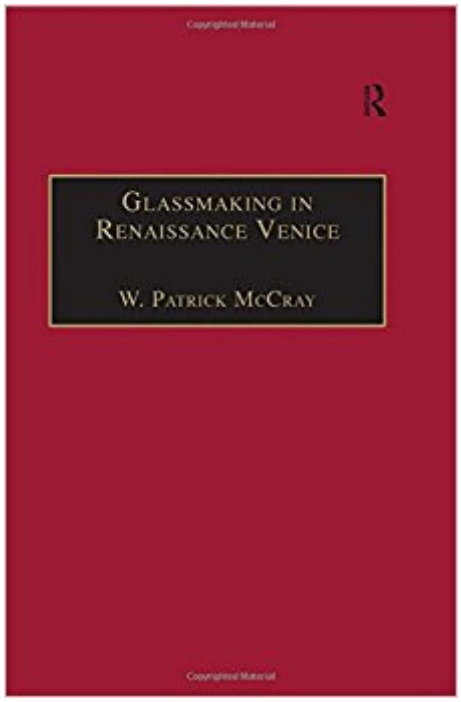
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# Glassmaking In Renaissance Venice: The Fragile Craft




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## Synopsis

The transformation of the Venetian glass industry during the Renaissance was not only a technical phenomenon, but also a social one. In this volume, Patrick McCray examines the demand, production and distribution of glass and glassmaking technology during this period and evaluates several key topics, including the nature of Renaissance demand for certain luxury goods, the interaction between industry and government in the Renaissance, and technological change as a social process. McCray places in its broader economic and cultural context a craft and industry that has been traditionally viewed primarily through the surviving artefacts held in museum collections. McCray explores the social and economic context of glassmaking in Venice, from the guild and state level down to the workings of the individual glass house. He tracks the dissemination of Venetian-style glassmaking throughout Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and its effects on VeniceÃ¢â ¬â„¢s glass industry. Integrating evidence from a wide variety of sources - written documents such as shop records and recipe books, pictorial representations of glass and glassmaking, and the careful physical and chemical analysis of glass pieces that have survived to the present - he examines the relation between consumer demand and technological change. In the process, he traces the organizational changes that signified a transition from an older and more traditional manner of Ã¢â ¬â„¢artisanÃ¢â ¬â„¢ manufacture to a modern, Ã¢â ¬â„¢factory-styleÃ¢â ¬â„¢ manner of production.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

’This is an excellent book ... It [brings] together in a refreshing way the history of luxury and consumer culture in Venice and the technology and organization of glassmaking.’ Professor Maxine Berg, University of Warwick ’McCray provides a detailed and rich account of an area crucial to Venice’s identity.’ Choice, Vol. 37 No. 10 ’McCray’s description of renaissance glass technology is authoritative, and his account of the way in which colourless glass (cristallo) came to be perfected is the best available.’ Burlington Magazine ’The volume has detailed notes, analytical tables and bibliography, which in themselves make it an indispensable handbook. It will appeal to a wide readership as the best introduction to Venetian renaissance glassmaking, particularly in its technical aspects, available in English.’ Burlington ’... careful research, fascinating details, and varied perspectives will undoubtedly make Glassmaking in Renaissance Venice useful to historians of early modern technology and material culture.’ Technology and Culture ’...McCray’s book is the first to investigate the Venetian glassmaking industry fully...’ Sixteenth Century Journal ’W. Patrick McCray offers an erudite and comprehensive study, which benefits enormously from the wide range of sources and methodologies he brings to bear... this is overwhelmingly an insightful book... The author [...] has an excellent product...’ ISIS

W. Patrick McCray, University of California - Santa Barbara, USA

Excellent and comprehensive treatment of a somewhat obscure but critically important time in the history of Italian glass. There is nothing quite like this in the literature, which has traditionally taken a scholarly but narrow approach to understanding the complex circumstances that gave rise to the Golden Age of Venetian glass. The author provides a cross-disciplinary survey of social, political and economic factors that contributed to rise and success of some of the most innovative and highly-skilled objects ever to be made from this material.

As the title suggests, this is a book with a narrow focus. I read it for background on Venetian glassmaking, and, as such, it succeeded. It wasn’t an especially engaging read, but it was informative, and that was what mattered to me. Although I have three complaints, the book was a helpful reference work.My most serious complaint is that in the copy I read--the 2016 hardcover Routledge edition--the illustrations were so poorly reproduced that many were rendered worthless. In addition, there were many minor errors that should have been caught by a copyeditor. Lastly, despite not knowing much Venetian history, I knew enough to spot an error in chapter two, when the

author stated that "In 1571, the Venetian fleet suffered a defeat to the Turks at the battle of Lepanto." Whereas in fact the Venetians were on the winning side. Hopefully the glassmaking information is more accurate.

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