and cultural landscape." See R. Hoffman, 'Introduction' in R. Hoffman, M. Sobel & F. Teute (eds.) *Through A Glass Darkly: Reflections on Personal Identity in Early America* (North Carolina, 1997) vii-viii. On 'lived experience', see P. Christiansen, *Kultur og historie: Bidrag til den etnologiske debat* (Copenhagen, 1995) 9; and R. D. Brown, 'Microhistory and the post-modern challenge' *Journal of the Early Republic* 23 (2003) 13.

[36] C. Ginzburg & C. Poni, 'The Name and the Game: Unequal Exchange and the Historical Marketplace', in E. Muir & G. Ruggiero (eds.) *Microhistory and the Lost People of Europe* (Baltimore, 1991) 1-10; E. Muir, 'Observing Trifles' in Muir & Ruggiero, 1991, vii-xviii; and G. Levi, 'On Microhistory', in P. Burke (ed.) *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (Cambridge, 1991) 93-113.

[37] S. Magnùsson & I. Szijártó, *What is Microhistory? Theory and Practice* (London, 2013) 9.

Vavassore – or indeed, the printing industry – in isolation, I shall demonstrate the close connections between members and practitioners of different trades. The business of print relied heavily on paper makers, and apothecaries or *vendecolori* (colour sellers) who manufactured inks and pigments.[38] More specifically, Vavassore's pattern books of lace and embroidery question the existence of reciprocal connections between practitioners who made and sold these goods, and the printers who created patterns for wider sale. This evidence for collaboration between producers, merchants, and shopkeepers confirms a broader understanding of Venetian socio-economic conditions, without falling into the trap of providing a mythic narrative of the harmony of the *popolo*.[39] Certainly, artisans did not always get along: guild statutes record moments when producers and sellers of certain goods felt threatened by the activities of outsiders or those in other trades, and in 1559 the printer Melchiore Sessa dismissed the bookseller Zacharia Zenaro as a 'traitor' for encouraging obedience to the Holy Office's request to submit their prohibited stock, when others in the trade had vowed to resist it.[40] Nonetheless, Vavassore emerges as a collaborator, and these collaborative ventures and professional networks underpin the activities and output of the workshop across the course of eight decades. Finally, the cultural background to the Vavassore workshop and its output is also well supported, as I have linked the production of the workshop closely to both contemporary events and wider artistic trends wherever it has been possible to do so. Many of the workshop's publications were produced in response to a particular event or occurrence: the outcome of a battle or siege, a surge in the number of pilgrims passing through Venice on their way to the Holy Land, or the meetings of the Council of Trent.

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[38] On the *vendecolori*, see J. DeLancey, 'In the Streets Where They Sell Colors: Placing *vendecolori* in the urban fabric of early modern Venice', *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 22 (2011) 193-232; and L. Matthew & B. Berrie, '"Memoria de colori che bisognino torre a Vinetia": Venice as a Centre for the Purchase of Painters' Colours' in J. Kirby, S. Nash & J. Cannon, *Trade in Artists' Materials: Markets and Commerce in Europe to 1700* (London, 2010) 245-52. On printers' ink, see C. H. Bloy, *A History of Printing Ink, Balls and Rollers, 1440-1850* (London, 1967) and C. Fahy, 'Descrizioni cinquecentesche della fabricazione dei caratteri e del processo tipografico', *La Bibliofilia* 88 (1986) 56-9.

[39] On the myth of *popolano* harmony, see R. Mackenney, *Tradesmen and Traders: The World of the Guilds in Venice and Europe, c.1250-c.1650* (London, 1987) 4-7, 44-65, 133-49; and D. Romano, *Patricians and "Popolani": The Social Foundations of the Venetian Renaissance State* (Baltimore, 1988) 77-90.

[40] "Marchio Sessa qual mi disse che io era sta traditor de l'arte per haver obedito." ASV, SU, b.14 fasc. Labeled "Constituto contra Vicentium Valgrisum librarium 1559 9 Agosto" f.3r. This incident is also cited in Salzberg, 2014, 144.

The focus of this project is not, however, limited to reconstructing a sense of individual 'lived experience.' Foundational works of microhistory, such as Carlo Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms* and Natalie Zemon Davis' *Return of Martin Guerre,* have placed the personal beliefs and worldview of particular individuals (in Ginzburg's case, the Friulian miller Menocchio; in Davis', the French peasant Martin Guerre and his wife Bertrande) at the heart of their studies.[41] Whilst I am interested in understanding the influence of Vavassore's interests and beliefs (especially devotional ones) on the output of his workshop, their investigation has not been the sole aim of this research. Although it should be noted that his diverse activities within the print industry, and the production of the workshop, represent a fundamental part of who Vavassore actually was; this thesis presents a wider biography that is concerned less with the man himself, and more with the print workshop he established.

The microhistorical concept of the "typical exception" is also nuanced by this study.[42] As Matti Peltonen has argued, critics of the field of microhistory have concluded that the only possible links between the 'macro' and the 'micro' are exceptionality and typicality.[43] Not only is the equation of the micro with a single individual and his experience misleading, it is entirely possible for the subject of historical investigation to be both exceptional *and* typical.[44] There are aspects of the Vavassore workshop's activity and production that conform closely to other contemporaneous ventures, and still others for which there can be no close or effective comparison. All are equally worthy of consideration.

Furthermore, the impact of this study should not be limited to enhancing our knowledge of aspects of social life and culture in sixteenth-century Venice. My research into the Vavassore workshop might most effectively be described as a "big microhistory" – a study that is small in scale yet has the ability to touch on a myriad of different topics and themes, some of which reach beyond the traditional social and

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[41] C. Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (New Edition with preface; Baltimore, 2013); N. Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Cambridge, MA, 1983).

[42] The phrase "eccezionale/normale" was first coined by Edoardo Grendi, 'Micro-analisi e storia sociale', *Quaderni storici* 35 (1977) 506-20. He later admitted that as a formula this was "certainly overrated" in idem, 'Ripensare la microstoria', *Quaderni storici* 86 (1994) 549; but it is an approach that has come to be associated with Carlo Ginzburg.

[43] M. Peltonen, 'Clues, Margins, and Monads: The Micro-Macro Link in Historical Research', *History and Theory* 40 (2001) 347-359; especially 356.

[44] Charles Lemert argued that "the equation of micro with individual is extremely misleading" in *Sociology: After the Crisis* (Boulder, 1995) 163. See also Ibid. 356-7.

cultural concerns traditionally associated with the discipline. Creating a chronology of the workshop has necessitated the following of a number of parallel chronologies, which at times diverged from one another, and at other times corresponded closely. For example, consideration of the devotional output runs parallel to our already established understanding of the changing religious landscape of the sixteenth century. At times, the output of the press echoed the cries of the reforming church almost exactly – reaffirming the orthodox belief in transubstantiation, reinforcing the importance of the sacraments and of saintly intercession, and transmitting the orations of the Council of Trent to a wider audience – at others, there seems to have been little respect for the demands of either the Venetian Holy Office (*Sant'Uffizio*) or the Tridentine Index of Prohibited Books. Other thematic explorations of, and case studies taken from, the surviving output of the press speak to a diverse range of topics, among which are the desirability of "copyright" (in the form of the *privilegio*) in the Renaissance; the practicalities of working in, and passing down, a *bottega* among members of the same family; the market for books among women and children; Venetian perceptions of the world and its place within it; and the connections between material culture and the printed page.

In her comparison of microhistory and biography, Jill Lepore has argued that the key difference between the practitioners of these two disciplines is that biographers tell the story of a whole life, whilst microhistories chronicle only the key events.[45] I have had to find and adopt the middle ground between these two different approaches in order to be able to speak directly to the various topics and themes raised by the surviving output of the press. As perhaps the most valuable aspect of the Vavassore workshop to the history of print is its relative longevity, it has been necessary to take a chronological approach in order to chart its progression over eight decades of activity. Thanks to an overabundance of surviving material, I have selected specific case studies and themes (the equivalent of the microhistorian's 'key events,' as described by Lepore) and used them to represent identifiable stages in the broader chronology of the workshop's progression. This has led to a structure that could be described as a series of case studies *within* a case study: continually narrowing the field of study not to make

[45] J. Lepore, 'Historians Who Love Too Much: Reflections on Microhistory and Biography,' *Journal of American History* 88:1 (2001) 132. Guido Ruggiero also discusses the importance of storytelling in the field of microhistory in G. Ruggiero, *Binding Passions: Tales of Magic, Marriage, and Power at the End of the Renaissance* (New York, 1993) 18-20.

fewer or smaller conclusions, but to make more meaningful ones that can be related to larger historiographical themes, events, and experiences. Rather than focusing on Vavassore's singular experience and using it as an exemplary model of the issues affecting the culture of sixteenth century Venice, the production of the workshop – in all its occasionally contradictory and frequently disjointed variety – will instead be taken to represent the 'experiences' of the much larger and equally diverse group of contemporary readers (and viewers) who purchased his wares.

In Chapter One Vavassore is introduced as both a printer and a man in the context of sixteenth-century Venice. As an individual, Vavassore acts as an historical representative for several groups: as a member of the immigrant population, his case allows us to understand both the appropriation of old skills to new trades, and the progression of an artisan from outsider to insider in his trade. Contemporaries frequently commented of Venetians that "most of their people are foreigners", and the importance and variety of the city's immigrant populations has been the subject of growing scholarly attention.[46] As well as focusing on Vavassore's immediate family and their roots in the Bergamasco, Chapter One also examines the parish records of births and marriages in the parish of San Moisè. These records demonstrate the high concentration of merchants and artisans to settle in this central parish after leaving Bergamo and its surrounding area; as well as offering insight into the kind of trades they entered and the continuing trend for marriage between members of the Bergamaschi community.

Chapter One also focuses on the institutions and community groups open to residents of Venice (some of whom were not necessarily citizens) and the crucial role they played in forming professional and personal networks. In 1530, Vavassore's name appeared on a list of matriculated members of the Painters' Guild that met at the church of San Luca, just a stone's throw from his workshop located on the Ponte dei Fuseri, at meetings of which he mixed with men who were involved in various different (albeit related) trades.[47] The location of his workshop, confirmed through the colophons of maps and books issued from it, also enabled him to interact and

[46] P. de Commynes, *The Memoirs*, edited by S. Kinser (Columbia, 1969-73) Vol. II 493; D. Chambers & B. Pullan, *Venice: A Documentary History 1450-1630* (Toronto, 2001) 323-50. See also De Maria, 2010; Schulz, 2011; Crouzet-Pavan, 2002, 229-70; and Wilson, 2005.
[47] Vavassore is listed as "Zuanandrea Vadagnin" on the list, conserved in an 1815 manuscript held at the BMCV. The document has been transcribed for inclusion in Favaro, 1975, 137-44.

collaborate with other printers and mapmakers with small workshops. Finally, Vavassore was a lifetime member of the *scuola* that met at the church of San Moisè. Separately, these institutions have been the subject of substantial historical interest, but by drawing these threads together into the fabric of a single case study, it is possible to create not only a detailed picture of Vavassore's life in Venice, but also to understand the process by which an immigrant might assimilate himself into Venetian society; and to access the complex and interwoven personal (and professional) relationships that underpinned the city's printing industry and social orders.

Having considered Vavassore's Bergamasco origins and life in Venice, in Chapter Two the workshop itself is reconstructed. Here I make use of the printer's own testaments to establish both the size of his workshop and the labour he employed to work in it, and question how its market share compared to that of other contemporary shops.[48] Reconstructing the workshop is an important exercise, for as Guido Ruggiero has noted, the *bottega* "produced more than products. It produced identity… and it helped to produce the networks, friendships, and contacts central to the male world."[49] Whether they were sold directly from Vavassore's premises on the Ponte dei Fuseri (and later, in the Frezzaria) or through a seller on the street, all of the works discussed in this thesis were produced in the workshop; making it important to question what it actually means for a print, map, pamphlet or book to be a product of this environment. Finally, Chapter Two establishes the output of the workshop in quantitative terms. By drawing on the appendix of works compiled for this thesis, it gives an overview of the workshop's output in terms of the size, language, genre, and length of the works issued from its presses.

Chapter Three traces Vavassore's early and somewhat tentative first steps as a woodcutter and illustrator. It explores the importance of two sets of prints – one religious, one secular – as well as a number of contemporaneous book illustrations, and argues that they act as an obvious link between his old trade as a woodcarver and his

[48] Vavassore and his associates were referred to using various terms, including *stampatore* (printer), *tipografo* (printer) and *libraio* (bookseller). The term *editore* refers not to an editor but to a publisher, and was not yet in use by the sixteenth century. See L. Pon, *Raphael, Dürer and Marcantonio Raimondi: Copying and the Renaissance Print* (New Haven, 2004) 48-9.

[49] G. Ruggiero, 'Mean Streets, Familiar Streets, or the Fat Woodcarver and the Masculine Spaces of Florence' in R. J. Crum & J. T. Paoletti (eds.) *Renaissance Florence: A Social History* (Cambridge, 2006) 301.

new one as a printer.[50] Thanks to the previously held assumption that Vavassore was active in Venice from c.1530, these early examples of his work have received little scholarly attention. However, they play an important role both in foreshadowing the work produced by the workshop in the decades that followed, and in demonstrating the extent to which Vavassore operated within a tightknit community of small printers who shared both skills and resources.

The sense of collaboration among, and the sharing of resources between, members of the printing trade remains an important theme in Chapter Four, which takes the cartographic production of the workshop as its focus. Another printer and mapmaker who is yet to receive adequate scholarly attention is Matteo Pagano, whose workshop was located at the Sign of the Faith in the Frezzaria.[51] Not only were the two workshops located within close geographic proximity of one another, the surviving cartographic output of the Vavassore workshop offers evidence of the existence of a close working relationship between them. Chapter Four explores this relationship and situates the maps produced by the Vavassore workshop firmly within the context of both the Venetian map industry and contemporary events and tastes. As the only area of the printer's oeuvre to have attracted the attention of the historian, this chapter builds upon and updates the foundational lists compiled by Bagrow and Almagià in the early twentieth century by focusing closely on two large multi-block woodcuts not included in either of them: one of the *Battle of Marignano*, and a perspective plan of *Trent*.

The remaining chapters draw directly on the surviving output of the Vavassore workshop – books and pamphlets, both illustrated and not, in Latin and in the vernacular – in all of its breadth and variety. Whilst supplementary Appendix 1 documents the surviving editions produced and sold by it, these chapters focus on a series of case studies and themes used to chart the progression of the workshop over eight decades of production. The first section of Chapter Five focuses closely on

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[50] Vavassore describes his trade as that of an "incisor figurarum" or woodcarver in his testament of 25 August 1523: Schulz, 1998, 120-1.

[51] Archival evidence on Pagano is even more scant than it is for Vavassore, for he is mentioned briefly in the records of the Sant Uffizio: Archivio di Stato di Venezia, SU, Processi (1551-58) b.14, fasc. 1. His maps have also received attention from Leo Bagrow, who catalogued them in much the same way as he did Vavassore's maps: L. Bagrow, *Matheo Pagano: A Venetian Cartographer of the 16th Century* (Jenkintown, 1940). A facsimile edition of Pagano's aerial view of Cairo, published in 1549, with a translation of the original accompanying Latin Text was published as M. Pagano, *The True Description of Cairo: A Sixteenth Century Venetian View*, edited by N. Warner (Oxford, 2006).

profit, and aims to unpick the reasons behind Vavassore's adoption of the confusing nickname 'guadagnino' (literally, 'the small profit') on many of his colophons. It also considers the sale of material goods – including books, pamphlets, and prints – within the much larger and complex system of exchange highlighted by Patricia Allerston and Evelyn Welch, before going on to question the longevity and progression of the workshop.[52]

In this chapter I start to establish this chronology of production by discussing examples drawn from the secular output of the first decades of the press (c.1515-c.1540), beginning with the few surviving pamphlets and poems printed to commemorate (or, more often, to commiserate on) the involvement of Venetian forces in wars and sieges. As Salzberg and Rospocher have noted, these were the type of pamphlets that most often reached the hands of their buyers through those of a middleman, a street seller, who might also perform or recite the poems he sold.[53] Although the initially perceived polarity between 'popular' and 'high' culture is closing rapidly, it is difficult to entirely eradicate the idea that items as cheap as these reached a much wider reading public than their more expensive counterparts.[54] These pamphlets were among the cheapest publications produced and sold by the Vavassore workshop, but are also among the rarest of surviving editions. However they were sold and whatever their price, interest in the fortunes of Venice and the Veneto was not restricted to the apprentices and unskilled workers who were among those who could afford to pay as little as one *bezzo*, or half a *soldo*, for a printed poem or song.[55]

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[52] P. Allerston, 'Consuming Problems: Worldly Goods in Renaissance Venice' in M. O'Malley & E. Welch, *The Material Renaissance* (Manchester, 2007) 11-46.

[53] Salzberg & Rospocher, 2012. See also S. Noakes, 'The Development of the Book Market in Late Quattrocento Italy: Printers' Failures and the Role of the Middleman', *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 11:1 (1981) 23-55.

[54] On the wider popular culture debate, see R. W. Scribner, 'Is a History of Popular Culture Possible?' *History of European Ideas* 10:2 (1989) 175-96; P. Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1978) and *idem*, 'Popular Culture Reconsidered' *Storia della storiografia* 17 (1990) 40-9. More specifically related to the popular culture of print is Chartier, 1984, 234-6 and T. Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640* (Cambridge, 1991) 1-8; and to art, P. Emison, *Low and High Style in Italian Renaissance Art* (New York, 1997).

[55] Marin Sanudo described printed poems selling for as little as one *bezzo* during the Wars of the League of Cambrai: "Era stampado una canzon si chiama: *La Gata di Padoa*, con una altra in vilanescho di Tonin: *E l'e parti quei lanziman,* qual, per non offender il re di Romani, cussi chome si vendevano un bezo l'una…". DMS, 9:335 (22 November 1509); also cited in Salzberg, 2008, 29. On the price of books and their relation to wages in Venice, see Grendler, 1977, 14; and Salzberg, 2014, 20. On the price of books more generally, see M. Lowry, *Book Prices in Renaissance Venice: The Stockbook of Bernardo Giunti* (Los

Reconstructing the market for Vavassore's wares continues to be an important focus throughout Chapter Five, because if we are to truly understand the practicalities of a workshop, it is important to question why certain types of books were sold, who their intended audience was, and if these titles were successful (establishing, in turn, how it is possible to measure 'success' in the case of a sixteenth century print workshop). Moving away from the more general readership to whom news pamphlets and poems in *ottava rima* may have appealed, the latter half of the chapter focuses on pattern books for lace and embroidery aimed at a more select market of "beautiful and virtuous women" (*belle et virtuose donne*). Pattern books are a fascinating yet relatively neglected genre in the history of the book – perhaps because so few survive, or because such editions represent a predominance of image over text. My focus on these pattern books situates the surviving examples from the Vavassore press within the context of their use by sixteenth-century women, questioning the connection between these editions and the evidence of lacemakers and embroiderers found to be working nearby in the parish archives. Finally, I bring together strands of the history of the book with that of material culture, examining the paper patterns alongside surviving objects and fabric samples manufactured using them.

Chapter Six provides a thematic analysis of the output of Vavassore by focusing on a key relationship for many Venetian printers. In examining the Vavassore workshop's relationship with the Venetian authorities, I consider the books protected by a Senatorial privilege (*privilegio*). The vast majority of Vavassore's works were not protected by a privilege, granted by the Venetian Senate in an attempt to protect printers who expressed fears that another printer might easily copy and publish their work and make a profit from it. Various studies have clarified our knowledge of the process or applying for, and the effectiveness of, what has rather anachronistically been characterised as "copyright" in the Renaissance, but many questions remain and the aim of this chapter is to address these by examining Vavassore's motivations for protecting his works.[56] It asks why he sought a *privilegio* for some titles and not for

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Angeles, 1991); and on wages in Venice see B. Pullan, 'Wage-Earners and the Venetian Economy, 1550-1630', *Economic History Review* 16:3 (1964) 415-20; F. C. Lane, *Venice: A Maritime Republic* (Baltimore, 1973) and R. C. Davis, *Shipbuilders of the Venetian Arsenal. Workers and Workplace in the Preindustrial City* (Baltimore, 1991).

[56] Various sources on copyright include: C. Witcombe, *Copyright in the Renaissance: Prints and the* Privilegio *in Sixteenth Century Venice and Rome* (Leiden, 2004); R. Deazley, M. Kretschmer & L. Bently (eds.) *Privilege and Property: Essays in the History of Copyright Law* (Cambridge, 2010); R. J. Agee, 'The Venetian Privilege and Music-Printing in the

others, why he chose to begin applying to the Senate relatively late in his career (in 1553), and what he might have believed he stood to gain from doing so.

Finally, it is the aim of Chapter Seven to address the extant devotional output of the Vavassore workshop. Given the changing religious landscape of the sixteenth century, the longevity of the workshop offers a revealing representation of the simultaneously changing (or unchanging) nature of religious texts and the devotional practices associated with them. As a member of both the Painters' Guild that met under the protection of their patron St Luke, and of the *scuola del santissimo sacramento* in the parish of San Moisè, Vavassore's testaments portray an image of a man whose devotion was at the heart of his personal and professional life. The documents explored in this chapter portray a slightly different perspective. Drawing on the archives of the Venetian Holy Office (*Sant'Uffizio*), I explore Vavassore's encounters with the Inquisition and question whether we can consider his behaviours as truly 'heterodox'. My focus on the religious books and texts themselves comes from the perspective of their use as objects or aids of devotion, purchased by men and women in an attempt to enhance their religious experience. By looking at specific case studies of devotional books – and within that, different copies of the same book – I question the way contemporaries experienced and interpreted the Bible, religious rituals, and life in close quarters with people of 'orthodox' or 'heterodox' beliefs and inclinations.

Continuing the chronological theme, I separate these devotional titles into the periods leading up to, during, and after the Council of Trent. Vavassore and his nephew Alvise attracted the attention of the Inquisition for having copies of the *Dialogues* of Pietro Aretino among the stock in their shop in 1570, with the latter pleading that he was rarely in the *bottega* long enough to know which books must be removed. Indexes of prohibited titles continued to grow, with one Brescian bookseller complaining in 1568 that: "every few days books get banned, and those that are in use this year, next year are good only to throw to the fish."[57] By creating a picture of the devotional output of the press over the course of eight decades, I consider whether the stifling hand of the Inquisition actually had a discernable impact on the kind of

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Sixteenth Century,' in *Early Music History* 3 (1983) 1-42; R. Fulin, 'Documenti per servire alla storia della tipografia veneziana,' *Archivio Veneto* 23 (1882) 84-212; and H. Brown, *The Venetian Printing Press: An Historical Study based upon Documents for the Most Part Hitherto Unpublished* (London, 1891).

[57] A list of debts drawn up by a Brescian bookseller in 1568, cited in Richardson, 1999, 38.

devotional books produced and sold in a period marked by religious challenge and reform.

If relatively little has been written on the Vavassore workshop, there has been no attempt to reconstruct or understand its later production under the guidance of Alvise Vavassore, or later still under his sons Luigi and Guiliano. However, the continuation of the workshop is an important stage in its life cycle, not least because the presses of so many of Vavassore's contemporaries – including those of Niccolò Zoppino, Paolo Danza, and Matteo Pagano – died with them. In drawing together the Conclusion, I question the continuation of the workshop after Giovanni Andrea's death in May 1572.[58] What did the Vavassore workshop achieve in its period of activity? Why did it survive? How did the changing landscape of sixteenth century Venice impact on the output of the workshop, and to what extent did tastes for printed material change? By following a single printshop over the course of eight decades, this thesis aims to provide a new perspective on the Venetian print industry, bringing collaboration and networking to the fore, and closing the gap between those who produced, sold, and consumed the vast quantity of printed material available in the sixteenth century lagoon.

[58] "Item lasso a messer Alvise Valvasorio mio nepote qual e sempre stato cum noi et sta, duj torcholj et le stampe de figure di santj et di librj, non li carte stampate et librj si habbino da divider si come ordinero." Schulz, 1998, 124.

Chapter One

Immigrant Integration and Identity: The Origins of the Vavassore

The surviving documents concerning Vavassore's life, and the lives of his family members, are a crucial starting point in this consideration of the workshop he established in Venice in the early decades of the sixteenth century. They reveal much about his family and his origins, and offer an insight into his personal and professional concerns at two very different stages in his life and career. In 1998, Anne Markham Schulz published Vavassore's two surviving testaments – along with the testaments of his niece Samaritana and his nephew Clemente – in transcript for the first time.[59] However, both her short biography of Vavassore and her examination of the documents were rather cursory, and would greatly benefit from being revisited. Although Schulz provided a much needed biography of Giovanni Andrea Vavassore, which had until that point been lacking, these documents have much more to offer than a brief overview of his life. The aim of this opening chapter, therefore, is to carry out a much closer examination of the extant *testamenti*, and to explore the origins and identity of the Vavassore family.

Hailing from the Bergamasco region of the Venetian *terraferma*, the Vavassore was just one of many families drawn to the lagoon in search of prosperity.[60] Bergamo had been annexed to Venice in 1428, but what had started as a trickle of migrants in the later fifteenth century became a "veritable wave" by the sixteenth.[61] Woodcarvers, merchants and workers in the silk and wool industries, fruiterers and stonemasons were among some of the professional groups who flocked to Venice during the unsettled years of the Italian Wars, leading to Marcantonio Michiel's 1516 description of a Bergamo that was a shadow of its former self: its natural resources and industries exhausted, and many of its inhabitants flocking in large numbers to the cities of Venice and (to a lesser extent) Milan in pursuit of work.[62] As well as tracing the origins of the Vavassore back to their Bergamasco village of Telgate, this chapter will use the remaining archival evidence to chart their

[59] Schulz, 1998, 117-125.
[60] On immigrant communities in Venice, see Calabi, 1996, 913-46.
[61] A. M. Schulz, *Woodcarving and Woodcarvers in Venice, 1350-1550* (Florence, 2011) 14.
[62] M. Michiel, *Bergamo 1516: città e territoria nella Descriptio di Marcantonio Michiel* (Padua, 1983) 71.

progression in Venice from immigrant 'outsiders' to integrated 'insiders' over a relatively short period of time.

During this process, Vavassore employed a number of mechanisms to aid his swift integration into Venetian society. The records of marriages and baptisms in the Archivio Storico del Patriarcato di Venezia demonstrate that intermarriage between members of the same, and closely related, trades was common, as was the choice of godparents. Printers (*stampatore*) frequently married booksellers (*libraio*), and stationers (*cartoler*) to expand their web of professional (and personal) connections, whilst intermarriage also occurred between migrants who had been born in the same region. These records play an important role in the reconstruction of Vavassore's life in Venice because, in addition to ties of kinship and marriage, the parish formed the cornerstone of public and professional life for the early modern city-dweller. Containing all of the elements essential for life – churches, *campi*, wells, houses and shops – the parish community effectively became a microcosm of the wider city.[63] It is crucial, therefore, to locate any early modern individual within such a context, and this chapter will place Vavassore and his family within the context of the central parish in which they settled – San Moisè.

Finally, Vavassore quickly became a member of two important Venetian institutions after settling in the lagoon – the confraternity, or *scuola*, and the Painters' Guild that met at the church dedicated to their patron saint, Luke.[64] These institutions doubtless provided him with a sense of collective identity as well as an individual one, and would have facilitated his meetings with other printers who lived and worked in the *sestiere* of San Marco, as well as members of other, closely related and potentially useful, trades. By taking Giovanni Andrea as a starting point, this chapter will use the surviving documentation to trace the origins of the Vavassore family, their identity, and their integration into Venetian society through the consideration of a series of 'concentric rings.' Beginning with its origins and provenance, I will introduce the Vavassore family and address their status as immigrants from the Venetian *terraferma*, before moving on to consider the

[63] On the importance of parish and neighbourhood in Venice see D. Romano, 'Charity and Community in Early Renaissance Venice' in *The Journal of Urban History* 11:1 (1984) 63-82.

[64] For the foundational literature on confraternities and guilds (and the Painters' Guild in particular) see Favaro, 1975; Mackenney, 1987; C. F. Black, *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1989) and the essays in N. Terpstra, *The Politics of Ritual Kinship: Confraternities and Social Order in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge, 2000).

importance of the parish to both the individual and his workshop, and reviewing Vavassore's integration into the parochial and supraparochial institutions of confraternity and guild.

1.1 Introducing the Vavassore

The last will and testament given by Giovanni Andrea Vavassore to the local notary Giovanni Antonio Zanchi in 1523, just eight years after he had begun a career in the Venetian print industry, is a crucial document in its provision of the basic biographical information required to reconstruct the life of this printer and his family. Born in Telgate, Giovanni Andrea was the son of Venturino Vavassore, a citizen of both Bergamo and Brescia who had died by the time his will was written on 25 August 1523. All of his property – which was presumably inherited from his father – was held in common with his three brothers, Giovanni Jacopo, Giuliano, and Giovanni Maria, whom he referred to in his will as 'de fraterna.'[65] Vavassore was by this point married to a woman named Samaritana, and the fact that the executor of his will – his wife's brother Ser Faustino Vavassore – shared his surname suggests that he had in fact married a relative. Vavassore would still have been a relatively young man when he filed his testament in 1523, and this is reflected in the terms laid out within it. He names his three brothers as his heirs in equal parts, but states that if a son (or sons) were to be born from his marriage to Samaritana, his property would then be theirs to inherit. Furthermore, in the case of a daughter or daughters, his assets should be used to provide for her dowry.[66] Despite his provision, Giovanni Andrea and Samaritana Vavassore's marriage did not produce any surviving children.

Vavassore's testament does not suggest that he was either unwell or injured at the time of its writing, which certainly raises the question why an apparently healthy

[65] "nunc et in futurum dimitto et lego Joanne Jacobo, Juliano, et Joanne Marie fratribus meis de fraternal licet ab utribus et cuique eorum: Et eos et quemlibet eorum ne in predictis heredes universals instituo et esse volo equaliter et equalibus portionibus." Testament of 25 August 1523, transcribed in Schulz, 1998, 120-1.

[66] "Verum si me contigerit heredes filios mascules et legittimo matrimonio natos, unum vel plures, eum vel eos equalibus portionibus ne in predictis omnibus heredes universalis instituo et esse volo. Si autem me heredem contigerit filiam vel filias legittmam vel legittimas pro utracumque eam vel eas volo maritarj seu dotarj debere deo vel mundo condecenter impensis facultatis mee." Ibid. 121.

young man would feel it necessary to visit (or be visited by) a local notary to give his final testament. However, in 1523 Venice and much of the Italian peninsula was attacked by a particularly ferocious outbreak of plague. The city was struck repeatedly and, despite the strict measures put in place to quarantine plague victims in the *lazzaretti*, the openness of the city to merchants, traders, and visitors meant that endemic and epidemic diseases were a problem throughout the sixteenth century and beyond.[67] Similarly, goods carrying the contagion of plague were also able to leave Venice and spread the disease along the trade routes: the epidemic of 1523, for example, had travelled across the sea to Constantinople by the summer, infecting the Venetian colonies of Rhodes, Corfu and Crete along the way.[68]

The panic caused by the outbreak of plague could certainly have been the impetus for Vavassore to ensure that his property was secure by writing a will. Perhaps less threatening, but taken no less seriously at the time, were the reports of a coming deluge in February 1524.[69] The debate was first launched in print in 1499 with the publication of the *Ephemerides* of the astrologer Johann Stöffler, who predicted that multiple planetary conjunctions in the year 1524 would lead to a large number of catastrophes, notable among which was the flood or deluge. Stöffler's work circulated in Venice in 1522 in an edition published by Luc'Antonio Giunta.[70] This undoubtedly fuelled the lagoon's already panic-stricken atmosphere, for the patrician Marin Sanudo recorded in his diary that "the whole land is inclined to devotion for fear of these floods."[71]

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[67] See J. L. Stevens Crawshaw, *Plague Hospitals: Public Health for the City in Early Modern Venice* (Farnham 2012); S. K. Cohn Jr., *Cultures of Plague: Medical Thinking at the End of the Renaissance* (Oxford, 2010); R. J. Palmer, 'The Control of Plague in Venice and Northern Italy, 1348-1600' (PhD Thesis, 1978) 355; and D. Owen Hughes, 'Bodies, Disease, and Society' in J. Najemy (ed.) *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance 1300-1550* (Oxford, 2004) 103-24.

[68] Andrea Priuli, the Venetian *Bailo* in Constantinople, died there of plague on 18 July 1523. N. Varlik, 'Disease and Empire: A History of Plague Epidemics in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire (1453-1600)' (PhD Thesis, 2008) 77.

[69] On the Flood and its impact see O. Niccoli, *Prophecy and People in Renaissance Italy* translated by L. Cochrane (Princeton, 1990) ch. 6; P. Zambelli, 'Fine del mondo o inizio della propaganda? Astrologia, filosofia della storia e propaganda politico-religiosa nel dibattito sulla congiunzione del 1524' in *Science, credenze occulte, livelli di cultura. Convegno internazionale di studi (Firenze, 26-30 giugno 1980)* (Florence, 1982) 291-368; and G. A. Schoener, 'The Flood of 1524: The First Mass-media Event in European History,' *Esoterica: The Journal* 8 (2007) 166-78.

[70] J. Stöffler, *Almanach nova plurimis annis venturis inservientia* (Venice: Luc'Antonio Giunta, 1522).

[71] DMS, 35:332.

In addition to making the provision to split his property between his brothers (or future sons) in equal parts, Vavassore made only one other specific request. To his beloved wife Samaritana, he left all of the garments, wool and silk; linens; and rings and jewellery she had brought into their marriage in her dowry. [72] He also expressed his fervent wish that upon his death, his three brothers would continue to take care of her. In the event that they were unable to do so, Vavassore asked that his assets be used to pay for his widow to "live chastely" – presumably in a convent.[73] Whilst his wife's brother Faustino Vavassore acted as the executor, Giovanni Andrea also left specific requests for his funeral and burial. He charged the bookseller (*librario*) Paolo Danza with determining both the site of his burial and the amount of money that was to be spent on his funeral although he expressed the wish that his body be buried in either the grave of the confraternity in the church of San Moisè, or the new confraternity of S. Nicolò in the nearby church of San Salvatore.[74] Danza's role would customarily have been the responsibility of the executor, but his inclusion in the will suggests that Faustino did not live in Venice.

By the time Vavassore gave his second testament in 1570, both his wife Samaritana and two of his brothers – Giovanni Jacopo and Giuliano – had died, but it is clear that the Vavassore family had flourished and expanded in the lagoon.[75] Florio, another brother who was described as "mio fratello" rather than "i miei carnal fratelli", had also died. Although Schulz concluded that Giovanni Andrea and Florio were "probably half-brothers," it is impossible to determine the nature of their relationship accurately on the basis of the remaining evidence.[76] Given their shared surname, it is likely that Florio was the product of a second marriage by Giovanni Andrea's father

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[72] "Item dimito et lego domine Samaritane consorti mee dilecte et leittime omnes et singulas suas vestes et drapamenta, linea, lanea, sericea, zonas, anulos, veram et Omnia sua jocalia, et bona et res suas sic argeteas quam alias, quas et quam ipsa habet, ac etiam ego esse feci de quibus omnibus disponere valeat pro libito et de voluntatis nomine sua condictione Valente, quia restant sui iuris." Schulz, 1998, 120-1.

[73] "Etiam si aliter faceretur et eo adve(n)iente casu infrascripte domine Samaritane usufructuariam dimitto, lego, et esse volo omnium et singulorum bonarum meorum jurium et actionum mobilius et stabilium presentium et futurorum et ubique postirum et existenium, et ea moriente ipsam sepelirj facere condecenter juxta condictionem meam expensis commissarie mee vidua, et caste vivenda." Ibid. 121.

[74] "Et quando me hac fungi contigerit volo cadaver meum tumulari is archis confraternitus Sancti Corporis in ecclesia S. Moysis seu etiam in archis confraternitus Sancti Nicolai quae fit apud ecclesiam Sancti Salvatoris Venetiarum prout placebit dicto Ser Paulo Danza librario et cum illis impensis funeralibus prout placebit dicto Ser Pauolo Danza." Ibid. 120.

[75] Testament of 19 January 1570, transcribed in Ibid. 123-4.

[76] Ibid. 120.

Venturino; but his own marriage to a relative (Samaritana) before 1523 means that we cannot rule out the possibility that Florio was a cousin or other family member. Whatever their connection, the two were working together in Venice in the 1530s and 1540s, and published several works which will be discussed in subsequent chapters. Furthermore, it is clear that after Florio's death, Giovanni Andrea had taken on the responsibility of looking after his brother's wife, Margareta. His will stipulates that upon his death she continued to be cared for by his nephews Ventura and Venturino, and provides the financial resources required for them to do so. Unlike Vavassore's first testament, the will of 1570 is a substantial document, and involves a considerable number of specific bequests and requests. It therefore offers a much more complete picture of Vavassore's personal and professional concerns, and demonstrates the central role he played as the patriarch of an expanding family.

Although two of the *fraterna* had died, the 1570 testament attests to the fact that the Vavassore family had grown exponentially since its arrival in the lagoon. In the absence of his brothers, Vavassore named the sons of Giovanni Jacopo (Ventura and Venturino) and Giuliano (Clemente and Alvise) as his heirs in equal parts. As well as four nephews, Vavassore also had at least three nieces – from his brother Giuliano, Samaritana and Constantina; and from Giovanni Jacopo, Pollonia.[77] His niece Samaritana had died after giving birth to a stillborn infant in February 1561.[78] It is clear that, in the absence of their own children both Giovanni Andrea and his wife Samaritana were very close to their niece, for not only did Vavassore act as executor to her will, but Samaritana left 50 ducats to her aunt of the same name, whom she had come to see as her mother (she also appears to have been named after her).[79] Furthermore, Giovanni Andrea kept sums of her money "in trust" (*legato*) after her death, and granted both Constantina and Alvise the 200 ducats she had left them upon his death in 1572.[80] His nieces and nephews were all to receive sums of money, but Vavassore also made

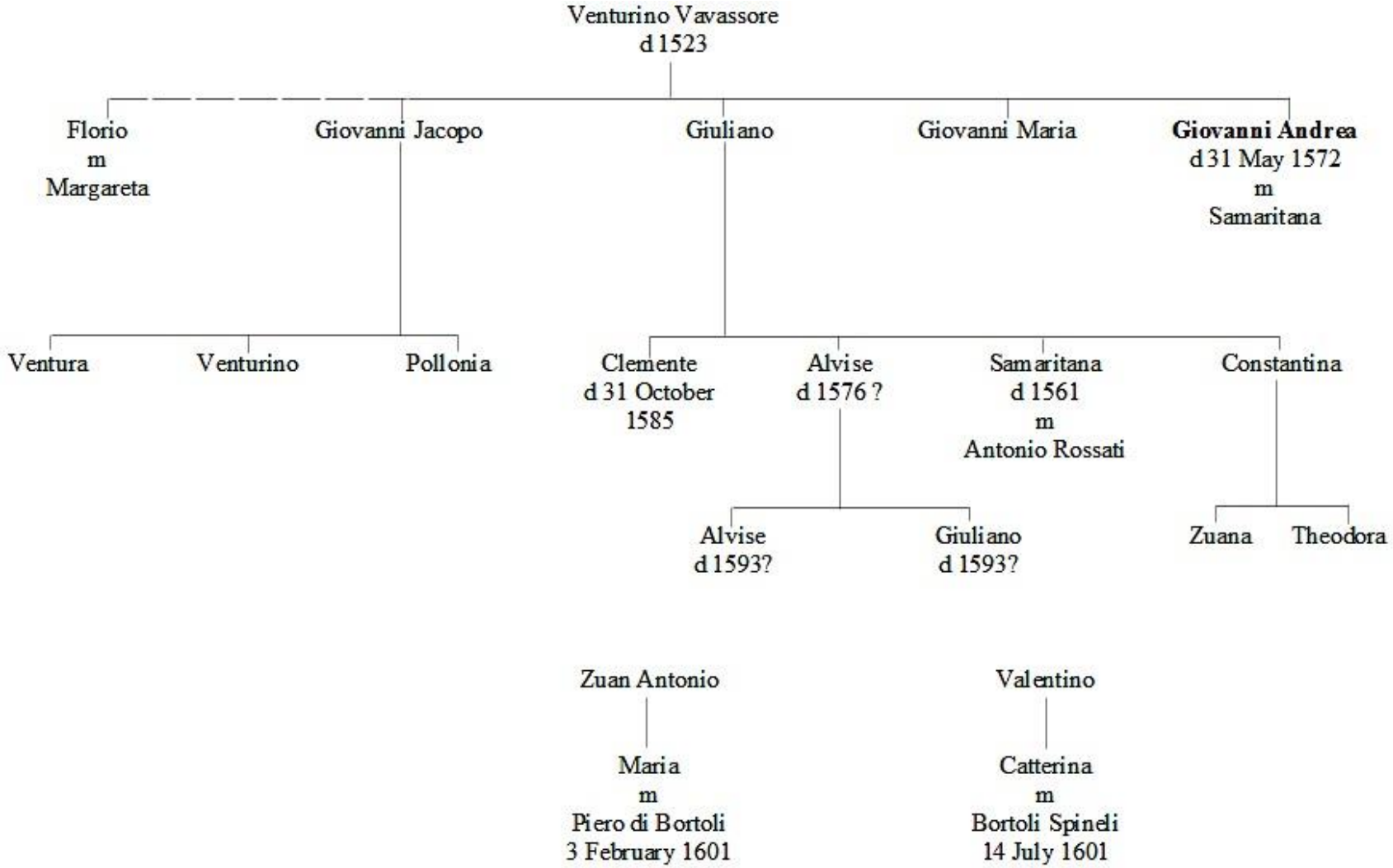
[77] Ibid. 123-4.
[78] "sana per la gratia del mio Signor Dio della mente, ma molto inferma del corpo per haver parturido adesso in questa note passata una creatura morta, et temendo di non manchar senza testament, ho fatta chiamar et venir da mi pre Francesco Bianco, nodaro pubblico di Venetia el qual Io ho pregato, presenti li infrascripti testimonij." Samaritana gave her own testament on her deathbed on 2 February 1561, with her uncle Giovanni Andrea Vavassore acting as executor. It was opened and read in the same month. Her testament is also transcribed in Ibid. 122-3.
[79] "Lasso a madona Samaritana la quale io ho tenuto et tengo come mia madre, consorte de messer Zuanandrea Valvassore, ducati cinquanta, cio ducati 50..." Ibid. 122.
[80] "Item lasso chel ditto messer Alvise possi traere ducatj desento (200) per li legato gli lasso madonna Samaritana mia neza li quali sono ventuj in casa in eneficio di tuttj." Ibid. 123.

bequests to two women named Anzelicha and Marta "who stayed with us" (*che gia e stata con noi*), each for five ducats; to Faustina, the daughter of his doctor (*medico*) Ser Fancho Fanzolla who was granted 50 ducats for her marriage; and to his apprentice Bartolomeo, who was to receive ten ducats upon the completion of his training.[81]

In terms of his personal affects, as his heirs in equal parts, Clemente, Alvise, Ventura and Venturino were to share his personal and shared assets, his merchandise, the contents of his house, and his other possessions. Alvise and Clemente, both of whom had played some role in the workshop's operation, also received specific bequests. To Alvise, Giovanni Andrea left his two presses and carved wooden blocks of saints and book illustrations, and asked that his books be divided between the two nephews, with Clemente taking those that best served his study.[82] Finally, it seems that there had been some complex financial dealings between family members in the years or months before Vavassore recorded his testament. His nephews Ventura and Venturino appear to have demanded money from the late Florio's wife Margareta and two other female relatives (*cognate*) called Libera and Lucia; whilst Clemente was charged with ensuring that his brother Alvise paid all of his debts, including a sum he owed to a coppersmith (*uno batirame*) in Treviso.[83] In naming him executor and granting him responsibility for concluding his brother's poor financial decisions, it seems that Giovanni Andrea was trying to carve out a central role for Clemente as mediator of the family. Clemente's involvement in the family business as an editor, however, ceased after the death of his uncle. Alvise and his sons (Vavassore's great-nephews) continued to run the workshop for over two decades after Vavassore's death, which occurred on or shortly before 31 May 1572, when his second testament was opened and read.[84]

The evidence contained within Giovanni Andrea's testaments illuminate the extent to which the Vavassore family had thrived in Venice. Certainly, a third generation of the family was well established by the time of his death, for Alvise's sons Luigi and Guiliano had begun to play an active part in the workshop's activity by attending book fairs. They also appear as Clemente's heirs in equal parts in his

[81] Ibid. 124.
[82] "Item lasso a messer Alvise Valvasorio mio nepote qual e sempre stato cum noi et sta, duj torcholj et le stampe de figure di santj et di librj, non li carte stampate et librj si habbino da divider si come ordinero … Item dechiarischo che tuttj li librj si trovano apresso a messer Clemente per suo uso." Ibid. 123-4.
[83] Ibid. 124.
[84] The back of the second testament is marked "1572 31 Oct., apertum."



testament of 1576, written shortly before he professed his vows at the monastery of Sant'Andrea della Certosa on the Lido.[85] Similarly, Samaritana recorded in her testament of 1561 that her sister Constantina had already given birth to two young daughters: Zuana and Theodosia.[86] Though her brother Clemente was not to have any children – for he had none in 1572, and entered a Carthusian monastery shortly after his uncle's death – Vavassore's nieces and nephews continued to establish the family still more firmly in Venice, for the name continues to appear in the parish registers into the following century.

These short documents thus contain a wealth of information about the day-to-day lives and end-of-life concerns of this printer and his family members. They also confirm that, after the death of their father Venturino, Giovanni Andrea was not the only one of the Vavassore *fraterna* to leave the Bergamasco in search of a better life in the lagoon. Even if Vavassore's brothers did not travel with him, they and the subsequent generations of the family also came to settle and thrive in Venice. By 1570, Vavassore was an elderly man, and his motivations for giving his last will and testament were quite different from those he had experienced in 1523. He records that he had called the notary Baldessera Fiume to his house in the parish of San Moisè because though his mind, body, memory and intellect were sound, "this, our fragile life" (*questa nostra fragil vita*) had prompted him to file his testament. Certainly, it would be a considerable time (almost a year and a half) before his will was opened and read. These documents therefore offer a window into Vavassore's concerns for the continuation of his family and his business at two distinct, and quite different, moments in his life.

In both testaments, Vavassore identifies himself closely with the town of his birth – despite, by 1570, having lived in Venice for some 55 years or more – and the position of his late father, Venturino Vavassore.[87] Now part of Lombardy, Telgate is a *comune* in the district of Bergamo, approximately 60km northeast of Milan, situated on the main road linking Bergamo and Brescia. Its small size and central position between two much larger and more significant settlements means that there has been little

[85] "heredi miei universali Alvise e Giuliano fratelli e fioli del q. Alvise Valvasore mio fratello…" Clemente's testament of 28 August 1576 is transcribed in Schulz, 1998, 124.
[86] "Lasso a Zuana mia neza, fia de Constantina mia sorella ducatj cinqunata, et alter ducatj cinquanta a Theodosia sua sorella, cio al maridar de cadauna de esse, o volendo munegar, et se una de esse morisse, vadi in laltra et morendo tute doi, vadino lj deti sui lassi alla detta mira sorella Constantina sua madre." Ibid. 123.
[87] The testament begins: "Quapropter Ego Joannes Andreas q. Ser Venturini de Vavasoribus de Talgate agri Bergamensis incisor figurarum." Ibid. 124.

historical interest in Telgate and the Telgatesi, whilst the historiography of the Bergamasco has tended to follow one of two approaches: a consideration of the Venetian *stato da terra* or *terraferma* as a whole, or one in which Bergamo and Brescia are viewed as a single entity.[88] The first approach emphasises the importance of the *terraferma* dominions as a whole, and characterises Bergamo and Brescia according to their strategic position as the western-most outposts of the Venetian lands from the fifteenth century. The second, adopted by art historians like Andrea Bayer, has focused on the rich artistic and architectural production of Venetian subject cities like Bergamo, Brescia, and their surrounding areas during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; simultaneously considering their similarities and keeping them apart from other subject cities in the *stato da terra*.[89] Certainly, the connection between Venice and its territories in Bergamo, Brescia, and their surrounding areas would have provided the inspiration – if not the impetus – for Vavassore's move to the lagoon.

The relationship between Venice and her subject cities was, for the most part, a reciprocal one, but varied enormously according to geography. Padua and Treviso, thanks to their proximity to the lagoon, were subject to closer scrutiny and harsher exactions than the more distant centres of Bergamo, Brescia, and (albeit briefly) Cremona.[90] Venice operated a system of exchange with her Lombardian dominions: bartering lucrative salt for essential timber and the safe passage of goods destined for northern Europe. From the Venetian perspective, the existence of such a large and varied hinterland offered a range of employment opportunities for patricians, including governing roles such as the *podesta* or *capitano*, and episcopal sinecures. Inhabitants of subject cities, on the other hand, primarily gained through access to markets and the provision of privileges from the Venetian Senate. After the formal submission of both Brescia and Bergamo in 1428, for example, subjects could request to be granted Venetian citizenship *de intus*, awarding them rights to trade with Venice, as well as

[88] For examples of the most recent scholarship, see M. Knapton 'The Terraferma State' in E. Dursteler, *A Companion to Venetian History, 1400-1797* (Leiden, 2006) 85-124; *idem*, 'Venice and the *Terraferma*' in A. Gamberini and I. Lazzarini, *The Italian Renaissance State* (Cambridge, 2012) 132-155; J. E. Law, *Venice and the Veneto in the Early Renaissance* (Farnham, 2000) and the collection edited by P. Humfrey, *Venice and the Veneto* (Cambridge, 2008).
[89] Andrea Bayer, 'Bergamo and Brescia' in Humfrey, 2008, 285-326.
[90] Cremona was under Venetian control for the decade between 1499 and 1509. See E. Hutton, *The Cities of Lombardy* (New York, 1912), 219-233 (Cremona), 169-182 (Bergamo), 183-195 (Brescia).

some access to minor offices following a period of residency in the city.[91] As citizens of Bergamo and Brescia living in Venice, the Vavassore could have been granted some citizenship rights in the lagoon. In fact, in 1559 the Council of Ten conferred on Clemente Vavassore the right to practice law in the Ducal Palace, a privilege normally restricted to native-born citizens, or *cittadini originarii*.[92]

Born in Telgate, Vavassore and his family were especially well placed between two wealthy, well-resourced cities, with the connections to (but not the scrutiny of) one of the largest and most powerful empires in the world. Bergamo's wealth came largely from wool and textile production, which flourished in the valleys to the north; but it was also a centre for the production and manufacture of iron, silk, and wine – resources which were carefully monitored by Venice from the sixteenth century onwards.[93] Brescia, "the richest and most strategically important of [Venice's] subject cities," also derived much of its wealth from its natural resources.[94] Several lakes and rivers provided both food and a means of communication, while the fertile plains to the south of the city generated crops for local consumption and for trade. Furthermore, the mountainous pre-Alpine region to the north of Brescia provided abundant supplies of timber for fuel, shipbuilding and industry, and was also mined for various minerals and metals. As Bortolo Belotti argued, Bergamo (like Brescia) depended directly upon its surrounding area, and vice versa.[95]

With access to natural resources like these, it is perhaps unsurprising that Giovanni Andrea Vavassore came to adopt woodcarving as a trade. The profession of his father Venturino is not included in either will, but Vavassore defines himself as a woodcarver ('incisor figurarum') in 1523.[96] Although abundant evidence exists to attest

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[91] The government granted two forms of citizenship by privilege in the sixteenth century: citizenship *de intus*, and citizenship *de intus et extra*. See D. Beltrami, *Storia della popolazione di Venezia dalla fine del secolo XVI alla caduta della Repubblica* (Padua, 1954) 65; and B. Pullan, *Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice: The Social Institutions of a Catholic State, to 1620* (Cambridge, 1971) 100-5.

[92] ASV, CX, Commune Registro 24, f. 38v (9 August 1559).

[93] For an overview of the history of Bergamo and the Bergamaschi, see the multi-volume work by B. Belotti, *Storia di Bergamo e dei Bergamaschi* (Bergamo, 1959), esp. Volume III on the history of Bergamo during the period of Venetian dominance. See also A. Bayer, 2008, 285; and C. Carlsmith, *A Renaissance Education: Schooling in Bergamo, 1500-1650* (Toronto, 2010) 6-7.

[94] S. Bowd, *Venice's Most Loyal City: Civic Identity in Renaissance Brescia* (Cambridge, MA, 2010) 18-9.

[95] Belotti, 1959, 11-5.

[96] "Quapropter Ego Joannes Andreas q. Ser Venturini de Vavasoribus de Talgate agri Bergamensis incisor figurarum, de contracta S. Moysis…" Schulz, 1998, 120.

that he made his career as a maker and distributor of woodcuts, as well as a printer and bookseller, this term is most often used to indicate a maker of wooden statues.[97] In her study of woodcarving and woodcarvers in Venice, Anne Markham Schulz has suggested that the existence of so many printed works disproves the notion that Vavassore might have worked in the production of statues, frames, and other objects manufactured from wood. As this thesis will demonstrate, over the course of his career Vavassore engaged in all aspects of the printing trade, making it enormously difficult to pin him down simply as a woodcarver, printer, publisher, mapmaker, or bookseller. Similarly, he did not refer to himself on publications in a consistent fashion.[98]

The fact that he described himself as a woodcarver in his first testament and omitted any trade from the second could suggest that Vavassore began his career as, or at least trained in, the carving of wooden statues. By the end of his career, as an elderly man with an established reputation for producing and selling woodcuts, maps, and books, it was no longer necessary for him to define his profession in this way. Although Venturino's profession remains unknown, the general trend for trade dynasties – in which (male) children adopt their family trade and learn it through apprenticeship – was especially strong among woodcarvers.[99] The evidence of Vavassore's early activities in Venice (dating to 1515) confirms that he could indeed carve complex designs into wooden blocks. The evolution of the Vavassore workshop, which will be illustrated below, relied heavily on the progression of Vavassore's individual skills: moving from woodcarving to the design and production of printed images and illustrations; from large scale cartographic works to books of all kinds that were manufactured using moveable metal type.

What little we do know about Venturino Vavassore concerns his status as a citizen of both Bergamo and Brescia.[100] Just as in Venice, there were roughly three

[97] Schulz, 2011, 12-3.
[98] The colophons of work published by the workshop refer to him variously as "ZuanAndrea", "Giovanni Andrea Vavassore", "Valvasor", "Vavasori", "detto Guadagnino," "ZuanAndrea Vadagnin" and others.
[99] Schulz noted that "members of a single family often followed the same profession of *intagliatore* and, if the job were a large one, sometimes shared commissions." Schulz, 2011, 17.
[100] In his second testament of 1570, Vavassore describes himself as the son of: "Messer Venturin citadino di Bergomo et Bressa." Schulz, 1998, 124.

orders of society in Bergamo: nobles, citizens, and the *popolo*.[101] The city's nobles were gentlemen, and its citizens were wealthy enough to be distinguishable only by their dress.[102] Like many of the civic authorities in Renaissance Italy, the councils of Bergamo and of Brescia actively encouraged men of wealth or skill to apply for the privilege of citizenship.[103] In Brescia, in order to qualify for citizenship a man had to own a property there or have resided in one for a decade, but the authorities were flexible and might also grant citizenship based upon the prestige or profession of the individual involved. In Bergamo, a statute declared that to be true citizens (*veri cittadini*) of the city, a man would require six witnesses to attest that his family had been resident there since the 1400s.[104] However it, too, conferred citizenship by merit or wealth.

Thus, as a citizen of both Brescia and Bergamo, it seems likely that Venturino Vavassore met any or all of the following criteria: he was a skilled man, in possession of considerable wealth, and his family had lived in Telgate for several generations. As a "sister of Venice", citizens of Bergamo considered themselves as being equivalent to citizens of Venice.[105] It is unclear to what extent this had any practical translation to life in Venice itself, and many questions remain to be answered about the assumptions and experiences of immigrants to Venice from the *terraferma*. However, it is worth noting that Stephen Bowd has observed a notable division between older citizens and newly created citizens in late fifteenth-century Brescia, and it seems likely that citizens from the *terraferma* in Venice did not receive the same practical advantages and privileges as those who hailed from the lagoon city itself, or had made their fortune there.[106] Whatever his trade and claim to citizenship, Venturino Vavassore established a secure

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[101] On Venice, see B. Pullan, ''Three Orders of Inhabitants': Social Hierarchies in the Republic of Venice' in J. Denton (ed.) *Orders and Hierarchies in late Medieval and Renaissance Europe* (Toronto, 1999) 147-168. On Bergamo, see Belotti, 1959, 3-4.
[102] The fashions of Bergamaschi citizens were included in Book I 'The Clothing of Lombardy' of C. Veccelio's *Habiti Antichi e Moderni di tutto il mondo* (1590) reproduced in M. Rosenthal & A. R. Jones, *The Clothing of the Renaissance World: Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas* (London, 2008).
[103] See J. M. Ferraro, *Family and Public Life in Brescia, 1580-1650: The Foundations of Power in the Venetian State* (Cambridge, 2003), esp. 58-61; and Bowd, 2010, 67.
[104] Belotti, 1959, 4.
[105] Ibid. 3.
[106] Divisions arose in Brescia among older Bresciani citizens who had come from the countryside and achieved citizenships under the lordships of Malatesta and the Visconti, and those who had achieved it more recently under Venetian rule. See Bowd, 2010, 67.

grounding for his four sons, enabling Giovanni Andrea to leave the Bergamasco and establish a business in Venice.

There are various factors to consider in understanding Giovanni Andrea Vavassore's decision to emigrate with his family and begin a new life in Venice. The wealth generated by such a vast and lucrative trade network attracted merchants and artisans of all types from across the Venetian *terraferma* and beyond.[107] Furthermore, the city was renowned for being a "city of foreigners," hospitably accepting migrants with open arms and allowing them to settle and ply their trades with relative ease.[108] In the Brembana and Seriana valleys north of Bergamo, and across the provinces of Bergamo and Brescia more generally, movement to (and, to a lesser extent, from) Venice was particularly intense. Enticed by the prospects of more lucrative employment, larger networks of patronage, and artistic freedom, most artisans and merchants who moved to Venice contributed to the economy of basic housing, sustenance and clothing, while others produced luxury products for the export market. Although merchants and artisans achieved greater financial success in Venice, the city itself ultimately reaped the rewards of their labour – leading Dennis Romano to describe Venice as a drain on "the talent of its *terraferma* and overseas dominions" in the sixteenth century.[109]

A further factor in the large-scale emigration from Bergamo and Brescia were the events leading up to and including the War of the League of Cambrai (1509-1516).[110] The French descent into Italy in 1494 and the wars that followed shattered the status quo that had characterised life on the Italian peninsula during the fifteenth century. The

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[107] A. Colombo & G. Sciortino have discussed the 'pull' and 'push' factors for immigration in modern Italy (many of which are applicable to early modern trends in the Venetian empire) in their article 'Italian Immigration: The Origins, Nature and Evolution of Italy's Migratory Systems' in *The Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 9 (2004) 49-70. See also Calabi, 1996, 913-46; C. Romba, G. Piccinni & G. Pinto (eds.) *Strutture familiari, epidemie e migrazione nell'Italia medievale* (Naples, 1984); and De Maria, 2010). An upcoming project by Rosa Salzberg also aims to explore the issue of immigrants and immigration by focusing on the spaces of arrival (inns, lodging houses, ferry stations) in early modern Venice.

[108] De Commynes, 1969-73, Vol. II, 493; also included in Chambers & Pullan, 2001, 325.

[109] Romano, 2008, 12.

[110] For an overview of the War of the League of Cambrai, see F. Gilbert, 'Venice in the Crisis of the League of Cambrai', in J. R. Hale (ed.) *Renaissance Venice* (London, 1973) 274-92; M. E. Mallett & J. R. Hale, *The Military Organisation of a Renaissance State: Venice c.1400 to 1617* (Cambridge, 1984) 222-24; and E. Muir, 'Was there Republicanism in the Renaissance Republics? Venice after Agnadello' in J. J. Martin & D. Romano (eds.) *Venice Reconsidered: The History and Civilisation of an Italian City-State* (Baltimore, 2000) 137-68, especially 138.

passage and occupation of allied French, German and Spanish troops exacerbated existing resentments between Italian powers and sparked new ones – ultimately culminating in a show of hostility towards Venice when, in 1508, Julius II asserted the secular power of the Papacy and joined forces with Louis XII of France, the Holy Roman Emperor Maximillian I, and Ferdinand I of Spain to form the League of Cambrai.[111] Their collective aim was to reclaim the papal territories that had been seized by Venice in 1503, notably Rimini and Faenza, but also to seize as much of its *terraferma* as possible.[112] Maximilian I was to seize Vicenza, neighbouring Verona, Padua, and Friuli; Ferdinand I would take Otranto from the Venetians; and Louis XII would use his foothold in Milan as a basis for an attack on Bergamo, Crema, Cremona, and Brescia. [113] Louis XII defeated the forces of Venice in the Battle of Agnadello on 14 May 1509, and within days he had taken Brescia, Bergamo and other cities in Lombardy. Imperial troops also occupied Verona, Vicenza, and Padua. Although Padua quickly revolted and was brought back into Venetian hands by a successful campaign under Andrea Gritti, it would take another seven years and a great deal of military and diplomatic bargaining before Venice regained the rest of her land empire.

We know that Vavassore was already living in Venice in 1515, for a set of woodcuts depicting the *Apocalypse* and a large multi-sheet 'map' depicting the events of the *Battle of Marignano* were produced in that year.[114] Other single-sheet prints and illustrations produced in collaboration with several other Venetian printers also confirm that he had been active in the city for several years by the time he gave his first testament in 1523. Whether he had completed his apprenticeship in his native Telgate or in Venice, it is likely that his decision to leave the Bergamasco was influenced by the events during, and in the period immediately after, the Venetian defeat. Venice did not hesitate in demanding contributions and sacrifices from both Brescia and Bergamo during times of war, and the cities suffered both physically and financially as a result.[115] After the victory of the League forces at Agnadello in 1509 Bergamo had to readjust to Milanese rule under either the French or the Spanish. Although many were content to

[111] Bowd, 2010, 195-6.
[112] J. J. Norwich, *A History of Venice* (London, 1983) 390-95.
[113] Bowd, 2010, 195-6.
[114] An early example of book illustration by Vavassore is discussed in E. T. Falaschi, 'Valvassori's 1553 Illustrations of *Orlando Furioso*: the development of multi-narrative technique in Venice and its links with cartography' in *La Bibliofilia* 77 (1975) 227-51. See also Schulz, 1998, 117.
[115] Belotti, 1959, 2.

allow old allegiances with the Duchy of Milan to resurface, especially in the wake of such exploitation by Venetian forces, others maintained their deference to Venice.[116] The Bergamasco had acted as a mediator between the Venetian and Milanese forces in the fifteenth century and, having maintained its relative independence from the city it surrounded, provided a 'hotbed' of allegiance to Venice in the wake of the defeat at Agnadello.[117] It seems that many merchants and artisans from this area (including the Vavassore) felt more allegiance to Venice than Bergamo under Milanese rule, a fact that was reiterated in Federico Contarini's letter to the Signoria in 1511, in which he described that "all, be they gentlemen, citizens, or people [*populi*] of the Bergmascho are exemplary in their faith and devotion to our Venetian state."[118]

Both Bergamo and Brescia were to be reunited with Venice in 1516, and remained a part of her empire until its fall in 1797. The loss of the *terraferma* nonetheless aroused a great deal of anxiety and shock among Venetians, not least because of the close proximity of enemy troops camped on the lagoon shores.[119] The seven-year period of Milanese occupation in Bergamo therefore aroused intense popular interest, with the diarist Marin Sanudo commenting upon it in 1511.[120] The demand for news of the events taking place in Lombardy must have been especially strong among the Bergamaschi who had arrived in the city prior to this point. The number of people flocking to Venice in the early decades of the sixteenth century as a result of extreme poverty caused the depopulation of Bergamo and the Bergamasco in the years that

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[116] Bayer, 2008, 290; Carlsmith, 2010, 6-7; and G. Ruggiero, *The Renaissance in Italy: A Social and Cultural History of the Rinascimento* (Cambridge, 2015) 416-7.
[117] See Belotti, 1959, ch. 6; Muir, 2000, 137-68; and M. E. Mallett & C. Shaw, *The Italian Wars 1494-1559: War, State and Society in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2014).
[118] "tutti, zentilhomeni, cittadini et populi bergamaschi essere uno exemplare de fede et devozione verso il Veneto stato nostro." Federico Contarini's letter is cited in the diaries of Girolamo Priuli, *Diarii*, BMCV MS. Prov. Div. 252-c vol.3, cc. 211 February 1511. See also, L. J. Libby, 'The Reconquest of Padua in 1509 according to the Diary of Girolamo Priuli' in *Renaissance Quarterly* 28 (1975) 323-331. On the loyalty of the *popolo* of the *terraferma* after the Battle of Agnadello, see A. Ventura, *Nobiltà e popolo nella società veneta del '400 e '500*. (Rome: 1964).
[119] Crouzet-Pavan, 2005, 132.
[120] "Intenso l'acquisto di Bergamo – egli scrive – tuta terra fo in alegreza et maxime li fachini, quali tutti fano demostratone de alegreza, et venivano con bandiere e loro diredo, cridando: 'Marco, Marco' per piaza, et portono una forcha con uno gallo impichado, qual havia una anguilla in boacha, ch'e l'arma de Milan, et era grandissimo rumor in piaza, tutti jubilando, e fo preperato uno gran focho in cao della piaza verso San Geminiano, con un gallo vivo di sopra e una anguilla in forma di bissa, e cussi poi impiono focho, balando fachini atorno e brusoe il gall. Et cussi in diversi campi fo fato fochi et feste in segno di letizia et a San Geminian in Piaza sonato compano." DMS, 13:455.

followed the crushing defeat of Venice at Agnadello.[121] Marcantonio Michiel's description of the city in 1516 certainly attests to this, for he wrote that Bergamo and its people were "languishing in poverty and hunger, with not enough from the poor and barren terrain to administer to it."[122] His account also makes it clear that the area was suffering major depopulation, with residents from the Brembana valley in particular leaving the area in droves: some destined for Milan, but more frequently journeying to the city of Venice and its dominions.

The timing of the Vavassore family's arrival in Venice – which, based on the surviving output of the workshop, was sometime in 1515 – suggests that their departure was a direct response to the desperate circumstances that had made life in Bergamo and Brescia in the wake of the Venetian defeat untenable. Nonetheless, certain members of the Vavassore family remained in the Bergamasco – Samaritana's brother Faustino, for example, was still living there when Vavassore gave his first testament in 1523. However, whilst these 'push factors' may have been strong, Venice also offered the promise of lucrative trade and extensive markets, especially for an artisan looking to establish himself in the printing trade. The small number of Bergamaschi immigrants who had ventured eastwards to the lagoon in the late fifteenth century were quickly joined by many thousands more. Like the Vavassore family, the new arrivals settled in 'pockets' throughout the city and began to engage in a variety of different trades.

1.2. Profiling the Parish: Vavassore in San Moisè

One of the largest of these Bergamascho 'pockets' was to be found in the central parish of San Moisè. Situated just a minute or two on foot to the west of Piazza San Marco, San Moisè benefitted from its strategic location between the political and religious heart of the city at San Marco, and the bustling market at Rialto. Home to one of the most notable shopping districts in Renaissance Venice, the parish became one of the most

[121] Schulz, 2011, 14.
[122] "I Valligiani poi abitano quasi tutti in varie contrade, e crescono in tanto numero che se con la loro naturale sottigliezza, e maravigliosa industria non si procacciassero il vitto, languirebbero d'inopia, e di fame, non bastando lo scarso e sterile terreno a somministrarglielo. Quelli però che fermansi nelle loro case, o guardano pecore, o lavorano panni: tutti gli altri ne partono per impiegarsi altrove, o nelle botteghe, o ne'traffici, e sono costoro in sì gran numero… Tutti que' di Val Brembana, eccenttuatine gli abitanti di là dal giogo, che fanno panni di seta in Milano, frequentanto lo stato e la citta de Venezia." Michiel,1983, 71.

densely populated areas of Venice in the sixteenth century, and attracted international renown for the vast array of goods on sale there. Print scholars have reached a consensus that the city's burgeoning book trade found a home in these streets, and recently Rosa Salzberg focused particular attention on the parish of San Moisè as a hub for the dissemination of cheap print, and the site of some of the most productive printers and publishers of cheap material active at this time.[123] It is unsurprising, therefore, that in his testaments of 1523 and 1570 Giovanni Andrea Vavassore is listed as living in the parish of San Moisè. Drawing on a selection of contemporary sources, including archival records, travel accounts, and city views, this section will contextualise the Vavassore within the context of the parish in which they made his home, as well as examining and questioning the workshop's location.

The division of the city into *confinia* or *contrade* dates from the last decades of the eleventh century. An increase in population and growing settlement-density gradually necessitated a more rigid system of organisation, in which the *sestieri* (sixths) of the city were divided into *contrade*, the form of which was based on existing parishes.[124] Marin Sanudo noted in his description of the city the existence of seventy *contrade*, a figure that remains largely unchanged to the present day.[125] The *sestieri* of Venice have been the subject of investigation by Joseph Wheeler, whose focus on the district of San Polo examined the *sestiere* as an all-purpose administrative unit that formed the basis of major fifteenth-century schemes concerned with property valuation, property sales, and extraction of the *decime*.[126] However, the *sestiere* played no political role and had only a limited role in the distribution of offices.[127] Beyond such basic

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[123] See Salzberg, 2010, 111-32. On the concentration of printers and booksellers between the Piazza San Marco and Rialto, see Landau & Parshall, 1994; Bury, 2001, 170; and Woodward, 2007, 779.

[124] J. Wheeler, 'The Sestiere of San Polo: A Cross Section of Venetian Society in the Second Half of the Fifteenth Century' (PhD Thesis, 1995) 43. Fynes Moryson, who visited Venice in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, described the "six sextaries, or six parts, vulgarly called *sestieri*" in his *An Itinerary: Containing his Ten Yeeres Travell through the Twelve Dominions of Germany, Bohmerland, Sweitzerland, Netherland, Denmarke, Poland, Italy, Turky, France, England, Scotland & Ireland* Vol. II (London, 1617) 78.

[125] "contrade over parocchie partide per sextier." M. Sanudo, *De Origine, Situ e Magistratibus Urbis Venetae ovvero La Città di Venezia (1493-1530)* edited by A. C. Aricò (Milan, 1980) 167-9.

[126] The *decime* was a direct tax inaugurated in Venice in 1463, the raising of which is described by Sanudo in 1499 in relation to various wars. See P. H. Labalme & L. S. White, *Venice,* Cità Excelentissima: *Selections from the Renaissance Diaries of Marin Sanudo* (Baltimore, 2008) 237.

[127] The distribution of offices within the *sestiere* was limited to the election of the *Cai di Sestier* and the *Signori di Notte*, groups of men who had no rights of forcible entry and

administrative functions, it is clear from Sanudo's description of the city that contemporaries viewed the *sestieri* as no more than agglomerations of parishes. Parish boundaries themselves were in a state of considerable flux: although a matter of daily and ceremonial importance, they remained distinct and unwritten, and were frequently altered to accommodate areas not previously assigned to one parish or another when they were built upon.[128]

The monumental bird's-eye view of Venice produced by Jacopo de'Barbari c.1500 is an invaluable resource in sketching the topography of the sixteenth century city.[129] Like the textual descriptions of the city by Marcantonio Sabellico (1489) and Marin Sanudo's (1499) de'Barbari's presentation of the *sestiere* of San Polo as a coherent whole has been attacked by Wheeler who points out that other contemporary descriptions fractured it into parishes – even considering the Rialto as a separate *isola*.[130] However, for this reason, de'Barbari's woodcut is an ideal tool with which to excavate the porous boundaries between parishes and their different characteristics. The area immediately to the west of Piazza San Marco, encompassing the parishes of San Moisè, San Vidal, Santo Stefano, San Luca and San Fantin, is one of the most densely populated areas on the map (Fig.1.1). Much more concentrated than the areas around Santa Maria Formosa, SS. Giovanni e Paolo, and Cannaregio, the density of buildings is comparable only to the area surrounding the Rialto. One of the most visible canals on the 1500 woodcut is the *Rio di San Moisè*, which cuts across the centre of that parish north to south before becoming the *Rio dei Barcaroli* and later, the *Rio di San Luca*. A branch of the same canal (at this point the *Rio dei Fuseri*) stretches east towards San Marco, and is located immediately behind the Frezzaria (Fig 1.2). The existence of such convenient waterways, which cut across parish boundaries and provided access to the Grand Canal on both sides, would have facilitated the movement of goods and materials to and from workshop premises in this area. Jacopo de'Barbari further implies this with the inclusion of several tiny boats at the southern-most point of the *sestiere*, which is

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whose only qualification was that they be familiar with the area and able to watch out for strangers; see Wheeler, 1995, 40. The officials of the *Sestieri* were also involved in maintaining order, including the regulation of prostitution: Chambers & Pullan, 2001, 120-3.

[128] Ibid. 42.

[129] The Jacopo de'Barbari map also served as inspiration for a *View of Venice* produced by Vavassore in the 1520s. See J. Schulz, 'Jacopo de'Barbari's View of Venice: Map Making, City Views, and Moralised Geography Before the Year 1500,' in *The Art Bulletin* 60:3 (1978) 425-474; and D. Howard, 'Venice as Dolphin: Further Investigations into Jacopo de'Barbari's View' in *Artibus et Historiae* 18:35 (1997) 101-11.

[130] Wheeler, 1995, 31-2.

situated directly across from the trading hub at the customs house or Dogana da Mar (Fig. 1.3).

The existence of such fluid parish boundaries is crucial in understanding the life of the Vavassore family in Venice, as well as the existence of a printing network, and the site of the workshop's premises. The earliest extant work I have identified by Giovanni Andrea is the woodcut *Battle of Marignano*, printed in c.1515-16, which bears the colophon: 'Giovanni Andrea Vavassore, also called Guadagnino, at the Ponte dei Fuseri.' (Fig.1.4 G).[131] This colophon is the only definitive 'address' for the workshop and is repeated on at least two other distinct works published by Vavassore in his career (c.1515-c.1544).[132] The Ponte dei Fuseri, still in existence today, is a small bridge across the *Rio dei Fuseri* which stands at the intersection of the *contrade* of San Fantin and San Luca (Fig. 1.5). Along with San Salvador, these two parishes contained the homes and businesses of several printers by the early sixteenth century. Located on the Ponte dei Fuseri, Vavassore would have found himself in the midst of a vibrant community of printmakers and sellers including Giovanni Antonio Nicolini da Sabbio, Nicolò Aristotile de'Rossi (known as Zoppino), and the brothers Benedetto and Agostino Bindoni (Fig.1.4 F).[133] Nearby in the Frezzaria was a small cluster of mapmakers, among them Matteo Pagano, whose cartographic output mirrored that of the Vavassore workshop, and with whom Giovanni Andrea evidently worked quite closely.[134] Although many of these engravers identified their shops with a sign – Matteo Pagano, for example, had a shop at the Sign of the Faith (*insegna della Fede*) in the Frezzaria – Vavassore was among those who made use of easily recognisable landmarks and meeting points in describing the location of his shop.

It is evident, however, that the Vavassore workshop did not remain at the Ponte dei Fuseri for the entire duration of its activity (1515-1593). Vavassore's extant wills attest to the fact that Vavassore was not living at premises in San Luca in 1523 or 1570,

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[131] "per Zuan Andrea dito Vadagnino di Vavasori al Ponte di Fuseri." For discussion of the woodcut of *Marignano*, see Chapter Three, below.

[132] See J. D. Passavant, *Le Peintre-Graveur: Les Maitres Italiens du Xve et XVIe Siecle*, Vol. 5 (Leipzeig, 1864) 88-89. A series of woodcuts of *The Planets*, carved by Florio and printed by Giovanni Andrea, are dated to 1544. Despite their inclusion by Passavant, I have been unable to identify them in a collection.

[133] For Nicolini (who worked in concert with his brothers at San Fantin from c.1512) see F. Ascarelli & M. Menato, *La Tipografia del '500 in Italia* (Florence, 1989) 354.

[134] Evidence of the relationship between Vavassore and Matteo Pagano will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three. See also D. Woodward, *Maps as Prints in the Italian Renaissance: Makers, Distributors, and Consumers* (London, 1996) 120.

but rather in the nearby parish of San Moisè.[135] Furthermore, only a limited number of works by Vavassore include the address at the Ponte dei Fuseri in their colophon; including an undated set of woodcuts of the Planets that are now lost.[136] It seems likely that if he was producing and selling his printed wares from a shop at that location, he would continue to include its address in the colophon – given, of course, that there was precedent for him to do so. As the workshop's output varied considerably, it cannot be argued that such a shift could mark a transition in its focus from woodcut prints and maps to books. Large multi-block (and thus multi-sheet) maps continued to be a staple of the workshop's output across the decades, and a large number of his books printed with moveable type were illustrated with woodcuts. Vavassore may have had to seek out larger premises to cope with rising demand for his printed wares, but he would still have needed to accommodate the same basic equipment: presses with metal type (of which we know that Vavassore had at least two by 1570), carved wooden blocks both large and small, inks, paper, printed books, and workers. Extant archival evidence proves that the workshop's premises were of sufficient size to be able to store stock in the shop, rather than in a warehouse – for when the shop was searched on 23 August 1571, an Inquisitor was able to examine Vavassore's stock and identify copies of the prohibited *Dialogues* of Pietro Aretino, and two bundles of books of fortune telling and other verses, in his shop.[137] Furthermore, by the time the workshop had passed to Giovanni Andrea's great nephews Luigi and Giuliano (sometime before 1576, when Alvise is recorded to have died in Clemente's testament) it was trading as the "Workshop of Guadagnino" at the Sign of the Hippogriff, in the bustling thoroughfare of the Frezzaria.[138]

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[135] Vavassore states in his second testament that he had asked the notary, Baldessera Fiume, "to come to his house in the parish (*contra*) of San Moisè" to record his testament: "…cusi ho fatto venir et chiamar de me Baldessera Giume nodaro di Venezia qui in casa mia posta nella contra di S. Moyse, il qual a una cum li testj sottoscrittj ho pregato questo mio testamento…" Schulz, 1998, 124.

[136] This is a set of seven engravings of the planets, produced in collaboration with his brother Florio Vavassore, which include an address for the premises at the Ponte dei Fuseri in the colophon. See Passavant, 1864, 88-9.

[137] ASV, SU, b.156 'Librai e libri prohibiti' ff.15v-16r (25 August 1571). This incident will be discussed in Chapter Six. On printers using warehouses to store their stock (and as welcoming spaces for conducting business) see F. de Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics* (Oxford, 2007) 94-5; Grendler, 1979, 5; and W. Pettas, 'An International Renaissance Publishing Family: The Giunti', *The Library Quarterly* 44:4 (1974) 347, who records a fire in 1557 that damaged both the shop and warehouse of the Venetian shop run by Tommaso Giunti.

[138] See 'Luigi Vavassore' in Ascarelli & Menato, 1989, 363.

Paired with the Merceria, the Frezzaria was one of the most renowned commercial streets in Renaissance Venice. It is also perhaps one of the most characteristic of its many *calli*: "a narrow dark street which runs from the Salizada San Moisè just off Piazza San Marco, takes a right-angle turn, and ends on the Ponte dei Barcaroli near Campo San Fantino."[139] So-named because the makers of arrows (*frezze*) had their shops there, records show that the *calli* existed in its current form as early as the thirteenth century, when the guild of smiths divided into specialised groups of arrow-makers, armourers, sword-makers, cutlers, makers of scabbards, and general smiths.[140] The workshops they founded gave their names to various streets in the city, a phenomenon common in Venice, and thus the Spadaria, Merceria, Corderie and Casseleria are streets still recognisable in the modern city. Given the nature of the work and the density of occupation it is not surprising to find that Marin Sanudo noted in his diary that a fire, which had broken out in the Frezzaria on the night of 12 July 1518, caused a deal of great damage.[141]

The shopping and market districts of Venice, concentrated in the *sestiere* of San Marco (at the Merceria and Frezzaria) and San Polo (at Rialto) attracted a considerable amount of attention from contemporary visitors. A strong impression of wealth and abundance is given by such accounts, and visitors to the city seemed impressed (and at times even repulsed) by the glittering array of goods on sale. Fynes Moryson, who visited Venice at the end of the sixteenth century and whose *Itinerary* was published in 1617, described the Rialto as first and foremost a marketplace, under the arches of which many merchants met to carry out their business. As well as the fish markets at both San Marco and Rialto, where fresh fish could be bought twice daily, he describes the proliferation of "Gold-Smiths shoppes… and over against them the shoppes of Jewellers" and sellers of "…carved Images, of the blessed Virgin, the Angell Gabriel, and the two protecting saints of the City" in the area surrounding the Rialto bridge.[142] The connections between the trade of the goldsmiths and that of engravers have been well documented, and a number of printers, publishers and booksellers are known to

[139] V. M. Jeffrey, 'Shakespeare's Venice', *The Modern Language Review* 27 (1932) 24-35, esp. 26, which offers an excellent description of the Frezzaria.
[140] The Smiths Guild had divided into distinct groups producing specialist goods in 1271. See Ibid. 26.
[141] DMS, 25: 522-4 (12 July 1518).
[142] Moryson, 1617, 87-8.

have been active in this area.[143] In terms of Vavassore's professional network, the bookseller (*libraio*) Paolo Danza, who is listed in Giovanni Andrea's 1523 testament as responsible for determining the site of his burial and the amount spent on his funeral, is known to have sold books and pamphlets at the foot of the Rialto until 1538; whilst Alessandro Paganino issued Vavassore's *Apochalypsis* woodcuts a short way down the Grand Canal from his shop on the Riva del Carboni (Fig. 1.4 B).[144]

In the parish of San Moisè itself, I have been unable to identify any contemporary accounts of the Frezzaria. It is possible, however, to reconstruct a sense of the early modern shopping thoroughfare from the description of the city published by Francesco Sansovino in 1581. Describing his walk from the Piazza San Marco to the market at Rialto, he notes that all the way along, on either side, "are shops in large numbers, selling goods from of all of Europe and the Levant."[145] John Evelyn evokes a similar scene in his account of a visit to the lagoon in the 1640s, in which he describes the Merceria as "the most delicious streete in the World for the sweetnesse of it" and offers a unique insight into the sensory world of early modern Venice.[146] Walking along the bustling *calli*, Evelyn notes that both sides of the street appeared as though tapestried, hung with cloth of gold, rich damasks and other silks; and that the air was thick with the perfumed scents of apothecary shops and the sounds of innumerable caged nightingales.[147] Whilst smiths' shops may have continued to produce the arrows that gave the Frezzaria its distinctive name, by the time Vavassore settled into the parish of San Moisè in the early sixteenth century, this area was devoted to the production and sale of fine artisanal goods of all kinds, as well as the provision of food and services.

Whilst the testaments of the Vavassore family tell us much about their individual priorities and concerns, the parish records of marriages and baptisms held in the Venetian parish archive offer some insight into the trades and practices that were taking

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[143] Many copperplate engravers trained as goldsmiths, a trade which used many of the same instruments (including the burin), skills (dexterity) and materials (fine metal work). By a decree of 1331, goldsmiths were required to exercise their trade only at the Rialto. See Bury, 2001, 170; and Landau & Parshall, 1994, 1.

[144] See 'Danza, Paolo' in Ascarelli & Menato, 1989, 353; and A. Nuovo, *Alessandro Paganino, 1509-1538* (Padua, 1990).

[145] "et da i lati, dove correla via comune, sono lunghissimi volti, dove sono botteghe in gran numero di finilmi panni di diversi colori, de quali la maggior paate e mandata, per tutta Europa, & in Levante, dove sono grandemente desiderati, & questa di chiama la drapperia ..." F. Sansovino, *Venetia, Città Nobilissima et Singolare* (Venice: Iacomo Sansovino, 1581) Lib.VIII f.134.

[146] J. Evelyn, *The Diary of John Evelyn* Vol. 2, edited by E. S. de Beer (Oxford, 1955) 434.

[147] Ibid.

place on their doorstep. For the most part, the documents preserved in the parish archives have been under-used by historians of early modern Venice, possibly because the records for parishes like San Moisè begin relatively late – in 1571 (baptisms) and 1599 (marriages and deaths). However, the records documenting the marriages and baptisms of those resident in the parish of San Moisè still provide a vital resource in the reconstruction of parish life – and, on a microhistorical level, the life of the Vavassore – during the sixteenth century. First, the families included in the records represent a broad spectrum of Venetian society. Unlike the contemporary accounts of chroniclers like Sanudo, the parish records chart the marriage celebrations, baptisms and deaths of the *popolo minuto* as well as those of patricians and wealthy *cittadini*; enabling a prosopographical approach in which the study of the individual gives way to more general social categories.[148] Second, although the records concern the births and marriages of children and couples in the last decades of the sixteenth century (and the first decades of the seventeenth) their scope is actually much wider: not only were sons and daughters defined by the profession of their father, but workshops were passed within families to sons, son-in-laws, and nephews, and older members of the community acted as godparents and witnesses to their younger relatives and friends. Finally, the information provided regarding the trades, provenance and place of residence of parish residents creates a wider picture of the bonds of neighbourhood, and offers real insight into how people experienced life in a parish like San Moisè at this time.

The surviving marriage records for the parish of San Moisè reveal a wide variation in the provenance of those living within its boundaries. Of course, many marriages involve one or both parties declaring to be citizens of Venice – if not *originarii* (by birth), then certainly *de intus* (by privilege). But among those listed in the register are also men and women from all over the Italian peninsula: Castelfranco, Florence, Naples, Padua, Trento, Trieste, Vicenza, and Verona; as well as further afield in Germany and Turkey.[149] By far the largest group of migrants listed in the parish

[148] For more on prosopography, see J. S. Amelang, *The Flight of Icarus: Artisan Autobiography in Early Modern Europe* (Stanford, 1998) 4. For Marin Sanudo on patrician marriages see P. H. Labalme, L. S. White & L. Carroll, 'How to (and How Not to) Get Married in Sixteenth-Century Venice (Selections from the Diaries of Marin Sanudo)', *Renaissance Quarterly* 52:1 (1999) 43-72.

[149] ASdP, Parocchia di San Moisè di Venezia: SMM I (1599-1620). Castelfranco: f.167 (28 March 1611) Florence: f.194v (15 June 1615) Naples: f.116v (21 September 1605); f.171 (1 May 1611) Padua: f.181v (20 July 1613) Trento: f.20 (6 May 1600); f,23 (May 1600)

records for San Moisè was from Bergamo and the Bergamasco. Like the Vavassore, merchants and artisan traders of all kinds emigrated to Venice from Bergamo in the sixteenth century, and at least 100 marriages between families who defined themselves as 'Bergamasco' are recorded in the marriage book of San Moisè between 1599 and 1620.[150] This is an exceptionally conservative estimate. The condition of many of the documents precludes their inclusion in this number, and we must also take into account the unknown number of individuals and families of Bergamasco descent who chose not to define themselves in this way. The parish records reveal that the Vavassore can be included within the latter group. Two marriages, which took place in 1601, demonstrate this: Maria, daughter of ZuanAntonio Vavassore, married Piero de Bortolo Bergamasco at the house of Nicolo Fantin in February; and Cattarina, daughter of Valentino Vavassore, married Bartolomeo Spineli in the church of San Moisè in July.[151] In neither instance did the Vavassore family define themselves by their provenance. It seems likely, though it cannot be definitively proved, that ZuanAntonio and Valentino were Giovanni Andrea's great-great nephews – the sons and daughters of his great nephews Luigi and Guiliano, who took on the running of the workshop in or before 1576 – and attest to the continued presence of the Vavassore family in the parish of San Moisè.[152]

Like those arriving from across the *terraferma* and beyond, immigrants arriving in Venice from Bergamo and the Bergamasco were monitored closely by the Venetian authorities. Monitoring entry into the city was central to controlling the flow of immigrants and visitors and became crucial in the sixteenth century as Venice began attract increasingly large numbers of migrants. Although in times of need (such as the aftermath of outbreaks of the plague, or in response to labour shortages) the government actively encouraged certain types of migration, they became increasingly concerned with the potential threats posed by immigrants: Monica Chojnacka has highlighted contagion, crime, and heretical behaviour as perceived threats in her consideration of immigrant

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Trieste: f.23 (27 June 1600) Vicenza: f.21 (29 May 1600) Verona: f.187v (1 May 1614) Germany: f.56 (4 September 1603); f.65 (3 May 1604) and Turkey: f.22 (19 June 1600).

[150] ASdP, SMM I. The records were indexed alphabetically a considerable time after their completion. Although the index includes many marriages between people from the Bergamasco, there are many more which were not included in this index. The illegibility of some of the leaves makes it impossible to provide anything but a conservative estimate.

[151] ASdP, SMM I. For the marriage of Maria Vavassore and Piero de Bortolo: f.16 (3 Feburary 1601), and for Catterina Vavassore and Bortolo Spineli: f.44 (14 July 1601).

[152] This assumption stems from the fact that Zuana and Theodosia, the daughters of Giovanni Andrea's niece Constantina, would not have retained the surname Vavassore.

women in early modern Venice.[153] As a result of such concerns, Venetian law mandated that newcomers to the city register with the authorities, giving their name and place of origin, and appear before the appropriate magistracy within a day of arrival.[154] Houses for different migrant groups were established throughout the city to facilitate the entry of artisans and merchants and accommodate them: the Fondaco dei Tedeschi (by the Rialto) and Fondaco dei Turchi (on the fringe of the city) are perhaps the most well-known, but others existed for immigrants from the *terraferma* and beyond. The concentration of immigrants from Bergamo and its surrounding areas in the parish of San Moisè explains the existence of the *Calle dei Bergamaschi* at its heart (Fig. 1.6). Like the *calli* and *sotoportegi* of the Albanesi (near the Frari church at San Polo); the Armeni (in the parish of San Zulian) and the Bressana (near SS. Giovanni e Paolo); the Calle dei Bergamaschi may have (at least temporarily) housed migrants from the region. As they were required to register, immigrants were welcomed into inns and lodging houses, which were clustered in turn around points of entry into the city (ferry stops). The narrow Calle dei Bergamaschi in San Moisè is to this day close to the stops of the *traghetti*. Whether immigrants from the Bergamasco stayed in San Moisè because of its central location, or because of its proximity to their point of arrival, this *calle* seems to have been named after the concentration of people from that province who resided in or passed through it.

The parish was equally diverse in terms of the range of trades practiced within it. The traditional trades of the Bergamaschi were typically manual trades influenced by the region's natural resources: woodcarvers, stonemasons, and workers of silk and wool.[155] Woodworkers are documented in clusters in the *sestieri* of San Polo and Canareggio, and specifically in the parishes of Sant'Aponal, San Polo, Silvestro, Santi Apostoli, San Felice and Santa Sofia; or on the peripheries of the city near the lumberyards.[156] In San Moisè and the parishes in its immediate vicinity, however, there were relatively few

[153] See M. Chojnacka, *Working Women of Early Modern Venice* (Baltimore, 2001) 81-102.
[154] ASV, Compilazione Leggi, b. 210 p.794, Ordini delli Eccel. mi Sig.ri Essecutori Contra la Biastema. Cited in Chojnacka, 2001, 85.
[155] Matteo Bandello is cited as describing the Bergamasco reputation for "earning what they can with sweat and the greatest pains and saving as much as possible on clothes and food" in U. Tucci, 'The Psychology of the Venetian Merchant' in J. R. Hale, *Renaissance Venice* (London, 1973) 363-4. See also Schulz, 2011, 14; and Wheeler, 1995, 143-6.
[156] Schulz identifies 27 woodcarvers in the three parishes of San Polo (Sant'Aponal, San Polo and San Silvestro) and 26 in those of Cannaregio (Santi Apostoli, San Felice and Santa Sofia). 15 woodcarvers were clustered in the peripheral parish of Santa Giustina in the early *quattrocento*, close to the lumberyards; and later at the Zattere. Schulz, 2011, 14.

woodcarvers – but the high concentrations of printers and booksellers suggest that, like Vavassore, many of the Bergamaschi residents of this central parish adapted their existing skills to suit their new surroundings. [157] Regardless of their place of origin, the records of marriages and baptisms in San Moisè demonstrate an exceptionally wide range of occupations, and the existence of social and familial networks between different but related trades. As one would expect in an area with a specific focus on the production and sale of print, a higher than average number of marriages are documented between (and witnessed by) parishioners who defined themselves by their trade as a printer (*stampador/stampatore*), bookseller (*libraio*) or woodcarver (*intagliador*).[158] Fewer in number but no less interesting are those whose professions were closely associated with printmaking. These include the marriage of the daughter of a music scribe; that of a woman named Lucretia to Antonio, a woodcarver (*intagliador*), which took place in the home of a local paper maker or stationer (*cartoler*); and the baptism of a son born to a Neapolitan printmaker, whose godfather was listed as a bookseller.[159]

Aside from printing, extant records reveal the parish to be a bustling centre of artisanal activity. Several individuals and families are listed as '*strazzariol*', and thus engaged in the selling of second hand clothes, furnishings and other goods. Although *strazzaria* has traditionally been viewed as a business venture for which permission was granted to the Jews, in reality Venice was home to a large and exceptionally vibrant second-hand market in this period, which has been explored by Patricia Allerston.[160] Included in the number of second-hand traders are those who specifically located their shops in the Frezzaria and would have worked alongside the window makers, silk

[157] San Moisè was home to only 12 woodcarvers, and very few lived in the adjacent parishes of San Samuele and San Angelo. Ibid. 14.
[158] ASdP, SMM I, records containing "stampador": f.35 (17 June 1601); f.44 (22 June 1602); f.49 (19 January 1621); f.97 (3 June 1607); f.123v (7 Feburary 1608); f.128v (5 July 1609); f.199v (13 March 1616); "libraio" (or "libraro"): f.68 (24 August 1604); f.151v (19 Febraury 1612); and "intagliador": f.129v (12 July 1609); f.129v (19 July 1609); f.184 (28 November 1613). See SMB I (1571-1602), for records containing "stampador": f.26 (15 August 1524) f.114 (23 July 1578); f.118 (12 November 1578); f.166 (27 November 1580); f.171 (21 January 1581); "libraio": f.1 (8 April 1574) and "intaiador": f.310 (15 August 1588).
[159] ASdP, SMM I: f.184 (28 November 1618) "Lucretia con Antonio in casa del sig. Francesco di Bianchi, Cartoler alla Corona"; and SMB I: f.114 (23 July 1578).
[160] For Jews as sellers of *strazzaria* see B. Ravid 'The Venetian Government and the Jews' in R. C. David & B. Ravid (eds.) *The Jews of Early Modern Venice* (Baltimore, 2001) 3-30; P. Allerston, 'The Market in Second-hand Clothes and Furnishings in Venice, c.1500-1650', (PhD Thesis, 1996).

merchants, and embroiderers who also had premises on this busy thoroughfare.[161] San Moisè was also home to a large number of apothecary shops: families and individuals defined themselves variously in parish documents as perfumers (*profumier*) or spice-sellers (*spicier*).[162] As Filippo de Vivo has argued, early modern apothecaries were important not just for the preparation and distribution of medicines, but as spaces in which business transactions and discussion of political and topical news took place.[163] Whilst their primary function was the sale of medicines, syrups, soaps and candles, apothecary shops also lay at the heart of the parish community, and were a space in which locals and visitors, rich and poor alike, could meet and interact.

Finally, two records, one concerning the baptism of Antonia daughter of Iacomo the colour-seller (*dai colori*) in 1579; and the other concerning the marriage of Chiarastella, daughter of the colour-seller Bortolomeo, to Geronimo Luna of Padua in 1601, are of particular interest to the activity of the *vendecolori* in San Moisè in the sixteenth century.[164] As both Julia DeLancey and Louisa Matthew have shown, this specialist group of merchants manufactured and sold artists' pigments and tools from their shops, in a trade that was (at least initially) unique to Venice.[165] Unlike the shops of apothecaries, which were relatively evenly spread across parishes, many of the *vendecolori* in the late fifteenth century were clustered together in the area immediately surrounding the Rialto. There they became what might be termed 'destination shops' which specialised in the production and sale of pigments for painters, glassmakers, printers, woodcarvers, and other artisans from across Europe. By the mid sixteenth century colour sellers were a much more obvious presence in the Venetian urban fabric. The earliest definitive records for pigment shops in San Moisè date to the seventeenth

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[161] ASdP, SMB I – "fenestrer": f.144 (December 1579); SMM I – "fenestrer": f.93v (4 February 1609); f.139 (22 February 1610); f.238v (16 February 1619); "mercanti da seda" f.78 (10 July 1605); and "conracorami": f.198 (10 December 1615).
[162] ASdP, SMM I: "profumier": f.81 (23 November 1605) "spicier": f.50 (12 January 1603); f.88 (17 August 1606); f.160v (5 August 1611); f.197v (11 October 1615); f.213v. (7 October 1614). SMB I: "profumier" f.134 (25 July 1579); "spicier": f.117 (15 October 1578); f.123 (5 January 1579); f.135 (17 August 1579).
[163] See F. de Vivo, 'Pharmacies as Centres of Communication in Early Modern Venice' in *Renaissance Studies* 21 (2007) 505-21; and de Vivo, 2007.
[164] ASdP, SMB I: f.144 (27 December 1579) "Antonia Gaspara fia de M. Iacomo dai colori et madona Chiara Guigalli. Conpari il mag(co) ms. Andrea Pisani e ms. Andrea Fortariol." ASdP, SMM I: f.32 (30 April 1601) "Chiarastella q. di Bortolomeo dai colori, con Geronimo Luna da Padova."
[165] See L. C. Matthew, '"Vendecolori a Venezia": The Reconstruction of a Profession' in *The Burlington Magazine* 144:1196 (2002) 680-686; Matthew & Berrie, 2010, 245-49; and DeLancey, 2011, 193-232.

century, but it is possible that the extant records listed above suggest the early presence of, or at least a precedent for, the shops of the *vendecolori* in the parish. [166]

In terms of the Vavassore family, their connections within the parish of San Moisè were based on mutual bonds of trade and shared heritage. When Vavassore's niece Samaritana gave her testament in 1561, among the witnesses was the notable composer and music publisher Antonio Gardano, who defined his trade as that of a bookseller at the Sign of the Lion and the Bear (*liberer al lion et l'orso*).[167] The witnesses to Giovanni Andrea's own testament of 1570 included the baker (*pistor*) Gasparo and Andrea Zamatio the second-hand seller, both of whom had shops in the Frezzaria.[168] If the Vavassore workshop was indeed located in premises in this thoroughfare, their friendships were probably based on their day-to-day interactions and close physical proximity. Furthermore, the records of the Holy Office, which will be discussed in greater detail in the context of the workshop's devotional output in Chapter Seven, attest to Vavassore's social interactions with Simon, a pearl worker from Bergamo; and Antonio Rossato, a mask maker (*mascherer)* and second-hand clothes dealer, who was not only his neighbour in San Moisè, but the husband of his beloved niece Samaritana.[169] These were connections forged around common bonds of kinship and friendship, in which people assisted one another in various ways. As well as providing testimony to the Holy Office in the cases of both Simon and Antonio, Vavassore had also acted as *commissario* for his nephew-in-law, drawing up an inventory of both his household and his shop in the Frezzaria in 1556.[170]

Much as the city of Venice was welcoming to foreigners, the integration of

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[166] Three colour sellers are listed in San Moisè in the seventeenth century: Stefano Albertini and Francesco di Piero di Regli at the Sign of the Carro (active in the Frezzaria 1604-1612); Bertolo Ferrari at the Sign of Madonna del Rosario (active in the *contra* of San Moisé in the late seventeenth century); and Aurelia Nedigia at the Sign of Antonio di Padova (in the *contra* of San Moisè in the 1660s). See Delancy, 2011, Appendix.

[167] "Io Antonio Gardano liberer aal lion et l'orso juf testimonio giurado et pregado come di sopra." Schulz, 1998, 122. Gardano used the sign of the lion and the bear as his identifying mark. On Gardano, see M. Lewis, *Antonio Gardano, Venetian Music Printer, 1538-1569: A Descriptive Bibliography and Historical Study* (New York, 2005).

[168] "Io lunardo del q. gasparo pistor in frezaria fui testimonio zurado et pregardo soto scrissi… Io andrea di zamatio di bianchi stracarol in frecaria fui testimonio zurado et pregado soto schrissi…" Schulz, 1998, 124.

[169] Samaritana names her husband as Antonio Rossato in her 1561 testament; see Schulz, 1998, 122. On Vavassore's role in these heresy trials, see Chapter Six.

[170] Acting as *commissario*, Vavassore stated that he drawn up an inventory of the household and shop of 'Domnius Antoniis Rossati quondam dominus Bernardini strazaroli sita in confinio Santi Moysis in Frizaria.' His shop contained a large number of masks. ASV, CI, Miscellanea notai diversi inventori b.39 fasc.44 (1556).

immigrants like the Vavassore relied heavily on the parochial context in which they found themselves. Fortunately for Giovanni Andrea and his family, San Moisè was both centrally located, and a ready-made community who also hailed from Bergamo and the Bergamasco. The presence of a group of artisans who shared the same common heritage, whether they were traditions, dialects, or even relations, must have provided a welcoming environment in which to settle into life in the lagoon. The records held in the Venetian parish archive and the wills of the Vavassore family certainly attest to the fact that strong professional and personal bonds were made at a parochial level – whether they were established on mutual or related trades, or on shared heritage. It is clear that the family's Bergamasco roots remained important, for not only did subsequent generations also live and work in the parish of San Moisè, but in 1601 the daughter of one of Giovanni Andrea's relatives married a man who defined himself by his origins in that region. Within the microcosm of the parish, daily interactions would become friendships, and personal and professional networks would expand in order to integrate new arrivals into the larger picture of life in the lagoon.

1.3 Shaping a Venetian Identity: Membership of the *Scuole* and *Arti*

A census of 1563 revealed that, of the Venetian population of 170,000, 120,000 were artisans and their families.[171] Although not all of the artisans would have been formally enrolled in trade guilds (*arti*), the relative openness of Venetian institutions in the early modern period meant that their existence would have touched the lives of many in a myriad of different ways. Thus, as Richard Mackenney observed, the world of the guilds was actually "the world of three-quarters of the people in Venice."[172] In addition to the guilds (and perhaps encompassing an even wider section of the population) were the devotional confraternities, or *Scuole*, which functioned for the most part at a parish level. Central to the religious and social experience in the period, these confraternities attracted members from across the social spectrum, offering a sense of community and identity to both Venetians and immigrants alike. Living and working in the *sestiere* of San Marco, Vavassore and his family must have been among the 120,000 artisans included in the Venetian census of 1563. Evidence in both of Giovanni Andrea's testaments indicates that he was a lifelong member of the *Scuola del Santissimo*

[171] Mackenney, 1987, xiii.
[172] Ibid., xi.

Sacramento in the parish of San Moisè, which was part of a growing number of religious confraternities devoted to the Eucharist. As a vital part of the parish community, the *scuola* would have facilitated Vavassore's integration into Venetian social and religious life, whilst his membership of the Painters' Guild would have provided him with an opportunity to expand his book of contacts in trade. The aim of this section is to explore the place of the *arti* and *scuola* in the lives of Venetian artisans in the sixteenth century, and to question their role in the Vavassore family's swift integration into life in the lagoon.

Giovanni Andrea Vavassore, as "Zuannandrea Vadagnin", appears on the list of members of the Painters' Guild (*L'arte dei Pittori*) first compiled in 1530.[173] The list provides an index of the artisans who had become members in or before this year, and is arranged alphabetically by first name (as was customary at this time). Other names were added to the list as more craftsmen joined the guild, but it would appear that the membership lists were not regularly updated since the later additions are almost all accompanied by dates ranging between 1580 or 1600, leaving a gap of some five decades. Matters are complicated by the fact that this list is based on a copy drawn up in 1815 by Giannantonio Moschini and now preserved in the Museo Correr. The loss of the original lists is a major obstacle in the interpretation of the dates and signs that follow names – even a reliable copy is unable to recreate the changes in handwriting and ink, which are also carriers of useful information.[174] Nonetheless, this list of some 230 matriculated members of the Painters' Guild is an exceptionally useful resource.

The Venetian Painters' Guild, like many others in cities in early modern Europe, took as its patron St Luke, the evangelist identified by the Byzantine author John of Damascus as the painter of a portrait of the Virgin.[175] It consequently met in the parish of San Luca, situated just five minutes on foot to the north of Piazza San Marco (Fig. 1.7). Members of the guild would evidently have attended meetings from across the city, as there was no real concentration of easel painters (who form 48% of the 77 out of 230 members who specified their craft) in San Luca, or indeed any particular area of the city. Easel painting was not, of course, the only craft practiced by members of the painters' guild. Each member of the *banca* or governing body of the guild, comprised of

[173] The list, compiled by Moschini and preserved in BMCV as MS. Moschini XIX, has been transcribed by Favaro, 1975, 137-44.
[174] Favaro, 1975, 131.
[175] See V. Moncada, 'The Painters' Guilds in the Cities of Venice and Padua', *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 15 (1988) 110-13.

the *gastaldo* and two *compagni*, was required to be familiar with the different crafts practiced by those in the guild: whether they were painters (*pittori*), those who practiced drawing (*disegnatori*), gilders (*indoradori*), sign painters (*targeri*), card painters (*cartoleri*), leather decorators (*cori l'oro*), illuminators (*miniadori*), or embroiderers (*recamadori*).[176] This list of related trades was included in the earliest surviving *mariegola* of the painters' guild, a book of 88 rules that dates from 1436. It is clear that by 1530 an even greater variety of trades were being practiced by members of the guild. Among painters alone, members were increasingly defined according to their particular specialism: an example is the Italian-Albanian Marco Basaiti, who is one of several described as "a painter of figures".[177] As well as easel painters, there were distinct groups of artisans engaged in the painting of furniture, cards, fans, miniatures, and masks.[178] Two woodcarvers, Pietro de Giovanni and Paolo Campsa, can be identified among the members of the guild in 1530; and as Anne Markham Schulz has argued, the number of woodcarvers matriculated in the *arte* would be much higher if earlier guild records had survived.[179]

A number of those engaged in the printing trade can also be found among members of the Painters' Guild, although previous studies have failed to acknowledge them. In addition to Giovanni Andrea Vavassore (who is identifiable by name rather than profession) are Alessandro, a bookseller in San Stin; Domenico dal Jesus, who worked in conjunction with his brother Niccolò to publish c.20 books between 1501 and 1527; and Ettor Ruberti, whose profession is intriguingly described as 'pittore di carte'.[180] The list of members in 1530 also includes nine artisans (two of whom were women) who defined their profession as that of a stationer (*chartoler/cartoler/cartolera*), a trade that would have revolved around the sale of paper and ink to both the retail and wholesale markets.[181] The appearance of printers,

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[176] Moncada, 1988, 109.
[177] See "Marco Basaiti figurer" among the transcribed list in Favaro, 1975, 141.
[178] The project aimed at distinguishing easel painters from those with other specialisations is outlined by N. De Marchi & L. Matthew 'I dipinti' in F. Franceschi, R.A. Goldthwaite & R.C. Mueller (eds.) *Il Rinascimento Italiano e l'Europa: Commercio e Cultura Mercantile Vol. IV: Commercio e Cultura Mercantile* (Treviso, 2007) 247-83.
[179] See "Piero di Zuane intaiador" and "Polo Champsa" in Favaro, 1975, 141; Schulz, 2011, 19.
[180] See "Alexandro liberer a San Sten"; "Domenigo dal Segno del Iesus" and "Ettor Ruberti" in Ibid. 137 and 139. On Domenico and Nicolo de Sandri (dal Jesus), see Chapter Three.
[181] The 8 stationers are: "Anzolo de Nicolò chartoler", "Agostin Rizo cartoler", "Bernardo chartoler", "Benetto de Nicolò chartoler'", "Francesco Cartoler", "Isabeta chartolera", "Iacomo de Bernardo chartoler", "Tadia cartolera" and "Zuanne chartoler".

booksellers, and stationers among the matriculated members of the Painters' Guild – even in such small numbers as these – is unsurprising in light of the fact that the Guild of Printers and Booksellers was not established until the second half of the century. Although it is clear that an informal organisation of printers had existed before this point, the guild was not founded until 1548-9 by a decree of the Council of Ten, and there are no extant records of its meetings until 1572.[182] Printers had, however, been active in Venice from the 1470s and 1480s, and had consequently become members of many different social and professional institutions in that time. Nicolas Jenson, one of the earliest printers active in Venice, was a notable member of the *Scuola di San Girolamo* in Cannaregio.[183] Although Jenson himself either lived or worked in San Salvador in the *sestiere* of San Marco, he gravitated towards a *scuola* near Rialto with a mixed membership of goldsmiths, jewellers, and workers of the mint.[184] Such a choice demonstrates Jenson's desire to mix with craftsmen whose technical expertise and network of contacts could assist him – motivations that would have been equally important to a newly arrived artisan eager to establish himself in a Venetian trade.

There are several reasons why Giovanni Andrea Vavassore might have joined the Painters' Guild in or before 1530. Active from 1515, Vavassore was already relatively established in his career by 1530, but continued to expand both his individual skills and his book of contacts. The community of painters, manuscript-illuminators, stationers and other tradesmen who met regularly at the altar of St Luke provided an established network of professional and personal contacts; and a varied set of skills upon which Vavassore might be able to draw. In producing his books of patterns for lace and embroidery in 1532, 1550 and 1566, for example, Vavassore may have consulted with those members of the guild who specialised in embroidery (*recamadori*). The meeting place of the guild at the parish church of San Luca is also suggestive, for the workshop's early output was produced and sold at the Ponte dei Fuseri. The premises therefore occupied a position at the intersection of the *contrade* of San Fantin and San Luca, just two or three minutes on foot from the church of San Luca. Although Christina Dondi

[182] The documents relating to the guild of printers and booksellers was first brought to light in Brown, 1891, ch. 10. See also C. Dondi, 'Printers and Guilds in Fifteenth-Century Venice', *La Bibliofilia* 106:3 (2004) 229-65; and Salzberg, 2014, 144-7.
[183] Nicholas Jenson is listed in the *mariegola* as a member of the *Scuola di S. Girolamo* as "Nicolo Xanson stampador a S. Salva(or)" in BMCV, *Mariegola* 108, *Mariegola della Scuola di San Girolamo*. Horatio Brown and Martin Lowry have both commented upon his membership of that *scuola.* See Brown, 1891, 98; and Lowry, 1991.
[184] Dondi, 2004, 239.

has suggested that membership of a guild "bears little connection with parish affiliation," the close proximity between workshop and guild would have made attending its meetings both easy and convenient.[185]

Furthermore, Giovanni Andrea's 1570 testament also confirms that, at the time of his death, the printmaker had an apprentice called Bartolomeo working in his shop. Apprenticeships were unusual among Venetian working relations as they required a written contract, and masters were required to register the contract with the *Giustizia Vecchia* at the start of the apprenticeship.[186] Guilds also played an important role in ensuring that *garzoni* received the appropriate training, as well as offering protection to apprentices from abuse by their employer, with whom they both lived and worked in close quarters. By the time of Vavassore's death in 1572, the newly established Guild of Printers and Booksellers was taking a much harder line on the training of new members of the printing trade. Membership of the guild became mandatory, and apprentices were required to serve at least five years before becoming a journeyman (*lavorante*).[187] The demands on the length of time required to train in the trade, as well as the close examination of its practitioners, made it increasingly difficult for 'outsiders' to enter the printing trade. By bequeathing ten ducats to him on the condition that he completed his apprenticeship, Vavassore provided an effective incentive for Bartolomeo to complete his training after the death of his master.[188]

The fees, fines, and taxes paid by members of the Painters' Guild entitled them to a number of benefits. The protection of their trade from outside competition was chief among them, but they were also promised some degree of welfare provision – whether in the form of accident funds, dowries, or funeral payments – as well as a decent burial.[189] Despite the promise of a good burial for members of the Painters' Guild, Vavassore requested instead to be buried at the church of San Moisè, home to a devotional confraternity, or *scuola*, of which he was apparently a member. *Scuole*, both *grandi* and *piccole*, were characteristically Venetian confraternities that stood at the intersection of religious and economic life in the early modern period. As Richard Mackenney has put

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[185] Dondi, 2004, 233.
[186] See J. E. Shaw, *The Justice of Venice: Authorities and Liberties in the Urban Economy, 1550-1750* (Oxford, 2006), 170-3.
[187] BMCV MS *Marticola dell'Arte dei stampatori e librari di Venezia* ff.18v-19r (27 April 1572). See Chapter Five.
[188] "Item lasso ducatj diese a Bortolamio il qual sta cum noi compiando il suo tempo." Schulz, 1998, 124.
[189] See Mackenney, 1987, 44-50; Moncada, 1988, 110; and Dondi, 2004, 243.

it: "[T]hey sought to glorify God by exalting poverty, and their devotion and philanthropy were inseparable."[190] The *scuola* at San Moisè was part of a growing number of parish-based confraternities dedicated to the Eucharist – the *Scuole del Santissimo Sacramento*.[191] Their aims and works were different to those of the *arti*, but like the guilds they patronised an altar, and held their meetings in the church of their parish.

The *Scuole Grandi*, of which there were six scattered across Venice in Vavassore's time, were supraparochial, drawing members from various trades, professions and provenances.[192] Much (if not all) of their charity was directed inwards, with a system of polarity in which richer brothers offered aid to poorer ones in an attempt to guarantee salvation.[193] Their reach was, however, relatively limited: Joseph Wheeler suggested that only ten per cent of the total population of the *sestiere* of San Polo could have been involved in the activities of the *Scuole Grandi*.[194] By comparison, the *Scuole Piccole* had a much broader scope: Marin Sanudo counted 119 scattered throughout Venice in 1521, a number which continued to grow until there were several religious confraternities in each of the 70 parishes.[195] Like the larger confraternities, these *scuole* were founded to pursue salvation by carrying out good works, but they were intrinsically tied to particular parishes and to parish life.[196] Members came together to pray, honour saints, maintain altars and lights, and assist each other in times of distress. These were crucial social institutions, especially for those who, like Vavassore, had migrated to Venice from elsewhere. *Scuole* were inclusive, welcoming both citizens and migrants alike, and constituted a kind of extended family for those who were a considerable distance away from their network of kin.[197] Unlike the guilds, which were

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[190] Although there were *scuole* in other Italian cities during the early modern period, nowhere were they greater in number than Venice. Mackenney, 1987, 45.
[191] G. Barbiero, *Le Confraternite del Santissimo Sacramento prima del 1539* (Treviso, 1941); M. Cope, *The Venetian Chapel of the Sacrament in the Sixteenth Century* (New York, 1979); and P. Hills, 'Piety and Patronage in Cinquecento Venice: Tintoretto and the *Scuole del Sacramento*' in *Art History* 6:1 (1983) 30-43.
[192] There were six *Scuole Grandi* by 1552: the *Scuola Grande della Carità, Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, Scuola Vecchia della Misericordia, Scuola Grande di San Marco, Scuola Grande di San Rocco,* and the *Scuola Grandi di San Teodoro.*
[193] Romano, 1984, 73.
[194] Wheeler, 1995, 199.
[195] DMS, 30:399 and 401 (25 June 1521).
[196] See B. Pullan, 'Natura e Carattere delle Scuole' in T. Pignatti (ed.) *Le Scuole di Venezia* (Milan, 1981) 9-26; R. Mackenney, 'The *Scuole Piccole* of Venice: Formations and Transformations' in Terpstra, 2000, 172-90; and Wheeler, 1995, 191.
[197] See Black, 1989, 271.

formed of men who were neither very rich nor permanently needy, but who had given alms on occasion and been in receipt of them on another, the *scuole* encompassed a much broader social spectrum. Patricians rubbed shoulders with wealthy *cittadino* families, regular artisans, and the perpetually poor; and the most important work of the *scuola* – the provision of a decent, well-attended burial – was available to all, regardless of their status.

The *scuola* of San Moisè that Vavassore had joined upon his arrival in Venice from the Bergamasco belonged to a specific group of confraternities devoted to the Holy Sacrament; a specific type of *scuola* that had existed in Venice as early as 1395. By 1500 confraternities devoted to the Eucharist had popped up across the city.[198] Although by no means the first, the confraternity at San Moisè is a relatively early example of its type – its *mariegola* lists a founding date of 2 May 1506 – and would have been well established by the time Vavassore arrived in Venice.[199] The role of these confraternities can be discovered in some detail from their extant *mariegola*, which like those of the guilds had to be authorised by the Council of Ten according to the Venetian constitution. The statutes themselves each conform to a set pattern, but I will refer here to the *mariegola* of the *scuola* at San Moisé.

The primary reason for the existence of the *Scuola di Santissimo Sacramento* was to care for, and ensure the reverential treatment of, the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. Masses were held weekly on Thursdays (to commemorate the institution of the Eucharist on Maundy Thursday) at the altar of the parish church, the care and lighting of which were the responsibility of the *compagni*.[200] At each meeting the treasurer (*nonzolo*) would take a collection to cover the lavish provision of candles and altar lamps; a cost that only the poorest members of the *scuola* at San Marziale were exempt from.[201] In addition, the brothers and sisters (*fratelle e sorelle*) of the confraternity were expected to take part in major processions through their parish on both Good Friday and the feast

[198] The founding dates of at least 17 of the earliest confraternities can be found in their surviving *mariegole*: San Giuliano (1502); San Cassiano (1504); San Moisè, Sant'Apollinare and Santa Maria del Giglio (1506); San Bartolomeo and Santa Sofia (1507); San Stae (1510); San Toma and Santi Apostoli (1511); San Pantaleone (1513); San Marizale (1512); San Silvestro (1516); San Martino (1529); San Giovanni Grisostomo (1531); San Nicolò da Tolentino (1538); and San Canciano (1539). Barbiero compiled this list in 1941; and Hills added San Marizale to the list based on the date on its *mariegola* in the Museo Correr.
[199] ASdP, *Scuola di Santissimo Sacramento di S. Moise, Catastici I* (1506-1750) f.2.
[200] See ibid. f.2 capitolo "Terzo".
[201] Hills, 1983, 32.

day of Corpus Christi.[202] The presence of the *scuola* in the parish on such occasions is attested by Sanudo, who described in his diary the procession of 16 candles and 400 torches carried by members of the *scuola of* San Cassiano in 1515.[203] The confraternities also engaged in more regular symbolic behaviour: the *mariegole* of San Cassiano, San Marziale, San Trovaso and San Giuliano incorporate instructions for the distribution of holy water to its members by the guardian (*gastaldo*) as they entered and left the chapel.[204] This gesture was intended to recall the washing of the disciples' feet by Christ at the Last Supper, and appealed directly to the Venetian desire for repeatable, symbolic acts: each year on Maundy Thursday, a crucial day for the confraternities dedicated to the sacrament, the Doge washed the feet of 12 poor citizens; and in 1524 a group of patricians washed the feet of the syphilitics of the *Ospedali degli Incurabili*.[205] For the *scuola* of San Moisè, providing for the needy sick and the distribution of the Eucharist drew crucial parallels with the desert miracles of their patron saint, Moses.

Although the majority of their activity was focused on the maintenance of the altar in their parish church, the *scuole* were also important philanthropic institutions that recognised the human need for mutual support in the face of sickness, plague, poverty, and death. Francesco Sansovino described their function very simply as the "sole care of the altar of the body of our Lord," which involved not just the maintenance of the confraternity's altar, but also the carrying of the Eucharist (and often alms) to brothers and sisters of the parish who were sick.[206] Finally, the last thing that the *scuola* could provide for its members was a decent, well-attended burial. Each confraternity sought to acquire a separate burial place where *scuola* members could be laid to rest in a communal tomb.[207] The *mariegola* of the *Scuola di San Chiereghino e del Rosario*, established at the church of San Simeone Profeta in September 1535, offers perhaps the most detailed description of confraternity policy on the care afforded to one of its members after their death: "… because the burial of the dead is a work of mercy and

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[202] ASdP, *Scuola di Santissimo Sacramento di S. Moise, Catastici I* (1506-1750), f.3 capitolo 22.
[203] "Fu posto el Nostro signor ozi, de more, in spurchrio, et per le contrade grandissime luminarie vid, zoè a San Cassan, che fo bello con li misterii di la passione et cierii 16 e tozi più di 400, San Stai, Santo Aponal, et cussì per tutto; et questo fa le scuole dil Corpo di Christo, leavte per le chiesie in questa terra." DMS, 20:98.
[204] Hills, 1983, 32, summarises these four *mariegole*.
[205] Ibid..
[206] See Sansovino, 1581, 103v; and Cope, 1979, 4.
[207] See P. Humfrey & R. Mackenney, 'The Venetian Guilds as Patrons of Art in the Renaissance,' *The Burlington Magazine* 123:998 (1986) 318.

charity … when one of our brothers passes from this life to the next, we should all go to him and wash his body and pityingly accompany it to burial, bearing the cross, the banner, and our great candles and tapers. And we will give him an honourable burial within the city of Venice, taking all due and proper care."[208] The processes of attending to the sick; as well as preparing, accompanying, and burying of a member's body, must have contributed to the sense of belonging to a parish, as well as fostering a sense of closeness between family, friends and neighbours.

Although the *scuola* did provide funds to enable the burial of poor members, Vavassore's testaments demonstrate that he was not poor enough to require such charity in either 1523 or 1570. Nonetheless, the intervention of the confraternity would have ensured that his funeral was well attended and his soul commemorated. In his first testament, Vavassore stipulated that upon his death he should be buried in the grave of either the Confraternità del Corpo Santo at San Moisè or the new Confraternità di S. Nicolò at the church of San Salvador.[209] The former correlates to the Scuola di Santissimo Sacramento examined above, but I have been unable to find evidence relating to the confraternity of San Nicolò in nearby San Salvador. By 1570, however, the printmaker reiterates his wish to be buried in the grave at San Moisè, this time giving no alternative, and places the onus of paying for his funeral on his nephews Clemente, Alvise, Ventura and Venturino.[210] He also bequeathed a single ducat to the *scuola* he had attended throughout his life, requesting that a mass in honour of St Gregory be celebrated in his honour.[211] Such a long-held desire to be buried in the tomb of the *scuola*, as well as a donation to it in his will, indicates that the parish community played a crucial role in the religious and social life (and death) of Giovanni Andrea Vavassore.

1.4 Conclusion

More focused examination of the archival sources pertaining to the Vavassore family

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[208] Extract from the *Mariegola* of the *Scuola di San Chiereghino e del Rosario* (12 September 1535) reproduced in Chambers & Pullan, 2001, 212.
[209] "Et quando me hac fungi contigerit volo cadaver meum tumulari is archis confraternitus Sancti Corporis in ecclesia S. Moysis seu etiam in archis confraternitus Sancti Nicolai quae fit apud ecclesiam Sancti Salvatoris Venetiarum". Schulz, 1998, 121.
[210] "Item quando piaquera al mio Signore Iddio separar lanima mia dal corpo et quella a se chiamar, voglio esser sepulto nella giesia di San Moyse cum quella spesa parera alli infracritti mej nepotj." Schulz, 1998, 124.
[211] "Item voglio sijno celebrate le messe di S. Gregorio per lanima mia. Item lasso ducato una alla schola del sacratissimo corpo di Cristo della mia contra." Ibid. 124.

demonstrates the potential for such documents to offer a window on the concerns and motivations of artisans in sixteenth century Venice. Vavassore's testaments demonstrate the extent to which the family multiplied and thrived in the lagoon, whilst the registers of births and marriages in San Moisè begin to reconstruct both the physical space and the community in which he lived. The questions raised in relation to the printmaker's origins and motivations for emigrating to Venice; the location of his workshop; the importance of the parish context; and his integration into the communal and institutional life of Venice; are ones that are reflective of the much wider, fundamental concerns which characterised Venetian life in the sixteenth century. One of thousands of immigrants from the *terraferma*, the motivations of his departure from the Bergamasco – a combination of 'pull' and 'push' factors which probably resulted from the defeat of Venice at Agnadello and the status of the city as an entrepôt – Vavassore is a typical example of the microhistorian's "exceptional normal."

It is clear that a number of factors contributed to Vavassore's relatively fluid integration into Venetian society. Although Venice was renowned for being open and hospitable to immigrants, certain institutions and circumstances helped him on his way. Surviving prints produced in Vavassore's earliest months and years in Venice attest to the fact that his network of collaborators – whether they were printers, publishers, or booksellers – grew rapidly. The geography of print, concentrated as it was between San Marco and Rialto, as well as in the central parishes to the west of Piazza San Marco, actively fostered and encouraged such connections, which Vavassore would continue to nurture throughout his life. When he gave his final testament in 1570 local tradesmen with premises in the Frezzaria acted as signatories, demonstrating that the kind of connections and bonds of friendship made between artisans were as much based on day-to-day interaction as they were focused on trade.

Finally, the institutions of guild and *scuola* provided different kinds of kinship to an outsider adjusting to life in the lagoon. The large number of immigrants from Bergamo and the Bergamasco in the parish of San Moisè provided a ready-made community for artisans arriving in Venice. Migrant communities from various different regions of the *terraferma* were concentrated in clusters or pockets across the city; for they recognised that by banding together – as the Bergamaschi did in the parish of San Moisè – they would be able to continue to observe their own traditions, customs, and dialects. In the same way, many of the Bergamaschi who had settled permanently in Venice sought to establish patterns of intermarriage and godparenting that underlined

their sense of shared heritage. Confraternities compounded this sense of community, as the activities of the *scuole* brought people into close contact with one another during their most difficult moments: into the homes of the sick, or at the funerals of the dead. Whilst the guilds played a less prominent role in the social lives of Venetian artisans, they provided support (financial or otherwise) to members when they needed it most. An understanding of the individual origins, motivations and support mechanisms behind Vavassore is a vital starting point for considering the workshop and its output, for life and work were intrinsically linked in sixteenth century Venice.

Chapter Two

Reconstructing the Vavassore Workshop and its Output

Filippo de Strata's disgruntled assertion that Venice had, by 1474, become a city "stuffed with books," would certainly have become even more of a reality by the time Vavassore entered the trade in c.1515.[212] At the beginning of the sixteenth century, approximately 150 Venetian presses had produced more than 4,000 editions, more than twice the known production of the city's nearest rival, Paris. This rapid rate of production meant that there were roughly twenty books to each individual member of the Venetian population.[213] These figures would continue to rise rapidly, reaching a peak between 1540 and the year 1575 when a disastrous outbreak of plague struck down many of the most established printers in the city. The decades in which the Venetian printing industry experienced a "boom" thus coincide almost exactly with the printing and publishing activities of the Vavassore workshop.

One of the first attempts to calculate book production in sixteenth-century Venice was carried out by Ester Pastorello, whose unpublished catalogue listing titles in the holdings of selected northern Italian libraries is held in the Sala dei Manoscritti of the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, and contains an estimate of 7,560 separate titles.[214] This conservative figure was subsequently challenged by Paul Grendler (1979), Amedeo Quondam (1989), and Ugo Rozzo (1993). Grendler arrived at a total of 17,500 editions by doubling Pastorello's total and adding the output of the Manuzio, Gioliti, Giunti, and Marcolini presses. Quondam criticised all such estimates, preferring to gauge the production of individual printers like Vavassore as being between three and twenty times greater than Pastorello's figures.[215] Certainly, recent research into the workshop of the Scotto, who specialised in the production of music, has revealed that the number of

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[212] "O good citizen, rejoice: your city is well stuffed with books. For a small sum men turn into doctors in three years. Let thanks be rendered to the printers!" ("*O bone civis, ova: libris urbis est bene fulta. Pro paucis nummis doctors sunt tribus annis. Gratia reddatur stampantibus!*") F. de Strata, *Polemic Against Printing* translated by S. Grier and edited by M. Lowry (Birmingham, 1986) unpaginated.

[213] See I. Fenlon & J. Haar, *The Italian Madrigal in the Early Sixteenth Century: Sources and Interpretation* (Cambridge, 1988) 54; and Lowry, 1979, 7-8.

[214] Ester Pastorello based her pioneering work, *Tipografia, editori, librai a Venezia nel secolo XVI* (Florence, 1924) on her total of 7,560 titles. Her unpublished catalogue listing the titles published by Venetian publishers in the Cinquecento is located in the Sala dei Manoscritti of the Biblioteca Marciana.

[215] Quondam, 1989, 51-104. See also Bernstein, 1998, 13.

extant titles vastly exceeds the number of editions listed in Pastorello's original catalogue.[216] The online database Edit16 currently lists 27,148 editions produced in Venice between 1501 and 1600, a figure that complements Ugo Rozzo's estimate (which aims to take into account the potentially lost editions and printed ephemera excluded from other totals) of 50,000 to 60,000 editions.[217]

Recognising the low survival rate of sixteenth-century print is especially important in the reconstruction of the activities and significance of the Vavassore press. After all, Vavassore's output was predominantly vernacular, and he published many works in pocket-sized formats – two of the factors identified by Neil Harris as rendering them 50% less likely to survive than larger Latin volumes.[218] As is the case for any printshop in the Renaissance, the figures generated from the number of surviving Vavassore editions and analysed in this chapter cannot, therefore, be considered a truly accurate representation of the number of editions published by the workshop under Giovanni Andrea and his heirs. Nonetheless, they offer an insight into the variety of printed material available in Venice in the sixteenth century, and demonstrate the substantial contribution made by small workshops to book production in both Venice and the Italian peninsula at this time. By extrapolating the output of the Vavassore workshop from the lists of sixteenth-century editions, it is possible to see how it compares and contrasts with (and may contribute to) our wider knowledge of the printed material available in sixteenth century Venice.

Drawing on the catalogue of works I have compiled for this thesis, the aim of this chapter is to reconstruct the Vavassore workshop and its output in the broadest possible sense. Whilst the chapters that follow will focus on specific types, genres, and methods of production, here I will focus on establishing the practicalities of running a Renaissance printshop, as well as the range of material (in terms of size, language, and genre) available for purchase from the Vavassore shop premises (whether in San Luca or San Moisè). Using the data extracted from the catalogue of works, I hope to create a picture of the wider chronology of the workshop, establishing phases of production and

[216] Bernstein estimated that the number of extant titles published by the Scotto press in the sixteenth century is c.1500, a figure vastly in excess of the 357 editions attributed to that press by Pastorello. See Bernstein, 1998, 14.
[217] U. Rozzo, *Linee per una storia dell'editoria religiosa in Italia (1465-1600)* (Udine, 1993) 21-2. See also Salzberg, 2014, 5-8. EDIT16 currently lists a total of 64,247 editions dating from 1501-1600; with Venetian editions comprising 27,148 of that number.
[218] Harris, 1993, 18-21.

exploring how changing demands and controls impacted on the kinds of printed material sold by the Vavassore.

2.1 Reconstructing the Vavassore Workshop

Before focusing on the data yielded from the catalogue, this section will focus on what the Vavassore workshop has to reveal about the practicalities of running a print workshop in Renaissance Venice. Reconstructing its everyday activities has, however, been hindered by a lack of surviving evidence. Excepting the publications themselves, the surviving documentary evidence all pertains to the 1570s, when the workshop was undergoing a transition in its management (from uncle to nephew). The conclusions made here thus reflect a later stage in the workshop's lifecycle, but can be applied with care to the earlier phases of its activity.

We learn from Vavassore's second testament of 1570 that, along with two presses, his nephew Alvise was to inherit the woodblock illustrations for books and single woodcuts of *Saints*.[219] In terms of the equipment in a printing shop, the ornamental initials or illustrations engraved on wood or copper plates were among the most valuable of its assets; not least because of the investment in raw materials and time that would be required to replace them. It is therefore unsurprising that Giovanni Andrea specifically bequeathed these items – alongside the presses themselves – to Alvise, for they were both a valuable commodity and a helpful resource in ensuring the continuation of the workshop. Many of the editions published in the final phase of its activity featured woodcuts that had been produced for them at an earlier stage, or simply 'repurposed' existing illustrations to suit new volumes.[220] This was not an uncommon practice as, for example, chivalric poems featured recurring themes and motifs that could be easily illustrated using stock images of knights, battles, and damsels.[221] Marian Rothstein's research has suggests that recycled images should be understood as "disjunctive" as they performed a communicative role that was distinct from that of the text. Paul Kristeller countered this with his assertion that figurative woodcut

[219] Schulz, 1998, 122-3.
[220] For example, the view of Venice that appears in Francesco Sansovino's *Nobility of the City of Venice* (published 1583, Appendix 1 n. 200) was recycled from an earlier 1580 edition of Niccolò Poggibonsi's account of his pilgrimage from Venice to the Holy Land (Vol.2 Appendix 1 Cat. n.187). The latter had been circulating in Venice since 1518.
[221] This practice was not always successful. See M. Rothstein, 'Disjunctive Images in Renaissance Books,' *Renaissance and Reformation* 14:2 (1990) 101-20.

illustrations "speak more impressively to the religious feeling or to the imagination of the reader than the words alone are able to do."[222]

The lack of an account book makes it impossible to know how many other people were employed by the workshop at any given time. However, Vavassore's second testament is useful in the fact that it does at least reveal the scale of his operation by 1570. Knowing that he was in possession of two presses, the evidence of contemporaneous shops makes it possible to infer how many workmen were involved in the production of his books.[223] Each printing press usually required its own workforce of four or five, which consisted of men who were at different stages of their professional training, or who possessed different skills. At the bottom was the apprentice (*garzone*), of which Vavassore was responsible for the training of (at least) one, named Bartolomeo, at the time of his death. Apprentices came from a wide variety of backgrounds, the sons of ordinary citizens, apothecaries, wine merchants, carpenters, weavers, and (of course) printers; and were literate in both vernacular and Latin.[224] The age of the apprentice averaged between 15 and 20 years, with the period of their service fluctuating between two and five years. In addition to teaching the apprentice his craft, the master was required to provide room and board, clothes, and pocket money; and in return, the apprentice swore to obey his master, to serve him faithfully, and not to leave his house.[225] Vavassore's bequest of ten ducats, to be granted to Bartolomeo on the completion of his apprenticeship, might therefore be construed in two ways. Perhaps, living in such close quarters for a long period, the elderly Giovanni Andrea had developed a genuine affection for his young apprentice; but it is more likely that he sought to provide an incentive for Bartolomeo to continue with the "disheartening tasks" of his training in order to qualify as a printer after his death.[226]

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[222] P. O. Kristeller, *Early Florentine Woodcuts* (London, 1897) xi. Kristeller's observations on Florentine incunabula could equally apply to the Venetian books produced in the first half of the sixteenth century.

[223] Girolamo and Ottaviano Scotto declared in their 1566 tax declaration that they had two presses. Jane Bernstein has suggested that the number of surviving editions is indicative of the firm's operation of three or four presses during busy times. Based on a workforce of four to five men to a press, up to 20 men might have worked for the Scotto. A larger press like the Plantin Press might have 40-50 men working eight to ten presses. See Bernstein, 1998, 56-7; and L. Voet, *The Golden Compasses* (Antwerp, 1969) Vol. 2, 335.

[224] Some apprentices might even have knowledge of Greek. See L. Febvre, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing, 1450-1800* (New York, 1997) 129.

[225] Ibid.

[226] Febvre, 1997, 129-30 describes the "the meanest, most disheartening tasks" given to young printing apprentices. For more on Venetian apprentices see Shaw, 2006, 169-70.

Other staff members might include a journeyman (*lavorante*) who, after serving his apprenticeship, travelled from town to town over a period of at least five years, staying in different localities and working in the workshops of other master printers.[227] Such a position would benefit both the journeyman and his master: a newly qualified apprentice would learn a greater breadth of skills by working under several printers with different specialisms, whilst his master might make sales and open up new markets for his own work. Again, we can turn to Giovanni Andrea's second testament for evidence of such activity at the Vavassore workshop. At the time of its writing on the 19 January 1570, Giovanni Andrea appears to have quarreled with his nephew Alvise, for the latter had lost some of the firm's money through poor management. Furthermore, he writes that "many times the children [Luigi and Giuliano, sons of Alvise and Giovanni Andrea's great-nephews] have lost merchandise going to fairs."[228] Owing to his old age and ailing health, it is clear that by this point Alvise had taken over the day-to-day running of the workshop, that his sons had trained (or were training) in the business, and had assumed the role of journeymen in selling printed works at fairs.[229] Just four years after Giovanni Andrea's death, Alvise had also died, leaving the workshop in the hands of the third generation of the family. Publications dated after 1576 declare that they were published by the "heirs [*heredi*] of Luigi Vavassore," confirming that his two sons had taken over the running of the workshop.[230]

Among the other members of his workforce were trained labourers, who worked either as compositors or pressmen, and ranked above journeymen. Compositors set type and prepared frames for printing, while pressmen were responsible for pulling sheets of paper and operating the press. The latter was a less skilled and more physically exhausting job, facilitated by the role of the apprentice in preparing the ink and damping

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[227] The training of both *garzone* and *lavorante* tightened up considerably in 1572, the year of Vavassore's death, when the Guild of Printers' and Booksellers began to restrict and examine new entrants to the trade more carefully. See BMCV, *Marticola dell'Arte dei stampatori e librari di Venezia* f.18v-19r (27 April 1572). Also cited in Salzberg, 2014, 145.

[228] "Item lasso chel ditto messer Alvise possi traere ducatj desento (200) per li legato gli lasso madonna Samaritana mia neza li quali sono ventuj in casa in eneficio di tuttj; et perche il ditto messer Alvise a mangiato aasaj faculta et si ritrova debetor asaj per li librj, et perche li figli le piu volte hanno perso le robbe che andavano alla fiere." Schulz, 1998, 124.

[229] On book fairs in the Renaissance, see Nuovo, 2013, 281-313; and A. Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance* (New Haven, 2010).

[230] "heredi miei universali Alvise e Giuliano fratelli e fioli del q. Alvise Valvasore mio fratello con conditione espresso che ne loro, ne altri per nome loro, possino sino all'eta di anni vinti cinque ingerirsi in detti mei beni…". Clemente Vavassore, testament of 28 August 1576, transcribed in Schulz, 1998, 124-5.

the sheets before printing.[231] The job of proof correction was in the hands of a head compositor in larger presses like those of the Manuzio and Giunti, but at the Vavassore workshop, this work would have been overseen by Giovanni Andrea himself, or, in certain cases, by his other nephew Clemente. Clemente was the nephew named by Vavassore as his sole executor, and his name appears on two surviving publications as an editor or contributor of annotations.[232] A doctor of law who practiced in the Ducal Palace, Clemente Vavassore evidently had no desire to continue his involvement with the press after the death of his uncle. In his own testament of 1576, we learn that he was still in possession of the books given to him by Giovanni Andrea, which he bequeathed to the Carthusians; indeed, he had left the legal profession and entered the Carthusian convent of Sant'Andrea on the Lido.[233]

Vavassore's testament of 1570 makes it clear that, despite having no children of his own, the workshop was a business venture based on firm familial relationships, with each of its members using their skills to enhance its reputation. Furthermore, the surviving publications attest to the fact that the Vavassore workshop was a family business from an early stage: eight separate titles published between 1534 and 1539 were printed by "Giovanni Andrea Vavassore and his brothers [*fratelli*]", with another twelve printed by Vavassore in partnership with his half brother Florio [*Florio fratello*] between 1541 and 1545. Beyond the Vavassore *fraterna* itself, close personal friendships with other members of the trade were a by-product of the collaborative ventures and professional relationships that were at the heart of the Venetian print industry.[234] These collaborative ventures, which both preceded and overlapped with Vavassore's publishing activity on his own account, will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

We must, of course, be wary of asserting too confidently that the Vavassore workshop was run by a group of around ten men who set the type, operated the presses, and collated the sheets. However, the workshop's production offered incredible variety:

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[231] Febvre, 1997, 129.
[232] See Vol.2 Appendix 1 Cat. n.141, and n.142.
[233] Clemente Vavassore will be discussed in greater detail in Chapters Five and Six.
[234] Family relationships and workshops played a role in defining the socio-economic hierarchy of any trade. Under Venetian law, upon the death of the head of the family all of the male heirs shared jointly in the estate. Brothers and cousins would form a *fraterna* or family partnership, collectively operating their business and often living together too. See F. C. Lane, 'Family Partnerships and Joint Ventures' in *Venice and History: The Collected Papers of Frederic C. Lane* (Baltimore, 1966) 36-55.

as well as short pamphlets and printed books, single (or multi) sheet maps were also available for purchase. Practically speaking, these large sheets (and the wood blocks they were printed from) would have been unwieldy and difficult to handle, requiring several pairs of hands to ink, print, dry, and fold them ready for sale.[235] Finally, Vavassore would have required assistance in running the shop and selling his wares. Certainly, when the shop was first searched by an inquisitor in 1571 neither Giovanni Andrea nor his nephew Alvise were on the premises that day.[236] As well as apprentices, it was common for women to work in the family business, assisting her father, brother, husband, or son wherever it was appropriate; and it is likely that Giovanni Andrea's wife Samaritana, followed by later generations of Vavassore women, may have worked behind the shop counter.[237] Whatever its labour structure, it is clear that the Vavassore workshop was established as a family business, and continued to operate as one until its activities ceased in 1593.

2.2 Analysing Output

In compiling the catalogue of works that accompanies this thesis, I have identified 211 distinct titles published by the Vavassore workshop across the eight decades of its activity in Venice. 53 of these titles were reprinted at least once in new – sometimes identical, but more often revised, annotated, or illustrated – editions. In addition to these books and pamphlets are seven editions issued by other publishers and known to contain woodcut illustrations produced by Vavassore, as well as a series of woodcut single-leaf prints on the *Labours of Hercules*, and approximately 21 multi-sheet prints and maps produced and sold by the workshop between c.1515 and 1593. The number of editions for which Vavassore provided illustrations is an exceptionally conservative estimate, based on my identification of his signature on the woodcuts include within them. Information about illustrations and their makers is often omitted in catalogues and

[235] Landau and Parshall have observed that, once folded, a twelve-block woodcut would have been several centimetres thick. On multi-sheet prints, see Landau & Parshall, 1994, 88-9; L. Silver, E. Wyckoff, & L. Armstrong, *Grand Scale: Monumental Prints in the Age of Dürer and Titian* (Wellesley, 2008) and Stermole, 2007, 269-318.
[236] See Chapter 7.
[237] See J. C. Brown, 'A Woman's Place was in the Home: Women's Work in Renaissance Tuscany' in M. Ferguson, M. Quilligan & N. J. Vickers (eds.) *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago, 1987) 208; and M. King, *Women of the Renaissance* (Chicago, 2008) 69-70.

further examples of woodcuts produced in collaboration with other printers will undoubtedly continue to come to light. The purpose of this section is to examine the workshop's overall output and, with the aid of such online resources as Edit16 and the Universal Short Title Catalogue (hereafter USTC), assess how it compares to the more general trends (in terms of the size, length, language and genre of printed material) identifiable in the Venetian print industry at this time.

The surviving editions produced by the Vavassore workshop are charted in Graph 1. Here, the sample is comprised of 169 distinct, dated editions. Approximately 20% (42 out of 211) of the surviving editions published by the Vavassore are undated, and as such have not been included on this graph. The editions published by the Vavassore workshop for the first time (whether or not they have been printed by another publisher) are represented on the chart in blue, whilst the red bars denote the number of reprinted editions issued in any given year. Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, for example, was published in a new edition every year during the 1550s and again in the early 1560s. As a rule, the number of new editions exceeds the number of reprints, but towards the end of its activity, we find that the opposite is true. This represents very effectively the business strategy adopted in the last years of the workshop's activity by Luigi and Guiliano (collectively the 'heirs of Luigi Vavassore'), which focused on reprinting successful earlier editions under the name (and reputation) of 'Guadagnino.'

The graph is representative of the consistent, though fairly low-level, production of the press; and demonstrates that, at least until the last decades of its activity, the workshop was issuing a number of new titles each year (as well as reprinting the most popular volumes). In terms of surviving editions, this represents about four or five new titles every year. Based on this figure, Chart 2 demonstrates the average market share typically enjoyed by the Vavassore workshop in a given year. 1565 was chosen because it occupied a position roughly half way between the workshop's establishment and its close; and because an average number of publications (5) have survived from that year. Drawn from the online catalogues of the USTC and Edit16, the chart is based on a sample of 429 editions published in Venice in 1565, by 60 named publishers. The largest market shares were held by Gabriele Giolito de Ferrari (8%), Antonio Gardano (4%), and Francesco Rampazetto (6%) – all of whom occupied a place among the upper echelons of the printing industry's hierarchy. The Giolito family printed exceptionally prolifically and distributed their wares from shops across the Italian peninsula, whilst

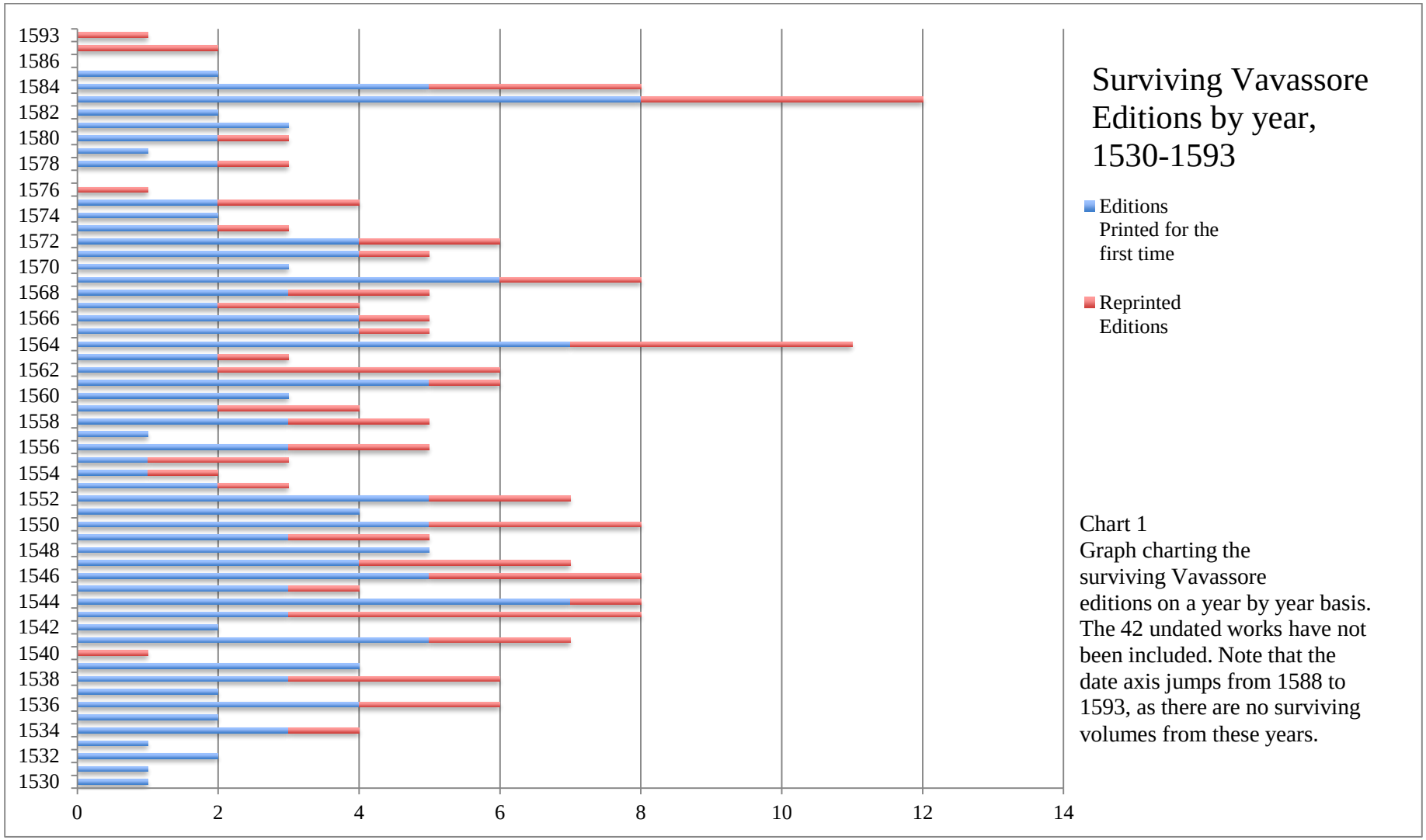

Chart 1
Graph charting the surviving Vavassore editions on a year by year basis. The 42 undated works have not been included. Note that the date axis jumps from 1588 to 1593, as there are no surviving volumes from these years.

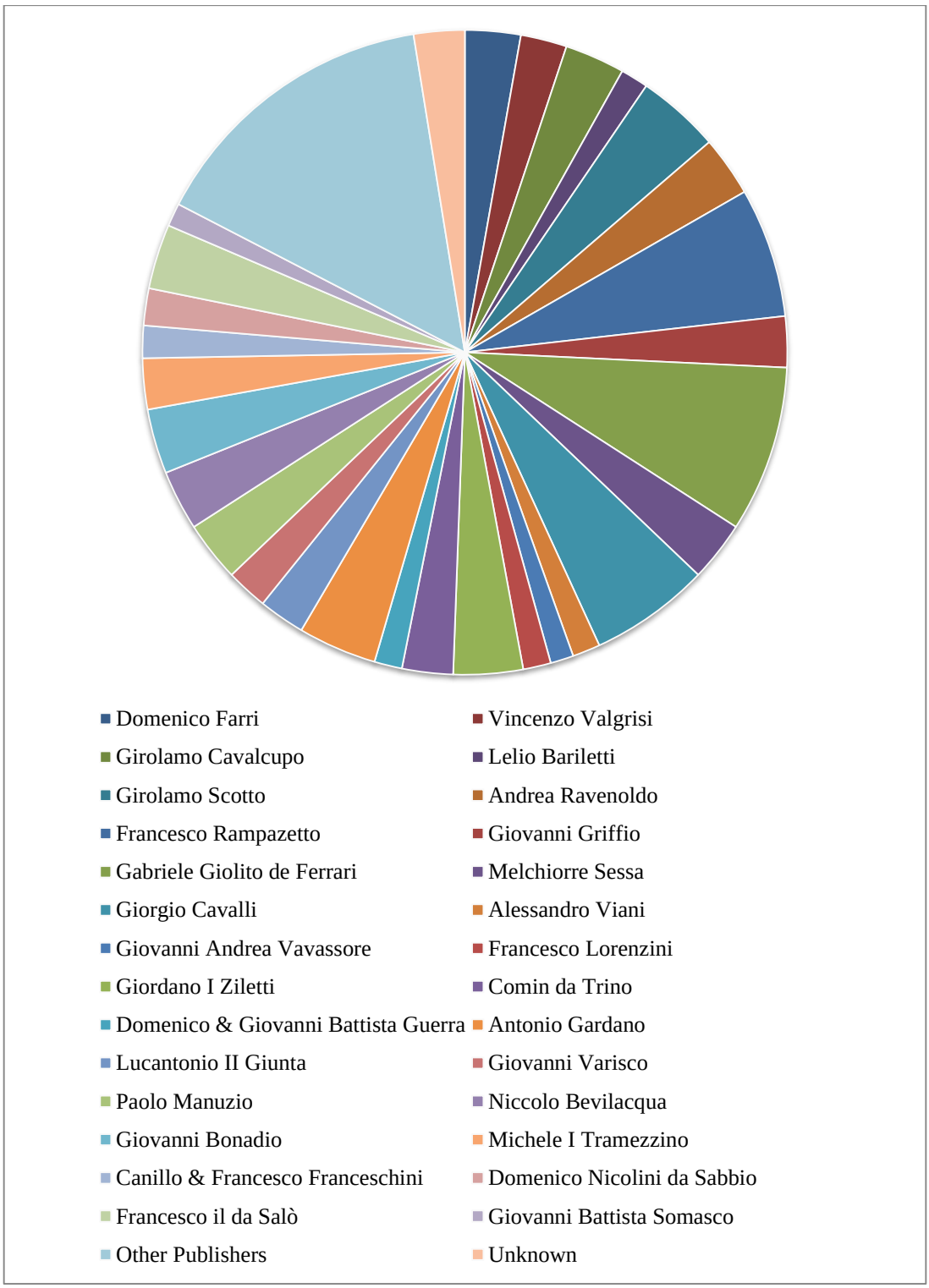

Chart 2. Showing the market share of printers in Venice in 1565. Note, for the sake of clarity the category of 'Other Publishers' is made up those of who published fewer than five volumes in this year, whilst 'unknown' refers to those works that do not include the name of a publisher. Source: USTC. The sample included 429 editions, by 60 named publishers.

Gardano was a highly influential composer and music publisher, and Rampazetto became one of the first (and most vocal) priors of the Guild of Printers' and Booksellers.[238]

Other printers occupied the middle ground, publishing somewhere between 10 and 15 editions in 1565. The vast majority of printers, however, issued far fewer editions. For the sake of clarity, those publishers who issued less than four editions (who comprise 30 out of 60 publishers included in the sample) have been included on the graph under the category of 'Other.' This makes it clear that although the Vavassore workshop was not publishing a huge number of titles each year, the surviving output of the workshop still outstrips that of many of its contemporaries. Whilst the market may have been dominated by major players like Gabriele Giolito, charting a particular year's worth of (surviving) production suggests that the vast majority of the printed material available in sixteenth-century Venice was manufactured and sold by smaller workshops. Thus, the majority of Venetians probably bought their printed wares – whether in the form of books, pamphlets, or maps – from shops like Vavassore's.

In terms of the kind of printed material that was available, working from a catalogue of surviving editions offers the opportunity to gauge sixteenth century purchasing (or reading) habits at a glance. Just over three quarters of the 211 surviving editions published by the Vavassore workshop were in Italian, with the rest predominantly in Latin, and a tiny minority in French, Greek, or other languages (including Zerga, the 'language of the thieves') (Chart 3).[239] This is indicative of a press that predominantly served a popular market, rather than a scholarly one. Although the Vavassore did publish a number of textbooks and treatises by classical authors, the vast majority of its volumes would have appealed to the category of book defined by Paul Grendler as exerting "a very broad, nearly universal appeal."[240] The volumes on sale in Vavassore's shop were certainly varied enough to appeal to all tastes and abilities; and we must be careful not to fall into the trap of suggesting that those of more refined tastes and greater intellectual capabilities would not be attracted to the same editions as their less refined, and less well educated, counterparts.

[238] On the Giolito, see Bongi, 1890 and Nuovo & Coppens, 2005. Gardano was one of the witnesses to the testament of Vavassore's beloved niece Samaritana, see note 167 and Lewis, 2005. On Rampazetto and his influence on the guild legislation, see Salzberg, 2014, 145.
[239] Vol.2 Appendix 1 Cat. n.192.
[240] Grendler, 1993, 451-2.

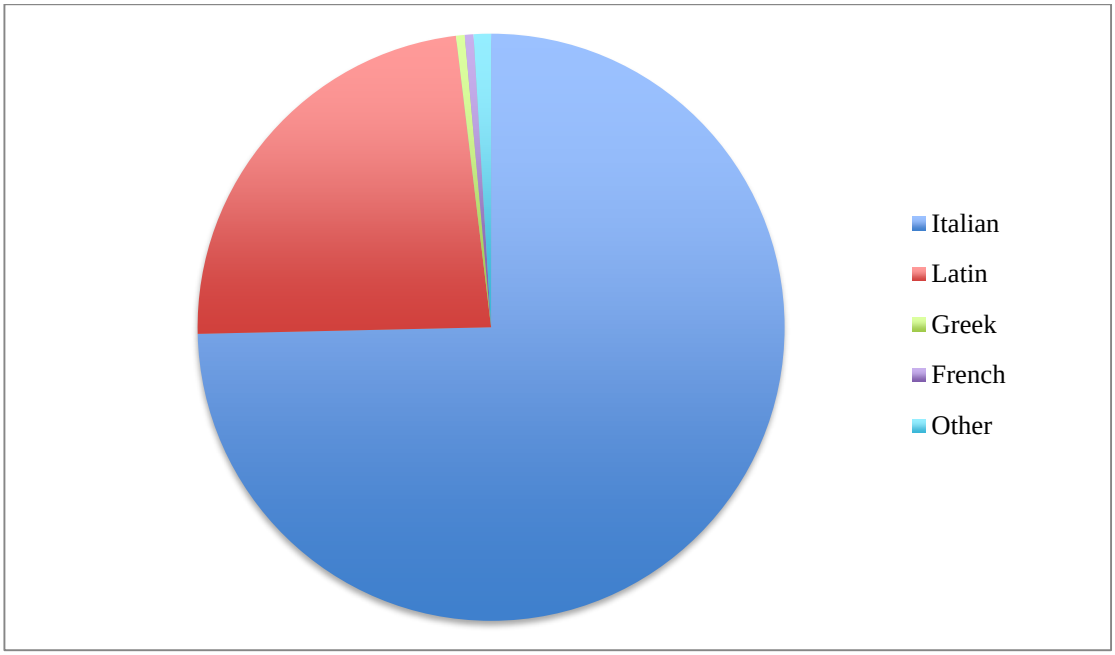

Chart 3. Showing the language of works printed by the Vavassore workshop, 1530-1593.

The workshop also focused closely on the production of small, portable volumes, with two thirds of its surviving output in the octavo format (Chart 4). Commonly used for devotional or liturgical texts in the incunable period, Aldus Manutius is consistently credited with establishing the octavo as an acceptable format for scholarly translations and classical texts.[241] By the time Vavassore established his workshop in 1515, editions of all kinds were being printed in this practical format. Not only could they be easily carried and consulted in public, they required less paper, and consequently cost less than their larger quarto and folio counterparts. Whilst quarto volumes still had a broad appeal, just 2% of the workshop's overall output comprised of folio editions. All were printed in Latin for the scholarly market, and are legal texts or classical writings. At the other end of the scale, the workshop produced a handful of books in the smallest pocket-sized formats: duodecimo and sextodecimo. Many of these were devotional, suggesting that this genre of books was the one most commonly taken out of the *casa*, and thus the most common type of book to be used in public places and spaces during the Renaissance.

[241] Aldus' intention with the octavo format was to provide portability for those who led an active life outside the study. As such, his second octavo (1501) was dedicated to his friend Marin Sanudo, whom he suggested could carry it to read in moments of rest between his commitments in public office and as a historian. See Richardson, 1999, 126-8.

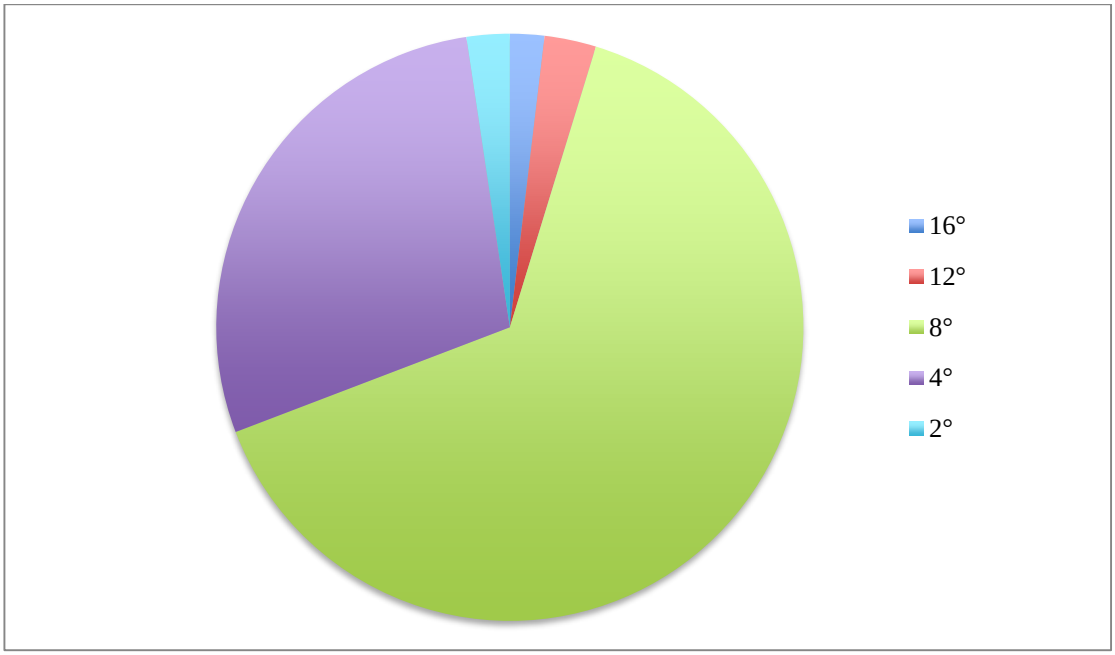

Chart 4. Showing the sizes of works printed by the Vavassore workshop, 1530-1593.

As I have already suggested, the Vavassore workshop sold a baffling array of different types of printed material. In some cases, it has been very difficult to categorise surviving editions by genre, for they may straddle several. Furthermore, compartmentalising them under specific genre headings does not take into account the variety of subjects identifiable among the books and pamphlets published by the Vavassore. Educational books, for example, account for approximately 22% of the workshop's surviving output, but include a whole host of books that required different levels of education, different interests, and different sets of life skills. This category encompasses a number of Latin and Greek textbooks on grammar and rhetoric, presumably for use by students, as well as books produced specifically for use by women: whether collections of patterns for lace embroidery, or instructions on childbirth and postnatal care for midwives. 'Educational' books might also teach the purchaser how to compose the perfect love letter, tips for identifying herbs and plants, and recipes and remedies for treating maladies of all kinds.

Unsurprisingly, religious books represent almost a third of the surviving texts published by the workshop before 1593 (Chart 5). Again, these represent a number of sub-genres, from manuals to assist in the preparation of confession to ecclesiastical dictionaries; hagiographical accounts to visual bibles. As I will demonstrate in Chapter

Seven, the kind of devotional works issued by the workshop evolved over time in response to a number of external factors. The Council of Trent was not only a pivotal moment in the church's stance against heresy, but impacted directly on the output of this workshop; which focused closely on allying itself both *with* the reforming Catholic Church, and *against* the threat of Protestantism then evident in the city. Other genres also responded directly to contemporary events and circumstances. This is most obvious in the (often undated) poems in *ottava rima*, which celebrated or lamented the fortunes of the Venetian forces in battles and sieges across the sixteenth century.

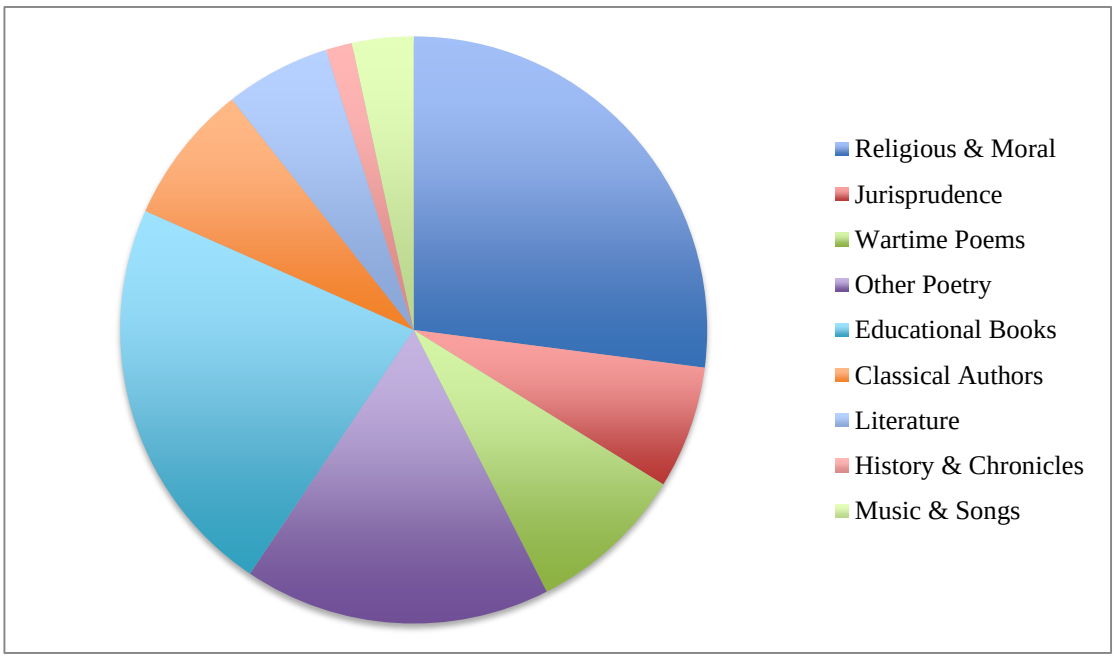

Chart 5. Showing the genre of works printed by the Vavassore workshop, 1530-1593.

These pamphlets, often comprised of just one or two folded leaves, cost comparatively little to manufacture, and were among the most accessible of the editions published by the workshop.[242] Whether they were sold from printshops or by itinerant street-sellers and performers, such pamphlets could cost as little as one *bezzo*, or half a *soldo*, apiece.[243] However, they are also the genre with the lowest survivial rates of all those published by the Vavassore workshop. Whilst editions of between two and eight pages in length represent just less than 20% of the workshop's overall output, their rates of

[242] The cost of paper was a critical factor, and as such, titles that required fewer sheets were cheaper. See Lowry, 1979, 10; and Grendler, 1988, 30-1.
[243] See n. 55, above.

survival are much worse than more substantial volumes (Chart 6). Wartime pamphlets, for example, invariably exist in a single copy or handful of copies. Whether because of their format or their content, which most often reacted to the popular demand for news, these ephemeral items were rarely bound and frequently discarded. As such, it is likely that these publications represent a very small fraction of a much larger original output, for they meet all of the criteria established by Neil Harris as limiting their chances of survival to around fifty percent.[244]

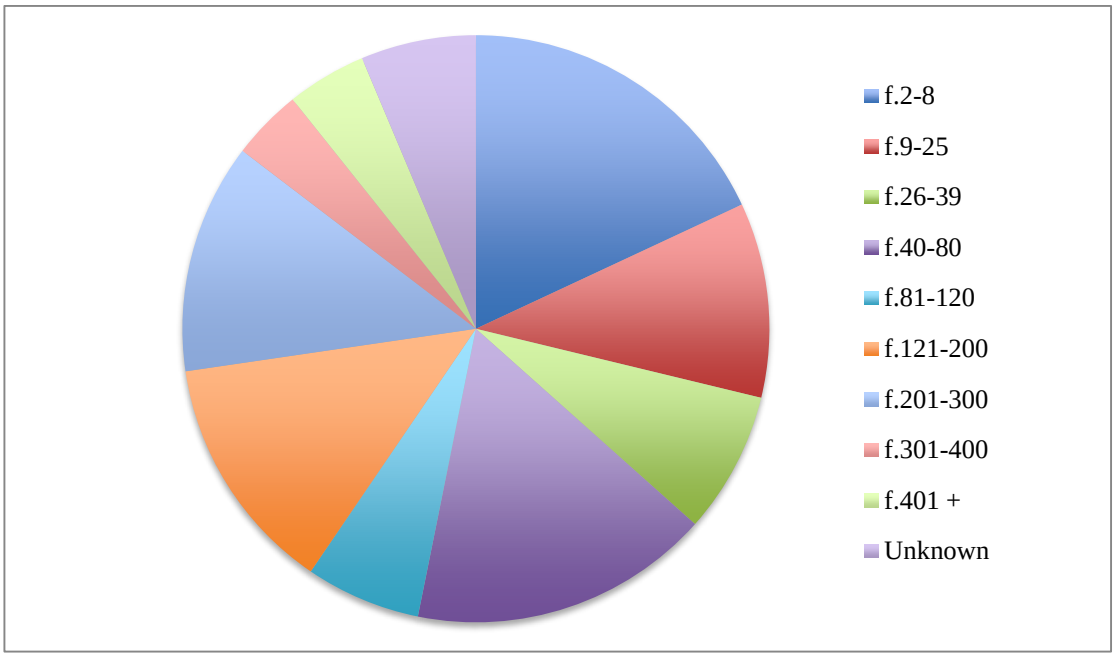

Chart 6. Showing the length of works produced by the Vavassore workshop, 1530-1593.

Considered here in isolation, the quantitative figures pertaining to the extant titles produced by the workshop are unable to tell us much more than that the Vavassore workshop, over the course of eight decades, was consistent in its production and sale of titles and editions of all kinds. Furthermore, such a consideration fails to represent the potential market share of its products, for I have not included printed maps and images, and titles printed by other publishers for which Vavassore provided the illustrations. The collaborative ventures discussed in Chapter Three will, however, redress this balance: work by Vavassore's hand certainly crossed the counters in the shops of Paolo Danza, Niccolò Zoppino, Melchiorre Sessa and

[244] Harris, 1993, 18-9 argued that titles were fundamentally less likely to survive if they were smaller and thinner, or published in the vernacular. See also Rozzo, 1993, 21-2.

Alessandro Paganino, and may have been stocked in a much larger (and now unknowable) number of bookstores. The data presented in this chapter must, therefore, be seen as part of a much larger picture of production that encompassed a variety of different printed wares, sold by many different sellers, and consumed by an even larger number of purchasers and users. Nonetheless, this quantitative approach is a useful way to begin an examination of the workshop, demonstrating its longevity, as well as its flexibility and adaptability in the size, length, language, and genre of works it produced.

Based on the evidence of surviving editions, I have separated the publications issued by the press into four distinct periods or phases, and for each of these outlined the basic production of the workshop in a series of tables. Again, the undated editions have been excluded, though it is likely that a good proportion of these works fell into the first phase – for they are often poetic laments commemorating the lost territories of Negroponte (1470) and Rhodes (1522), or concern the sieges that occurred in Naples, Rome, and elsewhere. As the woodcut of the *Battle of Marignano* will serve to illustrate in Chapter Four, it seems that Vavassore was concerned to exploit the demand for the kind of printed material that responded directly to contemporary events. Nonetheless, the earliest surviving work bearing a date is from 1530. Phase 1 therefore represents the period in which Vavassore, still a relatively new member of the printing trade, was refining his skills as a publisher of works composed and printed from metal type. It also includes the twenty editions already attributed to Giovanni Andrea in concert with his brothers [*fratelli*] and half-brother Florio.

The partnership between Giovanni Andrea and Florio ended in 1545, for the latter's name ceases to appear on the surviving publications issued by the workshop after that date. There is also a shift in the nature of its output in the phase that follows: not only was the workshop more prolific, but a larger percentage (33.3%) of the works it published were in Latin. Although the Vavassore produced a larger proportion of vernacular editions in each phase, it is notable that from 1546 onwards, it began to publish a larger number of Latin editions. Phase 3, for example, begins the year after the closing of the Council of Trent. Unsurprisingly, the workshop published a much larger proportion of religious texts during these years, including Latin orations and poems composed by bishop Antonio Minturno to commemorate the meetings of the ecumenical council, and the anti-Protestant treatises written in

Italian by Girolamo Muzio. Consequently, the workshop's output is representative of the larger trends identifiable at this time: whilst vernacular editions continued to lead

Phase 1: 1530-1545

Format	Italian	Latin	Total
Folio			0
Quarto	2	1	3
Octavo	47	6	53
Duodecimo	1		1
Sextodecimo			0
Total	50	7	**57**

Phase 2: 1546-1563

Format	Italian	Latin	Total
Folio		1	1
Quarto	15		15
Octavo	44	19	63
Duodecimo			0
Sextodecimo	1		1
Total	60	20	**80**

Phase 3: 1564-1572

Format	Italian	Latin	Total
Folio		2	2
Quarto	12	3	15
Octavo	11	19	30
Duodecimo	4		4
Sextodecimo	1		1
Total	28	24	**52**

Phase 4: 1573-1593

Format	Italian	Latin	Total
Folio		3	3
Quarto	6	4	10
Octavo	25	5	30
Duodecimo	1		1
Sextodecimo	1	1	1
Total	33	13	**46**

the way, a larger proportion of texts were being printed in Latin.[245]

The fourth and final phase of the Vavassore workshop begins after the death of Giovanni Andrea, and thus represents the activity of the posthumous press under Alvise Vavassore and, a short time later, his sons Luigi and Guiliano. There are fewer surviving editions from this phase, but a greater variety of different book formats were also made available. Furthermore, as noted above, the workshop relied heavily on reissuing older titles that had a proven track record of success (including, for example, Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*) rather than on compiling new editions. Nonetheless, it continued to operate in much the same vein, producing a wide variety of books and short pamphlets both devotional and secular, in Latin and Italian, and in the most popular formats.

2.3 Conclusion

Despite our best efforts, it is almost impossible to calculate with any certainty just how many books were produced and sold by a publisher like Vavassore. Nonetheless, an examination of the surviving output is capable of yielding results that enhance our knowledge of the printed material available for purchase in Venice during the

[245] The USTC includes 214 surviving vernacular editions published in 1564, and 170 Latin ones. The number of Latin editions compares favourably to, for example, the Venetian output in 1558, which includes 238 vernacular editions to 145 Latin ones.

sixteenth century. The catalogue of the surviving editions issued by the workshop makes it clear that the output of the workshop was very varied. Furthermore, the kind of books and pamphlets printed by the Vavassore were relatively consistent in their quantity, and reflect the printshop's ability to react and respond to market demand. The inherent adaptability of the workshop and the centrality of the market are central themes in this thesis, and will continue to surface in the more detailed discussion of its output that follows.

Considered alongside the contemporary workshops of Giolito and Zoppino, the Vavassore workshop pales in comparison in terms of the volume of its output. However, it is important to remember that a large percentage of the works it published are of the kind recognised by print historians as having just a 50% chance of survival.[246] Furthermore, as both Ugo Rozzo and Rosa Salzberg have noted, our knowledge of the *fogli volanti* is reliant on continuing improvements in the cataloguing of ephemeral works like wartime poems, bills, and pamphlets.[247] The number of surviving titles identified in the catalogue does, however, represent a much larger number of circulating volumes. Both Angela Nuovo and Paul Grendler have suggested that, at least from the 1540s onwards, the Venetian print market was strong enough to support press runs that reached an average of one thousand copies.[248] Although the number of copies of a particular work was dependent on several external factors – including the availability of paper, equipment, and labour – such a figure suggests that the workshop alone may have been responsible for the production of at least 211,000 volumes between c.1515 and 1593.[249] This is a very conservative estimate, excluding both other forms of printed material (images, maps, and woodcut illustrations) and the collaborative projects undertaken by the Vavassore. It nevertheless represents a substantial number of volumes circulating in the city of Venice and beyond.

Books and pamphlets represent just one area of the workshop's production, but one that undoubtedly occupied much of the time and energies of Vavassore's employees. Although the extant testaments offer the briefest of glimpses into the day-to-day running

[246] Harris, 1993, 18-9.
[247] Rozzo estimated that perhaps one in twenty of these kinds of texts survive from the first century and a half of printing in Italy, and that only one in ten of the survivors has been thus far identified. See U. Rozzo, 'La strage degli innocenti,' *L'oggetto libro* 5 (2000) 121; and Salzberg, 2014, 3.
[248] Nuovo, 2013, 108; Grendler, 1977, 9.
[249] Nuovo, 2013, 108-9.

of the workshop, they do suggest that familial connections – whether between brothers, half-brothers, nephews, and sons – formed the basis for this enterprise and many others like it. As well as training apprentices like Bartolomeo, Vavassore appears to have instructed his own nephews (and great nephews) in the various roles required of members of the printing trade. However, building up both his workforce and his reputation to the point of running two presses simultaneously would have required a substantial amount of investment in both time and resources. Furthermore, arriving in Venice as a woodcarver by trade, Vavassore relied heavily on other, more established, printers to 'show him the ropes.' His early years in the printing industry were, therefore, characterised by a series of collaborative ventures, all of which enabled him to both refine his existing skills and to accrue new ones.

Chapter Three

Networks and Collaboration in the Vavassore Workshop

As I demonstrated in Chapter One, the forging of a series of personal and professional connections and networks – whether through his attendance at formal, organised meetings, or in more informal ways – enabled Vavassore to establish himself quickly upon his arrival in the lagoon. The majority of these connections centred around his interactions with established members of the trade, who would have been valuable sources of information and support to a young artisan establishing himself in a new trade (and a new city) in the early sixteenth century. Paolo Danza, for example, with whom Vavassore entrusted the responsibility of arranging his funeral and burial in his testament of 1523, had established his shop at the foot of the Rialto bridge by 1511 (Fig. 1.4 D).[250] His shop chiefly sold small, short pamphlets in the vernacular, but he was also one of the first printers to publish the edicts of the Venetian council on commission – several of which have been preserved in the pages of Marin Sanudo's diaries.[251] With his first-hand experience, solid reputation, and centrally located premises, Danza would have been on-hand to provide a source of advice and guidance for Vavassore; and his shop also served as an outlet for Vavassore's woodcuts, which illustrated some of the pamphlets sold there.[252]

Whilst Vavassore's relationship with Paolo Danza appears to have been founded as much on personal friendship as it was on professional collaboration, his first decade in Venice as a printer and woodcutter can be characterised by his close

[250] See DTEI, s.v 'Paolo Danza'; and 'Paolo Danza' in Ascarelli & Menato, 1989, 353.
[251] Danza is thought to have been a street performer as well as a printer, and the authorship of some of the poems he printed is attributable to him. See F. Novati, 'La storia e la stampa nella produzione popolare italiana' in E. Barbieri & A. Branvilla (Rome, 2004) 97; T. Saffioti, *I giullari in Italia* (Milan, 1990); and Niccoli, 1990, 17. The government laws printed by Danza have been preserved in DMS, 50:140-1, 306-7; 58:107-14.
[252] Unknown Author, *Libro o vero Cronicha di tutte le guerre de Italia, incomenzado dal mille quatrocento* [sic] *nonantaquattro fin al mille cinquecento decedoto. Narrando tutte le guere* [sic] *si del reame de Napoli, come de Lombardia et re duchy e signori del stato suo scazati. E quelcita e castelli son bruiate & sachizati. Azonteui molte cose de le quale non erano in la prima impressione. Et in piu corrette. Nouamente stampate.* (Stampato in Venetia: a petitione de Paulo Danza, 1522, Adi I Marzo) Edit16 CNCE 22117. An updated version that assimilated several shorter works into one volume was published in 1534, under the title *Guerre horrende de Italia. Tutte le guerre de Italia comenzando dala venuta di re Carlo del mille quatrocento novantaquatro fin al giorno presente* (Venice: Paolo Danza, 18 March 1534), also featured illustrations by Vavassore. See GOR, 1: 141-2, no. 230. Schulz, 1998, 120-1; and Salzberg, 2008, 63, both note that woodcuts by Vavassore appeared in pamphlets produced and sold by Paolo Danza from his shop.

involvement with other members of the trade; some of whom had been active in the city for years, or even decades, by the time he arrived. Others established their presses in the early sixteenth century, and their shops failed or flourished alongside that of Vavassore.

Taken together, the collaborative ventures undertaken by Vavassore in the early decades of the workshop's establishment point towards the existence of a complex printing network. Whether the network was based on geographical proximity, membership of the same guild, or simply a desire to produce similar wares, it provided a valuable resource on which a young artisan could draw. The process of setting up and maintaining a successful workshop required not only material assets – a press, woodblocks, paper, and ink – but also professional ones, which included demonstrable skills, an established reputation, and an extensive book of contacts. The formative years of Vavassore's activity – characterised in this chapter by his production of prints and book illustrations for other printers and booksellers – demonstrate his attempts to acquire these assets very well. Not only did he obtain the raw materials required to begin publishing on his own account; but in the process of collaborating with other printers, he established for himself a network that would continue to influence the output of the workshop over the decades that followed.

The surviving *testamenti* discussed in Chapter One offer evidence that Vavassore was highly sociable, and integrated himself by adopting the communal mentality that underpinned life in early modern Venice. Although it is difficult to reconstruct the day-to-day interactions that occurred between printers in the city, many of the surviving volumes attest to the close working relationships that lay at the heart of the Venetian print industry during the first half of the sixteenth century. The aim of this chapter is to consider the existence of a network of printers, and to question its role in shaping the workshop's activity.

There is a great deal of helpful theoretical literature on the importance and definition of networks in historical study.[253] At its heart, the network is formed by individuals or groups (and the relationships between them) which exist in concert with one another, for mutually beneficial purposes. The way they interact and connect with one another offers a key to understanding how their world works: whether at an

[253] For the most recent historiography, see the chapter on 'Networks' in S. Graham, I. Milligan & S. Weingart, *Exploring Big Historical Data: The Historian's Macroscope* (London, 2015).

individual level, among those living in the same city or space, or those working in the same trade (within that space, or in a broader context). Historians who have focused on network studies have looked at a variety of networks over very different periods, but with the consistent focus of analysing instances of individual participation in networks and abstracting them in the hope of revealing more general trends.[254] Historical networks have often been reconstructed in rather indirect ways: for example, Alexander and Danowski's analysis of Cicero's network of correspondence was based not on the philosopher's actual correspondents, but on information generated from reading the letters themselves.[255] By focusing on Vavassore's day-to-day interactions with other printers, this thesis aims to access the themes (or 'general trends') of cooperation and collaboration in the Venetian printing industry. Vavassore's emergence as both a collaborator and a networker effectively counters the traditional notion of the Venetian print industry as inherently competitive.[256] These collaborative arrangements appear to have been reciprocal and mutually beneficial, for in as much as he benefited from the reputations and resources of other printers, Vavassore was also required to turn his own skills to assist them.

The first part of this chapter is devoted to the comparison of his workshop to three contemporaneous case studies – the printer-performer Niccolò Zoppino, the coetaneous workshops of the Bindoni family, and the brothers Nicolò and Domenico de Sandri, who operated their presses under the Sign of Jesus. By analysing the connections between these workshops, I will begin to reconstruct the network of printers of which Vavassore was a part. These three workshops have been chosen as comparative studies for various reasons: the surviving evidence of their close collaboration with Vavassore, their close geographical proximity to both his home and workshop, their position as 'outsiders' or migrants, or their involvement in the same guild. Thanks to a lack of documentary material concerning the workshop's affairs (economic or otherwise), I have had to rely on the surviving printed material itself as

[254] On the network of the 'Republic of Letters' see R. Hatch, 'Peiresc as Correspondent: The *Republic of Letters* and the Geography of Ideas' in B. Dolan (ed.) *Science Unbound: Geography, Space, Discipline* (Umeå, 1998) 19-58, and R. Mandrou, *From Humanism to Science* (Harmondsworth, 1978). On the Medici family's use of networks to gain power in Florence, see J. F. Padgett & C. Ansell, 'Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici, 1400-1434,' *American Journal of Sociology* 98:6 (1993) 1259-1319.
[255] M. C. Alexander & J. A. Danowski, 'Analysis of an Ancient Network: Personal Communication and the Study of Social Structure in a Past Society,' *Social Networks* 12:4 (1990) 313-35.
[256] See note 21.

evidence of Vavassore's collaborative ventures. Reliance on this body of material must, therefore, come with the caveat that the volumes that have been lost – perhaps up to 50% of the workshop's total output – may prevent us from knowing the true extent of the professional network of which he was a part.[257]

The second part of this chapter demonstrates how this network worked in practice, by focusing on the collaborative ventures undertaken by Vavassore in his early years in Venice (1515-1523). In so doing, it hopes to outline the artistic origins of the Vavassore workshop. As a woodcarver from the Bergamasco, Vavassore logically turned his hand to the cutting (and perhaps even the designing) of woodcut prints and illustrations before he began printing with metal type. The case studies examined here – which have, until now, received little scholarly attention – represent the development of Vavassore's own "style" which came to characterise the prints, maps, and illustrations among the workshop's output. As will become apparent in the chapters that follow, it is clear that Vavassore relied heavily on designers and models in producing his woodcuts. Furthermore, a lack of surviving evidence makes it impossible to know whether he was responsible for the designing of such images as well as their cutting. Even among print historians, there is a tendency to overlook the more manual process of cutting and printing in favour of focusing on their artistry and design, despite the fact that this is a crucial part of a much larger process. Recognising this, the aim of this chapter is to chart Vavassore's progress as a producer of woodcuts, from the relatively unskilled copying of existing woodcuts by Albrecht Dürer in 1515, to the production of prints and illustrations with characteristic qualities – following the process by which Vavassore refined his own set of skills by engaging in a series of fruitful collaborations with other printers and booksellers.

3.1 The Printing Network: Comparative Studies

3.1.1 Niccolò Zoppino

As both an outsider and something of a *poligrafo* of printing, Niccolò Zoppino represents an ideal starting point for the consideration of the printing network in which Vavassore played a part. Not only did the two collaborate, the production of

[257] See Harris, 1993, 18-9.

these two workshops often overlaps: both, for example, printed such popular works as wartime poems in *ottava rima,* books of designs for lace and embroidery, and lunar charts. Unlike Vavassore, however, Niccolò d'Aristotele de'Rossi da Ferrara, known as Zoppino, has attracted significant scholarly attention.[258] Zoppino began his career in 1503, at the height Aldus Manutius' domination of the Venetian print industry. However, as Neil Harris has noted, Niccolò Zoppino was "as opposite to Aldus as it was possible to be," for he never published in Greek, and very little in Latin, but focused almost exclusively on works in the vernacular.[259] Like Vavassore, he adopted the octavo format for some ninety per cent of his publications, only occasionally opting for the larger quarto (or even folio) size. Many of his printed wares were short and attractively illustrated pamphlets of the kind so avidly read by contemporaries that few titles have survived in more than one copy. Lorenzo Baldacchini's *Annali*, which is by no means an exhaustive list of all of the publications issued by Zoppino (either alone, or with his associate Vincenzo di Paolo), furnishes a list of 438 editions.

As a printer and publisher Zoppino was enormously prolific, and as such, the surviving output of his press is a little over double that of the Vavassore workshop – despite the fact that he was active for only half the length of time (1503-44). Though an enormous number of publications are attributable to Zoppino – to which Vavassore himself contributed woodcut illustrations – the items printed and sold by the Vavassore workshop are much more varied.[260] Whilst Zoppino's activities in print were led by his simultaneous career as a street performer, Vavassore's reflect his beginnings as a woodcarver, who turned his hand to the production of printed images, illustrated his own books and pamphlets, and designed his own maps in the woodcut medium. Such pursuits were both expensive and time consuming, and would have involved Vavassore diverting a great deal of his time and investment away from the publication of the books and pamphlets published by the likes of Zoppino. Despite

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[258] See L. Baldacchini, *Alle origini dell'editoria volgare. Niccolò Zoppino da Ferrara a Venezia. Annali (1503-1544)* (Manziana, 2011); J. M. Potter, 'Nicolò Zoppino and the book trade network of Perugia' in D. V. Reidy (ed.) *The Italian Book, 1465-1800: Studies Presented to Dennis E. Rhodes on his 70th Birthday* (London, 1993) 135-9; L. Severi, "*Sitibondo nel stampa de'libro": Niccolò Zoppino tra libro volgare, letteratura cortigiana e questione della lingua* (Manziana, 2009); Nuovo, 2013, 306; and Salzberg, 2014, ch. 3.

[259] See N. Harris 'Review of Lorenzo Baldacchini, *Alle origin dell'editoria volare. Niccolò Zoppino da Ferrara a Venezia. Annali (1503-1544)*' in *The Library: The Transactions of the Bibliographical Society* 14:2 (2013) 213-7.

[260] Vavassore produced the red and black woodcut frontispiece to the *Thesauro Spirituale Vulgare in Rima & Hystoriato* published by Niccolò Zoppino and Vincenzo di Polo, see Vol. 2, Appendix 1, n. 213.

the similarities, the key differences between Vavassore and Zoppino are reflected in the type of production in which they engaged, their outside influences and interests, and in their individual approach to career progression.

One issue of considerable debate that has, until very recently, surrounded the figure of Zoppino has been his dual career in publishing and street performance.[261] Continually mobile, Zoppino was originally from Ferrara, but had already worked in Bologna, Milan, Pesaro, Ancona and Perugia by the time he opened a shop in Venice in the parish of San Fantin (Fig. 1.4 F). Rather than settle in the lagoon, Zoppino continued to search out other commercial opportunities, enrolling in the Florentine guild in 1536 in order to sell books in that city; and petitioning the authorities in Ravenna to open a bookshop there in 1542.[262] Such a nomadic existence "wandering for so many years through the cities of Italy" and performing in the *piazze* would have provided Zoppino with excellent knowledge of the demands made by an audience and the kind of works that would sell.[263] Whilst Zoppino occupies this vital position between the worlds of oral and print culture, Vavassore's stance was very different. As far as we know, Vavassore never engaged in the performance of poems and plays in the streets of *piazze* of Venice, but instead approached his role as a printer and publisher from a more artistic perspective. A registered member of the Painters' Guild of San Luca in or before 1530, Vavassore began his career cutting, and perhaps even designing, woodcuts. Vavassore's artistic approach to his profession is reflected in the fact that the vast majority of his books are heavily illustrated and feature ornate title pages, the imagery of which is borrowed or appropriated from both other printed images, and other artistic forms. His production of multi-sheet woodcut maps also remained a concern long after he had made the progression from woodcutting alone, to printing with both woodblocks and moveable type.

The works produced by Vavassore in the first phase of production (1515-1544) are those most akin to the kind of material sold by Zoppino, but by the time the workshop progressed into its second phase, Zoppino had died, and left no heirs to

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[261] The evidence that Zoppino the printer and the *cantimbianco* of the same name were one and the same person has been presented by M. Rospocher, '"In Vituperium Status Veneti": The Case of Niccolò Zoppino', *The Italianist* 34:4 (2014) 349-61.
[262] Sazlberg, 2014, 79.
[263] "Discorendo per tanti e tanti anni come ha fatto per la citá d'Italia…". This was included in his petition to open a bookshop in the city of Ravenna, and is quoted in S. Bernicoli, 'Librai e tipografi in Ravenna a tutto il secolo XVI', *L'Archiginnasio* 30:4 (1935) 174-5; and ibid. 79.

continue his presses.[264] Whilst Baldacchini's study attempts to capture the intensity of Zoppino's years as a printer and publisher, my consideration of the Vavassore workshop presents a more well-rounded view of print production across the sixteenth century as new religious pressures affected output. Several works published by Zoppino – notably his edition of Ariosto's comedy *The Necromancer* (1535) – would have alerted the attention of the authorities if published even a decade after his death.[265] The 1554 Venetian Index of Prohibited Books, for example, specifically targeted all works on the subjects of geomancy, necromancy, and pyromancy.[266] Whilst the sheer magnitude of the printed works produced by Zoppino may have piqued the interest of print historians, the longevity of Vavassore's career, and the need for his workshop to adapt and change to fall in line with the increasing restrictions on print in sixteenth century Venice, is what makes him such a valuable case study.

Finally, fundamental differences between Vavassore and Zoppino emerge in terms of the progression of their careers. Although both were immigrant printers, they took fundamentally different paths: whilst one toured the Italian cities, the other became firmly rooted in the lagoon. Zoppino's activities resulted in a network of bookshops scattered across Northern Italy, in Bologna, Florence, and Venice; and, somewhat unusually for a printer with a base in the lagoon, as far south as Perugia and Pesaro.[267] This network of shops facilitated the sale of the incredible output of his presses, but ultimately meant that 'outsourcing' to other artisans would have been a necessary part of the production of his books and pamphlets. Whilst Vavassore was closely involved in some way with the authorship, editing, and illustration of the vast majority of his works – as well as actually printing and selling them – Zoppino worked with a string of printers and editors, as well as presumably employing a large staff to operate and manage his presses whilst he entertained audiences and sold his wares in the piazza.

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[264] Zoppino is known to have had a son, Sebastiano, but no publications bear his name.
[265] Lodovico Ariosto, *Il Negromante. Comedia di messer Lodovico Ariosto* (Venice, Niccolò Zoppino, 1535). Copies exist at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini and the Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice.
[266] G. H. Putnam, *The Censorship of the Church of Rome: A Study of the Prohibitory and Expurgatory Indexes* (New York, 1906) Vol.1 160.
[267] Potter, 1993, 135-9.

3.1.2 The Bindoni

Like the Vavassore, the Bindoni family comprised of a *fraterna* of brothers – a term often used to indicate the inheritance or possession of property in common.[268] In the case of the Bindoni, the *fraterna* was comprised of Alessandro, Benedetto, Agostino and Bernardino. Alessandro was the first to arrive in the lagoon, establishing a shop in the Frezzaria of San Moisè at the Sign of Justice (*insegna della Giustizia*) in 1506, and his brothers soon followed him into the printing industry.[269] The later migration of the Vavassore family mirrors the Bindoni's progression to Venice in many ways: in the same way that the Bindoni brothers progressively moved to Venice from the tiny island of Isola Bella in Lake Maggiore, Vavassore's brothers, and later nieces and nephews, gradually left the Bergamasco for the lagoon.[270] Alessandro had died by 1522, but the list of printers compiled by the Avogaria di Comun in March 1533 testifies to the continuing activities of his three brothers: Benedetto was active in the parish of San Fantin, Agostino in San Paternian, and Bernardino in the Frezzaria (perhaps in the premises previously occupied by Alessandro).[271] All of these locations were in close geographical proximity to one another, and were certainly within walking distance to Vavassore's workshop at the crossover of the *contrade* of San Luca and San Fantin.

The Bindoni have received relatively scant attention in the historiography of Venetian print, although Peter Burke noted their potential to contribute to our knowledge of the complex interplay between oral and print culture.[272] Similarly, Salzberg's study of cheap print noted that the Bindoni brothers were "among the most

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[268] Schulz, 1993, 118.
[269] A. Cioni, 'Alessandro Bindoni,' in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* Vol.10 (Rome, 1960) 498-9.
[270] Vavassore's nephew Clemente is recorded as being born in Bergamo, but ultimately worked as a judge in Venice (and the *terraferma*) before settling in the monastery of Sant'Andrea del Lido in the second half of the sixteenth century. Clemente is discussed in Chapter Seven. On the provenance of the Bindoni, see E. Motta, 'Uno stampatore del Lago Maggiore a Venezia,' *Bollettino storico della svizzera italiana* 14:9-10 (1892) 199-200.
[271] ASV, Avogaria di Comun, Notatorio, registro 2054, f.40v. (29 March 1533). This list is by no means exhaustive, as it excludes a number of printers known to have been active in this period. Salzberg noted that stallholders and street-sellers who engaged in the sale of print were also excluded, but included in another list of 1567. See Salzberg, 2010, 115.
[272] P. Burke, 'Oral Culture and Print Culture in Renaissance Italy' in *ARV: Scandinavian Yearbook of Folklore* (1998) 9-10. See also, I. Menis 'I Bindoni: Materiali storico-documentari per una ricostruzione biografica e annalistica' (Tesi di laurea, 1992-3).

prolific and pioneering producers of cheap print in sixteenth-century Venice."[273] Certainly, the original *fraterna* focused their production on the kind of cheap, vernacular pamphlets that were are also among the first publications to be issued by the Vavassore workshop on its own account. This is perhaps unsurprising, for they required little time and investment, and were easy to sell from shops or through street performers and sellers.[274] However, the ephemeral nature of their production has led to very low survival rates of Bindoni volumes: among the thousands of publications listed on the Edit16 catalogue, less than a hundred surviving works can be attributed to Alessandro Bindoni, a few more to Benedetto, and just twenty three to Bernardino.[275]

The Bindoni thus provide a useful counterpart to the Vavassore workshop in facilitating our understanding of the phases of development and evolution of a working press. Whilst the *fraterna* were indeed prolific in their production of cheap print, Alessandro Bindoni had also learnt to intersperse larger works, which were expensive to produce, with the vernacular pamphlets that provided the mainstay of the press' income.[276] This model was also adopted by Vavassore: after a few years of accumulating skills, techniques, and financial resources by producing woodcuts for use by other publishers; publishing short, cheap publications and selling them from his own workshop enabled him to accrue the kind of money required to finance the more substantial projects that occurred later. The critic Anton Francesco Doni noted the prevalence of such an approach in his mid-sixteenth century *Dialogue on Printing*, using one of the characters to express his own criticism of the 'plebeian' business of printing, in which many were motivated only by a desire for gain. "Some printers," he wrote, "first grow rich by printing trash, and then, turning to finer things, grow wealthier still."[277]

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[273] Salzberg, 2014, 76.
[274] This was a common starting point for those entering the print trade; see J. L. Flood, 'The Printed Book as a Commercial Commodity in the Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries' in *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* (2001) 172-82.
[275] EDIT16 lists 76 publications for Alessandro Bindoni (CNCT 466); 127 for Bernardino (CNCT 319) and just 23 for Benedetto (CNCT 215).
[276] Alessandro undertook the printing of a folio edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, financed by Luc'Antonio Giunta: the colophon reads "Venezia per Alessandro Bindoni ad instantia di Lucantonio I Giunta, 1508)" USTC 845660.
[277] A. F. Doni, *A Discussion About Printing Which Took Place at* I Marmi *in Florence* translated by D. Brancaleone (Turin, 2003) 45. Sections of Doni's pithy dialogue are referred to in B. Richardson, *Print Culture in Renaissance Italy: The Editor and the Vernacular Text, 1470-1600* (Cambridge, 1994) 11; and Salzberg, 2014, 77.

In addition to printed pamphlets, the workshops of the Vavassore and Bindoni crossover again in their production of pocket-sized octavos of popular contemporary writers like Aretino and Ariosto. Letters, sonnets, dialogues, poems and plays in the vernacular were an important part of the output of a vernacular press, whilst chivalric romances (*libri de bataglia*) became its mainstay.[278] The most handsome profits were to be gained from successive editions of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* – the work proclaimed by Daniel Javitch to be "the most popular book of the sixteenth century" – a business move of which Vavassore was evidently acutely aware, for he issued new editions on an almost annual basis.[279] Whether they amassed money and expertise by "printing trash" or not, the production of the kind of cheap, ephemeral works discussed in Chapter Five were an essential part of the lifecycle of a sixteenth-century printshop.

Located in the Frezzaria, and the nearby parishes of San Fantin and San Paternian, the workshops of the Bindoni family were, like the Vavassore workshop, in the central *sestiere* of San Marco. The geography of print – in terms of both its production and sale in Venice – was relatively well confined and compact. Zoppino's workshop was similarly located in a campo in San Fantin, whilst Matteo Pagano set up his shop at the Sign of the Faith (*all'insegna della fede*) in the Frezzaria. Geographical proximity would certainly have facilitated collaborative ventures on a practical level, but it was not the only thing these workshops had in common. Similar (if not identical) titles issued from the workshops run by these printers in the first half of the sixteenth century, including vernacular poems such as the *Orlando Furioso*, news pamphlets, wartime poems, and pattern books. Whilst Ilde Menis has argued that the Bindoni printers adopted different publishing strategies in an attempt to avoid simply repeating all of the same titles, the same does not seem to be true of the larger network of printers operating within this relatively limited geographical area (Fig. 1.4).[280] However, as my discussion of the day-to-day interaction that occurred between the workshops of Vavassore and Pagano will demonstrate in Chapter Four,

[278] Bernstein, 1998, 22. On the popularity of the *libri de bataglia*, see Grendler, 1989, 289.
[279] On the success of Ariosto's work, see Daniel Javitch, *Proclaiming a Classic: The Canonization of Orlando Furioso* (Princeton, 1991). Vavassore issued new editions of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* in varying formats in 1548, 1549, 1553 (two editions), 1554, 1556, 1558, 1559, 1562, 1563, 1566, and 1567.
[280] Menis, 1992-3, 83-4.

working in such proximity actively facilitated and encouraged the borrowing and sharing of ideas and resources between workshops.[281]

3.1.3 Nicolò and Domenico de Sandri (dal Jesus)

The final comparison I would like to draw is between the Vavassore workshop and the little known workshop run by the brothers Nicolò and Domenico. The pair published both books and printed pictures in Venice under the Sign of Jesus (*insegna del Giesù*); even adopting the name 'dal Jesus' in place of their family name (de Sandri) on their publications.[282] If the output of the Vavassore workshop pales in comparison with Zoppino's prolific production, Nicolò and Domenico published just c.20 books between 1501 and 1527 – less than one new title per year. Instead, their main focus was on the production of printed images, (re)producing sets of woodcuts and engravings by such sought-after artists as Marcantonio Raimondi and Albrecht Dürer and selling them to the Venetian market.

Scholarship on the de Sandri brothers has been scant, but an article by Lisa Pon has outlined the workshop's canny ability to copy prints whilst complying with the official *Privilegio*, and its connections with the Gesuati. This lay order was founded to spread the word of God and to heal the sick, and was flourishing in Venice in the early sixteenth century. As well as building a new church on the Zattere, Pon suggests that Nicolò and Domenico may have received some financial support from the Gesuati in order to publish books, for their early works are all devoted to the lives and teachings of the saints.[283] Their place in Vavassore's printing network stems from my identification of Domenico as being one of the only other printers to have been included on the list of members of the Painters' Guild in 1530.[284] Just a handful of its members were involved in the production of woodcut images, making this an especially fruitful comparison.[285] As the Guild of Printers and Booksellers was not

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[281] See Chapter Four.
[282] The brothers are the subject of an article by L. Pon, '"*Alla Insegna del Giesu*": Publishing Books and Pictures in Renaissance Venice', *Bibliographical Society of America* 92:4 (1998) 443-64.
[283] Ibid. 455.
[284] Domenico appears as "Domenego dal Segno del Iesus" on the list of matriculated members compiled in 1530; transcribed in Favaro, 1975, 137-44.
[285] Schulz recorded just three woodcarvers matriculated in the Painters' Guild: Vavassore, Pietro di Giovanni, and Paolo Campsa. Whilst Pietro and Paolo were probably responsible for the production of frames, altarpieces and other items carved from wood, Vavassore actually had more in common with Domenico dal Jesus, Bartolomeo di Lorenzo and Varisco

formed until the second half of the sixteenth century, both Vavassore and de Sandri must have chosen to matriculate into the Painters' Guild. The connections between woodcarvers and painters were long held, with the Provveditori di Comun recognising in 1459 that the two trades had become so interconnected that they could not be separated.[286] Whilst the fifteenth-century woodcarvers who were members of the Painters' Guild had produced ornate frames and furniture, their sixteenth-century counterparts turned their skills to the production of woodcuts. Even if their contact was limited to their membership of the same guild, Vavassore undoubtedly interacted with Domenico (and possibly also his brother, Nicolò) at its meetings, which took place at the church of San Luca, close to his own workshop premises.

Similar parallels are also evident in the passing down of the workshop at the Sign of Jesus to another generation of the family, and its involvement with the Venetian Inquisition. Vavassore's interactions with the Inquisition will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Seven, but for now it is relevant to mention that he was implicated in the heresy trials of friends and associates for reading and discussing the gospels, and that books included on the Index of Prohibited Books were identified in his shop. Nicolò and Domenico's heir, Piero di Nicolò dal Jesus, was running the shop by 1558, and in 1571 – just months before the investigation into the Vavassore workshop and the identification of restricted titles among its stock – was brought before the Inquisition to respond to a charge that his shop contained books prohibited by the Index. Piero stated that he had neither bought nor sold the titles, but said that they had been left in the shop by his predecessors.[287] Just as Vavassore's nephew Alvise defended himself by saying that he was rarely in the shop to know which titles should be removed from the shelves, Piero continued on to say that "our profession is not books, but depicting saints on paper for the confraternities."[288]

Zeniori (who defined themselves as "incisor" or "intagliator") who produced woodcut images. See Schulz, 2011; and Favaro, 1975, 67, 68-9, 141 and 143.

[286] On 19 May 1459 the Provveditori di Comun and Giustizieri Vecchio recognised that the two trades were so interconnected that they could not separate them, and allowed the members of the two groups to exercise both skills if they proved to the latter that they had the skills necessary to do so. Favaro, 1975, 68-9.

[287] ASV, SU, b.156, f.22: "Non so dir altro se non che sono cose vechissime, che li nostril vecchi le havevano et io non le ho vedute a niuno ne comprate di aluno, ma le ho trovate cosi in bottega a lassate da i nostri vecchi…"

[288] Ibid. f.22 "ne la professione nostra è de libri, ma da depenzar santi de carta per le schuole."

This was indeed the case, for both the Scuola di Santa Maria Maggiore and the Scuola di Sant'Ursola recorded payments to Nicolò and Domenico dal Jesus for "santi" (saints) or "madone instampe" (printed madonnas) in their *libri dei contri* between 1508 and 1545.[289] The Scuola di Sant'Ursola, for example, ordered some 600 copies of pictures of small saints (*santi piccolo*) and 600 more of large saints (*santi grandi*), the former costing 9 *lire,* and latter costing 18 *lire* 10 *soldi*.[290] These figures are also useful to this consideration of the Vavassore workshop, for although none of its printed depictions of saints have survived, Vavassore bequeathed to his heirs his collection of woodcut blocks of *Santi* when he died in 1572.[291] Whether they were distributed by confraternities or sold in the shop, the Vavassore workshop's woodcut saints probably fulfilled much the same purpose for their buyers as those published by Nicolò and Domenico dal Jesus, and commanded similar prices too.[292] Finally, the workshops run by both the Vavassore and de Sandri families clearly provide a valuable reminder of the need to avoid separating the production of printed books and printed images. Whilst Vavassore may have focused more closely on the production of (albeit illustrated) books, and Nicolò and Domenico produced far fewer books to meet the demands for printed images by the *scuole* and Gesuati, it is clear that these activities occurred simultaneously in workshops in Venice during the sixteenth century.

3.2 Tracing the Artistic Foundations of the Vavassore Workshop

Whether in formal or informal ways, the existence of a printing network benefitted the Vavassore workshop in several ways. As well as being able to offer support and advice, the collaborative projects explored in this section provided him with the kind of steady work that, as an artisan in a new city and a new trade, enabled him to establish for himself both a reputation and a book of contacts. The relatively high

[289] Pon, 1998, 460-1.
[290] Ibid. 461 n. 32, an extract from a loose note in the Scuola's *Libro dei contri* (1555).
[291] "Item lasso a messer Alvise Valvasorio mio nepote qual e sempre stato cum noi et sta, duj torcholj et le stampe de figure di santj et di librj, non li carte stampate et librj si habbino da divider si come ordinero." Second testament of 19 January 1570, transcribed in Schulz, 1998, 123.
[292] Inexpensive paper saints were distributed on saints days and other religious festivals, see A.M. Hind, 'Early Italian Engraving,' *Proceedings of the British Academy* 16 (1930) 6; H. Saffrey, 'Les images populaires de saints domicains a Venise au XV siècle et edition par Alde Manuse des 'Epistole' de Sainte Catherine de Sienne', *Italia Medievale e Umanistica* 25 (1982) 241-312; Landau & Parshall, 1994, 36; and Pon, 1998, 460.

cost of equipment and the need to be able to tie up substantial investments over a long period of time certainly go some way to explaining why, at least in the early years of his career, Vavassore almost exclusively collaborated with other printers and publishers.[293] The illustrative projects on which he worked can be seen to have a direct influence on the works he would later publish on his own account, allowing him to refine his woodcutting technique and amass designs (whether his own, or by other artists). Such regular interaction – which would certainly have involved either working in different workshops, or walking to various *botteghe* in order to consult with publishers – would have served to strengthen the close knit community of printers, publishers, booksellers, and stationers, on whom Vavassore would continue to rely throughout the duration of the workshop's activity.

The case studies considered in this section have, for the most part, passed under the radar of print scholars – not least because the early print catalogues of Johann Passavant, Max Sander and Victor Massena suggested that the Vavassore workshop was not established in Venice until c.1530.[294] Surviving evidence confirms that Vavassore was in fact active in Venice as early as 1515, when he produced the monumental 'map' of the *Battle of Marignano* discussed in the next chapter. The aim of this section is to focus on the collaborative projects that characterised the formative years of Vavassore's career in Venice, and to explore the artistic roots that underpinned the workshop's later attempts to combine text and image. This examination will demonstrate that Vavassore had indeed become adept at the craft of woodcutting by c.1515/6, as well as representing his fluid and flexible approach to his trade. By collaborating with established members of the trade, Vavassore focused on honing his skills as a woodcarver (*intagliatore*) and appropriated them to suit the process of cutting and printing woodcuts. Whether they were sold as prints or book illustrations, Vavassore's early works entered the Venetian print market through other print-publishers whose established presses were located, for the most part, in the bustling *sestiere* of San Marco.

[293] Pettas has argued that the number of copies of books (and prints) normally far exceeded the demand for it, suggesting "that it often took many years for an entire edition to be sold and the publisher's investment recovered." See Pettas, 1974, 335.
[294] Passavant, 1860, Vol.5, 88-9; Massena, 1914, Vol.3, 112-5; and Sander, 1942, Vol.3, 105.

3.2.1 The *Apochalypsis Ihesu Christi*

The collection of illustrative, full-page woodcuts printed in the *Apochalypsis Ihesu Christi* of 1516 represents one of the earliest examples of Vavassore's oeuvre (the other being the map of *Marignano*).[295] The previous year Alessandro Paganino – a successful publisher of Brescian origin with a workshop a short way down the Grand Canal from the Rialto bridge on the Riva del Carboni (Fig. 1.4 B) – had issued the Latin text of the Book of Revelation with an Italian translation and commentary by Fra Federigo da Venezia, a fourteenth century Dominican who had grown up in Venice before going on to study and teach in Padua.[296] Published with the intention of making the biblical text more accessible to the broader public, his work appeared first in Rome around 1470, and in Venice in 1515. Vavassore's involvement with Paganino, and with Fra Federigo's biblical translation, dates to the following year. As a sixteen-page supplement to his previous printing of Fra Federigo's translation and commentary, Paganino's 1516 edition presented the Book of Revelation in Latin alongside a series of fifteen full-page illustrative woodcuts. The influence of northern imagery – and Dürer's *Apocalypsis cum figuris* in particular – on their style and content is clear and Krystina Stermole has described the woodcuts as "some of the most complex and grandiose woodcuts ever to appear in Venetian books."[297]

The task of definitively attributing the *Apochalypsis* woodcuts to Vavassore has been plagued with issues, including some confusion over his identity, and the existence of several contemporary engravers who used the same signature on their works. The presence of the signatures of a "Zoan Andrea" (ZA) or the Latin variation "Ioannes Andreas" (IA) on seven of the fifteen woodcuts have certainly been taken as signs of his involvement in their production.[298] A number of

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[295] Vol.2 Appendix 1 Cat., n.212. On Alessandro Paganino, see Nuovo, 1990.
[296] Paganino declares the address of his shop to be "*sopra la riva de li carboni*" on his publications. On Fra Federigo and his commentary, see A. Luttrell, 'Federigo da Venezia's Commentary on the Apocalypse: 1393/94' in *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 27/28 (1964-65) 57-65. See also K. Stermole, 'Venetian Art and the War of the League of Cambrai (1509-17)' (PhD Thesis, 2007) 240.
[297] Stermole, 2007, 240.
[298] The tenth woodcut in the series bears the inscription "zova andrea". The lower-case 'z' stands in for the letters 'Gi' in the Venetian dialect, and thus Vavassore was known variously as Giovanni Andrea, Zuandrea and Zoan Andrea. The monograms on the other woodcuts include one with "z.A." (frontispiece), another with "Z.A.D." (1st), and seven with "I.A." (3rd, 8th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th). Here the 'I' indicates the name Giovanni one again, but this time in its Latin form. Arthur Hind challenged the notion that such initials identified

printmakers by this name seem to have been working in northeast Italy in the early decades of the sixteenth century, and the separation and distinction of these various Giovanni Andreas has stimulated a healthy amount of debate. Opinions on this subject have ranged from Johann Passavant's inclusive view that attributes the works of the various Zoan Andreas to a single individual, to Charles Ephrussi and Victor Massena's attempts to discern multiple artists who shared the same name.[299] The latter has remained, until now, the most comprehensive study of the works published by Vavassore and his workshop, as well as the best attempt to separate the distinct artistic personalities known as 'Zoan Andrea' in the early decades of the sixteenth century.

Ephrussi and Massena attributed the woodcuts of the *Apochalypsis* to an engraver active until 1519, whose designs were strongly influenced by Andrea Mantegna (1431-1506) and signed with the monogram 'Z.A.' This engraver has subsequently been identified as Giovanni Antonio da Brescia.[300] After Mantegna's death in 1506, Giovanni Antonio da Brescia continued to produce engravings in Rome until 1519 – several years after Paganino published the illustrated edition of the *Apochalypsis*. As well as being active in Rome at the time of its publication, the style and form of Giovanni Antonio da Brescia's work is fundamentally different to that of Vavassore: whilst the latter worked exclusively in the woodcut format, the former predominantly produced prints from engraved copper plates. Perhaps because of the difference in the media in which they worked, Giovanni Antonio da Brescia's engravings contain a great deal more fine detail, and are more skillful in their handling of light and shade. These fundamental differences certainly suggest that it was Vavassore, and not another Giovanni Andrea, who was responsible for the woodcuts included in Paganino's edition.

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the designer of the woodcut, and that variations in quality and style are suggestive of the involvement of a workshop rather than individual woodcutters and designers. See Hind, *Introduction to a History of the Woodcut* Volume II (1963) 466-68; and Stermole, 2007, 241.

[299] See Passavant, *Peintre-Graveur*, Vol. 5, 79-91; and C. Ephrussi & V. Massena, 'Zoan Andrea et ses Homonymes Parte 2,' *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 6 (1891) 401-15; and Ephrussi, 1891, 225-44.

[300] See S. Boorsch, 'Mantegna and His Printmakers' in J. Martineau (ed.), *Andrea Mantegna* (New York, 1992) 56-66 and L. Donati, *Del mito di Zoan Andrea e di altri miti grandi e piccoli* (Florence, 1959); and I. Andreoli, 'Dürer sotto torchio. Le quattro serie xilografiche e i loro riflessi nella produzione editoriale veneziana del Cinquecento,' *Venezia Cinquecento* 37 (2009) 5-135; see 128.

However, variation in both the style and quality of the *Apochalypsis* woodcuts suggests that they were not all designed and cut by a single hand. Instead, it is likely that several designers and woodcutters worked on the project – some of whom signed the work they produced for Paganino, others who did not – of whom Vavassore was one.[301] Among the catalogue of extant works produced by the workshop compiled for this thesis, Vavassore identifies himself variously as Giovanni Andrea, Zuan Andrea, il Guadagnino, and Ioannem Andream; demonstrating that his approach to signing his work was very flexible and often led by the language (Latin/vernacular) of the work in question. The apocalypse woodcuts include various monograms and signatures, including "Z.A", "I.A.", "Z.A.D." and "Zova Adrea." Though Vavassore does use the name Ioanneam Andeam Vavassorem on his later publications in Latin, I propose here that Vavassore is responsible for the cutting of just three of the woodcuts included in Paganino's *Apocalypse*: those signed "Z.A.", "Z.A.D" and "Zova Adrea." The reason for this is twofold: firstly, that these signatures are used by Vavassore on other woodcuts produced either in conjunction with other publishers, or on the workshop's own account; and secondly, that the "Z" he uses is highly stylised. Rather than a conventional "Z", the letter closely resembles the number "3", and becomes something of a signature for woodcuts executed by Vavassore throughout his career.

Though I focus on just three examples here, the *Apochalypsis* woodcuts have as a whole received relatively scant scholarly attention, and have generally been dismissed as poor copies of Dürer's earlier examples. Certainly, two of Vavassore's woodcuts bear striking similarities to the prints designed and cut by Dürer in Nuremberg. Nonetheless, their consideration in this chapter is useful when establishing the larger picture of the Vavassore workshop's evolution. Rather than simply dismissing them as poorer quality copies, I will demonstrate that the execution of the three woodcuts actually laid the foundations for the illustrative work produced by the workshop in the decades that followed.

The small woodcut included on the title page for the *Apochalypsis* (Fig. 3.1) is perhaps the most important in considering the development of Vavassore's career as a printmaker. It depicts the events of the Calming of the Storm, one of the

[301] Giulia Bartram also concluded that Vavassore was the author of the Apocalypse prints in F. Carey, *The Apocalypse and the Shape of Things to Come* (London, 1999) see cat. no. 25, 142-3.

miracles of Jesus as told in the Gospels of Mark, Luke and Matthew. A small boat sails in the midst of a stormy sea, the dark clouds visible behind the buildings visible in the distance. Christ is asleep at the prow, his head resting upon his arm, whilst one of his disciples places a hand on his shoulder in an attempt to rouse him. At the rear, one of the disciples holds the rudder of the boat, while the others attempt to make fast the rigging. The waves encroach upon the craft, and a pool of water is visible at their feet. Unlike the other woodcuts included in Paganino's *Apocalypse*, the title page is not derived from an earlier design by Dürer. The designer is therefore unknown, and as this woodcut demonstrates some of the hallmarks of later woodcut illustrations produced by the Vavassore workshop, it seems plausible that it was both designed and cut by Giovanni Andrea. The shape of the boat and the rendering of its sails are stylistic traits very similar to the woodcuts included in later works published by the workshop: most notably a depiction of *Jonah and the Whale* (Fig. 3.2) in the visual bible published in the 1520s or 1530s; and the much later *Nave Evangelica* (Fig. 3.3) printed in 1551. Similarly, the castellated settlement in the background and the characterisation of the figures are typical of chivalric illustrations cut by Vavassore for Zoppino (see below) as well as some of the city views executed by the workshop of otherwise unknown design (Fig. 3.4).

Why might this have been chosen as the title page for the *Apochalypsis*? Unlike the other woodcuts produced for the publication, the frontispiece woodcut does not depict the events recorded in the Book of Revelation. However, given the message of this biblical miracle – "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" – its employment suggests that the depiction of Christ's miracle would have served as a reminder for the reader to remember their faith in the face of fear. The image of a boat in the storm was particularly powerful in Venice, and the woodcut's caption – "The small ship tossed but not sunk" (*Fluctuabit nauicula sed non demergetur*) – acts as both a call to an individual test of faith, and as a metaphor for the preservation of the Venetian state. The story of the Calming of the Storm was repeated often in the literature of the Renaissance, and was employed in its visual form throughout the 1510s – a decade characterised by the Wars of Cambrai and its aftermath.[302] When in 1510 the Pope signed a treaty with the Kings of Spain and

[302] On imagery and the Wars of Cambrai, see Stermole, 2007, 248-51. Petrarch referred to the Republic in this fashion in one of his letters: "The august city of Venice rejoices, the one home of liberty, peace and justice, the one refuge of honourable men, the one port to which

England, the Republic celebrated its hopes for the imminent conclusion of the war with an elaborate procession. Marin Sanudo was in attendance at this event, and records that, among the various floats created for the event, that of the Scuola di San Rocco displayed a ship bearing the inscription "Do not fear, for the winds have stopped" (*Nolite timere, cessavit ventus*).[303] By 1516, in the aftermath of the rare victory of the Venetian forces at the Battle of Marignano, the imagery of the ship saved from the storm would have been still more pertinent. With his origins in the Bergamasco, Vavassore would have been more aware than most that the success at Marignano offered the promise that Venice could survive the war and reclaim parts of its lost *terraferma* empire, and he may have chosen this design to reflect his own feeling of security in Venice after years of upheaval and uncertainty.

There other two woodcuts bearing the distinct "Z" monogram rely much more heavily on the well-known series of Apocalypse woodcuts by Albrecht Dürer. This is unsurprising, as printed images provided both models for established artists and allowed amateur cutters and engravers (as Vavassore would have been at this time) to learn and hone the required techniques. Most apprentices honed their technique, composition, and style by copying the works of other masters; and the very nature of prints, as highly portable objects that were produced in many copies, made it possible for artists and their apprentices to access the works of many European artists without travelling.[304] Dürer's *Apocalypsis cum Figuris* had been published in 1498, resulting in his immediate fame and an insatiable demand for this series of woodcuts, and the subsequent *Life of the Virgin*, across the continent.[305] As a hub of trade and burgeoning centre for the production and sale of print, works by Dürer were highly prized in early sixteenth century Venice –Vasari recorded in his *Lives*, for example, that Marcantonio Raimondi was so amazed by the number of woodcuts and engravings by Dürer on sale in the Piazza San Marco that he spent

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can repair the storm-tossed, tyrant-hounded craft of men who seek the good life." Petrarch, *Letters*, selected and translated by M. Bishop (Bloomington, 1966) 234.

[303] DMS, 13:135.

[304] Landau & Parshall, 1994, 322; observed that copying prints became "a regular means of training apprentices in draftsmanship" in the sixteenth century. See also Pon, 2004; and S. Gregory, *Vasari and the Renaissance Print* (Farnham, 2012) ch. 4.

[305] See G. Bartrum, *Albrecht Dürer and his Legacy* (London, 2002) 106 and 124-5; and K. Crawford-Luber, *Albrecht Dürer and the Venetian Renaissance* (Cambridge, 2005) ch. 2.

almost all of his money on them.[306] Vasari continues his tale by claiming that Dürer had travelled to Venice to stop Marcantonio, who had succeeded in capturing the former artist's style to such an extent that his prints were being bought and sold as by his hand, and raised a complaint with the Senate.[307] Their reaction – not to stop Marcantonio from producing such works for sale, but merely to prevent him from adding Dürer's monogram to them – represents the extent to which copying was an accepted means of production.[308] Whether Vasari's account is entirely accurate or not, the Senate's passive response to this dispute ensured the continuing presence of woodcuts and engravings inspired by Dürer designs in Venice – whether in the blatant form of the *Apochalysis* woodcuts, copied by Vavassore and other cutters for Paganino's edition, or in more subtle references to the *Klein Passion* in the woodcuts of the blockbook bible.

The composition of both *The Woman Clothed in Sun* (Fig. 3.5 a and b) and *The Martydom of St John* (Fig. 3.6a and b) make it clear that the designer of the Venetian woodcuts had spent considerable time studying Dürer's earlier prints in order to create convincing copies. Indeed, the cuts are such close replicas that the placement of the figures has been reversed, meaning that the original woodcut had been copied without taking into account that the image would be mirrored after it was printed. Whether Vavassore himself was involved in copying Dürer's designs, or whether he simply cut them into blocks for printing, these are woodcuts of considerable complexity that required skill to produce. Stermole has contrasted the 'effective' designs of Dürer with the heavier, less technical woodcuts printed by Paganino, but this unfavourable comparison is somewhat unhelpful as it renders the Venetian *Apochalypsis* as nothing more than a poor imitation of the German model.[309] Not only are they early examples of Vavassore's cutting skill, and thus helpful in considering his career development from woodcarver to printing, their careful rendering is impressive when one considers the smaller format of Paganino's

[306] See Pon, 2004, 39-48; Gregory, 2012, 22-3; and J. Chipps Smith, 'Dürer's Losses and the Dilemmas of Being' in L. Tatlock, *Enduring Loss in Early Modern Germany: Cross Disciplinary Perspectives* (Leiden, 2010) 81-2.
[307] Pon, 2004, 40-1.
[308] Dürer also found pirated impressions of his prints being sold in Nuremberg in 1511, and sought action against their creators and sellers. On 3 January 1512, it ruled that only Dürer's monogram was legally protected; aligning their decision with that of the Venetian Senate. See Chipps-Smith, 2010, 82; and W. Schultheiss, *Albrecht Dürers Umwelt* (Nuremberg, 1971) 241-3.
[309] Stermole, 2007, 243.

edition. While the German prints are approximately 40 x 30cm, the Venetian woodcuts measure only 27 x 20cm. More broadly, Vavassore's woodcuts for Paganino can be seen as part of a general shift in print production in Venice: a shift that Hans Tietze and Erica Tietze-Conrat have described as "from German into Italian, from the irrational to the formal."[310]

Paganino's *Apochalypsis* must have proved valuable experience for the young Vavassore in honing his woodcutting technique, for in the years that followed he began to take on many more projects in conjunction with other printers. Vavassore's work was not, of course, just sold from the premises he had established on the Ponte dei Fuseri. Across the city, his illustrative woodcuts were sold at the foot of the Rialto bridge by Paolo Danza; and just down the Grand Canal Paganino distributed copies of the illustrated *Apocalypsis* from his shop. The shopping thoroughfares of the Merceria and Frezzaria – where many members of Vavassore's printing network maintained their premises – were home to printers who specialised in the production of printed images, as well as those who sold books. From large and expensive prints to cheaper, less ornate varieties, Vavassore would have found no shortage of outlets for his woodcuts and illustrations.[314]

3.2.2 The *Labours of Hercules*

Dated variously between 1515 and 1550, relatively little is known about Vavassore's prints of the *Labours of Hercules*.[315] This series of woodcuts, on a similar scale to that of the *Apochalypsis*, comprises an illustrative series that begins with Hercules' birth and ends with his death.[316] These depictions were undoubtedly influenced by literary descriptions of the twelve 'labours' from ancient mythology, which were disseminated widely in the Renaissance by such famed writers as Francesco Petrarch, Giovanni Boccaccio, and Coluccio Salutati.[317] Stories of Hercules' life and labours

[310] Tietze & Tietze-Conrat, 1938, 465.
[314] Woodward, 1996, 45; and G. van der Sman, 'Print Publishing in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century', *Print Quarterly* 17:3 (2000) 235.
[315] The most recent work on the dating of these woodcuts is M. Matile, *Italienische Holzschnitte der Renaissance und des Barock* (Basel: Schwabe & Co, 2003) 22-29.
[316] On Hercules imagery and the 'Labours' see M. Bull, *Mirror of the Gods: Classical Mythology in Renaissance Art* (London, 2005) 86-140.
[317] Petrarch included an unfinished chapter on Hercules in his *On Illustrious Men* (1337-8), and Boccaccio devoted a chapter to him in his *Genealogy of the Gods* (1360-74). Salutati

remained popular throughout the sixteenth century, appearing as epic poems and prose narratives in the 1530s, 1540s and 1550s.[318] However, despite their consistent attribution to Vavassore, they have yet to be considered within the context of his career as a printmaker, printer, and publisher – in part, perhaps, because some of the woodcuts in the series are known only from later French copies. By drawing together the existing disparate knowledge of these woodcuts, and considering their production within the larger picture of Vavassore's career as a printer and printmaker, this brief discussion will question their significance to the workshop's overall production of both printed images and texts. Unlike the woodcuts produced for Paganino's *Apochalypsis*, the *Hercules* series do not seem to draw directly on well-known models, and begin to represent characteristics notable in the woodcuts produced by the workshop in the decades that followed. Although little is known about who published the prints or where they were sold, they are nonetheless rare and important evidence in considering the evolution of the printshop. If they were produced in the 1510s or 1520s, they fit well with the illustrative work that seems to have established Vavassore's name in Venice. If on the other hand, as Michael Matile has suggested, they date to c.1550, they demonstrate the workshop's ability to effectively combine the production of word and image during the period of its activity.[319]

The scene depicting *Hercules and Cacus* (Fig. 3.7) is indicative of the woodcuts of the *Labours of Hercules* in its close attention to textual descriptions of their encounter: Hercules has stopped to pasture the cattle he had stolen from the giant Geryon, without realising that he is close to the cave occupied by the fire-breathing monster Cacus. While he is sleeping, the monster steals eight of his cattle, dragging them by their tales to create a false trail. When Hercules awakes to find them missing, he storms angrily towards the cave; where Cacus attacks him by spewing out a stream of fire and smoke. Hercules retaliates with tree branches and

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wrote the monumental four-volume series *On the Labours of Hercules* in 1406. See J. L. Smarr, 'Boccaccio and the Choice of Hercules', *Modern Language Notes* 92:1 (1977) 146-52; R. Witt, *Hercules at the Crossroads: The Life, Work, and Thoughts of Coluccio Salutati* (Durham, NC., 1983) 213-9. These and many other accounts of the life and labours of Hercules are discussed in E. Stafford, *Herakles* (London, 2012) ch. 1.

[318] For example, L. G. Giraldi, *Vita Herculis* (Basel, 1539) and G. B. Giraldi Cintio (Cinzio), *Dell'Erocle* (Modena, 1557), a 26 canto poem written to flatter Ercole II d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, Moden and Reggio (1534-59).

[319] Matile, 2003, 24-5.

stones, eventually overcoming the monster (and, in so doing, protecting the Romans living nearby).[320] Vavassore's depiction of *Hercules and Cacus* incorporates several elements of this mythological story by employing the multi-narrative technique that has been identified in the elaborately illustrated publications of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* issued by the workshop in 1553.[321] The figure of Hercules dominates the foreground with the monster cowering at his feet.[322] Behind him, however, is a much smaller representation of Cacus, who is at that moment engaged in the act of leading the stolen cattle away by their tails. The depiction of Rome as a castellated settlement in the background is indicative of the workshop's cartographic style; whilst the main action takes place on the carefully rendered but sparsely adorned ground outside Cacus' cave. Although Cacus is not depicted by Vavassore as the fire breathing monster described by Boccaccio, his defeat to the heroic Hercules is assured by the latter's powerful stance and the club raised threateningly above his head.

Whilst the *Apochalypsis* woodcuts were produced as an accompaniment to text, the series of prints of *Hercules* stand alone. Vavassore has, however, added a short poem or explanatory inscription to each scene. Like the design, the inscription was carved directly onto the woodblock, so that both text and image could be transferred onto paper in a single process. The lettering used in the *Hercules* inscriptions is characteristic of that used on other woodcut works published by Vavassore, including the biblical references on the pages of the *Opera nova contemplativa* blockbook, and the frontispiece of the history of Eesop dating to 1533 (Fig 3.8). Although metal typefaces – Gothic, Italic and Roman – were used indiscriminately by many printers and publishers in late fifteenth and early sixteenth century Venice, woodcut text like this was much harder to replicate. Its clarity and consistency was largely dependent on the skill of the designer, who had to create the text in reverse, and the block-cutter who carved it into the wood. As with writing of

[320] The story of Hercules and Cacus is given its most extensive treatment in Virgil's *Aeneid*, which inspired many scenes of Hercules' labours. See G.K. Galinsky, 'The Hercules-Cacus episode in Aeneid VIII,' *American Journal of Philology* 87 (1966) 18-51; Stafford, 2012, 59-60; and Bull, 2005, 86-140.
[321] As discussed in Chapter Five.
[322] This echoes Dante's description, for in the Inferno he writes that Cacus was subdued "under the club of Hercules." Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri: Volume 1: Inferno* edited and translated by R.M. Durling (Oxford, 1996) Canto 25: lines 25-33.

any kind, this lettering became something of a signature on woodcuts produced by the Vavassore workshop, and was included in the books and maps it would produce over the course of its activity. In defining himself as a woodcarver (*incisor figurarum*), Vavassore made it clear that, at least at the early stage of his career, he was responsible for cutting the wood blocks, whether he was working from designs by other artists or not.[323]

The figure of Hercules provided an exemplar of moral and civic virtue in Renaissance art, and in Venice appeared as a protective image with local resonance on the west façade of the Basilica of San Marco. The thirty-one labours recounted in literary accounts of his life allowed artists to 'pick and mix' their chosen scenes depending on the number of prints, tapestries, friezes, or lunettes were at their disposal.[324] Herculean imagery lent itself particularly well to media that enabled serial treatment, and a number of series of woodcuts and engravings of the *Labours of Hercules* emerged in the sixteenth century.[325] The inherent portability of print meant that collections of prints depicting the various Labours could be quickly transported across Europe and copied or used as models for subsequent graphic and visual arts.[326] It is clear that the images of Hercules cut by Vavassore did travel, because they directly inspired a set of woodcuts published in France by Jehan Duhege.[327] The surviving woodcut of *The Birth of Hercules* produced by Vavassore is in particularly bad condition, but it is possible to discern the clear similarities between the Venetian woodcut and the undated French edition (Figs. 3.9 & 3.10). In both prints, a group of women have gathered for the birth of Hercules: his mother Alcmene is depicted giving birth in the foreground, whilst Hercules (in a wooden crib) is strangling snakes in the background. Many (if not all) of the elements in

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[323] See Schulz, 1998, 121.

[324] See Bull, 2005, 86-140. On the iconography of Hercules, see P. Fortini Brown, *Venice and Antiquity: The Venetian Sense of the Past* (New Haven, 1996) 22-3; P. Simons, 'Hercules in Italian Renaissance Art: Masculine Labour and Homoerotic Libido,' *Art History* 31:5 (2008) 632-64; E. Panofsy, *Hercules am Scheidewege und andere antike Bildstoffe in der neueren Kunst* (Lepizig, 1930); and J. D. Reid, *The Oxford Guide to Classical Mythology in the Arts, 1300-1990s* (Oxford, 1993) 527-9.

[325] See, for example, the series of engravings produced of the *Labours of Hercules* by Hans Sebald Beham (1545); Battista Franco (1530-61); and an anonymous printmaker working in Italy now known as the 'Master of 1515' – see Hind, 1963, Vol.1 279-90.

[326] The collector Ferdinand Columbus, for example, assembled a large collection of books and printed images during his travels across Europe. See M. McDonald, *The Print Collection of Ferdinand Columbus, 1488-1539: A Renaissance Collector in Seville* (London, 2004). On prints as models, see n. 304.

[327] The British Museum catalogue suggests a date of c.1520 for Duhege's prints.

Vavassore's woodcut – including the tiled floor, the decorative scheme of the interior, and the text box in the left-hand corner – are present in Dehuge's copy. These, in turn, appear to have provided the model for a series of woodcuts of the *Labours of Hercules* produced in Paris by Denys Fontenoy between 1579 and 1583 (Fig. 3.11).

The success of Vavassore's woodcuts as a model for other artistic representations of Hercules has been argued by Giustina Scaglia, who proposes that Vavassore's Venetian woodcuts were used as the basis for a wooden frieze at the castle of Vélez Blanco in Spain.[329] Her argument is based upon the assertion that his woodcuts, which are undated, were produced in 1506 (with Vavassore being little more than twenty years old) and carried from Venice to Spain. [330] However, in light of the evidence from the workshop that has been drawn together for this thesis, it seems highly unlikely that Vavassore was producing woodcuts as early as 1506. Although there is no surviving evidence to definitively date his birth in Telgate or his subsequent move to Venice, proposing a birth date of 1483 would make Vavassore approximately ninety years old by the time of his death in 1572. Whilst it is evident from his long career that Vavassore, like the artist Titian, did indeed live to a ripe old age, the surviving works produced by him suggest that he was active in Venice from 1515 at the earliest.

Malcolm Bull has similarly noted the lasting influence of Vavassore's woodcuts in southern Germany.[331] In his *Mirror of the Gods*, Bull claimed that when artists in Dürer's studio were working on drawings for a set of twelve small medallions of the labours, they took over Vavassore's selection of subjects and some of his designs.[332] Certainly, it seems that Vavassore's *Hercules* woodcuts did influence other artists, for Bull suggests that they were the model for Thomas Hering's roundels at Landshut, a set of engravings produced in 1550 by Heinrich Aldegraver, and many other works in various media.[333] However, there is also much evidence to support that artists working independently of one another might choose the same subjects. Hans Sebald Beham, for example, produced a series of engravings

[329] G. Scaglia, 'Les *Travaux d'Hercule* de Giovanni Andrea Vavassore reproduits dans les frises de Velez Blanco,' *La Revue de l'Art* 127 (2000/1) 21-31.
[330] Ibid. 23.
[331] Bull suggests that Vavassore's woodcuts were "produced in Venice at the beginning of the century." See Bull, 2005, 101-2.
[332] Ibid. 102.
[333] Including, for example, the white-lead pastiglia boxes of the Veneto. Ibid. 103.

of the *Labours of Hercules* in 1545 that "offered an entirely independent range of subjects and images."[334] Even when the two sets of prints draw on the same tradition of literary description, they not only offer different expressions of a particular scene, they are fundamentally different in terms of their style and execution. In the depiction of *Hercules and Antaeus* (Figs. 3.12 & 3.13), for example, Beham's figures are situated in a rocky landscape whilst Vavassore's battle takes place near a settlement. In both prints, Hercules holds the giant Antaeus up off the ground – but whilst both figures face the viewer in the Beham engraving, Vavassore's woodcut presents Hercules' back. We should, therefore, be careful not to overstate the influence of Vavassore's woodcuts on later models, which could themselves evolve very naturally and independently within the context of their production. We must also be wary of – as both Scaglia and Bull have done – attributing the design of the *Labours* so definitively to Vavassore, who may actually only have been responsible for their cutting into blocks.

The *Hercules* woodcuts represent some of the only examples of single sheet prints among the Vavassore workshop's surviving oeuvre; but it is clear that many other woodcuts have not survived. Upon his death in 1572, alongside his two printing presses, Vavassore bequeathed his woodcut blocks of saints (*santi*) to his nephew Alvise. Furthermore, another example of a single leaf print – this time comprised of a modified book frontispiece – will be discussed alongside the text in Chapter Seven. The destruction of posters, bills, and pamphlets printed on a single sheet has been so great that Ugo Rozzo has dubbed it a "massacre of the innocents."[335] Single sheet prints have been similarly, if not more harshly, afflicted. Rozzo estimated that perhaps as few as one in twenty of these texts – collectively known as the *fogli volanti*, or 'flying sheets' – have survived from the first century and a half of printing in Italy.[336] Furthermore, only one in ten had been identified in modern collections. It is likely that even fewer printed images have survived, for the ways they were used and displayed meant that they became worn and were disposed of at a much faster

[334] Ibid. 103.
[335] On the "strage degli innocenti" see Rozzo, 2000, 114-31; and *idem*, 2008.
[336] Ibid., 121. Rozzo suggested in 2004 that instead of a massacre of the innocents, their destruction was more of "la strage ignorata." See U. Rozzo, 'I fogli volanti a stampa nell'Italia del secolo XV' in L. S. Tarugi (ed.) *L'Europa del libro della età dell 'umanesimo. Atti del XIV convegno internazionale (Chianciano, Firenze, Pienza 16-18 luglio 2002)* (Florence, 2004) 248.

rate.[337] The vast majority of single leaf prints that survive today have done so precisely because they have been stored within, or pasted onto, the pages of books and composite albums.

3.2.3 Illustrating Books

The close proximity of Vavassore and Zoppino, whose workshops were located in the neighbouring parishes of San Luca and San Fantin, was undoubtedly a leading factor in the fruitful collaboration that emerged between these two printers.[338] Both Anne Markham Schulz and Enid Falaschi noted that Vavassore's signature appeared on a woodcut frontispiece designed and cut for Zoppino's edition of the *Thesauro spirituale volgare in rima et hystoriato* published in 1518.[339] This was not, however, the only woodcut produced by Vavassore to adorn Zoppinine volumes, nor was he the only woodcutter to work with the printer-cum-street performer.[340] The identification of a number of other woodcuts cut (and signed) by Vavassore over a period of several years proves that their collaboration extended much further than the illustration of a single volume. Vavassore did, of course, have much to gain from their professional partnership; for not only did Zoppino have an established reputation and workshop, he had outlets across the Italian peninsula from which he could distribute his printed goods. Furthermore, these small projects – comprising a single woodcut or handful of woodcuts per publication – allowed the young Vavassore to perfect his craft by requiring him to produce a variety of different images (whether in terms of subject or scale) that could be printed independently or alongside letterpress text.

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[337] On the myriad of uses and methods of display of prints, see S. K. Schmidt & K. Nicols, *Altered and Adorned: Using Renaissance Prints in Daily Life* (Chicago, 2011); A. Griffiths, 'The Archaeology of Print' in C. Baker, C. Elam & G. Warwick (eds.) *Collecting Prints and Drawings in Europe, c.1500-1750* (Burlington VT, 2003) 9-28; E. Lincoln, 'Printing and Visual Culture in Italy, 1470-1575' (PhD Thesis, 1994); Landau & Parshall, 1994; and Bury, 2001.

[338] Zoppino records the location of his workshop on certain publications, including the Orlando Furioso as: "*La sua bottega si sul campo della Madonna di san Fantino*." See L. Ariosto, *Orlando furioso di Ludovico Ariosto nobile ferrarese, con somma diligenza tratto dal suo fedelissimo esemplare, historiato, corretto, et nuovamente stampato.* (Venice: Nicolo d'Aristotile di Ferra detto Zoppino, November 1530).

[339] Vol.2 Appendix 1 Cat. n.213. See Schulz, 1998, 117; Falaschi, 1975, 232; and Witcombe, 2004, 124.

[340] The various woodcutters and engravers linked to the workshop of Zoppino – including Matteo Pagano, and Girolamo Bellarmato – have been discussed in a recent article by G. Atzeni, 'Gli incisori alla corte di Zoppino,' *ArcheoArte* 2 (2013) 299-328.

As well as the frontispiece, the *Thesauro spirituale* featured several full (octavo) page woodcuts signed "Zovan Andrea de Vavasori F." Again, it is impossible infer from these signatures whether Vavassore himself designed the woodcuts, or whether he simply cut existing designs into wood blocks for printing. The same stylised 'Z' that appeared on all three of the *Apochalypsis* illustrations is also evident here and, like the text included on the *Hercules* woodcuts, his signature has been cut into the wood – with both instances of the letter 'N' printed back to front. One of the designs features Christ, standing on a plinth and preaching to an assembled group of men and women (Fig. 3.14). The women are, for the most part, seated on the ground before him, whilst the men stand to one side. Both the shell-shaped niche and the window frames depicted in the background are stylistically very similar to the structural features included in various woodcuts that comprise the blockbook that will be discussed in Chapter Seven; whilst the rendering of the figures and their garments – most notably, the dresses of the women, and the distinctive headwear worn by the men – are also very similar to those depicted in this visual bible. It is unlikely that these women, who listen in such rapt attention to Christ's teachings, were an accidental addition, as the 1518 edition of the *Thesauro* includes two sonnets written by Zoppino and dedicated to Lucrezia Borgia.[341] Vavassore was also responsible for the woodcuts used in a pilgrims' handbook printed by Zoppino in that year, which were reused to illustrate a much later edition of this work published by Giovanni Andrea's heirs.[342] Such evidence of later use is perhaps more indicative of Vavassore's role as designer than simply that of a cutter.

Following on from the 1518 woodcuts, Vavassore worked again with Zoppino, cutting images for inclusion in three separate titles in 1521. All of them are identifiable by the addition of the distinctive initials "Z.A." The first of these was an illustrated edition of the fifth book of Matteo Boiardo's epic *Orlando Innamorato* – a title typical of Zoppino's activities, for it brings the printed page and the spoken word together.[343] These full-page (quarto) woodcuts include heavy ornamental frames, decorated with foliage; but are otherwise stylistically very similar to the simple designs included in the illustrated books printed and sold by the Vavassore workshop

[341] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.213.
[342] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.214. See also, K. Blair Moore, 'The Disappearance of an Author and the Emergence of a Genre: Pilgrimage Guidebooks between Manuscript and Print,' *Renaissance Quarterly* 66:2 (2013) 357-411.
[343] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.215.

– suggesting, again, that Vavassore's role went beyond that of simply cutting existing designs into blocks for printing. The backgrounds are plain, rather flat depictions of buildings and foliage, for the emphasis is placed instead on the activity of the figures who are displayed in the foreground. The ornate borders were not, however, a stock item to be reused again and again with a different centre block: as the image of Orlando on horseback led by a young man carrying a standard shows (Fig. 3.15), figures and details could 'break out' from the inner frame.

The second surviving volume of 1521 for which Vavassore collaborated with Zoppino is an edition of Petrarch's *Song Book and Triumphs* (*Canzone e Trionfi*).[344] The illustrative woodcuts produced for this octavo edition represent the allegorical procession of figures described in the *Trionfi*: Love, Chastity, Death, Fame, Time, and Divinity. *The Triumph of Love* is an accurate visual representation of Petrarch's writing: the figure of love, represented by cupid, stands upon a fiery car with a bow in his hands (Fig. 3.16). Four horses (two within the frame, and two just outside it) pull the car along, whilst around it are depicted the women and men who make up the procession of "mortals beyond count."[345] Petrarch himself, identifiable from his crown of laurel leaves, watches over the procession, and in the foreground, a dog and a rabbit – presumably used as symbols of fidelity and fertility – complete the scene. Elements of Vavassore's clean and simple style also shines through in these woodcuts: the background features a castellated settlement, and the rendering of both the horses and the people – as well as the flames that surround the figure of Cupid – are stylistically very similar to those included in the blockbook woodcuts, and in other illustrations employed by the workshop in the decades to come. Furthermore, echoes of Vavassore's wartime maps and pamphlets (which will be discussed in Chapters Four and Five respectively) can also be found in a 1521 woodcut produced by Vavassore to illustrate a pamphlet published by Zoppino on the *Siege of Padova* (Fig. 4.5).[346] Whether this style derives from a particular technique of cutting or from

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[344] Ibid. Cat. n.216.

[345] "This scene, so wondrous and so beautiful/ Four steeds I saw, whiter than whitest snow / And on a fiery car a cruel youth / With a bow in hand and arrows at his side. / No fear had he, nor armour wore, nor shield / But on his shoulders he had two great wings of / a thousand hues; his body was all bare. / And round about were mortals beyond count; / Some of them were but captives, some were slain, / And some were wounded by his pungent arrows." Petrarch, *Triumph of Love* I lines 20-30. See E.H. Wilkins, 'The First Two *Triumphs* of Petrarch,' *American Association of Teachers of Italian* 40:1 (1963) 7-17.

[346] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.217 (f.Dr)

drawing his own designs, both the simple backgrounds and the rendering of the figures creates a kind of visual syntax common to all of the woodcuts signed by Vavassore.

A final woodcut produced for Zoppino dates to 1522. Included in Antonio da Atri's *Life of St John the Evangelist,* the monogram included in the bottom left-hand corner is a variation of the initials that appear on the other woodcuts produced by Vavassore.[347] Here, the signature he adopts is much more complex, as a 'V,' a 'D', and a small cross have been added to the earlier monogram.[348] The cross motif was featured in the various printers' marks adopted by the workshop; whilst the characteristic 'Z' certainly suggests that the woodcuts were at least cut by Vavassore's hand. His portrait of St John (Fig. 3.17) includes many of the stylistic tropes already described in Vavassore's work for Zoppino; tropes that appear in the illustrations produced to illustrate his own volumes. It is likely that Vavassore collaborated with Zoppino on other projects, but that many have not survived. What the illustrations discussed here do demonstrate, however, is that Zoppino played an important role in Vavassore's integration into the world of Venetian print. Although he had collaborated with other printers by the time he began working with Zoppino in 1518, Vavassore was still a young, and presumably relatively inexperienced, woodcutter. The various illustrations he produced for Zoppino should therefore be seen as an important stage in the evolution of Vavassore's practice and style of woodcutting, and their collaboration (c.1519-c.1522) as a formative stage in the workshop's professional development.

At the same time as he was working with Zoppino, Vavassore was actively strengthening his printing network by collaborating on projects with other Venetian printers. In much the same capacity, he began working with Melchiorre Sessa and his partner Pietro de Ravani. Sessa would have been a good ally for someone like Vavassore, who appears to have used the printing network as an aid in establishing his reputation as a printer in the early decades of the sixteenth century. He had been active in Venice since 1505, and is said to have farmed out "start up" printing jobs (a practice now known as 'jobbing printing') to smaller printers who were new to the

[347] Ibid. n.218.
[348] On the various printers' marks adopted by the Vavassore workshop, see Vol. 2, Appendix 2.

trade.[349] Sessa, whose workshop was situated in bustling Merceria, retained his position at the centre of the Venetian printing network for a long time, and became one of the first priors of the Guild of Printers' and Booksellers when it was established in the second half of the sixteenth century.[350]

Vavassore may have taken some of these 'start up' jobs, but he was also engaged in cutting (and perhaps even designing) the illustrations for several editions published by Sessa and Ravani in the 1520s and 1530s. The earliest was a new edition of the *Decades* of Titus Livius (1520), for which Vavassore provided both a frontispiece portrait and a number of woodcuts that were included in the main body of the text.[351] Each woodcut features the characteristic "Z.A." monogram in the bottom left-hand corner. Although Schulz has described the woodcut portrait of Livy (Fig. 3.18) as "highly esteemed," it is unclear whether this was a contemporary belief or the judgment of a later historian.[352] The Roman historian is portrayed within a shell-shaped niche – around which the Latin inscription 'Vera Titi Livii Effigies' has been carved – with one hand resting upon a book, and the other placed contemplatively on his chin. The careful rendering of the lines on his face and the drapery of his clothing and head covering demonstrate a sense of care and attention to detail on Vavassore's part. Surrounded by an intricate border, and portrayed against a shell-shaped niche, the portrait is much more refined than even the slightly earlier illustrations he produced for Zoppino. It is unclear whether Vavassore copied the portrait from an existing text, but I have found no surviving models. Nonetheless, the portrait provides a visual manifestation of the increasing respect and esteem in which Livy was held following the rediscovery, translation and abbreviation of his writings in the Renaissance.

The smaller woodcuts included at the beginning of each of the sections are much closer in style to those Vavassore was producing for Zoppino at this time (Fig. 3.20). The rendering of the figures, the sparsely decorated backgrounds, and the

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[349] Melchiore was active from 1505 to c.1562, but his heirs continued to operate from the same shop after his death. See Ascarelli & Menato, 1989, 327. On 'jobbing printing' see E.L.Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1979) Vol.1 59-60; and D.F. McKenzie, 'The Economies of Print, 1550-1760: Scales of Production and Conditions of Constraint' in S.Cavaciocchi, *Produzione e commercio della carta e del libro, sec. XIII-XVIII* (Prato, 1992) 389-425.

[350] Salzberg, 2014, 144.

[351] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.219.

[352] Schulz, 1998, 117.

inclusion of hand-cut text labels are characteristic of the images cut by Vavassore between 1516 and 1523, during his collaborations with Alessandro Paganino, Niccolò Zoppino and Melchiorre Sessa. These would also become the hallmarks of the woodcuts that illustrated his own books and pamphlets; as well as influencing the kind of imagery that was incorporated into the workshop's cartographic output.

3.3 Conclusion

Vavassore faced heavy criticism by early print historians such as Charles Ephrussi and Victor Massena for being a "mediocre engraver" who demonstrated a lack of refinement and skill in the works he produced.[353] However, it is worth noting that, like many artists in the sixteenth century, he was probably restricted by the need to produce illustrations very quickly for publication, and the necessity to use existing designs and models. Whether we now consider Vavassore a good engraver or not is actually of little importance, for it is clear that other members of the Venetian printing trade valued or rated his skills highly enough to employ him in the cutting of woodcut illustrations for their publications. These collaborative projects are inseparable from the formative beginnings of the Vavassore workshop, as well as his progression from woodcarver to woodcutter and printer. Through the examination of the woodcuts of the *Apocalypse*, the *Hercules* prints, and the early illustrations produced by Vavassore, it is possible to get a sense of the skills, reputation, and contacts he amassed during his early years in Venice.

Comparisons between Vavassore and other vernacular printer/publishers like Niccolò Zoppino, the Bindoni family, and the brothers Nicolò and Domenico di Sandri also help to clarify the position of the workshop within the wider network of printers in Venice. However, it is in the differences between these figures that the contribution the Vavassore workshop has to make to the field becomes clear. The longevity of Vavassore's career is unparalleled by a figure like Zoppino, who may have produced a larger number of works and sold them in shops across northern Italy, but operated over a comparatively short period of time (1503-1544). Whilst Zoppino's appeal to the historian lies in the sheer magnitude of printed material he produced, the majority of his activity occurred in the period immediately before the

[353] See Massena, 1914, 113; and Ephrussi, 1891, 226-44.

tightening restriction on the print industry in Venice. By contrast, the longevity of Vavassore's career resulted in the need for his workshop to adapt and change to fall in line with the increasing restrictions on print in sixteenth century Venice. It is the workshop's ability to respond to change over time that renders it possible to view it as a microcosm of the wider printing industry.

As a woodcarver, Vavassore was able to contribute a different set of skills to the printing network already established by the time he arrived in the lagoon. In addition to cutting illustrations and prints for other publishers, Vavassore also came to act as a printer and bookseller; inevitably drawing on his early collaborative experience to inform the output of his workshop in the decades that followed. Not only did he possess a wide range of individual skills but, as the following chapters will demonstrate, the printed wares produced in and sold from his workshop were much more varied than those of his contemporaries. Whilst Danza focused his attention on printing short pamphlets and official documents in the vernacular, the de Sandri brothers concentrated on the production of printed images (especially those of saints, which were distributed through religious confraternities) to the exclusion of books manufactured using moveable type. Whilst it is clear that the kind of specialisation evident in the Venetian printing industry in the last decades of the fifteenth century did continue into the sixteenth, the surviving output of the Vavassore workshop proves that some shops stocked a bewildering array of printed goods, including woodcut maps, single leaf prints, and every length, size, and type of printed book or pamphlet.

The importance of collaboration in the early years of Vavassore's career raises questions about the nature of the network that existed among printers in Venice, as well making it possible to chart the appropriation and progression of his skills from woodcarver to printer. The projects in which he was involved demonstrate that printers did indeed interact closely with one another, and relied on one another for the skills (or reputation) that they themselves lacked. The established workshops of Zoppino, Danza, and Sessa provided fertile ground for a new and relatively inexperienced woodcutter like Vavassore to 'cut his teeth' in the printing industry. The cutting of the designs for Paganino's *Apochalypsis* and the *Labours of Hercules* (the publisher of which is unknown) into blocks represented a considerable undertaking, requiring both the substantial financial investment of the publisher, and an even greater investment of time and effort on the part of Vavassore. Whilst the

woodcuts produced for Paganino were definitely derived from existing models, other examples discussed in this chapter represent the potential for Vavassore to go beyond the position of woodcutter and become involved in the design of images. Zoppino's established reputation also ensured that Vavassore's woodcuts had the potential for much wider distribution across the Italian peninsula; whilst the fact that Vavassore's cuts of *Hercules* inspired at least two later sets of French prints is testament to the inherent portability of the printed image.

The early years of Vavassore's activity in Venice, as well as the existence of a network of printers, provide important starting points for the consideration of the workshop's output that follows. Just as Zoppino approached printing and publishing from the perspective of one engaged in the complex interplay of the oral and written (printed) worlds, the production of the Vavassore workshop was heavily influenced by Giovanni Andrea's early work as a woodcarver and block cutter. The prominence of illustration and the close interaction of image and text in the vast majority of the Vavassore publications is, therefore, a crucial point to note as we continue to analyse its output.

Chapter Four

Mapping the World from the Workshop

In the previous chapter, I explored Vavassore's marked artistic ingenuity and his early search to combine woodcut image and text in saleable and satisfactory ways. In this chapter I want to develop this exploration in relation to the workshop's production of maps, which also serve to demonstrate Vavassore's skills in these areas. Furthermore, the workshop's cartographic production also clearly illustrates the role of collaborative networks and markets, which I have thus far argued were crucial to its success.

Until now, the scholarly attention directed towards the Vavassore workshop has focused almost exclusively on its production of maps. Two early catalogues – one in Italian by Roberto Almagià (1920) and one in English by Leo Bagrow (1939) – provided a list of the maps and views that were then attributed to him.[354] Vavassore's name has subsequently appeared in the large, comprehensive histories of cartography of Leo Bagrow and David Woodward; but his maps are afforded brief mention over one or two pages among a much broader discussion of cartography in Renaissance Italy.[355] Finally, discussion of specific examples can be found in writing about particular genres of maps, such as the portolan charts used by sixteenth century mariners.[356] Despite the relative abundance of research into the cartographic production of the workshop, Vavassore's maps and city views would benefit greatly from being revisited and reconsidered.

As Arthur Robinson has noted, those interested in the history of cartography have tended to view the map as a record of geographical knowledge rather than a graphic object, and have had little interest in either the methods of mapmaking or its

[354] Almagià, 1920, 17-30; Bagrow, 1939.
[355] See Bagrow, 2010, 133-35; and Woodward, 2007, 773-803.
[356] T. Campbell, 'Portolan Charts from the Late Thirteenth Century to 1500' in J. B. Harley & D. Woodward (eds.) *The History of Cartography: Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean* (Chicago, 1987) 371-462; M. Mollat et al, *Sea Charts of the Early Explorers: 13th to 17th Century* translated by L. Le R. Dethan (New York, 1984); and D. Howse, 'The Earliest Printed Sea Charts, 1485-1569,' Paper presented at the International Conference on the History of Cartography (Warsaw, 1978).

connections to other types of printing.[357] Rather than focusing on Vavassore's maps as isolated works, however, this chapter will discuss the way they complement both the other works produced by the workshop (including books and pamphlets) and those circulating more generally in Venice during the years of their production. In the case of the city views discussed below, for example, knowledge of the specific context of their production is vital to understanding the way in which the Vavassore workshop was led by, and responded to, market forces. Furthermore, as with the *Battle of Marignano*, the techniques, methods and imagery used in the production of his maps mirror those found in Vavassore's prints and illustrations, whilst simultaneously drawing on the literary traditions of chivalric romances, wartime poems, and travel writing.

A renewed focus on the cartographic production of the Vavassore workshop is also appropriate in light of the discovery of new material since Bagrow's catalogue was compiled. The early lists of his works are badly in need of updating, and although useful for identifying the location of any extant copies, offer little description or analysis. Maps are continually resurfacing as cartographic collections are explored and studied; and as the vast majority of Vavassore's maps exist in a single copy, findings represent a considerable advance in our knowledge of his cartographic oeuvre. In 1939, Bagrow catalogued 18 distinct maps and views attributable to Vavassore, half of which were undated. By 1953, G.H. Beans had added a hitherto unknown perspective plan of *Trent* to the list, unearthed in the Vatican Archives by Bagrow.[358] This perspective plan of *Trent*, and the large woodcut *Battle of Marignano* were not included in the early catalogues, and have received little attention from scholars. The *Marignano* print is included within this discussion of the workshop's cartographic output rather than with other early graphic works, as although not strictly a 'map,' its large scale and use of geographical detail means it has more in common with Vavassore's maps than his other woodcuts. Rather than simply enlarging the lists compiled by Bagrow and Almagià, this chapter aims to frame the Vavassore workshop's map production within current trends in the study of cartography: understanding maps as concepts of space, relating them to

[357] See A. H. Robinson, 'Mapmaking and Map Printing: The Evolution of a Working Relationship', D. Woodward (ed.) *Five Centuries of Map Printing* (Chicago, 1975) 3.
[358] Beans, 1953 14.

particular historical moments and events, and situating them within the context of ownership and display.

The exceptional involvement of Vavassore in the production of maps during this period goes against the elaborate division of labour that developed in, and came to characterise, Venetian map publishing in the sixteenth century.[359] There were four necessary stages in the production of a map: the compilation or design, in which information was collected and plotted onto a manuscript plan; cutting the design onto wood or engraving it onto copper; the printing of impressions from the carved block; and the sale of these impressions. Scholarship by David Woodward and Denis Cosgrove has treated each of these stages, both in terms of the processes involved and the individual who carried them out, separately. Cartographers like Cristoforo Sorte and Giacomo Gastaldi were, therefore, typically responsible for drawing the maps; woodblock cutters or engravers for carving them onto (or into) printable surfaces; printers for actually producing them; and publishers for overseeing and organising the whole project, as well as selling the results. Compartmentalised in this way, for both Chandra Mukerji and Woodward the stages and the individuals involved "were usually not stable parts of a single shop, but were linked by a common division of labour and labour process."[360] Specialist cartographers and engravers may have brought the same skills and habits of drawing, cutting, or engraving from one cartographic project to the next, but the production of a map was scattered between various individuals and shops. What characterises the cartographic activity of the Vavassore workshop, on the other hand, is the fact that – with the exception, in several cases, of the design of the map – each of these apparently separate processes was carried out within the confines of a single workshop. For the vast majority of the maps it produced, Vavassore was responsible for cutting, printing, and selling the impressions from his shop; making the workshop a rare and valuable case study of cartographic production.

The workshop may have been very independent in its approach to producing maps, but Vavassore also forged a number of connections within the sixteenth century map industry, both in Venice and beyond. From his workshop in San Luca,

[359] See Woodward, 1996; D. Cosgrove, 'Mapping New Worlds: Culture and Cartography in Sixteenth Century Venice,' *Imago Mundi* 44 (1992) 1-25; C. Mukerji, 'Printing, Cartography and Conceptions of Place in Renaissance Europe,' *Media Culture Society* 28:5 (2006) 651-69; and Robinson, 1975.
[360] Mukerji, 2006, 656; and Woodward, 2007.

Vavassore was well placed to interact with other mapmakers and publishers in sixteenth century Venice – most of whom had shops in the main shopping thoroughfares of the Frezzaria and Merceria.[361] The most intriguing of these relationships developed in the first half of the sixteenth century between Vavassore and Matteo Pagano. Although the two are frequently discussed together, their relationship has received very little scholarly attention. There are, however, striking parallels between the production of the workshops, as well as evidence of blatant copying, potential block-borrowing, and close everyday interaction between the two. The final section of this chapter will reconstruct the relationship between the workshops of Vavassore and Pagano, before going on to chart the impact of the workshop's cartographic works on later maps produced in northern Europe, where they remained in use as models for several decades after his death.

4.1 The Map Industry of Venice

The establishment of an active and vibrant map industry across the Italian peninsula mirrors many of the other developments in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; most notably the gradual shift in the economy from Mediterranean to Atlantic.[362] The roots of the map trade in Italy can be traced to Florence, where the enterprise centred around the shop of the painter and miniaturist Francesco Rosselli who has been described as "probably the first entrepreneur to be successful in making an independent living from the print and map trade."[363] From 1480 to 1570 – just two years before Vavassore's death – engravers, printers and publishers of maps in Florence, Rome and Venice dominated the trade in printed maps, producing more cartographic works during the period than any other European country.[364] Rosselli's shop – and its surviving inventory – has proved an exceptionally rich resource for historians of mapmaking, not least because this period has disappointingly scant archival evidence on the map and print trade. Genevieve Carlton's recent research on

[361] Matteo Pagano's shop is known to have been located in the Frezzaria "al segno della Fede." Also in the Frezzaria was Giacomo Franco "al insegna del Sole," and in the Merceria were the notable mapmaker Paolo Forlani ("al segno della Colonna" and "Alla Libreria della Nave") and Donato Bertelli ("al segno di San Marco"). See Woodward, 2007, 780.
[362] Woodward, 2007, 773.
[363] Ibid. 773.
[364] After 1570, stagnation set in and Venetian map sellers (and those elsewhere on the Italian peninsula) were unable to compete with the northern centres of Antwerp and Amsterdam.

Rosselli's "map shop" has made excellent use of the surviving inventory evidence of map prices to reconstruct the consumption of maps in the late fifteenth century, and demonstrates its potential to contribute to our broader knowledge of the map market in the Renaissance.[365]

As well as economic change, map publishing emerged in parallel with the activities of both humanists and book publishers in early sixteenth-century Venice. The close link between the production of books and maps, stronger than in the other mapmaking cities of the Italian peninsula, is underlined by the fact that Venice was the hub for the publication and dissemination of Ptolemy and his ideas about cartography. More than a dozen translations in at least 30 published editions appeared from the late fifteenth century onwards, many of which contained woodcut or copper engraved maps alongside contemporary commentaries.[366] Although original, faithful translations followed Ptolemy in distinguishing and prioritising geography over chorography, Venetian cartographers and map publishers produced works in both genres. Maps of the world and of the continents attempted to represent the known world according to the system of astronomical observations, whilst city views gave pictorial 'impressions' that often showed little regard to quantitative accuracy.[367] The cartographic production of the Vavassore workshop includes both geographic and chorographic works, which vary considerably in terms of accuracy and the incorporation of the Ptolemaic ideas of latitude and longitude. No copy of the *Geographia* exists among the extant publications of the workshop, so it is likely that Vavassore's knowledge of Ptolemaic cartography came either from circulating copies of the text, or at second hand from earlier maps.

The significance of maps and mapping in Venetian daily life in the early modern period certainly reflects the city's many practical needs for them. As a commercial centre, Venice depended on maritime trade for its economic livelihood, and boasted the largest merchant fleet in Europe; both forces that combined to create an enduring need for accurate and up-to-date maps and charts of its trading sphere. As well as land maps, portolan charts were produced to show, with ever-increasing

[365] G. Carlton, *Worldly Consumers: The Demand for Maps in Renaissance Italy* (Chicago, 2015).
[366] Cosgrove, 1992, 66-7.
[367] Ibid. 66.

accuracy, the coasts and islands of the Mediterranean.[368] In addition to their use in navigating and maintaining trade routes, portolan charts were also required in Venice itself, as the city's own immediate environment was unstable and subject to the alteration of its channels, banks, and *lidi*.[369] From the later fifteenth century onwards, the Republic became increasingly concerned with hydrographic and military mapping: the former was employed to protect its marine defenses, and to prevent silting of channels by dredging and diverting fresh water; whilst the latter aided the systematic exploitation and defense of the expanding *terraferma* empire.[370] Finally, the history of regional mapping is entangled with that of warfare. Although it could be argued that when the Vavassore workshop was producing maps – in the aftermath of the Wars of Cambrai – Venice was concerned more with defense than conquest, the Republic continued to rely on accurate cartography in order to fulfill that aim.[371]

The practical need for maps in Venice certainly offers fertile ground for the consideration of Vavassore's cartographic oeuvre. As well as a portolan chart of the Mediterranean for mariners – one of, if not the first entirely printed chart for use at sea – Vavassore produced maps and views that reflected the specific military activities and *terraferma* concerns of the Republic in the sixteenth century. As time progressed and Venetian dominance in trade and commerce began to wane, Vavassore adapted his cartographic output to meet the demands of a new market of armchair travellers who sought maps that depicted the changing world around them. This chapter is therefore divided into three sections: the first deals with his chorographic 'maps' and views, and aims to situate them within the context of their

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[368] On the production of portolan charts see Campbell, 1987, 371-462; Mollat et al, 1984; and Howse, 1973.
[369] See Cosgrove, 1992, 67; and H. Ballon & D. Friedman, 'Portraying the City in Early Modern Europe: Measurement, Representation and Planning' in Woodward, 2007, 690.
[370] For example, the Council of Ten demanded an inventory of all oaks in its territories in 1470, recording their numbers, size, maturity, and accessibility via a navigable channel. See Karl Appuhn, *A Forest on the Sea: Environmental Expertise in Renaissance Venice* (Baltimore, 2009); *idem*, 'Inventing Nature: Forests, Forestry, and State Power in Renaissance Venice', *The Journal of Modern History* 72 (2000) 851-89 and *idem*, 'Friend or Flood?: The Dilemmas of Flood Control in Late Renaissance Venice' in A. Isenberg (ed.) *The Nature of Cities: New Approaches to Urban Environmental History* (Rochester NY, 2006) 79-102.
[371] Cristoforo Sorte's boundary surveys and provincial maps for the Ducal Palace reveal that the Venetian defense strategy depended equally on accurate cartography. See J. Schulz, 'Cristoforo Sorte and the Ducal Palace of Venice' in *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 20 (1976) 107-26; and Cosgrove, 1992, 68.

creation. The second, which focuses on the more 'accurate' geographical representations of the continents and the world, will use Vavassore's maps as a tool for understanding how Venetians reacted and interacted with maps in a period of ever-advancing knowledge about the world. Finally, the third will attempt to reconstruct the wider cartographic network of which the workshop was a part. Taken together, these three areas will enhance the existing scholarship on Vavassore's cartographic production, and provide a clearer picture of a Venetian map shop in which the processes of design, cutting, printing and selling were – unusually – in the hands of a single individual.

4.2 The *Battle of Marignano* Woodcut

Dating to 1515, Vavassore's monumental *Battle of Marignano* (Fig. 4.1) occupies a unique position in the output of his workshop. Produced in the same year as the woodcuts of the *Labours of Hercules* and the *Apochalypsis*, discussed in the previous chapter, it represents one the earliest, and certainly one of the most ambitious, examples of his oeuvre. This large, eight-block woodcut portrays the scenes that occurred before the gates of Milan during the Battle of Marignano on 15 September 1515. A depiction of the city, protected by its walls, dominates the two left-hand blocks, in front of which the armies have assembled. In the top right-hand corner, Vavassore immortalises the ceremonious arrival of the Venetian captain Bartolomeo d'Alviano and his cavalry to the battle. The arrival of the Venetian cavalry proved a decisive moment in the battle, a fact that is recognised in both their visual predominance and the explicit identification of d'Alviano with a banderole. The four central blocks represent a mass of men engaged in combat, men on horseback, and slayed men and horses who are being trampled under foot. Rows of canons are arranged behind them; and both cavalry and footmen appear as though stacked on top of one another. The opposing Swiss infantry, on the other hand, are afforded little space in this visual narrative. The figures themselves appear rather small and diminished against the overwhelming number of assembled Venetian troops, and are crushed onto a single block between the city of Milan and the arriving cavalry. Though they, too, are depicted with rows of sharp pikes, their weapons are no match for the canon balls being fired at them from just a short distance away. Venice's French allies are conspicuously absent from Vavassore's version of events.

The Battle of Marignano was one of the greatest clashes in the Wars of the League of Cambrai, and the Venetians had good reason to commemorate it. Venice's abysmal military record made this a rare success to be celebrated – not least because the Republic's forces played such a decisive role in bringing about the victory. The French had been losing ground on the first day of the conflict, but the arrival of the Venetian troops on the second day turned the tide in favour of the combined forces of the Franco-Venetian alliance.[372] Vavassore reflects the popular idea of the 'rescuing' Venetian forces as the captain and his troops sweep into battle in the upper right-hand block; whilst simultaneously diminishing the role of the French forces in the victory at Marignano to nothing. With its celebratory, chivalric imagery – enhanced on this surviving copy by the application of vivid red, yellow, and green pigments –Vavassore's *Battle of Marignano* woodcut sent out a clear message about the capability of the Venetian forces. Back in the lagoon, the market for such a print would have been eager to savour the Republic's military success, for it was a success that offered the promise that they were not only going to survive the war, but would regain the better part of the lost *terraferma* empire.

Like several of Vavassore's works, the *Marignano* print was a unique graphic project for its time.[373] Representations of contemporary battles were rare in Renaissance art, despite the frequency with which they appeared in the artistic production north of the Alps. The Battles of Anghiari (1440) and Càscina (1364) certainly remained in Florentine public consciousness into the sixteenth century; but John Hale identified just three distinct works produced during the Italian Wars of 1494 to 1559: the *Battle of Marignano*, a far less ambitious engraving of the earlier *Battle of Ravenna*, and a painted image on the wooden cover of an account book.[374]

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[372] On the Battle of Marignano, see P. Piero, *Il Rinascimento e la crisi militare italiana* (Turin, 1970) 514-34; and R. Finlay, 'The Foundation of the Ghetto: Venice, Jews and the War of the League of Cambrai', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 126 (1982) 146.

[373] See discussion of the Portolan chart of the Eastern Mediterranean and the *Opera nova contemplativa* blockbook below, Section 4.4, and Chapter 7, Section 7.2 respectively.

[374] J. R. Hale, *Artists and Warfare in The Renaissance* (New Haven, 1990) 140. The engraving of the *Battle of Ravenna* was produced by the printmaker known as 'Master Na. Dat.' identifiable by the mousetrap monogram. Scholarship on the earlier Florentine battles of Anghiari, Càscina and San Romano has been somewhat eclipsed by the lost depictions of these events by Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, but see P. Cuneo, *Artful Armies, Beautiful Battles: Art and Warfare in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden, 2002) and G. Griffiths, 'The Political Significance of Uccello's *Battle of San Romano*,' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 41 (1978) 313-6.

Vavassore's decision to design and publish such an unusual subject was, therefore, surely sparked by the fact that the Venetians perceived their victory at Marignano as much more than just a simple military success. Rather, they interpreted it as a strong indication of God's approval of the Republic, which they had been desperately seeking since their crushing defeat at Agnadello in 1509.[375] The diarist Marino Sanudo remarked that the battle had been won only "with the aid of our Lord God", and that many Venetians saw the victory as the answer to their prayers.[376] Sanudo's writings echo, as ever, the popular sentiment surrounding this occasion. The joy of victory and the divine favour of the Republic would have been felt at all levels of society, as the Signoria organised masses and grand processions, and distributed grain to the poor to express their gratitude.[377] In this context, Vavassore's woodcut must be seen as a pictorial representation of the celebratory mood that gripped the lagoon in the aftermath of their victory at Marignano. Unlike other contemporary monumental woodcuts with a religious theme, which were employed to express hope for the future, Vavassore's *Battle of Marignano* commemorated a contemporary event that demonstrated that the Republic had already won God's favour.[378]

The multi-block woodcut represents a singularly unusual work of art. Unlike smaller prints, which could be safely stored in albums or protected within the leaves of books, large scale ones could not be viewed without being displayed. In this respect, they competed directly in both scale and imagery with paintings of battles and sieges, and attracted many of the same buyers. Such competition is evident in the formal complaint made by the Painters' Guild to the Venetian Senate in 1512; in which guild members expressed their disquiet and frustration that hand-coloured woodcuts were being glued to boards and sold as paintings.[379] Although comparable in size, paper was a much flimsier – if cheaper – support than canvas or wood and resulted in more modest modes of display. Some owners are known to have framed them and hung them like paintings, but most probably pasted them to a board or

[375] Stermole, 2007, 287.
[376] DMS, 21:82.
[377] Ibid., 21:114, 121.
[378] The most notable examples of the form are Titian's *Submersion of Pharaoh's Army in the Red Sea* and *The Triumph of Christ*, and Jacopo de'Barbari's bird's-eye view of Venice. See M. Muraro & D. Rosand, *Tiziano e la silografia del cinquecento* (Vicenza, 1976); L. Olivato, 'La *Submersione di Pharaone*', in S. Bettini et al, *Tiziano e Venezia; convegno internazionale di studi, Venezia, 1976* (Vicenza, 1980) 529-37; Schulz, 1978, 425-74; and Stermole, 2007, 274-85.
[379] Favaro, 1975, 67; and Muraro & Rosand, 1976, 47.

pasted them directly to the wall.[380] Paper, whether glued to a board or to wall plaster, would have deteriorated quite quickly in the damp Venetian climate.[381]

Little is known about how much prints and maps of this size might have cost. We know that Anton Kolb sold de'Barbari's woodcut for three ducats a copy, but this was recognised as a high price and intended to reflect the complexity of its realisation.[382] As the publisher outlined in his request for a privilege from the Senate, numerous views sketched by a large team of draughtsmen had to be compiled into one, accurate bird's-eye view of the city.[383] Stermole has argued that the kind of prints produced during the Wars of the League of Cambrai would have cost much less than de'Barbari's view, whilst David Landau and Peter Parshall concluded, on the basis of the cost of reprints of Titian's *Triumph of Christ* (c.1511) in Antwerp, that works of this scale produced north of the Alps were within the reach of a skilled workman.[384] The relative affordability of the medium is perhaps the reason why multi-block woodcuts have earned the nickname "frescoes of the poor."[385] Such a categorisation is, however, misleading. Skilled workmen may have owned or earned considerably lower sums than their patrician or *cittadino* counterparts, but could nonetheless afford to purchase a small library of books (and, by association, other printed goods).[386] Whilst skilled artisans and masters might have been able to purchase a copy of the *Battle of Marignano*, it is unlikely that such a print adorned the homes of the truly impoverished.

Furthermore, the surviving copy of Vavassore's woodcut has been richly (and probably professionally) coloured, in a manner that certainly justifies the complaint made by the Painters' Guild in 1512. A tiny minority of the surviving maps published by the workshop were coloured, suggesting that this was not a process that

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[380] The inventory of Gabriele Vendramin lists a print of Titian's *Submersion of Pharoah's Army in the Red Sea*, which was framed in "un adornamento negro dorado col suo timpani soazado e dorado." Transcribed in Landau & Parshall, 1994, 231-2. Landau and Parshall also refer to the practice of pasting prints onto boards or directly onto the wall, see ibid., 290.
[381] Stermole, 2007, 272.
[382] Schulz, 1978, 425-47; and Howard, 1997, 101-12.
[383] Anton Kolb's request appears as a transcript in Fulin, 1882, doc. 105, 142. Translation in Chambers & Pullan, 2001, 373.
[384] See Stermole, 2007, 273. Given the strength of the Venetian print industry, it is not difficult to imagine that the rules of the market were that different in Antwerp in the 1540s than in Venice when they were published for the first time. See Landau & Parshall, 1994, 236-7.
[385] Muraro & Rosand, 1976, 58.
[386] On the relationship between real wages and the price of books, see Grendler, 1977, 14.

was done 'in house.' Instead, the purchaser would have to arrange – perhaps on Vavassore's recommendation, for as a member of the Painters' Guild he would encounter painters of various different types – to have a woodcut print or map finished by hand. An anonymous Italian woodcut produced to commemorate the *Battle of Zonchio* in 1499 is finished using the same red, green, and yellow colours; suggesting that this was a popular, or at least easily accessible, palette (Fig. 4.2).[387] In the case of the earlier woodcut, colour had been applied using a stencil, resulting in a finish that is not as neat or refined as that of the Vavassore woodcut. The process of adding colour to any print would undoubtedly have increased its cost, and the amount of time that passed between its production and sale in the workshop and its display on the walls of the buyer's home. Nonetheless, the addition of colour transformed this copy of the Marignano woodcut into a work of art that could be displayed and treasured long after the celebrations of the Venetian victory at Marignano had ceased. As Mark McDonald has argued in the case of the print collection of Ferdinand Columbus, large prints like these could fulfill two functions: they satisfied both "a market that needed both instant, relatively cheap images for specific functions" and were "carefully embellished as lasting and impressive documents of historical significance."[388]

Though these large woodcuts may have been comparatively inexpensive when compared with painted canvases, publishers would need to believe it was possible to sell the many hundreds of impressions that a woodblock could generate in order to justify their production.[389] The issues surrounding the production of such prints were much the same as those encountered by the sixteenth century printer of maps: they required a substantial amount of paper; and the production of larger, more complex blocks that were costly in both time and labour. The planks used to manufacture blocks for printing both maps and large prints were medium-grained

[387] This woodcut was also included in the print collection of Ferdinand Columbus, see M. McDonald, *Ferdinand Columbus: Renaissance Collector* (London, 2005) 104-5.
[388] Ibid. 31.
[389] On printing woodcuts in editions of hundreds, or even a thousand, see A. Sartori, 'Documenti padovani sull'arte della stampa nel secolo XV' in A. Barzon (ed.) *Libri e stampatori in Padova. Miscellanea di studi storici in onore di Mons. G. Bellini* (Padua, 1959) 115. On the size of print editions and press runs more generally, see Nuovo, 2013, 99-116.

woods, such as beech, sycamore, apple, pear or cherry.[390] These materials were able to hold fairly fine detail, but were resilient enough not to be affected by the gums, oils, varnishes and water used in the inking and cleaning of the blocks.[391] The blocks may have represented the most significant investment, but large sheets of paper were also required, and these were necessarily thicker and more durable (and consequently more expensive) than those used for standard graphic prints and books. David Woodward has therefore estimated, using a variety of contemporary figures for the capital costs, overheads, raw materials, and labour (both manual and professional) involved in the production of woodcut maps that between 250 and 300 impressions would have to be sold to turn a profit.[392] Though Venetians may have been keen to celebrate their victory at Marignano, this seems a remarkably large number of impressions of such a specialised, and ultimately short-lived, work. Whilst Stermole has argued that the production of monumental woodcuts presupposed the existence of an enthusiastic buying public, it is entirely plausible that the Marignano woodcut was a commissioned piece that actually reached a more limited audience. Based on the evidence of the one richly coloured surviving copy – and a record of its purchase by the major print collector Ferdinand Columbus – Vavassore's market may have comprised of print collectors or their associates. The workshop certainly did accept commissions (as demonstrated in the case of the *Trent* woodcut, discussed below in Section 4.3), and would have required substantial financial investment to produce such a project so soon after its establishment.

The clash at Marignano took place on 15 September 1515, and the year 1515 is the only date to appear on the woodcut. Muraro and Rosand consequently believed it to date to late 1515 or early 1516.[393] Like the war poems in *ottava rima*, performed in the street by itinerant street performers and widely circulated in the form of cheap printed pamphlets, Vavassore's woodcut would have reached the height of its popularity in the immediate aftermath of the battle. The *cantastorie* were keen to exploit a public eager for the latest news, and able to produce texts for

[390] See D. Woodward, 'Woodcut Technique' in idem. *Five Centuries of Map Printing* (Chicago, 1975) 42-3; and A. M. Hind, *Introduction to the History of Woodcut,* (1935) 1-28.
[391] Robinson, 1975, 7. See also, M. Clapham, 'Printing' in C. Singer et. al. (eds.) *A History of Technology* (New York, 1957) Vol. 3 377-416.
[392] See Woodward, 1996, 52; and *idem*, 2007, 598.
[393] See Muraro & Rosand, 1976, 72; and Stermole, 2007, 286. The print also appeared in the vast print collection of Ferdinand Columbus, which was begun in 1512, and is included in the catalogue of his collection. See McDonald, 2004, Inv. No. 2815 2:519-20.

immediate consumption.[394] As Massimo Rospocher has argued, the *cantastorie* "were able to put an account of a battle to verse, perform it publicly, and sell it in the piazza" within just a few days.[395] The Ferrarese singer Bichignolo, for example, boasted in a song describing the naval encounter between the Duchy of Ferrara and the Venetians (1509) that he had managed to gather information, compose a poem, have it printed, and disseminate it within two weeks of the military action taking place.[396] An even more impressive turnaround was mentioned in a poem in *ottava rima* written about the battle of Agnadello (1509). In the final section, the anonymous author declares he had composed and brought his poem to the printer just two days after the event itself had occurred.[397] Thus, the ability to produce a work commemorating the Venetian victory in the War of the League of Cambrai quickly was not only advantageous to the publisher, but had come to be expected by a market eager for news.

John Hale is one of very few to have discussed this print, but his conclusions are not especially helpful. Comparing the *Marignano* print to other monumental woodcuts of the period – notably, Titian's *Submersion of Pharaoh's Army in the Red Sea* (c.1515) – he expressed his disbelief that someone who bought Titian's high quality, stylish woodcut could possibly have been interested in another as "unfashionable" as Vavassore's *Marignano*.[398] Although the notion that subject, rather than style, would have been the primary concern is important it should not follow that woodcuts be categorised as "fashionable" or "unfashionable", or that categories of buyers can be known with any certainty.[399] In justifying his attack on the *retardataire* style of Vavassore's woodcut, Hale suggests that the two blocks on

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[394] On the demand for news, see M. Meserve, 'News from Negroponte: Politics, Popular Opinion, and Information Exchange in the First Decade of the Italian Press', *Renaissance Quarterly* 59:2 (2006) 440-80.

[395] M. Rospocher, 'Songs of War. Historical and Literary Narratives of the 'Horrendous Italian Wars' (1494-1559)' in M. Mondini & M. Rospocher (eds.) *Narrating War: Early Modern and Contemporary Perspectives* (Bologna, 2013) 82.

[396] Bichignol (or Bichignolo), *Li horrendi e magnanimi fatti de l'illustrissimo Alfonso duca di Ferrara contra l'armata de Venetiani in Po del Mile e Cinquecento e Nove del mese di Decembro a gironi vintidoi* (Ferrara: Baldassare Selli, 1510), also cited in ibid. 82.

[397] Anonymous, *La miseranda rotta de venetiani a quelli data da io invictissimo et christianissimo Ludovico re de Franza et triumphante duca de Milano. A di xiiii de Maggio, M.D.I.X.* (Milan, 1509) f.4v, cited in ibid. 82-3.

[398] Hale, 1990, 144.

[399] Hale argues that "the 8-block format for a work so unfashionable in style implies a category of Italian purchasers that has not yet been defined, unless those who bought Titian's multi-block woodcuts which narrowly preceded it in Venice were less interested in artistic quality than is generally assumed." Ibid.

the left – which depict the city of Milan – were "borrowed or pirated."[400] This is not entirely implausible, for the evidence for printers' collaborative efforts and the sharing of resources is littered throughout this thesis. The depiction of Milan is indeed on a different scale to the rest of the scene that is taking place on the right, but it does not necessarily follow that they were produced by a different hand and slotted into this larger work (Fig. 4.3). Without a definitive identification of the earlier view of Milan of which these blocks were a part, we cannot assume that Vavassore borrowed or copied existing blocks in order to produce his woodcut of Marignano more quickly – even if the market had come to expect news of sieges and battles almost immediately. Rather than questioning the origins of particular parts of the Marignano woodcut we should focus on the print as a complete object, which in itself forms an artistic response to a particular moment. Viewing it in this way enables us to understand that a buyer would purchase a woodcut like this because they could relate to the events that were being depicted, or at least relate to what the depicted events had come to represent in the Venetian collective memory.

In its imagery, Vavassore's woodcut borrows much from the tradition of the chivalric romance. The events of the Cambrai War were often placed within the context of the chivalric world of the Middle Ages, both in terms of text and image.[401] The chivalric poem, as exemplified in the work of Ludovico Ariosto, Matteo Maria Boiardo and Torquato Tasso, interwove epic fantasy with historical reality, and legends of war with accounts of real, but equally dramatic, historic wars.[402] Similarly, wartime news pamphlets frequently adopted the style of the courtly romance to imbue narratives of modern events with greater importance; and figurative woodblocks originally carved for printed romances were repurposed to accompany the text. Vavassore's *Battle of Marignano* can, therefore, be understood within this context. His representation of the opposing armies as bodies piled one on top of another, and the careful rendering of the clusters of spikes pointed directly towards the enemy or into the air, directly recall the imagery used to illustrate

[400] Ibid. 144.
[401] Ibid. 289-90.
[402] See L. Bolzoni, '"O Maledetto, o abominoso ordigno": la rappresentazione della Guerra nel poema epico-cavalleresco' in W. Barberis (ed.) *Storia D'Italia Annali 18: Guerra e Pace* (Turin, 2002) 199-250; L. Pampaloni, 'La Guerra nel Furioso', *Belfagor* 26 (1971) 627-652; E. Scarano, 'Guerra favolosa e Guerra storica nella 'Orlando Furioso'' in L. Lugnani, M. Santagata & A. Stussi (eds.) *Studi offerti a Luigi Blasucci dai college e dagli allievi pisani* (Lucca, 1996) 497-515; Rospocher, 2013, 81; and Salzberg, 2014, 104-10.

pamphlets or printed romances (Figs. 4.4 & 4.5).[403] The inclusion, or perhaps more accurately the inversion, of all the components of the news pamphlet or poem is further underlined by Vavassore's inscription on the lower right block. The lengthy text recounts the sequence of events of the battle "in praise and glory" of both the "illustrious and most serene government of Venice" and the King of France, whose forces are excluded from the image entirely.[404] Whilst it provides a "true" account of the battle and the involvement of the French, this is subordinate to the real message contained in the image, which is one of Venetian prowess and success. Though a different format, Vavassore's monumental woodcut adopts the popular courtly style of both depiction and description circulating in illustrated pamphlets, and in so doing transforms the historical reality of the Venetian victory at Marignano into a chivalric legend.

The woodcut produced to commemorate the events of that occurred at Marignano offers a slightly unusual point of departure with which to begin a systematic exploration of the workshop's cartographic output. However, the methods employed by the workshop in its design and production were exactly the same as those used for maps in the decades that followed. Vavassore's woodcut may have been ambitious for one so early in his career, but it is also one of the earliest examples of his intent to meet the demands of his market, and to produce works that represented the interests and concerns of his customers.

4.3 Chorography in Context: Views of Rhodes, Constantinople, Trent and Venice

Seven years separate the design and production of the *Battle of Marignano* woodcut and the next cartographic work issued by the Vavassore workshop. Almagià and Bagrow have thus catalogued a pictorial depiction of the island and town of Rhodes, dated 1522, as the first of Vavassore's maps (Fig. 4.6). Printed on two joined sheets (77.5 x 56.8cm) from four woodcut blocks, this was a much less ambitious undertaking than the eight-block *Marignano* print.[405] Nevertheless, the motivations

[403] On wartime pamphlets, see Stermole, 2007, 27-67.
[404] "A laude e Gloria del victorioso Signore S. Francesco Anglem Christianissim Re di francia 7 della Illustrissima 7 Serenissima Signoria de Uenetia."
[405] The use of four blocks on two joined sheets is evidenced by the faint white lines that appear where the impressions do not quite meet. This phenomena is observable on many multi-block woodcuts, including Jacopo de'Barbari's *Venice*.

behind its production were much the same. Rather than a simple chorographic depiction of the city of Rhodes, Vavassore's depiction presents the island as besieged by the Turks during a military campaign supported by the Venetian forces – providing a visual record or report of this event.[406] As well as an example of chorographic work produced in Venice during the early decades of the sixteenth century, Vavassore's representation of Rhodes reflects both the imminent desire of Venetians (and visitors) for up-to-date news of the events taking place beyond the lagoon, and the need for their printers to cater to it in visual and textual formats.[407]

The Siege of Rhodes was the second, and ultimately successful, attempt by the Ottoman Empire to expel the Knights of St John from their island stronghold and secure Ottoman control over the Eastern Mediterranean.[408] The Knights of St John had captured Rhodes after the fall of Acre in the early fourteenth century, and over time became an active part of trade in the Aegean Sea. The policing of these waters against the Turks, and their involvement in lucrative Levantine trade, made Rhodes a natural ally of both the Venetians and their subjects in the nearby territories of the *Stato da Mar*. The first attempt by the Ottomans to capture the island in 1480 had been repressed, and consequently the city's fortifications had been strengthened. These works – which included the rebuilding of the rings of stonewalls, the removal of gates, and the construction of towers and bastions – are clearly visible on Vavassore's woodcut view of *Rhodes*.[409] The wall surrounding the city clearly delineates its boundaries, and the towers built into it dominate the image. Whether an issue of scale, or an attempt to represent Rhodes' defenses against the Turks; these towers are depicted as the same size (or larger) than the churches and houses encased within the city walls.

A short woodcut text inscription is included in the top left-hand block, which declares its production by Vavassore in Venice in 1522.[410] The fact that the woodcut view of Rhodes was published in that year suggests that Vavassore produced the map

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[406] Mark McDonald argued that the print of *Rhodes* must have been produced immediately after the siege, and that it "was made specifically as a report and record of the event." See McDonald, 2005, 122.
[407] Vavassore's woodcut of Rhodes was also among the prints collected by Ferdinand Columbus see ibid. 122.
[408] On both sieges of Rhodes by the Ottomans, see E. Brockman, *The Two Sieges of Rhodes, 1480-1522* (London, 1969).
[409] See K. Nossov, *The Fortress of Rhodes, 1309-1522* (Oxford, 2010).
[410] "Stampata in Venetia per Vadagnino di Vavasori nel MCCCCCXXII."

either immediately after the siege, or before he knew of its outcome.[411] Lasting from 26 June to 22 December 1522, copies of Vavassore's woodcut must have been printed and distributed between the end of December and 1 March (the beginning of the Venetian calendar year). Rather than a defeated city, Vavassore presents Rhodes as a city under siege. In a style reminiscent of the *Battle of Marignano*, he depicts the Ottoman armies advancing on the city as bodies and horses piled one on top of the other (Fig. 4.7). The forces, whether on horseback, in boats, or operating canons, and their camps – depicted as elaborate tents to the left of the city – remain outside the city walls. The heavy iron chain known to have blocked the entrance to the harbour also remains intact, with only the Knights' own ships depicted in its waters (Fig. 4.8). The map thus features an impressive level of detail and Vavassore is careful both to label the forces and landmarks with woodcut lettering and to distinguish between the Knights and the Ottoman forces of Suleiman the Magnificent in terms of dress and weaponry.

The Venetian involvement in the second Siege of Rhodes certainly explains the interest in such a subject. When Philippe Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, the Grand Master of the Order of St John, called upon the knights elsewhere in Europe for aid, Venetian troops from Crete were the only ones to come to the islands' defense. Thus, as it had been during the years of the Wars of the League of Cambrai, intense interest in the military campaign occurring in the eastern Mediterranean gripped the lagoon. I will return to the workshop's production of wartime pamphlets and poems in Chapter Five, but it is clear that a short work entitled *Lacrimoso lamento di Rodi* – published in Venice, Rome, Florence, Trent, Perugia, Orvieto and Verona at regular intervals throughout the century – was one of the most popular examples of this genre. Whether published by the Vavassore workshop, by Matteo Pagano, Paolo Danza, or the Bindoni brothers; distributed directly from their shops or through the hands of itinerant street sellers, the number of surviving editions indicates that demand for this pamphlet was exceptionally high, and remained so for several decades.[412] Vavassore's map of Rhodes therefore appears to be an early, and purely visual, representation of the siege that would go on to circulate in the form of the

[411] McDonald, 2005, 122.
[412] See Salzberg & Rospocher, 2012, 9-26. EDIT16 lists editions of the *Lacrimoso lamento di Rodi* dating variously from the 1520s, 1530s, 1540s, 1550s, and even as late as the 1570s. For information on the two surviving Vavassore editions, see Vol. 2 Appendix 1 Cat. n.12.

poetic lament. His edition of the lament includes a much smaller and less refined depiction of the city under siege, which was almost certainly inspired by the woodcut map he produced during the siege in 1522 (Fig. 4.9). As in the aftermath of the *Battle of Marignano*, the printer was able to gauge the level of public interest in the siege, and exploit the willingness of Venetians to buy information in the form of both maps and pamphlets.

The workshop produced at least four other city views and perspective plans. All are rare, and the view of Padua – although catalogued as extant in one copy at the National Library in Vienna in the late nineteenth century – is now lost altogether.[413] Like the map of Rhodes, these plans cannot be separated from their context, as they were produced to reflect popular interest in, and the desire for news of, the events occurring in the cities they depict. The view of Constantinople, undated but probably published by the workshop in the 1520s or 1530s, is labeled *Byzantium sive Costantineopolis* – "Byzantium or Constantinople" (Fig. 4.10). The title, carved in woodcut letters and discreetly tucked away at the top of the map, highlights the imperial identity of the city that had served to make 'Byzantium' and 'Constantinople' synonymous with one another. The bird's-eye view depicts the new capital under the leadership of Sultan Mehmed II, and is almost certainly based on a lost original made with the permission of the sultan in the last decades of the fifteenth century.[414] Where or how Vavassore obtained a copy requires some guesswork. Such an object was surely more likely to be found in Venice, the gateway between East and West, than anywhere else; and there is also a record of a large map of Constantinople in the inventory of the Rosselli shop (1525).[415] Arthur Hind suggested that Rosselli may himself have visited Constantinople at some point

[413] The perspective plan of Padua is mentioned in Lippmann, 1888, 110. Both Almagià and Bagrow include the plan in their catalogues of Vavassore's work, (catalogue numbers 10 and 18 respectively) but no impression can be found.

[414] Mehmed II was renowned for his interest in cartography. See G. Necipoğlu, 'From Byzantine Constantinople to Ottoman Kostantiniyye: Creation of a Cosmopolitan Capital and Visual Culture under Sultan Mehmed II' in *From Byzantion to Istanbul: 8000 Years of a Capital* (Exhibition Catalogue, Sakip Sabanci Museum: Istanbul, 2010) 269. The map is also discussed in I. R. Manners, 'Constructing the Image of a City: The Representation of Constantinople in Christopher Buondelmonti's *Liber Insularum Archipelagi*' in *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 87:1 (1997) 72-102.

[415] None of the city maps in the Rosselli inventory are known to have survived, but Schulz noted that it is possible to reconstruct the views of Rome and Florence from other sources, as both employ the bird's-eye view format of the city in the surrounding landscape. It thus seems likely that the lost view of Constantinople was constructed in the same way. See Schulz, 1978, 425-74.

before his death in c.1513, so it is possible that his printed view of the city had been in circulation for some time before the Vavassore workshop produced a similar map.[416] As I have already noted, the circulation of existing maps was a crucial part of the process in producing new ones.[417]

Vavassore's woodcut projects a cosmopolitan image of a thriving metropolis that was both a hub of international trade and of diplomacy. The water surrounding the city is busy with ships both small and large, many of which carry banners featuring crescents, the cross, the double-headed eagle of the Holy Roman Emperor, and the lion of St Mark.[418] Necipoğlu suggests that the inclusion of the Marcian lion, a symbol of the privilege granted to Venetian ships that allowed them to sail under their own flag in 1479, dates the original map to that year, when ambassadors of both the Venetian Signoria and Emperor Fredrick III were present in the city.[419] Even if Vavassore was copying an earlier map, the incorporation of small labels to identify the antiquities and architectural features encapsulates a sense of the city's history and renovation.

So why might a perspective view of Constantinople have been of interest to a Venetian mapmaker and his customers? Strong links between Venice and Constantinople remained, and trade with the Levant continued to be exceptionally lucrative for several decades after the map was published.[420] Vavassore's woodcut therefore gives visual representation to this continuing relationship, by creating parallels between the two cities. Like Venice, Constantinople appears prominently surrounded by water, whilst trade and the passage of ships are crucial for its continuing success. On the right hand side of the image, Vavassore has depicted a kind of Byzantine Grand Canal, upon which small boats – reminiscent of gondola in both their shape and method of propulsion – are rowed. Finally, it has been recognised that the Vavassore view does not emphasise the "Islamic character of the

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[416] See Manners, 1997, 93; and Hind, 1948, 13.
[417] Kafescioğlu has argued that the Vavassore map was not an original representation, for its content "strongly suggests the involvement of Ottoman patrons" in its production. See Ç. Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul: Cultural Encounter, Imperial Vision and the Construction of the Ottoman Capital* (University Park, PA, 2009) 148.
[418] Necipoğlu, 2010, 269.
[419] Ibid. 269. Kafescioğlu also argues that the Vavassore view is a copy of one of the earliest examples created in 1480, see Kafescioğlu, 2009, 158.
[420] The Venetian representative in Constantinople between 1558-60 estimated that the overall value of the trade between Venice and the Levant was roughly 125 tons of silver. See, most recently, L. Pezzolo, 'The Venetian Economy' in Dursteler, 2013, 255-91, citation from 264.

city", instead presenting a rather unremarkable, but very familiar, view of a city containing churches and houses that is surrounded by fortified walls.[421] By simultaneously drawing similarities and repressing the city's foreignness, Vavassore encouraged Venetians to identify with Constantinople on familiar terms.

For the most part, plans and views of cities are characteristic of the early cartographic production of the workshop. One final perspective plan, published several years later than the others in 1562, is also best understood when placed in the original context of its production. Vavassore's plan of *Trent* (Fig. 4.11) was not included in either of the catalogues of his works compiled by Almagià and Bagrow, but it was reported in 1953 that a copy had been unearthed in the Vatican Archive.[422] Two further copies have thus far been identified, representing two different states of the same woodcut: a single copy of the original 1562 edition at the British Library, and two copies of a second edition, dated 1563, now held in the States Archive of Vienna and in the Vatican Archive.[423] The Vienna copy alone has been richly coloured in a professional manner similar to that of the *Battle of Marignano*. Given the potential for this topical print to have adorned both domestic spaces as well as religious buildings, its survival rates are comparatively good when considered alongside other examples of the workshop's cartographic output (which have survived in a single copy, or have been lost since they were catalogued). Nevertheless, despite its close association with such a pivotal moment in the religious history of the early modern period, the perspective plan of Trent has so far received relatively little attention from scholars.[424]

The woodcut of *Trent* produced by the Vavassore workshop was not only the first printed view of the city, but was undoubtedly produced to mark the closing of the long deliberations of the Council that had met there. Apparently commissioned in 1562 by the treasurer of the Council of Trent, Antonio Manelli, Vavassore's plan of Trent effectively became an attempt to "memorialize the event even before its

[421] Kafescioğlu, 2009, 161.
[422] The inscription reads "Tridentum. Trent. Venetiis, apud Io. Andrea Valuassorem, cognomento Guadagninum… M.D.LXIII." See Beans, 1953, 14.
[423] F. Cappelletti, *Imago Tridenti, Incisioni e libri illustrate dal XV al XVIII secolo* (Trent, 1996) Catalogue Numbers 12a (1562 edition) and 12b (1563 edition), 47-50.
[424] See Ibid. 47-50, and S. Ditchfield, 'Trent Revisited', in G. Dall'Olio, A. Malena & P. Scaramella (eds.) *La fede degli italiani* (Pisa, 2011) 357-70.

closure."[426] Manelli's name may appear on the 1562 version of the map, but its replacement with that of Pope Pius IV a year later has led Aldo Chemelli to suggest that the Prince Bishop Cardinal Cristoforo Madruzzo, was in fact the real patron.[427] As the Bishop of Trent, Madruzzo's involvement in the production of a view of the city is entirely plausible, for he would have been able to provide any information necessary for the completion of the plan (even if the project was funded by the Council itself). Certainly, the 1563 edition was not republished at the request of the treasurer (*ad instantia Depositarij S. Consilij Trident*), but appears to have been the workshop's own initiative. Given its propensity to respond quickly to demand for news of current events, Vavassore would have been keen to exploit the attending cardinals, church officials, and visitors to Trent (as well the general populace) interested in owning a momento of the Council of Trent. Simon Ditchfield has thus suggested that the reprinting of the plan of Trent in 1563 was "indicative of the image's popularity."[428]

The commissioning of the print by Manelli – or, indeed, by Madruzzo – makes this view of Trent a unique example among the cartographic production of the Vavassore workshop, though the circumstances of the commission will require further research outwith the remit of this thesis. Although there would have been fewer publishers of maps than of books, the map industry was to reach its peak in Venice in the years around 1566. Vavassore had been established as a designer, cutter and publisher of maps for several decades, but by the late 1550s and 1560s the Merceria was buzzing with the cartographic workshops of Giovanni Francesco Camocio, Paolo Forlani, Niccolo Nelli, Domenico Zenoi, Michele Tramezzino, Ferdinano Bertelli and Bolognino Zaltieri.[429] Competition must have been intense, and to gain such a prestigious – and ultimately lucrative – commission should be noted among the successes of the Vavassore workshop.

Like the *Battle of Marignano* and the other cartographical works published by the workshop, this perspective plan would have required substantial investment in

[426] The colophon of the 1562 edition reads 'Venetiis, Apud Io. Andrea Valvassorem, cognomento Guadagninum: Ad instantia Antonij Manelli Depistiarij S. Concilij Trident. 1562.' See Cappelletti, 1996, 48; and Ditchfield, 2011, 360.
[427] A. Chemelli, *Trento nelle stampe d'arte* (Trent: Provincia Autonoma di Trento, 1990) 92, 96. See also Cappelletti, 1996, 48.
[428] Ibid.
[429] See Woodward, 2007, 787; *idem*, *The Maps and Prints of Paolo Forlani: A Descriptive Biography* (Chicago, 1990); and Bagrow, 2010, 136.

both time and resources. Printed from six woodcut blocks totaling 77.5 x 77cm, this bird's-eye view of *Trent* depicts the city within its surrounding landscape. The surrounding land is presented as lush, fertile and well maintained, especially in the case of the hand-coloured Vienna edition, while the city itself nestles beside the river Adige. At the centre of the bottom right-hand block is the large villa-fortress of the Madruzzo family, now known as the Palazzo delle Albere (labeled 'Prato del Palazzo' in reference to the field in front of the building, see Fig. 4.12). Its inclusion raises further speculation about the involvement of the Cardinal Madruzzo in the commission of this woodcut, for it was not otherwise connected to the meetings of the Council at the church of Santa Maria Maggiore (Fig. 4.13) or the lodgings of the visiting cardinals at the Palazzo a Prato in the town centre. Vavassore's view of Trent would have provided a kind of visual reference for the various events and stages that had been held in there since the Council had first convened in 1545. As was the case with chivalric poems and laments, the publication and distribution of works like these created a collective consciousness of current events and an awareness of the historical moment.[430] A sense of contemporaneity – described by Brendan Dooley as "the perception, shared by a number of human beings, of experiencing a particular event at more or less the same time" – was emerging.[431] Intended for display in a variety of public and domestic spaces, Vavassore's map reflects this contemporary desire of the church to commemorate and disseminate a particular historical moment.

Finally, a view of Venice – undated, but thought by Bagrow to date to the earliest years of Vavassore's career – provides evidence that, although he was quick to respond to the needs of the Venetian market, Vavassore also produced maps with a weather eye to the export market.[432] Following the established and very successful model by Jacopo de'Barbari, Vavassore depicts the city filled with galley ships offloading and carrying goods, which had been spirited to the city by enthusiastic wind gods. The bustling representation of the city as an entrepôt is underlined by a series of vernacular inscriptions, which address the viewer directly: "as you see

[430] Rospocher, 2013, 83.
[431] B. Dooley (ed.) *The Dissemination of News and the Emergence of Contemporaneity in Early Modern Europe* (Farnham, 2010) xiv.
[432] Bagrow estimated the perspective plan of Venice (52 x 36cm) as dating to c.1517. See Bagrow, 1939, 11. J. Schulz, *The Printed Plans and Panoramic Views of Venice* (Florence, 1970) estimated a date of 1535; whilst Bronwen Wilson has suggested that the Vavassore view of Venice dates between 1517 and 1525: see Wilson, 2005, 51.

depicted here in the middle of a maritime lagoon… This city has an immeasurable number of people who come together from all parts of the world for trade."[433] His deictic inscription offers an exact parallel to the mode of representation, for the viewer can indeed see for himself that the city is a hub for the trade of goods of all kinds.

As Genevieve Carlton's recent work on the inclusion of maps in the inventories of Venetian homes has proved, Venetian families may have displayed their maps in the *porteghi* and *studioli*, but they rarely kept views and plans of their own city there.[434] Alongside the world map so admired by Federico da Porto when he visited Sanudo's *portego* was a view not of Venice, but one of the city of Verona. Sanudo had held a minor administrative position there for sixteen months in the early part of his career and, like several other Venetian map owners at this time, evidently used maps to underline his connection with this area.[435] A later example in the form of the household inventory of Marco Dandolo (1631) reveals a particularly strong interest in city views.[436] In his *portego* were maps of Buda, Rome, Padua and Bergamo, a hand-written description of these territories; as well as sketches of Friuli and a drawing of the territory of Piran, a Venetian possession on the Istrian peninsula, which was attached to cloth.[437] This somewhat unusual map was probably intended to indicate the family's trading interests with that region, but the other regional maps and views clearly underline the success of the Dandolo family in producing numerous regional governors of the *terraferma*.[438]

Given the great esteem with which Venetians held their city, one would expect to find printed representations of the lagoon listed among the moveable goods included in inventories. However, the opposite is true. Among the 2,200 inventories

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[433] "come tu vedi qui dipintta nel mezzo de uno martimo lagumene… Questa citta a populo i[n]finite et di tutte le parte del mondo per esercitar la marcantia vi concorrano."
[434] G. Carlton, 'Making an Impression: The Display of Maps in Sixteenth Century Venetian Homes', *Imago Mundi* 64:1 (2012) 26 and 36.
[435] On Marin Sanudo in Verona, see R. Fulin, 'Diarii e Diaristi veneziani', *Archivio Veneto* 22:1 (1881) xxi; and D. Chambers, 'Marin Sanudo, Camerlengo of Verona, 1501-1502', *Archivio Veneto* 109 (1977) 37-66.
[436] ASV, Giudici di Petizion b.352 fasc.17, 29 April 1631 f.7v, cited in Carlton, 2012, 36.
[437] The drawing of Piran attached to cloth is described in the inventory as: "dissegno in carta attacata in tella di Piran et territorio". Quoted in ibid.
[438] Marco Dandolo's ancestor of the same name had been the Venetian ambassador to the Holy Roman Empire in 1437, and was the representative when the Empire officially recognised the Venetian claim to Bergamo, Brescia, Padua and Treviso. The Dandolo family produced four Doges and numerous regional governors who held positions in the *terraferma*. Ibid.

collected between 1497 and 1631, Carlton identified almost a thousand maps: of these 410 were world views, 321 landscape views, 97 regional maps, 70 city views, and 32 navigational charts.[439] Narrowing the field again, among those containing city views, hardly any Venetian households had a map of their own city. However, we should be careful not to rely entirely on the evidence of household inventories to understand how Venetians displayed their maps in the sixteenth century, as they are frequently biased towards wealthier owners. One particularly interesting exception to the rule emerges in the records of the Sant'Uffizio. When the the letter caster Pietro d'Ochino was suspected of heresy in 1575, the denunciation records that in the room of the accused there were "many views of cities, including Rome, Genoa, Venice, Antwerp and Geneva."[440] It should be noted that plans and views – which comprise less than a tenth of the total number of maps in inventoried Venetian homes – represent a third of the extant cartographic production of the Vavassore workshop. Venetians may have been willing to purchase maps of their territorial possessions or areas in the midst of military conflict, but it is apparent that views of the city itself catered primarily for markets beyond the lagoon.[441]

4.4 Charting Land and Sea: Maps of the World and its Waters

The poor survival rate of the maps produced by the Vavassore workshop probably reflects the hostility of the environment in which they were displayed more than the damage inflicted by their daily use as practical objects. The exception to this is a portolan chart of the Eastern Mediterranean, published by the workshop for the first time in 1539, and reissued in 1541 (Fig. 4.14). Matteo Pagano, to whom I will return later in this chapter, published a 'new' edition of the same chart (including almost identical material but omitting Vavassore's name in order to include his own) almost

[439] Ibid. 29.
[440] ASV, SU, b.14 fasc. 16 "Pietro d'Ochino", 1575. "Sono diversi ritratti di Cittadi, vi e il ritratto di Roma, di Genoa, di Venetia, di Anversa, e di Ginevra."
[441] Vavassore's view of Venice was used as a model by Matteo Pagano in two woodcuts of the city published around 1560. In the text accompanying the smaller of the two woodcuts, Pagano explained that the work of the cartographer was "to describe the site, the structure of the place, its origins, the inhabitants, and the prosperity of the place, and when the place that one is discussing is unknown, one strives to make it more clear to the eye and the mind of the viewer and reader." ("narrare il sito, l'edificacion di tal luoco, la sua origine, gli habitanti, e la feilità del paese, e quando il luoco di cui si ragiona è incognito, allhora si estende in far più piano l'occhio, & la mente di chi guarda e legge.") The two woodcuts are discussed in more detail in Wilson, 2005, 51-2.

two decades later in 1558. Despite the evident demand for additional copies, a single impression survives at the Royal Maritime Museum in Greenwich. The woodcut chart includes the routes from Venice to Syria and Constantinople, on a single sheet. The surviving copy is from the second edition, because there are two titles at the top of the left-hand sheet: the first, in Latin, is dated 1539; the other, in Italian, is dated 1541.[442] Rather than replacing the original cartouche, it seems Vavassore simply added another inscription by carving it into a plug and inserting the plug into the block (Fig. 4.15). Whether the information included on the chart – such as place names and symbols – was updated between the editions, we cannot know with great certainty, but the wording of the vernacular colophon suggests that Vavassore did make some improvements. Whilst the Latin inscription declares all the information to be found within the chart – the names of all the islands, reefs, bays, headlands, harbours and sea towns on the trade route between Venice and Constantinople – the Italian inscription declares the inclusion of "names now in use written in the vulgar tongue."

There is a consensus among scholars of cartography (and portolan charts in particular) that Vavassore's work represents the earliest surviving entirely printed sea-chart intended for use on board ship.[443] The wording of the colophon makes it clear that he was indeed aiming to meet the needs of that market. The Latin inscription contains the reassurance that it contained both every place "so far known to the sailor" and all the information that might previously only have been found in a mariner's own drawings.[444] Given that printed land maps and views were available

[442] The Latin inscription reads: "Within this small drawing is contained all that lies upon the sailor's route between Venice and Constantinople, and between Venice and Tyre, including all islands, bays, headlands, harbours and seatowns, and everywhere worthy of a name that is so far known to the sailor. Drawn with such care and skill by Giovanni Andrea Vavassore that the observer may see clearly here all that he previously knew from sailors' own drawings. 1539." And the Italian: "The true description of the Adriatic Sea and the Archipelago, and Sea of Tyre, with the names now in use written in the vulgar tongue, including all the islands, reefs, bays, headlands, harbours, and shores not otherwise described except when found in sea charts. The work of Giovanni Andrea Vavassore, known as Guadagnino, newly printed in the noble city of Venice, 1541."

[443] See Bagrow, 2010, 116; Mollat et al, 1984, chapter 1; and Mukerji, 2006, 653. Derek Howse includes the chart in his discussion of early examples of the format, but questions whether Vavassore's work could actually have functioned as a sea chart, see Howse, 1973, 15-6. The chart is also described in D. Howse & M. Sanderson, *The Sea Chart: A Historical Survey Based on the Collections in the National Maritime Museum* (London, 1973) 39; and M. Kozličić, 'G.A. Vavassore's "Tabella" – Technological Turning-Point in the 16th Century Nautical Cartography of the Adriatic,' *Informatologia* 32 (1999) 60-63.

[444] See note 442, above.

in much larger quantity and variety, and at relatively low cost, it seems unlikely that a customer would buy a portolan chart unless he had a practical use for it. Navigational charts account for just 32 of almost 1,000 maps included in the inventories of Venetian homes over a 134-year period: evidence, perhaps, that such objects were not particularly highly prized for their aesthetic qualities.

Although the colophon does not refer to a model, this chart of the eastern Mediterranean was probably produced from an existing manuscript drawing or drawings. Unlike Rosselli, who may have made the voyage from Venice to Constantinople in the early years of the sixteenth century, the continuity of the workshop over such a long period precludes the possibility that Vavassore acquired this information at first hand. Few sea charts had been required and had therefore been produced – or at least finished – by hand. Consequently, compared to land maps, it took a very long time for printed sea charts to appear on the market, and only seven examples have been identified as dating before 1569 (five from Venice, and two from the Low Countries), the year in which Paolo Forlani declared that "here at last is a printed sea chart."[445] Sea charts and sea-atlases were published with increasing frequency in the 1570s and 1580s, when control over the content of such maps slackened. Mukerji has argued that in the early sixteenth century both sea charts and military maps were seen as powerful tools, the value of which was dependent on the control of their content.[446] Furthermore, the demand for printed sea charts – which, like other woodcuts had the potential to yield at least several hundred copies – may not have been sufficient to support their production. As a surviving example of an entirely printed portolan chart from the late 1530s, Vavassore's work is unique. Not only was the chart popular enough to be reissued at least twice, but it also made public information about trade routes and ports several decades before other portolan charts.

Although Derek Howse has raised speculation about whether Vavassore's woodcut was capable of acting as a true sea chart for sailors actually travelling between Venice and Constantinople, it is clear that this portolan chart provided the model for almost all charts of the eastern Mediterranean that came after it. Unlike

[445] See Howse, 1973, 9.
[446] Mukerji, 2006, 653. See also G. R. Crone, *Maps and their Makers: An Introduction to the History of Cartography* (5th Edition, 1978) and B. Penrose, *Travel and Discovery in the Renaissance: 1420-1620* (Cambridge, MA, 1960).

later charts – beginning with a copperplate engraving produced by Paolo Forlani and sold at his shop at the Sign of the Ship (*insegna della Nave*) in the Merceria – Vavassore's woodcut includes many distortions and inaccuracies. It also lacks many of the features that distinguish later sea charts from other maps, such as compass- or wind-roses, rhumb lines, appropriate scales of distance and navigational hazards like rocks and foul ground.[447] What Vavassore does achieve is a map that seamlessly incorporates image (or symbol) and text in a medium that had traditionally had to be finished by hand. Lettering has been a pervasive problem in cartography, as almost all maps contain labels and captions. Cartographers and printers tackled this problem in several ways: some inserted metal type into the block itself, whilst others created 'stereotypes' which could be glued onto its surface.[448] Vavassore, on the other hand, succeeded where many others had failed in cutting letters directly onto the block. Carving letters into wood by hand was exceptionally difficult, and often resulted in crude, primitive and square lettering that was at odds with the softer, more rounded fonts popular during the Renaissance. Vavassore's maps and graphic prints – especially the text-heavy portolan chart – offer excellent examples of the workshop's woodcut lettering in a very rounded Roman style. Although it exhibits some inconsistencies in the size and shape of letters, and serifs are frequently omitted or truncated, Vavassore was able to cut his woodcut text to any size or style, and compress it into the space available.[449] Rather than simply a crude and primitive method, this hand-cut text – like any lettering done by hand – lends a distinctive style to the cartographic (and more general) output of the Vavassore workshop.

If depictions of city views – whether in perspective plan, or bird's-eye view – attend to likeness and aesthetic appeal rather than proportions, and maps of the world "deal with the quantities more than the qualities… [giving] consideration to the proportionality of distances for all things, but to likeness only as far as coarser outlines" then regional maps represent a kind of 'middle-ground' between the two.[450] Regional maps account for over half of the workshop's cartographic output, featuring geographical depictions of *Spain* (1532), *France* (1536), *Greece* (1545), the *British Isles* (1556) and *Hungary* (1553); as well as maps of *Friuli* (1557) and *Tuscany*

[447] Howse, 1973, 9.
[448] On all of these techniques, see Woodward, 1975, 45-6.
[449] Ibid. 45.
[450] See J. L. Berggren & A. Jones, *Ptolemy's* Geography*: An Annotated Translation of the Theoretical Chapters* (Princeton, 2000) 58; and Ballon & Friedman, 2007, 689.

(1559). There are also undated maps of Central Europe, Germany and the Italian peninsula among his oeuvre. Just as the Republic employed cartography to fashion itself as a premier trading and maritime power of Europe, regional maps appeared in various forms with a myriad of functions: from increasing knowledge of over-land trade routes to the systematic calculation and exploitation of *terraferma* resources.

Rather than carrying out the surveys necessary for producing maps of France, Germany, Spain, Hungary or the British Isles, Vavassore relied on existing maps of these countries that were circulating in Venice as models. The map of Germany, known only in the early catalogues, was argued by Bagrow to have been based on a much-copied fifteenth century map by Nicolaus Cusanus.[451] Although the original manuscript map has not survived either, it seems likely that Vavassore managed to obtain a printed copy of it produced in Eichstadt in 1491, for Bagrow claimed that it was "a rough piece of work… [with] the same content, but for a few misprints."[452] Similarly, the 1556 map of the *British Isles* (Fig. 4.16) is derived entirely from one produced by George Lily a decade earlier (Fig. 4.17).[453] These examples, and the case of the Caspar Vopel world map (discussed below), suggest that Vavassore both bought and sold maps from his workshop in San Luca.

Whilst many of the workshop's maps were designed, cut, and printed by Vavassore – there were, for example, no existing precedents for the 'map' of *Marignano* or the perspective plan of *Trent* – copying other maps formed a crucial part of all sixteenth century cartography. Whilst Elizabeth Eisenstein and Adrian Johns put forwards arguments against this practice, Mukerji countered that copying was "at the heart of good cartography rather than bad science."[454] No authoritative text facilitated the accurate production and reproduction of maps, and as such the process of making maps always started by copying old ones, and adding new information or otherwise making corrections. David Woodward may have limited Vavassore's cartographic activities to that of a "copyist," but given the persistent

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[451] Bagrow, 1939, 10; Almagià, 1920, LXI; and Ephroussi, 1891, 242-3.
[452] Bagrow, 2010, 147.
[453] The inscription on this map reads "*Britanniae Invulae quae nvnc angliae et scotiae regna continent cvm Hibernia Adiacente nova descriptio. Venetiis apud Ioannem Andream Valuassorem cognomina Guadagninum. Anno Dominis M.D.LVI*". One impression is extant in the collection of the British Museum (36.9 x 51.2cm, Shelfmark 1860,0414.167.b). For the Lily Map of 1546, see E. Lynam, *The Map of the British Isles of 1546* (Jenkintown, 1934) 6.
[454] Mukerji, 2006, 652; Eisenstein, 1979; and A. Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago, 1998).

need to refer to and update older models to create new ones, one could argue that this is true of almost all of the mapmakers in sixteenth-century Europe.[455]

Regional maps account for approximately 10% (97 out of c.1000) of those found in the inventories of sixteenth and early seventeenth century Venetian homes. Although considerably less in number than world maps and landscape views, it is a substantial proportion when compared with city views (70) and navigational charts (37).[456] Evidence of the popularity of regional maps in the early seventeenth century has been documented by Federica Ambrosini.[457] Although Ambrosini, like Carlton, takes household inventories as her source, she notes a trend beginning in the second half of the sixteenth century for the inclusion of maps of the four continents in private houses. Ambrosini's inventories make frequent reference to "descriptions of the world in four parts" in both urban *case* and the houses owned by wealthy patricians and citizens in the *terraferma*.[458] Like the large painted maps of the regions and continents of the world commissioned by the State to adorn the walls of the Palazzo Ducale, printed maps enabled the less wealthy to express their interest in geography by purchasing more modest depictions of the same areas. Remembering Pietro d'Ochino – our letter caster who was cross-examined at home by the Sant'Uffizio – it seems likely, especially when we take into account the very poor survival rate of Vavassore's maps, that artisans like him were among the workshop's target market.[459] Evidence from the Rosselli inventory on map pricing is useful in the absence of an account book for our workshop, but we must tread carefully as the production of maps was not the only means of income available to Vavassore, and he therefore produced far fewer cartographic works. Navigational charts represented simultaneously the least and most expensive maps in Rosselli's map shop, whilst world maps of various sizes ranged in price from 7 *soldi* to 3 *lire*. Regional maps and city views cost considerably less, ranging from 1 *lira* 15 *soldi* to 3 *lire*.[460] Given

[455] Woodward, 2007, 780.
[456] Carlton, 2012, 29.
[457] Ambrosini notes that pairs of globes, world maps, and maps of the four continents increased in popularity among patricians in Venice into the seventeenth century. See F. Ambrosini, 'Descrittioni del mondo del case venete dei secoli XVI e XVII', in *Archivio Veneto* 117 (1981) 67-79.
[458] Ibid. 69-70.
[459] ASV, SU, b.14 fasc. 16 "Pietro d'Ochino" (unfoliated).
[460] G. Carlton, 'The Map Shop: The Evolving Landscape of Fifteenth-Century Map Consumption,' Paper presented at the Renaissance Society of America General Meeting 2014, 7.

that the cost of the materials required for producing maps (wood, paper, labour) remained relatively stable, and that the market for printed maps was more competitive in Venice than in Florence, it could be assumed that Vavassore's maps sold for similar (or perhaps even lower) prices. This would certainly have put them within the reach of artisans like Pietro d'Ochino, who as a letter caster was a skilled workman earning between three and four ducats per month.[461]

The Vavassore workshop was responsible for the production of at least two maps of the world: one undated, but which must have been printed before 1550, and another of 1558, a monumental twelve-sheet woodcut derived from an original by the Cologne cartographer Caspar Vopel. Neither were produced to Vavassore's own designs, but represent both the largest and smallest of the workshop's cartographic production. New knowledge of the world – whether in the form of commentaries, drawings or maps – actively challenged the established Ptolemaic traditions concerning the size of the globe and the distribution of land and sea, and as such, world maps required constant updating and redrawing.[462] Vavassore's woodcuts are just two of many world maps produced by cartographers and printers at a time when the Venetian map industry played a crucial role in charting the progress of discovery. Much has been written about this genre of map, especially on the technicalities of incorporating geographical knowledge of the New World into the medium.[463] It is therefore important to consider these maps within the context of contemporary understanding and interest in these discoveries, the possible appeal of such a map, and how the two world maps interact with other works produced by the workshop.

The workshop's first world map – entitled *Tuto il Mondo Tereno* – represents the most modest, and presumably least expensive, of the maps it produced (Fig. 4.18). Printed on one sheet measuring 52 x 37cm, there are more extant copies of this map than any other. Undated, Bagrow suggested that it was based on an earlier depiction of the world (the 'Sylvanus Map') from 1511.[464] Given the extent to which copying occurred in the map industry at this time, it is impossible to say for sure

[461] On the wage of a compositor, see Lowry, 1991, 186. This was comparable with a master in the building industry, who might earn up to 30 *soldi* per day. See B. Pullan, 1964, 415; and Salzberg, 2014, 20.
[462] Cosgrove, 1992, 72.
[463] See, for example, J. Brotton, *Trading Territories: Mapping the Early Modern World* (Chicago, 2004); and R. Shirley, *The Mapping of the World: Early Printed World Maps 1472-1700* (London, 1983).
[464] Bagrow, 1939, 8.

whether Vavassore was working from this model or not; and whether he produced it in the 1520s, 1530s, or 1540s. However, the map must have been produced before 1550, when an impression of it (together with another sheet from Vavassore's map of Italy) was 'repurposed' in the printing of Pagano's *Procession of the Doge* (see below). This depiction of the world is not the most sophisticated of Vavassore's cartographic works, but nonetheless incorporates the Ptolemaic concepts of latitude and longitude, and allows us to reconstruct a contemporary understanding of the distribution of lands and seas (including North America, South America, Cuba, Hispaniola, and the 'Fortunate' or Canary Islands, which are all included on Vavassore's map).

The 1558 map was a considerably larger undertaking (Fig. 4.19). Comprising of twelve separate sheets, the assembled dimensions of this map measure almost two metres in length by one metre in height, making it one of the largest of all the multi-block woodcuts produced by the workshop (the other is the perspective plan of Trent). The blocks required to create the impression would have taken a very long time to prepare, and Vavassore may have had to employ extra cutters to incise the design (thus increasing his labour costs). The cost of the paper would also have been substantial. Unlike the other maps produced by the workshop, which probably catered to a wide variety of customers from every social level, this would have been an expensive product, catering to a niche market that was both wealthier and had enough space to display such an object. Although Bagrow recorded the existence of a single damaged impression of this map in Vienna, another has come to light at the Houghton Library at Harvard. Like the extant impressions of the *Battle of Marignano* and view of *Trent*, colour has been applied to this impression of Vavassore's world to elevate his work beyond simply that of a printed map. Decorative details, figures, animals, borders and scales have been highlighted with blue, green, and red pigments. The application of colour is not, however, as skilled or effective, and the overall effect is muddy and inconsistent; with the red pigment appearing as though added at a later date (Fig. 4.20).

Thanks to its large size and the cost associated with producing this map of the world, it seems highly unlikely that Vavassore would have had the space or inclination to store copies of it in his shop. Instead, he probably produced impressions from it upon request from his customers. Unlike copperplates used for intaglio maps and engravings, which could be heated and re-carved with another

design; once carved, woodblocks could not usually be reconditioned and used again. Although blocks were sturdy enough to withstand the wear and tear inflicted by regular printing, once carved, it was difficult to repurpose the blocks for another use. While it was possible to make alterations and repairs, the fundamental design was fixed in place at the time of its carving. It is therefore unsurprising, given the cost implications of obtaining and carving the wood, that blocks were stored and used in workshops for a long time and could be passed between generations.[465]

As mentioned above, Vavassore's second world map was derived from a work published by Caspar Vopel, a cartographer and instrument maker active in Cologne until his death in 1561. No copies of the original Vopel map have survived, so are known only to us through copies by Vavassore (1558) and Bernaard van den Putte (1570). Matteo Pagano later published a woodcut edition derived from Vavassore's copy, which is almost identical except that it is produced on a smaller scale.[466] According to Bagrow, Vopel had complained that Vavassore had reprinted his map without mentioning him as author. However, Vopel's comments must have been based on hearsay, rather than from consulting an impression of Vavassore's map, as he is indeed credited for the design in a large colophon.[467]

Although the workshop produced a larger number of regional maps and city views to their own designs, it is clear that in the field of world mapping, Vavassore achieved success by working from successful models. Vopel's disquiet that Vavassore might have copied his map without attributing it to him probably represents the general feeling among map producers at this time. Few wanted to carry out the time-consuming tasks of designing and publishing a map simply to have their work copied and distributed by another. Although Vavassore applied to the Senate for privileges against some of his printed books, he never applied for the protection of a privilege for his maps. There is evidence of printmakers applying to protect their maps from copyists – the most well-known example being Anton Kolb's request concerning Jacopo de'Barbari's *View of Venice* – but Vavassore probably

[465] Vavassore bequeaths a set of woodcut illustrations for books and blocks of Saints (and possibly others) to his nephew Alvise in his testament of 1570. See transcription in Schulz, 1998, 124.
[466] Pagano's map was printed on two sheets rather than 12 (15.5 x 77cm), and can be found at the British Library (51.5 x 77cm, Shelfmark Maps C.7c.17). It is briefly described in the Appendix of E. Dekker, 'Caspar Vopel's Ventures in Sixteenth-Century Celestial Cartography' in *Imago Mundi* 62:2 (2010) 183.
[467] The colophon reads: "Caspar Vopelius Madeb. 1558 mathemati, conscripsit."

realised that, in an industry based on the copying and updating of existing maps, such requests were fruitless.[468]

The purchaser of one of Vavassore's world maps – especially of the first, more modest and affordable representation – probably belonged to a category of buyer described and defined by Liz Horodowich as an "armchair traveller."[469] Although the names of Venetian explorers were not among those who played pivotal roles in the discovery of the New World – nor, even, was Venice the first Italian city to hear of the discoveries – Venice became the capital for the transmission of knowledge of these discoveries across sixteenth century Europe.[470] Just as in other cities, the discovery of the New World piqued the interest of many Venetian writers who quickly became fascinated with the Americas.[471] Information about the voyages of discovery flowed into Venice from embassies and agents, including Gasparo Contarini in Spain, and circulated in various forms.[472] His account of the conquest of Mexico City is also included in Sanudo's diary.[473] The sixteenth century saw the development of travel writing, a genre that shifted "from a discussion focused on the

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[468] On Kolb's request, see note 383. Domenico Zenoi also succeeded in obtaining a privilege from the Senate in 1567, to "print or have printed for sale devotional figures, portraits, and geographies of Europe, Asia, Africa." This privilege is transcribed in E. Bevilacqua, 'Geografi e Cosmografi,' *Storica della Cultura Veneta* 3:11 (1981) 365.

[469] See E. Horodowich, 'Armchair Travelers and the Venetian Discovery of the New World,' *Sixteenth Century Journal* 36:4 (2005) 1039-62; and *idem*, 'Venetians in America: Nicolò Zen and the Virtual Exploration of the New World,' *Renaissance Quarterly* 67:3 (2014) 841-77.

[470] News of the discovery of the Americas reached Rome and Florence before it reached Venice, but the city was second only to Paris in producing texts about the New World in the sixteenth century. See R. Romeo, *Le scoperte americane nella concienza italiana del cinquecento* (Rome, 1989) 15; R. Hirsch, 'Printed Reports on the Early Discoveries and Their Reception' in F. Chiappelli, *First Images of America: The Impact of the New World on the Old* (Berkeley, 1976); and Horodowich, 2005, 1041-2.

[471] See, for example, J. H. Elliot, *The Old World and the New* (Cambridge, 1970) 12-14; K. O. Kupperman, *America in European Consciousness, 1493-1750* (Chapel Hill, 1995); Penrose, 1967; Romeo, 1989; and E. Dursteler, 'Reverberations of the Voyages of Discovery in Venice, c.1501: The Trevisan Manuscript in the Library of Congress' in *Mediterranean Studies* 9 (2001) 43-64.

[472] Contarini had various discussions with Pietro Martire d'Anghiera, an Italian humanist and teacher who later became an administrator, a member of the Council of the Indies, and the author of *De orbe novo decades III*, a history of Spanish discoveries. Through him he obtained knowledge about native peoples and their customs, and saw some of the treasures sent back to Spain from Mexico. See G. Stiffoni, 'La scoperta e la conquista dell'America nelle prime relazioni degli ambasciatori veneziani (1497-1559)' in A. Caracciolo Aricò, *L'impatto della scoperta dell' America nella cultura veneziana* (Rome, 1990) 356; and F. Ambrosini, 'Echi della conquista del Messico nella Venezia del Cinquecento', in Caracciolo Aricò, 1990, 7-23. On Gasparo Contarini, see E. G. Gleason, *Gasparo Contarini: Venice, Rome, and Reform* (Berkeley, 1993).

[473] DMS, 33:501-3, letter from Gasparo Contarini dated 6 March 1520.

marvelous and fantastical… to an unprecedented ethnographic analysis of the plurality of new worlds that came to be known during the age of exploration."[474] Cartographic depictions of the world and the continents gave visual representation of these plural new worlds, and provided an ideal counterpart to published travel accounts and the descriptive books of islands, or *Isolari*.[475] The fact that so many maps circulated in Venice – whether they had been produced there for a local market, or imported (like the original Vopel map) from the North – created a foundation for what has been termed "cartographic literacy."[476] Although Cosgrove limited the application of this concept to the patrician and citizen classes of Venice, the production of maps like Vavassore's *Tuto il Mondo Tereno* implies a similar level of familiarity among, at the very least, skilled artisans.

The Vavassore workshop catered to the "armchair traveller" who wanted to enhance his geographical knowledge by distributing a variety of maps illustrating the countries, continents, trade routes and cities that Venetians had become accustomed to hearing about. Travel was no longer the preserve of merchants and missionaries, but was increasingly undertaken by curious and independent secular travellers and reporters.[477] We have seen from the inventory evidence analysed by Ambrosini and Carlton that growing numbers of Venetian houses contained maps, which were displayed on the walls of family *porteghi* and *studioli*. Even if they did not collect the more specific geographical depictions of countries like France, Germany, Hungary, Spain and the British Isles that were sold by the Vavassore workshop, at least half of these homes contained a world map. As Federico da Porto observed when he looked upon the world map displayed in Marin Sanudo's *portego*, maps enabled their viewers to see "the immense machine of the universe opened up… the seas, the heavens, the infernal regions, and those who live on the other side of the earth."[478] It is evident that Vavassore maintained his interest in geography and navigation until the end of his life, as the workshop's cartographic production is

[474] Horodowich, 2005, 1039-40.
[475] On the *isolari* as a genre, see Wilson, 2005 and T. Conley, *The Self-Made Map: Cartographic Writing in Early Modern France* (Minnesota, 2010) chapter 5.
[476] Cosgrove, 1992, 69.
[477] Horodowich, 2005, 1040.
[478] Federico da Porto's account of entering the house of Marin Sanudo in the early years of the sixteenth century is recorded in DMS, 22:211; Ambrosini, 1981, 67-8; Carlton, 2012, 28-9; and P. Fortini Brown, *Private Lives in Renaissance Venice: Art, Architecture and the Family* (New Haven, 2004) 222-3.

complemented by the later publication of Girolamo Muzio's *Il Gentilhuomo* in 1571.[479] This popular dialogue engaged with a variety of different subjects including comparisons between the Old World and the New, and in particular between Venice and the waterlocked Aztec city of Tenochtitlan/Tenustitan (Mexico).[480] Vavassore must have been one of the first to publish this work, as the earliest editions of the work date from Venice in that year. His nephew issued a further edition of *Il Gentilhuomo* in conjunction with Giovanni Domenico Micheli in 1575; reflecting the workshop's continuing interest in travel, discovery and the New World even after it had ceased to produce new maps.[481]

4.5 The Cartographic Network

There has been a general consensus among scholars of the history of cartography that the map industry was characterised by an elaborate division of labour between design, cutting, printing, and sale.[482] As mentioned earlier in this chapter, what is notable about Vavassore is that each of these apparently separate processes was carried out within the confines of his workshop. Among the extant works produced by him during the fifteenth century, there are maps that demonstrate his ability not only to carve the blocks required to generate impressions for sale, but to create new designs for maps and views for which there was no precedent. There are also, of course, examples of works produced from older models and designs by other

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[479] 34 editions of *Il Gentilhuomo* published by Vavassore in 1571 have been identified on Edit16.

[480] This comparison can also be found in the sixteenth century account of B. Díaz del Castillo, *The True History of The Conquest of New Spain* translated by J. Cohen (London, 1973) 250. Gasparo Contarini also provided an account of Tenustitan in his dispatches of 4 September 1522. According to the letters of Cortes, which Contarini read, the Spanish force found a tidal salt lake in the centre of which was a large city called Tenustitan, said to have up to 40,000 hearths, the lord of which claimed jurisdiction over La Scaltezza. He was held in great veneration by his subjects who obeyed him implicitly and they were extremely civilized "save with regard to religion, being Idolators; and to their Idols they sacrifice human beings" and in eating their enemies. However, their homes were spacious and well decorated, their clothes and household hangings were made of cotton cloth, they had a great deal of gold which they fashioned into ornaments rather than circulated as money. All their contracts were made by bartering one commodity for another, although for smaller purchases they used a fruit resembling an almond as currency. TNA: PRO 31/14/71 f.37v (transcription provided by Stephen Bowd).

[481] The colophon of the 1575 edition of *Il Gentilhuomo* reads "In Venetia: appesso gli heredi di Luigi Valvassori, & Gio. Domenico Micheli, 1575."

[482] See Mukerji, 2006, 656; Cosgrove, 1992, 69; Robinson, 1975, 3; and more generally, Woodward, 1996.

mapmakers. This section hopes to demonstrate that this was, in fact, a reciprocal arrangement; for as often as Vavassore used the designs of cartographers like Caspar Vopel and Giacomo Gastaldi, the workshop's designs were adopted as models by other mapmakers and continued to influence new regional maps and city views for many decades after his death.

This independent method of production did not mean that Vavassore was not part of a much larger network of mapmakers and printers. Much has been written about the map industry of Venice, and even of the production of the shops established there from the 1550s onwards. We know a lot about where mapmakers established their workshops in the city thanks to the colophons included on their works – in fact, the location of Vavassore's shop on the Ponte dei Fuseri was recorded for the first time in the colophon of the *Marignano* woodcut discussed above. Like other printers and booksellers, their shops could be found for the most part along the main shopping thoroughfares of the Merceria and Frezzaria. Despite our ability to locate the activity of mapmakers in the mid sixteenth century city, we know very little about how cartographers and printers interacted with one another at this time.

Vavassore's name has, without exception, been mentioned in histories of cartography alongside that of Matteo Pagano.[483] Yet there has been little explanation or justification for this comparison. Both Bagrow and Woodward appear to have considered the two together because it was thought that these mapmakers were active from the 1530s onwards.[484] However, it is evident that Vavassore had already been active for over a decade by this time, for he had produced the monumental woodcut of the *Battle of Marignano*, as well as the city views of Rhodes and Constantinople (and probably of Padua and Venice, as well). Pagano's first maps, on the other hand, do not appear until 1538, by which time Vavassore's shop in San Luca had been established for over two decades.[485] Nonetheless, there are several similarities between the two workshops that could explain their consistent pairing in the historiography. Both employed the woodcut medium to produce maps – and it seems

[483] See, for example, Woodward, 2007, 780-1; Beans, 1948, 73; and Shirley, 1996, 32-6.
[484] Woodward, 2007, 780-1; Bagrow, 2010, 161. Pagano's maps were catalogued in much the same way as those of Vavassore, see Bagrow, 1940.
[485] 1515 is the date on the woodcuts for the *Apochalypsis* and the *Labours of Hercules*, as well as the *Battle of Marignano*, the colophon of which definitively places the workshop on the Ponte dei Fuseri in the parish of San Luca.

that they both possessed the skills required to cut the blocks themselves. Whilst Vavassore describes his profession as "incisor figurarum," there are no extant testaments or guild records for Pagano. A single privilege document of 18 August 1561 described him as a printer and bookseller, and among his extant maps, we find one example of him describing himself as a "chorographer."[486] Furthermore, both workshops published books and pamphlets as well as maps.[487]

Given the consistent comparison between the two printers, and the similarities outlined above, it is surprising that there has been no attempt to establish more firmly a connection between the two. However, closer examination of the extant maps produced by both Vavassore and Pagano reveals less correlation than we might expect between the two workshops. Although both produced city views, regional maps and world maps, they represent a very different choice of subject matter. Whilst the majority of maps produced by Vavassore's workshop depicted Italy and its provinces and cities – including Tuscany, Friuli, Padua and Venice – aside from a map of Piedmont, Pagano focused on the mapping of other cities and areas. The first of his dated works were maps of Cyprus and Crete, and one of his best-known works is a woodcut view of Cairo, published in 1549, and cut on twenty-one blocks. Pagano also appears to have had a much closer working relationship with Giacomo Gastaldi than Vavassore, as he printed at least four of his designs, as well as the accompanying text *Dell'Universale* (published in 1562). In his brief discussion of these two mapmakers, Woodward described Pagano as "less of a copyist than Vavassore."[488] However, the remaining maps tell a different story, as Pagano seems to have produced very few woodcuts to his own designs.

If the documentary evidence on Vavassore and his workshop is scant and scattered, there is almost nothing to be found on Pagano. In addition to the *privilegio* request mentioned above, like Vavassore he appears in the records of cases brought

[486] This request for a privilege from the Senate is transcribed in R. Almagià, *Intorno ad un grande Mappamondi perduto di Giacomo Gastaldi (1561)* (Florence, 1939). His four-sheet map of Tuscany includes the colophon: "Chorographia Tusciae … a gli honorati lettori studiosi della corographia Matthio Pagano… in Venetian per Mathio pagan in Frezaria al segno della Fede." This is included as no. 565 in R. V. Tooley, 'Maps in Italian Atlases of the Sixteenth Century, Being a Comparative List of the Italian Maps issued by Lafreri, Forlani, Duchetti, Bertelli, and Others Found in Atlases', *Imago Mundi* 3 (1939) 43.
[487] One interesting example is Pagano's book of woodcut embroidery patterns, the *Ornamento Delle Belle & virtuose Donne* published in 1554 (one copy is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art); which was probably derived from a similar book of patterns produced by Vavassore and his brother Florio in the 1530s.
[488] Woodward, 2007, 780.

before the Sant'Uffizio.[489] Pagano is otherwise evasive, and the only evidence of a connection between the two workshops is to be found among their output. Vavassore's 1539 portolan chart, for example, was reproduced by Pagano in 1558. The woodcut is almost identical to the original, the only exception being that Pagano has omitted to include Vavassore's name in the colophon, and replaced it with his own. This had evidently been a very popular and successful map, which may explain why Pagano was so keen to reproduce it.[490] Another example of flagrant copying is Pagano's, albeit smaller, version of the vast world map published in 1558 by Vavassore to a design by Vopel. Pagano's map, undated, condensed onto just two sheets what Vavassore had depicted on twelve. The result is a less impressive, though perhaps more attainable, world map. Whilst Vavassore evidently took great care to obtain and study an impression of Vopel's map, it is clear that Pagano worked from Vavassore's design rather than consulting an original. According to Elly Dekker, details from the celestial maps (such as the names of certain stars) are missing from both Vavassore and Pagano's copies, and the maps produced by the two workshops share a number of spelling errors and omissions in common.[491]

In the second of these two examples it is clear that, although Pagano did copy his design, he did carve his own, smaller, blocks. However, the remarkable closeness in the size of these two portolan charts of the eastern Mediterranean encourages speculation on whether or not they were printed from the same blocks. As Denis Cosgrove has argued, there is a great deal of evidence not just of copying, but of plates and blocks changing hands between workshops.[492] Vavassore may have been careful to attribute his map of the world to Vopel in the colophon, but it is often difficult to distinguish just who designed and printed a map. Printing surfaces – whether copper or wood – passed between workshops and were re-engraved, so that more than one name frequently appears on a single print.[493] When Pagano died in

[489] Pagano was brought before the Sant'Uffizio and fined three ducats for printing without a license some stories and other works printed against the form of the laws: "istorie et alter opere stampati contra la forma de le leze." See ASV, SU, b.14 fasc.1 (20 August 1558).
[490] No impression of the original 1539 print survives, but it was reprinted in 1542. Just one impression of Vavassore's second edition, and one of Pagano's copy, survive; the former at the Royal Maritime Museum in Greenwich and the latter in the library of the University of Helsinki.
[491] Dekker, 2010, 170.
[492] Cosgrove, 1992, 69.
[493] Woodward also refers to this phenomenon in his descriptive list of the maps of Paolo Forlani. See note 429, above.

1562, the contents of his workshop – including his blocks – passed to the brothers Francesco and Tommaso da Salò, who re-issued a perspective plan of Venice designed by Pagano in 1567.[494] We cannot know with any great certainty that Vavassore's portolan chart blocks entered Pagano's hands, but there does seem to have been a symbiotic relationship between the two workshops that was based on more than just close physical proximity.

The most intriguing evidence of the relationship between the two workshops is in the form of a woodcut, published by Pagano between 1550-60, on the verso of which are two maps by Vavassore. This woodcut printed from eight blocks and measuring over three metres in length, was described in detail by Michael Bury.[495] Depicting the ceremonial order of *The Procession of the Doge*, like the other monumental woodcuts discussed in the first section of this chapter, this print was presumably intended for display – perhaps as frieze decoration (Fig. 4.21). For the purpose of this dissertation, the most interesting part of this woodcut is the verso side. Woodward noted that "waste prints" of woodcut maps produced by Vavassore were used as paper for two of the eight sheets of Pagano's woodcut *Procession*, perhaps alluding to the expense of paper or the fact that "maps were regarded as more expendable than other prints."[496] Vavassore's woodcuts – one of the single sheet map of the world, and the other of the Italian peninsula – were indeed waste, or trial, copies. Both maps feature a printed title above the line of the frame: the title is absent from other copies of the map of Italy; whilst in other copies of the world map, the title is included within a small cartouche at the lower left of the world map.[497]

Given the cost of paper – which was an expense equal only to labour in sixteenth-century printing – it is unsurprising that these relatively large sheets would be repurposed for another print. Woodward's second claim seems more debatable: given their size and the effort and expense involved in their production, maps were probably considerably more expensive than other (woodcut) images. It is therefore unlikely that they were viewed as an expendable commodity by either producer or consumer. Whatever the purpose behind the creative reuse of these sheets, it offers

[494] The colophon to this map of Venice reads: "pianta prospettica di Venezia intitolata Venetia di Matteo Pagano. 1559. Ristampa di Francesco e Tommaso da Salò, 1567." For the Salò, see the entry in Ascarelli & Menato, 1989.
[495] See Bury, 2001, cat. no. 121.
[496] Woodward, 2007, 780. The Pagano print (and thus the Vavassore maps) are in the collection of the British Museum, shelfmarks 1860,0414.167 b & c.
[497] See Bagrow, 1939, 8-9.

evidence that the Vavassore and Pagano workshops interacted on an everyday level. Vavassore's shop at the edge of the parish of San Luca was located on the small canal immediately behind the Frezzaria (or, just a few minutes walk away) where Pagano kept his shop at the Sign of the Faith – making it ideally located for the day-to-day sharing of resources (Fig. 4.22).

Among all of the mapmakers in sixteenth century Venice, Vavassore's relationship with Pagano seems to have been quite unique. The likeliest reason for this is that the cartographic production of his workshop was waning at the time when a new generation of mapmakers – including Gernando Bertelli, Giovanni Francesco Camocio, Paolo Forlani, Bolognino Zaltieri and Domenico Zenoi – began to produce single sheet maps and custom-made atlases from engraved copperplates.[498] However, the maps already produced by the workshop continued to serve as models for maps published in Venice and across Europe. A particularly notable example is included in the *Theatro de la tierra vniversal* of Abraham Ortelius, a large and comprehensive atlas, published by the famous Antwerp publisher Christophe Plantin in 1588 (Fig. 4.23).[499] Among its regional maps of Italy, Ortelius' atlas includes a map of Friuli derived from the 1557 woodcut by Vavassore (Fig. 4.24). Although Vavassore is not credited, the influence of his map is clear on this later design; which follows his representation of its rivers and the labeling of the settlements on the edge of the Adriatic. Similarly, the Newberry Library contains two plans of Constantinople derived from Vavassore's undated bird's-eye view. The first is an anonymously published single sheet map, which is estimated to have been produced in Venice or Rome in the 1570s (Fig. 4.25). The bottom margin is badly damaged, but the author has added fourteen circular cartouches, thirteen of which contain portraits of sultans. Like the depiction of Friuli included in the atlas published by the Plantin Press, the shape and style of Vavassore's depiction of Constantinople – though simplified – is easily identifiable. The second representation of the city is included in another atlas, the *Civitatus orbis terrarium*, which was issued by Georg Braun and Franz Hogenberg in various editions from 1572 to 1612 (Fig. 4.26).[500] Finally, the third volume of Braun and Hogenberg's atlas (1581) also contained a

[498] From the stock of copperplates in the mapmakers *bottega*, the client was able to choose a selection of maps that would be printed, assembled into collections and bound. See Woodward, 2007, 788.
[499] A. Ortelius, *Theatro de la tierra vniversal* (Antwerp: Christophe Plantin, 1588) Plate 71.
[500] G. Braun & F. Hogenberg, *Civitatus orbis terrarium* (Cologne, 1577) v.1 f. 51.

perspective view of the city of Trent, inspired directly by Vavassore's earlier, much larger, woodcut (Fig. 4.27).[501] Although these examples represent, for the most part, the trend for bound collections of maps, the inclusion of maps based on Vavassore's designs attests to the longevity (and broad availability) of the workshop's cartographic production.

4.6 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was not just to build upon the existing scholarship on the Vavassore workshop's cartographic oeuvre, but to consider whether it can contribute to current trends in map scholarship; and to place these maps within their specific contexts. Although his name has appeared frequently in general studies of the map industry of sixteenth century Venice (and Italy), the lists of works attributed to him that had been compiled in the early twentieth century were in need of updating and expanding. Examples such as the *Battle of Marignano* and the perspective plan of *Trent*, which had come to light since the publication of early catalogues, have much to contribute to this field. Furthermore, the shape of the history of cartography as a field has changed much since Almagià and Bagrow first catalogued Vavassore's works. Instead of simply focusing on how and when maps were produced (and where in the world they had ended up), our understanding of the historical value of maps should be shaped by their ability to depict or demonstrate the context in which they were produced. Though the history of cartography is increasingly moving towards an understanding of the display and ownership of maps, understanding the motivations behind their creation, and their connections to contemporary interests and events, are equally valuable and informative pursuits.

Rather than viewing Vavassore's maps as an isolated aspect of the production of the workshop, contextualising them gives us greater insight not only to the market for such prints, but the ways mapmakers responded to changing circumstances. From the earliest depictions of the Venetian military successes at Marignano and Rhodes through to the later depictions of the changing world, the Vavassore workshop was responding to changing trends in map production. Fed by the stories, songs and printed pamphlets of the itinerant *cantastorie*, as well as the longer-lasting

[501] Ibid. v.3 f.48.

accounts of foreign lands and the growing world, sixteenth century Venetians developed an appetite for images and texts that reflected current events and changing circumstances. Vavassore's maps catered to this demand, providing a range of maps that varied in size and complexity, as well as price.

Connections also arise between the cartographic oeuvre and printed books and pamphlets; which are an important consideration in this microhistory of the Vavassore workshop. The *Marignano* woodcut drew on the literary tradition of chivalric romance, and the poems of popular authors like Ariosto, Boiardo and Tasso. As for many printers at this time, editions of Ariosto's epic poem the *Orlando Furioso* provided a steady and dependable form of income. Many of the editions published by the workshop on an annual (or even biannual) basis were illustrated with woodcuts of his own design, and the war imagery they contained was replicated in the maps produced to commemorate battles and sieges. Short, throwaway pamphlets such as the *Lacrimoso lamento di Rodi* employed similar heroic language, combining epic fantasy with equally fantastical reality. The symbiotic relationship between maps and the typically sixteenth-century genre of travel writing is perhaps a more obvious comparison; but all of these connections are an important frame of reference when considering the motivations of a printer and the demands of his market (as I will demonstrate in the next chapter). On a more practical level, the stable income derived from publishing books and pamphlets allowed Vavassore to invest time and resources into the more expensive, but potentially very lucrative, area of map making.

Inventory evidence for the display of maps in sixteenth-century homes reveals that Vavassore was producing every kind of map purchased by Venetians at this time. The remaining maps also point to the fact that he was producing maps that offered considerable variation in price. From the more modest, single-sheet city views and regional maps to the vast twelve-sheet world map derived from Vopel, the Vavassore workshop catered to a variety of customers. There can be no doubt that wealthy patricians and citizens purchased maps – and, perhaps, had them professionally coloured – to display in their homes in the city and on the *terraferma*. However, the existence of so few copies of the single-sheet city views and perspective plans is indicative of a different type of buyer: the (albeit literate) artisan, who has been represented in the guise of the letter caster Pietro d'Ochino throughout this chapter. Although the vast majority of Vavassore's maps were intended for

display, the existence of the portolan chart of the eastern Mediterranean also serves as a reminder that Venetian map workshops must also cater for the practical needs of their customers. As knowledge of trade routes and coastlines advanced, map producers had to adapt and reissue their maps to keep up with market demand.

Perhaps the most valuable contribution to our knowledge of the Venetian map workshop arises from the discussion of Vavassore as an independent producer of maps. Moving away from the idea that maps were designed by professional 'cartographers' like Giacomo Gastaldi before being passed into the hands of less skilled artisans, we find in the case of our workshop that such a complex division of labour was unneccesary: the processes of design, cutting, printing, and selling could be condensed into the activities of a single workshop. Although many printers did not have the skills to produce their own blocks or type – demonstrated, for example, by Vavassore's production of woodcuts to illustrate pamphlets published by his friend Paolo Danza – Vavassore proves the exception to the rule. With his training as a woodcarver, Vavassore could focus on the most complex process in a map's production – the cutting of the blocks. It is impossible to know how many hands may have contributed to producing the maps published by the workshop, but it is clear that the Venetian map industry was one that thrived less on competition than on cooperation and collaboration (even if that 'collaboration' was actually copying). Even if the subject was entirely unprecedented – as it was when Vavassore produced the bird's-eye view of the relatively obscure town of *Trent* – new maps could only be produced by copying and adapting older models. Blocks and plates passed between mapmakers hands on an 'as-needed' basis; but the sharing of such basic resources as waste prints by Vavassore and Pagano is indicative of much closer and more co-dependent relationships. Analysing these connections in more detail provides a fresh perspective on how workshops, and the map industry at large, thrived.

Chapter Five

Responding to the Market: Vavassore's Production of 'Popular' Books

As I demonstrated in Chapter Two, over two thirds of the books published by the Vavassore workshop fall into the oft-problematic category of 'popular' books. These texts were almost always in Italian, in the smaller quarto and octavo formats, and composed of fewer leaves than their more scholarly counterparts. Although their rates of survival are poorer, they form a crucial cornerstone of the workshop's production. Developing the discussion of printed images and maps in Chapters Three and Four, this chapter focuses on Vavassore's attempts to combine woodcut image and letterpress text together in order to create 'general interest' volumes that had the potential to capture the attention of a large proportion of the Venetian population.

The term 'entrepreneur' can frequently be found in the historical scholarship concerning the economic and social lives of people in early modern Italy. From military men engaged in making war and building states to unregulated healers selling quack remedies; weavers of cloth to printers of Hebrew books in Venice, the word – often with the prefix "active", "innovative" or "successful" – is often used with little or no reference to its sixteenth-century meaning.[502] For example, Mario Infelise's chapter concerning the publication of books and the circulation of images in *A Companion to Venetian History, 1400-1797* (2013) presents Giuseppe Remondini as "a small entrepreneur from the Venetian *terraferma*, starting from … a small-scale operation, [who] constructed a veritable publishing empire which would a century later be considered one of the largest in Europe."[503] Such use of the term strikes a somewhat anachronistic note, however, as the English word 'entrepreneur' is of relatively recent coinage. The Italian equivalent *imprenditore*, derived from the

[502] See, for example, J. Fynn-Paul (ed.) *War, Entrepreneurs and the State in Europe and the Mediterranean, 1300-1800* (Leiden, 2014); D. Gentilcore, *Healers and Healing in Early Modern Italy* (Manchester, 1998) 3; R. K. Marshall, *The Merchants of Prato: Small Entrepreneurs in the Late Medieval Economy* (Baltimore, 1999); C. F. Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History* (London, 2000) 37, 58, and 77; and A. Shear & J. Hacker, 'Introduction' 12-3; B. Nielson, 'Daniel van Bombergen, A Bookman of Two Worlds' 64-75; and J. Hacker, 'Sixteenth-Century Jewish Internal Censorship of Hebrew Books' 109-119; all in A. Shear & J. Hacker (eds.), *The Hebrew Book in Early Modern Italy* (Philadelphia, 2011).

[503] M. Infelise, 'Book Publishing and the Circulation of Information', E. Dursteler (ed.), *A Companion to Venetian History, 1400-1797* (Leiden, 2013) 651-74; quotation at 664.

Latin term *imprendere* (to undertake, or embark on something), may have a more established etymology, but considerable future research will be required to establish and analyse the meaning and use of such a term (or terms) in Italy and beyond in the early modern period.

In its common modern usage, an entrepreneur is defined as a person who, in response to market demand, is driven to set up a business or businesses; and takes on financial risks in the hope of achieving profit. With his prolific and longstanding workshop, coupled with evidence of the substantial financial gain that can be found when we compare his testaments of 1523 and 1570, Giovanni Andrea Vavassore could certainly be cast in this mould. However, none of the surviving contemporary documents pertaining to Vavassore or his workshop refer to him as an *imprenditore*; and nor do they use any other term to describe him that is not directly linked to his trade as a printer and seller of books, pamphlets, maps and prints (*stampador, libraio*). Furthermore, questions arise as to whether Vavassore's actions and activities contributed to the longevity and apparent success of his workshop, or whether these factors were merely the result of an extraordinarily long life dedicated to the Venetian printing trade.

The woodcut prints and maps discussed in the preceding chapters demonstrate Vavassore's ability to actively engage with the market. The apocalyptic woodcuts produced for Alessandro Paganino met the immediate demand for a title that reflected the eschatological preoccupations of the local market; whilst the Marignano woodcut exploited the atmosphere of elation and celebration that followed this rare victory of the Venetian forces.[504] The ability of the Vavassore workshop to react to contemporary events and changing circumstances becomes still more evident in relation to the books and pamphlets in a wide variety of genres and forms it produced across eight decades of the sixteenth century. Collectively, in addition to the graphic objects already accounted for in Chapters Three and Four, the Vavassore workshop – whether under Giovanni Andrea independently, in concert with his brother Florio, or later in the hands of his heirs – was responsible for over three hundred distinct works surviving in collections today. It is impossible to say how many more of its publications have been lost over time. Taken together, these publications form an eclectic and sometimes contradictory grouping: from scholarly

[504] On these examples, see Chapters Three and Four respectively.

tomes to short throwaway pamphlets, devotional aids to the scurrilous writings of Aretino; in both vernacular and Latin, with illustrations and without, in folio, quarto, and octavo.

If the overall aim of examining the surviving output is to create a picture of the workshop over time, the aim of this chapter is to refocus this process by examining a group of 'popular' books that demonstrate most effectively Vavassore's response to the demands of the market. Sixteenth-century references to books may not have distinguished between popular and elite titles, but there have been many attempts by historians to define this category.[505] Paul Grendler suggested that one major indicator of the "popularity" of a volume was its physical form, with most popular books published in small format, whether quarto or octavo, on a small number of pages, using certain styles of type (chiefly, Gothic and Roman).[506] To the early modern consumer, such attributes were likely to indicate that a book was affordable (or cheap), accessible, and might contain particularly entertaining or useful information. In terms of its content, Grendler went on to argue that the popular book "exerts a very broad, nearly universal appeal… [it] might attract the interest and delight of those with more refined taste and greater intellectual capacity, as well as those of limited abilities and tastes."[507] In their format, all of the case studies in this chapter conform to Grendler's category of the popular book: they are short publications, printed in the vernacular, on quarto or octavo sized sheets. However, as the case of the pattern books published by the Vavassore workshop between 1530 and 1566 will show, both their content and target audience pushes the boundaries established around this genre by previous scholars.

As this chapter is concerned with charting Vavassore's ability to respond accurately and effectively to the demands of the market, it begins by addressing both the problem of the market and the need for the workshop to diversify its activities in order to overcome it. The Venetian market of the sixteenth century was an extremely complex system of exchange, in which goods could be traded both over

[505] As Salzberg has argued, they instead tended to identify a small or short work using epithets like *libretto* (little book), *operetta*, or *opuscolo* (little work), see R. Salzberg, 'From Printshop to Piazza: The Dissemination of Cheap Print in Sixteenth Century Venice' (PhD Thesis, 2008) 19; eadem, 2014, 19.
[506] Grendler, 1993, 451-2. Neil Harris added to these criteria when he suggested that the most popular books, which are also the least well survived, were more commonly published in the vernacular. See Harris, 1993, 20-1.
[507] Grendler, 1993, 453.

and under the counter, for money, goods, or services. I begin by reconstructing the contemporary market for goods of all kinds; situating printed goods, and more specifically the output of the Vavassore workshop, within it. Vavassore's somewhat puzzling adoption of the moniker "guadagnino" will also be addressed here, and its potential meanings explored. Moving away from the Venetian market itself, the rest of the chapter takes the form of two very different case studies. Both will be used to illuminate Vavasore's ability to respond to market demand. Though both pattern books and wartime pamphlets have attracted the attention of previous scholars, examination of the surviving examples published by the Vavassore workshop will be used to complement and add to our existing knowledge of popular books. Whilst Vavassore's motives as a printer, publisher and seller remain an important consideration, this chapter focuses on the category of the popular book from the perspective of the demands and expectations of the market.

5.1 Reconstructing the Venetian Market

In directing our attention to the activities of Nicholas Jenson and Aldus Manutius, Martin Lowry addressed the very practical issues of how the earliest workshops were established, the kind of equipment and raw materials they required, and how much they might have cost.[508] In summary, the equipment of a printer – including the press and a font or two of metal type – represented a capital investment hardly larger than the cost of paper required for a single volume.[509] Whilst the more general, day-to-day expenses of paper, ink, and labour were substantial, the initial costs for an artisan seeking to establish a printing press were much lower than those engaged in trades of a comparable social or professional level; including furnaces for the production of glass and mirrors, and looms for silk weaving.[510] However, despite

[508] Lowry, 1979, 10-14.
[509] This was in large part thanks to the relative expense of paper as a raw material. As early as 1474, Peter the baker of Padua was selling "one press for printing letters, wooden, fully equipped" among a job lot of bric-a-brac for just 100 lire, or just over 16 ducats. As recorded in Lowry, 1979, 10. See also, Lane, 1973, 316.
[510] On glassmaking, see W. P. McCray, *Glassmaking in Renaissance Venice* (Aldershot, 1999); and on the silk industry, see L. Molà, *The Silk Industry of Renaissance Venice* (Baltimore, 2000). See also A. Mozzato, 'The Production of Woollens in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Venice' and F. Trivellato, 'Murano Glass, Continuity and Transformation (1400-1800)' in P. Lanaro, *At The Centre of the Old World: Trade and Manufacturing in*

our relatively detailed knowledge about the kind of equipment required and the cost of establishing a press we know comparatively little about how smaller workshops actually operated in early modern Venice. If there were so many printers in the city, how did small workshops continue to survive – or even to flourish – in such a competitive market? Is it possible for us to compare the 'success' of one printer with another, and what kind of criteria must we consider in order to establish what 'being successful' actually meant in the Venetian printing trade? The case of the Vavassore workshop is a useful aid in grappling with such questions: by stepping away from the large and well-documented presses with multiple outposts across the peninsula, we are able to enrich our understanding of the way small businesses functioned and thrived, whilst gaining an insight into the business of the early modern printing trade.

The ability to make a profit is, certainly, a good indicator of the success of any business, modern or early modern. Profit was clearly important to Vavassore, for he adopted the nickname "il guadagnino" – which literally translates as 'the small profit' – on the majority of his publications.[511] Victor Massena was the first to draw attention to this unusual nickname, speculating on whether the term might have been used to refer to a usurer in the Venetian dialect.[512] An article by Denis Reidy is otherwise the only scholarship to have commented on the inclusion of the phrase on Vavassore's publications. He writes that "rather than indicative of the fact that Giovanni Andrea was a successful printer – at least 85 editions is hardly a very prolific output especially if it is compared with the output of, say, the House of Giunta – it would perhaps suggest that Giovanni Andrea Vavassore was also a money-lender, an activity from which he was more likely to earn a tidy little profit than from printing."[513] Closer research into the Vavassore workshop and its output has revealed many more publications and collaborative projects than the eighty-five editions attributed to him by Reidy in the mid 1990s. Furthermore, my investigation into the etymology of *guadagnino* has revealed that it is not a term specific to the

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Venice and the Venetian Mainland, 1400-1800 (Toronto, 2006) 73-108 and 143-184 respectively.

[511] See Volume 2, Appendix 1. At least two thirds of the works issued by the press include the moniker Guadagnino, and Giovanni Andrea's great nephews continued to use it until the workshop ceased its activities in 1593.

[512] "que guadagnino signifie interesse – meme un peu usurier – dans la dialecte vénitien?" Massena, Parte 3 1914, 112.

[513] See D. V. Reidy, 'Dürer's *Kleine Passion* and a Venetian Block Book' in F. Flood & W. Kelly (eds.), *The German Book, 1450-1750* (London, 1995) 83.

Venetian dialect. The terms 'Guadagnare' and 'Guadagnarsi' were evidently contemporary ones, however, as they appear in Filippo Venuti's sixteenth-century dictionary, published by the workshop in many editions.[514] Their definitions refer to profit, winning, and gain, but the derived term 'Guadagnino' used by Vavassore is absent. It is also absent from the Battaglia's comprehensive dictionary of the Italian language, where the diminutive and pejorative 'guadagnuccio' and 'guadagnuzzo' appear.[515] The only references to 'Guadagnino' I have been able to trace are on the colophons of the works issued by the press, and on the select few archival documents that refer to him.[516]

There is also no concrete evidence to support the theory that the printer supplemented his income by lending money at interest. Vavassore's long-held connections with the *Scuola del Santissimo Sacramento* at the church of San Moisè, as well as the regular devotional works issued by the workshop could, on the other hand, be seen to work against the idea that he actively engaged in the trade more commonly associated with Jews in Venice.[517] Although Vavassore was able to provide a modest financial legacy to his nieces and nephews upon his death (as well as merchandise, the contents of his house, and his other possessions) the list of assets in his testament is not detailed enough to confirm or deny his engagement in petty lending in search of the small profit to which his nickname refers. The rare survival of transcriptions from the account books of four Jewish moneylenders in the Venetian territory of Brescia suggest the kind of goods and sums that could contribute substantially to the income of an artisan, but would not necessarily have appeared on his final testament.[518] Here, the Brescian Jews dealt in sums ranging from a few *soldi* or *lire* to much higher amounts. Items and their values varied, from the cloaks, caps, jackets and other clothing or lengths of cloth pawned by women for

[514] F. Venuti, *Dittionario volgare et latino: nel quale si contiene, come i vocaboli italiani si possano dire et esprimere latinamente.* (Venice: Giovanni Andrea Vavassore, 1561) 403.
[515] Etymology of the term 'guadagnare' suggests that the word is of Germanic origin. S. Battaglia, *Grande dizionario della lingua italiana* (Turin, 1961-).
[516] ASV, SU, b.7 f.26r, November 1548 concerning "Z. Andr. Guadagnino". In his second testament on 19 January 1570, Vavassore refers to himself as "Zoan Andrea Valvasorj ditto guadagnino". Schulz, 1998, 124.
[517] On the Jews as second-hand traders, see P. Allerston, 'The Second-Hand Clothes Trade in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Venice', *Costume* 33 (1999) 46-56; M. Shulvass, *The Jews in the World of the Renaissance* (Chicago, 1973) 114-154, esp. 136-8.
[518] Bowd, 2010, 165.

small amounts; to silver and damask belts and gold rings and gems.[519] Such contemporary accounts are useful as they suggest that, given the very ordinary (and relatively low value) nature of items people wished to pawn, it is entirely possible that Vavassore supplemented his income by lending small sums secured with pawned goods. Furthermore, these items would not have (and do not) appeared on a testament predominantly concerned with the passing of presses, blocks and books between members of a printing family.

In any case, the figure of Vavassore and his moniker 'il guadagnino' serves as a reminder of the need for early modern artisans to diversify their activities in order to earn a living. Operating in Venice, Vavassore's workshop catered to a remarkably wide range of inhabitants, both visitors and residents, who were able to acquire an equally kaleidoscopic range of goods. The list of items demanded by Albrecht Dürer's patron Willibald Pirckheimer in 1506 provides some insight into the variety of items on sale: gemstones and pearls, rugs, history paintings, enameled goods, paper, feathers from cranes and swans, and newly published texts in Greek.[520] There were equally diverse ways of acquiring such goods. Patricia Allerston has vastly increased our understanding of the second hand trade in Venice, which was an important means by which people of every social level obtained goods.[521] Items like clothes, household furnishings, books, jewellery and other precious objects continuously circulated through a series of channels: new or used, over or under the shop counter, obtained in lieu of payment, bought at public auctions, rented, borrowed, received as gifts or stolen.[522] It was clearly not unusual for Dürer to have received three rings as payment for three small paintings executed during his time in Venice.[523]

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[519] Ibid. 166.
[520] P. Braunstein, 'Un Étranger dans la ville, Albrecht Dürer' in P. Braunstein (ed.) *Venise 1500: La puissance, la novation et la concorde; le triomphe du mythe* (Paris, 1993) 216-228. Also cited in Allerston, 2007, 11-46. Dürer's role as a book buyer is also noted in L. Jardine, *Worldly Goods: New History of the Renaissance* (New York, 1996) 225.
[521] Allerston, 1996.
[522] In Sanudo's Testament, he insists that his books be sold at auction, suggesting that this was not an uncommon practice: "I wish and command that all my other printed books, which are in the large study on the ground floor, and those manuscripts that are in my armoires in my bedroom be sold by my executors at public auction … They are more than 6,500 in number and have cost me a lot of money, and they are rare and beautiful objects, many of which one no longer finds." Sanudo, 2008, 40.
[523] Allerston, 2007, 12.

With increasing restrictions by both the Inquisition and Senate, the market for books also moved quickly, and payment with goods and services rather than money was convenient.[524] Artisans bought books with their own wine, oil, flour or fabrics, whilst itinerant sellers of print might leave objects such as bedsheets or tablecloths as security until they sold all the books they had had printed.[525] Some books, however, would never be paid for: a Brescian bookseller who drew up a list of money owed to and by him in 1568 noted that many of his debts had been years in the making, lamenting "God knows when they will pay … every few days books get banned, and those that are in use this year, next year are good only to throw to the fish."[526] We cannot, therefore, assume that Vavassore exclusively exchanged his printed wares for money, but probably also received goods and services in lieu of payment.

In light of such a complex system of exchange it is exceptionally difficult to calculate the financial worth of any artisanal practice in the early modern period, and records pertaining to the prices of books, prints and maps are especially scant. Remaining account books include a wide variety of different coinages and monies, and as David Landau and Peter Parshall have proved, attempting to correlate denominations can be bewildering.[527] Whilst a Latin folio volume of a classical, legal, medical or philosophical text might be purchased for a ducat (124 *soldi*) or more, vernacular books in smaller formats sold for much less.[528] Octavo, duodecimo and sextodecimo volumes comprising 150-400 pages sold for as little as 40, 30, 20, 10, 8, 6 or even 4 *soldi*.[529] Simple vernacular books containing poetry, comedy, news, history of hagiography sold at the lower end of these prices, making them well

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[524] On transactions such as these, see P. F. Gehl, 'Day-by-Day on Credit: Binders and Booksellers in Cinquecento Florence,' *La Bibliofilia* 100 (1998) 391-409 and *idem,* 'Credit-Sales strategies in the Late Cinquecento Book Trade', in A. Ganda & E. Grignani (eds.) *Libri tipografi biblioteche. Richerche storiche dedicate a Luigi Balsamo* (Florence, 1997) 193-206. Exchanges are also discussed in Nuovo, 2013; and E. Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance: Consumer Cultures in Italy 1400-1600* (New Haven, 2005).

[525] Francesco de Madiis frequently received payment in barter, be it wine, oil or flour. Pedlars left such basic items as security with the Ripoli press in Florence. Richardson, 1999, 38.

[526] Cited in Richardson, 1998, 38.

[527] Landau & Parshall, 1994, 349-53.

[528] In 1455, the Venetian government pegged the gold ducat at 124 *soldi* (or 6 *lire* 4 *soldi*) and this value held throughout the sixteenth century. See P. F. Grendler, 'Printing and Censorship', in C.B. Schmitt et al, *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1988) 30.

[529] The amount of paper required to produce a book was the deciding factor, and thus titles that required fewer sheets were cheaper. Ibid. 30-1. On book prices more generally, see Lowry, 1991.

within the reach of artisans. In the second half of the sixteenth century, a Venetian master mason earned in the region of 30-50 *soldi* per day, averaging an annual income between 50-100 ducats per year.[530] His assistant might expect to receive 20-37 *soldi* per day, but also received his board and lodging from his master.[531] Thus, based on wages and the cost of books, it is possible that a literate artisan could afford to own a few volumes; a humanist schoolmaster or university teacher a hundred or more, and a patrician collector, if so inclined, several thousand.[532]

Evidence relating to collections like that of Ferdinand Columbus are exceptionally rare, listing as it does the prices both he and his assistants paid for books and prints across Europe.[533] His collection has now been dispersed, and unfortunately many of the titles described within it cannot be pinpointed with any degree of accuracy. This has made it difficult for the historian to make meaningful comparisons between book prices from one location to another, or to attain a gauge of their real value beyond that outlined above. This is especially true when the amounts involved are small, as would have been case with the vast majority of items on sale in Vavassore's shop – making any evidence that books could be bought for as little as 4 *soldi* (or even, in the case of printed pamphlets and sheets, just one *bezzo*, or half a *soldo*) very useful indeed, for it confirms that printed wares were within the financial reach of the vast majority of the urban population.[534] It also makes us aware of the vast number of volumes Vavassore would have had to sell across the span of eight decades in order to amass the savings (let alone the expenses required to maintain his home and business premises) of several hundred ducats he distributed amongst his nieces and nephews upon his death. Though we lack an equivalent account book or description of the costs of Vavassore's books, taken together this

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[530] Grendler, 1988, 31. Grendler also outlines these figures in *idem*, 1992, 14.
[531] Grendler, 1988, 31.
[532] Grendler estimates the salary of a humanist schoolmaster or university teacher "of modest reputation" to earn between 50 and 100 ducats annually, which would have enabled him, for example, to afford Aldus Manutius' collection of five volumes of Aristotle's *Opera* (1495-1498) which sold for 11 ducats. See Grendler, 1988, 30. The patrician Marin Sanudo owned approximately 6,500 books, see note 522.
[533] See McDonald, 2004 and 2005; and D. Landau, 'The Print Collection of Ferdinand Columbus (1488-1539)' in Baker, Elam & Warwick (eds.) 2003, 29-36.
[534] The diary of Marin Sanudo is a rare source of information about the prices of ephemeral print, for he recorded in 1509 that printed songs about the ongoing war of Venice with the League of Cambrai were being sold in the city for one *bezzo*, or half a *soldo*, each. "Era stampado una canzon si chiama: *La Gata di Padoa,* con una altra in vilanescho di Tonin: *E l'è partì quei lanziman,* qual, per non offender il re di Romani, cussì chome si vendevano un bezo l'una…" DMS, 9:335 (22 November 1509). Cited in Salzberg, 2008, 29.

evidence allows us to make a number of informed generalisations about the price of the books on sale in his shop. Books in octavo format were cheaper than those in quarto (and, by the same token, folio) for considerably less paper was required in their manufacture. Similarly, books illustrated with woodcuts, maps or engravings demanded greater time and effort in their production than those without, were more frequently protected by a Senate approved *Privilegio*, and sold for a higher price.

Financial matters aside, one of the most impressive features of the Vavassore workshop is its longevity. Vavassore was already operating his press and selling his wares from his shop in San Luca in 1515, and had been working in collaboration with other printmakers and publishers in the two or three years previous to that point. The workshop then continued to flourish under his leadership until his death (at what was presumably a very great age) in 1572. Giovanni Andrea presided over almost six decades of activity alone, after which time the workshop was briefly in the hands of his nephew Alvise, before finally being passed to his own sons, who maintained it for a further two decades. Comparatively, Matteo Pagano's press and shop at the Sign of the Faith, with which the Vavassore workshop cultivated such close connections, was active from c.1543 to 1560.[535] Niccolò Zoppino, who was well established by the time Vavassore arrived in the lagoon, was active in Venice from c.1505 to 1543.[536] His friend Paolo Danza, whose shop was located at the foot of the Rialto, published in 1511, 1522 and 1538.[537] Among the Bindoni family of printers, Bernardino was active from c.1532 to 1562; Benedetto produced publications between c.1520 and 1541; and Agostino maintained premises in San Paternian from c.1528 to 1558.[538]

Such comparisons make it clear that the Vavassore workshop outlasted those of his some-time collaborators and friends, the majority of whom were active for between two and three decades. Given that much of the remaining bibliographical evidence suggests that other small printers published just one or two volumes, the workshops of the Bindoni, of Pagano, Zoppino and Danza all showed resilience in

[535] Ascarelli & Menato, 1989, 383.
[536] Ibid. 351-2.
[537] Ibid. 353. See also E. Pastorello, *Bibliografia Storico-analitica dell'arte della stampa in Venezia* (Venice, 1933) n.135.
[538] For all three, see DTEI, s.v.

what was clearly a saturated market.[539] However, they were active for a period that amounted to just half of Vavassore's career, and their presses were not taken over after their respective deaths. Perhaps the most useful comparison is between the workshops of Vavassore and Melchiorre Sessa, who was active from 1505 to c.1562, and whose heirs carried on his work from the same shop.[540] It was not uncommon for presses to pass between the hands of family members after the death of their founder, for this also happened in the enormously successful printing families of the Giolito, Giunti, and Manuzio. However, it seems that a long history of producing and selling printed wares, as well as a younger generation with the desire and training to remain in the printing industry, were necessary for a workshop to continue. It is clear from the evidence in his will and surviving editions that Vavassore had trained both of his nephews – Alvise and Clemente – in varying aspects of his business. However, whilst Clemente had been involved in editing volumes during his uncle's lifetime, only Alvise and his sons continued to produce and sell books after his death.

So why did the Vavassore workshop endure, when other small presses did not? Does the answer lie in Vavassore's skills and abilities as a maker and seller of printed material, or is its survival indicative of the fact that Vavassore outlived his collaborators and contemporaries by several decades? Certainly, Vavassore's long life enabled him to oversee the running of his workshop into its sixth decade; and to train his nephews (and great-nephews) in the business of print in the absence of his own children. The longevity of the workshop makes his case a useful one, for it spans many decades of change and development in the social, economic and cultural life of Venice, and more specifically in the printing trade. The endurance of the Vavassore workshop makes it more representative of the need for printers to adapt to changes in their social, religious, or political environment than the comparatively short-lived endeavours of his contemporaries. However, Vavassore's ability to react to the changing market should not be discounted. As I have noted in previous chapters, the output of the workshop varied enormously over time: the production of

[539] The vast majority of workshops at this time were very transient, with many sixteenth-century workshops issuing just a handful of publications before disappearing. See Lowry, 1979, 9.

[540] Ascarelli & Menato, 1989, 327. See also, N. Vianello, 'Per gli 'annali' dei Sessa tipografi ed editori in Venezia nei secoli XV-XVII' in *Accademie e biblioteche d'Italia* 38:4-5 (1970) 262-85.

images from wood blocks occurred alongside the printing of books and pamphlets from moveable type. Maps both small and large were sold alongside a myriad of different volumes intended to attract a market as diverse as the one that occupied (and presumably shopped in) the parishes that surrounded his shop.

The records of the parish archive discussed in Chapter One reveal San Moisè to be a microcosm of the larger city; with the wealthy nobles and citizens who occupied the *palazzi* bordering the Grand Canal rubbing shoulders with a large cross section of artisans engaged as cloth-makers, window sellers, merchants of second hand goods, apothecaries, doctors, printers, and sellers of food and wine.[541] The parishes of San Luca, San Fantin, Santo Stefano, San Salvador and San Zulian demonstrate similar levels of diversity. In Vavassore's shop, customers had access to books that reflected their professional interests as well as more general topical subjects: patterns of lace and embroidery, manuals on midwifery and the care of infants, manuals on the treatment of horses, humanist translations of classical texts, religious books and devotional aids, Latin-Vernacular dictionaries, poems and romances, travel guides, and the latest news from across the Italian peninsula.[542] Many of these titles are what might be described as 'popular books.' However, titles like these were subject to changes in fashion and taste: even a poem as successful as Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato* was quickly overshadowed by Ariosto's follow-up epic, *Orlando Furioso*.[543] In order to remain afloat in a market supporting a large number of printers, Vavassore needed to stay alert to the genres, titles, and authors his market wanted to buy in that moment. Both the surviving editions and the relative longevity of the workshop suggest that in this, it appears that he was indeed astute and successful.

[541] For evidence of these trades in parish records, see note 162, above. See also ASdP, SMB 1 f.46 for Giovanni Battista a "herbariol" (a seller of greens, 2 January 1575), and ASdP SMM 1 f.59 (2 January 1603), f.175v (12 October 1612) and f.194v (6 May 1615) for "travassador da vin" or "mercanti da vin".
[542] See Volume 2, Appendix 1 for a full list.
[543] EDIT16 records over 220 editions of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* published in Italy between 1516 and 1600, and just 26 editions of Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato* between 1511 and 1588.

5.2 Pamphlets, Poems and Wars in *Ottava Rima*

Compared with the later phases of the workshop's activity, relatively little survives from the first decade and a half of its production. Among the 211 distinct titles (excluding reprinted editions) extant today, less than twenty include dates from this period on their title pages or colophons. Nonetheless, the small number of surviving publications sold by the workshop in its formative years can provide information about works now lost. By focusing on the kind of works published by Vavassore in the early stages of his career as a printer and bookseller in Venice, it is also possible to illuminate the life cycle of the workshop. The short pamphlets and poems concerned with contemporary events and interests, produced in these early years, effectively bridge the gap between the graphic works first produced by Vavassore upon his arrival in Venice, and the more assured and typographically dominated works the workshop would go on to produce.

The early decades of the sixteenth century were – rather fortunately for a young woodcutter embarking on a career as a printer and seller of books – packed full of wars, battles, and sieges. The "horrendous Italian Wars" raged on across the peninsula, in a series of peaks and slumps of activity, from 1494 to 1559.[544] As early as 1515-6, with the production of the *Battle of Marignano* woodcut, Vavassore had shown himself to be willing and able to respond to changes in the fortunes of the Venetian forces, and to exploit the desire for knowledge of them in print. Whilst the large and visually rich Marignano woodcut may well have been commissioned, pamphlets produced to commemorate, commiserate or inform reached a much wider and more varied audience. Poems were routinely performed and sold in the piazzas of Italian cities, especially during wartime, and as Massimo Rospocher has argued, the *cantastorie* quickly established war poems as both a popular literary genre and crucial part of the marketplace for information about events occurring elsewhere in the territories.[545]

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[544] The wars were thus dubbed in a popular contemporary poem, see C. Vivanti, 'Le "Guerre horrende de Italia"', *Storia d'Italia* Volume 1 (Turin, 1974) 346-75. See also Rospocher, 2013, 79.

[545] Rospocher, 2013, 81. See also M. Rospocher & R. Salzberg, 'An Evanescent Public Sphere: Voices, Spaces, and Publics in Venice during the Italian Wars' in M. Rospocher (ed.) *Beyond the Public Sphere: Opinions, Publics, Spaces in Early Modern Europe* (Berlin, 2012) 93-114.

Chronologically, the first battle to be commemorated in *ottava rima* – a stanza form established by Boccaccio as the standard for epic and narrative verse in Italy – and published by the workshop concerns the Battle of Ravenna.[546] This battle was fought on 11 April 1512 by the forces of the Holy League (Spain and the Papal States) against France. The poem offers a description of the battle, along with a list of the names of the men and captains who died or were wounded.[547] Published in quarto, like many of the workshop's pamphlets, it is comprised of just four leaves printed recto and verso.[548] Although its colophon recognises Giovanni Andrea Vavassore (also known as Guadagnino) as its publisher, the work is undated. Various catalogues, including those of Sander, Massena, and Ascarelli and Menato, have attributed to it a date of 1530 – based largely on the previous assumption that Vavassore was active in Venice from that year. However, the evidence established in the previous two chapters proves that he had already been active in the city for at least fifteen years by that date. Not only had he established his workshop at the Ponte dei Fuseri, he had formed working relationships with other printers (including Paganino and Zoppino) and produced a monumental woodcut that responded directly to a contemporary event. It is therefore unlikely that Vavassore would have published a poem about the Battle of Ravenna as late as 1530 – long after interest in it would have piqued, and when other sieges had already captured the public consciousness.

We must, of course, be wary of attributing dates to publications based entirely on when the events with which they are concerned occur. For example, another undated poem by Vavassore is a lament on the Venetian loss of Negroponte to the Turks on 12 July 1470. Margaret Meserve has discussed the importance of the events at Negroponte in informing our understanding of the spread of news, and has called it "one of the first events in Renaissance history to be recorded in print more-or-less immediately after the fact."[549] From its earliest days, the printing press was

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[546] See Vol. 2, Appendix 1 Cat. n.11; and *GOR*, Vol.1 n.96, p.73.
[547] The full title reads: *El fatto darme fatto in Romagna sotto Rauenna. Con el nome de tutti gli signori & capitanei che furno morti feriti & presi de luna & de laltra parte*. The poem underwent considerable remodeling over time, and eventually became part of the long poem 'The Horrendous Wars of Italy.' See note 544, above, and Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.11.
[548] Vavassore's poem is included *GOR* Vol.1 n.95, 73; whilst the pamphlets published on this battle are discussed in detail in G. Schizzerotto, *Otto Poemetti volgari sulla battaglia di Ravenna del 1512* (Ravenna, 1968).
[549] Meserve, 2006, 443.

adopted as a means of charting events happening across the peninsula and elsewhere: from the attacks on Rhodes and Otranto in 1480, the Pazzi conspiracy against the Medici in 1478, and the sensational story of Simon of Trent in 1475.[550] The poems published about Negroponte, however, were not necessarily printed and distributed in the months immediately after its siege and sack. News of its fall received considerable "literary treatment" on its way into print: the events were dramatised in Latin epics and anonymous vernacular poems, whilst their historical and moral significance were explored in devotional verse, consolatory epistles, and political speeches.[551] Thanks to the proliferation of printed accounts, the fall of Negroponte became part of the Venetian collective (and historical) memory, and remained a subject capable of arousing considerable public interest decades after it had happened. Vavassore's publication of the lament in the early decades of the sixteenth century should therefore be seen as an expression of the recurring fear that territories were again slipping from Venetian hands. Despite the poor survival rates associated with this genre, the lament appears to have been met with considerable market demand – for Vavassore published at least two distinct editions of this poetic lament, with one surviving edition in Gothic type, and the other in Roman type.

The majority of the surviving pamphlets published by the workshop do not include illustrations, but both the laments commemorating the losses of Negroponte and Rhodes (1522) feature small, and highly simplified, woodcut maps or views. Beginning with Negroponte, the walled city is surrounded (at least on one side) by water, and ships are depicted next to the harbour (Fig. 5.1). The image is rather busy and confusing – a lack of sustained perspective means that the buildings are very crowded and merge together with the water. The small view of Rhodes features many of the same visual elements (Fig. 5.2). The island is surrounded by a similar fortified wall, behind which troops can be seen defending their city from attack. The buildings encased within the walls appear more orderly, however, and contrast with the flapping tents of the attackers that surround the city. Boats similarly appear in the city's harbour, but the use of short shaded lines rather than waves to represent water makes the image appear less busy. It is perhaps unsurprising that Vavassore's miniature view of Rhodes is more successful than that of Negroponte, for he had a

[550] Ibid. 445. On Simon of Trent, see S. D. Bowd & J. D. Cullington (eds.) *"On Everyone's Lips": Humanists, Jews, and the Tale of Simon of Trent* (Tempe AZ, 2012).
[551] Meserve, 2006, 445.

much larger and more detailed view on which to base it. Nonetheless, these views would have provided the reader with some visual context for the events described in the accompanying text.

An illustrative woodcut is also included with a poem concerning the Sack of Rome, published by the workshop in 1527 (either in, or shortly after the month of May, when the sack took place).[552] Rather than a map of the city, Vavassore has instead included a scene intended to represent the pillage and slaughter that took place there (Fig. 5.3). This small woodcut is very busy: knights in armour fight on horseback, brandishing their swords and spears. In the bottom right hand corner a slayed soldier lays dead, his body in immediate danger of being trampled by horses in the mêlée. The mention of Pasquino – a statue that had functioned as a site for local discontent and sarcasm since c.1501 – in both the title and the main body of text is also significant.[553] According to Roman lore, this ancient and rather battered statue is said to have lost its arms in the Sack of Rome. Pasquino's role in the poem also serves as a reminder of two important issues: first, that printed poems were, in effect, an extension of the much more widespread oral culture. Like the anonymous verses posted to the base and walls surrounding Pasquino, poems in *ottava rima* provided their (also largely anonymous) authors with a means to express their own opinions and discontents about contemporary events. Second, unlike the other extant poems published by the workshop in this period, this pamphlet demonstrates that Venetians were not solely interested in the military events occurring in their own dominions and affecting their own forces. Rather, the circulation of poems about the Sack of Rome is indicative of a public interested in and eager for news of all kinds. In addition to the poems about Negroponte, Ravenna, Rhodes and Rome, Vavassore also published on the Siege of Pavia in 1525.[554]

In their form, there is considerable overlap between the workshop's production of popular news pamphlets and its chivalric epics and romances. There are several examples of chivalric poems in *ottava rima*, including *Ippolito and*

[552] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.14.
[553] The title reads: *La presa e lamento di Roma & le gran curdeltade fatto drento: con el credo che ha fatto li romani, con un sonetto, e un successo di Pasquino. Novamente stampato.* On Pasquino, see G. Warwick, 'Making Statues Speak: Bernini and Pasquino' in A. Satz & J. Wood, *Articulate Objects: Voice, Sculpture and Performance* (Bern, 2009) 29-46; F. Silenzi & R. Silenzi, *Pasquino: Quattro secoli di satira romana* (Florence, 1968); and V. Marucci, *Pasquinate del cinque e seicento* (Rome, 1988).
[554] See Vol. 2, Appendix 1, cat. n.13, n.11, n.12, n.14 and n.9 respectively.

Leonora, attributed to Leon Battista Alberti, and Ludovico Ariosto's *Regina Ancroia*.[555] A surviving octavo edition of the latter dates to 1546, but it is certainly a possibility that earlier editions by Vavassore have been lost, for its popularity was clearly well established by this time: Francesco Bindoni and Maffeo Pasini had published the poem in quarto in November 1526, and Benedetto Bindoni in 1533.[556] Vavassore's version of Ariosto's *Regina Ancroia* is sparsely illustrated with miniature woodcuts depicting scenes of knightly battles and scenes not unlike the one used to decorate the short pamphlet concerning the Sack of Rome (Fig. 5.4). Similar imagery crops up again and again in the production of the workshop in a variety of different forms, from monumental woodcuts to single pamphlet illustrations, and miniatures in larger volumes. Regardless of their illustrations, poems in *ottava rima* – whether concerned with love or war – were especially suited to live performance, and perhaps circulated among the mountebanks who set up their steps and small stages in Piazza San Marco.[557]

Alongside the *cantastorie*, singers and performers who spread news and sold their poems in the piazza, were other street sellers who plied their wares to the public. Their activities form an interesting parallel to the world of print with which they often overlap. This is the case with a chart forecasting the conjunctions, oppositions and eclipses of the moon from 1530 to 1551.[558] Compiled by the astronomer Camillo Leonardi, Vavassore published this short 24-leaf octavo volume on 14 April 1530. The volume also represents one of Vavassore's first forays into printing with both black and red inks: an effect used only on a small minority of the works published by the workshop, and one that was to prove more successful for devotional titles.[559] Alongside instructions of how to calculate the lunar month, the

[555] On the attribution of *Ippolito and Leonora* to Alberti, see J. Rawson, 'The *novella* of *Ippolito e Leonora* and its Attribution to Alberti: A Computer Analysis of Style and Language', in P. Hainsworth et al. (eds.) *The Languages of Literature in Renaissance Italy* (Oxford, 1988) 19-43. See Vol. 2, Appendix 1, cat. n.39 (*Ippolito e Leonora*) and n.90 (*Regina Ancroia*).
[556] Ludovico Ariosto, *Regina Ancroia* (Venice: Francesco Bindoni & Mapheo [sic] Pasini, November 1526); and Ludovico Ariosto, *Regina Ancroia* (Venice: Benedetto Bindoni, 1533). See Edit16 records CNCE 23217 and 34087 respectively.
[557] On street singers and performers, see Salzberg & Rospocher, 2012, 9-26.
[558] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.43.
[559] This was probably because the cost and effort involved in producing them was greater, and would have resulted in more expensive volumes. Black and red inks are also used on the following publications: Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.31; the 1538 edition of Corradone's

timing of eclipses, and the dates of religious festivals, Leonardi's almanac also includes sixteen leaves of text concerned with issuing various prognostications, tables featuring the most favourable days for carrying out bloodletting, and dietary advice. In Venice alone, Vavassore's was just one of a long line of Leonardi's charts, which were continually updated and published by Niccolo Zoppino (September 1525 and February 1537), Benedetto and Agostino Bindoni (3 March 1524), Paolo Danza (1 February 1526) and Bernardino de Viano (8 March 1527).[560]

The market for this lunar chart must have been especially buoyant to support its production by so many printers working at the same time, and the case of Ippolito Ferrarese offers some indication why. Ippolito Ferrarese was a travelling *cerretano* or *ciarlatino* and occasional publisher in Venice, Pesaro, and elsewhere, and was responsible for financing an edition of Leonardi's chart (among other works) in Venice in 1532.[561] However, like the *ciarlatini* discussed by David Gentilcore, Ippolito was part of what has been termed the "Early Modern Medical Marketplace."[562] Street sellers were at once peddlers, performers, remedy sellers and surgeons; providing health care to a much larger proportion of the urban population than medical professionals or even apothecaries. Sixteenth-century charlatans are known to have sold simple and compound remedies, waters, essences, unguents, herbs and oils, as well as other items – Ippolito, for example, sold soap alongside his printed wares.[563] In 1585 Tomaso Garzoni offered insight into the extent to which street performers and sellers had woven themselves into the urban fabric. According

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confession manual, Cat. n.51; Cat. n.64; Cat. n.90; the 1547 edition of the writings of Honorius Augustodunensis, Cat. n.57; and Cat. n.114.

[560] Vavassore's edition of 14 April 1530 is included as Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.43. Other editions, including references to entries on Edit16: C. Leonardi, *Lunario al modo de Italia calculato* (Venice: Niccolò Zoppino, September 1525) (CNCE 50614); C. Leonardi, *Lunario* (Venice: Niccolò Zoppino, February 1537) (CNCE 77585); C. Leonardi, *Lunario al moro de Italia calculato* (Venice: Benedetto & Agostino Bindoni, 3 March 1524) (CNCE 45513); C. Leonardi, *Lunario al modo de Italia calculato* (Venice: Paolo Danza, 1 February 1526) (CNCE 74325); C. Leonardi, *Lunario al modo de Italia calculato* (Venice: Bernardino de Biano, 8 March 1527) (CNCE 38543).

[561] G. Petrella, 'Ippolito Ferrarese, a Travelling "Cerretano" and Publisher in Sixteenth-Century Italy,' in B. R. Costas (ed.) *Print Culture and Peripheries in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden, 2013) 201-226, esp. 209.

[562] See D. Gentilcore, *Medical Charlatanism in Early Modern Italy* (Oxford, 2006), and *idem*, 1998, 2-3.

[563] A comprehensive list of the wares of Roman street sellers can be found in T. Storey, 'Face Waters, Oils, Love Magic and Poison: Making and Selling Secrets in Early Modern Rome' in E. Leong & A. M. Rankin, *Secrets and Knowledge in Medicine and Science, 1500-1800* (Farnham, 2011) 153-4.

to him, these characters had "grown like a weed, in such a way that, through every city, through every land, through every square, nothing is seen other than charlatans or street singers."[564] Worse still, they actively encouraged their audiences to spend their money on entertainment and "fripperies" like remedies, herbs and soaps.[565] Garzoni's comments certainly suggest that a substantial proportion of the copies of Leonardi's *Lunari* – whether published by Vavassore or his contemporaries – reached their intended market through the hands of itinerant sellers.

Examples of printed ephemera generally survive only because they are bound within the pages of (poorly catalogued) composite volumes, making it impossible to know exactly how many of these pamphlets, poems, and almanacs are extant, let alone were produced. However, the surviving examples produced by the Vavassore workshop demonstrate the importance of engaging with the immediate needs of the audience. As I have noted, time was of the essence in producing publications to commemorate or commiserate a military victory: so many battles, sacks and sieges were taking place in the period of the Italian Wars that one was quickly replaced in the public consciousness with another. Authors and performers gloated about the speed with which they had heard news of military defeat or victory, penned a witty poem, printed it, and distributed it to anyone who would buy it.[566] Works like the lament of Negroponte, however, contradict this trend: such pamphlets were probably a useful (and lucrative) weapon in the printers' armoury, to be pulled out and reprinted when an opportune moment to refresh the collective memory presented itself.

These short quarto volumes also begin to tell us about the early stages of the life cycle of the press. The majority of these early works – excepting the octavo lunar chart from 1530 – were published in quarto on just four leaves.[567] The cost of producing such short volumes was comparatively low, as many pamphlets could be produced and sold from the paper required for a single, more substantial volume.

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[564] Tommaso Garzoni, *La piazza universale di tutti le professioni del mondo* (Venice: Giovanni Battista Somasco, 1585) ff.745-52. Also cited in Salzberg & Rospocher, 2012, 9.
[565] Salzberg & Rospocher, 2012, 9.
[566] The Ferrarese singer Bichignolo boasted that he had managed to gather information about a naval encounter between the Duchy of Ferrara and the Venetians at the end of December 1509, to compose a poem, have it printed, and disseminate his work within the space of two weeks. Bichignolo, 1510; Rospocher, 2013, 82.
[567] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.9, n.11, n.13, and n.14 are all printed in quarto, and comprise of just four pages of printed text.

The quality of the paper (and the printing) used for these pamphlets is generally poor: the paper itself is very thin, and the process of printing on both sides can make it difficult to read the text.[568] However, surviving examples from the Vavassore workshop serve to reflect larger trends within the printing industry at this time. In 1537, the Venetian Senate passed a law attempting to counter slipping quality standards in the quality of the material printed there. Threatening to fine printers who failed to use good quality paper for their works, the Senate exempted "small things that are sold up to the sum of ten *soldi* each."[569] Given that paper was the most expensive component in printing, and that size dictated cost, Vavassore's early pamphlets would almost certainly have been among those "small things" (*cose minute*) priced at less than 10 *soldi*.

Furthermore, popular war poems, love stories and moon charts played an important role in the early decades of the workshop's existence. From a chronological standpoint, these publications act as a bridge between the graphic works produced by Vavassore – including the *Apochalypsis* woodcuts, the monumental print of Marignano, and the view of *Rhodes* – and the predominantly typographical works that followed. As Matile's recent conclusions over the dating of the *Hercules* woodcuts, as well as the testament evidence of the printed *Santi* suggest, the workshop continued to produce single sheet prints alongside printed books and pamphlets of various sizes, making it difficult to generalise between periods of "graphic" and "typographic" production.[570] However, the inscriptions included on some of the workshop's early maps, as well as the signatures used on woodcut illustrations produced for other publishers, are entirely woodcut, making the aforementioned pamphlets some of Vavassore's first attempts at printing with metal type. This experimental nature is revealed through the intermittent use of both gothic and roman type, occasionally in the same text, during the early decades of the

[568] Grendler supports this when he writes that "printers used poor-quality paper for certain types of books, and crowded more words on a page by using smaller type and reducing the width of margins … Readers responded with a chorus of complaints about the deteriorating appearance and physical quality of books." Grendler, 1988, 30.
[569] "Non si comprehendono però sotto el presente ordine le cose minute, che si venessero fino alla summa de soldi 10 l'una." ASV, Senato Terra, r.29, ff.129v-130r (4 June 1537) cited in Salzberg, 2008, 20.
[570] Matile, 2003, 22-9. On the *Santi* woodcuts mentioned in the 1570 testament, see note 462, above.

workshop's production.[571] Over time, use of woodcut lettering is largely replaced with printed type, though Vavassore did continue to employ hand-carved text on all of his maps and in some of his later publications (especially those produced in conjunction with his brother Florio).[572]

Close examination of the surviving output of the press, in the absence of accounts or ledgers, has much to reveal about the process of establishing and continuing a print workshop as a business in sixteenth century Venice. By creating a chronology of production, it is possible to identify a sense of progression in both the expense and complexity involved in the production of the publications issued by the workshop at various different stages. During this formative period, short quarto pamphlets of just a handful of sheets required less initial investment, and could be produced and sold whilst the market for news was strong. Vavassore undoubtedly sold his wares from his shop on the Ponte dei Fuseri (and later in the Frezzaria), but the surviving editions also confirm that certain works were distributed by street singers and sellers. As well as Camillo Leonardi's lunar chart, the Vavassore workshop also published undated pamphlets on the story of the famous Farrrese buffoon Gonella, a later lunar chart by Ercole della Rovere, and songs by the entertainer Zan (or Joan) Fritada.[573] The later phases of production, discussed in Chapters Six and Seven, will demonstrate the workshop's increasing concern with longer, more complex combinations of image and text that would have been sold directly from his shop or traded at book fairs. Over time, these popular yet transient works were superseded by increasingly specialised titles aimed at particular segments of the book-buying public, though never disappeared from the workshop's output entirely.

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[571] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.31 includes a heavy Gothic script title, whilst the rest of the text is printed in Roman type. The pamphlet featuring a poetic lament of Negroponte (Cat. n.13) exists in two editions with identical content, one with Roman characters, and one with Gothic. See *GOR* v.1, 156 n.12.

[572] Examples of this carved text can be found in the *Opera nova contemplativa* (Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.18), on the frontispiece of the *Opera nova universal intitulata corona di racammi* (Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.24), on the *Hercules* prints discussed in Chapter Three, and on the maps discussed in Chapter Four.

[573] See Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.8, n.192, and n.7 respectively. Zan Fritada was a street entertainer in Venice, who appears in the accounts of visitors like Ben Jonson and Tomaso Garzoni. See B. Jonson, *Volpone, or the foxe. A Comoedie acted in the yeere 1605* (London, 1616) II.ii.110; T. Garzoni, *La Piazza Universale di tutte le professioni del mondo* edited by G.B. Bronzini (Florence, 1996) Discorso CIV, 910; and M.A. Katritsky, *The Art of* Commedia*: A Study in the* Commedia dell'Arte *1560-1620 with Special Reference to the Visual Records* (Amsterdam, 2006) 100.

5.3 Books for the 'Beautiful and Virtuous': Pattern Books of Lace and Embroidery

Pattern books for lace and embroidery represent a singularly fascinating, but relatively neglected, genre of book in the Renaissance; and form a case study for the second phase of the workshop.[574] Like many popular books and pamphlets dating from this period, their survival rate is notoriously poor – poorer, in fact, as the books would have been deconstructed to facilitate their use, pricked with pins, and eventually discarded when they became worn.[575] As a result, the few surviving examples offer a rare insight into the overlap between print culture and material culture in the sixteenth century.[576] Furthermore, unlike other contemporary titles, the surviving examples of pattern books also allow us to reconstruct the market to which they were aimed with some degree of accuracy. Although books of costumes were popular with both men and women, pattern books provided instructions and examples for sewing, embroidery and lacemaking – all activities considered to be women's work – and were intended for a female audience.[577] Historians of early

[574] There were several exhibitions and associated publications on patterns of lace and embroidery in the early decades of the twentieth century, but they have subsequently received fleeting mention in larger, collective volumes on the women or material culture of the Renaissance. See, for example, E. F. Strange, 'Early Pattern-Books of Lace, Embroidery and Needlework', *The Library* 7:1 (1902) 209-18; Author Unknown, 'Lace Pattern Books of the Sixteenth Century', *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 14:4 (1919) 86-9; M. Harrington-Daniels, 'Early Pattern Books – Lace, Embroidery, and Woven Textiles: A Special Exhibition', *The Metropolitan Museum of Art* 33:3 (1938) 70-73; and M. Jourdain, *Old Lace: A Handbook for Collectors* (London, 1908). More recently, pattern books have received mention in M. Ray, 'Letters and Lace: Arcangela Tarabotti and Convent Culture in *Seicento* Venice', in J. Campbell, & A. Larsen, *Early Modern Women and Transnational Communities of Letters* (Farnham, 2009) 45-74 and A. R. Jones & P. Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge, 2000).

[575] Lace is worked onto a pattern, which shows where the pins should go, in turn dictating the positioning of stitches. On the techniques of lace making, see P. Nottingham, *The Technique of Bobbin Lace* (London, 1995) 1-10; and B. Fuhrmann, *Bobbin Lace: An Illustrated Guide to Traditional and Contemporary Techniques* (New York, 1976).

[576] Fewer than ten copies of the *Esemplario di Lavori* (1532, Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.46) and the *Corona di Racammi* (undated, Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.24) have survived. Contemporary pattern books published by other workshops, including Zoppino, have survived in similarly low numbers.

[577] The most popular of these costume books was arguably Cesare Vecellio's *Habiti Antichi et Moderni*, published in Venice in 1590. See Vecellio, 2008. On embroidery and lacemaking as 'women's work' see Witcombe, 2004, 291; A. Caracausi, 'Beaten Children and Women's Work in Early Modern Italy,' *Past and Present* 222:1 (2014) 95-128; King, 2008, 66-7; A. R. Jones, 'Labor and Lace: The Crafts of Giacomo Franco's *Habiti delle donne venetiane*', *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 17:2 (2014) 399-425; and M. L. Brown & K. McBride, *Women's Roles in the Renaissance* (Westport, 2005) 242-44. It

modern women have noted that their taste in reading material was reasonably broad: ranging from pious and devotional titles to advice books, stories, poems and romances that were chiefly, but not always, in the vernacular.[578] Whilst the vast majority of these titles were not ostensibly produced with women readers in mind, pattern books specifically and directly address (whether in the title, in the frontispiece text, or in their woodcut illustrations) the female market in their use of text and illustration (Fig. 5.5).[579] Although they do not wholly conform to the category of the popular book as described by Grendler and Harris, in terms of the number of copies sold, these were in fact some of the most popular books produced by the Vavassore workshop. Whilst pattern books cannot be considered wholly representative of a "phase" of the workshop's production, this genre plays a crucial role in its overall development. This section will therefore consider the pattern books produced by Giovanni Andrea – either independently, or in concert with his brother Florio – as an example of the increasing specialisation of the workshop. By focusing on this neglected genre, it aims to test the response of the workshop to the market, to understand the demands of the female audience; and to discuss how such books were used, the skills they encouraged, and the objects their owners were able to create with the patterns they bought. Moving beyond the book, extant examples of lace and embroidered cloth demonstrate the close links between printed page and material object.

Sabba da Castiglione was echoing the thoughts of many when he wrote in 1559 that "the good and virtuous woman will teach her daughters to work with their hands and above all to sew; [for] idleness is a great evil."[580] Sewing and embroidery were praised by moralists and humanists as a suitable pastime for young girls and women, as it kept them safely and decorously occupied and prevented them from

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should also be noted that Vavassore refers to his patterns as "examples of work" (*esemplario di lavori*).

[578] On women's reading tastes, see King, 2008, 173.

[579] The exception to this is Boccaccio, who addressed his *Decameron* to an audience of "dear ladies" (*grazioissime donne*). See M. Suzuki, 'Gender, Power, and the Female Reader: Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptameron*', *Comparative Literature Studies* 30:3 (1993) 231-52; and King, 2008, 173.

[580] Sabba da Castiglione was a religious humanist, belonging to the Order of the Knights Hospitaller. His *Ricordi overo Ammaestramenti di monsignor Saba da Castiglione Cavalier Cierosolimitano, ne quali con prudenti e Christiani discorsi si ragiona di tutte le materie honorate, che si ricervano a una vero gentil'huomo* was published in Venice by Paulo Gherardo in 1554.

engaging in the less respectable activities of dancing and playing card games.[581] Certainly, the women engaged in needlework on the frontispiece of the *Esemplario di Lavori* are characterised as both pious and respectable (Fig. 5.5). Girls were also responsible for sewing and embroidering items for their trousseau – from small items such as chemises and handkerchiefs, to the much larger wall hangings and tablecloths she would use when living and entertaining in her marital home.[582] As Margaret King has written, all women were engaged in every stage of the process of winding, spinning, weaving, washing, drying, sewing, trimming and embroidering of cloth.[583] The popularity of both embroidery and lacemaking meant that pattern books were both in demand and increasingly widely available in the sixteenth century.

Vavassore's *Opera nova universal intitulata corona di racammi* was one such title aimed at this flourishing market. In quarto format, this short book is comprised of twenty-five leaves, and features forty-eight patterns intended for use in the production of lace and embroidery. The patterns vary in complexity and subject matter, and could be used – as indicated in the frontispiece text – for the manufacture of both items of clothing (including collars and camisoles) and home furnishings. The titlepage inscription (Fig. 5.6) is the only text to accompany this otherwise purely visual work. This could be said to be indicative of the low literacy rates traditionally assumed of the book's target audience: women and young girls.[584] However, two samplers included among the patterns published in this edition are intended as templates for embroidered alphabets, which might also be adapted to form inscriptions within the fabric (Fig. 5.7). As a belt with an embroidered love

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[581] Erasmus noted that "Girls today … take up dice, cards and other masculine amusements" in his *Colloquies* (1529), translated in D. Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus: Colloquies* (Toronto, 1997) 894. On cards, games and dancing, see M. Ajmar-Wollheim & F. Dennis, *At Home in Renaissance Italy* (V&A Exhibition Catalogue, 2006). Humanist and moralist writers wrote about models of moral virtue, linking women's needlework to narratives about ideal daughters, wives and queens: Jones & Stallybrass, 2000, 137.

[582] See Ajmar-Wollheim & Dennis, 2006. On the trousseau, see C. C. Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence: Families, Fortunes and Fine Clothing* (Baltimore, 2005) 133-46.

[583] King, 2008, 66-7.

[584] Opportunities for women and girls to gain basic schooling in reading and writing were less frequent compared to those for boys, and discussions of their education often comprise brief sections on works that focus on boys. See M. Wiesner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (3rd Edition, Cambridge, 2008), 141-73; A. Grafton & L. Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities: Education and the Liberal Arts in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA, 1986); and Grendler, 1989. Male and female literacy rates have been discussed and compared in H. J. Graff (ed.), *Literacy and Social Development in the West: A Reader* (Cambridge, 1981) 105-21.

poem discussed below will demonstrate, these designs could be both incredibly complex and inspired by other textual sources the maker had read; presupposing a level of literary competence that early concepts of women's literacy were quick to disprove. Furthermore, in a different pattern book produced by the workshop in the same year (1530), Vavassore encouraged young women and girls to "write with the needle" – alluding to the capacity of the pattern book to act as an educational tool that might supplement other forms of learning.[585] Several other titles produced by the press in that decade reveal Vavassore's proclivity for producing books in what might best be described as a "self help genre."[586] As well as books of patterns, the press also produced an instructive volume on on writing love letters, and a translation of an earlier German manual for midwives and pregnant women.[587]

Like Vavassore's prints, maps, and illustrations, the pattern books were created using the woodcut technique. Each block has been carefully and clearly cut to create an easy to read, easy to follow, pattern. Each square is marked or left blank on the grid to designate the placement of stitches in the overall design. None of Vavassore's patterns include suggestions for the use of particular types or colours of material, enabling the owner of the book to personalise these stock designs through the creative use of combinations of coloured and metallic thread. An Italian undergarment, embroidered in the sixteenth century and now in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum in New York, provides a perfect demonstration of all of these techniques: ornate birds and floral patterns have been sewn onto linen using both coloured silk and metal threads (Fig. 5.8).

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[585] The introduction to this work, which is also the only text included within it, makes reference to "punto scritto" or "writing stitch". The title reads: *Esemplario di lauori: che insegna alle donne il modo et ordine di lauorare e cusire et racammare et finalmente far tutte quelle opera degne di memoria li quali po fare vna donna virtuosa con laco in mano. Et vno document che insegna al compratore accio sia ben seruito.* (Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.46) The workshop issued the designs on 1 August 1532, and in an identical edition dated 10 November 1540.

[586] There has been a great deal of work on this genre, and especially on Renaissance 'Books of Secrets'. See M. DiMeo & S. Pennell, *Reading and Writing Recipe Books, 1550-1800* (Manchester, 2013); W. Eamon, *Science and the Secrets of Nature: Books of Secrets in Medieval and Early Modern Culture* (Princeton, 1996), *idem, The Professor of Secrets: Mystery, Medicine and Alchemy in Renaissance Italy* (Washington DC, 2010) and S. Cavallo & T. Storey, *Healthy Living in Late Renaissance Italy* (Oxford, 2014). Other recent research has focused on books of cosmetics, see J. N. Spicer, '"A Fare Bella": The Visual and Material Culture of Cosmetics in Renaissance Italy (1450-1540)' (PhD Thesis, 2015).

[587] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.68 and n.61.

The *Corona di Racammi* features among the forty-eight designs a variety of different types of pattern, which are not ranked according to difficulty. It is clear from the number of patterns that incorporate leaves and foliage that these were among some of the most popular designs. Foliage is variously presented in organic, flowing patterns (Fig. 5.9) that could easily be repeated on wall hangings, curtains, or coverlets; as well as in more self-contained designs like this one of flowers displayed in an urn (Fig. 5.10). Leaves and organic shapes are also incorporated into more elaborate designs featuring birds, dragons and other animals, both domestic and exotic. The patterns for various birds, including peacocks, eagles and swans (Fig. 5.11) do not form a coherent design, but instead provide models that could be worked into many different garments and furnishings. Among Vavassore's motifs are examples of a centaur with a bow and arrow, a mermaid amongst the waves, the ram of St John the Baptist, and – most appropriately for Venice – a ship (Fig. 5.12). The use of stock motifs like these would have served to personalise items, as is the case with the eagle added to the embroidered girdle discussed below.

As well as smaller motifs, letters, and repetitive patterns, the Vavassore pattern book also included coherent, stand-alone designs. One of these is spread over two consecutive sheets, and represents one of the most complex patterns in the collection (Fig. 5.13). The scene depicts *Orpheus Taming the Beasts* – a large caped figure, holding a sword, is portrayed among a large group of animals both domestic and exotic. Recognisable amongst the assembled group of animals are birds of all types, dogs, a rabbit and a squirrel, two stags with prominent antlers, a tortoise, a lion and a cheetah. This pattern served as the design – albeit slightly altered – for a finely executed piece of linen embroidered lace (or *lacis*) now held in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (Fig. 5.14).[588] However, the printed pattern itself suggests that it could also be embroidered – used as a design, perhaps, for a much larger and brightly coloured wall hanging displayed somewhere within the Venetian *casa*.[589] The early

[588] Linen embroidered lace (*lacis*) by an unknown maker. Philadelphia Museum of Art Accession Number: 1950-112-5. The scene is taken in part from Vavassore's *Esemplario di lavori* (1532) and is mentioned in D. E. Blum, *The Fine Art of Textiles: The Collections of the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 1997) 65.

[589] On the use of textile objects, see E. Currie, 'Textiles and Clothing' in Ajmar-Wollheim & Dennis, 2006, 342-51; and 'Embroidery and Textiles' in V. Avery, M. Calaresu & M. Laven, *Treasured Possessions: From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 2015) 220-25. Frick also suggests that women with a reputation for modesty and attractiveness could show off their talents by casually displaying a sample of their needlework to impress an

modern fascination with the menagerie has been the subject of much scholarly attention, and this design certainly echoes the representation of exotic animals in contemporary works of art and literature.[590]

A second, smaller design depicts two sweethearts standing side by side, he holding a bouquet of flowers, whilst she grasps a heart that has been pierced by cupid's arrow (Fig. 5.15). It is unclear whether this was intended to commemorate a betrothal or a marriage, but the image can be linked to marriage customs.[591] Alongside the figures, the windows and doors of houses are visible – a reminder, perhaps, that like so many of the marriages recorded in the Parish Archives, wedding ceremonies often took place in the homes of prominent individuals in the parish, and involved many parishioners in their organisation and celebration.[592] Given the importance of needlework – or 'work' as it is more commonly referred to by contemporaries – in the lives of women and young girls, and the need for them to make and sew many of the items included in the trousseau, it comes as little surprise that a subject like this should be included among the patterns.[593]

The designs produced for the manufacture of lace are more complex, rigid and geometric (Fig. 5.16). Unlike embroidery patterns, these were not produced on a grid. In needlepoint lace, the pattern was replicated by eye, using just a needle and thread; whilst in bobbin lace the paper patterns were torn out and pinned onto a

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interested man. Vasaio recounts the case of an Alessio Laurentani, who became infatuated with a young woman named Lucrezia Casasanta, after he saw a sample of her needlework in the form of an embroidered handkerchief. See Frick, 2002, 44.

[590] See P. F. Cuneo, *Animals and Early Modern Identity* (Farnham, 2014); P. Mason, *Before Disenchantment. Images of Exotic Animals and Plants in the Early Modern World* (London: 2009); L. Kalof, *Looking At Animals in Human History* (London, 2007) 72-96; S. Cohen, *Animals as Disguised Symbols in Renaissance Art* (Leiden, 2008); K. A. Enenkel & P. J. Smith (eds.), *Early Modern Zoology: The Construction of Animals in Science, Literature and the Visual Arts* 2 volumes (Leiden, 2007); and E. Fudge (ed.) *Renaissance Beasts: of Animals, Humans, and Other Wonderful Creatures* (Urbana, 2004).

[591] See T. Dean & K. J. P. Lowe (eds.) *Marriage in Italy, 1300-1650* (Cambridge, 1998); A. F. D'Elia, *The Renaissance of Marriage in Fifteenth-Century Italy* (Cambridge, Mass., 2004); and D. L. Krohn, 'Marriage as a Key to Understanding the Past' in A. Bayer (ed.) *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy* (New York, 2008) 9-18.

[592] ASdP, SMM I (1599-1620) f.194; 30 April 1615 "Anrola g. Anzolo Zambello con Zorzi Bonzolo Bergamasco, in casa della madre della ditta presenti S. Zuane spezamente et G. Andrea Cocelli gastasi qui in campo." Similarly, Concordia, daughter of Tomaso Bastaso, married Ventura Bergamasco on 4 June 1606 in the campo di San Moisè: ibid., f.87.

[593] On women's work see King, 2008, 66-7; and Brown & McBride, 2005, 242-44. On the trousseau, see Frick, 2002, 133-46.

cushion.[594] Fine threads were then wound around and through the pins outlining the design, which would be removed when the piece was completed.[595] Used in this way, the paper Vavassore (and other printers of books like these) used to manufacture his pattern books would show little resilience to such wear and tear. Pricked with pins and continually under the hands, lace patterns would quickly have deteriorated and then been discarded – unsurprisingly, very few of the pattern books produced by Giovanni Andrea and his brother Florio survive today.[596]

The inclusion of both embroidery and lace patterns in books like the *Coronna di Racammi* implies that women and girls were proficient in both skills. This may have been the case among women and young girls who practiced these crafts at home, but evidence suggests that there was greater segregation between the two when they were carried out professionally. Marriage records in the parish archive note that there were artisans in the parish of San Moisè who produced and sold embroidery, whilst the diaries and descriptions of Francesco Sansovino and John Evelyn refer to the display and sale of embroidered fabrics along the Merceria and around the Rialto bridge.[597] Lacemaking, on the other hand, occurred behind closed doors – in convents, hospitals and orphanages – to such an extent that in the seventeenth century, the Archbishop of Béziers, then French ambassador to Venice, observed that "all the convents of the religious and the poor families live off this work here."[598] Whilst men might produce embroidered fabrics (or own a shop that sold them), the production of lace was almost exclusively in the hands of women.[599] They worked either by themselves or in groups scattered throughout the city and its surrounding islands – especially on Burano – or were part of an existing religious

[594] On the techniques of lace making, see C. Amoroso Leslie, *Needlework Through History: An Encyclopedia* (Westport, 2008) 108.
[595] Ibid.
[596] Less than ten copies of each of the *Corona di Racammi* and *Esemplario di Lavori* have survived, whilst there are even fewer of the later works discussed below.
[597] See ASdP, SMM 1 (1599-1620) f.198, a marriage between Virginia and Nicolò, in the house of Contorina, a woman who produced needlework (*conracorami*); Sansovino, 1581, Lib.X f.158; and Evelyn, 1955, 434.
[598] Quoted in P. Allerston, 'An Undisciplined Activity? Lace Production in Early Modern Venice', in T. Buchner & P. R. Hoffman-Rehnitz (eds.), *Shadow Economies and Irregular Work in Urban Europe: 16th to Early 20th centuries* (Berlin, 2011) 69.
[599] See M. Gambier, 'Testimonianze sulla lavorazione del merletto nella Repubblica di Venezia' in D. Davanzo Poli, *La scuola dei merletti di Burano* (Venice, 1981) 21-2.

institution.[600] For women and girls in the Casa delle Zitelle and Ospedale dei Derelitti, as well as the many Venetian convents, lace was a useful product for them to be able to make: not only was demand high enough for it to be a lucrative product for institutions to produce, but it was also considered a virtuous activity for women to engage in.[601] Some of their work came from commissions, both local and distant, but the vast majority of the lace they produced was sold by mercers.[602] 'Professional' lacemakers like these would have had little need for books like Vavassore's, but as Meredith Ray has noted, the slew of pattern books in the sixteenth and seventeenth century served to "illustrate the kinds of elaborate, delicate designs that Venetian women produced, and that became popular throughout Europe."[603] Vavassore's books were not responsible for the lace designs being produced in the lagoon, but instead represent just one part of a larger exchange of ideas. Rather than providing the initial designs, his patterns took their inspiration directly from the lace produced and sold in the lagoon – effectively packaging the Venetian lace brand for sale across Italy and the rest of Europe.

In terms of the number of copies it produced, pattern books represent a consistent and significant proportion of the output of the Vavassore workshop. From the exact dates evident on some of these volumes, we know that the turnaround for reprinting was short. A gap of fifteen years followed the first pattern books – the *Esemplario di lavori* and *Corona di Raccammi* – before the publication of the *Fior de gli essempi* in 1545.[604] However, in the address to the ladies and readers of the 1530 *Esemplario*, Vavassore notes that he had already produced some books of patterns (*fatti alcuni libri di essempli di diverse sorte*). Given that collections of patterns were produced before 1530, we cannot rule out the fact that editions may have been produced before 1545 and have not survived. Unlike the 1530 editions, which apparently incorporated the workshop's own designs, this later work was a collection of embroidery patterns designed by Francesco Pellicioli. Vavassore also worked with Pellicioli on another book that year, which had received a *privilegio*

[600] On Burano and lacemaking, see L. D. Sciama, *A Venetian Island: Environment, History and Change in Burano* (New York, 2003) 166-8.
[601] See Allerston, 2011, 63-72; and Ray, 2009, 53.
[602] Venetian mercers did not claim a monopoly over lace production, but they did claim a right to its sale. Allerston, 2011, 70.
[603] Ray, 2009, 53.
[604] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.84. Pellicioli's book is included in the comprehensive catalogue A. Lotz, *Bibliographie der Modelbücher* (Stuttgart, 1963) 152, no. 84.

from the Venetian Senate three years earlier. Pellicioli had applied and been granted a privilege on 15 April 1542 for a book he described as containing "designs of work for women."[605] Although Vavassore would go on to apply for printing privileges of his own in the 1550s, this was the first – albeit indirectly obtained – example of work produced by the press that was protected by a privilege. In the late 1540s or early 1550s came another book of patterns "for beautiful and virtuous women" which survives only in copies produced by Matteo Pagano (1554).[606] The latest pattern book produced by the workshop dates to 1566, an edition entitled *Corona de le moste* featuring designs by Armenio Corte.[607] Even without considering that several of these pattern books were reprinted in later editions, their steady production indicates that they were a staple of the workshop for several decades, and thus we can presume that they could be trusted to sell reliably.

At least two of the pattern books published by the workshop – the *Esemplario di Lavori* (1530) and the *Fior de gli essempi* (1545) – were produced by the Vavassore *fratelli:* Giovanni Andrea in concert with his half-brother Florio. As with a series of seven woodcuts of the planets (now lost), it appears that Florio was responsible for carving the patterns into wood, and Giovanni Andrea – who by this time had been running an established press at the Ponte dei Fuseri for fifteen years – printed and sold them.[608] Florio does not appear in Vavassore's first testament of 1523, and had died by the time he registered his second in 1570.[609] The fact that he

[605] Francesco Pellicioli's request to the Senate for the book "per alcuni desegni di lavoro di donne" probably relates to the *Essemplario novo di piu cento variate mostre belissime per cusire intitulato Fontana de gli essempli*, which was published by Vavassore in 1545, and in another edition in 1550. The request is found in the ASV, Senato Terra, reg. 32, f.19v. See also Witcombe, 2001, 291.

[606] *Ornamento delle Belle & virtuose Donne* (Venice: Matteo Pagano, 1554). The woodcut frontispiece included in this volume, depicting women engaged in needlework, was derived from (if not printed from the same block as) the frontispiece produced by Florio Vavassore for the *Esemplario di Lavori* (1 August 1532).

[607] Witcombe, 2001, 291. Corte's *Corona de la moste* is listed in Lotz, 1963, 183 no.108. See Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.157 and n.158.

[608] Florio Vavassore's signature "Florio Fecit" (F.F.) appears on three of a series of woodcuts, each on a separate sheet, representing the seven planets. These were printed by Giovanni Andrea in Venice at an unknown date, but must have been produced between 1530 and 1545, when Florio's name appears for the last time. On the woodcuts of the planets, see Passavant, 1864 (Vol. 5), 88-9. I have been unable to find any records of surviving copies of these woodcuts and it is Passavant who is cited by G. Dillon, 'Vavassore, Florio' in *Dizionario Enciclopedico dei pittori e degli incisori Italiani* Vol. 11 (Turin, 1976) 264; and Witcombe, 2004, 125.

[609] Vavassore refers to Florio as "mio fratello" in the 1570 testament, and his three brothers as "mio carnal fratello".

was not included among the *fraterna* who had inherited their real and moveable property in common is suggestive of the fact that Florio was either adopted, the product of a second marriage by either Giovanni Andrea's mother or father, or much younger than the other brothers. The similarities between the techniques used by the two *fratelli* – including the distinctive woodcut text and the rendering of figures and faces – makes the most plausible explanation that Giovanni Andrea took the young Florio as his apprentice sometime in, or just before, 1530.

The *Esemplario di Lavori*, or *Examples of Work*, proved to be so successful that it was reissued on 10 March 1531, just four months after it had first appeared on the market on 22 November 1530.[610] If, as Angela Nuovo and Paul Grendler have argued, print runs had stabilised at around a thousand per edition in the first decades of the sixteenth century, this represents a significant achievement.[611] The popularity of pattern books in the cities of Northern Europe (most notably in Flanders) from the mid sixteenth century onwards suggests that some of these copies may have been destined for the export market, but Vavassore would still have had to sell several copies of his *Esemplario* per day from his shop in the parish of San Luca (in addition to copies of the other book of patterns produced that year) to sell his entire print run.

The need to reprint was, therefore, not only indicative of its popularity, but a great commercial success for the workshop. As the patterns were produced in woodcut, Vavassore was quickly able to issue a second edition of the *Esemplario* by taking impressions from the original wooden blocks, which had been kept in storage. Thus, a second (and any later) edition could be produced quickly and for a fraction of the cost of the original, maximising the profits accrued by the workshop. The continued use of the woodcut medium in the workshop's maps, prints, and illustrated books – even after they had fallen out of favour with other printers – is somewhat puzzling; and there are several identifiable possibilities: that the production of woodcut images cost much less than those engraved into copper or other soft metals; that the workshop had become known for its woodcut prints, maps and illustrations; or that Vavassore was insistent on working in the medium in which he had trained in and used for several decades. By looking at the broader picture of its output, we can

[610] The original title page features the date "il [sic] anni del Signore MDXXX a di XXII Novembrio." Ephrussi, 1891, 232 also noted the existence of another edition dated 10 March 1531, and several later reissues.

[611] See Nuovo, 2013, 109 and Grendler, 1977, 8-10. See also, J. A. Dane, *The Myth of Print Culture: Essays on Evidence, Textuality and Bibliographical Method* (Toronto, 2003) 32-56.

conclude that the profits made from the reprinting of popular titles like the *Esemplario* could have been channeled into projects that required more substantial investment in time and materials, like maps. The workshop produced maps with more regularity and in greater number in the 1530s and 1550s than in any other decade, with the former coinciding with the production of his most popular and profitable works: the *Esemplario di Lavori*, and the *Opera nova contemplativa*.[612] Whatever the motivation behind the continued use of the woodcut format, it is identifiable as one of the hallmarks of the workshop's production.

Although Vavassore inevitably worked very closely with Florio in the production of these pattern books for embroidery and lace, the genre is also indicative of a much broader and more general collaboration between Venetian printers. We know that some of the earliest woodcuts produced by Vavassore were in conjunction with Niccolò Zoppino and Alessandro Paganino, in the mid- to late 1510s. The illustrative work Vavassore carried out for Zoppino was at a comparably lower level than the recreated Dürer designs produced to illustrate the *Apochalypsis*.[613] Working in conjunction or collaboration with other printers was, however, something that Vavassore continued to do after establishing his workshop in San Luca. Zoppino was responsible for the production of one of the earliest patterns for lace and embroidery in 1529, also named the *Esemplario di lavori*, and continued to publish works of the kind throughout the 1530s.[614] Similarly, Paganino published at least two books of this type, including the *Burato* (1527), notable for

[612] Although fewer examples of the *Esemplario di lavori* survive, it is evident from the number of subsequent editions and the incorporation of his patterns into later northern books that this was a very profitable work for the workshop. On the other hand, more copies of the *Opera nova contemplativa* blockbook (discussed in Chapter Seven) have survived in several states, which indicates that it was the workshop's practice to reprint editions in order to meet market demand.

[613] Vavassore's name appears on the frontispiece of *La Conuersione De Sancta Maria Madalena e La Vita De Lazaro e Marta. In ottava Rima Hystoriata. Co[m]posta p[er] Maestro Marcho Rasiglia Da Foligno* (Venice, c.1513) as "Sovan [sic] Andrea de Vavasori." It then appears as "Jovan Andrea de Vavassori F." on the frontispiece of *Thesauro spiritual volgare in rima et hystoriato* (Venice, 1518). Both were published by Niccolò Zoppino and Vincenzo di Paolo.

[614] Niccolò Zoppino published his *Esemplario di lavori* in Venice in 1529, and again in 1530. This was probably the inspiration for Vavassore's book of the same name. Zoppino's later pattern books include *Convivio delle belle donne* (Venice, August 1532) and *Gli universali de i belli recami* (Venice, 1537). Listed in Lotz, 1963, no. 65a, 65c, 68b, and 79 respectively.

publishing the kind of patterns used by lacemakers on the nearby island of Burano.[615] The symbiotic relationship between Vavassore and the printer and mapmaker Matteo Pagano, discussed in Chapter Four, is further underscored by their complementary production of pattern books. Pagano produced many patterns for lace and embroidery in the 1550s, including the *Ornamento delle belle et virtuose donne* which, like many of the works that emerged from the Pagano-Vavassore relationship, could have been produced first by either, then copied by the other.[616]

Working outwards from Vavassore's one-off or semi-regular working relationships, Sazlberg's work has pointed towards a much larger network of printers who published short pamphlets and cheap ephemera in the parish of San Moisè.[617] However, it is evident from surviving publications that although they focused on titles with the potential for broad audiences and lucrative sales, they produced larger books and volumes as well as pamphlets and newssheets.[618] Both Vavassore and Pagano, for example, had separate working relationships with Bernardino Bindoni, and whilst there are no surviving pattern books attributable to his press, he published the first printed handbook for midwives in Latin (1536), which Vavassore credits as the model for his vernacular edition published two years later.[619] Bindoni then worked on an edition of the dialogues of Erasmus with Pagano, published in 1550, at the height of Pagano's production of books and maps.[620]

At the Rialto, Giulio Danza sold books and paper next to the church of San Giacomo di Rialto, and was implicated with Bernardino Bindoni and others in 1544

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[615] Lotz, 1963, attributes two pattern books to Paganino: the *Libro de rechami* (c.1532), 71b; and the *Burato* (1527), 72. The latter was also published in 1532 in Toscolano, near Brescia, see Edit16 CNCE 55836.

[616] Among Pagano's output are the *Giardineto novo di punti tagliati* (Venice, 1550 and 1554), *Ornamento delle belle et virtuose donne* (Venice, 1554); *L'honesto essempio* (Venice, 1550); and *La Gloria et l'horone di ponti tagliati e fogliami* (Venice, 1556 and 1558). See Lotz, 1963, 80d, 80f, 81e, 85a, 87b, and 87c respectively.

[617] See Salzberg, 2008, 36.

[618] Mario Infelise writes that San Moisè became the nucleus of writers of manuscript newssheets in the seventeenth century because of its proximity to San Marco, the hub of political power. See M. Infelise, *Prima dei giornali. Alle origine della publica informazione (secoli XVI e XVII)* (Bari, 2002) 25-6.

[619] Bindoni's Latin text was a translation of Eucharius Rosslin's *Rosegarden for Pregnant Women and Midwives*, a German manual first published in 1513. See Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.61 for the Vavassore edition; which is also discussed in M. H. Green, 'The sources of Eucharius Rösslin's 'Rosegarden for Pregnant Women and Midwives' (1513)' in *Medical History* 53:2 (2009) 167-92.

[620] The colophon of *La moglie. Dialogo erasmico di due donne maritate intitulato la moglie…* reads "Stampato in Vineggia: per Bernardino Bindoni Milanese del Iago Maggiore ad instantia de Mattio Pagan in Frezzaria all'insegna della Fede, 1550."

by the blasphemy magistrates.[621] His brother Paolo Danza, who had both professional and personal ties with Vavassore, was active from 1511 to 1543, and maintained a shop at the foot of the Rialto bridge.[622] These are just a handful of the printers who were active at some point during the lifespan of the Vavassore workshop, however, such connections show the extent to which printers in sixteenth century Venice maintained regular, day-to-day contact. Existing studies that have focused on the major Venetian presses – the Aldine, the Giunti, and the Scotto – have emphasised the apparent singularity, as well as the importance of protecting their ideas and works with a *privilegio*, that ensured their continuing success.[623] We are left with the impression that such presses achieved success as they worked in competition rather than collaboration with one another. However, the present research into Vavassore's workshop begins to overturn this traditional viewpoint: popular books, like other printed objects, reveal the extent to which a complex network of printers collaborated with one another, and relied on each other for the ideas and materials necessary to continue issuing publications in an oversaturated market.

Moving beyond the printed page, remaining samples of embroidery and lace are testimony to the ways in which the owners of these books created objects for use in their everyday lives. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York holds within its collection an embroidered belt or girdle, which features a love poem woven in silk and metallic thread (Fig. 5.17).[624] Its basic design is taken from one of Vavassore's patterns, but the recurring text motif "Liberta" has been replaced by a love poem. The belt features a lively green background, with diagonally orientated cartouches in alternating gold and silver thread, which are outlined in turn with vibrant red thread. A floral design, also executed in gold and silver thread, decorates the space above and below the cartouches. At either end of the belt its maker has added a motif like those already discussed in this section: a white phoenix on a pyre, edged in vermillion. The ends of the belt have been finished, but like an earlier belt in the V&A collection, may once have featured a gilded or silvered buckle (*fibbia*) and

[621] Salzberg, 2008, 37.
[622] On the Danza, see DTEI, s.v.
[623] On the Aldine Press, see Lowry, 1979; and M. Davies, *Aldus Manutius: Printer and Publisher of Renaissance Venice* (London, 1995); on the Scotto, Bernstein, 1998; and on the Giunti, Pettas, 2012.
[624] The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: Fleecher Fund, 1946 (46.116.71).

metal tip (*puntuale*). The green silk backing was also added later.[625] Inside each cartouche, words are carefully woven in black thread, forming the text of a love poem which reads:

"I will burn even as a phoenix/ with the fire of your kisses, / and I will die. /
Life will return with / the breath of your sighs. /
Even as the net is woven / with the cords of love, / do you tie me to your heart /
as long as you will be faithful to me."[626]

In terms of just how effectively women and girls were able to use printed patterns, the belt is evidence that Vavassore's design – which aimed to "teach women the method and order for working [textiles]" – were highly effective, especially if followed precisely. The Metropolitan Museum of Art also possesses a band of contemporary embroidery that replicates the printed pattern exactly, with no decorative additions and the originally intended text 'LIBERTA' in each cartouche (Fig. 5.18).[627] The maker of the belt was clearly inspired by the pattern, but chose to make substantial alterations to it. Whilst the embroidered flowers and cartouches imitate the pattern exactly, the words of the poem and the phoenixes at either end are derived from other sources. Unfortunately, the makers' flair for personalisation does not quite reach the technical standards attained by the parts produced to Vavassore's pattern: the areas for which there was no pattern are less consistent in the quality of their sewing. Graphic images of the phoenix were, by this time, easily accessible in Venice, and may have been a reasonable substitute when an actual pattern was lacking. The well-studied Giolito press operated a bookshop near Rialto at the 'Sign of the Phoenix', and included a small emblem of the bird on its publications.[628]

The choice of text is perfect for the belt's function: through both the technique of its creation and the words of the poem, the voice of the lover refers to weaving, binding, and tying – effectively imbuing the belt with meanings relating to

[625] The belt is included as 'Cat. 55 Belt or Girdle with a Woven Love Poem' by D. L. Krohn, in A. Bayer (ed.) *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven, 2008) 128-9. The V&A belt features an unidentified coat of arms and a similarly amorous inscription. Its metalwork is intact.

[626] "al foco de'tuoi baci qual fenice inceneriso e moro al soffio del tuoi sospir riprendo vita. E colle fila che tessesti stringo amore quanto tu con lacci tuoi me stringi al cuore quando fero sarai fedel amme." This translation is in the files of the Department of the European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and is unsigned. Cited in Krohn, 2008, 129.

[627] The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: Rogers Fund, 1918 (18.138).

[628] On the use of distinctive printers marks, including the Giolito phoenix, see Nuovo, 2013, 143-63; and Harris, 2013, 433.

its actual use, as well as more symbolic meanings about the binding ties of love. Deborah Krohn has speculated on the provenance of the text, comparing the type of language used on the belt to that employed by Giovan Battista Strozzi in his intermezzi for the 1539 wedding of Cosimo I de'Medici and Eleonora of Toledo.[629] Details pertaining to this event were published in a festival book produced in Florence in that year, including descriptions of the performances and instruments used in the intermezzi.[630] However, even with the linguistic similarities, it is impossible to attribute the embroidered text to any particular poet; or, indeed, to prove that it is in fact a Florentine example. Phoenixes were a pervasive theme in medieval literature, notably developed by both Dante and Petrarch in the poems of the *Canzoniere*.[631] These ancient creatures, which burn with great ferocity before emerging unscathed and reborn from the embers, also figure in the poems and stories of the sixteenth century.[632] Closer research into the use of the symbol of the phoenix (be it textual or visual) is required, but perhaps a more likely – and less geographically specific – inspiration for the belt can be found in the references to the phoenix (and to love) in Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato*, Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, and the romances that emulated them.[633] Whatever its textual inspiration, the inclusion of a poem on this embroidered belt makes it a valuable example of the complex interplay between printed text, woodcut image, and material object.

The appeal of a book containing patterns for lace is clear when we consider that from the mid sixteenth century, this fabric – be it in the format of the geometric cutwork named *reticello*, or the later more complex (and thoroughly Venetian) *punto*

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[629] Krohn, 2008, 129.

[630] Pier Francesco Giambullari & Antonio Landi, *Apparato et feste nelle nozze dello illustrissimo signor duca di Firenze [et] della duchessa sua consorte, con le sue stanze, madriali, comedia [et] intermedij, in quelle recitati.* (Florence: Benedetto Giunta, 1539). Giambullari's account is translated in A. C. Minor & B. Mitchell, *A Renaissance Entertainment: Festivities for the Marriage of Cosimo I, Duke of Florence, in 1539* (Columbia, 1968). Giunta's publication is available online via the British Library's 'Treasures in Full: Renaissance Festival Books' initiative. [http://special-1.bl.uk/treasures/festivalbooks/pageview.aspx?strFest=0189&strPage=1 Accessed 1 February 2015].

[631] F. Petrarch, *Canzoniere* edited by G. Contini (Turin, 1964). The phoenix is mentioned in *canzoni* n.185, p.233 and n.321, p.384.

[632] See F. Zambon, *Il mito della Fenice: in Oriente e in Occidente* (Venice: 2005) 60-2.

[633] Ariosto refers to the phoenix in cantos 15, 27, and 36; see L. Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso* edited by E. Sanguineti & M. Turchi (Milan, 1964). See also P. Marinelli, 'Narrative Poetry: from Boiardo to Ariosto' in P. Brand & L. Pertile, *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature* (2nd Edition, Cambridge, 1999) 233-50.

in aria – witnessed an enormous increase in popularity across Europe.[634] However, after the turn of the century, Venetian lace faced increasing competition from Flemish makers, who specialised in highly ornate collars that could be worn by either men or women. Like many other products in the period, lace, embroidered fabrics, and the designs from which they came were subject to significant changes in taste. A late sixteenth-century carnival song, for example, urged passers-by to buy lace collars from a particular street seller because "they're of the latest shape/style."[635] The designs in the pattern books published by the workshop from the 1530s onwards would have suffered much the same fate: as quickly as one fell out of favour, another took its place. However, they were undoubtedly popular volumes, and also very lucrative. Consistent reprints and frequent new titles suggest that Vavassore recognised and exploited the potential of pattern books in both local and distant markets. In so doing, his books for "beautiful and virtuous women" became part of a much larger network of exchange between printers and buyers in Venice and other parts of Europe. Many of the first pattern books published in the northern printing capitals of Cologne, Antwerp and Amsterdam were inspired by – or direct copies of – popular Italian editions like those of Vavassore.[636]

5.4 Conclusion

The case studies explored in this chapter both support and contradict Paul Grendler's formative statements about the category of the popular book. In terms of their form, the poems issued to celebrate or commiserate the fortunes of the Venetian forces in the first decade and a half of the workshop's activity correlate closely with the attributes he described. Printed recto and verso on just a handful of quarto-sized sheets, these vernacular poems would have captured the popular imagination for a short period of time only. Nonetheless, they would have been a major contributor to the market for news about contemporary battles and sieges, as well as an important part of citywide celebrations, such as those described by Marin Sanudo in the wake

[634] *Lace Pattern Books*, 1919, 87.
[635] "Me li bavari de rede / forniv'allegrament'o generose / fornive chè li se con fose nuove. Bavari, donne!" Giovanni Croce, *Mascarata da Buranelle*, I Fagiolini recording (2001). First published as part of the *Mascarate piacevoli et ridicolose per il carnevale a otto voci* (Venice, 1590).
[636] *Lace Pattern Books*, 1919, 88.

of the Venetian success at Marignano.[637] Acting as a crossover between oral and written cultures, the content of these poems in *ottava rima* also fits well with Grendler's assertion that popular books held a nearly universal appeal. On the other hand, the pattern books discussed in Section 5.3 can only even really have appealed to half of the book buying – or perhaps more accurately, the book consuming – public. These were books for "beautiful and virtuous women", and their study is as much an exercise in textile history as it is the history of the book. Surviving examples of embroidery and lace produced using Vavassore's patterns, as well as the books themselves, have much to tell us about the patterns of use and purpose of these volumes, as well as the complex interchange between material and print cultures in the sixteenth century.

Vavassore's pattern books were certainly popular, as the surviving copies attest to the need to reprint the *Coronna di Racammi* just four months after it initially entered the market. It is clear from the number of pattern books produced later in the sixteenth and early in the seventeenth century that this genre was able to maintain the interest of purchasers across Europe; and it is likely that a proportion of the output of the Vavassore workshop in this field was exported from Venice and sold elsewhere. What Vavassore and other makers of books of patterns for lace and embroidery were really selling was not the volume itself, but a Venetian lace brand that promised the buyer that they would be able to recreate these fashionable patterns at a considerable distance from the lagoon. These books contained very little text and probably never resembled finished books. As Peter Stallybrass has argued, printers produced sheets, not books, and only with the intervention of others did they become bound volumes.[638] None of the surviving editions of the pattern books produced by the Vavassore workshop have contemporary bindings, which is perhaps unsurprising when we consider the inherently destructive process required to create a three-dimensional material object from a two-dimensional pattern on paper. Like newssheets and wartime poems, these publications probably had a limited shelf life for both the printer and the buyer. Rather than related to specific events in the public

[637] The city celebrated the joy of the victory and the divine favour of the Republic through masses, grand processions, and the distribution of grain to the poor. DMS, 21:114 and 121.
[638] P. Stallybrass, '"Little Jobs": Broadsides and the Printing Revolution' in S. A. Baron, E. N. Lindquist & E. F. Shelvin (eds.) *Agent of Change. Print Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein* (Amherst, 2007) 340.

consciousness, however, popularity for these books waxed and waned with changing fashions.

Both case studies are exceptionally useful tools in considering and evaluating the ability of the workshop to respond to the needs of its market. Vavassore was by no means the sole publisher and distributer of printed wares like these, as it is clear from surviving examples published by Vavassore's contemporaries that the market was buoyant enough to support the production of both wartime poetry and pattern books by a plethora of Venetian printers. Nonetheless, their importance in the life cycle of the Renaissance print workshop should not be underestimated. Newssheets and wartime pamphlets could be relied upon to sell reliably, even if demand for them was restricted to a limited window of time (the exception to the rule is, of course, the lament of Negroponte described above). Pattern books were similarly transient, both in terms of their use and the designs they contained, but nonetheless represent a significant (and successful) proportion of the workshop's output. This genre would benefit greatly from further research, but serves to illuminate the need for artisans of all kinds to interact on a daily basis to facilitate the production of certain titles.

Understanding the nature of the Venetian market is an essential tool in interpreting both the Vavassore workshop and the category of the popular book. The shop in San Luca would have catered to an extremely diverse market of locals and visitors, who in turn would have expected to be able to purchase an equally diverse array of printed goods. Given the apparent expectation of Renaissance consumers to be able to buy goods on credit or to barter for them, it is perhaps unsurprising that Vavassore may have accepted pawned items in lieu of payment for his books.[639] His adoption of the nickname "guadagnino" suggests that his maps, prints, books and pamphlets formed part of a broader material culture in which belts, rings, clothing, pieces of fabric, as well as coins played a key role. Although Vavassore was not destined to amass a great fortune, this flexible system of exchange did not impair his

[639] On bartering, see E. Welch, 'Making Money: Pricing and Payments in Renaissance Italy' in Welch & O'Malley, 2007, 71-84; Molà, 2000, 225-8; and J. Brotton, *The Renaissance Bazaar: From the Silk Road to Michelangelo* (Oxford, 2002). On systems of credit, see J. Shaw, 'Liquidation or Certification? Small Claims Disputes and Retail Credit in Seventeenth-Century Venice' in B. Blondé, P. Stabel, J. Stobart & I. Van Damme (eds), *Buyers and Sellers: Retail Circuits and Practices in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Turnhout, 2006); *idem*, 'Market Ethics and Credit Practices in Sixteenth-Century Tuscany', *Renaissance Studies* 27:2 (2013) 236-52; and A. Matchette, 'Credit and Credibility: Used Goods and Social Relations in Sixteenth-Century Florence' in O'Malley & Welch, 2007, 225-41.

ability to continue to operate the workshop, nor to finance a wide range of new, and rather more prestigious, projects.

Chapter Six

Printing with the *Privilegio*: Vavassore and the Venetian Authorities

The existence of regulating and endorsing bodies – and the interaction of printers with them – has attracted considerable scholarly attention in the histories of Venetian print. On 18 January 1549, the Council of Ten lamented that, whilst other trades practiced in the city were organised into guilds, printers and booksellers operated "in their own way, with extreme disorder and confusion."[640] Though Venice's last trade guild was to be established soon after, this proclamation was part of a long line of attempts by the authorities to control the production and distribution of printed goods in the sixteenth-century lagoon. The material thus far considered in this thesis slipped, for the most part, under the radar of the Venetian authorities. In Chapters Six and Seven, on the other hand, I shall demonstrate how the increasing control exerted by the authorities impacted on the life and work of a sixteenth-century printer in Venice.

After the death of John of Speyer in 1470 ended the monopoly over printing granted to him, the government was remarkably lax about issuing official permission to carry out the trade in the city.[641] The government interceded only to grant the *privilegi*, now understood by historians to have been "forerunners of copyright … a sort of patent on text or typographical innovation designed to protect the financial investment of publishers and printers and thereby promote the economic well-being of the industry."[642] By 1517 the system had become too unwieldy, so the Senate cancelled existing privileges, and decreed that they would only be granted to new works that had not previously been printed. As Salzberg has noted, most cheap print was printed without a privilege, for the time and expense of applying for one could

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[640] "…medesimamente occorendo di giorno in giorno molti inconvenienti circa le stampre, che hano bisogno de emendation, con diffiultà per l'istessa cagione si può venir in cognitione della verità, non vi essendo alcuno che rappresenti la ditta arte, nè chi risponda per quella, onde aviene, che tutti fano à modo loro, con estremo disordine e confusione." From the preamble to the law decreeing the establishment of the guild (18 January 1549) ASV, CX, Parti comuni, f.47 fasc. 88, cited in Salzberg, 2014, 129.

[641] On Speyer's monopoly, see J. Kostylo, 'Commentary on Johannes of Speyer's Venetian Monopoly (1469)' in L. Bently & M. Kretschmer, *Primary Sources on Copyright (1450-1900)* [www.copyrighthistory.org Accessed 1 June 2015].

[642] Salzberg, 2014, 130 (quotation); and see Witcombe, 2004, chs. 1 and 2. On early attempts to control Venetian presses, see Grendler, 1977, 71-6.

not be justified. Furthermore, it came to fall under a category known as *libri comuni* or communal books that could be reprinted freely by anyone who wished to do so.[643]

Concern about "ill-natured or dishonest works" (*opera dishoneste, et de mala natura*) a decade later led to the reaffirmation of a system of *licenze* in 1527.[644] The proclamation issued in that year insisted that no books could be printed in prose or in verse without the printer first having obtained a license from the Chiefs of the Council of Ten (*Capi del Consiglio dei Dieci*).[645] From 5 February 1545 onwards, the Riformatori dello Studio di Padova served as the official body to which publishers were obliged to submit requests for material they wished to print; taking the responsibility of deciding whether printed material was acceptable on religious, moral, and political grounds away from the Council of Ten.[646] Finally, the introduction of the Esecutori contro la bestemmia or magistrates against blasphemy in 1537 was a measured response by the authorities to the publication and dissemination of obscene works in print.[647] The remit of the Esecutori was much wider than simply policing blasphemy in print, but encompassed the control of a wide variety of immoral or indecorous behaviours, as well as more careful demarcation of sacred and profane space.[648] The involvement of this magistracy in the production and dissemination of printed texts was the beginning of a long process ultimately concerned with the suppression of heterodoxy in Venice. I will return to

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[643] Salzberg, 2014, 131. On the *libri comuni*, see also L. Carnelos, *'Con libri alla mano.' L'editoria di larga diffusione a Venezia tra Sei e Settecento* (Milan, 2012) 22.

[644] The concern of the Council of Ten is recorded in ASV, CX, Parti Comuni, f.4, fasc.162, cited in Salzberg, 2014, ch.5 n.12. Licensing was first instituted on 11 October 1506 by the Council of Ten, reaffirmed on 3 July 1519, and reaffirmed again on 29 January 1527.

[645] ASV, CX, Proclami, b.4, f.108. This proclamation is also discussed in Witcombe, 2004, 64; and Salzberg, 2014, 131.

[646] The document assigning this responsibility to the Riformatori is recorded in ASV, CX, Parti Comuni, b.36 f.124r.

[647] These included the works of Lorenzo Venier, such as *Il trent'uno della Zaffetta* and *Puttana errante*, as discussed in G. Pesenti, 'Libri censurati a Venezia nei secoli XVI-XVII', *La Bibliofilia* 58:1 (1956) 15-16. The *Puttanata errante* was disseminated by street sellers, as discussed in Salzberg, 2014, ch. 3.

[648] An extract from the Esectuori contro la bestemmia's proclamation of 1612 is included in Chambers & Pullan, 2001, 128-9; which reinforces the punishment of imprisonment, working on the galleys, or banishment for publishing "any book, song, prophecy, letter or other such matter without proper permission." Elizabeth Horodowich has argued that the remit of the Esecutori is reflective of the anxieties of the city in a period of rapid social change; see Horodowich, 2008, 56-90. See also R. Derosas, 'Moralità e giustizia a Venezia ne; '500-'600: gli Esecutori contro la bestemmia' in G. Cozzi (ed.) *Stato, società e giustizia nella Repubblica veneta (sec. XV-XVIII)* (Rome, 1980) 431-528; Witcombe, 2004, 65-6; Salzberg, 2014, 132.

the Vavassore's involvement with the Inquisition and its Index of Prohibited Books in Chapter Seven, as it provides crucial context for the consideration of the workshop's devotional output, but the aim of this chapter is to focus on the workshop's interactions (or, in some cases, lack of interaction) with the Venetian authorities in a more secular capacity.

Despite being an outsider from the Bergamasco, Vavassore had established himself and his position within the trade hierarchy of Venice – as a member of the Painters' Guild that met at the altar of St Luke – at a relatively early stage in his career.[649] There was no established guild of printers and booksellers in 1530, when his name appears on the list of members of the *L'arte dei pittori*, but work by Christina Dondi on the surviving *mariegola* suggests that there were at least informal meetings of members of these trades before this point.[650] As noted above, the Guild of Printers and Booksellers was founded following a proclamation by the Council of Ten in 1549, but the first documents to refer to meetings, and to list the names of the procurators and members of the guild, date to 1571. Nonetheless, the *mariegola* of the guild refers to various dates between 1517 and 1566.[651] It is likely that the earliest meetings arose in response to the law passed on 1 August 1517, aimed at "abating the inconveniences and disorders arising from the existing system of privileges."[652] Further instances include the meetings of a core group of printers in July 1548 to protest the order issued by the Council of Ten for them to hand in any heretical works they held, and the gathering of printers and booksellers in the workshop of Tomaso Giunta in January 1559 to discuss the Index of Prohibited Books and collectively agree to disobey the order for booksellers to submit lists of their prohibited stock.[653]

The Guild of Printers and Booksellers was, therefore, just beginning to assert its control more fully when Vavassore died in 1572. That year Francesco

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[649] Vavassore's name appears on the list of matriculated members of the Painters' Guild compiled in 1530 as "Zuannandrea Vadagnin." The connections between woodcarvers (*intaiadori*) and painters (*dipintori*) were long held, as noted in Chapter Three. See Favaro, 1975, 68-9 and 137-44.
[650] Dondi, 2004, 229-65.
[651] Ibid. 230.
[652] The deliberations of 1517 were discussed and published in full in Brown, 1891, 73-4 and 207.
[653] The meeting in the workshop of Tomaso Giunta is recorded in Grendler, 1977, 118-9. See also M. Jacoviello, 'Proteste di editori e librai veneziani contro l'introduzione della censura sulla stampa a Venezia (1543-1555)'*Archivio storico italiano* 151:1 (1993) 34-5; and Salzberg, 2014, 144.

Rampazetto, a guild Prior, voiced the concern that there were many, both in Venice and entering it, who "stupidly believing that the art of printing requires little intelligence, dare to enter into the practice of it with little knowledge, and less experience."[654] Although printing and bookselling had always been an open trade welcoming to newcomers, from that point onwards, printers and booksellers in Venice had to be matriculated members of the guild, which in itself set rules upon entrance to, and examination of, the trade. An apprentice (*garzone*) had to be registered to the guild and serve at least five years, followed by another three years as a journeyman (*lavorante*) with one of the city's workshops, before being judged worthy of entrance to the guild by senior members of the trade.[655] Such stringent measures were intended to close off the trade to a new generation of people like Vavassore, who as an immigrant at the very start of the sixteenth century had come to the lagoon and established a business at a time when entering the trade was easy and policed very poorly. By the time of his death, foreigners were required to invest in the same levels of training, and to pay guild matriculation fees twice those of Venetian-born printers and booksellers.[656] The case of the Vavassore workshop thus occupies the hinge point between the freedoms of the early print industry, and the more strict controls that came to be placed on members of the trade from the mid 1570s onwards.

Although we cannot rule out Vavassore's involvement in the informal discussions held in various *botteghe* across the city before the guild of printers and booksellers was established, it is clear that, at least in this respect, the role of the Venetian authorities in the workshop's production and dissemination of printed goods was minimal in its earliest stages. Whilst the output of the workshop – most notably, of hand-finished multi-block woodcut prints and maps – occasionally justifies the discontent of members of the painters' guild, this group of artisans would have provided fertile ground (and contacts) for a woodcarver cutting his teeth

[654] "Quanti suscitano di continuo in essa arte, in quali grossamente credendo che l'essercito della stamparia sia cosa de poca intelligentia, si fanno lecito entrar al maneggio di essa per poca cognitione, et manco esperienza che ne habbiano." BMCV, *Matricola dell'Arte dei stampatori e librari di Venezia*, f.18v (27 April 1572), also cited in Salzberg, 2014, 145.
[655] BMCV, *Matricola dell'Arte dei stampatori e librari di Venezia,* ff.18v-19r.
[656] Standard matriculation fees were five ducats, and foreigners were required to pay ten ducats. Ibid. On how these requirements and the cost of membership to the guild of printers and booksellers compared to those of other guilds, see Mackenney, 1987, 171.

in a new industry.[657] However, it was certainly not the only support mechanism for a new printer in Venice. In the sixteenth century, the city's printing industry was underpinned by a complex – if unofficial – network of personal and professional ties, forged from the bonds of kinship, friendship, and neighbourhood. Vavassore's close associations with printers like Paolo Danza, Niccolò Zoppino, and Matteo Pagano are indicative of this network, which provided a sense of solidarity long before the guild of printers and booksellers was established. As well as their fellow printers, men like Vavassore were part of a broader network that encompassed authors and editors, to which I will return in section 6.2.

Vavassore's interactions with the authorities do, nonetheless, have a direct impact on the output of the workshop over several decades of activity. By submitting applications to the Senate to obtain a *privilegio*, Vavassore declared some of his publications to be worthy of protection. Many of the earliest privileges were granted for innovations in printing technology, techniques of production, formats, designs of fonts, and other material aspects of the book. Aldus Manutius, for example, was concerned with the physical appearance of his works, rather than with protecting their intellectual content.[658] By the time Vavassore was applying for printing privileges in the second half of the sixteenth century, control over the content and illustration of books had become a more pressing concern for those producing and selling printed goods. Printers submitted their applications to the Venetian Senate, who granted privileges based upon a two-thirds majority vote; expressing their fears that, after so much hard work and investment, another printer could easily copy and publish their work and sell it to make a profit. The authorities responded to their concerns by more strictly defining the terms of the *privilegio*: confiscating works that contradicted them, and issuing fines appropriate to the number of volumes found.[659]

Given the extensive literature on applying for and using the *privilegio* in the sixteenth century, the aim of this chapter is not to echo their scholarly consideration in isolation, but rather to place the printer's interaction with the authorities within the

[657] As discussed in Chapter Three.
[658] Deazley, Kretschmer & Bently, 2010, 10.
[659] One of the documents included by Fulin requests "the normal sanctions" (*colle norme consuete*) to be placed on the works for which the applicant seeks a *privilegio*. See Fulin, 1882, n.169 88.

larger framework of the workshop's output.[660] Vavassore had been printing for almost four decades by the time he submitted his first supplication to the Senate in 1553, and only a handful of titles were published with a supporting *privilegio*. These will be considered in this chapter. The questions they raise are therefore concerned with Vavassore's motivations for protecting his works; why he sought a privilege for some titles and not others; why he chose to begin applying to the Senate for the protection of the *privilegi* so late in his career; and what he stood to gain from doing so.

6.1 Applying for the *Privilegio*: Protecting Text and Image

On 9 May 1553, Giovanni Andrea submitted a supplication to the Senate in which he stated that he had, with great labour and expense, gathered together "figures designed by the excellent masters" which he had cut (or had had cut) into blocks for printing.[661] These new designs were intended to be included in new editions of Boccaccio, Petrarch, and Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*.[662] I have yet to find any surviving copies of Vavassore's editions of Boccaccio and Petrarch, however, it was not unusual for printers to speculatively apply for privileges from the Senate and never actually publish the titles.[663] However, in a sea of illustrated editions of Ariosto's epic Enid Falaschi has drawn particular attention to Vavassore's 1553 edition of the *Orlando Furioso* for its use of a "multi-narrative technique".[664] Beginning with Gabriele Giolito in 1542 and continuing for the next decade and a half, it became fashionable to depict more than one episode in a single frame.[665] These illustrations can appear busy and confusing, with several scenes depicted

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[660] The history of the *privilegio* has attracted considerable scholarly attention. See Fulin, 1882, 84-212; Brown, 1891; Fumagalli, 1905, 449-509; Grendler, 1977, 151-4; and Witcombe, 2004.
[661] "figure designate da Masttri eccelenti." ASV, ST, reg. 39 f. 17v.
[662] "per nove figure, & nove additioni sopra Il Furioso dell'Ariosto, Il Petrarcha, et il Boccaccio." Ibid.
[663] Printers demanding privileges for works and volumes were forced to print them within a certain time. The remaining documents concerning the Senate *privilegi* include printers obtaining a privilege to print the same work(s) several years later, as they had not been printed before the previous privilege had expired. Fulin, 1882, 10.
[664] Falaschi, 1975, 227-51.
[665] Ibid. 227. After Giolito, only Vavassore (in 1553) and Vincenzo Valgrisi (in 1556) used the multi-narrative method in their editions of Ariosto's work.

above, below, or beside one another, with the action ebbing and flowing between them.

Vavassore's woodcuts of this type do indeed appear overcrowded in their effort to represent several episodes within the space of a single frame (Fig. 6.1). Though the half-page woodcuts in the 1553 (and identical 1554) edition can be difficult to follow (Fig. 6.2), the multi-narrative technique proved a useful method for illustrating such large and complex works as the *Orlando Furioso* as it allowed the printer to simultaneously depict various events occurring in a particular stanza of text, even if they were separated by time and space.[666] Architectural features are used effectively to separate the different scenes, and the scale of the characters depicted within them is subject to considerable variation (Fig. 6.1). Beyond the architecture, the inclusion of folds of landscape and roiling water recall the depiction of land and sea in Vavassore's larger cartographic works. As well as alluding to other aspects of the workshop's output, these illustrations demonstrate the more general way that artists "tackled the problem of rendering the literary content in visual terms in their attempts to convey representative or succeeding phases of a story within a limited framework."[667]

Vavassore states in his *privilegio* application that he had acquired a collection of designs by other artists when preparing the 1553 volume of *Orlando Furioso*. Who these artists may have been has invited speculation, but as yet we are no closer to definitively establishing their authorship.[668] However, it is clear that this was not the first time Vavassore had depended on other people for illustrations, as the 1548 edition of Ariosto's poem had included near copies of designs printed by Gabriele Giolito and sold at his shop at the Sign of the Phoenix.[669] All of the surviving illustrated editions of the *Orlando Furioso* published by the workshop therefore make use of designs by other artists.[670] It should be noted, however, that whilst the woodcuts protected by the *privilegio* of 1553 were certainly repurposed for future

[666] Falaschi, 1975, 234 noted that these ornamental frames ""detract from the clarity of the narrative scenes but are of interest as their design resembles that of some carved picture frames of the period."
[667] Falaschi, 1975, 227.
[668] In addition to Falaschi's article, see A. Ricci, 'The Orlando Furioso in Print, 1516-1542': An Historical Study and Descriptive Bibliography' (PhD Thesis, 1998).
[669] Falaschi, 1975, 231-3.
[670] See Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.99, n.100, n.119, n.120, n.124, n.136 and n.156. These editions were printed in various formats, both with commentaries and translations and without. Many were reprinted multiple times.

Vavassore editions, they also provided models for the designer of the woodcuts included in the quarto edition published by Vincenzo Valgrisi in 1556, and for later octavo editions published by Sigismono Bordogna (1587) and Paolo Ugolino (1602).[671] Whilst Valgrisi's full-page illustrations would certainly not have offended the terms of Vavassore's privilege, they do compound the difficulty of using the multi-narrative technique by encasing the already complex scenes in large and elaborate borders (Fig. 6.3).

The use of second-hand designs, as well as an increasing focus on providing the reader with new commentaries and annotations, does seem to suggest that the workshop was keen to focus as much on the text of the *Orlando Furioso* as it did on the woodcuts used to illustrate it. The frontispiece of the 1553 edition lists at least five individuals involved in the compilation of the edition and its accompanying sections: including a *vita* of the author by Simone Fornari, annotations and alterations by Lodovico Dolce, an outline of the allegories and topics in each *canto* by Clemente Vavassore and Giovanni Mario Verdezotti, and a list of all rhymes used by Ariosto by Giovanni Giacomo Paruta. Clemente Vavassore's prefatory eulogy of Ariosto's work goes further than other commentators or printers when he states that, rather than comparable to the edifying heroic poems of Homer and Virgil, Ariosto's epic possesses superior didactic value because it is a Christian poem that carries none of the liabilities inherent in the pagan worldview of the ancient poets. Rather than reading about the quarrels, adulteries, and love affairs of a multitude of sinful Gods, in the work of the "divine" (*divino*) Ariosto is to be found "one sole, eternal, and unchanging God, who orders and governs human affairs with perpetual providence."[672] Such favourable readings of Ariosto's work proved both popular and enduring, and were echoed by the famed courtier John Harington in his English translation of the poem in 1591.[673] Although Vavassore may have applied for the

[671] These (and other) editions are discussed in P. Hofer, 'Illustrated Editions of 'Orlando Furioso' in J-H. Fragonard, *Fragonard Drawings for Ariosto* (New York, 1945) 27-40; however, Vavassore's 1553 edition is not mentioned. See also Falsachi, 1975, 231.
[672] "Ma qui un solo Iddio, eterno, giusto, ed immutabile con perpetua providenza dispone, e governa le cose umane…" Clemente Vavassore, preface of the 1553 edition, quoted in Javitch, 1991, 36.
[673] Harington cites examples of Christian piety in Ariosto's work, and claims that he actually surpasses Virgil, who was ignorant of Christian doctrine and wisdom: "in this point my author is to be preferred before all the auncient Poetes in which are mentioned so many false Gods and of them so many fowle deeds, their contentions, their adulteries, their incest as

privilegio on the grounds of the inclusion of "new figures designed by the excellent masters," it also reflects, to some extent, the substantial amount of time and effort invested in the extensive commentary and annotations included in his editions.

So why did Vavassore apply for a privilege in 1553, having already published copies of the *Orlando Furioso* in the previous decade? And, given that copying played such a major role in his publications of the poem, was there any point to having the *privilegio*? The vast majority of printed works in Venice were printed without a privilege – it was simply an optional means of protecting financial investment in a project by preventing others from profiting from their labours. In addition to the printer, authors, editors, commentators and translators of original works could also apply for the protection afforded by a privilege. Ludovico Ariosto himself notably petitioned the Venetian Senate in 1515, specifying that it was not permissible "to print or to put into print my work, by using any other font, neither in a grand folio size, nor in the smallest one, without the explicit license and concession of me, Ludovico Ariosto, the author of the aforementioned work."[677] Despite his insistence, Ariosto's poem was widely published before his death in 1532, and became even more so in the decades that followed. Existing studies may have helpfully outlined the process of applying for and granting of a privilege, but they have concentrated too closely on the terms of the privilege (generally, the imposition of fines and confiscation of titles) with little consideration that they were routinely flouted.[679] Vavassore's 1553 application was probably intended to reflect the considerable time, effort, and investment involved in producing the illustrative woodcuts, annotating the text, and collating the efforts of so many editors and authors. Nonetheless, the protection afforded to Vavassore's editions of the *Orlando Furioso* from 1553 onwards cannot be said to have been entirely successful. Despite the standard threat of confiscation and a fine per volume, the "new figures" included

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were both obscenous in recital and hurtful in example." Harington cited in Javitch, 1991, 135.

[677] ASV, Notario del Collegio, reg. 18, f.23r, 25 October 1515. See also, Deazley, Kretschmer & Bently, 210, 10-11.

[679] For discussion of the effectiveness of the *privilegi*, see Witcombe, 2004, 81-11; and Deazley, Kretschmer & Bently, 2010, 10-11.

in his edition were meticulously copied by at least two other printers, who were able to profit from his more considerable labours.[680]

A second application to the Senate followed several years later, on 15 March 1560.[681] Vavassore was granted another privilege, this time for a single title: *Della Guerra di Campagna di Roma* written by Alessandro d'Andrea and edited by Girolamo Ruscelli. It would appear that the *privilegio* was more successful in this case: at least 62 copies of Vavassore's book exist in Italian libraries alone, but no copycat work can be attributed to another publisher.[682] By contrast to the protected edition(s) of the *Orlando Furioso*, illustrative woodcuts and images play almost no role. This quarto volume features 88 leaves printed recto and verso, and its only visual element is in the form of small, woodcut initials, included at the beginning of each section – featuring goddesses, like this example of Venus in a chariot pulled by swans (Fig. 6.4).

The book is concerned with the war that took place between Rome and the Kingdom of Naples in 1556-7. The original text was written in three *ragionamenti* – with one dedicated to Pope Paul IV and another to the King of Naples – by Alessandro d'Andrea, a captain and writer from Naples. In its margins, the notes of Girolamo Ruscelli, a *poligrafo* from Viterbo who died in Venice in 1566, have been added as printed annotations. By adopting this form, Vavassore was able to provide a relatively balanced account of the event, with information and input from both sides. In many ways, this publication is a perfect example of the progression of the workshop. Its subject matter – war – recalls the earlier pamphlets and poems in *ottava rima*; and although it does not adopt this form, nor use images to illustrate the event, it demonstrates Vavassore's continuing ability to engage with contemporary events and exploit the demand for news and discussion of them in print. Unlike the first example, this application also goes some way to answering what Vavassore (and printers like him) stood to gain from the system of privileges. Here, the *privilegio* ensured that Vavassore did hold the monopoly on publishing the title, whilst the number of surviving copies is perhaps indicative of a large print run and the associated profits.

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[680] Vavassore's woodcuts were meticulously copied by the Venetian printers Sigismondo Bordogna (1587) and Paolo Ugolino (1602). The designer of Vincenzo Valgrisi's cuts (1556) must also have utilised Vavassore's illustrations. Falaschi, 1975, 231.
[681] ASV, ST, reg. 42, f.123r-v. 15 March 1560.
[682] EDIT16, CNCE 15959 lists copies in at least 62 Italian collections.

Finally, Vavassore applied for and received a third *privilegio* on 23 March 1566.[683] Unlike the two earlier supplications, Vavassore did not provide as much information to the Senate, merely requesting the privilege to print "several titles." Just as printers applied for privileges on editions that they did not go on to produce, they also submitted requests that are impossible to trace from surviving editions – either because of poor survival rates, or a lack of information.[684] The catalogue of the workshop's extant production reveals several potential titles, each published in 1566: the first is an Italian vernacular-Latin dictionary compiled by Filippo Venuti. Venuti made a name for himself as a lexicographer, and collaborated with Vavassore on at least two occasions.[685] His dictionaries were concerned with the translation of vocabulary between Latin and the *volgare*, and were published by the workshop (always in octavo format) in 1561, 1562, 1564, 1565, 1566, 1568, 1569, and 1572. The printing and reprinting of various editions suggests that, like the *Orlando Furioso*, Venuti's dictionaries became a staple of the workshop's output. Not only were revised editions issued regularly until Vavassore's death in 1572, but Giovanni Andrea's great-nephew Alvise, in conjunction with Giovanni Domenico Micheli, issued further editions of the dictionary in 1576, 1582, and 1584.

In addition to the archival evidence of Vavassore's applications to the Senate for privileges to print, a very small number of the extant publications issued by the press testify on their frontispieces that they, too, were printed with the protection of the *privilegio*. Two editions of the poems of Laura Terracina, a poetess from Naples who was a member of the Accademia degli Incogniti, were published by the workshop in 1550 and 1552.[686] The frontispieces of both the *Quarte Rime* and *Quinte Rime* proclaim that they were printed "con gratia & privilegio" by the Vavassore in Venice, and include one of the only surviving portraits of the poet (Fig.

[683] ASV, ST, reg. 46, f. 15r. 23 March 1566.
[684] See note 146.
[685] On editions of the Venuti dictionary, see Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.137 and n.178. On sixteenth-century dictionaries more generally, see J. Considine, *Academy Dictionaries 1600-1800* (Cambridge, 2014) 12-14.
[686] On Laura Terracina, see N. Dersofi, 'Laura Bacio Terracina' in D. Maury Robin, A. R. Larsen & C. Levin (eds.) *Encyclopedia of Women in the Renaissance: Italy, France, and England* (Santa Barbara, 2007) 356-9; K. Eisenbichler, 'Laura Terracina (1519-c.1577)' in G. Marrone & P. Puppa (eds.) *Encyclopedia of Italian Literary Studies* (New York, 2007) 1861-2; V. Cox, *Women's Writing in Italy, 1400-1650* (Baltimore, 2008); *idem*, *The Prodigious Muse: Women's Writing in Counter-Reformation Italy* (Baltimore, 2011); and *idem*, *Lyric Poetry by Women of the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore, 2013).

6.5).[687] Several years later, Vavassore edited and published a Latin edition of Aristotelian rhetoric by Jacopo Brocardo.[688] The frontispiece of this 1558 work similarly attests to its printing "cum privilegio." Finally, in 1562, Vavassore published two works by the Paduan Girolamo Muzio.[689] The remaining copies also attest to the granting of a privilege from the Senate to print them – perhaps unsurprisingly, given that they were what might be described as pro-Catholic propaganda in the wake of the Council of Trent. *Il Bullingero Riprovato* and *L'antidoto Christiano* laid out Muzio's arguments against the Reformation, including such issues as the Council of Trent, justification of the faith, the tradition and interpretation of the scripture, the arrangement of the church, on the sacraments, and on the issue of transubstantiation.[690] The religious volumes published by the press, as well as the involvement of the Vavassore with the Venetian Inquisition, will be considered in greater detail in the next chapter. For the purpose of this chapter, however, the evidence of surviving volumes like these makes it possible to conclude that Vavassore applied to the Senate for privileges on several more occasions, even if the original archival documents have not survived.

6.2 Other Authorities: The Broader Network of Authors and Editors

Throughout this thesis, I have attempted to use the figure of Vavassore as a starting point for understanding the everyday relationships, both formal and informal, business and social, that existed between printers in sixteenth century Venice. However, remaining publications demonstrate the extent to which Vavassore – and the workshop as a whole – gained a reputation for printing the works of specific authors. The case of Filippo Venuti, whose dictionaries were printed and sold by the workshop for over two decades, is not exceptional. Works by the bishop-poet Antonio Sebastiano Minturno also frequently appear among the extant output of the press: four distinct collections of poems in Latin, including the *Poemata Tridentina* written by Minturno during the Council of Trent, were published by Vavassore in 1563-4 to coincide with its closing.[691] The first of these, a long quarto volume of

[687] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.104 and n.115.
[688] Ibid., Cat. n.129.
[689] See B. Piciché, 'Girolamo Muzio', in Marrone & Puppa, 2007, 1264-5.
[690] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.140 and n.141.
[691] Ibid., Cat. n.131.

over 450 leaves, is concerned with the *Art of Poetry*, and refers to different genres (heroic, tragic, comic, satire) and styles (sonnets, songs and other rhymes).[692]

The volume also includes annotations (*postille*) by "Dottor Vavassore" – Giovanni Andrea's nephew Clemente, who acted as editor for this edition. Clemente's involvement in the workshop is occasional and only ever in the capacity of editor, which is perhaps unsurprising given the nature of his other work. Born in Bergamo around 1530, Clemente Vavassore obtained a degree in canon and civil law at Padua, before serving as a judge for the Republic in Belluno, Bergamo, Brescia, and Verona. In light of his "virtù et industria," the Council of Ten conferred upon him in 1559 the right to practice law in the ducal palace, a privilege normally restricted to native, Venetian-born citizens.[693] The reference to him as a "Dottor" in the colophon of Minturno's volume echoes Clemente's description of himself as a "doctor of law" in his testament of 28 August 1576, around two years after he had abandoned his legal career to enter the Carthusian monastery of Sant'Andrea on the Lido (taking the library he inherited from his uncle with him).[694] In his capacity as editor to the bishop Minturno's Latin text, however, Clemente reconciled both his scholarly and religious interests, emphasising the morality of the work and the lessons that could be learned from "this great Christian poet" ("questo gran Poeta Christiano"). I will return to Vavassore's nephew in Chapter Seven, for despite professing his monastic vows, he is implicated heavily in the Venetian Inquisition's attempts to root out heretical behaviours.

Several other works published by the workshop also attest to its healthy working relationship with Giulio Ballino, an editor and mapmaker.[695] Many of Ballino's maps and views were published in conjunction with Paolo Forlani, who was active as a mapmaker in the later decades of the workshop's activity.[696] With

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[692] Ibid., Cat. n.144. See also G. Baldissone, 'Lyric Poetry', in Marrone & Puppa, 2007, 1088.
[693] ASV, CX, Commune, reg.24 f.38v, 9 August 1559. An inventory of Clemente's books is included in Appendix II of Grendler, 1977, 317-9.
[694] "io Clemente Valvassore Dottor di legge […] Lass a questo Monastero di S. Andrea della Certosa, al qual ho dedicato la vita mia…" Clemente declares in his testament that in 1576 he still had the books he used for his study, which he bequeathed to the Carthusians. Document transcribed in Schulz, 1998, 124.
[695] Ballino is best known as a mapmaker and compiler of a book of city maps (*De' disegni delle più illustri città et fortezze del mondo* [Venice, 1569]), which included a view of the city of Timistitan and compared it to Venice. See Horodowich, 2005, 1039-62; and B. Wilson, 'Venice, Print, and the Early Modern Icon', *Urban History* 33:1 (2006) 39-64.
[696] For a list of Forlani's maps and prints, see Woodward, 1990.

the Vavassore workshop, Ballino's contribution involved the editing and translation of texts for publication. In addition to two vernacular translations of the Greek writings of the Stoic philosopher Epictetus, Vavassore also published a 1566 edition of the *Sermons of St Basil of Caesarea*, translated by Ballino from the Latin. Analysis of the surviving volume reveals that this vernacular translation of the sermons of St Basil was indeed one of the books for which Vavassore attained a *privilegio* in 1566.[697]

Although Vavassore occasionally attracted the attention of the Inquisition for his books and behaviour, on the whole, the output of the workshop in the last decade of his life conforms to the stricter controls placed on printers.[698] Here, as a case study, the workshop comes into its own as an example of the need to adapt and conform over time. The presses of his some-time collaborators – Zoppino, Pagano, and Danza – had ceased operating months or even years before the authorities began to close in on printers in the late 1550s and early 1560s.[699] Vavassore's 1557 edition of Lorenzo Spirito's fortune-telling book was one of, if not the, last version of this work, which would surely have raised some alarm bells with the authorities if published in the following decade.[700] Finally, the 1534 case of Iseppo of Carpenedolo, a press operator accused of blasphemy and secretly printing works of necromancy on his days off, would undoubtedly have been dealt with more severely if it had taken place three decades later.[701]

Although connections between the printers themselves were essential, the workshop's success must partly be attributed to the authors, editors, and translators who contributed to its volumes – among them, of course, Giovanni Andrea's nephew Clemente. By creating a network through projects like these, Vavassore was able to continue producing works that met the needs of the – albeit changing – market, and he carved out a space for the workshop to continue publishing even after his death.

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[697] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.155.
[698] As well as applications for privileges, printers were also faced with the censorship of the Index of Prohibited Books. The 1559 Pauline Index was quickly replaced by a Tridentine version the following year, as discussed in Grendler, 1988, 46-7; and *idem*, 1977, 145-6.
[699] Ascarelli & Menato, 1989: Niccolò Zoppino (active 1505-43) 351-2; on Matteo Pagano (active 1520-58) 383; and Paolo Danza (1511-c.1538) 353. On Danza, see note 251, above.
[700] Of the 15 editions listed on Edit16, there are no (surviving) editions dating after 1557. CNCA 17574.
[701] Iseppo was absolved of his crimes upon the grounds that, as he claimed, a group of printers including Bernardino Bindoni, the brothers Nicolini da Sabbio, Guglielmo Fontaneto and Comin da Trino had banded together in an attempt to denounce him. ASdP, Archivio segreto, Criminali inquisizioni b.1, f.462r, cited in Salzberg, 2008, 66-7.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter began by questioning the role of the authorities in the activities and production of the Vavassore workshop. Whilst the mechanisms were put in place to make the *licenze* mandatory after the 1540s, these were required for individual titles rather than for printing in general. As a result, many printers slipped under the radar of the authorities and operated small, and often short-lived, presses without them. The *privilegi*, on the other hand, represented an optional level of interaction with the authorities only sought out by a printer who wanted to protect the content of his work. Though the majority of the books published and sold by the Vavassore workshop fall under the catchall bracket of the *libri comuni*, the process of applying for a privilege from the Senate (and its granting) suggests that both printer and authorities recognised that certain books should not be reprinted freely by anyone who wanted to print them.

Piecing together Vavassore's involvement with the authorities in the guise of the *privilegio* has required both the supplications themselves, and the output of the press. Extant volumes printed *cum privilegio* cast light on the number of volumes granted protection by the Senate; which although still a low number, is many more titles than the surviving original applications can attest. In applying for the *privilegio*, Vavassore employs the kinds of arguments used widely by sixteenth century printers in Venice. In the case of the *Orlando Furioso*, Vavassore seeks protection for the "new figures designed by excellent masters," but these multi-narrative illustrations are also accompanied by various annotations and commentaries that would have set his 1553 edition apart from others produced before it. Vavsassore's other applications – whether for specific texts, or for a group of unidentified ones – adopt these tropes further in suggesting that a *privilegio* is sought in order to prevent others from profiting from the considerable time and expense involved in producing them.

The workshop's 1553 edition of Ariosto's epic poem is a case in point for the failure of the *privilegio*: although Vavassore sought to protect the designs he had acquired and carved into blocks, the Senate ultimately failed in protecting his financial investment by not allowing others to profit from his labours (payback, perhaps, for the fact that his own early editions were themselves copies of someone else's work). Nonetheless, the continual reprinting and reissuing of new editions of

Ariosto's poem suggests that the theoretical loss of profit cannot have been too hard on the workshop: the enduring popularity of the *Orlando Furioso* quickly made it a staple of its production throughout the 1550s and 1560s, despite the fact that Vincenzo Valgrisi, Sigismono Bordogna, and Paolo Ugolino had meticulously copied his woodcuts and published them in their own editions of 1556, 1587 and 1602 respectively. Vavassore's second application, by contrast, appears to have been more successful in its protection of intellectual integrity.

The aim of this chapter was not, however, to evaluate the success or efficiency of the *privilegio*. Instead, it raised the issue of why a printer might begin applying for it after decades producing books and other printed objects without it – especially when he, too, was guilty of copying work issued by other workshops and passing it off as his own. Although there can be no definitive answer, Vavassore's increasing interaction with the authorities should be viewed as an important part of the workshop's evolution. By acknowledging the value of his works and requesting that they be recognised by the Senate in the form of a privilege, Vavassore was distinguishing the output of the workshop from the unchecked and uncontrolled production of *libri comuni*.

This recognition was just the beginning of a process that would ultimately lead to the passing of material and professional assets between uncle and nephew. As the perspective plan of Trent discussed in Chapter Four demonstrates, printing with the protection of the *privilegio* gave way to higher profile commissions and editions. To be awarded the commission to produce the woodcut that commemorated the end of the Council of Trent in 1563 was a major coup for the workshop, and one that was supported by its production of various anti-Lutheran and pro-Trent texts. These will be discussed in the next chapter, for they demonstrate a different kind of association between Vavassore and the Venetian authorities. Nonetheless, all of these activities succeeded in raising the profile of the workshop, adding to its reputation and book of contacts that would pass to Alvise on or before Vavassore's death on 31 May 1572, when the testament he had registered in 1570 was opened and read.

Chapter Seven

Responding to Religious Change: Vavassore and the Inquisition

As I have demonstrated in the previous chapters, the vast majority of the Vavassore workshop's output was secular in nature. Non-religious subjects, after all, offered greater scope for variety to the sixteenth century printer: not only were there an ever-increasing number of titles to publish, but texts could also be continually updated with annotations and illustrations, and sold as new editions. Devotional texts, on the other hand, were restricted to a smaller number of types (including complete Bibles and gospels, commentaries, hagiographical accounts, and sermons) that were limited further by the restrictions that came to be imposed on the production and distribution of printed material across the course of the sixteenth century.[702] Restrictions in the form of printing licenses had been commonplace for decades, though evidently flouted, but from the 1550s the Catholic Church – acting in Venice under the auspices of the *Sant'Uffizio* and the Index of Prohibited Books – played an increasing role in the censorship of printed material.[703]

The kind of devotional works published by the Vavassore workshop are a useful aid to understanding the way this printmaker, and the purchasers of his works, experienced and interpreted religion and religious texts in this formative period. The longevity of the workshop means that a large number and wide variety of devotional texts have survived from the period encompassing the decades leading up to the Italian Reformation, the meetings of the Council of Trent, and the attempts at implementing this reformed Catholicism in the decades that followed it. The aim of this chapter, therefore, is to examine its output of devotional books within the changing religious landscape of Venice during the sixteenth century. Drawing upon extant volumes, supplemented by Inquisition records, this chapter aims to create an intricate picture of Venetian religious experience which, as Vavassore's case

[702] For a general picture of censorship during the period, see G. Fragnito (ed.) *Church, Censorship and Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge, 2001) chs. 1 and 2.
[703] On printing licenses, see Agee, 1983, 1-42; and Witcombe, 2004. Grendler also notes that his analysis of imprimaturs is an unhelpful method in calculating the production of Venetian books, as printers did not seek licenses for the vast majority of their books. See Grendler, 1977, 8-9; and *idem*, 1973, 25-53.

represents, was at times contradictory and almost always more complex than existing studies on either orthodox or heterodox belief have painted.[704]

Over the course of the last three decades, a vibrant field of scholarship has grown to meet the demand for knowledge of the period of Catholic Reform in Italy, and more specifically in Venice. John Jeffries Martin has focused attention on such issues as popular Evangelism, fashioning religious identity, heresy and heretical belief, and women's religion; whilst Massimo Firpo has studied the impact of Reformation and Counter Reformation on Venetian artistic production.[705] Martin's investigation of Venice's "hidden enemies" offers a foundational study of heresy and the Venetian Inquisition, upon which the more recent scholarship of Federico Barbierato and Filippo de Vivo on communication, shop-culture, and heterodox belief has drawn.[706] Along more orthodox lines, Anne Schutte, Giuseppe Gullino, Nicholas Davidson and John Donnelly and Michael Maher have contributed to our knowledge on such spheres as post-Tridentine spirituality, the Venetian clergy, and confraternities in the era of Catholic Reform.[707] Case studies on Gasparo Contarini, Paolo Vergerio and Pietro Bembo have offered more individualised perspectives on religious reform, whilst Stephen Bowd's discussion of Vincenzo Querini argues in favour of "reform before the Reformation' in Italy.[708] Reviewing such an extensive

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[704] Ginzburg's microhistorical study of the Friulian miller Menocchio, for example, characterises him firmly as a heretic and blasphemer, largely informed by close reading of Menocchio's own explanation of his cosmology. See Ginzburg, 2013.

[705] J. J. Martin, 'Out of the Shadow: Catholic and Heretical Women in Renaissance Venice', *Journal of Family History* 10 (1985) 21-33; *idem*, 'Salvation and Society in Sixteenth-Century Venice: Popular Evangelism in a Renaissance City,' *Journal of Modern History* 60 (1988) 205-55; *idem*, *Venice's Hidden Enemies: Italian Heretics in a Renaissance City* (Berkeley, 1993); *idem*, 'Spiritual Journeys and the Fashioning of Religious Identity in Renaissance Venice,' *Renaissance Studies* 10:3 (1996) 358-70; *idem*, 'Religion, Renewal, and Reform in the Sixteenth Century' in J. A. Marino (ed.) *Early Modern Italy* (Oxford, 2002) 30-50; and M. Firpo, *Artistici, gioierlleri, eretici: Il mondo di Lorenzo Lotto tra Riforma e Controriforma* (Rome, 2011).

[706] See Grendler, 1977; F. Barbierato, *The Inquisitor in the Hat Shop: Inquisition, Forbidden Books, and Unbelief in Early Modern Venice* (Farnham, 2012) and F. de Vivo, 2007 and *idem*, 'Pharmacies as Centres of Communication,' 2007, 505-21.

[707] A.J. Schutte, 'Religion, Spirituality and the post-Tridentine Church' in J. Marino (ed.) *Early Modern Italy* (Oxford, 2002) 125-42; G. Gullino (ed.) *La Chiesa di Venezia tra Riforma protestante e Riforma cattolica* (Venice, 1990); N. Davidson, 'The Clergy of Venice in the Sixteenth Century', *Bulletin of the Society of Renaissance Studies* 2 (1984) 19-31; J. P. Donnelly & M. Maher (eds.) *Confraternities and Catholic Reform in Italy, France & Spain* (Kirksville, 1999).

[708] Gleason, 1993; F. Gilbert, 'Religion and Politics in the Thought of Gasparo Contarini' in T. K. Rabb & J. E. Siegel, *Action and Conviction in Early Modern Europe* (Princeton, 1969); A. Schutte, *Pier Paolo Vergerio: The Making of an Italian Reformer* (Geneva, 1977);

literature of the religious landscape of Venice during the sixteenth century certainly raises the question: what can the case of Vavassore and the devotional texts produced by his workshop add to our already expansive knowledge?

Whilst Paul Grendler has established a timeline for Inquisition activity in Venice, scholarship has, for the most part, focused on the official documentation surrounding censorship and control, rather than the surviving output of the city's presses.[709] According to the general rules contained in the 1564 Tridentine Index of Prohibited Books (the first Index issued at Venice was in 1549) all books of writings considered lascivious or obscene, by heretical authors on religious subjects, and works of astrology, divination and other occult arts ought to be absent from the shelves of Venetian bookshops.[710] However, as both the records of the Sant'Uffizio trials and surviving volumes attest, this was certainly not the case. Furthermore, it is clear that far more people were reading – or viewing – the Bible in the vernacular than just those permitted through their possession of a written license from an inquisitor or bishop.[711]

Vavassore stands as a constant and somewhat contradictory figure in the era of increasing control and censorship in the era of Catholic Reform. By the time the machinery of censorship was established in Venice in the 1540s, Vavassore had been active for some twenty-five years, publishing works both religious and secular in nature. During the Council of Trent (1545-1563), the Venetians took a much more active role in identifying the kind of heretical behaviours dangerous to both church and state, but continued to resist attempts by the papacy to control the Inquisition in Venice.[712] As has been argued elsewhere, the concern of the Venetian Inquisition (in the guise of the Esecutori contro la bestemmia, discussed in Chapter Six) was as much to root out behaviours and activities deemed harmful to the Republic, as it was

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P. Simoncelli, 'Pietro Bembo e l'evangelismo Italiano', *Critica Storica* 15 (1978) 1-63; and S. D. Bowd, *Reform Before the Reformation: Vincenzo Querini and the Religious Renaissance in Italy* (Leiden, 2002).

[709] See Grendler, 1977.

[710] J. M. de Bujanda, *Index des Livres interdits Vol. 3: Index de Venise, 1549, et de Venise et Milan, 1554* (Geneva, 1987); Grendler, 1977; U. Rozzo (ed.) *La censura libraria nell'Europa del secolo XVI* (Udine, 1997) and Fragnito, 2001.

[711] See, for example, the work on the Roman Holy Office on the control of vernacular translations and commentaries of the bible in G. Fragnito, *La Bibbia al rogo: La censura ecclesiastica e i volgarizzamenti della Scrittura (1471-1605)* (Bologna, 1997).

[712] See P. F. Grendler, 'Roman Inquisition and Venetian Press,' *Journal of Modern History* 47:1 (1975) 49.

to identify heretics with beliefs contrary to those promulgated by the papacy.[713] Vavassore demonstrated his support of the reforming Catholic Church through the publication of his monumental perspective plan of Trent, produced to commemorate the end of the council, and the publication of various Tridentine or anti-Protestant poems and orations. However, when the activities of the Venetian Inquisition reached a climax in the years 1569-71, prosecuting those who produced, sold and owned heretical books with vigour; even Vavassore, who had so actively demonstrated his piety and support for the reforming church just five years previously, was investigated by the Inquisition.[714]

This chapter divides the workshop's devotional output into three stages, adopting case studies from before, during, and after the Council of Trent in an attempt to illustrate the changing religious landscape and the reaction of buyers and sellers of print to it. The opening section will focus closely on the evidence of Vavassore's dealings with the *Sant'Uffizio*, forming a picture of his own religious beliefs and behaviours that will provide the backdrop for discussion of the workshop's devotional output that follows. Although its devotional books fall naturally into these three periods, when taken as a whole, they have much to reveal about how this genre changed and evolved across the sixteenth century, and the ways in which people experienced and interpreted religion in contemporary Venice. Rather than focusing on the restrictions imposed on booksellers by the Inquisition and questioning whether or not they were followed or flouted, this chapter will look at the workshop's output of religious books as objects or aids of devotion, purchased by men and women in an attempt to enhance their religious experience. It is therefore concerned with such questions as: what role did devotional books play in the religious lives of sixteenth century Venetians? What can they tell us about the way people experienced the Bible, religious rituals, and life in close quarters with members of other 'heterodox' religions? What do the surviving copies tell us about how these books were used, and how were they adapted to suit the devotional needs of individuals? How did religious books change over the course of the sixteenth century, and in what ways was there continuity? What kind of impact did the Venetian Inquisition have on the devotional lives of Venetians, and of the genre in print? By focusing on the output of the press, supplemented with a variety of

[713] Ibid.
[714] Ibid.

archival sources, this chapter creates a picture of books as aids, tools, and expressions of contemporary devotion, and employs them as tools for understanding the religious lives of their owners.

7.1 Accusations of Heresy: Vavassore's Dealings with the *Sant'Uffizio*

In his *Dream of Caravia* (*Il sogno dil Caravia*), the poet Alessandro Caravia painted a picture of a Venice in 1541 that had been spoiled by heresy: "uneducated people", he wrote, "could be seen everywhere speaking like graduates, theologizing out of all proportion and addressing matters of the Scriptures in *botteghe*, tailorshops and barbershops."[715] Similar sentiments were expressed in the city of Modena, where Cardinal Morone's vicar wrote that: "This whole city … is sullied, infected by different contagious heresies like Plague. In *botteghe*, street-corners, houses, etc. everyone … argues about faith, free will, purgatory, the Eucharist and predestination."[716] When the Council of Trent opened, Marco Vigerio della Rovere bishop of Senigallia took the opportunity to accuse all those who he felt abused the holy scripture, including vagabonds and apostates whom, he claimed, should not be allowed to handle it. He also chastised charlatans who sung parts of the Bible or sold pamphlets of it from their stalls for introducing new superstitions, and attacked those "fools" who put up pasquinades.[717] Vigerio's attempts to characterise such apparently commonplace behaviours as blasphemous were quickly laughed off.[718] The concerns of contemporary writers like Vigerio cannot have been entirely unfounded, however, as shortly after the Venetians finally yielded to the pressure Rome had been putting on them to address heretics and heretical books in her dominions.[719] The substantial historiography on the Inquisition has documented the

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[715] A. Caravia, *Il Sogno di Caravia* (Venice, 1541) BIIIv. For discussion of Caravia's picture of Venice see also E. Benini Clementi, *Riforma religiosa e poesia popolare a Venezia nel cinquecento: Alessandro Caravia* (Florence, 2000); and Barbierato, 2012, 59.
[716] Cited in Barbierato, 2012, 59.
[717] Marco Vigerio della Rovere's attack in March 1546 has been quoted and analysed by O. Niccoli, *Rinascimento anticlericale: Infamia, propaganda e satira in Italia tra Quattro e Cinquencento* (Rome, 2005) 129-30.
[718] Barbierato 2012, 59.
[719] Grendler, 1975, 50. In 1547, Venice established the *Tre Savii sopra eresia* – a magistracy of three prominent laymen charged to work with the Patriarch of Venice, the papal nuncio, and the Franciscan inquisitor – to aid its attempts to root out heresy. Their task was to assist the Venetian Inquisition in every aspect of its activity. See E. Peters, *Inquisition* (Berkeley, 1989) 114-7.

differences between the Venetian and Roman Inquisitions, and grappled with the difficulty of establishing or enforcing boundaries between belief and non-belief, and good and bad faith.[720] Rather than rehashing existing arguments, this section considers how a case study like Vavassore's can add to our knowledge of so-called 'heretical' belief, and of our knowledge of the impact of the *Sant'Uffizio* on devotional texts and practices.

Vavassore's first encounters with the *Sant'Uffizio* occurred in the dying months of 1548.[721] He himself was not accused directly, but seems to have been friends with those who were – perhaps predictably, given that the circle of suspects all lived in the parish of San Moisè, which he had made his home. The Inquisitor records that Simon, a pearl worker from the Bergamasco, had been accused of participating in heterodox discussions, and that in his testimony he had confirmed that he had indeed talked about the gospels in his shop with Vavassore.[722] Several weeks before, on 17 October, Vavassore had been implicated in the case of Antonio, a mask maker (*mascherer*) and second-hand clothes dealer (*strazariol*), who lived in the parish of San Moisè and sold his wares in the neighbouring parishes of San Fantin and San Anzolo.[723] Antonio appears to have been brought before the Inquisition for similarly engaging in 'heterodox' discussions about confession, the saints, and purgatory; and Giovanni Andrea was called to give an account of the event.[724] Given his profession, it seems likely that the man implicated in this trial is also the "Antonio Rossati" mentioned in a 1556 inventory for which Giovanni Andrea and his nephew Clemente Vavassore had both acted as *comissari.*[725] This inventory of his household and shop, located in the Frezzaria, records a large number of masks alongside a variety of other goods of the type know to have been sold by

[720] Peters, 1989; Martin, 1993; Grendler, 1977; Barbierato, 2012; Pullan, 1983; C. Black, *The Italian Inquisition* (New Haven, 2009); S. Haliczer, *Inquisition and Society in Early Modern Europe* (London, 1987); M. Thomsett, *The Inquisition: A History* (Jefferson NC, 2010); and E. Burman, *The Inquisition: The Hammer of Heresy* (Wellingborough, 1984).
[721] ASV, SU, b.7 fasc. 5, f.23v: day unspecified, November 1548.
[722] "Parlare sua Ms. Andrea guadagnin alla mia botiga". Ibid.
[723] ASV, SU, b.7 fasc. 5 f.16r-v, 17 October 1548. Vavassore is referred to as "Jo. Andrea Vavassorio civico bergamo ad stampator Venejis in confinio Sto Moysis."
[724] "Adimmandato si isso sa udico li Gier(mo) & Zulian a parla di purgatio et conffesioj nyposi pui volti. Io so santij li dittj el purgatori divando…" Ibid. f.16v.
[725] ASV, CI, Miscellanea notai diversi inventori, b.39 fasc. 44 (1556) "Indictione quartadecima die mercurij trig.o septembris Inventarium rer. et bonor. repertor. In domo et apotheca q. D. antonijs rossati q. D. bernadini strazaroli sita In conf.o S.ti moysis In frizaria factum ad Instantiam D. joannis andree ualuasorij dicti. guadagnini et D. clementis doctoris et D. aloysij fratrum de ualuasoribus…"

second-hand sellers at this time.[726] Vavassore's involvement in this second-hand seller's heresy trial, and the inventorying of his house and shop, can be explained by the fact that Antonio seems to have been his nephew by marriage. Vavassore's niece Samaritana names Antonio Rossato as her husband shortly before her death in February 1561.[727]

As these trials attest, the craftsmen's *botteghe* not only formed the heart of social and professional life, but were also the focus of concerns over the discussion of heretical belief. Federico Barbierato has described the *bottega* as "a well-frequented centre of sociability," and the trials of the *Sant'Uffizio* offer some insight into the kind of exchanges that took place within them.[728] The conversations engaged in by both craftsmen and customers covered a wide range of interests and, as attested by Vavassore's discussion of the gospels with Simon the pearl worker and the saints with Antonio, discussion and critique of the orthodoxy was prominent among them. It is easy to imagine Vavassore opening and referring to the books in his shop on these topics in light of such discussions. Heterodox ideas might also spread rapidly through certain professional circles, through conversations that took place among people who spent time together at work. Discussion did not stop at the end of the working day after the *botteghe*, which had bustled with people and conversations during the day, closed. It was possible to move to private houses or public places like the *botteghe d'acque* (spirit shops) and *osteria* (taverns) which stayed open into the night.[729] Two inns, the Black Eagle at San Bartolomeo and the White Lion, were known to be the temporary home to German immigrants who lived disreputably, "for they kept heretical books, ate meat and other foods of every kind at will on forbidden days, and conversed as they pleased on matters of faith."[730] The *Sant'Uffizio* recognised that bookshops were even more dangerous meeting places, for there it was possible for passionate readers to procure these unorthodox works, and at the same time engage in conversation with likeminded locals and visitors.

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[726] Including shirts, sleeves, other items of clothing and rags; as described in Allerston, 1999, 46-56; and in more detail in *idem*., 1996.
[727] ASV, Notarile, Testamenti b.127 fasc. 816, 2 February 1561 (unfoliated): "Samaritana, fiola de ms. Zulian Valvassore, et relicta del q. ms Ant.o rossato."
[728] Barbierato, 2012, 37.
[729] Ibid. 38. Later seventeenth-century bans offer insight into the location of these *botteghe d'acque*, for example at Ponte dell'Angelo in San Marco, Santa Maria Formosa, Canonica, San Moisè, Ponte Grande di San Polo and Anconetta in Rio della Sensa.
[730] Cited from the report of Alberto Bolognetti, papal nuncio in Venice 1578-81 in Chambers & Pullan, 2001, 330-1.

The Venetian Inquisition did, of course, attempt to restrict the type of books read and sold in the city's *botteghe*, proposing that all volumes imported to Venice be scrutinised by an inquisitor at a customs house, and that bookstores would be subject to regular inspections.[731] However, as Paul Grendler has argued, any attempt to censor the Venetian press was a formidable task, for the city harboured one of the highest concentrations of printers anywhere in the sixteenth century.[732] After various ineffectual attempts to control the printing and sale of particular titles in Venice, the first Index of Prohibited Books to make any impact on booksellers in the lagoon was issued by Pope Paul IV in early 1559.[733] Although many did offer up inventories of their shops, and even some books to be burned, it seems that they were unwilling to give up all of the titles prohibited by the Pauline Index.[734] With the closing of the Council of Trent in 1564, the Tridentine Index replaced the Pauline Index, and relaxed certain aspects of it that had been most heavily criticised by the Venetian bookmen.[735] Despite attempts to restrict the availability of certain 'undesirable' titles, many bookshops continued to sell prohibited works. Booksellers frequently exerted caution in displaying the compromising volumes they had for sale, keeping them under the counter, or hidden in small warehouses located close to their *botteghe*. Still others paid little attention to the dangers and displayed prohibited titles for perusal by their customers, or attempted to throw off the scent of the inquisitor with false title pages and innocent prefatory matter.[736] After all, it was always possible to plead ignorance during a search, for it was surely unreasonable to be expected to keep up to date with the continual updates to the Index of prohibited titles.[737]

We know that Vavassore's shop was searched on 23 August 1571, as the archives of the *Sant'Uffizio* record the event in some detail. Just two weeks before, on 9 August, the Holy Office had compiled a new list of prohibited printers,

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[731] See ASV, SU, b.156, ff.76r-78r, for the decree of 13 September 1567.
[732] Grendler, 1975, 49.
[733] Ibid. 54.
[734] As discussed in Chapter Six, above, an informal meeting between printers and booksellers occurred in the *bottega* of Tomaso Giunta in January 1559 to protest this order. See Grendler, 1977, 118-9; and Jacoviello, 1993, 34-5.
[735] See Grendler, 1988, 44-6.
[736] Ibid. 162.
[737] Grendler, 1988, 166-77, finds examples of excuses including absence from the city, illness, and ignorance among printers inspected in Febuary and August-October 1571, whilst Barbierato, 2012, 273, notes that the same excuses were prevalent among the Inquisition records of the following century.

booksellers, and titles.[738] Among the names of printers included on this list are Gabriele Giolito and Gironimo Scotto, whose major and prolific presses have been the subject of lengthy studies; alongside known associates of the Vavassore, including the Bindoni and the Sessa.[739] At the very end of the list is "Ms. Alvise Vavassore", Giovanni Andrea's nephew, who had clearly already begun to take a leading role in the running of the workshop by this time. Between August and October 1571, the Holy Office questioned twenty-seven bookmen from this list and demanded to know why they were still in possession of prohibited titles, or why their stores had escaped inspection.

The Vavassore shop was searched twice: the first inspection uncovered the *Dialogues of Pietro Aretino* (*Dialoghi dell'Aretino*) and a certain "De fisionomia" in great quantity.[740] On 23 August 1571 Dottore Giacomo Foscarini, the Inquisitor General, visited the *bottega* to check that the aforementioned volumes had in fact been removed.[741] During his inspection of the shop, Foscarini found that copies of Aretino's *Dialogues* remained, and also identified two bundles of fortune telling books and other verses.[742] When the inquisitor confronted Alvise, who was in the *bottega* on the day in question, Vavassore's nephew and protégée insisted that he did not know that such volumes had to be removed, as he attended many book fairs and was therefore "never in the shop."[743] His claim certainly supports Vavassore's assertion in his 1572 testament that Alvise had lost him much merchandise and money at fairs. The matter was officially resolved by the end of the month, when both Giovanni Andrea and his nephew returned to the office of the *Sant'Uffizio* and paid a fine of twenty ducats; used to cover the official costs and otherwise donated to the hospitals of SS Giovanni e Paolo, and the *Incurabili*.[744] Just a few days later, the shop of Gabriele Giolito at the Sign of the Phoenix (towards the Rialto on the Merceria) was also found to contain books prohibited by Index, and a fine of nine

[738] ASV, SU, b.156 'Librai e libri prohibiti, 1545-71' f.8v-r, 9 August 1571.
[739] Bongi, 1890-5; and Bernstein, 1998.
[740] ASV, SU, b.156, f.15v. I have been unable to identify a surviving edition of 'De Fisionomia.'
[741] Ibid. ff.16r-17r, 23 August 1571.
[742] "due balle de ibri della ventura et altri di versij." Ibid. f.16r.
[743] "Essendo cosi, che io sto sempre in molo, et vado a diverse fiere, ne mi fermo in bottega non sapeva, che vi fussero dettj libri anzi dico seben sono in Venetia non vado quasi mai in bottega." Ibid.
[744] Ibid. f.20r, 30 August 1571.

ducats divided between the inquisitor and these two philanthropic institutions.[745] Vavassore and Giolito, as well as the other printers investigated by the Holy Office, suffered the destruction of the prohibited volumes found in their possession.[746]

This is, of course, the first occasion that the *Sant'Uffizio* was able to implicate Vavasssore *directly* in heretical activity. Until this point, his name appears alongside other artisans in the proceedings of the Inquisition in the parish of San Moisè as a giver of testimony. John Jeffries Martin has reconstructed this central parish as a hotbed of heretical discussion and activity, with several evangelical groups or conventicles attracting the attention of the Inquisition there.[747] There are three plausible explanations for this: firstly, that a higher than average number of foreigners (and especially Germans) were resident in the parish; secondly, that it was home to many printers, all of whom would have produced devotional texts and some of whom would have sold heterodox ones; and thirdly, that its close proximity to the religious and political heart of the city (coupled with the fact that it housed the Frezzaria, one of the main shopping districts) made it an ideal congregating point for all kinds of people. In October 1548, at the same time Vavassore was implicated by Simon the pearl worker for engaging in discussions about the gospels, a group of artisans who also lived or worked in San Moisè came before the Inquisition. Membership of this group was fairly extensive, with some dozen craftsmen involved: coral workers, a cobbler, a goldsmith, two turners, a carpenter and a jeweller.[748] These were very related trades: coral workers (similarly, pearl workers like Simon) must have worked closely with goldsmiths and jewellers, whilst turners would have interacted with carpenters – so it is perhaps unsurprising that chatter (whether idle, or intentioned) might have passed easily between their *botteghe*.

It is unlikely that Vavassore's connection with Simon the pearl marker was founded on professional ties like these, but they did both hail from the Bergamasco, and shared common heritage as a result. The members of the small group of artisans

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[745] Ibid. f.23v, 10 September 1571.
[746] Grendler has suggested that although the number of volumes destroyed is not known, it must have been large. The inquisitor often referred (as is the case with the Vavassore workshop) to titles being found in 'great quantity' or to several bales of books belonging to one bookman. The figure undoubtedly reached the thousands – for Vincenzo Valgrisi alone was found to possess some 1,150 prohibited volumes in his warehouse. ASV, SU, b.14, 'Contro Vincentium Vadrisium' ff.11r-19r. Grendler, 1988, 166 and 168.
[747] Martin, 1993, 91.
[748] Ibid.

from San Moisè and studied by Martin would alternate gathering in one anothers' shops, and met for religious readings and discussions.[749] In this respect, their interaction sounds very similar to that which occurred almost simultaneously between Vavassore and his friends. Simon the pearl worker similarly confessed to the Inquisition that he had discussed the gospels with Vavassore in his own shop, implying that meetings of these small groups were common throughout the parish, and perhaps across the city at large.[750] Books and reading were, indeed, at the heart of such meetings: informers attested that this mobile group – described by one as "la scuola di lutherani" – met together to "discuss scripture and the gospels and read certain books".[751]

Vavassore was, of course, just one of many Venetian printers investigated by the Inquisition. His name (or rather, the name of his protégé Alvise) appears alongside some 50 others on a list of printers found by the commission to have banned titles in their shops and storehouses (*apothecis*).[752] Among them were printers with whom Vavassore worked closely, including the Sessa and the Bindoni; as well as the Scotto and Giolito, family-oriented workshops that have now received significant scholarly attention.[753] However, the group of printers investigated by the Inquisition in the 1570s was by no means a majority: historians of print have identified many hundreds of printers and workshops in Venice from the trade's infancy in the fifteenth century. It is therefore useful to consider Vavassore's case in the category of analysis created by Edoardo Grendi and the first microhistorians: "the exceptional normal".[754] This concept was adopted by Carlo Ginzburg and used in the case of Menocchio, the Friulian miller investigated by the Inquisition, where he expanded on it by writing that "a truly exceptional (and thus statistically infrequent) document can be much more revealing than a thousand stereotypical documents."[755] Only by considering these 'exceptional' cases are we able to uncover the hidden

[749] Ibid. 91.
[750] ASV, SU, b.7 fasc. 5, f.23v.
[751] "li parlando della scriptura sacra e delle evangelie et legono certi sui libri." ASV, SU, b.7, 14 October 1548; cited in Martin, 1993, 91.
[752] See note 719, above.
[753] On the Scotto, see Bernstein, 1998; and on the Giolito, see Bongi, 1890.
[754] For Grendi, "il document eccezionale può risultare eccezionalmente 'normale', appunte perché rilevante" (an exceptional document can turn out to be exceptionally 'normal', precisely because of its relevance). See Grendi, 1977, 512.
[755] Ginzburg & Poni, 1991, 7-9. Ginzburg also referred to the "normal exception" in the case of Menocchio, see Ginzburg, 2013.

realities absent from more typical sources; and in so doing illuminate broader trends.[756]

The interactions of the Vavassore family with the Venetian Inquisition over a period of several decades form a necessary backdrop for the wider consideration of the workshop's religious books and pamphlets. The devotional output of the workshop effectively contradicts the image established by the archival documents of a man implicated in, or at the very least alongside, 'heretical' activity on several occasions – for not only did Vavassore produce a wide variety of devotional titles, both in the vernacular and in Latin, he allied himself with the reforming Catholic Church during the Council of Trent. Rather than a display of heterodoxy, Vavassore's case demonstrates the need to acknowledge a wider spectrum of *orthodox* behaviours and activities: from discussion of gospels recently read with friends, to talking about the topical issues of confession, intercessory saints and purgatory with family members during the period of Tridentine reform. Apart from the presence of the *Dialogues* of Aretino in the workshop in 1571, none of the activities Vavassore was implicated in by the Sant'Uffizio could be described as impious in the sense of showing a lack of respect for God or the religion of Catholicism. Consideration of the output of the workshop, then, facilitates the uncovering of the hidden realities absent from the archival documents of the Inquisition. Whilst the documents may paint a picture of Vavassore as a reader, printer, and seller of heretical books, the extant titles – coupled with his long-held association with the Painters' Guild of San Luca and the *Scuola di Santissimo Sacramento* at San Moisè – reflect the reality of an individual interested in discussing and disseminating devotional issues and texts during an era of significant and much broader change: the Counter Reformation.

7.2 The Freedom of the Press: Vavassore's Visual Bible

The religious books produced in the early decades of the Vavassore press are, for the historian, plagued by much the same problems as the secular ones: chiefly, that some

[756] The notion of exploring broader trends is expressed especially well by Giovanni Levi, when he writes "…even the apparently minutest action of, say, somebody going to buy a loaf of bread, actually encompasses the far wider system of the whole world's grain markets." See Levi, 1991, 96.

are undated, and that many cannot be attributed to a particular author. The books vary in length, from pamphlets of a few leaves to the longer, much more substantial volumes of the ecclesiastical dictionaries. In this way, they echo the broad range of secular publications described in the previous chapters: from the news pamphlets issued to commemorate the victories and losses of the Venetian forces, to Filippo Venuti's Vernacular-Latin dictionary, which became a staple of the workshop's non-devotional output over several decades. There are, to be sure, many fewer surviving devotional titles. However, one of Vavassore's religious books – an illustrated bible, entitled the *Opera nova contemplativa* – has survived well.[757] Around thirty copies of this devotional blockbook survive, a staggeringly high number when we consider that it is an exceptionally rare format in Italy, its small octavo form, its potential uses, and the survival rates of comparable volumes (approximately one third or less of that number). The aim of this section is to focus attention on this unusual blockbook, examining extant copies of this volume and using it as a case study to explore religious experience (and the place of books in shaping it) in the years preceding the period of Catholic Reform.

The *Opera nova contemplativa* (hereafter *ONC*) blockbook comprises of 120 woodcut illustrations accompanied by biblical quotes and references; characteristics this unusual volume has in common with earlier, much more well-known, northern examples. The pages are printed recto and verso, indicating that they were produced using a press, rather than the more traditional blockbook method of rubbing the paper onto an inked block from the back.[758] Vavassore's use of this format is somewhat intriguing, as this type of volume was principally produced in Germany and the Low Countries in the mid to late fifteenth century.[759] Denis Reidy is one of only a handful of scholars to have examined and discussed Vavassore's blockbook, and wrote that he was "not aware that any blockbook had been printed in Italy in the fifteenth century, let alone the sixteenth century."[760] Not only is the blockbook

[757] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.18.
[758] As Hind observed, this method of printing caused too much of an indentation for satisfactory double-sided printing to be achieved. See Hind, 1963, 214.
[759] Examples include the *Ars Moriendi* (Art of Dying), the *Ars Memorandi* (Art of Memory), the *Biblia Pauperum* (Bible of the Poor), the *Apocalypse* (a combination of the Apocalypse and the Life of St John) and the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* (Mirror of Human Salvation). These Netherlandish and German editions are discussed in Hind, 1963, 207-30; and P. Parshall, *The Origins of European Printmaking* (New Haven, 2005) 95-7.
[760] Reidy, 1995, 81.

unique in Venice, then, but potentially unique across the Italian peninsula, for none survive. There are several plausible explanations for his use of the blockbook format, which I will outline before moving on to discuss its purpose and value as a devotional text. Outdated and unusual though it may now seem, the surviving copies suggest that this sixteenth-century blockbook was one of the Vavassore press' biggest commercial successes. At least twenty-seven copies of the *ONC* exist in libraries and museum collections in Europe and North America. Many are complete, others are missing leaves; and almost all bear the hallmarks of appropriation and individualised use. Still others demonstrate the need to replace or re-carve blocks when they became too worn to generate impressions. In this way, Vavassore's edition is not only useful in the context of the workshop's larger production of devotional texts, but also as a case study that can offer valuable insights into the way people actually used and interacted with the books they purchased.

As an entrepôt for goods moving between Europe and the Mediterranean, it comes as little surprise that the block books produced in Germany and the Low Countries would have arrived and circulated in Venice. Reidy draws parallels between the original *Biblia Pauperum*, a folio volume produced in the Netherlands in the 1460s or 1470s, and the *ONC* blockbook.[761] Despite the inherent portability of books, it seems unlikely that Vavassore would have consulted one of the original folio editions designed as reference tools to facilitate in the compilation of sermons.[762] However, these large volumes, each over one hundred pages and printed on one side only, were copied and published in the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in smaller formats better suited to wider circulation.[763] Remaining with northern examples, Reidy also notes that some of the New Testament woodcuts (most notably, *Christ driving out the Money Lenders from the Temple*) are reminiscent of similar illustrations produced by Albrecht Dürer in Nuremberg in c.1511 (Figs. 7.1 & 7.2).[764] We know that Dürer's works did indeed circulate in Venice, and commanded a high price, for Marcantonio Raimondi almost bankrupted himself buying his woodcuts and engravings, which were on sale in Piazza San

[761] Ibid. 82.
[762] Parshall, 2005, 96.
[763] The definitive text on the *Biblia Pauperum* remains A. Henry (ed.), *Biblia Pauperum: A Facsimile and Edition* (Aldershot, 1987). On later editions see ibid., 4.
[764] Reidy, 1995, 82-3.

Marco.[765] Vavassore himself encountered them, even at second hand, for the *Apocalypsis* illustrations he cut into blocks in 1516 were close copies of Dürer's earlier *Apocalypse*. It is therefore likely that, in order to produce such likenesses, the workshop managed to obtain a copy of the *Kleine Passion* to use as a model for certain New Testament woodcuts in the *ONC*. However, Vavassore's blockbook represents a much more substantial undertaking, and we must be wary of attributing too much of its imagery to Dürer, when only a very small number of the 120 woodcuts show close similarities.

Producing the blockbook would have represented a considerable investment in time and materials: although a small octavo volume, each of the 120 cuts would have been carved by hand (either onto small individual blocks, cut recto and verso, or as two, four, or more cuts into larger blocks). Not only were the images carved into blocks for printing, but the accompanying text was also produced in the same way. By the sixteenth century, as was the case with maps and mapmakers, most printers combined woodcut images with metal-cut type for both ease and speed.[766] The use of woodcut, hand-carved text is therefore something of a signature of the workshop: what distinguished a print, blockbook, or map issued by the Vavassore from others was its continued use of this irregular but highly skilled hand cut text. A number of early print scholars implicated Vavassore's brother and apprentice Florio in the production of the blockbook, on the basis of the style of the figures and the similarity of the letters to the initials on the lace pattern book, *Esemplario di Lavori*.[767] The sheer scale of the publication, however, implies that more than two hands may have been responsible for its production. Designers and cutters frequently moved between *botteghe* in pursuit of work, and although Woodward has argued that they took with them their own style, they had to have been required to produce work to a standard house style.[768] Although the lack of an account book or similar documentation prevents us from knowing how many hands were involved in a project like this, it also forces us to think about what kind of characteristics defined a workshop's production. Simply executed, expressive figures depicted in basic landscape or interior scenes, bordered with unobtrusive frames (and in the case of the

[765] See Pon, 2004, 39-48; and J. Chipps Smith, 2010, 81-2.
[766] See Woodward, 1975, 45-6.
[767] See Massena, 1914 (Vol.3) 114; G. Dillon 'Vavassore' in *Dizionario Enciclopedico dei pittori e degli incisori italiani* Vol. 11 (Turin, 1976) 264; and Ephrussi, 1891, 232.
[768] On idiosyncrasies and style, see Woodward, 2007, 601.

ONC, accompanied by Gothic hand cut lettering) are features that consistently appear in the illustrated works issued by the press across almost every decade of the workshop's activity – though it is impossible to trace whether these traits are the result of cutting techniques or Vavassore also playing the role of designer.

From its extended title, we learn that in his blockbook, Vavassore intended to show scenes from the Old Testament, on eighty full-page blocks, in conjunction with scenes from the New Testament, on forty blocks (Fig. 7.3).[769] The Old Testament scenes include a descriptive paragraph of text above the image, while the New Testament scenes are decorated with attractive borders and feature smaller separate woodcuts at the foot of the main image, containing portraits of pairs of prophets and the relevant chapters from the Old Testament. Like the *Biblia Pauperum*, but on a smaller scale, the blockbook is therefore intended to be consulted in groups of three images, with each New Testament scene (in the middle) flanked by a scene from the Old Testament, and accompanied by a quotation from the prophets who heralded and prophesied its coming (Fig. 7.4).[770] By reading and looking at the book, its owner goes on a journey through the Bible: each Old Testament theme offers a prefiguration or comparison with the birth, life, death and resurrection of Christ. Each scene in this typological work has been carefully selected to demonstrate the predictive relationship between the events and figures of the Old Testament and the life and times of Christ in the New.

Sold as unbound sheets, Vavassore added 'signatures' to each of the gatherings, which would have guided the person folding (or binding) the sheets and aided in the correct collation of the final volume. It is clear that these signatures, which take the form of a letter followed by a Roman numeral (Fig. 7.5), were stamped on after printing, perhaps by an apprentice, as the copy at the Museo Correr features one upside down example, and there is considerable variation in the care

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[769] *Opera nova contemplativa per ogni fidel christiano le quale tratta de le figure del testamento vecchio: le quale figure sonno verificate nel testamento nuovo: con le sue exposition: et con el detto de li propheti sopra esse figure: Si come legendo trouarete. Et nota che ciaschuna figura del testamento nuovo trovareti dua dil testamento vecchio: le quale sonno affiguratte a quelle dil nuovo Et sempre quella dil nuovo sara posta nel meggio di quelle dua dil vecchio: Cosa belissima da itedere a chi se diletano de la sacra scrittura: Nuovamente Stampata.* Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.18.

[770] The three scenes in the *Biblia Pauperum* are most often printed on a single folio sheet. The octavo format makes this impossible, so the three scenes are printed on three separate sheets.

with which they have been applied.[771] Despite his attempts to ensure the correct ordering of his work, the extant copies of the *ONC* reveal a wide variation in the ordering of the woodcuts, making it entirely possible that the reordering of the pages was a matter of personal choice. The viewer is intended to begin his typological journey through this illustrated bible with the *Call of Gideon*, but the copy held at the British Museum is unique in its choice to open with the depiction of the *Temptation of Eve*. This decision probably reflects the owner's understandable decision to begin a collection of Old Testament woodcuts with a chapter from the book of Genesis. Nonetheless, these two scenes are presented together in the earlier *Biblia Pauperum*, meaning that the sixteenth-century owner was able to order them in this way without fundamentally altering the typological meaning. As the work is intended to be considered in blocks of three, and is printed recto and verso, any reordering – whether accidental, or intentional – has a domino effect that results in an understanding of the interaction between the Old and New Testaments that varies from copy to copy, and owner to owner.

Still other copies of Vavassore's blockbook reveal the very personal nature of devotional text ownership at this time. Several include repurposed vellum or parchment in their bindings: due to its high price, these materials were often reused as resilient coverings for books, collections of prints, and official records.[772] The vellum used to bind the British Museum copy of the *ONC* appears to have begun its life as a letter or part of a manuscript, as text in Latin, written in brown and red inks, can be found on the inside and outside covers (Figs. 7.6 & 7.7). Much of the text on the exterior of the binding has worn away with time and handling, but the legible writing on the inside confirms that this was a religious work. Similarly, the owner of the copy now preserved at the Morgan Library in New York also reused manuscript fragments from a Saints' lives as pastedowns (Fig. 7.8). Whether these manuscript texts or letters were valuable enough to be kept by their owners, or were perhaps just on hand at the time of the purchase and binding of this book, it is interesting to note that religious texts were used or reused in bindings of other devotional books.

[771] *Opera nova contemplativa,* BCMV copy (INC. I 0048 .2), f.26r (my foliation) marked with signature DIII.
[772] See A. Melograni, 'Manuscript Materials: Cost and the Market for Parchment in Renaissance Italy' in Kirby, Nash & Cannon, 2010, 199-219.

Examples like these also add to our steadily clearing view of book ownership and personalisation in the sixteenth century.[773]

One incomplete copy of the *ONC* at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia in Venice offers particularly useful insight into the use and appropriation of printed material in the Renaissance. This copy stands out among the others for the fact that the owner has applied colour to the vast majority of its pages. Only two pigments have been used, a yellow and an orange. It is evident on some of the woodcuts that special care and attention has been taken to apply the colour with a brush or other implement, but in the majority of cases it has been daubed on with a finger or thumb. The yellow pigment is used to highlight architectural features or cloth, whilst the orange is used to particularly good effect to add colour to exposed flesh. In most cases this means the face (Fig. 7.9), but the colourist has also taken particular care to apply the pigment to exposed legs, knees and hands, as well as to the nude or nearly nude bodies of the Christ child, Adam and Eve, and the risen Christ (Fig. 7.10). As we progress through the blockbook, more and more colour has been added to its pages. The focus moves away from faces and flesh to the liberal application of colour to robes, scepters, crowns, flames, and even frames (Fig. 7.11). Just one other copy – one of three held at the British Library – includes evidence of colouring, and its owner also exclusively used orange and yellow pigments. Recent scholarship on the kind of pigments and dyes sold by apothecaries and the specialist *vendecolori* (colour sellers) of Venice has suggested that organic red lakes and mineral pigments like yellow ochre would have been among the most easily available and affordable in their shops.[774]

Armed with examples of some of the ways early modern owners compiled and personalised their copies of Vavassore's blockbook, the questions that remain are concerned with its content and purpose. Like the earlier Netherlandish *Biblia Pauperum,* the *ONC* could have been used by priests and preachers as an aid to

[773] Suzanne Karr Schmidt and Kimberly Nichols have done much to improve our knowledge of personalised prints in the Renaissance, in the 2011 exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago and subsequent publication: *Altered and Adorned: Using Renaissance Prints in Daily Life.* See Schmidt & Nicols, 2011.

[774] Matthew, 2002, 68-86; B. H. Berrie & L. C. Matthew, 'Venetian "Colore": Artists at the Intersection of Technology and History' in D. Brown, S. Pagden & J. Anderson (eds.) *Bellini, Giorgione, Titian and the Renaissance of Venetian Painting* (New Haven, 2006) 302-3; *Idem.* 2010, 245-53; and DeLancey, 2011, 193-232.

teaching or compiling their sermons, as well as by lay people.[775] They certainly were in the hands of religious men, for one of copies includes a written colophon that reads "In memory of Brother Aurelio of Sicily, from the City of Palermo." (Fig. 7.12) The inclusion of his name certainly connects Vavassore's volume with the world of the monastery, but more evidence will be required to demonstrate a connection between this visual bible and the predominantly oral interactions that occurred between a preacher or priest and his assembled congregation.

The coloured copy at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia also offers evidence of another purpose for the blockbook, which is for instruction at a more general level. Whether used for furthering knowledge of the Bible, or as a reading aid, this copy demonstrates very personal signs of ownership. Below the printed text on the colophon, which announces its publication in Venice by the Vavassore workshop, the owner of this copy has added a few handwritten lines in brown ink (Fig. 7.13). The writing itself seems the work of someone who was semi-literate, and has proved all but unreadable for the archivists and paleographical specialists I have consulted.[776] Turning over to the blank page that follows it, we see that the owner has used this space to practice his or her handwriting and doodle a few sketches – one of which appears, rather inappropriately, to be a small figure urinating (Fig. 7.14).

These childlike features imply the existence of a market of children for Vavassore's blockbook. Little work has been carried out on childhood in the Renaissance, and studies of schooling and education have focused more closely on the changing curriculum rather than the kind of books children learned from.[777] We

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[775] Despite its name *Biblia Pauperum* or 'Bible of the Poor' Parshall notes that block books served as reference tools for preachers preparing sermons, and as teaching aids for the instruction of the illiterate. Although some examples are simple in design and message, most consist of "complex combinations of highly abbreviated text and unusual typological or symbolic imagery" making it more likely that their audience, whether monastic or lay, were skilled in reading and seeing, and interested in intense study and meditation. Parshall, 2005, 96.

[776] Thanks here to the staff of the Biblioteca Fondazione Querini Stampalia, and to Irene Mariani for acting as an intercessor for me with the staff engaged in the Medici Archive Project in Florence.

[777] On childhood, see L. Haas, *The Renaissance Man and His Children: Childbirth and Early Childhood in Florence, 1300-1600* (New York, 1998) and D. Kertzer & M. Barbagli (eds.) *The History of the European Family Volume 1: Family Life in Early Modern Times, 1500-1789* (New Haven, 2001). On schooling and education, see Grendler, 1989; *idem*, 'Schooling in Western Europe', *Renaissance Quarterly* 43:4 (1990) 775-87; R. Black, 'Italian Renaissance Education: Changing Perspectives and Continuing Controversies',

cannot, of course, assume that religious education and the giving of devotional texts was not in the hands of parents, godparents, and other family members, rather than simply the preserve of the schoolteacher. With its predominance of image over text, this easy to follow guide to the complex typologies of the Old and New Testaments could have functioned as both a reading aid *and* an aid for devotion from a relatively early stage in a child's education. Furthermore, an undated octavo pamphlet of the *History of St Peter and St Paul* also published by the Vavassore workshop is bound with a Brescian book of orations and songs in praise of God and the Virgin, specifically intended for the instruction of children (*per instruir li fanciulli*); as well as a Milanese book on the life of the Christian, identified as for the same purpose.[778] These examples confirm that children in the sixteenth century were indeed interacting with printed material, and that books like these played an important role in their formative education on devotional matters. The *ONC* blocbook may have fulfilled a similar purpose, even if it was not specifically intended for the instruction of children. Further work on defining children's books and the market for them is required, but there can be no doubt that sixteenth-century printers were aware of the need for books that addressed the religious education of children directly. Above all the examples of re-ordering, binding, and even application of colour carried out by early modern owners, the childish drawings and doodles discussed here are the most personal additions to a copy of Vavassore's devotional blockbook; offering a valuable reminder that printed material was used by, and part of the everyday life of, a wide variety of people during the Renaissance.

The imagery contained within the *ONC*, as previously stated, focuses on the life of Christ, as told through the complex typologies between the Old and New Testaments. How does this compare with the other imagery circulating, in various formats, at this time? Whilst it is clear that the scenes from the Old Testament are used as prefigurations – 'types,' in comparison to later 'antitypes' – they make reference to the kind of New Testament imagery that would have been familiar to sixteenth century Venetians. Scenes of Christ's miracles and crucifixion dominated

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Journal of the History of Ideas 52:2 (1991) 315-34; C. Carlsmith, 'Struggling Toward Success: Jesuit Education in Italy, 1540-1600,' *History of Education Quarterly* 42:2 (2002) 215-46; and *idem*, 2010.

[778] Anonymous, *Orationi Divotissimie per Cantare dinaco all'altissimo Dio & alla beauttima sua Madre, raccolte per instruir li fanciulli di Cremona, alla Santa & Cattolica Fede* (Brescia: Iacopo Britannico, 1567); Matteo Besozzo, *Summario della vita Christiana, qual s'insegna ali fanciulli di Cremona* (Milan: Vincenzo Girardoni, 1568).

the decorative scheme of contemporary churches, as did those of other New Testament saints; while on feast days confraternities gathered together as saintly relics were processed through the city.[779] Even the *scuola* that met at the church dedicated to Moses, of which Vavassore was a member, in 1585 commissioned a painting of *Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet* by the artist Jacopo Tintoretto, rather than a more predictable Old Testament subject.[780] By drawing on the audience's assumed knowledge of the life of Christ, Vavassore enabled his viewer to learn more about the Old Testament, its imagery, and its teachings, by allowing them to engage with it through the familiar imagery of the New Testament.

The woodcuts do not, of course, just depict Christians. Jews play a major role in the iconography of the *ONC*, appearing in the vast majority of its scenes. Much scholarship has focused on the ways Jews have been represented by Christians, whether in manuscript, painted panel or fresco, or print form.[781] Still others have attempted to establish the distinguishing symbols and marks attributed to Jews in the early modern period, which inevitably overlap with the characteristics attributed to their depictions in art.[782] Vavassore's Jews are characterised in various ways. They are depicted wearing the *baretta* or *bereta*, a head covering that the authorities required Jews to wear from 26 March 1496, in summer and winter, in all parts of the Venetian territories (Fig. 7.15).[783] These yellow head-coverings were part of a long line of regulations stemming back to the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), proposed with the intention of making Jews "distinguishable from the rest of

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[779] See Muir, 1981, 185-211; and K. Petkov, 'Relics and Society in Late Medieval and Renaissance Venice', *Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales et Humanistes* 19 (2010) 267-82.
[780] It should be noted, however, that Moses was considered to be Christ's Old Testament prefiguration, and that the walls of the Sistine Chapel (decorated in the 1480s) have scenes from the life of Moses and the life of Christ on facing walls. See L.D. Ettlinger, *The Sistine Chapel before Michelangelo. Religious Imagery and Papal Primacy* (Oxford, 1965) esp. chs. 3,4 and 5.
[781] See S. Lipton, *Images of Intolerance: The Representation of Jews and Judaism in the* Bible Moralisée (Berkeley, 1999); G. B. Guest, Bibles Moralisée: *Commentary and Translation of Biblical Texts* (London, 1995); D. Katz, *The Jew in the Art of the Italian Renaissance* (Philadelphia, 2008); and C. Harris, *The Way Jews Lived: Five Hundred Years of Printed Words and Images* (Jefferson NC, 2009).
[782] D. O. Hughes, 'Distinguishing Signs: Ear-Rings, Jews and Franciscan Rhetoric in the Italian Renaissance City', *Past and Present* 112 (1986) 3-59; R. C. Davis & B. Ravid (eds.), *The Jews of Early Modern Venice* (Baltimore, 2001) introduction, esp. 3-7; B. Ravid, 'The Legal Status of the Jews in Venice to 1509', *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 54 (1987) 183-6; and *idem.*'From Yellow to Red: On the Distinguishing Head Covering of the Jews in Venice', *Jewish History* 6:1 (1992) 179-210.
[783] Ravid, 1992, 183.

the population by the nature of their clothes."[784] The head-coverings Vavassore depicts are not of one standard style, but most likely reflect the myriad ways the Jewish population wore their *baretta* (Fig. 7.16). However they are rendered, the inclusion of these identifiable head-coverings echoes the 'standard portrayal' of Jews in the earlier French *Bibles Moralisées* manuscripts as "bearded men wearing various forms of conical or pointed hats."[785] As Sara Lipton has argued, it has been long accepted that the pointed hat was the standard Christian iconographic convention for identifying Jews: whilst some have noted that Jews were wearing them in their own Hebrew manuscripts, others have asserted that this symbol was employed to identify them as Jews and as such had an anti-Jewish connotation.[786] Unlike these earlier French manuscripts, Vavassore's Jews cannot be identified by any other signs: their robes are much the same as the New Testament Christian figures, their beards are similar to those sported by the disciples, and almost none (excepting, predictably, the money lenders in the temple) are depicted with the symbol of the usurer: a moneybag.[787]

There has been a tendency in the scholarship to focus on the depictions of Jews in the early modern period as entirely negative. As Stephen Bowd has noted in his study of the 'blood libel' of Simon of Trent, the images that circulated in print for some time afterwards presented Jews in an "instantly recognisable and stereotypical fashion as ugly or hook-nosed, sumptuously dressed, and wearing distinctive hats bearing their names."[788] To be sure, Vavassore depicts the Jews in the blockbook as wearing the distinguishing *baretta*, in the guise of the moneylender, and as the crucifier of Christ, but there is actually little visual difference in the depiction of the Old Testament Hebrews and the Christians of the New Testament; as, of course, there was little identifiable difference between Christian and Jew in the sixteenth century city. Despite the continuing scholarly focus on the divisions between Christian and Jewish residents, the two groups lived and worked closely together in

[784] Ibid. 179.
[785] Lipton, 1999, 16.
[786] Ibid. 16.
[787] "The beard probably became a standard iconographic device associated with Jews not because all Jews wore them but because particularly pious Jews wore them; beards consequently could be associated with the Jewish religion." Ibid. 20.
[788] See Bowd & Cullington, 2012, 10.

Venice both before and after the establishment of the ghetto in 1516.[789] Local and visiting Christians were evidently very interested in the differences between Jewish culture and their own, and curious of the language of Hebrew, for diarists dedicated a great many pages to discussion of it.[790] Records of the Holy Office also include a case in 1587 when three young Paduans, Zanetto, Antonio and Monego, all of whom had recently converted to Christianity from Judaism, joined the mountebanks on Piazza San Marco and made money "without selling anything, but by speaking in Hebrew for the delight of bystanders."[791]

Converts and conversionary ceremonies were also greeted with a great deal of interest for the entertainment and spectacle they provided. Marin Sanudo noted that "every place in the Frari was taken" to witness the baptism of a Jewish girl named Vivian in 1528, estimating a vast (and probably exaggerated) crowd of some 10,000 people.[792] The records of the *Casa dei Catecumeni*, founded in Venice to address the conversion of Jews, Turks and Mores, similarly attest to the presence of Jews and those converting to Christianity in everyday life.[793] Converts joined and were baptized into the congregation at the church of San Moisè, as well as many other churches across Venice, making them curious and regular fixtures in the devotional and everyday life of Vavassore and other Venetians like him.[794]

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[789] On the ghetto, see Finlay, 1982, 140-54; Davis & Ravid, 2001; and Harris, 2008. Vavassore did, to be sure, issue a text on "The Errors of the Jews" written by the converted Hebrew writer Samuel Marochitanus, in 1537. See Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.58.

[790] These differences certainly piqued the interest of travellers like Fynes Moryson (the first non-Jewish traveller to comment on the ghetto) in 1594, Thomas Coryat in 1608, and William Lithgow in 1609. See Moryson, 1617, Part 1 88; T. Coryat, *Coryat's Crudities: Hastily gobbled up in Five Moneth's Travels* (London, 1611) 230-1; and W. Lithgow, *The Totall discourse of the rare adventures & painefull peregrinations of long nineteen yeares travayles from Scotland to the most famous kingdomes in Europe, Asia and Affrica* (Glasgow, 1906) 37.

[791] ASV, SU, b.59, proc. Marco di Francesco of Padua, 22-23 October 1587.

[792] DMS, 46: 501-2, 9 January 1528. See also, B. Pullan, *Jews of Europe and the Inquisition of Venice: 1550-1620* (London, 1983), ch. 14.

[793] On the *Casa dei Catecumeni*, see P. Zorattini, *I nomi degli altri. Conversioni a Venezia e nel Friuli Veneto in eta moderna* (Florence, 2008); E. N. Rothman, 'Becoming Venetian: Conversion and Transformation in the 17th Century Mediterranean', *Mediterranean Historical Review* 21: 1 (2006) 39-75; G. Ellero, 'Pia Casa dei Catecumeni 1557-1797' in *idem. L'Archivio IRE Inventari dei fondi antichi degli ospedali e luoghi pii di Venezia* (Venice, 1984) 209; Pullan, 1983, 254-81; and *idem.* 'La nuova filantropia nella Venezia cinquecentesca' in B. Aikema & D. Meijers (eds.) *Nel Regno dei Poveri* (Venice, 1989) 19-34.

[794] IRE CAT B 4 (1592-1599). See f.5r for the conversion of Marcello the Moor before the congregation of San Moisè, 23 July 1592, for example. Unfortunately, the records of early catechumens from 1557-1592 have been lost.

Reflecting the place of, and interest in, Jews in contemporary Venetian society may not have been the original intention behind Vavassore's blockbook, but it is nonetheless an interesting and challenging source on this subject. His images of Old and New Testament Hebrews simultaneously continue a long-held artistic tradition of distinguishing Jew from Christian whilst offering visual support to the contemporary documentary evidence of the *baretta* as the only distinguishing sign of the Venetian Jew.

Undated, it is impossible to establish with any great certainty when Vavassore's blockbook was produced and issued by the workshop. It seems, however, that scholars and collectors have attempted to attribute a date to it for some time, leading to an estimated production date of c.1530 – roughly coinciding with the previously assumed date of the establishment of the press.[795] The large number of woodcuts required for the volume would certainly lead to the logical suggestion that Giovanni Andrea produced them in concert with his brother Florio (perhaps alongside several other hands) with whom he worked from 1530 to c.1543.[796] The *ONC* encouraged both individual contemplation of the Bible, and enabled its owners to shuffle or shake-up the order of images (and, therefore, the relationship between Old and New Testament events) – attributes actively encouraged by Luther and the Reformers, but of great concern to the Catholic Church in the age of Counter or Catholic Reformation that would follow. However, the number of surviving copies demonstrates that, despite attempts by the reforming church to restrict the circulation of religious books to the vast number of people with vernacular literacy, Vavassore's blockbook remained in use. At least two surviving copies were rebound in composite volumes in the later decades of the sixteenth century.[797]

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[795] See Massena, 1914, 114; Sander, 1942; and Ephrussi, 1891, 232. Their early speculations have been repeated in R. Mortimer, *Harvard College Library. Department of Printed Books and Graphic Arts. Catalogue of Books and Manuscripts, Part II, Italian 16th Century Books* (Cambridge, MA, 1974) no.518; Ascarelli & Menato, 1989, 363; Witcome, 2004 125; and included in online catalogues.

[796] The earliest dated book produced by the brothers is the *Esemplario di Lavori* of 1 August 1530.

[797] The work bound with the copy of the block book at the Museo Correr is: A. da Castello, *Rosario della gloriosa Vergine Maria. Di nuouo stampato, con nuoue & belle figure adornato* (Venice: Pietro De'Franceschi, in the Frezzaria at the sign of the Queen, 1575). The work bound with the copy at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia is: S. Razzi, *Miracoli della gloriosa Vergine Maria nostra signora, tratti da diuersi catholici, & approvati auttori. Nuovamente stampata con aggiunta ristampati, & corretti* (Venice: Giacomo Vincenzi, 1587).

One of these works was Alberto da Castello's *Rosario,* which offers – both for the reader, and for the historian – an excellent counterpart to the *ONC*. The text and its accompanying woodcuts act as a kind of printed rosary, encouraging contemplation of images whilst reciting the Ave Maria and Paternoster prayers (Fig. 7.17). Rather than a typological work, it complements the earlier blockbook by delving deeper into the events described in the New Testament, focusing on the life of the Virgin rather than that of her son. The *Rosario* was circulating in Venice as early as 1521, but seems to have witnessed a resurgence in popularity in the later decades of the century – probably in response to the expansion of chapels and confraternities dedicated to it, like the Chapel of the Rosary at the basilica of SS. Giovanni e Paolo (1582).[798] The specifically Venetian connection with the Virgin was underlined still further by the proclamation of a Marian feast of the Rosary after the battle of Lepanto in 1571.[799] Originally the feast day of Our Lady of Victory, Pope Gregory XIII renamed the feast for Our Lady of the Rosary in the belief that Christendom owed its triumph at Lepanto to prayers recited to the rosary.[800] Together, Castello's *Rosario* and Vavassore's earlier blockbook offer a comprehensive and portable reference guide to the Bible, as well as a highly topical focus for meditation and prayer.

As well as this visual bible, the other devotional works published by the workshop from its establishment in c.1515 and the beginning of the Council of Trent in 1545 have a similarly broad appeal. Short pamphlets on the topic of death – the *Capitolo de la Morte* and *Meditatione della Morte* – would have found a ready market in a city continually devastated by outbreaks of plague.[801] From 1528,

[798] See A. Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose: The Making of the Rosary in the Middle Ages* (Pennsylvania, 1997) 66; and Black, 1989, 103-4.
[799] On the Battle of Lepanto, see G. K. Chesterton, *Lepanto with Explanatory Notes and Commentary,* edited by D. Ahlquist (San Francisco, 2003); and H. Bicheno, *Crescent and Cross: The Battle of Lepanto, 1571* (London, 2004).
[800] A. G. Remensnyder, 'Christian Captives, Muslim Maidens, and Mary', *Speculum* 82:3 (2007). 646.
[801] Anonymous, *Capitolo de la morte: il qual narra tutti li homeni famosi incominciando ne la Bibia fin al testament nuovo. Con li famosi morti nel tempo moderno* (Venice: Giovanni Andrea Vavassore detto Guadagnino & Florio fratello, 1532); and C. Castellani, *Meditatione della morte. Meditatio mortis composite per Castellanum Pierozzi de Castellani.* (Venice: Giovanni Andrea Vavassore detto Guadagnino & Florio fratello, undated).

visitations of the disease became less frequent, but morality rates soared.[802] If, in such an unstable and hazardous environment, it was possible to forget the inevitability of death, a flourishing market for books and objects that acted as a *Memento mori* provided a constant – and highly portable – reminder (Fig. 7.18).[803] Publications like these reflect concerns that were typical in the pre-Tridentine period. The reforms of the Council of Trent impacted on every area of devotional life, but especially on attitudes to death and dying. Extreme unction, one of the Last Rites, was reaffirmed as one of the seven sacraments, and belief in purgatory was actively encouraged with the understanding that the prayers of the living could benefit souls there. They also endorsed the practice of offering Masses in honour of the dead, and declared that it was valid for a priest to offer these Masses without the presence of others.[804] With the Council's reaffirmation of the rituals of dying and the promise of eventual salvation from purgatory, there was little space left for publications like these, which encouraged frightening contemplations of death.

Other contemporary publications included short hagiographical pamphlets such as the octavo volume of the *History of St Peter and St Paul* mentioned above.[805] The text itself takes the form of a poem and describes the lives of the apostles with Jesus Christ, from their initial meeting to the crucifixion; their subsequent activity as preachers; their deaths; and the miracles attributed to their holy bodies (*sacri corpi*). The feast days of saints like St Peter and St Paul formed an integral part of civic and religious ritual in the sixteenth century, in Venice in the church and *sestieri* of San

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[802] There were fourteen outbreaks of plague in the lagoon between 1446 and 1528, resulting in the continuous existence of the *Provveditori alla Sanità.* See Chambers & Pullan, 2001, 113; Palmer, 1978; and Cohn, 2002.

[803] M. Lindemann, *Medicine and Society in Early Modern Europe*, (Cambridge, 1999), ch. 2, esp. 48*;* H. Puff, 'Memento Mori, Memento Mei: Albrecht Dürer and the Art of Dying' in L. Tatlock, *Enduring Loss in Early Modern Germany: Cross Disciplinary Perspectives* (Leiden, 2010) 103-33; and M. O'Connor, *The Art of Dying Well. The Development of the* Ars Moriendi (New York: 1942).

[804] Session XIV 25 November 1551 on 'The Most Holy Sacraments of Penance and Extreme Unction', *The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Ecumenical Council of Trent,* edited and translated by J. Waterworth (London, 1848) 92-121. On changing practices, see R. A. Boisclair, 'The Rituals for Dying, Death, and Bereavement among Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox Christians' in L. Bregman (ed.) *Religion, Death, and Dying Volume 3: Bereavement and Death Rituals* (Wesport Connecticut, 2010) 49-50.

[805] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.31. The workshop also produced another hagiographical account concerned with Santa Oliva by Francesco Corna; which captured the imagination of audiences in the form of both printed pamphlets and performances by the singer Altissimo. On Altissimo and his epic poem *I Reali di Francia*, see L. Degl'Innocenti, *I 'Reali' dell'Altissimo: Un ciclo di cantari fra oralità e scrittura* (Florence, 2008); and Salzberg & Rospocher, 2012, 13.

Polo, and poems like this may have been performed to celebrate them, before being circulated in print. Finally, an *Ecclesiastical Dictionary* by the fifteenth-century Savonese monk Giovanni Bernardo Forte provided an aid to "less erudite readers" who found it difficult to understand the scriptures. [807] Despite his claim that the dictionary was "useful and necessary for many," the intended audience for this work was made up of clergymen who lacked Forte's humanist education; a market alluded to by the workshop's use of polychromatic printing (Fig. 7.19).[808] Printing with both red and black inks would have required twice the effort, time, and material; and the buyer would consequently have paid a premium for books that had been printed using this method. Whilst both the ONC and the vernacular pamphlets otherwise described may have appealed to a very similar market, Forte's dictionary demanded a higher level of engagement with the scriptures, and an education in Latin terms.

The surviving devotional works published by the Vavassore workshop before 1545 are relatively few in number and, for the most part, targeted at a broad market of lay people interested in hagiography, who had perhaps encountered sermons on the importance of 'dying well', and were keen to enhance their knowledge of the Bible and of the complex typological connections between the Old and New Testaments. More copies of the blockbook are extant today than almost any other book produced by the workshop, and it is clear from the evidence of the *Crowning of the Virgin* (and the variation in quality between copies) that the blocks were continually reused until they wore out. The text in this particular block was replaced with a 'stereotype' made from metal type, which was glued onto or inserted into the carved wood block and printed together (Fig. 7.20).[809] Whether these volumes were simply more highly prized than others, or because there were more copies circulating, it is exceptionally useful that so many examples remain. Although Vavassore went on to produce many more devotional books, this visual bible is a useful reminder that, once in the hands of an owner, books that would later come under the scrutiny of the Inquisition continued to be read, prized, and circulated for a period of time now unknowable to the historian.

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[807] "i lettori meno eruditi." G. B. Forte, *Vocabulista Ecclesiastico latino e vulgare* (Venice: Giovanni Andrea detto Guadagnino & Florio fratello Vavassore, 1539) f.1v.
[808] "vtile e necessario a molti." Ibid., titlepage.
[809] On stereotypes see Woodward, 1975, 45-6; and for a comparison between the two woodcuts of the *Crowing of the Virgin*, see W. L. Schreiber, *Manuel de l'amateur de la Gravure sur bois et sur metal au XVe Siecle* (Berlin, 1900) LXXVI and LXXVII.

7.3 The Reforming Church: Tridentine Catholicism in Print, 1545 – 1564

The period in which the council met in the city of Trent (and, briefly, at Bologna) is also characterised by a rise in the number of devotional works published by the Vavassore workshop. There can be little coincidence in this as, for the most part, the kind of works printed for sale by the press during this period were directly concerned with the discussions taking place there. Whilst some of its publications represent a straightforward continuation of the kinds of books and pamphlets issued by the press in the preceding decades, still others attest to Vavassore's desire and ability to publish titles that responded to, or directly reflect, the events, issues and discussions that occurred during, or as a result of, the Council of Trent. The devotional titles discussed in this section are therefore able to cast light on the reading habits and religious interests of Venetians – some unchanged, others new – within the much broader theme of church reform. Although, as outlined above, Vavassore found himself under the speculation of the Holy Office on several occasions, the titles published in the period 1545 to 1563 clearly demonstrate his support of (and interest in) the reforming Catholic Church.

Although evidently concerned with the developing events at Trent, certain books and pamphlets issued by the workshop between 1545 and 1563 respond to more immediate concerns. A volume of the *Miracles of the Virgin Mary*, published in sextodecimo format on 1 December 1549, must have been produced to coincide with the feast days and celebrations occurring in that month.[810] As well as the period of advent and the anticipation of the nativity, just a week after its publication, there would have been celebrations of the feast of the Immaculate Conception, one of the key themes explored in this work (as, of course, in any other on the Virgin). The *Miracles of the Virgin* was evidently a popular work during the sixteenth century, for not only are there extant editions produced by various publishers in the decades before and after the 1549 edition, but Vavassore is at pains to state that this edition has been newly revised and corrected, and features some seventeen miracles not to be found elsewhere (*con diecisette miracoli aggiornata li quali non sono nelli altri*). This was, as print scholars have agreed, an often-used ploy used by printers to attract

[810] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.102.

new buyers for works they had actually altered very little.[811] Difficult though it may be to identify the intended audience for printed works, books and pamphlets concerning the life of the Virgin would have held a special interest to women readers. Marian images were omnipresent in the everyday lives of sixteenth century women (and men), but they were also important sources of comfort and protection during the defining moments of her life: marriage, pregnancy and childbirth. Prints of the Virgin and Saints could be imbued with some of the power of the icons or miraculous images they represented; casting the protection of the original over those who held, carried or wore them.[812] Printed accounts of the annunciation of the Virgin and the birth of Christ may have functioned in much the same way.

The Vavassore workshop also continued to produce volumes intended to enhance their readers' knowledge of the Bible. In 1552, an anonymous edition of the *Fioretto di tutta la Bibia hystoriato* was issued by the workshop, containing sermons (*predicationi* or *predicazioni*) that form a chronicle of antiquity, blending scriptural information with elements of profane history and even pagan mythology.[813] Its primary focus on the events described in the Old Testament echoes and continues the emphasis of the earlier block book; and consequently begins with the creation of the world, as told in the book of Genesis, and ends at the beginning of the New Testament with the nativity of Christ. The *Fioretto* would benefit from further study, for it certainly existed in a wide variety of versions, and enjoyed great commercial success in both manuscript and print.[814] Despite its popularity, the reforming Catholic Church grew increasingly suspicious of the vernacular *Fioretti*. In 1554, Pier Paolo Vergerio defended vernacular versions of the Bible in his polemical commentary of the Index of Prohibited Books, but attacked the Catholic authorities for continuing to allow books like the *Fioretti* to circulate freely. "The *Fioretti della Bibbia*," he writes, includes "an infinity of false doctrines and corrupt fables drawn

[811] On this topic, see Witcombe, 2004; and Landau & Parshall, 2004. Woodward, 2007, 773-95 also identifies similar behaviour among mapmakers.
[812] See Schmidt & Nichols, 2011, 61-69. Such functions of printed Marian images have also been discussed in the Florentine context in R. Maniura, 'Image and Relic in the Cult of Our Lady of Prato' in S. J. Cornelison & S. B. Montgomery, *Images, Relics, and Devotional Practices in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Tempe, 2005) 193-212; and M. Holmes, 'Miraculous Images in Renaissance Florence', *Art History* 34 (2011) 432-65.
[813] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.114. See also E. Barbieri, 'Tradition and Change in Spiritual Literature' in Fragnito, 2001, 127-8.
[814] A. J. Schutte, *Printed Italian Vernacular Religious Books 1465-1550: A Finding List* (Geneva, 1983) 94-6; J. Dalarun, 'La Bible italienne', *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Moyen âge*, 105 (1993) 884; and Barbieri, 2002, 127.

word for word from the *Metamorfosi* (and narrated as if they truly happened at the time of the Old and New Testament)", chief among which is the assertion and "outright lie that Cain engaged with his son in the vice [sodomy] so rife among you now that you have prohibited legitimate marriages."[815] Vergerio not only managed to accuse members of the church hierarchy of sodomy, but cemented the fate of the vernacular *Fioretti*, for the authorities quickly condemned and banned the work in subsequent Indices.[816]

Returning to Vavassore's edition of the *Fioretto*, below its title, the frontispiece of this octavo volume has been divided into six small woodcut scenes used to depict the days described in the creation story (Fig. 7.21). The first two frames show God creating light and darkness, heaven and earth. The designer of these cuts has adhered closely to the written word of the book of Genesis, effectively eliminating the need for text in conveying the creation story. This is further underlined by its existence as a separate single-sheet print of 'The Six Days of Creation' (*I sei giorni della creazione*) (Fig. 7.22). The six small woodcuts are exactly replicated, but in this version small labels have been added in Latin, as well as a narrow but ornate band of decoration down the middle. Whether printed this way, or added later by its owner, the print is bordered again with a fine but striking band of gold ink or paint.

Given the alterations in the basic layout and function of the woodcut, it cannot simply be understood as an image that has been cut out of or otherwise separated from the volume. The printed text of the 1552 volume is peppered with small illustrative woodcuts, including those of the banishment of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, Jacob's Ladder and the Ark of Noah (Fig. 7.23). It seems that Vavassore assembled the frontispiece from six small, individually cut blocks (which may have been intended as in-text illustrations) that were then reassembled with the addition of text labels and an ornamental frame for the print. This heavily illustrated vernacular text – and the 'spin-off' print produced from the same woodcuts – may have been targeted towards a market of women and children, whose literacy skills were still developing. Like the earlier blockbook, the inclusion of simple but easy to understand illustrations would be an aid to reading as well as

[815] P. P. Vergerio, *Catalogo dell'Arcimboldo* (1554), cited in Barbieri, 2002, 128.
[816] See A. Rotondò, 'Nuovi documenti per la storia dell' "Indice dei libri proibiti" (1572-1668)' *Rinascimento* 2:3 (1963) 157; Fragnito, 1997, 209-13; and Barbieri, 2002, 128.

devotion, for "pictures [can] communicate more naturally and more directly than words, and thus help young readers make sense of the texts they accompany."[817]

Other than the series of woodcuts of the *Labours of Hercules*, produced in the early years of his career and described in chapter two, this print is one of the only pieces of surviving evidence to suggest that Vavassore sold single-sheet woodcuts as well as books and maps from his workshop. In his testament of 1570, Vavassore bequeathed to his nephew Alvise not only woodcut illustrations for books (such as those included in the *Bibia hystoriato*) but also single woodcuts of Saints.[818] These *Piccoli Santi* ('Small Saints') were very popular, as they could be produced, bought and collected very cheaply thanks to their small size and often relatively crude quality. In her study of the place of women in late Medieval and Renaissance art, Christa Grössinger has suggested that, in the wake of (and in response to) the Reformation, "the production of cheap woodcuts of saints, available to all, was halted."[819] The basis for this argument is that in the eyes of the Reformers female saints and chastity no longer merited veneration, and that the Virgin and saints were no longer allowed to act as intercessors.[820] Whilst this may have been the case in those areas where the influence of the Reformation was strongest, in Italy such images generally continued to proliferate, and came to be actively endorsed by the Council of Trent. At its twenty-fifth session, the reforming Catholic Church outlined its policies on the intercession and invocation of saints, as well as adding a rather last minute statement on the use of images. In opposition to the Reformers, Council members actively encouraged the offering up of prayers to the saints, for "it is good and useful suppliantly to invoke them, and to have recourse to their prayers, aid [and] help for obtaining benefits from God."[821] Furthermore, the cuts Vavassore alludes to in his will undoubtedly fall under the category described in the decrees as images by

[817] P. Nodelman, 'Decoding the Images: Illustration and Picture Books' in P. Hunt (ed.) *Understanding Children's Literature* (New York, 1999) 70. See also L. G. Duggan, 'Was art really the "book of the illiterate"?', *Word and Image* 5:3 (1989) 227-251.
[818] "Item lasso a messer Alvise Valvasorio mio nepote qual e sempre stato cum noi et sta, duj torcholj et le stampe de figure di santj et di librj, non li carte stampate et librj si habbino da divider si come ordinero." Schulz, 1998, 124.
[819] C. Grössinger, *Picturing Women in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art* (Manchester, 1997) 150.
[820] Ibid.
[821] Waterworth, 1848, 234.

which viewers "may order their own lives and manners in imitation of the saints; and may be excited to adore and love God, and to cultivate piety."[822]

Certain titles published by the workshop in the Tridentine period demonstrate the issues and concerns at the heart of the reforming church. One such title is the *Speculum Confessorum* by Matteo Corradone, which Vavassore had published in collaboration with his brother Florio in 1535, 1536, 1538 and 1543. Vavassore went on to publish further editions of Corradone's manual in 1546, 1553, and again in 1564, a year after the closing of the Council.[823] Whilst this text had clearly been popular enough to warrant reprinting prior to the Council's meetings, Corradone's ideas found a larger and more receptive market in the wake of Tridentine reform. Of the twenty-eight copies of the *Speculum Confessorum* recorded in the USTC, twenty were produced during or after the meetings of the Council of Trent. Reform did, of course, lead to changes in the practice of confession and the experience of the sacrament of penance: instead of a public act, confession began to take place in the privacy of the confessional.[824] Rather than a means by which the "average person" might "tell the priest about the sins of his neighbours", confession encouraged self-examination and the admittance of private sins rather than social ones.[825]

Confession manuals like Corradone's *Speculum Confessorum* had existed as a genre and circulated widely in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, in a variety of forms.[826] Manuals or guidebooks addressed to the faithful aimed to assist in the preparation of a good confession; whilst those addressed to priests were to ensure that the confessions were as thorough as possible. Corradone's manual is an example of the former, intended to function as a "mirror" for examination of the self. The text is made up of sets of questions, followed by instructions and statements on

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[822] Ibid. 235.
[823] There are seven surviving editions of Corradone's confession manual published by the Vavassore workshop. See Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.51.
[824] The Council of Trent Session XIV, 25 November 1551: "as regards the manner of confessing secretly to a priest alone, although Christ has not forbidden that one may in expiation for his crimes and for his own humiliation, for an example to others as well as for the edification of the Church thus scandalized, confess his offenses publicly, yet this is not commanded by divine precept; nor would it be very prudent to enjoin by human law that offenses, especially secret ones, should be divulged by a public confession."
[825] J. Bossy, 'The Social History of Confession in the Age of the Reformation,' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 25 (1975) 24.
[826] See P. J. O'Banion, '"A Priest Who Appears Good:" Manuals of Confession and the Construction of Clerical Identity in Early Modern Spain', *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 85:1 (2005) 333-48.

the severity of the sin as well as references to authoritative books and passages the confessor might want to consult in the bible. As Michael Cornett has argued, these were printed texts that served an oral purpose: by "reading the form of confession, or hearing it read aloud, penitents could recognise in the wide-range avowals of sin, in a voice that was to become their own voice, the sins they had committed, so that they could articulate them to their confessor."[827] A copy of Corradone's text held at the Bodleian Library brings this connection still closer: it is bound in repurposed parchment, which contains a manuscript document from a widow to her confessor. In it, the widow asks the confessor to communicate with the bishop on her behalf in connection with her desire to enter the Catholic faith.[828] Like the various personalised versions of the block book discussed above, this copy offers a tantalising insight into devotional life and the use of devotional books during the period. As, most likely, a Jewish *conversa*, the widow probably used the *Speculum Confessorum* as an instructional guide in preparing to give confession. The *Capitoli* of the Casa dei Catecumeni, founded in Venice during the period of Tridentine reform, similarly emphasises the importance of the study of religious texts in the teaching and instruction of its charges before baptism.[829] Furthermore, by reaffirming the purpose and function of the 'works of mercy' (*opera de misericordia*) Corradone underlined the importance of the sacraments, which played a crucial role in both devotional life and church reforms.[830]

Whilst the meetings and decrees of Trent may have reinforced the message contained within Corradone's manual, new titles published during this period speak directly to the spirit of religious change invoked by the Council. Like the *Speculum Confessorum*, a short book of sermons by the Padua cleric Bernardino Scardeone entitled the *Nave Evangelica* is also closely connected with contemporary oral

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[827] M. E. Cornett, 'The Form of Confession: A Later Medieval Genre for Examining Conscience' (PhD Thesis, 2011) iv.
[828] 1538 copy, Bodleian Library Lawn F.42.
[829] The *capitoli* is extant only in a later printed edition. IRE, CAT A1; *Capitoli et Ordini per il buon governo delle pie case de'Catecumeni di Venezia* (Venice: Vincenzo Rizzi, 1802; reprinted from an earlier edition of 1736) 10.
[830] Several sessions focused on the issue of the sacraments, and the decrees ultimately underlined that salvation could not be attained without receiving them. All page references from the edition by Waterworth, 1848: Session 7, 3 March 1547 'Decree on the Sacraments' 53-8; Session 13, 11 October 1551 'Decree concerning the most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist' 75-84; Session 14, 25 November 1551, 'On the Most Holy Sacraments of Penance and Extreme Unction' 92-105; Session 24, 11 November 1563 'Doctrine on the Sacrament of Matrimony' 193-207.

culture.[831] Published in 1551 with the protection of the *privilegio*, the woodcut on the frontispiece raises a crucial question about the church's role during this period (Fig. 7.24).[832] A large ship, labelled as the *Nave Evangelica* ('Evangelical Ship' or 'Ship of the Gospels') is depicted in still waters, with the flag of Christendom flying on its mast. In the top left-hand corner, a 'windhead' of the type included in Vavassore's map of the known world blows a favourable wind upon the scene. The ship is separated into three sections, each labeled according to the group occupying that space. At its stern stands Christ, preaching to the apostles (*apostoli*) assembled before him; in the centre are a large group identified variously as priests, monks and brothers (*preti, monache, frati*); and at the bow are the *mondani*, ordinary men who are the worldly, secular, or earthly. The frontispiece thus presents the Catholic Church in an intercessory role: just as the centre of the ship must be crossed to reach the stern from the bow, the *mondani* could only access Christ's teachings through his representatives on earth (the church). In the foreground, a small boat approaches the ship containing two men reading, underlining the evangelical aspect of the work. Responding to Luther's challenge of *sola scriptura*, Scardeone's sermons and Vavassore's accompanying woodcut offer a collective attempt to justify the continuing role of the church in facilitating knowledge and understanding of Christ.

Two texts by Antonio Sebasatino Minturno are still more explicit in their reference to Tridentine reform. The first is the *Poemata Tridentina*, published first in 1559, and reissued again in 1564 to mark the end of the Council of Trent.[833] Minturno is primarily known for *On The Poet* (*De Poeta*), a critical work of 1559 that attempts to use poetic tragedy as both a lesson on the transience of worldly things and a means of spiritual purification.[834] As Bishop of Ugento, Minturno's *Tridentine Poems* were the result of his attendance and interactions at the meetings

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[831] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.111. On the links between written/printed culture and orality see: W. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (2nd Edition, London, 2002); M. McLuhan, *Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (London, 1962); Eisenstein, 1979; B. Richardson, *Manuscript Culture in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, 2009); and A. Fox & D. Woolf, *The Spoken Word: Oral Culture in Britain, 1500-1850* (Manchester, 2002).

[832] The title page declares that it was printed '*cum privilegio'* but the application has not survived.

[833] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.131. The USTC records just one remaining copy of the 1559 edition, but 26 of the 1564 edition in Italian and French libraries alone.

[834] On Minturno, see B. Weinberg, 'The Poetic Theories of Minturno' in *Studies in Honour of Dean Shipley* (St Louis, 1942) 101-29; and M. A. Carlson, *Theories of the Theatre* (New York, 1993) 44-5.

of the Council. This is a short volume, comprising of just fifty leaves printed recto and verso, separated into chapters under the headings: 'The Fold' (*Ouile*), 'The Vineyard' (*Vinea*), 'The Net' (*Sagena*), 'The Temple' (*Templum)*, and 'The Kingdom' (*Regnum*). Each of these represents a different metaphor, used by Minturno to characterise the Catholic Church – for example, in the case of the *Sagena,* the church is compared to a vast fishing net, rescuing the souls of the faithful and saving them from the "spiritual wreck" of heresy and heretical belief. The second text by Minturno is the related *Orationes Tridentinae,* another octavo volume produced in the immediate aftermath of the Council in 1564.[835] This substantial book (178 leaves printed recto and verso) is separated into six sections, or *oratio,* that deal with the processes and outline the proceedings of the Council of Trent. By publishing Minturno's poems, the Vavassore workshop enabled a much larger audience (albeit, still one learned in Latin) to join in the discussions of the Council of Trent.

Finally, Vavassore's support of the reforming church reaches its peak with *L'antidoto Christiano,* written by Girolamo Muzio and published by the workshop in 1562.[836] Muzio was an ardent supporter of the Catholic Reformation, and this short pamphlet is essentially a rebuttal of the claims and challenges made against the Catholic Church by the Protestant reformers. Muzio's work reinforces many of the issues that concerned the Council of Trent: underlining the purpose of the church, reinforcing the importance of the sacrament of baptism in forgiveness of the faithful from original sin, and emphasising the centrality of the 'miracle of transubstantiation' to belief. Responding to the Reformers, Muzio argued that heretics had denied the existence of transubstantiation, that Martin Luther had been taught by Satan himself to see holy mass and the order of the priesthood as abominations, and that as a result he had been led into pursuing a 'doctrine of the Devil' (*dottrina del Diavolo*).[837] Muzio also reflects on the Protestant challenge of

[835] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.142.
[836] Ibid., Cat. n.140.
[837] "La miracolosa transustantiatione, della quale parlato habbiamo, negano gli heretici, & biaimano la messa, come cosa abominabile, con tutto che in quella non siano cose altro che sante, scrittura del nuovo, & del vecchio testamento, & devotissime orationi. Ma a fine che oui intendiarte il fondamento della loro dottrina, havete a sapere, che Martin Luthero scrisse un libro, hel quali egli dice haver parlato co'l Diavolo; & che il Diavolo gli ha insegnato, che la messa, & l'ordine del sacerdotio sono cose abominevoli; & cosi egli dapoi si diede a seguitar la dottrina del Diavolo…" G. Muzio, *L'antidoto christiano* (Venice, 1562) 23-5.

the intercessory role of saints, and actively encourages his audience to continue to pray to them for guidance and aid.[838] Whilst Minturno's texts were a show of support to the processes adopted by the reforming church (chiefly, the Council of Trent), Muzio's text is a much fiercer counter-attack to the challenges promulgated by Martin Luther during the Reformation. The Vavassore workshop published at least seven other titles by Girolamo Muzio, in multiple editions, from the early 1560s and into the period of the posthumous press after Giovanni Andrea's death in 1572. Although other publishers in Venice and Rome also issued copies of Muzio's various writings, the workshop's continuing affinity with his ideas further underlines its position in favour of Catholic reform.

The devotional texts issued by the workshop in the period 1545-63 play a crucial role in our understanding of the workshop's capacity to survive and adapt to changing religious circumstances. These titles represent both a sense of continuity in the production of texts and sermons intended to facilitate understanding and contemplation of the bible, and a growing awareness of the challenge of Protestantism and the Catholic response to it. Alongside the commissioned view of *Trent*, the publication of such works as Minturno's *Tridentine Poems* and *Orations*, the *Nave Evangelica* and Muzio's *L'antidoto Christiano*, should have secured Vavassore's reputation as an ardent supporter of both the Council of Trent and wider Catholic reform. Such credentials were not sufficient to place him above the suspicion of the Venetian Inquisition, but did provide the Venetian market with crucial information and opinions about the discussions taking place at Trent.

7.4 Obeying the Index: Religious Books after Trent

The inquisitor's search of the Vavassore shop in 1571 was just one of many routine checks imposed on the printers and booksellers of Venice: the records of the *Sant'Uffizio* are full of accounts like these, in which the inquisitor visits the shop in question, finds (often unidentified) prohibited books, and the seller is forced to pay a fine. It is clear that Alvise had already taken over (if not wholly, then certainly in part) the running of the workshop before Giovanni Andrea died in 1572. Just a month after Vavassore's shop was searched, the shop of Gabriele Giolito at the Sign

[838] Ibid. 27-8.

of the Phoenix was found to contain books with titles and authors that had appeared on the Index.[839] Giovanni Griffo's workshop was similarly searched by an inquisitor in January 1572, and he was brought before a tribunal for having books by Sansovino (presumably his revised version of Dante's *Divine Comedy*) in his possession.[840] Though Aretino's scurrilous *Dialoghi* spoke openly of the carnality and corruption of the Romans, the presence of a number of copies of this title in the workshop does not necessarily suggest that Vavassore's support of the reforming church had waned.[841] The printers' *bottega* was, first and foremost, a business that needed to turn a profit to survive, and the market for prohibited titles was presumably buoyant enough for Alvise to risk having copies of Aretino's book in the shop.

The Vavassore family's connection with the Inquisition did not end with the death of Giovanni Andrea on or before 31 May 1572.[842] His nephew Clemente, the judge-turned-monk who had been tangentially involved with the workshop in editing volumes and providing commentaries on them, was implicated in a long and bitter Inquisition trial.[843] After abandoning his legal career to enter a monastery, one of his fellow monks denounced him for heresy, anticlericalism, and contempt for monastic ceremonies in 1580. Although one monk defended Clemente, the other five members of the tiny community of Sant'Andrea del Lido declared themselves in full

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[839]ASV, SU, b.156, f.23v, 10 September 1571. "Zuane Inq(stor) fui se lui sapeva questi suoi magazeni et in la sua libraria vi fussero ta mej libri de autori prosibiti come apparo nell'Indice". He was fined 9 ducats.

[840] Ibid. f.37v, 3 January 1572. "alla bottega del Griffo, che nano ardisca vendere ne tener in botegga Giustino Hist(o) con la epta si Simon Grineo. Ne la cento novella del Sansovino sub pena arbitrij sacri Tribunalis." Sansovino combined the commentaries of Cristoforo Landino and Alessandro Vellutello in a new revised edition of Dante's work, departing from earlier editions of the text by the Venetian Pietro Bembo.

[841] The Vavassore workshop issued works by Aretino from a relatively early stage, most notably his *Quattro libri della humanità di Christo* (1547) which was part of his bid for a cardinal's hat. No surviving copies of Vavassore's 1571 edition of Aretino's *Dialogues* exist. The surviving editions listed in the USTC and on EDIT16 were published in the early 1540s, one of which has been translated in R. Rosenthal, *Aretino's Dialogues* (Toronto, 2005).

[842] On the outside of document is an inscription: "Testamentum Domini Joannis Valvasorij dicti Vadagnino q. domini Venturinij civis Bergomensis rogatum sub del Jovis XVIIIJ mensis Januarij 1569. Indictione XIII dei sabbatj 31 maji 72 publicatum." These dates are in the Venetian calendar. Testament transcribed in Schulz, 1998, 123-4.

[843] ASV, SU, b.47, ff.44r-v and 68v "Fra Clemente Vavassore": his testimony of 30 June 1580, and his written defense of 13 February 1581 respectively. The trial lasted for over a year from 7 February 1580 to 12 December 1581. A summary of Clemente's life, and the inventory of his books as seized by the Inquisition, are recorded in Appendix II Inventory 8 of Grendler, 1977, 317-9.

support of the accusation made against him. Vavassore responded in kind by accusing the prior and his fellow monks of ignorance, sloth, fraud, and debauchery; claiming that they were unable to read Latin, and that their pose of "holy simplicity" simply disguised laziness and stupidity. He also complained that the monastery had no library, and argued that the prior's misgovernment had resulted in a drastic decline in the size of the community from eighteen to seven in just six years. Clemente further accused the prior of embezzling monastic funds with the aid of laymen, and claimed that his previous attempt to report these misdeeds to the Inquisition had resulted in the intercepting of his letter, and that he had been confined to the monastery by the prior himself.

The trial lasted over a year, from 7 February 1580 to 12 December 1581. Rather than inviting sympathy, Clemente revealed himself to be an outspoken and rather irritable individual. After lengthy investigation, and one instance of the use of torture by the Holy Office in an attempt to uncover whether he was protecting heretical accomplices; Clemente confessed to having denied the real presence of Christ during the Eucharist, and to having questioned extreme unction, the efficacy of confession, and the validity of prayers for the dead. He also admitted to having called the pope 'Anti-Christ.' In the course of the trial, the Holy Office seized the contents of his library, and among the thirty-five titles in his possession were writings by northern Protestant humanist scholars.[844] He also confessed to having purchased Pietro Paolo Vergerio's *Instruttione Christiana* from Francesco Ziletti's shop, but this was not among the titles they found.[845] Clemente stubbornly defended his possession of prohibited titles on the grounds that the Index had enforced blanket bans on specific authors rather than texts, and that such texts contained only very few statements objectionable to the reforming church. Furthermore, he claimed that Aldo Manuzio the younger had told him that inquisitorial permission to keep such books was very difficult to obtain, and as a result had decided to hold on to them in the

[844] Many of these volumes had been inherited from his uncle Giovanni Andrea, and thus represent the shift from titles that were acceptable to those deemed heretical. Among the books were copies of the works of Cicero and Plato, textbooks on Rhetoric, an edition of Boccaccio's *Decameron.* Among those by banned authors was a rhetorical textbook by Philip Melanchthon, whose annotations had appeared alongside those of Erasmus in two classical editions of the works of Cicero and Terrence, published by the Vavassore workshop in 1548 and 1550. See Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.95 and n.109.

[845] Vergerio's text was published for the first time in 1549, and a surviving copy printed by Dolfino Ladolfi is at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence. See USTC 862583; and EDIT16 72142. On Vergerio, see Schutte, 1977, chs. 8 and 9.

hopes of not being caught.[846] For his crimes the Inquisition sentenced Vavassore to perpetual imprisonment, but recognised that both the monastery's prior and the informer were also guilty of criminal misconduct. His imprisonment effectively ended when he died on 31 October 1585, when his testament of 1576 was opened and read.[847]

Throughout this long trial, the workshop continued to operate under the direction of Giovanni Andrea's great-nephew Alvise (or Luigi) Vavassore, producing and selling books from a shop at the Sign of the Hippogriff in the Frezzaria. Despite an ongoing family scandal, the Vavassore workshop continued to produce a variety of devotional (and secular) texts; many of which echo the kind of publications issued in its earlier phases. Luigi and his associate Giovan Domenico Micheli – the first outsider, or non-family member, to be involved in the workshop – were not, however, the subject of any further investigations, and nor did inquisitors find any reason to fine them for owning or selling further titles prohibited by the Index. Given the increasingly forceful presence of the Inquisition, and the tightening of Catholic belief and ritual during the Counter or Catholic Reformation, we might expect that its devotional publications would take on a very different character.[848] This is not the case. The workshop's output of religious books from Vavassore's death in 1572 to the end of its activities in 1593 demonstrates remarkable continuity in the demands of the market, and the provision of books.

The blockbook, produced by the workshop around 1530 and extant in so many surviving copies, finds its parallel in the 1570s and 1580s with Alberto da Castello's *Rosary of the Virgin Mary*.[849] Many of the scenes executed in the *Rosario* can also be found in the earlier volume, including the annunciation, the nativity, the presentation of Jesus at the temple and the circumcision, the Massacre of the Innocents, the raising of Lazarus, expelling the Money lenders from the temple, the crucifixion and the burial of Christ. However, because Alberto da Castello's work focuses exclusively on the New Testament, rather than the typological links between

[846] Paul Grendler has argued that such behaviour must have been typical of humanists and scholars at this time. Unable to obtain permission to keep banned titles, they instead decided to disobey the Index and tried to be discreet: "if they avoided calling attention to themselves, they probably held banned books without being disturbed." Grendler, 1977, 318.
[847] The back of the testament document reads "1585 31 Oct. apertum." His short testament, dated 28 August 1576, is transcribed in Schulz, 1998, 124-5.
[848] Barbierato, 2012.
[849] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.187.

the Old and New, there is a much heavier focus on the events leading up to the crucifixion: scenes depict the capture of Jesus and his presentation before Pontius Pilot; the flagellation; the crown of thorns; the stations of the cross and the wiping of Christ's face on the sudarium. The resemblance between some of these images and earlier examples from the *ONC* is striking, for example, the woodcuts of the *Presentation of Christ at Temple* both feature the same, shell-shaped ornamental niches in the background (Fig. 7.25).

From the surviving volumes produced in this period, it is clear that the market for works in honour of the Virgin Mary and of the cult of the Rosary – which, as mentioned above, was certainly undergoing a surge of popularity Venice in the 1580s – was especially buoyant. Working alone, Luigi Vavassore had produced a *duodecimo* edition of a *Rosario* by Luis de Granada in 1574, which proclaimed in its title to have the support (*confirmatione*) of Pope Pius V (who died in 1572) and his successor Gregory XIII.[850] With Giovan Domenico Micheli, the pair followed up a 1576 duodecimo edition of Castello's earlier *Rosario* with a larger (and much more readable) octavo in 1578, which had been 'newly printed with beautiful and ornate illustrations' (*nuovo ristampato, et di bellissime figure ornato*). The popularity of the Virgin was certainly sufficient enough for books dedicated to her to dominate the devotional production of the workshop in the 1570s and 1580s – a *Life, Passion and Death* of the Virgin Mary and the martyred St Catherina was issued in 1583, dedicated to the latter saint and proclaiming to provide a true history (*vera historia*) of these holy women.[851] Like many of the early wartime pamphlets issued by the press, this devotional text is in *ottava rima*, a poetic form that had evidently retained its popularity and was equally useful in religious and secular works. Books focusing on the life of the Virgin and female saints would have targeted the specific corner of the market dominated by lay women – a market familiar to the Vavassore workshop from the patterns of lace and embroidery published in its early decades. What we can conclude from the remaining devotional texts produced by the workshop after Giovanni Andrea's death is that this genre remained integral to its overall production, that their format (and to some extent subject matter) were relatively consistent, and that the workshop continued, as ever, to adapt to the needs of its market. As dedication to the cult of the Rosary grew, workshops like that of the

[850] Vol. 2, Appendix 1, Cat. n.183.
[851] Ibid., Cat. n.200, n.207 and n.210.

Vavassore responded by printing works specifically suited to customers who were actively engaging in acts of worship and devotion to the Virgin Mary.

7.5 Conclusion

As a case study, the archival material pertaining to the Vavassore serves to enhance our existing knowledge of heterodox activity and belief in Venice, and the kind of people implicated in carrying it out. John Jeffries Martin has defined those engaging in these activities – the *eretici* – as "first and foremost those individuals whose ideas for the reform of church and society placed them at odds with the interests of both the Roman curia and the Venetian state."[852] However, for all his insistence on the existence of a sliding scale of moderate-radical heresy, neither Martin's definition nor his work on Venice's *Hidden Enemies* allows for a case like Vavassore's, which is one that simultaneously manages to include exceptionally pious activity and what we might call 'heretical' belief. Close examination of Vavassore's life and work demonstrates that, over the course of just less than seven decades, his beliefs and behaviours actually changed relatively little. His interest in reading and discussing the gospels was probably borne out of the fact that, by the time the *Sant'Uffizio* began to investigate meetings between artisans and friends in the Venetian *botteghe* in the late 1540s, Vavassore had been issuing sermons, hagiographical pamphlets, ecclesiastical dictionaries and illustrated bibles for almost two decades.

Although the way Vavassore carried out his professional or personal activities did not change, the way these activities came to be viewed by the authorities did. Whether he met with other artisans to discuss the gospels in his home parish of San Moisè in 1548 or not, Vavassore went on to show his full support to the reforming Catholic Church during the Council of Trent. By publishing books like Girolamo Muzio's *L'antidoto Christiano* in 1562, Vavassore deliberately and effectively positioned himself against the heretical reformers who questioned the authority of the saints and argued that transubstantiation did not occur during the Eucharist; and by producing the commemoratory view of Trent, alongside the *Poems* and *Orationes* of Sebastiano Minturno, he recognised that the Council represented a

[852] Martin, 1993, 9. Martin draws on the earlier works of D. Cantimori, *Eretici italiani del Cinquecento* (Florence, 1939) and F. Chabod, *Lo Stato e la vita religiosa a Milano nell'epoca di Carlo V* (Turin, 1938) in defining the *eretici*.

turning point for the Catholic Church. It is perhaps surprising that, in light of this activity in support of reform, Vavassore and his workshop would continue to be investigated by the Inquisition at all. Rather than "out of step with the broader views of society," his interactions with the Inquisition suggest that some of the activities sought out as 'heterodox' were actually those engaged in by a large and well-informed group who customarily had conversations about devotional matters with one another.[853]

This chapter began by asking questions about the role printed devotional material played in the religious lives of sixteenth century Venetians, and what these surviving editions can tell us about the way people experienced the bible, religious ritual, and life in close quarters with other heterodox religions. Examples from Vavassore's oeuvre have much to offer in answer to these questions. Books like Corradone's *Speculum Confessorum* and Scardeone's *Nave Evangelica* offer insight into a now lost oral world – a world in which people consulted an index of sins in order to find the right words to give their confession, or were able to read transcripts of sermons spoken in towns and cities a considerable distance away. The copy of the confession handbook now held at the Bodleian Library offers a still more intriguing link between instructional guides and texts and the conversionary culture that became so prevalent in Venice (and elsewhere) during Vavassore's lifetime. Catechumens at the Venetian house of conversion followed a strict teaching regime that emphasised the study of religious texts in their instruction about Catholicism before they were baptised. Archival evidence of the close interaction between Christians and those in the process of conversion – who attended mass at churches like San Moisè – as well as ample evidence to suggest the integration of Jews in Venetian society is reflected by the effortless portrayal of Hebrews in Vavassore's blockbook. Unlike the well-studied Bibles Moralisées and the propaganda surrounding the 'blood libel' of Simon of Trent, Vavassore's Jews do not bear the weight of negative association. Free of the hooked noses, flamboyant clothes and moneybags often used to distance them from Christians, they are distinguished only by their *baretta*. These head-coverings are not of one standard style, but most likely reflect the myriad ways that Christians encountered the Jewish population wearing the *baretta* in everyday life.

[853] Ibid, 17-8.

Vavassore's typological block book also has much to tell us about how books were used and adapted to suit the devotional needs of their owners. The fact that so many copies of this unique volume have survived is, in itself, quite remarkable; not least for the opportunity it extends to compare one edition with another. By reordering, adding colophons, binding in repurposed texts and documents, or adding coloured pigments, the owners of this devotional text created highly personal volumes. This must surely have added to their experience of using the book, and perhaps also explains why so many copies still survive today.

The texts produced by the workshop after Giovanni Andrea's death serve to demonstrate that the devotional needs of the market actually changed very little. Over the course of eight decades, there is consistency in the type of devotional book (or pamphlet) issued by the press: they are predominantly vernacular, and in the portable octavo format. Surviving volumes suggest that books of sermons, accounts of the lives and miracles of saints, and aids for interpreting the bible retained their popularity throughout the life of the workshop. Whilst the Council and its decrees may have attracted a great deal of attention at the time, ultimately, the return to books about the life of the Virgin Mary – many of which, like the *Rosario,* had already been in circulation for decades– suggests that the role of devotional books in the lives of those who owned them remained the same.

The Inquisition certainly had a profound impact on the Vavassore family. Giovanni Andrea's minor involvement in the trials of his friends and associates, and even the requirement to pay a fine of twenty ducats for possessing books banned by the Index of Prohibited Books, pales in comparison to Clemente's long and bitter feud with the Venetian Holy Office. His case reminds us that, in some ways, attempts by both church and state to restrict undesirable or dangerous behaviours – including the buying and selling of books and ideas – were very successful. On the other hand, the kind of books printed and sold to meet the devotional needs of Venetians in the last decades of the sixteenth century would have been very familiar to those who had lived five or six decades before them. Established religious texts and practices continued to play a central role in the lives of laypeople, and consequently the Inquisition persisted in their monitoring of groups of artisans who, like Vavassore, met in one another's workshops, on bridges, and in *botteghe d'acque* to discuss the gospels and other matters of faith.

Conclusion

Amongst Filippo de Strata's vehement complaints about the Venetian print industry was that the production of books rested in the hands of uncouth "ink-stained artisans, dismissed servants, and drunken foreigners" who were motivated solely by profit.[854] For many historians, the appeal of studying the history of the book and print lies in accessing the undoubtedly dirty, and potentially rather rowdy, world of the Renaissance printshop. Unfortunately it is almost impossible to reconstruct the sights, sounds, and smells of the printers' *bottega*; or to recover a sense of the pressure faced by typesetters, woodcarvers, and press operators as they attempted to issue new editions. What is possible, however, is an understanding of the way workshops functioned on a day to day, month by month, and year on year basis; and the network of collaborators and suppliers required for them to do so. Focusing on the remaining body of work produced by a single workshop – whether on its own account, or in collaboration with other printers and their shops – allows us to chart the progression of that workshop, and the printing industry more generally, over the course of a significant period of time. As I hope to have demonstrated with Vavassore's case, life and work in sixteenth century Venice were intrinsically linked to one another, and the development of an individual artisan's skills, reputation, and contacts, simultaneously manifested in the progression and success of his workshop.

As a citizen of the Bergamasco, Vavassore was one of a large number of migrants who flooded into Venice during in the Renaissance. Whether he was escaping *from* the problems at work in his native town of Telgate, or *to* the wealth of Venice; he arrived in the lagoon at an opportune, if troubled, moment and turned his skills as a woodcarver to good effect. Thanks to a lack of surviving evidence, any character sketch of Giovanni Andrea must be an inferred one. However, it is important to extrapolate the aspects of his character and personality from the surviving documents; and to view him as a person rather than a single 'individual' or 'artisan' who comprised just one of a large and otherwise faceless group.

We know that Vavassore was a relatively young man when he arrived in Venice. This may have been a benefit in terms of training in a new trade, but his lack of experience also made it necessary to rely on other, more established, printers

[854] De Strata, 1968, unpaginated.

in order to enter the printing industry. His membership of both a trade guild and a religious confraternity, as well as the collaborative nature of many of his early projects, all point towards a persistent desire to be part of a group. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given his migrant status, such formal and informal networks point to Vavassore's concern with fitting in, and demonstrate the communal mentality so central to life in Venice during the sixteenth century. Groups like these – whether founded on a mutual trade or shared religious belief – were the mechanisms by which people both integrated into Venetian society, and continued to feel a part of it.

The surviving archival evidence suggests that Vavassore was also a fairly conventional, and rather sensible, person. Although he alludes to some minor disagreements with his nephew and great nephews, there were no major falling-outs, and the Vavassore family appears to have been very close and cohesive. Whether among members of his own trade or when meeting other artisans who hailed from the Bergamasco, Giovanni Andrea comes across as very sociable. In the course of his day-to-day activities, Vavassore ventured onto the bridges and into the *botteghe* of other artisans to discuss matters of faith as well as other topics of general interest. Unsurprisingly, he also seems to have been popular, and found no shortage of witnesses to his testaments among the artisans who owned neighbouring premises in the bustling shopping thoroughfare of the Frezzaria.

In Vavassore, we encounter someone who was, in many ways, a success story. The workshop he established outlasted those of his competitors and collaborators, producing and selling printed wares for over eight decades; and transitioning between three generations of the same family. However, the picture painted by the remaining evidence is not entirely rosy; and in many ways, Vavassore remains an enigmatic, and frustratingly unknowable, quantity. The same sociability that enabled Vavassore to integrate himself into Venetian life would go on to attract the attention of the Inquisition, which attempted to put an end to such open discussions among friends and colleagues. Though, throughout this thesis, the workshop will emerge as an enterprise reliant on collaboration, the printing industry continued to be affected by the overcrowding that had plagued it in the last decades of the fifteenth century. It was not uncommon for presses to issue just a handful of titles before closing. Thus, printers might rely on one another, but the survival of their workshops ultimately depended on their independent ability to adapt and evolve to meet both the needs of the market and the demands of the authorities. Success

relied on hard work and demanded continual investment, and in the absence of an account book, we cannot assume that Vavassore did not encounter failure and financial loss at some point(s) during his life in the lagoon.

The sheer magnitude of the print industry in sixteenth century Venice is overwhelming: editions published by over a thousand printers active in the city at some time between 1500 and 1599 have survived, with many more published by anonymous "silent printers."[855] An unknowable number of Venetian printers active in the sixteenth century have left no surviving trace. The Vavassore workshop therefore offers a helpful window into the broad and complex networks of production and dissemination that characterised the industry of print in Venice. Expanding knowledge about the wages of merchants, artisans, and labourers in the city; as well as on the (relatively low) cost of the printed wares distributed from shops, in the streets, and on the bridges makes it clear that print was a fundamental part of life for all types of people in Renaissance Venice. The printed page fulfilled a myriad of functions: it was a vehicle for the latest news about the battles and sieges occurring in other parts of the Italian peninsula; a way to commemorate or commiserate the victories and losses of the Venetian forces; a means of expressing devotion; a learning aid; a means by which to create and decorate material objects; and a way to experience other countries and cities without leaving the lagoon. It had a place in both the public sphere and in the private home, represented various aspects of social, religious, political and cultural life; and catered to men, women, and children. The Vavassore workshop printed books and pamphlets for every type of sixteenth century reader – including those who were unable to read – and thrived precisely because it focused on supplying the demands of the market.

A willingness to adapt and to innovate, as well as to respond to changing circumstances and events in a timely and creative manner, allowed small scale printers like the Vavassore not just to survive, but to thrive. Given that their activities ultimately contributed to the successes of the Venetian print industry in its broadest sense, they have received surprisingly little scholarly attention. New work on Niccolò Zoppino is beginning to redress the balance, but interest in his activities is still dominated by his position at the intersection of the worlds of oral and printed

[855] EDIT16 records editions published by 1008 printers in Venice in the sixteenth century. On the so-called 'silent printers,' see D. E. Rhodes, *Silent Printers: Anonymous Printing at Venice in the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1995).

communication. Whilst Vavassore may not have been innovatory in the sense of Jenson's typefaces and Aldus' octavo format, the inherent adaptability of the workshop – producing a variety of printed goods, in many formats, for many purposes, and at different price points – ensured that those interested in the latest publications would always have access to works they wanted to buy. By focusing on the Vavassore workshop, I hope to have provided access to the kind of print that occupies the middle ground between the expensive, high quality volumes produced by the industry's major players, and the ephemeral *fogli volanti* which cost very little but disappeared quickly. Studying its production provides an opportunity to complete our picture of the Venetian print industry in this crucial period, filling the gap left by the increasingly polarised study of print.

Furthermore, I have attempted to bring together two parallel, but often separated, strands of scholarship on the production and dissemination of printed work. Printed books, pamphlets, maps and images were (and are) not created in isolation, but their production is part of a much larger chain of events that serve to imbue them with a sense of meaning and signficance. The occupants of San Moisè, the central parish in which the Vavassore family made its home, represent a diverse range of skills and occupations, and would have found more specialist texts alongside the general interest works on the shelves of his shop. Guidance on childbirth, herbals, and instructions for writing love letters satisfied the demands of ordinary Venetians; whilst specialist texts like Federico Grisone's *The Rules of Riding* (1584; see Fig. 8.1) catered to the needs of the high-ranking noblemen and wealthy *cittadini* who lived alongside them. By analysing specific case studies I have tried to present both sides of the coin, questioning where certain titles and objects were derived, what they responded to, and –wherever possible – the meanings attached to them. In the hands of readers and viewers, Vavassore's publications came to be used and personalised in various ways, and in that process became carriers of meaning. These processes – which occurred after books and pamphlets like Vavassore's had already left his shop premises – represent an equally important stage in the life cycle of early modern print, and warrant a similar level of consideration and discussion as the processes of their manufacture and sale.

Vavassore's case provides an effective microcosm of the progression of the printing trade as a whole. The trade, like the city, opened itself up to large numbers of migrants in the sixteenth century and, having no formal means of restricting their

activity and involvement, flourished as a result. As a woodcarver, Vavassore embarked on a career in print from a slightly different angle to those of Jenson and Aldus: upon his arrival in Venice, such skills had to be appropriated to suit his new surroundings. His early activity is dominated by his production of woodcut prints and illustrations, which he produced in collaboration with some of the more established members of the trade. Having amassed both new skills and financial resources, the output of the workshop continued to evolve and multiply, all the while retaining its original focus on representation and communication through image as well as text. This focus on collaboration – which is, in some ways, at odds with the established idea of the Venetian print industry as inherently competitive – has been a recurring theme throughout this thesis. Whilst we might expect that a new printer would seek assistance from more established members of the trade, it is clear that networks were a crucial factor in the workshop's success throughout the period of its activity. From the early opportunities to fine-tune his woodcutting style, to the sharing of scrap paper between Vavassore and Pagano, and the recarving and reissue of a woodcut of Venice some sixty-five years after its initial publication (Fig. 8.2); the sharing of skills, resources and contacts among a community of printers, woodcutters, and booksellers remained integral to the Vavassore workshop until its closure in c.1593.[856]

When Giovanni Andrea died in May 1572, he had had a long and relatively lucrative career in print, and had continued to publish new editions right up until his death. Although many of his contemporaries did not pass down their presses to future generations, his nephew Alvise took on the running of the workshop. In the absence of his own children, the creation of this 'artifical paternity' – by adopting a nephew or apprentice – ensured the continuation of the workshop and the transition of both his material assets (including presses, blocks, plates, and stock) and his professional ones (contacts, reputation, and skills).[857] The Vavassore family is again representative of

[856] A woodcut of Venice, signed 'Z.A.' was used to illustrate Niccolò Poggibonsi's account of his pilgrimage from Venice to the Holy Land, issued by Zoppino in September 1518. The Vavassore workshop under Luigi and his associate Giovan Domenico Micheli either repurposed the original block or recut another block to use it to illustrate their 1583 copy of Francesco Sansovino's *Nobility of the City of Venice.* See Vol. 2, Appendix 1 Cat. n.214 and 204.

[857] See R. Salzberg, 'Masculine Republics: Establishing Authority in the Early Modern Venetian Printshop' in S. Broomhall & J. Van Gent (eds.) *Governing Masculinities in the Early Modern Period: Regulating Selves and Others* (Farnham, 2011) 57.

the two prevalent strands of thought held by printers in sixteenth century Venice: whilst some, as men who had often built up a business from the ground, were keen to transmit the wealth, contacts and renown they had acquired to a future generation; still others were content to leave the kind of patrimony that allowed their children to climb the social ranks of Venice.[858] In the Vavassore family, Alvise and his sons (Luigi and Giuliano, who took over, in turn, the day-to-day running of the workshop) continued to maintain the mechanical or business end of the printshop; whilst Clemente became a successful, and evidently well respected, judge who was permitted to practice law in the ducal palace.

Passing on a workshop did not, however, come without risk; and it is clear that Vavassore was rather hesitant to leave the workshop he had established in the hands of his nephew. Although Alvise, the son of Giovanni Andrea's brother Giuliano, had grown up in his uncle's business, in his testament of 1570 Vavassore writes that Alvise had already managed to lose a considerable amount of the firm's money through poor management. He also recalls that, on several occasions, Alvise's children Luigi and Giuliano had managed to lose his merchandise whilst attending book fairs.[859] These were not the best hands to pass the business into. Alvise was not, however, to run the business for long. By the time his brother Clemente had taken his vows at the Carthusian convent of San Andrea del Lido and given his testament in 1576, Alvise had died – probably during the terrible plague epidemic that claimed 50,000 victims in Venice during the mid 1570s.[860] The continuity of the workshop was this time ensured by Alvise's sons Luigi and Guiliano, who – together with Giovan Domenico Micheli – are responsible for the vast majority of the works

[858] In his will of c.1540, the minor printer Bernardino Stagnino wanted his sons and heirs to follow in "the book trade as far as they can and … each of them to labour for the common good of all of them." ("Voio che se faza lo mester de libri fin ache si poia far et che ognuno si afatiga al ben comuno de lor tuti"). His will is transcribed in S. Pillinini, *Bernardino Stagnino. Un editore a Venezia tra Quattro e Cinquecento* (Rome, 1989) 109-10; see also Salzberg, 2011, 57.

[859] "Item lasso chel ditto messer Alvise possi traere ducatj desento (200) per il legato gli lasso madonna Samaritana mia neza li quali sono ventuj in casa in eneficio di tuttj; et perche il ditto messer Alvise a mangiato aasaj faculta et si ritrova debetor asaj per li librj, et perche li figli le piu volte hanno perso le robbe che andavano alla fiere, et ancho si ha perso asaj lettere di cambio per haver fallito li mercadantj, et perche tuttj li mei nepotj hanno consumato li faculta o sia come si voglia," Schulz, 1998, 124. On book fairs in the Renaissance, see Nuovo, 2013, 281-313; and Pettegree, 2010.

[860] Clemente named Alvise and Giuliano, sons of his brother Alvise (now deceased) as his residual heirs; see Schulz, 1998, 123-4. On the plague epidemic of the mid 1570s, see Pullan, 1964, 408.

published in the period between Vavassore's death in 1572 and c.1593, when the workshop ceased its activities.

Given the propensity for sixteenth century print workshops to die out with their founders, the passing of the Vavassore between three generations of the same family represents a considerable achievement. Although it is almost impossible to know when the workshop shifted its premises from the Ponte dei Fuseri to the Frezzaria, it must have continued to thrive there in order to afford the rents associated with running a shop under the Sign of the Hippogriff. Whilst the archival evidence attests to the continuing presense of the Vavassore family in Venice – and in the parish of San Moisè in particular – into the seventeenth century, the shop failed to be taken over by a fourth generation of printers. Nonetheless, the workshop remained active and successful for almost eight decades, thriving where others failed because of its willingness to both adapt and to conform.

This sense of the workshop's continuity – whether in the guise of adapting to the needs of the market, adjusting to the demands of the authorities, or passing between hands – has been a key theme throughout this thesis. Rather than attempting to establish his own reputation in the print industry, Vavassore's nephews and great-nephews maintained the workshop's connection with Giovanni Andrea, adopting his moniker "Guadagnino" as a kind of a guarantee of quality for the titles he produced.[861] Woodcut illustrations continued to play a key role; and the titles issued by the posthumous press reflect a sense of continuity in both the kind of work published and sold by the workshop, and the demands of the people who shopped there. Camillo Leonardi's advice of 1530 about the phases of the moon, religious feasts, and the importance of bloodletting are echoed in the *Lunario et pronostico* of the Bolognese astrologer Hercole della Rovere (1582); and the short poems in *ottava rima* issued by the early press find their parallel in a small octavo collection of *frottole* and songs. Whilst the Esecutori contro la bestemmia had taken action to seize such publications and denounce those who sold them, their concerns that *frottole*, along with other songs, stories, letters, and prognostications were being printed "without the required licenses" and sold by "boys and others on the Rialto

[861] The colophons of works published in the fourth phase of the workshop's production (c.1573-c.1593) include a variety of different colophons including: "the heirs [*heredi*] of Luigi Vavassore"; "the *bottega* of Guadagnino" and the shop's address in the Frezzaria at the Sign of the Hippogriff.

bridge and in other places" had been eclipsed by more pressing matters by the time the Vavassore workshop issued its edition in 1584.[862]

The Vavassore workshop also continued to foster connections with some of the more notable authors active in the last decades of the sixteenth century. Whilst Giovanni Andrea had issued the poems of the noblewoman Vittoria Colonna and her protégée Laura Terracina, his heirs continued this legacy by publishing a "diligently revised" edition of Terracina's poems in 1584, complete with the much earlier portrait of the poetess cut by their great-uncle.[863] The workshop also continued to pursue and exploit new and existing markets for its works. The workshop issued an edition of Francesco Sansovino's description of the city of Venice (1583), as well as books designed specifically to cater to the demands of the pilgrim market. The republishing of an illustrated octavo account of the cities, ports, and churches the pilgrim would encounter on his journey to Jerusalem provided a guidebook for the visitor passing through Venice before embarking on his trip to the Holy Land. The earlier edition of the pilgrims' guidebook, published in Venice in 1518 by Zoppino, had featured illustrations by Vavassore (signed Z.A.).[865] It appears, therefore, that the blocks had remained in the possession of the workshop for several decades, and were brought out again by Giovanni Andrea's heirs to appeal to much the same market. When he reached his destination, the book-buying pilgrim might have purchased another short quarto volume of the *Ways and Ceremonies of Jerusalem* (1583) to help him plan his trip.[866] A thorough examination of the extant output of the Vavassore workshop facilitates the forging of connections between titles like these, cultivating the idea of a 'one-stop shop' which continued to tailor its wares to meet the demands

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[862] "Molti librari et stampadori contra la forma delle parte et ordini dell'illustrissimo Consiglio di Dieci … si fano lecito stampare in questa cita libri, istorie, frotole, canzon, lettere, et pronostichi senza la debite licenza et liberamente venderli over per puti et altri far vender sul Ponte di Rialto et altri lochi." A former printer, Alvise Zio was elected to seize such works and denounce those who produced them. ASV, Esecutori contro la bestemmia, Notatorio b.56, vol. 2, f.38v (2 March 1568). Also cited in R. Salzberg, 2008, 41, 166-7.

[863] Giovanni Andrea Vavassore had published Vittoria Colonna's *Rime de la diva Vettoria Colonna di Pescara inclita marchesana* in 1546, and Laura Terracina's poetry in 1567. On both female poets and the encouragement of Terracina by Colonna, see I. B. Jaffe & G. Colombardo, *Shining Eyes, Cruel Fortune: The Lives and Loves of Italian Women Poets* (New York, 2002) chs. 3 and 6, esp. 166; and Cox, 2008, 2011, and 2013.

[865] See K. Blair Moore, 'The Disappearance of an Author and the Emergence of a Genre: Niccolò da Poggibonsi and Pilgrimage Guidebooks between Manuscript and Print,' *Renaissance Quarterly* 66:2 (2013) 391.

[866] Unknown author, *Le vie, o cerimonie di Hierusalem, le quali si dicono essere state composte, et ordinate dal glorioso santo Agostino* (Venice: Luigi Vavassore & Gio. Domenico Micheli, 1583).

of the market: in this case, the near-constant ebb and flow of pilgrims passing through the city.[867]

As well as the evolving needs of the market, the Vavassore workshop also responded well to the growing involvement of the Venetian authorities, who became increasingly concerned with the monitoring of printers' activities and the goods they produced during the period of its activity. By applying for the protection of the *privilegio,* Vavassore sought to protect his work from copyists who could profit from his work. Unfortunately, as the case of the multi-narrative woodcuts produced for his 1553 edition of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* demonstrates, the Senate's protection was not always particularly effective. Nonetheless, the granting of the *privilegio* offered a way of distinguishing work from the collective body of *libri comuni,* which could be printed by all. The Vavassore did not, of course, conform exactly to all of the legislation imposed by the authorities in the second half of the sixteenth century. Vavassore and his nephews were variously brought before the Holy Office for engaging in heterodox discussions, reading banned titles, and having titles prohibited by the Index amongst the stock in their shop. However, their case also suggests that there is a need to be wary in the consideration of the 'repressive' hand of the authorities. Although it is clear that the Inquisition did have a profound impact on the professional (and personal) lives of certain printers and booksellers in Venice, the output of the posthumous press (1573-93) indicates that the tastes and demands of people actually buying books in the post-Tridentine period were actually relatively unchanged. Nonetheless, the way they consumed print now took place under the watchful eyes of the Inquisitor.

Vavassore's death not only marks the end of his involvement in the workshop, but the increasing involvement of the Guild of Printers' and Booksellers in the trade. Increasing restrictions on the length of time apprentices and journeymen had to train in the trade, as well as the requirement for them to pass examinations and pay matriculation fees and fines, began to close off the trade that had been so open to foreigners. Such strict regulation ultimately backfired, for there was a need to reopen

[867] On pilgrimage, see C. Houston, *The Renaissance Utopia: Dialogue, Travel and the Ideal Society* (Farnham, 2014); R. Barnes & C. Branfoot (eds.) *Pilgrimage: The Sacred Journey* (Oxford, 2006); and R. L. Wilken, 'Christian Pilgrimage to the Holy Land' in N. Rosovsky (ed.) *The City of the Great King* (Cambridge, Mass., 1996) 117-35. Pilgrims in Venice en route to Jerusalem were included in celebrations and rituals, see DMS, 24:347-8, 11 June 1517.

the trade to immigrants after a particularly ferocious outbreak of plague in 1630-1 carried off many of the city's established printers.[868] Certainly, by the time Vavassore's great-nephews took over the running of the shop in the Frezzaria, the printing industry had changed considerably. Whilst the workshops of Vavassore's collaborators did not survive long enough to witness it, the activity of his workshop over a period of eight decades demonstrates the kind of resilience and adaptability required to survive in such tumultuous times. Knowledge of the market, respect for the authorities, a willingness to evolve, and a good supply of male descendents ensured that the Vavassore workshop continued to flourish into the last decade of the sixteenth century.

Microhistories are typically fraught with issues of scale and significance. In many ways, the case of Vavassore and his workshop typifies the "typical exception" identified by the earliest proponents of the discipline; and in taking the individual as the starting point, this thesis was in danger of taking the approach described by Jill Lepore as "historians who love too much."[869] Throughout, however, I hope to have demonstrated that the workshop's oeuvre was fundamentally underpinned by the printer's own sense of identity, as well as his interests and motivations. In some cases, the workshop's output is typical of the kind of printed wares produced and sold in shops across the city; but there are also ways in which Vavassore breaks the mould – designing, woodcutting, printing, editing, and selling a variety of publications that might otherwise have been the product of many hands. Furthermore, both his behaviours and his wares represent something of a paradox; demonstrating the extent to which superstitious astrological charts and controversial (later prohibited) writings could coexist peacefully alongside anti-Lutheran tracts and works published to commemorate the Council of Trent. Rather than a typical exception, both Vavassore and his workshop were both typical and exceptional in their approach to the business of print in sixteenth century Venice.

[868] See G. M. Weiner, 'The Demographic Effects of the Venetian Plagues of 1575-77 and 1630-31,' *Genus* 26:1 (1970) 41-57; and P. Ulvioni, 'Stampa e censura a Venezia nel Seicento,' *Archivio Veneto* 104:139 (1972).
[869] Grendi, 1997; and Lepore, 2001, 129.