

Christopher Wright

NON EX UNICA NATIONE SED EX PLURIMIS:
GENOA, THE CATALANS AND THE KNIGHTS OF ST JOHN
IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

DOI: 10.19229/1828-230X/3612015

ABSTRACT: *In the fifteenth century, the hitherto usually close relations between the Genoese community and the Order of the Knights of St John were threatened by an increase in tension and incidents of violence. The difficulties between them in this period were due less to their contrasting approaches to relations with Muslim powers than to the Order's increasingly strong ties to Genoa's traditional enemies, the Catalan subjects of the Crown of Aragon. These arose from the growing importance of Catalan and Aragonese knights in the Order, of Catalan merchants and financiers in the Knights' base at Rhodes, and of the Aragonese Crown to the interests of the Order. Combined with the intensification of hostilities between Genoese and Catalans in the same period, this development produced recurrent antagonism between Genoa and the Hospitallers, manifested primarily in acts of piracy and the resulting reprisals. Such difficulties reflected the nature of the Order as a political power which was also a multinational association, and the tendency for violence between communities to impinge on other groups with whom their membership overlapped or was closely associated. This article examines this process of contagious recrimination, but also the ways in which it was contained by the enduring mutual connections, internal subdivisions and policies of the Order and the Genoese community.*

KEYWORDS: *Genoa, Hospitallers, Catalans, Aragon, Rhodes, Chios, piracy, reprisals, mastic.*

NON EX UNICA NATIONE SED EX PLURIMIS: GENOVA, I CATALANI E I CAVALIERI DI SAN GIOVANNI NEL XV SECOLO

SOMMARIO: *Nel Quattrocento, le relazioni tra il Comune di Genova e l'Ordine dei Cavalieri di San Giovanni, finora cordiali, peggiorarono in un crescendo di tensioni che sfociarono in scontri violenti. I contrasti tra queste due realtà ebbero origine non certo dal diverso modo di relazionarsi con le potenze islamiche bensì, dal fatto che l'Ordine rafforzò i legami con i Catalani, nemici tradizionali di Genova e sudditi della Corona d'Aragona. I genovesi si preoccuparono della presenza sempre maggiore dei cavalieri catalani e aragonesi nell'Ordine e dei mercanti e banchieri catalani a Rodi, nonché delle interferenze della Corona d'Aragona negli interessi dell'Ordine. L'intensificazione delle ostilità tra i Genovesi e i Catalani si manifestarono in atti di pirateria e nelle conseguenti rappresaglie. Tale difficoltà erano lo specchio della natura stessa dell'Ordine nel quale il potere politico era collegato ad una struttura gestionale multinazionale e alla tendenza di risolvere con la violenza i conflitti tra le comunità. Questo saggio esamina questa realtà, ma anche il modo come era gestito il conflitto per il tramite di consolidati rapporti relazionali, delle divisioni interne e delle scelte politiche dell'Ordine e di Genova.*

PAROLE CHIAVE: *Genova, Ospedalieri, Gerosolimitani, Catalani, Aragona, Rodi, Chio, pirateria, rappresaglie, mastice di Chio.*

In August 1435 the government of Genoa wrote to Antoni Fluvià, Master of the Knights of St John, lamenting that in sad contrast to the past, Genoese citizens were now being treated with great disfavour in Rhodes, particularly in any dispute between them and Fluvià's Catalan compatriots. They wished to remind him of his Order's multinational character, observing that «Religionem illam nobilissimam non ex unica natione sed ex plurimis constare», and that it was not proper that the

Knights should be so compliant to any one nation as to offend against others. Where strife arose between peoples, Fluvia's duty was to pacify, not to inflame it¹. This complaint reflects the enduring ambiguities of the Order's distinctive character as a territorial state which was also a polyglot membership association and a multinational landholding corporation. The ties and loyalties its members retained to their communities of origin interacted in complex and varied ways with their commitment to the brotherhood they had entered and with the policies and interests of the polity the Order had become. More specifically, this complaint encapsulated the particular manifestation of such entanglements which disturbed the Hospitallers' relations with the Genoese in the fifteenth century. Despite occasional ructions, primarily over their contrasting priorities in dealings with Muslim powers, they had hitherto been habitual allies. Now, however, their relationship was increasingly fraught by the growing influence wielded over the Order from both within and without by Catalans and Aragonese, just as hostility between the Genoese and these traditional rivals reached its peak.

The Hospitaller regime was distinctive among the polities of the Latin East in that its supreme authority was based in the eastern Mediterranean, overseeing extensive dependencies in western Europe, rather than being either confined to the East or part of a political structure centred in the West. It was distinctive also in the varied origins of its members and the wide distribution of its landholdings across western Europe, which ensured that no major society of the Latin world was wholly foreign to the Order. These qualities promoted a high level of interpenetration between the Knights' own network of interests and connections and those of other Latin powers and communities with which they had dealings, without the Order being overwhelmingly identified with any one of them. Its polyglot composition endowed the Order with valuable connections in many places, but also laid it open to entanglement with other groups and authorities in ways that could generate suspicion and conflict. This interplay was especially conspicuous in the sphere of maritime violence and reprisal, where across the medieval world the difficulty of catching and punishing particular transgressors ensured that individual actions frequently led to collective reprisals against a community, through embargos on trade, arrests, and seizures of goods. The interconnection of different groups could lead to a chain reaction of conflict, as actions against one group spilled over into provocation of another that was associated with it, leading them to retaliate in turn.

The diversity of connections implicit in the Order's own membership and property network was heightened by the particularly varied array of

¹ Archivio di Stato di Genova (hereafter *Asg*), *Archivio Segreto* 1783 (*Litterarum* 7, 1434-7), ff. 177^v-8 (no. 365).

outsiders who were drawn to its territories by commercial opportunities. Rhodes enjoyed a pivotal location at the junction point of sea routes connecting the West with the eastern Aegean and the Black Sea on one hand, and with the south-eastern Mediterranean on the other. Its attractiveness to foreign merchants was enhanced by the extent of the political independence enjoyed by the state established there by the Knights. This set it apart from most of its Latin contemporaries in the late medieval East, which tended to be subject to the formal authority or practical hegemony of some larger polity, typically either the communes of Venice and Genoa or the Angevin Kingdom of Naples. As a result, Hospitaller territory acted as a kind of neutral space, widening its international connections by making it particularly attractive to western merchants from outside the two leading maritime communities. Rhodes became the principal base for the eastern activities of the Florentines, Provençals and Catalans, Latin mercantile communities which did not possess the chains of territorial footholds in the region enjoyed by the Venetians and Genoese².

Rhodes would never have the special importance for the Genoese that it had for these other groups, but a substantial Genoese mercantile presence had developed there, magnifying the importance of relations with the island's rulers to Genoese economic interests, and forging local bonds between the community and the Order which tempered those relations. In the fifteenth century Genoese merchants residing on Rhodes became major financiers of the Hospitaller regime, and some leading lenders became intimately involved in the Order's affairs. Resident financiers served as bridges between their community of origin and the local regime, a counterpart to the role of individual knights as connections to their native societies³. Certain members of the community

² C. Carrère, *Barcelona 1380-1462: un centre econòmic en època de crisi*, 2 vols., Curial, Barcelona, 1978, vol. 2, pp. 125-8; M. del Treppo, *I mercanti catalani e l'espansione della Corona d'Aragona nel secolo XV*, L'Arte tipografica Napoli, Napoli, 1972, pp. 34-5, 59-61, 71-2; A. Luttrell, *Interessi fiorentini nell'economica e nella politica dei Cavalieri Ospedalieri di Rodi nel Trecento*, «Annali della Scuola Superiore di Pisa: lettere, storia e filosofia», 2nd series, 28, 1959, pp. 317-26, reprinted in Id., *The Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece and the West 1291-1440*, Ashgate, London, 1970, VIII; Id., *Actividades económicas de los Hospitalarios de Rodas en el Mediterraneo occidental durante el siglo XIV*, in *VI Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón*, Artes Gráficas Arges, Madrid, 1959, pp. 175-83, reprinted in Id., *The Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece and the West 1291-1440*, Ashgate, London, 1970, VII at pp. 177-80; Id., *Aragoneses y Catalanes en Rodas: 1350-1430*, in *VII Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón*, Barcelona, 1962, pp. 383-90, reprinted in Id., *The Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece and the West 1291-1440*, Ashgate, London, 1970, XIII; Id., *The Town of Rhodes 1306-1356*, City of Rhodes Office for the Medieval Town, Rhodes, 2003, pp. 136-40.

³ The Genoese community of Rhodes and its relations with the Knights are to be the subject of a forthcoming article by the present author.

also gained the distinction of being granted fiefs on Rhodes, an exceptional phenomenon in the Order's territories, where feudal grants were highly unusual⁴. Conversely, besides its western estates in Genoa's Ligurian hinterland, the Hospital possessed properties on the neighbouring island of Chios, in Genoese hands since 1346 and leased from the commune by the corporate Mahona of Chios. The substantial interpenetration of Genoese and Hospitaller networks of interests, whether in the form of Genoese commercial operations in Rhodes or Hospitaller estates in Genoese territories, gave them an incentive to avoid conflict with one another, as this could readily lead to the obstruction of trade and revenue collection and the temporary sequestration or permanent seizure of assets belonging to one group in areas under the other's control. Individuals who straddled the divide between the two groups, combining Genoese origins with membership of the Order, residence in Rhodes or strong business links with its rulers, were in a position to promote understanding and offer a mediating influence. Such considerations would work both to prevent or shorten conflict, and to nuance the manner in which it was conducted when it did occur.

These restraints on conflict between the Knights and the Genoese community can be contrasted with the Order's traditionally more tenuous bonds with the Venetians, a community whose relations with the Hospital had tended to be uneasy⁵. The Venetians had more limited business interests in Hospitaller territory, while Venice generally barred its citizens from joining the Order, until its fifteenth-century conquests on the Italian mainland led to compromise on this point, so that Venetians could be put in charge of the extensive Hospitaller properties in the region⁶. This restriction was an expression of the Venetian Republic's exceptionally stringent efforts to control its people's activities and monopolise their loyalty, contrasting with the looseness of Genoese communal authority, the corresponding importance of the initiatives of individuals or small groups in shaping Genoese affairs, and the promiscuity of the Genoese in attaching themselves to other authorities

⁴ A. Luttrell, *Feudal tenure and Latin colonization at Rhodes: 1306-1415*, «English Historical Review» 85, 1970, pp. 755-75, reprinted in Id., *The Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece and the West 1291-1440*, Ashgate, London, 1970, III, at pp. 756-7, 763-6.

⁵ A. Luttrell, *Venice and the Knights Hospitallers of Rhodes in the fourteenth century*, «Papers of the British School at Rome», 26, 1958, pp. 195-212, reprinted in Id., *The Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece and the West 1291-1440*, Ashgate, London, 1978, V.

⁶ A. Luttrell, *Templari e Ospitalieri in Italia*, in M. Roncetti, P. Scarpellini and F. Tommasi (eds.), *Templari e Ospitalieri in Italia: la chiesa di San Bevignate Perugia*, Electa, Milano, 1987, pp. 1-11, reprinted in A. Luttrell, *The Hospitallers of Rhodes and their Mediterranean World*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 1992, I, at p. 6; Id., *The Hospitallers of Rhodes at Treviso*, in *Mediterraneo medievale: scritti in onore di Francesco Giunta*, 3 vols., Soveria Manelli (Cz), Rubbettino, 1989, vol. 2, pp. 755-75, reprinted in A. Luttrell, *The Hospitallers of Rhodes and their Mediterranean World*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 1992, XIV at p. 768.

in order to advance their own interests. However, while these Genoese qualities had their advantages in building bridges with other groups such as the Hospitallers, and thus retarding conflict, these had to be set against corresponding disadvantages. The same weakness of communal power and scope for local initiative made it more difficult for Genoa to restrain the piratical violence of its citizens, and thus to avoid retaliation⁷.

Before the fifteenth century, alignments in the politics of the Christian world had generally been conducive to good relations between the Genoese and the Hospitallers. In the thirteenth century they had been allies in the internal conflicts of the Crusader States in the Holy Land, counterpoising the alliance between their respective rivals the Venetians and the Templars⁸. The Hospitaller conquest of Rhodes from the Byzantine Empire in 1306-9 had been undertaken in conjunction with the Genoese adventurer Vignolo de Vignoli, who had apparently been granted estates there and control of the lesser islands of Kos and Leros by imperial authority, but later turned against Byzantium. The attendant effort to take control of the rest of the Dodecanese brought the Order into conflict with the Venetians, who had been gaining ground there against Byzantium and its Genoese clients⁹. While this contest was soon resolved in the Knights' favour, their relations with Venice remained prickly, and such friction naturally encouraged sympathy between the Hospital and Genoa. In western affairs, Genoa's alliance with France in the Hundred Years War chimed with the Order's prevailing French affinities. The one serious bone of contention between them arising from European politics had been the Great Schism of the papacy. Genoa sided with the popes in Rome, as did the majority of Italian Hospitallers, whereas the Order's leadership and the bulk of its members supported Avignon. This divergence even encouraged an abortive scheme hatched in 1384 by Ricardo Caracciolo, appointed Master of the Hospital by the Roman Pope

⁷ A. Borlandi, *Potere economico e vicenda politica nella Genova del Quattrocento, in Aspetti della vita economica medievale: Atti del Convegno di Studi nel X Anniversario della morte di Federigo Melis Firenze-Pisa-Prato, 10-14 marzo 1984*, Università degli studi di Firenze, Firenze, 1985, pp. 602-5; R.S. Lopez, *Venise et Gènes: deux styles, une réussite*, «Diogene», 71, 1970, pp. 43-51, reprinted in Id., *Su e giù per la storia di Genova*, Università di Genova, Genova, 1975, pp. 35-42; G. Ortalli, *Venezia-Genova percorsi, paralleli, conflitti, incontri*, in G. Ortalli and D. Puncuh (eds.), *Genova, Venezia, il Levante nei secoli XII-XIV: Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi Genova-Venezia 10-14 marzo 2000*, Società ligure di storia patria, Genova, 2001, pp. 9-27 at pp. 21-7; G. Pistarino, *Comune, "Compagna" e "Communitas" nel medioevo genovese*, «La Storia dei Genovesi» 3, 1983, pp. 9-28, reprinted in Id., *La capitale del Mediterraneo: Genova nel Medioevo*, Istituto internazionale di studi liguri, Bordighera 1993, pp. 105-26 at pp. 107-11, 124-5; Id., *Riflessi d'oltremare nelle istituzioni medievali genovesi*, in Id., *I signori del mare*, Civico istituto colombiano, Genova, 1992, pp. 9-40 at pp. 22-4, 30-3.

⁸ S. Runciman, *The Crusader States, 1243-1291*, in K.M. Setton (ed.), *A History of the Crusades*, 6 vols. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, Wisconsin, 1969-90, vol. 2, pp. 556-98 at pp. 560, 568-9.

Urban VI, to seize control of Rhodes with Genoese help, although it is doubtful whether such assistance would actually have been forthcoming¹⁰.

The most enduring source of potential trouble lay in the two groups' respective relations with Muslim societies, given the natural contrast between the priorities of a commercial community whose fundamental interests relied on peaceful traffic with Muslim territories, and those of an organisation whose prime function was war against the infidel. This had been aggravated during the half-century after 1291 by the papal embargo on trade with the Mamluks, which the Knights sought to enforce¹¹. Only a short time after their collaboration in the conquest of Rhodes the Genoese had come to blows with the Hospital over the seizure of Genoese vessels on this account, a rupture which led them to ally with the Turks of Mentеше against the Knights¹². While this difficulty was lessened by the relaxation of the embargo from the 1340s, the Genoese commune was notable by its absence from most of the cooperative Christian military efforts taken against the Anatolian Turkish emirates and later the Ottomans, in which the Order consistently played a leading role, as did Venice¹³. The comparatively good relations the Genoese enjoyed with the Ottomans heightened the potential for tension between them and the champions of collective Christian defence. By the mid-fifteenth century the community had gained a reputation for collusion

⁹ A. Luttrell, *The Genoese at Rhodes: 1306-1312*, in L. Balleto (ed.) *Oriente e Occidente tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna: studi in onore di Geo Pistarino*, G. Brigati, Genova, 1997, pp. 737-61, reprinted in A. Luttrell, *The Hospitaller State on Rhodes and its Western Provinces*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 1999, I.

¹⁰ A. Luttrell, *Intrigue, schism and violence among the Hospitallers of Rhodes: 1377-1384*, «*Speculum*» 41, 1966, pp. 30-48, reprinted in Id., *The Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece and the West 1291-1440*, Ashgate, London, 1978, XXIII.

¹¹ E. Ashtor, *Levant Trade in the Later Middle Ages*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1983, pp. 17-63; N. Housley, *The Avignon Papacy and the Crusades, 1305-1378*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1986, pp. 200-9; A. Luttrell, *Genoese at Rhodes* cit., pp. 756-60.

¹² A. Luttrell, *Genoese at Rhodes* cit., pp. 759-60; E.A. Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade: Venetian Crete and the Emirates of Mentеше and Aydin (1300-1415)*, Istituto ellenico di studi bizantini e postbizantini di Venezia, Venezia, 1983, pp. 11-2.

¹³ N. Housley, *Avignon Papacy* cit., pp. 25-49; K.M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571)*, 4 vols., American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, 1976-84, vol. 1, pp. 188-207, 229-31, 234-7, 291-301. Genoese territorial regimes and local administrations in the East, whose geographical exposure to Muslim threats mirrored that of the Hospitaller territories, do however seem to have been rather more inclined to take part in such efforts than the metropolis. This is suggested by the Christian defensive league formed in 1388, which included the Mahona of Chios, the Genoese Gattilusio lords of Mytilene, and the Genoese colonial administration of Pera as well as the Hospitallers and the Kingdom of Cyprus, and by later efforts to revive such an arrangement. C. Wright, *The Gattilusio Lordships and the Aegean World 1355-1462*, Brill, Leiden, 2014, pp. 48-51, 329-34, with source references.

with the Turks against Christian interests, although the relative cordiality between them and the Ottomans was effectively terminated after 1453¹⁴.

However, such contrasts and their propensity to estrange the Hospitallers from the Genoese should not be overstated. If the Genoese tended to be on unusually good terms with the Turks, in their relations with the Mamluks of Egypt they were much more inclined to pursue a violently assertive policy than their Venetian rivals, reflecting the relative importance in the two communities' commercial networks of the regions dominated by these different Islamic powers¹⁵. On their side, the Knights' own antagonism to Muslim regimes was also by no means unstinting. In particular, their reliance on the Anatolian mainland for much of their provisioning obliged them to maintain peace with at least some of their Muslim neighbours to keep commercial channels open. Such nuances are highlighted by events such as the Knights' diplomatic efforts to restrain the depredations of the fleets sent by King Alfonso V of Aragon under the command of Bernat de Vilamarí to wage war against the Muslims in the East in 1449-53¹⁶.

The fifteenth century did see attacks by the Order's corsairs against Genoese shipping which may have been related to trade with the Turks, but they are not very frequently attested, and there is a lack of clear evidence that the Genoese were actually being targeted on the grounds of their dealings with the Turks, rather than simply falling victim to indiscriminate opportunist violence. The reaction to these incidents is also suggestive of the Hospitaller leadership's concern to restrain such predatory activity. In 1413 attacks on Genoese vessels and those of their Turkish trading partners drew protests from the Genoese regimes of the Aegean and led to the capture at Mytilene of a Hospitaller galliot operating from the Order's mainland castle at Bodrum, which was probably responsible for these attacks. The authorities on Rhodes, while protesting

¹⁴ E. Basso, *Genova e gli Ottomani nel XV secolo: gli "itali Teuceri" e il Gran Sultano*, in *L'Europa dopo la Caduta di Costantinopoli: 29 maggio 1453*, Atti del Convegno Storico Internazionale, Todi, 7-9 ottobre 2007, Fondazione centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, Spoleto 2008, pp. 375-409; C. Caselli, *Genoa, Genoese merchants and the Ottoman Empire in the first half of the fifteenth century: rumour and reality*, «Al-Masaq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean» 25 (2013), pp. 252-63; J. Paviot, *Gênes et les Turcs (1444, 1453): sa défense contre les accusations d'une entente*, «La Storia dei Genovesi» 9, 1989, pp. 129-37; S.F. Ratteri, *Alfonso d'Aragona e Pietro Campofregoso: il confronto dialettico del 1456*, in G. Petti Balbi and G. Vitolo (eds.), *Linguaggi e pratiche del potere: Genova e il regno di Napoli tra Medioevo ed Età moderna*, Laveglia, Salerno, 2007, pp. 71-90.

¹⁵ E. Ashtor, *Levant Trade* cit., pp. 114-26, 216-22, 227-30, 245-69, 283-93, 297-301, 303-8, 311-36, 450-86.

¹⁶ P. Bonneaud, *Els Hospitalers Catalans a la fi de l'Edat Mitjana: l'Orde de l'Hospital a Catalunya i a la Mediterrània, 1396-1472*, Pagès, Lleida, 2008, pp. 274-5; C. Marinescu, *La Politique Orientale d'Alfonse V d'Aragon, Roi de Naples (1416-1458)*, Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Barcelona, 1994, pp. 191-234.

to Jacopo Gattilusio, the Genoese lord of Mytilene, also sent orders to Bodrum to desist from such attacks and make restitution for them, instructions which notably pertained not only to Christian shipping but to those Turkish groups with which the Order was at peace¹⁷. In April 1460 a Hospitaller embassy was sent to Chios in response to complaints about attacks on Genoese merchants and Turks plying the channel between Chios and the mainland, with orders to discuss restitution and the penalties to be imposed against the commanders and crew of the vessels from Kos or Bodrum that were held to be to blame¹⁸. This conciliatory action is notable for being undertaken at a time when there was, as will be seen, active strife between Chios and Rhodes for other reasons. In September 1466 the Order's Chapter-General debated the problem of illicit attacks by vessels armed in Rhodes on ships sailing between Chios and Anatolia, and approved the imposition of a secret ban on Hospitaller craft entering this channel, or at least on attacking ships there¹⁹. Such a sweeping prohibition is indicative of the Hospitaller leadership's determination to prevent the violence of their mission against the infidel from spilling over into actions that antagonised their Genoese neighbours, though also of the apparent difficulty of ensuring by less drastic means that their subordinates discriminated sufficiently between permitted and prohibited targets.

Overall, in the available evidence from this period, instances of violence between the Hospitallers and the Genoese arising from the Order's vocation to wage war against the enemies of the faith are less commonly encountered, and their repercussions less conspicuous, than the ructions provoked by the Order's tightening association with Genoa's political and commercial rivals within the Catholic world, the Crown of Aragon and its Catalan subjects. This in many ways implicated the Order more inextricably than their dealings with the Turks did the Genoese. If there were difficulties in preventing maritime violence against one group impinging on another in cases where the groups involved were as distinguishable as the Genoese and their Muslim trading partners, such problems were likely to be far worse with regard to groups whose members were more similar, more closely associated, and indeed often the same people.

The tendency for such cross-contamination to poison relations between the Hospitallers and the Genoese grew markedly in the fifteenth

¹⁷ A. Luttrell and E. Zachariadou, *Sources for Turkish History from the Hospitallers' Rhodian Archive/Πηγές για την Τουρκική Ιστορία στα Αρχεία των Ιπποτών της Ρόδου*, National Hellenic Research Foundation, Athens, 2008, pp. 140-5 (nos. 10-1, 13-4); C. Wright, *Gattilusio* cit., pp. 350-1.

¹⁸ Archivium Ordinis Maltae (hereafter Aom) 370 (*Libri Bullarum* 1460), ff. 232-3.

¹⁹ Aom 282 (*Capitulum Generalis* 1454, 1459, 1462), f. 160.

century. In this period the Catalans, already habitual foes of the Genoese throughout the fourteenth century, replaced the Venetians as Genoa's most important and persistent enemies. The expanding power of the Crown of Aragon propelled an escalating conflict over control of the islands of the western Mediterranean and the fate of the Kingdom of Naples, where Genoa allied with successive Angevin rulers and claimants in opposition to the ambitions of their mutual enemy. During the reign of Alfonso V of Aragon (1416-58) three bouts of full-scale war (1420-6, 1435-44, 1454-8) were interspersed with persistent low-intensity conflict, as Alfonso ousted Genoa's allies from Sardinia and Naples, contested Genoese control of Corsica, intruded into Liguria and menaced Genoa itself²⁰.

During the same period, Catalan-Aragonese influence on the Hospital was growing on multiple fronts. Catalan eastern trade had always been overwhelmingly focused on the south-eastern Mediterranean, connecting with Mamluk territory either directly or through Cyprus, with Rhodes serving as the principal station along the way to these destinations. The decline of Cypriot trade and its domination by the Genoese after their acquisition of Famagusta in 1373-4 helped make Rhodes the preeminent centre of Catalan commercial activity in the East, though the Catalans did continue to do business in Cyprus. The importance of Rhodes was further enhanced by recurrent bouts of conflict with the Mamluks, arising from Catalan piracy and the aggressive policies of Alfonso V, which at times prevented the community from trading in Egypt and Syria, obliging Catalan traders to exchange

²⁰ L. Balletto, *Fra Genovesi e Catalani nel Vicino Oriente nel secolo XV*, in M.T. Ferrer i Mallol (ed.), *Els Catalans a la Mediterrània Oriental a l'Edat Mitjana*, Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Barcelona, 2003, pp. 167-90 at pp. 167-81, 187-9; E. Basso, *Il confronto con Alfonso d'Aragona*, in Id., *Genova: un impero sul mare*, Consiglio Nazionale dei Ricerche, Cagliari 1994, pp. 243-61; M.T. Ferrer i Mallol, *Incidència del cors en les relacions catalanes amb l'Orient (segles XIII-XV)*, in Id., *Els Catalans a la Mediterrània Oriental a l'Edat Mitjana*, Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Barcelona, 2003, pp. 259-307; G. Pistarino, *Genova e Barcellona: incontro e scontro di due civiltà*, in *Atti del I Congresso Storico Liguria-Catalogna*, Istituto internazionale di studi liguri, Bordighera, 1974, pp. 81-122; A. Ryder, *Alfonso the Magnanimous: King of Aragon, Naples and Sicily, 1396-1458*, Clarendon, Oxford, 1990, pp. 49-52, 73-120, 131-4, 175-6, 188-92, 197-251, 261-6, 400-5. The continuation of conflict outside the periods of formal war can be seen not only in sporadic maritime violence but also in territorial conflicts, often involving proxies, notably in Corsica (M.G. Meloni, *Ufficiali della Corona d'Aragona in Corsica (secoli XIV-XV)*, in M.T. Ferrer i Mallol, J. Mutgé i Vives and M. Sánchez Martínez (eds.), *La Corona catalanoaragonesa i el seu entorn mediterrani a la Baixa Edat Mitjana*, Consell Superior d'Investigacions Científiques, Barcelona, 2005, pp. 167-84). Catalan encroachment in the fifteenth century was also manifested in commercial dealings with other societies, as seen for instance in the rise of their fortunes and the decline of those of the hitherto preeminent Genoese in the trade of Granada (R. Salicrú i Lluç, *La Corona de Aragón y Génova en el Reino de Granada del siglo XV*, in M.T. Ferrer i Mallol and D. Coulon (eds.), *L'expansió catalana a la Mediterrània a la Baixa Edat Mitjana*, Consell Superior d'Investigacions Científiques, Barcelona, 1999, pp. 121-45).

goods moving to or from those regions in other ports, chiefly Rhodes²¹. During the fifteenth century the island's Catalan merchants became the principal financiers of the Hospitaller administration, a status likely to bring with it considerable influence, the more so given that the Order was in serious financial difficulties in this period. The Genoese were themselves the second most important group of lenders, but some way behind the Catalans²².

Within the Order, the number of Catalan and Aragonese knights in the Convent of Rhodes had begun to grow in the late fourteenth century, and increased dramatically after 1420, when many arrived for the meeting of the Order's Chapter-General and afterwards remained²³. This expanded contingent reinforced wider shifts underway in the Hospital's power-structure, beginning in the late fourteenth century and intensifying in the mid-fifteenth. The dominant position enjoyed since its foundation by the numerically preponderant French knights was challenged, as the non-French *langues* of the Convent cooperated to secure a greater share of perquisites and high office²⁴. The greatest beneficiaries of this transition were the Spanish knights, aiding the election to the office of Master of the Hospital of the Catalans Antoni Fluvià (1421-37) and Pere Ramon Zacosta (1461-7)²⁵. Ironically, it was in large part a strengthening of the Order's multinational qualities that

²¹ E. Ashtor, *Levant Trade* cit., pp. 147-51, 222-7, 230-6, 286-9, 294-7, 301-3, 308-11, 336-43, 364-5, 486-91; M. Del Treppo, *Mercanti catalani* cit., pp. 34-8, 59-61, 85-91; D. Coulon, *Un tournant dans les relations catalano-aragonaises avec la Méditerranée orientale: la nouvel politique d'Alphonse le Magnanime (1416-1442 environ)*, in G. D'Agostino and G. Buffardi (eds.), *La Corona d'Aragona ai tempi di Alfonso il Magnanimo: I modelli politico-istituzionali, la circolazione degli uomini, delle idee, delle merci, gli influssi sulla società e sul costume: XVI Congresso Internazionale di Storia della Corona d'Aragona*, 2 vols., Paparo Edizioni, Napoli, 2000, vol. 2, pp. 1055-79 at pp. 1056-9, 1064-71; Id., *El comercio de Barcelona con Oriente en la Baja Edad Media (siglos XIV y XV)*, in M.T. Ferrer i Mallol (ed.), *Els Catalans a la Mediterrània Oriental a l'Edat Mitjana*, Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Barcelona, 2003, pp. 243-55; C. Otten-Froux, *Chypre, un des centres du commerce catalan en Orient*, in *ibid*, pp. 129-53 at pp. 145-53; M. Viladrich, *Els catalans a la Mediterrània oriental a l'edat mitjana. Les relacions polítiques i diplomàtiques amb el sultanat de Babilònia*, in *ibid*, pp. 223-41 at pp. 232-7.

²² P. Bonneaud, *La crise financière des Hospitaliers de Rhodes au quinzième siècle (1426-1480)*, «Anuario de Estudios Medievales», 42, 2012, pp. 501-34 at pp. 515-6, 518.

²³ P. Bonneaud, *Le prieuré de Catalogne, le couvent de Rhodes et la couronne d'Aragon, 1415-1447*, Conservatoire Larzac templier et hospitalier, Millau, 2004, pp. 122-34; Id., *Hospitaliers* cit., pp. 141-8, 165-85; A. Luttrell, *The island of Rhodes and the Hospitaliers of Catalunya in the fourteenth century*, in M.T. Ferrer i Mallol (ed.), *Els Catalans a la Mediterrània Oriental a l'Edat Mitjana*, Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Barcelona, 2003, pp. 155-65, reprinted in A. Luttrell, *Studies on the Hospitallers after 1306*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2007, XVIII, at pp. 161-2.

²⁴ A. Luttrell, *Intrigue* cit., pp. 34-5, 47-8; Id., *The Italian Hospitallers at Rhodes*, «Revue Mabillon» 68, 1996, pp. 209-31, reprinted in Id., *The Hospitaller State on Rhodes and its Western Provinces, 1306-1462*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 1999, XIX, at pp. 214, 218-9.

²⁵ P. Bonneaud, *Prieuré* cit., pp. 134-8; Id., *Hospitaliers* cit., pp. 148-53, 309-29.

led to the Genoese lament in 1435 that its impartiality was being overwhelmed by the predominance of one nation.

In the fourteenth century the Kings of Aragon had striven to assert control of the Order's estates in their territories, and of the services of knights residing there²⁶. Alfonso V extended this effort, coupling it with more ambitious aspirations to assume the role of the Order's protector, part of a wider bid to establish his credentials as a champion of Christendom against the infidel and to promote Catalan commercial interests in the eastern Mediterranean²⁷. The growing power of his subjects in Rhodes did not immediately benefit the king's agenda much, since the Knights resented and resisted his impositions in the West, opposition in which the Catalan Master Fluvià played an important part²⁸. Alfonso was also impeded by the hostility of the papacy, matched with papal support for his Angevin rivals. However, this obstacle was cleared away by his conquest of Naples in 1442 and the papal acknowledgement of his rule there the following year, a triumph which also extended his sovereignty over the Neapolitan knights who were a significant presence in the *langue* of Italy²⁹. At the same time, the growing Ottoman and Mamluk threat to Rhodes and the Order's straitened resources increased its need to cultivate the goodwill of western powers able and willing to offer military assistance. Among the traditional Latin sea powers of the Mediterranean, Genoa no longer had the ability, while Venice's willingness was doubtful, especially where the Mamluks were concerned, given the Venetians' determination to avoid any provocation that might damage their vital interests in Egypt and Syria. This magnified the importance of Alfonso's support, though in fact little would ultimately come of his offers to help defend Rhodes against the Mamluks³⁰. His help was also significant in restraining widespread Catalan piracy, a

²⁶ M. Bonet Donato, *La Orden del Hospital en la Corona de Aragón*, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid, 1994, pp. 59-80; A. Luttrell, *The Aragonese Crown and the Knights Hospitallers of Rhodes: 1291-1350*, «English Historical Review» 76, 1961, pp. 1-19, reprinted in Id., *The Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece and the West 1291-1440*, Ashgate, London, 1970, XI; Id., *La corona de Aragon y las Ordenes Militares durante el siglo XIV*, in *VIII Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón*, 3 vols., Caja de Ahorros y Monte de Piedad de Valencia, Valencia, 1970, vol. 2/2, pp. 67-77, reprinted in Id., *The Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece and the West 1291-1440*, Ashgate, London, 1970, XII; Id., *Island of Rhodes* cit., pp. 155-65.

²⁷ D. Abulafia, *El Mediterrani en temps del Magnànim: Il Mediterraneo a l'epoca di Alfonso il Magnanimo*, in R. Bellveser (ed.), *Alfons el Magnànim de València a Nàpols*, Institució Alfons el Magnànim, Valencia, 2009, pp. 97-111 at pp. 104-7; Coulon, *Un tournant* cit., pp. 1061-3; A. Ryder, *Alfonso* cit., pp. 290-305.

²⁸ P. Bonneaud, *Prieuré* cit., pp. 251-95; Id., *Hospitalers* cit., pp. 191-213. In this regard, Bonneaud disputes the view of Marinescu, who argued that Alfonso already exercised a strong hold on the Order even before his conquest of Naples in 1442. C. Marinescu, *Politique* cit., pp. 45-70.

²⁹ P. Bonneaud, *Prieuré* cit., pp. 312-3.

³⁰ Id., *Hospitalers* cit., pp. 241-80; C. Marinescu, *Politique* cit., pp. 91-5, 115-32.

particularly important concern in the light of its provocative effect on the Mamluks, whose pursuit of reprisals was likely to impinge on Rhodes, as the centre of Catalan activity in the East³¹. After 1443 Alfonso's influence increased, helped by his good relationship with the French Master Jean de Lastic (1437-54) and the development of a clientele of Hospitallers in the king's service³².

These developments had baleful implications for the Order's relations with the Genoese. Positive evidence that the growth of Catalan influence actually promoted policies harmful to the Genoese is hard to find. It was Fluvià who in 1427 reportedly cancelled an agreement, made without his knowledge, for Alfonso and the Hospital to assemble a joint fleet to defend Rhodes against the Mamluks. He did this in response to complaints from the Genoese, who had got wind of the scheme and feared that the fleet would be used against them. This led Fluvià into further dispute with the king³³. However, even if it is unclear how far the power wielded by Catalans in Rhodes actually had a detrimental effect on the Genoese, the plausible expectation that it might do so would inevitably generate suspicion at times of violence between the two communities, encouraging hostile behaviour which could feed into a cycle of estrangement and recrimination.

Given the perennial piratical violence between the two communities, the status of Rhodes as a port much used by the Genoese, lying astride their main trade routes, and as the Catalans' chief base in the East, ensured that there would be incidents in the vicinity even at times of nominal peace. For instance, in 1432 the Genoese ship of Bartolomeo de Marini was robbed by three Catalan ships in the harbour of Rhodes³⁴. In the same year, the ship of Pietro Grimaldi was captured by the Catalan ship of Antoni 'Rubei', again in the harbour of Rhodes. Genoa's complaints to Alfonso about this incident stressed that this was a place where the ship should have been safe, and the ability of the Catalans to carry out such attacks under the noses of the Knights must have deepened Genoese suspicions of Fluvià³⁵. The outbreak of war with Aragon in 1435 naturally brought an escalation of tensions, forming the context for the letter to Fluvià complaining of partiality shown to Catalans and against Genoese in Rhodes. In August 1436 a Hospitaller embassy

³¹ P. Bonneaud, *Hospitalers* cit., pp. 161-3.

³² Id., *Prieuré* cit., pp. 295-312, 318-23; Id., *Hospitalers* cit., pp. 213-9, 270-88.

³³ G. Bosio, *Dell'Istoria della sacra Religione et illustrissima Militia di San Giovanni Gerosolimitano*, 3 vols., Stamperia Apostolica Vaticana, Roma, 1594-1602, pp. 142-6; Id., *Prieuré* cit., pp. 281-4; P. Bonneaud, *Hospitalers* cit., pp. 205-10.

³⁴ C. Jona, *Genova e Rodi agli albori de Rinascimento*, «Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria» 64, 1935, pp. 67-154 at pp. 95-7 (no. 6).

³⁵ Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 1781 (*Litterarum* 5, 1431-4), ff. 228^{r-v}, 283^{r-v}, 322^v (nos. 649-50, 808-9, 912).

was sent to Genoa to defend the Order against complaints of collusion in Catalan actions against the Genoese³⁶. However, around the same time Genoa formally declared war on the Order, accusing the Knights of conniving at the use of Rhodes as a base for Catalan corsairs³⁷. While this produced a rupture in normal relations, evidence for serious clashes between the two parties is lacking. Genoese citizens were banned by their government from going to Rhodes to trade³⁸. Nonetheless, it was evidently possible for Genoese resident in Rhodes to remain there and continue to conduct their business normally³⁹. On occasion it seems they could also come and go, as indicated by safe-conducts granted by the Order⁴⁰. The Knights also granted a general exemption from reprisals to the subjects of the Mahona of Chios⁴¹.

There were persistent efforts to end the conflict through negotiation. An order in February 1437 to give the Hospitaller Treasurer Pierre Lamand, two other knights and their retinue safe passage through Genoese territory may relate to such efforts⁴². Certainly in July that year an embassy was sent to Genoa to pursue a settlement⁴³. However, it was only a fresh approach to Genoa initiated after the death of Antoni Fluvià and the election of Jean de Lastic as his successor that achieved a breakthrough. The reaction to this event suggests that Fluvià's origins had been of key importance in stoking Genoese suspicion and hostility against the Order. In May 1438 the Doge of Genoa Tommaso Campofregoso replied to a letter from De Lastic with congratulations to the new Master on his election, rejoicing both in his goodwill towards Genoa and the fact that he came from a traditionally friendly nation, an observation obviously implying a contrast with his predecessor's background. The Doge announced the immediate suspension of reprisals against the Hospital for a year, pending negotiations over damages⁴⁴. A Hospitaller representative was appointed in August, but negotiations took some time, and in February 1439 Genoa took the precaution of extending the suspension for a further six months⁴⁵. In the event an agreement was reached at the beginning of April. The Genoese agreed to release whatever

³⁶ Aom 352 (*Libri Bullarum* 1436-7), f. 148^v; G. Bosio, *Dell'Istoria* cit., pp. 151-2.

³⁷ Aom 352 (*Libri Bullarum* 1436-7), f. 184^v.

³⁸ Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 1783 (*Litterarum* 7, 1434-7), f. 453 (no. 1027).

³⁹ Aom 352 (*Libri Bullarum* 1436-7), f. 164; Aom 353 (*Libri Bullarum* 1437-8), ff. 159^v, 175, 194^{r-v}.

⁴⁰ Aom 353 (*Libri Bullarum* 1437-8), f. 150^v/151^v; Aom 354 (*Libri Bullarum* 1439-40), f. 255/254.

⁴¹ Aom 352 (*Libri Bullarum* 1436-7), f. 184^v.

⁴² Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 1783 (*Litterarum* 7, 1434-7), f. 415^v (no. 919).

⁴³ Aom 352 (*Libri Bullarum* 1436-7), ff. 152^v-3^v; G. Bosio, *Dell'Istoria* cit., p. 156.

⁴⁴ Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 1784 (*Litterarum* 8, 1437-9), f. 219^{r-v} (no. 660); C. Jona, *Genova e Rodi* cit., pp. 98-9, 102-3 (nos. 7-9, 15).

⁴⁵ Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 1784 (*Litterarum* 8, 1437-9), f. 388 (no. 1124).

ships or goods they had seized during the hostilities or pay compensation for them, but the main focus was on the settlement of Genoese grievances. This included the payment of compensation for damages, suggesting that some of the Genoese complaints were acknowledged to be well-founded. However, this was limited to a lump sum of 2,500 Venetian ducats, which was to be considered a full and final settlement of all claims, with the exception of any hitherto unreported complaints presented in the next four months. This sum was divided up between the injured parties by the Genoese authorities⁴⁶. The Knights also pledged to deal justly with the outstanding law-suits in Rhodes of a number of Genoese, including the claim by the prominent merchant of Pera Francesco Draperio and his associates that Fluvià or his officers had unjustly awarded a consignment of olive oil belonging to them to a Catalan, Esteve Torres⁴⁷.

Given the friction between Fluvià and his king over the Order's branches in the Crown of Aragon, and the goodwill that developed between Alfonso and De Lastic, it may well be that Genoese suspicion of the Catalan Master and hopes in his successor were both excessive, although poor relations with Alfonso need not have undermined Catalan Hospitallers' sympathies with their compatriots in conflict with their traditional enemies. Some Catalan businessmen were themselves clearly not satisfied with the extent of the alleged Hospitaller partiality towards them, in 1436 registering complaints in Barcelona of unfavourable treatment in Rhodes⁴⁸. There is, however, some indication that De Lastic's appointment did indeed lead to a shift of policy in Genoa's favour. Not long after his election he introduced a decree banning the unloading and sale in Rhodes of plunder taken from Christians, a measure which under current circumstances was surely directed primarily against Catalans preying on the Genoese⁴⁹.

The essential source of the conflict of the 1430s seems to have been the violent actions of Catalans outside the Order. The size and importance of the non-Hospitaller Catalan maritime community in

⁴⁶ Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 1784 (*Litterarum* 8, 1437-9), ff. 438^v, 453^{r-v} (nos. 1258, 1297-8); *Archivio Segreto* 2731 (*Materie Politiche* 1420-56), no. 24; *Archivio Segreto* 3031 (*Diversorum Communis Ianue* 11, 1439), nos. 80, 113. Unsurprisingly, a number of these individuals were evidently active in the East at the time, and arranged that the Genoese representatives sent to receive the money from the Hospitaller authorities on Rhodes should pay them or their agents their share there, rather than send it on to Genoa. These sums amounted in total to about two-thirds of the total amount due. Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 1784 (*Litterarum* 8, 1437-9), ff. 466, 472^{v-3}, 485^{r-v}, 490^v (nos. 1329, 1342, 1360, 1379).

⁴⁷ Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 2731 (*Materie Politiche* 1420-56), no. 24.

⁴⁸ P. Bonneaud, *Prieuré* cit., p. 154.

⁴⁹ Id., *Hospitalers* cit., p. 162.

Rhodes inevitably made it a focal point for operations against the Genoese. Given the power the Catalans had gained within the Order, this naturally led to perceptions of collusion, which, whether or not they were justified, gave rise to retaliatory action. Conversely, later episodes of strife seem to have arisen primarily from violent actions by the Genoese, whose repercussions were transmitted through other manifestations of the same entanglements and overlaps between communities and polities. Ships were targeted by the Genoese because they were controlled by Catalans, provoking the Order because the individuals in question were also Hospitallers, or because members of the Order were travelling or transporting cargo on these vessels; other cases ostensibly involved mistaken identity⁵⁰. The outbreak of formal war seen in the 1430s did not recur; these incidents led to technically less extreme, but more prolonged, processes of litigation and reprisal.

In September 1441, with Genoa's war with Alfonso still underway, a Genoese squadron of five ships, commanded by Simone Massa, captured two Hospitaller warships and a smaller vessel, a balinger, which they found unattended in the harbour of Rhodes, looting them and burning the balinger. Informed that these craft belonged to the Order, the Genoese returned the other two ships and their loot and withdrew. Complaining of this attack and of the theft of some livestock from their coast, the Knights took reprisals against Genoese property in Rhodes, including sequestering the goods of two of the captains responsible for the attack. These were Stefano Doria, whose possessions on the island were in the keeping of Gerardo Lomellini, and Angelo Giovanni Lomellini, whose goods were in the hands of the leading Genoese merchant of Rhodes Bartolomeo Doria. In the face of demands for full compensation and threats of reprisal from the Order, the Genoese government claimed in mitigation that the ships targeted had displayed no insignia, and that they were originally Genoese vessels which had previously been captured by Catalans and were thought to be still in their possession⁵¹. Responding to the Hospital's complaints, the Genoese government insisted on their dismay and determination to see justice done, while offering a defence of their citizens' conduct⁵². A less diplomatically guarded reflection of their views on the controversy is revealed by a letter sent to the pope at the

⁵⁰ The risks of such incidents led on occasion to pre-emptive provision for individuals, such as when in 1435 the Treasurer Pierre Lamand was granted safe-conduct by the Genoese government for his journey from Venice to Rhodes, with the explicit specification that this should apply no matter what the nationality of the ship on which he was travelling, presumably with Catalan shipping in mind. Asg, *Archivio Segreto 1783 (Litterarum 7, 1434-7)*, f. 202 (no. 422).

⁵¹ C. Jona, *Genova e Rodi cit.*, pp. 105-10 (no. 18).

⁵² Asg, *Archivio Segreto 1788 (Litterarum 12, 1441-4)*, ff. 31^v-2 (no. 74); C. Jona, *Genova e Rodi cit.*, pp. 104 (no. 17).

same time. This sought to exculpate the Genoese captains, stressing the misunderstanding leading to their action and the prompt restitution they had made. However, it also protested in tones of bitter sarcasm at the furore generated by such a trivial incident, remarking that the level of protest was as great as if they had burned all of Rhodes rather than one small craft, and complained that Genoese ships had been barred from visiting the island⁵³. This incident, apparently arising from the Knights' purchase for their own use of prizes of war taken from the Genoese by Catalan corsairs operating from Rhodes, is suggestive of the varied channels by which involvement in conflict could be transmitted from one group to another, particularly in the context of connections as close as those between the Catalans and the Hospital. It may also be imagined that the reputation of Rhodes as a Catalan base made the Genoese the more ready to expect to find enemy vessels there and to attack precipitately.

In July 1442 a Hospitaller embassy came to Genoa to seek full compensation for this and other claims which the Order had against the Genoese. After an initial hearing of their grievances, a commission of four was appointed to calculate the level of damages owed. One of the two members of this board nominated by the Knights was Battista Fieschi, a Genoese Hospitaller and Preceptor of San Giovanni di Prè, the Order's establishment in Genoa⁵⁴. Two months later he requested and received permission to resign from the commission. It seems that he had found himself in an embarrassing position, caught between his loyalties to the Order and his compatriots⁵⁵. Two days before, the ambassadors had protested that rather than simply proceed with their task of calculating damages, the board had continued to deliberate the question of the Genoese captains' culpability and to hear their arguments in their own defence. They called for the matter to be resolved by arbitration, a demand rejected by Genoa⁵⁶. The nomination of Fieschi to represent the Order's interests on the Genoese commission reflects the potential usefulness of those who were both Genoese and Hospitallers as mediating figures between the two groups, though, as the outcome of the process shows, such influence could not guarantee a meeting of minds. The matter remained unresolved, and in 1447 the dispute was taken up again by the Genoese government, complaining that the goods of Stefano Doria and Angelo Giovanni Lomellini remained under sequestration⁵⁷.

⁵³ Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 1788 (*Litterarum* 12, 1441-4), ff. 33-4 (no. 78).

⁵⁴ Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 527 (*Diversorum Registri* 32, 1442), ff. 44^v, 49^v. Fieschi had also been a witness to the peace treaty of 1439. Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 2731 (*Materie Politiche* 1420-56), no. 24.

⁵⁵ Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 527 (*Diversorum Registri* 32, 1442), ff. 72^v-3.

⁵⁶ C. Jona, *Genova e Rodi* cit., pp. 105-10 (no. 18).

⁵⁷ C. Jona, *Genova e Rodi* cit., p. 111 (no. 19).

Receiving no satisfaction, in 1449 Genoa threatened to take its own reprisals against the possessions of the Hospital and its Rhodian subjects if restitution was not made⁵⁸.

The Hospitaller embassy of 1442 also sought arbitration of other claims of illegal seizures by the masters of Genoese ships. The ship of Geronimo Doria was said to have seized some slaves and merchandise belonging to the Order from a ship of the lieutenant of the Treasurer of the Hospital at Sapienza in the Peloponnese, though he had returned some of them. Marco de Negro had seized a *griparia* of Rhodes in the channel between Chios and the mainland, along with its cargo, belonging to the Order's emissary to Venetian Candia. Two burghers of Rhodes, Antonios Kalothetos and Palamede Minerbetti, had suffered the seizure of their merchandise by the Genoese Battista 'de Ginibertis'. When challenged, he claimed that he had believed the goods to be Catalan property. Although the Rhodians had secured a favourable court judgement from the Genoese authorities in Chios, Battista had appealed the case to Genoa, invoking the alleged failure of the Order to do justice to another Genoese in a dispute over a debt with a Jew of Rhodes, and calling for equivalent treatment of Rhodian litigants in Genoa⁵⁹.

The lack of detail given about these seizures, and the absence of the Genoese side of the story, leave the character of these events unclear. Certainly the readiness of the Chian court to rule in favour of the Rhodian litigants does not suggest entrenched antagonism to the Hospital at this time, while Geronimo Doria's return of some of the slaves he had seized suggests that he may have been pursuing a debt by muscular means, retaining only what he believed he was owed. As with the willingness of the Genoese captains to return the ships captured in the harbour of Rhodes and the ostensibly sympathetic attitude of the Genoese authorities to the Order's claims, the impression given by these events is of the kind of private disputes and minor episodes of piratical violence that were a normal part of Mediterranean life, even if the tension in the atmosphere was heightened by the shadow of the Genoese-Aragonese war. On this occasion the peace that had been concluded between Genoa and the Hospital in 1439, repeatedly invoked in the documentation, continued to hold. The Order's interests in Chios did come under attack in 1442, but the Genoese authorities do not appear to have been responsible. In November of that year a mission was dispatched from Rhodes to restore order to Hospitaller estates on Chios whose inhabitants had rebelled. Its orders included an instruction to seek help if necessary from the secular arm, that is, from the Genoese

⁵⁸ C. Jona, *Genova e Rodi* cit., p. 112 (no. 21).

⁵⁹ C. Jona, *Genova e Rodi* cit., pp. 106-9 (no. 18).

government of the island, implying that they were not seen as being implicated in these events⁶⁰.

The conclusion of peace between Genoa and Alfonso V in 1444 seems to have checked the incidence of fresh clashes provoking dissension between the Genoese and the Knights. Conversely, the resumption of general hostilities between the two western Mediterranean powers in 1454 stoked a more serious outburst of violence and reprisal between Genoese and Hospitallers, arising again from the blurring of lines between the Catalan community and the Knights. In February 1455 the Order complained to the government of Chios about their response to previous complaints regarding harm done to the Hospitallers in Cyprus by a Genoese ship, and the capture of a galliot belonging to a brother of the Order, Andrea della Croce. Apparently the Chian authorities had replied sympathetically to an initial letter of complaint and a Hospitaller embassy had been sent to Chios to plead the Order's case. Losing their suit and protesting to the Chian government, they had reportedly drawn a shockingly hostile response, leading their superiors in Rhodes to write this letter appealing to their traditional friendship with Chios and again requesting restitution⁶¹.

Whatever the source of the friction underlying these events, the trouble became more serious in 1457. In February that year the Order wrote to the authorities in Chios complaining about the seizure of goods belonging to the Hospitaller Admiral Sergio de Seripando or his nephew by the Genoese captain Giuliano Gattilusio, who operated from Chios⁶². Giuliano was a habitual pirate who was to become notorious, and his actions cannot with certainty be linked to wider Genoese attitudes or policies, but in the course of his career he often showed a willingness to tailor his behaviour to the interests of the Genoese community at large, and he was on occasion engaged by the commune as a naval contractor⁶³.

⁶⁰ Aom 355 (*Libri Bullarum* 1441-2), f. 264/265.

⁶¹ Aom 365 (*Libri Bullarum* 1454-5), f. 266.

⁶² Aom 366 (*Libri Bullarum* 1456), f. 163/170; Aom 367 (*Libri Bullarum* 1457-8), ff. 190^v-1.

⁶³ E. Basso, *Pirati e pirateria nel Mediterraneo medievale: Il caso di Giuliano Gattilusio*, in A. Mazarakis, *Πρακτικά Συνεδρίου, Οι Γατελούζοι της Λέσβου 9 Σεπτεμβρίου 1994 Μυτιλήνη, Φοινίκη, Athens, 1996*, pp. 342-72; Id., *La presenza Genovese in Inghilterra e le relazioni commerciali anglo-genovesi nella seconda metà del XV secolo*, in M. Arca Petrucci and S. Conti (eds.), *Giovanni Caboto e le vie dell'Atlantico Settentrionale: Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Roma, 29 settembre-1 ottobre 1997*, Brigati, Genova, 1999, pp. 17-37 at pp. 22-34; G. Pistarino, *Giuliano Gattilusio corsaro e pirata greco-genovese del secolo XV*, in M. de Bernardis (ed.), *Miscellanea Storica, Biblioteca dell'Accademia Olubrense* 12, Pietrabissara, 1992, pp. 63-77; Id., *I signori del potere: mercanti e diplomatici, uomini di guerra e di ventura nel medioevo genovese*, in Id., *I signori del mare*, Civico istituto colombiano, Genova, 1992, pp. 301-76 at pp. 333-47; S. Jenks, *Robert Sturmy's commercial expedition to the Mediterranean (1457/8) with editions of the trial of the Genoese before king and council, and of other sources*, Bristol Record Society, Bristol 2006.

For him to attack such a target is suggestive of fractious relations between Chios and Rhodes, an impression reinforced by the sequel. Reprisals were initially taken against the property in Rhodes of Niccolò Doria, who is known from other sources as a close associate of Giuliano's immediate family, and who may have been directly implicated in this affair⁶⁴. However, in May 1457 this measure was cancelled and fresh reprisals were initiated against the possessions of the Mahona of Chios, including their warehouses in Rhodes housing mastic, the chief export of Chios and a monopoly of the Mahona⁶⁵. Such an expedient was clearly an escalation of hostilities, and one which suggests that the Knights held the authorities in Chios themselves at least partly responsible for Giuliano's activities.

Given the apparent ascription of blame to the neighbouring Genoese authorities for Giuliano's attack, and the state of war existing between Genoa and Aragon, it may well be significant that Sergio de Seripando was a native of the Kingdom of Naples, a possession of the Crown of Aragon since 1442. The context of other Genoese attacks harming the Hospitallers and attracting reprisals at this time clearly reflects the impact of hostilities against the Catalans. In 1458 a Hospitaller emissary to Egypt, John Wikes, was robbed when the Catalan caravel on which he was travelling was captured by the Genoese at Alexandria⁶⁶. A balinger belonging to a Catalan member of the Order, Bartomeu Rodriguez, was seized by the Genoese Lancelotto Grillo, Lodisio 'de Ginibertis' and Pelegrino Giustiniani, inflicting capture and financial loss on other Catalan Hospitallers. These included the Prior of Catalonia, Jaume 'de Laialteni', and the Preceptor of Majorca, Johan de Cardonia⁶⁷. Another balinger belonging to an Aragonese brother, Galvano Tolza, Preceptor of 'Dananacorbe', was also seized by Genoese vessels⁶⁸. The latter attacks led to further seizures from the mastic stores belonging to the Mahona. The campaign of reprisals continued until May 1462, when the government of Chios agreed to provide compensation for the losses incurred and normal relations were restored⁶⁹. Even then, the Order's

⁶⁴ Aom 367 (*Libri Bullarum* 1457-8), ff. 190^v-1. In 1456 Niccolò had been chosen as an arbitrator in a dispute involving Giuliano's father Battista Gattilusio. A document of May 1457 indicates that Niccolò, then in Rhodes, had previously undertaken to make a payment in Genoa on Battista's behalf. In the same month, Battista's will nominated Niccolò as one of his executors and a guardian of his children. Most significantly, around this time Niccolò had a financial interest in the cruise of a ship outfitted by Battista, whose activities included capturing Catalan ships, an enterprise in which Giuliano had also been involved. Asg. *Notai Antichi* 848 (Tommaso de Recco 2), nos. XCVIII-XCIX, CXC, CCV.

⁶⁵ Aom 368 (*Libri Bullarum* 1457-8), ff. 190^v-1.

⁶⁶ Aom 367 (*Libri Bullarum* 1457-8), f. 215^v.

⁶⁷ Aom 372 (*Libri Bullarum* 1462), ff. 210^v-2.

⁶⁸ Aom 371 (*Libri Bullarum* 1461), f. 231^{r-v}/233^{r-v}.

⁶⁹ Aom 372 (*Libri Bullarum* 1462), ff. 210^v-2, 226^v-7^v, 232^{r-v}/233^{r-v}.

claims against Giuliano Gattilusio remained unsettled, and seem still to have been outstanding as late as 1469⁷⁰.

The actions taken seem to have extended only to limited, targeted reprisal procedures, not an outbreak of general hostility against the Genoese. In the midst of the controversy the government in Genoa, under French sovereignty from 1458 to 1461, continued routine diplomatic communications of a sort indicating that they hoped for a sympathetic hearing for their intercessions. In April 1459 they wrote a letter of recommendation to the authorities on Rhodes for Tobia Lomellini, a Genoese merchant wishing to settle on Rhodes⁷¹. Another letter in July appealed on behalf of the Genoese Hospitaller Battista Grimaldi that he should be excused travelling to Rhodes to attend the Order's Chapter-General, and that he should be appointed to the vacant Preceptory of Marseilles⁷². In April 1460 the support of the leadership on Rhodes was sought for the Genoese government's preferred candidate in a dispute over possession of the Preceptory of Prè which was then underway at the papal Curia⁷³. For their part, in August 1460 the Order's leaders, in response to complaints from the captain of Famagusta and other Genoese of acts of piracy by the Hospitaller galley of Giovanni de Buffoli, ordered the galley's crew to bring a halt to actions against the Genoese and other Christians⁷⁴. Nevertheless, the extent and persistence of the violence and reprisals between the two groups in these years was unparalleled for the period, with the possible exception of the 1430s. The continuing delicacy of the situation, and the scope for violence involving the Catalans to cause trouble even when they were formally at peace with Genoa, is indicated by Genoese orders to the authorities on Chios in November 1462. They were instructed to make restitution for cloth which the leading English Hospitaller John Langstrother had sent to the Master, but which been seized as part of the cargo of a Catalan ship captured by the Genoese while on its way from England to Rhodes. The letter stressed that they should take care to ensure that the Knights should have no grounds for complaint, presumably anxious to avert any return to the protracted recriminations which had recently been terminated⁷⁵.

⁷⁰ This is indicated by safe-conducts granted to Genoese merchants in 1466 and 1469, explicitly guaranteeing them against reprisals taken on account of Giuliano's actions. Aom 375 (*Libri Bullarum* 1465-6), ff. 147/146, 189^v/188^r; Aom 378 (*Libri Bullarum* 1469), f. 232^{r-v}.

⁷¹ Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 1797 (*Litterarum* 21, 1455-64), f. 200 (no. 748).

⁷² Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 1797 (*Litterarum* 21, 1455-64), f. 215 (no. 812).

⁷³ Unusually, however, letters were sent not only to the Master but also to the *langue* of Italy, perhaps in the hope that the Italian brothers would respond more sympathetically than others at such an acrimonious time. Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 1797 (*Litterarum* 21, 1455-64), f. 254^{r-v} (nos. 960-1).

⁷⁴ Aom 370, (*Libri Bullarum* 1460), f. 237.

⁷⁵ Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 1778 (*Litterarum* 2, 1426-1503), f. 421^v (no. 1579).

These cases display in its most intractable form the Hospital's exposure to entanglement in conflict through its polyglot character and connections. The same individuals could be, without contradiction, at once members of a community at war, exposing them to attack by its enemies, and members of an association like the Hospital, making any such attack an act of aggression against it which demanded a response. The scope for such contamination was heightened here not only by the prominence of the Catalans and Aragonese in the Order and in the wider society of Rhodes, but also by Alfonso V's efforts to secure the services of Hospitallers who were also his subjects for his own purposes, and to enlist the Order as a whole as an adjunct to his policies. Such a blurring of the lines between the kind of pan-Catholic cooperation represented by the Hospital and the particular agenda of the Crown of Aragon in Christendom's internal conflicts can also be seen in the events surrounding Pope Calixtus III's crusade against the Ottomans, which formed the backdrop for these clashes. The pope himself, the erstwhile Bishop of Valencia Alfonso de Borja, was not only a subject of Alfonso V by birth but a former servitor of the king, who also relied heavily on him to provide ships and men for the naval effort against the Turks in the Aegean, although the two men fell out over the deficiencies of Alfonso's contribution. The original commander of the papal fleet, the Archbishop of Tarragona Pedro de Urrea, was dismissed following attacks on Genoese and Venetian shipping, while Calixtus complained of Alfonso's slowness to provide the forces he had promised, due to his continuing employment of them for his own purposes. Urrea's replacement was the Venetian Cardinal Lodovico Trevisan, but the papal fleet which operated in the Aegean from summer 1456 until late 1457 was composed very substantially of Catalans and Aragonese⁷⁶. Trevisan used Rhodes as his base of operations and cooperated closely with the Hospitallers. Their Admiral Sergio de Seripando, whose family was around this time the target of attack by Giuliano Gattilusio, may have acted as a senior commander in the cardinal's fleet⁷⁷. Under the circumstances it would have been hard to avoid conflation of Alfonso's forces with those of the

⁷⁶ M. Navarro Sorní, *Alfonso de Borja, Papa Calixto III: en la perspectiva de sus relaciones con Alfonso el Magnánimo*, Institució Alfons el Magnànim, Valencia, 2005, pp. 377-570; K.M. Setton, *Papacy* cit., vol. 2, pp. 166-71, 184-9. Navarro Sorní rejects the supposition in most earlier literature on the subject that Urrea used the papal forces to wage war on his sovereign's behalf against the Genoese, attributing his dismissal to attacks on Genoese and Venetian vessels near Sicily, undertaken on his own initiative rather than as part of the Aragonese war effort. M. Navarro Sorní, *Alfonso* cit., pp. 458-67.

⁷⁷ Given the nature of his position, it seems reasonable to conjecture that he was the 'Sergios' whom Trevisan reportedly put in command of a squadron stationed at Lesbos in summer 1457. Michael Kritovoulos, *Critobuli Imbriotae Historiae*, ed. D.R. Reinsch, De Gruyter, Berlin and New York, 1983, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 22, p. 130.

crusade, with which there was such an extensive overlap in personnel, and conflation of both groups with the Hospital, with its own very substantial Catalan and Aragonese component. There was some modest collaboration between the crusading fleet and the Genoese regimes in Chios and Lesbos, but in the context of the ongoing war between Alfonso and Genoa the potential for friction arising out of this association is evident⁷⁸.

It has been suggested that Trevisan's campaign marked a major shift towards better relations between Genoese and Hospitallers, born of an increased sense of shared vulnerability to the Ottomans in the wake of the fall of Constantinople⁷⁹. However, the level of strife now shown to have erupted between them during that expedition and in the years that followed indicates quite the opposite. This seems understandable, on the basis of the view advanced here that relations with the Crown of Aragon were a more serious source of estrangement between the Order and the Genoese than relations with Muslim powers. If there was a clear shift to more persistently amicable relations, it must be placed after the settlement of 1462, and attributed in large part to the gradual cooling of hostilities between Genoese and Catalans. This was initiated by the death of the aggressive Alfonso in 1458 and the termination in 1461 of the traditional Genoese-Angevin alliance against Aragonese power in southern Italy, though it was a slow process marked by continuing violence and ructions⁸⁰.

This calming of Genoese-Catalan relations is perhaps reflected in the fact that the tenure of the Order's second Catalan Master, Pere Ramon Zacosta (1461-7) seems to have been a period of quiet in relations between Genoa and the Hospitallers. There was, however, a fresh cluster of controversies in the mid-1470s. The most prominent incident, which had unusually wide diplomatic repercussions, occurred when a ship belonging to Raymond Ricard, the Hospitaller Prior of Saint-Gilles (Provence), carrying cargo belonging to the Order and to some merchants of Marseilles, was wrecked at Modon and cargo taken from it by three Genoese ships in June 1473. According to the Genoese, they were

⁷⁸ C. Wright, *Gattilusio* cit., pp. 336-9, 352-5.

⁷⁹ E. Basso and P.F. Simbula, *La nave di Rodi: una "cause célèbre" nel Mediterraneo del Quattrocento*, in J. Costa Restagno (ed.), *Cavalieri di San Giovanni in Liguria e nell'Italia Settentrionale: Quadri regionali, uomini e documenti*, Istituto internazionale di studi liguri, Genova, 2009, pp. 541-67 at pp. 546-7. The authors of this article do not appear to have been familiar with the Hospitaller documentation regarding the conflict of 1457-62.

⁸⁰ The turmoil that followed Alfonso's death had prompted a last bid by the Angevins to drive their rivals from Naples, an expedition launched from Genoa in 1459 by King René's son Jean d'Anjou, then governor of the city for the King of France, but the French were ousted from Genoa in 1461 and Jean d'Anjou was defeated in 1464. G. Galasso, *Storia del Regno di Napoli*, 5 vols., Utet, Torino, 2006-7, vol. 1, pp. 643-63.

salvaging cargo that would otherwise have been lost, but the Hospitallers accused them of piracy, saying that they had attacked the ship when it was in difficulties and caused the shipwreck, while trying to pass themselves off as Venetians. The Hospitallers complained to Genoa and its overlord the Duke of Milan, and the controversy became internationalised. The Count of Provence and erstwhile King of Naples René of Anjou intervened on behalf of his Provençal subjects, whose cause was then taken up by King Louis XI of France, while the Papacy, Naples and Milan sought to contain the diplomatic repercussions. In April 1474 a Genoese court ruled in favour of the defendants, while arranging for the return of the goods retrieved from the ship. The Genoese faced Provençal reprisals and threats of them from France, but for a time the controversy died down⁸¹.

However, the claims arising from the incident were revived a few years later. In 1476 the Order assigned the case to its Treasurer and receiver-general in Avignon and Treasurer of Auvergne. They seem not to have actively pursued it, but when in December 1477 they delegated their mandate to five Hospitaller preceptors, including Raymond Ricard and two of his relatives, the controversy reignited. Their fresh demand for compensation was backed by a letter from Louis XI, issued in January 1478, which threatened reprisals if satisfaction was not given, and also raised a more recent incident in which grain had apparently been seized from a ship belonging to the Master of the Hospital by the Genoese of Chios. Louis's intervention displays another manifestation of the Order's multinational affinities and their capacity to spread disputes, as he claimed to be motivated in part by the fact that the current Master, Pierre d'Aubusson, was French by birth and the king's vassal, and that his family were important servitors of the French Crown. Genoa retorted that the Ricard case had already been settled, while the other incident involved a much smaller quantity of grain than claimed, belonging not to the Master but to some of his Rhodian subjects, and had been seized in pursuance of a private dispute; even so, if any wrong had been done it would swiftly be corrected. The accompanying Genoese protestations stressed the importance of solidarity between Genoa and the Knights for the preservation of Rhodes and Chios, now the last remnant of the Genoese empire in the East⁸². Louis appears not to have taken any real action, but around the same time René of Anjou reasserted claims on behalf of his subjects and instituted reprisals, which led Genoa to warn

⁸¹ Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 1665A (*Maritimarum* 1472-1540), nos. 1, 6, 100-2, 109, 127, 144, 151-2, 163, 169, 181, unnumbered documents dated 23 Aug, 21, 23 Oct 1473; C. Jona, *Genova e Rodi* cit., pp. 127-38 (nos. 34-44); E. Basso and P.F. Simbula, *Nave di Rodi* cit., pp. 553-67.

⁸² Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 2737B (*Materie Politiche* 1408-1577), nos. 106, 108-9.

of possible retaliatory action against the Provençal grain trade, but again it seems René was ultimately willing to relent and let the affair drop⁸³. It has plausibly been argued that the heat of the first phase of the controversy was stoked less by the Order itself than by other powers' exploitation of the situation, and the same is probably true of the second⁸⁴. It certainly seems significant that during both bouts of the dispute the attested reprisals or threats of them came from France and Provence, not from Rhodes.

While this episode and its unusual diplomatic ramifications seem to have arisen through opportunism, another occurring shortly afterwards indicates that the lingering antipathy between Genoese and Catalans retained at least some of its potential to generate trouble between Genoese and Hospitallers. In early 1475 a balinger owned by two citizens of Rhodes, 'Busach Bel Fara' and Manuele Ferandi, the latter of Rhodian birth but claiming Genoese ancestry through his father, and commanded by another citizen of Rhodes, Gabriel Blanco, was seized near Elba by the Genoese ship of Aleramo Salvago. The balinger was carrying a cargo of grain from Cotrone in Calabria to Pisa for Blanco and for some Sienese merchants based in Naples, who had chartered the ship. Its capture prompted protests from the injured parties and from the Hospital⁸⁵. Salvago justified his action on the grounds that the ship was enemy property, identifying Blanco as a Catalan and denying his claim to Rhodian nationality⁸⁶. Committing the matter to trial, the authorities in Genoa wrote to the pope to explain their position, protesting their favourable disposition towards Rhodians and their wish to treat them as justly as they would their own people. However, the letter observed that the complainants had it against them that they were Catalans and that the cargo had been loaded not in Rhodes but in Catalan territory, and expostulated on the notorious violence and cruelty habitually shown towards the Genoese by members of that community, before somewhat unconvincingly insisting that such considerations would not prejudice the case⁸⁷. The Hospital remained liable to becoming implicated in

⁸³ Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 1800 (*Litterarum* 28, 1478-9), ff. 11-2, 18-20, 27, 33^{r-v}, 40-1, 85-6^r (nos. 24-5, 41-6, 57, 69, 83, 173).

⁸⁴ E. Basso and P.F. Simbula, *Nave di Rodi* cit., pp. 557-8.

⁸⁵ C. Jona, *Genova e Rodi* cit., pp. 138-43 (nos. 45-8).

⁸⁶ C. Jona, *Genova e Rodi* cit., pp. 142-3 (no. 48a).

⁸⁷ Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 1799 (*Litterarum* 25, 1461-84), f. 266 (no. 759). Those referred to as Catalans here evidently include Blanco, possibly the Rhodian owners of the balinger, and probably some of the merchants of Naples, since one of those owning a portion of the cargo had been 'Franciscus Scales', a secretary of King Ferrante I. When the ship stopped at Elba, before the encounter with Salvago, cargo including that belonging to 'Scales' had been seized by the lord of Piombino. C. Jona, *Genova e Rodi* cit., pp. 141-2 (no. 48).

controversy with the Genoese through those who combined Catalan or Aragonese ancestry with an association with the Order.

However, throughout this period the process by which the repercussions of violence and reprisal reverberated from individual to collective and back, and were transmitted from one collective to another through linking individuals and perceived associations, was by no means blind or automatic. Grievances could be settled by agreement, and where this was not initially possible, formal reprisals against property offered a legal form for financial retribution which could contain conflict, hopefully avoiding open war or the uncontrolled escalation of unofficial retaliation. Reprisals enabled a governing authority to target as wide or narrow a group as it pleased, subject to specific limitations and exemptions. In contrast to the often sweeping and indiscriminate reactions of a power like the Mamluks, disputes between Genoese and Hospitallers were moderated by long-standing and complex relationships and by sensitivity to the internal variations within a community, especially one as decentralised and diffuse as that of the Genoese.

Most of the available evidence regarding formal reprisals relates to those taken by the Knights against the Genoese, although the Genoese certainly did officially initiate them against the Order and its subjects on occasion, as during the war of the 1430s. The modest volume of trade conducted by the island's native inhabitants diminished the potential for securing compensation and imposing pressure by acting against those present in Genoese territories. It may be partly for this reason that the Order's complaints about Genoese actions at times of strife relate largely to attacks on Hospitaller or Rhodian ships at sea, perhaps the most practical means of retaliation available.

The Hospital's estates in Liguria were not directly targeted on such occasions. Besides the delicacy of interfering with ecclesiastical property, they were shielded by the Order's multinational character and local roots in each of the various Western territories where it operated. Given the availability of native knights who were intimately tied into the local social and political structures, and were often important figures in government service, efforts by local rulers to take advantage of or interfere with Hospitaller assets commonly took place through the Order's own members rather than by overt coercion, often leading to interference in appointments to high office. The Crown of Aragon's contests with the authorities on Rhodes over the proceeds of Hospitaller estates in its territories and the services of its subjects who were also Hospitallers exemplifies this sort of tension, which is also widely attested elsewhere⁸⁸.

⁸⁸ E.g. K. Borchardt, A. Luttrell and E. Schöffler, *Documents Concerning Cyprus from the Hospital's Rhodian Archives: 1409-1459*, Cyprus Research Centre, Nicosia, 2011, pp. xlvi-xlix; A. Luttrell, *The Hospitallers in Hungary before 1418*, in Z. Hunyadi and J. Las-

Even on this level, there is little evidence for conflicts between Genoa and Rhodes seriously impinging on Hospitaller estates in Liguria. A struggle over possession of the Preceptory of Prè did roughly coincide with the strife of the late 1430s, the Genoese government of Doge Tommaso Campofregoso backing the claims of Battista Fieschi, who spent much of his time in the service of the Genoese commune as a military commander and naval contractor⁸⁹. However, this dispute seems to have been essentially a product of the changing political order in Genoa itself and of papal efforts to appropriate the right to appoint to such posts. Battista's rival, the Bolognese Racello de Oro, probably owed his appointment in 1425 to the influence of Filippo Maria Visconti of Milan, then ruler of Genoa, and of the Archbishop of Genoa Pileo de Marini, whereas the overthrow of Milanese rule in 1435 and the accession of Tommaso Campofregoso the next year brought on the insertion of Fieschi in his place. Both appointments were made by the pope in defiance of the Order's rights, an encroachment aided by the fact that the men chosen were congenial to the preferences of successive regimes in Genoa⁹⁰.

Naturally, the commune's conflict with Rhodes was liable to impinge on the career of a figure as closely associated with the Genoese government as Battista Fieschi. Besides the direct benefits to the commune of promoting an ally like Fieschi with papal help, backing such a move perhaps offered a means of putting additional pressure on the Hospitaller leadership in the current troubles, encouraging them to mend relations with Genoa in the hope of depriving the pope of the commune's support for such aggrandisement. In 1437 Genoa successfully lobbied the pope to appoint Fieschi to the vacant Preceptory of Albenga. This action faced resistance from the Prior of Lombardy, whose jurisdiction included Liguria, presumably with the backing of the authorities on Rhodes⁹¹.

zlovsky (eds.), *The Crusades and the Military Orders: Expanding the frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity*, Central European University, Budapest, 2001, pp. 269-81, reprinted in A. Luttrell, *Studies on the Hospitallers after 1306: Rhodes and the West*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2007, XX at pp. 273-7; H. Nicholson, *The Knights Hospitaller*, Boydell, Woodbridge, 2001, pp. 107-15.

⁸⁹ E.g. Asg. *Archivio Segreto* 526 (*Diversorum Registri* 31, 1441-2), ff. 51-2; *Archivio Segreto* 1784 (*Litterarum* 8, 1437-9), ff. 111^v, 187^v (nos. 342, 567).

⁹⁰ G. Petti Balbi, *I Gerosolimitani in Liguria in età medievale tra tensione politiche e compiti istituzionali*, in J. Costa Restagno (ed.), *Cavalieri di San Giovanni in Liguria e nell'Italia Settentrionale: Quadri regionali, uomini e documenti*, Istituto internazionale di studi liguri, Genova, 2009, pp. 165-90 at pp. 177-82; D. Puncuh, *Carteggio di Pileo de Marini arcivescovo di Genova (1400-1423)*, «Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria» n.s. 11 (85), 1971, pp. 1-308 at pp. 190-4, 201-3, 221, 237-8, 241, 244-8 (nos. 132, 135, 145, 155-6, 158-9).

⁹¹ Asg. *Archivio Segreto* 1784 (*Litterarum* 8, 1437-9), ff. 43^v, 105^v, 196^v (nos. 124, 319, 590). The letter congratulating Jean de Lastic on his appointment and announcing the suspension of hostilities in April 1438 also asked him to confirm Battista Fieschi as Preceptor of Albenga. *Ibid.*, f. 219^{r-v} (no. 660).

Nonetheless, any connection between this dispute and the wider conflict seems tangential, and it would continue long after that strife had been resolved⁹². Another prolonged dispute over the Preceptory of Prè erupted in 1458 and continued until the eventual triumph of the Genoese Hospitaller Brasca Salvago in 1467. This again coincided with a major bout of strife between Hospitallers and Genoese, but again it is not clear that that conflict made a major contribution to the various papal, Hospitaller and Genoese machinations regarding the appointment⁹³.

Formal steps taken by the Hospitallers against the Genoese are better documented than the reverse. These measures were nuanced in various ways to reflect the differing relations that the Knights had with different individuals and groups, and to exploit the potential of such coercion as a means of muscular negotiation. The considerable Genoese commercial presence in Rhodes offered a convenient target for reprisals; it also at times helped contain their inflammatory impact, by enabling them to be targeted specifically against perpetrators or their associates rather than collectively against their community. This can be seen in the steps taken against Stefano Doria and Angelo Giovanni Lomellini over the 1441 attack, or the initial moves against Giuliano Gattilusio's associate Niccolò Doria in 1457.

More sweeping reprisals and general hostilities could be differentiated by the practice of granting safe-conduct to individuals, guaranteeing that they could travel to and from Hospitaller territory to do business, exempt from violence and seizures. Sometimes these clearly served the Order's own purposes: on various occasions when reprisals were in operation against the Genoese, safe-conducts were granted to the masters of Genoese ships to bring grain to Rhodes. In moments of scarcity, which is sometimes explicitly cited as the reason for this, the requirements of provisioning the island were naturally an overriding concern. Such exemptions, explicitly

⁹² The dispute with Racello de Oro continued long into the 1440s, by which time Battista Fieschi had other problems. Though he sent all the revenues for 1443-4 from the estates he controlled to Rhodes to help pay for its defence against the Mamluks, his failure to obey an order for all preceptors to join the defence in person supplied grounds for his dismissal in 1445 by Michele Ferrandi, the Prior of Lombardy who had opposed his appointment to Albenga. He was replaced by Giovanni Scoto, Preceptor of Savona and Gavi. In practice, however, continuing papal and communal support enabled Battista to maintain his position, and in 1448 the Genoese government wrote to Jean de Lastic, rejoicing that he had taken up Fieschi's cause. *Asg, Archivio Segreto 1784 (Litterarum 8, 1437-9), ff. 647^v-9, 663^{r-v} (nos. 1772-3, 1814-5); Archivio Segreto 1785 (Litterarum 9, 1438-69), f. 11^v (no. 40); Archivio Segreto 1788 (Litterarum 12, 1441-2), f. 47^v (no. 119); Archivio Segreto 1789 (Litterarum 13, 1446-50), f. 307^v (no. 1037); G. Petti Balbi, *Gerosolimitani cit.*, pp. 182-6.*

⁹³ *Asg, Archivio Segreto 1797 (Litterarum 21, 1455-64), f. 254^{r-v} (nos. 960-1); Archivio Segreto 1800 (Litterarum 26, 1467-74), f. 4 (no. 9); G. Petti Balbi, *Gerosolimitani cit.*, pp. 186-8.*

against reprisals targeting the Genoese, were made for Genoese merchants including Luchino Leardo and Ambrogio de Castilliono, a resident of Rhodes, in 1462, and for Domenico Pulcifera of Chios in 1477⁹⁴. Most safe-conducts against reprisals did not have such particular motives stated. Only a few granted to Genoese during the ructions of the 1430s and 1440s appear in the record, the recipients being residents of Rhodes⁹⁵. Safe-conducts granted to Genoese appear much more prolifically during the troubles of the 1450s-1460s and 1470s, applying both to residents and others, commonly the masters of ships, some of them given explicitly with regard to reprisals in force against Genoa or Chios⁹⁶. There were also safe-conducts issued at such times to guarantee the letters of exchange purchased by Genoese in Rhodes to move money through the Order's financial apparatus, either for the ostensible purpose of transferring money elsewhere or as a form of disguised loan⁹⁷.

The most extensively documented nuancing of the Order's use of reprisals against the Genoese relates to the rulers of Chios themselves. In part this was again a matter of personal favours for individuals. For decades the Knights maintained a special relationship with members of the Paterio family, one of the lineages that held shares in the Mahona of Chios. In the early fifteenth century there is evidence of ties with Bernardo Paterio, son of Raffaele, who had leased from the Mahona the *appalto* of the mainland settlement of New Phokaia and its alum mines, jointly with his brother Niccolò, who also served as *podestà* there in the late fourteenth century⁹⁸. In 1413 Bernardo provided the Order with intelligence about Ottoman naval activity⁹⁹. Both he and his other brother Tommaso, another major alum trader, were involved in business with the leading Hospitaller financial officer Domenico d'Alemania, while Tommaso had a financial interest in the soap monopoly of Rhodes¹⁰⁰. As

⁹⁴ Aom 371 (*Libri Bullarum* 1461), ff. 233^v-4; Aom 385 (*Libri Bullarum* 1477), ff. 225^v-6.

⁹⁵ Aom 353 (*Libri Bullarum* 1437-8), f. 150^v/151^v; Aom 354 (*Libri Bullarum* 1439-40), f. 255/254.

⁹⁶ E.g. Aom 367, (*Libri Bullarum* 1457-8), ff. 197, 201^v; Aom 369, (*Libri Bullarum* 1459), f. 235; Aom 371, (*Libri Bullarum* 1461), f. 226/228; Aom 372 (*Libri Bullarum* 1462), f. 231; Aom 375, (*Libri Bullarum* 1465-6), ff. 177^v-8, 188^v; Aom 377 (*Libri Bullarum* 1467-8), ff. 228^v/230^v, 232^{r-v}/234^{r-v}; Aom 382 (*Libri Bullarum* 1467-8), ff. 223, 224^{r-v}, 227^{r-v}, 228^v-9, 231^{r-v}; Aom 384 (*Libri Bullarum* 1468-76), ff. 22, 24, 26^v-7, 30^{r-v}, 88^v, 98^{r-v}, 108; Aom 386 (*Libri Bullarum* 1478), ff. 220^v-1^v/221^v-2^v, 225^v-6/226^v-7, 228^v-9/229^v-30; Aom 387 (*Libri Bullarum* 1480), ff. 198^{r-v}, 200^v-1, 202-3^v, 206^{r-v}, 207^v-8, 210^{r-v}, 214, 216^{r-v}.

⁹⁷ Aom 371 (*Libri Bullarum* 1461), ff. 190/191, 191/192, 193/194^v.

⁹⁸ Asg, *Archivio Segreto* 499 (*Diversorum Registri* 1399), ff. 6^v-7 (no. 19); M. Balard, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare: atti rogati a Chio da Donato di Chiavari (17 febbraio-12 novembre 1394)*, Università di Genova, Genova, 1988, pp. 26-31 (no. 2).

⁹⁹ Aom 339 (*Libri Bullarum* 1409-16), f. 283^v.

¹⁰⁰ Aom 339 (*Libri Bullarum* 1409-16), f. 288; P. Piana Toniolo, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare: atti rogati a Chio da Gregorio Panissaro (1403-1405)*, Accademia Ligure di Scienze e Lettere, Genova, 1995, pp. 165-6 (no. 116).

late as 1473, a safe-conduct granted by the Order to Bernardo's sons Lanfranco, Guirardo and Bernardo was explained in terms of his services to the Hospital as well as their own¹⁰¹. Towards the end of the century another member of the Paterio family of Chios, Italiano Paterio, would himself be admitted to the Order and become Preceptor of Lodi and Savona¹⁰².

The most prominent figure in this connection was Giovanni Paterio, who seems to have succeeded to Bernardo's role, and to have become the usual representative for the Order's affairs in Chios. It appears that he owned houses and warehouses in Rhodes, indicating substantial business interests there¹⁰³. His son Bartolomeo was also involved in business with the Knights, acting as procurator for John Langstrother¹⁰⁴. In April 1444, as the Mamluks prepared to attack Rhodes, Giovanni Paterio was appointed, along with Giovanni Bocherio, a Genoese citizen of Rhodes and associate of the Hospital, to procure military aid from Chios. The Knights undertook to pay their costs, and entrusted them with 5,000 ducats for initial expenses¹⁰⁵. The following year, with the Knights in acute financial difficulties, Paterio was commissioned to raise a loan of 10,000 ducats¹⁰⁶. In 1451 he was made the linchpin in the organisation of the Jubilee Indulgence in territories ruled by Genoese regimes in the region¹⁰⁷. His close cooperation with the Order naturally brought him influence which he could use to intercede for others; hence, in September 1459 a Hospitaller safe-conduct for a Genoese ship going to trade with the Mamluks was declared to have been granted at his request¹⁰⁸. It may be significant that Giovanni Paterio also had notable business connections with Catalan merchants, and on

¹⁰¹ Aom 384 (*Libri Bullarum* 1468-76), f. 87.

¹⁰² A. Lercari, *Ceto dirigente e Ordine di San Giovanni a Genova. Ruolo generale dei Cavalieri di Malta liguri*, in J. Costa Restagno (ed.), *Cavalieri di San Giovanni in Liguria e nell'Italia Settentrionale: Quadri regionali, uomini e documenti*, Istituto internazionale di studi liguri, Genova, 2009, pp. 115-273 at p. 159.

¹⁰³ Aom 371 (*Libri Bullarum* 1461), f. 223^v/222^v.

¹⁰⁴ Asg, *Archivio Segreto 1778 (Litterarum* 2, 1426-1503), f. 421^v (no. 1579).

¹⁰⁵ Aom 356 (*Libri Bullarum* 1444), f. 154^{r-v}/153^{r-v}. At this time Bocherio was on Rhodes, his normal place of residence, while Paterio was elsewhere, presumably on Chios. Bocherio was promised that if he or his companions were captured by Catalans on their journey, the Order would pay the ransom. Aom 356 (*Libri Bullarum* 1444), f. 168^v/167^v.

¹⁰⁶ Aom 357 (*Libri Bullarum* 1445), f. 161/164.

¹⁰⁷ Paterio was to take personal charge of collection in Chios, to nominate those who should be entrusted with the task in the Mahona's New Phokaia and in the Gattilusio lordships of Lesbos, Ainos and Old Phokaia, to write to the rulers of those places on the Order's behalf, and to hold one of the keys for the collection chests in each place. The knights sent on to make arrangements in Constantinople, Pera and Caffa were to send their reports through him. Aom 363 (*Libri Bullarum* 1451-2), ff. 273-4^v.

¹⁰⁸ Aom 369 (*Libri Bullarum* 1459), f. 238.

at least one occasion represented the Mahona in negotiations with Vilamari¹⁰⁹.

In the light of his position it is no surprise that Giovanni Paterio was to be accorded special treatment during the disputes of the late 1450s and early 1460s. In February 1459 a decree was entered into the Order's *Libri Bullarum* guaranteeing him and his children the exemption of their property from any future reprisals arising from disputes between the Hospital and Chios, Genoa or members of the Genoese community¹¹⁰. On the same day a more limited guarantee was issued regarding the mastic stores belonging to the Mahona, but both documents were later struck through¹¹¹. The reason for this cancellation is not stated, but it seems that they formed part of a wider process of reconciliation that proved abortive. Presumably Giovanni Paterio, with his particularly close relationship with the Knights, had been chosen by his partners in the Mahona to negotiate a settlement with the Hospital, and had taken the opportunity to secure special protection for himself as well as acting on behalf of the corporation. In August that year, with the conflict evidently still unresolved, the Mahona sent Giovanni, along with Bernardo Giustiniani, to protest to the Hospital about the seizure of mastic from the stores in Rhodes and seek redress¹¹². In December 1459 Giovanni's son Bartolomeo Paterio was in Rhodes, perhaps for related reasons, though his purposes may equally have been purely commercial¹¹³. In April 1461, a year before the dispute was finally settled, an exemption in favour of Giovanni Paterio and his children similar to that of 1459 was issued, this time without cancellation, which also conferred on him a total exemption from commercial taxation¹¹⁴. It may be supposed that at this point Giovanni was once again present in Rhodes to negotiate on the Mahona's behalf. An individual in a powerful position in Chios who also had close ties with the Order and commercial interests in Rhodes had obvious value to both sides as a mediator, and favourable treatment in times of conflict must have been calculated to preserve his goodwill and readiness to use his influence on behalf of the Hospital.

More complex than such favours for individual Genoese friends was the treatment of the collective interests of the Mahona of Chios. As the closest representative of Genoese communal authority to Rhodes, the regime in Chios was the most convenient conduit for the conduct of

¹⁰⁹ L. Balletto, *Fra Genovesi e Catalani* cit., pp. 182-5, 189.

¹¹⁰ Aom 368 (*Libri Bullarum* 1457-8), f. 232^{r-v}.

¹¹¹ Aom 368 (*Libri Bullarum* 1457-8), ff. 231^{v-2}.

¹¹² Asg, *Notai Antichi* 848 (Tommaso de Recco 2), no. 131.

¹¹³ This is known through Bartolomeo Paterio's purchase, together with Lodisio Grimaldi, of a letter of exchange to Avignon from the Order. Asg, *Notai Antichi* 848 (Tommaso de Recco 2), no. 376.

¹¹⁴ Aom 371 (*Libri Bullarum* 1461), f. 223^v/222^v.

relations between the Order and the Genoese community, whether friendly or acrimonious. However, relations with Chios were also subject to their own dynamics, distinct from those applying to dealings with Genoa itself. The Mahona were likely to be more directly aggravated by attacks emanating from Rhodes, and their fortunes were more closely implicated than those of the metropolitan authorities in the state of affairs in the Aegean, and in the state of relations with the Turks in particular. In so far as the limited documentation permits judgement, when trouble arose between Genoese and Hospitallers in the context of dealings with the Turks, the process of complaints, reprisals and negotiations that resulted tended to take place between the Knights and the authorities on Chios alone. Genoa itself was more inclined to become involved in the repercussions of clashes involving the Catalans, part of a conflict centred on the western Mediterranean that impinged on the metropolis more directly, as seen in the disputes of the 1430s, 1440s and 1470s.

However, the greater closeness of Chios to the Muslim world could distinguish the attitudes and interests of its rulers from those of the commune in ways that had positive as well as negative implications for their relations with Rhodes. Their shared exposure to Muslim attack encouraged solidarity between the island regimes, both practically and sentimentally, as expressed in collective defensive precautions in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries¹¹⁵. Such considerations reinforced the effects of personal ties between communities entwined by close proximity and constant traffic, exemplified by the Order's friends in the Paterio family. The Genoese of the Aegean were also more likely than their compatriots in Liguria to have a direct interest in ensuring the untroubled continuation of trade with Rhodes itself. Furthermore, Chios, with its proximity to Rhodes and the route to the south-eastern Mediterranean, seems to have been more involved than other Genoese territories in the East in commerce with the Catalans¹¹⁶. Such distinctions were widened further by the fact that Genoa spent much of the fifteenth century under the rule of foreign overlords, whose priorities differed from those of the metropolitan Genoese, let alone the community overseas¹¹⁷. For the Genoese at least as much as for any community of

¹¹⁵ See above, n. 13.

¹¹⁶ M. Balard, *Les Catalans dans l'Outre-Mer génois aux XIII^e-XIV^e siècles*, in M.T. Ferrer i Mallol (ed.), *Els Catalans a la Mediterrània Oriental a l'Edat Mitjana*, Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Barcelona, 2003, pp. 103-111 at pp. 106-11; L. Balletto, *Fra Genovesi e Catalani* cit., pp. 181-90.

¹¹⁷ E. Basso, *De Boucicault à Francesco Sforza: persistence et changements dans la politique orientale des seigneurs étrangers de Gênes au XV^e siècle*, in M. Balard and A. Ducellier (eds.), *Le Partage du Monde: échanges et colonisation dans la Méditerranée médiévale*, Publications de la Sorbonne, Paris, 1998, pp. 63-77.

the time, the repercussions of conflict up the scale from individual to collective and down again were complicated by different tiers of political authority and group interest.

Despite their particular ties to their Chian neighbours, when the efforts of Genoa's French governor Marshal Boucicault to rein in the prerogatives of the Mahona led Chios to revolt in 1408, the Hospitallers sided with the Genoese metropolis, sequestering the Mahona's property on Rhodes¹¹⁸. Support for legitimate authority, affinity with the French Crown, and personal ties between the Master Philibert de Naillac and Boucicault, his old crusading comrade-in-arms, may all have played a part in this choice¹¹⁹. However, in explaining their actions the Order's leaders asserted that they had acted at the urging of the Genoese community of Rhodes, indicating that the island's resident merchants backed the commune against the Mahona. If true, in this affair the policy of the Knights was swayed by a Genoese interest-group with whom their relationships and shared interests were even closer than with their neighbours in Chios. The episode thus reflects a further permutation of the ways in which relations between the Genoese and the Hospital could be modulated by the influence of individuals whose affiliations spanned the divide between different communities and polities, and by the internal distinctions within a diffuse and far-flung network such as that of the Genoese.

Just as the operation of Rhodes on the diplomatic stage was shaped by the Hospital's character as an international membership association and corporate landowner as well as a territorial state, so that of Chios was influenced by the Mahona's character as a commercial company as well as a governing authority. The commercial interests of the Mahona had an especially significant impact on relations with the Hospitallers through the role of Rhodes as a depot for the storage and marketing of

¹¹⁸ Aom 339 (*Libri Bullarum* 1409-16), ff. 226-27/192-93; P. Argenti, *The Occupation of Chios by the Genoese and their Administration of the Island 1346-1566: described in contemporary documents and official dispatches*, 3 vols., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1958, vol. 1, pp. 155-65.

¹¹⁹ Both Boucicault and Naillac had participated in the Crusade of Nikopolis in 1396, and the Hospitallers had made a major contribution to ransoming Boucicault and other crusade leaders captured by the Ottomans. The Knights had contributed galleys to expeditions in the eastern Mediterranean led by Boucicault in 1399 and 1403. On the latter occasion, when Boucicault's aims had combined the defence of the Genoese position in Cyprus with his own preoccupation of war against the Muslims, Naillac had been instrumental in securing a favourable settlement with Cyprus. J. Delaville le Roulx, *Les Hospitaliers à Rhodes (1310-1421)*, E. Leroux, Paris, 1913, reprinted Ashgate, London, 1974, pp. 235-7, 275-6, 293-9; J.-C. Poutiers, *Les Chevaliers de Rhodes à la croisade de Nikopol (1396)*, «Etudes Balkaniques» 17/1, 1981, pp. 89-123; K.M. Setton, *Papacy* cit., vol. 2, pp. 370-1, 382-8; C. Wright, *An investment in goodwill: financing the ransom of the leaders of the Crusade of Nikopolis*, «Viator» 45/3, 2014, pp. 261-97 at pp. 263, 265-6, 272-3.

mastic. Rhodes formed the dividing line between the eastern and western sectors into which the export trade was organised, and served as the distribution centre for mastic bound for all ports to its east¹²⁰. This offered the Knights a particularly easy and potent mechanism for applying pressure directly to the neighbouring Genoese regime, but it was one which they seem to have been inclined to use sparingly and with care. When in 1436 the authorities on Chios sent word to Rhodes of Genoa's intent to wage war on the Order, they insisted that they themselves disagreed with this action and had argued against it, and asked for the protection of Genoese goods on Rhodes from the impact of hostilities. Evidently the behaviour complained of by the metropolitan government had not been so harmful as to convince the Hospitallers' Genoese neighbours that the costs and dangers of open conflict were justified. The Knights, expressing their own desire for peace, agreed to guarantee the safety of the Mahona's mastic warehouses and of Chian subjects and their goods in general, espousing the long-standing friendship between Rhodes and Chios, while affirming their right to take action against other Genoese property, and their intention of doing so¹²¹. By contrast, when in 1457 the Order instigated reprisals for the piracy of Giuliano Gattilusio, after the cancellation of the initial seizure from Niccolò Doria it was the Mahona's mastic stores which were specifically targeted, although the safe-conducts granted to Genoese individuals in the following years suggest that steps were also instituted against the community more widely¹²².

The differentiated approach to different elements of the Genoese network revealed in these episodes was facilitated by that network's loose-knit character, which enabled an autonomous colonial administration to pursue its own external policy, at odds with that of the metropolitan government. In a case where repercussions rippled up the chain of authority from the actions of an individual acting locally, such as Giuliano Gattilusio, retaliation could be targeted locally so as to put direct pressure on the group best placed to restrain the perpetrator in future. On the other hand, where they rippled downwards from the policies of a higher and more distant authority, the same group could be

¹²⁰ A. Rovere, *Documenti della Maona di Chio (secc. XIV-XVI)*, Società ligure di storia patria, Genova, 1979 («Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria» 93 (n.s. 19/2)), pp. 102-6, 111-8, 129-33, 146, 175-6, 187-99, 255-62, 275-83, 301-12 (nos. 4, 8, 14, 18, 27, 36, 68, 81, 94); L. Balletto, *Notai Genovesi in Oltremare: atti rogati a Chio nel XIV secolo dal notaio Raffaele de Casanova*, Istituto internazionale di studi liguri, Bordighera, 2015, pp. 183-9 (no. 46); G. Pistarino, *Chio dei genovesi nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo*, Istituto poligrafico e Zecca de Stato, Roma, 1995, pp. 479-81; P. Argenti, *Occupation of Chios cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 124-5.

¹²¹ Aom 352 (*Libri Bullarum* 1436-7), f. 184^v.

¹²² Aom 368 (*Libri Bullarum* 1457-8), ff. 190^v-1.

shielded from the conflict, helping to retain the goodwill of sympathetic neighbours, who could act as advocates for the Order within the Genoese community in the same way as those individual associates whom the Knights likewise exempted. In the case of the Mahona, the fact that they were the main Genoese governmental authority in the Aegean made their goodwill and readiness to disclaim the policy of the commune a potent force for dampening the intensity and disruptiveness of the conflict. The lack of evidence for violence arising from the formal state of war existing between Genoa and the Hospital for over two and a half years in 1436-9 presumably owes much to the state of truce between the Knights and the regime that dominated the Genoese presence in their own Aegean neighbourhood. The ructions of later decades were driven by the actions of Genoese who were in at least some cases based in Chios, for which that island's authorities were held accountable and, far from being exempted from reprisal, were directly targeted. The troubles of the 1450s-1460s in particular seem to have been regarded as a conflict between the Order and Chios specifically, and were resolved by a diplomatic settlement between them, rather than an agreement with the metropolitan commune as in other disputes. Consequently, the comparative practical impact of these different conflicts may not be quite what one might expect from the greater formal severity of that of the 1430s. Rather than a greater readiness to make exemptions, it may be that the much greater number of safe-conducts issued to individuals in later episodes of strife reflects the absence of any blanket exemption such as that given to Chians in 1436. In a locally-generated conflict, accommodations between authorities on the spot could not give shelter to those actually most active in the Aegean, as they could in the case of a war dictated by policies directed from far-away Liguria.

The delicacy with which the Knights employed the mastic warehouses to influence the Mahona is indicated by the steps taken as the controversy of the 1450s-1460s drew towards its end. In December 1461, with the conflict still unresolved but negotiations to end it continuing, special provisions were made at the Mahona's request for a quantity of mastic which had been seized from its warehouses and auctioned off. The Order placed an embargo on the export of this mastic from Rhodes, effectively obliging those who had bought it to sell it back to the Mahona once it was in a position to make such a purchase¹²³. When the dispute was finally settled in May 1462 the Mahona made arrangements to recover the embargoed mastic¹²⁴. Their goal in this was presumably to prevent any infringement of their monopoly and protect prices. By

¹²³ Aom 371 (*Libri Bullarum* 1461), f. 231^{r-v}/233^{r-v}.

¹²⁴ Aom 372 (*Libri Bullarum* 1462), ff. 210^{v-2}.

blocking export pending a settlement the Hospitallers could both win goodwill and maintain their leverage over the Mahona. In the final agreement the Order explicitly retained the right to make seizures from the warehouses in the event of future conflict¹²⁵.

The carefully calibrated treatment of the mastic question may reflect an awareness both of the depot's value as a mechanism of pressure and of the potential for this tool to break if it was overused, a not uncommon feature of such economic sanctions. If the possibility of seizure came to seem too much of a liability, the Mahona might simply cease to use Rhodes as a depot, despite the convenience of its location for shipments to the south-eastern Mediterranean. This would deprive the Order both of the opportunity to extract compensation and apply pressure by this means in future, and of the fiscal and economic benefits of having this trade pass through their port. The same applied to the maintenance of the Genoese mercantile community and commercial activity in Rhodes more generally, with its economic and fiscal benefits for both sides, and its capacity to discourage damaging conflict and keep open conduits for reconciliation and future cooperation.

This reflects wider considerations affecting the handling of mercantile communities by a regime like that of the Order. Governments which controlled seafarers' access to important zones of production or consumption, or to major land trade routes, could afford to be relatively brusque and high-handed in disputes with commercial groups, confident that the limitations or absence of alternative ports would ultimately force the merchants to come to terms. In the fifteenth century the Mamluks exemplified such a case. A port like Rhodes, whose small island hinterland was itself of little consequence, could gain great commercial importance because its location at a junction of sea lanes made it an ideal point for redistribution and regional exchange, but the flexibility of sea travel meant that such centres were always susceptible to replacement by alternative ports if the disadvantages of using them outweighed the benefits. In the case of Rhodes and the Genoese, the fact that that community possessed a great commercial centre of its own as close by as Chios made the margin of advantage offered by using Rhodes especially narrow. The continued importance of the island in the Genoese commercial network in spite of the frequent ructions and shifts in political alignments of the fifteenth century must in part reflect the skill with which the Order managed its relations with the Genoese community and calibrated its response to outbreaks of violence.

The Hospital's profusion of ties to other political communities, arising from the multinational character of its own membership and estates, and

¹²⁵ Aom 372 (*Libri Bullarum* 1462), ff. 226^v, 232^{r-v}/233^{r-v}.

further ramified by the diversity of the commercial population attracted by its territorial base at Rhodes, made it the focus of an extraordinary confluence of the different ways in which one political community could be involved and entwined with the affairs of another. The diversity of its ties created wide-ranging potential for its members' and associates' other identities to implicate it in conflict. However, this was moderated by that same diversity of connections, and by the Order's role as a representative of a shared cause uniting the Catholic world, softening any impressions of partiality between different Christian groups. The strengthened association with the Catalan-Aragonese monarchy and community which developed during the fifteenth century disrupted this balance, embroiling the Order in recurrent strife with the Genoese in spite of their traditional affinity with one another and enduring ties. The fact that the conflicts that arose remained limited reflects some of the more advantageous aspects both of the internal subdivisions of the Hospitaller and Genoese networks and of their enduring interpenetration with one another. Against a backdrop of traditional amity and common interests in regional security and the continuation of commerce, the mediating influence of those who belonged to or had strong ties with both parties offered conduits for resolving differences. The intimacy between the two groups, manifested in both the Aegean and western European environments, made it easier to contain conflict and encourage compromise through the differentiated treatment of different individuals and groups. Such approaches were facilitated by, on the one hand, the distinction between the Order's central institutions and its western branches, often controlled by local knights, and on the other, the decentralised nature of authority within the Genoese community. The limitations of central control made it harder to regulate the provocative actions of those within such a network, but when the consequences of such violence were approached flexibly by authorities wishing to contain the problem, the internal distinctions of the networks involved and their familiarity and entanglement with one another enabled responses to be targeted or moderated flexibly, according to the circumstances of a particular case. Even if exaggerated at the time, the fears expressed in the complaint of 1435 reflected a real trend with harmful consequences for the Order's relations with the Genoese, as indicated by the degree to which the chronology of the ructions between the two groups echoed the rhythm of escalation and abatement in Genoa's conflict with the Crown of Aragon. However, the enduring depth and variety of the multinational affiliations of the Knights and the society of Rhodes, and the degree to which they remained entwined with the Genoese in particular, helped enable the two sides to avoid any more general and lasting breakdown of relations, which would have been harmful to them both.