Shakespeare's Italy
Functions of Italian locations
in Renaissance drama

edited by Michele Marrapodi, A. J. Hoenselaars,
Marcello Cappuzzo and L. Falzon Santucci

1993

Manchester University Press
Manchester and New York

distributed exclusively in the USA and Canada by St. Martin's Press
a complex *machina theatralis*. Canals, bridges, buildings and various types of floating vessels opened up vistas and perspectives in a rich, natural and architectural scenery. Religious and civic festivals underlined everyday city life, while on special occasions Venice showed all its fascination by building festive structures and apparatuses. Every year on Corpus Christi Day a sumptuous procession gathered in St Mark’s Square; on Ascension Day, the marriage of the town to the sea was celebrated by the whole citizenship, which accompanied the Doge’s Bucintoro off the Grand Canal; a lot of other feast days dotted the year and offered opportunities for celebration. When foreign visitors arrived in town, Venice exhibited all its magnificence: in 1574 for Henry III, king of France, a loggia and a three-vaulted triumphal arch after Palladio’s drawings were raised at the Lido, so that ‘they could be enjoyed and admired by those who arrived there [...] because the watery perspective augmented the fascination of the structures’. Contemporary artists recorded the event in pictures and drawings, in the same way as they witnessed the solemn entry of the dogaressa Morosina Morosini Grimani in 1597. This lady arrived at the Palazzo Ducale on the Bucintoro, followed by hundreds of smaller boats and gondolas, while in front of St Mark’s Square a ‘teatro del mondo’ had been built on the water (based on Vincenzo Scamozzi’s drawing). The ‘theatre of the world’ was a floating circular apparatus made of timber and stucco, towed by ships or barges along the Grand Canal. Its origin goes back to the end of the fifteenth century; though its decorations had been modified, it nevertheless kept its round structure and its function as a scenographic apparatus, which had been invented to add special effects to the urban spectacle, mainly because of its mobility which affected the perspective of the city like an item of changeable scenery.

But the Venetian landscape of small squares, minor canals and narrow streets was also the scene against which popular (even aristocratic) entertainments were performed. There, mock fights with sticks and bullfights took place, street fools sang, mountebanks sold their goods, actors performed their *commedia improvvisa*, and masked people flowed by during Carnival. These are the sorts of entertainment that Giacomo Franco reproduced in his engravings. Carnival was the time during which popular festivals were concentrated. P. Molmenti states that it dates back to the end of the eleventh century and that masks are attested as early as 1268, in a document which prohibits them. But once disguise was allowed, masks became very
popular, so that 'mask makers prospered as to be able to found a special branch of the painters' guild'. On these occasions St Mark's Square itself was the main 'stage' on which maskers 'performed'. Nevertheless, they also used to sing serenades in the streets and to frequent minor sites. An engraving by Pietro Bertelli (1589) shows a company of masked people under some ladies' windows, in the act not of singing but of throwing 'odorous eggs'. A particularly noteworthy activity took place on Shrove Thursday: on a stage in the Piazzetta, near the Palazzo Ducale, built between two sets of steps for spectators – including the Doge – acrobats created high human pyramids of various shapes called 'Forze d'Ercole' (Hercules' Labours) to celebrate the Venetian victory over the Patriarch of Aquileia in 1164.

The local performance which kept its original flavour well into the sixteenth century, despite the development of 'regular' forms such as comedy and tragedy, is the momaria. Appearing in the fifteenth century when the first 'Compagnie della Calza' were formed, a momaria was a highly symbolic spectacle in which pageantry and lavish costumes were used. Music and dance played a relevant role in it, whereas, even if some lines were spoken, dramatic texts did not, a momaria being 'a secular pantomime, where the performers' movements were nearly always ruled by music, and where the language of gestures substituted words'. The 'Compagnie della Calza' were also responsible for the construction of the 'teatri del mondo', at least till 1564, when the 'Compagnia degli Accesi' built one of them ('the most complex one') in honour of Francesco Maria della Rovere, Duke of Urbino.

The status of Venice, as it appeared to the inner citizens and as it was exported abroad, certainly rested on the political system of the town, but it also resulted from the ample and complex visual machinery of its spectacular festivals. Venice the town was a set of multiple stages on which Venice the State acted its inward and outward politics.

2 Political and legal 'stages'

As stated above, the Republic's authorities were well aware of the power of public ceremonies to enhance both the interior and the exterior idea of the town as an ancient, independent, tolerant and righteous state. But the fame of Venice also rested on less ephemeral elements: actually what contributed to it, apart from the well-known status of Venetian commerce, was the legal system through which justice was administered and power controlled. As early as 1480 Bartholomew Glenville (Bartholomeus Anglicus) wrote:

Venetia itaque in Italia est provincia quae multarum terrarum et civilitatum dominium habuit ab antiquo in mari et in terra, cuius potestas hodie per longissimos maris protractus usque in Graeciam se extendit. Germanorum fines usque in Aquileiam tangit. Dalmatium et Sclavorum piratarum predam tyrannicam reprimit et compescaet. Insulas et portus, promonstoria maris et sinus sub eius domino existentes iustissime regit. Subditos protegit ab hostibus potentissime ac defendit. Rem publicam et civilem iustis legis subicit. [...] Huius gentis referre singulars probitates estimo superfluum, cum de gentis Venetorum virtute et potentia, circumspectione et prudentia, unitate civium et concordia, amore totius iustitiae et clementia omnibus fere nationibus iam sit notum."

The land of Venice is then an Italian province which has governed many a town and territory over land and sea since ancient times. Its present power reaches very distant places and extends as far as Greece. It touches the German land as far as Aquileia. It restrains and represses the tyranny of Dalmatian and Slavonian pirates. It reigns very righteously over islands, ports, and all promontories and creeks in its dominion. It protects and defends its subjects from their enemies with all its strength. It rules the commonwealth with equitable laws. [...] I deem it superfluous to report individual examples of the probity of its people, since almost all nations already know the virtue of the Venetian population; the circumspection, the prudence, the harmony and the unity of Venetian citizens, their love for complete justice and mercifulness. (my translation)

It is noteworthy that Glenville finds it superfluous to relate other details about Venice, since they are 'already known to all nations', and that he uses the word 'justice' (or its derivatives) three times in a relatively short passage. From the quotation we understand that by the end of the fifteenth century the fame of Venice had spread all over Europe and was defined mainly in terms of righteous power.

The government of the Republic was in the hands of a patrician oligarchy from which not only the Doge was chosen but also the members of the various administrative and judicial boards. The Doge was assisted and controlled by the two main groups of state magistracy, that is the Council of Ten and the 'Avogaria di comun', whose chief task was to see to the observance of the law:
To sum up [...] the opposition between the Council of Ten and the Avogaria, one could say that the Avogadori represent the law as a guarantee of justice and equality, whereas the Council of Ten represent the law as an expression of authority.\textsuperscript{14}

The legal procedures of these two levels of magistracy varied. The Avogadori held their trials publicly and defendants were allowed to have their own lawyers, who disputed with an ‘Avogadore di comin’ and were permitted to read the recorded proceedings of previous days. The Council of Ten, on the other hand, worked in an atmosphere of utmost secrecy and defendants were alone in front of the court, no lawyer being admitted. It is not difficult to believe that the procedure of the Venetian law administration that mainly appealed to foreigners was the Avogadori’s (especially after the Reformation, since the Council’s procedures too closely resembled those of the Inquisition). Foreigners admired the guarantees offered by a fair trial and the lively debates which took place in courts where ‘spectators’ were admitted and where the skilful oratory of both sides was to be witnessed.\textsuperscript{16}

While members of the Avogaria were patricians, lawyers came principally from the University of Padua, although a degree was not considered absolutely necessary. In any case the fame of Venetian judges ranked very high and they themselves were proud of their office, so much so that Pietro Bodoaro (a patrician lawyer at the end of the sixteenth century) wrote that ‘Venetian judge

\textit{vuol dire in linguaggio di ch’l conosce, giudice per disposizione di volontà giusto, per bontà d’animo incorrotto, per isperienza delle humane attioni prudente, per fede catolico, et per dolcezza et facilità di natura, di carità, di pietà et di misericordia ripieno.}\textsuperscript{17}

[The phrase ‘Venetian judge’] means, to those who understand the language, a judge righteous because of the disposition of his will, incorrupt because of his good-heartedness, prudent because of his knowledge of human actions, catholic because of his faith, and full of charity, piety, and mercy because of the ease and meekness of his nature. (my translation)

Of course we are allowed to doubt the truth of this flattering portrait, especially concerning the honesty of the judges and their unbrirability. In any case, this was the state of self-consciousness of those who worked inside the Venetian law courts, when they assembled robed in crimson velvet gowns trimmed with ermine.\textsuperscript{18}

3 The role of Venice in Shakespeare and Jonson

The solemn aspects of the administration of justice were part of the widespread idea of Venice: they contributed to the myth of the town in the same way as its private and public ceremonies. It is no wonder, then, that these two Venetian ‘spectacles’ were of great interest to the Elizabethan dramatists. Other Italian places were chosen by playwrights both to distastian the events of their plays from local English problems (and avoid censorship by doing so), and to reproduce a stereotyped idea of Italy as the land of corrupt power and lost glory. But many of these towns and cities (Ferrara, Padua, Naples, Parma, Florence and perhaps Rome itself) often lack authenticity on the Elizabethan stage: they are neutral locations, an ‘Italian anywhere’, so to speak, ready to justify the plots which take place in them. Venice, on the other hand, is used very specifically, even if differently, by both Shakespeare and Jonson, who know how to authenticate their ‘Venices’. In fact, only the knowledge (even if sometimes imprecise) of what makes Venice famous at the turn of the sixteenth century allows the two playwrights to render the town a protagonist of their plays, together with the \textit{dramatis personae}, and not simply a backdrop against which the action takes place.

The image of Venice which Shakespeare evokes in \textit{The Merchant of Venice} and \textit{Othello} stresses the multi-cultural dimension of the town, its worldwide commercial interests, its political role against the Turks in the Mediterranean and its equitable administration of justice. Venice is the place where different ethnic groups live together (though with reciprocal prejudices and racial hatred), where legal commerce ennobles citizens’ life and usury is censored, where law courts meet to judge private cases which have deep public and political implications. Jews are tolerated, Moors can reach the top of a military career, mixed marriages are celebrated, and European Christianity is upheld and defended. It would seem a utopian ideal, were it not cracked by obscure, individual flaws which spoil this idealistic vision. The government of the town, as it were, is represented as positive, righteous and far-sighted, whereas the behaviour of individuals shows hatred, jealousy, greed and vindictiveness. What Shakespeare compares is a public and a private image, the contrast between State politics and individual misbehaviour.

That Venice lives on international commerce reaching as far as the then-known world is clear from what Bassanio says about Antonio’s misfortunes.
VENICE: SPECTACLE AND POLIS

But is it true Salerio?
Hath all his ventures fail'd? what not one hit?
From Tripolis, from Mexico and England,
From Lisbon, Barbery and India
And not one vessel scape the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks?

City life itself articulates around streets, canals (a 'gondola' is mentioned in II.vii.8), the Ghetto and 'the Rialto'. This last place was not only the famous extant stone bridge but also a loggia nearby, where merchants assembled to discuss their transactions.³⁰ Actually it is the place from where the news about the fortune of ships spreads (I.iii.17 and 34; III.i.1), and where Shylock is abused by Antonio (I.iii.101–2).

Street revels are hinted at in II.v and II.vi, when Lorenzo abducts Jessica from her father's house. Even if the text calls it 'a masque' repeatedly, it resembles more a mummmaria, with revellers masked and disguised, leaving a private house and going along the streets. According to Shylock, these revels are accompanied by drum and fife music leading 'Christian fools with varnish'd faces' (II.v.33).

The primary focus in The Merchant of Venice, however, is the way in which justice is administered in the town. Trials have always been associated with spectacle as occasions on which orators wearing their rich robes show their ability to manipulate words and concepts.³¹ And English drama has always made skilful use of trial scenes since the 'Parliament of Heaven' episode in the N Town cycle and in The Castle of Perseverance. The highly dramatic potential of the trial against the Christian debtor is already present in the sources of The Merchant, especially in the novella from Il pescatore. However, the Italian story does not locate the trial inside the institutional magistracy (the dispute takes place in an inn) and does not involve any public authority. Shakespeare's court, on the other hand, is chaired by the Duke himself (the Doge) and 'magnificoes' act as judges, while the trial resembles one held by the Avogadori di comun. The historical impression of this situation is evident: the Doge was originally part of the Council of Ten, but in the sixteenth century he had already gradually lost his power over the other magistrates. The procedure followed seems to be that of a law case dealt with by the Avogadori, but incongruously located in a Council of Ten session. This typical Shakespearean inaccuracy does not affect the plot, since it focuses the play's attention on the law itself and on the role of Venice as a righteous distributor of justice.

Once more Venice and its sense of justice stand out as the judge, because, as Antonio stresses:

The duke cannot deny the course of law:
For the commodity that strangers have
With us in Venice, if it be denied,
Will much impeach the justice of the state,
Since that the trade and profit of the city
Consisteth of all nations.

The meeting in Othello (I.iii) is more similar to a Council of Ten session. The Duke and 'senators' are assembled to discuss matters of state and war, when Brabantio enters to have the Moor convicted of sorcery. There is no lawyer to defend Othello, as the defendant is alone in front of his accuser, nor is there any audience. There is nothing of the terrifying secrecy historically imputed to this Council, which, on the contrary, is shown by Shakespeare as humane and just. Other details of Venetian life do not appear in the tragedy, but here, too, the town has a well-defined role as a benevolent character in charge of its citizens' well-being. Therefore, it is no wonder that Othello, in order to divert his controllers' attention in the last scene and to kill himself, 'performs' a short play where he acts as a defender of Venetian honour by killing a Turkish slanderer.

When, during the 1986–87 season, the Compagnia del Teatro Eliseo performed Volpone, directed by Gabriele Lavia, the first scenes of the second act were expunged and Scoto the Mountebank's speech ending with Celia's courtship was replaced by a scene in a church where she was shown holding a love letter from Volpone.³² In doing this, the performance eliminated the most Venetian of all episodes and it transformed the play into a cynical and satirical fable about human greed 'for all places'. All other Venetian hints were also abolished, while the setting was a type of dark gold mine containing Volpone's bed. But Jonson had not chosen Venice as the place for his play haphazardly: the dramatist reversed Shakespeare's idealistic view of the town, which, through the mirror of private affairs, appears to be the den of general corruption.

What in Shakespeare is a multi-cultural society becomes in Jonson's Volpone a bad example which foreigners come to imitate. Lady
Would-Be is in Venice to learn a courtesan’s ways, and her husband is proud to be taken ‘for a citizen of Venice’ (IV.ii.8). The law is continually neglected and justice corrupted. Law courts and their ‘Avocatori’, as well as lawyers, far from being righteous, are subject to corruption. Merchants are selfish and sell their wives; patricians are depraved. Old ‘magnificoes’ are gullied and new upstarts centre on stage. In this town, ‘riches, the dumb god that giv’st all men tongues’ (I.i.22) represents the only value, barren in itself since there is no Bassanio asking for money to court a lady. Romance is impossible here, even between Celia and Bonario, since they are too naïve. But this is Venice, nevertheless. It is the town where the problem of money has become urgent, where since the 1530s to obtain wealth has been a state business and a political tool. Marin Sanudo tells in his Diaries that on the pageants built in 1526 to celebrate the Cognac League the following sentences were written: ‘Aurum belii materia’, ‘Per aurum victoria’, ‘Obediunt omnia pecuniae’. In this society gold and money were the means of obtaining public offices.

Discussing Jonson’s choice of Venice as the setting for Volpone, Dutton highlights the role of the Italian town in the first decade of the seventeenth century as ‘middle ground in the struggle between the Protestants and the Catholics in the Counter-Reformation’, since ‘the city was Catholic but maintained its independence of the Papacy and of other Catholic powers to such an extent that Sir Henry Wotton, an English ambassador at this time, even entertained hopes of its turning Protestant’. The dramatist’s decision to set the action in Venice would answer a hope of English diplomacy on the one hand, and, on the other, offer, as ever, a safer ground for satire and parody.

However, Jonson’s Venetian setting was not only ‘exotic and fantastic’, that is exotic to avoid censorship, and fantastic because unrealistic. His Venice retains much of the real town’s characteristics, especially its spectacularity, even if seen by a more disillusioned eye. Presenting a long and intriguing series of disguises, the play often focuses on the town’s spectacles of disguise which mingle with the plot. The mountebank scene takes place in the ‘Piazza’ (St Mark’s Square), near ‘the Portico to the Procuratura’ (II.ii.36), that building already provided with arches even before the new addition by Vincenzo Scamozzi in the second half of the sixteenth century. It is the ‘Serenissima’s maximum “theatre”, where mountebanks and street players usually performed. A character of the *commedia dell’arte* is explicitly mentioned, namely *zanni* (II.ii), the nickname for ridiculous male servants of Pantalone, the ‘magnifico’ in the *scenari*. When Volpone disguised as Scoto enters to start his performance, he orders Nano to mount the trestle stage calling him ‘Zany’ (II.i.28). Later Nano is addressed as ‘Zan Fritada’, when asked to ‘sing a verse’ (lines 114–15). It is worth noticing that one of Giacomo Franco’s engravings is devoted to these daily Venetian performances: in it, with the title ‘Intartenimento che dano ogni giorno li Ciarlatani in Piazza di S. Marco al Populo d’ogni naizone [ ... ]’, musicians, masked *commedianti* of the *commedia improvvisa* and quacks can be seen performing even on the same raised platform, surrounded by people. An old Pantalone is portrayed in the foreground while possibly courting a lady. Actually it could be an illustration to the third scene of the second act of Volpone.

Famous Venetian authorities are also mentioned in the play: there seems to be no Doge in Jonson’s Venice, but the ‘Great Council’ (Maggior Consiglio?), ‘the Forty’ (Quarantia), ‘the Ten’ (Council of Ten) are quoted as the addressees of Sir Politic’s plans ‘unto the state of Venice’ (IV.i.71–5).

Jonson’s text gives ample space to the administration of justice by locating two great scenes in a Venetian court (IV.v and V.x). The playwright is well aware of the dramatic and theatrical power of legal cases, and employs it skillfully in both episodes. Volpone’s trial seems to take place during an Avogadori session, not only because the judges are called ‘Avocatori’ in the speech headings but because the defendant is represented by an ‘advocate’. The justice administered by this court – even if, in the end, truth triumphs – is severely impaired by the Avocatori’s gullibility and by their inclination to value money above everything. Venetian justice, notwithstanding Pietro Bodoaro’s self-confident words quoted above, has degenerated in its theatrical reproduction as well.

Jonson, too, appears inaccurate: in fact, in 1571 an act had been approved which gave the Council of Ten (and not the Avogadoria) the power to decide about all patricians’ cases. But, as with Shakespeare, this is not the kind of verisimilitude requested of a playwright. Both Shakespeare and Jonson understood the relevance of Venice in European culture and the fascination of its being a ‘theatre of the world’. The idea of Venice resulting from their plays keeps to international stereotypes about the town. However, both playwrights used this idea functionally: Venice was a kind of imperfect Utopia for Shakespeare, for Jonson its grotesque reversal. Theatricality was already there (in the streets, squares and law courts) as an inherent
quality of the town. Venice was for them an active background for narratives that had to, and actually did, interact with its reality.

Notes
6 Molmenti, La storia di Venezia, 1, 1910, p. 255.
7 Molmenti, La storia di Venezia, 1, 1910, p. 256 (my trans.).
8 The engraving is reproduced in Molmenti, La storia di Venezia, 2, p. 60.
9 The ‘Forze d’Ercole’, too, are reproduced in one of Franco’s prints. In it the human pyramid stands out against the lagoon background and, particularly, the two columns marking the land’s end.
10 The ‘Compagnie della Calza’ were not formed by professional actors, but by aristocratic youths who, united by a special ‘coat of arms’ embroidered on their stockings, gathered to offer spectacles both on private and on public occasions. Marin Sanudo, in his Diaries testifies to ceremonies such as nuptials which were celebrated with momerie as early as the end of the fifteenth century.
13 In a widely discussed document dated about 1561 Alvise Cornaro advanced his ideas ‘per conservare la virginità a questa mia cara patria et il nome di Reina del mare’ (‘so that this dear country of mine may preserve its virginity and the title of Queen of the sea’). Among minor proposals, he suggested that a ‘Theatro di pietra grande’ (‘a large stone theatre’) should be built in the lagoon, so that ‘tale edificio si vederà commodamente stando nella piazza di San Marco e sarà un bellissimo vedere’ (‘this building will easily be seen by those standing in St Mark’s Square, a wondrous sight’). The new vista should also have been enriched by ‘una fontana di acqua dolce viva e pura’ (‘a lively and pure fresh-water fountain’) and by ‘un monte’ (‘a mountain’), to be created as two artificial islands (the document is reproduced in M. Tafuri, Venezia e il Rinascimento, Turin, 1985, Appendice, pp. 242–3). M. Tafuri observes that, according to Cornaro’s ideal, ‘the emersion of a theatre all’antica from the water of the lagoon would have underlined the link between the specific spectacularity of the town and antiquarian culture. As a place for spectacles, the theatre itself would have become a spectacular object’ (ibid., p. 286; my trans.). On Venice as a ‘virgin city’, see McPherson, pp. 33–4.
15 G. Cozzi, Repubblica di Venezia e stati italiani politica e giustizia dal secolo XVI al secolo XVIII, Turin, 1982, p. 100 (my trans.).
18 Cf. ‘Tre Avogadori di Comun e tre notai’ (end of the sixteenth century), a picture painted by Paolo de’ Freschi, Venice, Palazzo Ducale.
20 Also Coryat, in his Crudities (2 vols, London, 1611), endorses this piece of information (1, p. 512). An idea of what the Rialto looked like may be grasped from Vittore Carpaccio’s Miracolo della croce (1494, Venice, Gallerie dell’Accademia) where both the ancient wooden bridge and the loggia are portrayed.
21 I will not discuss here the relationship between drama and trial, nor the often analysed trial scene in the play. See C. Dente, La recita del diritto saggio su ‘The Merchant of Venice’, Pisa, 1986.
22 The title role was played by Tino Carraro, Mosca by Umberto Orsini;
scenery and costumes were designed by Paolo Tommasi.


Dutton discusses the relationship between Volpone, the Gunpowder Plot and Lord Salisbury (pp. 147–8, and 151–3).


I have dealt with the problems of the play as a continuous performance of disguising in ‘Volpone di Ben Jonson: la teatràlità della simulazione’, Rivista di Letterature Moderne e Comparative, 45, 4, 1990.

Tafuri, Venezia e il Rinascimento, p. 226.

‘Franciscina’ (Franceschina) and ‘Pantalone di Besogniosi’ (de’ Bisognosi) are the commedia dell’arte characters quoted later by Corvino in II.iii.4 and II.iii.8, when he stops Scoto’s speech. For the use of commedia dell’arte characters in Jonsonian masques, and especially for the relationship between Inigo Jones’s costumes and the Italian/Venetian dramatic practice, see K. Richards, ‘Inigo Jones and the Commedia dell’arte’, in The Commedia dell’Arte from the Renaissance to Dario Fo, ed. C. Cairns, Lewiston, 1989.


The idea of Venice in Shakespeare and Ben Jonson

Leo Salingar

By the early seventeenth century imaginary foreign settings were very familiar on the English stage. An Italian court was the favoured setting for Jacobean tragedies of intrigue and revenge. And from the last years of Shakespeare’s career, from about 1610 onwards, when peaceful relations had been resumed with Spain and Spain’s cultural prestige was gaining ground, John Fletcher and others were beginning to turn to Spanish short-story writers, notably Cervantes, as previously they had turned to Italians, to furnish them with raw material for plots. Several of their comedies of romantic adventure are derived from one or a couple of Spanish novelas and were set in Spanish cities, for example The Spanish Gypsy (1623) by Middleton and Rowley, where the action, combining two stories by Cervantes, takes place in or near Madrid; or Fletcher’s Rule a Wife and Have a Wife (1624), set in Valladolid. These and similar plays capture something of the spirit of Spanish cape-and-sword romances. Again, the action of Middleton and Rowley’s outstanding tragedy, The Changeling (1622), is derived mainly from an English but partly also from a Spanish narrative source and is set in Alicante. But although these nominally Spanish or nominally Italian plays contain allusions to national manners and carry some local or topical references, none of them builds up a distinct impression of a particular foreign city. The sense of place in them is vague and generalised. In contrast, our impression of Venice is distinctive and strong in Shakespeare’s The Merchant of Venice (produced about 1596), in Othello, the Moor of Venice (1604) and in Ben

11

*This article is the second of two papers on ‘Images of Europe on Shakespeare’s Stage’, read at Paris in September 1991 in the International Seminar on Image de l’Europe des nations sur scène organised for the Council of Europe by the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. The text, with a change of title, is published here by courtesy of the CNRS.