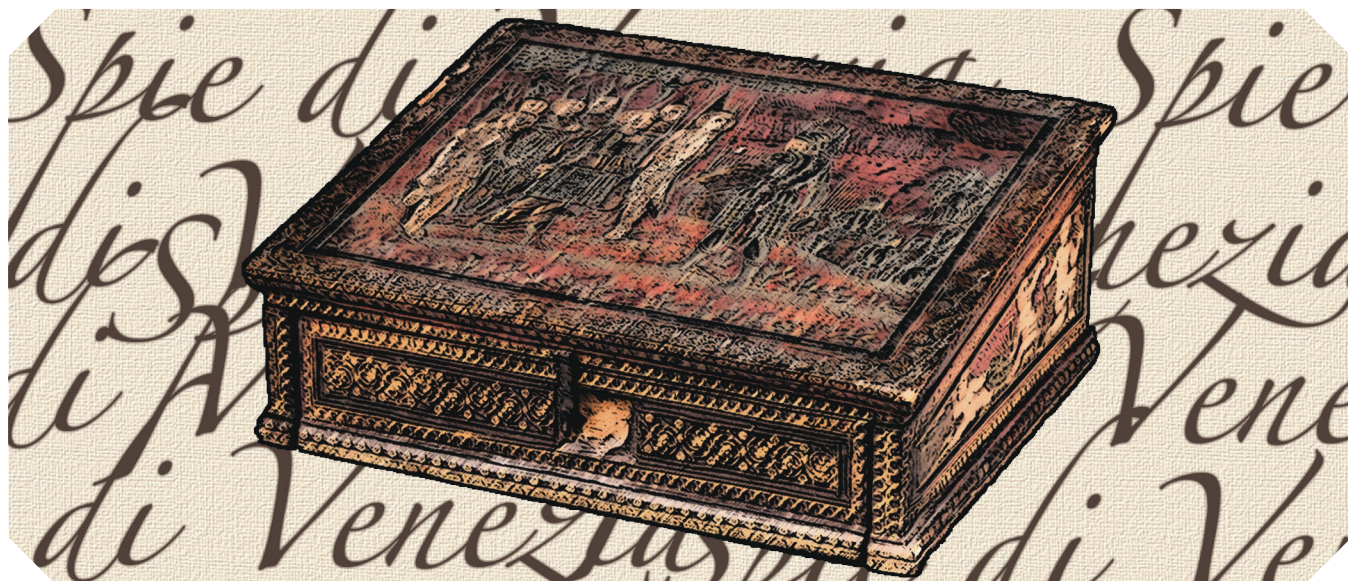


GURPS[®]

Fourth Edition

Renaissance Venice:[™] **SPIES OF VENICE**[™]



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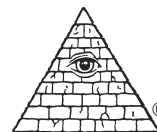
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STEVE JACKSON GAMES

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INTRODUCTION

The late Renaissance was a time of growing terrestrial powers. By the dawn of the 16th century, most of the Iberian peninsula had become united into the single kingdom of Spain. France was mostly under the direct governance of its own king, and the Ottoman Empire was well on its way to controlling the entire Eastern Mediterranean. The Holy Roman Empire, though entering a period of disarray, was still a substantial power. The city-states and smaller kingdoms of Italy had seen their best days during the previous century. They were now falling under the influence of the larger powers of the west, and all were under threat from the growing power in the east.

The one notable Italian power which remained free of foreign control through this period was the republic of Venezia. Tucked into its corner of the Adriatic, it ruled little territory of its own: a chunk of northeastern Italy, some of the Dalmatian coast, and scattered outposts around Greece and the Aegean. Yet it remained independent until Napoleon. It managed this feat on the strength of masterful diplomacy and wealth derived from international trade. Those capabilities rested in part on knowing what was going on. This supplement deals with how Venezia managed that: the scope and structure of its intelligence-gathering machinery; the historical, political, and cultural context in which it operated; descriptions of missions undertaken by Venetian agents; and, of course, how to turn all of that into adventures.

RECOMMENDED WORKS

This work is intended as a supplement to *GURPS Hot Spots: Renaissance Venice*. That book is very strongly

recommended, though not necessary for anyone with a reasonably good grasp of the history of the Renaissance. A realistic espionage game is heavily social, so *GURPS Social Engineering* is likely to be useful, though not necessary for understanding the information here, while *GURPS Hot Spots: Renaissance Florence* is a helpful reference for other aspects of the period. *Poisons*, in *GURPS Low-Tech*, pp. 128-130, is a good reference for Venezia's extensive repertoire of toxins (p. 9), though not all poisons listed in *Low-Tech* are necessarily available. And "On de Medici's Secret Service" (*Pyramid* #3/10: *Crime and Grime*, pp. 7-10) describes a fictional but plausible – and, indeed, typically loosely organized for the period – alternative intelligence operation.

*I can only hope your presence
[in Venice] is a coincidence,
Mr. Bond. I dislike being spied on.*
– Holly Goodhead,
in *Moonraker*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Matt Riggsby is trained in anthropology and archaeology and, like the rest of his generation, has a job in computers. He works for an international healthcare IT company and lives with his lovely and talented wife, above-average child, and a pack of dogs.

Art Acknowledgments

P. 4: "Effigie naturali dei maggior principi et piu valorosi capitani di questa eta con l'arme loro," by Giacomo Franco. From The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1957, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, metmuseum.org.

P. 6: "Doge Andrea Gritti, c. 1546/1550," by Titian. From the Samuel H. Kress Collection. Courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington, nga.gov.

P. 8: "Writing Box." From the Robert Lehman Collection, 1975, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, metmuseum.org.

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