

Venetian Opera 1660-1760

Theatrical Activity

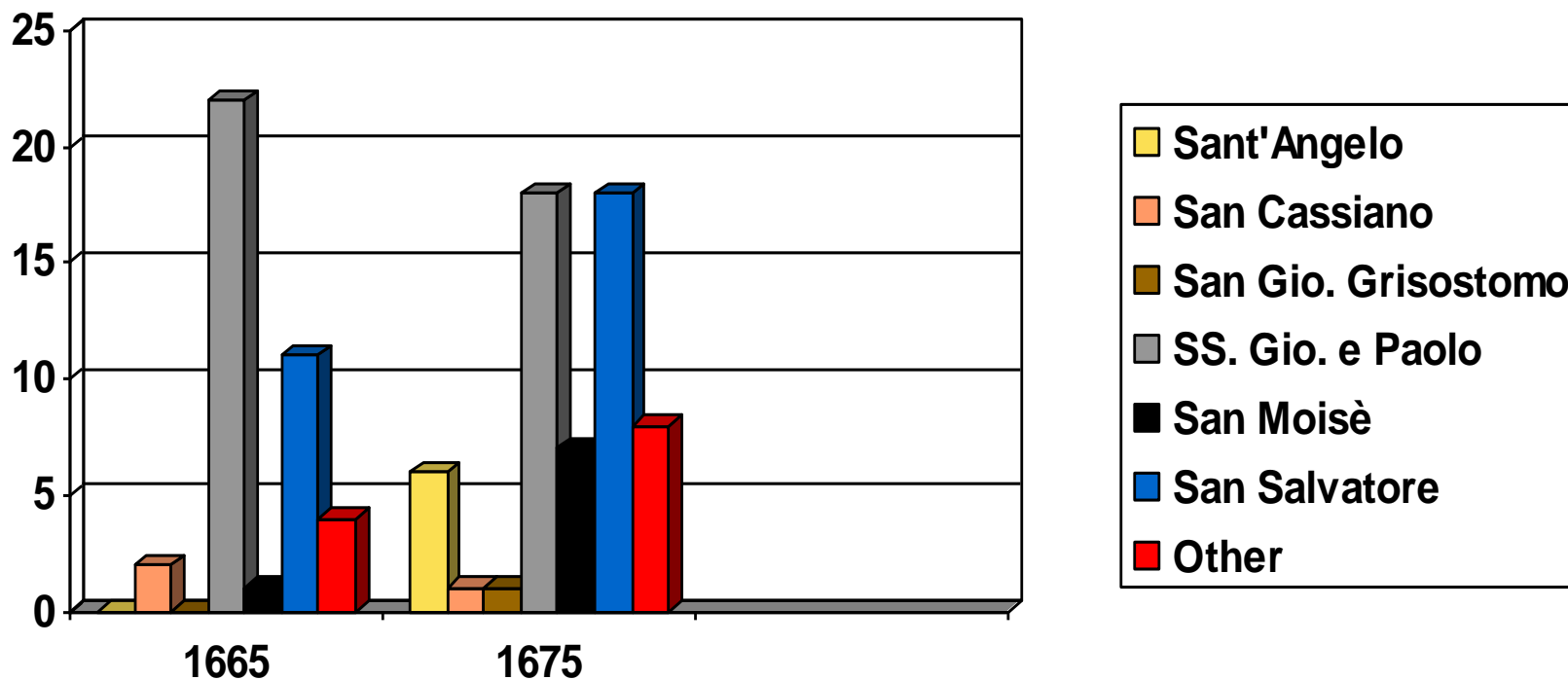
2024 Eleanor Selfridge-Field

Venetian Opera (1660-1760)

Theatrical Activity

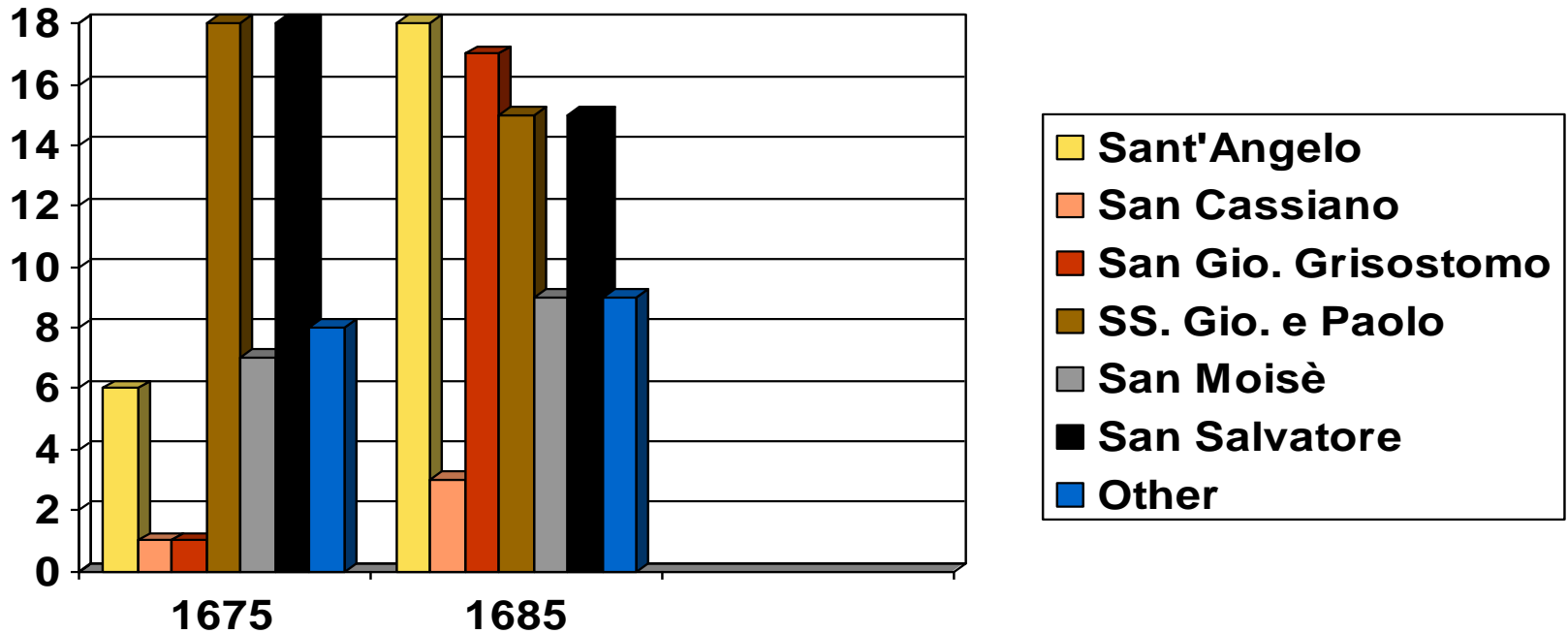
- Eight hundred eighty-nine operas (889) were staged in Venice over this century.
- Many operas ran for three weeks, some for two, some for only a day or two.
- Estimated number of performances = *c*1,778.
- Graphs show how contributions rose and fell from one theater to another.
- These charts bring context to individual composers, genres, and patronage.

Venetian opera 1660s vs 1670s



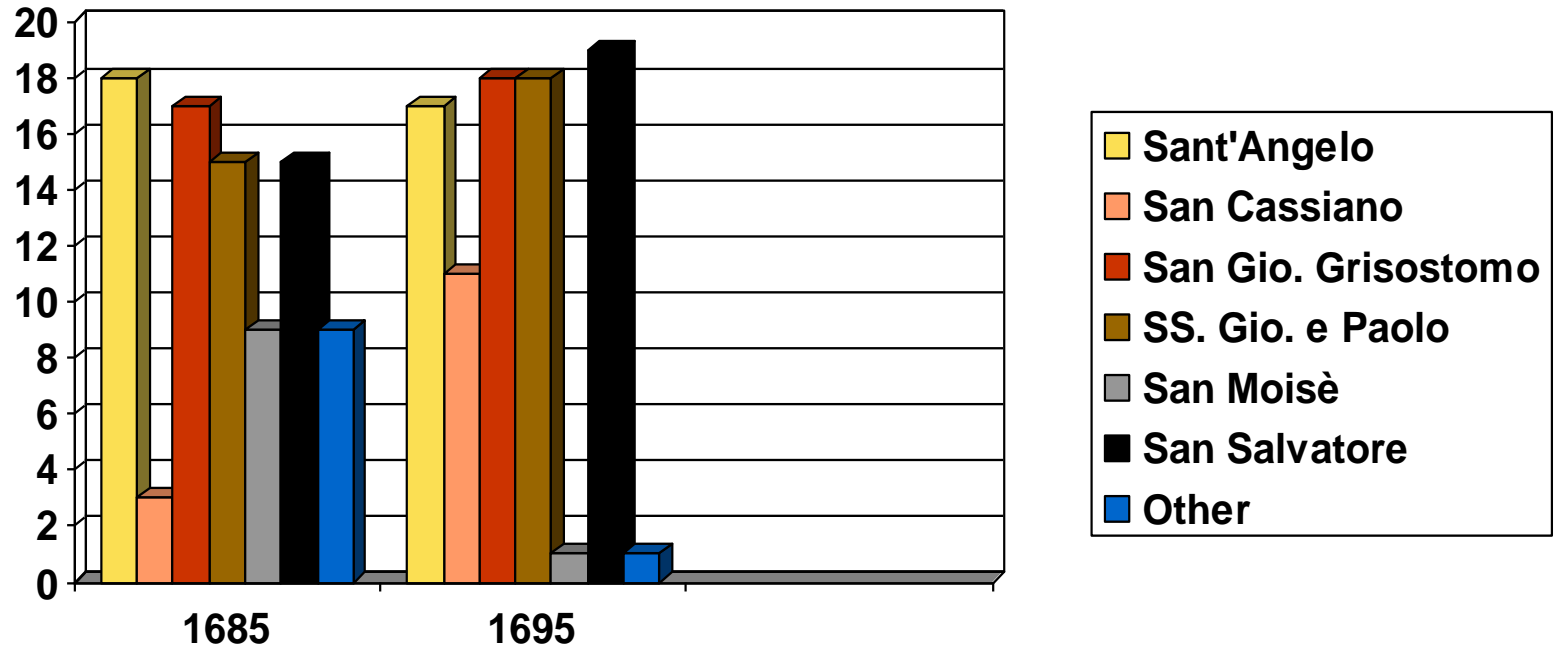
Dates (e.g.1665) show **median** year of each decade.
San Salvatore grew quickly from its opening in 1661.

Venetian opera 1670s vs 1680s



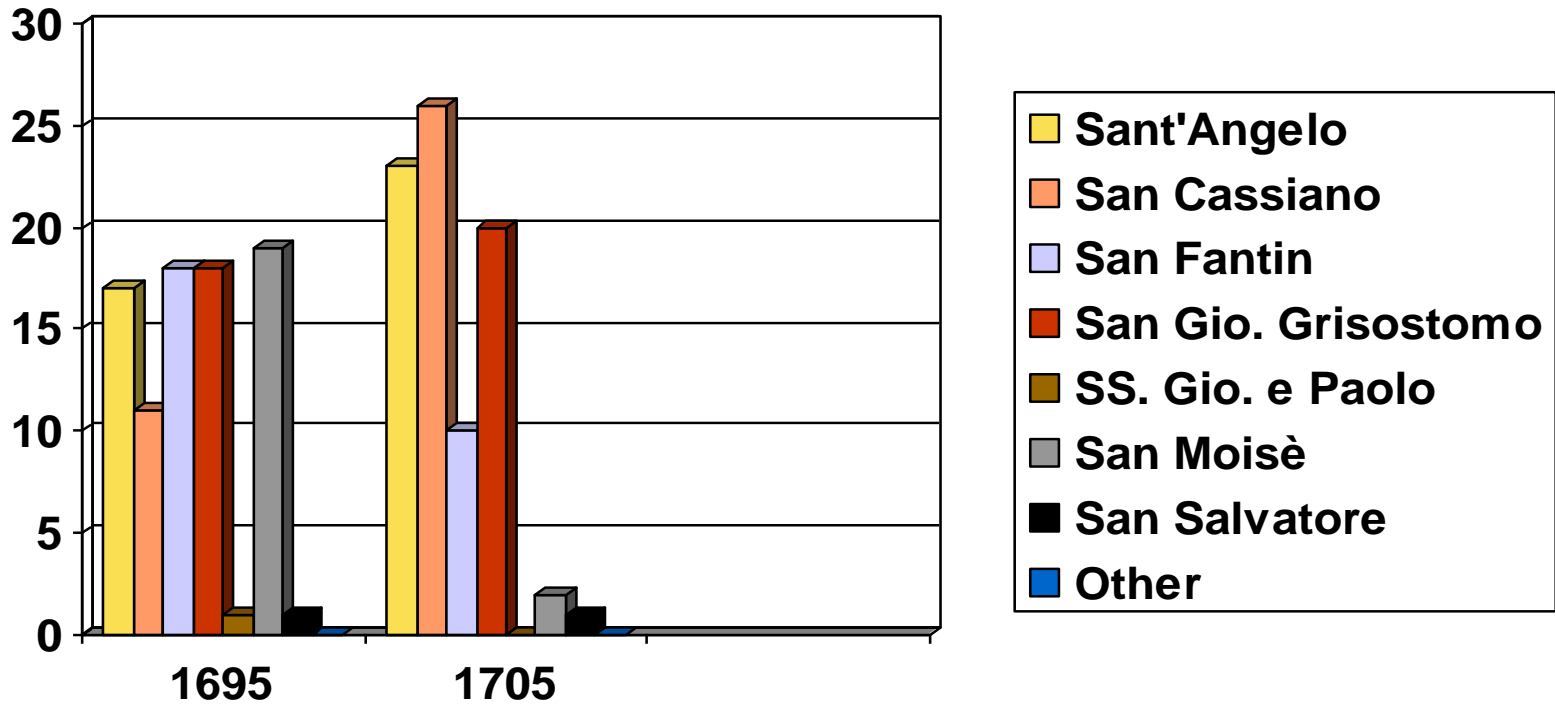
The most active theater in the 1670s was SS. Giovanni e Paolo. Sant'Angelo and San Gio. Grisostomo opened in 1677 and 1678.

Venetian opera 1680s vs. 1690s



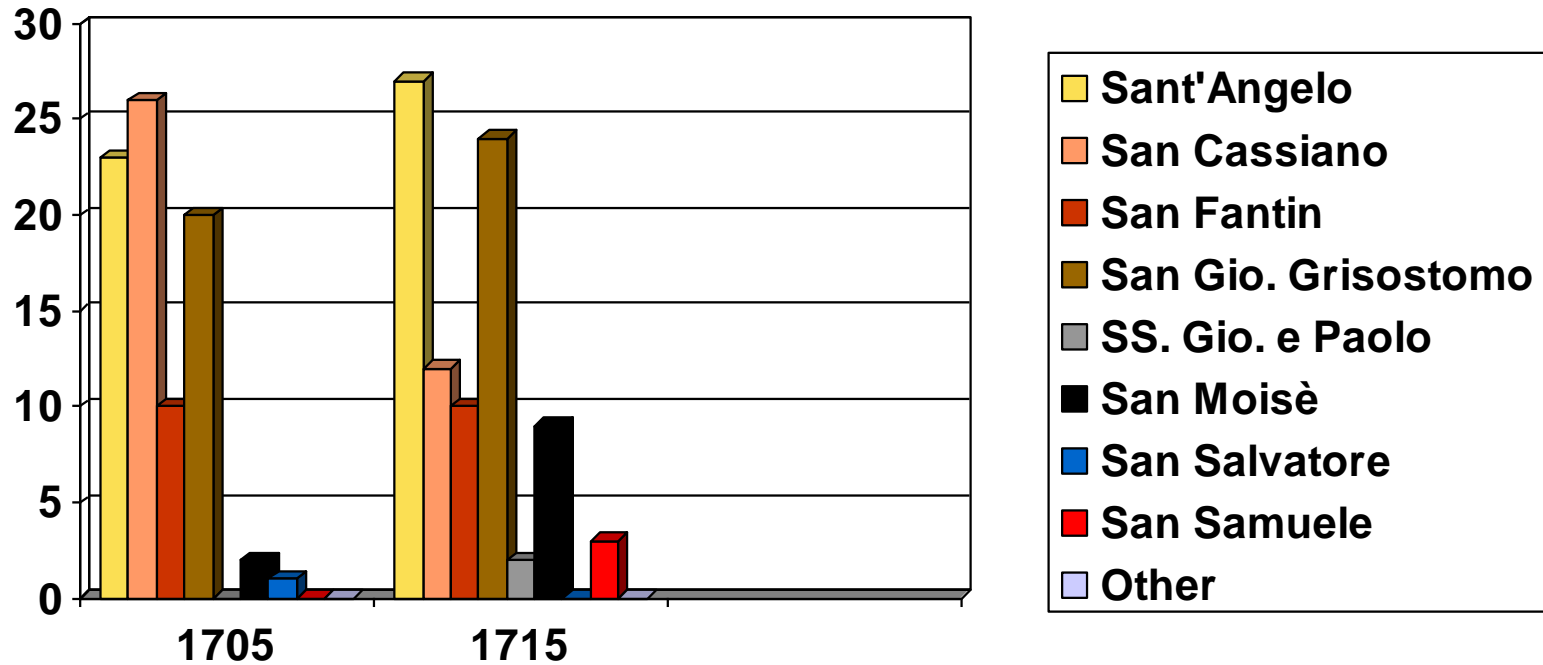
San Cassiano blinked on and off several times.

Venetian opera 1690s vs 1700s



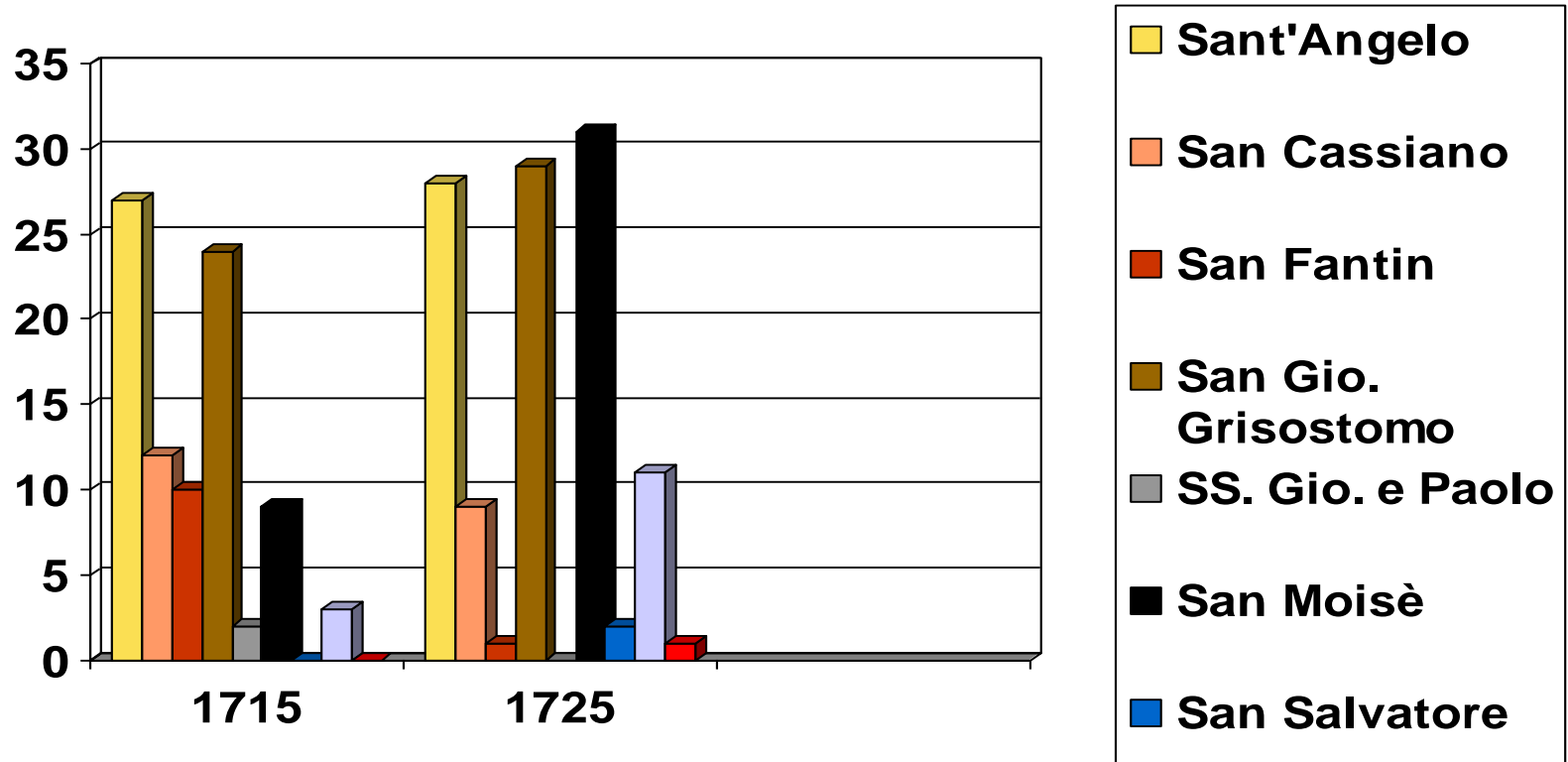
San Cassiano fared well in the difficult 1700s.

Venetian opera 1700s vs 1710s



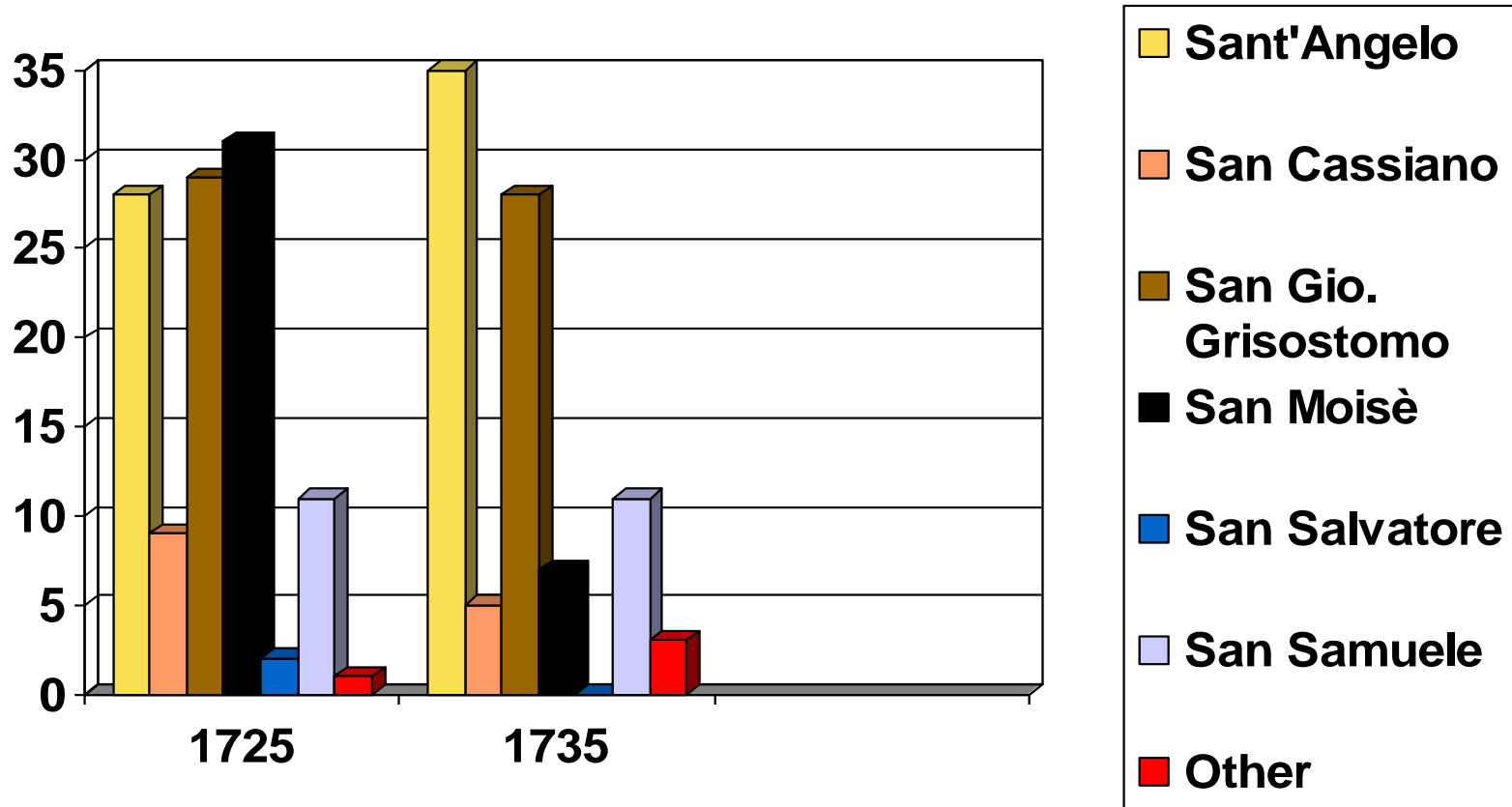
Sant'Angelo eclipsed San Gio. Grisostomo in the 1710s, as the Grimani turned their attention from San Gio. Grisostomo to San Samuele, a theater that gave comedies in one season and lighter operas in another.

Venetian opera 1710s vs 1720s



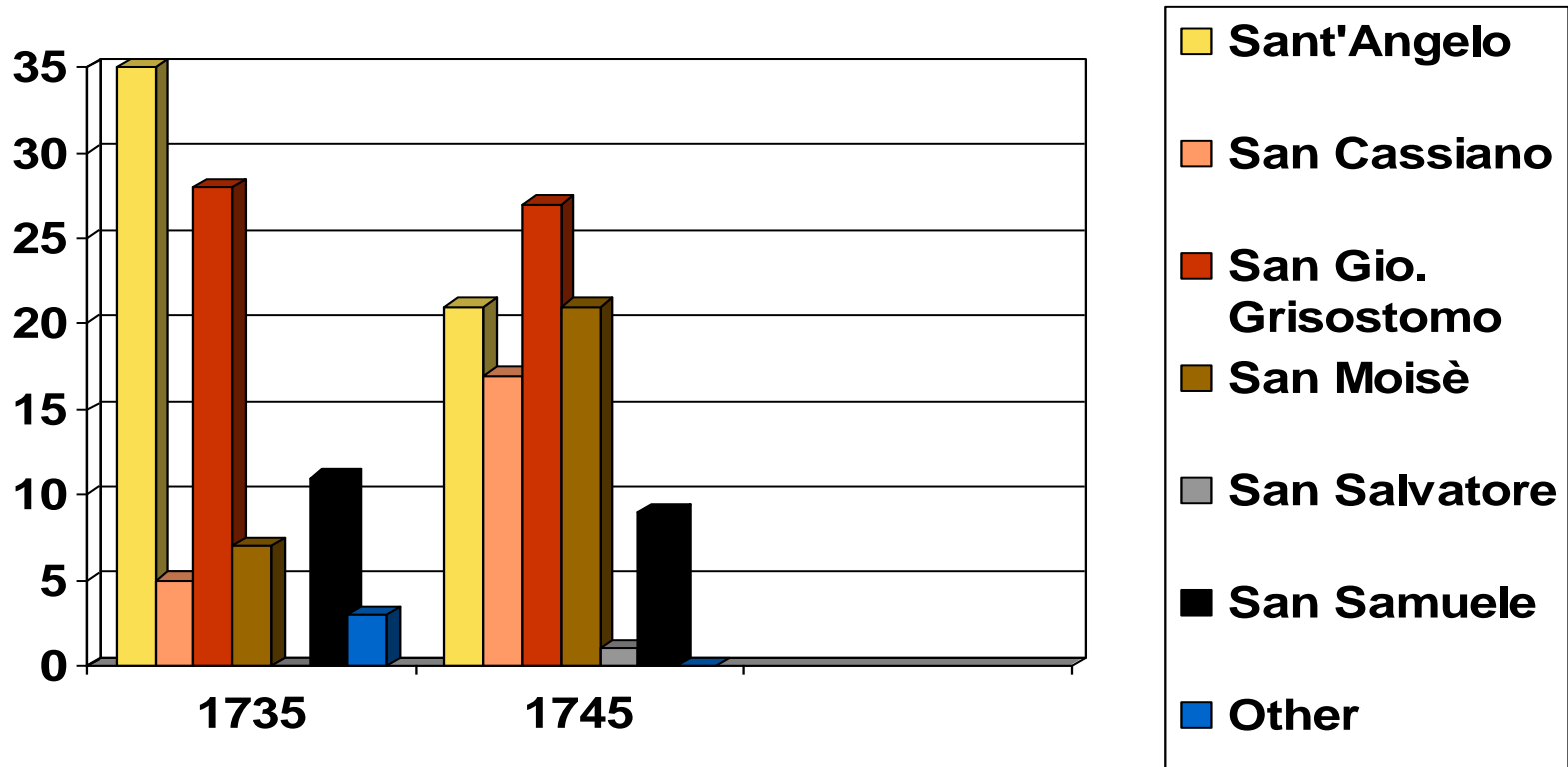
San Moisè, which had operated intermittently for decades, was very active in the 1720s.

Venetian opera 1720s vs 1730s



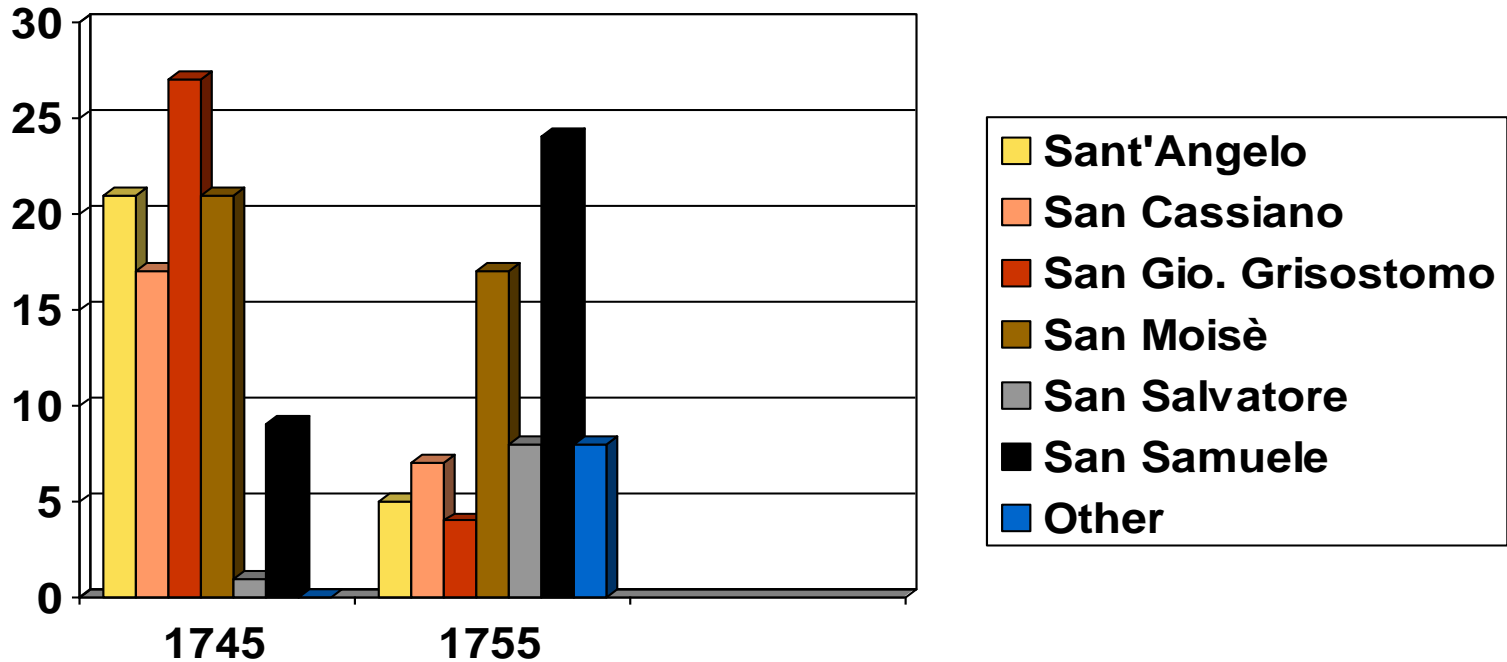
The later 1720s and early 1730s were highly successful because of an increase in visitors from Britain and growing Hapsburg domains.

Venetian opera 1730s vs 1740s



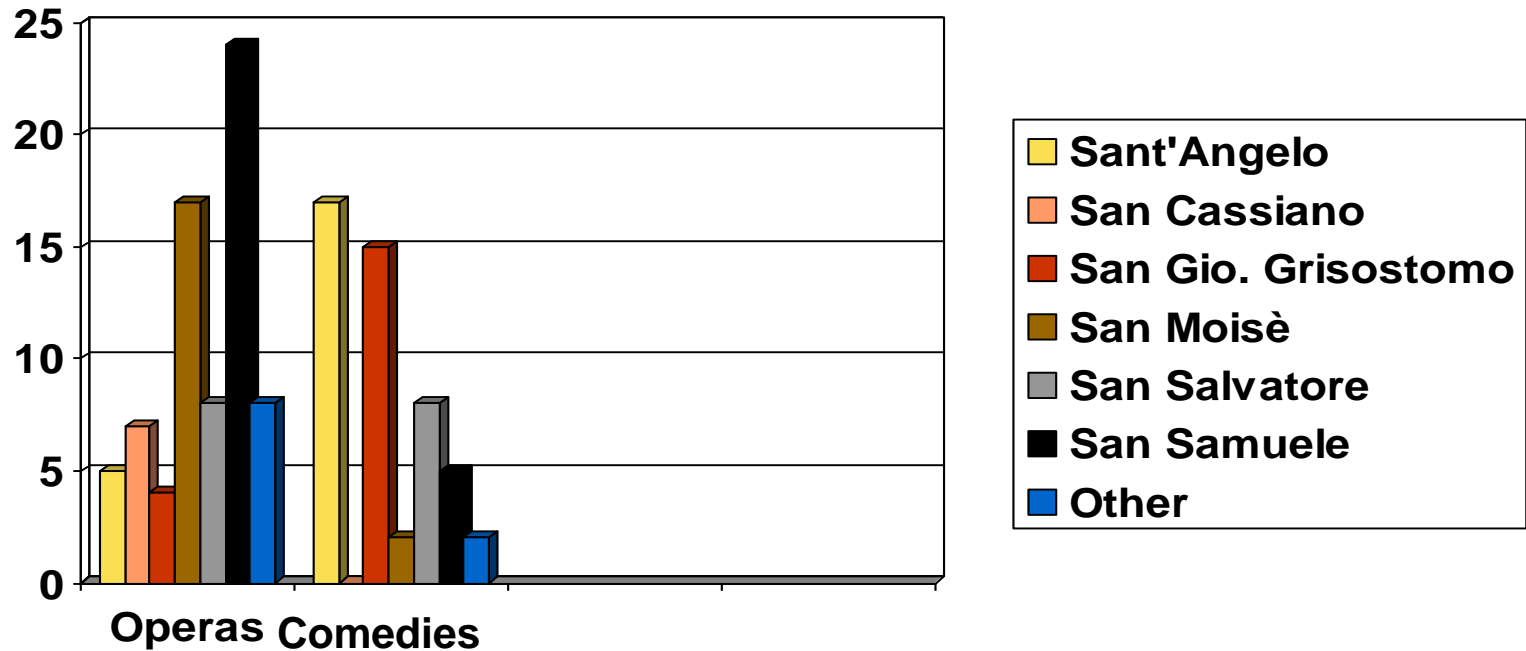
Despite a huge increase in visitors from Saxony and Naples around 1740, famine and war in Central Europe reduced demand for opera.

Venetian opera 1740s vs. 1750s



Rising interest in prose comedy and the *opera buffa* in the 1740s led to a sharp decline in the *dramma per musica* by the 1750s.

1750s Operas vs 1750s Comedies



Here we compare operas (all kinds) with prose comedies by Goldoni and others in the 1750s.

Further information:

- *The New Chronology of Venetian Opera and related genres, 1660-1760* (Stanford University Press, 2007).
- *Song and Season: Science, Culture, and Theatrical Time in Early Modern Venice* (Stanford University Press, 2007).