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# Enduring City-States: The Struggle for Power and Security in the Mediterranean Sea

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Enduring City-States:  
The Struggle for Power and Security in the  
Mediterranean Sea

Zachary B. Topkis  
History Senior Thesis  
Advisor: Sean Cocco  
Spring, 2015

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# 1 “The Origin of Two Maritime City-States”

The world is an ever changing place that has witnessed the rise and fall of a multitude of vast empires, the formation and break-up of alliances, and the invention of institutions and specializations that people have endeavored to create. Most of history focuses on the bigger picture, the so called “Big Players” or superpowers that are thought to control and be the main avenue for change. Past historians have concentrated on national histories, which in turn have dominated the narrative. However, this will never add up to be a complete history as small nations or cities have proven to play pivotal roles in historical events. These important moments in history are where the City-State, or ancient *Polis*, come into play as serious political, military, and commercial actors. The question is, not that of national histories, but instead a manner of scale and understanding the fact that national boundaries were not distinct and were fairly permeable which helps explain the massive cultural contacts that occur within this region of the world. This thesis will examine medieval and early modern city-states in the Mediterranean as illustrative of political, commercial and military responses to threats and opportunities in the pre-modern period instead of focusing on larger states and empires that seemingly dominate the Mediterranean world. When discussing state powers such as Venice, it is not enough to simply enough to acknowledge how they conduct wars, but the manner in which city-states are able to successfully negotiate with larger states and its ability to establish multi-layered relationships. This relationship creates an air of complexity that could see a city like Venice, go to war with the Ottoman Empire for example, and yet still conduct regular trade and commercial expeditions with them in Istanbul, so as not to allow political disturbances to ruin the overall trade economy. In order for a city-state to survive, that city must have shrew negotiation skills, skills that can

create creative outcomes such as this, when the alternative, all-out war, is extremely risky and could end in the military domination of the capital city.

In order to accomplish this goal, this thesis will attempt to identify and understand the institutions in which city-states, such as Venice and Genoa-- seemingly fragile and weak-- employ to counter significant internal and external threats in the form of rivalries with other city-states, the environment in relation to disease and commercial risk within the Mediterranean Sea, and finally, larger states or empires whose presence simply and utterly dwarf that of the respective city-state, both politically and militarily. The dynamics and institutions that comprise states are imperative in understanding how a specific state will act in a situation that they deem to be threatening. According to Hui, who wrote *War and State Formation in Ancient China and Early Modern Europe*, states whose rulers “wish to maintain survival, recover losses, or establish hegemony would have to strive to increase their military and economic capabilities” by not only creating “larger armies, but also [establishing] a range of administrative, fiscal, and policing organizations.”<sup>1</sup> In order to view this process and understand the mechanisms used and employed by city-states, this thesis will focus mainly on Venice as our chief example and will, on occasion, branch out to other city-states in the region for comparative purposes. The time period that this paper will deal with will roughly cover between 1100 AD and 1600 AD. In addition to this, it is important also to take into consideration the mechanisms that enabled city-states to survive, which this paper will accomplish by examining not only the city-states that endured and prospered, but also those that failed establish themselves and which were ultimately conquered by a neighboring forces or states.

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<sup>1</sup> Hui, Victoria Tin-bor, *War and State Formation in Ancient China and Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge University Press, 2005. pg 38-39

This thesis will also stand as a comparative study of two main city-states, Venice and Genoa. In addition to this, other city-states will be discussed in varying lengths in order to achieve a broader and more accurate understanding of their responses and reactions to threats. This will in part occur naturally with the application of the “survivor bias theory,” which takes into account (for the purposes of this thesis) those city-states that survived in addition to those that failed to establish themselves and lost power. Most historians, according to John Gaddis, “trace process from a knowledge of outcomes” whereas political scientists use “process tracking” “which suggests a rediscovery of narrative, and the technique does employ narratives in constructing comparative case studies.”<sup>2</sup> One primary goal of this thesis is to accomplish both tasks that historians and political scientists employ in an attempt to discover other key significant players within the Mediterranean region while at the same time analyzing their institutions which have allowed these states to react and respond to events. One of the goals of this examination is to identify those traits which help city-states and potentially more importantly, those characteristics that caused it fail. This comparative study will help determine the nature of city-states in the terms of what sorts of areas these entities tend to form in and the conditions that contextualize their rise to power. In addition, this will help identify each city-states distinct culture as well as how their foundings have influenced the institutions and mechanisms that their citizenry create.

One might ask: Why is it important to study city-states? Or perhaps what possible benefit can one receive from studying a city-state that they can’t receive from studying a larger country in the same context? In short, it’s important to study city-states as they have either been key players or influential partners in many historical events that allowed for larger countries or

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<sup>2</sup> Gaddis, John. *Landscapes of History: How Historians Map The Past*, Oxford University Press, 2002. Pg 65

alliances to be able to accomplish their feats in addition to that of carrying out the interests of the city-state itself. Part of a city-states power comes from its geographical location and their ability to assist themselves as well as other states. According to Giovanni Botero, a contemporary historian who has done considerable research on cities regarding their institutions and functionality, considers “a site convenient if it is so situated that many peoples need it for trade, either exporting the goods of which they have a surplus, or importing those that they lack.”<sup>3</sup> This is the case because most contemporary historians of the time focused on the significance of cities, despite the ever growing power of the nation-state monarchies. Both Genoa and Venice are great cities “because they both mediate between extremes; they are not just transit-points, but warehouses and stores...it is not enough; therefore, for the site to be necessary, in order to render a city great; besides that, it must be useful to the neighboring peoples as well.”<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, an additional example of this can be seen during the crusades where Europe sent vast armies to conquer land in Palestine. City-states in Italy became key to this operation as a means for troops to travel across the Mediterranean as city-states such as Venice, which had vast fleets, was able to allocate the city’s resources in order for them to be able to pump out ships at a rate no country in Europe had the ability to even come close to. Due to this, one could argue that Italian city-states dominated the Mediterranean during this time. The crusades were an essential component to the rise of Italian city-states and will be discussed in depth later on in this paper.

An ancient example could be viewed when ancient Greek *Polis* united under the Delian League and the leadership of Athens in order to combat the Persian Empire that was attempting

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<sup>3</sup> Botero, Giovanni and Symcox, Geoffrey. *On The Causes of the Greatness and Magnificence of Cities*, 1588. University of Toronto Press, 2012. Pg. 17

<sup>4</sup> Botero, Giovanni and Symcox, Geoffrey. *On The Causes of the Greatness and Magnificence of Cities*, 1588. University of Toronto Press, 2012. Pg. 18



to invade and conquer Greece. These accomplishments would be impressive for that of a country to manage, and seems nearly impossible for a single city to accomplish. This is discussed heavily in Faruk Tabak's *Waning of the Mediterranean*, in which he describes "a pulsating unit that, despite some regional variation caused by the arrival of new crops or proximity/distance to other markets (such as the Atlantic), responded with great uniformity to the dominant rhythms of 'temporalities' and socioeconomic process" along with incorporating "a half centur[ies]" worth in "research on agriculture, manufacturing, money, and land use, especially from Turkish-language sources."<sup>55</sup> This brings us to Tabak's larger concept of a Geohistorical approach that rejects the classic "Clash of Civilizations" theory which splits the Mediterranean into the East and West, Christians and Muslims. One possible explanation for these instances of immense achievement within city-states could be that they have an innate ability to concentrate their power on a single goal or task that larger countries lack the efficiency and capacity to accomplish. To reiterate a previous example, many coastal Italian city-states focused mostly on navies and building large fleets chiefly for commercial gains and power. During the times of the crusades, Genoa has able to refocus all of her efforts into making ships in order to carry troops and supplies over to the Levant, which it did so by allowing its government to temporarily assume control in order to organize the building project. It was said that "the citizens of Genoa decided that the time had come to bury their differences and to unite in a *compagna* under the direction of six consuls; the aim of the *compagna* was primarily to build and arm ships for the crusade" between the years 1083 through 1096.<sup>6</sup> This shows the ability of a city-state to fully take control of their economy in order to accomplish a single great task that other larger

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<sup>55</sup> Salzmann, Ariel. *An Introduction To The Research of Faruk Tabak, Sociologist*, Int. J. Middle Eastern Study. Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pg. 2

<sup>6</sup> Abulafia, David. *The Great Sea: A Human History of The Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011. Pg. 290

countries would have difficulty organizing. Another side effect of this specific example is that citizens of city-states like Genoa or Venice would become expert sailors that states and other cities would seek out in order to conduct business.

i.

### City-State as Polity

Before going into the immediate historical context that will surround this thesis, it is important to actually understand what a city-state is in comparison to that of a nation or empire. Mogens Herman Hansen has done a tremendous amount of research on identifying what a city-state's (*Polis*) characteristics are that distinctly separate them from actual states. In *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures, The shotgun method: the demography of the ancient Greek city-state culture*, and *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis*, Mogens explores the wide depth and breadth of characteristics and traits that most city-states tend to possess.<sup>7</sup>

To begin with let's start out my explaining the differences between states and city-states according to Hansen. He acknowledges that a city state must not only have a "nucleated centre" but must also have these five characteristics that he refers to as *stadtgemeinde*.<sup>8</sup> *Stadtgemeinde* is the German word for borough, township or urban center which Hansen likes to use in his research. These five characteristics that city-states must possess to be classified as a city-state are (1) a defense circuit, (2) a market, (3) laws and law courts, (4) political decision-making body,

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<sup>7</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 12

<sup>8</sup> Hansen, ed., *City-State Cultures*, 12.

and (5) at least partial autonomy.”<sup>9</sup> These characteristics are very broad and one might find it more helpful to determine those characteristics of a state which Hansen seems to have a more specialized criteria for. A “territorial state,” as Hansen refers to these entities, although dislikes the term, is:

“Is characterized by specialized and hierarchically organized decision-making institutions and administrative organs which have monopolized the legitimate use of physical force. Thus a state is a centralized legitimate government in possession of the sole right to enforce a given legal order within a territory over a population.”<sup>10</sup>

Some historians feel as if this definition is insufficient and lacking a criteria that establishes a public power over both ruler and ruled.<sup>11</sup> However, this may not be appropriate to apply during this time as public powers over both ruler and ruled appear to have a more modern day distinction over the responsibilities of the state over the individual or general public where people have some power to elect officials and check the government’s role. Although some city-states and states may have had institutions such as this, it might be unfair and counter-productive to require the application of this criteria over a territorial state.

Many historians refer to states as “territorial states;” however, this causes a significant problem as far as classifications go. Hansen would argue that a city-state is a “territorial state just as much as any macro-state with multiple urban centers” and that “It has a small territory (mostly the immediate hinterland) but nevertheless a territory with, usually, well-defined borders.”<sup>12</sup>

Focusing on definitions and characteristics such as size and territory are unhelpful. It is better to

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<sup>9</sup> Hansen, ed., *City-State Cultures*, 12.

<sup>10</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 13

<sup>11</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 13

<sup>12</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 16

acknowledge and identify the concentration of political organization “surrounded by either a city or many urban centers.”<sup>13</sup> City-states vary in size and territory over the course of their history. A city-state can even aspire to and become an “empire” but is still considered a city-state, not because of its territory, but due to the inability of the political institutions to fully assimilate the cultural and social aspects of a neighboring territory and incorporate it into its own. When city-states do expand and increase in size and territory, the usual result is that of a capital region that has few or many “dependent” regions, which is why some city-states are awarded the name of empire.

This next section will examine the regions and dynamics that tend to allow city-states to take root. This will tie into how city-states tend to form, the culture they develop, and the relations these geo-political entities have with their neighbors. A city-state usually forms within a region where the people that inhabit it all share a common language and cultural history. However, if one were to look at this region in a broader context, Hansen notes that for centuries, this area will deal with long periods of political divides which dissolve into smaller communities that share a common idea.<sup>14</sup> These smaller communities are what create city-states. These communities tend to form out of a need for protection, but can occur for a variety of different reasons. Hansen explains a few of these occurrences and acknowledges that city-states most commonly form from a period of decline where a larger macro-state that disintegrate into a number of independent cities.<sup>15</sup> However, city-states can also form from colonization, a period of demographic and economic upsurge that takes place at the same time as this city’s state

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<sup>13</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 16

<sup>14</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 16

<sup>15</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 17

formation and urbanization occur.<sup>16</sup> In addition, this period of colonization can either occur in a location where no state has existed prior, or where a state once existed but has lost significant political and military sway over the region, thus allowing smaller groups within a macro-state to break away and form small independent, or semi-autonomous states.

Although the formation of city-states can vary, one aspect, however, tends to be a constant throughout history and geographical region. Most areas that have one city-state tend to have many more either already in the region, or will see many additional ones founded.<sup>17</sup> This is the case for two reasons. First being that once a city-state has been formed, this area is then established as a decent location for smaller independent or semi-autonomous states to form. Again, this can either be from a break-up of an empire or macro-state, or could occur from colonization of a newly discovered region. The second reason for multiple city-states to form is that this occurrence will dictate how long these cities will survive. This is the case because city-states are dependent on one another for protection, finances, and quite often food from trade, whether or not these city-states understand this fact or not. One might grow confused and ask, “Why did city-states fight amongst themselves if they are dependent on one another for survival?” An easy answer to this question could be that the leaders of city-states were short sighted in their mindset when thinking about how to deal with major threats such as empires. However this is not to say that city-states are incapable of working together; in fact, this is essential to their survival within their geopolitical regions.

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<sup>16</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 17

<sup>17</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 16-17.

Most alliances made between city-states were temporary at best. Within clusters of city-states, these cities communicate over land, sea, or a mixture of the two.<sup>18</sup> If a region is not efficient or convenient for city-states to communicate within a larger cluster, then these city-states will become isolated and extremely vulnerable to foreign influences or invasions as a lack of efficient relations between these political entities means that these states will most likely be weak economically and militarily due to being forced to rely on themselves entirely or close to it. However, some regions that have split into clusters of city-states have done so on multiple occasions.<sup>19</sup> This means that just because a region has now become occupied by a macro-state, does not mean that this area cannot disintegrate into city-state clusters again. Later on in this chapter, there will be an example of a city-state that suffered from a poor geopolitical region and were then conquered due to lack of efficient resistance to foreign influence.

Despite certain common characteristics between city-states, most vary considerably in relation to size, both geographically and demographically. This is partly the case, as Hansen points out, because no city-state is powerful enough to permanently conquer a region and transform it into a cohesive political unit in line with the “capital” city.<sup>20</sup> This is an additional characteristic that city-states tend to share and can therefore be helpful in identifying the difference between a city-state and a macro-state. An attempt to create a larger political unit that encompasses multiple major cities tend to fail when dealing with these. City-states, in this case, tend to get “swallowed up” by larger neighboring states or end up in a breakdown of the alliance as these agreements favor the stronger city-states, leaving the weaker ones to contend with more

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<sup>18</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 16

<sup>19</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 17

<sup>20</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 16

problems.<sup>21</sup> This becomes apparent during the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Europe as city-states in Italy face grave threats from Empires and larger states as more and more cities in the North and South of Italy become subservient to these greater authorities.

Depending on the manner in which a city-state was founded, will have significant bearing on the institutions and culture the political entity adopts. Hansen has divided this into three separate political cultures: hegemonic, independent, and dependent.<sup>22</sup> Depending on which political culture each city-state has will determine how much political freedom that city will bestow upon its citizenry. That being said, city-states all vary according to how strict their laws are and their distinctions between what they consider to be a citizen and an “outsider.”<sup>23</sup>

Now that some time has been spent on discussing how city-states are formed and varying characteristics that some might employ, this next section will cover some common characteristics that Hansen has acknowledged most if not all obtain. City-states have been in existence since about 5000 B.C. and were first found in Mesopotamia, and then began to spread throughout India, China, Egypt, and the Americas.<sup>24</sup> With each passing military conquest, these cities tend to fluctuate, either increasing or decreasing in size and population. As far as size and territory are concerned, this will vary from region to region, and city to city. Typically, however, most city states start quite small in regards to population and land are concerned and then begin to grow as they survive through history. Hansen has struggled with setting exact parameters for a city-state in comparison to a macro-state as they can be considered both large and small.

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<sup>21</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 17

<sup>22</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 17

<sup>23</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 17

<sup>24</sup> Kotkin, John, *The City*. Random House Publishing Group New York. 2005. Pg 4

However, the typical city-state will have a main city, with a developed political urban center which is surrounded by territory in the immediate vicinity that the city can control.<sup>25</sup> Many city-states do expand territorially and can encompass additional regions with small towns that can be assimilated into the capital region; however, this can be quite limited as city-states tend to borders of other city-states and thus create conflicts over control of the land. As far as population is concerned, as previously stated city-states tend to be smaller usually in the 4 to 5 digit range, although some do grow and incorporate over 100,000 residents within a single city, even though not all of these people will be considered citizens.<sup>26</sup> A city-state has a distinctive political and ethnic identity that can be shared across a region with other city-states as well as tend to refer to their respective ethnicity according to the name of their city.<sup>27</sup> However, this does not serve as a unifying force for these city-states as most tend to be centered on an idea that puts their city-state first and foremost ahead of other cultures, which includes other city-states. A city-state's political identity can differ from this ethnic identity as it is formed and based off the urban/political center decided upon by the city's citizens. A city-states urban center will reveal much about the identity and values of the citizens which live within the city and can help explain their decisions when dealing threats or other governing duties. Just because city-states are in the same region, does not necessarily mean they share a similar ethnic or political identity. Citizens within a city-state tend to change their form of government as the times and situation of their city demands. However, a city-states ethnic identity is not something that can so easily be changed, if at all. People can migrate from place to place; however, the ethnic identity of a city-state is

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<sup>25</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 17-18

<sup>26</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 17-18

<sup>27</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 17-18



difficult to drastically change due to very stringent citizenship laws that many Italian Renaissance city-states obtained at the time. This is not by any means a new or relatively new phenomenon of dealing with citizenship and ethnic identity.

A city-state differs greatly from a macro-state in respect to the size and location of the majority of the population. In a city state, the population of urban centers tend to be far higher in number than that of populations existing in macro-state city-centers.<sup>28</sup> The sheer size of population could be an explanation as to how an individual city can be so efficient and capable of performing difficult tasks. Most people in city-states tend to live either in the urban center, or along the countryside in small villages. Hansen remarks that all city-states have a single urban center which serves as a central place for the community's economic, religious, military, and political power or authority.<sup>29</sup> A city-states government is centered and run from the urban center and tend to remain within that city, even if they conquer other territories or cities. Hansen stressed that multi-centered governmental city-states are extremely rare.<sup>30</sup> This urban center will serve as the sole place of political authority, even if a city-state manages to conquer additional regions or cities. In order to be considered a city-state by any standard, there must be at least "a self-governing polity" within the urban center, although this system does not have to be fully independent.<sup>31</sup> These polities usually have some form of a legislature, administration, and judicial unit. These institutions will possess the legal authority over internal matters of the "state," or at least a government with the ability to enforce laws. In order to be thought of as a

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<sup>28</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 18

<sup>29</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 18

<sup>30</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 18

<sup>31</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 18

city-state, the urban center must have some form of defensive capability. This can be demonstrated by possessing an army and having a fortified location.<sup>32</sup> Each city-state also must have an efficient and subsistence economy.<sup>33</sup> What this means is that each city must have some form of farming in which to feed its citizens, along with specialization of functions within society, such as merchants, along with division of labor, thus ensuring a city's capability to function. The last main characteristic of city-states is that they are not self-sufficient.<sup>34</sup> City-states usually are characterized by its lack of economic self-sufficiency usually due to the small area in which the urban center is located. This will also lead a city-state to interact with its neighbors and will enter into large amounts of trade and commerce in order to make up for this self-sufficiency problem.

Relations between city-states vary but it is important for these cities to establish and maintain diplomatic relations as discussed earlier. However, city-states will inevitably go to war with each other. Hansen describes this phenomenon as “endemic,” but acknowledges that despite ongoing military conflicts, city-states will still attempt to continue and maintain economic, religious, and cultural interactions as this is vital to their overall survival.<sup>35</sup> Although wars may occur quite frequently, city-states do tend to seek peaceful relations with city-state neighbors, or at least those neighbors who are not direct rivals. During times of peace, city-states will establish diplomatic relations with one-another by entering into an alliance, formation of a league (often hegemonic with one dominant city-state leading the league), trade agreement, or just maintaining

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<sup>32</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 18

<sup>33</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 18

<sup>34</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 18

<sup>35</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 17

standard diplomatic relations in order to attempt some moments of peace.<sup>36</sup> After establishing diplomatic relations, city-states can begin to expand, not necessarily territorially, but culturally and economically through commerce. This expansion, either through commerce or military is the ultimate goal of the city-state as they are attempting to increase the reach and power of not only the city-state, but the notable families that run them. This is especially prevalent within the Mediterranean context. A city-state will cease to exist if their urban/political center is destroyed or by conquest of a stronger state.<sup>37</sup>

Cities were initially created in order to maintain security during invasion.<sup>38</sup> People feared attack and dangers in countryside from nomadic raiders so this was an understandable alternative as city walls provide protection from invaders and raiders. Once security was under control, these cities began to expand their power and influence. In the end, “the development of imperial cities with control over large areas allowed for rapid growth of trade in all areas of early urban growth, from China to Egypt, Mesopotamia, and eventually the Americas.”<sup>39</sup> This development will later provide the vary foundation in which Italian city-states follow in order to survive in the Mediterranean Sea. With this, came population increase, commercial advancement as trade continued to expand throughout Italy, and transformed what is today modern Italy into a vibrant region teeming with life and potential.<sup>40</sup> This is the location that strong city-states will form as the region had a significant economic and political recovery period despite the collapse of the Roman Empire and waning of the Byzantine Empire.

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<sup>36</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 17

<sup>37</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 17

<sup>38</sup> Kotkin, John, *The City*. Random House Publishing Group New York. 2005. Pg 11

<sup>39</sup> Kotkin, John, *The City*. Random House Publishing Group New York. 2005. Pg 13

<sup>40</sup> Waley, Daniel; and Dean, Trevor. *The Italian City-Republics*. 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Routledge 2013. Pg 4

## City-States in the Mediterranean Sea

This in the end provides a broad, but basic description of what we can refer to as a city-state throughout the rest of this thesis, which is how this paper will create a broader connection to city-states in general, even though this thesis will focus only on a handful of city-states in the Mediterranean. However, before examining these specific city-states, one must first establish an historical context in order to explain and critique a city-state's development. David Abulafia's *The Great Sea* and Faruk Tabak's *The Waning of the Mediterranean* both offer deeper insight and context into the events that transpired within the Mediterranean for a vast majority of its contact with people starting from as early as 22000 B.C. leading up to modern day times. David Abulafia offer his own history separating his timeline into several sections in which to analyze and contextualize events. Faruk Tabak presents a history of the Mediterranean, but one that is propelled through finance, and economic prosperity. In other words, his books focuses on how economic practices shaped both political and military ventures along with their outcomes. Another aspect of importance that Tabak offers is some insight on how the plague decimated certain areas and the effects that had on society. At an economical level, Tabak argues that due to the Black Death, there was less need for food due to fewer people being left alive at that time.<sup>41</sup> This could provide both positive benefits in form of other crops for trade, but could also prove negative as a cut in food production could negatively affect ones trade output if that city or state is trading in food stuffs.

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<sup>41</sup> Tabak, Faruk. *The waning of the Mediterranean, 1550-1870: A Geohistorical Approach*. Baltimore, Md. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008 pg. 47

By 600 AD, the Mediterranean had become a fractured region with little to no unity remaining. Before the collapse of the Roman Empire, Rome had divided herself into two Empires, a West and an East. The Eastern Empire “far surpassed the second, both in superiority of civilization and in much higher level of economic development.”<sup>42</sup> This in part is due to the lack of significant and major cities left within the Western Roman Empire before its collapse. Therefore, once Rome fell, the region will undoubtedly be in an economic state of desolation. However, the Mediterranean still maintained an internal trade network. One could see this from the Byzantine Empire as they still had a thriving economy at this time that spanned, arguably, the length of the Mediterranean at some points. The Byzantine Empire at this time still had considerable power and reach, but was significantly diminished from its former glory.<sup>43</sup> In the early 600’s, a new threat began to rise in the east, which threatened Byzantine holdings in North Africa, Egypt in particular. This came to be due to the unification of Muslim tribes under the banner of Islam, which saw many caliphs unite.<sup>44</sup> This unification gave some tribes power enough to seize control of Jerusalem, parts of Syria, and Egypt, which caused the Byzantines a chief grain supplier. However this strong resistance to Byzantine authority quickly began to deteriorate. These tribes were mostly united under Islam but quickly reverted back to their original tribes who began squabbling amongst themselves.<sup>45</sup> This further provided chaos in the Mediterranean and officially marked the beginning of Arab and Muslim navies in the sea.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Pirenne, Henri. *Medieval Cities: Their Origins and Revival of Trade*. Princeton University Press 1939. Pg 5

<sup>43</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pgs. 241-242.

<sup>44</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 244

<sup>45</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 244-245

<sup>46</sup> Hodgson, Marshall G.S. *The Venture of Islam, Volume 1*. The University of Chicago Press. 1974. Pg. 292-4

Piracy had been mostly controlled in the Mediterranean until the introduction of these navies which further weakened the strained trade networks of a weakened Byzantine Empire who no longer could protect its neighbors from this threat.

The Mediterranean Sea turned into a battleground between Christian fleets under Frankish and Byzantine banners against Muslim fleets. However, Frankish and Byzantine interests quickly came to a head over land possessions in Europe.<sup>47</sup> Charlemagne, the leader of the Franks, had gained a considerable amount of power which threatened Byzantine interests ensuring that the Muslims fleets saw no strong resistance. However, Charlemagne did make some effort and sought to establish or improve settlements along the coast of his empire or near his empire that could build ships. One of these settlements included Genoa. The site where Genoa is located had been in use since the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. but saw varied amounts of prosperity. However, Genoa became an important location again as the want for more ships became a need for many states and empires in the Mediterranean. In 827, the Franks responded to Muslim pirates with very ambitious naval assaults all along the North Coast of Africa.<sup>48</sup> Although the Franks won almost every battle during this campaign, Charlemagne's successor, Louis the Pious knew it would be impossible to keep any of the newly acquired cities and had to abandon them. In addition, due to internal rivalries and border disputes with the Byzantines, Louis's attention had been taken away from pirates altogether after these events. These border disputes were due to conflicts in the Adriatic, which held many important trade routes along the sea. Cassiodorus wrote that "the early inhabitants of these marshlands lived 'like water birds, now on sea, now on land' and their wealth consisted only of fish and salt, though he had to admit

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<sup>47</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 250

<sup>48</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 250

that salt was in no sense more precious than gold: everyone needs salt but there must be people who feel no need for gold.”<sup>49</sup> When war breaks out in this area between these two powers, the cities that inhabit the region are forced to pick sides. Some end up swallowed by these Empires but some, like the people in the lagoon, were able to survive, gaining wealth from this conflict but remaining somewhat independent. One city-state had its roots established within this conflict as the neighboring villages sought collective defense within the Lagoons.<sup>50</sup> This land was formally controlled by the Byzantines but left them mostly independent in return for a tribute and collective defense against Slav barbarian invasions and pirates. Once these villages and towns gathered, they established a settlement on the water, and named it Venice around the year 812. These people were expert watermen with ties to significant land holdings in which to grow food.<sup>51</sup> The lagoon also provided protection for its inhabitants. This concept of the benefits provided by the lagoon is further supported by Denis Crouze-Pavan, writer of *Venice Triumphant*, who states that “the lagoons were already more than a mere shelter” and became “dotted with edifices and crosses” of a thickly populated city showing an area that has become heavily populated due to its variety of benefits.<sup>52</sup> Many merchant families found significant trade in this location and accumulated wealth from salt, fish, and timber in addition to luxury items from East to West trade like silks, jewels, gold artifacts, saints, and relics.<sup>53</sup> Abulafia asserted that “Now that Marseilles was in decline, Venice had become the main port through which

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<sup>49</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 250

<sup>50</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pgs. 254-255

<sup>51</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pgs. 254-255

<sup>52</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 37

<sup>53</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pgs. 254-255

contact with the Eastern Mediterranean was maintained—commercial, diplomatic, ecclesiastical.”<sup>54</sup> In other words, within a relatively short period of time, Venice became a very important location within the Mediterranean. This turned into a center for pilgrim traffic and became a patriarchal seat of Christianity due to that traffic. The prominent families of Venice, with their new found power and wealth established the Doge, part of the government that has the most power within the Venetian government, and kept a tight hold on it.<sup>55</sup>

Despite the Mediterranean suffering from both Muslim and Christen fleets battling it out, a third religious group found opportunity. The Genizah Jewish traders flourished during this time monopolizing trade wherever they could locate it.<sup>56</sup> They were especially well known for trade in silks, and traders like them became known for their ships as one of the only means of crossing the Mediterranean at the time. This helped to change the face of the Mediterranean Sea thereby once again establishing Alexandria as a powerhouse within the Fatimid Empire and helping Southern Italian city-states prosper. Some city-states like Amalfi were located here and thrived from this new trade. At the same time, German influence under Otto I began to fade which saw the rise of Pisa and Genoa as independent authorities.<sup>57</sup> This marked the time where city-states, in the words of Faruk Tabak, “had dominion over the inner sea.”<sup>58</sup>

This thesis will primarily cover the institutions and events that transpired for Genoa and Venice; however, it is important first to look at a variety of different cultures, states, and

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<sup>54</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pgs. 254-255

<sup>55</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 255

<sup>56</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 268

<sup>57</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 275-76

<sup>58</sup> Tabak, Faruk. *The waning of the Mediterranean, 1550-1870: A Geohistorical Approach*. Baltimore, Md. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008 pg. 39



civilizations that also occupy the same space as these two city-states. In the next chapter, the institutions of Venice and Genoa will be discussed in great detail, although again, it is vital to have a basic understanding of many of the events that caused cities like Venice to choose to create and establish a particular institution.

Genoa is located in the Ligurian Alps, which provides protection for Genoa from land based attacks. However, these mountains also cut Genoa off from any decent land with which to grow food. However, despite lacking a plethora of land, Genoa still managed to export wine, chestnuts, olive oil, and herbs which connected Genoa to a rather ambitious trade network.<sup>59</sup> Genoa was not a center for industry, except for the fact that ship-building was very active here, especially during the time of the crusades.

Pisa, in comparison, is located aside the river Arno, many miles from the sea due to the fact that the land around where the river connected to the sea was very marshy and prevented Pisans from establishing a sufficient port. Pisa's assets including excellent land, which allowed them to trade in grains, livestock, leather, wool, meat, and dairy products.<sup>60</sup> These trade networks allowed these city-states to improve their financial institutions which saw the rise of significant merchant and banking class. In addition, Tabak notes that fanning the flames of rivalry between city-states and notable families allowed merchants to capitalize on the financial and commercial opportunities which eventually, a few hundred years later, will result in fierce fighting culminating in the Italian hundred years war which ended with the Peace of Lodi in 1454.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 271

<sup>60</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 271-272.

<sup>61</sup> Tabak, Faruk. *The waning of the Mediterranean, 1550-1870: A Geohistorical Approach*. Baltimore, Md. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008 pg. 41

In 1060, Genoese and Pisan fleets began concentrating on eliminating Muslim pirate raiders by attacking Sardinia and Sicily.<sup>62</sup> This resulted in both city-states earning the title as defenders of Christianity along with providing a substantial increase in security for this part of the Mediterranean. At this same time, these city-states began establishing the first communes seen in Italy along with creating a trade network focused around Genoa, Pisa, and Venice. These were established and able to be created due to the fact that impressive developments in business and record-keeping had been achieved along with their ideal position for trade exponentially increased the power of these city-states wealth, which allowed them to expand their traditional trade territory.<sup>63</sup> A few decades earlier in 992, Venice saw a considerable gain in power thanks to their actions in the aid and service of the Byzantine Empire where Venice received a grant of trading rights for which to boost its economy.<sup>64</sup> The Byzantine Empire acts as a sort of Patron State that helps and nurtures Venice during its beginnings. Pisa and Genoa both had to rely on themselves when dealing with threats at this time but Venice had the Byzantine Empire which was sort of allied with Venice. Normally this could be extremely dangerous for a city-state; however, the Byzantines chose to allow Venice to remain as it was as this provided the Byzantine Empire with more substantial benefits.

In the later 1060's, Robert Guiscard and Roger de Hauteville, both Norman knights, attacked and conquered much of Southern Italy, which at that time had a substantial cluster of city-states that had appeared to be flourishing economically from trade.<sup>65</sup> This occurred in this

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<sup>62</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 273

<sup>63</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 278

<sup>64</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 278

<sup>65</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 282

region because the city-states that inhabited the lands in Southern Italy suffered from geographical bad luck. The terrain was very mountainous and made traveling from city to city difficult which hampered any diplomatic progress of unity amongst these city-states. Therefore when the Normans arrived to invade Southern Italy, instead of seeing a united South, they witnessed multiple individual city-states who would not lift a finger to help one another.

The Normans conquered land at the expense of the Byzantine Empire who was also, at this time, facing a breakdown in cooperation between the Pope and the Greek Orthodox Church thus weakening the Byzantine position within the Mediterranean Sea. The Byzantines, who were currently busy with factional fighting and attacks by the Slavs to the north, turned to Venice to solve this Norman problem in the form of ships and fleets to help stop the Norman advance. Venice provided naval assistance in 1082 against Guiscard's fleet off the coast of Dyrrhacion which allowed the Byzantines to retake the city.<sup>66</sup> The Byzantine Empire was very happy and grateful for the assistance and showered Venice in gifts. Emperor Alexis sent a golden bull to Venice while emphasizing that they were his "duli" or subjects (even though they were independent), which the Venetians took pride in their status as imperial subjects as they saw themselves as the inheritors of the Roman Empire who were helping the sister empire to Rome.<sup>67</sup> These gifts sent with the Golden Bull included a right to trade anywhere in the Byzantine Empire except the Black sea and Cyprus without any taxation and granted to Venice bits and pieces of land along the Golden Horn.<sup>68</sup> The consequences of this was that Venice was now able to establish a trade network throughout the Byzantine Empire, which would still exist after that

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<sup>66</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 284

<sup>67</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 285

<sup>68</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 285

Empire is gone. In addition, this golden bull helped establish a gold standard which city-states looked to when establishing treaties for the future.

In 1095, Pope Urban II “set in motion a movement that would transform the political, religious, and economic map of the Mediterranean and Europe.”<sup>69</sup> This movement is referred to as the Crusades, and ensued due to Byzantine appeals oppression of Christians in the East, the defeat of Christian armies by Turks, and that fact that Jerusalem had been lost to “infidel” hands. The crusades saw the movement of massive armies traveling across Europe in an effort to reclaim the “holy land.” City-states monopolized on this as they provided the ships that many an army will utilize in order to reach this distant lands. The Genoese elite believed that their city was destined to play a dominant role in the crusades and therefore did everything they could to help these initial crusades.<sup>70</sup> In return, they were rewarded with a Church in Antioch, along 30 houses, a warehouse, and a well which created the nucleolus for a merchant colony in the Middle East.<sup>71</sup> Genoa became the first of many as Italian city-states to begin setting up colonies such as this. They then began to appear all over the Levant in such cities as Jerusalem, Acre, Tyre and Jaffa. Acre eventually served as the main port for which Italian merchants did business within the Mediterranean.<sup>72</sup> Pisa, after helping seize Jaffa in 1099, was allowed to set up a trading base there.<sup>73</sup> Venice was perhaps the slowest city-state to voluntarily participate in the crusades. Historians disagree, but many attribute Venice’s slow advance into the crusades as due to

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<sup>69</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 287

<sup>70</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 290

<sup>71</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 290

<sup>72</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 291

<sup>73</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 292

construction projects within the city-state. At this time, Venice was building and expanding the city rapidly. This is also the time when Venice begins and finishes construction of the Church of San Niccolo which sits on the Venetian Lido.<sup>74</sup> Once Venice began to participate in the crusades, their main role was to help via sea, in the form of transporting troops and supplies along with establishing and maintaining naval blockades. Italian sailors from city-states were some of the best watermen around at this time, which is why it is no surprise that many countries will rely on any number of city-states to accomplish naval feats on behalf of their states or empires. Usually, city-states preferred times of peace with which they can establish trade; however, Abulafia points out that “trade obviously flourished in times of peace, but in war too there were excellent business opportunities: the seizure of booty and of slaves, the provision of armaments, and pirate raids against enemy shipping” to name a few.<sup>75</sup>

Venice’s participation in the crusades yielded some negative effects. This soured relations with the Byzantine Empire who were angry with the crusaders over not relinquishing land back to the Byzantine Empire. Venice’s participation frustrated them as well as their growing economic position within the Mediterranean. In response, John II, son of Alexios Komnenos, refused to renew the Golden Bull (1082, trade rights) bestowed upon the Venetians for service to the Empire.<sup>76</sup> With this, the Venetians turned elsewhere. Within a few years, a burst of crusader energy came from within Venice allowing the city to accomplish more feats in the Levant. Abulafia asserted that this rise in popular sentiment “enabled the Venetians to blockade Tyre, which was still in Muslim hands but fell the next year. Here the Venetians

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<sup>74</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 292

<sup>75</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 292

<sup>76</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 293

established themselves in a highly privileged position, acquiring not merely one-third of the town, but estates outside it, and the right to a church, a square, an oven, and a street in every town they helped capture in the future.”<sup>77</sup> Two facts were evident at this point, the first being that Muslim navies could no longer combat Italian shipping supremacy, and the second was that the Byzantines needed the Venetians and could not afford to lose yet another ally. Therefore in 1126, the Byzantines reconfirmed the Venetians Golden Bull. In addition, with the hopes of containing the Venetians, Emperor Manuel I Komnenos established “an enclosed area next to the Golden Horn, taking away land from Germans and French merchants, so as to create a Venetian quarter and control the Venetian traders more easily.”<sup>78</sup>

Amalfi, a city-state in Southern Italy, is at this time beginning to fail. As of 1130, Amalfi had stopped the Norman Invasion, unlike many other city-states within the southern cluster. Amalfi had been close with the Byzantines; however, they were replaced by the Venetians who were able to provide far more for the Byzantines. In 1127 while looking for new allies, Amalfi and Pisa entered into a treaty of friendship.<sup>79</sup> Pisa at this time had just joined the war with the Germans against the Norman invaders from the south. The Normans, who had been blockading the Amalfians allowed their ships to leave port if they attacked Pisan vessels. Amalfi agreed, but while away, a fleet of Pisan ships attacked and sacked the city in 1135, losing a substantial amount of their wealth.<sup>80</sup> Amalfi had been known for basic goods such as wine and oil but now

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<sup>77</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 293

<sup>78</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 294

<sup>79</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 294

<sup>80</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 294

could no longer support itself due to a lack of resources. They could no longer resist foreign influence and passed between Pisan and Norman control.

Needing new sources of wealth, Pisan and Venetian merchants begin to turn their attention to Northern Africa, specifically Egypt, with the hopes of finding new trade. The Genizah Jewish merchants who had dominated this area had recently lost influence under the Fatimads which the Italians hoped to secure. Genoa soon followed suite and acquired “a fonduk—a warehouse and headquarters—in Tunis, Bougie, Mahdia, and other cities along the coast of Africa.”<sup>81</sup> Italian merchants traveled to cities all along North Africa and “visited the ports of Maghrib to acquire leather, wool, fine ceramics, and from Morocco, increasing quantities of grain. Particularly important was the supply of gold, in the form of gold dust that reached the towns of the Maghrib along the caravan routes that stretched across the Sahara.”<sup>82</sup>

During the second crusade, the Byzantines saw renewed attacks by the Normans. This time, the Emperor again sought the aid of the Venetians when Corfu was attacked, but Norman navies remained a continual presence in and around Italy.<sup>83</sup> The Venetians were successful in repelling the Norman navies; however, both the Byzantines and Venetians were slowly realizing they did not like each other as much. They begrudgingly continued to help each other but relations had significantly soured. This is the point in which we will begin to fully examine Genoa and Venice as their communes or system of government have begun to better develop a more comprehensive system of institutions along with their vast fleets which can now operate throughout the Mediterranean Sea.

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<sup>81</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 298

<sup>82</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 298

<sup>83</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 322

## 2 “Venice and Genoa, a Struggle for Foundation: Their Routes to Empire”

In the last chapter, this thesis discussed some of the primary and essential characteristics that all city-states must possess, as well as offered a glimpse into a very volatile world in which these Italian cities existed. At the conclusion, I discussed one city-state, Amalfi that was unable to cope with this radically changing world and analyzed some of the reasons as to why that happened. This chapter will build off of those ideas and will analyze specifically how Genoa and Venice rose to power. Venice and Genoa both embarked on a journey of great risk around the beginning of the 10th and 11th centuries in an attempt to assure their continual existence and security within the Mediterranean; in fact, they sought to accomplish by creating institutions that



not only helped the day to day processes of their respective cities, but they also acquired the ability and nature of their city's responses to commercial and military threats and opportunities.

This chapter will begin to explore these two city's histories and institutions starting around 900 AD, however, it will quickly move to the 12<sup>th</sup> century, as that will be the start of the main focus of this piece. Whilst beginning to analyze these institutions, it is ever so important to have a good contextual understanding, which will explain the volatility and luck of the Mediterranean region in which Venice and Genoa find themselves situated.

Towards the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Middle Eastern industries were in decline, with their economies contracting and their politics fragmenting, albeit temporarily.<sup>84</sup> This most likely resulted from the recent crusades that saw the formation of the Latin Kingdoms along the Levant, thus allowing European powers to enter into the region. Italian city-states jumped at the opportunity to expand their trade and thus started moving toward this location. City-states at this time were mainly competing with each other for profits and monopolies within certain regions of trade. This competition saw the decline and thinning out of some weaker city-states as some were eventually unable to fend off foreign influence. Mogens likens the rise of Italian city-state power with that of the creation and adequate formation of the Commune, which allowed city-states to better handle the "growing volume and complexity of trade," which many acknowledge to be the lifeblood of these city-states.<sup>85</sup> In addition, Mogens suggest that this institution is a political response to "either to the void left by the collapse of the central government or to the opportunities for political autonomy opened up by the struggle after 1076 between the German

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<sup>84</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 326

<sup>85</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 279

Emperor and the papacy.”<sup>86</sup> This argument is convincing due to the fact that most Italian communes began to form after this date such as Pisa in 1081, Cremona in 1078, Genoa in 1098, Verona in 1107, and Venice in 1143. It should be noted, however, that these communes had slightly different names for their governmental systems and assemblies. For many European powers, city-states became a necessary solution to the question of attempting to establish sustained trade within different regions of the Mediterranean as they were known as some of the most skilled merchants in Europe. The Commune, is defined as “a sworn association of like-minded men who promised to abide by their own rules and to be sanctioned to be sanctioned for any infringement... whose purpose is to establish and uphold the reciprocal rules of engagement and to protect merchants against reprisals and the confiscation of goods.”<sup>87</sup> Two main benefits immediately arose from this institution, which saw the lowering of costs for trading over long distance and the multiplication of trading centers across the Mediterranean world, which also saw the increased division of labor as well as the collection and diffusion of information.<sup>88</sup> In short, trade became cheaper and less risky for those funding the expeditions. This immediate reaction makes sense because first and foremost, trade, was the most important part of the economic system in which city-states find themselves built upon, as they do not have the large swaths of land in which to cultivate numerous agricultural and industrial projects of their own.

Both Genoa and Venice faced similar struggles at home which would suggest multiple reasons as to how improbable it is for these two entities to not only survive but flourish under these circumstances. Nonetheless, both cities managed to endure and build upon their success.

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<sup>86</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 279

<sup>87</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 280

<sup>88</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 281

Both cities saw poor conditions at home, which will be discussed later in the chapter, that forced them into the sea as further land expeditions would bring them into conflict with multiple different states or cities that could overwhelm the lone city. Yet both capitalized on this inherent “bad luck” and sought to exploit the sea as a means for mobilization of their respective militaries, resources, and as a means to obtain their “birth rights” as they both saw themselves as decedents of the great Roman Empire. However, none of this would have been possible without the foundational institutions that these two cities both created in order to simply function as an entity in the Mediterranean.

The next section will be divided into two main portions: Legacies, institutions, and systems created prior to 1200 AD, followed by those created after 1200 AD through about 1300 AD.

i.

Geography and Myth:

As previously stated, both Genoa and Venice suffered from a lack of usable land which forced them to turn to the sea. This was not without considerable risk. Many like to think about how accessing the seas allows for opportunities to explore new lands and establish commerce with new states. In actuality, these ventures comes with considerable risk. For example, both Venetian and Genoese citizens felt a considerable amount of anxiety during the month of June, which was when their fleets and trade expeditions were set to return from their long distance journeys. A Genoese historian remarks that “in 1207, seven galleys and other ships, containing at

least 1000 Genoese, were close to safety in nearby Nervi when a great storm sank a *navis* and two barks, and one galley was beached at Sturla.”<sup>89</sup>

For Venice, land was scarce, due to the fact that those people who settled Venice, settled the city in a lagoon due to the need for protection against competing barbarian and European forces. As a result, Venice was able to produce little food except for the fishing that was attainable within this location.<sup>90</sup> Due to a lack of land, status and wealth was based not on landed aristocracy but instead on entrepreneurial skill.<sup>91</sup> Besides food shortages, ironically, fresh water was a constant problem which Venice struggled to correct. In addition, the constant changing of tides within the lagoon altered the shape and accessibility of the area, which the Venetians had to adjust for by creating safeguards in barriers in order to effectively live in this location.<sup>92</sup> Aside from that, Venice did prosper from the fishing and salt collecting that occurred within the Lagoon. In addition, it did not take long for others to acknowledge the relative safety that the lagoon afforded to its inhabitants and were thus sought after as a safe haven to conduct trade.<sup>93</sup> Upon this realization, the Venetians are thought to have begun charging for this protection, which began the onslaught of trade goods flooding into this region. This prime location, at the mouth of the Adriatic, soon saw a flourishing trade community born. So although Venice herself could not produce a wide multitude of products, a large variety of goods still flowed through Venice, allowing her to reap the benefits of becoming a trade center. In addition, this trade also

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<sup>89</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 99

<sup>90</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 32

<sup>91</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 32

<sup>92</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 37

<sup>93</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 57

greatly benefited from the good relationship the Venetians kept with the Byzantines up until the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

Genoa, on the other hand, did not possess as good landed area, however, it also was located “at the mouth of nothing on a sea where some of the great ports sat” which meant trade competition was a considerable obstacle that the inhabitants would have to face.<sup>94</sup> Genoa was situated in an area with rocky beaches, rugged cliffs, and had access to little flat ground or fresh water. Genoa had a number of other disadvantages to go with this. Liguria, the region in which Genoa is situated, suffered from a lack of plentiful resources and had little to no mineral wealth worth tapping, except for some marble deposits. In addition, Genoa also had a lack of rivers near the city, which forced them to build ships along coves across the coast.<sup>95</sup> The lack of rivers and fresh water also meant that the soil Genoa had, was less fertile and more shallow, which meant agriculture would never be as profitable as it could have been otherwise. Cereal farming was impossible due to the lack of land and freshwater and it also suffered from a lack of sufficient fishing because the waters near Genoa were too deep.<sup>96</sup> Lastly, the environment around the city was quite fragile, taking considerable time to recover from either natural or man-made disasters that occurred in the area.

However, Genoa did possess a good harbor, and despite being mostly mountainous, Genoa did have some fertile ground which was accompanied by “dramatic changes in altitude [within] this small region [, which] produced five zones of vegetation and climate within a small ecosystem” thus allowing for a wide variety of different agricultural products, although,

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<sup>94</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 9

<sup>95</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 11

<sup>96</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 12

truthfully, limited in scale.<sup>97</sup> This area hosted small forests, chestnut trees, land for vineyards, and olive groves which all helped to boost Genoese trade. Another environmental benefit of these mountains was that the mountains negated any chance of the formation of lakes near Genoa.<sup>98</sup> This might initially sound like a disadvantage as Genoa was suffering from a water shortage, however, with lakes, this brought more mosquitos which carries the increased chance of disease. Genoa also produced fruit trees, made bread from chestnut flower, and produced cheese, wool, and leather from their livestock.<sup>99</sup>

As previously stated, both Genoa and Venice saw themselves as heirs of the Roman Empire. This was displayed time and again through the Venetians willingness to assist the Byzantine Empire during times of need as the Byzantines were all that was left of the once great Roman Empire. Several myths have arisen from the Venetians early years, which they thought justified their place amongst the great Mediterranean powers. One day, it is said, the Pope, disguised as a poor beggar, entered Venice as a test to see how their citizenry and leaders would react. It is said that the Venetians treated him with such care and kindness that the Pope, ever so grateful and happy to see this reaction, named them protectors of the faith, and allowed them to walk in procession with a white candle during the feast-day procession to symbolize their honor and purity of the faith.<sup>100</sup>

Later on, the Pope also gave the Doge permission to seal his letters with lead instead of the traditional wax, which signified the Doge was on level with the rank of emperor. The story

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<sup>97</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 11

<sup>98</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 11

<sup>99</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 12

<sup>100</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 103

goes that when the Holy Roman Emperor found out about this, Frederick wanted the Pope locked away in chains and sent a massive fleet against the Genoese. The Venetians, in defense of the Pope and their city, launched a spirited defense, despite being so badly outnumbered at the time. The Doge's forces managed to defeat the Imperial fleet and was rewarded with a sword that "represented justice of the war" and a golden ring, which now serves a pivotal role in the Festa Della Sensa(Ascension) ceremony where Venetians sail out to where the lagoon meets the Adriatic and toss the golden ring into the waters, symbolizing their union with the sea.<sup>101</sup> Whether or not this is true, these stories serve the purpose of instilling pride within the mention of Venice as they are not only skilled warriors and watermen in these stories, but also offer great kindness and protection toward Christianity, a potentially unifying force in the region.

Genoa was an old Roman city, with Roman roads that lead to the heart of the city.<sup>102</sup> Despite this however, Genoa was not a center for trade, and the roads most likely were in place for military purposes although the ruins of the old city still remain the nucleus of Genoa, showing visual proof of their inherited right. Up until after the sacks by Muslim raiders in 934-35, Genoa did not possess imposing magnificent buildings like some great cities, although, it was still seen as critical, due to their port which, many landlocked city states sought to use or covet. These sacks, could help explain the religious Christian fervor that the people within this city felt, along with their belief that they are destined to partake in the crusades, a premise which we will explore later on in the chapter.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 104

<sup>102</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001.  
Pg 12

<sup>103</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001.  
Pg 13

Genoa's early history differed from that of Venice's in the sense that the Genoese commune was less stable, but is comparable due to the fact that both polities found and acquired nationalistic tendencies through the use of their early founding myths. Genoa dealt with constant internal civil strife, which continued well into the 13<sup>th</sup> century, as well as constant threats of domination and invasion from the Germans to the North and had to be granted much of their rights by higher authorities.<sup>104</sup> Genoa began, however, to develop significant strength at the start of the 11<sup>th</sup> century as they concentrated on building up their naval power in response to Muslim raiders. Through their wars with them, Genoa was seen by the Pope as a defender of Christianity. After 1156, Genoa had many rights bestowed upon them by the Lombard Marchese Alberto, who "confirmed the customs of the city."<sup>105</sup> This granted Genoa all the rights their fathers had under their previous host and also allowed them to exercise justices over themselves, thus, making them immune from any nobility. This is important because with this charter, Genoa was effectively (or not so effectively) governing themselves without the aid or creation of a commune. One additional fact that was seen under this charter, was that Genoa granted rights to farmers allowing them to hold land without public service.<sup>106</sup> This is noted to be a relic from the Roman Empire, and is yet another example of how they descended from them.

## ii.

### Creating a Government

Venice and Genoa both took some considerable time to fully establish their official government structure, most likely due to the erratic nature of events that occurred within this

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<sup>104</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001.  
Pg 15

<sup>105</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001.  
Pg 20

<sup>106</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001.  
Pg. 20



region, which forced these city-states to adapt to these ever-changing conditions. Both Genoa and Venice had to achieve some level of autonomy from other states and empires in the area. Although not officially owned by any one nation, both these two cities had strong connections to the Byzantine Empire and the German Holy Roman Empire respectively, both of which felt some privilege or entitlement to these cities. Nevertheless, both Venice and Genoa enjoyed considerable autonomy from the beginning, as these empires were now allowing these cities to operate on their own was more profitable for them at the time. These relationships between cities and empires will be discussed later in this chapter.

Venice's political structure saw significant divisions among factions either loyal to the Byzantine cause, or the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>107</sup> Officially speaking, legally, "the ruler of the Lagoon was the emperor of Constantinople" and the Doge, who ran the city, was "at best, a governor" as Medieval kings and Emperor's received their power through God, whereas, the Doge's power "flowed directly from the people they governed."<sup>108</sup> The Doge was specifically beholden to the tribunes and the people, the latter of which could assume the form of the *Arengo* which would be formed in moments of crisis. Thomas Madden, a historian reexamining Venice's history, argues that the *Arengo* was so powerful that no authority could "trump" this assembly, "save for the emperor."<sup>109</sup> The Doge is elected by the people and can also be deposed by the people through the formation of an *Arengo*. This is significant because it highlights the Venetians distrust in concentrated power, and that they prized freedom over all else.

For much of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, Venice prospered from a series of stable Dogeships, which tended to switch between ruling families, which at this time consisted of the

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<sup>107</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 53

<sup>108</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 31

<sup>109</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 31

Badeor, Candiano, and Partecipaze families.<sup>110</sup> This was a crucial time for the Venetians as the Mediterranean Sea was now being invaded by Muslim pirates along with Europe facing constant attacks by Vikings and Slavic raiders. Many Doges during this time, personally led war expeditions in order to eliminate pirate activity within their waters and throughout the Adriatic. This had the potential to curry favor with other cities and states also effected by the pirates and this, no doubt, greatly affected their relationship with the Byzantines who were also reeling in a vain attempt to protect their processions from these pirates.

During the 950's, Venice saw herself caught between a political event which forced the city to choose between their allegiance to the Byzantine Empire and that of the Holy Roman Empire. This occurred due to a coup led by Pietro IV who supported the Holy Roman Emperor, against his father Pietro III, who held allegiance to the Byzantines.<sup>111</sup> This coup ultimately failed and saw Pietro IV fleeing to the German Emperor. Upon his arrival, Pietro IV began to launch naval assaults against Venetian shipping. Shortly after this began, Pietro III died and the *Arengo* surprisingly elected Pietro IV to the Dogeship, as they saw this as a means to end the assaults.<sup>112</sup> Upon attaining the Dogeship, Pietro IV married Waldrada, the sister of the Marquis of Tuscany, who was the kinswoman to Emperor Otto II, Ruler of the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>113</sup> Waldrada had German soldiers accompany her to the Ducal Palace (the residence of the Doge) for her protection. This had the unfortunate effect of creating resentment among the Venetian people, who now felt as if their palace was occupied by the HRE. Not surprisingly, in 976, civil strife erupted split between the Morosini family who opposed the Germans and favored the Byzantine Emperor, and the Coloprinis family who supported the doge and sought to strengthen relations

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<sup>110</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pgs. 48-52

<sup>111</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 53

<sup>112</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 53

<sup>113</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 53

with the Germans.<sup>114</sup> The Morosini family won the day and assaulted the Ducal palace, killing Pietro and his son, though they had the wisdom to spare Waldrada out of fear of reprisal from the German Emperor.

Upon this very violent uprising, the *Arengo*, in 976, elected Pietro Orseolo to the dogeship. This series of events points to a larger possibility that the very foundation of the commune in both Venice and Genoa were unstable and that additional political, and commercial institutions need to be put in place in order to create a significant period of stability. Venice, far more so than Genoa, is adept at understanding the civil uprisings and worked to avoid them from the beginning. What is important to note about this individual is that he was not aligned to any leading noble family, but was instead, well known for his wisdom and piety, as well as being a well-respected individual in Venetian society.<sup>115</sup> Pietro Orseolo personally financed the reconstruction of the Ducal Palace as well as levied new taxes in order to pay reparations to the German Emperor who was furious over the incident. However, this tax levied proved enough to avert war and also enough to fix much of the damaged cities caused by the civil strife in the previous year. Later in 991, Pietro II Orseolo was elected Doge and managed to quell the remaining factional strife by simultaneously improving relations with both the Byzantine and Holy Roman Empires.<sup>116</sup> This was accomplished because, due to the actions previously discussed by Venetian fleets, the Byzantine enacted a Golden Bull, bestowing immense privileges on the city of Venice, which had the added benefit of making Venice more independent from their rule. In addition, it also helped that the new German Emperor Otto III was a personal friend of this Doge. This is important to show because it demonstrates Venice's

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<sup>114</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 31

<sup>115</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 54

<sup>116</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 58

ability to not only politically navigate potentially divesting incidents, but also their ability to recover from such events and still end up on the beneficial side, be it luck or skilled diplomacy.

From this point in the late 10<sup>th</sup> century, until about, the early 12<sup>th</sup> century, Venice prospered from improved relations with the Byzantine Empire in addition to relative peace amongst leading Venetian families. It is apparent from their actions during this time, that the Venetians realized early on that peace and quiet amongst their city and neighbors was good for business, which remained their guiding principle for dealing with notable families and international relations. During the Dogeship of Pietro Polani from 1129-1148, Venice began to found their very own commune by raising additional families to become “notable”, which he did, by awarding them positions as Judges and advisors in his court.<sup>117</sup> Some of these families include the Dandolo, Ziani and Mastropetros families. In addition, under Polani’s leadership, Venice saw the creation of the *Consilium Sapientium*, which was a council of wise men that represented the Venetian people and dealt with general day-to-day activities.<sup>118</sup>

On July 24<sup>th</sup>, 1177, a historic event occurred in Venice, and involved both Pope Alexander III and Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa of the Holy Roman Empire. The Pope and Holy Roman Emperor had been at war for some time, creating much instability within the region and distracting Europe from affairs occurring in the Levant. This conflict arose from territorial claims made by both the Emperor and Pope concerning northern and central Italy.<sup>119</sup> To counteract German influence, the Pope initiated the creation of the Lombard league (an invention that will be discussed later in order to explain one method of how city-states can defend themselves) which sought to oppose German influence in the region. Venice, which had been

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<sup>117</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 79

<sup>118</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 79

<sup>119</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 95

“officially” neutral during this struggle, was asked and then selected to be the meeting point for which to discuss terms and bring peace between these two Christian nations. Doge Sebastiano Ziani greeted both leaders and after much ceremony, began to conduct the last necessary acts to ensure peace.<sup>120</sup> Much of the negotiations had been completed far before the Pope or Emperor arrived. The city of Venice also underwent massive preparations, including the completion of the Piazza San Marco, which was the largest open air gathering in Venice at the time and hosted a plethora of different buildings, immense columns, and magnificent statues all which were to fit the nature of the grandiose event.<sup>121</sup> In addition, this event further demonstrated Venice’s ever increasing economic might, as well as their furthered independence from the Byzantine Empire, as relations with them have begun to sour by the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. This event is also politically and internationally significant, not only because a very advantageous peace treaty was being negotiated, but also because of the fact that Venice, a lone city-state, now had the stature and importance to be able to hold such a significant event, which brings us to a conclusion for this section concerning the Venetians as their next great governmental, political, and military feat will entirely revolve around the expedition known as the forth Crusade.

Where Venice prospered from a mostly stable urban and civil populace, Genoa faced an ever-increasing dilemma of how to manage their leading rival families, as on more than one occasion, these different groups attempted to pursue war against one another. This was a significant and persisting problem because the “great Genoese families were grouped together in tight clans, and the common interest of the clan overrode the immediate concern of the

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<sup>120</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 96

<sup>121</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 99

individual. The price that Genoa paid was acute factional strife, as rival clans tried to gain mastery of the consulate and other offices.”<sup>122</sup>

Between the years 1087 and 1099, Genoa established a commune which, described by Vito Vitale, one of Italy’s leading historians of Genoa in the twentieth century, as a “voluntary association of neighborhoods, with the bishop and nobility joining the oath” under the leadership of 6 consuls.<sup>123</sup> Genoa herself was separated into 7 neighborhoods, each with their own economic and political power, in addition to each having an obligation to provide crews for merchant or military ships depending on the city’s need at the time.<sup>124</sup> This took the form of a city that could self-govern, but suffered from an overly federated layout with not enough unity between the districts. Initially, Consuls served anywhere from 4 to 12 years depending on the laws that existed during that particular decade, as these laws tended to change rapidly in order to attempt to prevent families from consolidating too much power. This was the case until the year 1122, when consuls were allowed 1 year in office.<sup>125</sup> The responsibilities of the office of the consul is outlined as follows: Consuls were to administer equal justice among citizens, serve as judges, and not diminish the honor/income of the city or churches.<sup>126</sup> The Compagna was an assembly that dealt with the day to day activities of the city and advised Consuls on their recommendations. This body had a large set of rules governing who could be in it and what they could do once entered into the body. If an individual was called to enter the Compagna, meaning

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<sup>122</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 299

<sup>123</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg. 33

<sup>124</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 33

<sup>125</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 34

<sup>126</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 34

the individual was male, a citizen, and of a certain age, he would have 40 days to comply, or be barred from entering this body for 3 entire years.<sup>127</sup> This was a severe penalty for those seeking political life, as only members of the Campania could enter into the offices of consulship, treasurer, legate, or advocate. Only members of this body had the right to vote for the Consul and carry out merchant ventures, and worked on the basis of the majority. This body also had jurisdiction over trade in addition to the responsibility of outlining laws pertaining to homicide, assault, and developing an overall legal code.<sup>128</sup> In short, if one wanted political power in the city of Genoa, one would want to work to achieve office within this assembly.

The Genoese Commune was quite efficient at levying taxes as well as raising money. Since defense was a primary concern for this city, Genoa needed to ensure enough fiscal revenue to fund defensive projects. One such method they employed in achieving this goal, was the tax on foreign merchants and their income made along not only the port but also the coastal territory that Genoa controlled.<sup>129</sup> In addition, Genoa taxed land and goods sold into Genoa; however, this did not always fulfill Genoa's monetary needs and often resulted in Consuls needing to borrow money in order to pay the bills.<sup>130</sup>

The Commune not only benefited Genoa by levying taxes, but also allowed them to accomplish a great many other feats. For example, as the power of the Commune grew, so too did Genoa's international prowess and ability to conduct affairs with other nations. The commune accomplished this by spending money in order to bribe other cities or states in order to

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<sup>127</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 34

<sup>128</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 35-37

<sup>129</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 38

<sup>130</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 39-40

achieve their goals, and more importantly, the Genoese people trusted Consuls specifically to make these fiscal decisions.<sup>131</sup> To add to this, the centralized government also allowed Genoa to concentrate on dominating the surrounding area, which also in turn, grew and expanded the city's reach at home and abroad. For example, Ventimiglia, a small town near Genoa, saw its population come under Genoese control after the Commune humiliated their Count through economic dealings.<sup>132</sup> In short, this Commune was able to not only develop and maintain an economic and legal system, but also sought to deal with political squabbles, although the latter, saw Genoa facing considerably more difficult squabbles, as individuals began using their offices to their own ends. This can be seen in a law change where Consuls now had to swear that they would fight wars till the end instead of leaving their compatriots to deal with the conflict on their own.<sup>133</sup>

Throughout this decade, Genoa faced considerable internal and political strife that the Compagna could rarely correct on its own. Even the Consulship found it difficult at times to preserve the peace within the city and constantly had to make reparations and promises to unhappy families. These periods of unrest would generally follow times of war, due to the fact that as soon as the unifying enemy is dealt with, families once again fall into their standard squabbles and rivalries that tend to keep them separated and weak for some time. At the beginning of 1179, external wars raged and internal strife seemed to escalate, creating a considerable crisis for the commune to contend with. The Consuls at this time began separating

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<sup>131</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001.  
Pg 45

<sup>132</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001.  
Pg 45

<sup>133</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001.  
Pg 50



markets and allowing families to build walls in order for them to feel secure within their areas.<sup>134</sup> However, this did not work, and in 1193-4 the situation worsened with the sight of families creating siege weapons behind their walls as they hurled rocks and weapons at one another within the city.<sup>135</sup> A few years prior to this, Ottobono Scriba described a significant shift in the power of the commune as they slowly began to realize their current structure of government was no longer effective in quelling the social unrest. In response to this, the city created the position of the *Podesta* who was not only the new city manager, but also the military commander and chief judge.<sup>136</sup> In addition, an 8-member body called reactors, was created to help serve this individual in order to face the difficult task at hand. In 1194, Oberto de Olevano became both the Consul and *Podesta* and managed to restore order and calm within the city. Following him, was Drudo Marcellino, who not only managed to continue the peace, but also determined a way and followed through with paying off Genoa's considerable debts brought about by the civil strife and military conflicts.<sup>137</sup>

### iii.

#### Economy of a City-State

For a city-state, their main goal was to obtain and secure safety and privileges for their merchants both at home and abroad. This is the case because a vast majority of income and wealth of a city-state depends upon how skilled and crafty they are at conducting trade. These

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<sup>134</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 67

<sup>135</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 89

<sup>136</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 88

<sup>137</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 89-90

economic practices bred a very individualistic and capitalistic environment, where all merchants were vying with each other for profitable goods and exchange rates.

Venice is situated in an excellent location for prosperous trade at the top of the Adriatic. The city was positioned in a location that conveniently provided a “place from which to move goods to and from other European markets while also providing plenty of commercial docks and local markets for overseas shipping.”<sup>138</sup> During the 900s, Venice focused most of their time on building, whether it be actual structures or large fleets. Within this time Venice also began reaching out and establishing trade agreements with far away locations. It is important to bear in mind, that all of this supplemented their already valuable relationship with the Byzantine Empire. Venice’s fleet became masters of the Adriatic, after clearing out the pirates, thereby freeing Venetian ships to offer patrol missions for valuable cargo. Around 900 to 950, Venice had a population that number around 50,000. This increased over the next few centuries and by 1200 AD, the population living in Venice had hit 100,000 people, making it a very large and crowded city.<sup>139</sup>

Like other city-states, Venice too, developed a system in which their people could enter into both sea voyages and landed trade routes with hard labor or by financial means in order to take part in commercial expeditions. Within Venice specifically, “lending, both simple and ad negotiandum, appeared early, and in the 12th century it became an indispensable tool even though borrowing money was expensive. Commercial companies existed in Venice, for the most part they were used for acquiring shares in boat leases, where risk was reduced by dividing the

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<sup>138</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 48

<sup>139</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 65 and 126

global investment into 24 shares, or carati.”<sup>140</sup> This system is similar to that of other city-state economic practices but was referred to as *colleganza* instead of the more traditional name, *commenda*. This allowed for a system with “limited liability contract that might be unilateral, or, more often, bilateral and ended at the completion of the voyage.”<sup>141</sup>

Genoa as well had developed an economic system in which their citizens could participate in trade. Their system took the form of many classic Italian city-state trading systems and employed the use of *commendas*, or commercial contracts, where an investor puts money into a venture, and the traveling partner puts this money to use in return for a fixed part, which would usually be around a quarter of the profits.<sup>142</sup> For example, in October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1158, a Genoese citizen named Bongiovanni “accepted in a commenda’ L69 and agreed to take the investment to Sicily. Malfigliastro bore the risk of the venture, and Bongiovanni, by custom, received one-quarter of the profit for his labor.” *Societas* are like *commendas* except the key distinction is that *societas* have both individuals contributing money with the individual assuming who goes on the expedition receiving a slightly higher share.<sup>143</sup> In addition to these two, Genoa also employed a Sea Loan. This form of transition involves one citizen borrowing money from another and agreeing to pay it back within a certain amount of time or upon the conclusion of the expedition.<sup>144</sup> One important note is that this agreement requires the safe return of the expedition,

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<sup>140</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 90

<sup>141</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 90

<sup>142</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 56

<sup>143</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 56

<sup>144</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 56

thereby leaving some room for insurance in case the merchant and sailors encounter pirates, storms, or any number of tragedy while out on the Mediterranean Sea.

As time went on, these legal practices became more defined and evolved to face the ever changing events that face the city. In the Cartulary of Giovanni Scribba, who was a notary for Genoa between 1154 and 1164, one can note that these practices and institutions demonstrate an advanced stage of society that had clearly been evolving for some time.<sup>145</sup> Many of these documents show and depict legal contracts, commodity sales, wills, dowries, estate inventories and more, which show a very complex society that had achieved a very robust system of record keeping. Many contracts were included in this describing Sea Loans and *Commenda* transactions, as well as articulated much of the cargo being pepper, Brazilwood, cotton, gold, silk, alum, cloth, and exports of woolen cloth and silver. The jobs of these merchants were to go to a location such as Syria, Alexandria, Constantinople, Acre, Tyre, etc., and after selling or buying merchandise, they were to return to Genoa. This principle kept in touch with their mandate of moving commodities of places with abundance, to locations with scarcity, thereby allowing for maximum profits.<sup>146</sup> This not only helped with profits, but also greatly increased the diversity of products coming in and out of Genoa.

Epstein further remarks that Genoa can contribute most of its economic success to four basic reasons. These include “A rapidly growing domestic market, emphasis on capital-intensive trading, a legal environment relying on trust and not force to create functioning markets, and the abilities of families to devise organizations capable of sustaining knowledge and techniques of

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<sup>145</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001.  
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<sup>146</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001.  
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trading over time.”<sup>147</sup> The capital based trading augmented the productivity of a region obtaining scarce resources. The Commune, well trusted by the citizenry, did not try to overstep its bounds, and most trade partnerships were created from kinship and family relations, thereby allowing little room for misunderstandings and vendettas.

#### IV

##### Military Institutions and Responses

City-states can be relatively small entities that obtain an immense amount of suspicion due to necessity and force of ideology, although justly deserved at times, due to their fear of a large state or empire potentially attempting to take them over. Therefore, in order to deal with this problem, city-states have developed a number of responses both for large and small state and city threats. Before entering into the specific institutions that Genoa and Venice possess, wherein this thesis will discuss methods employed in dealing with both large and small states, it is important to understand the grand scheme of things being that not all is as it seems. In other words, just because a city-state has entered into a war with another city-state, does not mean they are arch-nemesis or have cut off all relations/trade entirely. In most cases, city-state relations with other cities and country are quite complicated and exist on a level of potential perpetual peace and war simultaneously. This will become clearer as the thesis moves forward and is vital in eventually understanding Venice’s role with the Ottoman Empire.

A very common response when an Empire or large kingdom threatens a city-state is the formation of a league. For example, in 1156 the Lombard league was formed between:

“Several shifting constellations of cities had emerged. Some were merely bilateral (the alliance between Milan and Piacenza in 1156 against Pavia and Cremona), others embraced several cities (Milan, Brescia, and Piacenza in 1159), but the so called

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<sup>147</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001.  
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“Veronese League” of 1164 was a genuine regional power bloc linking Venice with Vicenza and Padua as cities of the March of Treviso, and Verona, whose own Marca Veronese had by then been elided into it.”<sup>148</sup>

But even when cities like these form alliance, it is equally not uncommon for them to break those alliance and go to war with one another. In truth, city-states tend to spend so much time at war fighting one another that even during times of peace, it is not uncommon for ships from competing states to attack one another. But even in the case of Venice and Genoa, Madden reports that:

“On occasion Venetians and Genoese would swallow their dislike and band together against a common enemy, as they did with Emperor Frederick II, who waged war across Italy against the Popes and the Lombard’s. But usually the two powers entertained some level of aggression. It was not always easy to gauge their relations. Although Venice had an increasingly complex government to oversee their expanding empire, the Genoese did business in a much more casual manner, as families struggled against one another for dominance. Against their enemies, Venetians sent war fleets; Genoese sent Pirates.”<sup>149</sup>

Even though they are major rivals, they still are able to find enough common ground, which is something Northern Italian city-states have prospered from.

Venice handles most of these threats by attempting to avoid them in the first place, and then learning from each subsequent attack. For example, the Magyar invasion in 899 was stopped by Venetian fortifications in Malamocco, which is the same way in which they held back the Franks in the 700s.<sup>150</sup> After 1000 AD, Venice had additional walls constructed around the lagoon and placed them in a large sea chain that spanned across the entrance of the Grand Canal. During this time period, between 1000AD to 1200 AD, the Byzantine Empire had grown considerably weaker due to relentless attacks in the Middle East and the Normans in the Mediterranean. This forced Venice to keep bigger fleets around, not only for protection of their

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<sup>148</sup> Scott, Tom, *The City-State In Europe, 1000-1600: hinterland, territory, region*. Oxford University Press, 2012 pg 36-37

<sup>149</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 156

<sup>150</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 51

city, but greater protection for their merchants across the Mediterranean Sea. But in order to build ships, a city needs wood, something Venice did not have easy access to. This is why the Venetian assaults off the coast of Dalmatia in 1071 are explainable, because Dalmatia was reasonably close to Venice, in the Adriatic, and it had lots of forests.<sup>151</sup>

By the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Venice had a famous squadron known as the Gulf Squadron which was charged with protecting the waters in the Adriatic.<sup>152</sup> However prior to this, Venice first had to create a location in which to better construct ships. In the past, Venice relied on private shipyards and business for the construction of Venetian commercial and military vessels. In 1100 AD, Venice founded the first *Arsenale*, “it was up until 1300 relatively small, and indeed may not have consisted of more than a storehouse for supplies. By 1300, however, with the construction of the ‘New Arsenal’, shipbuilding had begun on site (as opposed to being undertaken exclusively in private yards), with a mix of private merchant vessels and ships for the state. From 1302, the provision of a monopoly was established, forbidding the building of ships for the state elsewhere.”<sup>153</sup> This is the process of how Venice created their large industrial shipbuilding yard that had its roots in economic practices hundreds of years before it was actually significant.

The Venetian fleet consisted of two main types of ships. The first being the Round Ship, which was a ship equipped with lateen sails and generally used for trade and heavy cargo and

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<sup>151</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 60

<sup>152</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 84-85

<sup>153</sup> Luca Zan (2004) *Accounting and management discourse in proto-industrial settings: the Venice Arsenal in the turn of the 16th century*, *Accounting and Business Research*, 34:2, 145-175, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00014788.2004.9729958>

could transport up to 500 tons of weight, depending on how many decks the ship possessed.<sup>154</sup> These ships were called *Tarette* for ships with one deck and *Navi*, for ships with multiple. The second ship is the Long-ship, or biremes. These were military vessels propelled forward by oars and were faster and lower in the water, thereby allowing much more maneuverability. These ships usually possessed two decks and mainly protected cargo vessels (Round ships).<sup>155</sup> The *bireme* was later replaced by the *trireme* which could hold more cargo and had an additional deck.

By 1171 AD, relations with the Byzantine Empire had greatly declined. Sometime during that year, a group of Venetian merchants attacked the Genoese quarter in Constantinople. Emperor Manuel, furious over this attack, decided he no longer wanted, or needed, the Venetians and ordered his soldiers to capture the Venetians and seize all their goods and possessions.<sup>156</sup> Nearly 20,000 Venetians were captured within the Byzantine Empire, thereby, forcing Doge Michiel I to respond. The Doge wanted a diplomatic resolution; however, an *Arengo* formed and order the Doge to respond to this grievous act of war. The Doge led a fleet of 100 galleys and 20 transports, and sailed them to Chalkas, which was the capital in Greece at the time.<sup>157</sup> The Governor came out to speak with the Doge in order for a peaceful resolution. The Governor agreed to help him send an envoy to the Emperor, which the Emperor refused to see. During this time, plague set into the military camp outside Chalkas and greatly weakened the military force.<sup>158</sup> The Doge, having no other choice at this point, returned to a very dissatisfied people

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<sup>154</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 85

<sup>155</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 84-85

<sup>156</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 87

<sup>157</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 88

<sup>158</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 89



who then assassinated him, after accusing him of not carrying out the “people’s” will. This is one of the last instances an *Arengo* will be formed, as this body’s rashness hurt Venice gravely during this hostage crisis and failed war.

In 1180, Emperor Manuel I died, thereby allowing his son Alexius II to rule at the age of 12.<sup>159</sup> Andronicus Comnenus became regent for the young ruler and encouraged and sanctioned anti-Latin fervor. Thus, it should be no surprise that later that year, mobs and riots formed and attacked Latin individuals in and across the Byzantine Empire. Thousands of women, children, and clergy-men were massacred, along with their processions seized.<sup>160</sup> In response to this, Pisa and Genoa immediately declared war in the Byzantine Empire, which left the Byzantines with no choice but to turn to Venice for naval assistance.<sup>161</sup> This was manageable because despite having 20,000 Venetians in custody, all 20,000 were safe and soundly locked away from the mobs along with all their processions. The Regent immediately released all Venetian prisoners, restored their quarter, and made payments for reparations.<sup>162</sup> This demonstrates both luck and good timing as Constantinople, with the rest of the Byzantine Empire, was no longer a place for competition and were only occupied by the Venetian merchants. However, relations never achieve the height that they once saw prior to the hostage crisis, which will help explain Venice’s actions (or inaction) during the 4<sup>th</sup> crusade.

Unlike Venice who began ship-building as a means for protection and increased economic activity, Genoa began as a means for aiding and potentially leading one of the crusades in an effort to reclaim the Holy Land. As far as their ships were concerned, they were relatively the same as Venice with both transports and galleys. By 1098, the first Genoese ships helped

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<sup>159</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 109

<sup>160</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 109

<sup>161</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 110

<sup>162</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 110

participate in the first crusade, providing the wood needed to build the siege weapons in order to take Jerusalem.<sup>163</sup> In Caffaro's, *Annals of Genoa*, this historian recounts that:

“The Genoese went to the River Jordan during Holy Week, then returned to Jaffa with the king, and held a council meeting there. From there they reached Arsuf, and captured it after three days fighting. Then in the month of May they reached Caesarea, and immediately beached their galleys. They ravaged all the cultivated land right up to the city walls and began to build siege-towers and siege engines.”<sup>164</sup>

After aiding in the capture of several Middle Eastern cities they then:

“Came with the galleys and the whole army to the beach of San Parlerio near St Symeon, and pitched camp. They first set aside one-fifteenth of the booty in the camp for the galley crews. The remainder they divided among 8,000 men, and gave to each as his share 48 solidi in the coin of Poitou, and two pounds of peppercorns, except for the rewards due to the consuls, the seacaptains, and men of quality, which were substantial. They started their journey back to Genoa on the Eve of St James the Apostle [24 July]; and they arrived back in the month of October, 1101 in triumph and covered in glory. [As] with the first Frankish army against Antioch in 1097, in the African expedition in 1088 [correctly 1087], in the first expedition to Tortosa in 1093, and when Jerusalem was taken in 1099.”<sup>165</sup>

The Genoese grew quite wealthy from the initial crusades. They were rewarded by Baldwin I in 1104 with the bones of Saint John the Baptist, a relic for the city, along with a number of buildings in Antioch and Jerusalem, and small colonies across the Levant in Acre, Arsuf, and Caesarea from which they could conduct business and trade enterprises.<sup>166</sup>

In 1155, Frederick I of the HRE was marching to be crowned Emperor by Pope Adrian IV. Most cities in response sent money as gifts to the Emperor, however, Genoa did not and instead fortified their city, launching a massive wall project to protect its people.<sup>167</sup> Frederick

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<sup>163</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 29

<sup>164</sup> Caffaro, *Annals of Genoa, 1099-1163*. Pg 53. pg 9 of Annals

<sup>165</sup> Caffaro, *Annals of Genoa, 1099-1163*. Pg 56, pg 13 of annals

<sup>166</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 29

<sup>167</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 72

surprisingly was not angry with this action and instead, impressed by their engineering feat over a very short time, rewarded them by leaving them alone, at least for the time being. Later that same year, Genoa received a promise of security throughout the Byzantine Empire, as well as receiving monetary gifts and tax incentives along with an *embolum*, or leased merchant quarter, inside Constantinople.<sup>168</sup> This helps explain why the Venetians and Genoese were present inside Constantinople, setting off the Venetian hostage crisis. In return for these gifts, Genoa promised to not make war with the Byzantines, protect them from Norman fleets, and allowed their own citizens to serve as sailors in the Imperial fleet for a wage, but Genoa would not automatically be entered into war with the Byzantine enemies.<sup>169</sup> These negotiations with the Byzantines were logical because relations closer to home were developing fast and Genoa needed more allies not so close to home, in order to continue conducting business.

The problems at home surrounded the HRE and the Normans in Sicily, who both wanted Genoese support against the other. In return, both leaders were promising the city much and even began bestowing Genoa with some of these gifts prior to Genoa siding with anyone. In 1162, Frederick sacked the city of Milan and summoned Genoa for another round of negotiations. Frederick promised the Genoese greater independence, along with a hint at virtually no taxes in return for Genoese assistance in helping fight the Normans. To add to this, Genoa would receive one quarter of any city that it helped capture, the city of Syracuse (once captured), and one quarter of the emperor's treasury at the time for their service.<sup>170</sup> This was accepted by Genoa but did not go accordingly to plan, due to newfound conflicts erupting between Pisa and Genoa over

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<sup>168</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001.  
Pg 72-73

<sup>169</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001.  
Pg 73

<sup>170</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001.  
Pg 76-77

the island of Sardinia. This conflict which lasted from 1162 to 1175 was fought over Sardinia because of potential resources the island held along with commercial benefits.<sup>171</sup> In truth, Sardinia was not that beneficial for either side but still a war they felt they had to fight in order to prove their superiority. At the same time as this war, civil strife erupted in Genoa and lasted for close to a decade due to military folly's and squabbling among the families. The Consuls did manage to bring about peace eventually but further highlighted the volatility and sensitivity that their current political/social structure held. In 1175, Genoa makes peace with Florence and Pisa which agreed to provide each their own sphere of influence in Sardinia along with trading rights in their respective cities.

## V

### Changes in Military Institutions and Responses (After 1200 A.D.)

The 13<sup>th</sup> century saw a time of constant fighting between city-states and nations, in the backdrop of an overarching battle between the Christian and Muslim faiths known as the crusades. This should be no surprise to anyone, as the crusades had been occurring for more than 200 years prior to this point. What is worth exploring is the constant squabbling between Christian nations that result in an ultimately weak effort to claim any land for Christianity. In 1280, after the fall of the Latin kingdoms within the Levant and the Latin Empire that had assumed the role of the Byzantines, these city-states still enter into conflict over commercial gains instead of focusing on larger threats to the East. Again in 1280, Caffaro reported on an incident where he witnessed a skirmish between Venetian and Genoese Galleys:

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<sup>171</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001.  
Pg 78

“The Venetians were at the time at war with the Anconitans, and therefore...they were patrolling in that area just as many [Venetian] armed galleys [sailed] in different regions for protection as well as to attack their enemies, the Anconitans. The said galleys of the Venetians unjustly set upon our [(Genoese)] galleys attacking them even though they recognized the flags of the Genoese. The Genoese recognizing and seeing the Venetian arrogance, vigorously drove their galleys forward, entering into battle...The Genoese came out with the victory, so that they captured two of the Venetian Galleys, while the third rode swiftly away.”<sup>172</sup>

What is interesting to note about this particular incident is that it shows how even during times of peace, these rival city-states will still set out and attack one-another for simply entering into territory they respectively regard as their own. Before diving into the aggression displayed between rival city-states, it is important to take into consideration the events and military responses to these incidents that occurred leading up to the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

A good place to begin is with Venice and to have a better understanding of how Doge Enrico Dandolo turned this city from a Republic, into a Maritime Empire. Venice has had a history of helping to support crusades in the past. In 1099, the Venetians supposedly set sail with some 200 ships, although they never saw any fighting due to delays on the part of the Byzantine Empire.<sup>173</sup> But then again in 1122, the Venetians were instrumental in capturing the city of Tyre and demonstrating a more robust response to the Byzantine antagonism toward Venetian involvement in the crusades. With these two crusades, Venice reaped many commercial gains as the fragile Latin Kingdoms greatly appreciated the added support by capturing this extremely important trade port.

With this, we arrive back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, on the eve of the 4<sup>th</sup> crusade led by the French, Count Thibaut of Champagne, Count Baldwin of Flanders, and Count Louis of Blois, all

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<sup>172</sup> Appendix C: Jacopo Doria, *Annals of the Genoese, Introduction and 1280*. Dale, S., A.W. Lewin, and D.J. Osheim. *Chronicling History: Chroniclers and Historians in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*. Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009. Pg. 82-83

<sup>173</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 71-72

of whom were attempting to create a logistical solution to how they were going to get an army around the size of 20,000 men over to the Holy Land.<sup>174</sup> Their end result was that they wanted to sail to the Middle East, and approached Venice asking them if they could do it. Innocent III had already called for this crusade a few years earlier, and had approached Venice with the idea of raising a fleet to sail to the Holy Land, so this appeal came as no surprise to them.<sup>175</sup> What did however shock them, was the sheer size of the proposed army. The projected size of the crusade was 20,000 foot soldiers, 9,000 squires, 4,500 knights and resources to sustain them.<sup>176</sup> This would require an incredible number of ships and manpower that any nation would balk at, let alone the lone city of Venice with a mere population of at best, 100,000 people. Another problem was finances. Venice did not necessarily have the required funding to start building immediately and would already require the vast majority of the merchant fleet, the entity that sustains the city's treasury. However, the Doge with his council devised a plan that would help solve this problem. His proposal consisted of payments of 4 silver marks per knight, 2 silver marks for each horse, and 2 silver marks for each person who was not a knight, which totaled to around 85,000 silver marks. In addition, Venice would supply a year of travel, along with 50 war galleys of their own to fight in the crusade on condition that all spoils would be split between the two.<sup>177</sup> However, since this was Venice, the Doge required the approval of the Great Council and the *Arengo* in order to carry out his plan. Luckily for the Doge, both bodies agreed, along with the French Counts, clearing the path for Venice to begin preparations for the crusade. In 1202, Doge Dandolo ordered all Venetian merchant vessels back to Venice and suspended all overseas trade in

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<sup>174</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 114-115

<sup>175</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 118

<sup>176</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 118

<sup>177</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 122

order to acquire the vessels needed for transport.<sup>178</sup> This was an enormous undertaking, the likes of which no state, or city-state for that matter had ever accomplished in the past. Venice had not only promised 50 war galleys, but also 450 transport ships for which to carry troops and supplies. This venture had the potential to economically cripple the Venetians, as they had to commit the entirety of their naval military might and merchant fleet in order to complete the task. Most ships had to be built at the state's expense and Venice, who only had about 30,000 able-bodied men to send, decided to commit half that force to the crusade and come up with another 15,000 men from its dependencies as they did not want to leave the city completely unprotected.<sup>179</sup> Despite this planning and successful completion of Venice's promises, less than half of the assumed number of crusaders actually arrived on time, leaving Venice with a problem of collecting the fees for transport as each individual was supposed to pay independently; in fact this setback greatly angered the Venetian populace.<sup>180</sup> In the end, the crusaders only came up with 51,000 silver marks out of the promised 85,000, leaving Venice and the entire crusade with a potentially crippling dilemma of what to do next. In order to save the crusade, the Doge managed a compromise that saw Venice loaning the 34,000 silver marks to the crusaders in return for the army assisting them in attacking the Christian nation of Zara, which posed a threat to Venetian dominance in the Adriatic.<sup>181</sup> This was agreed to and in October of 1202, the crusade set sail. Despite various setbacks and attempts by some individuals to not have a crusader army sack a Catholic settlement, the attack carried on as planned, and the city was destroyed, as the crusaders did not want to abandon the entire campaign due to this.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 125

<sup>179</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 126

<sup>180</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 127

<sup>181</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 127

<sup>182</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 127

After the assault on Zara, the crusaders were left with the problem of choosing where to direct this army. Some wanted to invade Egypt and plunder the riches that lay within, whereas others wanted to go to Jerusalem. However, due to manpower problems, neither option seemed adept enough as the crusader's numbers were too few. This problem, however, was eventually resolved as the crusader camp received an "unexpected" visitor. His name was Alexius IV, son of Emperor Isaac who had been murdered by his brother in a coup to take control of the Byzantine Empire. Antonio Morosini, who wrote the Morosini code reports that:

This lad (Alexius IV), was the [son] of the emperor...emperor Isaac, who was chased from his empire by the Grifoni (Greeks), was carried safely by a tutor of his to Germany and grew up in the court of the Emperor. So the young man made a request of the Doge or his barons saying that on the recommendation of the monarch he wished to travel with the fleet and return to his empire, which was his by right. The words were very pleasing to the Doge, and they were accepted, with an agreement on the following terms, that when he regained his empire he would give the Doge 200 thousand silver marks, and in addition to this repay every expenditure that the fleet made in this service and trouble."<sup>183</sup>

This agreement, which promised 200,000 silver marks, supplies, and a Byzantine army, was overwhelmingly accepted as the crusaders saw this as a mission to reclaim the throne for the rightful ruler of the Byzantine Empire. Alexius even promised to have the Greek Orthodox Church become subservient to Rome, giving the Pope some benefit from this crusade. This agreement came just in time as the Pope had just recently excommunicated the Venetians due to their destruction of Zara.<sup>184</sup> The Doge, who felt almost trapped by this agreement, reluctantly concurred with the decision as he hoped to keep the excommunication secret, even though he knew that assaulting Constantinople was a significant political, economic, and military gamble for Venice.

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<sup>183</sup> Appendix: Antonio Morosini, *The Morosini Codex* Dale, S., A.W. Lewin, and D.J. Osheim. *Chronicling History: Chroniclers and Historians in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*. Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009. Pg 209

<sup>184</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 140



By 1203, the crusade reached Constantinople. During the initial assault, headed by the Doge, the crusader army appeared to be doomed to defeat. In the face of retreat, the blind Doge, standing at the bow of his ship, ordered it to be beached under a hail of stones and arrows.<sup>185</sup> Venetian troops, witnessing this successful act of bravery, rallied to the Doge as the Byzantine troops fled in fear. In the end, the Venetians won the day and oversaw the crowning of Alexius IV, who immediately gave Venice 100,000 silver marks with the promise of more to come.<sup>186</sup> However, more did not come and the leaders of the crusade were now faced with immense discontent from their army. Alexius eventually refused to pay any more money after many riots and fires that were started by disgruntled Venetians and Pisans, who managed to destroy nearly 100,000 people's homes.<sup>187</sup> With this announcement, the crusaders took matters into their own hands and began raiding outside the walls of Constantinople. During this chaos, Emperor Alexius was murdered and replaced by Alexius V, which caused the crusading army to immediately declare war on the new Byzantine Emperor. The battle for Constantinople that occurred in 1204 between the Crusaders and the Byzantine Empire was mostly a naval affair, where "outnumbered but determined Venetian [and crusader forces] attacked and took the most well-fortified and powerful city in the Mediterranean."<sup>188</sup> The crusaders sacked the city for 3 entire days.<sup>189</sup> During the sack, Venice attempted to "save" some valuable pieces of art and history as the crusader forces were destroying a variety of objects in order to acquire the precious gems that lay inside. For example, during this sack, the Venetians "acquired" the Bronze horses of San Marco.<sup>190</sup> The fall of Constantinople poised a significant danger to Venice. Therefore, the

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<sup>185</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 141-2

<sup>186</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 142

<sup>187</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 144

<sup>188</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 145

<sup>189</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 145

<sup>190</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 145

Doge took steps to ensure stability in the region. The first of these moves consisted of a committee that would decide who the next Emperor of Constantinople would be. An account of the event states that:

“When Misier the Doge was preparing to return to Venice after winning such a great victory and allegiance, he held a council to choose an emperor, since at the time no one of imperial blood could be found, and Count Baldwin of Flanders was worthily elevated by Misier the Doge and the barons, and one of the relatives of Misier the Doge.”<sup>191</sup>

Thanks to Venetian support, Baldwin of Flanders won the election, signifying the beginning of the Latin Empire in Constantinople. As far as the spoils are concerned and in addition to Venice’s purchase of Crete from Boniface, Madden reports that:

“The Partition committee awarded Venice a large section of Constantinople near the harbor, the Sea of Marmara shoreline from Heraclea to the end of Gallipoli, and the city of Adrianople. Venice was also given rights to the islands of Salamis, Aegina, Andros, and both ends of Negroponte as well as the gulf of Corinth and the Morea (Peloponnese). Finally, [the] Venetians received all the lands of Western Greece along the Adriatic Sea. Like the purchase of Crete, these awards consisted only the right to conquer the region. Nevertheless, Dandolo immediately assumed a new title, which Venetians doges would proudly don for decades: “Lord of three-eighths of the Roman Empire.”<sup>192</sup>

Venice also attempts to justify their actions and role in the crusade by affirming that Constantinople was in the hands of heretics, and that the events that transpired could only have been the work of a prophecy.<sup>193</sup> This is a common theme of how the Venetian tend to respond to the threat of international scrutiny. Though Venice never tried to fully claim all the land they were *given* they did benefit from several strategic ports that greatly aided Venice’s economy, which was in need of activity due to the hiatus caused by the Forth crusade.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> Appendix: Antonio Morosini: *Morosini Codex*, Dale, S., A.W. Lewin, and D.J. Osheim. *Chronicling History: Chroniclers and Historians in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*. Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009. Pg 212

<sup>192</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 148-9

<sup>193</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 145

<sup>194</sup> All Venice received these lands, it was left to their independent action on whether or not to assert control over these areas.

For the Genoese, they saw dire consequences as the new Latin Empire in Constantinople was under heavy Venetian sway, thus allowing them to exclude all their rivals from these prosperous and tactical ports. This caused a serious blow to the Genoese commercial economy. This in part can explain Genoa's financial problems during this century, which lead to constant warfare to find needed money and civil uprisings as these expeditions failed to produce adequate results.

During this century, Genoa was in constant warfare with mainly Pisa, Venice, and Florence. Due to this, Genoa attempted to secure alliances in order to strengthen their position. Genoa sent peace treaty offerings to the Greek Emperor of Nicaea, the despot in Epirus, and the sultan of Egypt, as well as strengthening existing relations with the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>195</sup> The latter was in need, due to existing contentions between the two state leaders. The Emperor had decreed in 1232 that rulers in North Italy, including Genoa, should not have a Lombard as a leader or ruler, which was a problem because the Genoese had just elected a Podesta who was a Lombard from Milan, and due to pride, Genoa refused to change officials.<sup>196</sup> In response to this, the Emperor had Genoese traders and goods seized throughout the empire, thus virtually stopping trade with many colonies including the ever important Sicilian ports.<sup>197</sup> Genoese politics became split once again between Pro-Lombard and Pro-Emperor forces. However, despite these new groups forming, Genoa still managed to operate and reinforce Middle Eastern colonies in the 1230s and negotiate the release of Genoese merchants in Sicily thus avoiding

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<sup>195</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 121

<sup>196</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 121

<sup>197</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 121

war.<sup>198</sup> Also, during the 1230s, the King of Morocco wanted and planned an attack on Ceuta, a site with a large Genoese merchant colony. In order to protect their interests, Genoa sent 18 galleys and 4 large ships to aid the Sultan of Ceuta, however, the King of Morocco was still able to take the city despite Genoese intervention.<sup>199</sup> In 1235, Genoa launched a major naval operation as a show of force against the newly taken city, sending 70 large vessels, 30 smaller ones and 20 war Galleys under Ugone Lercario, which was the largest fleet Genoa had ever assembled.<sup>200</sup> This affair was ended with diplomacy as the King of Morocco ceded a portion of the custom duties of the city to Genoa along with payment and reparations for the Genoese merchant belonging in the city.<sup>201</sup> This is an example of city-state diplomacy as these cities possessed the dominant naval force within the Mediterranean, thus allowing them to press other nations even via their naval capacity, despite that nation potentially dwarfing them in size.

The 1230s and 1240s saw continuous peasant revolts and rebellions within the city of Genoa and throughout the countryside across Liguria. Many believed that Emperor Frederick of the HRE was responsible for inciting these upheavals in response to Genoa's refusal to change their Podesta.<sup>202</sup> Genoa however was saved by Pope Gregory IX, in return for Genoa's acknowledgement of their supremacy in a religious sense.<sup>203</sup> Genoa received 50 war galleys, as well as, a promise of aiding the city in recapturing the city of Syracuse. To add to this, Pope

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<sup>198</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 122

<sup>199</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 122

<sup>200</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 122

<sup>201</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 122

<sup>202</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 123

<sup>203</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 123

Gregory IX excommunicated Emperor Frederick.<sup>204</sup> The civil uprising had almost broken the city of Genoa during these decades; however, this was ultimately quelled with the help of Rome and the Podesta. To help the healing process, the leading Genoese families and Podesta chose not to punish any family siding with the Holy Roman Emperor, so as to have the city heal faster.<sup>205</sup> This is an excellent example of city-state families choosing to not punish the losers in order to better establish lasting peace.

Major wars broke out with Pisa in the years 1282 and 1283. These wars were caused by Genoese suspicion that Pisans were inciting further unrest along the Genoese countryside.<sup>206</sup> Pisa launched a naval assault on Genoa; however, they failed, therefore, Genoa returned the favor sending 93 Galleys and 8 *Panfili* under the command of Doria and Zaccaria who caught the main Pisan fleet in the harbor. This battle is known as the Battle of Meloria<sup>207</sup> Most of these ships were boarded with several others being sunk. This stood as a crippling naval blow for Pisa who would require considerable time to recover. This also allowed Genoa to dictate the terms in 1288, which they received from Pisa, the regions of Cagliari and Sassari, along with being able to keep their possessions in Corsica. To add to this, Genoa got to keep the important site of Elba's Castle until the Pisans fulfilled their monetary and land obligations to the Genoese. Lastly, the Pisans had to destroy their fortifications in Acre and in return, Genoa would return the considerable number of prisoners that they captured during the battle of Meloria.<sup>208</sup> As a result of

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<sup>204</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 123

<sup>205</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 123

<sup>206</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 159

<sup>207</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 159

<sup>208</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 179

this war, Pisa was never again able to challenge the might of the Genoese navy and subsequently, Genoa was able to get rid of one of their staunchest trading rivals in the Mediterranean Sea. Genoa's main rivals now consisted of Venice, and a few other major trading ports along the south of France. For the last few years of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Genoa and Venice were entered into a bloody conflict due to increasing animosity that had been building up over the last century. In 1298, this conflict came to a head when the Genoese sent a fleet of 87 galleys up the Adriatic and right into Venice led by Lamba Doria.<sup>209</sup> Venice responded by launching 90 of their own galleys. Among those present were Marco Polo, who had just recently returned from his adventures in the East.<sup>210</sup> This battle swayed heavily in the Genoese favor although they were unable to attack the city. Most of the Venetian fleet was destroyed along with the capture of Marco Polo by the Genoese. The next year, in 1299, Pisa, Venice, and Genoa made peace each swapping prisoners and agreeing to stop fighting for some years.<sup>211</sup>

## VI

### Changes In Government (After 1200 A.D.)

Many significant events occurred in the years leading up to and during the 13<sup>th</sup> century which effected the Venetian government and changed it into what will eventually manage and maintain their empire. In 1192, Enrico Dandolo was elected Doge and is considered by many historians to be responsible for the creation of Venice's maritime empire.<sup>212</sup> By this point in time, Doges, upon their election, had to swear an additional oath stating that they will not act

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<sup>209</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 183

<sup>210</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 183

<sup>211</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 183

<sup>212</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 111

without the approval of the “Doge’s Council,” which is a “growing body of important Venetians who represented various portions of the city.”<sup>213</sup> This is significant, because this shows an oath enumerating and limiting the powers of the Doge, which creates a nice system of checks, which further highlights the Venetians’ distaste and distrust of concentrated power. During his time in office, Dandolo created the first ever codification of civil and criminal laws in Venice, and made it publicly accessible for the people to acknowledge.<sup>214</sup> This will later be improved upon by Doge Giacomo Tiepolo who created the *Statuto*, which is an “extensive codification of Venetian civil law.”<sup>215</sup> This served as the basis of Venetian civil law for centuries. In addition to this, Dandolo also reformed the Venetian coinage system initiating the first token, *quartarolo*, and the first silver coin, *grosso*, the last of which became an international coin of exchange bearing the image of the Venetian Doge receiving a banner from the winged lion.<sup>216</sup> This stands as a symbol of the economic and political might Venice possessed at the time.

Later on, under the Dogeship of Vitale II Michiel, Venice saw a new transformation in their system of organization. This Doge separated Venice into six *sestieri*, or districts, which included San Marco, Cannaregio, Santa Croce, San Polo, and Dorsoduro.<sup>217</sup> This is significant because it greatly improved the local administration for each area of Venice, and also will in later days serve as the system for distributing the mail.

Throughout all these ideas and institutions, the Venetians were careful as their feared the formation of factional groups that would place the interests of the group ahead of the city, which could prove detrimental for everyone. Therefore, in order to avoid this, the Venetians created a

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<sup>213</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 111

<sup>214</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 111

<sup>215</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 169

<sup>216</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 111

<sup>217</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 164

rigorous system of checks and balances to avoid partisan politics. This election process was designed “to filter out partisanship while enlisting the wisdom of men and the will of God to make the best choice for the people of Venice.”<sup>218</sup> Without going over the entire process to elect the Doge, a long arduous process is set in motion that begins with plucking a random boy from the streets in order to select and read wax balls with paper slips inside, that will eventually select the 41 individual council members who then selected the Doge. The election process was designed “to be so cumbersome that only God could influence” the outcome.<sup>219</sup> This created a new, stable, and most importantly, peaceful method of electing the most powerful individual in Venice.

Also, during the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Venice’s population, as previously stated, nearly doubled over the course of a few hundred years. A consequence of this was that the number of wealthy individuals increased, and they all wanted to serve in political office with the goal of attempting to achieve more power for their families and themselves. This saw increased numbers of members in the Doge council, which eventually began meeting on their own and formed the Great Council, which was made up of important and wealthy men and is described by many to be the “engine of the Venetian Republic.”<sup>220</sup> This body had internal elections and acted as a sort of “gatekeeper” for entering into higher offices in Venice. This body increased in size with the number of wealthy citizens, which caused anger from the original members who wanted to keep the Great Council restricted. In 1289, Pietro Gradenigo was elected as the next Doge and devised a plan to deal with the situation.<sup>221</sup> The problem with the great council was that there were too many families who wanted to enter and not enough space. In order to deal with this, Doge

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<sup>218</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 170

<sup>219</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 172

<sup>220</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 170

<sup>221</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 174



Gradenigo reformed the Great Council by making it easier for men to join it, and what had been a few hundred man council became one with 1,100 members by 1300 AD.<sup>222</sup> To compare this to a larger country, it would be as if 1 percent of an entire populace worked and served within the government. However, this did not fully solve the problem of those who wanted the council to be more limited. Therefore, in order to appease both sides, in 1323 the Great Council was closed and accepted no more members, meaning that only ancestors of the members already within the council could enter. This event is known as the *Serrata*, or closing.<sup>223</sup> Some viewed this event as a defeat for democracy, however, others, like Madden, view this as a step in the right direction. Despite the closing:

“The reforms that led to the Serrata had dramatically increased participation in the Venetian government, making it more representative in the world. The Serrata did not create an oligarchy, since hundreds of families and well over a thousand members were included in the council. Instead, it gave certainly to those important families that their position in government and society could not be taken from them. The Serrata, therefore had the effect of dousing the most virulent forms of factionalism in the Great Council. And it was, in any case, never a complete closure. Venetians who distinguished themselves by extraordinary service to the state could still gain membership for themselves and their family—although this was appropriately rare.”<sup>224</sup>

Therefore, one can still acknowledge how this act did indeed expand the representation within the Great Council. Even though the council was technically “closed,” some exceptions were made for great deeds that certain citizens accomplished, such as the Polo family after their expeditions into the East.

By the start of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Venice had a specific hierarchy of government. At the bottom (not to suggest this body is weak, but instead to imply the sheer size of this group and exclusivity toward male citizens) was the *Arengo*, which consisted of all male citizens and

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<sup>222</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 174

<sup>223</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 177

<sup>224</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 177

confirmed the election of the Doge. Above them is the Great Council, who were responsible for running the day to day activities within the city as well as electing members to the council of 40 and the council of 60, known as the Senate. The council of 40 served as a sort of court of appeals and prepared legislation for the Great Council to debate. In addition, this body was responsible for electing the three heads of the Great Council or *Capi*, who were the presiding officers during the meetings. The Senate was tasked with commanding fleets, naming captains, and sending emissaries, although, they still did require greater approval from the Great Council to decide anything. Above the Great Council and their sub groups were the Doge's Council, which consisted of 6 men from the 6 districts of Venice and served for one year in office. The highest position of government was the Doge and the Signoria, which consisted of the Doge, his council, and the three *Capi* which created a body of 10 members who commanded the Great Council.<sup>225</sup>

Genoa did not have an easy time creating a government during this century. In 1216, with the continual rise in factional and civil strife within the city, the Genoese began giving their *Podesta* additional powers. This did create some stability, however it did not end the crime spreading across the city from factional feuds.<sup>226</sup> This continued throughout the century. In 1257, the Genoese saw the rise of the Popolo, or people who held two fundamental beliefs that forced them to act in the face of all this civil strife. These beliefs were that first, “the violence of their self-proclaimed betters, the nobles, needed to be controlled because it weakened the city by involving others in factional strife” and “second, the people paid for wars through excise taxes on basic commodities like salt, while the wealthy profited from the ways taxes were leased to them or pledged to pay the interests on loans. Thus the power of the nobles to upset the city and

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<sup>225</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 177-178

<sup>226</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 107-108

their control over its purse strings gave the people reason enough to rise.”<sup>227</sup> This served as their primary justification for creating additional unrest in a city plagued by war.

This is the environment that allowed Guglielmo Boccanegria to enter into the spotlight and become known as the “Captain of the People.”<sup>228</sup> He was a wealthy and skilled politician who seemed to appease both the Guelf and Ghibelline factions. In 1257, conflicts began in Acre and the Levant where 52 Genoese galleys were destroyed by Venetian fleets.<sup>229</sup> This was a great Venetian victory and greatly affected the Genoese’s ability to conduct trade within the Latin states in the Middle East. Boccanegria saw this as a potential opportunity with which to unite the people against a common foe, the Venetians, and inspired them with his promise of finding friendly markets in the Middle East.<sup>230</sup> This worked for a time and allowed him to also push through some temporary reforms such as canceling some tolls, changed the old tithing system, placing a check on the church, and with these changes, he was able to establish friends among merchants.<sup>231</sup>

One major concern at this time, was that Genoa was reeling from debts and loans that they owed. Due to this, Boccanegria attempted to reform the system of taxation by creating a new shareholder system that turned the state’s debt into mortgaged revenue. This new found source of income allowed Genoa to begin many building projects such as the Palazzo San Giorgio, which was a new palace. Along with this, were additional wharfs, a new harbor (Molo

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<sup>227</sup>Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 136

<sup>228</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 136

<sup>229</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 146

<sup>230</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 146

<sup>231</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 147

Vechio), and the construction of a new public building, which served as the center for politics, thus leaving the citizenry with an alternative option instead of using notable family's homes.<sup>232</sup>

This allowed the people to become more independent from the aristocracy.

Boccanegria focused on a new foreign policy revolving around revenge toward Venice and attempting to find new trading partners. Emperor Michael Palaeologus, who recreated the Byzantine Empire after defeating the short-lasting Latin one, decided to befriend Genoa as they were looking for a naval ally at the time.<sup>233</sup> In return for this, Genoa received a plethora of trade rights; however, this deal was not as well liked as Boccanegria had hoped. Pope Urban IV excommunicated Genoa for their new Greek alliance. This also proved to be unpopular at home for Boccanegria as several attempts were made on his life.<sup>234</sup> This effectively ended Boccanegria's rule and brought Genoa back to a government headed by a Podesta. The war with Venice continued until 1270 when the Pope intervened in a 15 year truce, most likely in the hopes of attempting to start a new crusade.

Like clockwork, when relations with Venice turned peaceful, the Genoese once again began erupting into civil and factional strife. Caffaro reports that in 1270, the very same year they achieved peace with Venice, Genoa:

In that same year the Genoese city, with all the countryside, lived in bitterness. Such division reigned between citizens and countrymen that poisonous actions proliferated throughout the villages and localities of the commune of Genoa. Homicides and thefts were committed indifferently, because of which banishments from both [city and

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<sup>232</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 147-149

<sup>233</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 151

<sup>234</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 151

countryside] were innumerable for those who caused riots in public streets, insulted men, and committed murder and despoiled their enemies and other travelers.”<sup>235</sup>

Political divides widened with people either siding with the Papal authority or the Holy Roman Emperor, as this was still a point of intense contention in the city. It appeared that no matter what the Genoese tried, they were ultimately unable to quell the unrest. In 1310 Henry VII, emperor of the HRE, traveled to Italy to be crowned in Rome. Due to decades of continuous economic and political strife, the Genoese willingly gave up self-rule to Henry for about 20 years. They did this “not in the face of external force, for Henry’s power and resources were limited, but because self-rule no longer worked.”<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> Appendix B: The Annals of Oberto Stancone, Jacopo Doria, Son of the Late Pietro, Marchisino Di Cassino, and Bertolino Di Bonifazio. Dale, S., A.W. Lewin, and D.J. Osheim. *Chronicling History: Chroniclers and Historians in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*. Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009. Pg 76-77

<sup>236</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 182

### 3 “A Clash of City-States: Rivals Confronted”

By the start of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the basic framework of Venetian Empire had been established and was invigorated by the wealth of the Venetian people and economy. Besides the multitude of different trade ports and destinations merchants had, Venice also underwent a cosmetic and functional transformation. The canals that weaved throughout the city experienced new clearings as the people drudged out the silt that had formed for decades within these waterways.<sup>237</sup> To add to this, the Venetians also managed to better stabilize the land that the city rested on as the shifting tides within the lagoon posed a constant threat to the security and support mechanisms of the buildings, and also better defined the districts of the city.<sup>238</sup> These were important improvements that the city required in order to operate the trading empire Venice has finally became after the 13<sup>th</sup> century. As far as trading is concerned, this information is best conveyed by Crouzet-Pavan who states:

“The overall picture of the Venetians’ merchant ubiquity runs thus: Venetians were active in the Black Sea, where commercial exchanges intensified thanks to the constitution of the Tartar Khanate of the Golden Horde in Southern Russia. They had a foothold at Sudak, on the east coast of the Crimean Peninsula, from which they exported grains, furs, and slaves. An agreement with the Sultanate of Rum facilitated trade with the Asia Minor Coast. We also find them in markets in Egypt, still their preferred source for goods from the Orient. They ruled as masters in Acre and Tyre. In the Adriatic their monopoly was undisputed. Finally, they ventured more bravely into the western Mediterranean. Although a Venetian presence cannot be attested in Spain at this date and they did not manage to bring the Genoese and the Pisans to their knees, they nonetheless intensified their relations with Tunis, Bejai, and Ceuta.”<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 70

<sup>238</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 70

<sup>239</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 70

However, this commercial prosperity did not last forever. However, up until this point of economic downturn for Venice, both Genoa and Venice were essential to the thriving and vibrant economy of the Mediterranean Sea. These two city-states were critical in creating this trade network that spanned throughout the Mediterranean, including the very profitable lands and trade routes of the Eastern Mediterranean, which served as the gateway to the Black Sea, Palestine, and Egypt. Furthermore, during this century, both city-states will be “locked in a deadly battle to preserve their own sea lanes and destroy those of their rival[s].”<sup>240</sup> Furthermore, both Genoa and Venice have been described as vanguards who “geographically...tried to reach as far as possible in Asia...Institutionally...tried to devise better ways to do business to accumulate larger amounts of less risky capital, to administer companies, and to monopolize the markets for commodities and money,” and “technologically... developed impressive sophistication in navigation, shipbuilding, and armaments.”<sup>241</sup> In truth, these city-states did not appear at first to be major players in the Mediterranean context, but proved over the course of history that these small republics could and did expand, mostly commercially but also territorially.

Due to the Mamluck invasions in the Levant along with Genoa’s new role of protecting the newly conquered Constantinople, Venice saw herself cut off or severely restricted when dealing with areas in and around the Middle East. Despite this however, Venice’s commercial prowess can be seen extending farther than any other city-state within the Mediterranean. The wealth of Venetian merchants is illustrated by the adventures of Marco Polo and his father Niccolo Polo. The Polo family consisted of good businessmen and were well respected in the city. Upon an excursion, Nicolo Polo saw himself trapped on the wrong side of the Black Sea

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<sup>240</sup> Abu-Lughod, Janet L., *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350*. Oxford University Press, New York. 1989 Pg. 102

<sup>241</sup> Abu-Lughod, Janet L., *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350*. Oxford University Press, New York. 1989 Pg. 102

shortly after the Greeks recaptured Constantinople from the short lasting Latin dynasty that had situated there. Without an easy way to return home, Nicolo traveled east. He ended up living with the Mongols for a few years until he arrived at the Great Khans palace where he met Kublai Khan, the leader of the Mongol Empire.<sup>242</sup> Kublai Khan showered Nicolo with gifts and riches and talked incessantly about his fascination with the West and Christianity in general.<sup>243</sup> Due to his fascination with Christianity, Kublai Khan requested Nicolo do a favor for the Great Khan. His request was for Nicolo to personally deliver a message to Pope Clement IV. This message requested that 100 scholars who could teach his people about *trivium* and *quadrivium* (advanced courses of study) as well as those who could convince his people about the true faith of Christianity.<sup>244</sup> Nicolo returned 1 year later and personally delivered the letter to Pope Gregory X, as Pope Clement IV had recently passed away. The new Pope saw this as a potential opportunity to fight the Muslims and save Europe from further invasions. The Pope sent back a reply accompanied by Nicolo Polo, Marco Polo, and two Dominicans.<sup>245</sup> They eventually made their way to Beijing where the Khan was thrilled to see them. He was especially intrigued by Marco Polo who he grew quite close to. While in Beijing, Marco Polo served as Kublai Khan's ambassador as he "particularly liked Marco's very Venetian approach to his ambassadorships. In Venice, ambassadors were essentially spies; in fact, it was their job not only to relate information to a foreign court but also to send back to the Venetian government dispatches reporting everything of importance, be it customs, rumors, or even local foods."<sup>246</sup> After two decades in service, the Khan granted permission for the Polos to leave, and after escorting an important Princess to her future husband, the Khan of Persia, both Marco and Nicolo made their way back

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<sup>242</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 158

<sup>243</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 159

<sup>244</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 159

<sup>245</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 162

<sup>246</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 162



to Venice accompanied by an escort of many ships filled with letters for European leaders, gold, and a multitude of different gems and presents.<sup>247</sup> With this, the Polo family became even more wealthy and more importantly, the city of Venice prospered from the accomplishing relations with the Khan that not many Europeans would even dare to imagine, thus displaying the reach and wealth of the city and its citizens.

For Genoa, the 13<sup>th</sup> century was a turbulent year for trade as kingdoms rose and fell. Trade declined for Genoa within the Levant due to a series of invasions from the Mamluks and attacks by the Venetians during the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Furthermore, a great divergence began to appear as Eastern trade routes began to become more dangerous. This divergence was the product of what began in 1258 “when the Mongols destroyed Baghdad and established their rival capital at Tibriz,” which decreased the attractiveness of trade routes leading to Baghdad as risk had grown considerably.<sup>248</sup> In addition, trade virtually stopped with the Byzantine Empire and Frankish states after the fourth crusade and shrewd negotiating of the Venetians in excluding Genoa from these markets. Trade in Sicily and Naples fell to virtually nothing due to their uneasy relationship with Charles of Anjou who now ruled both of these territories.<sup>249</sup> Finally, Genoa also suffered in Alexandria and Romania, in part, due to the Venetians, but also, due to the fact that the attention of the Genoese was never solely fixed upon trade. Instead, Genoa was forced to pay attention to constant rebellions and uprisings that were occurring within Genoa herself and the surrounding countryside.<sup>250</sup> Therefore, with the traditional trade destinations no

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<sup>247</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 163

<sup>248</sup> Abu-Lughod, Janet L., *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350*. Oxford University Press, New York. 1989 Pg. 120

<sup>249</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 143

<sup>250</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 98

longer serving as prosperous ports, the Genoese chose to look elsewhere. With this, the merchants looked to North Africa, Sicily, Catalonia, and Provence in order to continue the trade revenue into the city.<sup>251</sup> Catalonia and Venice both became significant rivals to Genoa during this century as far as commercial enterprises were concerned. However, despite “the rapidly changing political situation in the Mediterranean, the Genoese continued to find ways to prosper through long distance trade,” which “took some Genoese to the Black and Caspian Seas and the Atlantic Ocean in search of favorable markets in an increasingly competitive world.”<sup>252</sup>

In addition, Genoa saw a series of industrial changes within the city. For example, weapons and ships were in high demand due to the crusades that occur during this century. They began creating structures that could produce weapons and reorganized the maritime shipbuilding jobs into the shipbuilders or master shipwrights, rope and sail makers, provisioners and coopers, followed by the stevedores who loaded and unloaded the vessels.<sup>253</sup> Despite reorganization and finding new destinations for trade, the economic situation remained dire as the commune remained in almost constant debt to creditors. In 1214 the commune of Genoa appointed a council of Nobles to look into the finances of the city and essentially proposed a tax overhaul in order to fix the growing debt.<sup>254</sup> This overhaul was actually quite effective, although short lasting as Genoa’s constant shifting between civil unrest and warfare caused the commune to spend immense amounts of money throughout this century.

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<sup>251</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 98

<sup>252</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 146

<sup>253</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 99

<sup>254</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 102

Now that the previous chapters have established a historical context along with an overview of the institutions in which these city-states were built and relied upon, we can now begin to explore specific moments in history that will demonstrate a city-state's level of eagerness to engage in military conflicts and their resolve to see these wars through. These patterns will be revealed by exploring a city-states adaptive nature in responding to varying degrees of threats, in which city-states have a plethora of options in their arsenal, and will respond either militarily, politically, diplomacy, or with commercial incentives to achieve their goals. To be more specific, this chapter will focus on the Venetian-Genoese wars that occurred in the latter part of the 13th century and continued through the 14th century. During this time interval, three large significant wars broke out between these two polities: in 1294, 1350, and 1378. This pattern of debilitating wars that Venice enters over the course of the 14<sup>th</sup> century helps to explain the path Venice chose to take in order to build their *Terraferma*, or land based empire, which can be seen in the 15th century. In addition, these wars explain Genoa's weakened state entering the 15<sup>th</sup> century and why that city-state ultimately succumbed to foreign intervention and why they chose to accept foreign rule in place of independence. This period of time, stretching from the end of the thirteenth century through to the fifteenth century, serves as a perfect lens with which to view both Venice and Genoa as their institutions and cities will be put to the test while attempting to navigate these perilous times, which saw many wars break out, economic crisis ensue, and also the appearance of the "Black Death" in the mid-fourteenth century, which would rock the very foundations of the Mediterranean world.

According to John Martin and Denis Romano who wrote *Venice Reconsidered*, a book that offers a fresh look at the Republic of Venice with the most recent documentation on the city,

illustrates that this was a particularly trying and troubling time for Venice who found itself over extended and without many allies close to home. They further asserted that this century was:

“Sandwiched between these two periods of expansion and growth is the problematic 14<sup>th</sup> century. Venice’s claim to dominance of the Adriatic and the Mediterranean had come under siege. The decisive defeat of Pisa and the hands of the Genoa in 1284 and the resurgence of Byzantine power in the eastern Mediterranean once again made Genoa a formidable threat to Venetian commerce in the East. Venice’s hegemony in the Adriatic were challenged by Bologna and Ancona. The key port of Zara, on the Dalmatian coast, essential to Venetian control of the Adriatic, was in rebellion, encouraged by the Hungarians. At home, food shortages and a constricting economy resulted in general unrest marked by sporadic uprisings... The badly deteriorating political situation in the latter part of the 13<sup>th</sup> century resulted in the much discussed piece of legislation that has come to be called the ‘*Serrata*’ or ‘closing.’”<sup>255</sup>

As one can see from this, Genoa at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century saw their position increasingly strengthened from a badly defeated Pisa and a strong alliance with the newly formed Byzantine Empire centered in Constantinople. Although Venetians had gained considerable diplomatic and naval recognition for their efforts in the fourth crusade at the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, these benefits seem to have begun to fade and decline once the Genoese gained the upper hand after 1260. However, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, these conditions seem to have been reversed with Venice appearing to have regained much of their lost territory along with additional territorial acquisitions in the Italian peninsula. Venice it seems, began to shift its attention from that of a maritime empire to that of a more land based domain, a response to the war of Chioggia that saw Venice herself besieged by enemies allied against her. This shift in attention is in part responsible for the growing political, social, and cultural developments that will lead and inspire the early Renaissance. At the same time, Genoa seems to have slid back to their old ways with incessant civil conflict and uprisings debilitating the abilities of the Genoese commune and trade fleet.

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<sup>255</sup> Martin, John and Romano, Denis. *Venice Reconsidered: The History and Civilization of an Italian City-State, 1297-1797*. The John Hopkins University Press, 2000. Pg. 90

Now it is important to take into consideration the fact that city-states view their commercial operations and trading ventures as some of the most important functions of the city. This will be explained and demonstrated at length such as during the opening phases of the Battle of Chioggia when Pisani abandons a good portion of his fleet in order to save the Venetian cargo vessels. With that in mind, one can see that over the course of this hundred or so years that city-states like Venice and Genoa will risk everything and spare no cost in attempting to ensure the protection of these financial routes. Venice and Genoa in particular, show an uncanny ability to offer a significant number of varying responses that ended in only 3 major wars between these two states, which, when looked at over the course of the entire history, shows a period in which these two city-states acknowledge the fact that wars can be extremely costly and crippling to that of the integrity of their spheres of influence.

Despite such beneficial economic booms in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Europe and the Mediterranean suffered near the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century and continued until the 15<sup>th</sup> century when this economic downturn was finally lifted. By the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Charles of Anjou was in Southern Italy attempting to create his kingdom, the Latin Based Empire in Constantinople had fallen, along with the fall of Baghdad in 1258. When kingdoms are at war or when they fall to ruin, chaos and uncertainty take hold, which leads to troubling economic times for that region, despite any prosperity that had ensued prior to the downturn.

In addition to these events, further dramatic political shifts occurred due to the high degree of change that ensued within the thirteenth century which helped ensue and create the foundation for this period of “troubles” (14<sup>th</sup> century) as Abulafia phrases it.<sup>256</sup> To begin with, a

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<sup>256</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 348

good number of crusades led by various European leaders, attempted to, in vain, secure and protect the Latin Kingdoms of the Levant. Land continued to “shrink” in this area as Muslim Kingdoms slowly began systematically wiping out the Latin Kingdoms of the Levant.

Several crusades were even aimed at Egypt, as many European leaders believed that the Ayyubid Dynasty posed a greater threat to the Latin cities. A crusade launched in 1219 gained brief success in capturing Damietta, but was ultimately repulsed, only to have the same thing happen in 1248 when Louis IX, the King of France, also failed in conquering the city.<sup>257</sup> However in 1250, military commanders of slave origin toppled the Ayyubid Dynasty in Egypt, which ushered in a period of Mamluk rule in both Egypt and Syria.<sup>258</sup> The Mamluks were determined to drive out the Latin Kingdom and achieved their goal in 1291 when Acre, the last Christian city, fell in the Levant, cutting off access to trade conducted by the Italian city-states that had achieved monopolies in this area. In 1261, this situation intensified with the fall of the Latin Kingdom situated in Constantinople by the Greeks of Nikaia, who sought to reclaim the old capital of the Byzantine Empire in return for trading privileges and Black Sea trading ports.<sup>259</sup> However Egypt was also a pace for commercial expansion and not just military conquest. The Venetians decided to refocus on this location during the latter 13<sup>th</sup> century. Venice reportedly, in order to outmaneuver the Genoese, decided to “strengthen her relationship with the new military caste of slave and former slave soldiers, a strategy that assumed heightened significance in 1291 when the Mamluks” captured Acre, the last crusader city left in the

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<sup>257</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 348

<sup>258</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 348

<sup>259</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 349

Levant.<sup>260</sup> The Genoese, “shifting their effort to the diplomatic front... allied themselves [in 1260] with Michael Palaeologus, one of several Greek claimants to the throne in Constantinople and the one who seemed most likely to succeed in regaining that city”.<sup>261</sup> The Greeks of Nikaia accomplished this goal with the help of the Genoese who chose to act diplomatically instead of engaging excessive hostilities. This of course, refers to the reasoning behind Genoese support for the resurgence of Byzantine rule. Venice had achieved much from the fourth crusade, placing Genoa at a distinct disadvantage which they hoped to correct. Instead of engaging Venice head-on in an all-out war, Genoa instead, chose to act through the Byzantines, which helped them achieve their goals, which in turn, helped achieve Genoa’s goal of a weakened Venice. Diplomacy alone, it seems, expanded Genoa’s trading options and simultaneously placed Venice at a distinct disadvantage, as they were no friends of the new Byzantine Empire.

In the western Mediterranean, the situation was not any more tranquil. In the mid to latter 13<sup>th</sup> century, wars broke out between the Papal States and Frederick of the Holy Roman Empire over claims to Northern Italy.<sup>262</sup> Civil uprisings and internal conflicts spread throughout Italy and Sicily. According to the Sicilian Vespers, on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 1282 in Sicily, men and women woke up “to the sound of bells” where “messengers ran through the city calling on men of Palermo to rise against the Oppressor [(French)]” and at once the streets “were full of angry men, crying ‘Death to the French.’”<sup>263</sup> These uprisings are a result of both polities attempting to assert control over Southern Italy. In addition, this naturally sparked unrest in a number of city-states, as old

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<sup>260</sup> Abu-Lughod, Janet L., *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350*. Oxford University Press, New York. 1989 Pg. 121

<sup>261</sup> Dale, S., A.W. Lewin, and D.J. Osheim. *Chronicling History: Chroniclers and Historians in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*. Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009. Pg. 65

<sup>262</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 349

<sup>263</sup> Runciman, Steven. *The Sicilian Vespers: A History of the Mediterranean World in the Later Thirteenth Century*. Cambridge University Press, 1958 Pgs. 214-15

political divisions between loyalties to the Guelfs and Ghibellines began to intensify. This was further complicated by the wars to the South of Italy between Charles of Anjou and King Peter III of Aragon over Sicily.<sup>264</sup> This along with conflicts in North Africa, left a fractured Mediterranean divided, due to internal conflicts and exterior wars.

During the latter 13<sup>th</sup> century and into the 14<sup>th</sup> century, three main wars were raged between the Italian city-states of Genoa and Venice that significantly weakened their strategic positions within the Mediterranean and placed even greater strains on their already stressed institutions. These moments of conflict occurred due mostly to disputes centering on control of the strategic Black Sea trade routes and their financial gains. Genoa, who had a trading base at Caffa, focused on slaves, grains, dried fruits, local products, and good quality wax, whereas the Venetians, located at Azoz, were more focused on luxury items.<sup>265</sup> The fact that these rival cities both had trading bases in such close proximity to each other within the Black Sea, caused inevitable conflict. In order to wage war, city-states tended to favor preying on rival city-states trade conveyes, which economically can cripple a city-state if enough valued merchandise is plundered. City-states were keen to develop strategies for assaulting these merchant vessels.

Susan Rosan who wrote *Medieval Naval Warfare: 1000-1500*, concludes that:

“Sailing was confined to the summer months between April and October, meant that ships on trading voyages could be reliably found at certain “pinch points” on their routes at well-known times. The effect of this was that an opposing fleet need only be ‘on station’ for a short time to have a good chance of taking a high proportion of the enemy’s trading vessels. Since trade was... of vital importance to both states, a successful actor like this was not just commerce raiding but a severe blow to the losing states security.”<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 349-351

<sup>265</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 355

<sup>266</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 103



From this, one can see that the successful mastery of ascertaining these locations could yield a city-state or an aggressor considerable income and severely weaken the security and well-being of that city-state's economy and social integrity.

Therefore, in the mid-thirteenth century, one can see the differences in responses and tactics when hostilities were at a height between Venice and Genoa. In order to protect their merchant vessels, the Venetian government organized their trade ships into convoys with armed escorts called a *muda*.<sup>267</sup> In terms of Genoa, they attempted to go on the offensive, sending large fleets against large Genoese navies. Venice scored significant victories at Acre in 1258, near Settepozzi in 1263, and at Trapani in 1266.<sup>268</sup> Genoa in response to this, adapted and began sending out smaller raiding parties targeting Venice's merchant ships. In 1262, Genoese ships managed to plunder a year's worth of cargo and merchandise for the city arriving from the Black Sea. In addition, in 1264, Admiral Simone Grillo tricked Venetian escorts into a false route and captured the Venetian *muda* heading from Constantinople to Venice.<sup>269</sup> Genoa and Venice both realized that these conflicts were in fact working against their greater interests of trade domination as they hurt their overall spheres of influence. After this decade of fighting, Abulafia notes that Venice and Genoa had now achieved some level of relative peace. This chapter will specifically address those instances of major conflict in 1294, 1350, and 1378, but will also directly acknowledge the reasons as to why these moments occurred.

## i.

### The War of 1294: The Beginning of a New Era

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<sup>267</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 160

<sup>268</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 103

<sup>269</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 103

Before explaining the events of the first significant conflict between Venice and Genoa, it is important to first understand the strategic positions and resources available at the time. This influences into a number of factors such as fleet size. Fleets, which had numbered once over 100 during the times of the early crusades, were reduced to about 60 galleys with a few notable exceptions.<sup>270</sup> In Genoa, ship production was mostly private, instead of a state enterprise.<sup>271</sup> In contrast, the Venetians, which had a state monopoly on shipbuilding, which were built in the Arsenale and then the Novo Arsenale, which was constructed in 1304.<sup>272</sup> By 1324, this shipbuilding complex was fully reformed and modernized to produce ships with the utmost efficiency. This state monopoly created an environment that was not particularly nurturing of innovation or technological advancement, which gave the Genoese an edge when fighting Venetian vessels. Genoese ships during this time were “larger and better equipped” than the Venetians, which could be due to lack of funds or the possibility that Venice was falling behind in the technological race.<sup>273</sup> The Venetian Senate chose to build the Novo Arsenale in response to an increasingly dangerous shift in power toward the Genoese. In 1301, they also “declared that it was necessary to arm a permanent squadron for the protection of ‘the Gulf’ (Adriatic Sea).”<sup>274</sup> This further demonstrates the nature of city-states to adapt in varying degrees to the threats posed against their city and holdings.

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<sup>270</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 127

<sup>271</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 127-128

<sup>272</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 153

<sup>273</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 128

<sup>274</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 153

Although as previously stated, these two city-states did engage in extensive naval and military operations. Both Venice and Genoa engaged in “complex naval operations over large stretches of the Mediterranean involving a sophisticated understanding of time and geography, utilizing the intelligence gathering, subterfuge, and variety of stratagems to bring enemies fleets to battle on favorable terms.”<sup>275</sup> These complex naval operations included extensive preying on each other’s commercial shipping, which offers an explanation as to the severe decline of their commercial and military power during various portions of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. By 1294, Genoa was unquestionably the dominant force as far as western traders were concerned in Romania.<sup>276</sup> This was made possible by good relations with the Byzantines, which became essential for those seeking to access the profitable waters of the Black Sea. This was made even more important after the fall of the last Latin Kingdoms along the Levant. Genoa, by this time, also had major colonies in Pera, adjacent to Constantinople, Caffa in Crimea, Tana within the Sea of Azov, and Chios in the Aegean.<sup>277</sup> Venice, on the other hand, had many colonies and bases along the Aegean and the Peloponnese, the Island of Crete, and several islands within the Aegean that were controlled by Venetian noblemen but were not a part of the *Serenissima*.<sup>278</sup> This gave Venice extensive control over the waters of the Aegean, Adriatic, and those around Crete, which they feared safety for, due to the rising threat of Genoa. That, and the fact that Venice was increasingly interested in reestablishing trade routes through the Black Sea, which were being blocked by the Genoese.

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<sup>275</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 134

<sup>276</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 104

<sup>277</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 104

<sup>278</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 104

This in turn resulted in the inevitable war in which Venice felt the ever growing presence of the Genoese. By the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, one could see that “Genoese tactical superiority was as overwhelming as the Venetians’ had been at mid-century.”<sup>279</sup> This in part is due to the utter defeat of the Pisans at the hands of the Genoese navy during the battle of Meloria in 1284, granting them partial supremacy in the west. During the onset of the war in 1294, the Genoese base at Pera “raised a scratch fleet of hastily armed merchant ships...though outnumbered...[the Genoese] inflicted a severe defeat on the overconfident Venetians, capturing most of their vessels.”<sup>280</sup> In addition, the Genoese also caught the Venetian *muda* bound from Armenia off the port of Lajazzo and captured the majority of the goods the convoy contained.<sup>281</sup> This demonstrates a tough start for the Venetians who have fallen victim to several of the advantages that Genoa possessed, including skilled sailors against over confident ones along with the strategy of preying on Venetian *muda*. This was in truth made more complicated with the “extension of the sailing season year round... made the task of choking off an enemy’s commerce by interception of a single convey impossible. The galley’s limitations as a blockading craft were considerably more evident in these new conditions of navigation.”<sup>282</sup> This explains why Venice was still able to operate in this war despite these two significant defeats.

For Genoa however, one of their most controversial “victories” occurred in 1295. During this year, Genoa “dispatched 165 galleys and 35,000 men,” a sizable maritime fleet the likes of which the Mediterranean would not see again for another 300 years, “but the Venetians evaded it

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<sup>279</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 125

<sup>280</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 125

<sup>281</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 125

<sup>282</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 125

and the armada was forced to slink home.”<sup>283</sup> The armada had been sent to Messina in Sicily, and had “dared” the Venetians to engage them, who were not so foolish to accept. However, this endeavor was not without a high price. Shortly after the return of the fleet and following the news of this “unparalleled and fruitless effort, and to some extent as a result of strain of financing and manning it, bitter internecine fighting broke out among the opposing parties at Genoa. No fleet at all was sent out that year while a Venetian fleet of some 70 galleys attacked Genoese possessions in Romania, including even Pera and Caffa.”<sup>284</sup> This shows how city-states must balance victory and defeat with the rising tide of civil unrest that the communes must learn to control in order to survive.

In 1298, the ‘deciding’ battle of the war occurred. This was not necessarily deciding in the manner of utter destruction of one side’s fleets followed up by the invasion of the capital city; instead it was due to continuing unrest in Genoa that made them unable to continue the fight. The Battle occurred at the island of Curzola within the Adriatic, which was uncomfortably close for the Venetians. The battle consisted of 96 Venetian galleys led by Andrea Dandolo and 77 Genoese galleys under the command of Lamba Doria.<sup>285</sup> Genoa won a crushing victory over the Venetians sinking or capturing most of the Venetian galleys. Genoa also captured thousands of Venetian sailors, including the notorious Marco Polo, who was then imprisoned in Genoa.<sup>286</sup> However, after this great victory, the Genoese fleet did not continue onto Venice and besiege the city. Instead, they had to return home to deal with the growing civil war “between the Guelfs and the Ghibelline government of the metropolis growing increasingly dangerous and with the

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<sup>283</sup> Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 156

<sup>284</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 126

<sup>285</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 127

<sup>286</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 104

expense of maintaining hostilities growing increasingly burdensome, [Genoa] needed to end this war on two fronts.”<sup>287</sup> Genoa found this not to be too difficult to cease hostilities as all parties seemed to want to bring an end to the conflict. This in part is due to the large number of prisoners the Genoese now possessed both from Venice and Pisa during their conflicts. People are a resource that city-states must be very cautious and aware of so as not to find themselves under populated and vulnerable. Furthermore, “the Venetian failure to achieve decisive results by their attempt to destroy all of Genoa’s eastern commerce in the strenuous campaign of 1297 and the inability of Genoa to follow a naval victory with an attack on the enemy home city led to the peace.”<sup>288</sup>

In the end, not much was resolved as the balance of power had not shifted significantly due to these military ventures. Pisa was still too weak to threaten Genoese dominance, and all three city-states agreed to exchange/ransom prisoners. However the main problem and key source of the conflict which was, the question of control over the Black Sea and Romania, were left unresolved. During the course of this conflict, both sides “were able to put out substantial fleets at great costs.”<sup>289</sup> This was the first of a number of wars that prove to be more costly than beneficial as they realize that neither side is able to gain substantial progress against the other. Roger Crowley who wrote *City of Fortune* believes that the war “was conducted beyond the point of tactical reason and was immensely damaging to both parties” and that even “when the Pope attempted to arbitrate and meet half the costs of the Venetian claims personally, the

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<sup>287</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 127

<sup>288</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 127

<sup>289</sup> Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 156

Republic was seized by irrational emotions and refused.”<sup>290</sup> Despite the fact that both sides understood the risks and costs of extended naval warfare, it appears that neither was willing to enter into serious peace negotiations until they absolutely had to. This could be a result of desperate efforts on the part of the Venetians in order to curb the growing power of the Venetians, thus enabling them to allow a high degree of risk in order to achieve this goal.

ii.

### The New Century and “The Black Death”

Before discussing the second major conflict, it is essential to first look at the 50 year gap between the end of the first war in 1299 and the beginning of the second in 1350. Several significant political events along with disasters brought by the Black Death, wreak havoc on the Mediterranean state of affairs. The first of these events occurred in 1308 between three brothers seeking control of Ferrera, located along the Po River. One of the individuals seeking control, “Fresco, sought and received Venetian military support. For the Venetians, this seemed a golden opportunity to gain substantial control over the commercially important Po.”<sup>291</sup> In Medieval Italy at this time, most political factions were split between the Guelfs and the Ghibellines. Madden reports that “these groups dated back to the eleventh century and the dispute is between the popes and the German Emperors of Italy. Since those same disputes regularly resurfaced and were often mixed liberally with Italian city-state independence, German wealth, and the freedom of the church...broadly speaking, the Guelfs were pro-papal, while the Ghibellines were pro-imperial.”<sup>292</sup> The Venetians aligned with the Ghibellines in an effort to subvert Papal control over the region since they technically were the overlords of the city. Therefore, it is not

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<sup>290</sup> Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 156

<sup>291</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 183

<sup>292</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 183

surprising that when Pope Clement V opposed Fresco's claim and instead supported his Guelf brother, hostilities ensued. The Papacy had offered Venice control over Ferrera as vassals who paid an annual rent, but the Great Council refused this, seeking to avoid undermining their authority to some foreign ruler.<sup>293</sup>

This did not bode well with the Papal States. In response to their refusal, Clement V issued a formal Bull of excommunication against Doge Gradenigo and placed the city of Venice under interdict. Despite this move, Doge Gradenigo was under the opinion that "Venetians... need to safeguard their future in a dangerous world" thus "an opportunity like this to acquire firm control over shipping on the Po would not likely present itself again" and should be sought after by all means.<sup>294</sup> Shortly thereafter, Venice annexed Ferrera. The pope, enraged by the Venetians actions, issued a crusade against the republic in 1309, and placed a devastating bull against the people of Venice, further excommunicating the Signoria and all Venetian citizens. Property throughout Christian lands were seized. Venice had acquired many enemies, grown jealous from Venice's monopoly over much of the East, and thus many nations flocked to this crusade. The course of the war did not last long. The Venetian garrison at Ferrera was struck by disease, and quickly defeated by the crusader forces. Venice was unable to respond due to an unsuccessful coup in June of 1309 that left the people and government shocked.<sup>295</sup> Due to the recent coup attempt and internal unrest, the Venetian commune created a new council charged with overseeing the security implementations passed by the Great Council. This new body was called the Council of Ten, whose responsibilities included overseeing the Signori di Notte—city guards who ensured no citizen entered the city armed, organize security for great council members,

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<sup>293</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 183

<sup>294</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 183

<sup>295</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 188



intelligence gathering, diplomatic missions, investigating treason, and seeing that each *sestieri* of each district could provide enough well trained guards to ensure protection and maintenance of peace within the districts in addition to being able to respond to emergencies on behalf of the city.<sup>296</sup>

The Venetians risked much in their efforts to expand their territory in the Italian mainland, which is the first instance of many that this city will undertake in order to enable their home-field security. In the wake of their defeat, they realized exactly how much they risked when the Signoria witnessed a portion of its city rise up against them. The Signoria proved robust along with their institutions sound, which allowed them to weather this coup and implement reforms like the Council of Ten, which they hoped would rectify the potential future unrest.

This conflict with the Papacy will continue to surface well into the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup> century as Italian city-states, such as Venice and the Papal States vie for control of the Italian mainland possessions. For example Pope Sixtus IV established an interdict on Venice in 1482, which brought about a short struggle between these two entities over the Venetians claim and siege of Ferrera. The interdict by Pop Sixtus read as:

“If within 15 days the lords of Venice fail to raise the siege of Ferrera, they themselves and their subjects, supporters, advisors, and adherents, together with other specified cities, lands and places subject their rule, not to mention all persons both lay and clerical dwelling therein, shall, if they fail to obey the prescribed admonitions, orders and commandments, be accursed and excommunicate in their persons, while their possessions be laid open to plunder by all nations.”<sup>297</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 188

<sup>297</sup> The Interdict of Pope Sixtus IV, 1482. Chambers, D.S., J. Fletcher, B. Pullan, and Renaissance Society of America. *Venice: A Documentary History, 1450-1630*. Renaissance Society of America Reprint Texts. University of Toronto Press, 2001. Pg. 219-20

This demonstrates the Papacy's power when going to war with any Christian nation under their religious sovereignty as states must be cautious when dealing with the Pope due to this ability. As we will see more in the next chapter, the Venetians are able to enter into conflict multiple times with the Papacy while walking the fine line of excommunication and hat that will mean for their city.

Venice, now seeing the East become increasingly dangerous, began to look elsewhere to supplement any potential losses due to the fact that they were now beginning to lag behind the Genoese in trade. In 1317, Venice "set up regular maritime routes between the Mediterranean and the North Sea (Flanders and England)... Venetian ships could carry goods from the East far into the West taking on cargos of metals, wool, and textiles for the return voyage."<sup>298</sup> Routes like these become more prevalent among city-states as the Atlantic begins to open up due to technological advances in shipping. This in turn brings about more interlopers entering the Mediterranean world.

In 1329, a new growing threat emerged near Venice within the Italy mainland. Verona had fallen to the Della Scala family who were openly hostile to Venice and other city-states in the area, and eventually expanded their territory adjacent to traditional Venetian lands.<sup>299</sup> This family imposed stiff taxes on Venetian goods, causing a potential threat as this caused grain prices to rise. The city of Venice along had over 100,000 mouths to feed, which explains the potential economic and social crisis that could erupt should there be shortages of food. Their war cries for open conflict with some pushing for Venice to expand into the mainland. However, the Venetians, overall, preferred to not have outright war. Doge Francesco Dandolo did not truly like

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<sup>298</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 72

<sup>299</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 191

the idea of expanding Venice onto the mainland and believed they were “sailors and businessmen, not soldiers and farmers.”<sup>300</sup> Even though Venice had decided not to engage into open war with the Della Scala family, word spread throughout Italy that it had. It is not fully known whether this was intentional or not, however, what is certain, is that Venice greatly prospered from this news.

The Della Scala family had wasted no time in creating enemies throughout the mainland through their territorial conquests and harsh taxes. Many enemies of the Della Scala family sent money and various forms of support in the hope that Venice would be powerful enough to eliminate this threat. In addition, the Visconti of Milan, Estes of Ferrara, and the Gonzagas of Mantua, offered military assistance and formed a league with the Venetians to crush the Della Scalas.<sup>301</sup> The war was over by 1337, which saw Venice come into possession of Padua and Treviso. Upon this victory, Machiavelli reports that the Florentines did not benefit much from this alliance with Venice because the Venetians, “like all who enter into league with less powerful states than themselves, having acquired Trevigi and Vicenza, made peace with Mastino [della Scala] without the least regard for the Florentines.”<sup>302</sup> Padua was awarded to the Carraras Family that had helped Venice throughout the war, but Treviso was added to the Venetian Republic, making it the first of many future mainland acquisitions to come.<sup>303</sup> Despite the fact that Doge Francesco Dandolo had opposed open war, he was not amenable to the fact that fortune seemed to have turned against the Della Scala family and was quick to act

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<sup>300</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 191

<sup>301</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 192

<sup>302</sup> Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Greatest Works of Niccolo Machiavelli: The Prince, The Art of War, Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livius & History of Florence*. Chapter VII, History of Florence. First Kindle Edition 2013—Century Ebooks.

<sup>303</sup> Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 192

diplomatically, securing alliances in Italy and allowing Venice to reward herself with Treviso for committing a “service” for the Italian mainland overall.

By 1314, Genoa had finally reasserted itself for Imperial rule, which it allowed itself to come under due to the ongoing civil unrest that had begun at the end of the 1294 war with Venice. However, from this period of 1317 to 1330-31, Genoa was engaged in a bloody civil war with various families and political factions vying for control.<sup>304</sup> This in turn could provide a reason for a growing new presence in the western Mediterranean, the Catalans, which were a new conglomerate of city-states under the central authority of Barcelona. The major outcomes of this civil war is the heavy financial burden placed on the citizens of Genoa along with new fortifications that were erected around the city as Genoa saw itself attacked considerably from insurgents along its countryside, providing an excuse to reinforce the defense of the city.<sup>305</sup>

Around the same time in 1332, Venice set out again to expand its trade operations into the Black Sea. After normalizing basic relations with the Byzantines, the Venetians sent Nicolo Giustinian, an ambassador and businessman who “journeyed across the winter steppes to the Mongol court at Saray to request an audience with the Khan of the Golden Horde.”<sup>306</sup> This was granted in 1333, where Nicolo spoke to the Great Khan on behalf of the Venetians “to beg the khan to allow the establishment of a trading colony and to grant commercial privileges at the settlement of Tana, on the Sea of Azov.”<sup>307</sup> This was an important site that Venice hoped to acquire. Tana, was within a location “well situated at the heart of the western Mongol Kingdom, ideally placed for journeys north to Moscow and Nizhni Novgorod, the river routes of the Don

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<sup>304</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg. 194

<sup>305</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg. 201-202

<sup>306</sup> Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 157

<sup>307</sup> Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 158

and the Volga, and at the very head of the trans-Asian silk-road” in addition to the Sea of Azov being familiar terrain for Venetians who were used to “estuarine lakes with a mean depth of 8 meters, whose channels and hidden shoals made travel difficult” for those not raised on the waters of the Venetian lagoons.<sup>308</sup> This new trading base did not sit well with the Genoese, who was already battling the Venetians in other regions for monopolies in trade. The Genoese had felt the Black Sea and Sea of Azov to be their domain and resented the Venetians for interfering in it. The Venetian Senate also acknowledged the dangers of this new site, and they viewed Tana “as being precariously positioned ‘at the limits of the world and in the jaws of our enemies.’”<sup>309</sup> In 1341, the Great Khan, whom Nicolo Giustinian negotiated with, died, ushering in a period of uncertainty for the Italian city-states doing business in this region.

The next major political events that ensued and rocked the foundation of the Mediterranean were brought about by the Black Death or Bubonic Plague, which threw both the European and Islamic worlds off balance. For the Islamic world, the Bubonic plague struck here first, presenting a new natural disaster that these states must deal with on top of the Christian attacks from the west and internal conflicts within their respective states. Ibn Khaldun, an Arab historian from this time, writes in 1348 that “A destructive plague...overtook the dynasties at the time of their senility...it lessened their power...Their situation approached the point of annihilation and dissolution...Civilization decreased with the decease of mankind. Cities were laid waste...The entire inhabited world changed.”<sup>310</sup> Khaldun also had previously noted that this crisis was preceded by a period of economic downturn, which were caused most likely by the economic crisis growing in the Mediterranean at this time. Trade it seems, concerning gold and

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<sup>308</sup> Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 159

<sup>309</sup> Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 161

<sup>310</sup> Lacoste, Yves. *Ibn Khaldun: The Birth of History and The Past of the Third World*, The Thetford Press LTD London 1984. Pgs. 88-89

commercial routes were cut drastically. The trade routes between North Africa and “the Sudan declined considerably, then almost ceased completely” as a result to this biological crisis.<sup>311</sup>

Leading up to this at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century close to the 1340s, Europe appeared to be on the verge of an economic crisis. Famines were widespread due to population increase and financial institutions appeared to be failing.<sup>312</sup> The culprits for those responsible for bringing the plague to Europe were, in fact, the Genoese, who caught the plague at their “trading base at Caffa in Crimea not by merchants but by Mongol Armies, who besieged Caffa in 1347” thus prompting “several Italian ships to flee from the war in the Crimea. Their path took them to Constantinople, but, even if they were not infected, there were stowaways onboard who were—black rats who relished the grain that filled the holds of the Black Sea fleets and who carried plague flees, which also found homes in the bales of cloth in the cargo hold.”<sup>313</sup> By 1347 the plague was devastating the Byzantine Capital, as it began to spread from there as people tried desperately to flee the disease. Later that year, those Genoese merchant vessels had reached Messina, the first European port to be infected.<sup>314</sup>

The Black Death spread across European in a matter of years. It is said that potentially half the population of Europe perished in this crisis and major effects on the “social, economic, religious, and political life of the people of the Mediterranean.”<sup>315</sup> In some places, such as Catalonia, up to 60 to 70% of the population perished as its spread intensified, taking on

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<sup>311</sup> Lacoste, Yves. *Ibn Khaldun: The Birth of History and The Past of the Third World*, The Thetford Press LTD London 1984. Pg. 89

<sup>312</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 366-67

<sup>313</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 367-68

<sup>314</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 368

<sup>315</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 3667

“pneumonic form that could kill within hours of breathe-born infection.”<sup>316</sup> This plague of the 14<sup>th</sup> century might have been “the main agent in transformation within the Mediterranean and the lands beyond that led to the creation of a new order.”<sup>317</sup> However, this was not the only factor and severed as an unbiased and independent variable in the grand scheme of affairs.

The Black Death served to alter the framework, severely depleting populations of cities and severing lines of trade and communications, but also lessened the severity of the strain on the commercial, political, and social institutions of the state that were already under pressure from the growing populations. As such, although famine initially broke out as a result of the Black Death because there weren't many people left to work the fields, this corrected itself quickly as there were fewer demands for foodstuffs in general. The great trading city populations of Venice and Genoa collapsed as the disease spread quickly through their narrow alleyways and tight streets.<sup>318</sup> Venice alone had lost up to two thirds of its population along with losing the blood lines of 50 noble families. Roger Crowley writes that:

“During the summer of 1348 the black-draped pontoons punted slowly through the fetid canals. The terrible cry rose up: ‘Dead bodies!’ ‘Dead bodies!’ Every house was compelled by punitive edicts to bring out corpses. Extraordinary measures were put in place to try to stem the death rate. A special health committee was convened; ships suspected of being infected were burned; all trade ground to a halt; the sale of wine was prohibited, taverns closed; criminals were let out of prison for lack of warders. The Rialto, the docks, the busy canals fell silent. Venice was gripped in gloom...the dead went on being tipped into pits—‘a layer of earth, then a layer of bodies, then another layer of earth’—‘just like lasagna’ an one Florentine writer unnervingly put it.”<sup>319</sup>

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<sup>316</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 368

<sup>317</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 367

<sup>318</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 369

<sup>319</sup> Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 169

A Venetian artist Paolo Veneziano wrote, “Death himself motions the donor toward the Virgin, while an angel warns him that Man may die at any moment,” in describing how uncertain life and death had become in Venice.<sup>320</sup> Another Florentine writer, Boccaccio, wrote that when the “pestilence” had arrived in Florence, as it did “over every other [region] of Italy... men and women alike, there appeared, at the beginning of the malady, certain swellings either on the groin or under the armpits, whereof some waxed of the bigness of common apples, others like unto an egg...name plague boils” would eventually appear “in every part of the body” and after such boils appeared, a “very certain token of coming death” would loom on the horizon for the victim.<sup>321</sup> However, life went on. People within the Mediterranean knew that they had to move on from death; in fact, death was so common during this time, especially after the Black Death that people just went on with their lives. A Venetian Merchant named Andrea Contarini wrote his family member about the passing of his wife and son within months of each other. He states that he feels as if “a blade passed through [his] heart...as [he is] writing, one tear does not wait for the other.”<sup>322</sup> A few years latter this same individual talks about bringing home his new 14 year old “bellissima, bona he pura” thus demonstrating the relative speed with which individuals respond and recover from significant lose such as this. The old institutions, such as the merchant *Fonduk*, was still in place, city-states still raided and attacked each other, and European powers drew up elaborate plans for crusades against the powerful Mamluks in Egypt and Syria.<sup>323</sup>

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<sup>320</sup> Kedar, Benjamin Z., *Merchants in Crisis: Genoese and Venetian men off affairs and the fourteenth-century depression*. Oxford University Press, 1976 Pg. 84

<sup>321</sup> Boccaccio, Giovanni, *Decameron*. Start Publishing LLC 2012, E-Book edition. Day the First

<sup>322</sup> Kedar, Benjamin Z., *Merchants in Crisis: Genoese and Venetian men off affairs and the fourteenth-century depression*. Oxford University Press, 1976 Pg. 84

<sup>323</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 369



Economic life began to recover anew as more land became available. New agriculture was cultivated, varying the commercial and economic life. By the 1400s, the population levels of Europe had begun to rise to pre-plague levels, thus prompting the Venetians, Genoese, and Catalans to not only continue to explore for new granary locations, but also increase specialization in trades of “all manner of goods” thus provoking the Mediterranean economy to take new shape.<sup>324</sup> The collapse of the old banks in Italy allowed for the rise of new banks like the Medici Bank, which was tied to the political power and fame of the family.<sup>325</sup> In the end, there is no question that the Black Death contributed to lasting psychological and political effects that have far reaching consequences. Fortune now begins to appear more frequent, or the perception of chance. Benjamin Kedar, who wrote *Merchants in Crisis*, asserts that:

“Fortune appears as a major source of events, mostly unwelcome, also in the Genoese *Annales of Stella* and in the *Cronica Venetiarum*. This emergence of Fortune as an independent, largely amoral force indicates that the traditional perception of human fate was no longer adequate: Fortune, the personification of Chance, came to determine Man’s fate to a very large extent, and neither his sins nor righteousness were of much effect in face of her decree.”<sup>326</sup>

This shows a new threat of fortune and will be the guide for many city-states when deciding how to proceed in the future. Fortune is usually associated with negative phenomenon that are used as tools to guide leaders with caution, in light of the greater unknown.

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War of 1350

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<sup>324</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 373-76

<sup>325</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 366

<sup>326</sup> Kedar, Benjamin Z., *Merchants in Crisis: Genoese and Venetian men off affairs and the fourteenth-century depression*. Oxford University Press, 1976 Pg. 85

With the Venetians and Genoese still vying for control of trade in the Black Sea, tensions again began to rise. Due to the “intermittent opportunistic taking of vulnerable vessels and their cargo by both sides flared into a more serious conflict between a Venetian fleet of armed galleys sent east under the command of Marco Ruzzini to deal with the quarrel over trading rights in Tana.”<sup>327</sup> The Venetians caught 14 Genoese galleys in the harbor of Castro and captured 10 of these vessels, thus officially starting the next major war between Genoa and Venice in 1350. In response to these initial Venetian victories, Genoa dispatched a fleet in 1351, of 64 galleys to the Aegean under the command of Paganino Doria in an effort to disrupt Venetian shipping.<sup>328</sup> Venice had difficulties initially responding to this despite preparations in this region. Much of this difficulty, ultimately, came from a severe lack of man-power brought on by the decrease in population due to the Black Death. Frederick Lane estimated that “the usual Venetian draft would man about 25 galleys. Additional manpower had to be sought in Dalmatia and Greece.”<sup>329</sup> One could further acknowledge this fact by reviewing the “reduced size of these fleets, compared to the huge ones mustered in the 1290s, is more evidence of how both cities suffered from the plague.”<sup>330</sup> If Venice was in fact suffering from a lack of man-power which it was, and every other state in Europe was dealing with the same situation at the time, one could conclude that since Venice lacked sufficient resources of people, they, therefore, could not easily launch large fleets which would then explain the reduced fleet sizes in Venice.

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<sup>327</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 104

<sup>328</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 128

<sup>329</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 128

<sup>330</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 220

In light of this, Venice chose to make several diplomatic and military alliances in order to garner enough power to take on Genoa. In 1351, Venice entered into an alliance with the King of Aragon and the Byzantine Empire.<sup>331</sup> The King of Aragon had a special relationship with the Catalonians and thus provided Venice with their resources. This demonstrates a larger pattern of city-state behavior. Upon entering into a conflict with another city-state or state, Venice, tends to branch out diplomatically in an attempt to gain additional allies which they hope will tip the power-scale in their favor. This can be done by all sorts of means; however, Venice seems to be learning from this action over time and has, in the 14<sup>th</sup> through 16<sup>th</sup> centuries at least, consistently turned to the King of Aragon<sup>332</sup> and the Catalans for aid when fighting the Genoese. Both of them act as rivals to Genoa and would be perfect allies. Venice's goal in attacking Genoa is to cut off her shipping and commercial routes, and in order to do this, Venice needs allies closer to Genoa that can directly interfere with her commerce.

The Catalonians have been mentioned briefly before but not in any great detail. The Catalans were an important conglomerate of city-states under the authority of the wealthy city of Barcelona. In the 1220s, these cities saw a significant rise in power as they entered into the scene as a rival to both Pisa and Genoa. Catalans benefited greatly from the leadership of the Count of Catalonia, James "The Conqueror" I, who was the King of Aragon.<sup>333</sup> He provided substantial protection and resources in return for their alliance. James I was a more enlightened ruler in the sense that he had the capacity to perceive and understand both threats and opportunities. For example, instead of banishing and barring Jews and Muslims entrance from his cities, he instead encourages them to come as he receives economic incentives such as extra taxes and fees on

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<sup>331</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 104

<sup>332</sup> Later the Spanish Empire

<sup>333</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 334.

imports and exports.<sup>334</sup> This in turn encouraged religious tolerance, even if it is for financial reasons. Catalans were skilled sailors, and by the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, “Catalan ships had a good reputation for safety and reliability.”<sup>335</sup> Most of the trade that the Catalans focused on, occurred in the Western half of the Mediterranean, which brought them into contact and conflicts with both the Pisans and Genoese. Abulafia reports that Catalans were skilled entrepreneurs, muscling “into the Mediterranean trade networks through piracy as well as honest business.”<sup>336</sup> This made them a very valuable ally to Venice, especially after the city was so badly weakened from the Black Death.

With the Alliance formed, the powers that created it attempted to mass a fleet in which to assault Genoese galleys in the Aegean and near the Golden Horn. The fleet numbered to about 60 ships, with 12 coming from Catalan/Aragon, 8 Greek ships in Venetian pay, 12 Greek ships funded by the Byzantines, and the rest were Venetian, all under the command of Nicolo Pisani.<sup>337</sup> In order to be effective, however, these ships had to link up in order to count their numbers to their advantage. In February of 1352, the Allied Venetian and Catalan ships attempted to meet their Greek and Byzantine allies in the Golden Horn. However, a Genoese fleet intercepted them near the Bosphorus.<sup>338</sup> This battle was mostly indecisive with both sides taking heavy casualties; however, the Genoese did manage to turn the Venetians back so as to prevent them from reaching the Greek ships. With this allied fleet failing to address the Genoese in the Aegean, the Byzantine Empire was forced to withdraw from the war. In 1353, Pisani once

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<sup>334</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 339-40

<sup>335</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 345

<sup>336</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 347

<sup>337</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 105

<sup>338</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 105

again engaged a Genoese fleet, but this time off the coast of Sardinia. In August of that year, another allied fleet of 80 galleys under the command of Nicolo Pisani “inflicted a crushing defeat on Antonio Grimaldi off the harbor of Alghero in Sardinia” and managed to capture “41 of the 60 Genoese galleys... along with their crews,” which had further consequences back home in Genoa because the “Guelfs and Ghibellines blamed one another for the disaster and civil war again threatened.”<sup>339</sup> This was only averted due to the Genoese “placing the government in the hands of the ruler of Milan, its archbishop Giovanni Visconti.”<sup>340</sup> Although Genoa lost some independence in this move, the Milanese still continued to carry out the war with Venice by helping them fund and man a fleet to send out the next year. Prior to this, however, the Catalans in 1353 sent a fleet to the Bosphorus, losing one of its admirals, but inflicting damage on Genoese vessels.<sup>341</sup>

With Genoa now under the authority of Milan, Venice hoped that it would be able to sue for peace. Due to this belief, Venice gave Nicolo Pisani orders not to engage Paganino Doria, whom he had been hunting for over a year. Pisani chose to wait out the winter in Porto Longo, near Modon. Shortly after arriving, Doria and his fleet appeared off Modon, sneaked passed the Venetian galley at the mouth of the port, and engaged the Venetian fleet, taking most of the crew prisoner including Pisani.<sup>342</sup> According to the Genoese, they captured “36 Venetian galleys and 5 large ships” which was a great achievement because “Doria’s fleet consisted of only 25 galleys, probably all the plague stricken, recently defeated city could scrape together—another testimony

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<sup>339</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 129-30

<sup>340</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 130

<sup>341</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 376

<sup>342</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 105

to Genoa's reduced resources." Despite this victory for Genoa, "both sides were exhausted, and in June 1355, the nephews of the late archbishops of Milan, Maffeo, Bernabo, and Galeazzo Visconti, mediated a peace" between the too severely weakened city-republics.<sup>343</sup>

In the end, it is clear that the war benefited neither side. The war left Venice beaten badly, and it was not in a position to hold back the Hungarians who were now beginning to threaten both the Istria and Dalmatian coasts. Genoa no longer was fully independent, and was fully reliant on the Milanese to keep peace within Genoa and the countryside. Although Genoa was now quasi-dependent, they still benefited from resources of the overlords and there relative well maintained trade routes during this time period. Venice was in a lot worse shape. Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan explains that for the Venetian State of affairs:

"Venetian interests in Dalmatia and Istria had been weakened by a coalition of Venetian enemies, old and new. Rebellion broke out in Zara at regular intervals. Venice lost Dalmatia after a war with Hungary (1358), and the doge was reduced to being merely dux Veneciarum et cetera, losing the title of dux Dalmatie, which had been his since Pietro II Orseolo had added it to the doge's title. When it lost Dalmatia, Venice lost ports for its ships, bases of operations against pirates, and a reserve of naval manpower. A serious revolt was put down in Crete only at the high cost, paid by the public treasury, of sending a contingent of mercenaries. Competition with Genoa remained bitter. Enemy merchants confronted one another in the Black Sea, especially at Trebizond, a port on the northern coast of Anatolia and a starting point for routes to Persia, and at Tana in Crimea, a major slave market."<sup>344</sup>

This does not paint a good picture when pondering Venice's position as shipbuilding, an essential process that the city must be able to do, which has just become incredibly more difficult due to their loss of significant territory along the Adriatic. In addition, one can see how politically unstable Venice had become during this war. Before peace was formally negotiated, a coup was attempted in order to overthrow the ruling Doge. Marino Falier was the mastermind

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<sup>343</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg 221

<sup>344</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 73

behind the coup attempt and initiated it in 1354. This excerpt from the Morosini Codex shows how the government chose to react:

“Either for this reason or because he was urged on by the spirit of the Devil, he collected some men of the people, sailors and other persons of the lower class, and plotted to have the city of Venice subjected to his domination like a tyranny, but God and the Evangelist St. Mark, who by their divine grace have never allowed this to happen, nor will they ever allow it, inspired some men who were in the conspiracy to reveal it, so at one the doge Signoria, as quickly as they could, secured every entrance of the square, and the doge was brought to justice on the staircase of the palace, and was at once decapitated.”<sup>345</sup>

This shows how well the social and political institutions of Venice work because, conspiracy attempts like this genuinely fail to succeed or occur frequently throughout Venetian history. In addition, it calls upon the very foundation of the Venetian state arguing that true Venetians want liberty and would do anything in their power to stop Tyranny in their city. This was shocking as the coup was attempted whilst in the middle of a war with their main rival Genoa, but still demonstrates exactly how the Venetian Signoria is able to deal with threats like this. Genoa and Venice maintain a relative peace until the next great conflict which erupted in 1378.

iv.

#### War of Chioggia

The war of 1378, or War of Chioggia, was initially caused by “a quarrel over right to control Tenedos, an island in a strategic position at the mouth of the Dardanelles, which as a fortified galley base could control access to Constantinople and the Black Sea.”<sup>346</sup> Both city-states had claims to this island and feared the amount of control the other city could impose on access to the Black Sea. This location was even more important to the Venetians as they saw the

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<sup>345</sup> Appendix: Antonio Morosini, *Morosini Codex*, Dale, S., A.W. Lewin, and D.J. Osheim. *Chronicling History: Chroniclers and Historians in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*. Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009. Pg. 213

<sup>346</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 107

island of Cyprus come under Genoese influence. Genoa felt the island was theirs as Emperor Andronicus IV of the Byzantine Empire granted them the rights to settle.<sup>347</sup> However, at the same time, another rival faction seeking power in the Byzantine Empire promised Venice the same island.

These events allude to yet another pattern between Genoa and Venice upon entering into conflict that revolves around their desire to control specific choke points and their resolve to ensure the other did not succeed. Both city-states are attempting to create monopolies or boost their power in specific regions in order to push out rivals and better control the trade. The War of 1378, and the wars prior are a result of city-states carrying out this duty until they arrive at an impasse that can only be resolved militarily, at least in their eyes. City-states, Venice for example, are exceptionally skilled and adaptable when negotiating with larger states; however, this same skill and tenacity appears to fall short when negotiating with other city-states. Although Venice and Genoa stay mostly at peace during this century, this is negated by devastating wars that both suffered through in order to make negligible gains in the end. Furthermore, another pattern that is exhibited from this onset are the strategic diplomatic alliances that both sides attempted to make. This again is a result of city-states limited power and their fear and insecurity in mounting wars alone due to their incapacity to conquer and hold large swaths of territory at great distances from themselves. Although city-states are able to make substantial territorial gains, these gains appear to be mostly temporary, with few exceptions, thereby prompting city-states to attempt to make more long lasting effects by cumulating allies.

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<sup>347</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 130



During this conflict, both Genoa and Venice made a series of diplomatic moves in an effort to change the balance of power in the war. Genoa made an alliance with Venice's traditional enemy, Hungary, who was willing to launch another war effort against Venice in order to further secure their hold over the Dalmatian coast. In addition to this, Genoa formed an alliance with Francesco Carrara, the Despot of Padua, who felt threatened by Venetian dominance in the region.<sup>348</sup> Other Italian cities for this same reason chose to side with Genoa. In addition, Genoa furthered their chances of victory by neutralizing Aragon by agreeing to not interfere in Sardinia.<sup>349</sup> A high price, but one Genoa thought was worth it. This essentially left Venice surrounded, leaving only its fleets and lagoon for protection against a siege. Upon discovering news of this, Venice ordered all Galleys back to the city and the lagoon, under the command of Vettor Pisani, nephew of Nicolo.<sup>350</sup>

Venice also had a few diplomatic moves, but not to the same extent as Genoa. With Aragon and the Catalans firmly out of the war, the Venetians had few allies to choose from. The Venetians did manage to form an alliance with Milan, led by Bernabo Visconti, who had expressed a desire to reassert control over Genoa after they reasserted their independence shortly after the last war. To further add to this, Peter II, King of Jerusalem and Cyprus, who was angry over Genoese interference and invasions of his island, joined with Venice as a common enemy of Genoa.<sup>351</sup> Despite successfully creating an alliance, Genoa was in a far greater position as far as allies were concerned and their strategic locations. Milan was close to Genoa but could not do

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<sup>348</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 130

<sup>349</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 130

<sup>350</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 107

<sup>351</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 131

much aside from launch a land invasion on Genoese assets in Italy, making them strategically placed but not the best allies.

The first main battle occurred in 1379 within the Adriatic. Venice, who knew its strategic position was compromised due to the high volume of enemies in their immediate vicinity, had tried to recall as many galleys as it could, sending the rest to the Aegean and Golden Horn to raid Genoese possessions. After linking up with Hungarian ships at Zara, Luciano Doria, an admiral for Genoa, discovered 21 Venetian galleys.<sup>352</sup> These galleys were under the Command of Vettor Pisani who was attempting to transport his *mude* back to Venice and had stopped here to conduct some repairs on his ships. The Genoese appeared off Pola in Istria. Pisani had 16 *galie sotil* and 5 *galie grosse* ships under his command, but the Genoese outnumbered them forcing Pisani to abandon 15 Venetian vessels and crews in order to protect the 5 *galie grosse* ships which held the merchandise and booty Pisani would have been responsible to protect at all costs.<sup>353</sup> Genoa captured the crews of the 15 galleys which was a major blow to Venice, already hurting for manpower. However, this was not all good news for Genoa as their admiral, Luciano Doria, was killed in the fighting. Pietro Doria was sent from Genoa and assigned to take command of the fleet upon arriving a few weeks later with additional reserve ships.<sup>354</sup> With this fleet destroyed and an enemy fleet so close to Venice herself, the city found that it was in the worst position it had ever been. The Hungarians threatened from the North, the Carrarese occupied the Venetian *Terra Firma* to the west, and the Genoese fleet had complete control of the Adriatic, and “with

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<sup>352</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 131

<sup>353</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 108

<sup>354</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 131

supplies cut off, Venice was threatened with starvation.”<sup>355</sup> Upon his return to the city, Vettor Pisani was imprisoned by the Senate. They believed his actions during the previous battle accounted for his cowardice, and he was not only jailed but stripped of his command.<sup>356</sup> Due to this, Venice now not only lacked a significant fleet with which to defend the lagoon, but had just imprisoned the most experienced commander they possessed in the city, as Carlo Zeno, another skilled Venetian admiral, was raiding the Genoese and would not return home until next year to relieve the siege of Venice.

In August of 1379, Paduan and Genoese forces attacked and occupied the Chioggia, located at the Southern entrance of the lagoon.<sup>357</sup> This had never before occurred in Venetian history, were a foreign army controlled a portion of the lagoon. Venice however, fought back with resilience. Vettor Pisani was immediately released from prison, and placed back in command of 6 galleys to defend the lagoon, and immediately upon release, Pisani began formulating plans to use the lagoon and waterways to isolate Genoese forces.<sup>358</sup> In addition, Venice prepared tremendous defenses. They sunk ships at large openings of the lagoon to create chokepoints, rallied the residents of Venice to arms in defense of the city, and maintained an overall sense of order despite “staring starvation in the face.”<sup>359</sup> One thing was certain in the minds of the Venetians, if they were to come under siege, Venetians were ready to fight back and defend their city till the end. This is a tribute to the urban legends surrounding this city that the residents of which are willing to commit so much to protect themselves. This in part can be

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<sup>355</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 131

<sup>356</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 108

<sup>357</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 131-132

<sup>358</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 108

<sup>359</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 132

accredited to the social and political institutions that help formulate myths and legends which develops a sense of patriotism and nationalism. An institution any city would need if faced with an attack from an enemy army. The Genoese found themselves isolated and unable to make further progress as the remaining forces prepared for a siege.

Finally, after facing siege for some months, help arrived. In 1380, Carlo Zeno returned with a fleet of Galleys and began to blockade the Genoese in the lagoon.<sup>360</sup> The Genoese now found themselves besieged. They held out in hopes of relief from home, but ultimately their efforts were in vain as they tried desperately to clear the canals. Months of skirmishes ensued until finally, in June of 1380, “running out of food and ammunition, the Genoese forces in Chioggia surrendered. The Venetians captured four thousand Genoese citizens and 19 galleys.”<sup>361</sup> This battle lasted in total a few months, and as this was occurring, some Milanese forces captured a few Genoese processions. Both Vettor Pisani and Pietro Doria fell during these months.<sup>362</sup>

The Morosini Codex in the Patrician Chronicles portray a distinct account of the battle from the Venetians point of view. During the months of battle as Pisani initiates his night raids, an account reports that:

“It was great marvel that after the Genoese seized Chioggia, their galleys had never been so united that some of them were not at sea, also two galleys or one alone were accustomed to stand guard over the harbor, but on this day all of them were enclosed at Chioggia; and it was even more remarkable that our fleet stayed for several days within the canal of St. Mark, and remained there, and all this was not hidden from the enemy...And the eyes and understanding of the enemy could not believe that they had set out with such a fleet of galleys, because they were awaiting the noble captain misier

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<sup>360</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 108

<sup>361</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 133

<sup>362</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 133

Carlo Zeno who was expected to return from overseas...The enemy...aroused themselves at once, astonished at so many galleys and regretting their own negligence, and realizing that at that very moment that they were keeping us besieged conditions had now changed and they were enclosed even more closely, and in such a manner that the seas and rivers which had previously been closed to [the Venetians] were now open, and now the [Genoese] were at a disadvantage...Hearts and stones would have been moved to compassion, seeing two such notable and powerful communities which for the sake of destroying each other had placed all their forces on land and sea, and on one side and the other were well supplied with noble Lombard men, cannon, mangonels, and crossbows with which many were killed, among them the brave captain miser Pietro Doria of the Genoese who, wishing to go outside from the galleys, was killed by cannon fire.”<sup>363</sup>

Much hope had clearly returned to the city with the release of Vettor Pisani and his new tactics.

That along with his successful night raids allowed Venice to not only turn the tides on Genoa, but also hold out until Carlo Zeno arrived with reinforcements. The Genoese were clearly surprised by the attack from within the city, as one can see from their positioning, which would have been suited to confront an opponent attempting to enter the lagoons, such as Carlo Zeno. The Genoese clearly underestimated the resilience of the Venetian people. From this one can also see and acknowledge the strenuous conditions both armies must have faced as both eventually faced starvation from sieges. Not to mention that the entire population of Venice also had to be fed, thus put the city in a very precarious place. Clearly both sides suffered and lost much during this battle alone.

The War of Chioggia ended in 1381 with the peace of Turin. Further conditions of the treaty required Tenedos to be granted to the Genoese, after the Venetians destroyed all fortifications on the island, and that Venice was to agree not to interfere in the conflict between Cyprus and Genoa.<sup>364</sup> In addition, Venice had to acknowledge the loss of some Dalmatian territories to the Hungarians; however, they were still left with the trading disputes over the

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<sup>363</sup> Appendix: Antonio Morosini, *Morosini Codex*, Dale, S., A.W. Lewin, and D.J. Osheim. *Chronicling History: Chroniclers and Historians in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*. Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009. Pg. 213-214

<sup>364</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 133-134

Black Sea and Romania.<sup>365</sup> Although the Genoese and Paduans were badly weakened, there were still the Hungarians to the North to worry about. The Venetians also lost Tenedos, failed to recover Dalmatia, had to recognize Genoese rights in Cyprus, and lost its grain lands of Treviso to the Austrian Duke.<sup>366</sup> Although these conditions appear harsh on Venice, their shrewd negotiation saved their city.

v.

### Conflict: Tactics and Diplomacy

In the end, Venice ultimately recovered, surviving this period of downturn and launched the initiative to expand the *Terrafirma* so as to ensure Venetian security. Genoa in contrast began “to slip into a period of foreign domination, first by the Milanese, and then by the French.”<sup>367</sup> This is partly a result due to the very nature of the Mediterranean Sea. Faruk Tabak explains that the differences with Venice and Genoa stem from:

“A larger order into which the Mediterranean itself dovetailed: the Inner Sea derived its main features from the historical attributes and qualities of two disparate worlds of which city-states were a part. One existed on its eastern most edges ‘with a well-developed and rich money economy’ into which the Venetian merchants were drawn. The other, where ‘the development of a money economy had hardly begun,’ was a world the Genoese opened up and shaped in accordance with the requirements of the moneylenders and capitalists who led the colonization”<sup>368</sup>

This meant that Venice and Genoa were both created and nurtured in different worlds that eventually came head to head with one another. But more importantly, this also signifies how these two maritime city-states were inherently different and enjoyed different advantages and

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<sup>365</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 109

<sup>366</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 377-78

<sup>367</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 134

<sup>368</sup> Tabak, Faruk. *Waning of the Mediterranean, 1550-1870: A Geographical Approach*. John Hopkins University Press, 2010. Pg. 50

disadvantages. Venice will also further prosper during the 1380s and in the long term as this war created an atmosphere that saw Genoese power in the East decline due to internal strife and Genoa's difficulty with staying independent from the Spanish and later, French Empires. Venice on the other hand will expand economically after this war because Venice will reestablish control over the Byzantine Empire and will take advantage of the Genoese withdrawal from the East.<sup>369</sup>

Another result of this conflict was that “while [Venice and Genoa] had been locked in rivalry, preying on one another's commerce and undermining the financial stability of their own state as much as that of their rival by incurring the enormous expenses of galley warfare, Ottoman power in the region had been steadily increasing.”<sup>370</sup> This will be a mistake that the Venetians will be too weak and too late to correct, as they enter the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Aside from these conflicts, Venetians and Genoese still managed to maintain stable relations in commerce as is shown in Constantinople where merchants from both cities traded alongside one another. This shows a complicated multilayered relationship that has created an environment where both parties respect the other city, and to a certain extent, expect them to follow equal rules in war.<sup>371</sup> These city states also knew the importance and value of following these rules. For example, capturing a prisoner instead of killing him in battle offers your city a ransom, and some leverage over your enemy, whereas, his death, would yield you nothing but further anger. Also people were valuable to city-states and, therefore, both preferred to have their citizens captured instead of slaughtered. This same dynamic could be applied to trade in foreign cities as the continuation of this practice was not only profitable but necessary, especially, since raiders cannot seize enemy ships until

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<sup>369</sup> Tabak, Faruk. *Waning of the Mediterranean, 1550-1870: A Geographical Approach*. John Hopkins University Press, 2010. Pg. 18-19

<sup>370</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 109

<sup>371</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 378

they've been gathered and collected onto ships in these cities, unless they could completely eliminate the others presence altogether. Furthermore, relations seemed to have improved after these three wars. After 1381, both city-states took caution "to avoid entanglements by defining their trading spheres and commercial interests with care: Venice remained the prime centre of the Levant trade, sending its galleys to Alexandria and Beirut in search of spices, the Genoese laid more emphasis on bulk goods carried in round ships—alum, grain, and dryfruits—searching out those products in Asia Minor, Greece, and the Black Sea."<sup>372</sup> This eventual achievement of separate spheres of influence demonstrates the final solution to their external struggle.

Throughout these wars, both city-states responded differently to threats presented to their cities and interests. Both Venice and Genoa did, however, respond either militarily, diplomatically- by successfully negotiating with larger states-, and through their defensive measures. Even after these crushing conflicts between Genoa and Venice, other states in the Mediterranean "from the house of Osman to the house of Aragon and from Byzantine emperor to the Mamluk Sultan, were forced to rely on the sea-going city-states to an extent greater than before, on their amphibious arsenal, their command of the sea lanes, and their ability to extend significant loans without difficulty or hesitation."<sup>373</sup> From initial observations of the three wars, it is clear that one could place a value on a city-states sizable fleet. They are important, but not essential. They are helpful, but costly, which could lead to civil strife. Susan Rose suggests that:

"The elimination of a war fleet, while serious, did not spell ruin for the maritime cities. Great naval victories seem to have brought only minimal results. The capture of the entire Genoese fleet at Trapani in 1266 did not end the war, nor did other seemingly stunning

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<sup>372</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 378

<sup>373</sup> Tabak, Faruk. *Waning of the Mediterranean, 1550-1870: A Geographical Approach*. John Hopkins University Press, 2010. Pg. 10



victories by one side or another. The loss of trained manpower that such a defeat entailed was apparently more damaging than the loss of the galleys.”<sup>374</sup>

Even then, too much man power losses in war usually only led to a temporary suspension of hostilities, nevertheless, this would not enable long-term control of the Mediterranean to any one city-state.

During the wars, Genoa focused mostly on raising money for wars and enabling private enterprises to build ships for the city. In fact, Genoa’s main concern during periods of conflict was its ability to raise funds, which they were usually able to do, but at times with the price of civil unrest/war.<sup>375</sup> Genoa would impose forced loans and special taxes on its citizens. Ship-owners were also made to place their ships at the commune’s disposal, who would then seek and shell out compensation to the owners for time used. This could employ a heavy financial burden on that of the Genoese citizenry and people.

But the Genoese were innovative in their actions pertaining to methods of conquering territory where no state funded fleet or army could invade. For example in February of 1347, the Genoese were planning the invasion of Chios and how to pay for the operation. In the end, “after long deliberations and planning of the invasion of Chios, an agreement was concluded... between the commune and a group of creditors represented by Simone Vignoso” with the association called “Maona of Chios.”<sup>376</sup> The Commune also decided that “the debt owed to the ship-owners were repaid in shares, or luoghi, to an amount of 203,000 lire genovesi. This was less than the commanders of the ships demanded, but nonetheless they got property and the administration of Chios and the two Phocaeas, in addition to the revenues provided by the

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<sup>374</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 134

<sup>375</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 139-141

<sup>376</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 140

luoghi.”<sup>377</sup> This essentially created a state war, funded by private creditors, who, in return for their money and risk, would fund the war and potentially be rewarded with shares of what is gained. This represents a system that values private innovation and enterprise as opposed to firm state control.

Building ships in Genoa was also centered on private enterprise. Genoa did not even attempt to have a state funded fleet until the 1370s under Doge Campofregoso. By 1402, the Commune possessed 4 galleys; however, private ship-owners with larger fleets could impose their will over the decisions of the Commune.<sup>378</sup> The ensuing result of this is that the Commune is less powerful and carries less authority in important matters such as war in the face of powerful families or individuals.

Venice in contrast, focused on state shipbuilding and control of merchant ships, planning for the future, and ensuring a calm population. What is truly remarkable is the extent to which the Venetian government attempted to keep tabs on their merchant and military fleets. The Venetian Commune did their utmost to “keep themselves informed of what was going on and even attempted to control events despite the distances sometimes involved and the difficulties with communications with vessels at sea,” which contrasts sharply with the Genoese commanders who had a much freer hand.<sup>379</sup> To Venice, organizing a merchant or war fleet was a public matter of state, meaning that the State would act on behalf of the people in order to undertake this venture. In Venice, merchant ships benefit from the Venetian *muda* system that escorted merchant ships in convey with armed escorts. This was in addition to the standard

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<sup>377</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 140

<sup>378</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 142-43

<sup>379</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 101

Venetian galley patrols that guarded Venetian waters.<sup>380</sup> Venetians were also known for seeking out and destroying pirates within the Mediterranean so as to keep their waters calm and safe.

The Venetians could also call upon the state run Arsenale. The Venetian Arsenale was the largest and best managed industry in the entire city, potentially the entire Mediterranean.<sup>381</sup> The Arsenale was designed to build, repair, and dismantle ships of various sizes. By the 14<sup>th</sup> century, this shipyard was well established and the old Arsenale which could hold space for twelve galleys, was expanded and modernized into the Arsenale Novo, which could produce three large merchant galleys a year.<sup>382</sup> The Arsenale Novo could also produce the new great galleys. These new ships were “lateen-rigged triremes that could load up to 150 tons of cargo, though they also carried very large crews of maybe 200 sailors.”<sup>383</sup> Venetians were well known by now for their skills in shipbuilding, as well as navigation. Abulafia reports that Venetian sailors had plenty of “exact information” about coast lines and seas, along with navigating more confidently with the increased efficiency and use of the compass, thus allowing Venetians to extend the sailing season across the year. This placed Venice among Genoa and Majorca as centers of cartography.<sup>384</sup> In 1435, the Venetian Senate had declared that “our Arsenale is the best in the world.”<sup>385</sup> Indeed they believed their Arsenal great as they invited many political and military leaders to marvel at its magnificence. By 1473, the Venetian Arsenal was “the greatest shipyard in Europe and the essential foundation of the state” built upon a system reliant of

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<sup>380</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 101

<sup>381</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 378

<sup>382</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 379

<sup>383</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 379

<sup>384</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 379

<sup>385</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 154

commercial sea trade.<sup>386</sup> Venice also had Arsenals built in several of its important colonies including Negroponte, Nauplia, and Candia.<sup>387</sup> This created a system where Venice could pump out a substantial number of ships in a short time and in many different locations within the Mediterranean.

Venice also had an excellent ability to prepare for the future and see conflicts on the horizon. Several historians have concluded that one of Venice's most important attributes that its government chooses to employ is its ability to handle some levels of fortune effectively. Susan Rose cites historian Fredric Lane when arguing that, "the outcome of the Venetian-Genoese rivalry was not to depend on superiority of seamanship or naval operations' but instead the deciding factors would be 'their relative skill in social organization.'" Furthermore, Lane argues that, "in his view the Venetian Republic, for all its faults, was a more robust society than Genoa where factional rivalries were often out of control."<sup>388</sup> This is a fair assessment as Venice's trait of preparing for potential future problems have proven that the Republic is significantly more robust than Genoa, who had to, on a number of occasion, submit to foreign rule. An example of this can be seen in April of 1349, a year before the war of 1350. The Venetian Senate "required all the captains of Venetian armed galleys in [the Aegean], the Venetian authorities in Constantinople and the Consul of Tana to consult together about the damage done to Venetian merchants and their goods by the Genoese."<sup>389</sup> This was more important than ever since Venice had just been ravaged by the Black Death and their population numbers were more than likely highly depleted.

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<sup>386</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 155

<sup>387</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 154-155

<sup>388</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 105

<sup>389</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 107

On the subject of man-power, Venice had various creative ways of luring individuals into manning galley crews due to man-power shortages. Permission was given to galley captains in Dalmatia to recruit men, in addition to an “issue of decree to be read out on the Rialto which gave detail of the better diet to be offered to galley-men, including 4 meals a day, good bread, and meat three times a week.”<sup>390</sup> Usually men were recruited from Venice and not given such luxuries as was just described above, two signs that signal shortages of able-bodied men. Throughout this time, the “Senates main concern was to keep trade flowing as freely as possible provided this could be done without running undue risks.”<sup>391</sup> One step that the Senate undertook was that they ordered the Arsenal to increase production of galley class ships. Furthermore, they also ordered their ships to avoid Caffa and Pera as not to antagonize the Genoese as they wanted negotiations, which they always “preferred to battle.”<sup>392</sup> This shows a number of signs of insecurity and steps taking by the state to help better safeguard Venice and her assets.

Lastly, Venetians excelled in calming their population and ensuring the benefits of state to go along with their rule. During the ‘*Serrata*’ or “closing,” the Venetian government saw its ruling body to expand and encompass a large amount of the nobility and wealthy families. This was not necessarily to fix once and for all the defining governmental group, but to instead allow for the “social and symbolic identity of the nobility to be refined and defended” from this point forward.<sup>393</sup> According to Crouzet-Pavan, “by defining and ‘closing’ a dominant class, the aristocratic republic admittedly employed violence (at least symbolic violence) and worked to

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<sup>390</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 107

<sup>391</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 107

<sup>392</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 107

<sup>393</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 216

produce obedience.”<sup>394</sup> This in turn, assuming she is correct, would allow for Venice to produce a calmer more compliant population by simply expanding and then enclosing the ruling body.

In the countryside too, Venetians employed tactics to appease and control the peasants and middle class folk living in the rural countryside, especially in districts like Treviso that was part of the *Terrafirma* and not in the capital Venice, herself. In the eyes of the Peasants living under Venetian rule, “it was not the Venetian landlords they liked so much as the access to Venetian markets... Venice was a huge consumer that drove up prices of all kinds of products but especially agricultural staples such as grain and wine.”<sup>395</sup> Venice, had at its disposal, an immensely prosperous economy that people from all over sought to take part in. This provided an attractive market incentive to the peasantry that they had been denied prior. This was also seen in a later conflict which this thesis will discuss revolving around the war of the League of Cambrai in 1508. Pietro Bembo, a Venetian historian writes that upon Venice’s defeat at the hands of the French and the subsequent invasion by French and German forces in 1509, Padua responded in favor of Venice, the party that appeared to be on the losing side. Bembo reports that when the people of Padua heard of the horrible news of the Venetian defeat and saw “the Republic under pressure from all sides, they convened a citizen council” where “they passed a proposal to collect 500 gold pounds without delay and send it to Venice” along with appointing ambassadors to the Senate to let them know that Padua will “do everything to help [Venice] that might be commanded of them.”<sup>396</sup> In short, in return for participation in the Venetian market, the peasantry and cities under Venetian authority remained calm for the most part and willing to help

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<sup>394</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 215-216

<sup>395</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 151

<sup>396</sup> Bembo, Pietro. *Pietro Bembo’s: History of Venice, Volume 2 Book 8*. Translated by Urley. Harvard University Press. 2008. Pg. 307

Venice in moments that their overlords come under threat. It is because of institutions and systems of state control such as this that allow Venice, and not Genoa, to continue to survive and thrive independently into the 18<sup>th</sup> century while facing a new and dangerous adversary, the Ottoman Empire.

#### 4 “The City-State That Withstood a Millennia: Venice’s Adaptive and Resilient Course”

Many different states and polities exist within the framework of the Mediterranean world. As we have seen through the progression of time, new and foreign entities continue to emerge within or outside of the Mediterranean altering the current state of affairs and upsetting the balance of power. During the 1300s, as Venice was locked in a desperate struggle with Genoa for commercial domination of the Mediterranean, a new threat in the East had begun to arise and develop. This new danger was the Ottoman Empire. In addition, we can see how Venice slowly begins to turn away from her traditional place at sea, as the city begins to expand on the Italian mainland, which they hoped to expand in order to ensure that the events surrounding the War of Chioggia would never occur again.

Venice, one of the few thriving city-states left by the 1500s, was thrown into a new set of affairs where dangers lurk around every corner for this small maritime republic. In order to deal with these varying turn of events, Venice employed a strategy of appeasement and cooperation, while leaving physical conflict in the reserve, to be used at the paramount time, in order to deal with the mighty Ottoman Empire and various other European states such as the Spanish, Germans, French, and Austrians, who all hope to lay claims on Northern Italy. In this chapter, although Venice emerged weakened from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, one can still see the lessons learned from the Genoese war of Chioggia. Venice has now faced adversaries far stronger than they

themselves were, and survived, not from utter military domination, but instead by varying degrees of responses by engaging in diplomacy, appeasement, and then ultimately cooperation, which they find to be widely acceptable when attempting to preserve their commercial presence in the Mediterranean.

The city-states of Venice and Genoa emerge from the 14<sup>th</sup> century in a very cautious manner. They are both weakened, as previously stated, due to their debilitating wars in the previous 100 years, along with the economic crisis accompanied by the emergence of the Black Death. Yet despite all of this, both Venice and Genoa survived in one form or another. The previous chapters of this thesis have analyzed both Venice and Genoa simultaneously through the Mediterranean history. This chapter will divert from that pretext due to the fact that Genoa, from the 1400s onward, loses a significant amount of her independence due to constant civil uprisings in the city. Although Genoa had the most “powerful merchant marines of the Mediterranean world,” her commune, in desperation, will turn to Milan, Spain, and France at various times to step in and assert control over the situation.<sup>397</sup> Genoa’s commune will suffer from a lack of naval strength as the commune has no efficient system of calling up galleys for war and must instead rely upon their citizens and families. Genoa during this time will focus instead on the Western Mediterranean, leaving the East mostly to the Venetians and Ragusans. Genoa did however, see some economic resurgence with the opening of the Atlantic, its innovations in sugar cultivation, their discovery of new alum deposits, and Christopher Columbus’s (a Genoese born merchant) discovery of the New World in 1492.<sup>398</sup> In addition, during the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Genoa enters into a

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<sup>397</sup>Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 143-145

<sup>398</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 409



period of time known to historians as the “century of the Genoese.”<sup>399</sup> This period marked a time for Genoa, where their merchants hold supremacy throughout many European markets and institutions. Much of this was made possible, however, due to the fact that Genoa no longer existed as a purely independent entity and instead relied upon other European powers, like the French and Spanish, to run the city. For example, Thomas Kirk, a modern day historian on Genoa, notes that much of Genoa’s economic revitalization and dominance stemmed from how the Genoese “overwhelmingly dominated the Spanish Crown’s finances.”<sup>400</sup> Some of this is due to Genoa’s close relationship to the Spanish as the King of Spain wanted to use Genoese shipping in the Atlantic.

In light of this, Genoa’s actions over the course of the next two hundred years and onward, will reflect not necessarily those of the city, but of the larger national interests of Europe at play within northern Italy. Therefore, for the purposes of this thesis, this chapter will instead solely focus on Venice and her interactions with the Ottoman Empire and the various other larger states within Europe. Venice was never conquered during her time as a state until the time of Napoleon Bonaparte at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, thus ensuring a clearer picture as to the motivations of the city-state specifically. Just like Genoa, Venice also thrived economically during the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Although Venice was at first cautious about approaching the Sublime Porte (Ottoman Empire), trade flourished during the 1400s and 1500s because of the Venetian’s relationship with the Ottomans and the acquisition of “fortunes in presence of Ottoman power.”<sup>401</sup> This was the case because unlike Iberian and Italian polities that abide by a strict

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<sup>399</sup> Kirk, Thomas Allison. *Genoa and the Sea: Policy and Power in the Early Modern Maritime Republic, 1559-1684*. John Hopkins University Press. Pg. 29

<sup>400</sup> Kirk, Thomas Allison. *Genoa and the Sea: Policy and Power in the Early Modern Maritime Republic, 1559-1684*. John Hopkins University Press. Pg. 30

<sup>401</sup> Chambers, David S. *Imperial Age of Venice, 1380-1580*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971. Pg. 52 and 60

Catholic doctrine to restrict access to their cities by Muslims, the Ottoman Empire as well as many other Islamic states “allowed for diverse settlement” thereby inviting foreigners to come and enter into commercial activities within their cities.<sup>402</sup>

Besides this acquisition of fortune throughout the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Venice continued to focus on the expansion of their land based empire, or *Stato de Terra(Terrafirma)*, which was enlarged due to a series of wars that the Venetians fought in the first half the 1400s. In 1425, Francesco Foscari became Doge, and Venice began establishing new alliance within the Italian mainland in order to challenge Milanese dominance.<sup>403</sup> The war that ensued in 1426 lasted until 1428. However, this was not the end. Many additional short wars will follow in northern Italy between these two powers so that Venice could “enlarge its territorial state, not just nearby territories...but in Lombardy.”<sup>404</sup> These conflicts initially went quite well for Venice who even had the hopes of capturing Milan itself. However, war carries a heavy financial burden, and due to this, Venice opted for peace. In 1454 with the Peace of Lodi. “the rights of Venice, *La Dominante*, over Brescia and Bergamo were confirmed, and Crema too became a Venetian possession.”<sup>405</sup> In addition, Venice also acquired Apulia, and took Trieste and Fiume. In the end, thanks to “a skillful political opportunism and a firm expansionist policy, Venice played a winning game for some time.”<sup>406</sup> This allowed the city’s territorial processions to expand

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<sup>402</sup> Goffman, Daniel. *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge University Press, 2002. Pg. 137

<sup>403</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 129

<sup>404</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 129

<sup>405</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 13

<sup>406</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 131

dreamily, thus bringing Venice into the position of a dominant land and sea based power at the top of the Adriatic.

i.

### The Emergence of the Ottomans and the War for Negroponte

Whilst this land-based expansion of Italy was occurring, the Venetian Empire is entering into a period of panic. Venice, like the rest of Europe, understood that “the advance of Turkish power in the Balkans was made plain... by the crushing defeat of a crusading army, mainly made up of French and Hungarian contingents, at Nicopolis in 1396.”<sup>407</sup> For the Mediterranean, the “failed crusade of Nicopolis would have two important ramifications,” the first being that “Serbia, Albania, and Bosnia would come directly under Ottoman control” and the second being a significant physiological blow to Europe who was militarily bested by the Ottomans.<sup>408</sup> Venice somewhat benefited initially from the Ottoman advance. The Ottomans, who were derived from Asia Minor, had already extinguished the rival Turkish factions in the home region and had begun outward expansion. This came at the expense of the Byzantine territory, as the Byzantine Empire was located adjacent to the Turks. Many coastal towns within the Aegean and Asia Minor sought the stable Venetian’s oversight and protection in the face of the “declining [Byzantine] Empire” which brought “Durazzo and Scutari in Albania, Lepanto, Patras, Argos, Nauplia, and

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<sup>407</sup>Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 109

<sup>408</sup>Bisaha, Nancy. *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004. Pg 55

even briefly Athens” all under her authority.<sup>409</sup> Due to Genoese and Catalan reluctance to enter the Eastern trade, Venice was able to in part, reassert her control over the Levant trade, although new rivals such as the Ragusans were beginning to emerge. This also occurred due to the Ottoman’s attention being turned toward the East to fight the Persians in central Asia.<sup>410</sup>

During this time, Venice exerted no eagerness to confront the Ottoman’s conquest into the Mediterranean. Despite being mostly Christians, Venetians did not see themselves as the frontline of defense for the West. Instead, Venice hoped to “maintain as good relations as possible with the Ottomans consistent with maintaining their positions as merchants and control of their bases, particularly Negroponte and those in Morea.”<sup>411</sup> However, at the earliest decades of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman naval strength was quite weak. We can see this in the year 1416 when Pietro Loredano of Venice, was initially successful in destroying the bulk of the Ottoman’s ship Gallipoli, and Venetian bases in Morea, Modon, and Coron were “extensively refortified.”<sup>412</sup> Despite the Ottoman’s inadequacy in the seas in the very early 1400s, Venice still acknowledged Ottoman power on land and their potential to pose a significant threat to Venice herself, as the Ottomans were annihilating what was left of the Byzantine Empire. The maintenance and defense of the *stato de mar* is essential to Venice’s adaptive strategy of responding to military threats at a relatively fast paced speed. For example, in the Ottoman Empire, the Sultans could rely on slaves to fill the scores of rowers that each vessel required. In contrast, Venice “had its *Milizia da Mar*, a government agency [designed] to organize conscription in Venice and its dependencies; nearly 4,000 oarsmen were owed by the Venetian guilds and confraternities, and at any time over 10,000 conscripts were on the books, from whom galley crews would be selected

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<sup>409</sup>Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 109

<sup>410</sup>Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 110

<sup>411</sup>Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 111

<sup>412</sup>Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 111

by lot.”<sup>413</sup> The concerns of the Venetians were warranted as Cyriac of Ancona, who was a traveler and Renaissance humanist, writes that due to Ottoman invasions near the Peloponnese, the Hungarians “transported some troops of cavalry and infantry from the Peloponnese into Anatolia and Ozolian Locris and Parnassian Phocis in order to set free places and cities that had long been occupied by the barbarians [(Turks)], and fought bravely and vigorously against the onrushing barbarian enemy.”<sup>414</sup> The Peloponnese is a location of strategic importance to Venice as the city as dozens of fortresses, harbors, and ports within the Aegean.

These fears were only compounded by the 40s and 50s, as the Ottomans begin claiming swathes of territory that were either conquered or given to them through gifts in the Balkans. In 1453, Constantinople fell to Sultan Mehmet II who assumed the throne, establishing Constantinople as his new capital and began on a path that he believed would lead to a “revitalized Roman Empire controlled by Muslim Turks who would combine Roman-Byzantine, Turkic and Islamic concepts of rule.”<sup>415</sup> This shows early signs of Mehmet’s intention to create a mixed city and empire that encompassed more than just his Muslim subjects.

It is after the fall of Constantinople that terror seized the Venetians. This is evident because between “1456 and 1479 the Council of Ten authorized 14 attempts to poison Mehmet, via a string of unlikely operatives.”<sup>416</sup> Venice also began immediately reinforcing its naval bases along the Aegean and other Eastern Islands in a desperate attempt to dissuade the Ottoman Sultan from assaulting these positions. Venice also felt the need for the construction of more

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<sup>413</sup>Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 425

<sup>414</sup>Bodnar, Edward D. *Cyriac of Ancona: Later Travels*. Diary V, Harvard University Press, 2003. Pg. 341

<sup>415</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 385

<sup>416</sup>Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 322

galleys and warships to protect the *stato de mar* and called for the extension of the Venetian Arsenal by adding 8 hectares of land to the complex, thus making it the “the greatest shipyard in Europe and ‘the essential foundation of the state.’”<sup>417</sup> To add to this, “first, Negroponte and Nauplia, and then the Arsenal of Candia, an important strong point on Crete, were completely renovated between 1467 and 1470.”<sup>418</sup>

The weakened state of the Venetian navy was made apparent from a Venetian Census of naval forces which determined their naval inferiority. A Venetian chronicler Marino Sanudo, explains that this is the case because “there are few ships, because until now, we had no fear of the Turks.”<sup>419</sup> Despite the growing fears, Venice was still able to adjust and react to the turn of events. The result of these changes in the Venetian navy was “that the obligations imposed upon the captains of the *Mude* increased continually” for example in 1496 when “the galleys of the Barbary Coast convoy participated in a massive counter-attack, launched to limit the audacious actions of the Barbary Pirates.”<sup>420</sup> Furthermore, galleys were armed “by the port cities” and “in the event of conflict these Dalmatian, Albanian, Greek, and Cretan cities were required by the terms of submission to Venice, to provide one or more galleys for the naval draft as was due to the metropolis.”<sup>421</sup> This shows a clever, albeit risky, solution to amassing a great numbers of skilled sailors in times of danger posed toward the *stato de mar*. The risk posed to less defended

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<sup>417</sup>Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 155

<sup>418</sup>Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 154-5

<sup>419</sup>Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 163

<sup>420</sup>Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 163

<sup>421</sup>Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 155

naval cities and *mude* naval convoys that could potentially be carrying exorbitant amounts of merchandise could prove costly in the long run.

In 1463, after relatively peaceful relations between the Ottomans and the Venetians, both sides entered into conflict. The Venetians, despite calls to Europe and the rest of Christendom, were left to fight the Ottomans alone. Most rivals hoped that the Venetians and Ottomans would wear each other down; in fact, this is a grave misperception on the strength and stamina of the Ottoman Empire. Muslim naval power had grown considerably since the early 1400s. In the West, “Mamluk fleets off Egypt and Syria, Moroccan ships” patrolled the coasts, and “Turkish emirs within the Aegean” patrolled the East, “Muslim sea power had expanded outwards on a massive scale.”<sup>422</sup> Constantinople had become a command center for an enormous Ottoman fleet. Prior to the outbreak of hostilities, the Venetian State “busied itself with the distribution of cannonballs, gunpowder, and oars to various strategic hubs, the construction of galleys and conscription of men; the supply of ships biscuits; urgent requisitions of masons and materials for the repair of fortifications; instructions of the Captain-General to track the Ottoman fleet, but ‘only from afar and with discretion.’”<sup>423</sup>

During this war, the Venetians faced stark lessons and hard times. The Ottomans, learning from earlier naval engagements, refused to fight the Venetians in the open sea, thus depriving the city-state of its superior naval skill. In the Peloponnese, the Venetian advance had been halted and reversed due to a new Turkish advance.<sup>424</sup> However, this was just a side theatre. The real heart of the struggle lay in Negroponte, a Venetian stronghold located on an island used as a

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<sup>422</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 424

<sup>423</sup>Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 318

<sup>424</sup>Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 329

military, naval, and commercial hub for the *stato de mar*. In 1470, Sultan Mehmet II personally led a fleet of 300 ships, 108 of them being galleys.<sup>425</sup> Ottoman ships had recently received a few upgrades, including improved artillery and better sails that allow their ships to sail faster with larger crews. Venice did have 52 galleys and 18 *nave* vessels at Negroponte, but realized that they were heavily outnumbered, and unable to break the siege, fled to Crete.<sup>426</sup> Negroponte fell later that year, and with it, the Ottomans obtained their real prize. During the conflict, Venice suffered due to the fact that the supply lines for their empire were heavily reliant on open and safe seas. The Ottomans used this to their advantage by initiating, raiding, and using the Barbary Corsairs to interfere with Venetian shipping, thus finding a weak point in their system. This war was also extremely expensive, costing the Venetians more than 1,250,000 ducats annually.<sup>427</sup> To place this into context, this war alone lasted for close to 15 years, which created a considerable expense on any large state of the time, let alone a city-state.

In 1475, Mehmet successfully campaigned and destroyed the Genoese and Venetian holdings within the Black Sea.<sup>428</sup> With this, most of their possessions in the Aegean were lost including Negroponte, as the Ottomans continued raiding up the Adriatic; therefore, the Venetians finally began suing for peace. In 1479, the Venetians signed a harsh peace treaty stating that:

“Scutari...was given up, Negroponte was gone forever and all other territories taken in the war returned to the Turks. After 1479, the Republic controlled just 26 forts in the Peloponnese; the Ottomans 50. In addition, they paid the Sultan 100,000 gold ducats outright and a further 10,000 a year for the right to trade in the Ottoman Empire. The *bailo* was restored to Constantinople.”<sup>429</sup>

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<sup>425</sup>Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 112

<sup>426</sup>Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 11

<sup>427</sup>Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 343

<sup>428</sup>Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 343

<sup>429</sup>Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 346



However, despite this more than a decade long war, the relations between the Venetians and the Ottomans following the war were not adversarial. After the war, the Sublime Porte still afforded Venetians trading privileges. For the Venetians, the message from Mehmet was one in which they could tolerate “Christian merchants from overseas, just as Muslim rulers all around the Mediterranean had done for centuries; but they regarded Venetian or Genoese territorial dominion within the *Akdeniz*, or White Sea as unacceptable.”<sup>430</sup> The Venetians continued to coexist with the Ottomans, although, this will not be easy as long as Mehmet II holds the throne due to his territorial ambitions.

ii.

Otranto and the Venetian-Ottoman War of 1499

1480 was an eventful year in the Mediterranean, as both good and bad news would arrive to Christendom concerning major sieges that were underway. The good news for Europe was that Rhodes remained in Christian hands despite the Ottoman assault.<sup>431</sup> However, as the Venetians had warned two decades earlier, bad news arrived to Europe that the Ottomans had attacked Italy, and the Venetians, to weak and unwilling to oppose them, chose instead to help the Ottomans by ferrying their troops across the bay. The Ottomans chose to attack the city of Otranto with 18,000 men, and 40 war galleys led by Gedik Ahmet Pasha who slaughtered the entire male population of the city and enslaved the remaining populace.<sup>432</sup> Marsilio Ficino, a Florentine humanist and scholar wrote a letter to the King of Hungary in which he implores him to help save Italy from

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<sup>430</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 386

<sup>431</sup> Bisaha, Nancy. *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004. Pg. 74

<sup>432</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 387

the “inhuman Turks” who are “unruly monsters who wickedly ravage the countryside, destroy the towns, and devour the people.”<sup>433</sup> The Ottomans held Otranto for a year until they were eventually driven off by Alfonso V’s son Ferrante. This served as a shock to Europe and an alarm to the whole of Christendom, although besides promises of action, Europe did not move rapidly to stem the growing threat of the Ottomans. European nations will now slowly move toward the realization that the Ottomans are a serious threat, although not all nations will openly oppose them as some chose to maintain diplomatic relations such as the French. In the aftermath of the attack, Venice took the opportunity to assert its control over a number of Apulian ports including Traini, Brindisi, Monopoli, and Otranto, in order to guarantee free passage along the Adriatic straits.<sup>434</sup> This was most likely easily accomplished in the aftermath of the Ottoman attack due to the need for order and the lack of power Ferrante commanded in the region, making it difficult to oppose, openly, the Venetian actions.

The next significant conflict between the Ottomans and Venetians will not ensue until 1499, as a result of further Ottoman territorial ambitions in the Aegean. Venice was alerted to the onslaught of this war by the Venetian *bailo* in Constantinople, Andrea Gritti.<sup>435</sup> Andrea Gritti had established a grain trade in Constantinople and sent back encoded messages stating that “The Sultan continues to assemble a fleet.”<sup>436</sup> Venice’s main problem was to determine where this fleet was headed. According to the famous Venetian humanist and historian Pietro Bembo, the Turks invasion of Zara “removed all doubt as to where the sultan’s fleet would invade, since he had marched his land forces into the republic’s territory—up to that point there were some who

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<sup>433</sup> Bisaha, Nancy. *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004. Pgs. 74-75

<sup>434</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 388

<sup>435</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 113

<sup>436</sup> Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 350

believed that he was going to make war on Rhodes.”<sup>437</sup><sup>438</sup> Unfortunate for the Venetians, the Ottomans were after their processions yet again. In response to the Ottomans building a fleet, the Venetians commissioned one in April of 1499 and placed Antonio Grimani as the Captain General of the Sea to head the fleet.<sup>439</sup> However, despite this successful launching, once the fleet had reached the Ottoman ships which had already set sail, the galley commanders refused to listen to Grimani.<sup>440</sup> Pietro Bembo remarks that during this same war, galley captains in other squadrons also proved unable to engage the enemy due to cowardly fleet captains. He reports that upon reaching the Turkish galleys, the galley captains of the Venetian vessels “were hampered by fear and made the rower’s back-water...in a cowardly fashion.”<sup>441</sup> With this, the fleet returned home where Grimani and the other galley captains were imprisoned. Due to the fleet not engaging the Ottomans, the Venetian strongholds all across Morea and the Peloponnese fell. In 1503, the Ottoman Sultan allowed the Venetian citizens to ransom themselves for freedom. One such individual, Andrea Gritti, did so and returned to Venice in March of that year. According to Bembo, Andrea Gritti returned to the city with a letter from the Ottoman General Admete proposing “that if they wanted to end the war which existed between them and Bayazid, they should send someone to Constantinople to negotiate peace terms, in which Admete would support him.”<sup>442</sup> The peace treaty that occurred in 1503 stated:

“Venice accepted the inevitable and signed a humiliating peace with Bayezit that confirmed everything he had won. Soon the Venetians would dip their flags to passing

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<sup>437</sup> Bembo, Pietro. *Pietro Bembo: History of Venice, Volume 2 Book 5*. Translated by Urley. Harvard University Press. 2008. Pg. 3

<sup>438</sup> The only logical locations within striking distance was either Rhodes, or Venetian interests.

<sup>439</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 113

<sup>440</sup> Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 114

<sup>441</sup> Bembo, Pietro. *Pietro Bembo: History of Venice, Volume 2 Book 6*. Translated by Urley. Harvard University Press. 2008. Pg. 133

<sup>442</sup> Bembo, Pietro. *Pietro Bembo: History of Venice, Volume 2 Book 6*. Translated by Urley. Harvard University Press. 2008. Pg. 135

Ottoman ships in implicit recognition of a vassal status they were too proud to publicly acknowledge. From now on, cooperation with their powerful Muslim neighbor would become an axiom of Venetian foreign policy, and the city would turn its attention increasingly to building a land empire.”<sup>443</sup>

With this, the second of the two significant wars ended, with Venice consistently losing territory in the East. Yet at the same time, Venice’s economy is still going strong due to their cooperation with the Ottomans in trade and other commercial activities, despite the outbreak of hostilities in the years prior.

### iii.

#### The Italian Mainland Wars: The League of Cambrai and the League of Cognac

By the time of the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, the situation facing Venice on the Italian mainland had significantly changed. Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan describes this time as the “isolation of Venice, which occurred as a direct result of expanding the *Terraferma*. She further describes the situation by stating:

“The isolation of Venice was evident during the war with Ferrara. War broke out in 1481 because the Venetians were no longer satisfied with their extensive privileges in that city, traditionally its rival. Hostilities ended in 1484. The conflict, which marked by Pope Sixtus IV’s declaration of an interdict against Venice, was long and costly, and its results were mixed. Venice failed to take Ferrara, but at the Peace of Bagnolo it received Rovigo and the Polesine, the flatlands between the lower reaches of the Po and the Adige. This chronicle ends with the short lived War of Rovereto in the spring of 1487 against Archduke Sigismund, Count of the Tyrol. What it shows is that all of the neighbors of the Republic of Venice were worried about its advance.”<sup>444</sup>

As one can read, these wars, in addition to the earlier wars with Milan, have greatly expanded Venice’s territorial acquisitions in the Italian mainland, thus ensuring some sense of security should an enemy wish to attack Venice. Or so this is what the Venetian Senate was

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<sup>443</sup>Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 370

<sup>444</sup>Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 131

hoping. However, one might argue that the inland expansion of Venice was in actuality the cause of many a problem for that city in Italy. Take into consideration the land mass that Venice now occupies. David Abulafia reports that “the Writ of Venice reached as far west as Bergamo, where the lion of St. Mark brushed against the serpent of Milan.”<sup>445</sup> This *Terrafirma* expansion has brought Venice into close proximity with a good number of other Italian city-states, many of which are hoping to expand, like the Venetians. Milan, specifically, was a powerhouse in the region and constantly threatened their neighbors with their military superiority. This could prove to become quite a problem for the newly conquered territory that the Venetians had just acquired. In order to subvert some of the dangers posed toward Venice, Venice negotiated with France to enter into a war on their side against Milan in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. The French were eager to accept since, as previously stated, they hoped to further assert their control and authority over Northern Italy. By 1499, Pietro Bembo reports that “with Cremona brought under the sway of the Republic, magistrates were sent to administer justice, Domenico Trevisan and Niccolo Foscarini, and two ambassadors, Niccolo Michiel and Benedetto Giustinian ... all four were told to go to Milan together, there to welcome the king and congratulate him on his new realm in the name of the Republic.”<sup>446</sup> This demonstrates another successful negotiation by Venice with a larger European state, France, where Venice is able to negate the threat of Milan, at least temporarily, and at the same time, continue to expand Venetian territorial ambitions.

During the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Venice entered into two massive conflicts that would change the manner in which Venice is viewed internationally, and therefore, influences their tactics when negotiating with larger states. The first of these two conflicts is the War of the

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<sup>445</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 413

<sup>446</sup>Bembo, Pietro. *History of Venice: Books I-IV*, Harvard University Press, 2007. Pg. 327

League of Cambrai that was launched in 1508. During this time, many of the powerful European states to the north viewed northern Italy as ripe for the taking. Venice too attempted to take advantage of this time by further expanding the *Terrafirma*, a move that was very unpopular with the Papacy. In August of 1503, Pope Alexander VI died, ushering in a moment where Venetian diplomats might be able to organize the election of a Pope who would be favorable to Venetian expansion.<sup>447</sup> Bembo states that Ligurian Julius II succeeded Alexander, which “the Republic had very much wanted” since they had “taken great pains to secure this outcome.”<sup>448</sup> The Venetians believed they had won without causing any outbreak of hostilities with the Papal States. However, Julius I had other plans. Several of the towns that Venice hoped to secure authority over just so happened to also be under the interests of Julius I, who wanted to take them for himself.

It is an interesting time for European states when they declare war on the Papal States. Often, such states are still Christian and have no intention of changing their religion; however, when warring with the Papacy, religion is usually never kept out of it. However, many states had entered into conflict with the Papacy, therefore, Venice did not have to “reinvent the wheel” per say, when explaining internationally, which is why it is acceptable to fight the leader of your faith. Paolo Sarpi, one of the most important Venetian historians and religious thinkers of the 1600s, was “quick to admit the supremacy of the papacy in matters of faith, but concerned to maintain that rulers hold their power directly from God, and that therefore the clergy have no authority in matters of secular jurisdiction, being entitled to only preach the Gospel.”<sup>449</sup> In

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<sup>447</sup>Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 297

<sup>448</sup> Bembo, Pietro. *Pietro Bembo's: History of Venice, Volume 2 Book 6*. Translated by Urley. Harvard University Press. 2008. Pg. 157

<sup>449</sup>Wooton, David. *Paulo Sarpi: Between Renaissance and Enlightenment*. Cambridge University Press, 1983. Pg. 48

1507/8, the Venetians began their march south hoping to acquire the new cities believing the Pope would do nothing outright to stop them. However, the Venetians were wrong. Upon Venice's engagement of hostilities, Julius I immediately excommunicated Venice and secretly began opening negotiations with the Germans, Spanish, and French, hoping to form a league against the Venetians.<sup>450</sup> In 1508, the major powers of Europe met in Cambrai, forming the League of Cambrai whose ultimate goal, as Thomas Madden puts it, was to "turn back the clock on the Venetian Empire, returning the Republic to its lagoon."<sup>451</sup> The league was composed of the Papacy, the French, the Germans, the Spanish, and many Northern Italian city-states who had grown angry by Venetian aggression of the past century. No independent, lone, Italian city-state, or any city-state for that matter, had ever "faced such a formidable combination of European powers as the league of Cambrai, which declared war against the Venetians in December of 1508, on the pretext of their 'insatiable cupidity and thirst for dominion.'"<sup>452</sup> Venice responded quickly initially through diplomacy but then by raising an army which was ready to march the very next year. The Venetian Senate, according to Bembo, initially attempted to negotiate for peace with Rome by making the Papal States in charge and allowing Venice to serve as "Rome's vicar of those towns, which their previous masters had been."<sup>453</sup> Early in 1509, "an enormous army led by Condottiere Nicolo di Pitigliano and his young cousin Bartolomeo d'Alviano met an equally enormous French army just east of Milan at Agnadella."<sup>454</sup> Bembo reports that the

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<sup>450</sup>Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 298

<sup>451</sup>Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 298-299

<sup>452</sup>Chambers, David S. *Imperial Age of Venice, 1380-1580*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971. Pg. 64

<sup>453</sup> Bembo, Pietro. *Pietro Bembo's: History of Venice, Volume 2 Book 6*. Translated by Urley. Harvard University Press. 2008. Pg. 169

<sup>454</sup>Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 299

Venetian army consisted of some “6,000 heavy cavalry, 4,000 light cavalry, and 33,000 infantry, though by no means had all our forces yet arrived in the field.”<sup>455</sup>

Bembo’s telling of events shows that Venice could produce a large army, but was not the best organized as they were having trouble amassing all their forces with haste. This battle will come to be known as the Battle of Agnadello where the Venetian army was crushed by the allied forces who quickly occupied most of the Venetian *Terrafirma*, leaving Venetians to watch and wonder if their city would face a similar siege as in the War of Chioggia. After the onset of the fighting, Bembo reports that:

“And so within a short time the French, who not long before had been very fearful of the opposing army and had come greatly to regret making war on the Republic, now put to flight the men they had feared—not one of the entire Venetian force stood his ground once the first company had been routed and put to flight. [The French] also took possession of a huge quantity of the very best artillery, which the captain Vincenzo Valier and his aides had abandoned as they fled, leaving them unguarded in the middle of the field for the enemy to plunder.”<sup>456</sup>

After this, it was said that Venetians “could see the watch fires of the enemy troops camped along the lagoon flickering on the water.”<sup>457</sup> This was a troubling position for the maritime Republic to be placed in once again, proving how vulnerable they were when matched against these growing European powers. However, Venice did still have a few towns under her command, in addition to what was left of the *stato de mar*, so by no means was Venice out of the fighting. Although, Venice, to some extent, acknowledged that they were out matched and would require alternative means to emerge from this war alive, chiefly through diplomacy. But first,

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<sup>455</sup> Bembo, Pietro. *Pietro Bembo’s: History of Venice, Volume 2 Book 7*. Translated by Urley. Harvard University Press. 2008. Pg. 283

<sup>456</sup> Bembo, Pietro. *Pietro Bembo’s: History of Venice, Volume 2 Book 7*. Translated by Urley. Harvard University Press. 2008. Pg. 295

<sup>457</sup> Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 132



Venice had to win back some of its territory as to shows its people and the world that the city of Venice was not weak.

That same year, Venice massed another large army and launched a surprise attack on German positions in Padua, comprised of some 10,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry.<sup>458</sup> This was in part possible as the *stato de mar* always, except during times directly after plagues, possessed a healthy supply of rowers to man the many galleys that the Venetian state runs off of. This army, along with popular uprisings in some freshly captured cities who preferred Venetian rule, threatened the very framework that with which the league was founded upon.<sup>459</sup> All participants in the league wanted Venice confined, but only in addition to their states being granted rights over a portion of Venice's old territory. Therefore, when uprisings began to ensue, some parties to the league broke ties or switched sides. Starting with Padua, Venetians forces besieged the city, and, with the use of artillery knocked down their fortifications and brought the Germans to begin "negotiating surrender" as the Venetian "infantry crossed over the walls through the rubble and took the fortress" of the city.<sup>460</sup>

Apart from a few military exploits such as this, the Venetian diplomats chiefly won the war, because without their help, Venice would have succumbed to overwhelming force. David Chambers further argues that the "recovery of Venice... lay in the devious diplomacy which took advantage of the leagues' disunity, in provincial reactions against the invaders and in the enduring power of the Venetian wealth, trade, and empire overseas."<sup>461</sup> Bembo further notes that

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<sup>458</sup>Bembo, Pietro. *Pietro Bembo's: History of Venice, Volume 2 Book 8*. Translated by Urley. Harvard University Press. 2008. Pg. 309

<sup>459</sup>Madden, Thomas. *Venice: A New History*, Penguin, 2012 pg. 300

<sup>460</sup> Bembo, Pietro. *Pietro Bembo's: History of Venice, Volume 2 Book 8*. Translated by Urley. Harvard University Press. 2008. Pg. 369

<sup>461</sup>Chambers, David S. *Imperial Age of Venice, 1380-1580*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971. Pg. 66

Julius II and Venice eventually came to terms with the understanding that if the Pope allowed the “barbarian armies” to destroy Venice, then “Julius and all subsequent pontiffs would not be safe, even in Rome.”<sup>462</sup> This chilling message is mostly accurate since Venice, besides the Papal States, served as the strongest maritime naval, and military land presence in the Mediterranean, since its primary and historic rival Genoa, had fallen under the competing sways of the French and Spanish. The very being of the *stato de mar* serves Venice as an additional institution which they could utilize during wars. When fighting rival city-states or larger states on land, Venice can use the *stato de mar* as a form of protection and a place to regroup. Venice at this time still remains a major naval player in the Mediterranean Sea. In addition, Venice’s appropriately timed diplomatic moves ushered in feelings of uncertainty for the allies, which fractured the already wavering league, with which was created to “dial-back” Venice.

Over the next decade, this war will consist of various battles, betrayals, new allies, and switching sides, but in the end, Venice survived. The events that led to the ending of the conflict arose from discontent within the league and Venetian diplomatic moves who were aware of the dissatisfaction within the alliance. Around 1512, Francesco Guicciardini, a nobleman from Florence and Italian historian writes that “the King of France indeed had good Reason to be jealous of the Pope, for Leo desired nothing more than the French should have no longer any footing in Italy, either because he thought it most conducive to the common security, and to the grandeur of the Church, or because he retained the memory of the injuries received by the Crown of France.”<sup>463</sup> As stated earlier, the Pope feared the power of the French and the resulting actions they had taken into northern Italy in light conjunction with the league. Due to this, Julius II broke

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<sup>462</sup> Bembo, Pietro. *Pietro Bembo's: History of Venice, Volume 2 Book 8*. Translated by Urley. Harvard University Press. 2008. Pg. 299

<sup>463</sup> Guicciardini, Francesco. *The History of Italy, from the year 1490 to 1532, translated into English by the chevalier Austin Parke Goddard*. London T. Jones, 1753 Volume VI, Book 11, Pg. 132

ties with the French and began to plot and work toward their removal from Italy. Venice noticed this and began seeking to establish an alliance with the French who were already considering this in light of recent events. Andrea Gritti, who had been captured by the French, negotiated a treaty of alliance with the King of France, Louis XII, which read:

“By this treaty Bartolomeo Alviano and Andrea Gritti obtained their liberty, the Venetians were bound to assist the King of France with eight hundred men at arms, fifteen hundred light horse, and ten thousand foot [infantry] against all who should oppose his recovery of Afti, Genoa, and the Duchy of Milan; and the King was obliged to assist the Venetians till they had intirely recovered all that they possessed in Lombardy and in the Marquisate of Treviso before the League of Cambray.”<sup>464</sup>

This demonstrates the skill and optimal timing that Venetian diplomats are able to make, even when held in a French prison. Gaining the French as an ally proved to be quite effective. The French reasserted their authority over northern Italy and kept both the Holy Roman Empire and Papal States at bay, although the Spanish proved more difficult to confine as is alluded by Guicciardini in volume 6 of his history. With the help of the French, the Venetians are able to negotiate all parties to begin seeking peace.

Two peace treaties concluded the war. The first of which is the Peace of Cambrai, negotiated by the French who were now one of the only allies the Venetians had at the conclusion of the war. Upon the arrival of the peace agreement in Venice, the French king, Francis I, and the German Emperor made it “crystal clear that neither monarch considered the Venetian Republic a serious player in international politics,” and all that was agreed to, including “to return [to] Charles V within 40 days everything the French and Venetians had conquered in Southern Italy,

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<sup>464</sup> Guicciardini, Francesco. *The History of Italy, from the year 1490 to 1532, translated into English by the chevalier Austin Parke Goddard*. London T. Jones, 1753 Volume VI, Book 11, Pg. 129

without even informing their Venetian allies.”<sup>465</sup> Venice was not even included in the peace deal and was made to negotiate a separate Peace of Bologna. This treaty confirmed Venice’s loss of Ravenna and Cervia, along with her territorial claims to Apulia.<sup>466</sup> By the time both of these treaties were signed, the year was 1516, and the balance of power “was soon redressed, however, in an Italy that displayed a new alignment of foreign powers, and after a hard fought campaign... Venice regained its dominion over the *Terra firma* in June 1517.”<sup>467</sup> It was not until late 1516 when Guicciardini finally reported that “at last the Sinews of the war were slackened, and the Course of affairs manifestly tended towards a Peace” once the Emperor “restore Verona according to the form of the articles of the agreement.”<sup>468</sup> This concluded the hostilities that brought a majority of Europe to arms.

At the conclusion of hostilities for this war, Venice had the realization that new European powers such as the English, French, Spanish, and to some extent, the Germans were beginning to surpass Venice’s strength forcing them to reevaluate their relations with other European states. Yet at the same time, by the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and the conclusion of the War of Cambrai, Venice had become one of the chief naval and military powers within the Italian mainland and along the Italian coast. According to Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan the Venetian territorial state looked something along these lines:

The Venetian *stato di terra* stretched from Friuli to Ravenna and from Lombardy (Crema and Bergamo) to the Adriatic. Moreover, in order to conquer and defend this state,

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<sup>465</sup>Martin, John Jefferies; Romano, Dennis. *Venice Reconsidered: The History of Civilization of An Italian City-State, 1297-1797*. John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg. 175

<sup>466</sup>Martin, John Jefferies; Romano, Dennis. *Venice Reconsidered: The History of Civilization of An Italian City-State, 1297-1797*. John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg. 175

<sup>467</sup>Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 132

<sup>468</sup> Guicciardini, Francesco. *The History of Italy, from the year 1490 to 1532, translated into English by the chevalier Austin Parke Goddard*. London T. Jones, 1753 Volume VI, Book 12, Pg. 438

Venice, the ‘maritime republic,’ whose ships fought on the Po and on the Lago di Garda, also proved itself capable of putting a powerful army into the field. In the early 15<sup>th</sup> century, some ten thousand to twelve thousand men fought under the banner of St. Mark. This figure grew when war became an almost permanent state. At midcentury, Venice commanded some 20,000 men, by 1509, that figure had risen to 40,000, with a permanent army of some 8,000.”<sup>469</sup>

Venice also adopted a new political outlook at the conclusion of the War of Cambrai. Individuals such as Andrea Gritti will eventually pave the path for Venice “to represent herself as a center of a peace-loving state that could not only offer Italy and Europe a fresh vision of political, intellectual, and artistic life, but also play a key role in European culture.”<sup>470</sup> This is the role Venice chooses to accept in a region where Venice is no longer the strongest player and must now learn to cooperate and further adapt should she hope to survive. It is also relevant to note the actions of some of the client cities and towns under Venetian rule and how they acted during the conflict. While it is true many cities and towns immediately surrendered to the foreign invaders as they viewed their situation hopeless if they stayed with the Venetians. However, many cities chose to not rebel against the Venetians and stay loyal such as Padua in 1509. In addition, Guicciardini alludes to the “inexpressible... was the joy and satisfaction of the Venetian nobility and people for having at last seen a happy end of so long and dangerous a war, tho’ after infinite costs and trouble, for, as some of their historians assure us, they expended in the whole war since the League of Cambray no less than five million Ducats, of which five hundred thousand were raised by the sales of places. Incredible also were the rejoicings of the Veronese and all the other cities and People within the jurisdiction of the Republic, since they now promised

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<sup>469</sup>Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth, *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of Myth*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg 132

<sup>470</sup>Martin, John Jefferies; Romano, Dennis. *Venice Reconsidered: The History of Civilization of An Italian City-State, 1297-1797*. John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pg. 178

themselves...the benefit of peace.”<sup>471</sup> Provided here is yet another report of cities welcoming of Venetian rule, and preferring it over that of the foreign invaders as the Venetian commercial trade network and market provide considerable monetary incentives for those who are allowed to participate in this sphere.

The next significant war was the War of the League of Cognac, lasting from around 1525 through to 1530. This chapter will not fully cover this war such as the last one, but it is important to acknowledge that Venice’s participation in a league, which they used to further their territorial ambitions and to attempt to weather the growing military storms, was caused in part by the Northern European states such as the France. This war also encompassed a good number of other city-states, including to some extent, the Genoese, the Florentines, and the Papacy, all of which are attempting to utilize stronger European powers in order to use them to achieve their goals.

It is also important to note some Venetian actions in the onset of the war. As has been witnessed in earlier conflicts, Venice continues to demonstrate a pattern of preparedness for entering into this conflict due to their moves and actions before the league of Cognac was even fully established. Guicciardini remarks that “wherefore it was jointly concluded that the *Venetians* fould order the Duke of Urbino to march with all expedition to their frontiers toward the river Adda with their men at arms, and six thoufand Italian foot, and that the Pontiff fould fend Count Guido Rangone, with six thoufand foot, to Piacenza, and because it appeared neccessary to have a large body of *Swifs*, no lefs than twelve thousand, as the Duke of Urbino fignified to the Venetians, in order to obtain a compleat Victory.”<sup>472</sup> In addition, we also know

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<sup>471</sup> Guicciardini, Francesco. *The History of Italy, from the year 1490 to 1532, translated into English by the chevalier Austin Parke Goddard*. London T. Jones, 1753 Volume VI, Book 12, Pg. 439

<sup>472</sup> Guicciardini, Francesco. *The History of Italy, from the year 1490 to 1532, translated into English by the chevalier Austin Parke Goddard*. London T. Jones, 1756 Volume IX, Book 17, Pg. XXXIII

that these plans and assignments were given out prior to the outbreak of war because both Venice and the Papacy because they were willing to “send into Switzerland Agents of their own to levy them” in order to ensure that the Holy Roman Emperor did not “discover [The Venetians and Papacy] so openly against *Caesar*.”<sup>473</sup> This early state controlled planning allowed for the Venetians to essentially gain a head start on their enemy which they try to do whenever they are thinking of entering into military conflict. The League was also not concluded till later that year “on the seventeenth day of May, 1526...between the Pontiff, the King of France, the Venetians, and the Duke of Milan” in order to ensure that the HRE did not interfere in the affairs of Milan and Northern Italy.<sup>474</sup> The danger of introducing so many large European states into Italy to fight wars on behalf of city-states was later realized during the war when in 1527, Imperial forces sent by Charles V attacked and sacked the city of Rome as is told by Guicciardini who was actually in command of the Papal forces during the siege.<sup>475</sup> Bourbon, who had been placed in charge of the army was killed during the initial assault, which served to enrage the army that at last entered the suburb after fighting on the walls for “Two Hours,” and upon entering the city, the Imperial army now leaderless, began “to run in all haste and disorder to plunder, without the least regard not only to the name of the friends, and to the authority and dignity of prelates, but also to Churches and Monasteries, to Reliques honored with the Concourse of all world, and to things consecrated.”<sup>476</sup> This was a disaster for Rome as the Pope and his cardinals found themselves imprisoned and their capital city brutally sacked by a seemingly uncontrollable army. This war

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<sup>473</sup> Guicciardini, Francesco. *The History of Italy, from the year 1490 to 1532, translated into English by the chevalier Austin Parke Goddard*. London T. Jones, 1756 Volume IX, Book 17, Pg. XXXIII

<sup>474</sup> Guicciardini, Francesco. *The History of Italy, from the year 1490 to 1532, translated into English by the chevalier Austin Parke Goddard*. London T. Jones, 1756 Volume IX, Book 17, Pg. XLIII

<sup>475</sup> Guicciardini, Francesco. *The History of Italy, from the year 1490 to 1532, translated into English by the chevalier Austin Parke Goddard*. London T. Jones, 1753 Volume VIII

<sup>476</sup> Guicciardini, Francesco. *The History of Italy, from the year 1490 to 1532, translated into English by the chevalier Austin Parke Goddard*. London T. Jones, 1756 Volume IX, Book 18, Pg. 225

concluded a few years after the sack and created a somewhat stable peace between competing bodies in Northern Italy.

iv.

### The Rise of Corsairs and the Holy League of 1537

Upon his father's death in the 1520s, Suleiman the Magnificent took the throne, proclaiming himself Sultan of the Ottoman Empire. In 1522, Suleiman laid siege to, and conquered Rhodes, one of the last major naval powers left in the Eastern Mediterranean to confront the ever expanding Ottoman Empire.<sup>477</sup> During this time, the Ottoman Empire controlled much of the Eastern Mediterranean, yet still, their navies could not be everywhere in order to ensure the safety of their convoys to downgrade the very real risks that comes with naval passages. So in order to expand Ottoman power in the region, the Ottoman Sultans began hiring corsairs into their service. Two of the most famous corsairs were the Barbarossa brothers, which acquired their renown by raiding along the Aegean. Their main base of operations was Jerba.<sup>478</sup> This was also a somewhat chaotic time for the Ottomans. The sultan constantly had to "switch their attention back and forth from the Mediterranean, to the Balkans, to Persia, and their struggles with the Safavid Shahs in the East," which often distracted them from Mediterranean affairs.<sup>479</sup> Selim I, father to Suleiman, acknowledged these corsairs uses and due to this, the Ottomans employed Barbarossa, naming him the official emir of Algiers, giving him 2,000

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<sup>477</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 415

<sup>478</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 417

<sup>479</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 417



Janissaries, along with enough supplies and weapons to carry out his work.<sup>480</sup> Despite moves such as this, Turkish influence in the Western Mediterranean world consisted not entirely in confrontation, but also in accommodation, such as when dealing with Francis I who agreed to work with the Ottomans instead of opposing them when he sent 12 French vessels to resupply 100 Ottoman ships under Heyrettin.<sup>481</sup>

Throughout the rest of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, 3 major events will occur, which help dictate Venice's decisions by the end of that year, and brought about by their ability to approach new and uncertain threats with innovative strategies that other states at the time could not hope to reproduce. These three events are the Holy League of 1537, the Siege of Malta, and the Loss of Cyprus/Battle of Lepanto. In 1537, Suleiman launched onto a new advance, sending Hayrettin to lay siege to Corfu, which would provide the Ottomans with a Launchpad for further assaults into the Adriatic.<sup>482</sup>

With this realization in mind, Venetians grew alarmed as their safety within the Adriatic was being placed in further jeopardy. To confront this, the Papacy called for a Holy League which formed in Nice, bringing together the Spanish (along with Genoa), Portuguese, Venetian, Hospitallers, and papal forces together in 1538.<sup>483</sup> Due to Venice's participation, the Ottomans launched a series of raids targeting Venetian possessions. While the Holy League was being

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<sup>480</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 418

<sup>481</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 418-422

<sup>482</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 419

<sup>483</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 419

formed, Hayrettin began a series of attacks along Venetian holdings in the Aegean.<sup>484</sup> These bases were extremely important to Venice as they served as supply lines and harbors of safety for Venetian merchants and all Christians. By eliminating these, the Ottomans effectively began to whittle away at Venice's naval strength, stripping them of their tactics which won them their empire back in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The Holy League fleet set sail that same year, comprised of some 200 or so ships from various states, including Andrea Doria's 61 Genoese vessels. The fleet met the Ottoman navy on September 28<sup>th</sup> of 1538 off Corfu in what will come to be known as the Battle of Preveza.<sup>485</sup> The Ottoman fleet was about the same size as that of the Christian Holy League, however, the main problem for the allies was that there were leadership problems along with leaders not wanting to risk their ships in open engagement. Naval battles were still chaotic and could result in heavy damage to one's galley fleet. Building galleys was an expensive enterprise for a state, thus leading some rulers to offer fewer ships during times of conflict, or even attempt to keep those ships out of harm's way once committed to a fleet. The latter can be seen in the Battle of Preveza. Andrea Doria, a Genoese admiral brought 61 of his own ships to fight in this conflict.<sup>486</sup> The Christian fleet was badly beaten due to Doria's actions when the fighting appeared to turn against the allies. According to David Abulafia, once the Holy League fleet had engaged the enemy, Doria, unwilling to lose his ships, retreated, causing the allies to fail and the remaining ships to retreat.<sup>487</sup> Since no fleet was able to reach Corfu or the Aegean, the Ottomans were able to make great gains in the region, further strengthening their hold on the

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<sup>484</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 420

<sup>485</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 420

<sup>486</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 420

<sup>487</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 420

Eastern Mediterranean. The Ottomans appeared unstoppable at this point. No European power at this time has been able to stop and then push back an Ottoman advance, for any significant amount of time. That is, until the siege of Malta. Before continuing with Venice's historical path of dealing with threats, we must first acknowledge how significant this event is in the Mediterranean context.

v.

### The Siege of Malta, Ottoman Conquest of Cyprus, and the Battle of Lepanto

For many historians, the time of 1550 marked a period in history where control of the Mediterranean was up for grabs.<sup>488</sup> Venice, after the conclusion of the failed Holy League lost much of their possessions in the Aegean, yet still had control of Cyprus and Crete. Due to the last conflict, the Venetians were in no rush to help other Christian nations fight the Ottomans because of their extremely fragile empire, seemingly surrounded by Ottomans at times. The control of the Sicilian straits would give either the Spanish, Ottomans, or whoever held them, significant power over the commerce and commercial flow of that region. This left Malta, a strategic island directly in the sights of Suleiman the Magnificent. Malta had previously been used as a base from which to attack the Ottomans, leaving not many to wonder why the Ottomans wish to attack this location besides its strategic importance.<sup>489</sup> On March 30<sup>th</sup>, 1565, 170 warships, 200 transport ships bearing 30,000 men set off from Constantinople and arrived on

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<sup>488</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 429

<sup>489</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 429

May 18<sup>th</sup> of that year.<sup>490</sup> However, due to mismanagement by the commanding Ottoman admiral and general, along with some timely reinforcements from the Spanish Empire, the Turks failed to capture Malta and were forced to retreat. This broke a long string of defeats served to various European nations by the hands of the Ottomans. No more did Europeans see the Turks as invincible. They could and were, defeated. Due to this sudden halt and defeat, the Ottomans reevaluated their position, observing that in the Eastern Mediterranean, the large islands of Chios, Crete, and Cyprus were still in the hands of Italian city-states.<sup>491</sup> The latter two were specifically held by the Venetians, placing Venice once again in the center of the Ottoman's warpath.

This brings us to our next major event, the Ottoman Conquest of Cyprus and the Battle of Lepanto. Due to the Ottoman's defeat at Malta, Selim II, son of Suleiman the Magnificent, began preparing for an invasion of Cyprus in the late 1560s. However, rumor of this invasion had not escaped the Venetians. The Senate had heard rumor "of the attack already being disseminated in January of 1566, when the Venetian *Bailo* in charge of his fellow-nationals in Constantinople reported that plans were being drawn up."<sup>492</sup> Cyprus was not only important to the Venetians, but also to most Christians in the Mediterranean Sea. This location served as a harbor of protection for Christian pirates, which attacked Ottoman grain exports and imports to the Empire.<sup>493</sup> Selim II knew this shipping line needed to be protected and would be under threat as long as Cyprus lay in Christian hands. The Venetian diplomats in Constantinople raised diplomatic concerns to the

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<sup>490</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 429

<sup>491</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 435

<sup>492</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 446

<sup>493</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 446

Ottomans over the growing threat to Cyprus, however, the Ottomans were “not moved by the reminder that the Turks had cultivated good relations with Venice over many decades.”<sup>494</sup> In light of this potential threat, as no fleet had been launched by the Ottomans as of yet, the Senate ordered the organization of an additional, “8000 fresh infantry sent da Mar, preparations for a fleet of over 150 light galleys, 12 great galleys, and a good number of transports.”<sup>495</sup> This demonstrates the usual nature of Venice and how the Senate prepares in advance for *Fortuna*, in the event that unexpected or expected threats assault Venice’s interest, the government is at least somewhat prepared should the worst happen. This was easier for a single city like Venice to organize independently and then implement their plan throughout the *stato de mar*.

In July 1570, the Ottomans finally launched their fleet and attacked Cyprus, bringing with them some 100,000 men, along with 400 sailing vessels including 160 war galleys.<sup>496</sup> This naturally brought about a significant response by Christian nations in Europe, invigorated by their first victory against the Ottomans and alarms of concern over the potential loss of Cyprus, one of the last Christian islands in the Eastern Mediterranean. Like last time, Europe gathered together and negotiated the creation of a Holy League. This league was comprised of the Spanish Empire, the Papal States, the Venetian Empire, and other states that offered a few ships to the main fleet, which was commanded entirely by Don John of Austria, demonstrating how significant this event is to the Hapsburgs.<sup>497</sup> Their goal was to save Cyprus, which all knew to be a Venetian possession. The Holy League fleet set sail in mid-September of 1570, right at news

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<sup>494</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 447

<sup>495</sup>Mallet, M.E.; Hale, J.R. *The Military Organization of a Renaissance State: Venice c. 1400 to 1617*. Cambridge University Press, 1984. Pg. 233

<sup>496</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 447

<sup>497</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 447-8

had arrived of the fall of Nicosia to the Ottomans, one of two significant strongholds on Cyprus.<sup>498</sup> With that news, the fleet set sail, headed for Famagusta, the last fortified Venetian city on the island, and their only hope to now holding the island against the Ottoman advance since that city could be resupplied by sea allowing the Venetians to utilize, once again, their superior naval skills.

Venice also had other plans for how to hold Cyprus. In addition to the preparations made in the previous years and the establishment of the Holy League, the Venetians also set out in the Winter of 1571, sending “1,319 additional soldiers bringing the garrison to about 8100 men” to defend Famagusta.<sup>499</sup> In addition to these reinforcements, Venice also embarked on a number of raids against the Ottomans and were even able to recapture Durazzo. The beginning to this war went much better for Venice than in past conflicts with the Ottomans. Despite the fall of half the island of Cyprus, Venice was still holding their own, had acquired allies, and even had made back some of their lost territory with their reclaiming of Durazzo. It is perhaps because the Venetians had been doing so well that caused the Venetians to outright reject a peace deal with the Ottomans. This deal would have granted the Venetians a trading post in Famagusta in return for the island of Cyprus.<sup>500</sup> Now although this does not appear to be a good deal, it is the best deal the Ottomans had offered to the Venetians yet, especially when comparing these terms to past treaties with the Sublime Porte as they tend to be heavily sided in favor of the Turks and extremely greedy in seizing possessions from the Venetians. Yet still, the Venetians declined, most likely because their hope rested on the 200 ships sailing forth to Famagusta.

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<sup>498</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 448

<sup>499</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 448

<sup>500</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 448

In response, the Ottomans went back on the offensive. In addition to their siege of Cyprus, the Ottomans began raiding Venetian possessions along Crete, the Ionian Sea, and up the Adriatic as far as Zadar.<sup>501</sup> This is the second time in Venice's history that the Ottomans have made it this close to their capital. However, even the Ottomans most likely could have pressed on and attacked Venice, the Sublime Porte only intended to "scare, rather than smash Venice—to convince the Venetians that their Empire was fragile and that resistance to the Ottomans was futile."<sup>502</sup> In addition, on August 5<sup>th</sup>, 1571, the Whole of Cyprus fell, including Famagusta.<sup>503</sup> The Battle of Lepanto occurred in the Gulf of Corinth, marking the largest military event in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, which unfortunately for Venice, occurred after the fall of Cyprus. The men sailing onboard these ships received the news while on route to Cyprus.

The Ottoman fleet consisted of about 300 ships, 30,000 men, and rowers that were mostly slaves to power their vessels. Their ships were mostly equipped with few cannon, but mostly crossbow men.<sup>504</sup> These ships were small and navigable, yet they also had weak wood making them not the most formidable warships. The Holy league on the other hand consisted of 206 light Galleys, 6 galleasses and 20 supply vessels. 65 light galleys and 6 galleasses were supplied by the Venetians.<sup>505</sup> This fleet also most likely consisted of about 30,000 men, but had twice as many cannons as the Turks. For example, the Spanish "flagship, the *Real*, carried 400 Sardinian

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<sup>501</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 448

<sup>502</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 448

<sup>503</sup>Mallet, M.E.; Hale, J.R. *The Military Organization of a Renaissance State: Venice c. 1400 to 1617*. Cambridge University Press, 1984. Pg. 239

<sup>504</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 449

<sup>505</sup>Mallet, M.E.; Hale, J.R. *The Military Organization of a Renaissance State: Venice c. 1400 to 1617*. Cambridge University Press, 1984. Pg. 237

arquebusiers, the Ottoman flagship, the *Sultana*, only half the number.”<sup>506</sup> When both fleets met in the Gulf of Corinth, Mallet and Hale of *The Military Organization of a Renaissance City-State* reports that:

“The opposing fleets used similar tactics with vessels comparably designed and crewed; the only major discrepancy was the allies’ possession of the Venetian galleasses, whose superior firepower helped to shake the otherwise parade ground regulatory of the oncoming Turkish lines of battle.”<sup>507</sup>

This battle went quite poorly for the Ottomans. The Turkish bowmen were unable to be effective due to the smoke and fire from the canons and ships all around. The Turkish admiral Muezzinzade Ali was attacked onboard his flagship and died fighting. In the end, some 12,000 Christian slaves were freed along with the destruction of the Ottoman fleet.<sup>508</sup> This was seen as a great victory for the Christians against the Ottomans. Finally, Western Europe appeared to have caught up with the Ottomans and perhaps even surpassed them due to considerable funding from Spain, due to the riches gained in the new world, a nice perk that was also boosted during the time they held sway over Genoa. Yet in the end, this victory did not translate into a great deal for the Venetians. Cyprus was still lost as the Holy League fleet did not feel well equipped enough to continue with an invasion. In addition, in order to make sure their city lost nothing else, the Venetians made peace with the Ottomans effectively turning their back on the Holy League and confirming their loss of Cyprus to the Ottomans. According to Abulafia, this “victory was, in strategic terms, no more than a stalemate, for in the coming years neither side would have the

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<sup>506</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 450

<sup>507</sup>Mallet, M.E.; Hale, J.R. *The Military Organization of a Renaissance State: Venice c. 1400 to 1617*. Cambridge University Press, 1984. Pg. 238

<sup>508</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 450



manpower, timber, and supplies to fit out new fleets on this scale” or risk them in great battles if they were constructed.<sup>509</sup>

With the Battle of Lepanto over, Venice had once again faced and survived another major onslaught from the Ottoman Empire, despite losing some strategic positions along the way. Venice still held Crete and some small possessions within the Aegean and along the Adriatic. In addition by the start of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottomans were no longer invincible, yet they still held dominance in the East, after rebuilding their fleet by the end of the year, and the Spanish dominated the Western Mediterranean. Because the Ottomans gave up their interest in expanding westward after the siege of Malta, the Sultans of the 17<sup>th</sup> century would allow their Barbary pirates in pay, a much freer hand.<sup>510</sup> The nature of naval warfare was also in a period of transition. The great ship was slowly replacing the galley in naval warfare as it offered a better platform with which to place guns and artillery.<sup>511</sup> Furthermore, the situation within the Mediterranean will begin to be further complicated as new players, such as the English, Dutch, and German seamen will begin to appear more frequently in this region as their empires begin to grow.

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<sup>509</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 451

<sup>510</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 452

<sup>511</sup>Rose, Susan. *Medieval Naval Warfare 1000-1500*. Routledge New York, 2002. Pg. 115

## Negotiating Borders: The Venetian Nation in Constantinople

By the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Venice still held a fairly decent position within the Mediterranean. They still possessed a significant territorial state in the Italian mainland along with their *stato de mar*, which still included the important island of Crete, which Venice will hold until the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. In Constantinople, Venice also will continue to maintain a large presence, with there being at least 12 merchant houses established at this time in that city alone.<sup>512</sup> After the 16<sup>th</sup> century, although Venice's economic and commercial strength will still be sound due to cooperation with the Ottomans, the Venetian state will be in a time of decline until their fall at the very end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Venice benefitted from an increase in manufacturing and Western trade, which only increased after the Venetians made peace in 1573, which will mark the beginning of the longest period of peace between the Venetians and Ottomans. With Venice losing their monopoly in the East due to the Ottomans, the Levant trade began to open up to more states and cities looking to make profits. Part of the explanation to Venice's decline is due to their slow adaptation of naval warfare with abandoning lateen-rigged ships for larger more powerful vessels, and by 1619, the Venetian state navy now only possessed fifty *bertoni* alongside fifty galleys.<sup>513</sup> In comparison, the English and Spanish will acquire much larger vessels that will make their fleets far more powerful than anything the Venetians launch. Yet still, the Venetian state continued for more than another 200 years. The question of how and why will be the subject of the rest of this chapter.

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<sup>512</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 458

<sup>513</sup>Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 pg. 461

Part of the reason the Venetians, and city-states, were so effective at dealing with threats lay in their ability to successfully negotiate with larger and more powerful states, and at the same time approach potential dangers in creative and adaptive methods. Much of this will focus around trade and diplomacy. After the 15<sup>th</sup> century onward till the fall of Venice, the “Venetian-Ottoman border was extremely porous, as the religious and political dividing lines crossed a society that was wound together economically and culturally.”<sup>514</sup> Due to this fact, Venetian-Ottoman relations became extremely complex. Past historians who simply analyze this period as one of animosity and religious conflict between Christians and Muslims fail to acknowledge the full realization of complex and ever changing relations that were, at times, confrontational, but more often than not, were accommodating and cooperative. Venice serves as a perfect example to study this intertwined and complex relationship for a variety of different reasons. However, the first and one of the most important facts is that Venice, similarly to Constantinople, is “uniquely situated to function as both boundary and cultural middle ground, ‘a place of transition’ in which people throughout the Mediterranean and from every corner of Europe come together.”<sup>515</sup> Geographically, Venice is located in an area that helps foster relations between the East and West, although in reality, Venice was far more entrenched and engaged in Eastern Mediterranean affairs than that of the West. In fact, due to their expansion of trade and the variety of places traveled too, Venetians were encouraged, financially, to be able to develop relations with other foreign peoples in order to garner further profit for the city-state. Dursteler, who wrote *Venetians in Constantinople*, which offers an in depth exploration of the Venetian nation within Constantinople during the time of the Ottomans, stated that culturally diverse groups of

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<sup>514</sup>O’Connell, Monique. *Men of Empire: Power And Negotiation In Venice’s Maritime State*. The John Hopkins University Press, 2009 Pg. 159

<sup>515</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 2-3

“merchants, travelers, and officials regularly mixed in the cities of the Venetian Empire, and indeed, many travelers felt in entering the lagoon that they had already arrived in the exotic ‘Orient.’”<sup>516</sup>

The initial beginnings of diplomacy cantered around commerce. Dursteler reports that Venice nearly monopolized trade in the East due to their relationship with the Sultan for part of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>517</sup> In addition, despite troubles growing in the East, many Venetians believed that their cities future and fortune lay in the East.<sup>518</sup>

Venice’s initial strategy during this time was to avoid confrontation. The Ottoman Empire was powerful; in fact, there was no point in denying this fact and Venetians knew that for their empire to survive, they would need to deal with the Ottomans, either militarily, or diplomatically. Gregory Hanlon, a Professor of Italian History explains that “Venice considered it sufficient to maintain an infrastructure capable of raising a field army at short notice.”<sup>519</sup> This provided the basis for Venice to begin maintaining a standing army in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. During the Battle of Lepanto, Venice was able to place 130 galleys too sea with 23,000 infantry men.<sup>520</sup> This is quite a feat for a small state such as Venice which has become considerably weaker since their prominence of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. During the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century, Venice played a game “of balance and equivocation,” attempting to “play one power off the other” by utilizing a system “of ever-shifting alliances, and control over the dissemination of information to both the Hapsburgs

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<sup>516</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 3

<sup>517</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 3

<sup>518</sup>, Pg. 4

<sup>519</sup> Hanlon, Gregory, *Twilight of A Military Tradition: Italian Aristocrats and European Conflicts: 1560-1800*. New York, 1998. Pg. 145

<sup>520</sup> Hanlon, Gregory, *Twilight of A Military Tradition: Italian Aristocrats and European Conflicts: 1560-1800*. New York, 1998. Pg. 145

and the Ottomans in a sometimes desperate effort to appease and manipulate both states into positions favorable to the weakened republic as it confronted a brave new Mediterranean world.”<sup>521</sup> This thought process goes along with the idea that for Venice’s economy to prosper, the city-state must have good relations with whatever power is dominant at the time. In addition, this too shadows Venice’s policy in the Italian mainland during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Hanlon observes that Venetian policy during the 1600s was that after the Castro War of 1643, “Venetian policy never wavered from an attitude of non-intervention in the great power struggles that engulfed its neighbors,” which arguably resulted from more than “three generations of pressure by the Ottoman Turks on the Mediterranean Empire.”<sup>522</sup> For the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup> century, this increasingly became the Spanish and the Ottomans until both powers begin to decline. In fact, after hostilities ended in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Venetians earned the nickname “The Turk’s Courtesan” bestowed by Europe on Venice due to their close relationship with the Sublime Porte.<sup>523</sup> From 1500 to the fall of Venice in 1797, Venice and the Ottoman Empire “were at peace save for several relatively brief interludes of open hostility, punctuated by raiding and other corsair activity,” which for the most part has been covered above.<sup>524</sup>

Before diving into the Venetian nation that existed in Constantinople, it might first be helpful to further understand the various identities that people associated to at this time. Contrary to popular belief, the ideological clash between east and west, Christians and Muslims did not alone, dictate states and individual actions during this time. Daniel Goffman writes that there is a

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<sup>521</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 5

<sup>522</sup> Hanlon, Gregory, *Twilight of A Military Tradition: Italian Aristocrats and European Conflicts: 1560-1800*. New York, 1998. Pg. 149

<sup>523</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 5

<sup>524</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 6

contrast in attitudes between different people within a specific nation “which produced a chronic and fascinating tension in Venice between a religious ideology that conceived a perpetual crusade against the Islamic world and a situation that demanded bonds with Islamic states that controlled the international commercial routes to the East.”<sup>525</sup> Dursteler reports that “many individuals moved easily between religious poles, and indeed polities were never averse to allying with a perceived infidel if the stakes were right...they intermarried and formed alliances across denominational lines; when it suited their worldly aims, they changed faiths easily.”<sup>526</sup> This paints the portrait of a society, which definitely believes religion to be essential, but also one that preaches accommodation and compromise in order to fulfill their larger goals. An excellent example of this comes from Venice herself, who was famed for “the position expressed by the Senate after Lepanto, *Prima semo Veneziani, poi cristiani* [First we are Venetians, then Christians].”<sup>527</sup> Even after the Ottomans defeat at Malta and Lepanto, the Venetians still felt it best to break with most of Christendom and end their crusading stance, which the Papacy still preached. This independent policy allowed the Venetian State to be more flexible when dealing with the Ottomans, giving them a leg up with other European states when it came to commercial enterprises. Luckily for Venice, the Ottoman Empire was accepting of both Christians and Jews and allowed non-Muslims to assume posts of significance within the Empire. Ottomans governed and derived from their frontier milieu, which consisted of “a cultural mix of classical Islamic

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<sup>525</sup> Goffman, Daniel. *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge University Press, 2002. Pg. 137

<sup>526</sup> Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 11

<sup>527</sup> Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 12

legal traditions joined with Byzantine and their Inner Asian elements.”<sup>528</sup> Thereby allowing an already diverse empire to further expand and accept other cultures, while demonstrating theirs to be better through their empires great feats.

Next, the idea of associating oneself with their nation can be a difficult subject to inspect. Nation could refer to a variety of different sizes and groups. For example, the Venetian community in Constantinople was considered a “nation” until itself by the manner in which Dursteler refers to it. Nation, is used to express community as well as one’s home state.<sup>529</sup> Constantinople, specifically, had a large number of “nations” within their city. These nations or communities were from a variety of different countries, and served as “trading and diplomatic” centers, which “were juridical[ly] defined, and membership was limited, at least in theory, to a small cadre of individuals who met certain specific legal requirements. In practice, these communities’ borders were much less clearly delineated, and they contained individuals of many different religious, linguistic, political, and geographic backgrounds.”<sup>530</sup> The Venetian nation in Constantinople was one of the largest the city possessed and should reflect their adaptive nature as the Venetian State has maintained a nation in Constantinople since the Byzantine Empire existed, and these trading communities served as excellent commercial hubs with which Venetians can utilize to further prosper.

One aspect of life in the Venetian Nation in Constantinople has become abundantly clear, the more complex Veneto-Ottoman relations become, the more possible it is for people to

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<sup>528</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 12

<sup>529</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 15

<sup>530</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 15

identify with various aspects of different beliefs or cultures. In other words, individuals could, and did, possess multiple loyalties and could feel connected to multiple groups or be willing to change identities completely. One could be loyal to one's state, religion, commercial organization, family, geographical location, and more. The Venetian Empire was quite diverse and at times, encompassed more than 100 bases, cities, and islands scattered throughout the Eastern Mediterranean. In light of this, the population comprising the Venetian people, have consequently become more diverse and will automatically bear loyalties to their home region or place of birth. Loyalty to one's home was not necessarily a "trump" when dealing with individual affairs. For example, Dursteler notes that:

“Loyalty to the home community—the 16<sup>th</sup> century *patria*—was not inherently incompatible with the extension of loyalty to a wider community, so long as the advantages of political union... outweigh[ed] the drawbacks.” This is evident when looking at some Greek subjects of the Venetian *stato de mar* who came to “Constantinople to trade or work in Ottoman shipyards and galleys, and often married and settled in the city, never to return to their lands of birth.”<sup>531</sup>

In other words, loyalty to one's home can be significant, if not total, but that is not to say that these loyalties have the opportunity and ability to change, depending on the influences and motivations for doing so. The Venetian State was fully aware that Venetians took up work in Constantinople, however, they still required all official members of the Venetian nation to register at the embassy. If nothing else, this has created the opportunity for a widely diverse mixing of peoples to encompass a relatively small space in Constantinople. This city will not just become diverse due to Muslim Ottomans and Christian Venetians mixing, but due to all manner of folk from across the *stato de mar* and the Ottoman Empire. As far as Venetian loyalty is concerned, Venetians had no “natural geographic, religious, linguistic, or cultural coherence to

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<sup>531</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 16



the state's 'heterogeneous totality of distinct territories,' except that provided politically by Venice's governing institutions."<sup>532</sup> This places a heavy importance on the political institutions of the state that provide economic and commercial incentives. These incentives will usually take the form of being included in the Venetian economy, which for most in the *stato de mar*, was sufficient as people understood from Venice's past history that their trade, although accompanied with some risk, can be extraordinarily profitable. This sums up a broad understanding of some loyalties and can serve as a foundation for approaching the complex and ever-changing relations that the Venetians possessed with the Ottomans.

The Venetian "nation" in Constantinople was the largest and most vivacious foreign community within Constantinople during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. By analyzing this nation, one can challenge the pre-assumed animosity tendencies between Venetians and Ottomans, and instead argue that "although dissonance and strife were certainly part of this relationship, coexistence and cooperation were more common."<sup>533</sup> Alternatively, this relationship was not one where individuals were trapped into a specific loyalty or way of life, but could instead represent a continuing process of fashioning and refashioning to describe how loyalties can be obtained, then lost, and reasserted once more.

The nation of Venice, located within Constantinople, has had a long history of being an established colony in the city, stemming back into the times of the Byzantine Empire. At its height, this colony consisted of up to 1,000 official members.<sup>534</sup> In reality, the colony was considerably larger, as those individuals who aren't merchants or a member of the *bailate* were

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<sup>533</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 21

<sup>534</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 23

not considered members of the official nation. After the fall of the Byzantine Empire, “Venice lost its commercial monopoly, but its merchants continued to enjoy the favor of Mehmed the Conqueror, who granted them several lucrative privileges.”<sup>535</sup> This patronage will not last however, ending in 1463 when the Venetians declared war on the Ottomans. During moments of hostilities such as this, the Venetian population comprising the nation will dwindle to almost nothing, a pattern that will repeat itself in 1499, 1537, and 1570 to some extent during their major, but brief times of conflict.<sup>536</sup>

Life, for the nation, revolved around the Venetian embassy, or *bailate*. The *bailate* used to have a grand location within the Golden Horn of the city of Constantinople. However, after the fall of Constantinople and between the outbreaks of hostilities in 1499, the Venetian embassy was permanently relocated to Galata across the bay, in addition to constructing the *Vigne di Pera* in the hillside serving as a retreat.<sup>537</sup> The *bailate* was responsible for everyone with a connection to Venice. The embassy is home to the *bailo* and his *famiglia*. The vast majority of other Venetians would live outside of the embassy, whether near or far in distance.<sup>538</sup>

The *Bailo* is the head of the Venetian nation in Constantinople.<sup>539</sup> This position became quite powerful and influential over time, making it a position that could bring the holder significant rewards. For Venice during the early 1400s, the *bailo* was “at once consul, commercial agent, and ambassador to the Ottoman Court, tasked, above all, with ensuring that

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<sup>535</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 23-24

<sup>536</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 24-25

<sup>537</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 25

<sup>538</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 27

<sup>539</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 23

commerce in the empire continued as smoothly as possible. It was fear of losing valuable trade in Mehmet's realms with stayed Venice's hand."<sup>540</sup> Simone Contarini, a former *bailo* in Constantinople, described his former duties in a report to the Senate as: "the task of the bailo in Constantinople... seems to me to be contained in two offices: one ambassador, the other Consul", in addition to maintaining "extensive networks of friendships and patronage through which... to establish relationships with influential Ottomans in positions to benefit and protect Venetian interests."<sup>541</sup> In other words, the task of the *bailo* was to act as the Venetian ambassador, and spymaster simultaneously, all the while promoting Venetian trade interests over other European powers such as the English, French, or other city-states. The maintenance of a spy network and moles in strategic positions greatly benefited Venice as this served as their system of warning in the event that the Ottomans decide to go on the offensive. The *bailo* also held an important symbolic role as protector of Roman Catholicism in the Ottoman Empire until after the 1600s when the French, supported by the Jesuits, usurped that role.<sup>542</sup> This was a significant role and honor for Venice to possess, which demonstrates their importance in international affairs, but also within the realm of Christendom. Lastly, the *bailo* took charge in the matters of redeeming former slaves of the Ottoman Empire who were Venetian.

The *bailo*, with all these tasks and responsibilities, requires considerable help to achieve his goals. The *famiglia* is a group hired by the *bailo* to help him run and manage affairs for the nation.<sup>543</sup> There are many different positions within the *famiglia*, some far more important than

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<sup>540</sup>Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 321

<sup>541</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 29

<sup>542</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 31

<sup>543</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 32

others, but all vital to operating the many functions of the embassy. The *famiglia* that the *bailo* hires was hierarchical organized, with the secretary, *coadiutore*, *ragionato*, chaplain, doctor, and barber, as well as the dragomans and the *giovani della lingua* “making up “the *famiglia alta*, or upper family” with the “*famiglia bassa*, or lower family, comprised the remainder of the household—servants, pages, squires, couriers.”<sup>544</sup> The Doctor and barber, along with the chaplain both have self-explanatory jobs, except the barber was a term for a medical practitioner who was limited on what duties he could perform. The *Rasonata*, kept the financial records of the nation and kept track of all goods by land or sea.<sup>545</sup> Due to the nature of the Venetian nation, a significant amount of correspondences flow in and out of the *bailate*. That being said, the *Coadiutore*, or assistant secretary, was responsible for “maintaining notarial protocols, writing and copying correspondence, and enciphering and deciphering letters.”<sup>546</sup>

Despite these important roles, the two most significant members of the *famiglia alta* were the Secretary and the Dragomans. The Secretary served as the notary for the nation. This extremely time-consuming job was meant to ensure “the regular transfer of information between the baili and their numerous correspondents: the Senate, Council of Ten, and other magistracies in Venice” and the greater *stato de mar* in general.<sup>547</sup> The Dragamons were potentially one of the most useful and at the same time dangerous, members of the Venetian nation. Dragomans were masters of the Ottoman “idiom” or language and are separated into many different classes of

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<sup>544</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 32

<sup>545</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 34

<sup>546</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 34

<sup>547</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 32-3

Dragomans. The Grand Dragoman are charged with “treating the most important issues of state and spent his days in the divan and the palaces of the Ottoman hierarchy.”<sup>548</sup> Next is the little Dragoman. These individuals will normally spend their days in the ports or along the “loggia of Galata and were charged with interpreting for the merchants and the *ragionata* and dealing with any commercial matters involving Ottoman officials and magistracies.”<sup>549</sup> Another important Dragoman is the *Dragomano di strada* or traveling Dragoman. This individual served as a traveling translator. He also would accompany the *bailo* on trips away from Constantinople. Other Dragomans include the apprentices who attended to unexpected matters or dealings at the embassy.<sup>550</sup> Dragomans are significant not only because of their essential attributes in the Ottoman tongue, but also because, “in contrast to most other members of the bailo’s team, they were permanent residents of Constantinople, and indeed almost all of them were subjects not of Venice, but of the Ottoman Empire.”<sup>551</sup> This at first glance, could pose a significant problem of questioning Dragoman’s loyalty to either the Venetians or the Ottomans. The Senate clearly recognized this potential threat in 1551, and attempted to create a program that raised Venetians in the Ottoman vernacular; however, this ultimately failed.<sup>552</sup> Yet still by the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Dragomans were still considered essential. This is witnessed by the fact that “Venetian

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<sup>548</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 36

<sup>549</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 36

<sup>550</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 36

<sup>551</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 36

<sup>552</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 37

diplomatic missions to the Porte usually included a dragoman who accompanied an ambassador on his trip from Venice.”<sup>553</sup>

The *famiglia bassa* is comprised of lower level individuals yet still, nonetheless, important. The most important of which being the *Maestro di casa* or Majordomo. This individual “Oversaw the provisioning, staffing, and maintenance of the physical structure of the bailo’s household.”<sup>554</sup> Thus the Majordomo acted as a house watchmen and caretaker, looking after the members of the *famiglia* so that the *bailo* was left a freer hand. Another member was the *Cavaliere Marshal*. The Marshal mostly assisted in consular and judicial duties. Dursteler explains that his position encompassed a responsibility for “delivering summons and other legal communications; conducting investigations and interviewing witnesses in civil and criminal matters brought before the bailo.”<sup>555</sup> These represent the two most important positions within the *famiglia bassa*. An important aspect of the *Famaglia bassa* is that, unlike the *famaiglia alta* with the exception of the dragomans, the former is allowed to possess Turkish individuals. Therefore, many Ottoman subjects resided within the *famiglia*, the most import of which are the *Coza*<sup>556</sup>, Janissaries<sup>557</sup>, and couriers, other than the Dragomans already discussed.<sup>558</sup> This shows the literal mixing of peoples as they work alongside one another for common goals, regardless of their opposing places of birth. Bailo and *famiglia*, along with the merchants essentially created the core of the Venetian nation, or the “official” nation, meaning that they were allowed to be there

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<sup>553</sup>Rothman, E. Natalie. *Brokering Empire: Trans Imperial Subjects Between Venice and Istanbul*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2012. Pg. 168

<sup>554</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 37

<sup>555</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 38

<sup>556</sup>Instructors in the Ottoman idiom

<sup>557</sup>These individuals served as embassy and personal guards for the *bailo* and his staff.

<sup>558</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 39-40

both by the Venetian and Ottoman states and that their assignments and positions were “recognized and sustained.”<sup>559</sup> This maps out the *bailate*, the institution that allowed the Venetians to sustain a colony within Constantinople/Galata. Due to this, a series of mixings began to ensue in which a middle ground is created that creates an ever changing and very personal relationship between Venice and the Ottomans.

vii.

### The Mingling of Venetian and Ottoman People in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries

Interactions between nations and states were “inherently messy, contradictory, and variable [in] nature,” there was no easy divide like East and West or Christian and Muslim.<sup>560</sup> Yet one can still attempt to approach the subject of Venetian-Ottoman relations by identifying the geographical, commercial, social, and religious connections that complicate the clarity.

Geographically, Constantinople was a perfect location for the mixing of peoples from both the East and West. This city was also the largest within all of the Mediterranean, Europe, and the Near East at the time. Censuses conducted in 1535 and 1555 both show a population with a ratio of Muslims to Christians of 60 to 40 percent.<sup>561</sup> Constantinople’s compact and crowded streets provided an excellent setting to establish trade and develop relationships. If looked at in this image, Constantinople could be seen as a one “conformed to the model ‘Oriental city,’ composed of ‘an array of closed and compact societies, each leading lives separate from the

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<sup>559</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 40

<sup>560</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 151

<sup>561</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 153

other.”<sup>562</sup> Geographically, Constantinople was divided across the golden bay, facing opposite Galata. Historians refer to this separation as giving Galata the name “City of Infidels” facing the “City of Ottomans.”<sup>563</sup> This interpretation is both right and wrong. The Sultans of the Ottoman time did relocate most foreign embassy and residences to Galata, but this was by no means in total and should not signify Galata as purely comprised of Christians. There was physical separation, yet also mixing in taverns and streets. When Mehmet II conquered Constantinople, he left the suburb [of Galata] relatively untouched so as not to interrupt its commerce, but he did incorporate it entirely into the larger metropolitan institutional structures of his new capital” because of his greater understanding of the financial capability of this part of the city left intact.<sup>564</sup> This further demonstrates the understanding of the importance of city-states and commerce to the Ottoman Empire, a reputation which has been fostered over a long period of time has now paid off once again for these small but mighty Republic. Trade in the Mediterranean was still monopolized in part by small city-states with growing or shrinking empires, which, nonetheless, prove significant to take into consideration, even during times of territorial conquest. In addition, to dispel the notion of the purely Christian face of Galata, Dursteler reports that the settling Muslims in Galata was a deliberate part of the Sultan’s demographic policies: Suleyman established a community of Egyptians in Galata, and waves of Moor and Morisco refugees from Granada settled in the city in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.”<sup>565</sup>

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<sup>562</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 153

<sup>563</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 154

<sup>564</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 153

<sup>565</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 155



This demonstrates the physical separation for strategic purposes instead of one that pushes foreigners away.

Another significant arena for mixing is commerce. One of the chief areas of cultural exchange with Galata occurred by commercial interactions.<sup>566</sup> In fact, not just Venetians or other Christians but “Ottoman officials” in addition “appear to have been among the most active participants in the Veneto-Ottoman trade; although they rarely traveled outside the Empire, they nonetheless invested significant capital in this lucrative enterprise.”<sup>567</sup> This should not be too surprising after all. Ottomans too, participated in trade within the Mediterranean. The great Ottoman historian Naimi even acknowledged that “when he concluded political authority, *emaret*, as one of three main ways to gain wealth, the other two being agriculture and commerce.”<sup>568</sup> This shows Ottoman cultural inclinations to entering into trade, hence why they would seek out the Venetians who are known to conduct trade in these waters. In fact, Ottoman trade within the Mediterranean can be seen as early as 1453 during the conquest of Constantinople when “Candarli Halil Pasa traded with prominent Venetian merchants immediately following the cessation of hostilities;’ in fact, he was accused by some to have favored peace early in order to further his own business interests.”<sup>569</sup> This demonstrates the multitude of loyalties within the Ottomans, as this illustrates a high ranking official placing his individual commercial interests over that of the state to achieve further military gains.

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<sup>566</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 158

<sup>567</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 162

<sup>568</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 163

<sup>569</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 163

Another example can be seen in the actions of Ca'fer, an Ottoman citizen living in Constantinople during the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. With this example, we can see that the Venetians worked with certain Ottoman officials to further achieve their goals. Ca'fer was a merchant who “personally managed his commerce and intervened with Venetian authorities on his own behalf, he employed a variety of Greek, Muslim, and Jewish agents to carry out the actual trading.”<sup>570</sup> In addition to this, Ca'fer also helped Venice by informing the *bailo* “on matters in the divan and worked to free Venetian slaves and to protect Venice’s interests in the Ottoman Empire, no doubt to curry favor for his own interests, both political and economic.”<sup>571</sup> This is an excellent example of the Venetian nation working with local elements to achieve gains for their state's greater good back home in Venice. This *bailate* truly acted as an arm of commercial and diplomatic interests, ensuring that Venetians needs are heard and met as far East as Constantinople. This example of freeing slaves can be seen in Ca'fer’s personal correspondence to *bailo* Marco Venier, when Ca'fer writes ““that [he] had not forgotten [their] friendship and promises’ as Ca'fer divulges his “efforts to free a number of slaves and his intervention with the *kapudanpasa* to protect Venetian territories.”<sup>572</sup> This of course was not done out of the generosity of Ca'fer’s heart. Instead, Ca'fer had a special relationship with the Venetians where he enjoyed special treatment in trade and conversed with the Doge of Venice personally.<sup>573</sup> Utilizing agents of the Ottoman Empire in this manner manipulates their individual interests to cause multiple loyalties to shift priorities. Venetians are excellent at this tactic and used the very same when negotiating with the Byzantine

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<sup>570</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 165

<sup>571</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 165

<sup>572</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 168

<sup>573</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 165

Empire before their fall. Actions like this in truth are not that uncommon. According to Dursteler, Ottoman officials “regularly requested special treatment for their goods and agents.”<sup>574</sup> If nothing else, this represents a certain level of comfort and closeness between the two nations. Although, it is also true that Ottoman official did at times get caught “with contraband, or goods on which the appropriate duties had been paid.”<sup>575</sup> Moments like this had to be handled with care as commercial actions could have counter diplomatic and political reactions. The fact that the Venetian State had so much control over commercial transactions would definitely help ensure caution and the correct handling of events in situations such as this. Dursteler father explains trade with the Ottomans as:

“Despite such incidents, Venice’s policy was to facilitate all Ottoman trade, regardless of who brought it to the city. With Ottoman officials this was accomplished by sending secretaries and dragomans to register their commercial transactions, by providing safe-conducts and letters of introduction, and by obtaining a range of special privileges for them. The policy was maintained in recognition of the reciprocal nature of the relationship between Ottoman and Venetian officials.”<sup>576</sup>

The reciprocal nature of these events represents the importance the Ottomans place on the power of the Venetian commercial trade network. As history progresses through the 16<sup>th</sup> century onward, Venetian dominance in the region shrinks with each decade. Yet still, the Ottomans chose to make their economic relationship on a more even level, which shows the still powerful economic system that is controlled by the Venetian State. Until the capitulation of the state in 1797, the *Serenissima* worked toward the restoration of Venice as the “‘most favored nation’

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<sup>574</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 166

<sup>575</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 167

<sup>576</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 168

trading status” that the Ottomans took from them.<sup>577</sup> They wanted this in order to stay competitive with the English, French, and Dutch who were all competing with the Venetians in Constantinople. This goal by the Venetian state set the main objective of the century which would be to exploit the Ottomans during times of vulnerability toward them in order to regain their lost possessions from the Turks due to their quest for ever increasing profits and not because the Ottomans were simply an Eastern and Muslim polity.

Venetians also further their interests with the Ottoman Empire by establishing social and personal relationships with high ranking, or strategically placed, Ottoman officials. The past narrative of animosity between these two peoples would reject this statement as contrary to the manner in which good Christians or Westerners should behave or act. However, Dursteler argues that despite this view, these types of relationships were possible because “they already had much in common with numerous others in this society, in which migration and conversion were common. There was a shared discourse even beyond the migrants and converts, because there were shared interests.”<sup>578</sup> This is a plausible foundation which would provide the Venetians, and potentially other negotiating city-states to begin to develop relations. This has been seen historically, most notably by the French and Venetians who both worked and cooperated with the Ottomans. In fact, most European nations at one point or another had some dealings with the Ottomans other than war, so the current mantra that this time period saw only animosity between Muslims and Christians bears little basis in fact. Furthermore, due to the regular contact that occurred between members of the *bailate* and Sublime Porte, “it was not uncommon for the baili,

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<sup>577</sup> Hanlon, Gregory, *Twilight of A Military Tradition: Italian Aristocrats and European Conflicts: 1560-1800*. New York, 1998. Pg. 173

<sup>578</sup> Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 173

secretaries, and other official members of the nation and important figures of the Porte to become friendly, even intimate.”<sup>579</sup>

An example of this can be seen through the relations of Grand Vizier Mehmed Sokullu and *Bailo* Marcantonio Barbaro. These two enjoyed a friendship with one another prior to and during the Venetian-Ottoman war over Cyprus in the 1570s. When Barbaro was imprisoned during this war, Sokullu permitted him to visit the baths twice weekly for his health and sent regularly ‘to inquire about my status, to comfort me that I might be in good spirits.’ Barbaro wrote, ‘I could not nor would I know how to desire a better disposition from the Magnificent Pasa, who on many occasions, with me and with others shows himself to be very humane and affable.’”<sup>580</sup> This is an excellent example to show that relations between the Venetians and Ottomans surpassed political and cultural differences and managed to manifest in physical relationships between peoples, even when their two states are at war with one another. Although the opposite is known to occur as well. For those individuals who did not have high status and good relations with the Ottomans, their treatment during times of war can be quite different. During the Ottoman-Venetian war that lasted between the years 1463-1479, Crowley, the author of *City of Fortune*, states that:

“Venetians within the Ottoman Empire suffered badly. The *bailo* died in Constantinople prison; captive soldiers and resident merchants were publicly executed, their bodies left to rot in the streets. Trade in the Ottoman Empire was dying; commercial establishments collapsed.”<sup>581</sup>

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<sup>579</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 175

<sup>580</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 177

<sup>581</sup>Crowley, Roger. *City Of Fortune*. Random House Publisher, 2011. Pg. 319

Yet still, the Ottomans understood the importance of the Venetians as well as other city-states in the Mediterranean. Even after the worst conflicts between these two polities, the Venetians and Ottomans always seem to maintain some level of relations, and usually one that benefits both sides economically. This has added to the incentive of not warring between themselves, except for the exception of Ottoman interest in territorial expansion. The Venetians in particular realized that they had far more to gain from the Ottomans through cooperation than through confrontation.

Venetians and Ottomans also interacted through other means than just meeting with high officials. Mixing occurred at parties, balls, banquets, and taverns; individual Ottomans would also come to the *bailate* for a variety of reasons, not just business but also for personal ones as well.<sup>582</sup> It was also important to follow and acknowledge certain Ottoman customs as a way in which Venetians made connections with the Turks. The *bailo* Paolo Contarini, for this reason, valued an open door policy for the bailate “to preserve an honorable reputation in the Porte, it was necessary to ‘feed whomever desires it; and I can say with truth to have had a continual tavern in my house, and I very often needed to set three or four tables a day, because in this way friends are conserved and new ones acquired, and the greatness of this Most Serene Republic is made known to the world.’”<sup>583</sup> This was a public diplomatic move that not only would improve the attitude of the Sublime Porte to the Venetians but also make the people of Constantinople favorable to a Venetian presence in the city.

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<sup>582</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 179

<sup>583</sup>Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 179

Subjects of either empire would also use play competing institutions off of one another in order to achieve some personal gain. Officials would use their position to either help themselves, their country, or even their friends or family. An excellent example of this involves one Pietro Fortis, an Ottoman subject living in Istanbul who held the position of Dragoman. Rothman, the author of *Brokering Empire: Trans Imperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul*, reports that:

Pietro Fortis who, unlike previous holders of the position, this Istanbul-born subject created a trans-imperial dragoman dynasty that bridged Venetian understandings of the patrimonial state with Ottoman dragomans' expectations about patrilineal succession in office. Fortis, his brother Giacomo, and sons Giacomo and Alvisio not only resettled in Venice after two generations in Istanbul but trained in languages from a young age, specifically in anticipation of their entry into Venetian service as dragomans.<sup>584</sup>

This shows cultural and institutional mixing between the Venetian and the Ottoman systems and people, showing a family in Istanbul who is Ottoman, specifically preparing his life and that of his family member's lives for Venetian service as Dragomans.

Another two centers of cultural mixings occurred, somewhat surprising for the latter, through employment but also worship. It is already well known that the Venetian and Ottoman Empire was comprised of a diverse group of populations. Some Venetians traveled to Constantinople, found work, and then never returned. Under the terms of their commercial agreements, Venetian subjects and Ottoman subjects were free to travel to each other's city, although with some restrictions at times. This in part revolves around states efforts to curb the spread of the opposing religion of the city. For example in Venice, the Senate took steps to ensure that Muslim visitors were not only confined into one area of the city, but that their building was also crafted in a manner that stemmed the visitors inherent unintentional or intentional spread of their faith. The Senate passed a law explaining the guidelines and rules for the manner in which

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<sup>584</sup>Rothman, E. Natalie. *Brokering Empire: Trans Imperial Subjects Between Venice and Istanbul*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2012. Pg. 179

the *Dei Turchi* (The Turkish house built in 1621) is to be constructed and operated during the day.

In this bill, the Senate also included:

“Turks who are now in this city, and those who shall in future come to it, must go to live in the exchange house in full conformity with the decrees of the Senate and with the Collegio of 2 March last. Nobody, therefore, even if he is a broker of [the Turks], may give lodgings to Turks in contravention of the said legislation on any pretext whatsoever, on pain of those fines or corporal punishments that may be deemed appropriate by the magistrate.”<sup>585</sup>

This shows yet another example of Venetians placing business and state goals over religion, since clearly it is unpopular to allow the spread of other faiths, even with the Venetian people. In 1553, a Venetian diplomat named “Catarino Zeno, visited the Orthodox Monastery of Milesevo and reported witnessing both Muslims and Jews who came to hear prayers read by monks and offered alms in return.”<sup>586</sup> This demonstrates curiosity and the spreading of religious tolerance during a time in which past historians argued that Christians and Muslims were mostly if not all in abhorrence of one another. This mixing, both on a religious level and social one, was made possible because “individual and group identities were composites, constructed of concentric circles or multiple layers,” meaning that “identity was more than sum total of its various parts: it was malleable, instrumental, a dynamic process of negotiation rather than a static, essentialized object.”<sup>587</sup> This served as a basis for inviting various cultures, religions and peoples to meet and find some semblance of common ground to begin further relations.

### The Venetian Response to Threats

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<sup>585</sup> “House Rules For the New Fondaco Dei Turchi, 1621,” Chambers, D.S., J. Fletcher, B. Pullan, and Renaissance Society of America. *Venice: A Documentary History, 1450-1630*. Renaissance Society of America Reprint Texts. University of Toronto Press, 2001. Pg. 352

<sup>586</sup> Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 183

<sup>587</sup> Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 185



Venetians were able to respond to the Ottoman Empire and the overwhelming power of European alliances by approaching these threats in unique and adaptable strategies that oft times resulted in favorable outcomes for the city-state. These lessons were learned over the course of history and through their struggles against Genoa. During her wars with Genoa, Venice utilized a wide range of military tactics, most notably with shipping and the state organization to help mobilize and protect their fleets. The Venetian *mude* is an excellent example of state interference in Venetian commerce that yielded benefits of protection from pirates and other raiders in the Mediterranean. The authors of *War at Sea in the Middle Ages*, explained that:

“In this way it is possible to discern the main lines of power that lead the Republic of Venice to dominate a large portion of the Mediterranean. The senatorial nobility, uniting the most important investors and committed merchants in the maritime economy, patiently forged a tool without equal among the rival nations and competitors: the system of regular navigation routes plied by convoys of merchants galleys. The modest ship-owners, nobles or not, were discouraged by the regulatory and fiscal obstacles that favored the *mude* and by the permanent insecurity of sea-borne commerce, but were powerless to compete efficiently against the mixed private and public management of the naval potential.”<sup>588</sup>

The Venetians were problem solvers, who shifted their position in order to survive and manipulated factors in order to alter the current state of affairs. Towards the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century as Venice maintains a consistent posture of military retreat within the *stato de mar*, the *mude* system, which had been so vital to the lucrative transactions of the state, begins to receive less and less attention as the system is all together abandoned over time. The Venetian state was also essential in managing Venetian subjects while they interact with their Ottoman counterparts. This strategy could and was applied to other European states that posed potential threats to Venice; yet it can be clearly seen in the Ottoman course of events, due to the fragile position the Venetians were placed in by the emergence of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, Venetian officials

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<sup>588</sup>Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 164

were given strict instructions to not offend or cause conflict with Ottoman officials. Venetian officials were also known for sending presents to Ottomans upon their initial appointment or for special occasions in order to garner favor with them. In some ways, and some historians have argued that “due to the Venetian empire’s pragmatic approach to empire had expanded outward, encompassing its powerful neighbors as well as its subjects.”<sup>589</sup> If one believes this theory or idea, it would entail that the Venetian empire formed a sort of symbiotic relationship with the Ottoman Empire, encompassing both polities into one grand commercial network enterprise, which would explain the economic resurgence of both Empires after the War of Cyprus. In addition, this is further plausible when examining the Ottoman Empire’s position that states “provided the Turks continued to believe that the Venetians were strong, and the Venetians were prepared to pay tribute, it did not seem that conflict was inevitable,” and that instead, coexistence was not only plausible but worthwhile to both parties.<sup>590</sup> This is one of the most successful achievements of the Venetians merchants and diplomats, which is in fact, that the Venetian State cultivated a thriving merchant class which allowed their diplomatic core to negotiate and become invaluable to larger states and polities. This same idea could serve as a reason for the outbreak of uprisings in favor of Venetian rule that spread across the former *Terrafirma* when the League of Cambrai conquered the area in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. One of the chief reasons for these uprisings was not only the presence of foreign troops but also the benefits and economic incentives these cities and towns received under Venetian rule.

On that note, the very creation of the *Terrafirma* represents a Venetian response to the perceived threat of the Ottoman Empire, and the fact that the people of Venice wanted to ensure

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<sup>589</sup>O’Connell, Monique. *Men of Empire: Power And Negotiation In Venice’s Maritime State*. The John Hopkins University Press, 2009 Pg. 160

<sup>590</sup>Chambers, David S. *Imperial Age of Venice, 1380-1580*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971. Pg. 52 and 50

that the events surround Chioggia, resulting in the siege of Venice, would never again occur. To add to this defensive posture, the Venetians cultivated their very own army. By the 1450s, during times of peace, Venetian maintained a standing army of some 10,000 soldiers.<sup>591</sup> In addition, these forces comprised of a mix of cavalry, infantry, artillery, military engineers (for building fortifications, bridges, etc.), and river fleets. Of special note to Venice are the infantry and river fleet units. By 1508, the Venetian Senate decided that “the infantry,” which mostly acted as a garrison force, “should be essentially a national force...composed of Venetian subjects.”<sup>592</sup> This places Venice in a somewhat different position than other European and Asian armies and many states of the time started to become increasingly dependent on mercenary armies, which although saves the lives of your subjects, comes with a slew of potential downfalls and problems that could result in the loss of the military conflict. Mercenary armies should be avoided, and the Venetian Senate understood this. The river fleets of Venice acted as an extension of the Mediterranean fleet, into the Italian mainland by utilizing the various rivers within the mainland. These river fleets maintained supply lines, contributed to defensive postures, and acted as troop transports for rapid deployment.<sup>593</sup> All in all, the Venetian Empire created an effective land based military to guard the *Terrafirma* and to compliment the strength of the *stato de mar*.

The diplomatic and military options surrounding the Venetian State through the institutions that this city implemented allowed for a variable and calculated decision making body to navigate the ever changing and turbulent waters of the Mediterranean for over 1,000 years, from its creation at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century through to its demise at the hands of

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<sup>591</sup>Mallet, M.E.; Hale, J.R. *The Military Organization of a Renaissance State: Venice c. 1400 to 1617*. Cambridge University Press, 1984. Pg. 44

<sup>592</sup>Mallet, M.E.; Hale, J.R. *The Military Organization of a Renaissance State: Venice c. 1400 to 1617*. Cambridge University Press, 1984. Pg. 79

<sup>593</sup>Mallet, M.E.; Hale, J.R. *The Military Organization of a Renaissance State: Venice c. 1400 to 1617*. Cambridge University Press, 1984. Pg. 99

Napoleon in 1797. In a note written in 1618 from the Spanish ambassador, who was living in Venice, to his King, the ambassador explains:

“Furthermore, it is the most ancient state in Italy today... it has grown so much in the course of time, through a continual influx of people from every corner, that it has acquired a vast and spacious empire of great wealth and power, both maritime and terrestrial. Hence, it can truly be called a great and powerful commonwealth, more amply endowed with population, weapons, and riches than is any other state in Italy... Let me only say to Your Majesty that in matters relating to the defense of their possessions, in keeping them supplied with provisions, munitions and victuals for many years, the Venetians have spared no trouble or expense. Hence they are fully secured against invasion, especially in Lombardy, where they are well equipped not only to resist, but to destroy, any powerful army.”<sup>594</sup>

After more than a thousand years of constant changes in *fortuna*, environmental disasters, rival city-states, and menacingly strong and polities endangering the city of Venice, the city-state turned empire not only survived, but dominated the history of this region for a majority of its time in existence. Even during the cities decline in the 1600s, this Spanish Ambassador to the powerful Spanish Empire still describes and represents the power and accomplishments of the Venetian city-state.

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<sup>594</sup> “The Dominos of the Venetian Republic: A Report By the Spanish Ambassador, c.1618,” Chambers, D.S., J. Fletcher, B. Pullan, and Renaissance Society of America. *Venice: A Documentary History, 1450-1630*. Renaissance Society of America Reprint Texts. University of Toronto Press, 2001. Pg. 31 and 35

## 5 Conclusion

In Fernand Braudel's now famous characterization, the Mediterranean is a world "composed of a series of compact, mountainous peninsulas, interrupted by vital plains" and also there "lie vast, complicated, and fragmented stretches of sea, for the Mediterranean it is not so much a single entity than a 'complex of seas.'"<sup>595</sup> This is a vast land, home to a vast number of different environments, and peoples which interact and develop a sense of unity within this context due to the commercial resurgence after 800 AD. Predrag Matvejevic sees the

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<sup>595</sup> Braudel, Fernand. *Mediterranean and The Mediterranean World In the Age of Philip II, Volume 1*. University of California Press, 1996. Pg. 23

Mediterranean as a locations whose “position and homogeneity of its space make it seem a world in and of itself or the center of the world.”<sup>596</sup>

This thesis has been a close case study of specific city-states, focusing on Venice and Genoa and analyzing their various abilities and actions when dealing with varieties of threats. Analyzing the Mediterranean serves as a perfect example, as this is a region ripe with both history, and a plethora of powerful and long lasting city-states intersecting with large polities which gives us a solid number of centuries in which to study them continuously. My initial question when starting this venture was: “How do city-states, such as Venice and Genoa, respond to threats?” This question led to the initial task of identifying exactly what a city-state is, and both the physical and political characteristics of the city’s founding. As research progressed, this question eventually evolved into “In what manner did the two most significant Italian maritime cities choose to react and respond to various threats, including rival city-states, the environment, and larger states such as empires?” and “What institutions allow for the adaptability of Venice and Genoa to be able to initiate comprehensive responses that seemingly evolve to accommodate the specific threat endangering the city?” “Did the two cities manifest fundamental similarities and or differences?” “Where they able to adapt and be successful by different means?” “Can we learn about Venetian - Ottoman relations by examining the Venetian-Genoese conflicts during the 15<sup>th</sup> century, specifically looking at the War of Chioggia in the 14<sup>th</sup> century?” These questions were more specific, allowing for further research into the field. City-states, such as Venice and Genoa, created and established a variety of political, commercial, and economic institutions, which although were used for a variety of different purposes, enabled these polities to rapidly deploy the city’s resources and helped them achieve technological advances that, for

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<sup>596</sup> Matvejevic, Predrag. *Mediterranean: A Cultural Landscape*, Berkley, University of California Press, 1999. Pg. 12

the most part, only the organized, urban, and industrialized center of a city-state could obtain at this time.

The most important feature, and the most vulnerable, is the commercial trade that maritime city-states always take part in. During the period of 800 to 1600 AD, city-states helped, unintentionally, to reunify the fractured Mediterranean world by creating efficient and far-reaching trading networks in order to establish commercial empires in which revenues would fund and expand the home city's political, commercial, and military power, not only at home but also abroad where these trading missions extend too. This risky venture was in part attempted due to a city-states need to enter into trade in order to expand for monetary reasons, but also, because of practical purposes, such as keeping the home city's population fed, ensuring protection of ships outside of one's home territory, and also in order to demonstrate and expand a city's international clout. When acknowledging these features pertaining to maritime city-states, it is easy to then see how important overseas trade was for these cities, as successful and prosperous trade led to enormous wealth and prominence for that city, which would help that polity survive in the ever changing context of the Mediterranean. However, these ventures came with considerable risk, posed by other polities, natural disasters, and further unseen fortune that could alter the fate of any state in the Mediterranean.

Histories of these city-states have shown that successful and significant maritime trade and monopolization of that trade can lead to significant growth within that city, leading to the creation of institutions, and thus resulting in a city that has a relatively innate ability to adapt and respond to opportunities and risk with relative speed and tactfulness, although this quality is not necessarily innate and is reliant upon certain institutions and traits imposed by the state. This in part, is a result of the small size allowing for the government and institutions to be more effective

at the onset of the Venetian state, which then expanded later encompassing more and more territory, yet central authority remained within Venice allowing the state to continue to oversee the affairs of the latter Empire. To further explain this point, most city-states have tended to materialize in areas of political power vacuums, usually as a result of the collapse and disintegration of a large state or empire.<sup>597</sup> In light of this collapse, some cities may choose to isolate themselves and choose to rule themselves independently, thus allowing for a people with a past identity of “greatness”, and at the same time, a new allegiance to a city that does not necessarily answer to any greater authority. This line of reasoning leads to the creation of a new unique sense of nationality to not only your home city, but also a greater past unifying the whole of the city together, and in theory, should at the same time protect against most civil uprisings since one is creating love for the state (both past and present). To acknowledge a state’s ability to win over its people also alludes to the fact that that state then has the ability to mobilize its citizenry by rallying them around their home city. Machiavelli wrote that “princes and commonwealths that would save themselves from growing corrupted, should before all things keep uncorrupted the rites and ceremonies of religion, and always hold them in reverence; since we can have no surer sign of the decay of a province than to see Divine worship held therein in contempt.”<sup>598</sup> These institutions, Machiavelli argues, preserves the integrity and well-being of a government and state, with the added result of uniting the people under these myths. Therefore, in light of all this, an effective myth around ones founding can unite a population and invigorate this small group to achieve what larger states prove unable to accomplish in history. This line of reasoning is witnessed within both Venice and Genoa, although the Venetian government proves

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<sup>597</sup> Mogens Herman Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures*, KGL, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000 pg. 16-17.

<sup>598</sup> Machiavelli, Niccolò (2013-02-10). *Greatest Works of Niccolò Machiavelli: The Prince, The Art of War, Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livius & History of Florence* (Kindle Locations 7517-7519). Century eBooks. Kindle Edition.



to be far more stable over the course of history than that of their Genoese rivals. For example, in Venice during the 1354 Conspiracy of Marino Falier, the Venetian people and government officials, some involved in the conspiracy, rallied together to stop this coup attempt by a tyrant as is stated in the Morosini Codex because “God and the Evangelist St. Mark, who by their divine grace have never allowed this to happen, nor will they ever allow it, inspired some men who were in the conspiracy to reveal it, so at one the doge Signoria, as quickly as they could, secured every entrance of the square, and the doge was brought to justice on the staircase of the palace, and was at once decapitated.”<sup>599</sup>

The main, and most notable difference between Venice and Genoa revolved around state control of commercial and military expeditions. Genoa practiced within a system that did not see a tremendous amount of state control or interference in Genoese activities. For example, despite the fact that Genoa had the most powerful merchant marines within the Mediterranean world in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, their war fleet was “weak, indeed laughable, in comparison with the forces of its naval competitors.”<sup>600</sup> In addition, the Genoese commune had no effective means for calling up fleets and processed few state owned galleys throughout their entire history. Most Genoese vessels were owned by families or individuals, who could place significant sway over the affairs of the state for that very reason as they had the naval power to carry out tasks for the state. In addition, the simple fact that multiple families or individuals are making the decisions based off their military might, alludes to yet another reason as to why there was considerable unrest in Genoa. Although allowing businesses to operate without government control can allow for creativity and technological advances, this helps explain why Genoa seemed so incapable of

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<sup>599</sup> Morosini Codex in *Chronicling History*. Pgs. 212-213

<sup>600</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 143-145

keeping extended periods of peace and tranquility without outside help. The result of this is that the commune of Genoa was consistently weak and resultantly became a dependent state, tossed between the competing interests of the Hapsburgs and Bourbons, although Genoa did benefit from the ever expanding frontiers of the Kingdom of Aragon and later the Spanish Empire.<sup>601</sup>

Venice, on the other hand, possessed a government that practiced a considerable amount of state control over a variety of different areas, mostly concerning military and commercial activities along with participation in government. Venetian shipping lanes usually consisted of Venetian *Mude* convoys with which the Venetian government would organize to help protect and control the cities shipping. Participation in the Venetian *Mude* system was mandatory, thereby eliminating competition toward the government. This, in fact, made it easier for the Venetian government to potentially requisition merchant galleys for their use as war ships.<sup>602</sup> To add to this, the Venetian government also had a monopoly on shipbuilding. Once the Arsenal was created, Venetian ships could only be built within their government owned Arsenals, either located in Venice or one of her dependent cities within the *Stato de mar*. Security was still a concern for Venice; therefore, the city began tactically seizing strategic locations within the Eastern Mediterranean in order to provide safe ports of harbor for their ships and their allies. Furthermore, Venetian patrols would protect the Adriatic and parts of the Aegean in order to eliminate piracy or other enemies of the state. This can be seen by the Venetian government's orders to the galley captains to "engage and neutralize pirates, even if it meant diverting from the planned course," thus creating a sphere of safety in which their commerce can continue

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<sup>601</sup> Tabak, Faruk. *The waning of the Mediterranean, 1550-1870: A Geohistorical Approach*. Baltimore, Md. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008 pg. 12

<sup>602</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 160

unabated.<sup>603</sup> Politically, the Venetian government initiated the “*Serrata*” or “closing” of their government after opening it to a large group of wealthy and influential Venetian citizens at the start of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. This not only enlarged the number of people who could participate, but also ensured those families security and positions thereby guaranteeing that these families would be loyal to that government in which they are a part and, will not be working toward the overthrow of such.

However, both also shared some traits in common. Both cities did not possess a good location with which to build a port, yet both mobilized for the exploitation of the sea, as this was a source of protection from land based threats. Both also created institutions for conducting trade on water through the creation of the Sea Loan and Commenda agreements that allowed more citizens to participate in trade and at the same time lessening the monetary risks of that cities people.<sup>604</sup> In addition, both Genoa and Venice, along with a good number of Italian city-states in general, seem to have developed quite a talent concerning negotiations and diplomatic processes concerning large powerful states and empires. This can be seen most easily through Venice’s diplomatic events concerning both the Byzantine Empire and Ottoman Empire after the former’s fall. During the early time of the Republic, Venice’s fortunes were “directly founded on its Levantine trade, and during the Byzantine Empire’s waning centuries, the city-state emerged as a dominant European commercial power in the Eastern Mediterranean, as well as a significant political and military force, with colonies and outposts in Dalmatia and the Aegean and Ionian

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<sup>603</sup> Hattendorf and Unger, *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Rochester, NY, 2003. Pg. 160

<sup>604</sup> Epstein, Steven A., *Genoa And The Genoese: 958-1528*, University of North California Press, 2001. Pg. 56

islands.”<sup>605</sup> Much of the Venetian territorial expansion is due to their participation in the 4<sup>th</sup> crusade and the handsome accommodations with which Venice was rewarded for helping to capture Constantinople from the Byzantines. However, this newly expanded *stato de mar* also created a foundation for Venetian diplomatic relations with the soon to be Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Sultan viewed the Venetians monopoly on the Levantine trade as a significant threat, and implemented policies “to weaken Venice’s stranglehold on Levantine commerce;” however, these policies were not meant to seriously harm Venice or destroy the Republic, as Venice remained throughout its time to be “among the Ottomans most important international trading partners.”<sup>606</sup> Due to the fact that the Venetians asserted themselves to be one of the most profitable and important trading partners to possess in the Mediterranean, this allowed for their diplomats to negotiate with large states that wished to utilize Venetian trade routes and access their lucrative economic market. Most city-states had excellent economies (although Venice’s proved to be among the most prosperous), which could help explain and answer the question as to why large states and Empires were willing to entertain city-state diplomats.

By creating commercial, political, and military institutions, Venice and other city-states like her, were effective in establishing trade networks across the Mediterranean, in engaging in successful diplomatic relations with larger states, and were able to attempt risky ventures that could be debilitating if that venture were to have ended poorly. These institutions created an environment that allowed for the adaptability and versatility of city-states to react in a wide range of responses, both diplomatic, and hostile, which were designed to protect the city-states most vulnerable and important function, overseas trade. City-states have been known to retain

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<sup>605</sup> Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 3

<sup>606</sup> Dursteler, Eric. *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 3

their identity and their character in which they were originally founded, despite the fact of whether or not they were fully dependent or had seen multiple attempts at domination by larger states. Citizens of a city-state will also revolt against a government they feel has become to tyrannical, or if they feel that that government is no longer functioning or operating effectively. This is a threat that city-states must face as these revolts have been known to occur during times of war if the commune is perceived to be responsible for a major defeat or setback.

Venice and Genoa both suffered through the period of economic depression that tested their institutions and the resolve of their people. These institutions, however, proved mostly stable as both cities survive this period of economic downturn although both were changed. This period of economic depression occurred between 1250/1300 AD through 1450 AD according to Faruk Tabak. Tabak further adds that “During the tumultuous times of this drawn-out downturn, empires circumscribing the Mediterranean experienced a considerable weakening of their hold over their territorial possessions or a turnabout in the economic fortunes, or worse, both.”<sup>607</sup> This was a difficult time for any polity that was located within the Mediterranean. The Geohistorical approach that Tabak offers allows us to reexamine the question of city-state actions during this time as several conditions within the Mediterranean world had changed. Tabak’s work offers an approach that analyzes the market economy of Europe, and at the same time, includes the notion of multiple temporalities focuses on mechanisms and gears that shift “habitation cultivation, and trade within the larger Mediterranean.”<sup>608</sup> His framework encompasses and starts with the “little Ice Age in the late medieval period and ends only with the Victorian Age” which he uses to “explore a period of sweeping and dramatic structural and environmental change when colder,

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<sup>607</sup> Tabak, Faruk. *Waning of the Mediterranean, 1550-1870: A Geohistorical Approach*. Baltimore, Md. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008 pg. 33

<sup>608</sup> Salzmann, Ariel. *An Introduction To The Research of Faruk Tabak, Sociologist*, Int. J. Middle Eastern Study. Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pg. 2

wetter climates transformed the agrarian landscape and a succession of commercial hegemony made and unmade the Mediterranean's linkage with global markets."<sup>609</sup> In addition, instead of keeping with the usual "Clash of Civilizations" theory, which follows along the lines that the Mediterranean is broken down into distinct regions, where unity is characterized by a multitude of varying regions with distinct peoples, one can begin to approach this topic in another light. In other words, by studying certain patterns and polities within these regions, within the larger Mediterranean context, one can begin to further understand and equate the inter-complexities and shifts between the peoples and polities that inhabit this world. For example, Tabak engages his theory of a Geohistorical approach by analyzing the "rivalry of Genoa, the avatar of the Atlantic system, and the Venetian Republic, the hinge of the Mediterranean-Indian Ocean trade, established what [he] calls 'the tempo of change.'"<sup>610</sup> The wars of the 13<sup>th</sup> century had finally begun to take their toll, the Bubonic plague or "Black Death" strikes Europe in the early 1340s, in turn devastating Europe by cutting half of its population, and the Bubonic plague is about to be introduced to the Mediterranean along with a good number of new state actors within this context such as the Ottoman Empire, the British, and more. However, Tabak states that at the same time, city-states:

"In contradiction had fared comparatively better during the downturn, partly because of the disarray in which the monarchies found themselves and principally because of the opening of the lucrative Central Asian-Mediterranean trade circuit. In fact, the economic and political resilience the merchant republics exhibited during these taxing times proved to be one of the main reasons it was under the initiatives and labors of a few and select city-states, Venice and Genoa at their helm, that the Inner Sea had, by the 1450s, come to house and integrated and expansive network of production and trade."<sup>611</sup>

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<sup>609</sup> Salzmann, Ariel. *An Introduction To The Research of Faruk Tabak, Sociologist*, Int. J. Middle Eastern Study. Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pg. 2

<sup>610</sup> Salzmann, Ariel. *An Introduction To The Research of Faruk Tabak, Sociologist*, Int. J. Middle Eastern Study. Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pg. 2

<sup>611</sup> Tabak, Faruk. *Waning of the Mediterranean, 1550-1870: A Geohistorical Approach*. Baltimore, Md. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008 pg. 34

It is clear that because of city-states resilient institutions, these entities were enabled to survive longer than many other large states located in the same area. The Mediterranean is an ever-changing region with *'fortune'* playing a significant role in the state of affairs. A state's adaptive ability to understand and confront the concept of fortune, both good and bad, will determine the effectiveness, resilience, and duration of a state and government. A maritime city-state republic's most valued institution is its commercial functions, chiefly, the ability to trade by sea. This is even more true based off that of Tabak who believes that this institution is one of the main reasons that Venice and Genoa survived for as long as they did, because it helped them survive the economic 'downturn' that he describes taking place during the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Since trade was so important and lucrative, city-states consistently sought to enlarge and broaden their trading empires by establishing monopolies in locations. One side effect of this is that "by nature, this Seaborne emporium thrived on and further stimulated cross-border flows: merchants and vessels, crops and goods, currencies and ideas trespassed jurisdictional frontiers almost casually and on a continual basis despite sporadic wars and the almost ubiquitous presence of piracy."<sup>612</sup> This brings up the important fact that maritime trade was constantly threatened and despite being such a beneficial institution, comes with a considerable amount of risk for those partied with it. As just stated, Piracy, as well as other states, can pose severe risks to the well-being of crews and merchandise in merchant ships transporting goods. In light of this, "among the great maritime leaders of Medieval Italy...only Venice organized any significant part of her merchant marine into a state-run shipping system" to protect from Pirates and raiders,

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<sup>612</sup> Tabak, Faruk. *Waning of the Mediterranean, 1550-1870: A Geohistorical Approach*. Baltimore, Md. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008 pg. 34

although this was not a guarantee that ships would reach their destination as these vessels could still face problems from storms, disease, and large armadas.<sup>613</sup>

City-states were also successful diplomatically in their dealings with larger states including Empires. Genoa and Venice both had to deal with a number of large empires including Charlemagne's Empire, the Holy Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire, and the Ottoman Empire, to name a few of the prominent ones. This engagement with successful diplomacy could mean either the acquisition of rights under their authority, independence, trading rights, territory, or a combination of agreements that could severely hurt or hamper a city-states prowess and province in their region of influence. Venice is famed for their relationship with not only the Byzantine Empire, which placed the city on the path to establish a trading maritime empire, but also with the Ottoman Empire, a powerful Muslim state that rocked the power ratio of the Mediterranean with its first appearance in the early 1400s. When attempting to engage in diplomatic relations with a strong potentially threatening empire, Venice chose the path of initiating "commerce" as the "initial basis of this relationship."<sup>614</sup> For Venice, a Christian state to attempt to initiate and sustain trade and diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire was severely frowned upon, but was less unheard off after the 11<sup>th</sup> century, when city-states and larger states began to look to North Africa, a predominantly Muslim region, to initiate commerce trade and treaties. This idea of acting based off of one's personal financial betterment over that of one's religion, began to appear more common approaching the 13<sup>th</sup> century; in fact, acting in one's state interests over that of their religion became the norm.

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<sup>613</sup> Jansen, Katherine L.; Drell, Joanna; and Andrews, Frances. *Medieval Texts in Translation* University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010.

<sup>614</sup> Dursteler, Eric R. *Venetians In Constantinople: Nation, Identity, And Coexistence In The Early Modern Mediterranean*. The John Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 3



The attitude in Europe around 1450 was cautious and fearful of the Ottoman threat, as individuals of the day report believing that the Ottomans “would inaugurate the last dreadful days of the world.”<sup>615</sup> Dursteler reports that “in the political realm... apparently rigid divisions between Christian and Muslim states, proved much more pliable than is often acknowledged” with “Venice finding “little trouble breaking with Christendom to treat with the Ottoman Empire; indeed the city was famed for the position expressed by the Senate after Lepanto, *Prima semo veneziani, poi cristiani* (first we are Venetians, then Christians).”<sup>616</sup> The Ottoman Empire, being within close proximity to Venice’s possession and holdings, served as a direct threat to their interests. However, instead of engaging in constant military actions to destroy their empire, the Venetians opted for a substantial peace with diplomatic relations, in which Venice thrived off of the *Sublime Porte*. This notion of coexistence is essential to the continuing prominence of Venice, as they had to manage both times of peace and hostility with the Ottomans, as relations could be on opposite poles during certain times. Yet still, the Venetians for more than 300 years engaged in varying degrees of successful diplomacy with the Ottoman Empire, receiving at times contracts, trade agreements, territory, and more, although Venice at the same time would yield much to the powerful Turks.

Finally, city-states were increasingly successful in navigating potential risks in order to bring betterment and riches to the city itself and its people. An excellent example of this, as previously discussed, is the participation in the Crusades by city-states. Venice and Genoa were uniquely positioned and able to both build and launch large war fleets with which other European countries, as well as the actual city-states, sought to use to invade and capture territory

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<sup>615</sup> Bisaha, Nancy. *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks*. University of Pennsylvania Press, pg. 153

<sup>616</sup> Dursteler, Eric R. *Venetians In Constantinople: Nation, Identity, And Coexistence In The Early Modern Mediterranean*. The John Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pg. 12

in the Levant and North Africa. Despite this however, Venice and Genoa chose to focus on commercial enterprises, instead seeking to make profit from peaceful seas instead of constantly engaging in naval warfare. This was the case because peace, in this context, was good for business. During the 4<sup>th</sup> Crusade when the Venetians and Crusader army scaled “the great walls of” Constantinople, “the previously impregnable city was taken and sacked in a matter of days” with the “most obvious beneficiaries” being “the Venetians, who gained control of the trade routes of Byzantium and could exclude their rivals at will.”<sup>617</sup> However, although this appeared great for the Venetians, this venture was a significant risk for them to undertake as the Byzantine Empire, although less so in recent years, had been a patron of the city, showering it in riches and trading privileges in exchange for Venetian services. In defeat, Venice risked not only their limited resources such as man power, but also potentially permanently destroying this relationship with Byzantium and further antagonizing an Empire which is positioned next to Venice itself. Venice found herself in this position in 1378 during the War of Chioggia, which Venice successfully navigated out of, through the superior naval tactics of the notable Venetian Admirals Carlo Zeno and Vettor Pisani, who upon entering the battle changed the conditions of the battle “in such a manner that the sea and rivers which had previously been closed to [The Venetians] were now open, and now [The Genoese] were at a disadvantage.”<sup>618</sup> This in turn, led to the Venetian quest to establish a land-based empire in Italy, so as never to be surrounded like that again. These successful risks, along with the reputation of being skilled sailors and craftsmen, provided a nice international renown and respect for some city-states when European rulers sought out the expertise of these individuals.

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<sup>617</sup> Abulafia, D. *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011 Pgs. 241-242

<sup>618</sup> Mrosini Codex, Dale, S., A.W. Lewin, and D.J. Osheim. *Chronicling History: Chroniclers and Historians in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*. Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009. Pg. 214

By offering a close examination of the powers and limitations of a city-state's institutions, one can identify a how their perceived response might look when one takes into consideration that city's political, commercial, and military institutions, along with the foundations in which that entire city was founded upon. These factors shed light on that city-state's overall power and their limitations. After understanding these facts about a city, it becomes possible to better understand and interpret the reasoning behind state actions and the factors that come into play, such as ideology, resources, and the possibility of reward.

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