Of the Empire But Not In It: Charles V and Genoa*

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Introduction

The Republic of Genoa was critically important to Charles V's imperial ambitions in Italy and to the financial health of the entire Spanish empire; as early as 1527, the Spanish ambassador in Genoa, Don Lope de Soria (?–1544), referred to that city as "the door and the key to Italy". Militarily, Genoa served as the port and entry point into northern Italy, and after Andrea Doria (1466–1560), admiral of the Genoese fleet, committed to serving Charles in 1528, Genoese ships anchored Spanish efforts to defend and dominate the Mediterranean. Genoa also served as the communications link between Spain and its territories and armies in Italy. Last and definitely not least, Genoese bankers financed many enterprises of the Habsburg empire. Given Genoa's obvious importance, an interesting question arises: why did Charles V allow Genoa to remain an independent republic? Why didn't he annex the city, and make it a permanent part of 'Spanish Italy?' This

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Quoted in Arturo Pacini, "Poiché gli stati non sono portatili": geopolitica e strategia nei rapporti tra Genova e Spagna nel Cinquecento", in Génova y la Monarquía Hispánica (1528–1713), eds. Manuel Herrero Sánchez et al., vol. II (Genoa: Società Ligure di Storia Patria, 2011), 413–57. Pacini is the foremost historian of Genoa during the reign of Charles V. See also idem, I presupposti politici del "secolo dei Genovesi": la riforma del 1528 (Genoa: Società Ligure di Storia Patria, 1990); idem, La Genova di Andrea Doria nell'Impero di Carlo V (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1999); idem, "Genoa and Charles V", The World of Emperor Charles V, eds. Wim Blockmans and Nicolette Mout (Amsterdam: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, 2004), 161–99; idem, Desde Rosas a Gaeta: la costruzione della rotta spagnola nel Mediterraneo occidentale nel secolo XVI (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2013).

See Manuel Herrero Sánchez, "Génova y el sistema imperial hispánico", in La Monarquía de las naciones: patria, nación, y naturaleza en la Monarquía de España, eds. Antonio Álvarez-Ossorio and Bernardo J. García García (Madrid: Fundación Carlos de Amberes, 2004), 529–62. On 'Spanish Italy' see Aurelio Musi, Nel sistema imperiale: l'Italia spagnola (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1994); Spain in Italy: Politics, Society, and Religion 1500–1700, eds. Thomas J. Dandelet and John A. Marino (Leiden: Brill, 2007); The Spanish Presence in Sixteenth-Century Italy, eds. Piers Baker-Bates and Miles Pattenden (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

chapter will suggest some possible answers, by examining two particular historical moments when Charles, his state ministers and most especially his ambassadors in Genoa, discussed the possibility of doing just that. Both moments were precipitated by political crises: 1527 till 1528, when Genoa briefly fell under French control and 1547, when Charles nearly lost Genoa again due to the abortive Fieschi revolt.³ Ultimately, as I will argue, the main reason why an imperial takeover of Genoa never happened is because Charles feared alienating the Genoese and more specifically Andrea Doria, upon whom so much depended. And as we shall see, Charles's ambassadors sometimes gave conflicting advice on this issue, perhaps because of their often-problematic relationships with the Genoese admiral.

The strategic choices Charles V and his ministers and ambassadors faced concerning their relationship with Genoa—coercion versus persuasion, hard power versus soft power—reflect the wider Habsburg struggle for hegemony throughout the Mediterranean, one of the main themes of the present volume. Genoa represented one of the linchpins of the Habsburg bid for mastery in the Mediterranean, as well as the Atlantic, through much of the early modern period.⁴ The Habsburgs understood that if there was going to be a 'Habsburg Mediterranean', then the Genoese had to play a major role. But the Habsburgs also discovered that the Genoese had their own agenda in the Mediterranean world, and they were not afraid to use their money and what military might they possessed as leverage on the Habsburgs to advance those interests.⁵ And chief among those interests was their utter determination to maintain their political independence.

On the Fieschi revolt see Pacini, *La Genoa di Andrea Doria*, 593–610, and Michael J. Levin, "A Failure of Intelligence: Gómez Suárez de Figueroa and the Fieschi Conspiracy, 1547", *Bulletin for Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies* 38 (2013), 19–37.

⁴ The term "Habsburg bid for mastery" comes from Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (New York: Vintage Books, 1987), chapter 2. On the Genoese role in the Spanish Atlantic world, see Matteo Salonia, *Genoa's Freedom: Entrepreneurship, Republicanism and the Spanish Atlantic* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2017).

⁵ See Matthias Schnettger and Carlo Taviani, eds., Libertà e dominio: il sistema politico Genovese. Le relazioni esterne e il controllo del territorio (Rome: Viella, 2011), as well as Matthias Schnettger, "Principe sovrano" oder "civitas imperialis"? Die Republik Genua und das Alte Reich in der Frühen Neuzeit (1556–1797) (Mainz: von Zabern, 2006), and Dauverd, Imperial Ambition.

Lope de Soria in the 1520s

Don Lope de Soria, the ambassador quoted above, would be one of the first to deal with Genoese intransigence. A career diplomat, Soria served as resident ambassador in Genoa from 1522 until he was replaced in 1529.6 It is important to note that in the quarter-century before Soria's tenure, Genoa had experienced two extended periods of direct French rule, from 1499 till 1512 and from 1515 till 1522. These periods of foreign rule had convinced most Genoese citizens that their political and economic well-being depended on their maintaining the city's status as an independent republic. Between 1522 and 1527 Genoa, under the leadership of the Doge Antoniotto Adorno (1479-1528), became an ally of Charles V, and assisted him in his struggle against the French in Italy.8 But Adorno and the other Genoese leaders made their commitment to independence very clear to both Charles and his ambassador. The emperor, for his part, repeatedly assured the Genoese that he would honour their wishes. To cite one example, in November 1524 Charles wrote to Soria that he should "use the best words possible to assure the Genoese that I will do all in my power to defend them, their state and their liberty" if in return they did their utmost to aid Charles in his wars against France. Soria did just that on numerous occasions, and seemed confident that it was working. In February 1525 he reported that:

I said to the Doge and the community [of Genoa] everything you had commanded me to say, they are very happy and contented with all of the good will and love you have shown them... They humbly kiss your hands, they know the care Your Majesty takes to liberate them and all of Italy from all tyranny, and they all enjoy their liberties, and because of this and for everything touching on your service they will gather all of the forces and manpower possible.¹⁰

⁶ See Henar Pizarro Llorente, "Un embajador de Carlos V en Italia: don Lope de Soria (1528–1532)", in *Carlos V y la quiebra del humanismo político en Europa (1530–1555)*, ed. José Martínez Millán (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2001), vol. IV, 119–55, and Eduardo Ibarra y Rodríguez and G. Arsenio de Izaga, "Católogo de los documentos del archivo de Lope de Soria, embajador del emperador Carlos V", *Boletín de la Real Academia de Historia* 98, no. 1 (1931), 363–416.

Ohristine Shaw, "Concepts of Libertà in Renaissance Genoa", in Communes and Despots in Medieval and Renaissance Italy, eds. John E. Law and Bernadette Paton (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 177–90.

⁸ For the best recent description of the intricate Italian Wars, see Michael Mallett and Christine Shaw, *The Italian Wars 1494–1559* (London: Routledge, 2012).

⁹ Real Academia de Historia (RAH), Soria, 9/1951, #37, Charles V to Lope de Soria, 15 November 1524 (emphasis added).

¹⁰ RAH, Salazar A34, fol. 69r–73r, Lope de Soria to Charles V, 26 February 1525.

Note that Soria used the word liberty in two different senses, first emphasizing the idea of liberty from French tyranny, while also acknowledging the Genoese desire to maintain their liberty as a republic independent of any foreign power.

In the summer of 1527, however, Soria began reporting troubling signs of political unrest in Genoa. There was, he said, an increasing amount of talk about radically reforming the Genoese government, in order to reduce the factional conflict which had long plagued the city and creating a new "union" amongst the citizens.¹¹ (The factions consisted of the most powerful aristocratic families in Genoa, notably the Adorno family, which was pro-Spanish, and the Fragoso family, which was pro-French.) In early May 1527 Soria sent a long coded letter describing these discussions, noting that he had repeatedly told both the Doge and the general citizenry of Genoa "that they should not innovate such a thing without first consulting Your Majesty and your ministers here in Italy [...] [and they] should not enact such a novelty [novedad] without your wisdom". 12 (This very public stance against the reforms would come back to haunt Soria. 13) Soria indicated that in his opinion such a union would be bound to fail, given the deep political divisions in the city; furthermore, such a move would amount to a tacit break with Charles. Interestingly, Soria also reported that he was not the only one who was worried. He noted that in addition to the emperor, he had also sent letters to Charles' ministers and military commanders in Italy, including the commander in chief of the imperial forces, Charles III, Duke of Bourbon (1490-1527), and the Viceroy of Naples, Charles de Lannoy (1487–1527). 14 None had responded except Bourbon, "who ordered me on his part to beg the Doge and those of this city to cease these discussions, because they are a disservice to Your Majesty". Soria ended the letter with a warning and a suggestion for a preemptive strike: "I believe that this union will proceed if it is not forcefully prevented, it will be then necessary that it should be done with force of arms, with Your Majesty taking the city's fortifications and installing a governor in the city". This

These internal discussions actually dated back to 1506, when the city revolted against French rule. Shaw, "Concepts of *Libertà*", 189, and Claudio Constantini, *La repubblica di Genova* (Turin: UTET Libreria, 1986), 14–15.

¹² RAH, Salazar A40, #395, Lope de Soria to Charles V, 9 and 11 May 1527.

Pacini writes that Soria had already angered many Genoese back in 1523, during his first year on the job, by openly supporting the Adorno faction. Pacini, *La Genova di Andrea Doria*, 205–10.

Giuseppe Galasso describes Bourbon and Lannoy as part of a group of elite noblemen who between 1520 and 1530 formed an important faction in the imperial court, championing the idea of consolidating Habsburg imperial control of Italy. Giuseppe Galasso, *Carlos V y la España imperial*, trans. Carmen Marchante (Madrid: CEEH, 2011), 115–18.

appears to be the first time that Soria advised such a move. He admits that such an undertaking would not be "convenient" but, as he said, "it seems to me that Your Majesty would have just cause, it is important for your service and your state, as well as the service of God and of the city".¹⁵

In Soria's letters, he often argued that the annexation of Genoa would be justified not only by reasons of state but also by the will of God. He also repeatedly offered seemingly contradictory advice. On the one hand, he suggested several times that the Genoese would be amenable to an imperial takeover; on the other hand, he often complained that the Genoese could not be trusted to remain loyal. On 16 May 1527, for example, Soria sent Charles another remarkable coded letter suggesting that the discussions of political reform might be providing Charles with a golden opportunity. As he wrote,

I think God has permitted these discussions to go forward so that Your Majesty may have just cause to assure yourself of control of this land, which is so important to your state and service, by taking into your hands the [city's] fortifications and placing a governor in the city, such as has been done by all the princes who made themselves dukes of Milan, and in truth it would be in the service of God and the general good of this city if it were to be ruled by Your Majesty's governor rather than the head of one of the factions [...] because then there would be equal justice for all and without tyranny.¹⁶

This is an extraordinarily blatant expression of Spanish imperialism. It was of course arrogant for Soria to assume that what was good for Spain would also be good for God and Genoa. But he did not assume that the Genoese would agree on what was good for them. He continued:

But for the moment it seems to me that Your Majesty ought to dissimulate this, and neither approve nor disapprove this proposed union, nor reprove it, or cause them suspicion that you wish to change anything, because they are people of the devil and fond of novelties [porque son gente del diablo y amigos de novedades], and they need little excuse to start some rebellion, which would be a great disservice to Your Majesty, the world being what it is.¹⁷

¹⁵ RAH, Salazar A40, #395, Soria to Charles V, 9 and 11 May 1527.

¹⁶ RAH, Salazar A40, #432, Lope de Soria to Charles V, 16 May 1527.

¹⁷ Ibid.

So, not only was Soria an unabashed imperialist, he was also devious, and of course bigoted against the Italians.¹⁸

As it turned out, Soria's comment that the Genoese needed little excuse to start a rebellion would turn out to be prophetic. At this same time in May 1527, imperial troops committed the infamous Sack of Rome. Just afterwards, the French King Francis I took advantage of the fact that imperial forces were concentrated in central Italy, leaving Liguria and Lombardy relatively undefended. With the aid of Andrea Doria, the mercenary naval commander who had long served France, French forces besieged Genoa, which surrendered in August. ¹⁹ Soria and the proimperial Doge Antoniotto Adorno were forced to flee the city. During this period of flight and exile, Soria returned to the idea of taking Genoa by force, and his advice now took on the added weight of "I told you so" ²⁰ as he wrote,

On recovering Genoa, Your Majesty ought to appoint a governor there, who would govern in your name, and the whole city would be very content, and it will be in the service of God [...] and also Your Majesty ought to install a military captain [in command of the city fortifications], and in this way you can be confident of your hold on the city, and you would not lose it, as you have now.²¹

It is very interesting that Soria suggested that the Genoese themselves would be in favour of such an action. For one thing, he blamed the loss of Genoa on the factional conflict which had long plagued the city, especially between the pro-imperial Adorni and the pro-French Fragosi. Soria asserted that the Genoese would be glad to be rid of such conflict. (Perhaps he also indirectly rebuked the emperor himself for losing Genoa.) Soria also advised that once Charles has recovered Genoa, which, of course, was not a given, he should appoint a non-Genoese as the governor. Was he assuming the Genoese would agree to this as well?

As it turned out, the wheel of fortune would again take Soria by surprise. Less than a year after he wrote this letter, Andrea Doria made a fateful decision to switch sides. Unhappy with the perceived stinginess of the French king, in August 1528 Doria signed a private contract with Charles, which he would honour for the rest of his very long life. Crucially, this contract specified that in return for Doria's

¹⁸ For more on Spanish ambassadors and their fear of novedades see Levin, Agents of Empire.

¹⁹ Mallett and Shaw, Italian Wars, 164-65.

²⁰ RAH, Salazar A41, #216, Lope de Soria to Charles V, 18 September 1527.

²¹ Ibid.

service, Charles would guarantee to protect Genoa's liberties and independence.²² A month after signing this contract, Doria engineered a coup in Genoa, permanently ending French rule. Doria, however, did not take the opportunity to establish a personal regime; instead, he supported the reform of the Genoese government that had already been in the works for several months. For centuries, Genoese politics had been dominated by a handful of aristocratic families, and factional conflict had been the inevitable result. The reforms of 1528 sought to put an end to this cycle of violence by radically altering the political system, banishing the traditional factions and placing "new men" in charge.²³ Many of these new men were loyal to Andrea Doria, who thus became the de facto leader of Genoa for the next thirty-two years, although he never held an official title.

Soria, still in exile, continued to suggest that even if Charles did in fact approve of the new regime, it would still be best to take control of the city's fortifications and appoint a military commander, in order "to be sure of the city". 24 Charles, however, decided to let the Republic of Genoa remain independent, which in effect meant choosing Doria over Soria. There are numerous reasons why he would not have wanted to antagonize Andrea Doria at this moment. For years Charles had dreamed of finally settling Italian affairs in one great triumphant imperial march through the peninsula, during which he would pacify Italy, make a final peace treaty with France, receive an imperial coronation from the pope, and declare a crusade against the Ottomans. None of this would be possible without a safe sea passage from Spain to Italy, which Andrea Doria's warships provided.²⁵ Furthermore, as the historian Wim Blockmans writes, Charles's famous Grand Chancellor, Mercurino di Gattinara (1465-1530), had long counselled Charles, "not to exercise his power in the northern regions of Italy directly, but rather through alliances with local lords who enjoyed the support of the most influential parts of the population". ²⁶ Doria fit this paradigm exactly—and so Charles ignored Soria's pleas.

See Vicente de Cadenas y Vincent, El protectorado de Carlos V en Genova: La "condotta" de Andrea Doria (Madrid: Instituto Salazar y Castro, 1977), and Pacini, La Genova di Andrea Doria, chap. 1.

²³ Pacini, *I presupposti politici*, passim; idem, *La Genova di Andrea Doria*, chap. 2; and Rodolfo Savelli, *La Repubblica Oligarchica* (Milan: A. Giuffrè, 1981).

RAH, Salazar A43, #199, Lope de Soria to Charles V, 21 September 1528. Genoa had no standing army in this period, only a personal guard for the Doge and small garrisons for the local fortresses, and it depended on foreign powers for additional troops. Christine Shaw, Barons and Castellans: The Military Nobility of Renaissance Italy (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 121–22.

²⁵ Manuel Fernández-Álvarez, *Charles V: Elected Emperor and Hereditary Ruler*, trans. J. A. Lalaguna (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975), 78–80.

²⁶ Wim Blockmans, *Emperor Charles V, 1500–1558*, trans. Isola van den Hoven-Vardon (London: Arnold, 2002), 60. Much has been written on Gattinara; see for example the

Gómez Suárez de Figueroa and the Fieschi Revolt

The immediate question then became urgent, who would be the imperial ambassador to the new Genoese regime? Soria offered his services, but Andrea Doria's government made it clear that Soria was not welcome back in Genoa.²⁷ Therefore, in February 1529, Charles appointed a new ambassador, Don Gómez Suárez de Figueroa (d. 1569), who would remain in that post for the next forty years.²⁸ Unlike Soria, Figueroa had a distinguished military career before becoming an ambassador. He came from a hidalgo family in Guadalajara; his older brother, Nuño Beltrán de Guzmán (c. 1490-1558), was an infamous conquistador and administrator in New Spain (where he founded the city of Guadalajara, Mexico).²⁹ Figueroa served in Charles's personal bodyguard before being appointed a captain of infantry in Italy. He fought at the great battle of Pavia in 1525—in fact, he was one of the officers chosen to escort the captured King Francis I of France back to Madrid. Interestingly, during these years of military service, he also acted as diplomatic courier, in which role he became acquainted with Lope de Soria. Through the 1520s, Soria's correspondence mentions Figueroa numerous times, as a messenger he entrusted with important dispatches.³⁰ Figueroa would thus have been familiar with Genoa and its significance as a strategic base and communications centre, perhaps explaining why Charles chose him to replace Soria.

Figueroa would prove to be more adept than Soria had been in forging a close relationship with Andrea Doria. Indeed, the personal relationship between Doria and the ambassador, and between Doria and Charles, defined imperial-Genoese affairs for decades.³¹ In 1534, for example, Doria wrote a letter of recommendation for Figueroa, in which he praised the ambassador's good qualities and suggested that Charles was doing a disservice to Figueroa by not giving him proper financial

classic work by John M. Headley, *The Emperor and His Chancellor: A Study of the Imperial Chancellery under Gattinara* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), and more recently, Rebecca Ard Boone, *Mercurino di Gattinara and the Creation of the Spanish Empire* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2014).

²⁷ RAH, Salazar A43, #266, Lope de Soria to Charles V, 21 November 1528.

²⁸ See the instructions Charles V wrote to Don Gómez Suárez de Figueroa in February 1529: Archivo General de Simancas (AGS), Patronato Real, legajo 17, #25.

²⁹ On Nuño de Guzmán, see Donald E. Chipman, *Nuño de Guzmán and the Province of Panuco in New Spain, 1518–1533* (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1967), and Ida Altman, *The War for Mexico's West* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010).

³⁰ See for example RAH, Salazar 31, #366–68, Lope de Soria to Charles V, 4 June 1524.

Wim Blockmans notes that Charles's entire empire was structured around personal relationships with the emperor. Blockmans, *Emperor Charles V*, 136.

rewards.³² Figueroa, for his part, often praised Doria and emphasized the admiral's loyalty and devotion to Charles. (Charles likewise recognized Doria's loyal service, granting him the title of Prince of Melfi in 1531.) The ambassador was not quite so confident, however, about the loyalty of Genoa as a whole. Like Soria before him, he too would complain that the Genoese were fond of *novedades*, and that many of them had their own self-interested agendas which diverged from the emperor's interests.³³ Indeed, Figueroa often warned Charles that it would be prudent to maintain a military presence in or near Genoa, to prevent any possible uprisings, especially during the times Andrea Doria was away at sea. In February 1534, for example, the ambassador wrote: "I am certain that if the prince [Doria] of this city should leave it would be best to be on guard, and to have force on hand, because these people are fickle and prone to conspiracies".³⁴ His fears would prove to be all too realistic; in early January 1547, Figueroa and Charles came close to losing Genoa in the famous Fieschi conspiracy.

Gian Luigi Fieschi, a disaffected Genoese noble with ties to the king of France, came within a whisker of successfully deposing Andrea Doria's pro-imperial government. His forces seized the city's main gates and harbour, and assassinated Giannettino Doria (c. 1510–47), the admiral's nephew and designated heir; Andrea Doria himself fled for his life. Fieschi ultimately failed only because he had the misfortune to slip off a gangplank, fall into the harbour and drown. I have written elsewhere about the events leading up to the Fieschi conspiracy.³⁵ In this paper I am interested in exploring the imperial reactions to this near-disaster and the fierce argument that broke out among Charles and his ministers about how to prevent any more such incidents. The crisis in Genoa was, in fact, part of a broader challenge against imperial authority throughout Italy in this period. In May 1547 a serious revolt occurred in the Spanish territory of Naples and later that year Spanish troops quelled uprisings in the northern territories of Parma, Piacenza and Siena. Charles's ministers in Italy scrambled to respond.³⁶

³² AGS, Sección Estado, legajo #218, Andrea Doria to Charles V, 25 December 1534.

³³ See for example AGS, Estado, legajo 1363, #32, Gómez Suárez de Figueroa to Charles V, 25 June 1531 (one example of many).

³⁴ AGS, Estado, legajo 1367, #17, Gómez Suárez de Figueroa to Charles V, 2 February 1534.

³⁵ Levin, "A Failure of Intelligence".

Garlos J. Hernando Sánchez, Castilla y Nápoles en el siglo XVI: el virrey Pedro de Toledo (Salamanca: Junta de Castilla y Leon, 1994), 304–08; Geoffrey Parker, "The Political World of Charles V", in Charles V 1500–1558 and his Time, ed. Hugo Soly (Antwerp: Mercatorfonds, 1999), 193; José Martínez Millán and Manuel Rivero Rodríguez, "Hacia la formación de la Monarquía Hispana: la hegemonía hispana en Italia (1547–1556)", in La corte de Carlos V, ed. José Martínez Millán, vol. 2 (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2000), 196–97.

For example, Ferrante Gonzaga (1507–57), the governor of Milan 1546 till 1554, and one of Charles's closest advisors on Italian affairs, advocated an aggressive strategy to assert imperial authority (as well as his own) throughout northern Italy.³⁷ Gonzaga, with Charles's consent, ruthlessly pursued this goal, by, for example, arranging the assassination of the bastard son of Pope Paul III, Pier Luigi Farnese, Duke of Parma and Piacenza (1503–47) so that Charles could reestablish control over those territories.³⁸

News of the Fieschi revolt had an immediate effect on Charles. On January 14, 1547, he wrote two letters, one to Gonzaga, the other to Figueroa. In the first letter, he told Gonzaga that the best way to pacify Genoa "would be for us to become lord of the city and its forces". 39 This is the first time I am aware of the fact that Charles discussed this possibility. Interestingly, Charles did not propose unilateral action; instead he would instruct Figueroa to sound out Andrea Doria and other top Genoese allies, to see if they would possibly agree to this plan. In the second letter, to Figueroa, Charles likewise suggested that in order to prevent future "seditions and novedades" in Genoa, "perhaps it would be best to make himself lord of the city and its forces". 40 He then commanded the ambassador to approach Doria and the other pro-imperial Genoese leaders and propose this plan, while simultaneously assuring them that "we have no intention other than that that city and domain should be ruled as a republic, and preserved as it currently exists, as we have always conceded and granted by privileges". 41 This is rather odd. It is not clear how Genoa could become an imperial territory while remaining a republic. Evidently Charles was not proposing that Genoa should become like the state of Milan, which had been placed under the authority of an imperial governor

See Giancarlo Biasco, "La strategia politico-militare di Ferrante Gonzaga: la difesa del predominio spagnolo", in *Guerra y Sociedad en la Monarquía Hispánica*, eds. Enrique García Hernán and Davide Maffi, vol. 1 (Madrid: Laberinto, 2006), 273–88; M. J. Rodríguez-Salgado, "Ferrante Gonzaga: The Champion of Innocence", in *Ferrante Gonzaga: il Mediterraneo, l'Impero (1507–1557)*, ed. Gianvittorio Signorotto (Rome: Bulzoni, 2009), 139–96.

³⁸ See María J. Bertomeu Masiá, La guerra secreta de Carlos V contra el Papa (Valencia: Universitet de Valencia, 2009).

³⁹ See Massimiliano Spinola, L. T. Belgrano and Francesco Podestà, "Documenti ispanogenovesi dell'Archivio di Simancas", *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria* 8 (1868): 57–60, Charles V to Ferrante Gonzaga, 14 January 1547: [E]l que mas nos convernia, y para beneficio y pacification de aquella ciudad seria impatronizarnos della y des sus fuerzas. In this same letter Charles gives Gonzaga permission to pursue his plan to take over Parma and Piacenza.

⁴⁰ Spinola, Belgrano and Podestà, "Documenti ispano-genovesi", 55–57, Charles V to Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, 14 January 1547: [E]staria bien ympatronizar nos y ser señor della y de sus fuerças.

⁴¹ Ibid., 55–57, Charles V to Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, 14 January 1547.

in 1535.⁴² Perhaps Charles was mindful of the contract he had signed with Doria, which guaranteed Genoa's liberties and keeping Doria happy remained the highest priority.

In any case, Figueroa, who was in the best position to predict Genoese reactions to such a plan, expressed extreme caution. On 30 January 1547, he wrote a carefully worded letter suggesting that he had serious doubts about the emperor's plan to take over Genoa.⁴³ First, he declared that he absolutely agreed that they should take steps to provide security in Genoa and to prevent further changes or novedades. But, he warned, whatever they did, it should be with Doria's approval, and the Prince's deepest motivations were to protect both the city's liberties and his own position of authority. Thus, Figueroa says, he has been telling the Prince that "it would be well if he thought about what should happen after his death, by establishing some form of government, that would permanently preserve the city in Your Majesty's service and devotion". The ambassador also reported that Doria had promised that he would do just that, and that he would also propose some possible governmental reforms, Over the next few months, Doria would indeed successfully implement a famous governmental reform, called the Garibetto, a term in the Genoese dialect which indicated the changes had been agreed to by the general public rather than imposed from above. Among other things, the new laws reduced the size of Genoa's ruling Council, and further cemented Doria's power over the city's political destiny. (The historian Arturo Pacini gives Doria much of the credit for selling this plan to Charles while simultaneously preventing an imperial takeover, but clearly Figueroa played a major role. 44) But Figueroa's most effective argument against an imperial takeover was that such a plan would be terribly expensive. The city was dead broke, and if Charles took the city, he would also own its debts, and would be solely responsible for paying for the city's defences. This argument surely impressed the constantly cash-strapped emperor, who was at this moment fighting an extremely expensive war against German Protestants. 45

See Antonio Álvarez-Ossorio Alvariño, "The State of Milan and the Spanish Monarchy", in Spain in Italy: Politics, Society, and Religion 1500–1700, eds. Thomas J. Dandelet and John M. Marino (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 99–132, and Stefano D'Amico, Spanish Milan: A City within the Empire, 1535–1706 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

⁴³ Spinola, Belgrano and Podestà, "Documenti ispano-genovesi", 101–03, Gómez Suárez de Figueroa to Charles V, 30 January 1547.

⁴⁴ Pacini, La Genova di Andrea Doria, chap. 7.

James D. Tracy notes that due to the first Schmalkaldic War, Charles was forced to borrow nearly two million ducats just in the period from May 1546 till July 1547. James D. Tracy, Emperor Charles V, Impresario of War: Campaign Strategy, International Finance, and Domestic Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 225.

Figueroa also offered some positive advice: "If there was a castle here [in Genoa], over which Your Majesty could claim ownership, and where you could maintain 500 men, and place a governor in charge of it, so as to be able to do justice, while in other civil and commercial affairs things remain as they are currently, that would be best". 46 This idea, of building a fortress and maintaining a Spanish military presence in the city (which is once again something that Lope de Soria suggested twenty years previously), would recur repeatedly in imperial discussions of Genoa for the next two years. In any case, Charles's response to Figueroa demonstrated his trust in his ambassador's expertise. As he wrote in March 1547, "we have seen what you wrote on 30 January, concerning your opinion about our becoming lord of that [city], and the inconveniences that you suggest could result from it; which [opinion], upon consideration, seems not without merit [no se dexa de conoscer ser verisímiles], reflecting your accustomed prudence and experience in such matters. And thus [the plan] will be dropped for now, leaving it for a better occasion". 47 So, for the moment at least, Charles deferred to his ambassador's judgment, and did not initiate the annexation of Genoa.

Figueroa and the Castle

In fact, as best as I can determine, the "better occasion" never occurred: Charles and his ministers never again seriously considered taking over Genoa. Instead, for the next few years they focused on the idea of controlling the city by building a citadel and garrisoning it with imperial troops. Presumably they had in mind one of the new-style artillery forts which by now had become the backbone of military strategy throughout Italy and beyond. In December 1547, for example, Ferrante Gonzaga, the governor of Milan, warned Charles that Genoa still seethed with discontent, the government remained unstable, and that a fortress "would be the best and most sure way that could be found to secure it". Gonzaga also remarked that while Andrea Doria was loyal to Charles, "nonetheless, it can clearly be seen that he favours his own particular interests over Your Majesty's

Spinola, Belgrano and Podestà, "Documenti ispano-genovesi", 101–03, Gómez Suárez de Figueroa to Charles V, 30 January 1547.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 138–40, Charles V to Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, 29 March 1547.

There is a large literature on the development and importance of artillery forts in this period. See Simon Pepper and Nicholas Adams, *Firearms and Fortifications* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Mallett and Shaw, *Italian Wars*, chap. 6.

⁴⁹ Spinola, Belgrano and Podestà, "Documenti ispano-genovesi", 223–24, Ferrante Gonzaga to Charles V, December 1547.

service or the security of the state".⁵⁰ Throughout this period Gonzaga would become increasingly frustrated with Doria for not supporting the idea of an imperial military presence in Genoa.⁵¹ Charles, for his part, seemed indecisive. He wrote to Figueroa that while he hoped Doria would come around on the question of the fortress, nevertheless Figueroa should not push him too hard: "With [Doria] it is best to proceed in such a way that he does not despair, as one must always consider that in order to make [the plan] work, it must be done to his satisfaction".⁵² So the matter continued to be unresolved. However, another major figure was about to become involved: Prince Philip of Spain.

For the last few years Charles had been grooming the young Philip (b. 1527), and the prince's involvement in Italian affairs marked the end of his apprenticeship.⁵³ In June 1546 Charles formally invested Philip as the Duke of Milan. In his correspondence with his father in this period, Philip often mentioned the importance of obtaining funds from Genoa.⁵⁴ Then in early 1548, Charles wrote his famous 'Political Testament' to Philip, in which he bequeathed to his son what Geoffrey Parker calls a "blueprint for empire".⁵⁵ The emperor instructed his son that he must champion the Catholic faith, but also must defend his lands and his reputation.⁵⁶ Charles emphasized the strategic importance of Italy, describing each of the Italian states in detail. He devoted a paragraph to Genoa specifically, in which he stressed both Genoa's critical importance and its liberties. He said nothing about imposing imperial rule; instead, he expressed "hope" that the Genoese would be devoted to Philip. This seems like a shaky foundation for the future of Spanish-Genoese relations.⁵⁷ But if that was to be the plan, then the first

⁵⁰ Ibid., 223–24, Ferrante Gonzaga to Charles V, December 1547.

⁵¹ Pacini, *La Genova di Andrea Doria*, 648–52. According to Pacini, Gonzaga also blamed Figueroa for siding with Doria on this issue.

⁵² Spinola, Belgrano and Podestà, "Documenti ispano-genovesi", 224–26, Charles V to Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, 24 December 1547.

⁵³ See Geoffrey Parker, *Felipe II: la biografia definitiva*, 4th edition (Madrid: Planeta, 2010), chap. 2; idem, *Imprudent King: A New Life of Philip II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 31–35.

For example, Corpus Documental de Carlos V, ed. Manuel Fernández Álvarez, vol. 2 (Salamanca: Universidad, 1975), 501–03, Philip II to Charles V, 27 September 1546.

⁵⁵ Parker, *Imprudent King*, 31.

Fernández Álvarez, ed., Corpus Documental de Carlos V, vol. 2, 569–601, Charles V to Philip II, 18 January 1548.

Mario Rizzo suggests that throughout the later sixteenth century the Spanish Habsburg strategy in northern Italy depended as much on "soft power" and the co-optation of the Italian elite as on military force. Mario Rizzo, "Sticks, Carrots and all the Rest: Lombardy and the Spanish Strategy in Northern Italy between Europe and the Mediterranean", Cahiers de la Méditerranée 71 (2005): 1–11.

step would be to introduce Philip to the Genoese, as well as the rest of Italy. In the fall of 1548, Philip would leave Spain for the first time and go on a Grand Tour of Italy, starting in Genoa.

Philip arrived in Genoa on 1 November 1548, and his first public appearance did not go at all well. He barely acknowledged the cheering crowds that greeted him, and spoke so little, and so softly, that everyone perceived him to be haughty and aloof. (To make matters worse, a fight broke out between Spanish and Genoese soldiers, requiring Andrea Doria to intervene before it became a fullscale riot.)⁵⁸ His private meetings over the next few weeks fared little better. Philip resided in Genoa until 25 November, before moving on to Trent, where on 16 December he wrote a long report to his father, describing in detail his conversations with Andrea Doria.⁵⁹ Before his first encounter, he met with the Duke of Alba, Ferrante Gonzaga, and the ambassador Figueroa, to discuss how to approach Doria. According to Philip, when he finally got to meet Doria, it was the admiral who first brought up the issue of building a fortress, only to declare it impossible because it would be too expensive. Philip tried to argue, pointing out (rather tactlessly) that Doria might die, which would leave the government vulnerable in the face of inevitable unrest, and that a fortress was the only remedy. Doria remained unmoved. The meeting ended without resolution, other than all sides agreeing that the discussion should be continued another day. Philip never mentioned the possibility of taking over Genoa, or even of taking unilateral action to build a Spanish-controlled fortress, but instead argued for patience. Even the usually more aggressive Ferrante Gonzaga merely advocated trying to go around Andrea Doria, by secretly negotiating with other Genoese leaders, including some of Doria's younger relatives. Alba and Figueroa quashed that idea, arguing that such discussions could not possibly be kept secret from Doria. Philip concluded this letter simply by promising to continue the negotiation.

Over the next few months Philip travelled from northern Italy to Germany on his way to a reunion with his father in Brussels on 1 April 1549.⁶⁰ During this period Charles focused most of his energies on his northern European territories and settling the question of the imperial succession.⁶¹ Nonetheless a remarkable debate about Genoa played out between Charles, Philip and Figueroa in these months, which has mostly gone unnoticed by modern historians. In

⁵⁸ Parker, *Felipe II*, 98–99.

⁵⁹ Spinola, Belgrano and Podestà, "Documenti ispano-genovesi", 248–59, Philip II to Charles V, 16 December 1548.

⁶⁰ Parker, Imprudent King, 35.

⁶¹ Fernández-Álvarez, Charles V, 144–47.

their correspondence, the emperor, his son and the ambassador thrashed out the possibilities. To begin with, Charles responded to Philip's December 1548 report:

We have seen your coded letter of 16 December concerning the affairs of Genoa, from which we particularly understand the meetings, discussions, opinions and arguments which have recently occurred in that city, following the ones we have already written about many times [...] concerning this business of the castle and the rest which everyone has discussed, and seems to be advisable for the security of that place; and from what the Duke of Alba has written to us, the resolution that was decided on, given what has happened in the past, was much better than expected. Seeing and considering this, and given the common opinion of everyone there about the said Prince [Doria], after everything has been so well discussed and debated, concerning all the reasons and considerations, and all the pros and cons, we have nothing more to say about it; and so, conforming ourselves to it, we have written a letter to the said Prince [...] and likewise to the ambassador Figueroa; to whom, thanking them on our part for what they have done in this business, you may write concerning your opinions and what you see to be necessary and appropriate, so that the ambassador may know and understand from the said Prince the manner in which it seems to him the matter can and should proceed.⁶²

This is all a very roundabout way for Charles to say that he agreed with Philip that it would be unwise to force anything onto the Genoese (although this letter also makes clear that he ardently desired a fortress to be built). A few sentences later the emperor revealed why Andrea Doria should be handled so carefully: Charles needed the Genoese admiral's assistance in the ongoing war against the dreaded Muslim corsair Turgut Reis or Dragut (1485–1565).⁶³ As Charles admitted to Philip, they needed to consider carefully the "disadvantage and damage to reputation" (*el inconveniente y derreputación*) which could result if Doria did not participate in their campaigns.⁶⁴

⁶² Fernández Álvarez, ed., Corpus Documental de Carlos V, vol. 3 (Salamanca: Universidad, 1977), 59–61, Charles V to Philip II, 11 January 1549.

⁶³ Actually, this period represented a lull in the Habsburg-Ottoman wars, which would last until 1550, although of course Charles did not know that. Kenneth M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204–1571)*, vol. III (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1984), 502–03.

⁶⁴ Christine Shaw writes that "the reliance of Charles V on [Doria's] galleys to supplement the imperial fleet [...] gave Doria the leverage to ward off the designs of the emperor's men in Italy to establish control over Genoa". Shaw, Barons and Castellans, 134.

Philip, however, upon receiving Charles's permission to convey his own opinions to the ambassador Figueroa, took things in an odd direction. He wrote to Figueroa on 23 January, and summarized his father's letter in the following way:

What [Charles] told me, in effect, is that he well understands, from what the Duke of Alba has written to him, the answer Prince Doria finally gave me concerning the matter of the castle, and the manner in which it should be done, and having come to understand the great necessity for it and the fact that there is no remedy other than the castle, and that there is no way it could be enacted except by force; therefore, although at first the natives of that city may be somewhat upset that this had been done [aunque al principio los naturales de la ciudad puedan tener alguna mala satisfacion de que esto se haga], later they will come to understand that His Majesty had done it out of his zeal to maintain them in their liberty, and to always protect them; for which, if there was some other way to accomplish it, it would be done, but since there isn't, he would rather endure this ill-will, which will quickly pass, rather than risk seeing them in danger of losing everything.⁶⁵

This is a rather loose interpretation of what Charles said. It is not clear what Philip was thinking, or where the idea came from that Charles supported forcing a castle on the Genoese.⁶⁶ It is clear that Philip's brief sojourn in Genoa left him either unaware or unconcerned about the true depth of Genoese opposition to imperial interference.⁶⁷

Six days later, Figueroa directly responded to Philip's odd letter, in a cautionary way. He began by describing a recent conversation with Andrea Doria. He had assured Doria that both Charles and Philip had confidence in him and in his heirs; Doria answered belligerently, once again bringing up the issue of the castle, which he claimed could not be constructed without angering the populace. In fact, building the castle would require force:

⁶⁵ Spinola, Belgrano and Podestà, "Documenti ispano-genovesi", 259–60, Philip II to Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, 23 January 1549.

Mallett and Shaw suggest that "Charles was ready to settle for a more oligarchic government and the establishment of a garrison, and then work towards a fortress. No garrison came, and no fortress would be built. Doria pushed through a modest reform of the government and was adamant that was enough". Mallett and Shaw, *Italian Wars*, 245.

Philip wrote to his sister Maria and her husband Maximilian a letter describing his visit to Genoa, in which he said everything was very quiet and calm, except for rumours of a disturbance involving some soldiers, "but it was nothing". See Fernández Álvarez, ed., *Corpus Documental de Carlos V*, vol. 3, 72, Philip II to Maria and Maximilian, 29 January 1549.

And now he could not see any just cause which either His Majesty or Your Highness could claim for using force, because besides placing the whole venture at risk, it could be the cause for the beginning of a war, which would be very harmful to His Majesty's affairs, in addition to causing him to acquire a bad reputation in this city, as well as all of Italy, because in the contract which [Doria] had signed with His Majesty when he entered his service, it specified that this city's liberties would be guaranteed, and it would be given favor and aid against anyone who wished to disturb it.⁶⁸

This was quite a rant, which threatened war (against who, exactly, is unclear) if the imperials tried to impose a castle on Genoa, and also reminded Philip about his father's legal responsibilities. I am tempted to wonder whether Doria actually said this, or if Figueroa was using Doria as his mouthpiece. (Interestingly, a week later Ferrante Gonzaga wrote to Philip suggesting that Andrea Doria's claims should not be taken seriously.⁶⁹) In any case, Figueroa reported that he repudiated any doubts Doria might have had about Charles's commitment to protecting the city's liberties. Then, just to make his point crystal clear, Figueroa mentioned a meeting he was to have the following day with the Genoese nobleman Adam Centurion (d. 1568), who said that building a castle would be impossibly expensive; plus, the Genoese would rather go to the devil than become subjects of a foreign king (pensarian en darse al diablo por no verse subjectos). So, at this point, Figueroa seemed convinced that the best thing Charles could do would be to give up and accept the status quo. Charles evidently agreed: he warned Philip not to antagonize Doria, "because for certain he is of a delicate nature, and if one does not handle him carefully, it is to be feared that not only will he not facilitate matters as one would want, but he will actively impede them, now as well as after he is dead".70

One last letter should suffice to illustrate Figueroa's view of the matter. On 20 March 1549 he sent the emperor a description of several fruitless arguments with Andrea Doria, similar to the ones he had reported over the past two years.⁷¹ It is most likely that Figueroa still agreed with Charles and Philip that ideally a castle

⁶⁸ Spinola, Belgrano and Podestà, "Documenti ispano-genovesi", 265–68, Gómez Suárez de Figueroa to Philip II, 29 January 1549.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 268–73, Ferrante Gonzaga to Philip II, 6 February 1549.

Fernández Álvarez, ed., *Corpus Documental de Carlos V*, vol. 3, 94–99, Charles V to Philip II, 21 February 1549.

⁷¹ Spinola, Belgrano and Podestà, "Documenti ispano-genovesi", 283–89, Gómez Suárez de Figueroa to Charles V, 20 March 1549.

should be built, but once again Doria's speeches, as reported by the ambassador, clearly indicated the futility of such a plan. Here is a summary of the discussion:

Doria: His Majesty the emperor has no just cause to instigate anything counter to the city's liberties, which he promised to protect in the contract we signed.

Figueroa: You know very well that His Majesty has never had any intention of destroying the city's liberties, only to conserve and augment them, as you have seen with your own eyes. He has spent money and blood to protect you. The only reason he wants to build a castle is to guard against future incidents like the Fieschi revolt, when both the city and you personally almost lost everything.

Doria: You should not talk to me this way. I understand what you are saying on the emperor's behalf, I am just telling you that what His Majesty and Prince Philip want is simply impossible. I have thought long and hard about how to persuade the people to accept your building a castle, by telling them it is for their own security, but they just will not buy it. Otherwise the only way to accomplish it is by force, which also won't work, because it would lead to huge problems, and would be extremely risky for Charles's and Philip's affairs. You would be hated in this city, as well as the rest of Italy, which would provide an opportunity for the French—who are always nearby—to lure your allies away and reduce your control of Italy. Who knows what the pope or the Venetians would do, or the other Italian states? They would also see that you cannot be trusted. In sum, you should remain content with the support you currently enjoy in this city, rather than risk forcing the issue. One path leads to you keeping your good name, the other one leads only to hate.

Figueroa: I still think that without a castle you will lose your liberties.

Doria: I am a servant of His Majesty and of Prince Philip, and it is my duty to tell the truth. I am acting out of concern for your interests, not my own. Figueroa: We have every confidence in you, but what happens after you die? The city will be in great danger, because there is no one who can replace you.

Doria: Don't worry about it. There is no way Genoa would ever betray its loyalty to the emperor. Everything we have we owe to you.⁷²

⁷² Ibid.

Throughout these exchanges, Doria's arguments seem much more passionate and heartfelt than Figueroa's, even though Figueroa was the one relating them. Again, I am led to wonder how hard Figueroa was really trying to persuade Doria, rather than putting on a show for his masters. Or perhaps he was attempting to explain his embarrassing failure to bend Doria to the emperor's will? In any case Doria clearly won the debate: Genoa remained independent, and no castle would be built. By May 1549, Figueroa would simply report to Philip that all was quiet in Genoa, and he would seek to ensure, with God's grace, that it remained so.⁷³

Conclusion

One of the interesting things about this minidrama about a castle that the Spanish Habsburgs did not build in Genoa is that it parallels a similar story about a castle they did not build in Siena in the same period. Between 1547 and 1552, the famed Spanish diplomat and humanist scholar Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza (1503-75) served a rather lacklustre term as the imperial governor of Siena. At the urging of Ferrante Gonzaga, Mendoza spent years trying to build a castle in order to maintain control of the city. The plan failed, mostly because the Sienese strongly objected; in fact, in 1552 they revolted against imperial rule.⁷⁴ What Andrea Doria warned could happen in Genoa is what did happen in Siena. Perhaps Doria's advice was correct in addition to being self-serving. All of these stories highlight the limits of Spanish imperial power in Italy during Charles V's reign: the extent of Charles's influence depended at least as much on the cooperation of the Italian people (or at least the local elites) as on the brute imposition of military and political rule.⁷⁵ And as the essays in this volume indicate, this process of negotiation, which involved many local centres of power, typified the entire Habsburg Mediterranean.

AGS, Estado, legajo 1380, #83 and 88, Gómez Suárez de Figueroa to Philip II, 13 and 29 May 1549.

For a full description see Erika Spivakovsky, Son of the Alhambra: Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, 1504–1575 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970), 249–83.

⁷⁵ See Michael J. Levin, "Italy and the Limits of the Spanish Empire", in *The Limits of Empire: European Imperial Formations in Early Modern World History. Essays in Honor of Geoffrey Parker*, eds. Tonio Andrade and William Reger (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 121–36; Miles Pattenden, "Rome as a 'Spanish Avignon'? The Spanish Faction and the Monarchy of Philip II", in *The Spanish Presence in Sixteenth-Century Italy*, eds. Piers Baker-Bates and Miles Pattenden (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 65–84.