Importing the Netherlands: Dutch influence on the evolution of Genoese shipping in the middle of the seventeenth century

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This article deals with Dutch influence on the evolution of Genoese naval production in the middle of the seventeenth century. It starts from the Dutch intellectual influence, and looks at how Genoese projectors, just as many others throughout Europe, tried to identify the causes of Dutch ascendacy in trade and war, in order to reproduce them. Attention in Genoa focused on the joint-stock companies, which were seen as a politically easy and uncontentious way to gather resources for naval expansion. This idea brought about the establishment of two joint-stock companies of trade. Meanwhile, Dutch merchants based in Genoa helped the importation of foreign know-how, in the form of ships and mariners. This process interacted with two other phenomena: on the one hand, the armaments race started by the Anglo-Dutch Wars, which resulted in the widespread use of the ships of the line, and on the other hand, the application of these vessels in the Mediterranean warfare. The Genoese shipyards, while they were updating their production along Dutch lines, took part in both processes. The Genoese imported ships of the line in a very early phase, learnt how to reproduce these vessels, and sold them to Venice during her wars against the Ottoman Empire. With time, they abandoned their previous specialization in galleys and small boats for cabotage, and started a local production of sailing vessels geared for export.

INTRODUCTION

According to a well-known definition by Sir William Temple, the economic and military achievements of the United Provinces in the seventeenth century made them 'the Wonder of their Neighbours'. While Temple had certainly in mind their closest neighbours, such as his native Britain, their influence extended much further. Also in the Italian peninsula the Dutch Republic was envied, and it was seen as a model to be studied, or even outright emulated.

This article will focus on the Dutch influ ence on the naval sector of one specific Italian state, the Republic of Genoa. This country consisted of a narrow coastal strip and the island of Corsica, and it had a distinctively maritime character. Even though it had long been embedded within the Habsburg-controlled

international order, in the middle of the seventeenth century it went through a phase of political and economic experimentation. In this process, the United Provinces played a twofold role.

First of all, they acted as an intellectual model. In the eyes of some Genoese projectors, the Dutch Republic was an example of naval development, whose success was due to factors which could be identified and hopefully reproduced in Genoa itself. This was true in particular for the joint-stock companies of trade, which were seen as one of the main drivers of Dutch success. The second kind of Dutch influence was more concrete: in those same decades, Genoese shipyards became more used to building, and Genoese sailors more used to operating, new ship designs from Northern Europe. This evolution involved first and foremost the warships used by the Genoese navy, or sold to foreign navies, but it eventually impacted all local shipping. The small-Dutch speaking merchant community provided a channel for the importation of material and skilled personnel that was critical for this process.

This evolution has a broader significance, as it took place during a crucial moment for the development of the ship of the line. At a certain moment, the Genoese Republic commissioned the construction of warships that were at the cutting edge in design, so much so that they were sequestered by the Dutch Republic itself for use during the First Anglo-Dutch War. Later on, Genoese naval military production was stimulated by the demand created by the Venetian-Ottoman Wars, which stimulated the use of this kind of ships in the Mediterranean warfare, hitherto mainly waged through galleys. Naval evolution in the seventeenth century, therefore, was a relatively diffused European- and Mediterrean-wide process, which did not only take place in Britain and the Netherlands, despite the obvious importance of this core area. Even a country such as the Republic of Genoa which, in the eyes of its own élite, was apparently a relatively marginal 'latecomer', could play an active role nevertheless.

In this article, I will first outline the intellectual characteristics of the 'Dutch model', as it was expressed in Genoese pamphlets and manuscripts. Then, I will describe how this brought about the importation of Dutch ships, which were used for commercial companies and for a new public flotilla. I will dwell on the role played by Dutch-speaking merchants in this process, and on its implications for contemporary naval technology. Finally, I will look at the legacy of this period, which stimulated a long-term change in Genoese shipbuilding, starting from the production of warships.

LOOKING FOR A 'DUTCH MODEL'

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Republic of Genoa was an essential ally of Spain. Though formally independent, Genoa depended for its defence on the diplomatic and military support of the Habsburgs, and was an essential link in the transfer of soldiers, information and capital throughout

their dominions. The Genoese ruling élite had specialized in the provision of financial services and the management of galleys for Spain, rather than in commercial shipping. As in this period Northern European carriers entered the Mediterranean freight market, Genoese shipyards and captains came to focus their activities on galleys on the one side, and small boats for cabotage on the other.[1]

This situation depended on the Spanish provision of security, and demand of financial and naval services. This precondition changed drastically after the 1630s, when the Habsburg finances and armies entered a period of dire crisis. Spain could no longer guarantee Genoese safety, and looked like a drastically less safe state to make business with. Opposition to the Spanish alliance had always existed in Genoa but, in this context, it became more mainstream. The middle of the century witnessed the growth of a faction of so-called *repubblichisti*, or *navalisti*, who wanted to set up a more independent foreign policy, based on a strengthened fleet, owned and managed by the Republic. The ruling élite was supposed to abandon finance and to redirect its business activities to maritime trade, as this could provide the basis of a powerful navy. Whatever fostered shipbuilding and sea commerce was welcome.[2]

In this context, the Dutch Republic was not just a potential competitor, but also an example to be followed. The *navalisti* often compared the past naval glory of their city with its current backwardness: in their eyes, the Dutch had followed in the footsteps of the Genoese themselves. References to the activities of the Dutchmen were so widespread that according to the historian Claudio Costantini one could even speak of a Dutch model (*modello olandese*).[3]

This is not the place to speak about the Dutch influence on seventeenth-century Italian political thought, or on how contemporary Italians looked at what was going on in the Netherlands.[4] It is enough to say that, even though most Italian observers had a pro-Catholic and pro-Spanish bias, this did not necessarily prevent them from expressing admiration for the accomplishments of the Dutch rebels.[5] Moreover, Dutch institutions could resonate with those thinkers who built up on a tradition of republican thought and civic virtue, and who, like

1 Claudio Costantini, *La Repubblica di Genova nell'età moderna* (Turin 1978); Carlo Bitossi, 'L'antico regime genovese, 1576–1797' in: Dino Puncuh ed., *Storia di Genova: Mediterraneo, Europa, Atlantico* (Genoa 2003) 391–504; Thomas A. Kirk, *Genoa and the Sea: Policy and Power in an Early Modern Maritime Republic, 1559–1684* (Baltimore 2005).

2 Carlo Bitossi, 'Il Genio Ligure Risvegliato. La potenza navale nel discorso politico genovese del Seicento' in: Francesca Cantù ed., *Linguaggi del potere nell'età barocca* (Rome 2009) 81–112.

3 Costantini, *La Repubblica di Genova*, 170.

4 Hans Cools, 'Some Italian Voices on Dutch Liberties', in: Paul Brood and Raymond Kubben eds., *The Act of Abjuration. Inspired and Insiprational. Twelve Authors on One of the Highlights of the Nationaal Archief of the Netherlands* (Nijmegen 2011) 1–13; C. Reijner, 'Il mito dell'Olanda. Politiek en geschiedenidschrijving in vroegmodern Italië', *Incontri. Rivista europea di studi italiani* 30:2 (2015) 41–55. Nina Lamal defended a PhD dissertation on the topic in 2014 (*Le orecchie sì piene di Fiandra: Italian news and histories on the revolt in the Netherlands, 1566–1648*), and she is expected to publish a book soon.

5 C. Reijner, 'Gesprekken in Genua. Giovanni Costa over het Twaalfjarig Bestand', *De Zeventiende Eeuw. Cultuur in de Nederlanden in interdisciplinair perspectief* 30:1 (2014) 76–96.

these Genoese, had reasons to mistrust the Habsburgs.[6] Finally, as the *navalisti* wanted to stimulate naval and military development, they were struck by the success story of the VOC, which captured people's imagination all over Europe.[7]

Joint-stock companies of trade became the *navalisti*'s silver bullet. In 1638 an anonymous projector called for the establishment of a large company of this kind, which was supposedly planned along the lines of the Dutch ones.[8] Similar references were made in the following years as well, and Giovanni Bernardo Veneroso reiterated them in 1650 in the most famous work of *navalista* propaganda, the *Genio ligure risvegliato*.[9]

According to the 1638 projector the VOC, even though it was a private enterprise, produced greatness and prestige (*grandezza et riputatione*) for the whole country. This attitude was shared by Veneroso, who described how the Dutch companies benefitted all the Netherlands by drawing on private resources, and with no expenses at all for the taxpayer.[10] The *navalisti* were by then facing the problem of gathering enough political support for their schemes, in a Republic where the decision-making process was often stopped by factionalism. Apparently, the Dutch had found a way to get around this problem.

The joint-stock organization and the India companies, however, were only part of the package. For Genoese observers, Dutch presence was mostly visible in the form of merchant ships that played an essential part in the Mediterranean trading system, bringing Northern goods such as grain or hides and selling freights to local traders.[11] Expanding the Genoese merchant marine meant entering their market niche, and imitating their naval technology.

The *navalisti* often spoke of the need to extend the production of *galeoni*: even though this means literally 'galleons', Genoese usage at the time was rather loose, and in practice the term could refer to any vessel that weighed more than 100 tons, had a round hull and was exclusively powered by wind.[12] They were mainly characterized by what they were *not*, that is, neither galleys nor boats for cabotage. Already in 1617 some *navalisti* were calling for public support for the construction of galleons, that could help defeat Dutch competition.[13]

6 S. Mastellone, 'I repubblicani del Seicento e il modello politico olandese', *Il pensiero politico* 18:2 (1985) 145–163.

7 Grégoire Holtz, 'The Model of the VOC in Early Seventeenth-Century France (Hugo Grotius and Pierre Bergeron' in: Siegfried Huigen, Jan L. de Jong and Elmer Kolfin eds., *The Dutch Trading Companies as Knowledge Networks* (Leiden 2010) 329–335.

8 Archivio di Stato di Genova (ASG), Archivio Segreto (AS), inv.nr. 1654, 65 bis, 20th October 1638.

9 Giovanni Bernardo Veneroso, *Il Genio Ligure Risvegliato* (Genoa 1650).

10 Veneroso, *Il Genio Ligure Risvegliato*, 120.

11 E. Grendi, 'I nordici e il traffico del porto di Genova: 1590–1666', *Rivista storica italiana* 83:1 (1971) 23–69 and Marie-Christine Engels, *Merchants, interlopers, seamen and corsairs : the 'Flemish' community in Livorno and Genoa, 1615–1635* (Hilversum 1997).

12 Luciana Gatti, *Navi e cantieri della Repubblica di Genova (secoli XVI-XVIII)* (Genoa 1999) 166–171.

13 ASG, Manoscritti 632, *Discorso sopra la fabbrica di dodeci galleoni*.

It is important not to take too literally the *navalista* claims that galleons were a new technology in Genoa. It is true that galleons were often bought from Northern Europe.[14] Recent research, however, has shown that local shipyards actually produced also ships of this kind, every now and then.[15] Nevertheless, ship production was another area of activity on which the Genoese could hope to learn from the Dutch.

There was, however, one crucial aspect which the *navalisti* did not want to copy from the Northerners. Up until 1652, as I will show, they wanted galleons to improve the Genoese merchant shipping, but did not expect them to be the backbone of a navy. As far as military purposes were concerned, they put their hopes on galleys. The very first joint-stock company they managed to create, the *Compagnia di Nostra Signora di Libertà* (established in 1638), armed only galleys.[16] Veneroso himself considered galleons mainly useful for logistical support.[17] In those same years another projector wrote a long plan for the foundation of a joint-stock company which was supposed to enter the East India trade, but whose main purpose was not fighting there, but rather constitute a source of income, for the construction of new galleys.[18] The main geopolitical concern of the *navalisti* was obviously the Mediterranean Sea, and in that area, characterized by relatively weak and unpredictable winds, it was still reasonable to consider galleys as the main tool of naval warfare.[19]

To sum up, the 'Dutch model' that the *navalisti* wanted to apply was shaped more by their expectations and requirements, than by the reality of Dutch trade and navigation. Joint-stock structures were an essential part of this myth, as they were seen as a quick and efficient way to align private interests in favour of some public goals. Their potential was shown by the success of the India companies. In any case, the Dutch commercial success stimulated the imitation of their shipbuilding technologies, but not, for the moment, a reconsideration of Genoese naval priorities.

FROM THE MODEL TO THE COMPANIES

Soon this intellectual model brought about concrete steps to renovate Genoese shipping. Dutch-speaking merchants settled in town played an essential role in this, as they had a privileged access to the Dutch market of ships, ship provisions and naval labour. It is important to remember that, while the

14 Gatti, *Navi e cantieri della Repubblica di Genova*, 143

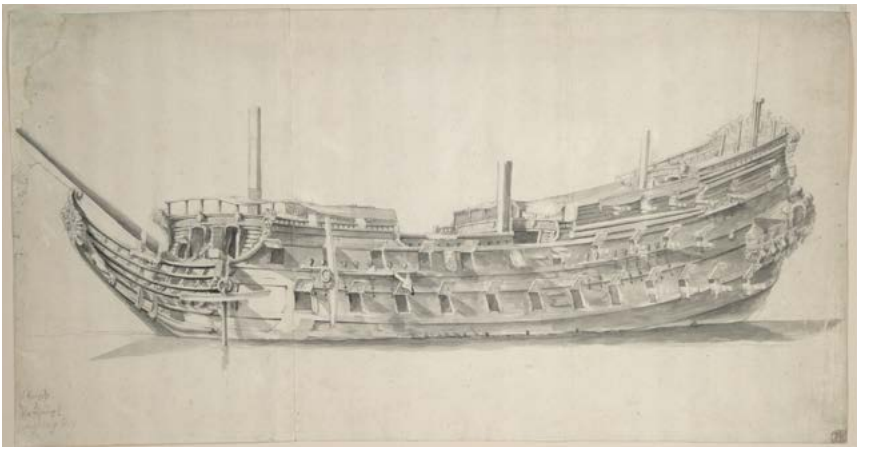
15 L. Lo Basso, 'Entre galères et vaisseaux. Armement et constructions navales en Ligurie au XVIIe siècle', *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* 84 (2012) 273–292.

16 Luca Lo Basso, *Uomini da remo: galee e galeotti del Mediterraneo in età moderna* (Milano 2003) 252–266.

17 Veneroso, *Il Genio Ligure Risvegliato*, 19.

18 Archivio Storico del Comune di Genova, Manoscritti Brignole Sale, 105.B.7.8, *Della necessità, che hà la Repubblica di Genova di armarsi, e del modo di mantenerla armata*.

19 Lo Basso, *Uomini da remo.*



Huis te Kruiningen, drawing on paper by Willem van de Velde. The drawing represents the hull of one of the ships which were sequestered from the Genoese. GREENWICH (UK), NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM

Dutch-speaking community in Genoa was relatively numerous (it numbered around 30 merchants, an amount comparable to the one in Venice),[20] only few Genoese merchants lived in the Dutch Republic.[21] Communication between the two regions was therefore either arranged by Genoese merchants who lived in Antwerp, and who managed to have the right contacts beyond the border, or by the Dutch-speaking merchants of Genoa.[22]

The role of the latter came to the fore during one of the first exploits of the *navalisti*, the establishment of the Genoese East India Company (*Compagnia Genovese delle Indie Orientali* or CGIO, 1647–1653). Even though projects about joint-stock companies, or even East India companies, had become popular in Genoa during the 1640s, the initiative was eventually taken by a Dutchman, Hendrik Muilman. Despite his role as a consul of the Dutch Republic, Muilman organized a full-fledged violation of the VOC privileges, and linked two Amsterdam merchants with some Genoese investors.[23] Eventually, at least 34 local businessmen bought shares of the company.[24]

East Asia seems to have been quite detached from the Genoese commercial interests at the time, and there was no local pool of people with relevant experience in this field.[25] The technical organization of the venture was then

20 Giorgio Tosco, *In Pursuit of the World's Trade: Tuscan and Genoese Attempts to Enter Trans-Oceanic Trade in the Seventeenth Century* (PhD thesis at the European University Institute 2020) 117.

21 A. Bicci, , 'Italiani ad Amsterdam nel seicento', *Rivista storica italiana* 102:3 (1990) 899–934. Also Maarten Draper is currently completing a PhD thesis on the topic at the European University Institute in Florence.

22 Julia Zunckel, *Rüstungsgeschäfte im Dreißigjährigen Krieg.: Unternehmerkräfte, Militärgüter und Marktstrategien im Handel zwischen Genua, Amsterdam und Hamburg* (Berlin 1997) 131–193.

23 Biblioteca Universitaria di Genova, Manoscritti B.II.39, c.138.

24 ASG, Notai Antichi (NA), inv.nr. 7327, 28th January 1648; inv.nr. 7331, 12th and 15th March 1650 and inv.nr. 7336, 31st July and 4th September 1652.

25 Tosco, *In Pursuit of the World's Trade*, 105.

managed by the Dutch investors, who procured two ships, with their officials and crew, on the Amsterdam market.[26] Also the rest of the Dutch-speaking community of Genoa played an important role. Two of them were the addressees of a bill of exchange sent by the captains of the CGIO during the travel.[27] More importantly, all the community tacitly supported the expedition, and nobody dared to bypass Muilman and to inform the authorities of the motherland of what was openly going on in Genoa.[28] For many practical purposes, therefore, the CGIO fits into the relatively common pattern of Dutch merchants using their skills and contacts to establish rival companies of the VOC under foreign flags of convenience.[29]

Eventually, the company ended in failure, as its ships were detected and captured by the VOC in 1649.[30] The VOC reimbursed the Genoese investors for their losses,[31] and the capital was transferred to another company, the San Giorgio Maritime Company (*Compagnia Marittima di San Giorgio*, or CMSG, 1653–1668).[32] The CMSG was not very successful, mainly because it failed to monitor efficiently its agents, and therefore its charter was not renewed after its expiration.[33] The CMSG operated in sectors which were more familiar to the Genoese, even though its activity extended at one point to Portuguese Brazil, and could rely on local captains and sailors.[34]

Nevertheless, a Dutch connection was present as well. One of the CMSG ships was bought in the Netherlands,[35] and one of its very first shareholders, and eventually one of its directors, was another Dutch-speaking merchant of Genoa, Samuel Sautijn junior.[36] Sautijn belonged to a rich and active family of merchants,[37] that traded in shipbuilding material such as tar,[38] or even directly arranged the provision of Dutch ships to Genoese freighters.[39] Apparently, he was in a good position to broker the importation of Dutch vessels to Genoa. However, the activities of Sautijn showed that this process was not straightforward.

26 S. Subrahmanyam, 'On the Significance of Gadflies: the Genoese East India Company of the 1640s', *Journal of European Economic History* 17:3 (1988) 559–581.
27 ASG, NA, inv.nr. 7329, 28th June 1649.
28 Nationaal Archief te Den Haag (NL-HaNA), Staten-Generaal (SG), inv.nr. 6906, 13th August 1650.
29 Cátia Antunes, Susana Münch Miranda and Jõao Paulo Salvado, 'The Resources of Others: Dutch Exploitation of European Expansion and Empires, 1570–1800', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 131:3 (2018) 501–521.
30 N.P. van den Berg, 'De Oost-Indische Compagnie der edelen van Genua (1648–1649)', *Tijdschrift voor Indische taal-, land- en volkenkunde* 24 (1877) 442–474.
31 NL-HaNA, SG, inv.nr. 6907, 24th September 1652.
32 ASG, Notai Giudiziari (NG), inv.nr. 2311, 9th June 1654.
33 Tosco, *In Pursuit of the World's Trade*, 145–148.
34 Leonor Freire Costa, 'Genoveses nas rotas do açúcar: a intromissão em exclusivos coloniais portugueses (c. 1650)' in: Manuel Herrero Sánchez et al. eds., *Génova y la Monarquía Hispánica* (Genoa 2011) 915–932.
35 ASG, NG, inv.nr. 2311, 27th August 1655.
36 Ibidem, 30th March 1658.
37 Tosco, *In Pursuit of the World's Trade*, 123–124.
38 ASG, NA, inv.nr. 7327, 5th June 1648.
39 Ibidem, inv.nr. 7331, 1st April 1650.

All these ships were employed by private, privileged companies and, as we saw, they were supposed to be primarily used as merchantmen, rather than warships. The public navy of the Republic of Genoa was composed of galleys, and the *navalisti* had the objective to increase their number, rather than changing its character.[40] This, however, changed suddenly in the 1650s, when the Republic of Genoa added a squadron of galleons to them. This shift coincided with the beginning of the armaments race that brought about the development of the ships of the line.[41]

This development was linked to the idiosincratic character of the political economy of the Genoese patriciate. In the context of the 1640s and the 1650s, as Spain was undergoing the most dramatic phases of its financial and military crisis, the Genoese started to disinvest from that country, and needed to move bullion out of the Iberian peninsula. This had traditionally been done on the galleys that sailed regularly between Spain and Genoa. However, in that moment of crisis, Habsburg authorities started to take a harder stance on the issue, and began inspecting galleys in port and sequestering illegal shipments. It was necessary to move silver on ships which were capable of mooring out of port, but these needed to be heavily armed to protect their cargo. In short, the Genoese élite needed strong and militarily powerful sailing ships, exactly the kind of vessels that they usually called galleons.[42]

The first vessels were commissioned in 1652 in the Netherlands, where the Genoese hoped they would get a better service for a smaller price.[43] Already in the spring of the following year, two ships were ready for use. The person in charge of the deal was Samuel Sautijn senior, the father of the merchant with the same name who lived in Genoa. Even though Sautijn was an experienced trader, his track record was far from auspicious: probably unbeknowst to the Genoese, in the 1630s he had performed a similar service for the Republic of Venice, and after being accused of scam he had to escape from Italy.[44] Even leaving aside Sautijn's attitude, the political situation was rapidly worsening, as the First Anglo-Dutch War showed the inefficiencies of the Dutch fleet.

40 On the public fleet of galleys, cfr. Lo Basso, *Uomini da remo*, 206–266.

41 Jan Glete, *Navies and nations : warships, navies and state building in Europe and America, 1500–1860* (Stockholm 1993); Jonathan R. Dull, *The age of the ship of the line : the British & French navies, 1650–1815* (Lincoln 2009).

42 G. C. Calcagno, 'La navigazione convogliata a Genova nella seconda metà del Seicento' in: *Guerra e commercio nell'evoluzione della marina genovese tra XVI e XVII secolo* (Genoa 1973) 265–392.

43 Giorgio Tosco, *La Compagnia Genovese delle Indie Orientali e i rapporti fra Genova e le Province Unite nel Seicento* (MA thesis at the University of Pisa 2015) 127–135; Rocco Boero, *Vascelli olandesi per la Repubblica: la missione diplomatica di Giovanni Stefano Spinola (1653–1656)* (BA thesis at the University of Genoa 2016).

44 Pit Dehing, 'De Amsterdamse Wisselbank en Venetië in de zeventiende eeuw' in: Margriet den Roever ed., *Amsterdam Venetië van het Noorden* (Amsterdam 1991) 120–136.

Amsterdam Harbour Scene, painting by Reinier Nooms alias Zeeman, ca. 1664–1665. Oil on canvas. The ship on the right, which can be identified from the panel on the stern, is the *Huis van Zwieten*, one of the ships sequestered from the Genoese. According to Henriette Rahusen, researcher at the National Gallery of Art, the carved figure on top of the panel was made for the original clients, and represents the famous Genoese admiral Andrea Doria (Rahusen, 'Reinier Nooms called Zeeman', 3–4). WASHINGTON (USA), NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

As it is well known, after the conclusion of the Civil War the English Commonwealth started a program of naval rearmament. The new English ships were not just powerful on their own, but they were also able to coordinate better their movements, and to fight in a line of battle rather than in many individual skirmishes. The Dutch navy, in contrast, relied extensively on the commission of merchantmen for war purposes, and was mainly organized as a cruising fleet, specialized in protecting lines of communication from isolated assaults rather than in engaging the bulk of an enemy fleet. As a result, in the initial phases of the First Anglo-Dutch War, the Dutch fared quite poorly. They were quick to learn, however, and by 1653 they were hastily commissioning new, heavier ships.[45]

It is in this context that the Genoese-commissioned ships captured their attention. Genoese sources focus on their cost, and they do not clarify their technical details. However, as the vessels were sequestered by Dutch authorities and incorporated in their fleet, some more details are available. The shape was modified somewhat after the commission from the Genoese, and they

45 Glete, *Navies and Nations*, 179–182; Jaap R. Bruijn, *The Dutch navy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Columbia 1993) 59–70.

were made larger on the stern, arguably in order to make them low enough to be able to sail in the shallow waters of the Zuyderzee.[46] For the rest, however, their basic structure remained arguably the same.

The two Genoese ships became the *Huis van Zwieten* and the *Huis van Kruiningen*, and were used, among the others, by Witte de With and Michiel de Ruyter. The first one was 146 Amsterdam feet (41,3 metres) long and numbered 60 guns, whereas the second one was 136 feet (39,6 metres) long, and numbered 54 guns.[47] Some visual sources are also available, especially drawings of the ships by Willem van de Velde, and they show ships with four masts, two gun decks and an afterdeck.[48] In this particular moment, these were big ships: at the beginning of the war, only four ships were longer than 130 feet, and still in February 1653, there were plans to build only 3 ships longer than 140 feet.[49]

It is no wonder, then, that the Dutch proceeded with the sequester. As the Genoese soon discovered, this had been favoured by Sautijn himself, who hoped to be paid a commission by both the Genoese and the Dutch authorities. However, it is possible that even with a less shady broker the outcome would have been similar. The Genoese had inadvertently chosen a moment of sudden change for the renewal of their fleet, and they had put themselves at the technological frontier. Their commission stimulated a transformation that was going on in the Dutch shipyards, stimulated by the demand of new and stronger warships.

A NEW NAVAL PRODUCTION

The diplomatic crisis caused by the sequester did not bring about lasting consequences. As soon as the Genoese authorities learned about the news, they sent an agent, the Antwerp-based merchant Giovanni Stefano Spinola, to negotiate on the issue. He quickly found out about Sautijn's scam and managed to obtain a reimbursement from the Dutch Republic. Meanwhile, the end of the war was easing the pressure on the market, and Spinola could broker

46 ASG, AS, inv.nr. 2335, 12th September 1653. I thank Victor Enthoven for a conversation on this issue.

47 Johan E. Elias, *De vlootbouw in Nederland in de eerste helft der 17e eeuw, 1596–1655* (Amsterdam 1933) 150–155; James Bender, *Dutch Warships in the Age of Sail 1600–1714: Design, Construction, Careers and fates* (Barnsley 2014) 195.

48 The images are available on the websites of the National Maritime Museum in Greenwhich (United Kingdom) and the National Gallery of Art of Washington (USA). Cfr. https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/157864.html, https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/144962.html, https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/141677.html and https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.154215.html (all accessed on 13th May 2020). On the painting, cfr. Henrietta Rahusen, 'Reinier Nooms, called Zeeman/Amsterdam Harbor Scene/c. 1654/1655,' Dutch Paintings of theSeventeenth Century, NGA Online Editions, https://purl.org/nga/collection/artobject/154215 (accessed on 13th May, 2020)

49 Elias, *De vlootbouw in Nederland*, 117 and 157.

the procurement of four new ships, by 1655. In the following decades the small squadron, known as *Nuovo armamento* ('new armaments', as opposed to the old ones made of galleys) organized convoys, mainly on the route between Genoa and Cádiz.[50] The aim of securing the importation of silver was reached, and the Genoese managed to profit from the upward trend in the importation of American silver that started in the 1660s.[51]

Meanwhile, however, the importation of naval technology was producing its effects in Genoa. Precise numbers are hard to come by, but scholars concur on identifying an upward trend in the constructin of 'galleons' in the second half of the seventeenth century.[52] Its effects are clearly visible on the *Nuovo armamento*: after the arrival of the first squadron of ships from the Netherlands, their replacements were all made in the Republic of Genoa.[53] This was visible on the composition of the crews as well: whereas in the beginning the Genoese had recruited many Dutch-speaking sailors to man their galleons, so much so that they had struggled two coordinate two parallel chains of command,[54] in later decades Genoese sailors became familiar with this kind of ships, which were used not just by the state navy, but by the merchant fleet as well.[55] As the *navalisti* had desired, a new kind of naval technology gradually spread.

This does not mean, however, that the link with the Netherlands disappeared, and the Dutchmen of Genoa kept on playing an essential role in providing naval material, in the broadest sense. Even Samuel Sautijn junior, despite what his father had done, provided rigging and hawser to the Genoese navy.[56] In this context of naval updating, the Genoese could afford to rely less on individual Dutch merchants, and to trust less their products: after a legal dispute on the provision of some rigging, Genoese authorities asked Sautijn to provide them with new one, and specified that it was supposed to be made in Genoa.[57] A few months later, Sautijn was even killed by a Dutch competitor of his, whom he had superseded as a supplier.[58] Nevertheless, even in this phase in which the Genoese shipyards gradually became more autonomous, Northern merchants were still important.

In this period the Genoese shipbuilders did not only profit from the construction of the galleon state fleet, but also from political events that were changing naval warfare in the Mediterranean. Despite the fact that the *naval-*

50 Calcagno, *La navigazione convogliata a Genova.*

51 Michel Morineau, *Incroyables gazettes et fabuleux métaux : les retours des trésors américains d'après les gazettes hollandaises (XVIe-XVIIe siècles)* (Cambridge-Paris 1985) 262.

52 Roberto Lenti, 'L'organizzazione di un cantiere per l'armamento pubblico nel sec. XVII' in: *La storia dei genovesi: atti del VI Convegno di studi sui ceti dirigenti nelle istituzioni della repubblica di Genova* (Genoa 1986) 39–49; Gatti, *Navi e cantieri*; Lo Basso, 'Entre galères et vaisseaux'.

53 Calcagno, *La navigazione convogliata a Genova.*

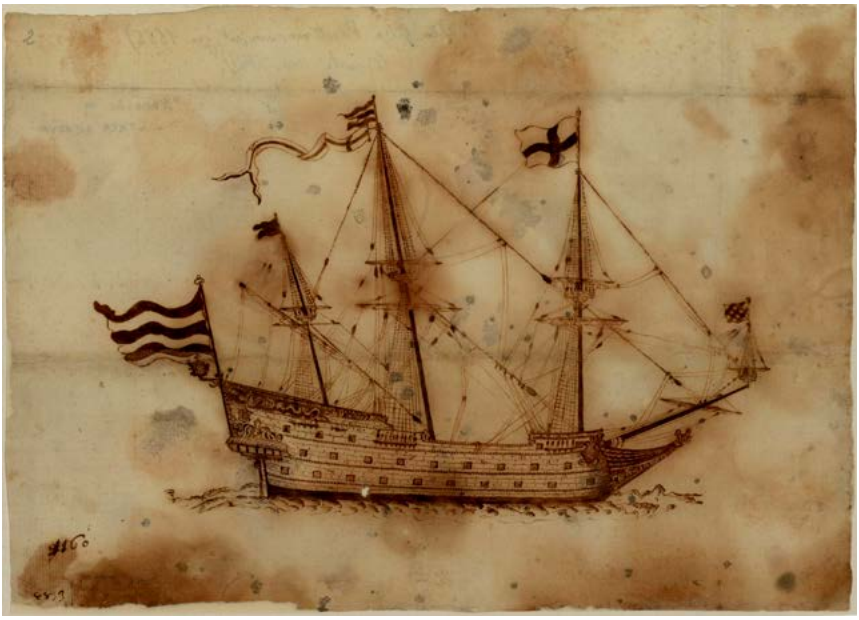
54 ASG, AS, inv.nr. 1667, 22nd March 1655.

55 Luca Lo Basso, *Gente di bordo : la vita quotidiana dei marittimi genovesi nel XVIII secolo* (Rome 2016).

56 ASG, NA, inv.nr. 7350, 31st January 1661.

57 Ibidem., inv.nr. 1668, 10th June 1661.

58 Ibidem., inv.nr. 1579, 29th December 1661.



Model of a warship the way the Dutch usually build (Modello di nave da guerra che usano fare gli Olandesi), anonymous, drawing on paper. Even though the drawing is not dated, the caption, and its location next to documents pertaining to the purchase, connects it to the events described in this article. It flies a Genoese flag, and it arguably shows one of the vessels bought in Holland that reached Genoa in 1655. GENOVA (ITALY), ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI GENOVA

isti in the 1640s put their hopes on galleys, the centrality of this kind of ships in this environment was gradually questioned. Already in the beginning of the century, the Barbary corsairs had changed the composition of their fleet and, after the arrival of Northern European renegades, they had relied more on ships exclusively powered by wind.[59] The long Venetian-Ottoman War over Candia (1645–1669) accelerated this process, and at the end of the conflict sailing ships played an essential role in the navies of both countries (which were the leading naval powers in the Eastern Mediterranean).[60] Of course, this raised the demand for vessels of this kind in the region.

The change was gradual. At first, Venice had rented English and Dutch merchantmen for mainly logistical support. These were the kind of ships that constituted the bulk of the Dutch navy before the English Wars: trading vessels which were rented for a limited amount of time, kept their usual captains, who had to follow the instructions of the admirals of the fleet, and were provided with more guns than usual.[61] However, the Venetians success-

59 M. van Gelder, 'The Republic's Renegades: Dutch Converts to Islam in Seventeenth-Century Diplomatic Relations with North Africa', *Journal of Early Modern History* 19:2–3 (2015) 175–198.

60 Guido Candiani, *Dalla galea alla nave di linea : le trasformazioni della marina veneziana (1572–1699)* (Novi Ligure 2012).

61 L. Sicking, 'Selling and Buying Protection. Dutch War Fleets at the Service of Venice,

fully expanded their role. They even managed to use them to enact the first winter-long blockade in the history of naval warfare, sealing the Dardanelles between 1648 and 1649 and cutting the supplies for the enemy capital.[62] In the same area, in 1655, the Venetians successfully managed to coordinate sailing ships and galleys to such an extent that the Ottomans lost five sixths of their whole fleet.[63] The slow but sturdy Northern ships stopped the enemy fleet, allowing the galleys to trap and destroy it.

Obviously, the Ottomans were not slow in responding, and started using the same strategies of their opponents. Besides hiring merchantmen and relying on their Barbary allies, they started building up their own sailing vessels.[64] The Republic of Venice followed suit, and over the following decades both countries, that went to war again in 1684–1699 and 1714–1718, started to dispose their ships in a line of battle. Galleys were never discarded, and they were still essential in patrolling, providing logistical support, and even towing ships when there was no wind. However, their role was now to assist sailing ships, which were at the center of the strategy, rather than the other way around.[65]

This process had a spillover effect on Genoese shipyards. Despite the naval build-up in its own arsenal, the Republic of Venice still needed to procure ships abroad, and it rented at least eight Genoese galleons between the 1680s and the 1690s. These were vessels that were used for both war and trade, but were generally as big and as powerful as the ones that the Genoese had bought in Amsterdam in the 1650s, in the beginning of the Anglo-Dutch arms race. For example, the *Nostra Signora dell'Apparizione*, built in the coastal town of Savona in 1673, started its career by transporting rice and corned beef, but ten years later was rented as a warship. It was 100 Venetian feet (34,7 metres) long, and could carry 60 guns.[66] An old Genoese convoy ship that the Venetians rented in the same period had a similar amount of guns, and was 120 feet (41,6 metres) long.[67]

It was only the beginning. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the Genoese galleon production was mainly geared towards the exportation.[68] In 1717, 7,5% of the ships used in the *Carrera de Indias* between Spain and America had been built in Genoa.[69] In the space of a few decades, the Genoese had stopped depending on foreigners for the provision of sailing ships, and they had renovated their naval activity.

1617–1667', *Studi Veneziani* 67 (2013) 89–106.
62 Candiani, *Dalla galea alla nave di linea*, 91–93.
63 Ibidem, 124–125.
64 Ibidem, 111–112.
65 Ibidem, 168.
66 Lo Basso, 'Entre galères et vaisseaux', 279–283.
67 Ibidem, 284.
68 Gatti, *Navi e cantieri*, 18.
69 Catia Brilli, *Genoese trade and migration in the Spanish Atlantic* (Cambridge 2016) 44–46.

CONCLUSION

The process that I outlined could be considered as a classic example of import substitution. In the beginning the Republic of Genoa had a naval production mainly geared towards galleys and small boats, and had to get 'galleons' from abroad. The vagueness of the term they used, which is especially baffling when one tries to connect Genoese sources with foreign ones, is indicative of the situation. The Genoese could lump together many different ships, as they all shared a clear difference from the bulk of their naval production. Over the decades, however, the picture changed, and clearly the commissions of foreign galleons promoted by the *navalisti*, whether for the joint-stock companies or for the *nuovo armamento*, facilitated the process.[70] Thanks to their efforts, the economy of the Republic of Genoa developed a strategically important sector.

However, the significance of these events is not limited to the Genoese history. In fact, they also show how naval evolution could proceed in the Early Modern world. In this as in other sectors, it is common to identify a process of gradual diffusion, from a center where the main changes take place, towards the periphery.[71] However, the process I showed allows us to draw a more complicated picture. The development of naval technology and war fleets in Early Modern Europe was, up to a certain extent, a European-wide process, where factors and inputs from different areas interacted with each other. Even an apparently marginal state such as the Republic of Genoa did not just receive imputs from outside, and tried its best to steer the wave it was riding.

There was a certain amount of serendipity involved. The Genoese naval expansion started with a theoretical elaboration, which tried to identify a Dutch model in order to pursue political goals, and with a policy demand from the ruling élite, which needed to protect the silver exports from Spain. However, the theory was misleading: the joint-stock companies did not prove to be an easy path to success, and in the end they were discarded. The importation of galleons was a more important and productive result. However, in the end, not even the establishment of the convoys and the commission of sophisticated warships turned Genoa into a military powerful state, nor did they eliminate the need of a powerful protector in foreign policy.

Some of the crucial factors of the Genoese evolution were in fact located outside of Genoa. The Republic could tap into technology that was produced in the Netherlands, thanks also to the links provided by the Dutch-speaking community that it hosted, and sold the new ships it built to Venice, which was meanwhile appreciating their potential in Mediterranean warfare. Therefore, Genoa could take advantage from the experimentation brought about by two conflicts in which it was not involved, those between England and the Dutch

70 L. Lo Basso, 'Diaspora e armamento marittimo nelle strategie economiche dei Genovesi nella seconda metà del XVII secolo: una storia globale', *Studi storici* 56:1 (2015) 137–155.

71 Dull, *The Age of the Ship of the Line.*

Republic on the one side, and Venice and the Ottoman Empire on the other. The Genoese intermediary position in broader processes that spanned Europe and the Mediterranean was a crucial factor in the development of their own shipping.

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