



News

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News

At the annual conference of the **Sixteenth Century Society and Conference** (SCSC) in San Diego, California, this 28–31 October 2021, there was a paper of interest to colleagues in confraternity studies, as follows:

Nilab Ferozan (McMaster University) “The Holy Rosary Feast of 1716 and 1717 at the Confraternity of Santissimo Rosario”

This paper examines the two politically motivated processions of 1716 and 1717 performed by the confraternity of the Santissimo Rosario at the Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome. These special processions were attended by Pope Clement XI and numerous cardinals in honour of the Holy Roman Empire’s victory against the Ottomans. Careful examination of the available documents opens a rich window into understanding the material and liturgical components of these political processions, and the spiritual and social meaning imbedded in the complex elements involved in the performance of the rites. The records show that through theatrical performances of processions such as these, the Rosario created a distinctive expression of Roman devotion and became a well-known contributor to the urban festive life of Rome. This paper thus argues that, for the Rosario, processions served as spectacular political pageants, as well as a hallowed ritual performance, where the confraternity showcased its devotions and its political and social affiliations, while at the same time the processions functioned as a tool for recruiting new members and attracting donors.

On 2–4 December 2021 the research project “Chiese di Venezia” (Churches of Venice), directed by Gianmario Guidarelli, held its ninth international conference, this time on the church and confraternity of San Rocco. The conference, which was organized by Maria Agnese Chiari Moretto Wiel and David D’Andrea, was titled **La chiesa di San Rocco: spazio sacro confraternale e centro di culto**. The entire event was recorded and can now be followed on the project’s web site at <https://www.chiesedivenezia.eu/en/conferences-2/>. As the conference program explained,

The church of San Rocco is the only Venetian church that is both a confraternal devotional space and a “sanctuary” that houses the body of the titular saint, who was translated to Venice in 1485 and located in the main altar since 1520. Belief in the miraculous power of San Rocco to heal and protect those afflicted with the plague made the church a popular pilgrimage destination and site of international devotion. The church was adorned with rich artwork and musical space (an organ and choir gallery) designed to focus religious devotion on the altar-reliquary.

The original church, built in 1489, was heavily renovated by Giovanni Scalfarotto between 1726 and 1733. The rebuilt façade, completed by Bernardino Maccaruzzi in 1769, unifies the confraternity's ritual space, which encompasses the square and the adjacent streets.

The conference proposes to examine, in a broad chronological span and with an interdisciplinary approach, the significant aspects of this devotional space, where processions, festivals, and pilgrimages reaffirmed the status of the confraternity and the healing power of San Rocco both in Venetian life and in universal Catholic devotion. Papers will discuss the origins of the cult of San Rocco in Venice, the foundation of the Scuola, the construction of the church and the relationship between the church and confraternity. The altars and devotional images of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century church and the later seventeenth- and eighteenth-century renovations will be analyzed in relationship with the other confraternal churches in Venice.

Particular attention will be dedicated to ritual spaces, music, objects of devotion (the relic of San Rocco, the miraculous Crucifix, the miraculous image of Christ Carrying the Cross; devotion to the Holy Eucharist), and festivals, including changes introduced by new religious devotions and spaces (the Redentore and Madonna della Salute) associated with the plague.

The conference program included the following sessions and papers:

1) Gli inizi del culto di San Rocco nel Veneto, la Scuola e la chiesa veneziana.

Chair: David D'Andrea

Claudia Salmi (Scuola Grande di San Rocco, già Archivista di Stato a Venezia) "Alla ricerca delle fonti sulla chiesa di San Rocco"

Rachele Scuro (Università degli Studi di Milano Bicocca) "Il culto di san Rocco e la presenza ebraica a Venezia e nello Stato veneto nel Rinascimento"

Francesco Bianchi (Università degli Studi di Padova) "San Rocco in ospedale (secc. XV–XVI)"

Adelaide Ricci (Università di Pavia) "Le opere e i segni: san Rocco nel progetto narrativo della Scuola di Venezia"

2) La chiesa quattro-cinquecentesca: gli apparati decorativi e il messaggio dei teleri

Chair: Paola Marini

Gianmario Guidarelli (Università degli Studi di Padova) "L'architettura della chiesa di San Rocco"

Maria Agnese Chiari Moretto Wiel (Wake Forest University) “L’arredo della chiesa quattro-cinquecentesca e le sue trasformazioni nel corso del Seicento: proposta”

Diana Gisolfi (Pratt Institute) “L’organo rinascimentale della chiesa di San Rocco”

Lorenzo Lazzarini (Laboratorio di Analisi dei Materiali Antichi, Università Iuav di Venezia) “Le pietre e i marmi della chiesa di San Rocco”

Louise Marshall (University of Sydney) “St Roch Between North and South: Understanding Artistic and Confraternal Choices in Tintoretto’s Narratives at the Chiesa di San Rocco, Venice”

Ewa Rybalt (Independent researcher, Löblin) “San Rocco cura gli appestati di Tintoretto e la disputa tra Valerio Superchio e Vettor Trincavello”

3) I rapporti della Scuola e della chiesa con il popolo

Chair: Martina Frank

David D’Andrea (Oklahoma State University) “From the Renaissance to the Grand Tour: The Church of San Rocco in the Eyes of Spiritual and Cultural Pilgrims”

Giulia Zanon (University of Leeds) “Relazioni sociali e devozionali nella chiesa di San Rocco tra Cinque e Seicento”

Matteo Casini (University of Massachusetts, Boston) “Liturgia urbana, di Stato, di gruppi”

Fabio Tonizzi (Facoltà Teologica dell’Italia Centrale) “La chiesa di San Rocco: un santuario? Aspetti giuridici e devozionali”

4) Il culto di San Rocco e la vita religiosa tra XVI e XVIII secolo

Chair: Fabio Tonizzi

Christopher Nygren (Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Art, National Gallery / University of Pittsburgh) “Il Cristo portacroce della Scuola di San Rocco, tra antropologia dell’immagine e storia dell’arte”

Alexandra Bamji (University of Leeds) “The Church of San Rocco between Venetian Piety and Post-Tridentine Devotion”

Andrea Savio (Università degli Studi di Padova) “La festa di San Rocco a Venezia dopo la pestilenza del 1630”

William Barcham (Fashion Institute of Technology, State University of New York) “La trasformazione della facciata di San Rocco, ca. 1756–1769”

Federica Restiani (Istituto Veneto per i Beni Culturali) “Giuseppe Angeli e il rinnovato ciclo pittorico della cupola del presbiterio. Contributi dal cantiere di restauro”

Jonathan Glixon (University of Kentucky) “The Choir of San Rocco and Its Music”

5) Trasformazioni, restauri, nuove prospettive di ricerca

Chair: Demetrio Sonaglioni

Maria Agnese Chiari Moretto Wiel (Wake Forest University) and Melissa Conn (Save Venice Inc.) “Ultime trasformazioni interne della chiesa: dal XVIII secolo ad oggi”

Amalia Donatella Basso (Scuola Grande di San Rocco, già Soprintendenza per i Beni Architettonici e Paesaggistici di Venezia e Laguna) “Rileggendo i dipinti di Tintoretto nella chiesa confraternale di San Rocco. Considerazioni e riflessioni”

Mario Piana (Università Iuav di Venezia) “La cantoria”

6) Conclusion

David D’Andrea (Oklahoma State University), Summary of the themes of the conference.

Final discussions.