

The Venetians: A New History: From Marco Polo to Casanova



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Reviews

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THE VENETIANS: A NEW HISTORY: FROM MARCO POLO TO CASANOVA

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Pegasus. 1 Cloth(s), 2013. hard. Book Condition: New. The Republic of Venice was the first great economic, cultural, and naval power of the modern world, notes Paul Strathern; after its ascendancy in the late 13th century, Venice enjoyed centuries of triumph and prosperityan era that only ended with the Republic's eventual surrender to Napoleon. Also the author of the Somerset Maugham Award winner *A Season in Abyssinia* and the Aventis Prize finalist *Mendeleyev's Dream*, Strathern explores the character of the Republic by profiling such citizens and visitors as Petrarch, Marco Polo, Galileo, Titian, Vivaldi, and Casanova, and wonders if their frequent tensions with the Venetian authorities illuminate some of the underlying factors of Venice's success."The city-state of Venice, situated on islands in a lagoon in the Adriatic, maintained its independence for more than a millennium, until the Napoleonic Age. Blessed by its location, it dominated the east-west trade routes that linked the medieval West with the Byzantine Empire and points further east. During the Renaissance, it became one of the glittering cultural jewels of northern Italy. Strathern attempts to explain the growth and magnificence of Venice by concentrating on the lives of some of the historical figures who played prominent roles in its development, from Marco Polo to the famed adventurer, lover, and literary icon Casanova. This is an enjoyable journey filled with interesting tidbits about both well-known and relatively obscure characters who left their mark on the city. Strathern also delves into the often mysterious and confusing manner in which Venice was governed by a small core of elite citizens."Booklist 354.

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