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MARE NOSTRUM? REFORM, RECRUITMENT  
AND THE BUSINESS OF CRUSADE IN THE FLEETS  
OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY MEDITERRANEAN\*

The seventeenth century Mediterranean was dominated by the business of crusade. Fleets proved disastrously expensive, and few states could sustain the cost of war. Galleys may have been much more effective than the old paradigm holds, and fortresses often proved disastrously ineffective. Fleets operated under the paradox that they were both a projection of the ruler's pact with the Almighty and a business opportunity. The Mediterranean was not abandoned in the *Seicento*, although the fighting revealed the paradox that in order to campaign against the enemy it was necessary to trade with him.

Business of war, crusade, galleys, *gazi*, seventeenth century Mediterranean

Nel corso del XVII secolo, il Mediterraneo fu dominato dal *business* della crociata. Le flotte si rivelarono enormemente dispendiose e pochi stati potevano sostenere il costo della guerra. Le galere risultarono ben più efficaci di quanto dicano i luoghi comuni storiografici, mentre le fortezze sovente si dimostrarono del tutto inutili. Paradossalmente, le flotte erano al contempo la proiezione del patto stretto dai governanti con l'Onnipotente e un'occasione per fare affari. Il Mediterraneo non fu affatto abbandonato nel Seicento, sebbene dal conflitto emerge il paradosso che, per poter combattere il nemico, era necessario commerciare con esso.

*Business* della guerra, crociata, galee, *gazi*, Mediterraneo seicentesco

The history of the galleys of the Mediterranean in the seventeenth century represented the business of crusade. Oared warships were maintained and deployed as part of a form of war undertaken in the service of the Almighty and celebrated as such in both the Christian

\* This paper is dedicated to the late Robert Oresko (1947-2010) in gratitude for his efforts in encouraging scholarship into the history of the dynastic states of the Italian peninsula in the early modern period.

and Islamic traditions. Yet nearly every aspect of their administration, from the recruitment of men and the purchase of biscuit to the final aims or ambitions, was governed by a financial rationale of one sort or another. Galleys therefore existed under the paradox of being both a sacred representation of their ruler's pact with Providence and a business opportunity. Nearly all the maritime states of the Mediterranean entrusted their military-financial systems to *munitioinaires*, financiers, corsairs and even, within Islamic tradition, *gazis*. While the commitment of these groups to the public good was, at best, open to debate, the experience of warfare tended to lead to the conclusion that alternative models of mobilisation were extremely unlikely to function, in large part because of the underlying financial problems experienced by these polities, which were never less than serious and often critical. Yet the fighting in the *Mare Nostrum* often turned on a deeper contradiction or tension: in the first place, war tended to interrupt a vast amount of peacetime 'interconnectivity' (to borrow Nicholas Purcell and Peregrine Horden's term); however, the dislocation of trade could only last for so long, as in the medium or long term conflict demonstrated that in order to campaign against the enemy it was necessary to trade with him, problematic though this often proved to be<sup>1</sup>. Venice, in fact, seems to have sustained extremely high losses to its Levantine commerce in the 1680s and 1690s, at precisely the moment that it was participating in successful campaigns against the Ottoman Turk as a member of the Holy League formed

<sup>1</sup> On the *asentistas*, see D. PARROTT, *The Business of War. Military Enterprise and Military Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge 2012; on crusades, N. HOUSEY, *The Later Crusades. From Lyons to Alcazar, 1274-1580*, Oxford and New York 1992; G. POUMARÈDE, *Pour en finir avec la Croisade. Mythes et réalités de la lutte contre les Turcs au XVI<sup>e</sup> et XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles*, Paris 2004. For different overviews of the history of the *Mare Nostrum*, P. HORDEN, N. PURCELL, *The Corrupting Sea. A Study of Mediterranean History*, Oxford and Victoria 2000; D. PANZAC, *La marine ottoman. De l'apogée à la chute de l'Empire (1572-1923)*, Paris 2009; F. BRAUDEL, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the age of Philip II*, translated by S. Reynolds, London 1972; K.M. SETTON, *Venice, Austria and the Turks in the Seventeenth Century*, Philadelphia 1991. On legitimisation and representative culture the best place to start is R. ORESKO, *The House of Savoy in search for a royal crown in the seventeenth century*, in *Royal and Republican Sovereignty in Early Modern Europe. Essays in memory of Ragnhild Hatton*, edited by R. Oresko, G.C. Gibbs and H.M. Scott, Cambridge, New York and Melbourne 1997, pp. 272-350. On galleys and fortresses in the Cinquecento, A. PACINI, «*Desde Rosas a Gaeta*». *La costruzione della rotta spagnola nel Mediterraneo occidentale nel secolo XVI*, Milano 2013; on naval strategy, P. PI CORRALES, *Felipe II y la lucha por el dominio del mar*, Madrid 1989.

by Pope Innocent XI in 1684. In these cases corsairs from Tripoli took advantage of their involvement in the official fleet mobilisations to seize rich freighters and merchantmen sailing back to the Rialto from Alexandria and other *entrepôts* in the Levant. Fighting against your principal trading partner was, indeed, a risky business<sup>2</sup>. One of the reasons for the prevalence of piracy and raiding in the inland sea was, paradoxically, the extraordinary extent and range of trade across political and religious borders.

The wars of the seventeenth century had a dramatic impact upon the states of the Mediterranean, which in nearly all cases incurred enormous debts that seriously prejudiced their day-to-day functioning and, indeed, their long-term health. From 1640 the costs of war had shackled Castile and Naples into a negative spiral of debt financing: from this point, simply meeting existing debts took up huge chunks of the revenues available to the governments of these vital kingdoms<sup>3</sup>. France was encumbered with very similar problems by 1715<sup>4</sup>. So high were its peacetime military costs that from 1620 Venice began to use foreign merchants to secure the loans necessary to maintain its administrative and diplomatic systems, a concession which ushered in far-reaching changes in its financial and economic organisation<sup>5</sup>. Later wars may have accelerated this process, as the rise in the cost of fighting was spectacular<sup>6</sup>. From 1695 the Ottoman Empire, caught in what might be termed a fiscal black-hole, introduced a system based on tax farming which was to transform the entire character of the relations between the central state and the provincial elites, who subsequently «developed their own new world»<sup>7</sup>. Even Safavid Persia, which had enjoyed relative peace and stability since

<sup>2</sup> G. CANDIANI, *I vascelli della Serenissima. Guerra, politica e costruzioni navali a Venezia in età moderna, 1650-1720*, Venezia 2009, pp. 406-407.

<sup>3</sup> D. MAFFI, *En defensa del imperio. Los ejércitos de Felipe IV y la guerra por la hegemonía europea (1635-1659)*, Madrid 2014, pp. 499-509. On the effects of financial policy on Spanish society, A. MARCOS MARTÍN, *España en los Siglos XVI, XVII y XVIII. Economía y Sociedad*, Barcelona 2000, pp. 159-162.

<sup>4</sup> G. ROWLANDS, *The Financial Decline of a Great Power. War, Influence, and Money in Louis XIV's France*, Oxford and New York 2012.

<sup>5</sup> M. FUSARO, *Cooperating mercantile networks in the early modern Mediterranean*, «Economic History Review», 65 (2012), 2, pp. 701-718.

<sup>6</sup> For the astronomical levels of expenditure during its last major conflict, CANDIANI, *I vascelli*, p. 534.

<sup>7</sup> K. BARKEY, *Empire of Difference. The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge and New York 2008, pp. 229-236.

1639, found its finances in desperate straits at the accession of the last Shah, Husain I (1694-1722)<sup>8</sup>.

All states, therefore, suffered major instabilities and failures as a result of the wars of the *Seicento*. Some time ago R.A. Stradling pointed out that there was no link or correlation between the foreign and military policy of Spanish Monarchy and its financial health<sup>9</sup>. This line of thinking might be taken considerably further: in fiscal terms, all of the major Mediterranean states did more than flirt with financial catastrophe. All powers, and not only those deemed to be successful or on the ascendant, were living beyond their means: the 'decline paradigm' is dangerous when applied arbitrarily to polities such as Safavid Persia or Venice<sup>10</sup>. Far from witnessing a 'military revolution' that saw the decisive subjugation of society by the well-ordered police state, the impact of military developments on government and society in Europe was in fact profoundly ambiguous and contradictory<sup>11</sup>. In the first place the 'financial revolution' was surprisingly difficult to delineate. «One of the most striking aspects of the Republic of Genoa during the "Genoese century" is its chronic shortage of funds»<sup>12</sup>. Early modern financial systems remain bafflingly difficult to understand. Between 1573 and 1588 the City of Seville loaned the crown more than 3.1 million ducats. The City itself actually enjoyed an annual income of around 40,000 ducats in this period<sup>13</sup>. The costs of 'legitimation' were extraordinary. It has been calculated that nearly 10% of the entire budget of the Ottoman Empire was spent on robes of honour in 1683, the year of Sultan Mehmed IV's (1648-1687) determinative, catastrophic, crusade against Vienna<sup>14</sup>. In the 1630s the

<sup>8</sup> S.F. DALE, *The Muslim Empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals*, Cambridge and New York 2010, p. 119.

<sup>9</sup> R.A. STRADLING, *Europe and the Decline of Spain. A Study of the Spanish System, 1580-1720*, London, Boston and Sydney 1981, pp. 115-116. A different interpretation is presented by D. GOODMAN, *Spanish Naval Power, 1589-1665: Reconstruction and Defeat*, Cambridge 1997, pp. 39-67.

<sup>10</sup> CANDIANI, *I vascelli*, pp. 577-582; R. MATTHEE, *Persia in Crisis: Safavid Decline and the Fall of Isfahan*, London 2012, chapter I.

<sup>11</sup> See PARROTT, *The Business of War*, pp. 307-327.

<sup>12</sup> T.A. KIRK, *Genoa and the Sea. Policy and Power in an Early Modern Maritime Republic, 1559-1684*, Baltimore and London 2005, p. 46.

<sup>13</sup> J.I. MARTÍNEZ RUIZ, *Crédito Público y Deudas Municipales en España (siglos XV-XVIII)*, in *Dinero, moneda y crédito en la Monarquía Hispánica*, edited by A.M. Bernal, Madrid 2000, p. 866.

<sup>14</sup> M.D. BAER, *Honoured by the Glory of Islam. Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe*, Oxford and New York 2008, p. 214.



government of Louis XIII of France (1610-1643) seems to have been spending as much on its financial system, involving the assigning of revenues and the recourse to financiers charging punitively high levels of interest, as on its military forces themselves. By the end of the 1650s the cost of this 'secret expenditure' had reached almost 90 million *livres*<sup>15</sup>. From the mid-fifteenth century the Catalan fiscal system was engineered to benefit the financial interests of its ruling class, who purchased the municipal debt bonds (*censals*)<sup>16</sup>. In the short term the results were disastrous for the textile sector of the economy. In the long term the fiscal military state failed to emerge in the principality. By the 1680s and 1690s the government in Madrid was selling offices in the Indies in order to pay for the army in Catalonia<sup>17</sup>.

In a pioneering study I.A.A. Thompson placed emphasis upon the contract or *asiento*. Accords of this sort nearly always led to the surrender of control of 'national' forces and, indeed, in some respects involved a derogation of sovereignty itself. For all this, the contract was the most efficient means of conducting warfare<sup>18</sup>. Professor Thompson proposed a cyclical model in which the government, after 1560, moved alternatively from *administración* (direct management by the royal officials) to *asiento* (contracting out of forces to businessmen), the latter proving ultimately more efficient and eventually triumphing in and after 1620. This transformation was partly driven by the crippling financial shortages that repeatedly gripped the government of Castile. The Genoese *asentistas* thus acquired enormous debts from the crown<sup>19</sup>. Gian Andrea Doria sometimes pointed out to Philip II (1556-1598) that it would have been much cheaper to pay the contractors the money due to them on time and in full rather than to allow the interest and late-payment penalty fines to accrue<sup>20</sup>. This wise

<sup>15</sup> R. BONNEY, *The French Challenge to the Spanish Netherlands (1635-1700)*, in *Banca, Crédito y Capital. La Monarquía Hispánica y los antiguos Países Bajos (1505-1700)*, edited by C. Sanz Ayán and B.J. García García, Madrid 2006, pp. 277-278, 282.

<sup>16</sup> B. YUN, *Marte Contra Minerva. El Precio del Imperio español, c. 1450-1600*, Barcelona 2004, p. 18. See also B. HERNÁNDEZ, *Fiscalismo y finanzas en la Cataluña moderna*, Barcelona 2003, pp. 217-221.

<sup>17</sup> F. ANDÚJAR, *Venalidad y gasto militar: sobre la financiación de la guerra de los Nueve años*, in *Un Estado Militar: España, 1650-1820*, edited by A. González Enciso, Madrid 2012, pp. 395-421.

<sup>18</sup> I.A.A. THOMPSON, *War and Government in Habsburg Spain, 1560-1620*, London 1976, esp. pp. 274-287.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78. See chapter VI, 'The Administration of the Galleys'.

<sup>20</sup> ARCHIVO GENERAL DE SIMANCAS (henceforth AGS), *Estado*, legajo (henceforth leg.) 1423, fol. 60, Doria to Philip II, Loano, 2 February 1591.

counsel did not, however, prevent Doria himself from turning a small underpayment of 1,000 ducats into a debt of 300,000 ducats; by the 1620s Ambrosio Spinola, another Genoese contractor, was owed 700,000 ducats<sup>21</sup>. One unresolved question is whether these enormous debts were ever met – indeed, it might even be wondered whether anyone ever seriously expected them to be paid. As early as 1574 the *Nuovi* nobles in Genoa observed that Spain was overburdened with debts and that wealth generated from strictly financial activities was bound to remain simply «painted in the books»<sup>22</sup>. Warnings of this sort may have been astute. Thus one of the great beneficiaries of the privatisation of warfare in Spain were the dukes of Medina Sidonia, who assumed responsibility for many of the most important military operations in Andalusia, perhaps the wealthiest part of the country. Yet in 1659 the ninth duke protested his extreme indebtedness – indeed, so great were his debts (over 600,000 ducats) that he was negotiating a bankruptcy settlement with his 200 creditors and was seriously considering an offer made by his mother-in-law, the Duchess of Feria, to take his wife back to live with her to save the costs of supporting an extended household, a burden which a ‘poor gentleman’ such as he simply could not sustain<sup>23</sup>.

Relations between Medina Sidonia and his mother-in-law may have been complex and deliciously ambiguous: in this they were not entirely dissimilar to the links between the Ottoman Empire and the world around it. The sultanate can legitimately be seen as a *gazi* state which claimed leadership of the Muslim community and at times advanced its pretension to the caliphate in the clearest terms<sup>24</sup>. As such, raiding played a critical role in the planning, execution and assessment of campaigns. This had been the case since the mid-sixteenth century, when the principle had been established that the booty from

<sup>21</sup> THOMPSON, *War and Government*, p. 178.

<sup>22</sup> KIRK, *Genoa and the Sea*, pp. 66-67.

<sup>23</sup> L. SALAS ALMENA, *Medina Sidonia. El poder de la aristocracia, 1580-1670*, Madrid 2008, pp. 448-456.

<sup>24</sup> On claims to the caliphate see, for instance, G. CASALE, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration*, Oxford and New York 2010; BAER, *Honoured by the Glory of Islam*, chapters VII and VIII; H. İNALCIK, *State, Sovereignty and Law During the Reign of Süleyman*, in *Süleyman the Second and His Time*, edited by Id. and C. Kafadar, Istanbul 1993, pp. 59-92; H.T. KARATEKE, *Legitimizing the Ottoman Sultanate: a Framework for Historical Analysis*, in *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power*, edited by Id. and M. Reinkowski, Leiden and Boston 2005, pp. 13-52. Dale's excellent comparative study, *Muslim Empires*, is particularly useful on questions of legitimacy.

previous campaigns would pay for this year's armada<sup>25</sup>. Needless to say, this model turned out to be profoundly destabilising, in that even in moments of relative success (such as 1645) there would be ferocious complaints that the booty was insufficient<sup>26</sup>.

In other ways the Ottoman state was profoundly open to the outside world. Mehmed IV's 'caliphate' clearly undertook a great deal of trade with the European 'misbelievers' and, indeed, the Persian 'heretics'<sup>27</sup>. The raids by the Christian corsairs in Levant trade were so frequent and successful precisely because there was so much trade and traffic going on in it<sup>28</sup>. One of the major conclusions of recent research has been to stress that the Ottoman elites were engaged in trade and commerce throughout this period<sup>29</sup>. Indeed important recent studies have underlined the role of the transnational or trans-imperial elites who operated within both the sultan's domains and those of the Christian and Safavid rivals<sup>30</sup>. This approach ties in with the comparative analysis provided by Karen Barkey: paradoxically, the sultans of the House of Osmân *gazi* presided over an empire of difference, «a marvel of flexible control over diversity»<sup>31</sup>.

Here it might be argued that all early modern empires were, essentially, negotiated. As Mario Rizzo has shown, the government of Habsburg Milan should be seen as an exercise in 'soft power'. Michael

<sup>25</sup> On the *gazâ mâli* (revenues from the *gazi*) see G. VEINSTEIN, *La dernière flotte de Barberousse*, in *The Kapudan Pasha, his office and his domain*, edited by E. Zachariadou, Rethymnon 2002, pp. 181-197, esp. 191-194.

<sup>26</sup> C. FINKEL, *Osman's Dream. The Story of the Ottoman Empire 1300-1923*, London 2005, pp. 226-227.

<sup>27</sup> R. MATTHEE, *The Safavid Economy as Part of the World Economy, in Iran and the World in the Safavid Age*, edited by W. Floor and E. Herzig, London 2012, pp. 31-48.

<sup>28</sup> On Greek merchants, Venice and wheat, M. GREENE, *Catholic Pirates and Greek Merchants*, Princeton and Oxford 2010, pp. 21-22, 38, 66. Dr Fusaro notes that Venice *Stato da Mar* was in desperate need of grains, *Cooperating mercantile networks*, p. 705.

<sup>29</sup> S. FAROQHI, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Around It*, London and New York 2004; on the respect afforded to trade and commerce, the institution of the *waqf*, and the protection of the peasantry, see DALE, *Muslim Empires*, chapter IV.

<sup>30</sup> E.R. DURSTELER, *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, Baltimore 2006; ID., *Renegade Women. Gender, Identity and Boundaries in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, Baltimore 2011; E.N. ROTHMAN, *Brokering Empire: Trans-Imperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul*, New York 2012.

<sup>31</sup> BARKEY, *Empire of Difference*, p. 294.

Levin's study of Spanish ambassadors in early modern Italy leads to a very similar conclusion<sup>32</sup>. Was it possible for one 'nation' to dominate others in the early modern period? There are good reasons for arguing that it was not<sup>33</sup>. In any case, attempts to describe national monarchies quickly run into problems. One of the major problems in approaching the financial and military history of the early modern Mediterranean is deciphering the boundaries between 'the Spanish Empire' and the transnational elites based in the imperial fief of Genoa: these families acquired large estates in the kingdom of Naples, in part because the *Mezzogiorno* offered them access to abundant supplies of wheat<sup>34</sup>. Indeed, one recent line of analysis has challenged the basic paradigm of 'imperial Spain'. The 'peripheral' states were, in fact, the basis of the military system of the 'transnational monarchy of the Habsburgs of Madrid'. The 'four pillars of the monarchy' were Castile, Milan, Naples and Flanders: these states played a decisive role in the military and political strategies formulated by Charles V and his successors<sup>35</sup>.

In Rossella Cancila's phrase, the Mediterranean presents the history of a complexity<sup>36</sup>. As Molly Greene has shown, society in Crete after its conquest in 1669 was remarkable for the degree of collaboration and co-existence between Muslims and Christians – qualities which later nationalist historiography sought to erase<sup>37</sup>. Documents from the Ottoman admiralty archives often reveal a surprising degree of interaction between Muslim and Christian inhabitants of the Lev-

<sup>32</sup> M. RIZZO, *Sticks, Carrots and All the Rest: Lombardy and the Spanish Strategy in Northern Italy Between Europe and the Mediterranean*, «Cahiers de la Méditerranée», 71 (2005), pp. 145-184; M. LEVIN, *Agents of Empire: Spanish Ambassadors in Sixteenth-Century Italy*, Ithaca and London 2005.

<sup>33</sup> M.A. VISCEGLIA, *Vi è stata una "Roma spagnola"?*, «Roma moderna e contemporanea», 11 (2003), pp. 313-323. For an interpretation placing emphasis on dynasticism, A. SPAGNOLETTI, *Le dinastie italiane nella prima età moderna*, Bologna 2003.

<sup>34</sup> See, for instance, the conclusion to C. DAUVERD, *Imperial Ambition in the Early Modern Mediterranean. Genoese Merchants and the Spanish Crown*, New York 2015. Broader views on the development of trading patterns and the relationship between institutions and markets can be found in R. GRAFE, *Entre el mundo ibérico y el Atlántico. Comercio y especialización regional 1550-1650*, Bilbao 2005; EAD., *Distant Tyranny: Markets, Power, and Backwardness in Spain, 1650-1800*, Princeton 2012.

<sup>35</sup> MAFFI, *En defensa del imperio*, pp. 455-498.

<sup>36</sup> R. CANCELILA, *Il Mediterraneo, storia di una complessità*, «Mediterranea. Ricerche storiche», 13 (2008), pp. 243-254.

<sup>37</sup> M. GREENE, *A Shared World. Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, Princeton (NJ) 2000.

ant<sup>38</sup>. From one point of view the entire Ottoman war effort after 1645 was reliant upon *convivencia*, as Greek shipwrights constituted the majority of workers in the Ottoman arsenals from this juncture<sup>39</sup>. The economy of Catalonia largely depended upon trade with the Muslim world, as did that of Valencia. This was especially true in times of war, when the importation of grains was decisive<sup>40</sup>. Indeed, many military operations in seventeenth century Spain relied upon wheat sourced in the North African outpost of Oran-Mers-el-Quebir<sup>41</sup>. Even Kheir-ed-din Barbarossa – whose life and career perhaps constitute the most unambiguous manifestation of the *gazi* tradition in the early modern period – can be seen as benefitting from «a major and varied population [brought] from all over the Mediterranean», the agricultural wealth of the Mitijda plain and Algiers's privileged position in Maghreb trade circuits<sup>42</sup>. He must be seen, in other words, as the product of interconnectivity. In support of this ambitious attempt at revisionism, it might be pointed out that his depredations in fact led to the establishment of a chartered company of businessmen in Valencia who sought to combine the purchase of wheat and other high-value products in Algiers with the redemption of captives. This fascinating business venture appears to have been short-lived<sup>43</sup>.

If the galleys can be seen as one manifestation of the business of war, then commanders often suggested that in the absence of the oared

<sup>38</sup> F.M. EMECEN, *Some Notes on the Defeters of the Kaptan Pasha Eyaleti*, in *Kapudan Pasha*, pp. 253-261.

<sup>39</sup> M. ÇIZAKÇA, *Ottomans and the Mediterranean: an analysis of the Ottoman shipbuilding industry as reflected by the Arsenal registers of Istanbul 1529-1650*, in *Le genti del mare Mediterraneo*, edited by R. Ragosta, Napoli 1981, II, pp. 773-787.

<sup>40</sup> E. MARTÍN CORRALES, *Comercio de Cataluña con el Mediterráneo musulmán (siglos XVI-XVIII). El comercio con los «enemigos de la fe»*, Barcelona 2001, pp. 193-197, 292-294, 311, 336-343, 508-509. Subsistence crises were frequent even in the eighteenth century, pp. 336-337. For Valencia, R. BLANES ANDRÉS, *Valencia y el Magreb. Las relaciones comerciales marítimas (1600-1703)*, Barcelona 2010.

<sup>41</sup> B. ALONSO ACERO, *Trenes de avituallamiento en las plazas españoles de Berbería*, in *Guerra y Sociedad en la Monarquía Hispánica. Estrategia, cultura y política 1500-1700*, edited by E. García Hernán and D. Maffi, Madrid 2006, II, pp. 739-766, esp. 761-764.

<sup>42</sup> HORDEN, PURCELL, *The Corrupting Sea*, p. 116 (citing – and taking further the arguments of – Geoffrey Fisher).

<sup>43</sup> See J.F. PARDO MOLERO, *Mercaderes, Frailes, Corsarios y Cautivos. Intercambios entre el Reino de Valencia y el Norte de África en la Primera Mitad del Siglo XVI*, in *Le commerce des captifs. Les intermédiaires dans l'échange et le rachat des prisonniers en Méditerranée, XV<sup>e</sup>-XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, edited by W. KAISER, Roma 2008, pp. 165-192, esp. 182-192.

warships there would not be much business at all in the *Mare Nostrum*. Genoa, for instance, lost huge amounts to corsairs in the middle of the century. Its initiative to run the free galleys in the 1640s was, among other things, an attempt to protect its commerce<sup>44</sup>. As we have seen, Venice may in fact have lost far greater volumes of trade in the 1680s and 1690s. Warships, and specifically oared warships, were used as often to protect trade routes as to raid them<sup>45</sup>. This had, of course, been true for many centuries<sup>46</sup>. In the Levant a sort of wheat diplomacy was operated by the Ottoman high admiral, the Kapudan Pasha. Grain cargoes featured prominently in the inventories of ships captured or seized – up to sixty could be impounded or confiscated in one calendar year<sup>47</sup>. An important feature of the existence of the squadrons of the Italian peninsula was the ferrying of silks from Sicily. The squadrons were hired out in late summer for this purpose<sup>48</sup>. Vilma Borghesi has calculated that the galleys of Genoa were involved in some 338 missions between 1559 and 1607. Of these 250 were for the transport of personnel, diplomats and eminent persons. 91 times they rode out to save damaged or endangered vessels; only 88 sailings had a pronounced military character, including the transport of troops<sup>49</sup>. The complaint against the galleys of Catalonia during their short period of existence under Philip III was precisely that they were used to trade, rather than to protect the principality<sup>50</sup>. Indeed, Daniel Panzac has shown that during the war of 1645-69 Venice awarded 1,078 contracts to captains: 233 of these were

<sup>44</sup> From the mid-1640s to 1651 Genoa calculated that 20 million lire had been lost to French corsairs; 2 million was lost when two very rich ships were taken, KIRK, *Genoa and the Sea*, pp. 136-137. For Christian attacks on Ottoman convoys during the War of Crete-Candia, PANZAC, *La marine ottomane*, pp. 152-154; on *caravane maritime* in the years 1684-99, pp. 175-176.

<sup>45</sup> On efforts to protect trade in the 1680s and 1690s, CANDIANI, *I Vascelli*, pp. 405-414 (with details on proposals for the modification and improvement of ship design) and 437-454 (against French corsairs).

<sup>46</sup> F.C. LANE, *Merchant Galleys, 1300-34: Private and Communal Operation*, reprinted in *Venice and History. The Collected Papers of Frederic C. Lane*, Baltimore 1966, pp. 193-226.

<sup>47</sup> On seizures of wheat, MARTÍN CORRALES, *Comercio de Cataluña*, p. 111; KIRK, *Genoa and the Sea*, p. 59; BRAUDEL, *The Mediterranean*, II, p. 882; for the sixty ships seized in the Levant, P. BRUMMETT, *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery*, New York 1994, p. 103.

<sup>48</sup> KIRK, *Genoa and the Sea*, pp. 64, 75, 128 (citing Edoardo Grendi).

<sup>49</sup> Cited by KIRK, *Genoa and the Sea*, pp. 61-62.

<sup>50</sup> HERNÁNDEZ, *Fiscalismo y Finanzas*, p. 154.



for ships «for use in war» (in other words, highly armed and able, if necessary, to engage the enemy); 845 were signed simply to provide for the ferrying of men, *matériel* and provisions<sup>51</sup>.

If we search for reasons why there was no ‘military revolution’ in the early modern Mediterranean, then the first – and principal – explanation must be the chronic shortage of funds which affected all exchequers; the second branch of argument must be the ‘business of war’ – the relative efficacy of *munitioinaire* forces. But beyond these lines of analysis, and intimately related to them on many levels, must be the inherent shortages of wheat, firewood, brick, gunshot, powder, cord, linen, and, of course, water in ‘the corrupting sea’. An economy based on interconnectivity between ever-evolving microclimates struggled to meet the demands of warfare in the *Seicento*. According to one estimate, a general population of fifty million inhabitants in the Mediterranean basin would have required some 75,000 tonnes of wood every day<sup>52</sup>. On the micro economic level of naval administration, it was impossible for the galleons to sail when fuel was unavailable to fire the ovens to cook the biscuit<sup>53</sup>. But oared sea power also offered the opportunity for punitive actions against enemy infrastructure. Destroying windmills, for instance, was a viable tactic during the fighting in Sicily in the 1670s<sup>54</sup>. Yet not all activities were so destructive. Slaves held in some Italian *bagni* seem often to have been relatively well protected and cared for. Individuals insisted on receiving the waters of baptism. Others were engaged in commercial activities, making use of their skills as artisans. Indeed in 1728 Pope Benedict XIII moved to clamp down on these small businessmen. Fortunately, his edict proved to be short-lived and ineffective<sup>55</sup>.

The model of the isolated, self-supporting fortress appears to have been just that – an ideal dreamed up for the Renaissance prince and applicable only in exceptional cases where administrators were able to call upon a thriving economic hinterland, such as Pavia<sup>56</sup>. It was,

<sup>51</sup> PANZAC, *La marine ottomane*, pp. 149-151.

<sup>52</sup> HORDEN, PURCELL, *The Corrupting Sea*, p. 185 (citing H.N. Le Houerou).

<sup>53</sup> M. LOMAS CORTÉS, *El proceso de expulsión de los moriscos de España (1609-1614)*, Valencia 2011, p. 175.

<sup>54</sup> L. RIBOT, *La Monarquía de España y la guerra de Mesina (1674-1678)*, Madrid 2002, pp. 89-90.

<sup>55</sup> S. BONO, *Schiavi musulmani sulle galere e nei bagni d'Italia dal XVI al XIX secolo*, in *Le genti del mare Mediterraneo*, II, pp. 856-858, 861-863, 866-867.

<sup>56</sup> M. RIZZO, *Demografia, sussistenza e governo dell'emergenza a Pavia durante l'assedio del 1655*, in *Battaglie. L'evento, l'individuo, la memoria*, edited by A. Buono

for instance, extremely difficult to maintain a garrison in the fief of Finale Ligure, a strategic enclave situated to the west of Genoa that played a supremely important role in ‘the Spanish system’<sup>57</sup>. In the 1670s many of the fortresses of Sicily were found to be in a poor state, lightly-garrisoned, semi-completed or suffering serious defects of one sort or another<sup>58</sup>. But all *plazas* were, to one extent or another, a work in progress. No sooner had work been completed on the *presidios* of Tuscany in 1678 than new proposals and ideas were drafted and submitted<sup>59</sup>. Ottoman fortresses in Greece and Albania were quickly seized in the Second War of the Morea (1714-1718). Naupalia, upon which great hopes lay, in fact fell in no fewer than eight days (12-20 July 1715)<sup>60</sup>. Koron resisted for just five days of siege: at this point its garrison simply ran out of water and surrendered<sup>61</sup>. Perhaps these details help to explain why, in 1721, a number of Venetian officials were arguing in favour of the abandonment and destruction of La Preveza and nearby positions, «as they are totally useless and of no defence»<sup>62</sup>.

There must be a reason why, aside from its simple poverty, Dénia failed to become a *plaza de armas*<sup>63</sup>. But any explanation of this sort – a more sophisticated vision of the province, its interconnectivity with other ‘nodules’ and micro-economies – is very difficult to formulate (it is almost impossible to escape the suspicion that a large part of its foodstuffs originated in North Africa)<sup>64</sup>. Things were, in

and G. Civale, Palermo 2014, pp. 59-97. I am grateful to Mario Rizzo for showing me his excellent paper, *Dearth, Savagery and Survival in Early Modern European Siege Warfare* (forthcoming).

<sup>57</sup> M. RIZZO, *Alloggiare in casa d'altri. Le implicazioni economiche, politiche e fiscali della presenza militare asburgica nel territorio finalese fra Cinque e Seicento*, in *Finale tra le potenze di antico regime. Il ruolo del Marchesato sulla scena internazionale (secoli XVI-XVIII)*, edited by P. Calcagno, Savona 2009, pp. 77-97.

<sup>58</sup> RIBOT, *La Monarquía de España*, pp. 102-103.

<sup>59</sup> F. ZAMORA RODRÍGUEZ, *La 'Pupilla dell'Occhio della Toscana' y la posición hispánica en el Mediterráneo Occidental (1677-1717)*, Madrid 2013, pp. 55-58.

<sup>60</sup> CANDIANI, *I Vascelli*, p. 500.

<sup>61</sup> F. CARDINI, *Il Turco a Vienna. Storia del grande assedio del 1683*, Roma-Bari 2011, p. 459.

<sup>62</sup> AGS, *Estado*, leg. 5681, don Luis de Tevés to marquis of Grimaldo, Venice, 25 October 1721.

<sup>63</sup> M. LOMAS CORTÉS, *Las Galeras de Dénia y el Duque de Lerma: un proyecto defensivo del litoral Valenciano a comienzos del siglo XVI*, in *Felipe II y Almazarrón: la construcción local de un Imperio global*, edited by M. Martínez Alcalde and J.J. Ruiz Ibáñez, Murcia 2014, I, pp. 249-264.

<sup>64</sup> Note, for instance, the extreme propensity towards drought and the limits of



fact, even worse in Murcia, where human habitation itself was a battle against the environment and the corsairs of Barbary<sup>65</sup>. The operations to expel the Moriscos underlined the considerable difficulties in maintaining military forces in Valencia. The crews of Philip III's galleons simply disappeared in the course of 1609, meaning it was all but impossible to sail them by the end of the year – a rather extreme case of 'military devolution'<sup>66</sup>. Of course, Venice faced identical problems after 1645 in raising and maintaining crews<sup>67</sup>. The same basic difficulty faced the officials of forts such as Rosas or Palamós in Catalonia. Here the garrisons, facing severe financial and logistical shortages and sometimes driven mad by hunger, simply went off to find work in the surrounding countryside – a curious, if evocative, example of interconnectivity serving to limit the *forze del principe*<sup>68</sup>. In this case the difficulties encountered by the military administrators clearly included resistance on the part of the local elites, who jealously guarded their political or national concerns and were weary of royal power. «Be careful», one *diputat* warned Charles V, «in Catalonia we understand French as well as Castilian»<sup>69</sup>. Similar views continued to be voiced in the later seventeenth century and would come to the fore in the War of Succession in the support given to the Habsburg candidate, the Archduke Charles<sup>70</sup>.

As we have seen, it is not unreasonable to view such sentiments as a manifestation of the financial interests of the ruling elites in the principality. Given the desperate failings of the military system in 1673, one military advisor urged Charles II of Spain (1665-1700) that

the *huerta* ('Mediterranean diversity both protects and limits human interests'), HORDEN, PURCELL, *The Corrupting Sea*, p. 251. For an exhaustive, document-by-document, narrative account of the extreme provisioning shortages in Denia in 1609, M. LOMAS CORTÉS, *El puerto de Dénia y el destierro morisco (1609-1610)*, Valencia 2009.

<sup>65</sup> S. GARCÍA MORENO, *La Defensa de la Costa Mazarronera a finales del reino de Felipe II*, in *Felipe II y Almazarrón*, I, pp. 277-292.

<sup>66</sup> LOMAS CORTÉS, *El proceso*, p. 378.

<sup>67</sup> A recurring theme of CANDIANI, *I Vascelli*, pp. 39, 43-44, 172-173, 424-426.

<sup>68</sup> A. ESPINO LÓPEZ, *Las guerras de Cataluña. El teatro de Marte, 1652-1714*, Madrid 2014, p. 60.

<sup>69</sup> J. BUYREU JUAN, *Institucions i conflictes a la Catalunya moderna. Entre el greuge i la pragmàtica (1542-1564)*, Barcelona 2005, p. 458. Note also the limitations on governmental control on trade, especially in the Pyrenean parts of the principality, pp. 428-244.

<sup>70</sup> J. ALBAREDA, *Cataluña hacia 1700: la hora de la política*, in *Vísperas de Sucesión. Europa y la Monarquía de Carlos II*, edited by B.J. García García and A. Álvarez-Ossorio Alvaríño, Madrid 2015, pp. 109-127.

«the best defence that these kingdoms can have is that of a fleet of ships and galleys, which are movable armies that come to the relief of wherever is necessary»<sup>71</sup>. At the end of the century events in Catalonia were to convince the Council of War that armies constituted a much better investment of resources than did fortresses. Far from witnessing a military revolution, the last years of the seventeenth century in fact saw the dismantling of frontier bastions on both sides of the Pyrenees<sup>72</sup>. Here was the value of oared warships to the military planner: they allowed the bringing together of resources over distances of many hundreds of miles. In April 1619 galleys were to be provided to escort ships carrying biscuit to the Puerto de Santa María<sup>73</sup>. In 1651 the *corregidor* in Malaga, don Pedro de Idiáquez, sought to arrange the import of wheat in light of the failure of the harvest in Andalucia. This meant importing French wheat aboard French ships – in order, this was, to organise campaigns whose overall purpose was to fight the French in Catalonia<sup>74</sup>. But of course in Barcelona Louis XIV's forces were facing identical problems and a logistical war was fought at sea for command of the land<sup>75</sup>. Indeed, as Guy Rowlands has argued, the military geography of France needs far more attention than is generally paid to it. The movement of cannonball or biscuit across the country was often a desperately complex, slow and expensive operation<sup>76</sup>. In Italy things may have been even more problematic, in part because of questions of sovereignty. In 1637 the Knights of Malta seized grains being sent from Sicily to the front in Milan. This was a serious problem and posed a major headache to Philip IV's planners: shortly afterwards, in fact, the Knights recognised – or appeared to recognise – His Christian Majesty, Louis XIII of France, as their overlord<sup>77</sup>. Issues of this kind could, of course, be solved in

<sup>71</sup> ESPINO LÓPEZ, *Las guerras de Cataluña*, pp. 78-79 (citing Manuel Herrero Sánchez).

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 436.

<sup>73</sup> «Escolta a los bajeles que han de conducir bizcocho al Puerto de Santa María [Cádiz]», ARCHIVO GENERAL MILITAR DE MADRID, *Fondos adicionales*, libro (henceforth 'lib.') 6668.248, 21 April 1619, Letter of Philip III to Príncipe Filiberto, «encargándole que envíe 4 galeras a Málaga, para que hagan escolta y remolquen a los bajeles que han de conducir 6.242 quintales de bizcocho al Puerto de Santa María».

<sup>74</sup> AGS, *Guerra y Marina*, lib. 217, fol. 304-305v.

<sup>75</sup> On the logistical war, R.C. ANDERSON, *The Thirty Years' War in the Mediterranean*, «Mariner's Mirror», 55-56 (1969-1970), pp. 435-451.

<sup>76</sup> G. ROWLANDS, *Moving Mars: The Logistical Geography of Louis XIV's France*, «French History», 25 (2011), 4, pp. 492-514.

<sup>77</sup> R. PILO, *Le relazioni diplomatiche tra il Regno di Sicilia e i Cavalieri di San*

various ways: by far the most effective and simple solution, however, was to have armed warships in Messina.

Venetian strategy in the long wars fought up to 1718 was often focused on denying Ottoman forces access to foods and, indeed, on starving Istanbul itself. The plan of Venice in 1648-49 was to cut off Ottoman forces in Crete, an achievement which would have severed the trade running into the Bosphorus itself: this was, as Professor Candiani has pointed out, the first blockade of its kind attempted by a European power and one of the most successful of the century. A similar strategy was attempted in the mid-1650s, early 1660s, mid-1680s and again, in the 1690s<sup>78</sup>. Whatever the economic effects that these blockades had in Istanbul – and there seems little doubt that they were severe – they clearly entailed profound political consequences. In 1648 Ibrahim was deposed and executed. Ottoman sources portray these operations in the most colourful terms. «The soldiers of Islam [on Crete] were hungry and desolate, stuck on that island for years», reads one account. «The honour of the manifest religion [was] broken». «Until today», records an account of successful Venetian operations in 1655, «Muslims had never been routed like this and the accursed infidels had never celebrated such victory and acquired so much plunder»<sup>79</sup>. «The infidel's *kalyons* and galleasses and galleys have blocked the sea lanes of succour», explained one official in late 1694, referring to the capture of Chios and its use as a blockading position. «While help was coming, the infidel ships intercepted and destroyed it»<sup>80</sup>. Sultan Ahmet II (1691-95) ordered that the island be recovered immediately and warned his commanders that any failure to do so would result in their immediate execution. Sovereignty – the projection of Ottoman authority within Islamic tradition – was crucial. As the sultan put it to his commanders,

my noble orders were repeatedly sent both to you and to the former Kapudan Pasha Yusuf Pasha, with my imperial admonition demanding from you, for the sake of Evident Religion, a fully vigilant service, zeal and enthusiasm. Yet be-

*Giovanni nella prima metà del XVII secolo. Le ragioni e il fine di un atteggiamento neutrale*, in *Nobleza hispana, nobleza cristiana. La Orden de San Juan*, edited by M. Rivero Rodríguez, Madrid 2009, II, pp. 1493-1527.

<sup>78</sup> CANDIANI, *I Vascelli*, pp. 24, 60, 177-178.

<sup>79</sup> BAER, *Honoured by the Glory of Islam*, pp. 54-56.

<sup>80</sup> S. SOUCEK, *The strait of Chios and the Kapitanpaşa's navy*, in *Kapudan Pasha*, p. 146.

cause of the dissension, timidity, dissolution and discord among you, you have fallen short of the hoped-for service. The result was that while the galleys and battleships of my imperial fleet and so many monotheist warriors were standing at the ready, the enemy of Religion seized the island of Chios without any trouble and, driving God's servants from their homes turned its noble mosques, places of worship of God's unity, into an abode of polytheism and rebellion. [...] and now you have all been entrusted with the task of attacking the nefarious ships of the accursed ones, destroying them with God's help, and by all possible means rescuing the island of Chios from the hands of the infidels [...] When it comes to battle, God willing do not abandon each other but lend one another mutual help and support, heartily united in the *gaza* and *jihad*, according to the motto 'Truly Muslims are brothers', as brethren for the sake of God and His Prophet.

Luckily for the individuals involved, they did in fact wrest back Chios from the 'hell-bent accursed ones'. The details of this operation are, again, indicative: it was undertaken with favourable winds in February 1695, thus surprising and overwhelming the Venetian men-o'-war; the galleys of the Republic seem to have been moved to other bases previously, perhaps because of the limits of Chios as a logistical base and safe harbour<sup>81</sup>. Aside from the contradictions and ambiguities in the various accounts of this campaign, the basic methodological problem is that the Turkish documentation leaps from the economic, logistical and financial effects of the Venetian blockade to the greater cause of the House of Osmân *gazi* – *viz.*, the defence of the *dar ul-Islam*. As was the case with the Knights of Malta recognising Louis XIII as their suzerain in 1637, the details of logistics, provisioning and raiding almost immediately lead to profound questions concerning sovereignty itself.

The *Cinquecento* witnessed the emergence of what was, perhaps, the most serious threat to interconnectivity and trade ever seen in the *Mare Nostrum* in the form of Islamic privateering as practiced by Barbarossa and his successors<sup>82</sup>. The early-seventeenth century saw

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 147-153.

<sup>82</sup> Obviously, a perspective of this sort necessarily depends upon changing interpretations of warfare and piracy over the centuries. It has been argued that the drive to stamp out piracy was primarily a means of justifying Roman expansionism: P. DE SOUZA, *Piracy in Classical Antiquity: The Origins and Evolution of the Concept*, in *Persistent Piracy. Maritime Violence and State-Formation in Global Historical Perspective*, edited by S. Eklöf Amirell and L. Müller, London 2014, pp. 24-50. For overviews of early modern piracy, see the essays by Wolfgang Kaiser and Guillaume Calafat, James K. Chin and David J. Starkey and Matthew McCarthy. Nor did the

the reinvention of Barbary piracy, with the adoption of high sided vessels by the corsairs of North Africa from 1605 or so. Still, it has been argued that the rate and impact of technological development was relatively slow, at least in regards to *el corso*. The corsairs who ran from North Africa from 1605 or so depended upon blending in with existing trade routes; their attacks did not benefit from the implementation of a fantastic new technology – hunting down ships and overpowering them with superior broadsides. The very opposite was the case: their entire *modus operandi* depended upon blending in with other merchant convoys<sup>83</sup>. Is this interpretation generally applicable? The work of Miguel de Bunes Ibarra tends to underline the elements or factors that operated against the Mediterranean system: technological change; the high cost of Mediterranean mobilisations; the failure of command under Philip III (due to the sort of venality that allowed Prince Filiberto of Savoy to purchase the position of high admiral); the fear engendered by the Barbary corsairs; the overall result was the inability of Spain to respond to the threats facing it, thus resulting in a dramatic, and catastrophic, decline<sup>84</sup>. Culturally, Spain collapsed into a sort of educational isolationism that made any sort of cross-cultural comparison with the Muslim world not just difficult or frowned upon but actually illegal<sup>85</sup>. This analysis very much chimes in with the arguments advanced by David Goodman about Spain's Atlantic failure<sup>86</sup>.

But not all views are so pessimistic. The events of the War of Messina (1674-1678) might be interpreted as evidence that galleys continued to offer unique tactical qualities and operational possibilities and, moreover, that in many circumstances these traits were decisive. The severe storm that overcame Charles II's squadron near the Straits of Messina on the night of 4-5 November 1675 led to the shipwreck

Muslim domination of the Mediterranean during the 'dark ages' result in the ending of European trade in the way that Henri Pirenne suggested, HORDEN, PURCELL, *The Corrupting Sea*, pp. 153-160.

<sup>83</sup> See P. WILLIAMS, *Piracy and Naval Conflict in the Mediterranean, 1590-1610/20*, PhD thesis, Oxford University, 2001, chapter 6, 'The Northerners'.

<sup>84</sup> M.A. DE BUNES IBARRA, *Filiberto de Saboya, un príncipe que llega a ser Gran Prior*, in *Nobleza hispana*, II, pp. 1529-1554; ID., *En la defensa de la Cristiandad: las armadas en el Mediterráneo en la edad moderna*, «Cuadernos de Historia Moderna», 5 (2006), pp. 77-99.

<sup>85</sup> ID., *El Imperio otomano y la intensificación de la catolicidad de la monarquía hispana*, «Anuario de historia de la iglesia», 16 (2007), pp. 157-167.

<sup>86</sup> GOODMAN, *Spanish naval power*.

and loss of 5 galleons and the destruction of one other (its crew set it aflame to prevent it falling into the hands of the enemy); fortunately, the galleys, which had simply rowed their way to safety, were able to return to rescue two of the stranded men-o'-war, the *San Antonio de Nápoles* and the *San Bernardo*, which had sustained serious damage<sup>87</sup>. A similar pattern of events emerged from one of the major engagements of the conflict. A French force combining both oared and sail-driven vessels (28 warships, 9 light ships and 25 galleys) decisively defeated a Spanish and Dutch force at the Battle of Palermo (2 June 1676). In this instance the guns of the city's fort were unable to protect the Spanish-Dutch armada anchored below its walls and, again, the winds were favourable to Louis XIV's forces<sup>88</sup>.

Guido Candiani's assessment of the campaigns waged by the Republic of St Mark underlines the value of technological development and, crucially, the capacity to keep pace with advances and to consistently out-perform the Ottoman Empire<sup>89</sup>. The Ottoman fleet in June 1656, when it suffered a major defeat at the Dardanelles, was characteristic of previous failures: the galleys were poorly garrisoned; its crews fell sick; soldiers refused to serve aboard the fleet meaning that it had to be manned by 'men of inferior quality'; when battle loomed many marines and crewmen leapt overboard and swam or waded to shore before the first shot was even fired; the decisive tactical feature of the engagement was the inability of the Ottoman fleet to escape from a desperately disadvantageous position caused by light winds and the current, a situation which left it exposed to Venetian cannon and fireships<sup>90</sup>. The Ottoman fleet in 1666 suffered from very similar problems, being badly affected by sickness and high mortality levels. Having set out in May, Fazil Ahmed Pasha had to rest the task force for two months at Thiva (Thebes) and it was not able to reach Crete until the winter<sup>91</sup>. The upshot of this was that it took a full campaigning season to transport the force from Istanbul to Crete: land operations did not in fact begin until 1667. In 1694 (the year of the loss of Chios mentioned above) the Ottoman fleet was in bad shape and faced a formidable Venetian force of eighteen ships of the line, four galleasses and twenty galleys<sup>92</sup>.

<sup>87</sup> RIBOT, *La Monarquía de España*, pp. 82-84.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 93-95.

<sup>89</sup> CANDIANI, *I Vascelli*.

<sup>90</sup> FINKEL, *Osman's Dream*, pp. 247-248.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 271; CANDIANI, *I Vascelli*, pp. 49-51.

<sup>92</sup> SOUCEK, *The strait of Chios*, p. 145.

The details of these campaigns perhaps underline the value of sailing galleys with men-o'-war: the use of the two types of ship together facilitated the sort of surprise operations seen at Palermo in June 1676, at which an enemy was caught unawares and at a considerable disadvantage. The Venetian victory in June 1656 appears to confirm the value of a joint galley-galleon offensive operation, taking advantage of winds and currents and being able to respond decisively to the inevitable shifts and breezes that occurred in the course of a day. Here, perhaps, lies an explanation for the growth of the physical dimensions of galleys (they expanded in terms of both the number and length of the banks and the size of the rowing crews) in the course of the seventeenth century. This change has generally been viewed as a negative one: perhaps, additional rowers were introduced to allow them to operate more effectively with galleons and high sided warships, which had to be towed into or from battle and regularly saved from dangerous squalls<sup>93</sup>. Certainly, in the 1500s it had proved very difficult to deploy high-sided and oar-driven ships together<sup>94</sup>.

What, then, was the well-armed galley? The principal characteristic of the *galera en buen orden* was the superior quality of its oarsmen. The best *remeros* tended to be employed in the *capitana* and other command vessels: the Kapudan Pasha, Sinán Pasha, escaped the carnage at the Battle of the Dardenelles by commanding his flagship to row out to open water. His seems to have been the only crew in his fleet capable of doing so<sup>95</sup>. In 1610 the galleys of Spain began a chase under oars of enemy ships, setting out from Gibraltar. The flagship left harbour one hour after the vice-flagship (*patrona*) but managed to catch up with the flotilla being pursued at the same time as the other royal ships. This success was due, argued the count of Elda, to «its being the best ship of the sea»<sup>96</sup>. While the flagship might well boast the best sailors, pilots, gunners and marines, the principal reason for its superiority lay in the quality of its *chusma*, rowing crew. When he came to establish his small squadron in Denia, the Duke of Lerma sought to make sure these ships would be *en muy buen or-*

<sup>93</sup> The pessimistic view of changes is put forward by J.F. GUILMARTIN JR., *Gunpowder and Galleys. Changing Technology and Mediterranean Warfare at Sea in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century*, London 2003<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>94</sup> PACINI, «*Desde Rosas a Gaeta*», pp. 157-169, 188-190.

<sup>95</sup> CANDIANI, *I Vascelli*, p. 50.

<sup>96</sup> Elda appears to have been in dispute with the marquis of Villafranca over his right to make appointments, AGS, *Guerra y Marina*, leg. 741, Elda to King, Gibraltar, 8 November 1610.



den. To this end he proposed to buy 300 slaves, the most «dispuestos y ejercitados» (skilled and experienced) that can be found in all of Italy or Spain, 85 of whom were to go in the *capitana*, 75 in the *patrona* and 70 in the two other ships<sup>97</sup>. Plans of this sort often ran into difficulty. In 1617 the Duke of Osuna, viceroy of the kingdom of Naples, warned Philip III that there were only 20 galleys and 348 *forzados* in Naples, while no more than 10 warships could be fitted out in Sicily. In light of these shortages, it would, he informed Lerma, require an enormous effort to fit out the four new galleys in Denia. The viceroy's solution was that each of the squadrons of Italy should provide a fully-manned galley, with the fourth ship being fitted out from the flotilla of Castile and by means of Lerma's own efforts to purchase slaves<sup>98</sup>. Osuna's letter focused in some depth on the recruitment and deployment of *chusma*: should the *capitana* be armed with six men per bank, and the rest of the squadron with five? Armed with fewer oarsmen they would be lost, as the corsairs of Algiers and Bizerta would definitely set out to hunt them down. Moreover armed with fewer oarsmen the *chusma* simply found the work too much and fell sick. The viceroy's concerns serve to underline that squadrons were established with an eye on the dangers which they would face.

The best galleys were those with the highest number of the most experienced and skilled oarsmen. The relatively high quality of Philip III's oared warships can largely be explained by the high percentage of *forzados* and slaves employed aboard them<sup>99</sup>. Indeed, this insight

<sup>97</sup> AGS, Estado, leg. 1945, *Las condiciones que el duque de Lerma, marques de Denia, suplica a Su Md*, no date (1616).

<sup>98</sup> AGS, Estado, leg. 1945, Consulta del Consejo de Estado on letter from Osuna about the arming of four galleys in Valencia, 22 February 1617 (Osuna's letter dated 11 January). The Council of State advised that the *capitana* should be armed with five oarsmen and the others with four. On the squadron of Denia see also THOMPSON, *War and Government*, pp. 181-182; for administrative details on the flotilla, LOMAS CORTÉS, *Las Galeras de Dénia*.

<sup>99</sup> On Philip III's galleys, the model of the reinforced galleys, and the value of convicts and slaves as *chusma*, see P. WILLIAMS, *Past and Present: the forms and limits of Spanish naval power in the Mediterranean, 1590-1620*, in *Le forze del Principe. Recursos, instrumentos y límites en la práctica del poder soberano en los territorios de la Monarquía Hispánica*, edited by M. Rizzo, J.J. Ruiz Ibáñez and G. Sabatini, Murcia 2004, I, pp. 237-278; for a wide-ranging discussion of the galley, see PACINI, «*Desde Rosas a Gaeta*», part II; for confirmation of the make-up of the oarsmen of Philip III's galleys, see M. LOMAS CORTÉS, *Les galériens du Roi Catholique: esclaves, forçats et rameurs salariés dans les escadres de Philippe III (1598-1621)*, in *Des galères méditerranéennes aux rivages normands. Recueil d'études en hommage à André Zysberg*, Caen 2011.



perhaps helps to set out the reasons for the relatively impressive performance of the galleys of Flanders<sup>100</sup>.

Recent research has provided a great deal of information on the recruitment and retention of the *chusma* of the galleys of Sardinia, Catalonia and Castile<sup>101</sup>. André Zysbourg's major study of oarsmen provided numerous insights into the social realities behind the Sun King's fleets<sup>102</sup>. An impressive statistical framework is now available: Professor Panzac provided detailed figures for the Ottoman fleet in the years 1660-1661, during which 7,367 rowers were available to the Kapudan Pasha, 5,068 belonged to the *milice* (the *küreçki azap*), 2,299 were captives or slaves. In 1651 Venice had some 7,120 oarsmen for its much smaller fleet (around a third the size of the Ottoman navy)<sup>103</sup>. The difference between these states lay in their respective decisions about how to arm ships: as in the sixteenth century, the Christians depended upon reinforced galleys.

Drawing on the pioneering essay of Colin Imber, Emilie Themopoulou has provided a vivid description of the oarsmen employed aboard the Ottoman fleets of the seventeenth century. The paid volunteers (known as *buenas voyas*) were generally experienced; the rowers who served as a tax payment were generally less skilled. The Sublime Porte tended to be able to recruit *forzados* by increasing condemnations; in years of major campaigns, the law courts tended to condemn more to the galleys. A high percentage of the oarsmen, pilots, technicians and engineers came from the Aegean, a province under the direct command of the Kapudan Pasha. Certain non-Muslim groups had to provide additional oarsmen: tavern keepers were, perhaps obviously, often charged with raising extra men; in 1648 the Patriarch of the Eastern Church was also commanded to send 125 *küreçki*

<sup>100</sup> R. GRAY, *Spinola's Galleys in the Narrow Seas, 1600*, «Mariner's Mirror», 64 (1979), pp. 71-83.

<sup>101</sup> A. MATTONE, *L'amministrazione delle galere nella Sardegna spagnola*, in *Sardegna, Mediterraneo e Atlantico tra medioevo ed età moderna: studi storici in memoria di Alberto Boscolo*, edited by L. D'Arienzo, Roma 1993; some valuable perspectives are found in V. CIPOLLONE, *La politica navale della Spagna nel fronte mediterraneo (1635-1678)*, PhD thesis, 2010-11 (<http://veprints.unica.it/666/>); M. MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ, *Los forzados de marina en la España del siglo XVIII (1700-1775)*, Almería 2011; F. ZARINEBAF, *Crime and Punishment in Istanbul 1700-1800*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 2010.

<sup>102</sup> A. ZYSBERG, *Les galériens. Vies et destins de 60000 forçats sur les galères de France 1680-1748*, Paris 1987.

<sup>103</sup> PANZAC, *La marine ottomane*, p. 72; L. LO BASSO, *Uomini da remo. Galee e galeotti del Mediterraneo in età moderna*, Milano 2003, p. 49.

or oarsmen. In fact, more men were mobilised for the 24 years of the War for Crete-Candia than for the conquest of Rhodes or the Lepanto campaign. In 1657 the Sublime Porte was capable of mobilising over 100 galleys in total<sup>104</sup>.

The work of Luca Lo Basso and Guido Candiani extended these lines further, showing how Venice implemented successive strategies (applied over relatively long periods) for the construction and maintenance of galleys and high-sided warships and how these bore up under the pressure of war after 1645<sup>105</sup>. In line with Professor Panzac's study of the Ottoman fleet, these works concurred on the essential viability of the contract as a means of equipping fleets<sup>106</sup>. In general, Venetian galleys remained the property of the state, with the individual commanders given free rein to run them in line with business principles<sup>107</sup>. Large numbers of foreign captains were hired in the war of 1645-69; the War of the Morea (1684-1699) saw the use of a new flotilla of *navi pubbliche*, which elicited great hopes. Hiring ships proved problematic, in part because of fears (in London) about reprisals against the English Levant Company<sup>108</sup>. Making use of the sophisticated financial networks established earlier in the century, Venetian warships were able to remain active over the winter, being relieved and replenished by the merchant fleet (through the contracts studied by Panzac, mentioned above). In this way the fleet remained operational for many years without interruption. This quality, critically, allowed it to strengthen its forts at Corfu over the winter<sup>109</sup>.

After 1645 the Most Serene Republic was able to equip relatively effective fleets in which free oarsmen formed the majority, although from this juncture slaves and *forzados* constituted an important element. As in so many other areas of early modern Europe, the application of a business rationale to warfare allowed many members of

<sup>104</sup> E. THEMOPULOU, *Les kïrekçi de la flotte ottomane au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in *Kapudan Pasha*, pp. 165-179; C.H. IMBER, *The Navy of Süleyman the Magnificent*, «Archivum Ottomanicum», 6 (1980), pp. 211-282.

<sup>105</sup> LO BASSO, *Uomini da remo*, pp. 36-39.

<sup>106</sup> Professor Panzac's work was, perhaps, slightly more conservative in assessment of Venetian successes and organisation, *La marine ottomane*, pp. 142-182.

<sup>107</sup> LO BASSO, *Uomini da remo*, p. 398.

<sup>108</sup> CANDIANI, *I Vascelli*, pp. 169-76.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57, 94. Obviously, it is not possible here to follow the narrative of actions in any detail. Initially, the hiring of foreign ships proved unsuccessful, pp. 22-23, 29. The skirmishes of 1651 proved a turning point in convincing Venice of the viability of joint galleon-galley actions, pp. 30-31.

poor but well-born families to recover some of their former lustre and prosperity: in Venice, in fact, this intention was designed into the system and had its origins in the Middle Ages. The key to success lay in the management of the *ciurme di libertà* which, paradoxically, existed in conditions not dissimilar to those of the *forzados* in other squadrons<sup>110</sup>. Indeed the Doge and his planners brought oarsmen from across their domains, using a system of regional allocations not dissimilar to the Ottoman *küireçki azap*. Moments of crisis meant a sudden spike in demands for *uomini da remo*, a change which the Republic's sophisticated credit systems facilitated<sup>111</sup>. But alongside these advanced systems for volunteer or conscripted oarsmen there was always the recourse to mass condemnation, an option which was exercised at moments of crisis – such as 1668-69<sup>112</sup>. From the viewpoint of the reinforced galley, it might be pointed out that Venice achieved success in inverse proportion to the size of its fleet. In the spring of 1648, 19 warships were shipwrecked at Psarà, an event which seems to have brought about a change in thinking. In 1656 only 24 oared warships were commissioned<sup>113</sup>. The fact that the enemy might be mobilising four times as many vessels did not affect the confidence of the Most Serene Republic.

In the phase when Venice had depended upon criminals and captives for its prison-warships, life in the chain gangs of the Most Serene Republic may have been fairly brutish and short. «From the whip comes fear in these men», wrote one official, «and from fear comes discipline»<sup>114</sup>. The relatively high performance of the free galleys after 1648 or so makes it quite clear that oared warships *en buen orden* could in fact be run using a core of volunteer oarsmen. However, this may have been something of an anomaly. Venice herself found, in the early eighteenth century, that *buenas voyas* were difficult to recruit. «The very name of the galley is odious to them», observed one official<sup>115</sup>. One of the first things her captains did in 1684 was to hunt for slaves, of whom there were too few<sup>116</sup>. There were many in Genoa who pointed out the danger of her 'free galleys' run-

<sup>110</sup> LO BASSO, *Uomini da remo*, pp. 39-40, 52-56. For figures, p. 48.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 81-89, 93.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 92-95.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59. Note complaints about the harsh treatment of sailors, CANDIANI, *I Vascelli*, pp. 146-147.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 429.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178.

ning into a veteran enemy squadron. These fears were well founded: the seven new galleys equipped in 1642 were highly ineffective<sup>117</sup>.

The history of Venetian flotillas in the *Seicento* therefore offers further evidence that a form of warfare prioritising operational and tactical concerns was a better bet than one grounded upon a desire for dynastic *gloire* through a major campaign (*una empresa formada*). This is not to deny the corruption found in the *asiento*. Ruses and tricks can be discovered at all levels. French convict oarsmen in the time of Louis XIV were indulged: when royal officials came to measure how much bread each *galérien* needed, captains conducted tests using «les plus grand mangeurs», the biggest eaters. The large surpluses were later sold on the open market<sup>118</sup>. Perhaps the most blatant example of corruption would be the Knight of Malta, François de Nuchèze, who, exploiting close links to Cardinal Mazarin, was able to extract extremely favourable terms from the Republic of St Mark for the provision of a squadron of warships to be fitted out in France and United Provinces. The fact that this flotilla hardly achieved any of its basic objectives did not affect the chevalier's demands for colossal sums of payment. Finding it very difficult to win payment, Nuchèze went as far as to threaten to run the seas as a corsair against Venetian shipping<sup>119</sup>. At his death, in 1687, he claimed to be owed 190,000 *piastres*. In 1684 debts to ship-owners ran to 330,000 ducats (the contractors in fact claimed considerably more and had submitted some 500 petitions for redress). At this point, with the outbreak of the War of the Morea, all debt payments were suspended. When we add these figures to the disagreeable experiences of Doria, Spinola, countless other Genoese financiers and, of course, the Duchess of Fera, it seems possible to suggest that the *asiento* presented such a valuable tool for princes because the debts accumulated in this way were never honoured. The 'new aristocracy' of Castile in the fifteenth century seems to have recognised that the most profitable use of crown debts acquired in wars was to convert them into incomes, 'misappropriated' taxes and seigniorial estates, 'alienations' from the crown itself<sup>120</sup>. Under Louis XIII clever financiers such as François Sabathier recognised that it was best to convert royal debts into offices in the

<sup>117</sup> KIRK, *Genoa and the Sea*, pp. 121, 123, 125.

<sup>118</sup> ZYSBERG, *Les galériens*, p. 248.

<sup>119</sup> POUMARÈDE, *Pour en finir*, pp. 557-570.

<sup>120</sup> YUN, *Marte Contra Minerva*, pp. 22-26.

‘military-industrial complex’ itself<sup>121</sup>. Perhaps others *munitionnaires* followed this course of action.

The old narratives of technological development, oriental despotism and European superiority have been challenged, but perhaps not decisively overthrown. Elements of the old narrative cannot be entirely dismissed: Köprülü Mehmed Pasha would seem, at some basic level, to have conformed to the model of Oriental despotism; the fact that the Venetian fortresses at Crete-Candia resisted for so long after 1645 is surely indicative of the fact that, under certain circumstances, long term sieges could be resisted. This having been said, the same bastions fell to the enemy in a matter of days in the 1715 campaign. The sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were the moment of European divergence, the early morning of the ‘Columbine age’: the very methods and techniques set out in the preceding pages have usually been cited as the reason for Europe’s rise to a position of global dominance. This perspective perhaps raises the question of whether Europe was spectacularly advanced and well-prepared for this first wave of globalisation, or, alternatively, whether the rest of the world was simply unprepared for the sort of against-all-odds-aggression that would be unleashed on it after 1492.

In more concrete terms it seems clear that the guiding principle of early modern statecraft was, as David Parrott has argued, to survive from one moment to the next. This was as true for, say, Philip IV’s *monarquía* in 1647 as for the Ottoman Empire in 1687: the key was to not lose, as the very act of stumbling on to fight in the next campaigning season meant that it was proportionally more likely that the enemy would cave in or, failing this, suffer such profound internal disturbances that he could be brought to the negotiating table on highly unfavourable terms. Perhaps the most striking feature of the Mediterranean in the early modern period is the different degrees and forms of state development. In many regards, it was astonishing that the ‘military revolution’ should have failed to develop in frontier regions separating major territorial states and/or those that straddled the confessional divide. Catalonia is, perhaps, the clearest example of this failed transition, although perhaps Languedoc, Murcia, Valencia or the Ottoman Aegean might also be profitably viewed in this context. In regard to these regions it might well be argued that the Braudel model of a Mediterranean unit, in which the unyielding geo-histori-

<sup>121</sup> D. PARROTT, *Richelieu’s Army. War, Government and Society in France, 1623-1642*, Cambridge and New York 2001, pp. 234-235.

cal structure of mountain and arid plain imposed profound limitations on the state and, indeed, on human activities, seems more plausible than the (more optimistic) idea that catastrophe was overcome by constantly evolving micro-ecologies. Still, these were, perhaps, amongst the poorest regions of the *Mare Nostrum*: Naples, Sicily, Istanbul – indeed even Algiers or Genoa – would doubtless provide a very different picture. It would seem highly plausible that economic conditions explain why Pavia became so important to Charles V and his successors and, conversely, why Denia did not. This overall perspective does, perhaps, strengthen the argument advanced recently that the great leap forward in Spanish organisation for war was achieved under Philip V<sup>122</sup>.

This being the case, it can perhaps be suggested that the most noteworthy feature of the *Mare Nostrum* in the *Seicento* was not that war was so prevalent, but rather that peace failed so spectacularly to break out when everything was in its favour. Some explanation, in other words, is needed for the compunction to fight when conflict – any sort of conflict – not only disrupted quotidian social and economic activities but also led to the alienation, or at least part alienation, of the resources and potential of the state itself. Sovereignty offers, perhaps, one such explanation<sup>123</sup>.

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<sup>122</sup> See C. STORRS, *The Spanish Risorgimento in the Western Mediterranean and Italy 1707–1748*, «European History Quarterly», 42 (2012), 4, pp. 555–577.

<sup>123</sup> For an interpretation focusing on sovereignty, P. WILLIAMS, *Empire and Holy War in the Mediterranean. The Galley and Maritime Conflict between the Habsburgs and Ottomans*, London and New York 2014.