

**The Textual Mosaic between the Two Shores of the Adriatic:
Rewriting as a Way of Border Crossing**

The aim of this paper is to investigate the interplay between three texts which crossed the geographical borders of the Adriatic Sea, in the second half of the sixteenth century.

One of the findings of my doctoral dissertation is that the only published text by the Ragusan noblewoman Maria Gondola - a thirteen page long dedicatory epistle written in praise of her friend in the context of '*querelle des femmes*' (1582) - was partially rewritten from the two other books. The first one, *Trattato dell'honor vero e del vero dishonour* (1567) written by her contemporary and lesser known Sicilian Girolamo Camerata's, and the second one, at time very influential Italian translation of Antonio de Guevara's *Libro di Marco Aurelio* (1568). This paper will trace how she reworked these two sources, by focusing on the parts that were rewritten, as suggested by cultural historian Paolo Cherchi, 1998.

Maria Gondola crossed geographical and textual borders, and reused these two books 'from the centre', in order to write the dedicatory epistle and to put it the liminal paratextual space of the book written by her husband, Nicolò Vito di Gozze *Discorsi sopra le Methoere d'Aristotle* (1584).

Written in defence of women, at a time when these kinds of texts were also used as rhetorical performances and instruments for self-fashioning, this dedicatory epistle opens up important ways for questioning the status of the author, and the concepts of early modern authorship in connection with *imitatio*, rewriting and plagiarism.