

versity library housed several volumes that illustrated and explained the museum's holdings from a scientific perspective. "The study of chemistry in its relation to industry, and of natural history in relation to trade, also find excellent and very recent sources in our library. We will solely mention the *Traité de Chimie générale industrielle et agricole* by Peleuze and Fremy. This section, the indispensable complement to the Museo Merceologico, will be constantly augmented with the best works on applied chemistry and technology."

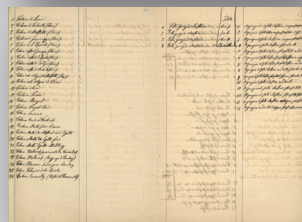
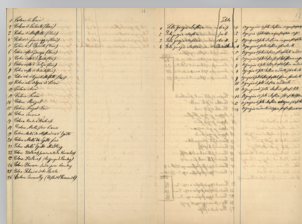
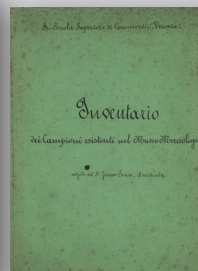
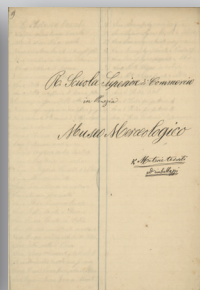
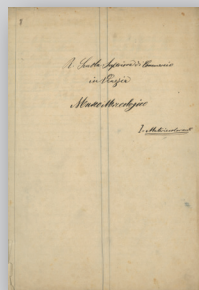
f. The Museo Merceologico's inventory lists all samples that were displayed in cabinets and cases. Some fascicles are missing, but the surviving ones are sufficient to understand the types of goods exhibited. The first fascicle is missing. The second fascicle is dedicated to "Coloniali", i.e. "colonial goods" such as various types of coffee (62 varieties, including "Caffè S. Domingo", "Caffè Rio I, II, III, IV", "Caffè Moka giallo", "Caffè Moka verde"), various types of sugar, such as "Havana raw sugar", "Bahia raw sugar", and more: "Cinnamon Caffia flowers", "Singapore pepper", "Puang black pepper". The third fascicle lists the specimens of "Wood", such as "Common fir", "Common spruce of Cadore", "Friuli spruce". The fourth fascicle is dedicated to "Tanning materials", such as "Istria gall", "Bark of young gregia" and also "Oak bark". The fifth is for "Gums and resins", and lists things such as "White lacquer", "Liver-coloured lacquer", "Java's incense", "Indies incense", and "Natural Egyptian incense". The seventh fascicle is for "Bituminous materials" such as "Asphalt" and "Coal tar". In the eighth, we find "Gelatin", for example, "Gelatin of France I, II white" and again "French Garavella Glue." The ninth fascicle deals with "Dyes" such as "Cuba yellow wood" or "Campeggio di Spagna" and "Vine black", "Victoria purple" and "Orange". In the tenth fascicle, we meet "Textiles and packaging materials" and will mention only the "Elastic raw silk", the "Italian artificial wool", and the "Washed Vicenza wool". The eleventh fascicle is about "Oilseeds, oils and other lighting materials". Among the seeds, we find "Red and black castor beans" and "Ithaca linseed"; the oils are "Veronese olive oil (Valpolicella)" and "First and second ricefield oil". The twelfth fascicle is about "Fats - waxes - soaps", and in the thirteenth, we find "Drugs, natural and artificial essences". The fourteenth, and last, fascicle lists "Mineral materials" such as "Fossil fuels", "Copper ores", "Iron ores", "Metals", "Other mineral oxides and salts", "Other building materials" and finally "Tobacco" such as "Virginia" and "Havana".

g. Pietro Andrea Mattioli (1501-1578) was a humanist, physician, and botanist who authored one of the most well-known botanical-pharmaceutical texts of the 16th century. He combined a commentary with the translation of Dioscorides Pedacio's *De materia medica*, enriching the Greek text with the addition of many "new" plants imported from the East and the Americas. Mattioli also included anecdotes and news related to popular tradition. Since 1554, when the Venetian Valgrisi edition in Latin with woodcuts by Giorgio Liberale da Udine was published, Mattioli's work was reprinted numerous times, translated into several languages, and always illustrated. It was commonly referred to as "Mattioli's herbal." The volume you can see here is one of the Italian reprints, with illustrations made by the sons of the printer Vincenzo Valgrisi. Valgrisi, through his commercial network and experience, contributed to making this the "most important botany book of its time" (Pesenti, p. 97). Considering the significance of this book, it is worth mentioning that the Historical Archive also has a Latin translation edited by the Swiss botanist Gaspar Bauhin (1560-1624) and printed in Basel by Joannis König in 1674. The volume is open on pages 404 and 405, illustrating various types of pepper.

DISPLAY CASE 2



e. photo of the museo merceologico



f. INVENTORIES of the Museo Merceologico
Inventory of samples at the Commodity Science Museum, carried out by Mr. Giacomo Soave, assistant



g. The speeches of Pietro Andrea Mattioli from Siena, imperial doctor, and of the most serene Venetian prince Ferdinando, archduke of Austria. In the six books of Pedaccio Dioscoride, printed in Venice in the workshop of Vincenzo Valgarisi's heirs, 1573



Ca' Foscari
University
of Venice

Ca' Foscari



EASTWARD BOUND: MARCO POLO'S JOURNEY THROUGH CA' FOSCARI'S ARCHIVES

Advisor: **Eugenio Burgio**

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DISPLAY CASE 1 - The Royal College of Commerce looks to the East

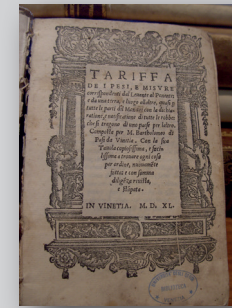
a. Between 1550 and 1557, the humanist Giovan Battista Ramusio edited three volumes of "Navigazioni et viaggi" (Voyages and travels), containing Western travellers' descriptions of Asia and the Americas written between the 13th and 16th centuries. The volume on display is the third Giunti edition of the second volume of this "best seller" of travel literature (published posthumously in 1559). The book contains Ramusio's version of the travels of Marco Polo, a text "that can be considered the foundation of the myth of Marco Polo" (E. Burgio). In 1871, the School's library was showcased at the Esposizione di Napoli. The section featuring prestigious volumes on travels, geography, and statistics highlighted the "famous edition of Ramusio (Giuntina, vol 3, in folio)". This volume is part of the Historical Collection's ANTICHI section, which was established through contributions from various patrons. You can virtually leaf through the volume, which is opened here on the front page, thanks to Phaidra.

b. This 1847 Italian edition of the Devisament du Monde was published by Ludovico Pasini (Schio 1804-1870), a Venetian patriot and geologist. Pasini was among the intellectuals who founded the Regio Istituto Veneto di Scienze Lettere e Arti. The editing (translated from French-Italian text transmitted from the Paris Codex fr. 1116) was entrusted to Vincenzo Lazari (Venice 1823 - 1864), a man of letters with a passion for philology and numismatics. Originally, part of the Geography section of the General Library was collectively transferred to the Historical Archive, which included ancient maps, atlases, portolan charts and rare books such as Cinquecentine. Later it was transferred to the current Gino Luzzatto Economics Library, where it is preserved in the Geography collection. The copy on display is particularly interesting because it was bound, probably between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, with a Japanese handbook published by Litografia Antonio Pellizzato. This printer published various lecture notes and teaching materials for the students of Ca' Foscari between 1895 and 1944. Why these 60 tables displaying the three alphabets used in Japanese (hiragana, katakana, kanji) were bound at the end of this edition of The Travels of Marco Polo remains to be ascertained, but we know that Japanese was first introduced as a university subject

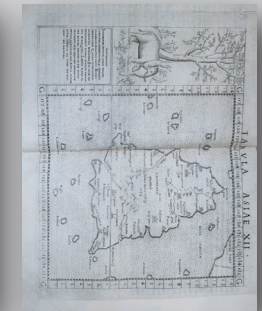
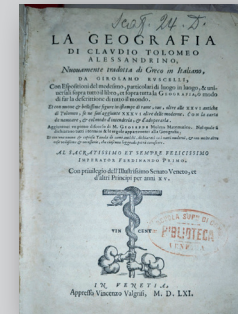
in Italy in 1873, here at the Royal College of Commerce in Venice. The first lecturer was Yoshida Yōsaku, who also worked as an interpreter at the Japanese Embassy in Venice and then as an official at the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo. The collection called "News and Data", which was presented at the Esposizione Nazionale in Milan in 1881, contained the syllabus prepared by Kawamura Kiyō, the third lecturer taking up the post.

c. This book, first published in 1503, was created by Bartolomeo Pasi, a mathematician active at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries. It was intended as a practical guide for Venetian merchants, providing price lists for various goods, details about weights and measures in different cities compared to those in Venice, information about taxes and recommended trade routes and means of transport. The Library acquired this valuable volume in 1916. Between 1908 and 1932, Pietro Rigobon, who was a member of the Library Board, took special care to add rare and prestigious pieces to the collections. The ex-libris on the cover indicates that this copy belonged to Pietro Roccardi (1828-1898), a mathematician from Modena who authored the bibliographical catalogue "Biblioteca matematica italiana" (1870-1891). Here, the volume is open on the first table, listing in alphabetical order the places and materials mentioned in the handbook with an indication of the page where they are described: a veritable index.

d. This is the first edition of Claudius Ptolemy's Geography (100-168 ca.) translated from Greek by the erudite Girolamo Ruscelli (1518-1566). The treaty is divided into eight books that explain the theoretical basis of mathematical geography and provide a detailed description of the known inhabited world (oecumene) at that time. It includes the latitudes and longitudes of more than 6000 places. This edition also includes maps of both the ancient world and the "new" world as it was known in the mid-16th century. The volume is currently located in the ANTICHI section of the Historical Collection. It was likely donated at the establishment of the Regia Scuola, as it is cited as a significant source for the "Geography" collection as early as 1871. You can see here Map XII of Asia, with the modern annotation by Ruscelli, who writes: "In this twelfth and last Map of Asia and of the entire volume of Ptolemy, the Island of Taprobana is described. Moderns today call it Samothra and say it is the largest island...".

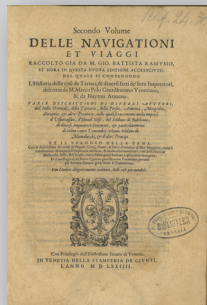


c. Tariff of corresponding weights and measures from the East to the West, and from one land to another ... Composed by Bartolomeo di Pasi from Venice. - In Venice, 1540 (In Venice, at the houses of Pietro di Nicolini from Sabbio, January 1540)



d. The Geography of Claudius Ptolemy from Alexandria, newly translated from Greek into Italian by Girolamo Ruscelli, with his descriptions and details from place to place, Venice, Vincenzo Valgrisi, 1561]

DISPLAY CASE 1



a. Second volume of voyages and travels, previously collected by Gio. Battista Ramusio, and enriched in this new edition... Venice, Giunti, 1574]



b. The travels of Marco Polo, translated for the first time from Rusticiano di Pisa's original French version, enriched with documents and illustrations by Vincenzo Lazari and published by Lodovico Pasini in 1847 with an Appendix in Japanese

DISPLAY CASE 2 - The Museo Merceologico: exploring goods and products

e. The old Ca' Foscari University Library was created at the foundation of what was then called the Royal College of Commerce, in 1868. At the time the library and the reading room were located on the first floor of Ca' Foscari, in the rooms overlooking the courtyard. The first-floor salone and two rooms overlooking the Grand Canal "[were] reserved for the Municipality in case [the authorities] want[ed] to make invitations to the shows parading on the Grand Canal". The second-floor hall overlooking the Grand Canal housed the Museo Merceologico (Commodity Science Museum). The Commodity Science Museum was modelled after a museum in Antwerp and received government subsidies from the beginning. Documents related to the Royal College of Commerce of Venice from 1868 to 1892 are in the Central State Archive (Ministry of Agriculture, Industry, and Commerce collection): funding for the Museo Merceologico is mentioned in correspondence from 1869 in the Accounts file. The university courses in geography, industrial statistics, and commodity economics were enriched by the samples on display at the Museo Merceologico. Additionally, the uni-