

*I patriarchi di Venezia e l'architettura: La cattedrale di San Pietro di Castello nel Rinascimento.* Gianmario Guidarelli.

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The Venetian cathedral of San Pietro in Castello is well known for its remote location compared to the political core of the city around San Marco and the Rialto, and for its connection to some prominent characters in art history, namely Mauro Codussi and

Andrea Palladio. So far research has focused on a few episodes of the cathedral's history as a single phenomenon, without considering the broader urban, ecclesiastical, and political context. Gianmario Guidarelli's monograph is the first comprehensive study of the church and its complex from its origins until the end of the seventeenth century.

The book is clearly arranged in four chapters and has a rich appendix of mostly unpublished documents as well as a succinct but detailed summary in English. The narration follows the history of the complex chronologically, starting with the antecedent history, the construction of the first cathedral, and its reconstruction after a fire in 1120. Chapter 2 is dedicated to the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, exploring the historical factors leading to the establishment of the patriarchy of Venice in 1451 and the role of the first patriarchs in the valorization of the complex. Chapter 3 analogously continues the narration for the sixteenth century, which sees — as Guidarelli demonstrates, thanks to new documentation — a much more direct intervention of the Venetian state in the building matters of the patriarchy. The reconstruction of the cathedral by Giovanni Gerolamo Grappiglia from 1621 to 1630 is the topic of chapter 4, with a particular focus on the role of patriarch Giovanni Tiepolo. The book concludes with the canonization of the first patriarch Lorenzo Giustinian and his figure as a saint who symbolically unites the interests of the patriarchy and of the Venetian patriciate.

The main argument of the study aims to put into perspective the assumption that the Venetian patriarchy was marginalized by the state to an isolated location. By following the urban history of the island to its origins, Guidarelli argues that the patriarchy itself might have had an interest in choosing the former cathedral of Venice in an admittedly remote but otherwise strategic place. The relationship between state, Holy See, and patriarchy is considered from the perspective of the patriarchs, both as intermediates and members of the Venetian patriciate. This perspective forces a tight chronological order, as the politics and interests of the patriarchy are only understandable through the actions of the individual representatives, who naturally also put their own personal interests into effect.

Next to few considerations on the policy of each patriarch, Guidarelli mostly focuses on the detailed building history of the various elements of San Pietro in Castello. Due to the scarce sources for the medieval period, Guidarelli resorts to the use of digital visualization tools. His models are limited to the representation of only the elements that are extensively argued about in the text, such as proportion and overall structure. As much as the result does not render the entirety of the appearance (for instance, it does not consider further architectural details, material, and furnishing) — and therefore needs to be seen as only a partial hypothesis — its strength lies in being consistent with a scientific survey and not being seduced by the almost unlimited potential of digital tools. The author therefore tries to complement the century-long history of the episcopal complex by considering also the gaps left, on one hand, by the concentration of earlier scholarship on Mauro Codussi's tower and Andrea Palladio's design for the facade as only remarkable achievements for the fifteenth and for the sixteenth century, respectively, and, on the

other hand, by the actual lack of detailed sources regarding the single steps in between and smaller changes that, however, affected the public space of the *campo* as a whole.

This being a first considerable step in studying the complex in detail, some of the addressed aspects, such as the relationship of state and patriarchy, the urban and architectural comparison between the cathedral and San Marco, and the cult of Lorenzo Giustiniani, offer material for further inquiries.

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