

Giulia DeLogu

Mediterranean Reflections. Venice as Myth and Model (18th-19th centuries)

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In 1827, Ugo Foscolo, exiled in London for years, published a scathing review of *The Memoirs* by Giacomo Casanova. For Foscolo it was primarily the opportunity to write about the history of the Republic of Venice and to propose it as the cornerstone for Italian constitutionalism. The Republic of Venice had ceased to exist since 1797, when the French army led by Napoleon Bonaparte conquered it. Yet it remained alive in the collective imagination, in a whirlwind of condemnation, praise and nostalgia.

In these pages, a narrative of words and images reconstructs how the Republic of Venice continued to be deemed a model, by virtue of the enduring power of its myth.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the many echoes of Venice resulted from a continuous play of mirrors, involving the maritime centres of Istria and Dalmatia and extending across the entire Mediterranean. The institutional models of the Serenissima continued to circulate, remaining at the heart of political and economic debates. Venice both absorbed reflections, also renewing itself, and radiated its model and myth, influencing nearby and distant regions. Thus, a connected Venice emerges, constitutive to an Adriatic system.



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