

Riccarda Suitner, *Venice and the Radical Reformation. Italian Anabaptism and Antitrinitarianism in European Context*, Göttingen (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Verlage) 2023 (Refo 500 Academic Studies 101), 272 pp., ISBN 978-3-525-50019-4, € 100.

The engaging volume by Riccarda Suitner delves into Venetian and Paduan non-conformism, which peaked in the 1550s and 1560s but was nearly eradicated by the Inquisition by 1582. While not extremely numerous (Suitner suggests that it may have had at least a thousand adherents over the course of the sixteenth century), the movement exerted a substantial impact on European intellectual and religious history, yet its full significance remains underestimated. In the second half of the twentieth century, Aldo Stella was among the first to provide a comprehensive introduction to Venetian Anabaptism and Antitrinitarianism. He offered insights into the dynamics of the movement he called the Italian Hutterists, drawing from materials of the Venetian inquisition stored at the Archivio di Stato di Venezia. The contributions of Carlo Ginzburg, Paul F. Grendler, Andrea Del Col, and other scholars remain noteworthy in exploring Venetian Inquisition sources, mechanisms, contexts, and individual trials. Most recently, two new monographs have appeared discussing the key roles of physicians at this religious movement, including Girolamo Donzellini, who was put to death, and Niccolò Buccella, who continued his activities in exile. Suitner's perceptive and comprehensive volume presents the most consistent general assessment of the movement, making it a recommended first choice for modern readers encountering the topic of early modern Italian heterodoxy. The book comprises an introduction along with five chapters: the picture and dynamics of sixteenth-century Venice dissent; the doctrinal way of Italian Antitrinitarianism and Anabaptism; the role of the University of Padua, particularly its medical studies, in relation to the movement; the interconnections of the Radical Christian doctrine with Judaism and Islam; and the eventual end of the movement, which continued to transform into Socinianism and laid the groundwork for the Enlightenment. From these topics, Suitner generates an intriguing discourse on the Venetian radicalism, conducting a deep contextual analysis. On the one hand, she regards the movement as the „embryonic state“ of Antitrinitarianism and Socinianism emerging in East-Central Europe (Transylvania, Lithuania, Poland and Moravia) from around the 1570s. Conversely, the author treats it as a separate religious phenomenon – one of the main offshoots of European Anabaptism – arguing against its assimilation with the Socinianism as misleading. The author combines the exploration of genuine texts with the documentation of Inquisition, which remains crucial for reconstructing the clandestine social networks and portraying figures along with their heterogeneous teachings. She depicts how the new lifestyle and social ethics involved Venetian medical practitioners, *sfratati*, craftsmen and nobles in the Anabaptist community of brethren. By discussing the exclusive validity of baptism received as an adult and pacifism as a uniform platform of German and Italian Anabaptism, Suitner demonstrates how the term ‚Anabaptism‘, thought to be used by contemporaries, did not correspond to the new born baptismal doctrines, which dealt not with a second baptism but rather with a single

baptism in adulthood. Indeed, it is characteristic of the majority terms applied to the exponents of the Reformation, starting with ‚Lutherans‘, which were introduced by the opponents who neglected the new hermeneutics of the reformers. On the other hand, within the context of mid-sixteenth century theological uncertainty, Suitner extracts key ideas from the Venetian *dottrina nuova*, which was articulated by a Venetian Anabaptist council in September 1550 and testified by survived documents. The author addresses these controversial questions of the doctrine as the cornerstone aspects of Venetian Anabaptism and deconstructs its polygenetic nature. The fundamental approach of the Italian „brothers“, conceiving mortality for sinners and immortality for the righteous, not only explains the other doctrinal aspects but also elucidates their stoic approach to death, as demonstrated by some of their famous martyrs, including Giulio Gherlandi and Francesco della Sega. Suitner’s book provides valuable insights for further studies on the dynamics of the transfer of Italian Anabaptism across East-Central Europe prior to the 1570s. The processes of Venetian movement and the development of heterodoxy in East-Central Europe were not simply consecutive but rather parallel, with Venetian Anabaptism and East-Central European heterodoxy being interconnected from the 1550s onwards. This was primarily due to the Polish and Lithuanian students at Padua (i. e. Peter Gonesius from Lithuania in 1555), as well as network created by Giorgio Biandrata, which started to develop particularly during his second exile in 1553 from Venice to Geneva, then to Poland and Lithuania in 1558, and finally to Transylvania in 1563. The operational dynamics of the network connecting early Venetian Anabaptism with its proponents in East-Central Europe would supplement this fascinating episode of early modern Christendom.

Dainora Pociūtė

Stefan Hanß, *Narrating the Dragoman’s Self in the Veneto-Ottoman Balkans, c. 1550–1650*, London-New York (Routledge) 2023 (Life Narratives of the Ottoman Realm. Individual and Empire in the Near East), 324 S., 35 Abb., ISBN 978-0-367-23369-3, GBP 135.

Ausgangspunkt der vorliegenden Monografie ist der sechs Folii umfassende Reisebericht des Dragomans Genesino Salvago (Edition S. 271–283), der über vier Jahrzehnte als Übersetzer im Dienste der an der Hohen Pforte tätigen venezianischen diplomatischen Gesandten stand. Zwischen März und Mai des Jahres 1618 unternahm Genesino in geheimer Mission eine Reise, die ihn von Konstantinopel aus quer durch den Balkan führte – durch die Gebiete der heutigen Länder Türkei, Bulgarien, Serbien, Kosovo, Bosnien und Herzegowina sowie Kroatien – und schließlich in Venedig endete. Seine Aufgabe bestand darin, für den neu ernannten venezianischen Bailo Francesco Contarini (Doge 1623–1624) aktuelle und verlässliche Informationen über einen größtenteils unbekanntem Landstrich zu sammeln und zu prüfen, ob die Anreise des Bailo über diese Reiseroute sicher sei. Das Manuskript blieb über 200 Jahre im Familienbesitz der Contarini und wurde schließlich von Rawdon Lubbock Brown gekauft, dem Hg. des „Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs Existing in the