

War, Communication, and the Politics of Culture in Early Modern Venice

Weaving together cultural history and critical imperial studies, this book shows how war and colonial expansion shaped seventeenth-century Venetian culture and society. Anastasia Stouraiti tests conventional assumptions about republicanism, commercial peace and cross-cultural exchange and offers a novel approach to the study of the Republic of Venice. Her extensive research brings the history of communication in dialogue with conquest and empire-building in the Mediterranean to provide an original interpretation of the politics of knowledge in wartime Venice. The book argues that the Venetian-Ottoman War of the Morea (1684–1699) was mediated through a diverse range of cultural mechanisms of patrician elite domination that orchestrated the production of popular consent. It sheds new light on the militarisation of the public sphere and exposes the connections between bellicose foreign policies and domestic power politics in a state celebrated as the most serene republic of merchants.

Anastasia Stouraiti is Senior Lecturer in Early Modern History at Goldsmiths, University of London, where she specialises in the history of the Republic of Venice and its empire. She has received several prestigious grants and awards, including fellowships at Princeton and the European University Institute, a British Academy Small Research Grant, and a Leverhulme Trust Research Fellowship. She currently holds a British Academy/Leverhulme Senior Fellowship for her project ‘Venice: A New Imperial History’.

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Anastasia Stouraiti

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Goldsmiths, University of London



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As this manuscript goes to press, I feel inspired by the many committed scholars, students, and activists challenging state-sanctioned violence, mainstream media complicity with forever wars, and governments’ suppression of free speech. I hope this book contributes to a deeper historical understanding of the politics of information and the imperial regimes of knowledge that have long underpinned military aggression, illegal occupation, and dispossession.

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Chronology

1683	Second failed Ottoman siege of Vienna.
1684	Holy League formed against the Ottoman empire at Linz: Austria, Poland, Venice, the Papacy. Start of Venetian campaigns in Greece: captain-general of the sea Francesco Morosini takes the island of Santa Maura (Lefkada) and the mainland port of Preveza in the Ionia Sea. Venice signs military contracts with German princes of Saxony and Hanover and Greeks of Epirus. Titles of nobility put up for sale in Venice to raise money for the war.
1685	Conquest of Coron (Koroni) after a siege of forty-nine days; occupation of the fortresses of Chelefa, Zarnata, and Passava in the southern Morea (Peloponnese); Kalamata surrenders to the Venetians. Vincenzo Maria Coronelli appointed official cosmographer of the Republic.
1686	Swedish general Count Otto Wilhelm von Konigsmarck joins Morosini and takes command of the Venetian land forces. He is accompanied by his wife Catharina Charlotta and her entourage, including lady-in-waiting Anna Akerhjelm, whose writings are a key source for the campaigns. Conquest of Old and New Navarino (Pylos), Modon (Methoni), Napoli di Romania (Nafplio). Turkish inhabitants are transferred to Alexandria, Derna, Tripoli, and the isle of Tenedos, but Morosini retains all black slaves. Festivities in Venice to celebrate the new conquests in the Morea.
1686–87	Plague in the Venetian army, which prevents the Maltese, papal, and Florentine troops from joining Morosini’s forces in the Morea.

Chronology

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- 1687 Occupation of Patras, the forts of Rumelia and Morea in the Gulf of Corinth, Lepanto (Nafpaktos), Corinth, Castel Tornese (Chlemoutsi), and Mystras.
Venetian invasion of Attica; four-day bombardment of the Acropolis and destruction of the Parthenon; 3,000 Turkish inhabitants of Athens transferred to Smyrna (Izmir), but 300 converted to Christianity and remained in Athens.
Deposition of Sultan Mehmed IV; he is succeeded by his brother Suleiman II.
- 1687–1700 Thousands of Greek refugees and immigrants from Ottoman territories move to the Morea, encouraged by Venetian authorities.
- 1688 Removal of antiquities from the Parthenon and withdrawal of the Venetian forces from Athens; transfer of Athenian families to Aegina, Zante (Zakynthos), and the Morea.
Plague in Athens and the Morea.
Death of doge Marc'Antonio Giustinian; Morosini accedes to the dogate.
Venetian bombardment of the port of Salonica (Thessaloniki).
Failed Venetian siege of Negroponte (Evia).
Three Venetian magistrates (*sindici catasticatori*) sent to the Morea to organise the administration of the peninsula.
- 1689–90 Siege and capture of Malvasia (Monemvasia) by Girolamo Corner.
- 1690 Morosini returns to Venice to a hero's welcome.
- 1691 Suleiman II dies and is succeeded by his brother Ahmed II.
- 1692 Failed Venetian attack on Canea (Chania), Crete.
Pietro Garzoni appointed official historiographer of the Republic.
- 1693 Morosini leaves Venice for the last time amidst popular celebrations in St Mark's square to resume command of the army in the Morea.
- 1694 Death of Morosini in Napoli di Romania; triumphal arch built in his honour in the Sala dello Scrutinio in the Ducal Palace.
- 1694–95 Brief Venetian occupation and loss of the island of Chios.
- 1695 Defeat of the Ottoman forces in the battle of Argos, Morea.
Ahmed II dies and Mustapha II enthroned as the new sultan.

xiv	Chronology
1696	Venetian–Ottoman naval battle of Andros; inconclusive outcome.
1698	Venetian–Ottoman naval battle of Samothrace; inconclusive outcome.
1699	Treaty of Karlowitz: Venice confirms gain of the Kingdom of the Morea.
1705	Pietro Garzoni publishes his <i>Istoria della Repubblica di Venezia in tempo della Sacra Lega contra Maometto IV, e tre suoi successori, gran sultani de’ Turchi</i> .
1715	The Ottomans reconquer the Morea after a three-month campaign with an army of 100,000 men.
1718	Treaty of Passarowitz: Venice loses the Morea back to the Ottomans.

Abbreviations

ASM	Archivio di Stato, Modena
ASV	Archivio di Stato, Venice
BMCV	Biblioteca del Museo Correr, Venice
BNM	Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice
BQSV	Biblioteca Querini Stampalia, Venice
DBI	<i>Dizionario biografico degli italiani</i> (Rome: Istituto dell’enciclopedia italiana, 1960–)
NA	National Archives, London
NE	<i>Neos Ellinomnimon</i>
SV	<i>Studi veneziani</i>