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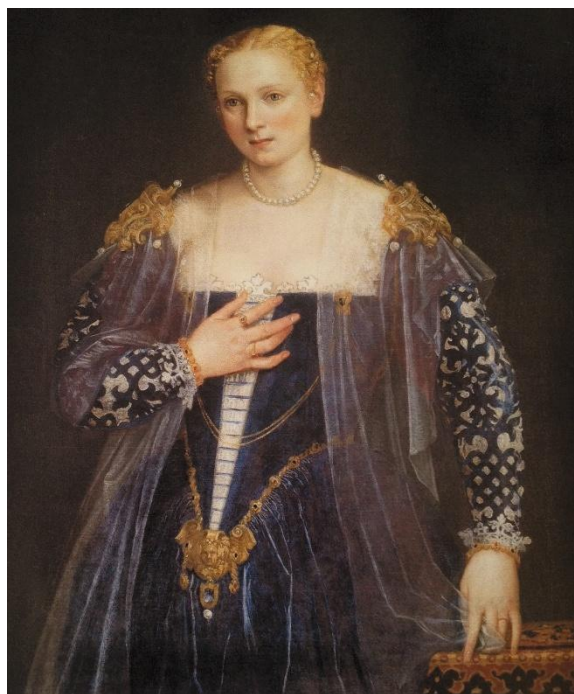
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TATIANA MARKAKI
Women and Material Culture in 17th-Century Crete
Insights from the Venetian Notarial Archives

This book examines the material culture of women in seventeenth-century Crete under Venetian rule and contributes significantly to our understanding of women's material world in early modern Mediterranean societies. Through a comprehensive analysis of marriage contracts and accompanying inventories of movables from the State Archives of Venice, it provides extensive insights into bride's possessions and dowry practices. The study quantitatively and qualitatively analyses 8.345 dotal objects from Candia (modern Heraklion) and its surrounding countryside, revealing patterns of household material culture and specific choices made by middle and lower-class women regarding their movable property's value, quantity, and quality. The detailed descriptions of qualitative features and valuations of goods illuminate the connections between material objects, intangible culture, and women's identities, distinguishing Cretan inventories from the inventories used in European material culture research. Key themes explored include practices of appropriation and cultural transfer, consumerism and durability, female values and the presence of luxury. The research demonstrates how material characteristics such as fabric, size, condition (new/second-hand), colour, and decorative motifs of textiles, garments, jewels, bed linen, and kitchen utensils construct different realities across varying geographical, social, and economic contexts and shape women's behaviour. Focusing primarily on non-elite women, the archival material provides evidence of the dissemination, versatility, and exclusivity of certain categories of movables transferred upon marriage. Furthermore, it illustrates the complex mechanisms in Venetian Crete that determined how individual women and social groups forged their identities through material possessions.

CONTENTS: Acknowledgments. 1. CANDIA AND THE COUNTRYSIDE: The Historical background (1204-1669). Living in Candia. Living in the countryside. Diverging and converging communities. 2. MARRIAGE AND DOWRY: The Marriage contracts. Brides and Bridegrooms. Poor, middle and rich brides. Mixed practices. 3. HOUSEHOLD MATERIAL CULTURE IN CONTEXT: Early Modern Europe. The Cretan *stima*. Values and appraisers. Shared, diverse, local cultures. Consumerism and the patina of time. 4. FABRICS, GARMENTS, KITCHEN UTENSILS, VALUABLES. Drappi e vestimenti: silk, cotton, flax, wool, mixed cloths. Bed and table. 5. DISTINCTIONS, VALUES, TRANSFERS. Luxury and display. Colours and decoration. Lacemaking and "the virtuous ladies". Vivere civilmente. The 'Venetian touch'. The ring and the publicity. CONCLUSIONS. APPENDIX 1: THE DATASET. APPENDIX 2. LIST OF NAMES. ABBREVIATIONS. BIBLIOGRAPHY. LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS. INDEX.

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La Bella Nani, Venetian bride with pearl necklace, *centa* and *manini*. Oil on canvas, Paolo Veroneze, ca. 1560 Musée du Louvre, Paris



Lucretia and her companions, Luca Bertelli, 16th c. engraving, Milan