

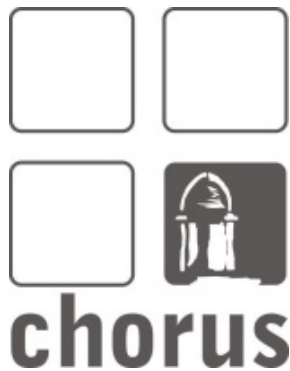
FRH Conference 2014

Friday, 31 October

Parallel Session

Spreading the wealth: using partnerships, trusts and charities

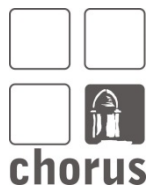
The idea of clustering buildings
and splitting the funds generated by one
across the maintenance of all



CHORUS

The Self-Help Network of Venice's Historic Churches

Rita Sartori, Ornella D'Andrea



CHORUS

Associazione per le chiese del Patriarcato di Venezia

established: **1997**

status: **not-for-profit, lay**

members: **13 parish priests, 10 laypersons**

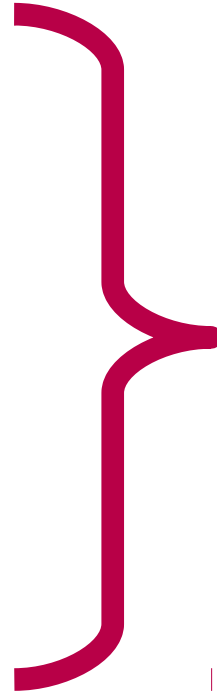
churches: **17**

staff: **25**

director: **Ornella D'Andrea**

CHORUS's mission

extended opening
safekeeping
care
promotion
safeguarding
conservation
restoration



**1. Churches of
Venice** *Città Antica*

**2. Churches of the
Venice Patriarchate**

in order to:

- **enhance their value**
(historical, cultural, cultural, artistic, social, moral)
- **raise growing appreciation and attention**
(faithful, visitors, scholars, students and residents)

(from Chorus's Statute)



The Making of CHORUS

Venice and Its Lagoon

a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1987

Extension: ca. 550 sq. km.



Venice '*Città Antica*'

Total Surface: ca. 62 sq. km.

Walkable Surface: ca. 8 sq. km.



Historic Churches

116

working

90

other use

22

closed

4

(status: sept 2014)

Venice '*Città Antica*'

DEPOPULATION

(year) (residents)

1951: **174,808**

1952: 174,488

1966: 121,309

1981: 93,598

1992: 75,159

1996: 69,906

2013: **56,683**

MAIN FACTORS

post-war rush to industrialized
mainland

the 1966 Great Flood

skyrocketing real estate prices
and maintenance costs

decreasing job opportunities

low birth rate

- 15 out of 40 **churches already restored** (Law for Venice, 1973)
- the City Council of Venice **stopped release of fundings** for the care and maintenance of the city churches (since 1990)
- **a dramatic depopulation** of the city and a progressive dwindling of the community of faithful:
 - 40 parish churches in **1951** → residents: 174,808
 - 40 parish churches in **1992** → residents: 75,179
- a pervasive **process of secularization**

lack of volunteers
(depopulation, secularization)

lack of offerings and donations
(serving the day-to-day management of the building)



**the opening, maintenance, safekeeping
of churches and their artworks
had become just unsustainable**
(no alarms, no custodians)

Don Aldo Marangoni

director of the Churches Office of the Venice Patriarchate
president of the Venice Parish Priests' Board
parish priest himself



**Venice Churches
were due to 'shut down'**

**Opening time was to be limited
'to Holy Service, only'**

the opening of the
over 100 churches of Venice
had become

'a cultural hazard'

Funding System in Italy

State

- Freedom of worship
- Right of public worship
(Italian Constitution, 1948, art. 19)

Regions

- Keeping
- Enhancement
(Constitutional Law 18 Oct 2001, n. 3)

Income Tax (8xmille)
the 8 ‰ system, compulsory
(Law 20 may 1985, n. 222)

- **CEI** (Italian Episcopal Conf.)*
A share is destined to worship needs
1.033 mio.euros in 2013 of which
- new buildings (123 mio.)
 - keeping/restoration of old ones (60 mio.)

- **State**
A share is used for
- keeping/restoration of cultural heritage

* Conferenza Episcopale Italiana, *Otto per mille. Destinazioni e impieghi*.
Sintesi per la stampa, aprile 2014 – www.8Xmille.it

Legal Personality

Churches need to have **legal personality** in order to receive state/regional funds

Legal personality is granted only to churches

- that are **open to public worship**
- that have **own means to grant the opening,** the ministering and the day-to-day maintenance

Closing churches

disappointment of **the faithful**

acts of vandalism

thefts

general decay

+

disappointment of

tourists, scholars, city lovers

residents, tour operators

... and no public funds

1997: A Turning Point

- 36 months to the 2000 Jubilee
- **last fundings insufficient** for granting reliable opening times
- 68,600 residents, only
- faithful outnumbered by over 20 millions of tourists a year, thousands in a day ➡ **new stakeholders**
- increasing demand of access into historic churches
- churches ➡ **spaces of conflict** (few pious vs. many tourists)

Don Aldo and a group of parish priests
started brainstorming

**How much do the care,
the day-to-day management and the
safekeeping of a historic church
actually cost a year?**

50,000 / 60,000 euros

116 churches

outstanding universal value

(World Heritage for future generations)

'ecumenical' attractions

(please-all)

dual spaces

(devotion/tourism)

a spread-out museum

(thousands of artworks still *in situ*)

a few '**stars**'

most visited

worldwide known

on the main tourist paths

'stars'



SANTA MARIA GLORIOSA
DEI FRARI



SANTA MARIA
DEI MIRACOLI



SAN POLO

many **'underdogs'**

less known

totally unknown/unheard of

off the tourist paths

=

more at risk

'underdogs'



SAN GIACOMO
DALL'ORIO

SAN PIETRO
DI CASTELLO

SANT'ALVISE

An **Unprecedented** Project

- an act of **conciliation** between traditional users and upcoming new stakeholders
- an action to guarantee the **opening of churches** beyond the 2000 Jubilee
- **involvement** of the city visitors in the project of safeguarding and promoting Venice religious heritage
- **a fixed contribution for the 'extended use'** of some selected sacred spaces
- creation of **a network of churches** (*stars ↔ underdogs*)
- activation of **a mechanism of solidarity** amongst churches

The **Chorus** Network was born (1997)



A first commitment:

***Biblia Pauperum, Open Churches
towards the 2000 Jubilee***

a project designed and managed by **Chorus**
with the encouragement of the Venice Patriarchate

The Chorus Network in 1998

13 churches

1. San Giacomo de l'Orio
2. San Stae
3. San Polo
4. Santo Stefano
5. Sant'Alvise
6. Madonna dell'Orto
7. Santa Maria Formosa
8. Santissimo Redentore
9. San Pietro di Castello
10. San Sebastiano
11. Santa Maria del Giglio
12. Santa Maria dei Miracoli
13. Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari



The **Chorus** Network

START-UP COSTS

258,000 euros

personally borne by the founder,

Don Aldo Marangoni

(a bank credit from Banco Ambrosiano Veneto)

A 'spread-out museum'

same opening times

non-stop (10 am – 5 pm)

safekeeping & care

alarm devices

labels on all artworks

appropriate lighting

infos on history and artworks

for a small fixed contribution

Contribution

(2014)

Chorus Pass

all churches, one-year validity
12 euros

Chorus Pass Reduced

all churches, one-year validity
8 euros (single students, max 29 yrs)

Chorus Pass Family

all churches, one-year validity
24 euros (2 adults + children max 18 yrs)

Chorus Pass School

all churches, one-year validity
3 euros (school & university, max 29 yrs)

Single Entrance

one church
3 euros

Single Entrance School

one church
1,50 euros (school & university, max 29 yrs)

Free entrance

- Venice residents
- Pilgrims
- Members of religious orders
- Disabled and accompanying carers
- Children aged 10 and under
- Members of ICOM and ICOMOS
- Authorised guides and group leaders on duty
- School group leaders on duty
- Journalists (*Chorus* accreditation)
- Researchers and Scholars (*Chorus* accreditation)

All contributions
are turned to
services

The agreement between parishes and **CHORUS**

approved by the Patriarchate Chancellor (abstract)

whereas

- a parish priest is liable for the safekeeping and safeguarding of each assigned church and its artistic content and must guarantee the opening of churches beyond the Holy Service times
- a parish priest is busy with the care of souls and has no such organizational structure so as to cope with the extended opening of his church

now therefore,



CHORUS commit themselves (in agreement with each parish priest) to provide (away from the Holy Services times)

regular opening

safekeeping

cleaning

power & lighting

day-to-day maintenance

information to visitors

free of charge

7 hours a day, six days a week

**ensuring the respectful use
of the sacred space**



Chorus's Staff

In the office: **5**

In the churches: **20**

open-ended contract

turn-around every 4 weeks
(safekeeping)

open and close churches,
activate/disactivate alarm systems

promote and illustrate

check and control

An interface between sacred and profane

Design Perspective*

*Levi D.- Kocher S., *Understanding Tourism at Heritage Religious Sites*, 2009

outdoors

an information sign



indoors

a functional box in glass and wood, heated

a mobile phone

a video-camera (when applicable)



Selection of churches

a 'church mix'

a circuit of diversities

Networking diversities

a church mix

all contributions to the most visited churches
also help the management of the least visited

a circuit of diversities

each church plays a distinctive role
each one serving the purpose of the network
each one providing form and continuity to the network

A two-direction dynamics

churches → **CHORUS**

churches joining Chorus
as the only alternative to closing down

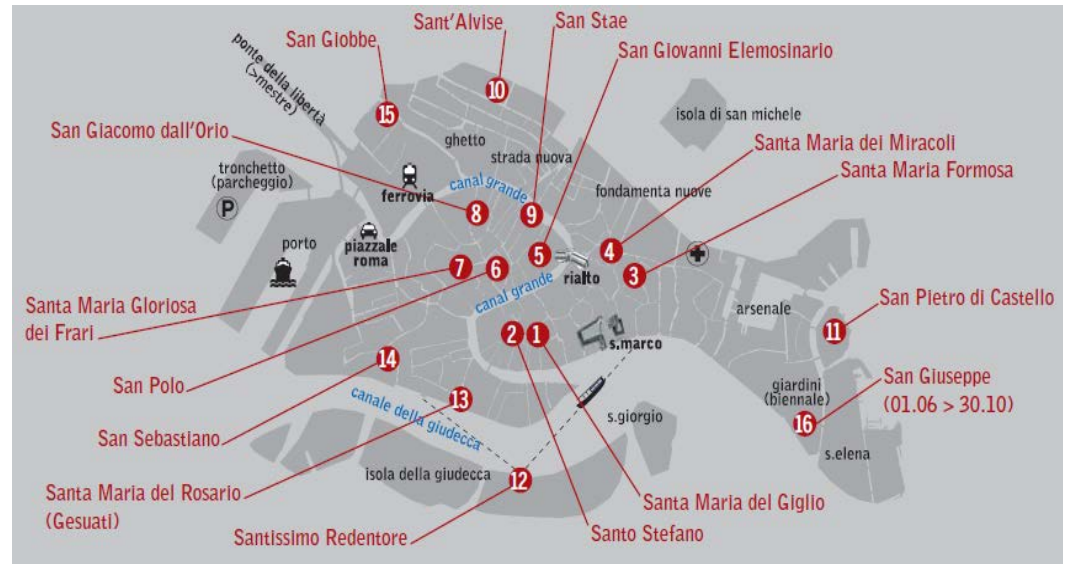
CHORUS → **churches**

Chorus seeking churches to better
serve the territory and the less visited churches
(distribution of tourist flows)

The **Chorus** Network in 2014

17 churches

- Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari
- San Giacomo de l'Orio
- San Stae
- San Polo
- Santo Stefano
- Sant'Alvise
- Santa Maria Formosa
- Santissimo Redentore
- San Pietro di Castello
- San Sebastiano
- Santa Maria del Giglio
- Santa Maria dei Miracoli
- San Giuseppe di Castello
- San Giobbe
- Santa Maria del Rosario
- San Giovanni Elemosinario
- **San Vidal (Chorus Cultura)**



Networking diversities

Status of the 17 churches

- 10 parish churches
 - 4 rectorial churches
 - 3 vicarial churches

Ownership

- 14 Diocese
 - 1 Cappuccini Friars
 - 1 Franciscan Friars
 - 1 the Venice City Council

Networking **diversities**

Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari

the driving church

an *ad hoc* agreement

a guest-star within the network

a plus for the network





Networking **diversities**

Church of San Vidal

venue for conferences
(Chorus Cultura)

venue for barock music concerts
(managed by Interpreti Veneziani orchestra)

guaranteed opening
(by Interpreti Veneziani)

no entrance fee
(free)

Enjoy & Preserve



Distribution of tourist flows

A map for **new routes** (and new travellers)



CHORUS's churches
are scattered **all over**
Venice *Città Antica*

visitors are given a **map**
showing their location

an exhortation to go **off**
the tourist paths and
explore beautiful, less
crowded surroundings

CHURCHES*

VISITS / YEAR

Santa Maria dei Miracoli
 San Polo
 Santa Maria del Giglio
 San Sebastiano
 Santa Maria del Rosario
 Santa Maria Formosa

20,000 - 30,000

Santo Stefano
 San Pietro di Castello
 San Giacomo dell'Orio
 Ss. Redentore

10,000 - 20,000

Sant'Alvise
 San Giovanni
 Elemosinario

5,000 - 10,000

San Giobbe
 San Stae

< 5,000

stars



underdogs

*2013, excl. Frari

THE **CHORUS** NETWORK

VISITORS 2007-2013 *

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
317,765	322,224	266,881	256,043	274,883	279,773	219,630

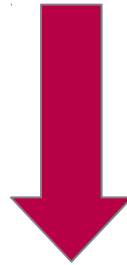
*

The visitors of the Frari's Church are not included.

They, alone, equal the sum of the visitors of the whole Chorus Network

The **Chorus** Network

(including the Frari's Church)



**the second most visited
museum in Venice***

* 2012

Building-up a consensus



Chorus Cultura

(2001)

awareness-raising
conferences
staff training
education for all
promotion
concerts & exhibitions

Chorus Cultura

the venue



Church of San Vidal

The **Chorus** Network

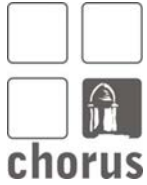
Friends & Partners

Friends

Amici di Chorus
Artemisia

Partners

Venezia Unica
Azienda di Promozione Turistica
Bassani
Palazzetto Bru Zane
Alitalia
Associazione Veneziana Albergatori



The **Chorus** Network

Outcomes

extended **opening** times of historic churches

safekeeping and **safeguarding**

a valuable **cultural offer**, now **easily accessible**

a comfortable, **enjoyable visiting experience**
(enhancement of the religious heritage's value)

a **sustainable** way to promote and divulgate culture
(through the creation of an economy of scale)

enhancement of historic churches
otherwise at risk of marginality



The **Chorus** Network Outcomes

benefits to the Venetian community
(faithful and laypersons)

a **steady job** for 25

a new discerning **public**

a renewed social **engagement**
(landmarks → **lovemarks**)



The **Chorus** Network

More Outcomes

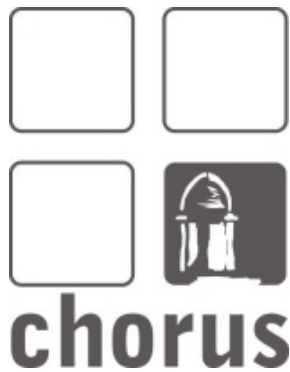
The Chorus Network has recently raised some interest in scholars in terms of

- a possible form of enhancement and safeguarding of cultural heritage in the **territory**
- an innovative approach in the management of sacred spaces as **common goods** ('**common heritage**' *)
- a conciliation between lay and religious needs, thus **reducing the risk of conflicts** among stakeholders
- a **sustainable, virtuous network**

* Kyiv Statement 2010, 12

This presentation is based on a study carried out within the course of Economics and Management of Arts and Cultural Activities of Ca' Foscari University, Venice, with the support of the Laboratory of Management of Arts and Culture





Thank you.

www.chorusvenezia.org