IN NOMINE DOMINAE:
NOTARIAL DOCUMENTS AND WOMEN'S LIVES IN GENOESE CHIOS (1348-1522)

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Abstract

The present study takes a gendered approach towards the notarial documents produced in the Greek island of Chios while it was under Genoese rule (1346-1566). For the first time these deeds are used to investigate women's lives, focusing particularly on their contribution to the economy of the island and how their marital status influenced it.

The first part of the thesis aims to place this research among the other works on Chios and introduce the sources (Introduction), and to contextualise the presence of the Genoese in Chios (Chapter 1). The second part (Chapters 2 and 3) demonstrates that female involvement in the economy was significant despite the limited evidence in records. Besides analysing the few documents where women took part in transactions, the research shows other ways they could have an impact on the economy. Chapter 3, in particular, considers women's belongings, dividing them into four categories: immovable properties, liquid assets, objects, and slaves.

Two very different aspects of slavery are explored in Chapters 2 and 5: the sale of slaves and their enfranchisement. Particular focus is paid to female slaves, as young adult women were especially prised in Chios. Coming mainly from the regions surrounding the Black Sea, slaves contributed to the multi-cultural society on the island. Through the study, examples of cohabitation and collaboration of different communities (Latin, Greek, Jewish) are numerous, as well as those regarding the coexistence of different legal systems: Genoese law, Roman law, and local customs.

Marriage is the subject of the third and final part of the thesis (Chapters 4 and 5), focusing on how it influenced women's lives. Particular attention is given to the *argomoniatico*, supposedly a tax that widows who did not remarry had to pay. There is no documentary evidence, but this study argues that if the *argomoniatico* existed, it was a Genoese sanction and did not have Byzantine origins. It would have been a local custom

dictated by Chios' colonial status, which also played a role in women's unusual involvement in dowry contracts and in the use of the term *domina* for women who were not necessarily widows. However, considering notions of rights and restrictions examined though the whole thesis, it emerges that in Chios widows had more agency and freedom compared to women with other marital status.

Acknowledgements

This work saw its completion thanks to the support and contribution of many, starting with the AHRC Midlands3Cities DTP that funded my doctoral research as well as trips to archives and libraries and conferences, which greatly shaped and improved my thesis.

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Table of Contents

Abstract I

Acknowledgements III

Table of Contents V

List of Figures, Maps, and Tables VIII

Editorial Notes X

Abbreviations XI

Published Acts XII

Glossary XIV

Money and Measures XVI

List of Places XVII

Introduction 1

Historiography of Chios 1

Brief Historiography of Genoese Documents 11

Chios' Primary Sources 16

Outline of Chapters 24

Chapter 1. The Genoese in Chios 27

The Island of Chios 27

The Genoese in Chios Before 1346 31

The Situation in Genoa 36

The Conquest of Chios in Giorgio Stella's *Annales Genuenses* 38

Comparing the Sources 42

Chios: the Island, the City 51

Colony or Not? 58

Conclusions 67

Chapter 2. Selling and Being Sold: Women in Economic Transactions 69

Women's Agency and Rights 71

Working Women 80

Women Acting Through Representatives 84

Women Acting for Themselves 89

Women Being Sold 100

Conclusions 118

Chapter 3. Beyond Commerce 121

Dowry and Inheritance 123

Women and Property: a Case Study 132

Dowry Contracts 141

Immovable Property 149

Liquid Assets 156

Objects 164

Slaves 170

Conclusions 172

Chapter 4. Marriage and Remarriage 175

Marriage 179

The *Argomoniatico* 184

Remarried Women 190

Dominae 196

Conclusions 203

Chapter 5. Without Husbands 206

When the Husband Is Away… 207

When the Husband Is Not Mentioned 212

Olim Serva Nunc Liberta: Freed Women 221

Conclusions 230

Conclusions 233

Bibliography 246

Archival Sources 246

Published Primary Sources 247

Secondary Sources 249

List of Figures, Maps, and Tables

Fig. 1 A.S.G., Notai Antichi, filza 944, doc. 407 (Photo: Chiara Ravera, 10/11/2017, authorised by A.S.G.) 22
Fig. 2 Chronological distribution of the documents examined 24
Fig. 3 Sketch map of Chios from *Occupation*, vol. 1. 29
Fig. 4 Lentisk trees (https://www.gummastic.gr/en/) 30
Fig. 5 Map of the city of Chios, 1574 - Giovanni Camocio (CC-PD-Mark, via Wikimedia Commons) 55
Fig. 6 Sketch plan from Hasluck, 'The Latin Monuments of Chios', 141 55
Fig. 7 Drawing of Kastro in Chios town (1740-1758) from Argenti, The Religious Minorities 56
Fig. 8 Plan of the modern citadel (Kastro) from Ortolani, 'Kastro di Chio: Genova e Venezia', 226 56
Fig. 9 Main Gate - Porta Maggiore (Photo: Chiara Ravera, 16/04/2014) 57
Fig. 10 De Costa family tree 88
Fig. 11 Chronological distribution of documents with women actively involved in economic transactions 99
Fig. 12 Case study: family tree 134
Fig. 13 Case study: relatives' interacting in the deeds 138
Fig. 14 Benedictus Salvaygus' family tree 158
Fig. 15 Iohannes Brexanus' family tree 167
Fig. 16 Zenevvra's family tree 192

Map 1 Genoese expansion in the East (adapted by Elena Mini from http://www.venicethefuture.com/schede/it/017?aliusid=017) 2
Map 2 Location of Chios (http://www.giustiniani.info/isole.html) 27
Map 3 Latin Empire and Empire of Nicaea after the Fourth Crusade, c. 1204 (CC BY-SA, via Wikimedia Commons) 32
Map 4 Genoa and its district (created by Elena Mini) 33
Map 5 Chios and Phocaea 35
Map 6 Slaves' proveniences (map by Elena Mini) 106

Table 1 Notaries and editors 23
Table 2 Main events in the history of Genoese Chios 48
Table 3 Slave sales in Chios (1359-1483) 113
Table 4 Dowries 148

Editorial Notes

Documents are cited with the abbreviated name of the published edition (see Abbreviations) and the number of the document. When I have consulted the original document, its archival collocation is indicated with its Arabic numeration (when a later numeration has been added in pencil, the earlier one is considered). For uniformity's sake, when only Roman numeration is present, Arabic numbers are still used. The transcriptions used are those found in published editions unless otherwise specified. When the document is unpublished, as indicated by a reference to the archival collocation alone, the transcription is my own.

The documents have no orthographic or grammatical consistency, and the same word can be spelled in different ways even in the same act. Except in direct quotations, an attempt at uniformity has been made, e.g. *quondam* even when *condam*. Personal names are given as they appear in the deeds, unless they are spelled in different ways in the same act, in which case they have been normalised. Common names are declined in the nominative case, others (especially Greek and Jewish ones, which were latinised by the notaries) are left as they are found. The structure of names follows no convention: a first name could be followed by one or more elements, such as a patronymic, a toponym, a specification of the branch of the family, or an occupation. Sometimes these elements could became 'simple' surnames, losing their original significance as identifier; as a general rule, the initials have been capitalised. Unlike other Latin quotations, personal names are not in italics.

Words with no English equivalent (e.g. podestà, Maona) have been left in the original form.

Any mention of Italy or Italians in the Middle Ages refers to the concept of Italy with geographical/territorial and ethnic meaning, mainly coinciding with the modern state, which did not exist until 1861. The term Latins is used to indicate Roman Catholics, who were mostly Westerners, usually in opposition to Orthodox Greeks and Jews.

Abbreviations

A.S.G. = Archivio di Stato di Genova

c. (pl. cc) = carta(/e)

cart. = cartulary

doc. (pl. docc.) = document(s)

n.n. = not numbered

n.s. = new series

r = *recto*

v = *verso*

AALSL = Atti dell'Accademia Ligure di Scienze e Lettere

ASLi = Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria [publications up to 2013 are available on http://www.storiapatriagenova.it]

CBC = *Codex Berianus Chiensis*

CGCC = G. Pistarino, *Chio dei Genovesi nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo* (Rome, 1995)

CJ = *Codex Justinianus*

D. = *Digesta*

EDRL = A. Berger, 'Encyclopedic Dictionary of Roman Law', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 43, n. 2 (1953), 333-809

JMH = Journal of Medieval History

LG = C. Desimoni and L. T. Belgrano, eds., 'Leges Genuenses', *Historiae Patriae Monumenta*, 18 (Turin, 1901)

MEFR = Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome

MHR = Mediterranean Historical Review

Nov. = *Novellae*

Occupation = Ph. P. Argenti, *The Occupation of Chios by the Genoese and Their Administration of the Island. 1346-1566*, 3 VOLS (Cambridge, 1958)

OHW = J. M. Bennett and R. M. Karras, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Women and Gender in Medieval Europe* (Oxford, 2013)

P&P = Past and Present

RM = Reti Medievali (http://www.rm.unina.it/)

'Romanie' = M. Balard, 'La Romanie génoise (XIIe – début du XVe siècle)', *ASLi*, n.s. 18/1-2 (1978)

VL = S. Aprosio, *Vocabolario ligure storico-bibliografico. Sec. X-XX*, 4 VOLS (Savona, 2001-2003)

Published Acts

Documents published in Ph. P. Argenti, *The Occupation of Chios by the Genoese and Their Administration of the Island. 1346-1566*, vol. 3 (Cambridge, 1958) are indicated only with the notary's name:

De Bracellis

De Roboreto

De Recco

De Ferrari

Foglietta

Sampietro

Notai Ignoti

Casanova = L. Balletto, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Chio nel XIV secolo dal notaio Raffaele de Casanova* (Bordighera, 2015)

De Canella = E. Basso, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Chio da Giuliano de Canella (2 novembre 1380 - 31 marzo 1381)* (Athens, 1993)

Di Chiavari = M. Balard, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Chio da Donato di Chiavari (17 Febbraio – 12 Novembre 1394)* (Genoa, 1988)

Gioffrè = D. Gioffrè, 'Atti rogati in Chio nella seconda metà del XIV secolo', *Bullettin de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome,* 34 (1962), 319–404

Giurista = L. Balletto, 'Un giurista acquese del Quattrocento nel Vicino Oriente: Alberto Bolla' in *Atti del Congresso Internazionale «Dai feudi monferrini e dal Piemonte ai nuovi mondi oltre gli Oceani»*, Alessandria, 2-6 aprile 1990 (Alessandria, 1993), 263–306

Greci e Latini = S. Origone, 'Greci e Latini negli stabilimenti genovesi del Levante' in *Studi in memoria di Teofilo Ossian De Negri* (Genoa, 1986), 41–50

Origone, 'Chio' = S. Origone, 'Chio nel tempo della caduta di Costantinopoli' in *Saggi e documenti II, vol. 1*, ed. by G. Pistarino (Genoa, 1982), 121–224

Panissaro = P. Piana Toniolo, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Chio da Gregorio Panissaro (1403-1405)* (Genoa, 1995)

Piemontesi = L. Balletto, *Piemontesi del Quattrocento nel Vicino Oriente* (Alessandria, 1992)

Roccatagliata = A. Roccatagliata, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Chio (1453-54, 1470-71)* (Genoa, 1982)

Rovere = A. Rovere, 'Documenti della Maona di Chio (secc. XIV-XVI)', *ASLi,* n.s. 19/2 (1979)

Villa = P. Villa, 'Documenti sugli Ebrei a Chio nel 1394', *ASLi,* n.s. 5/1 (1965), 117–51

Glossary

(N.B. This glossary does not claim to present comprehensive, detailed and complete definitions, but merely offers a quick, at-a-glance, explanation)

ad sagium (Peyre): at the weight of (Pera)

albergo: consortia formed by different families united into a single 'house' with a shared surname and common interests

antefactum: counter-gift to the dowry paid by the husband (*donatio propter nuptias*)

burgensis: 'burgher'

commenda: contract between investing and travelling partners setting the terms of the venture (usually maritime), the investment and the division of profits

commune: system of city-government common in northern and central Italy during the Middle Ages

compera: public debt. Private citizens would loan to the state and receive in exchange shares of specific taxes, whose revenues were used to pay off the interests

consul: in early communes a chief magistrate, elected for a fixed term. In Genoese overseas possessions the consul was a communal representative

dos: dowry

fideicommissary: testamentary executor, person in charge to carry out the testator's wishes

filia / filius: daughter / son

filza: stack of notarial documents. They were written on single paper sheets and kept together by passing through them with a metal tip attached to a string

fond: ‘the whole of the records, regardless of form or medium, organically created and/or accumulated and used by a particular person, family, or corporate body in the course of that creator's activities and functions’[1]

*iude**: Jewish

loca or luoghi*:* shares of the public debts

magister: master, generally used for members of guilds

Maona: partnership among private citizens (Maonesi) created for military purposes on the promise that the state would reimburse them

olim: once

Opus portus et moduli: department in charge of managing, maintaining, and developing the port and the docks of Genoa

podestà: senior official in charge of administering justice. In Chios he was the head of the local government, with both judiciary and executive powers

quondam: late/of the late

Romania: the lands, from Greece to the Black Sea and Crimea, that were or had been under the Byzantine emperors

San Giorgio: the Casa (or Banco) di San Giorgio (House or Bank of Saint George) was an institution founded in 1407 to manage the debts of the Commune of Genoa. The next year a banking activity was started

tutor: legal guardian of children

uxor: wife

vir: man, husband

[1] International Council on Archives, *ISAD(G): General International Standard Archival Description*, 2nd edn (Ottawa, 2000).

Money and Measures

A number of different currencies and measures appears in the documents.

The lira was a measure of account. A lira (pound) was 20 soldi (shillings) and a soldo was 12 denari (pennies). The genovino was the gold equivalent of the Genoese lira (pl. lire). Other common units of account are the hyperpera and the ducats, less frequent in the deeds are the florins (*florini*) and the aspers (*asperi, aspri*). The hyperpera were of Byzantine origins and they were called by Latins *perperi* or *bisanti*. A hyperperon was divided in carats and denari tornesi (deniers tournois). A submultiple of the ducat was instead the gigliato (*ziliatus*). Along with the type of currency, the type of material (gold, silver) and the provenience (Genoese, Venetian, Turkish, of Chios, Pera, Caffa, Rhodes, Cyprus, etc.) were usually mentioned, because the weight standard could change from one place to another.

It is not a concern of this work to discuss currencies and their exchange rates, nor weights and measures – which were similarly not standardised and could vary from region to region. It is sufficient to know that, indicatively, in Chios 1 kantar was approximately 48 kg.[1]

[1] Cf. the appendix on scales and weights in 'Romanie', 18/2, 897–98. For a more in-depth discussion see the still relevant 'Note on Coinage, Weights, and Other Technical Terms' in R. S. Lopez and I. W. Raymond, *Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World* (London, 1955). On Chios' coinage see A. Mazarakis, 'Chio: revisioni monetarie', in *Oriente e Occidente tra Medioevo ed età moderna, Studi in onore di Geo Pistarino, II* (Genoa, 1997), 813–901 and A. Mazarakis, *Τα νομίσματα της Χίου, 1346-1566* (Athens, 2003).

List of Places

Most of the places mentioned in the thesis are in the four provinces of Liguria (Genoa, Imperia, La Spezia, and Savona) and in the two provinces of Piedmont confining with Liguria (Cuneo and Alessandria).

The names are listed as found in the documents, translated if different from the modern name, and located.

Achaya = Achaea or Achaia (Greece)

Alexandria = probably Alessandria in Piedmont (Italy), not in Egypt

Anchona = Ancona (Italy)

Andoria = Andora, province of Savona

Asculi = Ascoli Piceno (Italy)

Bonifatio = Bonifacio (Corsica)

Caffa = Feodosiya (Crimea, Ukraine)

Calcinara = part of Uscio, province of Genoa

Calizano = Calizzano, province of Savona

Candea = Crete (Greece)

Castiliono = Castiglione, name of multiple places in Italy

Castronovo prope Terdona = Castelnuovo Scrivia near Tortona, province of Alessandria

Ceva or *Seva* = province of Cuneo

Cexegna = Cesena in Emilia-Romagna or part of Varese Ligure, province of La Spezia

Chilla = possibly Kiliya (Ukraine)

Clavaro = Chiavari, province of Genoa

Coronato = Coronata, quarter of Genoa

Cortona = in Tuscany (Italy)

Cuchurno = Cogorno, province of Genoa

Fegino = quarter of Genoa

Folia = Foça – Phocaea (Turkey)

Grisopoli = Chrysopolis, name of various localities, including one on the Anatolian shore of the Bosphoros (now Üsküdar), one in Macedonia (now Orfani), and one in Bulgaria (now Sozol)

Gubio = Gubbio (Italy)

Ianua = Genoa

Livadia = possibly Livadiya, in Crimea

Livelato = Livellato, part of Ceranesi, province of Genoa

Manarola = province of La Spezia

Mediolano = Milan (Italy)

Metelino = Mytilene (Greece)

Moncelis = possibly Moncielo in Lombardy (Italy)

Monelia / *Monellia* = Moneglia, province of Genoa

Mulasana = Molassana, quarter of Genoa

Murta = part of Genoa

Neapoli = Naples (Italy)

Negroponte = Euboea (Greece)

Peyra = Pera (or Galata), quarter of Constantinople/Istanbul (Turkey)

Pergamo = Pergamon (Turkey) or Bergamo (Italy)

Petralata = Pietralata, Rome (Italy)

Portufino = Portofino, province of Genoa

Quarto = quartier of Genoa

Rapalo = Rapallo, province of Genoa

Recho = Recco, province of Genoa

Ripalta = name of multiple locations in Italy, including one in Liguria, province of La Spezia

Roma = Rome (Italy)

Saona = Savona

Senis = Siena (Italy)

Sybilia = Seville (Spain)

Tabia = Taggia, province of Imperia

Uvada = Ovada, province of Alessandria

Valebona = Vallebona, province of Imperia

Valiso = Volissos, in Chios

Vignana = part of Levanto, province of La Spezia

Vultabio = Voltaggio, province of Alessandria

Vulturo = Voltri, quartier of Genoa

Zoalio = Zoagli, province of Genoa

Introduction

Historiography of Chios

The Genoese presence in the East during the Middle Ages has been widely explored by academic literature. With settlements and ports all over the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, from North-African Ceuta to Tana (modern Azov, on the Don River), Genoa's relevance could not be ignored by anyone interested in the medieval Mediterranean area and in the Latin Orient. One of these outposts was the Greek island of Chios, which came under Genoese control in 1346 and was lost to the Ottoman Empire in 1566.

Unsurprisingly most contributions to the literature on Genoese settlements overseas originate in Genoa itself. In 1858 one of the stated intentions of the new-born *Società Ligure di Storia Patria* was to give attention to the maritime and commercial expansion of Genoa, and more in general to its external history, which they thought had been overlooked in favour of the internal one.[1] Genoese colonial history became the 'most beloved theme' of the *Società*, which in 1978 published the pivotal monograph 'La Romanie génoise (XIIe – début du XVe siècle)' by Michel Balard.[2]

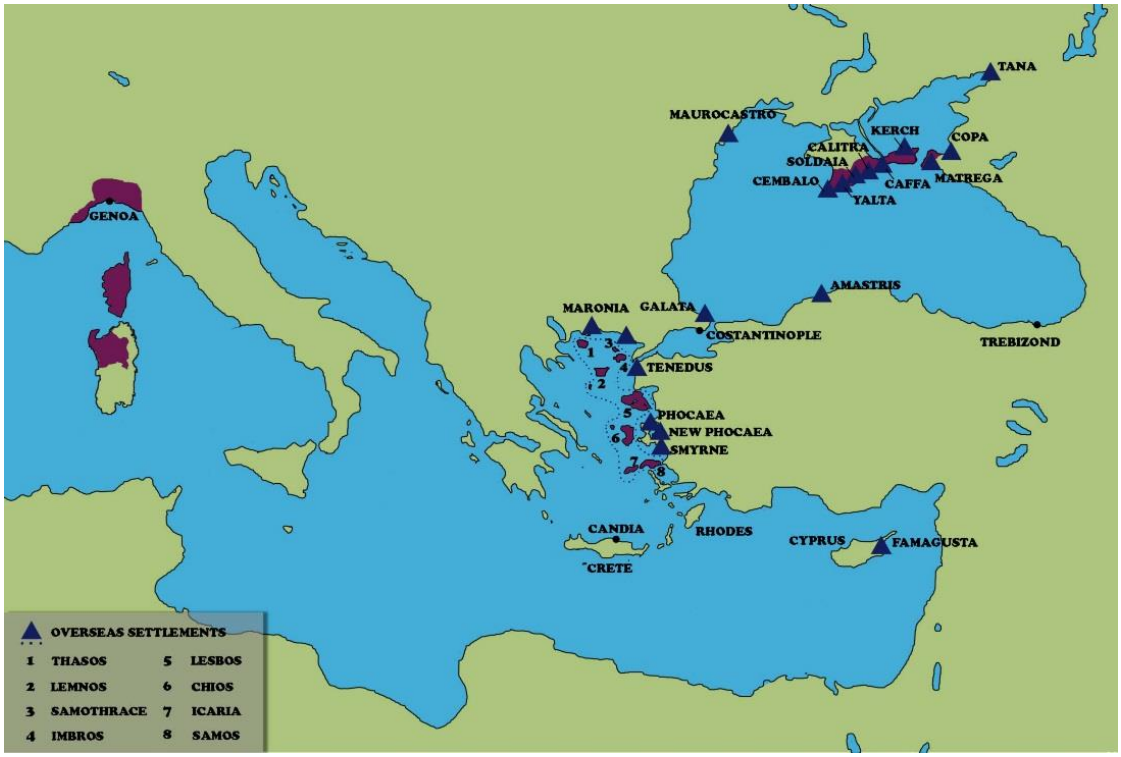
Romania is a term used to indicate the lands, from Greece to the Black Sea and Crimea, which were or had been under the Byzantine emperors.[3] There is no other work

[1] G. Petti Balbi, 'La storia medievale. Parte I (1858-1957)', ed. by D. Puncuh, *La Società Ligure di Storia Patria nella storiografia italiana. 1857-2007, ASLi*, n.s. 50/1 (2010), 81–117, pp. 82–84. On the *Società*'s history and the role played in Genoese historiography see also D. Puncuh, 'I centocinquant'anni della Società Ligure di Storia Patria', *ASLi*, n.s. 47/2 (2007), 3–14.

[2] D. Puncuh, 'I centodieci anni della Società Ligure di Storia Patria', *ASLi*, n.s. 8 (1968), 27–46, p. 29. M. Balard, 'La Romanie génoise (XIIe – début du XVe siècle)', *ASLi*, n.s. 18/1 and 18/2 (1978), hereafter 'Romanie'.

[3] On the term cf. L. Balletto, 'La colonisation orientale dans les "Annales" génoises de Giorgio Stella', in *Le partage du monde. Echanges et colonisation dans la Méditerranée médiévale*, ed. by M. Balard and A. Ducellier (Paris, 1998), 35–48, pp. 37–39; L. Balletto and G. Pistarino, 'Genova e il suo sistema politico-militare nell'Egeo (secoli XIV-XV)', *AALSL*, s. 5 vol. 53 [1996] (1997), 461–72; G. G. Musso, *Navigazione e commercio genovese con il Levante nei documenti dell'Archivio di Stato di Genova (secc. XIV-XV)* (Rome, 1975); M. G. Celle, '«Romania» negli annalisti genovesi del XII e XIII secolo', *La grande Genova: Bollettino Municipale*, y.8 n.2 (1928), 67–71.

considering Genoese *Romania* in a manner as encompassing as Balard's doctoral thesis (Buongiorno, for example, focuses only on the administration).[4] In two volumes Balard gives an exhaustive overview of the Genoese presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, concentrating his attention on the three colonies of Pera/Galata, Caffa, and Chios, and covering a variety of themes (e.g. society, administration, justice, defence, politics) using both published and unpublished documentation. Although each colony is usually discussed in separate chapters or paragraphs, the writing is not always linear, a drawback of handling such a wealth of information. Nevertheless, 'La Romanie génoise' provides an excellent start for any research on Chios, as it places the island in the wider context of the Genoese Eastern Mediterranean.



Map 1 Genoese expansion in the East (adapted by Elena Mini from http://www.venicethefuture.com/schede/it/017?aliusid=017)

[4] M. Buongiorno, *L'amministrazione genovese nella «Romania». Legislazione – Magistrature – Fisco* (Genoa, 1977).

Any scholar interested in Chios cannot ignore Philip Argenti's extensive production on his ancestral island.[5] For our period of interest 'The Occupation of Chios by the Genoese and Their Administration of the Island. 1346-1566' (1958) is still seminal.[6] The three volumes are still the most comprehensive work on Chios during the Genoese period and, as predicted by Pistarino in 1961, they became fundamental in Ligurian historiography.[7] The first volume is ordered in five sections dealing with political history and administration, economy, topography, social and lastly religious history. The other two present the primary sources Argenti utilised, forming the largest printed body of documentary material on Chios, which had been the basis for later studies.

While fundamental, Argenti's contribution has limitations.[8] For example, Pistarino and then Rovere point out some omissions, wrong dating and misspelled names.[9] They also advance doubts on the documents included in the last two volumes, which they consider chosen arbitrarily, and on how they were published. Reading a sample of those deeds first-hand in the Archivio di Stato di Genova (State Archive of Genoa) did indeed reveal that, as detailed later in the 'Primary Sources' section and then in the chapters, Argenti's edition leaves a lot to be desired.

Argenti also seems to have overlooked some (at the time) recent or contemporary literature in favour of older material, probably because the work had been written decades before the publication, with the intermission of the Second World War.[10] The problem

[5] E.g. Ph. P. Argenti, *The Bibliography of Chios from Classical Times to 1936* (Oxford, 1940); Ph. P. Argenti and H. J. Rose, *The Folklore of Chios* (Cambridge, 1949), 2 VOLS; Ph. P. Argenti, *Libro d'oro de la noblesse de Chio* (London, 1955), 2 VOLS. More relevant for this thesis are Ph. P. Argenti, *The Religious Minorities of Chios: Jews and Roman Catholics* (Cambridge, 1970); Ph. P. Argenti, 'The Mahona of the Giustiniani. Genoese Colonialism and the Genoese Relationship with Chios', *Byzantinische Forschungen*, 4 (1979), 1–35.
[6] Ph. P. Argenti, *The Occupation of Chios by the Genoese and Their Administration of the Island. 1346-1566* (Cambridge, 1958), 3 VOLS, hereafter *Occupation*.
[7] G. Pistarino, 'Nella Romania genovese tra i Greci e i Turchi: l'isola di Chio', *Rivista Storica Italiana*, 73/1 (1961), 69–84, p. 70.
[8] R. S. Lopez, 'Review', *Speculum*, 36/3 (1961), 447–49.
[9] Pistarino, 'Nella Romania'. See the introduction of A. Rovere, 'Documenti della Maona di Chio (secc. XIV-XVI)', *ASLi*, n.s. 19/2 (1979), hereafter Rovere.
[10] T. O. De Negri, 'Rassegne', *Bollettino ligustico per la storia e la cultura regionale*, 11.-3/4 (1959), 157–60.

appears less relevant for Chios than for Genoa. This is because the interest shown in Chios prior to Argenti had been mainly focused on the Giustiniani family, rulers of the island, to which Hopf, Bent and Rhodokanakes dedicated their works between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.[11] Studies by Promis and Hasluck on the Genoese mint and on the Latin monuments in the island date to the same period.[12] Later contributions, with a broader scope but, unlike Argenti's work, less accessible to international audience because written in Greek, were Zolotas' history of Chios, published between 1921 and 1928, and Andreades' history of the Orthodox Church on the island (1940).[13]

In the second half of the 20th century the array of topics widens and the publications increase, with the bulk of the studies carried out by Italian researchers, mostly in Genoa. The leader of this school was Geo Pistarino (1917-2008), extremely prolific historian who also directed a series with many titles dedicated to Genoa's settlements outside Liguria.[14] Among his voluminous production on many different aspects of Genoa's history, he published numerous books and articles on Genoese activities in the Levant and in Chios.[15] In 1970 Musso referred to Pistarino's 'Chio dei Genovesi' (1969) for a complete picture of

[11] C. Hopf, 'Storia dei Giustiniani di Genova', trans. by A. Wolf, *Giornale ligustico di Archeologia, Storia e Belle Arti (later Giornale ligustico di Archeologia, Storia e Letteratura)*, 7–8 (1881), 316–30, 362–73, 400–09, 471–77; C. Hopf, 'Storia dei Giustiniani di Genova', trans. by A. Wolf, *Giornale ligustico di Archeologia, Storia e Belle Arti*, 9 (1882), 13–28, 49–65, 100–30; C. Hopf, *Les Giustiniani, dynastes de Chios. Ètude historique*, trans. by E. A. Vlastos (Paris, 1888); J. T. Bent, 'The Lords of Chios', *The English Historical Review*, 4 (1889), 467–80; D. Rhodokanakes, *ΙΟΥΣΤΙΝΙΑΝΑΙ – ΧΙΟΣ, 1346-1884* (Siros, 1900).

[12] D. Promis, 'La zecca di Scio durante il dominio dei Genovesi', *Atti della Accademia Reale delle Scienze di Torino*, s. 2 t. 23 (1865); F. W. Hasluck, 'The Latin Monuments of Chios', *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 16 (1909-1910), 137–84; F. W. Hasluck, 'Genoese Lintel-Reliefs in Chios', *Burlington Magazine*, 18/9 (1911), 329–30, tavv.1–2.

[13] G. Zolotas, *Ιστορία της Χίου* (Athens, 1921-1928), 5 VOLS; G. M. Andreades, *Ιστορία της εν Χίω Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας* (Athens, 1940), 3 VOLS.

[14] For his bibliography see *Oriente e Occidente tra Medioevo ed età moderna. Studi in onore di Geo Pistarino, I*, ed. by L. Balletto (Genoa, 1997), XCIX-CLII. The series is 'Collana storica di fonti e studi diretta da Geo Pistarino'.

[15] See for example the collections of papers published in G. Pistarino, *I Gin dell'Oltremare* (Genoa, 1988) and in G. Pistarino, *Genovesi d'Oriente* (Genoa, 1990). On Chios see among others G. Pistarino, 'Fonti notarili genovesi per la storia di Chio', in *Χίος και Εμπόριο: πρακτικά Β' Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Χίου για την ιστορία και τον πολιτισμό του νησιού στα πλαίσια του προγράμματος Columbus '92* (Athens, 1990), 39–48; G. Pistarino, 'Notazioni su Chio dei Genovesi nel secolo XIV', in *Villes et sociétés urbaines au Moyen Âge: hommage à M. le Professeur Jacques Heers*, ed. by P. Desportes (Paris, 1994), 57–70; G. Pistarino, 'Chio dei Maonesi a metà del Quattrocento', in *Fra spazio e tempo: studi in onore di Luigi De Rosa. Dal Medioevo al Seicento, vol. 1*, ed. by I. Zilli (Naples, 1995), 683–706.

Genoese Chios, stating that the exposition was didactically exemplary and the bibliography thorough.[16] Pistarino's contribution to the study of Genoese Chios is invaluable for quantity and quality; a scope as wide as his 'Chio dei Genovesi nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo' (1995) had not been seen since Argenti (although with a more limited time frame and no documents attached) and has not been emulated since then.[17] Pistarino, however, as Balard and Argenti before him, did not dedicate any significant attention to women.

Many studies about the Genoese in the Levant and about the medieval Mediterranean Sea include Chios, often focusing on economy and commerce. Balletto's studies on the Genoese colonies across the Near East cover the administration of justice, religion and political power, and the presence of individuals from the Piedmont region, the latter works including documents never published before.[18] Among Balard's many contributions to the field, some are concerned with the network of Genoese ports in the Mediterranean, the Genoese 'empire', and the Genoese in the Aegean Sea in particular.[19] Trade and the ports system are also studied by Basso.[20] Relations with other protagonists in the Mediterranean Sea have been examined: trading ties with the Black Sea and the Danube area are discussed by Jinga, the ones with the Ottoman Empire by Fleet and Basso.[21] Olgiati considers the

[16] 'L'esposizione è didatticamente esemplare, la bibliografia esauriente', G. G. Musso, 'Ebrei nel Levante genovese: ricerche d'archivio', *La Berio*, y. 10 n. 2 (1970), 5–27, p. 8 n.9. G. Pistarino, 'Chio dei Genovesi', *'A Giuseppe Ermini', Studi Medievali*, s. 3 n. 10 (1969), 3–68.

[17] G. Pistarino, *Chio dei Genovesi nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo* (Rome, 1995), hereafter *CGCC*.

[18] L. Balletto, 'L'amministrazione della giustizia negli stabilimenti genovesi d'Oltremare', *Nuova Rivista Storica*, 76/3 (1992), 709–28; L. Balletto, 'Religione e potere politico negli insediamenti genovesi del Vicino Oriente', ed. by D. Puncuh, *Studi in memoria di Giorgio Costamagna, vol. 1*, *ASLi*, n.s. 48/1 (2003), 107–16; L. Balletto, *Piemontesi del Quattrocento nel Vicino Oriente* (Alessandria, 1992), hereafter Piemontesi; L. Balletto, 'Uomini di Novi nel Vicino Oriente intorno alla metà del Quattrocento', *Novinostra*, 35/1 (1995), 3–38.

[19] E.g. M. Balard, *La Méditerranée médiévale: espaces, itinéraires, comptoirs* (Paris, 2006); M. Balard, 'Il sistema portuale genovese d'Oltremare (secc. XIII-XV)', ed. by G. Doria and P. Massa Piergiovanni, *Il sistema portuale della Repubblica di Genova. Profili organizzativi e politica gestionale (secc. XII-XVIII)*, *ASLi*, 28/1 (1988), 329–50. Many other works have been reprinted in M. Balard, *Gênes et la mer / Genova e il mare*, I-II (Genoa, 2017), which also includes his bibliography.

[20] E. Basso, *Insediamenti e commercio nel Mediterraneo bassomedievale. I mercanti genovesi dal mar Nero all'Atlantico* (Turin, 2008); E. Basso, *Strutture insediative ed espansione commerciale. La rete portuale genovese nel bacino del Mediterraneo* (Cherasco, 2011).

[21] V. Jinga, 'Rapporti mercantili tra Genova e il mar Nero e Danubio, con riferimenti anche al popolo romeno', in *Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Studi Storici 'Rapporti Genova-Mediterraneo-Atlantico nell'età moderna', Genova, 31 marzo – 3 aprile 1982*, ed. by R. Belvederi (Genoa, 1983), 387–428; K. Fleet, *European*

Genoese colonies in front of the Turkish advance between 1453 and 1475, while Jacoby deals with a previous period and the Genoese presence in the Byzantine Empire.[22] Specific products and their trade have also been taken in consideration, for example alum, food, wine, soap, and slaves.[23] Only one article combines the topics of women, Genoa and the Near-East, and it is 'L'émigration féminine de Gênes au Proche-Orient au XVe siècle' by Balletto, which includes also Chios.[24]

Research focused exclusively on Chios is not lacking, although it is usually limited to chapters or articles. Once again Balard offers his expertise, this time focusing on the island as economic centre and on its principal production, mastic.[25] Balletto explores Chios and its relations with other places, such as Genoa, Phocaea, and Crete, the latter being a topic covered also by Pistarino.[26]

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and Islamic Trade in the Early Ottoman State: The Merchants of Genoa and Turkey (Cambridge, 1999); E. Basso, 'La Maona di Chio, Genova e l'Impero Ottomano: relazioni commerciali e intrecci diplomatici fra tardo Medioevo e prima età moderna', in *Relazioni economiche tra Europa e mondo islamico, secc. XIII-XVIII, Atti della 'Trentottesima Settimana di Studi' 1-5 maggio 2006*, ed. by S. Cavaciocchi (Florence, 2007), 315–24.

[22] G. Olgiati, 'The Genoese Colonies in Front of the Turkish Advance (1453-1475)', *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Tarih Bölümü Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 15:26 (1991), 381–89; D. Jacoby, 'Le Génois dans l'Empire byzantin: citoyens, sujets et protégés (1261-1453)', in *La storia dei Genovesi, Atti del Convegno di Studi sui Ceti Dirigenti nelle istituzioni della Repubblica di Genova, Genova, 7-8-9 giugno 1988*, vol. 9 (Genoa, 1989), 245–84.

[23] D. Jacoby, 'Production et commerce de l'alun oriental en Méditerranée, XIe-XVe siècles', in *L'alun de Méditerranée: Colloque International, Naples, 4-5-6 juin 2003, Lipari, 7-8 juin 2003*, ed. by P. Borgard, J.-P. Brun and M. Picon (Naples/Aix-en-Provence, 2005), 219–67; D. Jacoby, 'Mediterranean Food and Wine for Constantinople: The Long-Distance Trade, Eleventh to Mid-Fifteenth Century', in *Handelsgüter und Verkehrswege: Aspekte der Warenversorgung im östlichen Mittelmeerraum (4. bis 15. Jahrhundert)* (Vienna, 2010), 127–47; E. Basso, 'I Genovesi e il commercio del vino nel tardo Medioevo', in *La vite e il vino nella storia e nel diritto (secoli XI-XIX), vol. 1*, ed. by M. Da Passano and others (Rome, 2000), 439–52; M. Moroni, 'Produzione e commercio del sapone nel Mediterraneo tra basso Medioevo ed età moderna', in *Produzioni e commerci nelle province dello Stato Pontificio. Imprenditori, mercanti, reti (secoli XIV-XVI), Atti della giornata di studio di Camerino, 14 ottobre 2011*, ed. by E. Di Stefano (Ancona, 2013), 140–54. For a bibliography on slavery see Chapter 2.

[24] L. Balletto, 'L'émigration féminine de Gênes au Proche-Orient au XVe siècle', in *Migrations et diasporas méditerranéennes (Xe-XVIe siècles), Actes du colloque de Conques (Octobre 1999)*, ed. by M. Balard and A. Ducellier (Paris, 2002), 297–311.

[25] M. Balard, 'Chio, centre économique en mer Égée (XIVe-XVe siècles)', in *Mélanges Gilbert Dagron* (Paris, 2002), 13–19; M. Balard, 'Le mastic de Chio, monopole génois (XIVe-XVIe s.)', in *Itinéraires d'Orient: hommages à Claude Cahen, Res Orientales, 6*, ed. by R. Curiel and R. Gyselen (Bures-sur-Yvette, 1994), 223–28. On mastic see more in Chapter 1.

[26] L. Balletto, 'Tra l'isola di Creta e la "communitas" genovese nel XV secolo', *AALSL*, s. 5 vol. 50 [1993] (1994), 463–75; L. Balletto, 'Tra Genova e Chio nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo', in *Chemins d'Outre-Mer. Études d'histoire sur la Méditerranée médiévale offertes à Michel Balard, vol. 1*, ed. by D. Coulon and others (Paris, 2004), 51–61; L. Balletto, 'I Genovesi a Focea ed a Chio fra XIII e XIV secolo', *AALSL*, s. 7 vol. 8 (2005), 101–19; G. Pistarino and G. Olgiati, 'Tra Creta veneziana e Chio genovese nei secoli XIV e XV',

Topographical matters have been covered by Greek and Italian researchers during the last two decades of the 20th century. Stringa includes Chios in his study on Genoa's settlements and urban cultures in the Mediterranean Sea, while Xyda looks at the city of Chios (homonymous with the island) and its historical structures, and at the medieval villages in the south of the island.[27] Attention has also been directed to the kastro/*castrum*: after being studied in 1965 by Allen, its history, structures, and phases have been analysed by Ortolani, Mamaloukas, Dal Mas, Monioudi-Gavala, and Poleggi.[28] A comprehensive view of the architectonic history of the island, not restricted to the Genoese churches as in Bouras or to the fortress, is offered by Spagnesi.[29]

Another preferred topic, along with the economy, has often been the society and the population on the island, with contributions showing a different situation than the schematic division in social and ethnic groups described by Argenti. Origone examines Chios' situation in the critical moment that had been the fall of Constantinople (1453), the relations between Greeks and Latins in Genoese Eastern settlements, and Greek families in Chios, a topic also

Cretan Studies, 2 (1990), 197–219; G. Pistarino, 'Tra Chio e Creta negli anni Cinquanta del secolo XV', *AALSL*, s. 5 vol. 52 [1995] (1996), 237–49.

[27] P. Stringa, *Genova e la Liguria nel Mediterraneo: insediamenti e culture urbane* (Genoa, 1982); M. Xyda, 'La città portuale di Chios e i problemi di salvaguardia delle strutture storiche', in *Città portuali del Mediterraneo. Storia e archeologia. Convegno Internazionale, Genova 1985*, ed. by E. Poleggi (Genoa, 1989), 85–88; M. Xyda, 'La «Mastichochora»: i villaggi medievali di Chios', in *Oriente e Occidente, II*, ed. by Balletto (Genoa, 1997), 1257–70.

[28] P. C. Allen, *The Kastro, a medieval fortress* (Chios, 1965); G. Ortolani, 'Kastro di Chio: Genova e Venezia nel Levante. La Torre di Zeno', *Quaderni dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Architettura, Saggi in onore di Guglielmo De Angelis d'Ossat*, n.s., fasc. 1-10 (1987), 225–32; G. Ortolani, 'Kastro di Chio: le fortificazioni verso il mare', in *Χίος - Γένοβα: πρακτικά Α' Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Χίου για την ιστορία και τον πολιτισμό του νησιού στα πλαίσια του προγράμματος Columbus '92* (Chios, 1988), 63–72; S. B. Mamaloukas, 'Οι Γενοβέζικες Φάσεις των Οχυρώσεων', in *Χίος - Γένοβα: πρακτικά Α'* (1988), 45–49; M. Dal Mas, 'Kastro di Chio: le fortificazioni verso terra', in *Χίος - Γένοβα: πρακτικά Α'* (1988), 73–92; D. Monioudi-Gavala, *Το Κάστρο της Χίου: οι οχυρώσεις και η περιτειχισμένη πόλη από το Μεσαίωνα στις μέρες μας / The Castle of Chios: Fortifications and the Surrounded Town Nowadays since the Middle Ages* (Athens, 2001); E. Poleggi, 'Un caso di contaminazione urbanistica nel Mediterraneo: il castello genovese di Chios', in *Architetture e cittá del Mediterraneo tra Oriente ed Occidente*, ed. by A. Naser Eslami (Genoa, 2002), 247–62. More general is D. Monioudi-Gavala, *Η πόλη της Χίου: κοινωνία, πολεοδομία, αρχιτεκτονική / The City of Chios: Society, Town Planning, Architecture* (Athens, 1995).

[29] C. Bouras, 'Η αρχιτεκτονική των γενουατικών εκκλησιών της πόλεως Χίου', in *Χίος - Γένοβα: πρακτικά Α'* (1998), 41–44; P. Spagnesi, *Chios medievale. Storia architettonica di un'isola della Grecia Bizantina* (Rome, 2008).

considered by Balard.[30] Xyda and Balletto focus instead on families between Genoa and Chios.[31] Society is a main theme in many of Balletto's works. She makes a prominent use of documentation, for example in her analysis of professions in the island in the mid-15th century.[32] She also looks at Chios at the end of the 14th century using acts by the notary Donato di Chiavari, published by Balard in 1988, while her studies on slavery use 15th-century deeds, most of them unpublished.[33] Women are a common presence in these works because any discussion about society cannot ignore them, but they are never the main focus.

The internal dynamics of Chian society under the Genoese rule are examined by Becker in his PhD thesis.[34] In the fourth and fifth chapters he offers his most original contribution to the studies, exploring through the use of published and unpublished sources how Genoese families in the island tried to 'protect and preserve their households' during the 15th century.[35] In his dissertation Becker states that 'Chios has been relatively well

[30] S. Origone, 'Chio nel tempo della caduta di Costantinopoli', in *Saggi e documenti, II, vol. 1,* ed. by G. Pistarino (Genoa, 1982), 121–224, hereafter Origone, 'Chio'; S. Origone, 'Greci e Latini negli stabilimenti genovesi del Levante', in *Studi in memoria di Teofilo Ossian De Negri* (Genoa, 1986), 41–50, hereafter Greci e Latini; S. Origone, 'Famiglie greche nel Levante genovese (Chio, secc. XIV-XVI)', in *La storia dei Genovesi, Atti del Convegno di Studi sui Ceti Dirigenti nelle istituzioni della Repubblica di Genova, Genova, 15-16-17 aprile 1986,* vol. 7 (Genoa, 1987), 207–22; S. Origone, 'Periferie religiose nella Romania dei Latini: i Greci di Chio di fronte alla dominazione genovese', in *Bisanzio e le periferie dell'impero, Atti del Convegno Internazionale nell'ambito delle celebrazioni del millenario della fondazione dell'abbazia di San Nilo a Grottaferrata (Catania, 26-28 novembre 2007),* ed. by R. Gentile Messina (Rome, 2011), 181–202; M. Balard, 'Les Grecs de Chio sous la domination genoise au XIVe siecle', *Byzantinische Forschungen*, 5 (1977), 5–15.

[31] M. Xyda, 'Famiglie greco-genovesi tra Genova e Chios', in *La storia dei Genovesi, Atti del Convegno di Studi sui Ceti Dirigenti nelle istituzioni della Repubblica di Genova, Genova, 23-24-25-26 maggio 1989,* vol. 10 (Genoa, 1990), 455–58; L. Balletto, 'Nuclei familiari da Genova a Chio nel Quattrocento', *Archivio Storico e Giuridico Sardo di Sassari*, n.s. 6 (1999), 77–95.

[32] L. Balletto, 'Chio nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo', in *Atti del III convegno internazionale di studi colombiani, Genova, 7 e 8 ottobre 1977* (Genoa, 1979), 175–98; L. Balletto, 'Il mondo del lavoro a Chio intorno alla metá del XV secolo', in *Ricchi e poveri nella società dell'Oriente grecolatino, Simposio Internazionale*, ed. by Ch. A. Maltezou (Venice, 1998), 117–44.

[33] L. Balletto, 'Chio dei Maonesi sulla fine del Trecento (dagli atti del notaio Donato di Chiavari)', *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 20 (1990), 133–47; M. Balard, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Chio da Donato di Chiavari (17 Febbraio – 12 Novembre 1394)* (Genoa, 1988), hereafter Di Chiavari. L. Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi nella Chio dei Genovesi nel secolo XV', in *De l'esclavitud a la llibertat. Esclaus i lliberts a l'edat mitjana, Actes del Colloqui Internacional celebrat a Barcelona, del 27 al 29 de maig de 1999*, ed. by M. T. Ferrer i Mallol and J. Mutgé i Vives (Barcelona, 2000), 659–94; L. Balletto, 'La schiavitù nella Chio dei Genovesi a metà del secolo XV (dagli atti notarili redatti nell'isola nel 1449-1450)', *Bulgaria Mediaevalis*, 7 (2016), 181–214.

[34] B. N. Becker, 'Life and Local Administration on Fifteenth Century Genoese Chios' (PhD Dissertation, Western Michigan University, 2010).

[35] Becker, 299.

represented in the long bibliography of studies on the medieval eastern Mediterranean world', but laments the limited attention given to the relationships between different ethnic and social groups on the island.[36] While this statement is true if compared with the consideration given to Chios 'within the wider context of Genoese territorial expansion and economic activity', other fields are even more overlooked.

For example, the presence and the roles of women in Chios under the Genoese rule have rarely been explored, usually relegated to mentions in works by a handful of authors aiming their attention elsewhere. Balletto's work is a partial exception, but it considers only Genoese women's emigration, and without focusing only on Chios. Moreover, what little is said about women on the island is often presented as a given fact with no analysis, and the statements are not always followed by references to documents that could be used as supporting evidence. For example, Pistarino claimed that marriage by proxy was a common arrangement among Genoese bachelors and widowers in Chios, but he offered just one example, provided by a deed published by Argenti, before stating that it was a widespread practice.[37] The most comprehensive expositions about women in Chios are found in Origone's 'Chio nel tempo della caduta di Costantinopoli' and in Pistarino's 'Chio dei Genovesi nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo', both adding a couple of dedicated paragraphs to scattered mentions.

It is easy to see how these are merely hints, compared to the extensive literature on other facets of Genoese Chios, as well as that on women in medieval and early modern Italy and Europe, as the discussions and the comparisons in the following chapters will show. In 2010 Dameron wrote that women's history and gender studies were 'some of the most influential and important areas of historical study, regardless of period or region' and were

[36] Becker, 21.
[37] De Bracellis 50; Pistarino, 'Notazioni', 61.

'very visible in European historiography, including economic history'.[38] A quick look at Venetian Crete, to which Chios is often compared, reveals that the existing scholarship on women is small but not absent. An important contributor is Sally McKee. In articles such as 'Households in Fourteenth-Century Venetian Crete' and 'Inherited Status and Slavery in late medieval Italy and Venetian Crete' women are a consistent presence. What sets Crete apart from Chios, however, are specific contributions such as 'Greek Women in Latin Households of Fourteenth-Century Venetian Crete' and 'Women under Venetian Colonial Rule in the Early Renaissance: Observations on Their Economic Activities'.[39] Lambrinos, whose interests focus on the social history of Crete under Venetian rule, writes on patrician women, while Lauer considers Jewish ones.[40] There are no similar works on women in Genoese Chios.

This thesis aims to start to fill the gap in the literature regarding women in Chios under the Genoese rule and to add to the scarce literature in English about Genoese Chios in general. The research, in particular, focuses on women's economic status and social standing. What role did they have in the economy of the island? Did the absence and presence of men in their lives have any influence on it? Did Chios' status as Genoa's subject have any effect on women's lives? To try and answer these questions I turned to notarial documents produced in Chios by Genoese notaries.

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[38] G. Dameron, 'Becoming Invisible: The Role of Economic History in Medieval Studies and in the Historiography on Medieval Italy', in *Medieval Italy, Medieval and Early Modern Women: Essays in Honour of Christine Meek*, ed. by C. Kostick (Dublin, 2010), 25–38, p. 25.

[39] S. McKee, 'Households in Fourteenth-Century Venetian Crete', *Speculum*, 70/1 (1995), 27–67; S. McKee, 'Inherited Status and Slavery in Late Medieval Italy and Venetian Crete', *P&P*, 182 (2004), 31–53; S. McKee, 'Greek Women in Latin Households of Fourteenth-Century Venetian Crete', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 19/3 (1993), 229–49; S. McKee, 'Women under Venetian Colonial Rule in the Early Renaissance: Observations on Their Economic Activities', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 51/1 (1998), 34–67.

[40] K. Lambrinos, 'La condizione giuridica e sociale della donna patrizia nella Creta veneziana (sec. XVI-XVII)', in *Spazi, poteri e diritti delle donne a Venezia in età moderna*, ed. by A. Bellavitis, N. M. Filippini, and T. Plebani (Verona, 2012), 89–96; R. Lauer, 'Jewish Women in Venetian Candia: Negotiating Intercommunal Contact in a Premodern Colonial City, 1300-1500', in *Religious Cohabitation in European Towns (10th-15th Centuries) / La cohabitation religieuse dans les villes européennes, Xe - XVe siècles*, ed. by S. Boissellier and J. Tolan (Turnhout, 2014), 293–309.

Women are more visible in medieval sources than has often been assumed.[41] Even when documents relate to women only indirectly, they still contain precious information. Notarial deeds, in particular, dealt with a wide range of issues and can be analysed from many different viewpoints, allowing insights into the lives of individuals. They paint a picture for a specific time and place that, although in no way complete, can be a lot more comprehensive than the representation offered by chronicles or official public documents.

Brief Historiography of Genoese Documents

Genoa's records are unique in Europe for continuity and quantity, and can provide a remarkable insight into Genoese society on a scale that is not easily, or at all, attainable for other cities.[42] Giovanni Scriba's cartulary is not only the oldest one preserved in Genoa, but also the oldest known in Europe, dating to 1154-1164.[43] The Archivio di Stato di Genova holds just in the 'Notai Antichi' (Ancient Notaries) fonds 6 cartularies from the 12th century, 113 from the 13th, 332 cartularies and filze from the 14th, and 785 from the 15th.[44] In 1857, after the Archive had suffered, among other events, a bombing in 1664, spoliations during the Napoleonic era (1799-1815), and transfers to the Archivio di Stato in Turin following

[41] K. L. French, 'Medieval Women's History: Sources and Issues', in *Understanding Medieval Primary Sources: Using Historical Sources to Discover Medieval Europe*, ed. by J. T. Rosenthal (London, 2012), 196–209, p. 196.

[42] On Genoese notaries and documents cf. Costamagna's seminal works: G. Costamagna, *La triplice redazione dell'instrumentum genovese* (Genoa, 1961); G. Costamagna, *Il notaio a Genova tra prestigio e potere* (Milan, 1995); G. Costamagna, *Corso di scritture notarili medievali genovesi*, ed. by D. Debernardi (Genoa, 2017). See also G. Petti Balbi, 'Il notariato genovese nel Quattrocento', in *Tra Siviglia e Genova. Notaio, documento e commercio nell'età colombiana, II, Atti del convegno internazionale di studi storici per le celebrazioni colombiane (Genova, 12-14 marzo 1992)*, ed. by V. Piergiovanni (Milan, 1994), 91–144; A. Rovere, 'Aspetti tecnici della professione notarile: il modello genovese', in *La produzione scritta tecnica e scientifica nel Medioevo: libro e documento tra scuole e professioni, Atti del Convegno internazionale di studio dell'Associazione italiana dei Paleografi e Diplomatisti, Fisciano – Salerno (28-30 settembre 2009)*, ed. by G. De Gregorio and M. Galante (Spoleto, 2012), 301–35.

[43] P. Guglielmotti, *Genova* (Spoleto, 2013), 146.

[44] S. Macchiavello and A. Rovere, 'The Written Sources', in *A Companion to Medieval Genoa*, ed. by C. E. Beneš (Leiden/Boston, 2018), 27–48. Cf. also *Cartolari notarili genovesi (1-149). Inventario*, ed. by G. Costamagna (Rome, 1956), VOL.1 P.1; *Cartolari notarili genovesi (1-149). Inventario*, ed. by G. Costamagna (Rome, 1961), VOL.1 P.2; *Cartolari notarili genovesi (150-299). Inventario*, ed. by M. Bologna (Rome, 1990), VOL. 2. For a definition of fond and filza see the Glossary.

the annexation of Genoa to the Regno di Sardegna (1815), it still counted for the notarial archive 10,027 filze of notarial acts from 1154 to 1804 and 4436 of judicial acts, plus about 40 registers and other documents.[45]

Going to the notary was a common practice for Genoese people, part of their culture and habits, not just for purchase agreements, testaments, and contracts, but also to formalise reconciliations and any type of commitment (from limiting alcohol drinking and gambling to stopping spousal mistreatment).[46] The preservation of a considerable number of these records is due to the authorities' early decisions. A place where all the communal documentation was annually deposited existed already in 1163, and an archive for the deceased notaries' cartularies – which Rovere ascribes to the authorities' fear that those cartularies would get lost – probably can be dated to the same period.[47] It should be noted that there was no difference between public and private notaries, and one could draft both for the Commune's offices and private citizens, keeping in his personal archive and even in the same register *acta* and *instrumenta* (*acta* being, from a diplomatist point of view, public documents, and *instrumenta* being private ones).[48]

A programmatic interest in the documents kept in the Archivio appears in the second half of the 19th century, during the intensely productive first fifty years of the *Società Ligure di Storia Patria* (1858-1908). Belgrano and Desimoni, the major exponents of the *Società* in that period, followed their announcement of wanting to publish unknown documents on

[45] Cf. *Il bombardamento di Genova nel 1684, Atti della giornata di studio nel terzo centenario (Genova, 21 giugno 1984)* (Genoa, 1988); M. Bologna, '1684 maggio 17 - Le perdite dell'archivio del collegio dei notai di Genova', *ASLi*, n.s. 24 (1984), 267–90; P. Caroli, '«Note sono le dolorose vicende...»: gli archivi genovesi fra Genova, Parigi e Torino (1808-1952)', in *Spazi per la memoria storica. La storia di Genova attraverso le vicende delle sedi e dei documenti dell'Archivio di Stato, Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Genova, 7-10 giugno 2004*, ed. by A. Assini and P. Caroli (Rome, 2009), 273–387.

[46] For some examples see the catalogues of the expositions in 'Mostra storica del notariato medievale ligure', ed. by G. Costamagna and D. Puncuh, *ASLi*, n.s. 4/1 (1964), and in *Hinc publica fides. Il notaio e l'amministrazione della giustizia, Atti del Convegno Internazionale di studi storici, Genova, 8-9 ottobre 2004*, ed. by V. Piergiovanni (Milan, 2006).

[47] A. Rovere, 'Sedi di governo, sedi di cancelleria e archivi comunali a Genova nei secoli XII-XIII', in *Spazi per la memoria storica*, ed. by Assini and Caroli (2009), 409–26, pp. 422–23.

[48] Costamagna, *Il notaio a Genova*, 237.

the Ligurian history of commerce and navy with an edition of deeds from Brabant, Flanders and Bourgogne.[49] Poggi, general secretary of the *Società* until the resignation in 1931, saw in notaries' editions the way to propose a history of an entire community instead of an elitist one. His replacement – Vitale, one of the most distinguished exponents of Genoese historiography at the beginning of the 20th century – also insisted on the necessity of notaries' study and publication in order to reconstruct Genoese life.[50]

Following one of the main strands of Genoese historiography, the celebration of mercantile and colonial glories, studies on commercial activities and the relations with the colonies prompted archival explorations that went beyond the local context, involving foreign researchers. The tendency, however, was to build diplomatic codices around events considered particularly significant, covering large chronological arcs, and using different typologies of material (official acts as treaties, decrees or statutes, as well as letters, wills, inventories, etc.) and from different fonds. For example, Vigna – another important representative of 19th-century Genoese historiography – published between 1868 and 1879 six volumes on the colonies in the Black Sea area during the second half of the 15th century (1453-1475).[51] The documents were mostly from the archive of the Banco di San Giorgio but also from manuscripts, filze from other archives, and chronicles. Furthermore, these collections – often without archival references and notes apparatus – alternated summaries and integral editions without explaining the choices. On the opposite side of the spectrum there were fragmentary and almost casual editions of single or small groups of documents.[52] Only in 1906 was an entire cartulary published for the first time, but a large section of the

[49] C. Desimoni and L. T. Belgrano, 'Documenti ed estratti inediti o poco noti riguardanti la storia del commercio e della marineria ligure. I. Brabante, Fiandre e Borgogna. Documenti raccolti e ordinati dai soci C. Desimoni e L.T. Belgrano', *ASLi*, 5/3 (1867), 357–548.
[50] Petti Balbi, 'La storia medievale', 110–15.
[51] A. Vigna, 'Codice diplomatico delle colonie tauro-liguri durante la signoria dell'Ufficio di San Giorgio (MCCCCLIII-MCCCCLXXV)', *ASLi*, 6–7 (1868-1879).
[52] See S. Macchiavello and A. Rovere, 'Le edizioni di fonti documentarie e gli studi di diplomatica (1857-2007)', ed. by D. Puncuh, *La Società Ligure di Storia Patria nella storiografia italiana. 1857-2007*, *ASLi*, n.s. 50/2 (2010), 5–92, pp. 9–10, 23.

acts was summarised.[53] For the first integral edition of a cartulary the choice fell on Giovanni Scriba; this 1853 edition, however, is considered by Puncuh incomplete and poorly done.[54]

The period between the second decade of the 20th century and the end of the 1950s was characterised by an output contraction, partially caused by the two World Wars. However, it saw in 1938 the birth of the 'Notai liguri del sec. XII' series, devoted to the edition of the oldest Genoese notarial registries. In the immediate post-war period the initiative was broadened to the 13th century ('Notai liguri dei secc. XII e XIII'), but then the series progressively died, the last publication being in 1974. In 2004 the *Società* started the project again, planning also the publication of cartularies of particularly relevant notaries active in the 14th and 15th centuries ('Notai liguri dei secoli XII-XV'). The new 2015 series '*Notariorum Itinera*' aims to be its ideal continuation while widening its scope to everywhere the notarial institution developed, not only Genoa and Liguria.

In the thirty years between 1974 and 2004 the editions did not stop completely: Pistarino's 'Collana storica di fonti e studi' published between 1969 and 1989 almost sixty volumes, with almost half of those being editions of Genoese and Ligurian sources: statutes, account registers, cartularies of churches and monasteries, letters, but mostly notarial cartularies. Among the latter, twelve out of fourteen were notaries active in the colonies, the so-called 'Notai genovesi in Oltremare' series.

Cartularies are information reservoirs that lend themselves to countless approaches: studies on goods transmission, families' structures and history, local and international commerce, money circulation, professional groups and urban artefacts are just some of them. In 1866 Belgrano's work on Genoese everyday life, outlined through the examination of a consistent number of acts, started a historiographical strand destined to last, in which notarial

[53] '*Liber Magistri Salmonis Sacri Palatii Notarii (1222-1226)*', ed. by A. Ferretto, *ASLi*, 36 (1906).
[54] 'incompleta e decisamente scadente', D. Puncuh, 'Sul metodo editoriale di testi notarili italiani', ed. by A. Rovere, M. Calleri, and S. Macchiavello, *All'ombra della Lanterna. Cinquant'anni tra archivi e biblioteche: 1956-2006, ASLi*, n.s. 46/1 (2006), 593–610, p. 595 [first publ. in *Actum Luce*, 6 (1977), 59–80].

cartularies are the sources par excellence.[55] While it is impossible to cite all the works using these cartularies as basis, it could be said that every serious work on Genoese history, especially for a period prior to the 15th century, has them as its foundations.[56] Following this long-standing tradition, I have also chosen to base my study on notarial records, searching for women and what the documents can tell us about their lives in Genoese Chios.

The research that follows is not meant to be an encompassing account of women's lives in medieval Chios during the Genoese period. Rather it has two main aims: the study of women's economic and social roles, with the overarching and intersecting themes of women's rights and agency. According to Genoese law, a man could authorise his wife to take legal actions and even to act on his behalf during his absence, although she still needed male approval. The documents were analysed to see if there was evidence of women taking over their husbands' business when they were not present, and more in general, to examine what was their involvement in economic activities. Did they engage in trade, since Chios was a maritime city and a centre of commercial exchange? Another important consideration is, did women's rights (and restrictions) differ depending on the presence or absence of a husband, whether a temporary or a permanent one (i.e. a woman was widow or had never been married)? Lastly, comparisons with Genoa were sought, in an attempt to understand the impact Genoese rule had on the lives of the women of Chios.

[55] L. T. Belgrano, 'Della vita privata dei Genovesi. Dissertazione del socio Luigi Tommaso Belgrano', *ASLi*, 4 (1866). Cf. Macchiavello and Rovere, 'Le edizioni', 29 n.69.
[56] Some are listed in M. Moresco and G. P. Bognetti, *Per l'edizione dei notai liguri del sec. XII* (Genoa, 1938), 15–18; Q. Van Doosselaere, *Commercial Agreements and Social Dynamics in Medieval Genoa* (New York, 2009), 10; Guglielmotti, *Genova*, 156–58.

Chios' Primary Sources

The first nucleus of Genoese colonial legislation is a 1304 version of Genoese statutes called by its first editor 'Statuti della colonia genovese di Pera'.[57] It is stated there that colonies were subject to Genoese law (*secundum formam regularum et capitulorum Communis Ianue*), or in second instance, to Roman law (*secundum iura romana*).[58] There were, however, also specific norms issued by Genoese magistrates in loco.[59]

The Statutes ordered that, when various notaries were present and available, Genoese necessarily had to go to notaries endorsed by Genoa's *Collegio dei notai* (notaries' guild). It was an organisation that dealt with the training and protection of the profession: it held a school for apprentices and exams for aspirants, it regulated access to positions, supported widows and orphans of deceased notaries, and conserved their documents.[60] The *Collegio* was already established in the 13th century (the first document about it that can be dated with certainty is from 1258) and anyone who wanted to exercise the notarial art in Genoa or in its territories had to go through it.[61] Only its members, in fact, could be chosen for public offices, including overseas ones, called *scribanie.*[62]

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[57] V. Promis, 'Statuti della colonia genovese di Pera', *Miscellanea di storia italiana*, 11 (1870), 513–780.
[58] V. Piergiovanni, 'La dimensione internazionale di una storia locale: Genova nel Medioevo e nell'età moderna', ed. by V. Piergiovanni, *Norme, scienza e pratica giuridica tra Genova e l'Occidente medievale e moderno, ASLi*, n.s. 52/1 (2012), 461–71, p. 470 [first publ. in *Tra Varese, la California e il mare. Incontri sulle storie locali, Varese, 24 maggio 2006* (Varese, 2007), 37–47].
[59] V. Piergiovanni, 'Il notaio nella storia giuridica genovese', in *Tra Siviglia e Genova*, ed. by Piergiovanni (1994), 73–89, p. 80. See also M. Balard, 'Il notaio e l'amministrazione della giustizia nell'Oltremare genovese', in *Hinc publica fides*, ed. by Piergiovanni (2006), 353–69; G. Forcheri, 'Le colonie nella legislazione del Comune et Populus Ianue', in *Miscellanea di storia italiana e mediterranea per Nino Lamboglia* (Genoa, 1978), 267–90, esp. 267–73. More in general see V. Piergiovanni, 'I rapporti giuridici tra Genova e il Dominio', *ASLi*, n.s. 24/2 (1984), 427–49.
[60] On the Collegio see G. Petti Balbi, 'Sul collegio notarile genovese del 1382', in *Miscellanea di storia ligure in onore di Giorgio Falco* (Milan, 1962), 281–98; A. Assini, 'L'archivio del collegio notarile genovese e la conservazione degli atti tra Quattro e Cinquecento', in *Tra Siviglia e Genova*, ed. by Piergiovanni (1994), 214–28; C. Carosi, 'L'accesso al notariato a Genova in età colombiana: procedure d'esame, nomina ed immatricolazione', in *Tra Siviglia e Genova*, ed. by Piergiovanni (1994), 327–44.
[61] Costamagna, *Il notaio a Genova*, 153.
[62] Balard, 'Il notaio', 357, 368.

Scribanie were appointed yearly, so notaries' stays in the colonies were usually temporary and followed by a return to Genoa. For example, Giuliano de Canella started his career in Chios in 1380-1381, but was in Genoa from 1408 until 1422, when his cartularies (and maybe his life) stopped. Donato di Chiavari held offices in Pera in 1389 and in Chios from 1393 until 1408, when he returned to Genoa.[63] This explains why registers drawn up in Genoese colonies scattered across the Mediterranean Sea can be found in Genoa.

It is very important to consider that no matter how many documents survived, it is only a marginal portion of what existed in origin, due to what Stello calls 'the accidents of survival'.[64] It is not uncommon to find in the acts references to other deeds that are 'missing' or to notaries who would be otherwise unknown. For instance, considering not only the notaries whose acts survived, but also other colleagues' cited in those, Karpov calculates that the number of notaries working in the Black Sea area should be increased by 30%.[65] Petti Balbi counts that in de Canella's acts from Chios ten other Genoese notaries are named between 6 December 1380 and 31 March 1381, six mentioned sporadically as witnesses and more often as participants in commercial operations.[66] From the surviving acts it is also possible to learn about the existence in Chios of Greek notaries: mentioned in their Genoese colleagues' documents, until now no trace of their works has been found.[67] The Korais Library in Chios has nothing in their manuscript collection dated to the Genoese period and the oldest document at Chios' Historical Archives is dated around 1690-1700.[68]

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[63] G. Petti Balbi, 'Notai della città e notai nella città di Genova durante il Trecento', in *Il notaio e la città*, ed. by V. Piergiovanni (Milan, 2009), 3–40, pp. 7, 18, 21–28.
[64] A. Stello, 'Caffa and the Slave Trade during the First Half of the Fifteenth Century', in *Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean (c. 1000–1500 CE)*, ed. by R. Amitai and C. Cluse (Turnhout, 2017), 375–98, p. 375.
[65] S. P. Karpov, 'Il valore della documentazione archivistica genovese per la storia del mar Nero e dell'Europa orientale', in *Spazi per la memoria storica*, ed. by Assini and Caroli (2009), 501–07, p. 502.
[66] Petti Balbi, 'Notai della città', 19–20.
[67] Cf. M. Balard, 'The Genoese in the Aegean (1204-1566)', *MHR*, 4/1 (1989), 158–74, p. 169; Mazarakis, 'Chio', 831. Among others see also Origone, 'Chio', 188; Greci e Latini, 44; Balletto, 'Il mondo del lavoro', 126.
[68] Private communication with the librarian, Maria Vastianou, in date 28/07/2016.

It is therefore necessary to keep in mind that Chios' known notarial sources are partial: they were drawn up by Genoese notaries, thus only regarding people, for the most part Latins, who turned to them. It is possible that Greek notaries were used when only Greeks were involved, even if their deeds had legal value also for Latin contractors. At other times Latin notaries were called even when both parties belonged to the same (non-Latin) community, but it is suggested that it happened mostly when a Genoese justice court was involved.[69] It is probable that the Jewish community had its own notaries too, but currently there are no documents attesting this.[70] Moreover, the documentation available is mostly an urban production that took place in the main city of the island, so it is debatable how much of the knowledge gained from these notarial deeds can be applied outside the city and to the rest of the island. Similar observations have been made by McKee regarding notarial acts from Venetian Crete.[71]

The importance of Genoese expansion overseas in the Middle Ages has been clear since the *Società Ligure di Storia Patria*'s origins, because, in Lopez's words, Genoese colonies' history is one and the same with Genoa's history.[72] However, the number of documentary editions surpasses that of studies on Genoese 'Oltremare', and, as Guglielmotti notes, the work of transcription of overseas notaries has been less fruitful than the transcription of notaries working in the motherland.[73]

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[69] See G. Pistarino, 'I Genovesi nel Levante fra il tramonto di Costantinopoli e l'impero Ottomano', in *Aspetti della vita economica medievale: atti del Convegno di Studi nel X anniversario della morte di Federigo Melis, Firenze-Pisa-Prato, 10-14 marzo 1984* (Florence, 1985), 91–125, p. 96; L. Balletto, 'Società e cultura a Chio in epoca colombiana', in *Αιγαίο: χώρος πολιτισμού από τον Ομηρο στον Κολόμβο: πρακτικά Δ' Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Χίου για την ιστορία και τον πολιτισμό του νησιού στα πλαίσια του προγράμματος Columbus '92* (Nea Smirni, 1991), 91–96, p. 93. See also 'Romanie', 18/1, 269, 336; Pistarino, 'Fonti notarili', 43.
[70] Argenti, *The Religious Minorities*, 138; G. G. Musso, 'Ebrei nel Levante', 11–12.
[71] S. McKee, *Uncommon Dominion: Venetian Crete and the Myth of Ethnic Purity* (Philadelphia, 2000), VII–XIII.
[72] 'La storia delle colonie genovesi è tutt'uno con quella della città, anzi è la sua stessa ragion di vita', R. S. Lopez, *Storia delle colonie genovesi nel Mediterraneo* (Bologna, 1938), VIII. On historiographical production on Genoese Levant see M. Balard, 'Mediterraneo, Levante e Mar Nero', ed. by D. Puncuh, *La Società Ligure di Storia Patria nella storiografia italiana. 1857-2007, ASLi*, n.s. 50/1 (2010), 331–48.
[73] Guglielmotti, *Genova*, 149–52.

Two notebooks of acts drawn up in Chios, found in the cartularies attributed to the notaries Raffaele de Guasco and Giovanni Bardi, were first published in 1962 by Gioffrè.[74] The first notebook contained, among documents from other notaries drawn up in Genoa, 28 acts by Raffaele de Casanova from 1359; the second notebook was correctly placed in Giovanni Bardi's cartulary and had 62 deeds from the first five months of 1398. In 1965 Villa published 13 private acts involving Jews in Chios that would be later published by Balard among the others by notary Donato di Chiavari.[75] Documents concerning the government of Chios and the mastic extraction and commerce were the subject of Rovere's work in 1979, which included an ample introduction with content and style characteristics analysis.[76]

The previously mentioned series 'Notai genovesi in Oltremare' includes four other volumes of acts drafted in Chios, beside Donato di Chiavari's ones. The published notaries are Raffaele de Casanova, Giuliano de Canella, Gregorio (Giorgio) Panissaro and Lorenzo Calvi.[77] Documents from Chios have also been published in Argenti's second and third volumes, in Balletto's collection of documents involving Piemontesi in the Near East in the 15th century, and in other various publications.[78]

[74] D. Gioffrè, 'Atti rogati in Chio nella seconda metà del XIV secolo', *Bullettin de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome*, 34 (1962), 319–404, hereafter Gioffrè.
[75] P. Villa, 'Documenti sugli Ebrei a Chio nel 1394', *ASLi*, n.s. 5/1 (1965), 117–51, hereafter Villa; Di Chiavari.
[76] Rovere.
[77] L. Balletto, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Chio nel XIV secolo dal notaio Raffaele de Casanova* (Bordighera, 2015), hereafter Casanova; E. Basso, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Chio da Giuliano de Canella (2 Novembre 1380 - 31 Marzo 1381)* (Athens, 1993), hereafter De Canella; P. Piana Toniolo, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Chio da Gregorio Panissaro (1403-1405)* (Genoa, 1995), hereafter Panissaro; A. Roccatagliata, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Chio (1453-54, 1470-71)* (Genoa, 1982), hereafter Roccatagliata. Balletto found that Panissaro's name was Georgius and not Gregorius, L. Balletto, 'Gregorius vel Georgius? Quale il vero nome del notaio G. Panizario che rogò a Chio nel primo Quattrocento?', *ASLi*, 56 (2016), 9–29.
[78] For example in Origone, 'Chio'; Greci e Latini; L. Balletto, 'Un giurista acquese del Quattrocento nel Vicino Oriente: Alberto Bolla', in *Atti del Congresso Internazionale «Dai feudi monferrini e dal Piemonte ai nuovi mondi oltre gli oceani», Alessandria, 2-6 aprile 1990* (Alessandria, 1993), 263–306, hereafter Giurista; A. Roccatagliata, 'Da Bisanzio a Chio nel 1453', in *Miscellanea di storia italiana e mediterranea per Nino Lamboglia* (Genoa, 1978), 383–408; Balletto, 'Tra l'isola di Creta'.

What is currently published is only a part of the material stored in the Archivio di Stato di Genova: some deeds have yet to be studied, some possibly have yet to be found. Moreover, Petti Balbi and Guglielmotti agree that exegetic, philological, palaeographic studies are not always matched with organic data re-elaboration and interpretation.[79] Indeed, while published documents have been used in many of the works previously mentioned, topics such as the women in Chios during the Genoese period have yet to be addressed. It did not seem reasonable thus to look for new evidence before having analysed the already available documentation. Even with chronological, quantitative and partiality limitations, the wealth of information derivable from already published notarial material is conspicuous, especially for a subject yet to be studied in depth. I systematically analysed the published documents, identifying the women and extracting the information regarding them. Cross-checking these data revealed many instances of the same actors appearing in deeds from different notaries, allowing a better understanding of their actions and their networks. Research visits to the Archivio di Stato in Genoa were made in order to compare a sample of the edited acts with the original manuscripts. There it became evident that the documents published by Gioffrè and Argenti contained errors.

While mistakes in Gioffrè were mostly minor (some omissions, inaccuracies, and transcription errors), many deeds in Argenti's third volume turned out to be published only partially, with significant mistakes and even alterations, for example names being added or substituted.[80] It is unclear whether this should be all (or at all) ascribed to him. In the introduction Argenti thanked Professor Raffaele di Tucci for the transcription of the deeds of Pellegrino de Bracellis, Francesco de Roboreto, Bernardo de Ferrari, and the Unknown

[79] Petti Balbi, 'La storia medievale', 116; P. Guglielmotti, 'La storia medievale. Parte II (1960-2007)', ed. by D. Puncuh, *La Società Ligure di Storia Patria nella storiografia italiana. 1857-2007, ASLi*, n.s. 50/1 (2010), 119–57, p. 129.
[80] Some examples are mentioned in the chapters, others can be found in Casanova, pp. 62–64.

notaries.[81] The consequent assumption would have been that Argenti had transcribed himself the acts by the other three notaries (de Recco, Foglietta, Sampietro). However, Lopez stated in his review that 'the late Professors Raffaele Di Tucci and Carlo Bornate spent a good many busy days transcribing for him all they could find in the rich files of the Archivio di Stato'.[82] Many questions, for now unanswered, follow. Did Argenti transcribe anything himself? Did he just publish what he was given? Were the mistakes in the original transcriptions or did they appear along the passages of publications? Were they on purpose, especially where members of the Argenti family are added? While some of these documents have been republished – and attributed to the correct notary – by Laura Balletto, for most Argenti's edition is the only one available (and a new, correct, one is certainly desirable).[83]

I was able to check the documents published by Gioffrè contained in the cartulare 382 and those published by Argenti present in cartulare 317 (De Bracellis), filze 764-765 (De Ferrari), filza 848 (De Recco), filza 843 (Foglietta), and filza 1689 (Sampietro). It amounts to all the De Bracellis' deeds involving women and roughly half of those of De Ferrari, De Recco, Foglietta, Sampietro, and of those published by Gioffrè. Where I found inaccuracies, I have pointed them out and used my own transcription.

The research visits to the Archive also brought to my attention some acts that have never been published before and that have been included in this thesis (e.g. Fig. 1).

[81] *Occupation*, XXII–XIII.
[82] Lopez, 'Review', 447. Similarly in De Negri, 'Rassegne', 157, 160.
[83] Casanova.

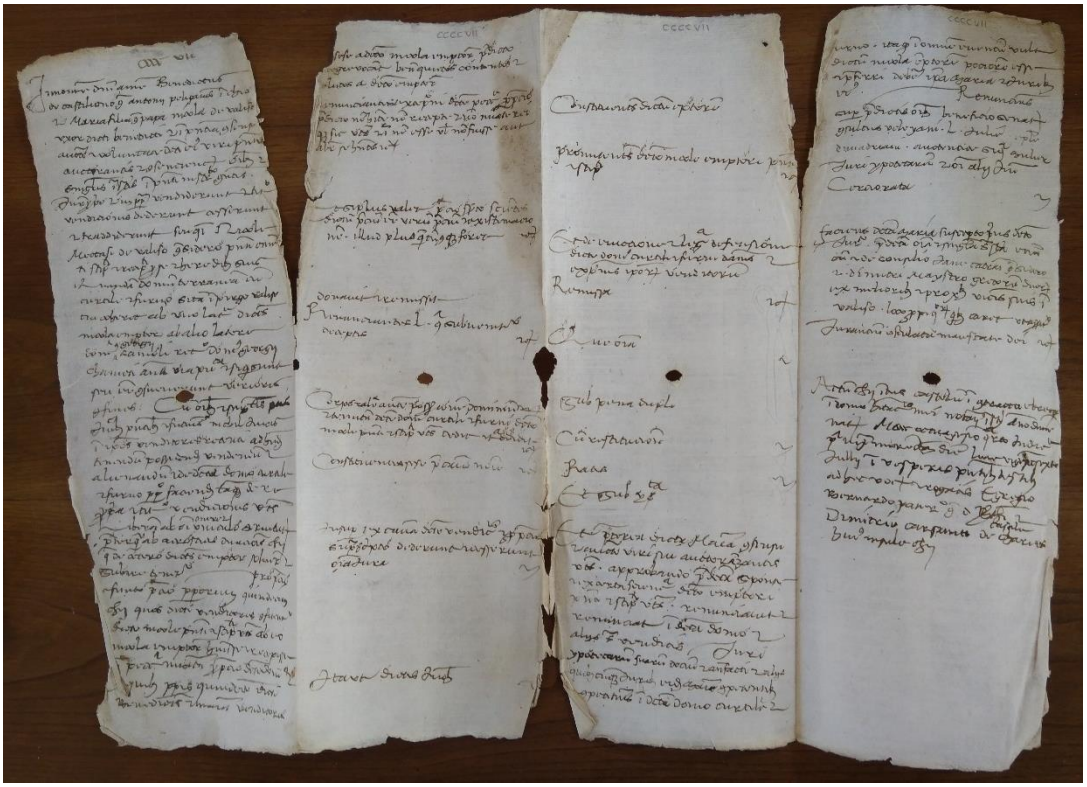


Fig. 1 A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 944, doc. 407 (Photo: Chiara Ravera, 10/11/2017, authorised by A.S.G.)

In total I have examined 1168 documents finding women in 262 of these. These deeds are from eighteen different notaries (and some from unknown ones) and have been published by ten editors: Argenti (82 documents), Basso (33), Piana Toniolo (30), Roccatagliata (29), Balletto (29), Balard (23), Gioffrè (11, plus other 5 published again by Balletto), Origone (5), Rovere (4). I have also considered 16 unpublished documents. The acts do not cover the whole period of the Genoese rule in Chios (1346-1566), but rather from 1348 to 1522 (Table 1).

NOTARY	DATES	EDITORS	NUM. DOCS.
De Bracellis	1348-1349	Argenti	7
Casanova	1359-1360	Balletto (Gioffrè)	8
De Roboreto	1360	Argenti	1
Turco	1361	Balletto	1
De Canella	1381	Basso	29
Unknown	1381	Argenti	1
Di Chiavari	1394	Balard (Villa)	29
Bardi	1398	Gioffrè	11
Panissaro	1403-1405	Piana Toniolo + Balletto	31
Balbi	1408	Origone	1
De Recco	1446-1461	Argenti + Balletto + unpublished	33
B. De Ferrari	1450-1462	Argenti + Balletto + unpublished	33
Precipiano	1452	Balletto	1
Calvi	1453-1471	Roccatagliata	29
De Rapallo	1456-1457	Origone	4
Antonio Foglietta	1460-1476	Argenti + Balletto	25
Unpublished	1460-1461	unpublished	6
Unknown	1463	Argenti	1
G.B. De Ferrari	1463	unpublished	1
Unknown	1477-1512	Rovere	4
Unknown	1483	Argenti	1
Unknown	1484	unpublished	1
Agostino Foglietta	1499	unpublished	1
Sampietro	1517-1522	Argenti	3
TOTAL			262

Table 1 Notaries and editors

Their chronological distribution is uneven: 87 from the first fifty of the Genoese period, 37 from the first half of the 15th century, 132 from the second half, and only 6 deeds dated to the beginning of the 16th century (Fig. 2). More than 340 women appear, with a more precise count being hard to determine as it is not always possible to detect if women with the same

name are the same person. There is no doubt that there are more unpublished documents from Chios, and within them the potential for future research.[84]

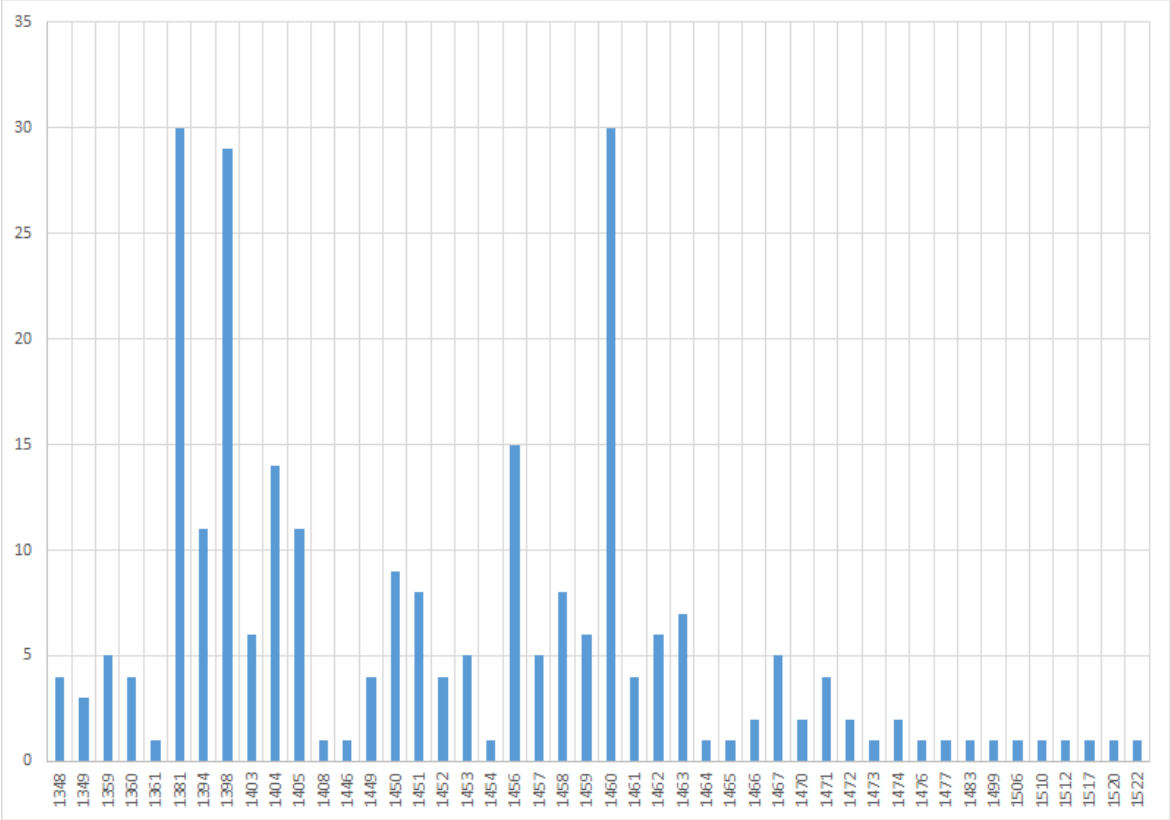


Fig. 2 Chronological distribution of the documents examined

Outline of Chapters

This thesis is divided in three parts. The first is an introductory one that begins by investigating why the Genoese were in Chios, in order to contextualise the situation of women living there in the medieval period. After presenting the island of Chios and the Genoese's long-standing interest in it, sources on the 1346 conquest are examined in order to try and reconstruct why and how Chios came to be under Genoese possession for more than two centuries. A closer look is then given to the city of Chios, where most of the

[84] Cf. also Balletto, 'La schiavitù', 181.

Genoese settled, before moving to a more general discussion of whether the island can be considered a Genoese colony or not.

The second part of the thesis considers the question of female involvement in economic activities, exploring the many ways women could take part in the economic life of the island. Despite the extremely limited evidence regarding women running or participating in business, or even having a job, they carried out other activities that show they had a role in the economy. After an overview of women's rights, focusing on agency and guardianship, Chapter 2 considers women working and participating in economic transactions. They could be active participants or passive ones. In the first case they could act through representatives or for themselves, and in both instances they were mainly involved in contracts concerning real estate and other high-value assets. The documents also show how Latins, Greeks and Jews interacted with each other in different contexts and ways, from social and economic points of view. The last part of the chapter deals with passive participants in sales: slaves. The terminology used in the acts is analysed before discussing slavery in Chios, with a particular interest shown towards female slaves.

Women's wealth cannot be limited to what we see them trading, and Chapter 3 explores women's properties through the use of deeds attesting a transfer of ownership, such as dowries, donations, and wills. The first section discusses who had rights over the dowry – the property that a bride brought into the marriage – and of which types, and what women could inherit and what they could leave as bequest. Then, after following the actions of the female members of an extended family through various generations, women's belongings are investigated, dividing them by type of asset. Through the whole chapter, as in the previous one, agency, possession, and management issues are discussed as they cannot be fully separated from the notion of women's properties.

The following two chapters deal with women and marriage, and how the presence or absence of a husband could influence women's lives. Chapter 4 starts with some aspects of marriages in Genoese Chios that go beyond the economic side considered in the previous chapter. Then it proceeds to focus on a peculiar tax that was supposed to be paid by widows in Chios if they did not want to marry again, the *argomoniatico*. As not much is known about it and not much has been studied, I try to determine its origins and reasons of existence, before looking at the remarried women mentioned in the documents. The last part of the chapter looks at those women who appear in the deeds with the title of *domina*, investigating whether it was because they were widows named *donna et domina* in their husbands' wills like elsewhere in Italy, and what it could mean in terms of rights.

After having considered married women, Chapter 5 focuses instead on women without a husband, whether he was momentarily absent or not present at all, in the documents or in real life. After discussing the two examples of women whose husbands were temporarily away from the island, the chapter looks at women who appear in the deeds without a husband mentioned. Not all of them were what we would call now single women, so I try to identify them among the others, some of whom were married or widows – as we learn from cross-checking data from various acts – while others were too young to be married. A category of women who never appear as married, although not by choice, is that of slaves, but also ex-slaves. The latter are the topic of the last part of the chapter, in which I analyse the manumission documents through which they gained their freedom.

Finally, the last chapter recapitulates the major findings of the thesis regarding the lives and activities of medieval women in Genoese Chios.

Chapter 1. The Genoese in Chios

The Island of Chios

Chios (in Greek Χίος, in the past also called Scio or Syo) is an island in the Eastern Aegean Sea, close to the Anatolian coastline. The channel separating the two lands varies in width from 8 km to 25 km at its widest. In the past this position made Chios a well-placed outlet for Asia Minor's caravan trades and the ideal naval base to combat the Turks when needed: the early 14th century saw the beginning of Turkish control of the western Anatolian coast, starting with the seizure of Smyrna from the Genoese in 1300.[1]



Map 2 Location of Chios (http://www.giustiniani.info/isole.html)

[1] P. Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean: 1204-1500* (London, 1995), 158.

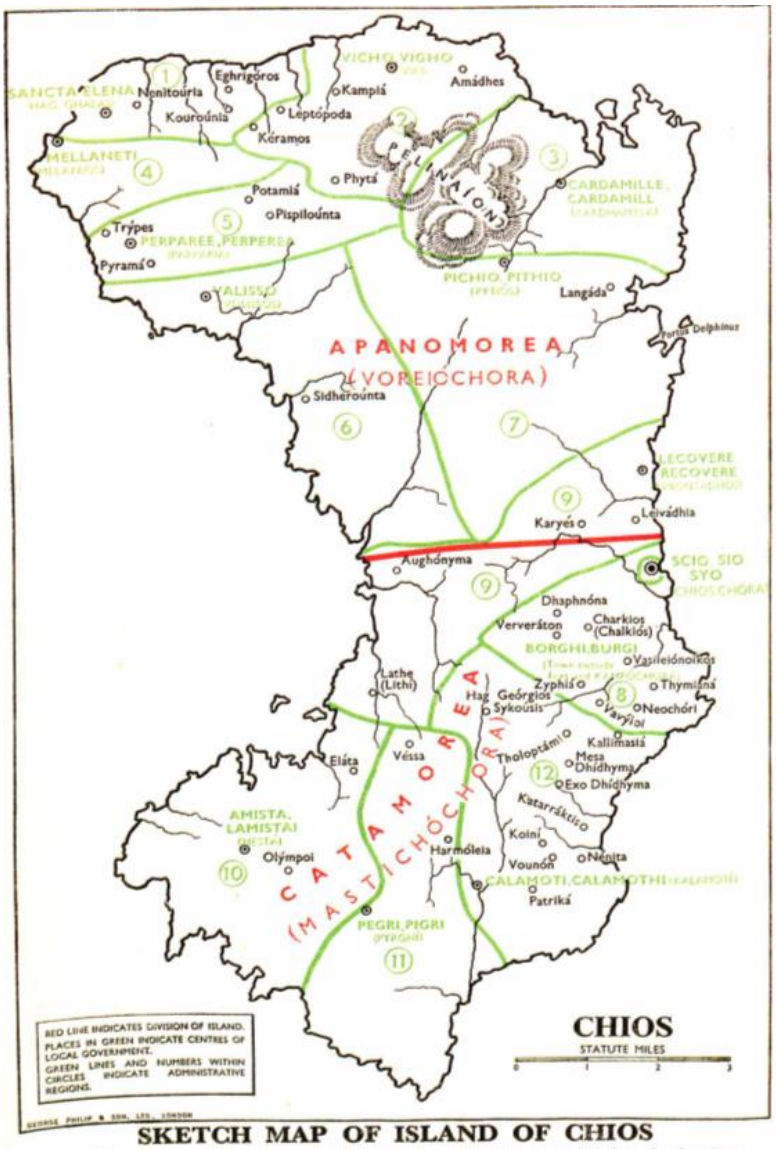
The island can be divided into three regions. Mountains characterise the northern region, called Epanomeria (also Apanomorea or Voreiòchora). The central region (Kentròchora) consists of broken ranges and plateaux. The southern area, Katomerià (or Catamorea), is hilly, with better weather conditions and less steep coasts that made for easier docking, leading to a more widespread occupation (Fig. 3).[2] It is where mastic has been produced since antiquity, mentioned by Greek authors as early as the 6th century BC. Cultivation was handled in the past as in the present by the 'mastic villages' – Mastichochora, a term that is sometimes used for the whole region.[3]

Mastic is a resin obtained from the lentisk tree with various uses, from pharmacology to perfumery, from food preparation to arts and crafts. The lentisk is a species commonly found in the Mediterranean area, but only Chios has a variant, called *Pistacia lentiscus* var. *Chia*, that produces mastic. However, it does so only in the southern region, especially in the south-west. The common lentisk shrub, which grows in northern Chios as elsewhere, produces only an ordinary resin. Every attempt of planting the variant outside the southern area of the island has failed. There is no definitive answer as to the reason. A hypothesis is that the *Chia* is an endemic form, consequence of insularism and prolonged genetic isolation. The environmental conditions of the region have also been suggested as the reasons: the specific climate, the presence of geothermic currents due to the island's volcanic nature, the thick and calcareous soil that favours a particular growth of the plant.[4]

[2] Spagnesi, 19–21; E. Kolodny, 'Chios: évolution récente et structures du peuplement d'une île de navigateurs', *Recherches Méditerranéennes*, 8 (1969), 313–51, pp. 316–20; I. N. Koukouni, '"Capitania Valisso Castrum Dicti Loci": Settlement Patterns and Defence on Northern Chios, 9th-16th Centuries' (PhD Dissertation, University of Birmingham, 2011), 46–51.

[3] Xyda, 'La «Mastichochora»'; Stringa, 321; Pistarino, *Genovesi d'Oriente*, 263.

[4] K. Browicz, 'Pistacia Lentiscus cv. Chia (Anacardiaceae) on Chios Island', *Plant Systematics and Evolution*, 155 n.1/4 (1987), 189–95; C. Baratto, 'Il mastice e la resina di terebinto nelle fonti antiche', in *La Signora del sarcofago: una sepoltura di rango nella necropoli dell'Università Cattolica. Ricerche archeologiche nei cortili dell'Università Cattolica*, ed. by M. P. Rossignani, M. Sannazaro, and G. Legrottaglie (Milan, 2005), 143–64; L. Castelletti, 'Il lentisco (Pistacia Lentiscus L.) e la varietà coltivata nell'isola greca di Chio (var. Chia)', in *La Signora del sarcofago*, ed. by Rossignani, Sannazaro, and Legrottaglie (2005), 287–90; D. G. Ierapetritis, 'Watchtowers, Mastic Contraband and Rural Communities in the Aegean Archipelago under Ottoman Sovereignty', *The Historical Review/La Revue Historique*, 10 (2013), 219–54, pp. 225–26.



SKETCH MAP OF ISLAND OF CHIOS
showing approximate administrative divisions of island during the Genoese administration, 1346-1566, as listed on Fols. LXXIII*verso*–LXXIIII, LXXV*verso*–LXXVI of Codex Berianus Chiensis.

Fig. 3 Sketch map of Chios from *Occupation*, vol. 1.







Fig. 4 Lentisk trees (https://www.gummastic.gr/en/)

Because these lentisk trees were the only known source of gum mastic, whoever owned the island held a worldwide production and commercial monopoly over it. Mastic, however, was not the only valuable produce: Chian wines, for example, were exported and appreciated all over the Mediterranean. The island's richness and fertility were two main reasons for Chios' importance during the medieval period. Another was its strategic position. Situated in front of Asia Minor's coasts, it was also at the crossroad of various maritime routes, connecting the Black Sea, Constantinople, other Aegean islands such as Rhodes and Cyprus, and also Syria and Alexandria. It was a pivotal point of commercial redistribution, not only for oriental products, but also for western export towards the Levant.[5]

The Genoese in Chios Before 1346

In 1261 Genoa signed the Treaty of Nymphaeum with Emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus, ruler of Nicaea (Map 3). He was planning an assault to Constantinople, occupied by the Latins (western, Catholic, Christians who adhered to the Latin rite) since the Fourth Crusade (1202-1204).[6] In exchange for naval help the Genoese received commercial privileges in the empire and a fixed presence in various cities, including that of Chios, on the homonymous island. They obtained some buildings and permission for their consuls to administrate jurisdiction over every Genoese.[7] The exact words were *universos Ianuenses et de districtu*

[5] See among others M. Carr, 'Trade or Crusade? The Zaccaria of Chios and Crusades against the Turks', in *Contact and Conflict in Frankish Greece and the Aegean, 1204-1453. Crusade, Religion and Trade between Latins, Greeks and Turks*, ed. by N. G Chrissis and M. Carr (Farnham, 2014), 115–34, p. 119; D. Jacoby, 'The Eastern Mediterranean in the Later Middle Ages - An Island World?', in *Byzantines, Latins, and Turks in the Eastern Mediterranean World After 1150*, ed. by J. Harris, C. Holmes, and E. Russell (Oxford, 2012), 93–117, p. 99; P. Freedman, 'Mastic: A Mediterranean Luxury Product', *MHR*, 26/1 (2011), 99–113; D. Jacoby, 'Thirteen-Century Commercial Exchange in the Aegean: Continuity and Change', in *Change in the Byzantine World in the Twelfth and Thirteen Centuries, First International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium, 25-28 June 2007*, ed. by A. Odekan, E. Akyurek, and N. Necipoglu (Istanbul, 2010), 187–94, p. 194; Balard, 'Le mastic'; A. Thevet, *Cosmographie de Levant* (Antwerp, 1556), 29–33.

[6] On the Latin empire see Lock, in particular chapters 1 and 3. On the Treaty see M. Balard, '1261. Genova nel mondo: il trattato del Ninfeo', in *Gli anni di Genova* (Rome, 2010), 39–68.

[7] *I Libri Iurium della Repubblica di Genova*, 1/4, ed. by S. Dellacasa (Genoa, 1998), n. 749, pp. 271–85.

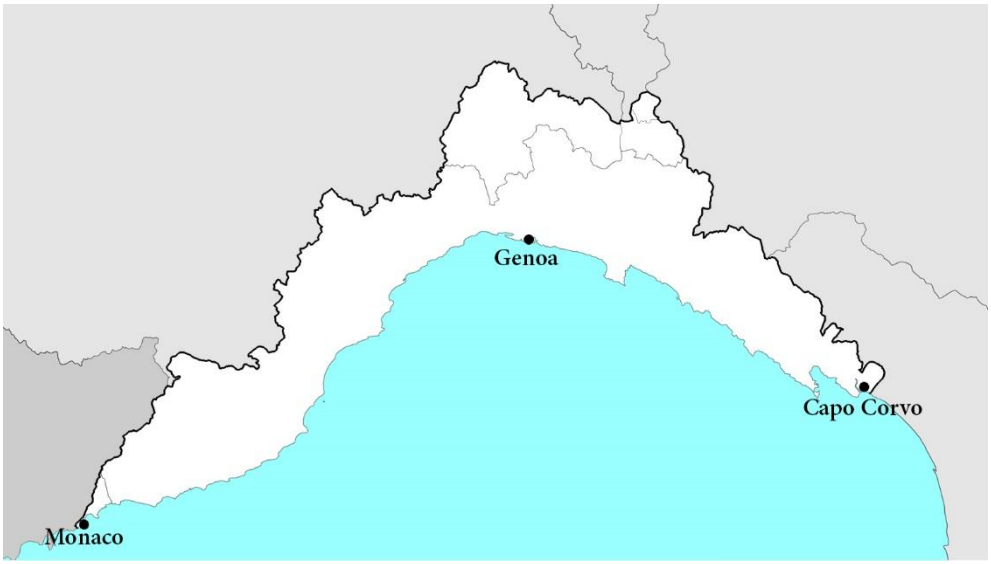
Ianue et eos omnes qui Ianuenses appellabuntur: people from Genoa, from the district and everyone who will be called Genoese.[8]



Map 3 Latin Empire and Empire of Nicaea after the Fourth Crusade, c. 1204 (CC BY-SA, via Wikimedia Commons)

The true and proper citizens, called *cives Ianue* or *ianuenses*, were the ones who could take part in the political life of Genoa and had all the economic rights, both in the city and outside. The district extended both east and west of Genoa along the coast, from Capo Corvo (near Lerici) to Monaco, and from Oltregiogo (in the hinterland, behind the city and beyond the Apennine ridge towards the north) to the sea, including other localities inland allied to Genoa or under its rule (Map 4).[9]

[8] Dellacasa, 273. See Jacoby, 'Le Génois', 246–50; D. Puncuh, *Storia di Genova. Mediterraneo, Europa, Atlantico* (Genoa, 2003), 223.
[9] P. Guglielmotti, 'Genoa and Liguria', in *A Companion to Medieval Genoa* (2018), 49–71, pp. 55–56; D. Bezzina, 'Social Landscape', in *A Companion to Medieval Genoa* (2018), 165–89, pp. 181–84.



Map 4 Genoa and its district (created by Elena Mini)

Then there were individuals who were neither citizens of Genoa nor residents of its district, and yet they were considered Genoese: they were foreigners who had obtained Genoese status by naturalisation. This status differed from citizenship and is called by Jacoby nationality. Genoese citizenship was permanent and hereditary, could only be granted by Genoa, and assured participation to the politic life of the metropolis. Nationality was instead obtained through naturalisation and could be certified in writing by overseas Genoese authorities (podestà, captains, or consuls). It was a status only valid abroad: the privileges obtained were only enjoyed in the Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean regions, and those naturalised were not allowed to participate to the politic life of Genoa.[10] Why then was being Genoese important? It mostly came down to financial matters. In 1201 the Genoese had obtained a reduction on the Byzantine *kommerkion*, which affected import-export trade, movement of goods, and sales in markets. It was a 10% tax *ad valorem* (meaning in

[10] D. Jacoby, 'Between the Imperial Court and the Western Maritime Powers: The Impact of Naturalizations on the Economy of Late Byzantine Constantinople', in *The Byzantine Court: Source of Power and Culture. Papers from the Second International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium, Istanbul, 21-23 June 2010*, ed. by A. Ödekan, N. Necipoglu, and E. Akyürek (Istanbul, 2013), 95–103, pp. 97, 99. In Jacoby, 'Le Génois', 246–50, he calls the three categories of Genoese: citoyens, *districtuales*, naturalisés.

proportion to the estimated value of the goods or transactions concerned), but the Genoese would pay only 4%. The Treaty of Nymphaeum completely exempted them from paying it.[11] It is just an example, but it shows the type of economic privilege that the Genoese enjoyed. It is not surprising, then, that the status was sought after, or that some claimed to be Genoese even when they were not, in order to benefit from those advantages.[12]

Even if other agreements between the Byzantine Empire and Genoa followed the Treaty of Nymphaeum, at the beginning of the 14th century the Genoese presence in Chios was lacking. This was possibly due to the numerous attacks from Turks, pirates, and soldiers of fortune, and to what Pistarino called 'the nationalistic aspect with religious Orthodox background' of the imperial restoration.[13] The situation, however, would soon change. Michael VIII Palaeologus had given control over the towns of Old and New Phocaea, on the western coast of Asia Minor, to the Genoese family Zaccaria de Castro (Map 5).[14] The exact date of the concession is unclear.[15] Some place it before 1261, some in 1264, some between 1267 and 1275.[16] This grant was accompanied by the imperial concession to mine in nearby mountains alum, which was the second best in the world.[17]

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[11] Balard, '1261', 536; M. Balard, 'Notes sur la fiscalité génoise à Caffa au XVe siècle', in *Gênes et la mer*, II, 845–62, p. 848 [first publ. in *Bulletin de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France* (1993), 224–41].
[12] G. Petti Balbi, *Negoziare fuori patria. Nazioni e mercanti genovesi in età medievale* (Bologna, 2005), 11; C. E. Beneš, 'Civic Identity', in *A Companion to Medieval Genoa* (2018), 193–217, p. 200; Balletto, 'L'amministrazione della giustizia', 716–17.
[13] 'carattere nazionalista su sfondo religioso ortodosso', *CGCC*, 429.
[14] On the family see E. Basso, 'Gli Zaccaria', in *Dibattito su famiglie nobili del mondo coloniale genovese nel Levante, Atti del Convegno, Montoggio, 23 ottobre 1993*, ed. by G. Pistarino (Genoa, 1994), 46–71; A. Mazarakis, *Zaccaria e Della Volta nell'Egeo orientale, 1268-1329* (Athens, 2006).
[15] 'Romanie', 18/2, 770–71.
[16] See for example Jacoby, 'Thirteen-Century Commercial Exchange', 190; E. Basso, 'Prima di Tolfa: i mercanti genovesi e l'allume orientale', *MEFR*, 126/1 (2014), 171–86, p. 172; Fleet, 83 n.28; R. S. Lopez, 'Majorcans and Genoese on the North Sea Route in the Thirteenth Century', *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, 29/4 (1951), 1163–79, p. 1167.
[17] See F. B. Pegolotti, *La pratica della mercatura*, ed. by A. Evans (ed. Cambridge - MA, 1936), 43, and more in general on alum 367–70; R. S. Lopez, 'The Trade of Medieval Europe: The South', in *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe from the Decline of the Roman Empire, Vol. 2 'Trade and Industry in the Middle Ages'*, ed. by M. Postan and E. E. Rich (Cambridge, 1952), 257–354, p. 336. More about the mines can be found in M. Çolak and others, 'Les régions productrices d'alun en Turquie aux époques antique, médiévale et modern: gisements, produits et transports', in *L'alun de Méditerranée*, ed. by Borgard, Brun, and Picon (2005), 59–68.



Map 5 Chios and Phocaea

Alum was used for a variety of industries: in leather tanning, in making certain types of glass, in medicine, and in the sugar industry. In particular it was important in the textile and especially dyeing industry as fabric mordant (fixative for dyes).[18] The Zaccarias managed to obtain a monopolistic control over Anatolian alum. They oversaw a large commercial space going from the eastern Aegean Sea to the English Channel, to which they later added the acquisition of Chios.[19] Being close to the Anatolian coasts and therefore to Phocaea meant, in fact, that the island could act as protection as well as depository for the alum, and could secure transport between the two places.

Once again there is uncertainty regarding the beginning of the so-called 'first Genoese domination' of Chios, traditionally dated 1304. Carr agrees with Zachariadou's

[18] See J. Heers, 'Les Génois et le commerce de l'alun à la fin du Moyen Age', *Revue d'histoire économique et sociale*, 32 (1954), 31–53. More in general 'Romanie', 18/2, 769–82; Fleet, chapter 6 and in particular 80–89; L. Liagre, 'Le commerce de l'alun en Flandre au Moyen Âge', *Le Moyen Âge. Revue d'histoire et de philologie*, 61 (1955), 177–206, pp. 177–80; Jacoby, 'Production et commerce de l'alun'.
[19] Basso, 'Prima di Tolfa', 172–74.

argument that it happened between July 1305, the date of Manuel Zaccaria's embassy to Andronikos II asking for the control of Chios, and November 1309, when we know the family was exporting mastic from the island. According to the chronicle of the Catalan Ramon Muntaner, Benedetto Zaccaria died before 1307. Therefore Carr postulates that, if he had been the first ruler, then the Zaccarias became lords of Chios after July 1305 and before 1307. [20]

Although it is not clear how Benedetto Zaccaria took control of Chios, it is probable that he seized the island, only later obtaining the emperor's endorsement. Balard states that 'Andronikos II let Benedetto occupy the island'.[21] The emperor gave him Chios as a fief for ten years and then the concession was renewed to his heirs until 1324. In 1329 Andronikos III recovered the island with the help of the local population, exploiting the disagreements between the two brothers in power, Martino and Benedetto II. The latter, who was in charge of one of the fortresses, handed it over to the emperor, and Martino had no choice but to surrender in the face of overwhelming opposition.[22] Chios remained under Constantinople's control until 1346.

The Situation in Genoa

Since 1196 the Genoese podestà, the senior official responsible for maintaining law and order in the city, appeared supported by a council of *Anziani* (Elders). Anyone who had served on this council or as consul was called *nobile* (noble). The title was thus not a prerogative of feudal nobility, as since the 12th century it had also been extended to ship-

[20] Carr, 'Trade or Crusade?', 118–19 n.18.
[21] 'Romanie', 18/1, 63 '[…] Andronic II, la même année, laisse Benedetto Zaccaria occuper l'île de Chio […]'. On the problem see also Mazarakis, *Zaccaria,* 53.
[22] For an overview of the Zaccarias' rule see Carr, 'Trade or Crusade?', 120, 130–33; Mazarakis, *Zaccaria,* in particular pp. 53–55 on the conflicts between the siblings and the reasons for Andronikos' actions. On Martino Zaccaria see also L. Gatto, 'Per la storia di Martino Zaccaria signore di Chio', *Bullettino dell'Archivio paleografico italiano,* n.s. 2-3 pt. 1 (1956-1957), 325–45.

owners, navigators, and merchants. In opposition to nobles, other families, even if no less illustrious and old, took the name of *popolari.*[23] It is therefore not correct to translate *popolari* as commoners as some authors do.[24]

In 1339 Simon Boccanegra rose to power and a new regime was established in Genoa, called *dogato popolare*: a doge (*duce*, from Latin *dux,* was the official title) was elected among the *popolari* ranks. In theory a life-long office, no doge governed for more than a few successive years, and between 1339 and 1528 only three died in office.[25]

It is important to underline that 'popular' governments were not necessarily governments where nobles were excluded and participation was reserved to 'the remainder of the adult inhabitants who enjoyed the status of citizens and were matriculated in the guilds'.[26] It is rather meant as a broadly-based government in which a substantial part of the adult male population from a range of social groups could be eligible to hold political and administrative offices.

For a brief period, in 1340, Genoese nobles were, however, indeed excluded from all offices, before being reintegrated starting from diplomatic and military roles.[27] By the 15th century offices were equally shared between nobles and *popolari* with the exception of the doge position, which could not be held by a noble.[28]

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[23] See A. Agosto, 'Nobili e popolari: l'origine del dogato', in *La storia dei Genovesi, Atti del Convegno di Studi sui Ceti Dirigenti nelle istituzioni della Repubblica di Genova, Genova, 7-8-9 novembre 1980,* vol. 1 (Genoa, 1981), 91–120, pp. 92–95; A. Lercari, 'La nobiltà civica a Genova e in Liguria dal comune consolare alla repubblica aristocratica', in *Le aristocrazie cittadine. Evoluzione dei ceti dirigenti urbani nei secoli XV-XVIII*, ed. by M. Zorzi, M. Fracanzani, and I. Quadrio (Venice, 2009), 227–362, pp. 240–45.

[24] E.g. *Occupation,* vol. 1, 86; E. P. Wardi, 'Rank and File Participation in Politics in Late-Medieval Genoa: The Commune's Submission to the French in 1396', *JMH*, 28/4 (2002), 373–99, p. 374; T. A. Kirk, *Genoa and the Sea: Policy and Power in an Early Modern Maritime Republic, 1559–1684* (Baltimore, 2005), 23.

[25] Cf. Wardi, 373; R. Musso, 'La tirannia dei Cappellazzi. La Liguria tra XIV e XVI secolo', in *Storia della Liguria*, ed. by G. Assereto and M. Doria (Bari, 2007), 43–70, p. 46. On the evolution of the commune see L. Filangieri, 'The Commune', in *A Companion to Medieval Genoa* (2018), 95–119.

[26] C. Shaw, *Popular Government and Oligarchy in Renaissance Italy* (Leiden/Boston, 2006), IX, 149–50, 185. See also C. Shaw, 'Counsel and Consent in Fifteenth-Century Genoa', *The English Historical Review*, 116/468 (2001), 834–62.

[27] Kirk, 23.

[28] See among others C. Shaw, 'Principles and Practice in the Civic Government of Fifteenth-Century Genoa', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 58/1 (2005), 45–90, p. 52; C. Shaw, *Popular Government*, 155. See also S. Ferente,

After their exclusion many nobles had left the city and taken refuge in Oltregiogo and in Riviera (the coast), where they had villas and fiefs. From there they launched attacks and fomented the *popolo* (here with the meaning of people) against the Doge. In 1344 Simon Boccanegra stepped down after the failure of his reconciliation attempts, and he was succeeded by Giovanni di Murta. In July 1345 an agreement was reached between *popolari* and *nobili*, who could return to the city and reacquire what had been confiscated. Excluded from the deal were members of the Fieschi, Spinola and Grimaldi families, known along with the Doria family as the *quattro genti* (the four lineages), the principal noble houses.[29]

The Conquest of Chios in Giorgio Stella's *Annales Genuenses*

Giorgio Stella was a Genoese notary and government official, author of the '*Georgii Stellae Annales Genuenses ab Anno 1298, usque ad finem 1409 deducti, et per Johannem Stellam ejus fratrem continuati usque ad annum 1435*'. Usually simply called *Annales Genuenses*, this chronicle of Genoa is composed of three books. The first one covers from the origins of the city to 1298, the second from 1298 to 1396, and the third continues until 1435, with the last period (1405-1435) written by Giorgio's brother, Giovanni, also a notary.[30]

The Stellas were continuing a long Genoese tradition. Most of the authors of the *Annales Ianuenses*, the official Genoese history that covers from 1099 to 1293, were notaries. The term 'official' can be used because in 1152 Caffaro di Caschifellone presented his work to the consuls of Genoa, who ordered for it to be transcribed and kept in the city's archive. His annals then continued in an institutional context, and after 1163 the annalists were chosen by the Commune specifically for the job. The result was an uninterrupted

'Parties, Quotas and Elections in Late Medieval Genoa', in *Cultures of Voting in Pre-Modern Europe*, ed. by S. Ferente, L. Kunčević, and M. Pattenden (New York/Abingdon, 2018), 210–28.

[29] C. Shaw, *Popular Government*, 157; M. Dolcino, *Storia di Genova nei secoli, duemila anni di civiltà ligure* (Genoa, 1974), 227.

[30] Cf. the introduction of G. Stella, 'Annales Genuenses', in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, 17/2, ed. by G. Petti Balbi (Bologna, 1975).

account of almost two centuries of Genoese history, written by contemporaries. These works are usually called 'Annali genovesi di Caffaro e de' suoi continuatori' (Genoese annals of Caffaro and his continuators), but originally they were simply indicated with the name of the author: *Cafari Annales, Otoboni Scribae Annales*, etc.

After a century, in 1396, Giorgio Stella wrote his annals. He was not an official chronicler, so even if his work is reminiscent of the others in title and format, it was never included among the documents of the Commune. It was therefore more available to the public than the annals of the Commune, which were kept in the archive and were difficult to access. This explains the fortune of Stella's annals among the historians who followed and why Genoese history has almost always been filtered and known through his account.[31]

According to Stella, some of the noble exiles had gathered in Roquebrune (between Montecarlo and Menton) and in Monaco, properties of the Grimaldi family. There they started to prepare an army of ten thousand men and a fleet of thirty galleys.[32] Genoa wanted to equip a fleet to defend itself, but it did not have the financial means to do so. A call for private ship-owners was issued, with the commitment to reimburse expenses and eventual damages guaranteed by an annual revenue of 20,000 lire *in comperis locorum* (shares of public debt).[33] Since the 13th century if not earlier, in moments of financial need the Genoese commune had resorted to create a *compera* or *mutuum*: a loan by private individuals to the state. The investors holding one or more shares (*loca*) formed a syndicate (*compera*) and in

[31] Cf. G. Petti Balbi, 'La cultura storica in età medievale', ed. by D. Puncuh, *Storia della cultura ligure, vol. 4, ASLi*, n.s. 45/2 (2005), 147–90, pp. 169–70. On Genoese historiography see G. Petti Balbi, *Caffaro e la cronachistica genovese* (Genoa, 1982). In English see Macchiavello and Rovere, 'The Written Sources', esp. 37–39; E. W. Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography in the Italian Renaissance* (Chicago/London, 1981), 60–61, 74–75.

[32] Stella, 'Annales Genuenses', 144–49 for his account of the year 1346. Cf. also Balletto, 'La colonisation orientale'.

[33] On this practice see C. Shaw, 'Genoa', in *The Italian Renaissance State*, ed. by A. Gamberini and I. Lazzarini (Cambridge, 2012), 220–36, pp. 227–31.

exchange received the rights to tax-revenues as interests' payments.[34] Forty-four Genoese came forward, seven nobles and thirty-seven *popolari*, but only twenty-nine agreed to deposit 400 lire each as a guarantee that they would fulfil their obligations.[35] It should be noted that both the Commune at the time and scholars later considered each galley as having just one owner, but it is probable that the citizens mentioned were the representatives of groups of partners.

On 19 January 1346 Simone Vignoso was appointed admiral for twenty-nine galleys, twenty-six sponsored by *popolari* and three by nobles. They set sail towards Monaco on April 24, but the enemies had already left, afraid of Genoa's fleet. Enlisted by the French king, who was at war with the English, Genoa's opponents sailed towards Flanders and England. Considering that no battle had taken place, the government could have nullified the contract. Refusing to refund the expenses already sustained, however, would have surely created unrest and discontent, and discouraged any future participation in similar calls for help. It was then decided to use the fleet to protect Genoese territories in the Levant, in particular those in Crimea that were being threatened by Mongols.

When Vignoso arrived in Negroponte, the main port of Euboea, he found twenty-six galleys, mainly Venetian. They were commanded by Humbert II, dauphin of Viennois, at the time leading the so-called 'Crusade of Smyrna' (1343-1351) against the Turks.[36] Vignoso learnt that, instead of wanting to help Smyrna, Humbert wanted to conquer Chios. The island was at the time held by the Greeks, who had treacherously taken it from the

[34] Cf. C. Taviani, 'Companies, Commerce, and Credit', in *A Companion to Medieval Genoa* (2018), 427–47, pp. 429–30; Y. Kamenaga-Anzai, 'Attitudes towards Public Debt in Medieval Genoa: The Lomellini Family', *JMH*, 29/4 (2003), 239–63; R. Cessi, 'Studi sulle "Maone" medievali', *Archivio Storico Italiano*, y.77 n.1 (1919), 5–69, p. 54 n.4; J. Heers, *Gênes au XVe siècle. Activité économique et problèmes sociaux* (Paris, 1961), 106; J. D. Tracy, *A Financial Revolution in the Habsburg Netherlands: Renten and Renteniers in the County of Holland, 1515-1565* (Berkeley/Los Angeles, 1985), 9–10; D. Stasavage, *States of Credit: Size, Power, and the Development of European Polities* (Princeton, 2011), 118; C. Wright, *The Gattilusio Lordships and the Aegean World, 1355–1462* (Leiden/Boston, 2014), 70, 157.

[35] For the names of the participants see CBC, the list in particular is at [SEQ_334]: Pagina: 311.

[36] See M. Carr, 'Humbert of Viennois and the Crusade of Smyrna: A Reconsideration', *Crusades*, 13/1 (2014), 237–51.

Genoese (*subtraxerant a Ianuensibus proditorie*). Humbert tried to bribe the ship-owners, but they refused and set sail towards Chios. Vignoso arrived on 15 June 1346, but three galleys had preceded him to offer help to the city of Chios against the dauphin and the Venetians. In exchange they asked for the Genoese flag to be raised above the fort and for a dozen Genoese *clientes* – which I believe here might refer to (foot) soldiers – to be accepted in the *castrum*.[37] The governor of the island, Giovanni Cibo (found in some texts also as Calojanni Kybos or Tsybos), rejected the offer with derision. To the cry of 'Death to the Genoese' (*Moriantur et occidantur Ianuenses*) the inhabitants attacked the Genoese galleys in the port with arcs, ballistae and trebuchets (*contra ipsas galeas sagitas arcuum et balistarum mittebant, etiam et machinas, quas nominat sermo vulgaris trabucos*). A trebuchet was a machine used for hurling large stones or other missiles, and a ballista was either a catapult or a large crossbow used for firing spears. On June 16 Vignoso struck back. By June 21 only the citadel was still standing. The siege lasted three months, but on 13 September 1346 the Greeks surrendered, overcome by hunger.

For centuries the *Annales Genuenses* have been used as the main source for the history of the conquest of Chios, presented as legitimate, but born out of a coincidental situation. Stella's vocabulary reflects this idea. The Genoese were horrified at Humbert's attempted bribery (*respuentes multo horrore*) and they wanted to help Chios for their honour as Genoese and for the reverence they had towards the Byzantine ruler (*tam pro honore nominis Ianuensis, quam reverentia Constantinopoli imperatoris*). The Greeks not only went against the empress' will (*contra voluntatem imperatricis*), but they behaved arrogantly and mocked

[37] Cf. A. A. Settia, '"Come si usa in Monferrato": l'organizzazione militare in età aleramica', *Monferrato. Arte Storia*, 20 (2008), 5–13, pp. 3–4 on RM's version; B. S. Bachrach, 'Merovingian Mercenaries and Paid Soldiers in Imperial Perspective', in *Mercenaries and Paid Men. The Mercenary Identity in the Middle Ages, Proceedings of a Conference Held at University of Wales, Swansea, 7th–9th July 2005*, ed. by J. France (Leiden/Boston, 2008), 167–92, p. 176; E. Barbero, *Un'oligarchia urbana. Politica ed economia a Torino fra Tre e Quattrocento* (Turin, 1995), 243, 249–50.

the delegates (*in derisum habentes, superbe dixerunt*). So the Genoese decided to punish their arrogance (*tanta Grecorum superbia corrigatur)* and not to leave before conquering the place. With God willing, at the end they took the citadel without fighting (*castrum ipsum, Deo volente, Ianuenses habuerunt in pace*).

This 'Genoese' version has been almost universally accepted by authors and scholars, who were also mostly Genoese. Considering the events in a larger historical framework and looking at them from different perspectives, however, present a slightly different picture.

Comparing the Sources

In 1347 an official document (the first convention between the Commune and the conquerors of Chios reunited in the Maona) stated that the army in Monaco was assembled by the rebels, enemies and rivals of Genoa (*Et magnum exercitum peditum armatorum quos preparabant rebeles inimici et emuli comunis Ianue et status presentis qui receptantur in castro monaci*).[38] Genoese accounts agree, or at least assume, that the rebels in Monaco were preparing to attack Genoa, that they fled scared of confronting the Genoese forces, and then got involved in the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453), fighting for the French side. Although Stella did not mention it, other sources report that most would die at the battle of Crécy (26 August 1346).[39]

However, we know that since the late 13th century French armies had included so-called 'Genoese' crossbowmen, hired mercenaries from all over northern Italy. In the early years of the Hundred Years' War the King of France, Philip VI, employed two Genoese

[38] CBC [SEQ_36]: Pagina: 013. Cf. *Occupation*, vol. 2, 38–55, p. 39.
[39] See Dolcino, 228–29; A. Giustiniani, *Annali della Repubblica di Genova*, vol. 2 (1537; Genoa, repr. 1854), 81–83; T. O. De Negri, *Storia di Genova* (Milan, 1968), 459. On the battle of Crécy and the Hundred Years' War there is extensive literature; see among others M. Livingstone and M. Witzel, *The Road to Crécy: The English Invasion of France, 1346* (Harlow, 2005) in particular 274–312 on Genoese participation.

freelancers, Ottone Doria and Carlo Grimaldi, who offered men and ships for hire. Already contracted in 1338, in 1345 they were asked to provide contingents for French service. At the time Doria was in exile after Boccanegra's rise to power, while Grimaldi had expanded his territories around the rock of Monaco, including Roquebrune, Menton and Ventimiglia. Grimaldi had signed a contract on 27 December 1345 stating that he would supply thirty-three ships and seven thousand crossbowmen to be available on the Channel coast by mid-April. It is then plausible that what the Genoese said were preparations for an attack were instead the preparations for this expedition. The numbers match well enough.

Similarly it is not hard to imagine that when the Genoese fleet departed on April 24, their opponents had already left simply because they had gone to join the French armies as they were supposed to. This seems to be Livingstone and Witzel's opinion in 'The Road to Crécy', which mentions Grimaldi's uncertainty 'about the intentions of Genoa, which was trying to bring Monaco back under its control; he was aware that a Genoese fleet was fitting out under the admiral Simone Vignoso and needed to make Monaco secure in his absence'. The corresponding note, however, refers to Epstein's 'Genoa and the Genoese' that talks about 'rebel ships and men'.[40]

In 1537 Agostino Giustiniani published his 'Annali della Repubblica di Genova' (Annals of the Republic of Genoa), using Stella's *Annales* as primary source. He wrote that Humbert II was only pretending to want to help Smyrna, while his real plan, devised with the Venetians, was to conquer Chios.[41] The crusader fleet led by Humbert was indeed predominantly Venetian. It is also true that Humbert was interested in Chios because it was the ideal base for operations, but before taking any action he wrote to Pope Clement VI requesting his

[40] Livingstone and Witzel, 51–52, 76–77; S. A. Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese, 958-1528* (Chapel Hill/London, 1996), 209.
[41] A. Giustiniani, 86.

intercession. The pope then wrote to Anna of Savoy, the regent for Emperor John V Palaeologus, asking for Chios to be allocated to Humbert for three years. Argenti stated that Humbert, either believing the regent was 'merely playing for time' or anticipating her agreement, had decided to set sail for Chios anyway and had asked for Vignoso's collaboration.[42] Carr disagrees and argues that Humbert was reluctant to seize Chios due to the Holy See's worries. The pope felt that it would have jeopardised relations with the Greeks and the possibility of a Byzantine-crusaders alliance, not to mention an eventual but always-hoped-for union between the Greek and the Latin Churches. Carr does not confirm or refute the truthfulness of the attempted bribe.[43]

Stella wrote about Chios having been wrongly taken from the Genoese, referring to the Zaccarias' period. What is fundamentally incorrect is that Chios had never been a Genoese possession, despite Giustiniani's words that 'the Emperor had previously gifted Chios [and the two Phocaeas] to the Genoese'.[44] It had always been a renewable temporary concession, with the Byzantine emperors maintaining the sovereignty. In the second half of the 19th century, however, there were still authors who considered the Genoese claim on the island originating from the Treaty of Nymphaeum, which instead only granted privileges (*privilegium iurium et edificiorum*).[45] The Genoese belief in their 'ownership' of the island has prompted some to suggest that Chios' recapture had been the original aim of Vignoso's expedition. Two of the most important scholars of Chios, Pistarino and Argenti, doubted that the conquest had been the fruit of an occasional chance. Pistarino was convinced that once the 'rebels fled' the Genoese government had wanted from the start to dissimulate the true purpose of the expedition – the occupation of Chios – in order not to make the

[42] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 92–93.
[43] Carr, 'Humbert of Viennois', 243–45, 250.
[44] A. Giustiniani, 87.
[45] Dellacasa, 275. See the criticism in D. Promis, 5–6.

Byzantines and the Venetians suspicious.[46] Argenti wrote that some Venetian historians thought that the entire Monaco mission had been a red herring, with Chios' conquest having always been the true goal, but he did not provide sources.[47]

While it is true that the Genoese colonies in the Levant were in danger, in particular Caffa (now Feodosiya, on the south-eastern coast of Crimea), which was under siege from the Tatars, there are few doubts that Vignoso's mission did not have just defensive intentions.[48] At the beginning of the 20th century Cessi and Di Tucci pointed out how the contract between Genoa and the ship-owners was modified after Monaco. The refunds for damages were not guaranteed by shares of public debt anymore, but by the administration of future conquests.[49] According to Hopf, instead, the original agreement already included that the ship-owners would remain in possession of all the eventual conquests until completely reimbursed.[50] Either way, it is clear that they at the very least hoped that there would be acquisitions.

Other clues of the premeditation of the conquest can be found, according to Pistarino, in the treaty that regulated the relationships between the Greeks of Chios and the Genoese. It was signed, together with an instrument of capitulation, on the same day of the surrender. Pistarino thought that the precision of the clauses revealed a good knowledge of local realities unlikely to have been acquired just during a three-month siege. This, along with the rapidity with which the treaty was presented, could mean that they had planned the situation in advance. The same observations have been previously made by Argenti, who, however, did not present any type of conclusion.[51]

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[46] G. Pistarino, *I signori del mare* (Genoa, 1992), 22.
[47] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 91 n.1.
[48] 'Romanie', 18/1, 75–76.
[49] Cessi, 12–13; R. Di Tucci, 'Documenti inediti sulla spedizione e sulla Mahona dei Genovesi a Ceuta (1234-1237)', *ASLi*, 64 (1935), 273–340, p. 319.
[50] Hopf, 'Storia dei Giustinani' (1881), 367–68.
[51] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 94–95, 103–04; Pistarino, 'Chio dei Genovesi', 25–26.

Epstein, the author of the most comprehensive history of medieval Genoa in English, seems to disagree with Stella but without doing so overtly. For example, he writes that Genoa attacked Monaco to recover the lands and that, after it failed, the fleet was sent to the Black Sea to protect Genoese interests. But he also adds that Lopez believed 'that this fleet had been transformed into a corsair expedition in order to earn its keep in the east through piracy and whatever else it might acquire out there'. Then he continues saying that 'whatever its purposes', the fleet arrived at Negroponte.[52]

In conclusion, it seems clear that the 'Genoese' version is not completely accurate. However, while some pointed out that Stella tried to 'justify and embellish Vignoso's seizure of Chios', his version has never been substantially challenged.[53] I believe that there may be multiple reasons for this, starting with the Genoa-centric vision of most Genoese scholarship, the major contributor to the studies on the topic. The fact that, as far as I know, there are no Greek (or other) accounts of the event does not help. Written between 1396 and 1405, Stella's work was the first one telling the story after the recount in the 1347 convention that, for the official nature of the document, would not have been easily accessible. Additionally, the tale presented was convincing, realistic and easily believable. Unless the Genoese knew about the contract between Grimaldi and the French king (and the details of it), it would have been quite natural to assume that the forces were assembling in Monaco because the rebels were planning to attack Genoa. Humbert II did have an interest in Chios and his fleet was indeed mainly Venetian. Knowing about the rivalry between Venice and Genoa in the Middle Ages, it is not surprising that the Genoese wanted to stop them.[54]

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[52] Epstein, *Genoa*, 209–10.
[53] Carr, 'Humbert of Viennois', 243–45, 250.
[54] Cf. M. Balard, 'La lotta contro Genova', in *Gênes et la mer*, II, 575–626 [first publ. in *Storia di Venezia*, III (Rome, 1997), 87–126]; G. Petti Balbi, 'L'identità negata: Veneziani e Genovesi nella cronachistica delle due città (secc. XII-XIV)', in *Genova, Venezia, il Levante nei secoli XII-XIV, Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi. Genova-Venezia, 10-14 marzo 2000*, *ASLi*, n.s. 41/1 (2001), 413–40. In English see D. S. Kelly, 'Genoa and Venice: An Early Commercial Rivalry', in *Great Power Rivalries*, ed. by W. R. Thompson (Columbia – South Caroline, 1999), 125–52; C. Shaw, 'To Dominate the Mediterranean: Genoa and Venice', in *Great Strategic Rivalries: From the Classical World to the Cold War*, ed. by J. Lacey (New York, 2016), 183–207.

Moreover, we have already seen how Genoese claims on Chios were still believed in the 19th century. We should also consider the authority and credibility that being a notary lent to Giorgio Stella and to his work, even if he was not an official chronicler. Or maybe because of that, since the annals from the 11-13th centuries can be considered as the expression of the Genoese government's view. What about Stella? What did he base his work on?

Born around 1365-1370, Giorgio Stella did not have first-hand knowledge about the events of 1346. Did he recount them as they were generally known by the people? Did he research them, maybe reading documents and reports? He did, after all, work for the government and had access to archival sources. Could he have talked to people who had lived through the events? Did he report a version sanctioned by the Genoese government, even if he was not an official chronicler? Or, on the contrary, did he simply write what were his personal beliefs and opinions? There is no unequivocal answer, and it adds to the difficulties of determining if the course of the events was revised on purpose and why.[55] What it is certain is that the instrument of capitulation and the treaty were signed on 12 September 1346.[56] The latter was signed on behalf of the island's population by members of local noble families (Argenti, Coresi, Cibo, and Agelasto) and for Genoa by Vignoso and the ship-owners. The inhabitants were to be subject to Genoa exactly as they previously were subject to the Emperor and were to be ruled by a Genoese podestà according to the Commune's laws. However, they could maintain their customs and faith (*secundum consuetudines suas uxitatas et secundum eorum fidem*), along with their proprieties (*possessiones*), privileges and benefits (*qui habeant gracias sive concessiones sive privilegia a domino Imperatore Romeorum [ ] dictas concessiones et gracias salvas habeant*).[57]

[55] Petti Balbi, 'La cultura storica', 155–56, 167; Macchiavello and Rovere, 'The Written Sources', 38.
[56] Such is the date in the CBC. Cf. *Occupation*, vol. 1, 94–95.
[57] Transcriptions can be found in *Occupation*, vol. 2, 28–32 and C. Pagano, *Delle imprese e del dominio dei Genovesi nella Grecia* (Genoa, 1846), 262–66. More details on the clauses in *Occupation*, vol. 1, 97–100.

A few days later, on September 16, Vignoso led his fleet towards Old Phocaea and invited the population to surrender. The inhabitants refused, hoping for help from a Turkish army, but it took only few hours for the Genoese to take the castle. They then moved towards New Phocaea. The Byzantine governor Leone Petronas surrendered on September 20 and on the same day his representatives signed an instrument of capitulation (but not a treaty) similar to Chios' one.[58] The conquest of Chios and of the two Phocaeas was completed by the annexation of the nearby islands of Santa Panagia, Psara, Samos, Ikaria and the islands called between the 15th and the 16th centuries 'di Spalmatore' (referring to careening and caulking, as they were a site of naval maintenance), the biggest one being Oinousses.[59] Vignoso then headed home and arrived in Genoa on 9 November 1346.

The island of Chios would remain under the Genoese for more than two centuries, until 1566, when it would be conquered by the Ottomans.

Table 2 Main events in the history of Genoese Chios

June 1346	Occupation of Chios by the Genoese
12 September 1346	Instrument of capitulation and treaty
17-20 September 1346	Old and New Phocaea conquered by Vignoso
26 February 1347	First agreement between Genoa and the Maona
1348	Cibo's attempt to regain Chios
1348 (or 1378)	Failed conspiracy against the Maonesi

[58] For the clauses see *Occupation*, vol. 1, 100–02; on the differences between the two agreements see *Occupation*, vol. 1, 104–05 and *CGCC*, 30–32.
[59] See E. Armao, *In giro per il mar Egeo con Vincenzo Coronelli. Note di topologia, toponomastica e storia medievali, dinasti e famiglie italiane in Levante* (Florence, 1951), 133–34, 139.

1350	Venetian attacks
June 1355	Chrysobull granting Chios to the Maonesi
1362	Second agreement between Genoa and the Maona
	Formation of the New Maona
June 1367	Confirmation of the Chrysobull
21 November 1373	Third agreement between Genoa and the Maona
1379	Venetian attacks
28 June 1385	Fourth agreement between Genoa and the Maona
1388	Ten-year league against the Turks (Chios, Pera, Lesbos, Rhodes, Cyprus)
21 December 1408	Declaration of independence in response to French rule in Genoa (1396-September 1409)
June 1409	Revolt subdued
11 March 1413	Fifth agreement between Genoa and the Maona
1415	Alliance with Mehmed I
November 1431 - January 1432	Venetian siege
17 December 1436	Sixth agreement between Genoa and the Maona
1453	After the fall of Constantinople, annual tribute to Sultan raised from 4000 to 6000 gold ducats

1455	Turkish fleet in Chios and skirmishes
	New and Old Phocaea lost to the Turks
	Annual tribute raised to 10,000 gold ducats
19 November 1476	Seventh agreement between Genoa and the Maona
1508	Annual tribute raised to 12,000 gold ducats
1510	Genoa's attempt to redeem Chios and Maonesi's refusal (payment deemed inadequate)
15 June 1513	Eighth agreement between Genoa and the Maona
1528	Genoa's renunciation to redemption rights in exchange of an annual tribute of 2500 lire
1533	Podestà deposed
1552	Podestà deposed
1558	Genoa's renunciation to all sovereignty rights
April 1566	Turkish fleet in Chios
17 April 1566	Occupation of Chios by the Turks

Chios: the Island, the City

As previously mentioned, the island and its main city have the same name: Chios. This can lead sometimes to confusion and uncertainty, especially because the Genoese conquered the whole island but mostly settled in the city. There are no precise numbers regarding the urban population. The only known figures are from a census of male Greeks living in Chios in 1395, in this case indicating the island, as the document read *sequella omnium hominum grecorum totius Insule chii*.

In 1395 the members of the Maona (Maonesi) petitioned the Doge to abolish a poll-tax (*kapnikon*) that was too high and caused many people to emigrate, and to substitute it with new taxes and increases of already existing ones. The newly appointed podestà Nicolò Fatinanti carried out investigations and consultations before submitting his proposal to Genoa. Since the Genoese did not pay the poll-tax, Fatinanti took a census of the male Greeks, excluding the mastic workers, the 150 sailors of the Maona's galley, and the 62 sawyers and pitch-workers. These categories were excluded because they enjoyed some exemptions, although they were subject to other special taxes. His result was that there were 1930 Greek heads of families.[60] This means there were more than 2142 Greek families. However, we do not know the number of workmen dealing with lentisk trees and the production of mastic, how many members we should consider in an average family, or the extent of the Latin and Jewish populations.

Balard estimates that the number of Greek households including the mastic workers would hardly pass 2200. Assuming that the ratio of Latins and Greeks consulted by the podestà (33:150) reflected the relative numerical importance of the two groups, he reports that there were probably around 400 Westerner heads of families, for a total of about 2000

[60] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 416–22, vol. 2, 141–57.

persons.[61] Pistarino calculated 8568 Greeks, with each family having an average of four members. Argenti considered the average family as composed of six members and that the Greeks must have numbered between 12,300 and 12,850.[62] Epstein's 'generous estimate' adds Genoese and Jews to Argenti's numbers, approximating the population in the neighbourhood of 20,000, even considering that the plague of 1347 reduced it.[63]

The impact of the Black Death in Chios has not been studied and the documentation is lacking.[64] Currently there are no data available and even other types of considerations, for example changes in testamentary practices, are impeded by the fact that the Genoese rule, and thus its documentation, had just begun in 1346. Even if there is no known evidence, it is unlikely that Chios had been spared by the plague.

In late 1346 and early 1347 the Black Death reached Crimea, where the Mongol-led Tatar army had Caffa under siege. The outbreak in the Genoese city exploded in the spring of 1347. Ships carried the disease to Constantinople, and from there it spread to seaports all along the Mediterranean coasts and then to Europe. If Constantinople was the first stop for all shipping from the Black Sea, Chios would have been a subsequent one for most galleys. As Aberth wrote, 'plague followed in the wake of European trade and commerce' and Chios was at the crossroad of many routes, for example to Cyprus and Alexandria. Nicephorus Gregoras, who witnessed first-hand the plague in Constantinople, wrote in the *Historia Byzantina* (ca. 1359): 'During the second year [1348] it invaded the Aegean Islands. Then it affected the Rhodians, as well as the Cypriots and those colonizing the other islands.' Some evidence suggests that Cyprus was affected in the late summer of 1347.[65] Alexandria

[61] Balard, 'The Genoese in the Aegean', 166.
[62] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 582; Pistarino, *Genovesi d'Oriente*, 250.
[63] S. A. Epstein, *Purity Lost: Transgressing Boundaries in the Eastern Mediterranean, 1000–1400* (Baltimore, 2007), 68.
[64] Cf. for example S. K. Wray, *Communities and Crisis. Bologna during the Black Death* (Leiden/Boston, 2009).
[65] J. Aberth, *The Black Death. The Great Mortality of 1348-1350: A Brief History with Documents* (New York, 2005), 14–15. On Cyprus see also M. W. Dols, *The Black Death in the Middle East* (Princeton, 1977), 58–60; P. Ziegler, *The Black Death*, 3rd edn (Stroud, 2003), 87.

was hit by the pestilence in the early autumn of 1347, no more than a couple of months after it broke out in Constantinople, in July. In that same summer Genoese galleys arrived in Sicily and then in Genoa, bringing the disease with them and spreading it along the way.[66]

On 26 February 1347 the agreement between the commune of Genoa and Chios' administrators had made it mandatory for Genoese galleys going to *Romania* or sailing from there to Syria and return to stop in the port of Chios and stay for one day.[67] For these reasons I believe that we should include Chios among Gregoras' Aegean islands that had been affected by the Black Death, just like Euboea, Crete, Cyprus, and Rhodes, for which the plague is documented.[68]

We have one account of a following epidemic in Chios thanks to a letter that Gerolamo Giustiniani sent to Giorgio Giustiniani in Genoa, on 6 September 1458. He wrote about '*de maledicta peste in Chio*' (the damned plague in Chios) that killed 280 people in one day and 6000 in three and a half months. Pistarino suggested that, even if the figures might be exaggerated, we should presume a population of no less than 12,000.[69] It would be more in line with the previous estimates than Armao's account of 50,000-60,000 inhabitants.[70]

Regarding the second half of the 16th century, an anonymous manuscript from the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana talks about 120,000 inhabitants, while Uberto Foglietta estimates 90,000 for the year 1575.[71] More reliable seem the numbers extracted from the Ottomans' population register that was compiled after the conquest (1566) in order to collect

[66] O. J. Benedictow, *The Black Death, 1346-1353: The Complete History* (Woodbridge - Suffolk, 2004), 44–54, 61–71, 91–95, 285–307. Cf. D. Cesana, O. J. Benedictow, and R. Bianucci, 'The Origin and Early Spread of the Black Death in Italy: First Evidence of Plague Victims from 14th-Century Liguria (Northern Italy)', *Anthropological Science*, 125/1 (2017), 15–24, pp. 15–18.
[67] *Occupation*, vol. 2, 38–55, p. 50. See *CGCC*, 107.
[68] N. Varlik, *Plague and Empire in the Early Modern Mediterranean World. The Ottoman Experience, 1347-1600* (Cambridge, 2015), 100.
[69] Pistarino, *Genovesi d'Oriente*, 250–51.
[70] E. Armao, 'Scio al tempo di Cristoforo Colombo', in *Studi Colombiani*, vol. 3 (Genoa, 1951), 419–21, p. 420.
[71] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 582.

a head tax (*cizye*) from Chios' non-Muslim inhabitants. Goffman reports 406 Greek, 49 Jewish, and 140 Venetian and Genoese households residing in the town of Chios, and 7000 Greek villagers in the island.[72]

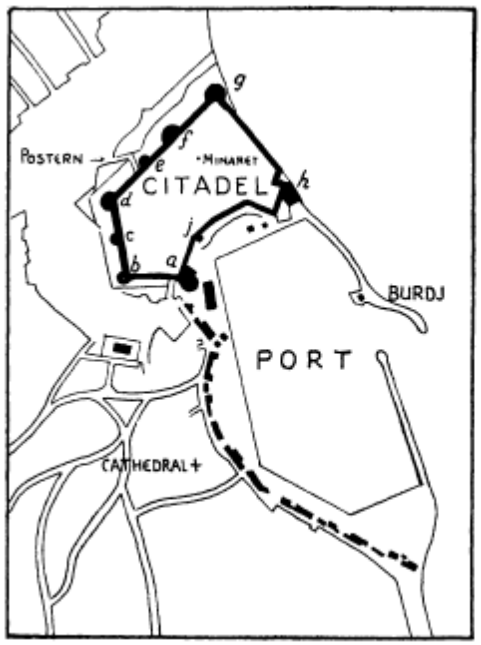
Due to the long period considered and the lack of sources and data, any calculation of the population of Chios during the Genoese rule is an approximate speculation. With every caution, we could very loosely estimate that between the second half of the 14th century and the second half of the 15th century the island's population was between 10,000 and 20,000 people.[73] Trying to establish how many people lived in the city is not any easier. In the treaty between the Genoese conquerors and the defeated Greek nobility there was a clause stating that two hundred houses inside the *castrum* had to be surrendered for its defence. Within eight months all the other houses in the *castrum*, or as many as the Genoese needed, could be demanded too.[74] This is the only number given and it is not much help in getting an idea of the urban population.

It should also be noted that what documents meant for *castrum* is not always clear or unequivocal. Sometimes it refers to the whole area surrounded by the walls. Other times, especially when it is called *castrum de Colla*, it seems referred to a 'castle/fortress' inside the bigger walled city (Fig. 5).[75] Hasluck in 1909 wrote that nothing survived 'of the fortifications of the town (as apart from those of the citadel)'.[76] He talked about two forts defending the harbour, which appear in a drawing published by Argenti (Fig. 6, Fig. 7). Recent maps, however, tend to identify the *castrum* with the citadel (Fig. 8).[77]

[72] D. Goffman, *Izmir and the Levantine World, 1550-1650* (Seattle, 1990), 63.
[73] On the general problems of medieval demographic studies cf. Benedictow, 245–49, 257–72.
[74] See note 58.
[75] Ortolani, 'Kastro di Chio: le fortificazioni', 70; *CGCC*, 422; Poleggi, 250, 258.
[76] Hasluck, 'The Latin Monuments of Chios', 140.
[77] Cf. Ortolani, 'Kastro di Chio: Genova e Venezia'; Ortolani, 'Kastro di Chio: le fortificazioni'; Dal Mas; Mamaloukas. On the citadel see M. Balard, 'Villes portuaires et fondouks génois en mer Égée et en Méditerranée orientale', in *Gênes et la mer,* I, 41–58, pp. 42–49 [first publ. in *Città portuali del Mediterraneo,* ed. by Poleggi (1989), 75–84].



Fig. 5 Map of the city of Chios, 1574 - Giovanni Camocio (CC-PD-Mark, via Wikimedia Commons)



—CHIOS: SKETCH PLAN OF THE TOWN AND HARBOUR.

Fig. 6 Sketch plan from Hasluck, 'The Latin Monuments of Chios', 141

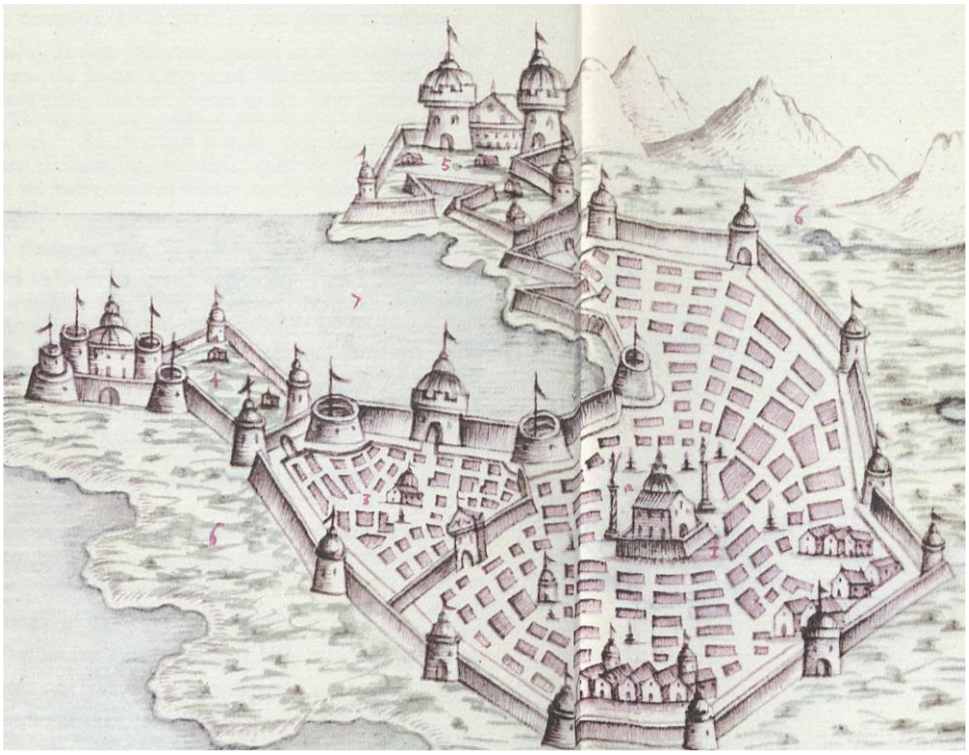


Fig. 7 Drawing of Kastro in Chios town (1740-1758) from Argenti, *The Religious Minorities*

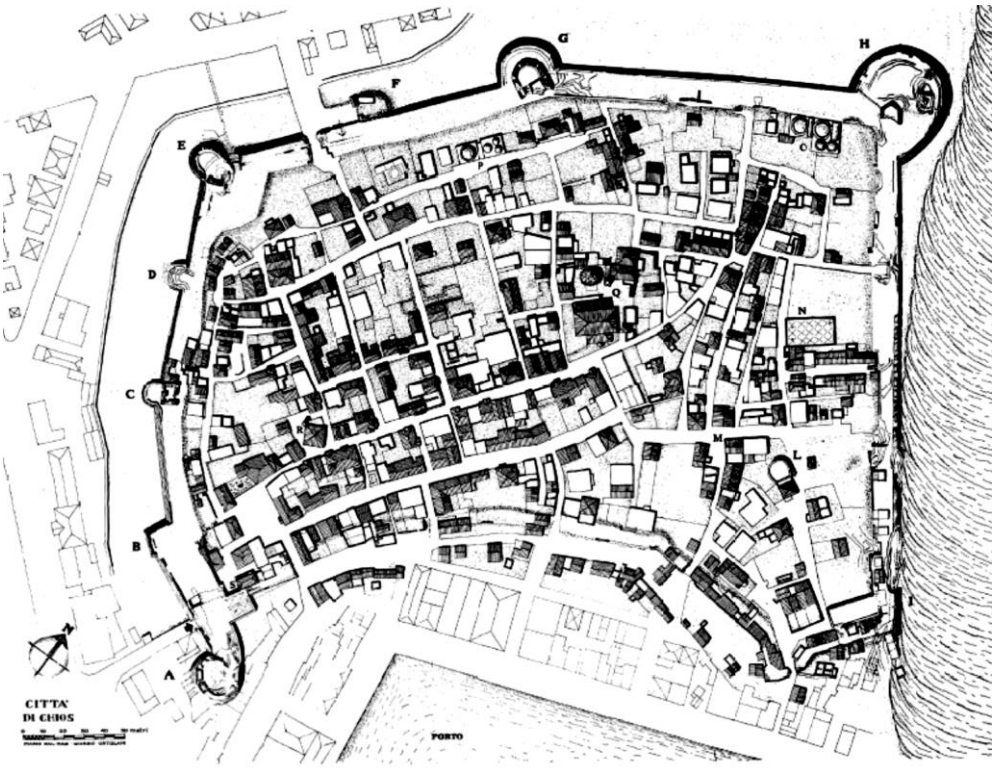


Fig. 8 Plan of the modern citadel (Kastro) from Ortolani, 'Kastro di Chio: Genova e Venezia', 226



Fig. 9 Main Gate - Porta Maggiore (Photo: Chiara Ravera, 16/04/2014)

Similarly, documents seem to use the term *civitas* sometimes as a synonym of *castrum*, to indicate only the area surrounded by walls, other times also including the *burghi*, the districts outside the walls.[78]

Perhaps because of these blurry definitions, the status of those living in Chios is not as clear-cut as in Genoa or in Caffa. Being a *civis Ianue*, a citizen, meant having full political rights and was connected to residence in the city.[79] The *cives Caphe* had a noble background and lived in the citadel.[80] Living in the *civitas* of Chios, however interpreted, did not mean someone was classified as *civis Chii*, no matter their lineage. It is quite rare to find that

[78] *CGCC*, 418–21.
[79] G. Petti Balbi, 'Cittadinanza e altre forme di integrazione nella societá genovese (secc. XIV-XV)', in *Cittadinanza e mestieri. Radicamento urbano e integrazione nelle città bassomedievali*, ed. by B. Del Bo (Rome, 2014), 95–140, esp. 100–05.
[80] E. Khvalkov, *The Colonies of Genoa in the Black Sea Region: Evolution and Transformation* (New York, 2017), 299.

designation, while it is much more common the term *burgensis.* While *burgenses* in Caffa were not noble, lived in the burgs and had to be Christians, in Chios Latins, Greeks, Jews, small traders, freedmen, and members of the Genoese ruling class could all be *burgenses* and they did not necessarily live in the burgs.[81] A more temporary status seems, instead, to be indicated by the term *habitator* (inhabitant). These qualifications, however, are not reliable. Not only did some people have a double label like *civis et habitator* or *burgensis et habitator Chii* (which is less understandable that people being citizen of Genoa and living – more or less temporarily – somewhere else), but sometimes the same person appears in different documents with different qualifications. These labels can also be imprecise because usually notaries simply wrote down what their clients said, and how someone identified themselves was not necessarily how others or the authorities would identify them.[82]

Colony or Not?

More often than not Chios is called a Genoese colony, but some scholars do not think that the term should be used when talking about Genoese overseas territories. In the preface of the 1996 edition of Lopez's 'Storia delle colonie genovesi nel Mediterraneo' (History of the Genoese colonies in the Mediterranean) Michel Balard asks the loaded question: what is a colony? If a colony is an entity subordinated to different forms of domination (territorial, political, economic, and cultural), Genoese territories would not fit into the category.[83] More than direct territorial control, the Commune of Genoa was interested in the possession or the control of ports, trading posts, and warehouses that would allow an expansion of their commercial network.[84] Chios is the only case of widespread occupation: even if the Genoese

[81] Khvalkov, 299–302; *Occupation*, vol. 1, 583–87; Pistarino, 'I Genovesi nel Levante', 96.
[82] Piemontesi, pp. 34–35.
[83] R. S. Lopez, *Storia delle colonie genovesi nel Mediterraneo* (Genoa, repr., 1996), XII.
[84] Balard, 'The Genoese in the Aegean', 161.

mostly concentrated in the city of Chios and its surroundings, the whole island was under their administration. Usually, however, Genoa's territorial domination extended only to very limited areas, such as quarters in foreign cities.[85] For this very reason, while these outposts followed Genoese laws and had their own officials and administrators, there was no complete autonomy as they were in some way still limited by the context in which they were embedded.[86] Epstein, for example, states regarding Genoese Caffa that 'whoever was the local khan of the Golden Horde controlled the region and also determined Caffa's fate'.[87]

Moreover, Genoese policy was characterised by great flexibility and tolerance of diversity, and there was not a systematic cultural oppression with imposition of intellectual, artistic, and religious models. In Chios, for example, the treaty concluded in the aftermath of the conquest allowed the Greeks to keep their properties, privileges and religion, and with time coexistence and collaboration gave way to a 'genuine Graeco-Genoese society'.[88] Some Chian families were eventually inscribed in the *Liber Civilitatis* (later called *Liber Nobilitatis*, the book of nobility) of Genoa in 1528, and after 1566 Genoese families remained part of the island's aristocracy.[89] We also know that the Genoese authorities did not enforce papal injunctions regarding the Jewish dress code that was supposed to make Jews easily recognizable. In 1423 Pope Martin V wrote to Leonardo, bishop of Chios:

> the Jews living in the island of Chios and your diocese, and those arriving there from other parts, are bound, both by law and by the accepted custom, to wear clothing distinct from the dress of Christians; nevertheless, they do

[85] L. Pubblici, *Dal Caucaso al mar d'Azov: l'impatto dell'invasione mongola in Caucasia fra nomadismo e società sedentaria (1204-1295)* (Florence, 2007), 17 n.58.
[86] McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, 10.
[87] Epstein, *Purity Lost*, 56.
[88] Balard, 'The Genoese in the Aegean', 163–68.
[89] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 594; A. Lercari, 'Notizie araldiche e genealogiche di famiglie nobili chiote nel "Libro d'Oro" di Philip Pandèly Argenti', in *Dibattito su famiglie nobili*, ed. by Pistarino (1994), 100–05, p. 102. On Genoese nobility see Lercari, 'La nobiltà civica', esp. 248–76.

> not take care to wear such, but go about in outer apparel similar to that of Christians, from whom they cannot be distinguished by any indication in their clothing […][90]

Nobody can deny that economic and financial domination could be found in each and every Genoese establishment. However, if colonisation is characterised by an exploitation of the local resources benefitting the mother-country, Chios would present a difficult case because it was not Genoa that profited from the island's richness.[91] In fact, while the Commune held the sovereignty and exercised criminal and civil jurisdiction (*merum et mixtum imperium et omnimoda jurisdictio*), it was the Maona that enjoyed the rights connected to the ownership and possession of the island, from collecting taxes to having the monopoly over mastic (*proprietas et dominium utile et directum*).[92]

A Maona was a partnership between private citizens who contributed to a military expedition on the promise that the state would repay them. Genoa had four documented cases of Maona: Ceuta (1235), Chios (1346), Cyprus (1373), and Corsica (1378).[93] The Maona of Chios is the most famous. It may be compared to a joint-stock company, with the shareholders – Maonesi – originally being the ship-owners who had conquered Chios.[94] Because Genoa was unable to fulfil the contract and pay them, in 1347 the Maonesi received the rights to administer and exploit the island, which Genoa could redeem within twenty years. Soon the Maonesi, who mostly went back to Genoa after the expedition, started

[90] Argenti, *The Religious Minorities*, 123.
[91] Pubblici, 17 n.8.
[92] Pagano, 271–85. *Occupation*, vol. 1, 107–16, vol. 2, 38–55.
[93] C. Taviani, 431–34. On the maone in general see Cessi; G. Petti Balbi, *Una città e il suo mare* (Bologna, 1991), 186–99, 223–46. Cf. also C. Otten-Froux, 'I Maonesi e la Maona Vecchia di Cipro', in *La storia dei Genovesi, Atti del Convegno di Studi sui Ceti Dirigenti nelle istituzioni della Repubblica di Genova, Genova, 11-12-13-14 giugno 1991,* vol. 12 p. 1 (Genoa, 1994), 95–118; G. Petti Balbi, 'I Maonesi e la Maona di Corsica (1378-1407): un esempio di aggregazione economica e sociale', *MEFR*, 93/1 (1981), 147–70; Di Tucci.
[94] On the differences between maone and colonial companies see C. Malberti, 'Shareholders' Rights in the Early Italian Companies: Agency Problems and Legal Strategies', in *Origins of Shareholder Advocacy*, ed. by J. G. S. Koppell (New York, 2011), 145–67, pp. 147–48.

farming out the tax collection to a society that had formed in 1349 for the extraction of mastic. In 1362 this society took over from the original Maona, taking the name of Maona Nuova (New Maona). The commune maintained the right of redemption but kept renovating the contract and never got the island's possession back.[95]

In his 'Colonies: an attempt at a typology' Finley did not consider the Venetian territories as colonies because agriculture had remained in Greek hands and there had not been a significant Venetian emigration. Talking about *Romania* he stated that it 'was not colonial' and he extended his reasoning to Genoese territories.[96] In Chios the authorities tried to incentivise Latin immigration offering land, but the fieldwork was still left to the natives, with the new arrivals more interested in selling the products (besides getting taxes and rents). Both Balard and Pistarino agree that Chios was not an agricultural colony because the land concessions aimed to attract immigrants, who were indispensable to guarantee military defence and revenues.[97] Heers, writing before Pistarino and Balard, saw instead Chios' agriculture as 'speculative and colonial'. Exploited by merchants and governed by businessmen, he considered Chios a good example of a colonial island, with some characteristics that would be later found in the Canaries and Madeira. I believe that recognising the Maonesi's role contradicts his previous statement that Chios was a colony in the full sense of the term ('une colonie au sens complet du term') where the Genoese

[95] Cf. *Occupation*, vol. 1, 107–16, 126–50, 231–34, 290–94, vol. 2, 38–74, 80–139, 218–27, 235–302; Rovere, docc. 17, 140, 144-157; Pagano, 271–91. See also Argenti, 'The Mahona'; *CGCC*, 89–93, 99–102, 114, 547–54.
[96] M. I. Finley, 'Colonies: An Attempt at a Typology', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 26 (1976), 167–88, p. 177.
[97] Cf. *Occupation*, vol. 1, 477–81, 576; 'Romanie', 18/1, 705; *CGCC*, 430.

authority was exercised without restrictions.[98] Neither the Maona nor the Commune had all-compassing power over the island, and their interests did not always coincide.[99]

Some scholars use the term colony while implying a different situation. Argenti stated that the 1346 Instrument of Capitulation and the Treaty present the relationship between Genoa and Chios as one between two sovereign states, because the terms are those of an agreement between equals. Balletto writes that, especially after the fall of Constantinople, 'the island felt like a nation on its own, autocephalous' and with its own very pronounced personality. Basso refers to Chios as a 'semiautonomous state'. They all suggest a degree of independence that does not fit with the typical idea of a colony.[100]

But what did the Genoese at the time think? How did they refer to their overseas outposts? Most of the times official documents use periphrases such as *per diversas mundi partes extra Ianuam* (in other places of the world outside Genoa), *in omnibus partibus* (in every place), *in partibus ultra maris* (in overseas places), *locorum remotorum* (of remote places), *remotos extra Ianuam* (remote outside Genoa).[101] The term *colonia* was sometimes used too. Doge Pietro Campofregoso referred in 1450 to Famagusta as *Car[issi]me Colonie*, dearest colony.[102] In a letter dated 'after 13 January [1446]' sent to Andreolo Giustiniani, a Genoese living in Chios, Cyriac of Ancona called Chios *praeclaram insulam et coloniam vestram* (your illustrious island and colony). He then included a poem in its honour than ended with these words:

[98] Heers, *Gênes*, 385, 391.
[99] See for example *Occupation*, vol. 1, 162–64; Ph. P. Argenti, *Chius Vincta, or The Occupation of Chios by the Turks (1566) and Their Administration of the Island (1566-1912)* (Cambridge, 1941), L–LXXI; Balletto, 'Tra Genova e Chio nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo'; *CGCC*, 132–33, 548–50.
[100] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 104; Balletto, 'Tra Genova e Chio', par. 4 on the online version; Basso, *Strutture insediative*, 103.
[101] Cf. passim V. Promis, in particular liber IV; LG.
[102] V. Vitale, 'Statuti e ordinamenti sul governo del Banco di San Giorgio a Famagosta', *ASLi*, 64 (1935), 391–454, p. 426.

Hor palma di victoria, nobil[e] colonia se' de' Genovesi, Genoese,al buon ghoverno de' tuoi Maonesi	Now you, the palm of victory, are a noble colony of the under the good government of your Maonesi[103]

The Maonesi themselves, in a letter dated 14 August 1455 that asked for help against the Ottoman expansion, wrote to Pope Callistus III: *Quonam pacto, sine communi christianorum auxilio, tam modica colonia defendetur?* (How, without the joint help of Christians, will be defended/will defend itself such a humble/modest colony?).[104]

It is important, however, to be careful and avoid the risk of anachronism, projecting modern notions onto the past. The term colony has often a loaded connotation that brings to mind conquest and systematic exploitation, which reflects more the modern concept than its historical one. The Greek and Phoenician colonies of the 8th-6th centuries BC, for example, were established as independent city-states from the very beginning. During Roman times *colonia* had different meanings and uses. It started as a settlement on confiscated land to secure a conquest and then became a way to provide for the poor and the veterans. During the Empire it partly went back to being a military settlement to secure a territory, but it was also used as an honorary title.[105]

Even in modern historiography the concept is not univocal. Balletto and Pistarino call colonies the Genoese establishments resulting from the Treaty of Nymphaeum.[106] Heyd catalogued under the term colony both commercial outposts and settlements, and

[103] Translated 'noble colony of Genoa, under the kindly government of the guild of Maona' in *Cyriac of Ancona: Later Travels*, ed. by E. W. Bodnar with C. Foss (Cambridge – MA/London, 2003), letter 29, 213–17.
[104] The letter is in *Occupation*, vol. 2, 427–28, with some inaccuracies; cf. *CGCC*, 310; Balletto, 'Tra Genova e Chio', par. 9 of the online version.
[105] Finley, 173–74, 185. Cf. the definition of *colonia* in *Harpers Dictionary of Classical Antiquities*, ed. by H. T. Peck (New York, 1898) and the definitions of colonization in *Oxford Dictionary of the Classical World*, ed. by J. Roberts (Oxford, 2007).
[106] Balletto and Pistarino, 464.

distinguished colonies, quarters, and consulates, even though he often used the word 'colony' in a generic way. Origone considers two main categories, the settlement colony and the commercial base, but she recognises that the reality of each case is much more varied.[107] McKee observes that while 'it has perhaps by now gone out of fashion to place merchant quarters in eastern Mediterranean cities, semiautonomous lordships and principalities in the Aegean, and territorial possessions under the direct control of distant powers all within the category of "colony" […] the question of which were colonies and which were simply settlements remains largely unaddressed'.[108]

Another aspect that should be considered is how contemporary circumstances influenced these authors' views and works. Khvalkov points out how historiography of Italian settlements overseas in the 19th century tried to present the origins of the entire system of European colonialism and how it became heavily influenced by ideology once again in fascist Italy.[109] An example can be seen with Di Tucci, who wrote in 1935 that the Genoese predated by seven centuries modern colonisation criteria. According to him, the Genoese did not exploit the colonies, but considered them as extensions of the mother-country, raised their energies, cultivated rationally their resources and introduced new industries. Not a single negative aspect is mentioned.[110]

The previous considerations are valid for all Genoese overseas territories, but Chios differed from the others, and not only for the widespread occupation or for how it came into Genoa's hands. It presents a more complex situation, especially regarding its administration. It was not under the jurisdiction of the podestà of Pera and of the magistrates *in partibus orientalis*. It was an entity on its own, directly dependent on Genoa's central government.

[107] S. Origone, 'Colonies and Colonization', in *A Companion to Medieval Genoa* (2018), 496–520, pp. 497–99.
[108] McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, 7–8.
[109] Khvalkov, 20–23.
[110] Di Tucci, 281 n.2.

In other settlements Genoa had the right to appoint all the most important officials: podestà, consuls, scribes, treasurers. In Chios, instead, it could not interfere in the Maona's business, while the Maonesi had a say in these appointments.[111]

To choose the podestà the Doge and the Anziani would present a list of twenty names, the Maonesi would select four, and the ducal government would pick the official among those. If the Maonesi were not satisfied with the first list, they could request a second one.[112] With the exception of the two main offices (podestà and *castellanus* of the fort) and their entourages, the sole Maona saw to the designation of all the other functionaries. Moreover, even if the *castellanus* was appointed by Genoa, he was to defend Chios also from the mother-country. If asked to surrender the castle of Colla without the Maona's consent, he had the duty to refuse and would not incur judicial action or be considered a rebel. The first convention, in fact, stated that the Commune would obtain effective possession of the island, including the castle, only after full payment of the redemption price.[113] The agreement was a mandate of state functions to a private association with clauses and limitations, which interestingly affected Genoa perhaps more than the Maona. For example, its validity was tied to the permanence of the *popolari* at the government: in case of political upheaval in Genoa, the Maonesi would be free from any obligation. Indeed in 1408, after the Commune's submission to the French in 1396, the Maonesi exploited the clause: they deposed the Podestà and other officials, and proclaimed their independence, which lasted six months (December 1408 - June 1409).[114]

It would, however, be a mistake to see the relationship between Chios and Genoa merely as the former striving to get its independence from the latter. More than once they disowned each other if it was deemed convenient. When the Byzantine emperor sent

[111] 'Romanie', 18/1, 476; Cessi, 19.
[112] Buongiorno, 51–53.
[113] *Occupation*¸ vol. 1, 390–91; Argenti, 'The Mahona', 17; Pistarino, *I signori del mare*, 73.
[114] *Occupation*¸vol. 1, 164; Pistarino, 'Chio dei Genovesi', 55; *CGCC*, 132–33.

ambassadors to Genoa in 1348 to demand the restitution of the island, Genoa replied that it had no rights over Chios because it had been occupied by private citizens and that it was not able to impose its authority because it lacked means and time. Then Genoese ambassadors came to an agreement with Constantinople that the Maonesi would leave the island after ten years. Vignoso and his partners had not been consulted and did not accept the accord.[115] Following the fall of Caffa in 1475, Mehmed II set his sight on the port of Chios. Since Venice was negotiating peace with the Ottomans, the Maonesi declared that the place was under Venice's authority and raised its flags.[116] In 1528 the Commune forwent its redemption rights: the Maona would hold the island forever in exchange of an annual tribute of 2500 lire. Thirty years later, in 1558, Genoa completely renounced to Chios, giving orders to the ambassadors to the sultanate to recant any sovereignty right over it and 'to take care of trade and merchandise only'.[117] This last decision, however, seems to have had little impact on the island, confirming that by that time Genoa's influence and power over Chios were extremely limited. Twice already, in 1533 and 1552, the Maonesi had deposed the Commune-appointed podestà and chosen one of their own, in an effort to appease Turkish demands.[118] As this was the most significant Genoese involvement in Chios' administration, we can suggest that its sovereignty had already become more or less nominal. An official renunciation probably did not entail any major disruption.

[115] *Occupation*¸vol. 1, 119; 'Romanie', 18/1, 125; Pistarino, 'Chio dei Genovesi', 32.
[116] Olgiati, 'The Genoese Colonies', 389; P. Piana Toniolo, 'Una nota su Chio dei Maonesi al tempo di Cristoforo Colombo', *Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana*, s. 12 vol. 3 (1998), 327–42, pp. 329–30; Balletto, 'Tra Genova e Chio', par. 16 on the online version; C. Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1650: The Structure of Power*, 2nd ed. (Basingstoke, 2009), 31–32.
[117] *Occupation*¸vol. 1, 360; *CGCC*, 69–70, 102.
[118] Argenti, *Chius Vincta*, LXII-LXXII.

Conclusions

Chios' geographical position and its natural products, primarily mastic, explain why Mediterranean powers (Genoa, Venice, Byzantine Empire, Ottoman Empire) showed an interest in it during the Middle Ages.

In 1261 Genoa was able to establish a presence in the island in accordance with the Treaty signed with Emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus. The following dealings would not be as diplomatic. At the beginning of the 14th century Benedetto Zaccaria received Chios in concession from the emperor, but it is speculated that he had first seized the island without permission. The rule of the Zaccaria family ended in 1329 with the Byzantine emperor taking the island back by force. Despite the sovereignty always remaining in Byzantine hands with the Zaccarias having a temporary concession, this period has been used both at the time and by later historians to validate Genoa's claims over the island. Interestingly, this argument was often advanced even when the events of 1346 were presented as coincidental.

Stella's version of the conquest of Chios has been widely used and rarely challenged, but analysing and comparing sources showed that it is not completely accurate, although it was not possible to discern whether it was revised on purpose, or why. As this version would have appeared credible and realistic to anyone not having additional information, I think it is plausible that it reflected what people at the time thought happened. Regarding what occurred after the aborted Monaco expedition, however, I believe that Pistarino raised good points and that there was a degree of planning into the events that brought Chios under Genoese rule.

As mentioned in the introduction, the notarial documents used in this research mainly reflect an urban reality, that of the city of Chios, and a section of this chapter briefly discussed its population and structure. Dedicated studies and different (and new) sources might shed further light, but for this research it was important to point out how words could

have different interpretations or meanings, as well as the lack of standardisations in personal denominations.

The last part of the chapter considered whether Chios should be called a colony. It appears clear that the island, even more than the rest of the Genoese overseas territories, does not conform to the common, modern, concept of colony. However, I believe that it is not erroneous to call Chios a colony. Looking at its immediate previous and subsequent history, the Genoese period stands out. Both Byzantine and Ottoman Chios did not see a significant immigration of 'colonists' and were part of an empire. Under the Ottomans, for example, the island was incorporated as a district into the province of the islands of the Aegean Sea, and the mastic villages were made an apanage of the sultan's mother.[119] I suggest that the practicalities of distance and communication played a role into Chios' inclusion in the two empires as opposed to its status as separate entity from Genoa.

Finally, and most importantly, we cannot ignore that for the medieval Genoese having a colony most likely meant having an established presence in a foreign territory, lacking, as Taviani noted, the modern idea of colonies as symbols of oppression.[120] Therefore, while other words like *emporium* or entrepôt put more emphasis on the economic mind-set that characterised Genoese presence overseas, using the term colony for Chios is perhaps a simplification but not wrong.[121]

[119] Ierapetritis, 236–37; O. Türesay, 'L'Empire Ottoman sous le prisme des études postcoloniales. À propos d'un tournant historiographique récent', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 60/2 (2013), 127–45.
[120] P. E. Taviani, 'Gli aromi di Chio affascinarono Colombo e determinarono il suo grande destino', in *Χίος - Γένοβα: πρακτικά Α'* (1988), 27–30, p. 27.
[121] Balard's introduction in Lopez, *Storia delle colonie genovesi nel Mediterraneo* (1996), XIII.

Chapter 2. Selling and Being Sold: Women in Economic Transactions

When talking about women in the Middle Ages, it is important to remember that, as Patricia Skinner says, 'women' cannot be considered as a homogeneous group.[1] Even in the same geographical place and in the same period their experiences varied greatly according to marital and social status, wealth, family background, ethnicity, religion, and many other elements.[2] This chapter will first present an introductory overview to women's rights. Comparisons and contrasts highlight the complexities of legal systems and the necessity to consider the discrepancies between theory and practice. They also provide a contextual background to better understand Chios' legal landscape and how the women participating in economic transactions, protagonists of the chapter, moved within it.

All women had rights and limitations dictated by laws, but there was a wide variety of jurisdictions, and practice did not always follow the law's prescriptions.[3] The *ius commune* (the combination of Roman civil law and canon law) formed the basis of continental law, but its influence and effectiveness varied.[4] It is almost axiomatic to say that medieval societies in southern and northern Europe were different. Generalizing, we could say that Roman laws, with some Germanic influences, governed in southern and

[1] P. Skinner, *Women in Medieval Italian Society, 500-1200* (London, 2001), 4.
[2] C. Beattie, 'Introduction: Gender, Power, and Difference', in *Intersections of Gender, Religion and Ethnicity in the Middle Ages*, ed. by C. Beattie and K. A. Fenton (New York/Abingdon, 2011), 1–11, p. 1. On Christian, Jewish, and Muslim women across the Mediterranean see *Across the Religious Divide: Women, Property, and Law in the Wider Mediterranean (ca. 1300-1800)*, ed. by J. G. Sperling and S. K. Wray (New York, 2010).
[3] J. M. Bennett and R. M. Karras, 'Women, Gender, and Medieval Historians', in *The Oxford Handbook of Women and Gender in Medieval Europe*, ed. by J. M. Bennett and R. M. Karras (Oxford, 2013), hereafter *OHW*, 1–17, pp. 7–8.
[4] J. A. Brundage, *The Medieval Origins of the Legal Profession: Canonists, Civilians, and Courts* (Chicago, 2008), 76.

Mediterranean regions, while customary and Germanic laws were predominant in the north.[5] For example, the south of France was known as the *pays de droit écrit* due to the use of written codes based on Roman law, while in the north customary law was more important.[6] This scheme was not universally true: in southern Italy, Amalfi and Salerno were less than 30 km distant and followed Roman law and Lombard law respectively.[7]

Roman, canon and common law, local and regional customs and norms were all involved in the formation of Western European law codes and legal thinking.[8] For example, in Italian cities the *ius commune* was used as a complement to the *ius proprium* ('laws peculiar to a particular place'), which had developed from the Roman law of the late empire.[9] Historical circumstances played a role too, especially in the case of conquered territories. In Venetian Crete the judges turned first towards the Statutes of Venice, then towards case law or precedents, and as a third resort to customs, which could be Venetian but also Byzantine.[10] The agreement between Genoa and the Maona signed on 26 February 1347 stated that Chios was to be ruled according to Genoese laws and to the agreement reached between Genoese and Chians, and failing those, according to Roman law (*secundum formam capitulorum et regularum et bonas consuetudines civitatis et comunis Ianue et secundum formam*

[5] E. E. Kittell, 'Testaments of Two Cities: A Comparative Analysis of the Wills of Medieval Genoa and Douai', *European Review of History / Revue Européenne d'histoire*, 5/1 (1998), 47–82, p. 47; K. L. Reyerson, 'Urban Economies', in *OHW*, 295–310, p. 299.
[6] Cf. K. L. Reyerson and T. Kuehn, 'Women and Law in France and Italy', in *Women in Medieval Western European Culture*, ed. by L. E. Mitchell (New York/Abingdon, 2011), 131–41, pp. 131–36; M. A. Kelleher, 'Later Medieval Law in Community Context', in *OHW*, 133–47, p. 137; J. M. Lanza, *From Wives to Widows in Early Modern Paris. Gender, Economy, and Law* (Aldershot/Burlington, 2007), 23–24.
[7] J. Drell, 'Aristocratic Economies: Women and Family', in *OHW*, 327–44, p. 332; P. Skinner, 'Donne nel commercio amalfitano (secoli X-XII)', in *Donne tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna in Italia. Ricerche*, ed. by G. Casagrande (Perugia, 2004), 1–22, p. 5.
[8] A. Bellavitis and B. Zucca Micheletto, 'North versus South – Gender, Law and Economic Well-Being in Europe in the Fifteenth to Nineteenth Centuries', in *Gender, Law and Economic Well-Being in Europe from the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Century: North Versus South?*, ed. by A. Bellavitis and B. Zucca Micheletto (London/New York, 2018), 1–27, pp. 1–2.
[9] L. Guzzetti, 'Women's Inheritance and Testamentary Practices in Late Fourteenth and Early Fifteenth-Century Venice and Ghent', in *The Texture of Society: Medieval Women in the Southern Low Countries*, ed. by E. E. Kittell and M. A. Suydam (New York, 2004), 79–108, p. 81.
[10] McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, 28–29.

conventionis Grecorum et, ubi hec deessent, secundum iura romana).[11] There were also elements supposedly inherited from Byzantine tradition, such as the 'tax on widows' called *argomoniatico*.[12]

Women's Agency and Rights

Following Roman law, which dictated that women required supervision when acting within a 'male sphere of action', in many parts of medieval Europe women needed a male guardian in order to make a contract.[13]

Working wives could have some independence from their husbands.[14] In late medieval Ghent a female public merchant (*coopwijf*) who practised a different trade from that of her husband was not subjected to restrictions imposed on married women, but she could enter into contracts, obligations, and debts.[15] Married women exercising a trade in Montpellier could act as sureties for others, and McIntosh infers that this implies that they could also contract obligations of their own.[16]

Most women, however, did not enjoy this privileged status, even if sometimes they could bypass their incapacity to act legally without male guardianship, as widows and older daughters in 14th-century Avignon did when they lacked male ascendants and descendants.[17]

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[11] CBC [SEQ_42]: Pagina: 019. Cf. *Occupation*¸ vol. 2, 38–55, p. 46

[12] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 460; Balletto, 'L'amministrazione della giustizia', 719–20. On the *argomoniatico* see Chapter 4.

[13] T. Kuehn, 'Person and Gender in the Laws', in *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. by J. C. Brown and R. C. Davis (London, 1998), 87–106, p. 91.

[14] Cf. C. Beattie, 'Married Women, Contracts and Coverture in Late Medieval England', in *Married Women and the Law in Premodern Northwest Europe*, ed. by C. Beattie and M. F. Stevens (Woodbridge, 2013), 133–54, pp. 145–46, 154; M. K. McIntosh, 'The Benefits and Drawbacks of Femme Sole Status in England, 1300–1630', *Journal of British Studies*, 44/3 (2005), 410–38; C. Beattie, '"Living as a Single Person": Marital Status, Performance and the Law in Late Medieval England', *Women's History Review*, 17/3 (2008), 327–40, as well as Howell's works on the Low Countries.

[15] S. Hutton, '"On Herself and All Her Property": Women's Economic Activities in Late-Medieval Ghent', *Continuity and Change*, 20/3 (2005), 325–49, p. 338; S. Hutton, *Women and Economic Activities in Late Medieval Ghent* (New York, 2011), 38, 40, 42.

[16] McIntosh, 414.

[17] J. Rollo-Koster, 'Item Lego…Item Volo…Is There Really an "I" in Medieval Provençales' Wills?', in *"For the Salvation of My Soul": Women and Wills in Medieval and Early Modern France*, ed. by J. Rollo-Koster and K. L. Reyerson (Saint Andrews, 2012), 3–24, pp. 5–6; R. L. Winer, *Women, Wealth, and Community in*

In Venice a woman could enter into transactions without her husband's permission when using her outright possessions. The greatest part of female property, however, was the dowry, which could not be used without the husband's consent.[18] Treviso's statutes of 1385 decreed that a woman could alienate her property, dotal or non-dotal, even without her husband's approval as long as she had the consent of two of her close male blood relatives. However, she could not press suit in court unless she had her husband's permission.[19] In Siena a married woman could agree to an alienation only with the authorisation of three close relatives; in Assisi she had to have her husband's and her father's consent, and in their absence she needed permission from male relatives, starting with her sons.[20]

In the Italian peninsula there were two main different institutions regarding male power over women, one deriving from Roman civil law and the other from Lombard practice. The *patria potestas* had no estimable value and could not be transferred. The *mundium*, instead, could be assigned, sold, or alienated. Originally it was the power over a daughter and it passed from the father to the husband, but in central Puglia, for example, it belonged to the closest relative and was not transmitted to the groom with the marriage.[21] In Florence women were obliged by law to have their legal transactions overseen by a *mundualdus*, an adult male holding the *mundium*. There were, however, no restrictions on who could act as *mundualdus*: if the husband was present, he automatically served in that

Perpignan, c. 1250-1300: Christians, Jews, and Enslaved Muslims in a Medieval Mediterranean Town (Aldershot/Burlington, 2006), 21–22; J. Rollo-Koster, 'The Boundaries of Affection: Women and Property in Late Medieval Avignon', in *Across the Religious Divide*, ed. by Sperling and Wray (2010), 38–50, p. 39.

[18] S. Chojnacki, 'Patrician Women in Early Renaissance Venice', *Studies in the Renaissance*, 21 (1974), 176–203, pp. 189–91.

[19] Kuehn, 'Person and Gender', 100.

[20] I. Chabot, 'Risorse e diritti patrimoniali', in *Storia delle donne in Italia, II, Il lavoro delle donne*, ed. by A. Groppi (Rome-Bari, 1996), 47–70, pp. 57–59; J. Kirshner, 'Donne maritate altrove. Genere e cittadinanza in Italia', in *Tempi e spazi della vita femminile tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna*, ed. by S. Seidel Menchi, A. Jacobson Schutte, and T. Kuehn (Bologna, 1999), 377–429, pp. 397, 400–01.

[21] T. Kuehn, *Law, Family, and Women: Toward a Legal Anthropology of Renaissance Italy* (Chicago, 1994), 201; P. Mainoni, 'Il potere di decidere. Testamenti femminili pugliesi nei secoli XIII-XIV', in *«Con animo virile». Donne e potere nel Mezzogiorno medievale (secoli XI-XV)*, ed. by P. Mainoni (Rome, 2010), 197–262, p. 225.

capacity, but otherwise any male sufficed. Women could often choose their own *mundualdus* and he did not need to be a relative or even an acquaintance.[22] Women in the Germanic Lombard districts in southern Italy could not perform legal actions without male permission and intervention, while in Byzantine areas they could represent themselves in court in cases affecting them personally.[23]

Genoese laws required women to always have male permission to act. If the *pater familias* was dead, he could be substituted by two relatives (*propinqui*), or neighbours (*vicini*) if there were no kinsmen in Genoa. If the woman was married and her father was still alive, she needed endorsement from both him and her husband. If the husband was absent, the wife needed her father's permission along with the testimony of two relatives of her husband confirming that he was expected to be away for more than six months. If the father was dead, she needed two men from her natal line and two from the marital side to witness for her. Appointing a procurator to act on her behalf was usually an easier alternative than obtaining permission from at least two men for every action. Wives with travelling husbands could also have another option: if the husband had left a document allowing her to act in his absence, by having his automatic consent she only needed the one from her natal kin.[24]

In Chios, too, according to the Genoese laws applied, a woman with an absent husband could act with the consent of her father and of two of her husband's relatives or

[22] T. Kuehn, '"Cum Consensus Mundualdi": Legal Guardianship of Women in Quattrocento Florence', *Viator*, 13 (1982), 309–33, in particular 309–11, 323; T. Kuehn, 'Understanding Gender Inequality in Renaissance Florence: Personhood and Gifts of Maternal Inheritance by Women', *Journal of Women's History*, 8/2 (1996), 58–80, p. 64. See also Kuehn, 'Person and Gender', 98, 101.

[23] P. Skinner, 'Disputes and Disparity: Women at Court in Medieval Southern Italy', *Reading Medieval Studies*, 22 (1996), 85–105, pp. 88–89.

[24] J. Smith, 'Keeping It Together: Women, Marriage, and the Family in Late Fourteenth-Century Genoa', in *Marriage in Premodern Europe: Italy and Beyond*, ed. by J. Murray (Toronto, 2012), 107–28, pp. 113–14; J. Smith, 'Legal Protection for Wives of Absent Husbands in Late Fourteenth-Century Genoa', in *Worth and Repute: Valuing Gender in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe. Essays in Honour of Barbara Todd*, ed. by K. Kippen and L. Woods (Toronto, 2011), 252–76, pp. 258, 262–65; D. O. Hughes, 'Urban Growth and Family Structure in Medieval Genoa', *P&P*, 66 (1975), 3–28, p. 21.

neighbours, but documents show how reality could differ from what the law prescribed.[25] In 1381 Maria de Lixa, whose husband was absent and father was dead, acted with the consent of two men instead of four.[26] In the deeds analysed most widows with no father alive also appear acting with the endorsement of only two men, in few cases three, and only in two acts four. If the husband was present, instead, in Chios like in Genoa a woman needed his permission, along with that of her *pater familias*, if he was still alive.

Besides being allowed to act in their husbands' absence, Genoese wives could also be appointed as their agents.[27] Studying Genoese commenda contracts between 1155 and 1216, Angelos found that in half of the cases where women acted as procurators, they were representing their husbands, although the situation changed in the later Middle Ages.[28]

Women could be procurators but not curators, the difference being that the former were selected by the clients to represent them, while the latter were appointed by a magistrate to represent someone who could not represent themselves. The only exception was the position of *curator minorum* as it was essentially a continuation of the office of *tutor*. Women, in fact, were often chosen as legal guardians for their children, both in case of their husbands' absence and death.[29] If a Genoese testator appointed *tutores*, they were also the testamentary executors, which therefore was a position often held by wives, mothers, or even other female relatives. As Coolidge states while talking about early modern Spain, female executors and guardians were common in Europe: 88% of Venetian husbands in Chojnacki's

[25] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 448.
[26] De Canella, docc. 10, 16, 37. See more in Chapter 5.
[27] G. Petti Balbi, 'Forme di credito femminile: osservazioni introduttive', in *Dare credito alle donne. Presenze femminili nell'economia tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna. Convegno Internazionale di Studi. Asti, 8-9 ottobre 2010*, ed. by G. Petti Balbi and P. Guglielmotti (Asti, 2012), 9–24, pp. 20–21; G. Petti Balbi, 'Donna et domina: pratiche testamentarie e condizione femminile a Genova nel secolo XIV', in *Margini di libertà: testamenti femminili nel Medioevo, Atti del convegno internazionale, Verona, 23-25 ottobre 2008*, ed. by M. C. Rossi (Verona, 2010), 153–82, p. 170.
[28] M. Angelos, 'Women in Genoese Commenda Contracts, 1155-1216', *JMH*, 20/4 (1994), 299–312, pp. 305–06; 'Romanie', 18/2, 607–08; Kamenaga-Anzai, 'Attitudes', 259–60.
[29] J. Smith, 'Navigating Absence: Law and the Family in Genoa, 1380-1420' (PhD Dissertation, University of Toronto, 2007), 144; Smith, 'Legal Protection', 261.

15th-century sample left their wives executors of their wills, and between 1350 and 1750 more than 80% of Spanish noblemen chose their wives as guardians of their children.[30]

Diseases, wars, exiles, criminal convictions, and long-distance travels were just the principal reasons that could cause the absence, more or less permanent, of the male head of a family. These absences created the necessity to appoint guardians for the children, since they were required by law to have one as long as they were under the age of majority. From birth to puberty children had a *tutor*, youths from puberty until the age of twenty-five had a *curator*. Some places, like Spain, followed classical Roman law and had male children reaching the age of puberty at fourteen and female ones at twelve, in others that age was seventeen for boys and fifteen for girls.[31] Genoese law allowed minors older than eighteen to request the concession of the *venia aetatis*, which would grant them the privilege to be considered of full age (*De venia etatis danda minoribus*).[32]

Women gained the ability to be guardians through the influence of canon law, because Roman law forbade it as it was a public office: according to the Digest, 'women are excluded from all civil and public offices; and thus they may not be judges, nor magistrates, nor advocates; nor may they intervene on another's behalf, nor act as procurators'.[33] Men and women had the same duties and responsibilities as guardians, but the appointment process was different. In most European regions a widower was the guardian by default,

[30] S. A. Epstein, *Wills and Wealth in Medieval Genoa, 1150–1250* (Cambridge – MA/London, 1984), 201, 220, 223–24; G. E Coolidge, *Guardianship, Gender, and the Nobility in Early Modern Spain* (Farnham, 2010), 2, 5.
[31] J. E. Grubbs, *Women and the Law in the Roman Empire: A Sourcebook on Marriage, Divorce and Widowhood* (London/New York, 2002), 23; Coolidge, *Guardianship*, 21.
[32] LG, 903.
[33] Smith, 'Keeping It Together', 11; J. Smith, 'Women as Legal Agents in Late Medieval Genoa', in *Writing Medieval Women's Lives*, ed. by C. N. Goldy and A. F. Livingstone (New York, 2012), 113–29, p. 113. Quote from D. 50.17.2 as in Kuehn, 'Person and Gender', 91.

while a widow had to be appointed. [34] In Spain only mothers and grandmothers could be guardians, not aunts, while uncles could be appointed.[35]

While Christian law codes from the realms of Aragon often prohibited panels of guardians, the situation was different in Jewish communities. Widowed mothers were still the most likely to serve as representatives for their children, but usually they were part of a panel with other people – not necessarily relatives – who could protect the economic interests of the minors.[36] Collective guardianship also happened in some Italian cities. In Florence a widow could not act as *tutrix* by herself, and in Genoa mothers were the first choice for a magistrate to appoint but usually with at least another – male – counsellor. Genoese statutes also listed the order of preference for guardianship: mother, uncles, paternal grandmother, maternal grandparents, and then anyone else in the paternal line.[37] In her study on Spanish nobility Coolidge sees the main reasons for this preference as motherly affection, the wives' knowledge about their children and properties, and their lack of vested interest in the children's inheritance, since they were not in line to inherit from their husbands' families.[38] In Florence, for example, the Magistrato dei Pupilli (court of wards) oversaw the appointment of guardians for children whose head of family had died intestate, and it had the obligation to ensure that there was no line of succession between the minors and the people entrusted with them.[39]

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[34] A. Bellavitis, 'Stepfamilies and Inclusive Families in Early Modern Venice', in *Stepfamilies in Europe, 1400-1800*, ed. by L. Warner (London/New York, 2018), 56–72, p. 57; L. Warner, 'Conclusion: Continuity and Change in Stepfamily Lives, 1400-1800', in *Stepfamilies* (2018), 233–64, p. 253.

[35] G. E Coolidge, '"Neither Dumb , Deaf , nor Destitute of Understanding": Women as Guardians in Early Modern Spain', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 36/3 (2005), 673–93, pp. 679–81.

[36] R. L. Winer, 'Family, Community, and Motherhood: Caring for Fatherless Children in the Jewish Community of Thirteenth-Century Perpignan', *Jewish History*, 16/1 (2002), 15–48, pp. 22–26; Winer, *Women*, 49, 115.

[37] T. Kuehn, 'Figlie, madri, mogli e vedove. Donne come persone giuridiche', in *Tempi e spazi*, ed. by Seidel Menchi, Jacobson Schutte, and Kuehn (1999), 431–60, p. 450; Smith, 'Women as Legal Agents', 119; Smith, 'Keeping It Together', 115–16.

[38] Coolidge, *Guardianship*, 2, 67.

[39] G. Calvi, 'Rights and Ties That Bind: Mothers, Children, and the State in Tuscany during the Early Modern Period', in *Kinship in Europe. Approaches to Long-Term Develpment (1300-1900)*, ed. by D. W. Sabean, S. Teuscher, and J. Mathieu (New York/Oxford, 2007), 145–62, pp. 147–51; G. Calvi, 'Reconstructing the

Guardianship was not necessarily equivalent to custody, especially in systems where there were multiple guardians living separately.[40] Spanish law considered the possibility of a mother not being the guardian and it stated that she was allowed to raise the children if she was 'a woman of good reputation' and as long as she did not remarry. By law as well as by custom, a remarried mother would lose the guardianship of her children and often the custody too. This was another difference between male and female guardians, as men usually did not lose the office when they remarried. Practice, however, could be more flexible than law, and it was not unheard of for mothers to bring their children with them into their new homes.[41]

When women assumed guardianships, they had to renounce laws which 'favoured' their sex but would impede their duties as guardians. The most common one was the *Senatusconsultum Velleianum*. The original Roman law stated that a woman could not be compelled to assume liability for the benefits of others. The rationale behind it was to protect the wife from being economically accountable for her husband's contracts and from having to obligate herself on his (or any other person's) behalf.[42] As it evolved, the decree did not make it illegal for women to intercede for others, but it gave them the possibility to back out of an agreement. If a woman was sued by the creditor, she could appeal and the transaction would lose its efficacy; she could even claim the return of what she had already paid. Female guardians had to renounce this privilege to make sure that the transactions they made on

Family: Widowhood and Remarriage in Tuscany in the Early Modern Period', in *Marriage in Italy, 1300-1650*, ed. by K. Lowe and T. Dean (Cambridge, 1998), 275–96, pp. 280–84.

[40] A. Rich Abad, 'Able and Available: Jewish Women in Medieval Barcelona and Their Economic Activities', *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies*, 6/1 (2014), 71–86, pp. 76–79; Winer, 'Family', 25.

[41] Cf. Winer, *Women*, 48, 68; Coolidge, *Guardianship*, 20, 67, 115–16; Coolidge, '"Neither Dumb"', 681; M. Mogorović Crljenko, 'Women, Marriage, and Family in Istrian Communes in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries', in *Across the Religious Divide*, ed. by Sperling and Wray (2010), 137–57, pp. 148–50; Calvi, 'Reconstructing the Family', 280–81; D. Wessell Lightfoot, *Women, Dowries and Agency. Marriage in Fifteenth-Century Valencia* (Manchester, 2016), 129. Bellavitis, 'Stepfamilies', 60–63; Warner, 'Conclusion', 244, 248–52; D. Wessell Lightfoot, 'Patrician Widows and Remarriage in Late Medieval Valencia', in *Worth and Repute*, ed. by Kippen and Woods (2011), 213–30, pp. 221–22.

[42] Cf. EDRL; R. Zimmermann, *The Law of Obligations: Roman Foundations of the Civilian Tradition* (Cape Town/Wetton/Johannesburg, 1992), 145–52.

behalf of the children could not be invalidated.[43] The *Senatusconsultum* had been re-enforced by Justinian (527-565 AD) with the enactment later known as the *Authentica si qua mulier.* It declared void a wife's intervention in her husband's affairs unless it was to her own advantage, for example with the proceeds being spent for her own benefit.[44] Legal protection for women included also the *Lex Iulia de fundo dotali* and its Justinianic extension, the *ius hypothecarum*. They prohibited husbands from alienating or hypothecating dotal properties both with and without their wives' consent.[45]

Depending on what she was doing, a woman could also need to surrender rights that were not only for women. For example, she could relinquish the *Epistola Divi Adriani,* which limited the liability of *fideiussores* by allowing a debt to be divided equally among the sureties.[46] Or she could request the *beneficium inventarii*: according to an enactment of Justinian, within a prescribed term an heir could call for an inventory of the inheritance and was then liable for the debts of the deceased only to the amount of three-quarters of the estate, the remaining fourth being reserved to him or her.[47]

As some examples showed, and more will appear in the rest of the thesis, reality did not always match the legal theory. This is indicative, considering the nature of the documentation used. Notaries could not openly sanction the breaching of laws or do it themselves. This does not mean they could not circumvent, omit, or conceal what was really

[43] M. A. Kelleher, 'Hers by Right: Gendered Legal Assumptions and Women's Property in the Medieval Crown of Aragon', *Journal of Women's History*, 22/2 (2010), 34–55, pp. 43–44; Smith, 'Women as Legal Agents', 118.
[44] Nov. 134.8. Cf. Zimmermann, 151; M. A. Kelleher, *The Measure of Woman. Law and Female Identity in the Crown of Aragon* (Philadelphia, 2010), 58; Costamagna, *Corso*, 57–58.
[45] EDRL. See also the Glossary in J. H. Pryor, *Business Contracts of Medieval Provence: Selected Notulae from the Cartulary of Giraud Amalric of Marseilles, 1248* (Toronto, 1981); P. Riesenberg, 'Roman Law, Renunciations and Business in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', in *Essays in Medieval Life and Thought, Presented in Honor of A. P. Evans*, ed. by J. H. Mundy, R. W. Emery, and B. N. Nelson (New York, 1955), 207–25, p. 209.
[46] Zimmermann, 131–32; Costamagna, *Corso*, 61–62.
[47] For the definition see EDRL.

happening. For instance, usury never appears in documents as it was condemned and prohibited by the Roman Catholic Church.[48] However, various expedients could hide an eventual interest. People could declare to have received a higher sum that they actually had; the amount received could be left unspecified, declaring only what had to be returned (or the opposite, saying how much they received and not how much they would need to give back); impossible restitution terms could be set, along with a fine for non-fulfilment.[49] According to Kirshner, fictive facts (e.g. kinship, residency, age) that enabled 'individuals to conform to or to evade legal norms are ubiquitous in the legal texts of Italian city-states.[50]

The situation is even more complicated when it is not clear which laws were in place. In a simplified North-South divide Chios was firmly and without doubts included in the south, and not just because of its geographical position. Roman law's predominance, reliance on written codes, and inheritance inequality were some of the aspects Chios had in common with many places in Mediterranean Europe. However, even if it is indisputable that Genoese and Roman law were applied (and sometimes disregarded), their reach and influence outside the city are so far unknown. Then there was the Byzantine tradition, which was impossible to completely erase, especially since the majority of the population was still Greek. They maintained their privileges, religion, notaries. Taxes with Greek names have suggested the persistence of Byzantine elements adjusted to the conquerors' necessities. Quite surely the Genoese adopted the previous norms concerning mastic production.[51] They did not have laws regulating the lentisk cultivation nor the harvest, stocking, and sale of the resin. They did not have legislation repressing and punishing frauds and illegal behaviour

[48] N. L. Barile, 'Credito, usura, prestito a interesse', *Reti Medievali - Rivista*, 11/1 (2010), 1–31, pp. 1–3 [on RM].
[49] Cf. Costamagna, *Corso*, 87; M. Balard, 'Les actes notariés génois au Moyen Age', in *Gênes et la mer*, I, 253–67, p. 266 [first publ. in *Univers du Texte. Genèse, Fonction et Constellation*, ed. by Sh. Sato (Nagoya, 2006), 252–64]; D. Bezzina, *Artigiani a Genova nei secoli XII-XIII* (Florence, 2015), 99, 107, 110, 125.
[50] J. Kirshner, 'Some Problems in the Interpretation of Legal Texts *re* the Italian City-States', *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte*, 19 (1975), 16–27, pp. 19–20.
[51] Without a doubt according to Pistarino, *I signori del mare*, 221. See also Freedman, 104; Jacoby, 'The Eastern Mediterranean', 99.

regarding mastic either, at least not until 1392, when the podestà issued an edict. It is probably not wrong to assume that it was based on dispositions already existing.[52]

Working Women

As mentioned before, Genoese wives could act in their husbands' absence, but they could also be appointed as agents for them.[53] It was not an exception: in other cities like Amalfi, Venice, and Ghent, female relatives could become proxies of travelling merchants and even substitute men as business partners.[54] Because Chios was a commercial city, it would be expected for men engaged in maritime trade, whether as merchants or seamen, to be abroad for periods of time. The documents, however, do not have a corresponding number of women participating in commercial activities in their absence. This would seem to confirm Pistarino's statement about an almost non-existent female participation within the business world in Chios.[55] He explained Latin women's lack of involvement in the commercial sector with the scarceness of their numbers, while Greek women's averseness to get involved in the trading world is traced back to Byzantine tradition. He also noted that even if this had not been the case, they would have turned to Greek notaries, whose documentation we are missing. He then concluded that Jewish women appeared, instead, 'very active', but without giving any reference or example to support his words. Pistarino's opinion had already been expressed by Balletto with almost the same exact words.[56]

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[52] Balletto, 'L'amministrazione della giustizia', 719–22. Cf. *Occupation*, vol. 1, 472–73, vol. 2, 192–97.
[53] D. Bezzina, 'Married Women, Law and Wealth in 14th-Century Genoa', ed. by D. Bezzina, *Beyond Their Dowries. Women and Wealth in Medieval and Early Modern North-Central Italy - MEFR*, 130/1 (2018), 121–35, pp. 129–30; Petti Balbi, 'Donna et domina', 170; Angelos; G. Pistarino, 'La donna d'affari a Genova nel secolo XIII', in *Miscellanea di storia italiana e mediterranea per Nino Lamboglia* (Genoa, 1978), 157–69.
[54] Skinner, 'Disputes', 91; Guzzetti, 'Women's Inheritance', 98; L. Guzzetti, 'Women in Court in Early Fourteenth-Century Venice', in *Across the Religious Divide*, ed. by Sperling and Wray (2010), 51–66, p. 53. Cf. also M. Rorke, 'Women Overseas Traders in Sixteenth-Century Scotland', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 25/2 (2005), 81–96.
[55] *CGCC*, 433.
[56] '[…] dobbiamo rilevare la scarsissima presenza di donne occidentali nell'isola e la quasi nessuna partecipazione dell'elemento femminile al mondo degli affari' in Balletto, 'Chio nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo', 198.

Among all the deeds, only twenty-two see women actively involved in economic transactions, which I define as when assets change ownership following a monetary exchange. For example, I do not include the quittance given on 20 March 1398 to Calli, widow of Franchus Georgius Carvogni (*Calli Angelina uxoris quondam Francho Carvogni* for Gioffrè), because the reason she owed and paid those 50 florins is not specified.[57]

It should also be noted that not all transactions were registered by the notaries, especially the low-value ones.[58] For example, there are no documents attesting the activities of bakers, butchers, or tailors, but we know that they existed. Occupational titles were often used to better identify someone, whether they were active participants or simply listed as witnesses. As a rule, however, women were identified through their relationships to men and do not appear as witnesses at the end of documents.[59] Chabot proposes that women's work 'was not a decisive factor in their social identity' because they mostly worked at home.[60] I do not think that their absence from the acts is a reason to believe that there were no female bakers or butchers or tailors, or in general women involved in petty retail. This is supported by the knowledge that the Middle Ages saw women all over Europe working in food processing, petty retailing, crafts, and textile industries. They were also employed in domestic service, agriculture, medical care and nursing, while also dealing with household chores.[61]

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[57] Gioffrè c. 74v = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, cart. 382, c. 74v. The original is missing the top left corner, which is present in Gioffrè's version.

[58] Cf. E. M. Dermineur, 'Women and Credit in Pre-Industrial Europe: An Overview', in *Women and Credit in Pre-Industrial Europe*, ed. by E. M. Dermineur (Turnhout, 2018), 1–18, pp. 8–10.

[59] Cf. E. E. Kittell, 'Patriarchal Imperialism and the Narrative of Women's History', in *Narrative Power: Encounters, Celebrations, Struggles*, ed. by L. T. Duchamp (Seattle, 2010), 40–58, p. 47.

[60] I. Chabot, 'Widowhood and Poverty in Late Medieval Florence', *Continuity and Change*, 3/2 (1988), 291–311, p. 292.

[61] D. Herlihy, 'Women's Work in the Towns of Traditional Europe', in *Women, Family and Society in Medieval Europe: Historical Essays, 1978-1991*, ed. by A. Molho (Providence/Oxford, 1995), 69–95 [first publ. in *La donna nell'economia. Secc. XIII-XVIII*, ed. by S. Cavaciocchi (Prato, 1990), 103–30]; Mogorović Crljenko, 146; Petti Balbi, 'Forme di credito', 19; J. Ward, *Women in Medieval Europe 1200-1500*, 2nd edn (Abingdon, 2016), 70–120; L. Guzzetti, 'Le donne a Venezia nel secolo XIV: uno studio sulla loro presenza nella società e nella famiglia', *Studi Veneziani*, 35 (1998), 15–88, pp. 38–45. Cf. also K. L. Reyerson, 'Women in Business in Medieval Montpellier', in *Women and Work in Preindustrial Europe*, ed. by B. A. Hanawalt (Bloomington, 1986), 117–44; I. Ait, 'Donne in affari: il caso di Roma (secoli XIV-XV)', in *Donne del Rinascimento a Roma*

Balletto states that among women employed in domestic service in Chios, the most common case was that of Greeks working for Westerners. However, she mentions only two examples, both 'famulato' contracts (*famulus/a* was someone who served; they could be a slave, a servant, an attendant, even an apprentice). In the first one Thedora de Grisopoli *grecha filia Papatis Duche* committed herself to serve Iacobus de Andoria as *pedissequa* (handmaid) for two years for a total salary of 7 ducats of Chios.[62] In the second, an unpublished deed, a Greek woman arranged for her 15-year-old daughter Anna to serve *more famule* for nine years *domina* Maria, widow of Baptista de Cazanova.[63]

The only other time a woman's job is explicitly cited in the deeds examined is when Isabella Faracha, an obstetrician, was called to testify during an arbitration.[64] Another possible case of medical care is that of Mecosa leaving in her will a bequest to Caterina for her services during her illness (*pro mercede quia ipsam servivit in sua egritudine*).[65] It is not clear, however, if nursing was Caterina's job and the bequest was in addition to a stipend, or if it was a gift for freely-given cures, maybe by a friend. *Merces*, in fact, can mean wage or recompense, or payment in general.

Another dubious case is that of Caterina, *alumpna Smeralde*, who received a bequest of two ducats from Smeralda's husband *pro mercede sua*. The term *alumpna* has been interpreted both as foster daughter and freedwoman.[66] Studying Roman inscriptions and

e dintorni, ed. by A. Esposito (Rome, 2013), 53–83; E. Fiorucci, 'Women at Work in a Southern European Town. Women, Guilds and Commercial Partnerships in Venice in the Sixteenth Century', in *Gender, Law and Economic Well-Being*, ed. by Bellavitis and Zucca Micheletto (2018), 215–27.

[62] Foglietta 325 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 843, doc. 26. Cf. Balletto, 'Chio nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo', 187–88. See more in Chapter 5. On the term cf. R. M. Karras, *Unmarriages: Women, Men, and Sexual Unions in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 2012), 134; Bezzina, *Artigiani*, 68.

[63] A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 944, doc. 437 (27 September 1484), mentioned in Balletto, 'Il mondo del lavoro', 134–35.

[64] See 'Women Being Sold' later in the chapter.

[65] De Ferrari 229. See more in Chapter 3.

[66] Related to Justinian ruling CJ 5.4.26 see M. Sheehan, 'Theory and Practice: Marriage of the Unfree and the Poor in Medieval Society', *Mediaeval Studies*, 50 (1988), 457–87, p. 474 n.62; P. L. Reynolds, *How Marriage Became One of the Sacraments: The Sacramental Theology of Marriage from Its Medieval Origins to the Council of Trent* (Cambridge, 2016), 448.

legal sources, Rawson concluded that *alumni* were 'usually young persons in a quasi-familial relationship with an older person. They are sometimes of free status, sometimes slaves'.[67] In 1381 a slave loaned in Chios as wet-nurse (*ad usum lactandi*) was also required to perform duties as *alumpna* (*faciendi alia servicia tamquam alumpna*).[68] Cluse reports another case in Genoa where a slave was to serve as 'an *alumpna* and wet nurse', and Smith puts in the glossary *alompne* as 'Genoese term for nurse, specifically a wet nurse'.[69] Pistarino, instead, translated the term as domestic servant (domestica).[70] In our case, whether *pro mercede sua* meant a wage or simply a reward for her service, it is clear that Caterina worked as a servant for the testator (*que servivit et servit ipsi testatori*).

I believe that the two main reasons for the lack of data regarding working women in Chios are the type of labour women did and the type of documentation analysed in this instance. I agree with Melo's suggestion that traces of women's work only show up in notarial deeds when they worked outside household business and independently of other family members.[71] As they were involved mainly in informal and/or familiar economy, they are difficult to locate: as Fontaine states, 'informal economy, unless it turned into crime, almost never entered any written record'.[72] Moreover, in Wray's words, 'it simply was not standard notarial practice to record a woman's occupation'.[73] It is possible that female workers were registered or mentioned more frequently in statutes or ordinances, although it

[67] B. Rawson, 'Children in the Roman Familia', in *The Family in Ancient Rome. New Perspectives*, ed. by B. Rawson (London, 1992), 170–200, pp. 173–86.
[68] De Canella 69.
[69] C. Cluse, 'Intimate Strangers: Slave Women as Wetnurses in Medieval Genoa', in *Nuove frontiere per la storia del genere, Atti del Congresso SIS 2010, vol. 2*, ed. by L. Guidi and M. R. Pellizzari (Salerno, 2013), 148–56, p. 150; Smith, 'Navigating Absence'.
[70] G. Pistarino, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Chilia da Antonio di Ponzò (1360-61)* (Genoa, 1971), doc. 30.
[71] A. S. Melo, 'Women and Work in the Household Economy: The Social and Linguistic Evidence from Porto, c. 1340-1450', in *The Medieval Household in Christian Europe, c. 850 – c. 1550: Managing Power, Wealth and the Body*, ed. by C. Beattie, A. Maslakovic, and S. R. Jones (Turnhout, 2003), 249–69, p. 253. Cf. also S. Ferente, 'Women, Lifecycles, and Social Mobility in Late Medieval Italy', in *Social Mobility in Medieval Italy (1100-1500)*, ed. by S. Carocci and I. Lazzarini (Rome, 2018), 217–27, esp. 220–22.
[72] L. Fontaine, 'Concluding Remarks', in *Women and Credit*, ed. by Dermineur (2018), 345–60, p. 351.
[73] Wray, 25.

is generally understood that laws addressed to 'men' were applied to both sexes, unless otherwise specified.[74] It is even more significant, then, that in the rules regarding the sale of the levy on the foreign trade (*comerchium forensium*) in Chios, a clause specifically mentioned Greek women. Together with Greek men (*quilibet Grecus vel quelibet Greca*) they were to be considered foreigners (*persona extranea*) and were supposed to pay the tax, unless they held the title of inhabitants or burghers of Chios and the *beneficium Ianuensium*, meaning they enjoyed the benefits all Genoese had, including exemptions from some duties.[75] It is clear that Greek women could be, if not merchants, at least involved in commerce.

I agree with Origone's statement that the female presence in Chios was remarkable and that it had an impact on the island's economic life.[76] Besides running a business, participating in it, or having a job, women could carry out other activities that imply an economic role, and those will be the subject of the following two sections. The last part of this chapter will then look at women who were, instead, the object of economic transactions: slaves.

Women Acting Through Representatives

The first document with a woman involved in an economic transaction is from 1348. Calli was the co-owner of a house together with her son, Iane Syricarius *quondam Nicole Valasto de Sio*.[77] Both her name and her family relationships indicate that she was Greek. On 15 June 1348 Iane sold the house with his mother's consent (*tam meo nomine quam nomine et*

[74] Mogorović Crljenko, 146; E. E. Kittell and K. Queller, '"Whether Man or Woman": Gender Inclusivity in the Town Ordinances of Medieval Douai', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 30/1 (2000), 63–100; Kelleher, *The Measure of Woman*, 4.
[75] Rovere, gabella 4.
[76] Origone, 'Chio', 189.
[77] De Bracellis 31 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, cart. 317, p. 26. This is my reading as Argenti transcribed *Vlasco*. He also wrote *Calli conoclisene*, while I think it might be *Conoclisne/Conoclismene*.

vice Calli conoclisene matris mee) to the Genoese Franciscus Arangius.[78] Another example of a Greek woman being represented is that of Eviena Critadena (Enieno according to Balletto).[79] On 10 March 1474 her husband Demetrius Laschari, acting on behalf of both, acknowledged having received from Teramo de Manarola the full payment for the rent of a tavern. Since Demetrius was his wife's attorney, we can infer that the Greek couple owned the tavern together.

There were, of course, dealings that did not concern real estate. On 24 October 1394 a Circassian slave named Andreas was sold by Iohannes de Coronato. He operated as attorney for his wife Lucia and his mother-in-law Iacha, widow of Nicolaus Macalufus.[80] Since it was specified that Iacha and Lucia were Nicolaus' heirs, it is possible that the slave had been part of the inheritance. This transaction is particularly interesting because, as we will see in Chapter 4, *domina* Iacha appears in five documents, but in this one and in one other she was represented by her son-in-law, while in the others she acted for herself. A representative also bought a slave for *domina* Francha, widow of *dominus* Georgius Gateluxius: on 7 October 1456 a 25-year-old Russian slave named Lutia (probably Lucia) was purchased for 73 ducats of Chios.[81]

Other cases of women being represented are more complex. The first one is Sobrana, widow of Petrus Iustinianus de Campis. On 5 March 1451 her brothers, Franciscus and Petrus de Bozolo, acted in her name (*Francisco et Petro de Bozolo fratribus nomine Sobrane sororis sue*).[82] They bought a house with a mill, a small structure, a courtyard, a well, and another small structure (*domum cum molendino domuncula cortilio uno puteo et alia domuncula,* where *domuncula* could be anything from shed to small house) for 350 gold

[78] See also Pistarino, 'Notazioni', 60.
[79] Foglietta 340. Cf. Balletto, 'Il mondo del lavoro', 132.
[80] Di Chiavari 102.
[81] Piemontesi 20.
[82] De Ferrari 203.

ducats of Chios. The seller was Batista Spinacius, who had bought everything from Nicolaus de Mulasana at an auction. Nicolaus was the curator of the goods of the above mentioned Petrus Iustinianus and his children's guardian. According to the sale deed dated 24 September 1450, he had sold the assets for 414 gold ducats of Chios, which were received by Sobrana.[83] It is logical to think that Nicolaus' wards were the owners. Sobrana was not the guardian, but she received the money from the sale, which might suggest that she had the custody of the children, and thus the profits went to her to be used for them. But why did the uncles buy it back for their sister, with no mention of the children? Why did it cost less? Airaldi suggests that Batista was a figurehead for Sobrana, helping her to preserve her rights over her husband's inheritance and the properties auctioned.[84] As Sobrana's agency seems to be limited (she did not hold her children's guardianship and she did not buy the house herself), I believe that it was likely that also in that instance she had appointed a man to act in her stead.

A document dated 1 April 1457 shows some of the difficulties women faced even when acting through representatives.[85] *Dominus* Gregorius Iustinianus and *domina* Carencia, both deceased, had six daughters (and one son, deceased too). Four were married and had already received their dowries, but the youngest two, Margaritina and Blanchineta, 16 and 15 years old respectively, still needed one. In particular, there were ongoing negotiations for Margaritina's wedding, but they could not be concluded because she lacked a dowry. The only remaining asset from Gregorius' inheritance was his share (or rather, part of a share, 5/12) of the Maona, so the girls' guardians sold it. The guardians were their grandfather, two uncles, and a brother-in-law. Three relatives from the paternal line and two

[83] De Ferrari 115.
[84] '[…] riteniamo che egli fungesse da prestanome a favore di Sobrana, onde salvare alla medesima quanto le competeva sull'eredità del defunto marito e la proprietà degli immobili andati all'asta' in G. Airaldi, 'I notai dei conti palatini genovesi', in *Studi e documenti su Genova e l'Oltremare* (Genoa, 1974), 197–315, p. 230.
[85] Giurista, pp. 272–73 and doc. 3 (see also doc. 2 where the *curatores* are appointed).

from the maternal side gave their approval to the sale. Margaritina and Blanchineta gave their consent too (*cum consensu et voluntate*), along with two other sisters; we can only assume that those not mentioned were not in Chios. In the presence and with the advice of the three paternal relatives, Petra, Salvagina, Margaritina and Blanchineta renounced the *Senatusconsultum Velleianum*, the *Lex Iulia de fundo dotali*, the *Si qua mulier* and every other legal aid (*renuntiantes suprascripte Petra, Salvagina, Margaritina et Blanchineta beneficio senatus consulti velleyani, legi iulie de fondo dotali, autentice «Si qua mulier» et omni alii iuri et legum auxilio*). Only after examining the issue, listening to the relatives, checking that the deal was in the girls' best interest and the price was right, the vicar of the podestà ratified the sale as a representative of Genoa in Chios. Smith points out how having a procurator could be an easier alternative for a woman than seeking multiple permissions.[86] In this case, however, the guardians acted for the girls, but approval from five relatives had still been necessary. It is also worth noticing that Petra and Salvagina renounced their rights over the share, meaning they still had, at least nominally, some claim on their father's inheritance even if they had already received their dowry.

In two documents from 1398 we find two sisters, one being represented and the other acting for herself, involved in two sales that offer further insight into inheritance practices. On January 16 Andriolus de Costa, Thomas de Pergamo and Isolta de Costa sold to Sidaro Prassino a house with a courtyard and a garden, while on January 29 they sold another house to Bartholomeus Iustinianus, son of Franciscus Iustinianus *olim* de Campis.[87] The documents inform us about their family relationships (Fig. 10). Andriolus had two brothers, Cristoforus and Constantinus. After Cristoforus died, his inheritance was shared between the two remaining siblings (*heres pro dimidia*). Then Constantinus died too, leaving his part

[86] Smith, 'Legal Protection', 265.
[87] Gioffrè p. 50, c. 57v.

to his three children: Thomas, Genevra and Isolta. It is worth noticing that they were heirs *cum beneficio inventarii* and that each of them held a sixth part of their uncle's inheritance, meaning that the daughters' shares were the same as the son's one (*pro sexta parte dicti quondam Cristofori*).

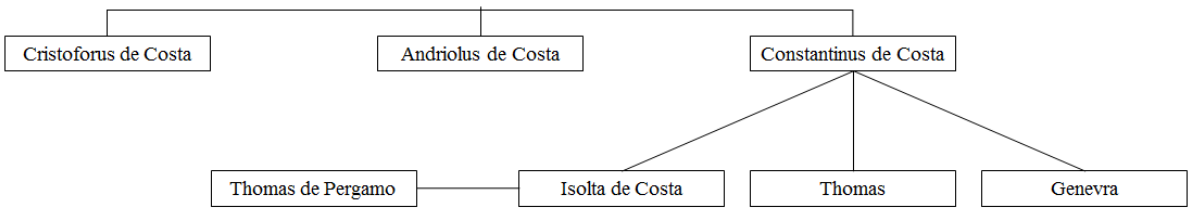


Fig. 10 De Costa family tree

Thomas de Pergamo was Isolta's husband and, together with Andriolus, Thomas' guardian. They also represented Genevra, daughter of the late Constantinus and Thomas' sister: *nomine et vice Genevre, filie dicti qu[ondam] Constantini sororis dicti minoris*. In case there were any doubts, this confirms that Thomas was a minor. His *tutores*, however, acted for Genevra too, without being her guardians. If we assume that she was of age, why did she not act for herself like Isolta? An answer could lie within the mention of the *beneficio capituli de pluribus filiis relictis*: Genoese law allowed heirs to accept an inheritance on behalf of absent siblings (or children and wife on behalf of an absent man). The inheritance and any related income would then be handed over once the absentee returned.[88] If Genevra was not present, then her brother's representatives could handle their common inheritance on her behalf too.

The last case in this section is an attorney acting on behalf of a female guardian: the woman being represented was representing someone herself. On 17 June 1394 *magister*

[88] LG, 885. See Smith, 'Navigating Absence', 139–40.

Elixeus, a physician, sold to Daniel Iustinianus *olim* Longus and Bartholomeus Iustinianus *olim* de Campis a batch of mastic for 1377 and a half gold ducats.[89] He was acting for Melicha, daughter of the late Ellias Salamon, widow of *magister* Ismail, and guardian of their son Gedidia. Ellias, Ismail and Elixeus were all Jewish and quite surely Melicha was too.

These examples add to the earlier consideration that low-value transactions were not registered, as the subjects of the contracts were real estate, slaves, shares, and mastic. Equally unsurprising is that women's representatives were in most cases relatives. More observations will be offered after discussing examples of women acting without representatives.

Women Acting for Themselves

There is only one document where women act as representatives: *domina* Marieta, mother of the late Georgius Paterius, and Catochia, his widow, were testamentary trustees and guardians of Georgius' children and heirs, together with Iohannes Paterius, Georgius' brother.[90] On 17 September 1450 they bought fifteen shares of the Compera of the Maona of Chios (*loca quindecim comperarum Mahone Chii*) for 525 gold ducats of Chios. The two women are not singled out, but they are always mentioned with the man, acting in exactly the same way.

In another deed we learn indirectly about a woman operating as representative, *domina* Margarita Iustiniana, widow of *dominus* Petrus Recanellus and guardian of their children (*tutricem et curatricem filiorum et heredum*).[91] A document dated 17 June 1394 is

[89] Di Chiavari 48, also in Villa 9. For more details about the amount and the price see N. Coureas, 'Commercial Relations Between Cyprus and Chios, 1348-1480', *Επετηρίδα του Κέντρου Επιστημονικών Ερευνών*, 29 (2003), 37–51, p. 46. See also Balletto, 'Chio dei Maonesi', 138, 146.
[90] De Ferrari 108. The children were Marietina and Giuliano according to Balletto, 'L'émigration féminine', 304.
[91] Di Chiavari 47.

a complaint against her brothers, *domini* Lazarinus and Antonius Iustiniani: in the summer of 1393 she had sold seven and half kantars of mastic and asked them to see the sale through, but they had failed to do so.

The other acts considered in this section see women directly involved in economic transactions and acting for themselves, and five of them are dated to 1381. On January 19, Calogrea Evedochia sold two houses acquired through her dowry and *antefactum* – respectively the marriage gift made to the groom by the bride and the one made to the bride by the groom (*domos duas, que eidem Evedochie obvenerunt, ut dixit, pro doctibus et antefacto patrimoni ipsius*). She did so with the advice and consent of two men, a relative and a neighbour (*cum et de conscilio et consensu ac presentia predicti Petri de Rocha, propinqui sui, et Bernabovis de Cortona, balistarii, vicini sui*).[92] It is not certain, but it is possible that Calogrea had yet another house, where the document was drawn up. The topical date in fact reads *apud hostium domus habitacionis dicte Evedochie*, at the door of the said Evedochia's house, without saying that the house was the one mentioned before (*dicte* or *predicte domus* is commonly found in these cases). Daughter of the late *papa* Nicola de Chilla and widow of Angelus de Senis, Calogrea was a Greek woman who had married a Latin.

There are two other examples of mixed marriages between a Greek woman and a Latin man where the wife owned part of a house and sold it. Maria, daughter of the late *papa* Nicola de Valiso, was married to Benedictus de Castiliono *quondam Antonii*. On 26 July 1484 she and her husband sold a house with a courtyard and an oven (*domum terraneam cum curtilio et furno*), Maria acting with the advice of two Greek neighbours.[93]

[92] De Canella 13.
[93] A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 944, doc. 407.

Ihera Michelina was instead married to Anthonius de Cexegna.[94] Ihera is sometimes treated as part of a name (Iheramelica, Iheraprofira), but I believe it was some kind of title and I therefore always write it as a separate word.[95] Balletto seems to agree, even if she remains cautious on its significance:

> '[…] the word *ihera*, which sometimes precedes the names of women who are not of Latin stock or are of humble social status […] in the same source, Goze is described either with the word *ihera* or with the title *dama*, which in contrast seem to have been used more specifically for women of a higher rank […]'[96]

All the examples I found in Chios, and others from Cyprus and Pera, regard non-Latin women.[97] There are no doubts that Ihera Michelina was Greek. She used an interpreter from Greek (*pro ea interpetrante de greca lingua in latina Vassalo de Sigestro*). Two Greek men vowed that she was acting on her own best interest, swearing *more Greco*, and they were her relatives (*Coste Michele Scrigni, propinqui sui, et Nicole Schilati, vicini sui et propinqui*). Her husband was also present and giving his consent when, on 5 February 1381, she sold her share of a house, part of her dotal properties, to the co-owner, Georgius Virmilius *quondam Andree*.

Much more impressive were Zenevvra's dotal properties, which included five houses and a courtyard sold on February 11.[98] She retained the right to live for a year in one of those houses – the one where she was currently residing and where the deed was drawn up –

[94] De Canella 23.
[95] Panissaro 114.
[96] L. Balletto, 'Ethnic Groups, Cross-Social and Cross-Cultural Contacts on Fifteenth-Century Cyprus', in *Intercultural Contacts in the Medieval Mediterranean*, ed. by B. Arbel (London, 1996), 35–48, p. 47.
[97] M. Balard, 'Péra au XIVe siècle: documents notariés des archives de Gênes', in *Les Italiens à Byzance: édition et présentation de documents.*, ed. by M. Balard, A. E. Laiou, and C. Otten-Froux (Paris, 1987), 9–78, docc. 74, 75, 77. My thanks to Aysu Dincer for her help with Cyprus' cases.
[98] De Canella 33. More about Zenevvra in Chapter 4.

without having to pay rent. Her father and her (second) husband were present, consenting and agreeing to the deal (*Zenevvra, filia Dominici Bexagnini, olim uxor quondam Iacobi Romani seneschalchi et nunc uxor Iacobi Vinacie de Albingano, in presentia, consensu, auctoritate et voluntate dictorum Dominici, eius patris, et Iacobi, nunc eius viri*). There were also two other men, the closest relative and the closest neighbour she had, swearing that she was acting in her own best interest.

Calogrea, Maria, Ihera Michelina, and Zenevvra gave up rights benefiting women: the *ius hypothecarum* and the *lex Iulia* (*de fundo dotali*). Except in the first document, they also forsook Justinian's *Si qua mulier*. Maria's renouncement is the most detailed, with the addition of the *Senatusconsultum Velleianum* and the *Epistola Divi Adriani*. Interestingly enough, in the other two 1381 documents there is no explicit mention among the renunciations of those regarding laws that benefited only women.

On March 19 Thomena, daughter of the late Marchus Pilosus and widow of Cristoforus Trotus de Alexandria, sold to Anthonius Meninus de Rapalo a house with a workshop or small store (*domum cum quintana*).[99] Once again it was hers because of her dowry and she acted with the advice and consent of two neighbours because she did not have any relatives (*cum et de consilio et consensu Andree Perucii, tabernarii, et Angeli Quartesani, calafacti, proximiorum viciniorum […] asserens se propinquos non habere*). Thomena acknowledged being older than twenty-five, meaning that she had full legal capacity. It also meant that laws protecting minors could not be applied: she could not claim that her inexperience had her entering into a disadvantageous transaction and demand an annulment of the contract.[100]

[99] De Canella 61.
[100] G. Mousourakis, *Fundamentals of Roman Private Law* (Berlin/ Heidelberg, 2012), 115–16.

The other 1381 deed is the only one where both parties in the purchase agreement are women. On February 27 Ana Vestarchisa, widow of Cheseni Canavucii, sold a house to Isota, daughter of the late Ansaldus de Campis and widow of Anthonius de Costa.[101] Ana's father, too, was dead, but we do not know his name as there is a blank space following *quondam*. A Greek man interpreted from Greek to Latin for Ana (*pro ea interpetrante de greca in latina locucione Sidero Criti Scharamanga, greco, locucionis latine gnaro*) so we can deduce that she was Greek. The fact that the two closest relatives who gave Ana their advice and consent have Greek-sounding names and are mentioned as knowing Latin confirms it (*cum, de consilio et consensu Michali Criti Triandusili et Sideri Criti Scharamanga predicti, proximiorum propinquorum dicte Ane locucioni latine gnarorum*). Even if Isota was a widow with a father no longer alive, just like Ana, the document does not report her having male consent for her purchase. It should be noted, however, that the deed lacks both topical and chronological dates, and that the two final male names are probably the witnesses, but it is not stated. We cannot exclude the possibility that men supporting Isota's action were mentioned in a missing part, although the editor does not note in the critical apparatus any blank space, damage, or anything else.

Of the acts which have yet to be considered only one has the woman renouncing legal benefits related to her sex. Antonucia, daughter of the late Antonius Catalanus and married to Baptista de Marcha de Anchona, renounced the *Senatusconsultum Velleianum*, the *lex Iulia de fundo dotali*, the *Epistola Divi Adriani*, and the *Autentica si qua mulier*.[102] She was the heir of her sister, Angelina, and of her brother-in-law, Jacopus Soppi, both deceased. With her husband present and consenting (*in presentia consensu auctoritate et voluntate dicti Baptisti mariti sui*), on 10 September 1460 she sold a house that had been

[101] De Canella 50.
[102] De Recco 283 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 848, doc. 454.

Jacopus' (*domum ipsam ipsius Antonucie que fuit dicti quondam Jacopi Soppi*). Another interesting detail is that, as she sold a house she owned, Antonucia was living with her husband in Michali Pricoladi's house, we assume renting it or just a part (*domus Michali Pricoladi in qua morantur dicti Baptista et Antonucia iugales*). It seems once again to be an example of collaboration, if not cohabitation, between the Greek and Latin population of the island, which we have already seen in other purchase agreements and with the tavern rented by a Greek couple to a Latin.

Together with Latin and Greek women, we also have two Jewish women actively involved in transactions, in both cases house sales. On 29 May 1394 Ecsati, widow of Moses Gripioti, and her son Ellias sold a house for 225 gold ducats to *magister* Elixeus Calaihi, a Jewish physician (*magistro Elixeo Calihi, iudeo, phisico, quondam magistri Moise*).[103] The house, with a courtyard and a well, was inside the *castrum*, in the Jewish quarter (*in castro Syi, in contracta Iudeorum*). Both mother and son swore on the sacred texts of Judaism and are always mentioned together, as equal partners in the sale. The only difference is that two male relatives had to swear that Ecsati was acting in her own best interest: *Ellie sacerdotis iudei, et Anadia, quondam Arie, iudei, propinquorum prosimorum ipsius Ecsati, iuriantium super litteris ebraicis, more iudeorum, se credere predicta omnia et singula facta fore ad utillitatem dicte Ecsati, et non eius lesionem*. Another document records that Ecsati and Ellias had the possibility to redeem the house within four years for the same price plus expenses amounting to a maximum of 25 ducats.[104] This right of redemption could suggest that the sale had not been a voluntary choice: they might have been in debt and in need of money, and found a fellow member of their community willing to help them out. In fact

[103] Di Chiavari 39 (Villa 5). Ecsati in some instances is written Chesati. Elixeus is the same who represented Melicha in Di Chiavari 48.
[104] Di Chiavari 40 (Villa 6). On both deeds see Balletto, 'Chio dei Maonesi', 138. Epstein writes that Elias' mother was allowed to live in the house, while in the document only the courtyard is mentioned, cf. Epstein, *Purity Lost*, 76–77.

Elixeus generously grants the free usufruct of the courtyard for those four years to Ecsati, and in case of her death to her son. We cannot completely exclude the possibility that this operation was concealing a loan with the house as the collateral, which would have remained in Elixeus' possession if mother and son could not repay him.

The other Jewish woman is Dolci, daughter of the late Bonanascho and widow of Isac Solomohei (Argenti transcribed Soloni).[105] On 2 August 1457 she sold to her son-in-law Soloni Alamano a house with a small structure (*domum unam ipsius Dolci cum domuncula*) in the Jewish quarter (*sitam in Iudaica*) for 150 ducats of Chios. She acted in the presence and with the advice of another son-in-law, a nephew, and a neighbour, all three Jewish (*Faciens dicta Dolci predicta omnia et singula in presentia cum et de consilio Iesup Sori eius generi Soloni filii Mojsi Chesseni eius nepotis et Eliachini orffano eius vicini iudeorum iurantium super biblia more ebreorum*). Dolci's daughter, Nachime, is also mentioned in the document: her husband bought the house with the money of her dowry (*ementi ut asserit de pecunia dotis Nachime eius uxori*) and then pledged it back to her, together with another house, as surety for her dowry.

Ecsati might not have needed to renounce her rights as a woman because she was acting with a man, and we might miss a part of the deed involving Ana and Isota, but what about Thomena and Dolci? They were selling a house exactly like the other women, but unlike them they did not renounce their 'female' rights. They, however, relinquished other 'universal' rights such as the *exceptio non numeratae pecuniae* – the possibility of claiming to have never received the money – or the law that protected a seller if the buyer had paid less than half of the just price (*legi qua subvenitur deceptis ultra dimidiam iusti precii*).[106] I believe that their marital status played a role: they were all widows and those renouncing

[105] De Recco 277 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 848, doc. 227.
[106] See the glossary in Pryor.

their rights as women, with the exception of Calogrea, were still married. It would make sense as those 'female' rights were originally instituted in order to protect wives and their properties from husbands' misdemeanours.

When there was no alienation of a property, of course, no renouncement was needed. On 6 July 1460 Marieta rented for one year, starting from the 1st of August, the house where she was currently living.[107] Despite Argenti titling the document – which had no actual heading preceding it – '*Vendita di casa in parrichia*' ('sale of house in *parrichia'*, where *parrichia* is the quarter where the house was located), it is undoubtedly a tenancy agreement. The clauses were clear: Iohannes de Brancia de Saulo would not have to pay if he did not enter the house, Marieta promised not to change the contract and raise the rent, and Iohannes promised to return the house in the same conditions (literally *potius melioratam quam deterioratam*, bettered rather than damaged). Marieta was the daughter of the late Guillemus Domice and she had been widowed and then remarried to Nicolaus de Recho (*olim uxor Marcii balador de moia et nunc uxor Nicolai de Recho*). Curiously, among the men supervising Marieta's actions there was not her husband, but rather three neighbours and a maternal uncle. He was probably not on the island: according to Genoese law a woman with an absent husband needed three men to stand for her, but one of them had to be her father. Since Marieta's father was dead, she would have needed two men from her natal line and two from her marital side.[108] She indeed had four males vouching for her, but she had to resort to neighbours because, besides her uncle, she did not have close relatives on the island (*ex prossimioribus loco propinquioribus quibus asserit carere in presenti civitate et insula Chij*).

[107] De Ferrari 237 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 764, doc. 307.
[108] Smith, 'Legal Protection', 265.

In the twenty-two documents considered in this section and in the previous one, thirty women are mentioned, offering a varied overview of how women could operate economically. There are fourteen deeds where at least one woman acted for herself. Then we have four cases of women being someone's representatives: some operated in panels (Isolta, and Marieta and Catochia), Melicha had appointed an attorney, and Margarita apparently acted by herself. In the remaining documents male relatives acted for the women, except for the notary chosen by Francha. These proportions are significant as we have seen that, due to legal restrictions, it was common, and perhaps even convenient, for women to have a male representative.

The majority of the contracts concerns real estate operations (fifteen). Studying medieval Montpellier, Reyerson notes how 'real estate may well have been the sector in which women were the most active' – widows in particular – and suggests it might be because they had a conservative approach to business.[109] In Chios, too, widows emerge as the most active group among women, especially those acting for themselves (60%). Regarding the reasons, the absence of smaller trade in the registers might have influenced the prevalence of real estate transactions. In fact the other assets exchanged are all of a certain value: slaves, mastic, and shares.

Only four times women (or their representatives) were buyers: Sobrana's brothers bought a house, Francha's attorney purchased a slave for her, Marieta and Catochia acquired shares acting as trustees and guardians, and Isota bought a house for herself. All the other times women were selling and in eleven cases out of fifteen the houses were either co-owned or had come in their possession as inheritance or dowry. It might mean that women had limited possibilities to increment their personal wealth through other means, possibly also due to restricted occupational opportunities. Consequently they usually would not have

[109] Reyerson, 'Women in Business', 137.

enough capital for big purchases or investments, or perhaps they would not even have a need or interest in it, for example if they already owned a house.[110] Conversely, selling properties might have provided them with needed liquidity. Since the female buyers were all widows, we can suggest that it was a role usually reserved to the head of the household.

The chronological distribution is uneven, as we have no deed dated to the first half of the 15th century or to the first half of the 16th. This gap could be ascribable to the fact that for the first period only documents by one notary covering two years have been published (Panissaro, 1403-1405) and for the second just acts from Sampietro (1484-1522) and some related to the Maona. The amount of deeds, however, is not necessary proportional to the number of documents with women involved in economic transactions: they are more numerous in the second half of the 14th century, but the acts examined are more numerous for the second half of the 15th century (Fig. 11). This could indicate a larger female participation in the economic life of Chios during the first fifty years of the Genoese rule, possibly dictated by the necessities of the new settlement requiring everyone's efforts. A decline could have followed once the Genoese presence had become more established, reproducing the situation in the mother-country where women's ability to access inheritances and properties saw considerable limitations in the 14th century.[111] More data are however necessary to verify this hypothesis.

[110] See also Dermineur, 7; J. E. Shaw, 'Women, Credit, and Dowry in Early Modern Italy', in *Women and Credit*, ed. by Dermineur (2018), 173–202, p. 186.
[111] Cf. Bezzina, 'Married Women'.

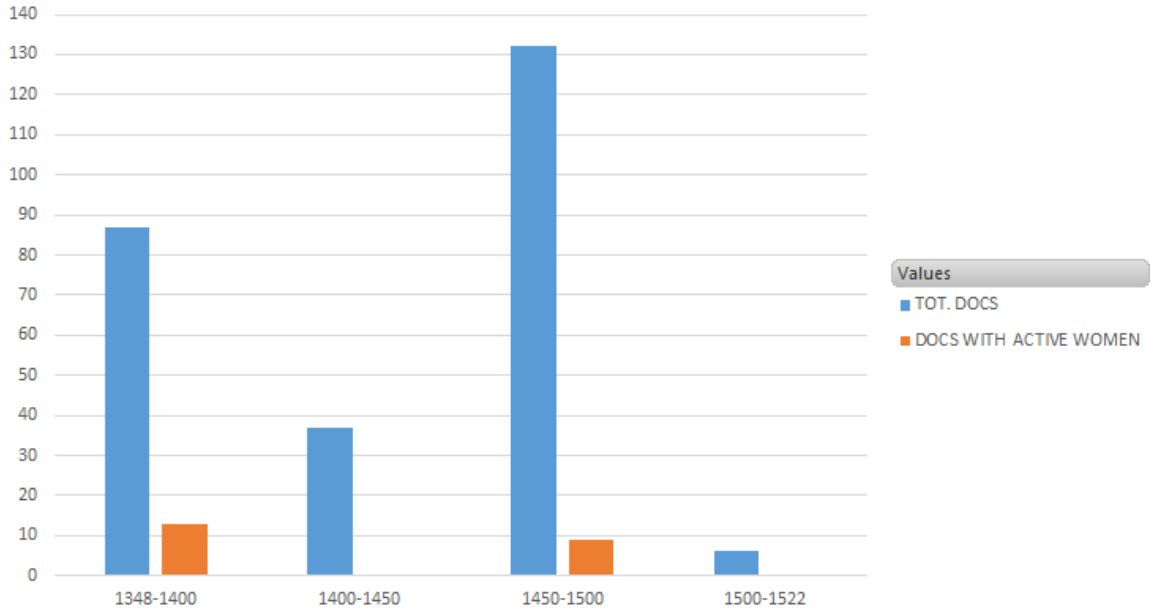


Fig. 11 Chronological distribution of documents with women actively involved in economic transactions

Looking at the ethnicity of the people involved in the transactions, we find Latins, Greeks and Jews, both males and females, providing evidence of these groups mingling in different contexts and ways: they lived next to each other, they did business together, and sometimes they got married. The three documents involving Jewish women are interesting because Latin participants only appeared in one, while in the others all the parties were Jewish. It should also be noted that the Genoese men did not interact with Melicha, but they bought the mastic from her procurator. In the two cases where the women acted for themselves, they sold their properties to and with the advice of Jewish men. A similar situation can be seen with Greek and Latin women tending to rely for approval and advice on men from their own community. The only exception is the Greek Calogrea, who had the consent of two Latins. It might have been due to her marriage to a Latin man, but there are no other examples that can confirm it. The two other cases of Greek women in mixed marriages requiring some kind of authorisation for their actions are those of Ihera Michelina and Maria. As we have seen, both of their husbands were alive, and that was the fundamental consent they needed.

In fact, they both had two other men, this time Greeks, listed after their husbands, but it is specified that they were present or that they gave advice, with no word about permission or approval.

In some cases we cannot identify someone's background as there is no indication of whether they were Genoese, Greek, Jewish, or other, and they do not have a recognizable name. In the majority of the documents, however, all parties were Latin. This prevalence is to be expected, as mainly Latin people would turn to Genoese notaries, often to deal with coreligionists. Likewise it is not surprising the lack of documents involving only Greeks since they would have likely used Greek notaries.

Women Being Sold

Slavery has been the subject of extensive research for every historical period, including the Middle Ages.[112] Several studies have been produced on slavery in medieval Genoa. Petti Balbi and Balard wrote about the 12th and 13th centuries. Pistarino looked at female slavery in 15th-century Genoese society and at the trade between Genoa and Spain in the same period. Cluse considered slave women employed as wet-nurses. Balletto focused on slaves as foreigners, and then on Albanian slaves, always in the 15th century.[113] Broader studies, still relevant despite their age, are Tria's one on slavery in Liguria, which examines in

[112] For some bibliography on Mediterranean slavery between Middle Ages and Modern Age see G. Fiume, 'La schiavitù mediterranea tra Medioevo e età moderna. Una proposta bibliografica', *Estudis. Revista de Historia Moderna*, 41 (2015), 267–318.

[113] G. Petti Balbi, 'La schiavitù a Genova tra i secoli XII e XIII', in *Mélanges offerts a René Crozet à l'occasion de son soixante-dixième anniversaire, vol. 2*, ed. by P. Gallais and Y.-J. Riou (Poitiers, 1966), 1024–31; M. Balard, 'Remarques sur les esclaves à Gênes dans la seconde moitié du XIIIe siècle', *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire*, 80/2 (1968), 627–80; M. Balard, 'La femme esclave à Gênes (XIIe-XVe siècles)', in *Gênes et la mer*, I, 395–408 [first publ. in *La femme au Moyen Age*, ed. by M. Rouche and J. Heuclin (Maubeuge, 1990), 299–313]; G. Pistarino, 'Tra liberi e schiave a Genova nel Quattrocento', *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 1 (1964), 353–74; G. Pistarino, 'Sul tema degli schiavi nel Quattrocento a Genova', in *Miscellanea di storia ligure, IV* (Genoa, 1966), 87–94; G. Pistarino, 'Tratta di schiavi tra Genova e la Spagna nel secolo XV', *Medievalia*, 7 (1987), 125–49; Cluse; L. Balletto, 'Stranieri e forestieri a Genova: schiavi e manomessi (secolo XV)', in *Forestieri e stranieri nelle città basso-medievali - Atti del seminario internazionale di studio, Bagno a Ripoli (Firenze), 4-8 giugno 1984* (Florence, 1988), 263–83; L. Balletto, 'Schiavi albanesi a Genova nel XV secolo', in *Οι Αλβανοί στο Μεσαίωνα/The Medieval Albanians* (Athens, 1998), 325–48.

particular the legal aspects, and Gioffrè's analysis of the slave market in 15th-century Genoa.[114] Slavery in Genoese overseas settlements has not been studied as much, but it is not completely unexplored. The edited collection 'Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean (ca. 1000-1500 CE)' has a part dedicated to the Latins in the Eastern slave trade where Genoa features in three chapters.[115] Fossati Raiteri wrote about the Genoese and the slave market in the near East, and on slavery in the Genoese colonies in the Levant.[116] Balard dedicated a chapter to the topic in 'La Romanie génoise'.[117] On slavery in Chios, besides two articles by Balletto and a subchapter in Argenti's 'The Occupation of Chios by the Genoese', there are mentions in various, broader works.[118]

These studies, like mine, are based on data extrapolated from notarial acts, therefore presenting typical problems, especially when it comes to numbers. We have only some documents by some notaries and, in Arbel's words, 'the number of acts regarding slaves could be a consequence of mere chance, or even of the notary's tendency to specialise in certain kind of transactions'.[119]

Unfree women appear in documents as *sclava*, *serva*, or *famula*, but the terminology is not always straightforward. While the word *sclavus* is only used for slaves, the terms *servus* and *famulus* are ambiguous. They are generic words for servants, but they could refer to slaves,

[114] L. Tria, 'La schiavitù in Liguria (ricerche e documenti)', *ASLi*, 70 (1947); D. Gioffrè, *Il mercato degli schiavi a Genova nel secolo XV* (Genoa, 1971).
[115] *Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean (c. 1000–1500 CE)*, ed. by R. Amitai and C. Cluse (Turnhout, 2017).
[116] S. Fossati Raiteri, 'La schiavitù nelle colonie genovesi del Levante nel basso Medioevo', in *De l'esclavitud*, ed. by Ferrer i Mallol and Mutgé i Vives (2000), 695–716; S. Fossati Raiteri, 'I Genovesi e il mercato degli schiavi nel Vicino Oriente (secc. XIV-XVI)', *Rivista dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Europa Mediterranea*, 1 (2008), 67–75.
[117] 'Romanie', chapter 4.
[118] Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi'; Balletto, 'La schiavitù'; *Occupation*, vol. 1, 615–23. Passim in Balletto, 'Chio nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo'; Pistarino, 'Notazioni'; Pistarino, 'Chio dei Maonesi'; *CGCC*; Epstein, *Purity Lost*.
[119] B. Arbel, 'Slave Trade and Slave Labor in Frankish Cyprus (1199-1571)', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, n.s. 14 (1993), 149–90, p. 153.

ex-slaves, free people working for a wage, or even apprentices.[120] Stuard states that in Ragusa the term *sclavi* was a synonym for *servi* (and *ancillae*) as early as in 1272, and that *famulus/a* meant family servant and was the most common euphemism used both for slaves and manumitted, dependent freemen.[121] Budak disagrees and considers the terminology clear: a *serva* or *ancilla* was always a slave, while *famula* was used for servants working with a contract.[122] However, Bismara, similarly to Stuard, says that *servus/a*, *famulus/a*, or *ancilla* cannot identify unequivocally slaves in 15th-century Verona because they could refer to free employees.[123] The same happened in Genoa: 15th-century Genoese documents attest the mixed use, as synonyms, of the terms *sclava* and *serva*.[124]

We have mentioned two *famulae* before, Anna and Thedora, where the latter was without doubt a domestic servant working for a wage. Iacobus promised her food and clothes (*providere de victu et vestitu*), but she had already received the money, meaning she would not work just in return of food, board and clothes.[125]

Some documents show *famuli* as apprentices, while an unpublished deed might hint at a *famulus* as an employee.[126] Antonius Pissis left instructions in his will regarding his *famulus* Antonius Caravella.[127] Pissis was a *speciarius* owning an apothecary shop. The two men had previously agreed on Caravella working two years for 33 ducats per annum, starting

[120] Balletto, 'La schiavitù', 182.
[121] S. M. Stuard, 'Urban Domestic Slavery in Medieval Ragusa', *JMH*, 9/3 (1983), 155–71, pp. 163, 170. See also S. M. Stuard, 'Ancillary Evidence for the Decline of Medieval Slavery', *P&P*, 149 (1995), 3–28, pp. 5, 8–9.
[122] N. Budak, 'Slavery in Late Medieval Dalmatia/Croatia: Labour, Legal Status, Integration', *MEFR*, 112/2 (2000), 745–60, p. 758 n.43; N. Budak, 'Slavery in Renaissance Croatia. Reality and Fiction', in *Mediterranean Slavery Revisited (500–1800) – Neue Perspektiven auf mediterrane Sklaverei (500–1800)*, ed. by S. Hanß and J. Schiel (Zurich, 2014), 75–96, p. 79.
[123] C. Bismara, 'Schiave e schiavi a Verona nel XV secolo', *Archivio Veneto*, s. 6 n.10 (2015), 77–96, p. 79. See also S. A. Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery: Color, Ethnicity and Human Bondage in Italy* (Ithaca, 2001), 18–21; P. Braunstein, 'Être esclave à Venise à la fin du Moyen Âge', in *Couleurs de l'esclavage sur les deux rives de la Méditerranée (Moyen Âge-XXe siecle)*, ed. by R. Botte and A. Stella (Paris, 2012), 85–104, pp. 87–88.
[124] Pistarino, 'Tra liberi e schiave', 355 n.11.
[125] Foglietta 325 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 843, doc. 26.
[126] Foglietta 303; Piemontesi 36; De Ferrari 151. Cf. Balletto, 'Il mondo del lavoro', 139–40.
[127] A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 848, doc. 354. My thanks to Laura Balletto for her help with this document. On the will see more in Chapters 3 and 4.

from the previous January (the will was written on 8 November 1459). The testator wanted Caravella to remain in the shop with his son Benedictus until the end of those two years, and then for another three years for the same salary. In those three years he would have a fifth of the shop's profits and after that, if he had accepted those terms, he would also receive a bequest of 100 ducats. Balletto writes that Caravella had been first Antonius' apprentice and then his employee, before starting his own business as it appears in acts dated 1471-1475.[128] It would still mean that the term was used for both roles, as he was still called *famulus* after he was employed.[129]

More than 70% of the women appearing in the documents as slaves or former slaves are called *sclava*. The term *serva* always refers to women gaining their freedom: in two cases a slave manumitted is called *serva et sclava*, in seven the manumission documents use only *serva*.[130] Two deeds involving freedwomen call them *olim serva* (in one case *olim serva nunc liberta*), and one act mentions *Francisca olim famula*.[131] Another term for slave was also *mancipius/a*, which appears only in one occasion. Lucia, *sclava et mancipia*, would be freed after her master's death and his daughter's marriage, as long as she had served them well in the meantime.[132]

Among the documents considered here, forty-three involve slaves being sold, covering a period from 1359 to 1483. Sales contracts generally include the slaves' sex, ethnicity, age, name, and price. Even if they usually do not indicate what slaves were bought for, it is reasonable to think that in the city of Chios they were mainly destined to domestic work. Slavery in the ports of the late medieval Mediterranean was predominantly urban and

[128] Balletto, 'Il mondo del lavoro', 141. Foglietta 313, 315, 324, 334, 337, 342, 352.
[129] Cf. Bezzina, *Artigiani*, 52–54.
[130] Panissaro 50, 83, 41; Roccatagliata 23, 97, 105, 120, 142; Foglietta 307. On manumissions see Chapter 5.
[131] Foglietta 290, 297; Panissaro 48. Cf. also Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi', 661.
[132] Sampietro 397.

domestic (and the majority of domestic slaves were women).[133] 'Domestic', however, could entail a wide range of tasks, both inside and outside the household. They could have also helped with their masters' trades and it has been suggested that looking at who the buyers were could indicate what the slaves' activities could have been.[134] Apothecaries, carpenters, barbers, bishops, notaries, merchants, tavern keepers, doctors, dyers, and friars were among those who owned slaves in Chios.

Fynn-Paul states that in most of southern Europe 'slavery did not spread to agricultural workforces' and we know that the Genoese tended to leave the production in their overseas settlements to the natives, taking interest in the commercial phase instead.[135] In Chios the immigrants, mostly artisans and traders, did not have practical knowledge about agriculture nor about local agrarian traditions. In order to capitalise on the lands, the Genoese usually left the agricultural exploitation to the Greeks, while getting taxes, rents, and revenues from the commercialisation.[136] Lacking evidence from the rest of island, however, we cannot exclude that there were slaves utilised in fields.

According to Balletto, slaves as objects of purchase in Chios were by large majority females, although in the acts from 1449-1450 she finds more male slaves and ex-slaves than female ones. Balard also reports that there were more men, while for Argenti women outnumbered men in the proportion of four to one because slaves were mainly used for

[133] Cf. D. Blumenthal, *Enemies and Familiars: Slavery and Mastery in Fifteenth-Century Valencia* (Ithaca, 2009), 2; S. McKee, 'The Familiarity of Slaves in Medieval and Early Modern Households', in *Mediterranean Slavery Revisited*, ed. by Hanß and Schiel (2014), 501–14, pp. 502–03; H. Barker, 'Egyptian and Italian Merchants in the Black Sea Slave Trade, 1260-1500' (PhD Dissertation, Columbia University, 2014), 86, 132.
[134] Blumenthal, 81–82.
[135] J. Fynn-Paul, 'Reasons for the Limited Scope and Duration of "Renaissance Slavery" in Southern Europe (ca. 1348-ca. 1750): A New Structuralist Analysis', in *Schiavitù e servaggio nell'economia europea. Secc. XI-XVIII = Serfdom and Slavery in the European Economy. 11th - 18th Centuries, Atti della "Quarantacinquesima settimana di studi", 14-18 aprile 2013*, ed. by S. Cavaciocchi (Florence, 2014), 335–50, p. 340. See also D. G. Wright, 'Vade, Sta, Ambula: Freeing Slaves in Fourteenth-Century Crete', *Medieval Encounters*, 7/2 (2001), 197–237, n.10.
[136] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 477–81, 576; 'Romanie', 18/1, 707–08; Stringa, 65.

domestic work.[137] In my evidence the sales of women prevailed, but not overwhelmingly: twenty-nine documents among forty-three, with twenty-nine female slaves among a total of forty-six mentioned. If we also consider manumissions and wills, the numbers are respectively fifty-five and thirty-four. As mentioned before, different results could depend on the documents used, the notaries, the length of period considered, etc. Moreover, some deeds deal with groups of slaves.[138] If sometimes the details are known, such as the two Bulgarian men sold in 1404 and the Abkhazian and the Russian, both males, sold in 1450, other times their number and sex are not specified.[139] Latin uses the masculine plural form both for all-males and mixed groups, furthermore hindering quantitative analysis. For example, on 16 April 1451 Bernardus Juvilamarinus (Bernat de Vilamari) received compensation from the Maona for the damages suffered in the fire of his galley, which had slaves on board. The expression *pro et occaxione precii et valoris dictorum sclavorum* does not give any information regarding the number or the sex of the slaves who had been on the ship.[140]

People believed that ethnicity affected slaves' temperament and value. This, but also the notary's knowledge and experience, could influence how the slaves were recorded. Of course, the labels were mostly for the buyers and sellers' convenience, and the slaves could have identified as something different.[141] The deeds register eight Tatars, seven Russians, and six Bulgarians. There are six Circassian slaves, to which are to be added two Ghetiks, because in Genoese documents the population of the Taman Peninsula, which is part of

[137] 'Gli schiavi oggetto di compravendita appartengono in grandissima maggioranza al sesso femminile', Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi', 662. *Occupation*, vol. 1, 617; 'Romanie', 18/1, 309; Balletto, 'La schiavitù ', 182–83, 211.
[138] Balletto, 'La schiavitù', 183–85.
[139] De Ferrari 110; Panissaro 86.
[140] De Ferrari 213. See Balletto, 'La schiavitù', 185–86.
[141] Epstein, *Purity Lost*, 61; S. McKee, 'Domestic Slavery in Renaissance Italy', *Slavery and Abolition*, 29/3 (2008), 305–26, pp. 313–14; C. Cluse and R. Amitai, 'Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean (c. 1000–1500 CE): Introduction', in *Slavery and the Slave Trade*, ed. by Amitai and Cluse (2017), 11–27, p. 20.

Circassia (or Zikhia), is called Ghetiks.[142] There are also four Bosnians, three Greeks, and three Turks. Only appearing once each are labels such as Abkhazian, Albanian, Armenian, Assyrian, Goth, Hungarian, and Wallachian (Map 6).[143] Circassians, Tatars and Russians were particularly appreciated in Italy too, and constituted the majority of the slaves also in Venice and Genoa.[144]



Map 6 Slaves' proveniences (map by Elena Mini)

[142] S. Kh. Khotko, 'Circassian Principalities in the XIV-XV Centuries: Formation and Interrelation With Sub-Ethnic Groups', *Krasnodar. Istoricheskaya i Sotsial'no-Obrazovatel'naya Mys-l' = Historical and Social Educational Ideas*, tom.8 n.2 (2016), 46–58, pp. 46–47; Khvalkov, 223.
[143] On the origins of slaves in the 'Genoese Romania' see 'Romanie', 18/2, 788–801.
[144] Balletto, 'Stranieri', 267–72; F. Angiolini, 'Schiave', in *Storia delle donne in Italia, II,* ed. by Groppi (1996), 92–115, p. 101; Braunstein, 92. On why some nationalities were more present than others in certain periods see M. Balard, 'Slavery in the Latin Mediterranean (Thirteenth to Fifteenth Centuries): The Case of Genoa', in *Slavery and the Slave Trade*, ed. by Amitai and Cluse (2017), 235–54, pp. 239–40; Barker, 'Egyptian and Italian Merchants', 134–36, 177–85, 197–201; Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi', 692.

The ages were estimates, always indicated with the word *circa* (approximately) and usually using numbers multiple of two or five.[145] In my documents the average age of the slaves sold in Chios is twenty to twenty-one, with women being slightly younger: their average is barely twenty while men's surpasses twenty-one. As Balard points out, however, the slave population's average age must have been higher, because the contracts marked only the beginning of the service and because older slaves were less likely to be sold or resold.[146] Indeed, I found only two slaves sold when aged forty (a man and a woman), and four when they were in their thirties (three women and a man). The youngest male sold, besides the 8-month-old infant traded with his mother in 1359, was 14-year-old Stephanus, a Russian boy who in 1450 was sold together with Andrea, a 40-year-old Abkhazian.[147] The youngest girl was a nameless Ghetik traded in 1450 when she was 9 years old.[148] Girls under the age of eighteen appear twice as much as boys, the variance diminishing when we look at slaves in their twenties. My results show a similar situation to those found by Argenti and Balard, the first stating that one third of the female slaves in Chios was younger than sixteen, and the second reporting their average age as twenty.[149]

Some deeds do not mention the slaves' names, but when they do, some names recur: Margarita, Lucia, Georgius, Magdalena, Maria, and Andrea. Even if the slaves were Christians, it is improbable that they had such a restricted range of names. The fact that in Genoa too, the most common names for slaves were Maddalena, Caterina, Maria, Margherita, Lucia, and Marta seems to confirm that. Balard notes how Martha, Maria, Margaret and Magdalene were saints who distinguished themselves for their obedience and

[145] Cf. Barker, 'Egyptian and Italian Merchants', 130.
[146] Balard, 'Slavery', 242.
[147] Casanova 16 (Gioffrè c. 15); De Ferrari 110.
[148] De Ferrari 168.
[149] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 617; 'Romanie', 18/1, 309.

humble devotion to domestic work.[150] In many cases these names were probably assigned by the masters, as mentioned in Venetian cartularies.[151] The only case I found is that of a slave *vocatum Iharchaso et Michael vocandum*: he was called Iharcaso but was to be called Michael. It is possible that this was at least his third name change: he was Circassian (*de progenie Iharcasorum*) and it was not unheard of slaves bearing names implying an ethnic origin.[152] Another example is the Greek Roda, who might have be named so because she was from Rhodes.[153] Some slaves might have kept their own names, but having a more peculiar name (such as Xeni, Roschato, Narguiza, Viergexia, Gingibei) does not necessarily mean so. We know that the Circassian Xeni got the name when her master Iane Gaura, Greek of Chios, had her baptised (*quam baptizari fecit […] ad ritum Romeorum et cui nomen imponi fecit et vocatur Xeni*).[154] Pistarino wondered if the reason she did not appear to have been manumitted was that she had been baptised with the Greek rite.[155]

The enslavement of Christians by other Christians is a complex issue, unavoidable when talking about slavery in the Middle Ages.[156] Balard and then Pistarino stated that in Chios Greek slaves, mentioned in contracts until 1381, disappeared from the market after that date, due to the gradual affirmation of the idea that 'Latins' ('Romani' in Pistarino, quite surely with the meaning of Christians) could not be enslaved.[157] My research, however, reveals a different situation. Roda was sold on 6 August 1450, although with some unusual conditions: the buyer could not resell her outside Chios, could do it in the island only at the

[150] Balletto, 'Stranieri', 267; Balard, 'La femme esclave', 402; Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery* , 26–30.
[151] Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery*, 25.
[152] De Canella 58. See also Epstein, *Purity Lost*, 61–62.
[153] Partially (and with mistakes) in De Ferrari 86 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 765, doc. 113. See also Epstein, *Purity Lost*, 70.
[154] Casanova 25 (Gioffrè c. 50).
[155] *CGCC*, 441. For *Romaeus* referring to Byzantines see H. Lamers, *Greece Reinvented: Transformations of Byzantine Hellenism in Renaissance Italy* (Leiden, 2015), XI, 69–70.
[156] See H. Barker, 'Christianities in Conflict: The Black Sea as a Genoese Slaving Zone in the Later Middle Ages', in *Slaving Zones. Cultural Identities, Ideologies, and Institutions in the Evolution of Global Slavery*, ed. by J. Fynn-Paul and D. A. Pargas (Leiden/Boston, 2018), 50–69.
[157] 'Romanie', 18/1, 308; *CGCC*, 436. See also slaves in Valencia claiming to be Greek and asking to be freed in Blumenthal, 36–40.

same price he had paid, and had to release the girl if her brothers or any relative were to give him the same sum he had paid.[158] While a *unicum* in the acts studied, similar redemption clauses can be found in deeds from early 14th-century Crete, again in limited number (eight cases among ninety-nine slave sales) and always for Greek slaves.[159]

We also know that in the second half of the 15th century Greeks were still enslaved in Chios: the Greek Manoli Moraytus de Achaya *dictus* Varentinus was freed on 11 November 1471 by his master, the Spanish dyer Degus de Sybilia (*magister degus de Sybilia yspanus tinctor pannorum*).[160] It might be that, as McKee proposes, Italians in the East continued to see Greek enslavement as tolerable for longer than those in their hometowns.[161] However, Greek Byzantine subjects were just a part of a much larger group of Christians living the East. Most of the populations mentioned in the contracts were, in fact, at least partially Christians.[162] In 1394 a Tartar slave was freed by the podestà of Chios after presenting witnesses supporting his declaration that he was Catholic and therefore could not be a slave (*asserens se esse christianum ab nacione catolicum et nunquam fuisse sclavum*).[163] On 1 October 1453 Caterina, a Circassian slave, was freed by her mistress with the condition that she would maintain the Catholic faith, otherwise she would revert back to enslaved status (*cum hac conditione et lege quod dicta Caterina teneat semper fidem catolicam; quam si mutaverit, cadat a presenti manomissione et sit semper serva*).[164] Even

[158] Cf. Balletto, 'La schiavitù', 187.
[159] A. M. Stahl, *The Documents of Angelo de Cartura and Donato Fontanella, Venetian Notaries in Fourteenth-Century Crete* (Washington, D.C, 2000), XII, docc. 76, 87, 102, 113, 128, 240, 467, 473.
[160] Foglietta 321, 322.
[161] S. McKee, 'The Implications of Slave Women's Sexual Service in Late Medieval Italy', in *Unfreie Arbeit: Ökonomische und kulturgeschichtliche Perspektiven*, ed. by M. E. Kabadayi and T. Reichardt (Hildesheim, Zurich/New York, 2007), 101–14, p. 105. Cf. McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, 125; McKee, 'Domestic Slavery', 309; A. Dincer, '"Enslaving Christians": Greek Slaves in Late Medieval Cyprus', *MHR*, 31/1 (2016), 1–19.
[162] Barker, 'Egyptian and Italian Merchants', 154–59.
[163] Di Chiavari 43. See Balletto, 'Chio dei Maonesi', 144.
[164] Roccatagliata 23. See also Epstein, *Purity Lost*, 72.

considering these examples, it would be false to state that being Catholic, if not Christian, meant being free.

By 1200 at the latest, enslavement of Latin Christians by Latin Christians was condemned both by the Church and by legislation. Ideally any slave who was Christian (such as Greeks, Russians, Bosnians, Armenians, etc.) or who converted to Christianity should have been freed, but the reality was different.[165] Genoese laws regarding the slave market in 15th-century Caffa required the bishop to visit the ships with slaves to ask each of them if they were Christians and if they wanted to convert. If the answer was positive, they were disembarked, but they were not freed: they simply were sold to Christian masters.[166] 'Slavery was only considered reprehensible when Christian slaves were sold to Jews or infidels, for fear they might be perverted' and baptism did not free a man from slavery. In 1363 a Florentine decree permitted the importation of slaves as long as they were infidels and not Christians. Three years later it was specified that it meant 'anyone who come from the land and race of the infidels', even if they were Catholics.[167] In theory this meant that people from the Byzantine Empire and other Christian 'nations' (whether Catholic or Orthodox) like Albanians, Hungarians, Bosnians, Circassians, and Russians, should not have been reduced to slavery.[168] However, we still find them enslaved. Sometimes they could reclaim their freedom as Christians, but Gioffrè noted that he found no Genoese document that put in doubt the legitimacy of the enslavement of Russians, unlike for Albanians, Greeks, and Bulgarians. He concluded that according to Genoese norms not all Orthodox slaves could appeal to the authorities to be freed, but only those coming from territories

[165] J. Fynn-Paul, 'Empire, Monotheism, and Slavery in the Greater Mediterranean Region from Antiquity through the Early Modern Era', *P&P*, 205/1 (2009), 3–40, pp. 31–36; Fynn-Paul, 'Reasons', 347.
[166] This is explained in a letter that the Commune wrote to Pope Eugenius IV in 1434, published in Stello, 391–92. Cf. K. M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571), Vol. 2, The Fifteenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1978; repr. 1997), 47–48.
[167] I. Origo, 'The Domestic Enemy: The Eastern Slaves in Tuscany in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', *Speculum*, 30/3 (1995), 321–66, pp. 324–35.
[168] See Balletto, 'Stranieri', 271–72.

already under the Byzantine emperors.[169] More recently Barker also sees politics as the reason of the different treatment reserved to Greek and other Orthodox Christians.[170]

Considerations about the prices of slaves are complicated by the long period covered by the deeds and by the values expressed in different currencies (Table 3), but they were certainly a luxury. A slave could cost more than a house: in 1394 Andrea and Georgius were sold for 40 and 46 ducats, and two houses for 18 and 33 ducats.[171] In 1404-1405 the cheapest slave was sold for 21 ducats: 1 ducat could buy a kantar (ca. 48 kg) of iron, and 25 ducats a kantar of mastic.[172] A general trend is that male slaves had lower prices, with girls in their twenties being the most expensive. Among the sales registered in 1359, the highest price paid for a man was lower than the one for the cheapest woman, while the most expensive was Lucia, a 28-year-old Assyrian valued 50 florins.[173] In 1404 two Bulgarian men, 35-year-old Abram and 28-year-old Ismael, were sold together for 35 ducats, the same price paid for Viergexia, a 25-year-old Bulgarian.[174] When two 20-year-old Circassians were sold in 1454, the man was purchased for 44 ducats and the woman for 74.[175]

[169] Gioffrè, *Il mercato,* 21. Cf. Balard, 'La femme esclave', 407. On Albanian slaves see Balletto, 'Schiavi albanesi'.
[170] Barker, 'Christianities', 64.
[171] Di Chiavari 102, 74, 42, 55.
[172] Panissaro 93, 147, 162.
[173] Casanova 22, 24, 12, 25, 16, 24 (Gioffrè cc. 46v, 7v, 13, 50, 15, 49v).
[174] Panissaro 86; Balletto, 'Gregorius vel Georgius?', 22.
[175] Roccatagliata 86, 99.

NAME	GENDER	AGE	ETHNICITY	PRICE	YEAR
Georgius	Male	21	Greek	28 florins	1359
Michali	Male	24	Greek	20 florins	1359
Aycat	Male	28	Turk	18 florins	1359
Xeni	Female	20	Circassian	36 florins	1359
Margarita	Female + son	20 / 8 mos	Tartar	32 florins	1359
Lucia	Female	28	Assyrian	50 florins	1359
Nicola	Male	15	Turk	47 florins	1360
Iharchaso - Michael	Male	18	Circassian	32 ½ ducats	1381
Roschato	Female	12	Russian	38 ducats	1381
Magdalena	Female	16	Russian	40 ducats	1381
Margarita	Female	30	Tartar	42 ducats	1381
Margarita	Female	40	Tartar	25 ducats	1381
Georgius	Male	20	Tartar	46 ducats	1394
Andrea	Male	18	Circassian	40 ducats	1394
Aspert	Male	25	Tartar	28 florins	1398
Unknown	Female	unkn.	Armenian	unknown	1398
Maria	Female	unkn.	Circassian	27 ducats	1398
Lucia	Female	15	Russian	40 ducats	1403
Mithare	Male	25	Turk	21 ducats	1404
Abram and Ismael	Two males	35 / 28	Bulgarians	35 ducats	1404
Margarita	Female	13	Russian	46 ducats	1404
Margarita	Female	14	Bulgarian	38 ducats	1404
Narguzia	Female	31	Bulgarian	28 ducats	1404

NAME	GENDER	AGE	ETHNICITY	PRICE	YEAR
Viergexia	Female	25	Bulgarian	35 ducats	1404
Unknown	Male	16-17	Bulgarian	34 ducats	1405
Roda	Female	12	Greek	41 ducats	1450
Unknown	Female	9	Ghetik	35 ducats	1450
Andrea and Stephanus	Two males	40 / 14	Abkhaz and Russian	80 ducats	1450
Madalena	Female	20	Tartar	80 ducats	1451
Georgius	Male	25	Tartar	30 ducats (3 yrs 9 mos)	1451
Lucia	Female	20	Goth	35 ducats 5 gigliati (7 yrs)	1452
Georgius	Male	20	Circassian	44 ducats	1454
Gingibei	Female	20	Circassian	74 ducats	1454
Magdalena	Female	22	Ghetik	40 ducats (6 yrs)	1455
Magdalena	Female	23	Ghetik	31 ducats (5 yrs 6 mos)	1456
Lucia	Female	25	Russian	73 ducats	1456
Maria	Female	12	Albanian	16 ducats	1462
Unknown	Female	16-17	Bosnian	25 ducats	1465
Melicha	Female	11	Bosnian	1,000 aspers	1465
Marta	Female	24	Russian	75 ducats (5 yrs)	1465
Clara	Female	18	Hungarian	61 ducats	1467
Melisa	Female	26	Bosnian	60 ducats	1467
Monacsia	Female	30	Bosnian	50 ducats	1467
Theodora	Female	11	Wallachian	25 ducats	1483

Table 3 Slave sales in Chios (1359-1483)

Sometimes slaves could be sold for a limited period of time which, according to Balletto, meant a reduced price.[176] The high value of Marta in 1465 (75 ducats) would be then peculiar, since she had to serve her new master for five years and then she would be freed.[177] There are not enough cases to determine how the provisional natural of a sale might have influenced the cost of a slave. We know that Magdalena in 1455 was sold for six years for 40 ducats because it is mentioned in her manumission, which happened in 1461 at the age of 28.[178]

There are then two other examples of slaves sold for a fixed term, with no mention of what would happen after. In 1451 Georgius, a 25-year-old Tartar, was bought for three years and nine months for 30 gold ducats of Chios, and in 1452 the Goth Lucia, 20 years old, was sold for seven years for 35 gold ducats of Chios and 5 gigliati.[179]

Besides age and race, other factors could affect a slave's price, the most obvious ones being physical appearance and condition.[180] In most cases the seller guaranteed, in more or less abbreviated forms, that the slave was healthy and free from all faults and defects, hidden and visible (s*anam et nitidam ab omnibus vitiis et magagnis occultis vel manifestis*).[181] It was often followed by formulas seemingly recalling Chios' customs (e.g. *secundum morem et consuetudinem civitatis Chii, ad usum et consuetudinem terre Chii*), which, however, might have been imported from Genoa as it was a type of formula used there too.[182] In some cases the declaration was more cautious: the slave was healthy up to the day of the sale (*sanam et nitidam usque in diem presentem*).[183] Other times the slaves

[176] Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi', 693.
[177] Foglietta 296.
[178] Giurista 11.
[179] De Ferrari 218, 221. On the gigliati see *Occupation*, vol. 1, 418 n.2 and the glossary entry in W. R. Day Jr., M. Matzke, and A. Saccocci, *Medieval European Coinage, Vol. 12 Italy (I) (Northern Italy)* (Cambridge, 2016).
[180] Balard, 'Slavery', 243.
[181] For example Foglietta 311. See also Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi', 662.
[182] Among others Roccatagliata 99, De Ferrari 168, Ignoti 397, Piemontesi 20, 47, 48. Cf. *CGCC*, 437; Balletto, 'La schiavitù', 193; Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi', 662.
[183] De Canella 49, 72, 74.

were sold with all the defects, hidden and visible (*cum omnibus suis magagnis ocultis et manifestis*) or, more simply, 'as they are' (*pro tali qualis est*).[184] In this way the sellers reduced their obligations and the possibilities for the buyers to demand the annulment of the sale because it had happened under false premises.[185]

Only one contract explicitly said that the slave had some problems, so it cannot be assessed if slaves with acknowledged defects were cheaper. When Nerguiza (or Narguzia), a 31-year-old Bulgarian, was sold for 28 ducats, she was called *monocula*: literally 'one-eyed', it can also mean 'with gravely damaged eyesight'.[186] The low price might have been due to her defect, but also to her age. There are, instead, more cases where a slave's health condition was the cause of controversy. On 19 September 1394 Friar Pax de Gubio demanded to have back the money he spent for Martinus, an 18-year-old slave. The seller had declared him healthy and without hidden or visible defects (*sanum et salvum ab omnibus viciis et magagnis occultis et manifestis*), but Pax found out that he had one tibia bigger than the other (*unam tibiam magis grosam quam aliam*). Moreover, Martinus was also incontinent, especially while sleeping, which was a hidden defect (*urinam tenere non potent nec vallet, et maxime dormiendo, quia urinas non sentit urinare, que est magagna occulta*).[187]

A particularly interesting case is the one between Iohanes de Tabia and Dominicus de Capriata, because it required a woman's professional opinion. On 8 December 1462 Iohanes accused Dominicus of having sold him a slave as healthy (*sanam et mondam*), while she was instead affected by uterine prolapse (*morbosam, silicet patientem exitum partis*

[184] De Canella 31; Casanova 24, 25 (Gioffrè, cc. 49v, 50); Foglietta 294, 295.
[185] Cluse, 152; Balard, 'Slavery', 224. On what was considered ground for return in Roman law see Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery*, 67.
[186] Panissaro 54. 'Monoculus: monocolo, con vista gravemente difettosa', N. Calvini, *Nuovo Glossario Medievale Ligure* (Genoa, 1984). On Nerguiza see also Chapter 5.
[187] Di Chiavari 86.

matricis ad extra vulvam).[188] The arbitrators deciding on the matter were Barnaba Trainatius, *phisicus*, and *magister* Anthonius de Bonifatio, *cyrurgicus*; both in the medical field, the difference between physician and surgeon would have been, in theory, their level of education.[189] The first witness to be heard was *domina* Isabella Faracha, an obstetrician. She testified that she had been called to cure the slave some time before her sale and had found her suffering from uterine prolapse (*domina Isabella obstetrix requisite fuit ad medendum dictam sclavam, que tunc patiebatur exitum partis matricis ad extram vulvam*). After hearing other depositions, the two arbitrators declared that the slave had been suffering from the condition known by experts as '*precipitationem matricis*' since before the sale (*antequam venderetur a dicto Dominico dicto Iohani, fuisse morbosam et egram egritudine quam sapientes appellant precipitationem matricis*). Having found Domenicus guilty, they asked for the advice of jurists who referred to the Digest (*leges Digestis «De edilitia», edicto in lege prima, parafo «Proinde»*) and consequently they condemned him to take back the slave, refund the price, and pay the legal expenses for the proceedings.[190]

Two health professionals, *magister fixicus* Franciscus de Homodeis and *cirurgicus* Petrus de Furno, were similarly called to resolve in 1449 a dispute where the buyer wanted to return a slave claiming that he was *male sanus*. In the same year a buyer refused to pay for a slave because, after buying her, he had noticed that she had a big scar on her jaw and bad breath.[191]

As any other type of merchandise, slaves were not only sold and returned, but they could be loaned, rented, pledged as guarantee, donated, included in dowries, left as bequest in wills. For example, on 21 March 1381 the Tatar Cristina was loaned by her master, the

[188] Piemontesi 43, see also pp. 42–43. Cf. Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi', 666–67.
[189] Cf. M. R. McVaugh, *Medicine Before the Plague: Practitioners and Their Patients in the Crown of Aragon, 1285-1345* (New York, 1993), 115; J. Shatzmiller, *Jews, Medicine, and Medieval Society* (Berkeley, 1994), IX.
[190] D. 21.1.1 par. 8.
[191] Mentioned in Balletto, 'La schiavitù', 188–89, 197–98 (198–201 for other controversies regarding slaves).

notary Raffael Musso, to his colleague Iohannes de Goascho.[192] She was to be his child's wet-nurse (*ad usum lactandi et lacte alendi filium parvulum suum*) during a trip from Chios to Genoa (*usque ad civitatem Ianue*).[193] Once they arrived, she would be either returned or bought for 40 Genoese lire. Slaves as properties included in dowries, donations and testaments will be considered in the next chapter, but there is one case where the type of transaction is not clear. On 18 June 1474 the *tabernarius* Baptista de Vignana *quondam Rainaldi* gave to Tiresia del Grogno de Catalonia a six-month-old slave called Teodosia.[194] She was the daughter of Cateria, Baptista's slave. She was not sold and there is no mention of any monetary exchange. The document states that Baptista wanted her to have a good chance (or fate – c*upiens ipsam habere bonam fortunam*) and that Tiresia was to feed and raise her (*pro anima sua alendam et gubernandam*). It had been therefore suggested that Tiresia was Teodosia's father.[195]

Various types of documents mention slaves, with sale contracts being the most numerous and mostly involving slaves from the regions surrounding the Black Sea. Considering our small sample, I agree with Argenti about adult women being the most expensive, followed by young girls and then males, rather than with Fleet, who states that in Chios there was no apparent difference between male and female prices.[196] This preference for adult women is seen also in Genoa and Venice.[197] However, without knowing what the slaves were bought for, if they had any specific skill, or even some qualities like beauty and strength, it is hard

[192] De Canella 69. See Pistarino, 'Notazioni', 67–68; Epstein, *Purity Lost*, 79.
[193] On slaves as wet-nurses see Cluse. On wet-nursing see C. Klapisch-Zuber, 'Blood Parents and Milk Parents: Wet Nursing in Florence, 1300–1530', in *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, ed. by C. Klapisch-Zuber, trans. by L. G. Cochrane (Chicago, 1985), 132–64.
[194] Partially in Foglietta 343 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 843, doc. 95.
[195] Cf. *CGCC*, 439–40; Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi', 689.
[196] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 617–18, 624–25; Fleet, 50.
[197] Epstein, *Genoa*, 268; Angiolini, 103; Braunstein, 93; Balard, 'Slavery', 244.

to discern patterns behind the prices. As Epstein points out, it is also necessary to consider the roles of sellers and buyers, and their bargaining skills.[198]

Conclusions

In this chapter I have looked at women who were at the opposite ends of Chios' economy: those who had an active role in economic transactions and those who were passive, being themselves the merchandise sold.

Despite Chios being a maritime society, the documents do not offer examples of women stepping in while their husbands or male relatives were away on business, unlike for other cities like Genoa, Venice, or Amalfi. It would, however, be wrong to equate this absence in the acts with a lack of female participation to the economic life of the island altogether as Pistarino and Balletto did.[199] There are no reasons to doubt that, like elsewhere, women's work was widespread but often inconspicuous. Small trade was generally not recorded in notarial documents, and neither were activities contributing to the householder's business nor work for personal consumption or to support the house and the family (from growing a vegetable garden to raising chickens, from childminding to laundry). Women worked largely in informal and dependent positions, which rarely appear in documents. In agreement with what Melo suggests, the working women in our deeds were all active outside their household.[200] Pistarino's statement that Greek women were averse to participation in the trading world due to Byzantine traditions is proved wrong by the norms on the levy on foreign trade. Clearly there were enough Greek women involved in trade to justify a specific mention to make clear that they, too, had to pay the tax.

[198] Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery*, 184.
[199] *CGCC*, 433; Balletto, 'Chio nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo', 198.
[200] Melo, 253.

I agree with Origone on women's impact as the deeds do reveal how they actively took part in economic operations.[201] They could act for themselves, through a representative, or even on behalf of other people. They mainly dealt with real estate, but also with shares, mastic, and slaves: these were all assets of a certain value, but it should be kept in mind that low-value transactions were not recorded. Only in one case a woman bought something for herself, much more often they sold belongings that had come into their possession through inheritance or dowry. It is possible that most women lacked the resources to invest and that selling their properties was the only way they had to get a consistent amount of liquidity. This is, however, still relevant in terms of agency: they had and exercised rights over their properties, managing and alienating them as they needed. Widows were the most active group, the majority of the women acting for themselves and the entirety of those buying. Without a husband and often with no (male) relatives on the island – as their recourse to neighbours vouching for them proves – it is not surprising that widows were more involved than other women in this otherwise male-dominated area.

While women selling or buying slaves in our documents are few, female slaves were the majority of those sold. This could have depended on the demand, since domestic work was predominant, at least in the city of Chios, but also on the offer: during wars and raids, children and women were more likely to be enslaved, and men killed.[202] It was a combination of circumstances that influenced slavery, and not just in Chios. Comparing our results with studies on slavery in Genoa, the situations present analogies. Similarities between Chios and its mother-country include a prevalence of Tatar, Russian, and Circassian slaves, a preference for adult women, and the same group of popular names. A difference can be found, instead, in the attitude towards Greek slaves, whose captivity was accepted in

[201] Origone, 'Chio', 189.
[202] Barker, 'Egyptian and Italian Merchants', 146.

Chios for longer than in Genoa, as it also happened in other Aegean islands. It is not true that, as Pistarino and Balard argued, Greek slaves were not on the market in Chios anymore after 1381.[203]

The chronological distribution of deeds with active and passive women in economic transactions is uneven, with a dip in the first half of the 15th century and shortage of documents from the end of that century onwards. In both cases the reasons could be various: internal (such as a decline in female participation once the Genoese presence was more established), external (for example, a fall of slave sales after the 1460s due to the Ottoman conquests), or simply coincidental (documents' survival).

Unlike the acts discussed in the first part, which involved Latins, Greeks, and Jews, the slave contracts see an overwhelming number of Latins, mostly Genoese or Ligurians, both as buyers and sellers, with only a handful of Greeks. Nonetheless, with the variety of proveniences of the slaves, this chapter once again shows the multi-ethnic society of medieval Chios.

[203] 'Romanie', 18/1, 308; *CGCC*, 436.

Chapter 3. Beyond Commerce

The role of women in the economy was not limited to buying and selling. Every woman who owned something, be it land and houses, jewels and money, clothes and furniture, played a role, or a potential one, in the economy. While simple ownership is often not documented, deeds attesting the redistribution of wealth, such as dowry contracts, wills, *inter vivos* donations (bequests that became effective during the lifetime of the donors instead than at their deaths; they were irrevocable, while testators could change or make entirely new wills), inventories, and divisions of assets, can inform us about female properties.[1]

As the first section of this chapter will show, the historiography on dowry and inheritance is abundant but heavily focused on law: who could use or manage the assets, who controlled them, restitution issues, who had rights on what, etc. Similar consideration has been given to other marriage-related goods. The *corredo* in Venice has been discussed in relation to its transformation from items given to the bride by her family for personal use to a gift to the groom.[2] A main take from Klapisch-Zuber's fundamental article 'The Griselda Complex: Dowry and Marriage Gifts in the Quattrocento' is the provisional nature of Florentine husbands' gifts to brides, as they were more loans than permanent gifts.[3] A recent collection of essays also explores women's non-dotal goods in medieval and early modern north-central Italy, a topic that has already been explored for Florence by Kirshner.[4]

[1] Wessell Lightfoot, *Women, Dowries and Agency*, 114.
[2] S. Chojnacki, 'From Trousseau to Groomgift', in *Women and Men in Renaissance Venice: Twelve Essays on Patrician Society* (Baltimore, 2000), 76–94 [first publ. in *Medieval and Renaissance Venice,* ed. by E. E. Kittell and T. F. Madden (Urbana, 1999), 141–65].
[3] C. Klapisch-Zuber, 'The Griselda Complex: Dowry and Marriage Gifts in the Quattrocento', in *Women, Family, and Ritual* (1985), 213–46.
[4] 'Beyond Their Dowries. Women and Wealth in Medieval and Early Modern North-Central Italy', ed. by D. Bezzina, *MEFR*, 130/1 (2018); J. Kirshner, 'Materials for a Gilded Cage: Non-Dotal Assets in Florence, 1300-1500', in *The Family in Italy from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. by D. Kertzer and R. Saller (New Haven/London, 1991), 184–207. See also D. Bezzina, 'Charting the Extrados (Non-Dotal Goods) in Genoa and Liguria in the Mid Twelfth to Thirteenth Centuries', *JMH*, 44/4 (2018), 422–38.

Less attention has been given to the properties themselves, to 'things – tangible things – and their ownership'.[5] Sometimes they are referenced in broader discussions, in the best case with some sections dedicated to them. Dotal properties in 15th-century Valencia are examined by type by Wessell Lightfoot, and Esposito considers female wealth connected to marriages in Rome between 1417 and 1431.[6] Inheritances and bequests from women and men are presented in Masè's analysis of wills from a Venetian nunnery.[7] Other works considering properties are three essays about England published in 'The Medieval Household in Christian Europe, c.850-c.1550', Epstein's book about wills in early medieval Genoa, and Smail's one about material culture and household possessions in Marseille and Lucca explored through inventories and records of debt collection.[8]

This chapter looks at what women in Chios owned, using documents that did not record economic transactions: deeds mentioning properties held by women, dowry contracts, wills and donations in which women are involved. Chojnacki states that married women had two kinds of property: dowries and outright possessions, generally derived from legacies.[9] Not all the women present in the documents considered were married, nevertheless I have chosen to regard dowry contracts separately, before grouping the other properties by type: unmovable (real estate), liquid assets, movable (objects), and slaves. These

[5] J. S. Loengard, '"Which May Be Said to Be Her Own": Widows and Goods in Late-Medieval England', in *Medieval Domesticity: Home, Housing and Household in Medieval England*, ed. by M. Kowaleski and P. J. P. Goldberg (Cambridge, 2008), 162–76, p. 162.
[6] Wessell Lightfoot, *Women, Dowries and Agency*, 74–91; A. Esposito, 'Strategie matrimoniali e livelli di ricchezza', in *Alle origini della nuova Roma. Martino V (1417-1431), Atti del convegno (Roma, 2-5 marzo 1992)*, ed. by M. Chiabò and others (Rome, 1992), 571–87.
[7] F. Masè, 'Men and Women Preparing for Death in Renaissance Venice (c. 1200–1600)', in *Planning for Death: Wills and Death–Related Property Arrangements in Europe, 1200–1600*, ed. by M. Korpiola and A. Lahtinen (Leiden/Boston, 2018), 153–76.
[8] C. Richardson, 'Household Objects and Domestic Ties', in *The Medieval Household*, ed. by Beattie, Maslakovic, and Rees Jones (2003), 433–47; E. Salter, 'Some Differences in the Cultural Production of Household Consumption in Three North Kent Communities, c.1450 - 1550', in *The Medieval Household*, ed. by Beattie, Maslakovic, and Rees Jones (2003), 391–407; N. W. Alcock, 'The Medieval Peasant at Home: England, 1250-1550', in *The Medieval Household*, ed. by Beattie, Maslakovic, and Rees Jones (2003), 449–68; Epstein, *Wills*; D. L. Smail, *Legal Plunder: Households and Debt Collection in Late Medieval Europe* (Cambridge – MA/London, 2016).
[9] Chojnacki, 'Patrician Women', 189.

classifications are discretionary as documents can mention multiple types of properties, dowries could include them all, and slaves themselves were considered chattel.

Before proceeding with those sections, however, a case study is presented, showing not only different kinds of possessions women could hold and how they could acquire them (and dispense them), but also the importance of the context. While examining a single document might give a distorted view, being able to place it in a wider framework might represent a person, their actions, and their relationships in a different way.[10]

Dowry and Inheritance

In classic Roman law *dos* was the donation made to the groom by the bride, or on her behalf, to contribute to the burden of matrimony (*sustinere onera matrimonii*). After the 3rd century there was also a counter-dowry, a gift from the groom, or on his behalf, to the bride. It was called *donatio ante nuptias* – now known as *donatio propter nuptias* after the Justinian code – or *antefactum*. A similar practice was common among Germans and Celts: the *morgengabe* (morning gift) was the husband's gift to his wife that marked the formal consummation of the marriage.[11]

The dowry was also supposed to provide for the widows so that they could avoid falling into poverty after the death of their husbands, and during medieval times it came to be considered as the bride's share of her natal family's patrimony.[12] For these reasons, even if it was managed by the husband so that he could use it to sustain the expenses of the

[10] Cf. A. Lahtinen, 'By Love and by Law: Choices of Female Donors in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Sweden', in *Donations, Inheritance and Property in the Nordic and Western World from Late Antiquity until Today*, ed. by O.-A. Rønning, H. M. Sigh, and H. Vogt (London/New York, 2017), 146–64, pp. 151–54.
[11] S. M. Stuard, 'Brideprice, Dowry, and Other Marital Assigns', in *OHW*, 148–62, p. 149; D. Herlihy, 'The Medieval Marriage Market', *Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 6 (1976), 3–27, pp. 5–6.
[12] L. Guzzetti, 'Dowries in Fourteenth-Century Venice', *Renaissance Studies*, 16/4 (2002), 430–73, p. 430; Wessell Lightfoot, *Women, Dowries and Agency*, 65.

household, the wife retained legal rights over it (and over the *donatio*).[13] Many statutes had limitations to the husband's use of the dowry such as requiring his wife's consent, though how much it was a free decision is debatable.[14] The Furs, the legal code in Valencia, accorded to the husband the usufruct and any income earned on the dowry, but he could not alienate anything without the express consent of his wife. Laws in the Crown of Aragon asserted that the husband had no power to alienate his wife's dotal properties because a married woman maintained ownership over them.[15] Since it was her own property, she was to regain it when the marriage ended, whether because it was dissolved through the fault of her husband or because of his death.[16]

The husband was responsible for preserving the dowry's value undiminished, so the woman could also sue for its restitution in case of misuse. The same was allowed in case of insolvency, debt, abandonment, and general failure to provide her with the necessities of life.[17] Caution must be exercised when using dowry restitution as evidence of female agency. In Valencia, as in Venice and elsewhere in the Mediterranean world, a woman's right to her dowry had precedence over any other claim to her husband's property.[18] At best he could be willing to return the dowry so that the couple could retain some funds to support themselves,

[13] S. Chojnacki, 'Dowries and Kinsmen in Early Renaissance Venice', in *Women in Medieval Society*, ed. by S. M. Stuard (Philadelphia, 1976), 173–98, p. 175. On dowry evolution (from roman contribution with heritage rights to *legitima*) see Chabot, 'Risorse', 51.
[14] Chojnacki, 'Patrician Women', 190–91; Drell, 332.
[15] D. Wessell Lightfoot, 'The Projects of Marriage: Spousal Choice, Dowries, and Domestic Service in Early Fifteenth-Century Valencia', *Viator*, 40/1 (2009), 333–53, pp. 338–39; Kelleher, 'Hers by Right', 39.
[16] Hughes, 'Urban Growth', 3–28, pp. 13–14; Kuehn, 'Person and Gender', 99; Chojnacki, 'From Trousseau to Groomgift', 83.
[17] Wessell Lightfoot, *Women, Dowries and Agency*, 153; E. Brizio, 'In the Shadow of the Campo: Sienese Women and Their Families (c. 1400-1600)', in *Across the Religious Divide*, ed. by Sperling and Wray (2010), 122–36, p. 124; D. Wessell Lightfoot, 'Family Interests? Women's Power: The Absence of Family in Dowry Restitution Cases in Fifteenth-Century Valencia', *Women's History Review*, 15/4 (2006), 511–20, p. 512.
[18] See chapter 6 in Wessell Lightfoot, *Women, Dowries and Agency*; C. E. Meek, 'Women, Dowries and the Family in Late Medieval Italian Cities', in *The Fragility of Her Sex: Medieval Irish Women in Their European Context*, ed. by C. E. Meek and M. K. Simms (Dublin, 1996), 136–52, pp. 144–45; J. Kirshner, 'Wives' Claims against Insolvent Husbands in Late Medieval Italy', in *Women of the Medieval World*, ed. by J. Kirshner and S. F. Wemple (Oxford, 1985), 256–303. For dowry restitution in Venice see S. Chojnacki, 'Getting Back the Dowry', in *Women and Men in Renaissance Venice* (2000), 95–111; A. Bellavitis, 'Women, Family, and Property in Early Modern Venice', in *Across the Religious Divide*, ed. by Sperling and Wray (2010), 175–90, pp. 177, 180–83.

at worst 'husbands and wives could manipulate the legal system to defraud creditors'.[19] Presenting the case of Caterina, a Genoese woman requesting her dowry because of her husband's eight-year-long absence, Jaime Smith considers plausible that she had acted in order to anticipate other creditors, so that she could support not just herself and her three children, but also her husband when he returned. The author also points out that a widow could be coerced into or out of asking for her dowry to be returned. Conversely Smith warns against seeing lack of female autonomy in dowry contracts since it was a financial transaction between the two spouses' kin and the bride-to-be was usually not an actor in the contract.[20]

Exceptions and differences regarding dowry assets were widespread. In regions ruled by customary law the property brought to the marriage by the bride was not held apart, but contributed to a communal account. It was usually managed by the husband, but the wife had to consent to alienations and had conspicuous rights over the whole account as a widow.[21] Most Flemish customs gave equal rights to both spouses over the marital communal property.[22] In Douai, in the southern part of medieval Flanders, all properties brought into the marriage by either spouse merged into a conjugal fund controlled by the husband, but neither spouse could sell, lend or give away anything without the other's approval.[23]

As in most southern Europe, in Genoa both dowry and *antefactum* were administered by the husband, and the wife could reclaim them at his death or at the end of the marriage.[24]

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[19] Wessell Lightfoot, 'The Projects of Marriage', 340.
[20] Smith, 'Legal Protection', 269–70; Smith, 'Women as Legal Agents', 116.
[21] M. C. Howell, *The Marriage Exchange: Property, Social Place, and Gender in Cities of the Low Countries, 1300-1550* (Chicago, 1998), 199.
[22] Hutton, '"On Herself"', 327; S. Hutton, 'Mixed Marriages: Family Strategies across the Noble-Burgher and Rural-Urban Divides', in *Marriage in Premodern Europe*, ed. by Murray (2012), 134.
[23] Howell, 'Fixing Movables', 16–20; Kittell, 'Testaments of Two Cities', 62. See also M. C. Howell, 'Marital Property Law as Socio-Cultural Text: The Case of Late-Medieval Douai', in *To Have and to Hold. Marrying and Its Documentation in Western Christendom, 400 - 1600*, ed. by P. L. Reynolds and J. Witte (New York, 2007), 421–52.
[24] Petti Balbi, 'Donna et domina', 162.

The wife also had the right to request her dowry restitution if she risked losing it to creditors or if her husband was absent and was failing to provide for her. Since 1375 she could receive her dowry and counter-gift (*simplum patrimonii et antefacti*), but before that date she could have been awarded twice the amount (*duplum patrimonii et antefacti*).[25]

According to Justinian's codes, *dos* and *donatio* were supposed to be equal, but for a while the latter continued to grow and the dowry to decrease. This trend started to reverse at the end of the 11th century, until in most parts of Europe the counter-gift had either shrunk to a symbolic amount or disappeared almost completely.[26] McKee finds that counter-dowers in Crete conformed largely to this pattern, but Dincer registers how they were still widely used in Cyprus.[27] A similar situation can be found in Genoa. By the late 12th century the city had seen the implementation of measures to limit practices that favoured the wife over descendants and greater kin. In 1143 a consular decree had abolished the *tercia*, a settlement of Frankish origin that allowed Genoese widows to claim one-third of their husbands' properties and could give them rights over it also during the marriage. Additionally, as the *dos* steadily increased, the *antefactum* was limited. It used to be equal to the dowry or even to exceed it, but it was then defined by law as half the size of the *dos* or 100 Genoese lire, whichever was smaller.[28] However, practice did not necessarily follow rules and it was not uncommon for Genoese husbands to exceed the limit set by the statutes, and some cases can also be found in dowry contracts from Chios.[29]

[25] Smith, 'Navigating Absence', 231–34; Smith, 'Legal Protection', 267–68, 270.
[26] Herlihy, 'The Medieval Marriage Market', 5–7, 10–12; Stuard, 'Brideprice', 149. On two theories on the counter-gift's declining popularity see D. O. Hughes, 'From Brideprice to Dowry in Mediterranean Europe', *Journal of Family History*, 3 (1978), 262–96, pp. 285–88.
[27] McKee, 'Households', 37; A. Dincer, 'Wills, Marriage and Business Contracts: Urban Women in Late-Medieval Cyprus', *Gender and History*, 24/2 (2012), 310–32, pp. 316–17.
[28] D. Bezzina, 'The Artisan Family in 12th- and 13th-Century Genoa: A Reappraisal', *Genesis*, 16/2 (2017), 111–30, pp. 122–24. On the *donatio propter nuptias* in Genoa see R. Braccia, '"Uxor gaudet de morte mariti": la donatio propter nuptias tra diritto comune e diritti locali', *Annali della Facoltà di Giurisprudenza di Genova*, 30 (2000), 76–128. Cf. also Drell, 333; Hughes, 'From Brideprice', 277; Hughes, 'Urban Growth', 14–15.
[29] Hughes, 'From Brideprice', 283–84; D. O. Hughes, 'Domestic Ideals and Social Behavior: Evidence from Medieval Genoa', in *The Family in History*, ed. by C. E. Rosenberg (Philadelphia, 1975), 115–43, p. 130; Hughes, 'Urban Growth', 24. See the section later in the chapter and Chapter 4.

Inheritance mechanisms varied widely across Europe, from primogeniture (whether male or female) to inheritance by the eldest son, from equal division among children to exclusion of daughters, from the spouse having precedence over the children to widows receiving only the dowry.[30]

In the north, medieval Scandinavia, Germany and much of the Low Countries were dominated by partible inheritance between sons and daughters, but the situation in southern Europe was different.[31] While Spanish inheritance laws mandated 'equitable inheritance for all legitimate children of a marriage', often daughters were excluded from succession if they had brothers or if they were married.[32] Jennifer Smith reports that early medieval customs from some of the largest cities in Occitania dictated that when a father died intestate, the property was to be divided between sons and unmarried daughters: married or dowered daughters were excluded, but not married sons.[33] In Marseille women were similarly able to inherit equally with their brothers, as long as they had not been previously granted their dowries.[34] Dowered daughters formally renouncing their *legitima* in 14th-century Avignon shows that, even when it was not an automatic exclusion, it was still a common practice.[35]

The Torah allowed daughters to inherit in the absence of sons, but they were the only Jewish women who could inherit from men.[36] Catalan Jewish women, for example, did not inherit from their husbands, but simply regained control of their own property and collected

[30] J. Whittle, 'Rural Economies', in *OHW*, 311–26, pp. 314–15; Reyerson, 'Urban Economies', 300.
[31] Cf. Howell, *The Marriage Exchange*, 31, 33, 92, 105, 154; Kittell, 'Testaments of Two Cities', 67; Hutton, *Women*, 6, 19, 37; Hutton, '"On Herself"', 328, 338; Hutton, 'Mixed Marriages', 134–35.
[32] Coolidge, *Guardianship* ,4; Wessell Lightfoot, 'Patrician Widows', 225.
[33] J. Smith, 'Unfamiliar Territory: Women, Land and Law in Occitania, 1130-1250', in *Medieval Women and the Law*, ed. by N. J. Menuge (Woodbridge, 2000), 19–40, pp. 27–31.
[34] G. F. Michaud, 'Family Emotional Outlets? Women's Wills, Women's Voices in Medieval Marseille (1248-1350)', in *"For the Salvation of My Soul",* ed. by Rollo-Koster and Reyerson (2012), 25–43, p. 31.
[35] Rollo-Koster, 'Item Lego', 6–7.
[36] K. Frank, 'Jewish Women and Property in Fifteenth-Century Umbria', in *Across the Religious Divide*, ed. by Sperling and Wray (2010), 95–108, p. 96.

the *ketubbah*, the sum of money that was owed to a woman by her husband at the end of the marriage.[37]

In northern and central Italy daughters often did not inherit from their fathers if they had brothers because a woman's dowry was considered her legitimate share of the patrimony (*exclusio propter dotem*).[38] Male succession was a principle observed in many Italian societies and statutes. If a Florentine father had only daughters, he was obliged by law to leave the bulk of his estate to his brothers, and daughters would inherit only in case of absence of male relatives up to the eighth degree.[39] In Venice men's rights to inheritance always took precedence. Sons would inherit immovable properties and would share the movable goods with their sisters, and a woman preceding a man by one degree of kinship would share the inheritance equally with him.[40] In Turin, in the event of parents' death in intestacy, dowered daughters were excluded from any inheritance.[41] In Amalfi, however, Skinner does not find evidence that the endowed bride was excluded from paternal inheritance *propter dotem*.[42]

Statutes could limit not only how and what women could inherit, but also their ability to make a will. In Montpellier childless married women needed their family's permission to dispose of their goods through a will. Mothers did not need permission, though they were restricted in what they could leave to their husbands.[43] In Perpignan a woman under the age of twenty-five was still considered a child under her father's power – if he was alive – and

[37] Winer, *Women*, 91; E. Klein, 'Public Activities of Catalan Jewish Women', *Medieval Encounters*, 12/1 (2006), 48–61, pp. 52–53.
[38] For some examples in Italy see Kuehn, 'Person and Gender', 94.
[39] S. Galasso, 'L'héritage des filles à travers les écritures administratives des mères tutrices: deux cas d'étude florentins au XVIe siècle', ed. by Bezzina, *Beyond Their Dowries* (2018), 167–82, p. 169. Cf. also Winer, *Women*, 21–22; Rollo-Koster, 'The Boundaries of Affection', 39.
[40] Bellavitis, 'Women', 176; Guzzetti, 'Women's Inheritance', 82–83; Chojnacki, 'Patrician Women', 187.
[41] M. Gravela, 'Against the Tide. Female Property and Political Shift in Late Medieval Turin', ed. by Bezzina, *Beyond Their Dowries* (2018), 151–65, p. 153.
[42] Skinner, 'Donne nel commercio amalfitano', 6.
[43] Reyerson, 'Urban Economies', 300.

she consequently was not legally entitled to make a will.[44] Conversely, in Ghent and Venice women were able to make wills without the permission of their spouse, father, or other male relatives.[45] In McKee's study on 14th-century testators in Venetian Crete, over half of them were women; many favoured in their wills sons over daughters, even if the law allowed children of both sexes to inherit from their mothers.[46] In Venice, in fact, all children were heirs to their mothers with no discrimination for their sex or for which marriage they were born from. Women, however, could apply the '*exclusio propter dotem*' logic, contributing with their wills to their daughters' dowries and excluding them from the rest of the inheritance. Something similar happened in Marseilles, where mothers followed the scheme female-dowry/male-succession, waiving the statutory laws that did not call for inequity between brothers and sisters.[47]

Florentine wives were obliged to bequeath their dowries to their children or to their husbands, but daughters could not inherit from their mothers if brothers or even nephews were alive. From 1415 the husband and his male heirs took precedence over children from the woman's previous marriage.[48] Even before 1415, however, it was common for married daughters to renounce their rights over their mothers' inheritance. This favoured not only their father but also eventual sons born from his second marriage. In a paradoxical situation those stepbrothers, with no connection to the deceased woman, would inherit her property to the detriment of her own daughters.[49] Most statutes in Piedmont, Lombardy, and Veneto

[44] Winer, *Women*, 36.
[45] Guzzetti, 'Women's Inheritance', 80.
[46] McKee, 'Households', 29, 39–40. On other proportions between male and female testators see I. Chabot, '«Io vo' fare testamento». Le ultime volontà di mogli e di mariti, tra controllo e soggettività (secoli XIV-XV)', in *Margini di libertà*, ed. by Rossi (2010), 205–38, p. 213.
[47] Chabot, '«Io vo' fare testamento»', 211. Petti Balbi disagrees with Chabot regarding daughters being excluded from maternal inheritance to their brothers' benefits in Petti Balbi, 'Donna et domina', 165. On Venice see also Guzzetti, 'Women's Inheritance', 82.
[48] I. Chabot, 'Lineage Strategies and the Control of Widows in Renaissance Florence', in *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by S. Cavallo and L. Warner (London, 1999), 127–44, p. 131; Chabot, '«Io vo' fare testamento»', 208.
[49] I. Chabot, 'Ricchezze femminili e parentela nel Rinascimento. Riflessioni intorno ai contesti veneziani e fiorentini', *Quaderni Storici*, n.s. 40/1 n. 118 (2015), 203–29, pp. 222–23; I. Chabot, 'Matrigne. Le altre madri

contemplated equal division of maternal inheritance, but privileged succession for children from the last marriage or just for sons happened in cities like Bergamo, Parma, Bologna, Siena, Arezzo, and Genoa.[50]

According to the *ius commune,* if the couple had no children, the dowry had to be returned to the woman's father or to his heirs, but it usually happened only partially.[51] Statutes in north and central Italy tended to favour the widower. Before 1487 in Rome the dowry had to be fully returned to the woman's family, but after that date the husband could keep a fourth of it.[52] Venetian earlier statutes did not admit succession *ab intestato* between spouses, but from 1420 laws allowed the widowers to keep up to one-third of the dowry.[53] The same amount was due in Assisi and Perugia, but in many cities the husband could keep half of the dowry and in others, like Milan, Bergamo and Florence, its entirety.[54]

In Genoa a dowered daughter had no claim on paternal inheritance and she could inherit from her mother with some limitations: for example, from 1375 the *antefactum* was assigned to daughters only if there were no sons or nephews. If the couple had no children, the dowry was to revert to the wife's kin and the *antefactum* was kept by the widower, otherwise he had the right to keep a part of the dowry too, usually an amount equivalent to half of the *antefactum*.[55] Widows' fate changed depending on their social status: Diane Owen Hughes found that artisan women were sometimes made heirs, even in presence of children, while among the aristocracy a widow was never the heir to her husband's estate.[56]

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dei Fiorentini (secc. XIV-XV)', in *Tra archivi e storia: scritti dedicati ad Alessandra Contini Bonacossi*, *vol. 1,* ed. by E. Insabato and others (Florence, 2018), 65–89, pp. 77–78.

[50] Chabot, 'Risorse', 61–62; Chabot, 'Ricchezze femminili', 220.

[51] Meek, 142–43.

[52] A. Esposito, 'I testamenti delle altre: le donne delle minoranze nella Roma del Rinascimento. Prime indagini', in *Margini di libertà*, ed. by Rossi (2010), 475–87, p. 477.

[53] Chabot, 'Ricchezze femminili', 215–16; Guzzetti, 'Women's Inheritance', 86.

[54] Kirshner, 'Donne maritate altrove', 402–03, 405; S. Superbi, 'In dotem pro dote et dotis nomine. Il sistema dotale tra norma e prassi nella Ferrara del XIV secolo' (PhD Dissertation, Università degli Studi di Ferrara, 2008), 37.

[55] Hughes, 'Urban Growth', 15–16; Braccia, 12–13; Petti Balbi, 'Donna et domina', 161–62.

[56] Hughes, 'Domestic Ideals', 126; Hughes, 'Urban Growth', 24–25.

In case of intestacy the statutes of 1375 specified with the provision *De femina tradita* that three among the testator's relatives would decide what the daughters would receive as dowries, and with the rubric *De successionibus ab intestato* that direct male heirs had precedence over female ones. As Bezzina points out, girls were not merely excluded because they already got their portion of family estate through the dowry but because of their sex (*exclusio propter masculos*).[57]

Family law on inheritance and intestacy is particularly relevant to women's rights because it was frequently applied, as the majority of people did not make a will.[58] However, it was much more complex than what is explained here, contemplating a number of possible situations with their variables. This can be seen in the two documents published by Argenti regarding laws of inheritance in Chios.[59] The first one is an anonymous letter in Genoese dialect that Argenti dated around 1375 (and Pagano 1373), the second is an ordinance from 1461.[60] Some caution should be used before considering the reported information as universally valid in Chios. According to the phrase preceding the letter, it is about the jurisdiction over Greeks (*Iurisditio Amotichi super grecos*), and Toso considers it a document written by (or on account of) ellenophones to an official to clarify some aspects of local customs.[61] The ordinance issued regarded instead 'times of pestilence' (*tempore pestis*). Both documents mention that the island authorities (Signoria; *dominatio*) were to receive either 10 hyperpera or one-third of the estate, whether the deceased had made a will – and whether he included the bequest or not – or died intestate. In Genoa, too, there was a

[57] Bezzina, 'Married Women', 123–24.
[58] Cf. Gravela, 153–54.
[59] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 451–53, vol. 2, 248–51.
[60] Pagano, 310.
[61] F. Toso, 'L'isola di Chios e l'influsso lessicale genovese in Grecia: una sintesi', *Estudis Romànics*, 38 (2016), 321–32, p. 321. See 'Liquid Assets' later in the chapter.

succession tax (*gabella defunctorum*): its rate varied, but it does not seem to have reached consistent amounts as in Chios.[62]

Women and Property: a Case Study

By cross-checking the data extracted from all the documents examined, it is possible to follow a family for more than one generation. The case study presented looks at twenty-one deeds and at the women in them dealing, in one way or another, with properties (Fig. 12).[63]

The first woman we encounter is Nicolosia, daughter of the late Raffus de Casali and widow of Iohanes de Luna.[64] In 1394 she had three daughters, two below the age of puberty. Iohanes' will had named Elliana and Marieta as his heirs and their mother as their guardian (*tutricis et curatricis testamentarie*). We know there was a third daughter only because Nicolosia acted with the advice of Moruel de Auria, her son-in-law and the brother-in-law of the heirs (*generis sui et cognati dictarum heredum*). She acknowledged having received from Symon Perellus de Vulturo her dowry and *antefactum*. Symon, a notary who appears with various roles in many documents, was Nicolosia's agent (*actor*), appointed the year before (26 November 1393).[65] The dowry amounted to 700 florins of Chios, the *antefactum* to 80 florins. Nicolosia did not receive the whole sum in cash, but in the form of two houses, two rings, and a garment (potentially a cloak, a coat, or a gown – *epitogium*). In total it was 709 gold ducats that corresponded to 780 florins of Chios. The list with its descriptions sparks some interesting reflections. The first house, which was large and had a garden (*domum unam magnam cum viridario contiguo*), was valued at 550 ducats, while the other, a neighbouring one, was only valued at 40. The two rings with red spinels, one big and one

[62] *Defunctorum*: http://www.lacasadisangiorgio.it/main.php?do=node&tag=5_113_867
[63] Di Chiavari 18-20, 69, 81; Panissaro 168; Piemontesi 5, 19; De Ferrari 231, 234, 238; Foglietta 284-285; A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 848, docc. 163, 354; filza 944, docc. 84, 84A, 85, 86, 143A; filza 886, doc. 273.
[64] Di Chiavari 18.
[65] Cf. the index of di Chiavari and Panissaro's acts. See Balletto, 'Chio dei Maonesi', 136–37.

small (*anulla duo duorum balasiorum, unius parvi et allii grosi*), were worth 24 ducats and 5 gigliati, while the *epitogium* was worth 20 ducats. Everything is said to have belonged to Iohanes. This is relevant because the amount in ducats is roughly equivalent to 700 florins, which was Nicolosia's dowry. As stated before, the husband managed the dowry, but the wife retained rights over it. It seems unlikely that these items were the original dowry on which Iohanes had staked a claim on, almost as if by usucapion. A possibility could be, instead, that the dotal goods – whatever they had been – were not available anymore, thus Iohanes had to replace them with his own assets until he reached the amount required.

In the following deed, always on 25 March 1394, Nicolosia donated to Elliana and Marieta her rights over three houses belonging to her brother, Christoforus de Casali.[66] Iohanes had been planning to buy them, and that is probably why the two girls appeared again as his heirs, as Nicolosia followed through with his intentions (*sciens et cognoscens dictum quondam Iohanem de Luna virum suum sive ipsius heredes expedisse peccuniam suam pro aquirendis*). In exchange she received her daughters' rights over an *apotheca* (workshop or small shop) in the bazaar.[67]

[66] Di Chiavari 19.
[67] Di Chiavari 20.

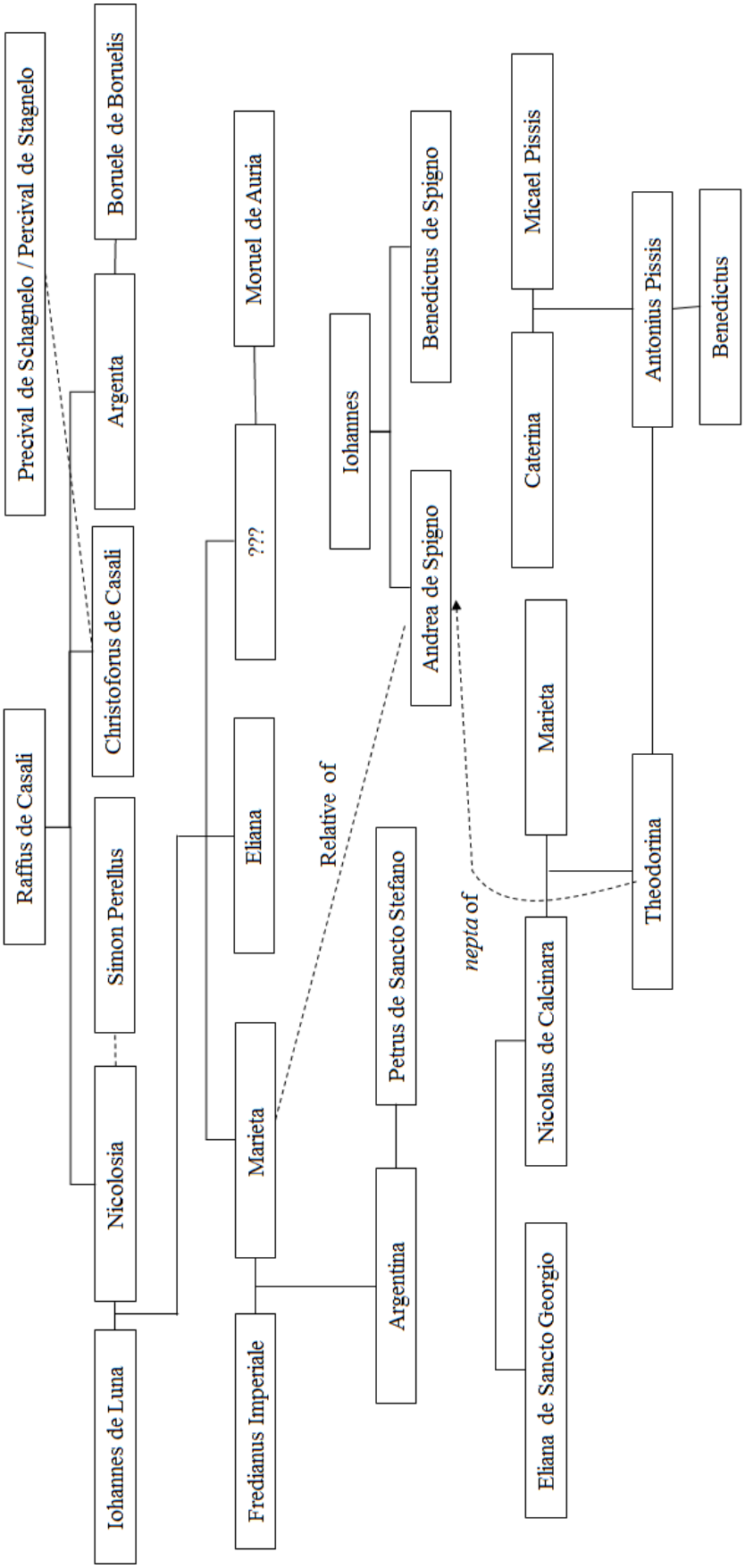


Fig. 12 Case study: family tree

The previous documents allow a better understanding of what happened on 17 August 1394, when Christoforus' procurator, Precival de Schagnelo, was awarded property rights (*ius proprietatis*) on a house in the bazaar and on half of another one in the bazaar's quarter.[68] Both houses belonged to the late Iohanes de Luna. Christoforus had been involved in a dispute with Iohanes, which he had won. Because the assessors found that Iohanes' movable assets could not cover what he owed, the houses were given to Christoforus. Besides receiving a notification from the assessors, Nicolosia does not seem to be further involved. As a matter of fact, if we just had this deed, we would have no idea that she was Iohanes' widow and Christoforus' sister: she is only mentioned once as *dicta Nicoloxia*. It is also quite curious that Precival is said to be *pater adoptivus prorogatus [et procurator] Christofori de Casali quondam Raffi,* which Balard simply translates as adoptive father.

These deeds show an assortment of what Nicolosia owned (cash, jewellery, clothes, houses), but we can still learn more about her from other acts. From a document dated 19 October 1459 we find out that she had a sister, as Raffus de Cazali had another daughter, Argenta.[69] In 1459 Argenta, widow of Boruele de Boruelis, was already deceased and had left her niece Marieta as her heir. We first met Marieta when she was underage, now Nicolosia's daughter has a family of her own. She had married Fredianus Imperiale and they had a daughter, Argentina, who had married Petrus de Sancto Stefano. By 1459 both Fredianus and Argentina had died, and Marieta was her daughter's heir. In the deed she appointed Andrea de Spigno, son of the late Iohanes, to take care of her affairs. Two years later, on 13 December 1461, she named him her universal heir.[70] *Domina* Marieta was at least sixty-seven years old (having been born prior to 1394) and still healthy (*sana mente corpore et intelectu*) when she made her will at her house (*in camera domus terranee ipsius*

[68] Di Chiavari 69.
[69] A.S.G., *Notai Antichi,* filza 848, doc. 163, mentioned in Balletto, 'L'émigration féminine', 305–06.
[70] A.S.G., *Notai Antichi,* filza 944, doc. 143A, mentioned in Balletto, 'L'émigration féminine', 306; Becker, 415–16.

testatricis). She gave instructions for her burial that suggest that she was possibly contemplating a trip. If she was to die in Chios, she wanted to be buried with her ancestors in the church of Saint Mary of the Friars Preachers (*in eclesia Sancte Marie de Chio fratrum predicatorum in sepultura antesessorum suorum*), to which she left 10 ducats of Chios. If she died in Genoa or elsewhere, Andrea would decide the place of her burial. She also left 1 ducat to the Hospital of Saint Anthony of Chios and other alms for her soul at Andrea's discretion. Then she disposed to pay two tithes, to the *Opus portus et moduli* and a succession tax, according to Genoese law: *decenum vero legatorum suorum legat operi portus et moduli et similiter cabelle defunctorum secundum formam capitulorum clausularum et ordinamentorum civitatis Ianue*.[71] The *Opus portus et moduli* was the authority in charge of managing, maintaining and developing the port and the docks of Genoa. Since the 13th century testators in Genoa – and outside – had their bequests taxed, with a tenth destined to this office.[72] Two years later Marieta was still alive: on 10 January 1463 Andrea, acting for himself and as her *procurator*, appointed two substitute attorneys.[73]

This is a rare case where we can follow a woman through different phases of her life and see some of the rights and possessions she held. Whilst underage Marieta needed a guardian and shared rights with her sister over real estate; as an adult she chose her own procurator and owned a house (and money). She had a family and she lost it. She was made heir in various wills, and then she made her own. She owned a house in Chios and her family was buried there, but she still maintained close ties with Genoa, possibly even wishing to return.

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[71] For the succession tithe see *Strumenti e documenti per la storia degli archivi genovesi nel secolo XIX*, ed. by S. Gardini (Genoa, 2016), 183.
[72] V. Vitale, 'Vita e commercio nei notai genovesi dei secoli XII e XIII. Parte prima: la vita civile', *ASLi*, 72/1 (1949), 79–80; P. Massa Piergiovanni, 'Fattori tecnici ed economici dello sviluppo del porto di Genova tra medioevo ed età moderna (1340-1548)', *ASLi*, n.s. 28/1 (1988), 37–133, pp. 87, 127; V. Piergiovanni, 'Dottrina e prassi nella formazione del diritto portuale: il modello genovese', *ASLi*, n.s. 28/1 (1988), 9–36, pp. 18–19.
[73] A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 886, doc. 273.

As Balletto wrote, the testamentary dispositions do not explain the relationship between Marieta and Andrea. According to Becker, he was her stepson, but in the document there is no mention of that (he also wrote that the charitable bequests were because her soul 'had gone astray' – *anima ipsius testatricis est in errando* – while it is *animam ipsius testatricis in errogando*, bestowing).[74] I believe that he was a relative, although not a close one. In the 1459 deed Marieta acted with the advice of a certain Benedictus de Spigno, *propinqui sui*. In two documents dated 1450 and 1456 there is a Benedictus de Spigno *quondam Iohanis*, who could be Andrea's brother: if Benedictus was Marieta's relative, so was Andrea.[75] What we know for sure is that Andrea had a *nepta* called Theodorina, daughter of Nicolaus de Calcinara and another Marieta.[76] *Nepta* could mean either niece or granddaughter. In his work on Genoese wills Epstein states that usually notaries added a qualifier like 'son of my son' to distinguish a grandson from a nephew, and when that does not appear, he assumes *neptis* means nephew.[77]

Theodorina first appears in her father's will, on 17 October 1456.[78] Nicolaus left to his wife *domina* Marieta her dowry and *antefactum* (the first of 400 gold ducats and the latter of an unspecified amount), and named her one of the fideicommissaries as well as the universal heir. After dealing with some credits and debits (including 50 ducats that were left to Nicolaus by his sister Eliana de Sancto Georgio in her will), the rest of Nicolaus' assets (minus the tithe to the *Opus portus et moduli*) was destined to Marieta, and if she was to die, to Theodorina, daughter of the testator and wife of Antonius Pissis. It seems an extreme application of the *exclusio propter dotem*: even without brothers, the married daughter was not chosen as heir and did not inherit unless the chosen beneficiary was dead. The will does

[74] Balletto, 'L'émigration féminine', 306; Becker, 416.
[75] Piemontesi 5 = De Ferrari 143 with the wrong date, 14 October instead 4; Piemontesi 19 = De Ferrari 230. On Benedictus see Piemontesi, pp. 40–42.
[76] De Ferrari 238.
[77] Epstein, *Wills*, 71.
[78] De Ferrari 231.

not specify what Marieta would inherit, and it might have depended on what would have remained after the debts were settled. However, if she was lucky, we can imagine that she would have inherited the house where the will was drafted, and possibly what was in it.

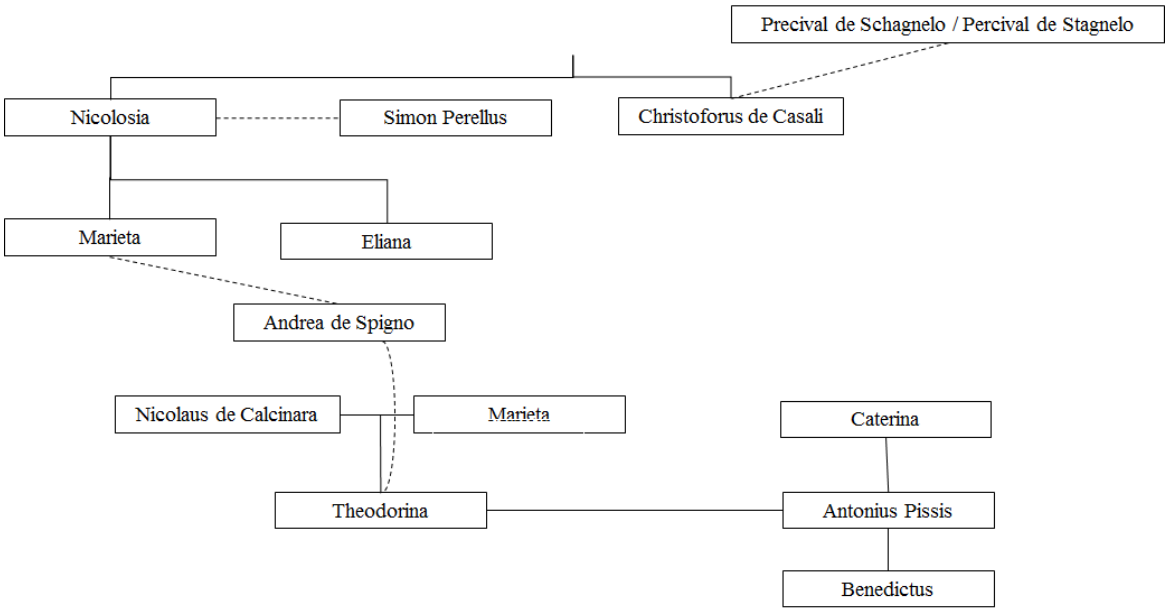


Fig. 13 Case study: relatives' interacting in the deeds

Three years later it was Theodorina's husband, Antonius Pissis, who made a will while ill (*eger corporis*), on 8 November 1459.[79] He put his wife and Iacobus de Campis *quondam Lodisii* in charge of his funeral arrangements. As seen with Nicolosia and Marieta, a woman had the right to receive back her dowry after her husband's death. Theodorina was to be returned 500 ducats and then some supplementary money if she was to remain widow without remarrying. She was not chosen as her husband's universal heir, even though the couple did not appear to have any children (though Antonius had an illegitimate son,

[79] A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 848, doc. 354, already mentioned in Chapter 2.

Benedictus, to whom he left his apothecary shop). Instead, Antonius, after allocating the tithes for the succession and to the port of Genoa, named his mother Caterina heir to his assets not otherwise destined. She was also one of her son's fideicommissaries and testamentary executors, together with Theodorina and Iacobus de Campis. Antonius also arranged for his mother to have 400 ducats as instructed by her dowry contract. Why had it not been returned after her husband's death? Sometimes a widow could choose not to claim her dowry and to remain in her late husband's family or with their children. As Chapter 4 will discuss, husbands usually encouraged this, leaving instructions in their wills to reward their wives if they remained widows and did not request the restitution of their dowries. It is possible that this had been Caterina's case.

By 15 July 1460 Antonius Pissis was already dead and his widow Theodorina was represented by Andrea Despino, who was surely de Spigno, as she is once again called his *nepta*. He hired two carpenters (*magistri ascie*) to build, or possibly rebuild, part of the roof in Theodorina's house, which had been her father's (*facere construere et fabricare tetum caminate et camere domus et habitacionis dicte Tedorine et qua fuit quondam Nicolai de Calcinara*).[80] While relevant to our discussion about female properties, Theodorina owning this house raises some questions, since it was not left to her as a bequest in her father's will. Did her mother die and consequently Theodorina became the heir or even inherited it from her mother in turn? Did Nicolaus give it to her in a previous occasion? Post-mortem arrangements were not the only way to carry out property strategies.[81] Nicolaus could have gifted the house to her as *donatio inter vivos*. Or it could have been part of her dowry, reverted back to her after her husband's death.[82]

[80] My reading of De Ferrari 238 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 764, doc. 303. Cf. Origone, 'Chio', 175.
[81] A. Musson, 'Medieval English Lawyers' Wills and Property Strategies', in *Planning for Death*, ed. by Korpiola and Lahtinen (2018), 119–52, p. 133; Richardson, 435.
[82] Theodorina is also involved in other documents not relevant to this chapter, including two particularly interesting where she appealed against an excommunication by the bishop of Chios and against a sentence

This case study presents a view of some types of property a woman could own and of some of the rights she held. It is important to acknowledge that when an amount of money was mentioned, it could have been used as a measure of account: it could refer to the comprehensive value concerned and not necessarily to hard cash. It is undisputable that a woman's wealth could include cash as well as houses, jewellery, and clothing. In a chapter about properties, it is fundamental to remember that 'possession and management are two separate spheres, and the notion of agency is inextricably connected to the capacity to dispose freely of one's property'.[83] This is usually pointed out in regard to husbands' controlling their wives' properties or women needing male consent to act. But women often managed properties not belonging to them, too. The typical examples are mothers acting as guardians for their children, like Nicolosia, and women chosen as testamentary executors, like Marieta, Caterina, and Theodorina. Even when they were not appointed to the roles alone, they still had a say in the matters and that is what counts in our perspective.

This case study also proved that being able to place a document in a wider context allows a better understanding of it, for example revealing otherwise hidden relationships or offering possible explanations for an action. Unfortunately, often we do not have enough deeds to reconstruct a family network in such details. We must therefore always keep in mind that analysing deeds as singular pieces, as often necessary, might present a skewed situation.

condemning her to pay 300 ducats, partially in Foglietta 284-285 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 843, docc. 211-212. My thanks to Marta Calleri for her help with the transcription.

[83] Bezzina, 'Married Women', 124–25.

Dowry Contracts

As seen before, in theory a wife retained legal rights over the dowry while the husband managed it, but in practice property rights are not so easily distinguished. When the dowry contracts include also the *antefactum,* it further complicates the situation. For this reason this section only includes the twenty-four dowry-related documents where women are actively involved, paying part of the dowry or promising it or receiving it back, which comprise half of all the dowry-related deeds.

Although the dowry was the property that a woman brought into her marriage, the *instrumentum dotis* was not necessarily redacted in occasion of the wedding, but it could be drafted later, sometimes even just before one spouse (or both) made their wills.[84] The dowry was usually bestowed by the bride's family, but it could also be assembled with bequests and donations from relatives, acquaintances, and other people (for example those setting up funds for dowries for poor girls as a form of charity).[85] It could consist of cash, but also clothes, jewels, houses, lands, shares, and other items, from furniture to crockery. They were not always listed in details (or at all), but often it was simply noted the overall dowry's value in currency.[86]

This exchange (that usually included the *antefactum*) was a financial transaction between the families of the two spouses, who were not necessarily involved in the contract (the bride more than the groom).[87] It was therefore surprising to see Nicolaus de Guiso recognising to have received from his daughter-in-law Salvaiga 600 gold hyperpera of Pera (*ad sagium Peyre*) as dowry, on 27 May 1394.[88] In exchange Nicolaus established an *antefactum*. The amount is not specified, but the act says that it was according to Genoese

[84] Balletto, 'Nuclei', 61; V. Polonio, 'Consentirono l'un l'altro: il matrimonio in Liguria tra XI e XIV secolo', in *Serta Antiqua et Medievalia, V, Società e istituzioni del Medioevo ligure* (Rome, 2001), 23–53, p. 4 on RM.
[85] Cf. Kelleher, *The Measure of Woman*, 49; Dincer, 'Wills', 315.
[86] Meek, 139; Petti Balbi, 'Donna et domina', 162.
[87] Smith, 'Women as Legal Agents', 116.
[88] Di Chiavari 36.

laws (*secundum formam capitullorum civitatis Ianue*), which prescribed for it to be half the size of the *dos* or 100 Genoese lire, whichever was smaller. The situation is peculiar because it is the only example of a dowry paid to the father-in-law and not to the husband. It is possible that Salvaiga paid her own dowry because she had no other relatives, at least not in Chios, as she was from Pera. Her dowry included a house that she owned in Pera (*domus dicte Salvaige posita in Peyra*) worth 300 hyperpera, and her late father, Iohanes de Alpe, had been *burgensis Peire*. It is more difficult to justify Nicolaus' role, especially as his son Antonius is said to be present. Perhaps he was younger than twenty-five and was still a minor? But why then his father was not indicated as his curator?

The most common instance in our documents sees the husband receiving the dowry in person. For example, on 30 October 1453 Domenicus Simbati, *burgensis Pere*, received from his wife Maria a dowry of 700 silver hyperpera of Pera, formed by money, silverware, furnishing, and a house:

> *[...] ab ea Maria habuisse et recepisse pro dote et patrimonio dicte Marie perperos septigentos argenti ad sagium Pere, partim schilicet in pecunia numerata, partim in argenteis, partim in suppellectile domus et partim in una domo [...]*[89]

There is more variety among those giving the dowries. In some cases it was the wife, like Maria above or Marosa, daughter of the late Leonis Zigolini de Valiso of Chios. In her mixed marriage with Iohannes de Moncelis, Marosa brought a dowry of 200 hyperpera of Chios, and Iohannes reciprocated with 100 hyperpera, following the law regarding the *antefactum* being half of the dowry.[90] Once again the dowry was variably composed of generic 'stuff',

[89] Roccatagliata 36.
[90] Partially in Foglietta 304 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi,* filza 843, doc. 322.

clothes, gold, silver, jewels, a bed, furnishings, and money (*rebus, bonis, vestibus, auro, argento, iochalibus, lecto, suppellettibus et pecuniis*).

Another case where the husband received the dowry from the wife is that of Lazarus de Vultabio and Benedicta, daughter of *dominus* Cristoforus Iustinianus de Garibaldo.[91] On 1 February 1454 Lazarus acknowledged the receipt of a dowry of 1000 gold ducats of Chios, partly in cash and partly in goods appraised by the parties (*partim in pecunia numerata, partim in rebus appreciatis inter ipsos*). It would seem peculiar that the bride's father, although alive, had no involvement, but another document sheds more light on the situation and highlights some of the shortcomings of Argenti's edition. He published a payment promise between Christoforus Justinianus de Garibaldo and Lazarus Argenti de Chio *quondam Stephani* dated 4 November 1450. It was instead December and Lazarinus Raimondus de Vultabio *quondam Stephani* was the one Christoforus had to pay.[92] From the deed we learn that in 1450 Benedicta's father still had to give to his son-in-law 700 ducats for the dowry (*dare debere et restare ad dandum ducatos septingentos auri de Chio pro dotibus et matrimonio dicte Benedicte*), while Lazarinus had already received from Christoforus clothes and other things (*Lazarinus presens et audiens confiteatur vestes et allia habuisse a dicto Christoforo*).

From different sources came the dowry received by Baptista de Rubeis de Castronovo *prope Terdona* on 3 December 1453.[93] He acknowledged to Teodora, daughter of the late Nicola *botarius* (spelled without capital letter, example of uncertainty between surnames and occupation, in this case cooper), that he had received her dowry. However, other people had contributed to it: Bartholomeus de Garibaldo, Andrea de Neapoli, Marexa, widow and fideicommissary of Iohannes Iordanus, and Ana, widow of Iohannis de

[91] Roccatagliata 98.
[92] De Ferrari 169 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 765, doc. 234.
[93] Roccatagliata 49.

Famagusta. They gave for Teodora (*pro ea Teodora*) 500 hyperpera in cash, movable and immovable assets. The latter were two houses, one valued 175 hyperpera and another, in ruins (*diruta*), valued 100 hyperpera. The dowry included also a bed, clothes, few small pearls and rings, and a belt (*lectus, vestes, alique pauce minuteque perle ac annuli et corrigium strinzicor*). These objects were worth 143 hyperpera, because two tranches of money – of 53 and 29 hyperpera – were added to complete the payment. The *antefactum* was of 100 hyperpera, perhaps a nod to the 100 Genoese lire rule. It is not specified why those people, who apparently had no family ties to Teodora, were paying for her dowry. A possibility is that they had debts towards Nicolaus (or in Marexa's case, her late husband did), which had passed to Teodora and were paid off in that way. Something similar happened in Candia when the Jewish Kalli arranged for her nieces' dowries to be partially paid by her debtors.[94]

There is just one example of a wife acting through an agent in regard to her dowry. On 11 September 1360 Iohannes de Livelato declared to the notary Raffaele Casanova that he had received the dowry from his wife Maria, daughter of the late Ianni Candili.[95] Maria was absent so Raffaele acted in her stead. The dowry included *pecunia numerate, iocalibus, arnisiis, rauba, massaliciis et aliis quibuscumque rebus*: money, jewels and other moveable goods (*arnisiis* could be tools, ornaments, furnishings, or simply objects; *rauba* could be clothing or just stuff; *massaliciis* were probably furniture and objects for the house), for a total of 1097 lire, 7 soldi and 6 denari of genovini.[96] Maria was Greek, as her father was from New Phocaea, and Iohannes was from the area around Genoa, as Livellato is currently part of the commune of Ceranesi. They decided to follow Genoese customs regarding the *antefactum*, which amounted to 100 Genoese lire.

[94] N. Tsougarakis, 'The Documents of Dominicus Grimani, Notary in Candia (1356-1357)', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 67 (2013), 227–89, p. 203 and docc. 73-78.
[95] Casanova 56.
[96] Cf. *VL*. See also Epstein, *Wills*, 107.

The mother of the bride could also be involved in dowry arrangements. In one deed, which Argenti titled *instrumentum dotis* even if the original has no heading, Diamante, daughter of the late Melchionis Josep, was dowered by her mother Isolta and by her brother Gabriel.[97] Anfreonus Cataneus *quondam Lodisii* received 1300 gold ducats of Chios in cash and jewels, and gave an *antefactum* of 100 Genoese lire following Genoese customs. It is worth noticing that if Melchionis was Jewish as Balletto believes, this would be the only case in our documents of a mixed marriage between a Jewish man and a Latin woman.[98] However, it might be a wrong assumption based only on the onomastic. In fact the document does not refer to Melchionis as *iudeus* as it usually happens when Jews are mentioned. Moreover, it is necessary to remember that unions between Jews and Christians were banned by canon law, Jewish law, and secular law, unless one partner converted to the other religion.[99] Could Melchionis have been a convert?

The last example is presented not only because it shows multiple women of the same family owning properties, but also because it is the only case where the value of the dowry is not mentioned. On 10 March 1457 Iohannes Bonichus, *habitator Chii de Vulturo,* promised to Raffaele de Costa de Cuchurno the dowry for his *nepta* Anna.[100] He was probably a maternal relative as Anna's father was Dimitri Bochi. The dowry was composed of two houses (both *domus de solario*, two-storey), three proprieties, and some moveable assets (a decorated bed with its framework, a silver cup, two silver spoons, two gold rings, a silver belt). The first house belonged to Anna's mother (*que domus erat matris dicte Anne*), while the second had been in ruins and then restored by Iohannes. He gave it to the couple with the condition that it could not be sold, rented or pawned as long as he and his wife

[97] De Recco 270 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 848, doc. 82v.
[98] 'Melchione Iosep – sans doute un juif', Balletto, 'L'émigration féminine', 306.
[99] J. A. Brundage, 'Intermarriage between Christians and Jews in Medieval Canon Law', *Jewish History*, 3/1 (1988), 25–40, esp. 27–28.
[100] De Recco 274.

Angelina were alive. The three properties were a vineyard with some figs and olive trees, a field where a cherry tree had been recently planted, and a garden with figs, mulberries and a well. They belonged to Anna's parents and had been assigned to her for her dowry (*que possessiones erant patris et matris dicte Anne et eidem Anne asignata fuerunt pro doctibus suis*). It is indisputable that both Angelina and Anna's mother had property rights. The latter was the sole owner of a house and the co-owner with her husband of some lands (or at least the sole owner of one of them). Angelina had to renounce her rights deriving from her dowry over the house. The presence of an interpreter (*presente et interpretante Antonio Florio notario*) suggests that there were some non-Latins involved, and considering the name of her father, I think Anna was one of them. Her parents' properties are said to be in Livadia, possibly Livadiya, in Crimea. If that was Dimitri's homeland, it could explain why Iohannes was the one acting even if the document does not refer to Anna's father as dead: he was not in Chios. If this is true, it would mean that Anna had been born from a mixed marriage and had similarly married, but also that, once again, real estate included in a dowry was not located in Chios (in previous cases it was in Pera).

In Mediterranean Europe it was common for marriages to be arranged by male family members. In Chios, however, half of the dowry-related contracts see women, in most cases the wife or her mother, being the one paying (or promising) the dowry. A similar practice is observed in Cyprus. Analysing the surviving marriage contracts from 14th-century Famagusta, Dincer finds that eleven out of twenty-five had been arranged by the bride, which 'looks unusual'.[101] Including also three deeds where the mother was involved, she suggests that they might have been immigrant women lacking male family members. When discussing how more than two-thirds of labouring-status women in 15th-century Valencia

[101] Dincer, 'Wills', 313.

concluded their own marriage contracts, Wessell Lightfoot identifies three factors: widowhood, deceased fathers, and immigration.[102] Hughes points out the frequent absence of artisan fathers from their children's marriage negotiations in 12th-century Genoa, which she ascribes to their delayed marriages, at least compared to their aristocratic counterparts. But artisans were often immigrants and for humbler women the move to the city meant a loss of kin. She reports how 60% of counsellors of artisan women were not kinsmen, most likely because they had none in Genoa.[103] In our documents, except in Benedicta's case, when a dowry was paid by someone other than the bride's father, he was already dead or not in Chios. Except one case, when male relatives existed, they were also involved.

The use of several different units of account, even in the same document, makes it difficult to compare the dowries or the *antefacta*. We find gold hyperpera of Pera and silver ones, hyperpera of Chios, gold ducats of Chios, Genoese lire, and sometimes the issues are simply called hyperpera or ducats.[104] If we consider every mention of ducats, gold ducats and ducats of Chios as the same currency, there seems to be no dowry inflation as observed, instead, in many Italian city-states between 1350 and 1550 (Table 4).[105] This phenomenon has been connected with the raise of female monachisation rates and 'a centuries-old movement to exclude women from the family patrimony' in favour of male heirs.[106] For example, Molho reports an increase in the size of Florentine dowries by the early 15th century and 'the consequent decision of many families to place their daughters in convents rather than marry them off'.[107] Studies agree that daughters entering into convents brought dowries considerably smaller than those who got married, often ranging from one-tenth to one-third

[102] Wessell Lightfoot, *Women, Dowries and Agency*, 45–46.
[103] Hughes, 'Domestic Ideals', 125, 136; Hughes, 'Urban Growth', 21–23.
[104] An attempt of such comparisons and considerations can be found in Becker, 332–61.
[105] S. Ferente, 'Women and the State', in *The Italian Renaissance State*, ed. by Gamberini and Lazzarini (2012), 345–67, pp. 347–49.
[106] J. G. Sperling, *Convents and the Body Politic in Late Renaissance Venice* (Chicago, 1999), 42 and in general chapter 1; Ferente, 'Women and the State', 362.
[107] A. Molho, *Marriage Alliance in Late Medieval Florence* (Cambridge – MA/London, 1994), 214.

of a secular bride's dowry.[108] In the documents examined no evidence regarding the presence of female monastic or religious houses in Chios has been found. It cannot be assessed whether this lack of mentions reflects an actual absence, and consequently if it played a role in the dowries on the island apparently not being subject to inflationary trends.

YEAR	DOWRY IN DUCATS
1405	1280
1405	200
1405	1000
1446	650
1450	700
1454	1000
1456	400
1456	1300
1458	1500
1460	300
1470	70

YEAR	DOWRY IN LIRE
1360	1097 lire 7 soldi 6 denari
1394	800 lire
1398	125 lire
1452	700 lire
1456	1000 lire

Table 4 Dowries

Another aspect to consider is the fact that the existence of a contract cannot guarantee that the dowry had been actually received or that the amount paid matched the one written.[109] Three contracts only mentioned the value of the dowry, which we have seen did not necessarily mean it included just cash. There is only one example where the value is not given and no money is mentioned at all, Anna's dowry.

[108] K. Lowe, 'Secular Brides and Convent Brides: Wedding Ceremonies in Italy During the Renaissance and Counter-Reformation', in M*arriage in Italy*, ed. by Lowe and Dean (1998), 41–65, p. 44; S. Evangelisti, 'Wives, Widows, and Brides of Christ: Marriage and the Convent in the Historiography of Early Modern Italy', *The Historical Journal*, 43/1 (2000), 233–47, pp. 240–42.
[109] Kirshner, 'Some Problems', 19–20.

The vast majority of marriage gifts were a combination of cash and objects, some more precious than others, with houses included only in four cases. A similar situation is found in Venetian Crete, and Gallina suggests that it might depend on the society being predominantly mercantile or on the traditional tendency to maintain the estates intact.[110] I think it is the latter, as the same pattern has been observed in Valencia and Genoa for artisans' dowries.[111]

Immovable Property

Thirty-seven documents mention women owning real estate. Some have been considered in the previous sections and in Chapter 2. This part therefore will focus on deeds not examined before that inform us about women holding immovable property, here meant as buildings and lands.[112]

A clear example of the distinction between possession and management discussed in the case study is the dispute between *domina* Critadena, widow of Iohanes Duca Petrocochino and guardian of her son Digitriano, and Nicolaus Pelavicinus, her son-in-law.[113] On 2 March 1461 two arbitrators decided that the house left by Iohanes to Mariola, his daughter and Nicolaus' wife, pertained to Nicolaus and not to Critadena. The controversy does not seem to be about Mariola's rights on the house, but rather about who could hold it, probably managing it. Since Iohanes was dead, we could speculate that he had left it to Mariola in his will. Another document, however, presents a second possibility: it was part of her dowry. On 3 September 1460 we have Cali Critadena, *filia Georgii Cutacalo* (Argenti

[110] M. Gallina, 'Diversi livelli di ricchezza e penuria negli atti matrimoniali rogati a Candia nel corso del secolo XIV', in *Ricchi e poveri*, ed. by Maltezou (1998), 263–92, p. 266; McKee, 'Households', 42–43.
[111] Wessell Lightfoot, *Women, Dowries and Agency*, 74–75; Bezzina, *Artigiani*, 141.
[112] Cf. M. C. Howell, 'Movable/Immovable, What's in a Name?— The Case of Late Medieval Ghent', in *Money, Markets and Trade in Late Medieval Europe. Essays in Honour of John H. A. Munro*, ed. by L. D. Armstrong, I. Elbl, and M. Elbl (Leiden, 2007), 538–71.
[113] De Ferrari 256 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 764, doc. 479.

wrongly transcribed *Calicardina filia Georgii Catarato*), widow of Iane Catrari Petrocochino and guardian of Digitriano, son and heir of said Iane.[114] She acknowledged to her son-in-law Nicolaus Palavicinus (*genero suo*) that Iane, while sick with the illness that killed him in Phocaea, had wanted Nicolaus to receive something else in addition to the dowry they had already agreed on. In order to carry out Mariola's marriage, later concluded, Iane destined to Nicolaus his house in the quarter of the episcopate:

> *Verus est quod dictus quondam Iane tempore eius infirmitatis qua infirmitate decessit in Foliis dixit voluit et mandavit quia se adimpleri posset matrimonium postea conclusum inter dictos Nicolaum et Mariolam volebat et contentabatur quod dictus Nicolaus haberet ultra dotes de quibus tractatum fuerat inter ipsos domum ipsius Iane sitam in contrata episcopatus in dotem.*

Origone considers two issues: the different location of the houses and the mother-in-law's different onomastic. In one deed she is Critadena, widow of Iohannes Duca Petracochino, in the other Calicardina, daughter of Georgius Catacatus and widow of Iane Catrari Petracochino.[115] We have seen that Argenti's Calicardina is actually Cali Critadena. Therefore the only difference in the onomastic appears to be the second name of the husband Duca – Catrari, as Iane is a variant of the name Iohannes. Regarding the houses, Origone presents two possibilities: either Iane had assigned to Nicolaus just one house and then there was an exchange, or the dowry included two houses and only one was given without arguments. In a following work Origone writes regarding the 1460 document that Cali Critadena, widow of Iane Catrari Petrocochino, appealed against her late husband's decision

[114] De Recco 282 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi,* filza 848, doc. 447. Cf. Balletto, 'Il mondo del lavoro', 120.
[115] Origone, 'Chio', 169, n.123.

to add a house to his daughter's dowry, and that she did so as guardian of Ducha Digitriano, Iane's universal heir.[116] We do not know what the dowry originally included, but nothing seems to exclude the possibility that the second house had been left as legacy in a will.

Other controversies are explicitly about inheritances. On 31 August 1450 Georgius and Antonius de Suzegna had appointed two arbitrators to settle their disagreement over their parents' inheritance (*tam ex hereditate paterna quam ex materna*).[117] On October 7 a decision was reached: each brother would get half of the vineyard and field that had belonged to their mother *domina* Illiana Gavisa.[118] They would share the grape press, or use it in alternate years if they could not find an agreement (starting with the older brother). Illiana also owned some houses, of which Georgius had the usufruct (*dictus Georgius possit et debeat gaudere et usufructuare omnes domus ipsius domine Illiane*). According to her will, half of them would then go to Antonius after his brother's death: *post vitam vero ipsius Georgii sint et esse debeant ipsius Antonii pro dimidia prout et sicut in testamento matris ipsius fratrum continetur.*

Maria Pedesfongena's will, instead, was contested by Nicola and Teodorus Vorla *quondam Micali*, with the other party being Enigeno Recanedena, widow of Michi (in Argenti '*Abichi [?]*') Cambanari.[119] The two men asked for a previous sentence to be annulled, while Enigeno affirmed it was just and produced Maria's will (*viso testamento quondam Marie Pedesfongene rogato per quondam papa Michi Pangalo notarum coram nobis per dictam Enigeno producto*). On 31 March 1517 the sentence was confirmed: Enigeno had to receive half of a field, the other half remaining to Nicola and Teodorus. We can deduce that Maria's will had named Enigeno as heir together with the men, but she had

[116] Origone, 'Periferie religiose', 195.
[117] De Ferrari 93.
[118] De Ferrari 138.
[119] Partially in Sampietro 378 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 1689, doc. 92.

not received her part and filed an appeal, which she won. In turn the men tried to appeal the sentence to keep the whole field to themselves, but lost.

Both cases present a woman owning lands (and Illiana houses too) and being able to dispose of them as she wished in her last will. Gifting properties while alive was another possibility. On 26 February 1398 the Jewish Ihera Melicha, daughter of the late Elia and widow of *magister* Ismael (*iudea filia quondam Elia quondam Solomonis iudei et uxor quondam magistri Ismaelis iudei phisici*) made a donation to her son-in-law, the estimated doctor Eliseus Calachi (*eximio doctore domino magistro Eliseo Calachi, iudeo, phisico, genero suo*).[120] She gifted him three houses in the Jewish quarter, an orchard, a vineyard, and some gardens. The deed clearly states that it was a mere, pure and irrevocable living-will donation (*mera, pura et irrevocabili donatione inter vivos*), made because Ihera Melicha was grateful for his services (*multa considerans varia, grata servicia, obsequia, utilitates et beneficia*). While the document is damaged, it seems that Ihera Melicha could still use what she gifted, though she had to pay 1000 gold ducats to Eliseus. The contract specifies that she would pay 100 ducats for ten years, and that in case of her death Eliseus could get the remaining amount from her assets. Some of these properties were probably her father's inheritance as Ihera Melicha acted for herself and as Elia's only heir (*proprio et privato nomine prefate Ihera Melicha et tamquam heres insolidum dicti quondam Elie eius patris*). She also had another house, always in the Jewish quarter, where she lived and where the act was drafted. It is unclear wherever her daughter, Eliseus' wife, was still alive, as she is not mentioned at all. It is also worth noticing that everyone involved was Jewish, but the five witnesses were all Latin, one of them an interpreter. Another extremely singular aspect of this deed is the preamble:

[120] Partially in Gioffrè c. 68v = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, cart. 382, cc. 68v-70r.

In Dei nomine qui creavit cellum et terram cuius exemplo cotidie humanum genus, sua illustrante clementia manifesta documenta conspiciens, invenit doctrinam ut benemeritis premia et favores exhibeantur benigne […]

'In the name of God who created heaven and earth, by whose example every day the human race, contemplating clearly in writings His shining mercy, finds the doctrine that rewards and favours are given benevolently to those deserving […]'

According to Epstein, it reflects Jewish beliefs about the purpose of good deeds. He also suggests that they went to a Latin notary even though they were all Jewish because 'the title to property depended on the power of Genoese authority, so it made sense for Ihera Melicha to ratify this gift in a valid notarial contract'.[121]

Another donation to a family member was that made by *domina* Clara Palavicina to his son Nicolaus. On 26 September 1450 Clara and another son, the bishop of Chios Antonius Palavicinus, rewarded Nicolaus for the time he spent at the service of his uncle, the late Leonardus Palavicinus, the previous bishop of Chios.[122] They claimed to have pushed Nicolaus to work for his uncle even if being a merchant would have been more remunerative. Because Leonardus had died without Nicolaus ever receiving what he had been promised, Antonius and Clara tried to remedy the situation. Antonius gave his brother various precious objects, including silver crockery and eight candleholders from Damascus, and part of the house he was entitled to as the bishop of Chios. Clara, who had already donated part of her assets to another son called Franciscus, gave Nicolaus a house she had dotal rights over (*domum que iure dotium suarum sibi spectat*), a silver basin, and some bedding. These gifts, however, came with some conditions. As long as Clara lived, Nicolaus

[121] Epstein, *Purity Lost*, 75.
[122] De Ferrari 120 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 765, doc. 168. Cf. Balletto, 'Nuclei', 80–81.

could not sell or alienate them without her consent, and he could sell them only to his brother. He also had to maintain her, whether healthy or ill, according to his means (*pascere vestire et calciare sanam et infirmam bene et decenter secundum eius possibilitatem toto tempore vite dicte domine Clare*).

A maternal gift was also the house given by Giamidena to her daughter Nachama on 4 December 1453. On 29 October 1456 Nachama, daughter of the late *magister* Solomie Salonichey and widow of Elia Catalanus, made an agreement with Guiliermus de Ceva, *magister antelami* (master mason).[123] The house, situated in the Jewish quarter (all the persons so far mentioned were Jewish, with the exception of Guiliermus), was damaged (*dirruptam*) and Guiliermus was hired to restore it. He would finish within a year and be paid 300 ducats of Chios plus a silver cup valued 10 ducats. The contract included very specific instructions on the works that had to be done and clauses regarding the payment. Mother and daughter promised to pay Guiliermus within three months after the end of the works, and then he would return the house to them. If he was not paid on time, he would have the usufruct for ten years, with Nachama still maintaining rights over the house. It is curious that Giamidena committed to pay for the works together with her daughter, even if she seemingly had no rights over the house anymore after the donation. I believe that Giamidena, who was twice widowed, first by Nachama's father and then by Gigel de El, had been living with her daughter. Nachama had another house adjacent to the one in question and one of the four men giving the women advice and testifying that they were acting for their own good is said to be their neighbour (*vicini dictarum mulierum*). The other three men were Solomie and Moyse Catalanus, Nachama's sons, and another relative. I suggest that the contract was respected since in August 1457 a Moyse Catalanus appointed Guiliermus as his procurator regarding a house that he had to build in the *Iudayca*: if Moyse was

[123] Piemontesi doc. 21 and p. 49.

Nachama's son, it would indicate that the parties were on good terms.[124] More in general, this is also an example of positive interactions between the Christian and Jewish communities.

Often female ownership is not the subject of the document, but it is simply mentioned or even just inferred (if a house is said to be someone's, unless otherwise indicated, I consider them to be the owners). Sometimes we learn about a woman owning a house from the topical date, when a deed was drafted in her house or next to it.[125] Other times a woman's house was cited to better locate another building that was being sold or rented. For example, Comenena, widow of Cupolari, owned a house in *contrata Neacorio* (*Cupohari* and *Neocorio* according to Argenti), next to the one sold by Antonius de Bozolo to Ambroxius de Mediolano in 1450.[126] Other house-owners were Orieta, widow of Bertholus Cavalerius, Calogrea, widow of Petrus Framulus, and the Jewish Afrati and Ihera Porfiria (or Profira).[127]

A final annotation regards women named heirs in wills: their ownership of real estate or any type of asset left as bequests is merely presumptive, unless corroborated by later documents. The implementation of the testator's wishes might have depended on what was actually available when the testator died and after settling eventual debts, but also on the executors' discretion.[128] Even getting back the dowry, which was rightfully theirs, was not always painless.[129] Another possibility was, of course, that the heir would die before the testator. It is a circumstance contemplated by Iohannes Brexanus when he made his will on 12 February 1454, before an imminent sea trip (*volens ad partes occidentales navigare*).[130] He bequeathed to his seven-year-old daughter, Margaritina, an estate with two houses, a

[124] Piemontesi 25. On Guiliermus see also Piemontesi doc. 30 and pp. 48–49.
[125] For example Panissaro 129; De Ferrari 240.
[126] De Ferrari 179 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi,* filza 765, doc. 229.
[127] Foglietta 288 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi,* filza 843, doc. 247 (Argenti writes '*retro curtilius chisilime quondam domini Lazari Argenti et Veschontis Justiniani*', but it is rather '*retro curtilius chisilime q(uondam) domini Veschontis Iustiniani*'); De Canella 13; Di Chiavari 39 (Villa 5).
[128] Musson, 133–34; Kirshner, 'Materials', 202–03.
[129] Cf. Guzzetti, 'Dowries', 435–44; Bellavitis, 'Women', 180–83; Chojnacki, 'Getting Back the Dowry'.
[130] Roccatagliata 118. See also later in the 'Objects' section.

cistern, a well, a vineyard and trees (*villam sive possessionem unam ipsius testatoris, in qua sunt due domus et cisterna et puteus, et que villa et possessio est vineata et arborata*). This and other bequests, however, were followed by very detailed instructions on what to do in case of Margaritina's death.

This section confirms that despite the association of female wealth with money, clothing, and objects, women often owned immovable property.[131] Houses are the only item that can be found in documents even when they are not changing owner, thanks to their use as locators. It is not always specified how women gained possession of their houses, though when noted it was often as an inheritance or a dowry, in agreement with what emerged from purchase agreements. As the first case presented showed, however, possession did not always mean control: Mariola's rights over the house left to her by her father are not brought into question, but her mother and her husband are the ones arguing about it. The contested inheritances, by no means a prerogative of female testaments, offered examples of women disposing of their properties, but they could also do so in more immediate ways, through donations. Nachama is the only clear case of female recipient of a donation *inter vivos*, but once again we ignore how her mother got the house or how Nachama herself got the one she lived in.

Liquid Assets

Liquid assets held by women are well represented in deeds, as cash is mentioned in many documents attesting a transfer of ownership. Another type of liquid asset popular in Genoese society (both in the mother-country and overseas) were shares (*loca*), especially after the

[131] I. Chabot, 'Multe sunt mulieres in matrimonio existentes que habent bona propria. Réflexions conclusives sur le dossier «Looking beyond Dowries»', ed. by Bezzina, *Beyond Their Dowries* (2018), 199–211, p. 201.

birth of the Banco di San Giorgio in 1407. Just considering non-commercial types of documents (dowry contracts and wills among the others), those mentioning liquid assets are fifty-eight. We have already seen that dowries almost always included cash, so this section will focus on some examples of bequests, other mentions of *loca*, and debits and credits.

Sometimes cash bequests are the only ones specified in a will, as in *domina* Blanchina's testament and codicil (*testamentum domine Blanchine de Furneto intus est codicillum ipsius*).[132] She was the widow of *dominus* Raffael Iustinianus de Furneto and had three sons, Pasqual, Paulus, and Octavianus. She bequeathed to Pasqual 400 Genoese lire, with the rest of her assets (not otherwise defined) being equally shared by all three sons, named universal heirs. She took care to mention that Pasqual was her firstborn (*filio suo primo*), but the additional bequest could have also been compensation for hosting her, since the act was drafted in his house and she was ill (*languens corpore*). We learn so from the codicil added the next day, 31 May 1456, where she also repeated the tithe to the port of Genoa and added a legacy of 400 Genoese lire to her grandson Ciprianinus, Octavianus' son.

Another will, that of *domina* Petra, daughter of the late Petrus Iustinianus de Monelia, would have been greatly misunderstood if we had just trusted Argenti's edition.[133] She was the wife of *dominus magister* Quilicus de Franchis *olim* Sachus *phisicus*, and not, like he published, of Pantaleone Argenti *quondam Iohannis*. Besides various small mistakes, Argenti also omitted parts of the document, like Petra's bequests to the *Opus Portus et Moduli* and to a Genoese hospital, and wrote that it had been written at Petra's house, while it was instead Iohannes de Portufino's.

[132] De Ferrari 228 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 764, doc. 229. Cf. Balletto, 'L'émigration féminine', 304–05.
[133] Partially in Foglietta 332 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 843, doc. 51.

Although she was not another testator, a will informs us about some of the late *domina* Fioreta's properties. On 3 October 1456 *nobilis* Benedictus Salvaygus *quondam domini Evangeliste* legitimated his natural son Augustinus (*filio suo naturali legitimato*) and named him his universal heir.[134] Among the bequests Augustinus received there were Benedictus' mother *domina* Fioreta's inheritance and her four shares of the Compere of San Giorgio. Benedictus also bequeathed 600 Genoese lire that his grandmother *domina* Salvagia had entrusted to her son Nicolaus Imperiale to give to Benedictus (Fig. 14). It is specified that those 600 lire had been given by the testator's mother to her own mother Salvagia from her private funds (*quas libras sexcentum dicta quondam mater ipsius testatoris dederat dicte Salvagie de ipsius quondam Fiorete peculio*), so we can speculate that Fioreta had died before her mother and left her that sum as a bequest.

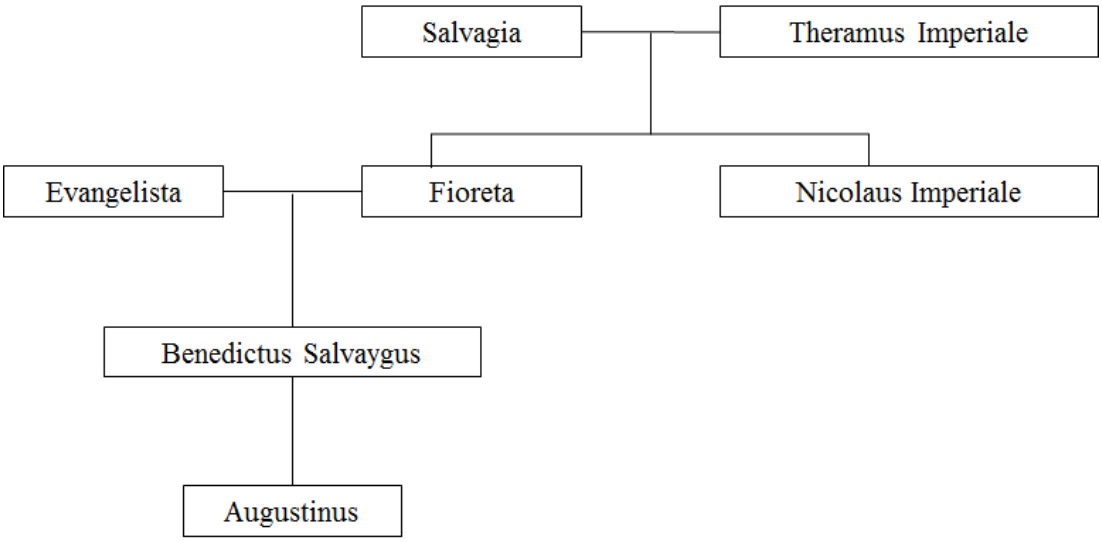


Fig. 14 Benedictus Salvaygus' family tree

Some shares of the Compere of San Giorgio were also owned by *domina* Maria, daughter of the late *dominus* Petrus Iustinianus de Rocha and widow of *dominus* Neapolionus

[134] Origone, 'Chio', doc. 2 and pp. 155–57.

Iustinianus.[135] In her will, dated 27 June 1456, she instructed to use two years of proceeds from her ten *loca* to pay for a thousand masses to be celebrated in Genoa for her soul. It should be noted that she entrusted with the task a sister and a sister-in-law, showing once again how women could manage assets that were not their own.

I believe that another woman owning *loca*, this time of the Compere of Pera (*locorum comperarum Pere*), was Caterineta, wife of Laurentius Gatellusius. On 9 November 1453 Benedictus Salvaigus *quondam Borruelis* (so not the same man mentioned earlier) and Laurentius gave each other mutual quittance for various matters, including the sale of some shares.[136] These *loca* were sold by Benedictus on behalf of Laurentius and his wife Caterineta (*spectantium dicto Laurentio seu Caterinete, eius uxori*). The text reads *seu*, but it is highly improbable that there was a doubt on whether Laurentius or his wife owned the shares. Much more plausible is a joint ownership or that each owned some of the shares sold by Benedictus, especially as *loca* were commonly purchased by women, possibly as low-risk investments, and they were often part of dowries.[137] On the island there were, of course, women owning *loca* of the Maona of Chios too: in just three documents published by Rovere there are seventeen.[138]

It might be strange to include women owing money when talking about female liquid assets, as it is implied that they did not have their own. However, not having enough money (or cash) is not the same as not having any at all (or other assets). Phipps points out how debt in late medieval England was often not a symptom of financial crisis but rather an indicator of commercial activity. She also adds that women's debts were proof of 'trust in

[135] De Recco 267. Cf. Balletto, 'L'émigration féminine', 305.
[136] Roccatagliata 39. Cf. also A. Roccatagliata, 'Con un notaio genovese tra Pera e Chio nel 1453-1454', *Revue des Etudes Sud-Est Européennes*, 17/2 (1979), 219–39, p. 232.
[137] Bezzina, 'Married Women', 128; J. E. Shaw, 183; S. Ferente, 'Women and the State', 348; Kamenaga-Anzai, 'Attitudes', 245–49, 259–60. The same happened in Venice, see Guzzetti, 'Le donne a Venezia', 47.
[138] Rovere, docc. 116, 137, 158.

their ability to fulfil credit arrangements'.[139] Indeed, it is fair to assume that anyone lending money did so with a guarantee to get them back in some way. That is not saying that it always happened…or without problems.[140]

An example is the deed dated 14 August 1404 and involving two Jewish women.[141] Ihera Profira, widow of Samaria Pangali, acknowledged having received money from the notary Thomas Buatellus de Quarto and from *magister* Moise de Mere, husband and procurator of Ihera Melicha. It is specified that a part was paid by Moise and the other by both men with Ihera Melicha's money (*de pecunia propria dicte Iherameliche*). The sum was owed according to a document dated 25 October 1401, which *magister* Isac de Mere, son-in-law and procurator of Ihera Profira, asked to be carried out on 17 December 1403. Ihera Profira acquitted Thomas and Moise, and through them Ihera Melicha (*per eos dictam Iheramelicham*), acting under the advice of Isac and of another Jewish relative, Ioil. Thomas and Moise, however, protested in her presence (*presentem et intelligentem*) that they gave the money not voluntarily, but forced by the podestà's vicar in observance with a sentence (*non sponte, sed tamquam coactos per suprascriptum dominum vicarium, in observatione sententie per eum late*). They objected that Ihera Melicha did not have to pay anything yet because there was a pending appeal and that the expenses had been wrongly estimated (*ipsa Iheramelicha solvere non debebat quia, pendente appellacione, nil debet innovari, etiam quia dicte expense debito modo taxate non fuerunt*). Unsurprisingly Ihera Profira did not agree. The document leaves us with some questions. Why did Ihera Melicha owe money to Ihera Profira? Were Isac and Moise related? Were consequently creditor and debtor part of the same extended family? However, something else is clear: both women had financial means, money they had direct access to.

[139] T. Phipps, 'Creditworthy Women and Town Courts in Late Medieval England', in *Women and Credit*, ed. by Dermineur (2018), 73–94, pp. 75–76, 84.
[140] Cf. Chabot, 'Widowhood', 295, 298, 301.
[141] Panissaro 114.

Particular types of debt were those related to dowries, which were not necessarily paid when the marriage took place. On 19 May 1405 Marta Fatinanti, widow of Georgius Fatinanti, admitted owing 200 gold ducats to her son-in-law Georgius de Assano.[142] It was the dowry for her daughter Maria, which Marta had promised Georgius (*Quos quidem ducatos auri CC pro dictis dotibus Marie dicta Marta dare et solvere promisit et convenit dicto Georgio).* Marta was probably confirming her promise so that she could not claim to have already paid in case something happened to Georgius. In the following deed made on the same day, in fact, Georgius left dispositions in case something happened to him during his trip to Alexandria (*in casu quo in presenti viagio Alexandrie moreretur vel arrestaretur vel aliter de eo esset*).[143]

More complex is the situation presented by a *promissio* dated 13 May 1458. *Domini* Gregorius Iustinianus and Augustinus Adornus had promised to give to Franciscus Gambonus 1500 ducats on behalf of Marietina, widow of Ambroxius Iustinianus de Rocha.[144] The sum was the dowry for Primefloris, Marietina's daughter and Franciscus' fiancée (*future sponse*). Later that day Marietina released the two men from liability and hypothecated all her assets (*ipothecavit et obligavit omnia ipsius Marietine bona mobilia et immobilia presentia et futura*). To do so she renounced the rights she held as a woman, in particular the *Senatusconsultum Velleianum* and the *Lex Iulia de fundo dotali*, as she clearly was assuming liability and hypothecating, among her other assets, her dowry. What is unusual is that Marietina, and consequently Primefloris, had male relatives. Present to the act and giving his consent was Iohannes Sagimbene, Marietina's father, while Ieronimus Sagimbene, her brother, and Bartholomeus de Castelino, a maternal uncle, were also giving their advice.

[142] Panissaro 158.
[143] Panissaro 159.
[144] De Recco 280 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 848, doc. 79.

If a dowry was owed to new family members, sometimes debts were between blood relatives. On 24 November 1460 Baptista de Illianis de Uvada acknowledged his debt toward his sister Antonina.[145] She was owed 400 gold ducats of Chios, left to her by her father Nicolaus in his will (*ducatos quadrigentos auri de Chio, dicte Antonine legatos per dictum condam Nicolaum, vigore dicti testamenti*), and 150 from her mother's dowry, as in her testament (*ducatos centum quinquaginta auri de Chio pro parte spectante dicte Antonine pro dimidia dotium condam Luchinete, uxoris dicti condam Nicolai et matri ipsorum Baptiste et Antonine, vigore testamento et ultime voluntatis dicte condam Luchinete*). Baptista pledged a house and agreed that Antonina could live with him without paying anything until he gave his sister her due. If she was still living with him after that, he could then take payments.

The last document to be discussed is not a debt in itself or a typical bequest (indeed, it is the only one of its kind found among my sources). On 5 April 1394 Ihera Chimesti, daughter of the late Ellia Comita and widow of Elia Fapsoni, added some codicils to the will she had made on 25 December 1393.[146] She bequeathed 6 hyperpera of Chios to the government of the island for the *aniotichi* as she had not done it before: *primo sciens se nichil legasse dominacioni Syi et ideo legavit ipsi dominacioni Syi perperos sex de Syo occasione aniotichi.* Transcribed as *aviotichi* in Villa, it is the Latin rendition of the word ἀβιωτικιον, which was a Byzantine tax on the transfer of property of someone who died intestate and without children.[147] Obviously Ihera Chimesti was not going to die intestate, but it is possible that she had no children. Did she really forget to include the provision to the government in her original will? We cannot exclude that she instead had a child who had died after the redaction of the testament and therefore made her subject to this charge. This

[145] Piemontesi 35.
[146] Di Chiavari 21 (Villa 1 with some discrepancies).
[147] Cf. Abiotikion, in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium,* ed. by A. P. Kazhdan (New York, 1991).

if we were to assume that the name maintained its exact Byzantine connotations: since the late 13th century the term *abiotikion* appeared in Byzantine documents as 'the legal right of the fisc to receive one third of the property of every childless person who died without leaving a written testament'.[148] I believe that what Argenti transcribed as *Amotichi* in the Genoese letter on laws of inheritance in Chios is actually *Aviotichi*.[149] Therefore it would be *Iurisditio Aviotichi super grecos* meaning that Greeks were subject to the tax too. This belies Epstein's suggestion that the *aviotichi* was a death tribute imposed by the Maonesi on 'their' Jews, but it makes perfect sense considering it was, at least originally, a Byzantine tax.[150] The Genoese letter states that the island authorities were to receive one-third of the estate whether the deceased was intestate or not and that if there was a will but no bequest to the government, the testament was not valid. This did not happen in Genoa, which confirms that it was a local custom from Byzantine times maintained by the Genoese administration. Moreover, the fact that Genoese testators included the Genoese succession tax (*gabella defunctorum*) but not the *aviotichi* suggests that the latter was applied to Greeks and Jews but not to Latins. The annulment of the will if the bequest to the authorities was missing would explain why, if Ihera Chimesti had forgotten about it, she made sure to rectify her mistake.

This section examined some examples of women's liquid assets, here considered mainly as cash and shares. It was not just a matter of owning, receiving or having rights on them, which, especially with dowries, did not always mean having control over them. There were plenty of women who did dispose of their own capital, whatever its provenience: they bequeathed, donated, lent, invested, and promised it. Once again it is important to remember

[148] C. Pavlikianov, *The Byzantine Documents of the Athonite Monastery of Karakallou and Selected Acts from the Ottoman Period (1294–1835)* (Sofia, 2015), 63.
[149] *Occupation*, vol. 2, 248–49. CBC [SEQ_230]: Pagina: 207.
[150] Epstein, *Purity Lost*, 75.

that small transactions were not recorded and that small amounts of capital did not require it either.[151] Smail, however, also points out the recourse to pledges and pawnbroking, and the importance of microcredit in medieval and early modern Europe, as households did not necessarily have stores of cash at hand.[152] As mentioned earlier in regards to dowries, an indication of value in currency does not inevitably correspond to the same amount of cash. This means that probably both the liquidity and the material possessions of women in Chios are underestimated, as well as their involvement in the economy of the island, as we have already mentioned in Chapter 2.

Objects

Different types of documents offer references to objects that made up medieval people's daily life.[153] Among the deeds examined there was no inventory, account book, or list of goods sold at auctions that involved women.[154] Besides dowries, however, various wills mention possessions that women held or would receive, at least in the testator's intentions, for a total of forty-three acts.

A testament was the expression of someone's last wills (*ultima voluntas*) regarding what to do with their properties after their death. A large number of wills survived in the archives, although the majority of the population would simply die intestate and the devolution of their assets would follow succession laws.[155] As shown before, a will did not always include details of what was left. Moreover, even when it did, it is safe to say that it

[151] Cf. A. Bardyn, 'The "Egalitarian Trend" in Practice. Female Participation in Capital Markets in Late Medieval Leuven', in *Gender, Law and Economic Well-Being*, ed. by Bellavitis and Zucca Micheletto (2018), 167–82, p. 171.
[152] Smail, esp. 107–21. See also J. E. Shaw, 188.
[153] Cf. Smail, 7.
[154] Present, although not numerous, those involving men, i.e. Roccatagliata 1, 4, 38; Piemontesi 42; Di Chiavari 7; Notai Ignoti 411; Roccatagliata, 'Da Bisanzio a Chio', doc. 9.
[155] Bezzina, 'Married Women', 122; M. Korpiola and A. Lahtinen, 'Introduction', in *Planning for Death*, ed. by Korpiola and Lahtinen (2018), 1–25, pp. 1–2.

was not a comprehensive list of what the testator owned. There were alternative ways to dispose of possessions, like donations or settling matters privately without going on record. More importantly, succession rules still applied even in the presence of a testament. The very act of making a testament was often a way to deviate from the standards. Any object (and heir) named in a will is therefore relevant in its own, because they were relevant to the testator enough to warrant a mention, whether for economic or sentimental value, or any other reason often impossible to discern.

Mecosa, widow of Iohannes Iordanus and daughter of Iohannes de Famagusta, made her will on 24 May 1456 and named her four sons as her heirs.[156] There is no indication of what they would inherit. However, she took care to mention that Erini, wife of Costa Gentile, held a silver belt of hers. Mecosa had pawned it for four hyperpera (*habere penes quemdam Erini uxoris Coste Gentilis corrigium unum argentei pignoratum penes dictam Erini pro perperis IIII*^{or}) and now she wanted her fideicommissaries to buy it back and then sell it to cover the expenses (*corigium vult redimi per dictos infrascriptos fideicomisarios, Et vult dictum corigium vendi debere et de ipsius processis fiant expense necesarie*).

The only other object mentioned in the testament was left to Caterina, wife of Georgius Belagamba, for her services during Mecosa's illness (*pro mercede quia ipsam servivit in sua egritudine*). This bequest, worth more than four ducats of Chios, was a *gopeletum unum panni vermilij*. Translating it as goblet (*gobelettus)* makes no sense with the scarlet cloth part, and similarly using the Ligurian Latin of *goballatus/gobeletum* as vessel with lid (vaso con coperchio).[157] Instead I believe it was a small hat, from cappelletto (and gobeletto is still the name of a typical Ligurian pastry with the characteristic shape).[158]

[156] De Ferrari 229.
[157] *VL*.
[158] A. Paganini, *Vocabolario domestico Genovese-Italiano* (Genoa, 1857).

Much more detailed was Iohannes Brexanus' will, which has been briefly mentioned earlier in regard to the real estate bequeathed to his daughter Margaritina.[159] The young child was not the only heir: he left to his wife Magdaleneta 400 gold ducats of Genoa, from which were to be deducted four and half shares that had been part of her dowry, and other things. She would also get all her clothes, rings, chests, belts, and what seems to be a sewing kit, with knives, a case for needles, and small silver scissors (*omnes vestes, anulos et capsias ipsius Magdalenete et corrigias suas de subtus et de super argenti, cum suis gladiis, agogiarolo et tesoiretis argenti*). He specified all the types of clothes she was to receive, winter as well as summer ones, those for working days and for holidays, and silk ones (*tam hiemalibus quam estivis et de diebus operarii quam festivis et de sirgo seu septa*). Among the things listed above was not included some jewellery: a clasp with pearls and ruby, a waved string with 164 pearls, two gold necklaces, and some pearl bracelets – *fermagium unum cum perlis sex et suo balasio, gropum unum perlarum veracium, continens pecios centum sexaginta quattuor, et cainete due auri, greghetini perlarum quos portat ad manus*. Those were to be sold and the proceeds given to Magdaleneta as final fulfilment of her dowry restitution. She would then dispose of the excess for the marriage of poor girls as she deemed fit. For the same purpose Iohannes tasked his wife with selling his clothes (*vestimenta*) and distributing the proceeds to poor girls so that they could marry (*dispensetur puellis pauperibus ad earum maritare*).

Analysing this document prompts several observations. Iohannes' affluence might have been the reason for the unusually (at least among our sample) detailed will, but it might have also depended on the fact that many members of his close family were alive (parents, sisters, uncle) and meticulous instructions were deemed necessary to avoid litigations (Fig. 15).

[159] Roccatagliata 118.

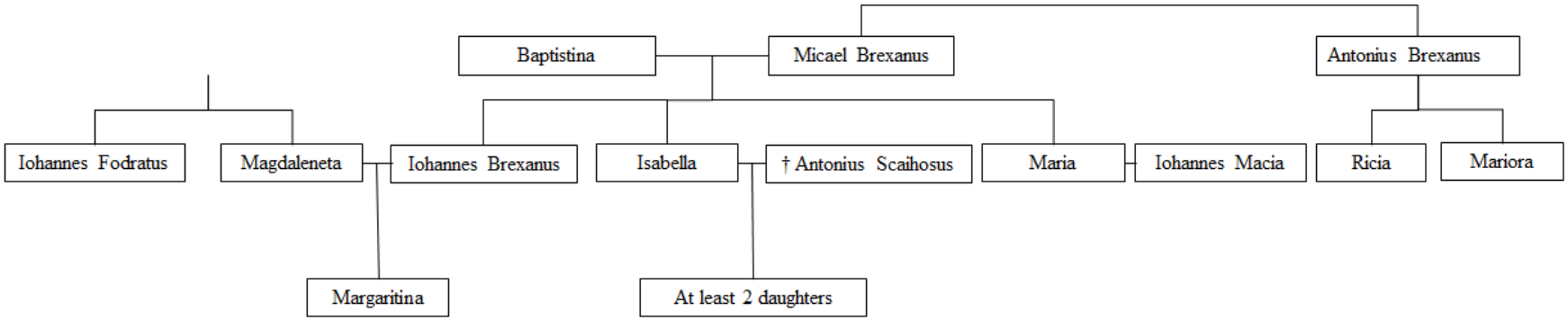


Fig. 15 Iohannes Brexanus' family tree

The use of the possessive for the first list of objects but not for the second group of jewels raises questions regarding ownership, use, and management of these items. Were the clothes, the sewing kit and the rest part of Magdaleneta's non-dotal goods, either brought into the marriage or acquired during it?[160] If so, why did Iohannes 'leave' them to her? Was it simply a way to make sure that she would get them? They clearly were not part of the dowry, as the dowry restitution is dealt separately. Or perhaps they were called hers because she wore and used them, but Iohannes had bought them for her? As Epstein observes, 'if the husband had spent money over the years clothing his wife, he may have thought that the clothes were his to leave'.[161] On the other hand, it makes sense that the jewels destined to sale were not indicated as Magdaleneta's as it would have meant selling her own property to get back her dowry.

The fact that she would then distribute the remaining money (as well as the proceeds from Iohannes' clothes sale) is just one of the ways Magdaleneta would exercise decisional powers after her husband's death. She was one of the testamentary executors, therefore dealing with the whole of Iohannes' estate, and one of Margaritina's guardians. However, the testator ordered for their daughter to be raised and educated by Iohannes Fodratus, Magdaleneta's brother and the child's uncle (*volens, ordinans et mandans ipse testator quod dicta Margaritina, filia sua, maneat, alatur, nutriatur et educator penes Iohannem Fodratum*). This is peculiar: while it was not a rarity for guardianship and custody to be separated, it was usually the mother being allowed to raise the children while not being their tutor.[162] Still, being a guardian meant that Magdaleneta would have been involved in the administration of her daughter's wealth, which would have been considerable. Besides real estate, Margaritina was to inherit all the assets and rights that Iohannes had over his parents'

[160] Bezzina, 'Married Women', 131–32.
[161] Epstein, *Wills*, 107.
[162] Winer, 'Family', 25; Coolidge, *Guardianship*, 67; Rich Abad, 76–79.

assets and inheritances. She would also receive an ornate bed with a featherbed with feathers from Flanders (*culceris una plume nova de Flandria*). The details imply that it was quite a luxury and might also suggest that it was not the only bed Iohannes owned.[163] It is also possible that it was specified because Margaritina would have brought it with her into her uncle's house.

Masè points out that in Venice beds belonging to wealthy people were part of the inherited houses and were not included among the personal belongings to leave as bequests. They were, however, often bequeathed to poor people as charitable gifts.[164] Indeed, that is what Guliermus Cravia *dictus* Figonus de Petralata did in his will on 5 August 1463.[165] He left to Margarita, *olim serva*, a bed with the bedding (specifically a quilt, a blanket, and a sheet), a chest that was at the foot of his bed, and all her clothes:

> *Item legavit Margarite olim serve ipsius testatoris lectum unum videlicet straponctam unam, cultrem unam, par unum linteaminum, banchale unum quod ad presens est ad pedes lecti ipsius testatoris, et omnes vestes dicte Margarite.*

The term *serva* was used for female servants, regardless of their status. Margarita could have been an ex-slave or simply a past employee. Balletto considers probable that she had been a freedwoman, manumitted by her master but still at his service.[166] The bequest might have been a recompense for her help during his illness (*corpore languens*). Another possibility is that it was his contribution to her dowry, as beds and bedding were often possessions brought by women into their marriages, as seen while discussing dowries.[167] However, the fact that

[163] H. L. S. Morgan, *Beds and Chambers in Late Medieval England: Readings, Representations and Realities* (Woodbridge, 2017), 25–28. Cf. Salter, 401.
[164] Masè, 173.
[165] Foglietta 290 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 843, doc. 256.
[166] Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi', 673.
[167] Masè, 172; Loengard, 172.

he did not specify that its use was *ad maritare* means that, even if that was Guliermus' intention, Margarita could dispose of the items bequeathed as she deemed fit.

Looking at the objects in bequests and dowries, it appears that only valuable ones such as beds, precious items (gold or silver articles, jewels), and some clothing had some kind of description. Dowries include more often generic collective nouns (*suppellettibus, arnisiis, rebus, rauba, massaliciis, bonis*), but it might be simply because in wills everything that was not specified was automatically part of the rest that was left to the universal heirs (*reliquorum omnium et singulorum bonorum suorum, mobilium et immobilium*). Because so many things are not mentioned, however, the picture of women's properties is partial. Those that are listed more often are objects typically portrayed as feminine: clothes and accessories, beds and bedding, and jewellery. Smail calls attention to the absent objects, which define a material culture as much as those present.[168] He admits the difficulty of this approach, and without inventories, which are supposed to be comprehensive lists, it is even harder. For example, in our documents there are no books or livestock. It might have to do with 'the long-lasting indifference of the Genoese towards cultural activity and intellectual leisure' or with the urban setting, but it cannot be excluded that women owned them even if they do not appear in the documents examined.[169]

Slaves

A particular type of property, and treated as such, were slaves. While female slaves were more numerous than male ones, female owners were not, and the documents where they appear do not reach double figures.

[168] Smail, 77.
[169] G. Petti Balbi, 'Intellectual Life', in *A Companion to Medieval Genoa* (2018), 320–44, p. 322.

We have mentioned Iohannes de Coronato selling a slaves while acting as attorney for his wife Lucia and his mother-in-law Iacha, and a representative buying a slave for *domina* Francha.[170] On 1 October 1453 *domina* Isabella, daughter of the late Borruellis Salvaighus and widow of Ambrosius de Nigro, manumitted her Circassian slave Caterina.[171] Another slave named Caterina was part of a dowry. On 13 September 1446 Antonius Michonus declared to have received the dowry for his wife Clarixeta from Genevra, widow of Antonius de Opicis and Clarixeta's aunt (*amita*).[172] The dowry was equivalent to 650 ducats of Chios and made partly by cash, partly by objects and jewels (*raubis et iocalibus*), and partly by the slave.

Slaves were frequently left as bequests. *Domina* Maria, daughter of the late *dominus* Petrus Iustinianus de Rocha and widow of *dominus* Neapolionus Iustinianus, had already left to her son Iohannes a slave *ante partem* (meaning it was an extra bequest before splitting the rest equally among the heirs), before she named him heir with his brother Octobonus on 27 June 1456.[173]

On 25 September 1456 Baptista Spinacius *quondam Bartholomei* ordered in his will to return to his wife Mariola her dowry of 1000 Genoese lire and the *antefactum* of 100 Genoese lire.[174] As long as she remained widowed and with their children (*stante et habitante in abitu viduali cum ipsis filiis ipsorum iugalium*), Baptista also left her and the children two female slaves: *ordinavit quod sclave due ipsius testatoris sint obligate servire et servire teneantur dicte Mariole et filiis ipsorum iugalium*.

[170] Di Chiavari 102; Piemontesi 20; see Chapter 2.
[171] Roccatagliata 23.
[172] A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 848, doc. 7. Cf. Balletto, 'Uomini di Novi', 16.
[173] De Recco 267. Cf. Balletto, 'L'émigration féminine', 305.
[174] De Recco 269. Cf. Origone, 'Chio', 157–61, 181–82. He was the same Batista Spinacius mentioned with Sobrana in Chapter 2. See more on him in Airaldi, 230–36.

The condition had been respected because in another document Mariola left to her children Francischeta, Iacobetus, and Bernardinus a slave called Ana, who would serve them for two years and then be freed.[175] I believe this document was a codicil: there is no preamble, heirs are not named nor fideicommissaries, and it is heavily abridged by the notary. Both Balletto and Becker report of a document from the same day (and the same filza, A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 944, n.n., 22 August 1461) as Mariola's will.[176] Balletto also mentions that another slave, Maria, was left for two years to Anastasia, widow of Franciscus Iustinianus de Garibaldo, and then she would be freed.

Balletto presents other examples of female slave-owners from unpublished documents, such as Ingo Giustiniani promising to support his mother *domina* Manfrena and her slave for the rest of her life.[177] There are also various cases of women who would potentially own slaves if they respected certain conditions or for a limited period of time. For example, the slave Lucia would have to serve her master Iohannes Meranus until his death and then his daughter Angeleta, but just until her marriage.[178]

Conclusions

Women's participation in the economy could take many forms and in this chapter I have considered the documents that inform us about women's properties not involved in economic transactions. No matter how much or how little someone owned, their belongings had a role, or a potential one, in the economy. However, simple ownership was often not recorded and it is to be expected that small amounts of money or modest possessions changing owner would not usually warrant a notarial deed.

[175] A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 944, doc. 128.
[176] Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi', 668–69; Becker, 425–27.
[177] Balletto, 'La schiavitù', 190–91, 208, 210.
[178] Sampietro 397.

A transfer of ownership did not necessarily mean buying and selling, but it could also take the form of exchanges and donations, which are not always easily distinguishable. Dowry and *antefactum* can be considered exchanges, as they were payments, in various forms and sizes, from the family of the bride to that of the groom and vice versa. Our knowledge regarding their consistency comes from dowry promises and receipts, but also from wills. The significant involvement of women in dowry-related contracts can probably be ascribed to Chios' 'colonial' status, with many women being immigrants and lacking male relatives on the island. The vast majority of marriage gifts were a combination of cash and objects, while houses were rarer. Reluctance to assign immovable property as dowry was also recognised by Hughes in Genoa, and across Western Mediterranean Europe too.[179] Even if the form the *antefacta* took is usually not specified, it would be fair to assume that something similar happened and that they, too, mostly consisted of moveable goods.[180] The reason was that, in both cases, there was a real risk that any property gifted would not revert back to its original owners, but it would be lost forever to the surviving spouse and their family.[181] Still, it appears that dowries, together with inheritances, were the main way through which women came into possession of real estate, which is in agreement with what revealed by purchase agreements analysed in the previous chapter. The importance of real estate can also be seen in the fact that it is the only type of property, besides slaves, that we find at the centre of controversies.

This chapter had the primary aim of expanding the knowledge about women's properties. The acts documenting transfers of ownership have widened our understanding of women's belongings, which would be extremely limited if we were to consider only the deeds recording economic transactions. To real estate, slaves, mastic, and shares, we can

[179] Hughes, 'From Brideprice', 281–83.
[180] Cf. Wessell Lightfoot, 'Patrician Widows', 218.
[181] Cf. Becker, 339–40, 356–60.

add clothes and accessories, jewellery, furniture and household goods, from silverware to sewing kits to linen. Unfortunately many mentions are left vague. Rarely is any furniture besides beds and chests listed, the same happening with household items, unless they were precious (usually silver). With objects generically grouped together, whether tools, furnishings, or even just 'stuff', the documentation used offers an incomplete portrait of women's properties. Women, of course, also had cash, but their liquidity should not be overestimated, especially considering that to a value given in currency did not necessarily correspond actual money.

Intrinsically connected with property are agency, possession, and management issues. During a marriage dotal goods were controlled by the husband, but the women retained the ownership, as exemplified by the fact that, except in one instance, all husbands arranged in their wills to return their wives' dowries. With conditional bequests of slaves, instead, women could manage and even own slaves without having complete control over them (for example when they were to be freed after a period of time). On another hand, as Duval points out, women's agency is 'tied less to their rights to possess property than to their ability to manage different kinds of assets, even if on someone else's behalf'.[182] Even when they seem to possess little agency when acting on their own, women's frequent appointment as executors and guardians meant that they managed considerable portions of patrimonies, even if on their relatives' behalf.[183]

[182] S. Duval, 'Women and Wealth in Late Medieval Pisa (c. 1350-1420)', ed. by Bezzina, *Beyond Their Dowries* (2018), 137–50, pp. 138, 144–45.
[183] Cf. Guzzetti, 'Le donne a Venezia', 56.

Chapter 4. Marriage and Remarriage

Women's legal status was shaped by a combination of marital status and lifecycle position. In his study on Genoese wills Epstein finds that 80% of the female testators between 1150 and 1250 described themselves as some man's daughter or wife (even if they were widows), or identified themselves as related to a man as mothers, sisters, or nieces.[1] Analysing court records from the late medieval kingdom of Aragon, Kelleher similarly notes that the vast majority of documents 'identify women only in relational terms, as wife, daughter, or widow of a given man'.[2]

Marriage was a central part of women's life, with implications for their social, economic, and legal status, and therefore can be studied from multiple point of views. The literature on the subject is abundant, going from analyses on specific perspectives (e.g. religious, documentary, legal) or places (e.g. Ragusa, Florence, Venice) to broader, more encompassing collections.[3] Chapter 3 provided a sample of the extensive bibliography on dowries, for example. As the economic side of marriage has been partially considered in the previous chapter through the analysis of dotal goods, the first part of this chapter explores other aspects of marriages in Genoese Chios, as revealed by the documentation examined.

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[1] Epstein, *Wills*, 41.

[2] Kelleher, *The Measure of Woman*, 8.

[3] E.g. E. Cohen and E. Horowitz, 'In Search of the Sacred: Jews, Christians and Rituals of Marriage in the Later Middle Ages', *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 20/2 (1990), 225–49; M. C. Howell, 'Marriage in Medieval Latin Christendom', in *A Companion to the Medieval World*, ed. by C. Lansing and E. D. English (Oxford, 2009), 130–60; *To Have and to Hold: Marrying and Its Documentation in Western Christendom, 400-1600*, ed. by P. L. Reynolds and J. Witte (Cambridge, 2007); *Married Women and the Law in Premodern Northwest Europe*, ed. by C. Beattie and M. F. Stevens (Woodbridge, 2013); *Regional Variations in Matrimonial Law and Custom in Europe, 1150–1600*, ed. by M. Korpiola (Leiden/Boston, 2011). D. Rheubottom, *Age, Marriage, and Politics in Fifteenth-Century Ragusa* (Oxford, 2000); Molho. Chojnacki wrote about various aspects of marriage in Venice, see S. Chojnacki, *Women and Men in Renaissance Venice: Twelve Essays on Patrician Society* (Baltimore, 2000); S. Chojnacki, 'Marriage Legislation and Patrician Society in Fifteenth Century Venice', in *Law, Custom, and the Social Fabric in Medieval Europe: Essays in Honor of Bryce Lyon*, ed. by B. S. Bachrach and D. Nicholas (Kalamazoo, 1990), 163–84. Among broader works see *Marriage in Italy, 1300-1650*, ed. by K. Lowe and T. Dean (Cambridge, 1998); *Marriage in Premodern Europe: Italy and Beyond*, ed. by J. Murray (Toronto, 2012); *Marriage in Europe, 1400-1800*, ed. by S. Seidel Menchi (Toronto, 2016).

If marriage was a common experience for many, in late medieval and early modern Europe remarriage was also frequent, and second marriages are the topic of the second part of the chapter.[4] Many factors could affect the choice to remarry: age, absence or presence of children, family, social status, economic standing and resources, local laws and customs.[5] In Jewish practice, for example, remarriage was common because the married status was considered the ideal.[6] Girls getting married very young, and often to older men, was another factor encouraging second marriages, especially if they were childless.[7] However, widowers remarried more often and more rapidly than widows, as remarrying women, especially if mothers, faced religious and cultural disapproval, and legal limitations.[8] Widows were more prone to remarry in the north than in the south of Europe, where they were more penalised for it.[9] Pisan widows who remarried would lose all the mandates granted by their late husbands, and in 1415 Florentine statutes even forbade a widow returning to her kin's house to bring her children with her.[10] Some Italian cities like Milan and Venice guaranteed widows' rights to their dowries in order to facilitate remarriage, but testamentary and inheritance practices, and even moral judgement, were against it.[11] In many cities husbands

[4] Cf. *Stepfamilies in Europe 1400-1800*, ed. by L. Warner (London/New York, 2018).
[5] Cf. Ward, 63–64; L. Warner, 'Introduction: Stepfamilies in the European Past', in *Stepfamilies* (2018), 1–19, p. 11; Wessell Lightfoot, 'Patrician Widows', 213–14, 226–27.
[6] A. Guerson and D. Wessell Lightfoot, 'Jewish Families, Conversion, and the Creation of Stepfamilies in Girona after the Anti-Jewish Violence of 1391', in *Stepfamilies* (2018), 20–37, p. 24.
[7] Meek, 147.
[8] Cf. Warner, 'Introduction', 11–13; Wessell Lightfoot, *Women, Dowries and Agency*, 87; Calvi, 'Reconstructing the Family', 275–77; Cohen and Horowitz, 243–49; Howell, 'Marriage', 144.
[9] Ward, 63; M. C. Howell, *Commerce before Capitalism in Europe, 1300-1600* (New York, 2010), 104.
[10] Duval, 145; S. Chojnacki, 'Daughters and Oligarchs: Gender and the Early Renaissance State', in *Gender and Society*, ed. by Brown and Davis (1998), 63–86, p. 81.
[11] Mogorović Crljenko, 148–51; A. Bellavitis, '"Et vedoando sia donna et madonna": Guardianship and Remarriage in Sixteenth-Century Venice', in *Less Favored – More Favored: Proceedings from a Conference on Gender in European Legal History, 12th – 19th Centuries, September 2004*, ed. by G. Jacobsen and others (Copenhagen, 2005), p. 3 at http://www.kb.dk/export/sites/kb_dk/da/nb/publikationer/fundogforskning-online/pdf/A15_Bellavitis.pdf; Wessell Lightfoot, *Women, Dowries and Agency*, 87; Chojnacki, 'Getting Back the Dowry', 104.

tried to prevent their widows from remarrying and taking their dowries into another family by offering them economic advantages and power.[12]

Genoese husbands, too, often offered their widows the possibility to inherit the bulk of their estate instead of remarrying and getting only what the law entitled them to. Kittel considers this tactic effective as in the wills analysed almost three-quarters of the single women testators were widows.[13] Even if children were usually bound to the paternal house and lineage, Genoese laws allowed them to follow their mother, whether she returned to her father's house or created a new family. Sometimes the marriage contract included that the husband would provide for his new bride's children, but more often they were simply absorbed into the new household.[14] Nonetheless, Epstein finds that in his wills 'the most common condition attached to a wife's legacy was that she not remarry', and according to Spanish traveller Pero Tafur, who visited Genoa at the end of December 1435, 'widows do not take a second husband, and if they do they suffer in their reputation'.[15] This was in line with the Christian attitude spread in Mediterranean Europe.[16] The idea of female remarriage as something shameful, however, did not seem to have followed the Genoese in Chios, where Argenti reported that second marriages were 'very far from uncommon'. This was supposedly due to a tax called *argomoniatico* (*άργομουνιατικόν*) that was to be paid by widows who had no intention to marry again.[17] The second part of the chapter looks at the

[12] Kuehn, 'Figlie', 453–54; Chabot, 'Lineage Strategies', 138; Chojnacki, 'Getting Back the Dowry', 98; Guzzetti, 'Le donne a Venezia', 67–68. On the relationship between remarried mothers and their children see also C. Klapisch-Zuber, 'The "Cruel Mother": Maternity, Widowhood, and Dowry in Florence in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', in *Women, Family, and Ritual* (1985), 117–31; I. Chabot, 'Seconde nozze e identità materna nella Firenze del tardo Medioevo', in *Tempi e spazi*, ed. by Seidel Menchi, Jacobson Schutte, and Kuehn (1999), 493–523.
[13] Kittell, 'Testaments of Two Cities', 63.
[14] Petti Balbi, 'Donna et domina', 159–60, 172; Hughes, 'Domestic Ideals', 140.
[15] Epstein, *Wills*, 107–09; P. Tafur, *Travels and Adventures, 1435-1439*, ed. & trans. by M. Letts (London, 1926), 29.
[16] See for example K. L. Reyerson, *Women's Networks in Medieval France. Gender and Community in Montpellier, 1300-1350* (Basingstoke, 2016), 60.
[17] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 458–60.

tax, in particular its origins and reasons of existence, and then at the remarried women appearing in the deeds.

The final section of the chapter considers then the women who are mentioned in documents as *domina*. Studies on medieval Italian women have found that some husbands designated in their wills their wives as *donna et domina* (or *donna et madonna*). This gave them some rights and authority over the deceased husbands' estate, but it is not clear to which extent.

Chojnacki talks about Venetian widows being invested with authority over their children and with rights to material support thanks to the usufruct of their husbands' assets. However, he notes that substantive prerogatives could be given even without a formal designation as *donna et madonna*.[18] Bellavitis reports that according to Venetian Statutes 'to be *donna et madonna* simply meant that she could continue to be the house mistress as she had been during her married life'.[19] Florentine husbands were ready to give their widows powers over the family to prevent their remarriage, but Chabot warns not to overemphasise these women's power because their position as *domina* was conditional both on a 'chaste and honest' lifestyle and on legal interpretations.[20] Calvi establishes a strong tie between this title and guardianship in early modern Tuscany ('widows named as guardians – *donne et madonne*'): in their wills husbands would leave their wives in charge of their children's care as well as of the administration of their estate, of which they enjoyed the usufruct.[21] Calvi also states that 'a widow was *donna et madonna* and could remain so with the sole condition that she agrees not to remarry', otherwise she would lose the guardianship, the right to use

[18] S. Chojnacki, 'Willing Patronesses: Choosing, Loosing, and Binding in Venetian Noblewomen's Wills', in *Venice and the Veneto during the Renaissance: The Legacy of Benjamin Kohl*, ed. by M. Knapton, J. E. Law, and A. A. Smith (Florence, 2014), 119–39, pp. 132–33.
[19] Bellavitis, '"Et vedoando"', p. 3 on the digital version.
[20] Chabot, 'Lineage Strategies', 138–40. Cf. also Galasso, 172.
[21] Calvi, 'Reconstructing the Family', 280, 290.

the family house, and the usufruct of her first husband's properties.[22] In Pisa, too, the clause *domina et usufructuria* had stipulations: the widow could not reclaim her dowry, had to stay with the children if there were any, and could not remarry.[23]

The last section of the chapter aims to investigate whether the women who were called *domina* in Chios' documents were widows named *donna et domina* by their husbands' wills and therefore would hold the title and any rights connected to it only as long as they would not remarry.

Marriage

Wills did not only contain provisions to prevent widows from remarrying but also to encourage young girls to marry. An example of both can be found in the testament that Petrus Iustinianus *olim* de Rocha *quondam Simonis* made on 31 August 1394, before leaving for Egypt (*previo navigare ad partes Egipti*).[24] He left 300 Genoese lire for the marriage of his illegitimate daughter Catalina: *ordinavit quod Catalina filia ipsius naturalis habeat et [habe]re debeat ad suum maritare […] libras trecentas ianuinorum*. Until that moment she was to be provided with food, clothes, shoes, and everything necessary (*nutriri, vestire et calciare et alia necesaria habere pro victu et vestitu suo*). After some other bequests and instructions, Petrus named his mother Luchina Iustiniana and his sister-in-law Petrina, widow of his brother Simon, his universal heirs, but only as long as they both remained widows and with their children (*ipsas stantes in habitu viduali cum eorum filiis*). They had permission to sell his assets to provide his nieces with dowries. However, if Petrina did not want to stay with her children nor remain widowed (*[Si] vero dicta Petrina non velet stare*

[22] Calvi, 'Rights', 146. See also G. Calvi, 'Widows, the State and the Guardianship of Children in Early Modern Italy', in *Widowhood*, ed. by Cavallo and Warner (1999), 209–19, p. 213.
[23] Duval, 143.
[24] Di Chiavari 76. Cf. Becker, 432–33.

cum filliis suis nec vitam vidualem ducere), Luchina would be the only heir, and after her death Simon's daughters would inherit.

When we find bequests for widows tied to their marital status, those women were part of the testator's family: most commonly they are the wives, but sometimes mothers, daughters, or even sisters-in-law like Petrina. It is not surprising since people outside the family would not have any interest in them maintaining widowhood. Girls receiving bequests for their dowries, instead, were not always related to the testator, sometimes they were even complete strangers.

When Antonius Pissis made a will on 8 November 1459, he left money bequests to religious institutions, to poor nubile girls and to the poor in general (*pauperes puelas maritandas et pauperes personas*), and to some specific girls, again for their wedding (*ad eius maritare*).[25] Two of them, Blanchineta and Orieta, daughters of the late Andrea Creti and Mariola, could have been relatives: from another document we learn that Mariola's father was Aloscii Pisis.[26] A familiar relationship would explain why their bequests were of 200 ducats each, while the third girl, Caterineta daughter of Georgius de Valebona, received only 25 ducats.[27] This testament highlights the importance marriage had not only for families, but for the society as a whole: providing dowries to poor girls was one of the most popular forms of charity in Genoa as well as elsewhere in Europe.[28]

For the very nature of the documentation examined, specifics about the wedding itself are extremely scarce. We know that marriage was a process rather than a single moment in time, although the deeds do not offer details regarding modalities or timings.[29]

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[25] A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 848, doc. 354, already mentioned in Chapters 2 and 3.
[26] De Ferrari 234.
[27] Cf. Guzzetti, 'Le donne a Venezia', 62.
[28] Cf. Epstein, *Wills*, 185–86; Meek, 140; Wessell Lightfoot, *Women, Dowries and Agency*, 131; V. Fiorelli, 'Class Privileges and the Public Good. The Monti dei Maritaggi in Early Modern Naples', in *Gender, Law and Economic Well-Being*, ed. by Bellavitis and Zucca Micheletto (2018), 121–35, pp. 121–23; Guzzetti, 'Le donne a Venezia', 61–64.
[29] Cf. D. Lombardi, 'Marriage in Italy', in *Marriage in Europe, 1400-1800*, ed. by S. Seidel Menchi (Toronto, 2016), 94–121, pp. 94–97.

Kuehn identifies three steps in a typical Florentine marital process: the betrothal (*sponsalitium*), the exchange of vows (*matrimonium*), and the delivery of the dowry, often with a procession where the bride and her goods were led into the husband's house (*traditio* or *deductio*).[30] Documents from Chios show different realities. Marta Fatinanti, for example, had promised the dowry when her daughter Maria had been conducted to her husband's house (*pro dictis dotibus Marie dicta Marta dare et solvere promisit et convenit dicto Georgio, presenti, quando videlicet transduxerit dictam Mariam, eius uxorem*), but she had not given it yet.[31]

An even more interesting case is that of Teodora, daughter of the late Nicola *botarius*: when her husband Baptista de Rubeis de Castronovo declared to have received her dowry, she had yet to move in with him (*nondum tamen transducte ad nuptias*).[32] Curiously the act reads *Teodore, uxori sue, sibi desponsate*. In the early Middle Ages *desponsatio* was the usual Latin term for the agreement to get married and *sponsa* or *desponsata* meant a woman betrothed but yet to be fully married.[33] Both Kuehn and Polonio agree that a woman in Florence and in Genoa was deemed married, and therefore called *uxor*, only after she had been 'handed over' to the husband and the marriage had been consummated.[34] Teodora, instead, was called *uxor* even if she had yet to move into the conjugal home.

Somewhere in between those two situations is the union between Iane Demerode *quondam Philippi, burgensis Peyre*, and Perpetua, daughter of *dominus* Franciscus Iustinianus de Campis.[35] When Iane acknowledged having received the dowry of 800

[30] T. Kuehn, 'Contracting Marriage in Renaissance Florence', in *To Have and to Hold*, ed. by Reynolds and Witte (2007), 390–420.
[31] Panissaro 158.
[32] Roccatagliata 49.
[33] Polonio, 1; P. L. Reynolds, 'Marrying and Its Documentation in Pre-Modern Europe: Consent, Celebration, and Property', in *To Have and to Hold*, ed. by Reynolds and Witte (2007), 1–42, pp. 4–6.
[34] Kuehn, 'Contracting Marriage', 401; Polonio, 9. For a theological discussion see P. L. Reynolds, 'The Regional Origins of Theories about Marital Consent and Consummation during the Twelfth Century', in *Regional Variations in Matrimonial Law and Custom in Europe, 1150–1600*, ed. by M. Korpiola (Leiden/Boston, 2011), 43–75.
[35] Di Chiavari 64. See also Di Chiavari 65-66.

Genoese lire, the *traductio* had been recent (*uxoris dicte Iane dudum transducte*). This marriage was between members of two important Genoese families (Demerode was a prominent family in Pera), but often it is not possible to know if the union was between members of the same social class, as women were not always indicated with their fathers' name when they were already married.[36] However, there is a tendency of individuals bearing surnames of important alberghi to marry each other (e.g. Giustiniani, Salvagus, de Nigro, Adorno, Lomellino, Paterio). For other people, unfortunately, it was not possible to recognise particular marriage strategies, for example if husband and father-in-law had the same occupation.[37]

It is slightly easier to look for patterns of marriage and intermarriage between religious groups, in this case considered as Latin-Catholic, Greek-Orthodox, and Jewish, without taking into account internal divisions. For example, Greeks could be natives from Chios or from elsewhere (other islands, Asia Minor, Black Sea region, mainland Greece), Jews could be of Greek origins or immigrants, Latins included Westerners but also converts. It should be noted that, unless there is a clear mention of someone's ethnicity (e.g. someone called *greca/us* or swearing *Grecorum more*), it is not always possible to know if they were Greek or Latin simply by their names. Both Latins and Greeks could have Christian names (sometimes the same as Jewish ones too), and the notary being Latin meant that he would probably write them in a latinised version. A name including a provenience is also not necessarily a reliable indicator, as it could simply be a way to better identify someone: a man named Andrea Creti or Anthonius de Metelino, could be Greek or simply a Latin who used to live in the islands of Crete or Lesbos.[38] However, I would exclude that a name

[36] Cf. M. Balard, 'La société pérote aux XIVe–XVe siècles: autour des Demerode et des Draperio', in *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography, and Everyday Life*, ed. by N. Necipoğlu (Leiden, 2001), 299–311, esp. 305–06.
[37] Cf. Bezzina, *Artigiani*, 141.
[38] De Ferrari 234 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 764, doc. 245.

referencing somewhere in Liguria or Italy could indicate anything else than an 'Italian' person.[39]

Most people married into their own community, which is not surprising since endogamy was common in many European medieval societies. Studies show endogamous inclinations among Venetian Candiote feudatories as well as among patricians on Venetian mainland and in Ragusa.[40] Molho finds that homogamy is the practice that best describes the matrimonial policies of the late-medieval Florentine ruling class.[41] Fossi and Visceglia state that economically powerful Italian national groups in 16th-century Rome used endogamy to defend their economic interests, their cultural identity, as well as a sense of belonging and superiority.[42] It was not, however, a practice limited to elite groups or to those holding power, as it is found also among the artisan class in Valencia.[43]

In Chios it was not only Latins who preferred marrying each other. When Greeks and Jews appear in the documents, they are usually married to other Greeks and Jews. When mixed marriages happened, however, they were mostly between Greek women and Latin men. My findings are consistent with those of Basso and Balard, even without considering those examples presented by the latter that are taken from Argenti and wrong (e.g. Lazarus Argenti de Chio instead of Lazarinus de Vultabio, *dominus* Pantaleone Argenti instead of Quilicus de Franchi).[44] This predominance can be found in Venetian Crete too, where, according to McKee, Greek men were discouraged from marrying Latin women because it

[39] As Kamenaga-Anzai notes, 'the place name in each persons' surname does not exactly mean the native place', but there is a high possibility that 'it should be his or his ancestor's native place', Y. Kamenaga-Anzai, 'An Aspect of the Genoese Network and Its Colonial World in the Middle Ages', *Mediterranean World = 地中海論集*, 22 (2015), 137–46, p. 138 n.5. Cf. also Guzzetti, 'Le donne a Venezia', 28.

[40] McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, 61–66; Sperling, *Convents*, passim e.g. 3, 6, 9, 23; Chojnacki, 'Marriage Legislation', 170; Rheubottom, 81; S. M. Stuard, 'Dowry Increase and Increment in Wealth in Medieval Ragusa (Dubrovnik)', *The Journal of Economic History*, 41/4 (1991), 795–811, pp. 797–98, 802.

[41] Molho, 237, 297, chapter 7.

[42] I. Fossi and M. A. Visceglia, 'Marriage and Politics at the Papal Court in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in *Marriage in Italy*, ed. by Lowe and Dean (1998), 197–224, pp. 203, 205.

[43] Wessell Lightfoot, *Women, Dowries and Agency*, 49–54.

[44] De Canella p. 31; Balard, 'The Genoese in the Aegean', 168. De Ferrari 169 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 765, doc. 234; Foglietta 332 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 843, doc. 51.

would have meant that Latin dowries and properties would have passed into Greek hands.[45] In Venice, too, patrician women were discouraged from marrying down or out, while non-patrician ones could marry in if their dowry could compensate for the lack of prestige.[46]

Except the dubious case of Melchionis Josep and then his daughter Diamante, there is no inter-faith couple where a spouse is Jewish. Diamante is also one of three cases where the husband clearly followed Genoese law by either giving an *antefactum* of 100 Genoese lire or corresponding to half of the dowry. The other two, Iohannes de Livelato and Maria, and Iohannes de Moncelis and Marosa, were mixed marriages (all three if Diamante's father was Jewish). Unsurprisingly this seems to suggest that non-Latin women adapted to Genoese customs when marrying a Latin man.[47] More often, however, the provision set by law was disregarded, which is something that happened in Genoa too.[48]

The *Argomoniatico*

Marriage and its numerous facets have been largely explored and comparative possibilities are abundant. Less studied and much more peculiar is the *argomoniatico* (*άργομουνιατικόν*), a tax that widows in Chios who did not want to marry again had to pay.

Its first mention is found in Nicolas de Nicolay's work about his journey in Turkey, taken in 1551 as the royal cartographer for the French crown.[49] The name is a compound of two words. Αργός in modern and Byzantine Greek means slow or late, from the ancient Greek ἀεργός meaning not working or idle. The other word is generally interpreted as a vulgar way to refer to female genitals (*μουνί*), while Lucien Caes proposed, instead, that

[45] See McKee, 'Women', 40; McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, 72.
[46] J. G. Sperling, 'The Paradox of Perfection: Reproducing the Body Politic in Late Renaissance Venice', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 40/1 (1999), 3–32, pp. 21-22.
[47] Lock, 291, 294.
[48] Hughes, 'From Brideprice', 283–84; Hughes, 'Domestic Ideals', 130.
[49] D. Brafman, 'Nicolas de Nicolay', in *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History, Vol. 6: Western Europe (1500-1600)*, ed. by D. Thomas and J. Chesworth (Leiden/Boston, 2014), 752–63.

μουν- might mean alone, solitude, celibacy, or even permanence.[50] In the first edition, dated 1568, de Nicolay translated *argomoniatico*, after apologising to his readers, as 'con reposé ou inutile'. The Italian edition of 1576 read 'conno sciopperato o inutile'. Both mean 'womb on strike or useless'.[51] The same translation was given by Bouchet in 1584 and then by Brantôme in 1666 (but written around 1601).[52] Following Caes' interpretation, instead, the reference would not be to an object (female genitals) but to the people subjected to this tax: widows who refused to take another husband and were consequently alone.

Citing Nicolas de Nicolay and Hieronimo Giustiniani, both writing at the end of the 16th century, scholars such as Argenti and Pistarino mentioned the *argomoniatico* as a tax of Greek origins that all women wanting to remain widows had to pay.[53] Balletto goes as far as saying that it was a tax of Byzantine origins for unmarried women or widows not remarried.[54] The original sources, however, present a slightly different situation. In his report de Nicolay simply wrote that it was a custom from ancient times still observed ('osservano ab antico questo costume').[55] According to Argenti, this information and the obvious derivation of the name imply that the tax was of Greek origin. Hieronimo Giustiniani published his history of Chios in 1586 and wrote that during the Genoese period a law called *argomuniatico* was imposed against Greek widows ('fu a quei tempi de' Signori Giustiniani ordinata una legge a Scio contra le donne vidue greche, chiamata argomuniatico').[56] Only Caes brought up again this reference to Greek women being the only ones subjected to the

[50] L. Caes, 'L'origine historique de l'argomo(u)niatikon ou contribution de veuvage permanent imposée dans l'île de Chio à certaines veuves', *Revue Internationale des Droits de l'antiquité*, 13 (1966), 123–76, pp. 142–44.
[51] N. de Nicolai, *Les quatre premiers livres des navigations et pérégrinations orientales* (Lyon, 1568), 54; N. de Nicolai, *Le navigationi et viaggi nella Turchia* (Antwerp, 1576), lib. 2, p. 8.
[52] Cf. P. Lemerle, ''ΑΡΓΟΜΟΥΝΙΑΤΙΚΌΝ', *Revue Archéologique*, s.6 t.31/32 (1948), 618–20; Caes, 123–33.
[53] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 458–60; *CGCC*, 149.
[54] '[...] nella "colonia" genovese di Chio le donne che non si sposavano erano soggette all' "argomoniatico": la tassa di origine bizantina per le nubili o vedove non rimaritate', Balletto, 'Schiavi albanesi', 329.
[55] De Nicolai, *Le navigationi*, lib. 2, p. 8.
[56] G. Giustiniani, *Hieronimo Giustiniani's Historia di Scio*, ed. by Ph. P. Argenti (1586; Cambridge, repr. 1943), 433–34.

tax.[57] Basso talks about it in relation to mastic farmers, whom we know were mainly Greeks, saying that it was a tradition maintained since Byzantine times. However, he does not say it was limited only to Greek widows.[58]

Looking at Byzantine attitudes towards remarriage, a Greek origin of the tax appears at the very least unlikely. Widows were actively discouraged from remarrying unless they were still young and childless, and even then, their social status was negatively affected by a second marriage.[59] Theologian John Meyendorff explained that the idea that death itself does not end a marriage — which is an eternal bond that continues in the resurrection — was the reason why remarriage in Byzantium was only tolerated and never encouraged.[60] With the *argomoniatico* women who wanted to remain widows had to pay: it does seem like an encouragement towards remarriage.

In 1961 linguist Manlio Cortellazzo wrote in a short article that the Byzantine origin was a hypothesis based only on the Greek name of the tax, which needed to be supported with other historical and juridical evidence, and not only linguistic one.[61] I have found no further studies on the matter, but there are doubts about the linguistic evidence too. It seems improbable that the Byzantine administration would have used such a vulgar word to name a tax, which would have then appeared in official documentation.[62] After refuting the thesis of a Byzantine origin and the even less plausible Turkish one suggested by Lemerle, Caes presented a compelling case for the *argomoniatico* as a Genoese sanction. He argued that the ordinance would have been in Latin, and even in an eventual Greek translation, it would not have used such a term. Even if he had seemingly been ignored by the subsequent works

[57] Caes, 141, 163.
[58] E. Basso, 'Il mondo egeo tardomedievale: paesaggi agrari della «Latinocrazia»', in *I paesaggi agrari d'Europa (secoli XIII-XV), Atti del XXIV Convegno Internazionale di Studi (Pistoia, 16-19 maggio 2013)* (Rome, 2015), 201–28, p. 220.
[59] L. E. Mitchell, *Family Life in the Middle Ages* (Westport – CT, 2007), 145.
[60] J. Meyendorff, 'Christian Marriage in Byzantium: The Canonical and Liturgical Tradition', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 44 (1990), 99–107, pp. 100–01.
[61] M. Cortelazzo, 'Qualche parola su Ἀργομουνιατικόν', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 54 (1961), 15–17.
[62] My thanks to Nicholas Coureas for raising this point.

on the topic, Caes also offered a reasonable explanation for the Greek name: *argomoniatico* was how the tax was known among the people of Chios, but, at least at the beginning, it did not have an official connotation. Why did the Genoese apply, if not invented, such a tax in Chios when it did not exist in Genoa?

Looking at other colonial experiences, in other periods and places, such as early colonisation of the Americas by the Spanish in the 16th -17th centuries or 18th-century Georgia, a common trait emerges: the scarcity of marriageable women, and even more, a shortage of women from the mother-country.[63] It has been noted, for example, that colonial widows in 16th-century New France remarried at extremely high rates, and that the traditional waiting period for widows to remarry was ignored.[64] Colonial population was usually predominantly male and often transient, and Chios was not an exception.[65] Due to its geographical position and its role in commercial networks, it is unsurprising that the island attracted a moving population of merchants, ship-owners, and sailors. For this reason the government tried to encourage permanent immigration. At the beginning of the Genoese rule, for example, lands were freely granted to Genoese with the condition that they would settle with their families on the island, which they would be allowed to leave only for limited periods of time, usually for commercial reasons.[66] Marriage by proxy was also a way to cope with the lack of women: in 1349 Rafael Paterius *quondam Lanfranchi* appointed Franciscus Arangius as his agent to marry Thedora Vignosa *quondam Octolini* de Ianua (*ordinavit […] procuratorem […] ad desponsandum Thedoram*).[67] It is the only example found, and the

[63] K. V. Powers, *Women in the Crucible of Conquest: The Gendered Genesis of Spanish American Society, 1500-1600* (Albuquerque, 2005), 12, 92; B. Marsh, '"The Very Sinews of a New Colony": Demographic Determinism and the History of Early Georgia Women, 1732-1752', in *Gender, Race and Religion in the Colonization of the Americas*, ed. by N. E. Jaffary (Aldershot, 2007), 39–53, pp. 41–42.
[64] M. Zug, 'Lonely Colonist Seeks Wife: The Forgotten History of America's First Mail Order Brides', *Duke Journal of Gender Law & Policy*, 20 (2012), 85–125, p. 107.
[65] Cf. Balard, 'La société pérote', 301.
[66] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 570–76, 598–99; 'Romanie', 18/1, 705; *CGCC*, 85, 476–77.
[67] De Bracellis 50 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, cart. 317, pp. 41v-42.

only one Pistarino offered before stating that it was a widespread practice among Genoese bachelors and widowers in Chios.[68]

To scarceness of Latin women has also been attributed the phenomenon of mixed marriages and its encouragement by the government.[69] In 1428 fiscal exemptions were granted to immigrants of any ethnicity who would settle on the island. For those who would marry women of the *Masticaria* (the area of production of mastic), however, it was mandatory to be mastic workers, and their children would inherit their duties and obligations.[70] They were required to collect a fixed quota of mastic proportional to the amount of trees they were assigned or they had to pay a fine. They could not leave Chios without losing property rights, and their movements within the island were restricted, too, to avoid the land being left uncultivated.[71]

Medieval ports like Chios attracted men looking to take advantage of the commercial opportunities offered.[72] Consequently the male population was larger than the female one because the arrival of western male immigrants, usually single, was not balanced with a corresponding influx of women. I believe this might be a reason for the predominance of mixed marriages between Greek women and Latin men over those between Latin women and Greek men: there simply were not enough Latin women.[73] We cannot exclude also economic reasons, such as promoting circulation of wealth as proposed by McKee for Crete.[74]

A low number of women could also be one of the reasons for the lack of dowry inflation as well as for the apparent absence of female religious orders on the island.

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[68] Pistarino, 'Notazioni', 61.
[69] Passim Origone, 'Chio' and Balletto, 'Società'.
[70] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 397 n.5. My thanks to Enrico Basso for providing me with the transcription of the referenced document, A.S.G., *Archivio Segreto*, Materie Politiche, 2737B.
[71] Rovere, docc. 96, 106; Balard, 'Le mastic', 224.
[72] Cf. Dincer, 'Wills', 325.
[73] De Canella p. 31; Balard, 'The Genoese in the Aegean', 168; Lock, 292.
[74] See McKee, 'Women', 40; McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, 72.

Competition would have been among men to marry the few available women rather than among women having to secure a husband by bringing dowries of ever increasing value. Moreover, if women were encouraged to marry and then remarry, it is plausible to think that they were not encouraged to enter convents as it would have reduced even more the number of marriageable women.

Even if I have found only one remarried Greek woman, it should not lead us to think that they were less impacted by the *argomoniatico*. Various considerations refute this idea. Marriages between members of the same community were the majority, leaving us with limited knowledge about Greek couples. The tax targeted widows who did not want to marry again, so it was clearly meant to be a deterrent to maintaining widowhood in an attempt to increase the number of women available for marriage. It would not have been logical to exclude from this measure the largest part of the female population on the island. Caes, in fact, stated that the law being against Greek widows, as written by Giustiniani, was not limiting because the population in Chios was largely Greek.[75] When Basso writes about widows in the *Masticaria* being forced to marry again, he also adds that the new husband would inherit the deceased's duties. He suggests that this measure was limited to widows with no adult sons, either because the children were still underage or because they had no male children at all.[76] A lack of male workers would have surely been damaging, as even nowadays mastic cultivation and harvest see a clear repartition of tasks between men and women.[77] Caes, too, wrote about Greek widows without children being the ones sanctioned, but it mostly seems like he applied to the *argomoniatico* some characteristics of Western

[75] Caes, 163.
[76] Basso, 'Il mondo egeo', 220.
[77] UNESCO – Intangible Cultural Heritage: https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/know-how-of-cultivating-mastic-on-the-island-of-chios-00993.

Roman emperor Majorian's law, the *Novella Maiorani* 6 (458), which he argued was the inspiration for the Genoese ordinance.[78]

Overall the existence of such a tax in a context like Chios under the Genoese makes sense. However, with no direct mention in documents and only few sources, we do not know if it targeted a specific social group or class or age bracket, how much they were supposed to pay, or if there were any changes over time. With no tax records, we do not even know if the *argomoniatico* was ever applied: at the moment we have no evidence that anyone living in Chios during the Genoese period had actually ever paid a similar tax.

Remarried Women

Argenti wrote that second marriages of women in the notarial deeds were numerous, but only cited eleven examples. In the 1168 acts read for this thesis I was able to find eleven cases among more than three hundred and forty women, with two of them not being one hundred percent certain. Combining Argenti's findings and my own, the number reaches nineteen. It is even more important than usual to keep in mind that the sources sampled were produced by Genoese notaries, which might have played a role in the remarried women seeming to be mostly Latin.

While not the focus of the deeds, our women's (re)married status is often clearly indicated. Most commonly they are mentioned as (*olim) uxor (quondam)…nunc uxor,* like Marieta *olim uxor Marcii balador de moia et nunc uxor Nicolai de Recho*.[79] Other times we can infer a second marriage: Nicolaus Romanus is said to have been Angela's first husband (*Nicolao Romano primo viro ipsius Angele*) in a document where she appears married to Petrus de Zoalio.[80] I believe she is the same listed by Argenti as 'Angeletta widow of Niccoló

[78] Caes, 172–75. Cf. A. Arjava, *Women and Law in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 1996), 170.
[79] De Ferrari 237.
[80] De Ferrari 248 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi,* filza 764, doc. 406.

Ravano married Pietro de Zoaglio'.[81] In the document he referred to I read *Angeleta filia dicti quondam Ambrogii uxoris primo loco dicti quondam Nicolai Romano et nunc uxoris Petri de Zoalio*.[82] Angeleta can be easily explained as a diminutive and Romano/Ravano as a mistranscription.

The creation of a new (step)family could be more or less successful.[83] A complex case of second marriages and the merging of families is that of Zenevvra, who is also listed by Argenti, as 'Zeneivra Besagnina *quondam* Domenico, widow of Giacomo Bornano, married Giacomo Vinaccia of Albenga' (Fig. 16).[84] She first appears on 11 February 1381 as *Zenevvra, filia Dominici Bexagnini, olim uxor quondam Iacobi Romani senescharchi et nunc uxor Iacobi Vinacie de Albingano*: Zenevra, daughter of Domenicus Bexagninus, once wife of the late Iacobus Romanus *senescharchus* (possibly a steward, if intended as occupational title) and now wife of Iacobus Vinacia de Albingano.[85] In two other documents drawn up on the same day we read that Angelus Senescharchus de Roma had been Zenevvra's first husband (*qui fuit primus vir dicte Zenevvre*) and that she had a daughter, Catalina.[86] Catalina's father was not Angelus but the late Michael de Insula de Saona.[87] Angelus, however, had a son, Nicolaus, from his first marriage with the late Richa (*Nicolai, filii quondam Angeli Romani senescharchi; quondam Riche prime uxoris dicti Angeli*).[88] Nicolaus was involved in a controversy with his stepsister: Angelus had provided the dowry for Catalina, but Nicolaus claimed rights over it as Richa's universal heir.[89]

[81] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 459.
[82] A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 848, doc. 450.
[83] Warner, *Stepfamilies in Europe 1400-1800*, passim. See also Chabot, 'Matrigne'.
[84] *Occupation*, vol. 1, 459.
[85] De Canella 33.
[86] De Canella 34-35.
[87] De Canella 38.
[88] De Canella 11, 34.
[89] De Canella 11.

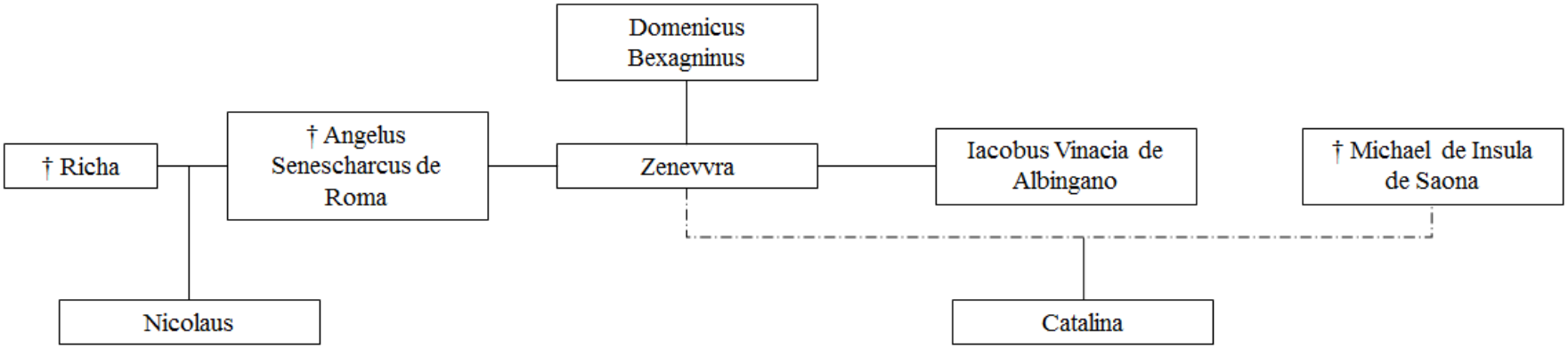


Fig. 16 Zenevvra's family tree

In the introduction to the edition Basso states that Michael had been married to Zenevvra before dying, meaning that Zenevvra had three husbands: Angelus Senescharcus de Roma (presuming that he is the same person as Iacobus Romanus *senescharchus*, whom Basso just names Giacomo Romano — Iacobus Romanus), Michael, and Iacobus Vinacia.[90] I believe, instead, that she had been married only twice, to Angelus and then to Iacobus Vinacia. There is no mention of Zenevvra's marriage to Michael and their relationship predated her marriage to Angelus – who is said to be her first husband – as Catalina was old enough to get married and receive her dowry from her stepfather. If Michael had been still alive and on good terms with them, enough to marry the mother of his child once widowed, why did he not provide the dowry himself?

Another conflict among a stepfamily about a dowry was the one between Franciscus, son and heir of the late Caterineta, first wife of the late Simone de Pilosa de Portufino (*Francisci filii et heredis quondam Caterinete prime uxoris quondam Simonis de Pilosa de Portufino)*, and Thedora, daughter of the late Iohannes Falchus and Simone's second wife (*Thedora filia quondam Iohannis Falchi et uxor secunda dicti quondam Simonis*).[91] In order to avoid going to court over a dowry matter, an arbitrator was appointed. Unfortunately no specification is given (*tam occasione dotium*): was Thedora reclaiming her dowry from her husband's heir? Was Franciscus demanding his mother's dowry from his stepmother?

Other times stepparents and stepchildren appear to have a better relationship. Another Thedora, widow of Francescus Cerexia, appointed her second husband, Domenicus de Calizano, as her procurator (*uxor quondam Francisci Celesie, et nunc uxor Dominici de Calizano*).[92] In the contract it is specified that Domenicus had duties towards Anthoninus, son of Francescus and Thedora. In particular, he had to make sure that his stepson could

[90] De Canella pp. 31 and 37 n.47.
[91] De Recco 281.
[92] De Canella 27.

learn a profession without harassment deriving from a contract previously stipulated. It seems likely that Thedora still had her son's guardianship and, equally important, that she trusted her new husband to have his stepson's best interests at heart.

Another remarried woman entrusted her stepson with recovering what was due to her from her first husband's goods and inheritance (*in bonis et hereditate quondam Andree Creti dotes et antifactum ac res viduales* [*vires vicuales* in Argenti] *ipsius Mariole olim primi viri ipsius Mariole*).[93] The peculiar aspect of this document is that Filipus de Metelino, the procurator chosen, was not only Mariola's stepson, as she was married to his father Antonius de Metelino, but he was also her son-in-law (*generum ipsius Mariole*).[94] We do not know who got married first, if Filipus and then Mariola to her daughter's new father-in-law, or vice versa. It is also entirely possible that Antonius had been at his second marriage too. Although remarriage was more frequent for widowers than for widows, our knowledge is much more limited. Because men were not tied to the women in their lives as women were with men, their marital status was not mentioned unless it was directly relevant to the document.[95]

All the women discussed until now have been considered, at least based on names, family relationships, and lack of denotative details, as Latin. However, we also have a remarried Jewish woman and a Greek one. Giamidena had first married *magister* Solomie Salonichey and then Gigel de El (*prima uxore condam magistri Solomie Salonichey et ultimate uxore condam Gigel de El*).[96] Anna Prasinisa, instead, had first married a fellow Greek and then a Latin. Daughter of the late Sideri Arfani, she appears in three documents

[93] De Ferrari 234 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 764, doc. 245.
[94] See also Origone, 'Chio', 177–78.
[95] Cf. Guerson and Wessell Lightfoot, 21; Bellavitis, 'Stepfamilies', 63; Wray, 17–18. More in general cf. *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Cavallo and Warner (1999).
[96] Piemontesi 21.

from 1449.[97] In the first two (March 17 and May 24) she is mentioned as the widow of Pantaleone Gordato, in the third (November 25) as the wife of the notary Nicolaus Bonaspina.

There are then two cases where remarriage can be suggested, but it is not explicitly stated. One instance is that of Nicolosia, widow of Iohannes de Luna, and Simon Perelus de Vulturo, who is said to be her man, *vir suus*.[98] Usually we find these words referred to men already cited before as husbands, but in this case it is his first mention in the document. However, it is said that she had no other relatives, which would imply that he was family, making it unlikely that he had been her partner without being married. Balletto thinks so as she writes that he appeared to have married Nicoloxia.[99]

The other woman had the same name, Nicolosia, and was the widow of Donatus de Via.[100] On 5 May 1404 the podestà recognised her as one of Ieronimus' guardians, with Ieronimus being Donatus' son. Nicolosia had a son called Andalus de Murta: considering the different surname and the lack of noted relationships with any de Via, it seems plausible that he had not been Donatus' son. Speculating whether Andalus' father had been Nicolosia's first husband or if Ieronimus had been her son, however, would be a complete guess.

Considering that remarriage was common despite its stigma and that in Chios remaining widowed was supposedly discouraged, the mentions of remarried women are fewer than expected. This might be a sign of the effectiveness of the provisions included in wills to prevent widows from remarrying by tying usufruct rights, bequests, guardianship of the

[97] A.S.G., *Notai Antichi,* filza 847, docc. 43, 91.2, 209. Cf. Balletto, 'La schiavitù', 190–91. See also Chapter 5.
[98] Di Chiavari 81. On Nicolosia see the case study in Chapter 3.
[99] Cf. Balletto, 'Chio dei Maonesi', 137.
[100] Panissaro 88, 96, 130.

children, and other advantages to their permanence in a widowed status. Greek women being the majority on the island but a minority in the documents might be another reason, especially if the *argomoniatico* actually existed. However, it should be noted that there is no actual proof that the tax on widows (and not wanting to pay it) had any role in the remarriages we know about. They could have simply been a normal occurrence in women's lives as in the rest of Europe: in late medieval Valencia, for example, a quarter of the brides were at their second marriage.[101]

Dominae

Some of the women discussed in previous chapters had their names preceded by the term *domina*. The male version, *dominus*, is much more common and seems to indicate a high social status, as most *domini* were men holding offices: podestà and their vicars, governors, members and contractors of the Maona, religious men.[102] Men with this title were usually Genoese or at least Latin, with rare exceptions (e.g. *domino magistro Eliseo Calachi, iudeo, phisico*), and many were also members of important Genoese alberghi such as Adorno, de Auria (or Doria), Gattilusio, Giustiniani, Grillo, Grimaldi and Paterio. Some alberghi assumed political, military, and economic power, like the Gattilusio family that between 1355 and 1462 held lordships in the north-eastern Aegean, centred on the island of Lesbos.[103] Many Maonesi around the years 1362-1364 had joined together in the albergo Giustiniani: since the Maona run the civil, military, and economic organisation of Chios, the Giustiniani played a key role in ruling the island.[104]

[101] Wessell Lightfoot, 'Patrician Widows', 213.
[102] Cf. Khvalkov, 297.
[103] See C. Wright.
[104] See 'Romanie', 18/1, 260; A. Agosto, 'Le insegne araldiche dei ceti dirigenti a Genova', in *La storia dei Genovesi, Atti del Convegno di Studi sui Ceti Dirigenti nelle istituzioni della Repubblica di Genova, Genova, 12-13-14 aprile 1984*, vol. 5 (Genoa, 1985), 177–99, p. 185; Epstein, *Genoa*, 224; H. Sieveking, 'Studio sulle finanze genovesi nel Medioevo e in particolare sulla Casa di San Giorgio', trans. by O. Soardi, *ASLi*, 35 (1905), 217.

Women holding the designation *domina* were also often members of important alberghi, with almost half of them being Giustiniani, either by birth or by marriage.[105] For others, instead, there is no indication that they belonged to the élite. We have seen the obstetrician Isabella Faracha, and wives of doctors could also be called *domina*, as Margarita, wife (and then widow) of *dominus magister* Iohannes de Itro.[106] The wife of another doctor, the *eximius artium et medicine doctor magister* Barnabas Trainatius, was called *domina*, but she was in Famagusta.[107] Another woman was potentially from Crete, if not Greek: Agnexia, widow of Bartholomeus de Caginaldo (or Cagrimaldis), *habitator Candie*, and daughter of Iacobus de Camolino (or Mollino) de Candea. In two documents from 1394 she appointed attorneys to deal with her business and properties in the Venetian island while she lived in Chios (the second act was drawn up at her house — *actum in civitate Syi, in domo habitacionis dicte domine Agnexie*).[108]

Sometimes the same woman could appear as *domina* in some deeds but not in others. The Greek (Cali) Critadena, widow of Iohannes Duca/Catrari Petracochino is called *domina* only in one of the two deeds examined in Chapter 3.[109] *Domina* Nicolosia de Luna was not called so in five documents by Donato di Chiavari, even if she was already widowed and her husband's will had already been opened.[110] Sobrana, widow of Petrus Iustinianus de Campis, was called *domina* when she received the proceeds from the sale of her husband's assets made by the children's guardian, on 24 September 1450. When her brothers bought them back on 5 March 1451, however, the title does not appear.[111] I do not

[105] See for example the seventeen *dominae* in Rovere, docc. 116, 137, 158.
[106] Piemontesi 43, De Ferrari 253, Origone, 'Chio', doc. 6.
[107] Piemontesi 44-45. On Barnaba cf. Piemontesi 31, 43; Foglietta 293-296, 299, 300; De Recco 283; A.S.G., *Notai Antichi,* filza 848, doc. 354, and see L. Balletto, 'Note sull'isola di Cipro nel secolo XV', in *La storia dei Genovesi,* vol. 12 p. 1 (Genoa, 1994), 119–44, pp. 124–25.
[108] Di Chiavari 5, 31.
[109] De Ferrari 256 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi,* filza 764, doc. 479; De Recco 282 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi,* filza 848, doc. 447.
[110] Panissaro 168; Di Chiavari 18, 19, 20, 69, 81.
[111] De Ferrari 115, 203.

believe that its presence might depend on their changed marital status or their role as mothers. There are no mention of second husbands and while Nicolosia might have had a new partner in Simon Perelus, the only act where she is called *domina* is from nine years later (1394 – 1405) and the only one completely unrelated to her tasks as her daughters' guardian. In Critadena's case, instead, she was acting both times as her son's *tutrix.*

Many *dominae* were mothers and often held guardianship. In 1394 *domina* Girella was the guardian of Francisca and Margarita, daughters and heirs of her late husband Pisanus Pelopolus de Ancona.[112] On 15 August 1404 *domina* Angelina Iustiniana, widow of Iohannes Iustinianus de Furneto, appointed Antonius de La Rocha de Asculi as attorney for herself and for Iohannes' children, for whom she had the guardianship (*suo proprio nomine ac etiam tutris et curatris filiorum*).[113]

A unique case is that of a woman appearing in five different documents, whom we have already met when her son-in-law Iohannes de Coronato sold a slave, acting for her and for his wife Lucia.[114] Her name was Iacha and she was identified through her father and her husband, Philipus Bezacia and Nicolaus Macalufus, even if at the time they were both already dead.[115] Balard's index lists Iacha Bezacia and Iacha Macaluffa as two different people, but I believe that they are the same woman. She appears only as *Iache filie quondam Philipi Bezacie*, never explicitly as Iacha Bezacia, but it is still clearly her father's surname. In another deed she is called *Iache Macaluffe*, taking her husband's surname instead. As other persons involved in the acts are the same, in particular her son-in-law, there are no reasons to think that the documents are talking about two different women.

[112] Di Chiavari 93.
[113] Panissaro 115.
[114] Di Chiavari 58, 87, 87a, 91, 102.
[115] Cf. Klapisch-Zuber, 'The "Cruel Mother"', 118.

In the first deed (doc. 58) Iohanes acknowledged having received from Iacha and Lucia 323 gold ducats. It seems that the women had inherited the debt: the money was owed by Nicolaus, and Iacha and Lucia were his testamentary heirs. There are no indications on why the money was owed; since the creditor was the son-in-law, the debt could have been related to Lucia's dowry, but it is just one of the possibilities. It is important to note that when Nicolaus was alive, he was the primary debtor, while his wife Iacha was the guarantor (*fideiutrix*). This means that she would have been liable to repay her husband's debt even if she had not been named one of his heirs.

In the second document (doc. 87) Batista Gatelusio acknowledged that his brother Iullianus had previously written in Mytilene (*Metelino*) a payment letter to Iannotus Bezacia (perhaps a relative of Iacha), who was to give 500 hyperpera in Pera to *domina* Iacha Macaluffa and Iohanes de Coronato. Batista, then, gave Iacha and Iohanes surety that if Iannotus did not pay, he would do it himself. We do not know what they received the money for. Was it a business transaction? A payment for a sale? A debt repaid? It does not seem related to Nicolaus' inheritance because there is no mention of Iacha being an heir and of Lucia, either on her own like her mother or represented by her husband. Both Iohanes and Iacha acted for themselves: does it mean that they were business partners and the money was owed equally to both? In this case we might also wonder if Nicolaus had been his son-in-law's associate too, and if the debt had been related to the venture. A couple of months later (19 September - 12 November 1394) Iacha and Iohanes declared that they had received 500 hyperpera from Iannotus as they were owed. Once again Iacha acted on her own without intermediaries: following the payment, the other document was crossed out (*cassum*) 'according to the order and will of said *domina* Iacha and Iohanes' (*de mandato et voluntate dictorum domine Iache et Iohanis*).

In two other occasions, instead, Iohanes acted as representative for his mother-in-law (and his wife). On 24 September 1394 he gave receipt to Iulianus Macaluffus that he had received in Famagusta 1419 bezants from Batista Gatelusio. One month later (October 24) he sold the slave. Both times it was specified that Iacha and Lucia were Nicolaus' heirs so it is possible that both cases were somehow related to his inheritance. But why did Iacha not act for herself? A likely explanation of why Iohanes was acknowledging the payment in Famagusta is that, although the receipt was being given in Chios, the money was received in Cyprus and Iohanes was the one who travelled there. Beyond that, the questions remain. Document 87a does not specify if Iannotus' money had effectively been paid in Pera: would that mean that both Iacha and Iohanes travelled there? In any case it is worth noticing that when Iacha acted on her own, she did so without the express consent of men.

For a *domina* appearing in five documents, there are others who are just mentioned, like Ginevra Iustiniana, whose house was near to where a document was drawn up on 27 September 1404.[116] Magdalena was named with no other details (*cum domina Madgalena Quilico et Paulo Justinianis*) in a contract's confirmation drawn up in Turkey (*in partibus Turchie*) on 8 July 1450.[117] Since all the other parties were members of the albergo Giustiniani, we can hypothesise that she was too, either by birth or by marriage. Lastly, *domina* Violantina, daughter of the late Nicolaus de Monellia and widow of Iacobus de Palodio, was already dead when a document involving her sons was drawn up on 21 May 1454.[118]

Even if a translation of *domina/us* would be lady/lord, these titles were not automatically hereditary nor acquired with marriage. Perpetua was the daughter of *dominus* Francescus

[116] Panissaro 129.
[117] De Ferrari 80.
[118] Roccatagliata 151.

Iustinianus de Campis and sister of *dominus* Bartholomeus Iustinianus, but she was not called *domina* herself. I would exclude that it was because she married below her station, as the Demerodes were a prominent family in Pera. Similarly it would not be because her father was still alive, since her brother held the title.[119] There are also examples of sons who did not hold the title, whether their *domini* fathers were alive or not (e.g. *Gaspar de Grimaldis quondam domini Raphalis*; *Johannes Justinianus, filius domini Francisci olim de Garibaldo*).[120] Moreover, it did not depend on whether there was a male heir – as if Perpetua could not have the title since her brother inherited it – because Margarita Iustiniana had two brothers and they all were called *dominus* and *domina*.[121] Conversely, someone could hold the title without the father having it before, like *dominus* Iohannes Iustinianus *quondam Ansaldi* and *domina* Iacha: neither her father nor her husband were *domini*.[122] In Iohannes Brexanus' will, his mother *domina* Baptistina was the only one holding a title, while her son and her husband did not.[123]

Women called *dominae* are absent from the published deeds of de Guasco and Bardi (years 1359, 1398), de Roboreto (1360), and de Canella (1381).[124] The title does not appear in de Bracellis' acts (1348-1349) either, but in one document there are two women called *Xira* Theodora and *Xira* Calocetina. Argenti added '[= Kyrà, Madame?]', which would make it κυρία, the equivalent of *domina* in Greek.[125] I suggest, instead, that it could be the Latin transliteration of χήρα, which means widow.[126] The notaries listed above were all working in Chios during the first sixty years of the Genoese domination, while the later ones used the term. It is worth considering the possibility that this is related to a more

[119] Di Chiavari 64-66. Cf. Balard, 'La société pérote' esp. 305–06.
[120] De Canella 4; Gioffrè c. 70v.
[121] Di Chiavari 47.
[122] De Canella 14; Di Chiavari 58.
[123] Panissaro 118.
[124] The first two notaries are published in Gioffrè.
[125] De Bracellis 48.
[126] My thanks to Nicholas Coureas for the insight.

established Genoese presence in the island, since *domina* was already used in Genoa at the beginning of the 14th century.[127] Aprosio's vocabulary lists *donna et domina* (also *domina et dona*) as a testamentary formula meaning 'padrona assoluta, con piena disponibilità' (absolute owner with full rights).[128] Petti Balbi, however, considers it a status in which the woman had the possibility and autonomy to manage her and her husband's affairs. She states that a Genoese woman could be *donna et domina* before being a widow if she had received power of attorney from her husband.[129]

In Chios, too, being a widow was not a prerequisite for being called *domina*, although widows are more numerous than women still married or with no husband mentioned. The lack of noted husband, however, does not necessarily mean that one did not ever exist. The two documents involving *domina* Clara Pelavicina (Pallavicini), mother of *dominus* Antonius Pelavicinus, bishop of Chios, made no mention of a husband, dead or alive.[130] However, she had dotal rights over a house, which implies that she had been married. We know that in 1404 Thomas Pilavicinus, bishop of Chios, appointed his brother Baptista as his attorney.[131] They had another brother, Leonardus, who succeeded Thomas as bishop. We know that Leonardus was Antonius' uncle, meaning that Baptista was probably Antonius' father.[132] Unfortunately this kind of cross-checking is not always possible, and without supporting evidence, the assumption of marriage remains often unconfirmed. A similar situation is faced when a woman is the guardian of her husband's children and it is not stated if she was their mother or not. If we consider marriage to the children's father combined with guardianship as indirect proof of motherhood, half of the *dominae* in our documents were mothers. We cannot exclude that in other cases children

[127] Petti Balbi, 'Donna et domina', 154.
[128] *VL*.
[129] Petti Balbi, 'Donna et domina', esp. 170.
[130] De Ferrari 120, 147.
[131] Panissaro 117.
[132] Cf. also Balletto, 'Nuclei', 80; Balletto, 'L'émigration féminine', 303.

were not mentioned because irrelevant to the act. On a total of fifty-six *dominae*, thirty-eight were widows, eleven still married, and seven had no husband's name associated (nor it could be found from other deeds). It is likely that *domina* identified married women, but, unlike in Bologna, it was not applied to every woman who had married and it might have been related to social status.[133] The majority of *dominae* can be classified as active, either acting on their own initiative or having – or having had in the past – an active role.

Conclusions

This chapter looked at marriages and remarriages in Genoese Chios through women's mentions in notarial documents. Analysing wills, bequests to people outside the family appear to have predominantly gone to girls so that they could marry: providing dowries was considered a form of charity exactly as leaving money to churches or hospitals, which can be also found in our testaments. This highlights the central role that marriage had in women's lives, which can be also seen in the restrictions on bequests, both for dowry-only use and to discourage remarriage. The latter clause is particularly interesting because literary sources report about the existence in Chios of a tax called *argomoniatico* aimed to encourage widows' remarriages. Despite this (and the fact that remarriage in medieval Europe was frowned upon but common), the number of remarried women in the documents is limited and nothing indicates that the *argomoniatico* played a role in their second nuptials. Remarried men are even less present, although it is commonly accepted that they remarried more often than widows. This absence is easily ascribable to the fact that their marital status is not usually mentioned: documents rarely refer to current or past wives, unless the information is directly relevant to the matter treated. Indeed, in the two cases where it is explicitly stated, the first wife was dead and her heir was involved in a dispute with the

[133] Wray, 26.

father's second wife. This seems to fit into the stereotypical 'wicked stepmother' narrative, especially if we consider that the examples where the mother was the one remarrying present better relationships between stepparents and stepchildren.[134]

Primary sources so far have offered no definitive answers on the implementation of the *argomoniatico*, or even on its existence, although it would be consistent with the situation of Genoese Chios. If it did exist, I do not believe that it had Greek origins as most scholars think (Argenti, Pistarino, Balletto, Basso). My suggestion, instead, is that it was a tax introduced by the Genoese that affected the entirety of the island population.

Men in Chios, like elsewhere, often tried to convince widows not to remarry by offering benefits and advantages. In the documentation examined the formula *donna et domina* was not found, but numerous women are called *domina* (around 17%). The main aim of the last part of the chapter was to determine if the title was strictly connected to a widowed status – since *donna et domina* was a testamentary formula – or if it was rather an indication of agency (meant here as the ability to make decisions about her own assets and her husband's) as found by Petti Balbi for Genoa.[135]

While most *dominae* were widows and often mothers (and guardians), it was not a prerequisite for holding the title. Similarities appeared when comparing our examples with the men called *domini.* In both cases the majority belonged to important Genoese alberghi. This might depend on the sources, which mainly see upper and middle-class Latins involved, or it might be because the designation was related to social status. It also emerged that the titles were not hereditary nor acquired through marriage. A difference between the female and the male version, however, is that the former only appears in later (published) deeds while *dominus* is present, although in reduced numbers, also in documents from the first

[134] Cf. Warner, 'Conclusion', 233–39; Lombardi, 102.
[135] Petti Balbi, 'Donna et domina'.

sixty years of the Genoese rule of Chios. A possible explanation is that, as time passed, the Genoese established their own families and recreated societal aspects from the mother-country, where the term *domina* was in use since the 14th century.

The deeds from Chios show that a *domina* had a certain degree of autonomy and power, like in Genoa. They appointed attorneys, paid debts, bought and sold, made wills and donations, gave receipts, and held guardianship over children. It is challenging to define to which extent (if any) being a *domina* gave them more or different rights. I believe that the title was mainly applied to widows or married mothers who exercised agency – either as owners or as representatives – and enjoyed an above-average social status.

Chapter 5. Without Husbands

Previous chapters have considered married women from different points of view, from what they brought into the marriage through their dowries to what might have happened after the death of a spouse. This chapter, instead, looks at women who appear in documents without a husband. The starting point will be women who were married but whose husband was absent, before moving onto single women. Single means unmarried and therefore would refer to any woman at some stage of her life. Following Bennett and Froide's classification, singlewomen can be divided between those who might marry in the future (life-cycle singlewomen) and those whose single status was a permanent one (life-long singlewomen).[1] I will try to distinguish between women who appeared with no husband but had one, like Clara Pallavicina, life-cycle singlewomen – either too young to get married or about to do so – and potential life-long singlewomen. Along with minors and girls with a prospective marriage, I also exclude from the number of possible singlewomen nameless and uncertain cases, because they do not provide enough information to identify them as 'adult women who had neither been married nor had any immediate arrangement to marry'.[2] Did these (potential) life-long singlewomen enjoy more independence as in other geographical areas? Chojnacka, for example, shows that in Venice singlewomen (together with widows) could handle their resources with fewer restrictions than married women, and that it was not rare for them to head their own households.[3] A particular category of women who appear in

[1] J. M. Bennett and A. M. Froide, 'A Singular Past', in *Singlewomen in the European Past, 1250-1800*, ed. by J. M. Bennett and A. M. Froide (Philadelphia, 1999), 1–37, p. 2; A. M. Froide, *Never Married. Singlewomen in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2005), 9; C. Beattie, *Medieval Single Women. The Politics of Social Classification in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 2007), 8.
[2] Kelleher, *The Measure of Woman*, 98.
[3] Cf. Bennett and Froide, 'A Singular Past', 14; M. Chojnacka, 'Singlewomen in Early Modern Venice: Communities and Opportunities', in *Singlewomen*, ed. by Bennett and Froide (1999), 217–35, p. 219, and in general the whole volume.

documents without a husband mentioned is former slaves. The last section of the chapter looks at the deeds granting them freedom, focusing on the rights they received and how they compared to those held by free women.

When the Husband Is Away…

As seen in Chapter 2, commercial cities in the Middle Ages often saw women receiving power of attorney from their husbands to act in their absence, but the situation is not reflected in the documents from Chios. Indeed, despite the presumption that it was common for men travelling abroad to leave their wives alone on the island, only two deeds state clearly that the husband was absent.

On 10 January 1381 Maria de Lixa appointed Anthonius de Cexegna *quondam Pagani* to recover a house from Georgius Paragdaihi and Nicola Tirianus.[4] Maria was the daughter and only heir of Franciscus Marinus, who had died without leaving a will (*filia et heres in solidum ab intestatum, ut dixit, quondam Franciscus Marini, eius patris*). The house was part of her inheritance and had been sold by her husband without her consent: *Georgius et Nicola emerunt sine consensu et voluntate dicte Marie, ut dixit, a dicto Michali Carvogni Sergia, tamquam marito dicte Marie*. Since her husband Michali was not in Chios (*absentis ab insula Syi*), Maria took advantage of his absence to undo his action. This was possible because, by law, the husband might have controlled the administration of his wife's properties, but he could not alienate them without her consent. This was valid for dotal goods and even more if the house was not part of the dowry, as it seems in this case. Even if her father's name seems Latin, I consider Maria to be Greek: she needed an interpreter from Latin to Greek (*pro ea interpetrante de latina in greca locucione*) and she surrounded herself with men with Greek-sounding names. Her legal counsellors were her neighbours (*Michali*

[4] De Canella 10.

Carvogni Scrigni et dicti Vataci de Folia, suorum vicinorum) and they assisted her because in that moment she was not able to have relatives nor her husband present (*proximiorum et viri sui, ut dixit, loco propinquorum, quos ad presens non valet habere*).

On January 28 Maria appointed another procurator in addition to her previous one, again making use of an interpreter.[5] The new attorney was the Greek Costa Michila, emancipated son of Leonis Vestarchi Scrigni. The two advisers, different from the previous ones, were also Greek: Theodorus Carvogni Scrigni and Nichiforus Coresi Cavali Nomico. Were Michali Carvogni Sergia, Michali Carvogni Scrigni, Costa Michali of Leonis Vestarchi Scrigni and Theodori Carvogni Scrigni all related? It would be interesting as it would mean that her husband's family approved of Maria undoing his actions. And I believe it is likely: while there was no uniform naming system yet, the second and following elements were the ones shared with family. The three-name pattern is not peculiar. While two-element names are the most common in the deeds examined, many others include the name of the father, a toponym, or the branch of the family, in no specific order. Sometimes the documents clarify the relationships but not in this case, as we read: *Theodori Carvogni Scrigni et Nichifori Coresi Cavali Nomico, proximiorum et propinquorum dicte Marie et vicinorum dicti sui viri. Propinquus* could mean both kinsman and neighbour, but if the term *vicinus* is also mentioned, *propinquus* is usually translated as relative and *vicinus* as neighbour.[6] In this case it is curious that they were identified as Maria's relatives and her husband's neighbours, as there would have been no need to distinguish their roles otherwise. It was also added that Maria did not have any closer relatives who could be present at the moment of the act and neither did her husband (*asserens proximiores non habere neque ad presens proximiores predicto viro suo*)

[5] De Canella 16.
[6] Hughes, 'Urban Growth', 21; Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery*, 79.

A month after the first act, on 12 February 1381, Maria appointed again Costa Michila as her attorney, this time not confirming the first procurator, who however appeared among the witnesses at her house when the deed was drafted.[7] The matter with the house improperly sold was still not resolved and the husband was still absent, his return not expected before six months (*de adventu viri sui intra menses sex non speratur*). Maria had once again different advisers, but they were still Greek and indicated as her relatives and her husband's neighbours:

> *[...] et fecit predicta omnia et singula predicta Maria in presentia, cum, de consilio et consensu predicti Michali Meistro Nomicho et Iane Francopolo Damala, propinquorum suorum et viciniorum dicti Michali viri sui [...]*

The other example is quite different as the wife acted for the absent husband and not against him.[8] It was another Greek woman, Anna Prasinisa, whom we already mentioned because she had married twice. Her second husband was the notary Nicolaus Bonaspina, who is said to have been away from Chios for a long time (*absentis iam diu a presenti civitate et insula Chii*). A possibility is that he was in another Genoese settlement working as a notary, since Genoese were required by law to go to Genoese (or Ligurian) notaries. Overseas posts could be remunerative but also inconvenient, and notaries already in the area probably had an easier time that those just arriving from Genoa.[9] Among the notaries who worked in various Genoese outposts there were Donato di Chiavari (Chios and Pera), Lorenzo Calvi (Pera,

[7] De Canella 37.
[8] A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 847, doc. 209. Cf. Balletto, 'La schiavitù', 190–91.
[9] Petti Balbi, 'Il notariato', 106–07; G. Olgiati, 'Una diversa dimensione professionale: il notaio genovese nelle colonie tra XIV e XV secolo', in *Tra Siviglia e Genova*, ed. by Piergiovanni (1994), 361–76, pp. 364–65, 369–72; Balard, 'Il notaio', 357.

Chios, and Caffa), and Luchino de Porta (Mytilene and Chios).[10] Wherever he was, Nicolaus was not in Chios to deal with Leonardus de Oliverio on 25 November 1449. Leonardus had guaranteed for Nicolaus in the past with various people and sums, and was demanding 100 hyperpera to release him from every obligation. Because her husband was absent, it was Anna who dealt with the request. Not only had her own assets been used as surety, together with those of Nicolaus, but Anna found herself unable to pay Leonardus and resorted to a *datio in solutum*. Literally meaning 'giving in payment', this happened when debtors would give something they owned other than what was originally due.[11] In this case Anna gave Leonardus a *viridarium* – a garden with fruit trees – renouncing the *Senatusconsultum Velleianum*, the *lex Iulia de fundo dotali*, the *Epistola Divi Adriani*, the *Autentica si qua mulier*, and any other right. She did so with the advice of her two brothers, a relative, and some neighbours, all with Greek-sounding names. No relatives of the husband were involved because he had none on the island (*loco propinquorum dicti Nicolai mariti sui carentium*). Confirmation that Anna was acting for her husband is the fact that those men swore that what she was doing was for both Nicolaus' benefit and her own (*ad utilitatem dictorum Nicolai et Anne*).

Considering the limited presence of Greek women in our documentation, it is interesting that both women with absent husbands we know of were Greek. Why did they turn to Genoese notaries, especially since they had to use an interpreter (Domenicus de Podio *interpretante*, was one of the five witnesses to Anna's act) in order to deal with them? Anna's case could be explained with the fact that the creditor was Latin and that a *datio in solutum* required a formal acceptance. Giving something else in lieu of what was owed did not mean the obligation was discharged unless the creditor accepted the substitute performance.[12]

[10] Cf. Di Chiavari, pp. 9–11; A. Roccatagliata, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Pera e Mitilene*, vol. 1 (Genoa, 1982), 8–12.
[11] EDRL.
[12] Zimmermann, 753.

Even if Greek notaries' acts had legal value, it is possible that Genoese notaries were more highly regarded, at least by Latins. It would then make sense for Anna to want every possible guarantee that the deed would be universally recognised as valid and that nobody could contest her release from the obligation. We do not know enough about local customs in Chios, but it is possible that Maria went to a Genoese notary to act in a way that she would not otherwise have been able to. It was the *Leges Genuenses* that required two relatives or neighbours of the husband to testify that he was not expected to return before six months and that the woman was pursuing the best course of action.[13] In both cases, these Greek women turning to Genoese law is a display of female agency, showing them navigating Chios' legal landscape and using it to their advantage. Moreover, they both acted alone, although with male guidance, but unfortunately we do not possess enough elements to ascribe their 'freedom of action' to their husband's absence. More cases would be needed to compare their number with those of other women acting alone.

There might have been other deeds where the absence of the husband was not explicitly mentioned, such as the case of Nicolaus de Recho, who was not present when his wife Marieta rented out a house in 1460.[14] Documents and notaries yet to be published, or even found, might contain more examples, however, I believe that their scarcity in a sample of more than one thousand deeds is significant. A survey on all attorney appointments, including male-male ones here not considered, might reveal if men tended to prefer members of their families. In this case the presence in Chios of the alberghi might explain the situation. This Genoese institution saw different families becoming one single 'house', sharing surname and interests.[15] If men preferred to choose as representatives male relatives, then

[13] LG, 877.
[14] De Ferrari 237 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 764, doc. 307. See Chapter 2.
[15] On the alberghi in Genoa cf. Y. Kamenaga-Anzai, 'Changing to a New Surname: An Essay Regarding the "Albergo" in Medieval Genoa', *Mediterranean World = 地中海論集*, 16 (2001), 221–35.

husbands could have their choice among the numerous members of their extended families, and therefore they did not appoint their wives.

When the Husband Is Not Mentioned

Marriage has been viewed as the ultimate goal for late medieval women and the idea has been espoused by modern scholars. So much that, as Kittell points out, the absence of marital status indicators has been considered by some as an omission due to lack of precision rather than the recorded presence of unmarried women.[16] One fourth of the women in our sample appears without a husband named. While being aware of the heteronormativity that, in Skinner's words, 'is embedded within the assumptions of most medieval authors and their modern interpreters', this part of the chapter aims to distinguish between women whose marital status was omitted and those who were instead singlewomen, whether life-cycle or life-long ones.[17] It can be quite difficult to differentiate between the latter two categories. As Farmer explains, a woman identified as someone's daughter, sister, or niece when the relative is irrelevant to the document is likely a singlewoman, but without knowing her age it is hard to know whether they were nubile girls or older singlewomen.[18] Similarly Chojnacka looks for women identified by their father's name and not called widows, and includes in her figures only women 'unambiguously adults, usually because either an age or a profession is given'.[19] The lack of professional women in our documents only adds to the difficulties in identifying singlewomen.

[16] Kittell, 'Patriarchal Imperialism', 48.
[17] P. Skinner, *Studying Gender in Medieval Europe* (London, 2018), 58.
[18] S. Farmer, '"It Is Not Good That [Wo]Man Should Be Alone": Elite Responses to Singlewomen in High Medieval Paris', in *Singlewomen*, ed. by Bennett and Froide (1999), 82–105, p. 73.
[19] Chojnacka, 219, 239.

Eighteen women with no husband mentioned surely or most probably had one. Seven have no familial appositive in one document and bear it in another, like *domina* Iacha Macaluffa.[20] In five cases we can surmise the name of the husband because the woman was designated as a mother and we know the name of the father of the children. This, of course, is if we assume that since there is no mention of those not being legitimate children, they were product of a marriage.

For some women we can hypothesise the existence, and sometimes the identity, of a husband. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Clara Pallavicini had likely married Baptisa Pallavicini. *Domina* Magdalena Iustiniana was one of the guardians of Odoardus Iustinianus de Furneto *quondam Francisci* so it is possible that Franciscus had been her husband.[21] Manuele de Apostolo had to return Isolta's dowry to her uncles so it is likely that he was her widower.[22] Examining Nicolaus de Calcinara's will we can conclude that his sister Eliana de Sancto Georgio married into the de Sancto Georgio family, although we cannot be sure who the husband was.[23]

I believe that the lack of mention in some deeds and not in others might have depended on the women's roles and on which relationship was the most relevant to the operations recorded. Except for three women (Clara, Iacha, and Nicolosia de Luna), all the others did not have an active role, while the children and siblings mentioned were involved in the documents, and the husbands (with the possible exception of Manuele) were dead. Marta Fatinanti would receive money (destined to her daughter) in case of accidents occurring to her son-in-law: her being Georgius Fatinanti's widow was completely inconsequential.[24] When Caterina was named Antonius' heir, it was important to know that

[20] Di Chiavari 58, 87, 87a, 91, 102. Cf. E. E. Kittell, 'The Construction of Women's Social Identity in Medieval Douai: Evidence from Identifying Epithets', *JMH*, 25/3 (1999), 215–27, p. 224.
[21] De Ferrari 80.
[22] De Ferrari 235.
[23] De Ferrari 231.
[24] Indicated as widow in Panissaro 30, 145, 158, but not in 159.

she was his mother, not that she was widowed.[25] It was equally irrelevant when Sobrana's brothers made a purchase in her name, and so on.[26] Chojnacka points out that by considering only explicitly adult singlewomen their number is almost surely underestimated.[27] These examples, however, show that there is also the risk of overestimating it, especially if the pool of documents examined is too small or contains only few documents from the same year.

Some girls were life-cycle singlewomen who lived as single only for the years preceding their marriage. Some were too young to be married, like Margaritina, who was seven when her father made his will.[28] I consider any girl under any type of guardianship related to her age, whether tutorship or curatorship, as a life-cycle singlewoman. Not only were they minors, but if they had been married, their husbands would have been their guardians.

In other cases we know the girls were engaged to be married. Thedora Vignosa was the future wife of Raffael Paterius *quondam Lanfranchi*, who in 1349 appointed an agent to marry her in Genoa in his stead.[29] Primeflore was engaged (*future sponse*) to Franciscus Gambonus, to whom her mother Marietina promised a dowry of 1500 ducats.[30] Engaged and a minor was Margaritina, daughter of the late Gregorius Iustinianus.[31] With another underage sister, Blanchineta, she first asked for the appointment of new curators and then took part in the sale of the remaining portion of her inheritance. Margaritina was sixteen years old (*etatis annorum sexdecim et ultra*) and needed the proceeds from the sale to conclude her marriage:

[25] Indicated as widow in A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 843, doc. 216, filza 944, docc. 84-86, but not in filza 848, doc. 354.
[26] Indicated as widow in De Ferrari 115, but not in 203.
[27] Chojnacka, 220.
[28] Roccatagliata 118.
[29] De Bracellis 50.
[30] De Recco 280.
[31] Giurista 2-3. See Chapter 2.

[…] nuperque fore in tractatu maritandi dictam Margaritinam et fore ipsum matrimonium quasi conclusum et non restare nisi quod reperiatur pecunia doctium ipsius Margaritine […]

Blanchineta was one year younger and needed the money for her dowry too, but nothing had been arranged yet. Seven other girls were in Blanchineta's situation: they (or their families) had marriage as a goal and they planned for it, often in the form of bequests in wills, as mentioned in earlier chapters.

Often life-cycle singlewomen did not have an active role in the documents: they were either mentioned in wills or represented by men. If singlehood offered more occasions of independence, they were clearly limited to adult – and therefore more likely life-long – singlewomen. Another detail to notice is that all the girls discussed in this section are – at least in appearance by name and relationships – Latin. Considering the significant prevalence of Latin testaments compared to Greek and Jewish ones, and the tendency to deal with family matters within their own community, this is not surprising.

Eighteen women are just mentioned but not referred by name. In other cases it is not clear if the women were in Chios. We have seen that Genevra was probably not on the island when her uncle, sister, and brother-in-law sold the houses in 1398, since the chapter '*De pluribus filiis relictis absentibus se reliquis hereditate non adita*' permitted an inheritance to be accepted on behalf of absent siblings.[32] Moise was probably in Genoa when her brother Antonius de Pinu *quondam Dominici* established that the proceeds from a sale would go to

[32] Gioffrè, p. 50 and c. 57v. LG, 885. Cf. Chapter 2.

her.[33] Because the sale happened in Genoa through Antonius' procurator, who had the money and had to give them to Moise, she might have been there too. In another document there is an empty space between the name of the woman and that of her son (*Marie **** et matris dicti Nicole*). If we presume that the notary planned to fill the gap, we cannot know if it was supposed to be the father's name or the husband's, if she had one.[34]

The uncertain cases leave twenty-three potentially singlewomen. Four of them were mothers and present again the problem of whether we should assume that, since there is no mention of the children being illegitimate, they were product of marriages. In these instances additional doubts can be posed due to the fact that there is no reference to the offspring's fathers either. We have the late *domina* Illiana Gavisa, mother of Georgius and Anthonius de Suzegna, *domina* Marieta, *mater quondam Georgii Pateri*, and Nicolosia, mother of Baptista Torre.[35] There is also Ana Iherami Maistricia, probably Greek, mother of Michali Plasinus.[36]

Ten women are simply named: two Jewish, four Latin, four Greek.[37] Maria Pedesfongena was another possibly single Greek woman: no husband is mentioned nor relatives, and the heirs involved in the dispute over her will do not seem related to her.[38] We have instead no doubts regarding the ethnicity of two Greek women with an active role in their documents. On 17 December 1450 Frini de Limono *greca* appointed two Latin men as her attorneys.[39] The other is Thedora de Grisopoli, whom we have seen committing herself to serve as *pedissequa* (handmaid) for two years.[40] If Grisopoli was her provenience, it is not clear where she was from. It could be Chrysopolis on the Anatolian shore of the

[33] Panissaro 160.
[34] De Canella 17.
[35] De Ferrari 138, 108; De Recco 278.
[36] De Canella 7.
[37] Di Chiavari 39, 40 (Villa 5, 6); Panissaro 129; De Ferrari 240; Roccatagliata 118; De Bracellis 48; Notai Ignoti 411.
[38] Sampietro 378 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 1689, doc. 92.
[39] De Ferrari 189.
[40] Partially in Foglietta 325 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 843, doc. 26. See Chapter 2.

Bosphoros (now Üsküdar) or the one in Macedonia (now Orfani). Less probably the name could refer to Sozol on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast.

On 16 December 1471 Thedora acknowledged to Iacobus de Andoria *quondam Baldasaris* that she had received 7 ducats in coins of Chios from the late Baldasare to be paid for her by Iacobus to Nicola Tocosecompa:

> *[…] recognovit Iacobo de Andoria civi Ianue quondam Baldasaris presenti se habuisse et recepisse a dicto Baldasare ducatos septem monete chii solvendos pro dicta Thedora per dictum Iacobum Nicolo tocosecompa grecho chiensis creditori dicte Thedore pro quibus pecuniis dicta Thedora promisit dicto Iacobo presenti servire bene et legaliter per annos duos […]*
>
> '[…] recognised to Iacobus de Andoria, citizen of Genoa, son of the late Baldasare, present, to have had and received from the said Baldasare 7 ducats in coins of Chios, to be paid for the said Thedora by the said Iacobus to Nicola Tocosecompa, Greek of Chios, creditor of the said Theodora, for which money the said Theodora promised to serve well and legally for two years the said Iacobus, present […]'

Nicola was her creditor, although we would not know from Argenti's transcription, as he omitted *creditori dicte Thedore* and *pecuniis*, along with a conspicuous part of the rest of the document. In the next deed, dated 9 January 1472, Nicola acknowledged having received from Iacobus the money that Thedora owed him (once again the deed is heavily abridged in Argenti – *pro dicta Thedora etc. Actum in burgis chii…Anno dominice nativitatis millesimo CCCCLXXII^{o}…die Jovis nono Januarii*).[41] The situation presented seems to be that Thedora had a debt with Nicola and she finished paying him with the money she would earn working

[41] Partially in Foglietta 326 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 843, doc. 26bis.

for Iacobus, who paid those 7 ducats directly to Nicola. Even if the two men mainly dealt with each other, there is no doubt about Thedora's agency. She had contracted a debt and she took action to repay it, committing herself to work for Iacobus. Moreover, at least in our documents, she did not have a representative, but she acted herself, with the advice – but not consent– of two Latin neighbours (*cum et de consilio*).

The situation is less clear in the act where Nicolaus de Fegino *quondam Nicolai* promised the podestà to consign Maria de Bossecia to Iohannes Litardus, on 2 January 1404.[42] Iohannes would then keep her with him for four years, but he would not be able to sell her (*eam vendere non possit, sed secum morari debeat annis quatuor*). There is no mention of Maria being a slave, and the fact that Iohannes could not sell her leads us to think that she was a free woman. Her having a surname of sort seems to confirm it. Moreover, it is unlikely that Nicolaus was lending his slave, maybe to repay a debt, since it is said that Iohannes had rights against Maria, not against Nicolaus (*omni iure suo contra dictam Mariam*). Nonetheless, Nicolaus committed himself and also offered a guarantor. Why was he involved if the situation was seemingly between Iohannes and Maria? And why should he have been able to consign her? Did he have some kind of power over her? What was their relationship?

Thedora and probably Maria were domestic servants, which was one of the most common occupations for singlewomen in medieval and early modern Europe.[43] The only other woman whose job is explicitly stated is the obstetrician *domina* Isabella Faracha, once again, probably a singlewoman.[44]

Many single adults lived with relatives, and it seems the case of Antonina, sister of Baptista de Illianis de Uvada, mentioned in Chapter 3.[45] The act acknowledging her

[42] Panissaro 55.
[43] Chojnacka, 222.
[44] Piemontesi, doc. 43, see also pp. 42–43. See Chapter 2.
[45] Piemontesi 35. Cf. Bennett and Froide, 'A Singular Past', 14; Chojnacka, 231.

brother's debts towards her also included that she could keep living with him. The debts were tied to their parents' wills, but since there is no reference to dowry or marriage, and there is a provision for Antonina to keep living with her brother after she received the money, it seems clear that the bequests were not tied to her getting married.

The few examples of women acting while their husbands were away raise various questions. Was a husband's absence such a rare occasion? Surely it was not considered so exceptional if Vignoso's contracts granting lands to Genoese settlers included a clause that permitted them to be away from Chios just for a limited amount of time.[46] Should we suppose that all the other deeds involving women with absent husbands have not been published yet or do not exist anymore? Did these women not go to the notary at all? It seems questionable. Is it possible that the husbands' absence was omitted? As seen with Nicolaus de Recho, we cannot exclude the possibility. However, it would certainly be very difficult to prove that, if not impossible. For example, we would need to find the husband mentioned in a document drafted in another place on a date that would make it impossible for him to be also present for the redaction of the act in Chios. We should also consider that if women had attorneys to act in their stead during their husbands' absence, its mention became unnecessary.

Studying single women is not much easier, first of all because of the difficulties in identifying them, as seen with the examples of dead husbands not recorded. In agreement with Klapisch-Zuber's statement about the importance of references to males when designating a woman, many of the women considered are classified as daughters and in some cases with other relationships like sister, granddaughter, or niece.[47] There are also women who have no family relationship indicated at all, but most of them are simply named

[46] De Bracellis 34-35.
[47] Klapisch-Zuber, 'The "Cruel Mother"', 118.

in the acts. If we consider what Kelleher says about her single women, who 'may have had marriage as a goal, but the lack of immediate prospects made it necessary for them to rely on their families or on their own resources', we may suggest that most of our singlewomen leaned on family as Antonina did.[48]

Life-long singlewomen have been accounted in Europe between 1250 and 1800 for 10 to 20% of all adult women, with rates affected by multiple economic, social, and cultural factors.[49] Summarising the findings of historical demographers, Kowaleski observes that until the 18th century Mediterranean Europe had relatively few singlewomen and even fewer life-long singlewomen compared to north-western Europe, and that rural areas had fewer than urban ones.[50] Chios, with its 8% of (potentially) singlewomen, fits into this 'Mediterranean marriage pattern'. However, we cannot exclude that its specific circumstances, like those that could justify the existence of the *argomoniatico,* might have played a part. Immigration, unbalanced sex ratio with a deficiency of women, but also inheritance strategies that tied bequests to marriage, the prevalence of young girls marrying older men, and the overall central role marriage had in the society, were all factors that could have determined a reduced presence of life-long singlewomen in Chios.

There is no substantial proof that not having a husband meant having more agency. Looking at the potentially singlewomen whose actions can be seen in the documents, only six appear as having or having had in the past some kind of active role. However, they did nothing that could not be done by married women or widows. Moreover, they were not exempted from having to operate with male permission or supervision: often they did not act independently, but rather through representatives, together with others, or with the consent of male relatives or neighbours.

[48] Kelleher, *The Measure of Woman*, 98.
[49] Bennett and Froide, 'A Singular Past', 2–5.
[50] M. Kowaleski, 'Singlewomen in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: The Demographic Perspective', in *Singlewomen*, ed. by Bennett and Froide (1999), 38–81, pp. 38, 50, 56, 64.

Olim Serva Nunc Liberta: Freed Women

Slaves had not been counted among the number of the potential singlewomen. Roman law denied the legality of slave marriage, but according to canon law they could get married, even if marriage did not change the fact that a slave and her offspring belonged to the master.[51] It means that any man wishing to marry a slave had zero rights as husband and father. In practice a wedded female slave was treated as if she were single.[52] It is not surprising, then, that in all the acts involving female slaves not one is said to be married. A slave's primary relationship was always with their master: that was their defining relationship, like for most free women it was who their father or husband was. Probably for similar reasons freedwomen are identified through their former masters. We have four cases: Francisca *olim famula* of Bartholomeus Negrinus, Margarita *olim serva* of Guillermus Cravia, Elena *olim serva quondam Petri de Ripalta*, and Caterina *alumpna Smeralde*.[53] I consider these four women as ex-slaves even if the terminology lends itself to some doubts, as explained in Chapter 2.

Manumitted slaves are the topic of this last part of the chapter since they appear in deeds as single women. We saw sale contracts that included a future manumission, but to investigate what the freedom they gained consisted of, it is necessary to examine the manumission documents.

[51] See among others Sheehan; A. Winroth, 'Neither Slave nor Free. Theology and Law in Gratian's Thoughts on the Definition of Marriage and Unfree Persons', in *Medieval Church Law and the Origins of the Western Legal Tradition: A Tribute to Kenneth Pennington*, ed. by M. E. Sommar and W. P. Müller (Washington, D.C, 2006), 97–109; Tria, cap. 5; R. M. Karras, 'Gender and Slavery', in *A Historical Guide to World Slavery*, ed. by S. Drescher and S. L. Engerman (New York, 1998), 216–21. Cf. McKee, 'Inherited Status', 47; Karras, *Unmarriages*, 71, 80; Barker, 'Egyptian and Italian Merchants', 100.
[52] S. M. Stuard, 'Single by Law and Custom', in *Singlewomen*, ed. by Bennett and Froide (1999), 106–26, p. 107.
[53] Panissaro 48; Foglietta 290, 297; Piemontesi 31.

All the manumission acts for women that I found are from the 15th century, with one exception (Lucia in 1520).[54] Origone points out the increased frequency of *liberti* in acts in the second half of the 15th century and suggests as possible reasons human compassion for common hardships and fear of the Turks.[55] After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Ottoman conquests continued. By the end of 1455 the Genoese had lost the two Phocaeas. Other important Latin territories in the Eastern Mediterranean fell into Ottoman hands: Gattilusios' Lesbos in 1462, Venetian Negroponte in 1470, Genoese Caffa in 1475. Between 1459 and 1462 other cities such as Sinope, Amasra, and Trebizond, which had remained 'isolated' in the Black Sea after the fall of Constantinople, were lost, and by 1479 the Ottomans had conquered the Balkan peninsula south of the Danube.[56] Freeing a slave was generally seen as an act of charity that pleased God and benefited the soul.[57] It is not surprising, then, that in such fearful and dangerous times there was an increase of manumissions: besides three deeds from the early years of the century, the others are from 1453 onwards.

Fourteen slaves were enfranchised: four Circassians, two Bulgarians, two Russians, one Tartar, one Abkhazian, one Serbian, one Ghetik, and two whose ethnicity is not mentioned. This reflects the slave population proportions inferred from the sale contracts. In nine cases the term *serva* appears (in two occasions as *serva et sclava*), in four *sclava*, and in one *sclava et mancipia*.

The Bulgarian Nerguiza is the only one who seems to have somehow bought her own freedom. It is not surprising that there are not more cases as it was the rarest occurrence. Balletto notes that it is unclear how slaves could have come in possession of enough money

[54] Sampietro 397.
[55] Origone, 'Chio', 198.
[56] D. Maland, *Europe in the Sixteenth Century*, 2nd edn (London, 1982), 100.
[57] Cf. Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery*, 87.

to redeem themselves.[58] On 8 April 1404 Neapoleus *medicus de Saona* (doctor from Savona) acted as attorney for Franciscus de Ponçola and freed Nerguiza after having received 11 gold ducats as the final part of a payment of 28 ducats (*ducatos auri undecim ad complementum ducatorum auri XXVIII*).[59] The document says that Nerguiza or Melchione de Nigro paid Neapoleus for her (*dictam Nerguizam sive Melchionem de Nigro pro ea dedisse et solvisse eidem Neapolioni*). It was probably Melchione who gave the money: it would not make sense for him to be mentioned if only Nerguiza was acting, as he does not appear in the deed again. We do not know the kind of relationship Nerguiza and Melchione had nor who owned the money. We also do not know anything about the first payment. The possibilities are various: Nerguiza could have bought her own freedom, Melchione could have bought it for her, he could have loaned her the money, she could have paid a part herself and borrowed the rest from him, she could have paid some herself while he paid the remaining, etc. It is interesting that Nerguiza had been sold some months earlier (January 2) to Franciscus, who then had appointed Neapoleus as his attorney (March 4) with the specific task to sell and free the slave (*ad vendendam et franchandam dictam sclavam*).[60] It is also worth noticing that Nerguiza was not called *monocola* anymore, probably because whether she was healthy or not was irrelevant to the documents in question, unlike in a sale.

Another finding in line with previous studies regards the age of manumitted slaves. Although the documents do not always indicate it, when they do, it goes from twenty-eight to thirty-seven, with Caterina being an outlier with her sixteen years.[61] It is in agreement with Balletto's statement that freed slaves were older than twenty-five, with few exceptions.[62] Was it because, as they got older, they were considered less efficient and

[58] Balletto, 'La schiavitù', 201.
[59] Panissaro 83. See also Chapter 2.
[60] Panissaro 54, 70.
[61] Foglietta 301.
[62] Balletto, 'La schiavitù', 214.

useful? Was it a sentimental matter, especially when a slave had served the same master for decades? As often it is with personal feelings and intentions, it is hard, if not impossible, to surmise. When the deeds state the reason the slaves were freed, the most common one is 'good service' (*bene et fideliter servivisse*).[63]

In 1454 Hanaste, a 37-year-old Abkhaz, was freed because of her many services (*propter multa et grata servicia et beneficia*) and because she breastfed her master's granddaughter (*quia lactavit Isoltam, neptem ipsius Thome, filiam Neapolioni de Vivaldis, generi sui*).[64] On 15 April 1461 Magdalena, a 28-year-old Ghetik, was freed by Leonardus Bazurrus, her last master, according to what a previous owner had stipulated. In 1455, in fact, Albertus Bolla had sold Magdalena to Pelegrus Iustinianus with the condition that she would be manumitted after six years. Pelegrus sold her after six months to Leonardus, with the same condition (*sub dicta lege et conditione*), and Madgalena served him for the remaining time, in particular nursing and looking after Leonardus' son (*in lactando, gubernando et nutriendo domini Leonardi filium*). She was freed *cum omni prole et ea nascitura*, leading us to think that she was a mother, and probably pregnant at the moment of the manumission.[65] It is impossible to know who had fathered the children; in general, when wet-nursing is mentioned, a previous pregnancy is implied, but there is no way to know who the father was. Karras states that 'in all slave-holding societies women slaves, whatever their other functions, were sexually available to their masters'.[66] However, sexual relations could also happen outside the household and Genoese laws included penalties for getting someone else's slave pregnant.[67] A potential example of a man fathering a child with a slave belonging to someone else has been presented in Chapter 2, with Baptista de Vignana

[63] Panissaro 50.
[64] Roccatagliata 120.
[65] Giurista 11.
[66] Karras, 'Gender and Slavery', 217.
[67] Balard, 'Slavery', 247; Tria, 19, 132–35; LG, 951–952.

giving to Tiresia del Grogno de Catalonia a six-month-old slave called Teodosia who was the daughter of Cateria, Baptista's slave.[68] As the document does not mention any monetary transaction (or any other type of exchange), it has been suggested that Tiresia had been Teodosia's father. Returning to Magdalena, even if she was expecting a child from Leonardus, it had no role in her manumission because she had been promised her freedom by a previous master.

Another case of manumission *pro multis et gratis serviciis* is that of a 35-year-old Circassian called Maria who, however, would have to wait two years or the marriage of her master's daughter – whatever came first – before being free.[69] The peculiar aspect of this deed, which is heavily abridged by Argenti, is the incipit:

> *Cum naturaliter omnes homines liberi nascantur et servitus per ius gentium est contra ius naturalle ad cuius extinctione per dictum ius gentium est introductum beneficium manumissionis…*
>
> 'Because by nature all people are born free and slavery introduced by the laws of the nations is against natural law, for its elimination through said laws of nations the benefit of manumission is introduced…'

Similar words appear in another document by the same notary, so it is not clear if this moral concern belonged to the master Baldasar de Segnorio or to the notary.[70] In the deed it is also added that Baldasar manumitted Maria to save his and his relatives' souls (*in remedium anime Baldasari et quorundam parentum suorum*). A case with similar spiritual concerns might have been that of another Maria, a Bulgarian slave manumitted by Marietta, Bernardus

[68] Partially in Foglietta 343 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 843, doc. 95.
[69] Partially in Foglietta 307 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 843, doc. 320.
[70] Foglietta 321.

and Thomas Paterius, respectively the widow and the brothers of the late Nicolaus.[71] They were Nicolaus' testamentary executors and freed the slave following the intentions expressed by Nicolaus while he was alive (*iuxta intentionem dicti quondam Nicolai, qui tempore vite sue eisdem, ut asserunt, dixit quod infrascriptam Mariam manumitterent*).

Another testamentary manumission was dated 22 August 1461, when Mariola, widow of Baptista Spinacius, left to her children a slave called Ana, who would serve for two years and then be free.[72] Genoese laws prohibited to manumit slaves by will, lest the slaves hasten their masters' death, but it still happened. The provision was in the 'Statuti della colonia genovese di Pera' (1304) and in the *Leges Genuenses* (1340), but our manumissions by will are dated a century after those statutes (1403, 1461) and in Genoa they still happened in the second half of the 16th century.[73]

Manumission documents list the rights the newly freed women acquired, and we can presume that they did not get rights that free women did not already have. The deeds can be more or less comprehensive, but they usually included the ability to make wills and codicils, sell, buy, cede, donate, engage themselves or their properties (i.e. as pledge or mortgage), and act freely in and out of courts (*testari et codicilari, vendere, emere, cedere et donare, se et sua obligare, iudicio interesse et demum quoslibet contractus et actus legitimos facere et liberaliter exercere, in iudicio et extra*). Some documents also add being able to enter into contracts, trade, rent out, lease, do business, and appoint procurators (*contrahendi, mercandi, locandi, conducendi, negociare, procuratores constituere*).[74] We do not know how much reality and the formulaic nature of the notarial language influenced the deeds. Do we need to think that if a right was not specifically mentioned, the woman did not have it?

[71] Panissaro 41.
[72] A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 944, doc. 128. See Chapter 3.
[73] V. Promis, CLXXVI, *De hiis qui commiserunt furtum in sclavo seu in sclava*; LG, 882 sub rubrica *Ne servi manumittantur in ultima voluntate*. See examples in *Occupation*, vol. 1, 622, and Tria, 49–50.
[74] See also Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi', 678–79.

Only one manumission mentions the ability to appoint attorneys: does it mean that it was a 'rare' right for freedwomen, while it was common for freeborns?[75] If a document does not list '*cedere et donare*' should we think that the woman could sell and buy and enter into contracts, but not cede and donate?[76] I believe, instead, that these might have been omissions on the notary's part than did not have repercussions on these newly free women's legal abilities, especially since according to the Justinian code, an enfranchised person was in everything equal to the *ingenuus*, a person free from birth.[77]

Indeed, some of these documents specify that the former slave could do everything a free-born person could. Panissaro wrote about the former slave becoming *liber homo* (even if the subject was female), and that the master returned to them the status of freeborn (*restituens primis natalibus et iuri ingenuitatis*).[78] In Calvi's acts the slave is proclaimed to be as free as a *mater familias* and Roman citizen, as if she had been born of free parents (*sicut et prout quelibet homo suis iuris, mater familias sui iuris ac civis Rhomana facere potest eque ac si ab ingenuis nata fuisset, restituens eam natalibus antiquis*).[79] Another reference to Roman law is that to the *ius patronatus*, the rights of a patron over the person and the inheritance of his freedman. It was often connected with the *obsequium*, a not-clearly defined respectful behaviour of the freedman towards his patron.[80] Epstein states that in the 1450s it had become standard practice in Chios to renounce these ancient Roman legal rights of a patron over an ex-slave.[81] However, we see patrons relinquishing the *ius patronatus* in Panissaro's acts in 1403-1404 (*remittens ius patronatus*) and keeping it in Calvi's ones, in 1454 and 1471 (*retento semper in se iure patronatus*).[82] The renunciation of the rights of

[75] Giurista 11.
[76] Cf. Roccatagliata 23, 97, 120, 142.
[77] See Origo, 352.
[78] Panissaro 41, 50, 83.
[79] Roccatagliata 23, 97, 120, 142.
[80] EDRL.
[81] Epstein, *Purity Lost*, 72.
[82] Panissaro 41, 50, 83; Roccatagliata 97, 105, 142.

patronage was often associated with the relinquishing of any action in case of transgression of the *obsequium*: even in case of ingratitude the freedom could not be revoked and the person could not revert to slave status (*remittens revocationis in servitutem propter ingratitudinem vel alio quovis iure*).

According to Balletto, former slaves had a non-irrelevant incidence on the socio-economic structure of Chios, and she presents examples of freedmen owning properties, houses, and ships.[83] Among the documents read for this thesis only three involve freedwomen, all owning property presently or in the future, like Margarita, *olim serva*, who at her former master's death was to receive bedding, a storage bench, and clothes.[84]

In a deed drafted by Panissaro on 23 November 1403, Benedictus Cazorinus de Clavaro declared to have received 5 florins from Bartholomeus Cassina, who acted in the name and on behalf of a woman named Francisca.[85] She is called *olim famula Bartholemei Negrini*. As already stated, *famula* is a term that could refer to servants, slaves, or even handmaidens. Francisca was not identified through a male relative and she did not have a surname: since the only relation acknowledged is the one with her former master Bartholomeus, it could be that she had been a slave. Could those five florins have been the price, or part of, for her freedom? While it is true that they were not owed to Bartholomeus, they could have been a loan in order to pay him. Either way, what is relevant is that this woman had contracted a debt and then had the means to repay it.

Elena, a freedwoman ex-slave of the late Petrus de Ripalta (*olim serva quondam Petri de Ripalta et ad presens liberta*), made a codicil on 28 March 1465. [86] She appointed Donelus Vercelinus de Seva as her fideicommissary. She was ill (*corpore languens*) and had

[83] Balletto, 'Chio nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo', 186–87; Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi', 681–82, 689–90.
[84] Foglietta 290. See Chapter 3.
[85] Panissaro 48.
[86] Partially in Foglietta 297 = A.S.G., *Notai Antichi,* filza 843, doc. 268. Cf. also Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi', 685.

been so for a long time (*longa infirmitate*), with Donelus taking care of her. Elena probably had compensated him in her will, since it is said that the expenses he already bore surpassed what she left him (*superant facultates et bona que ipsa Elena dimittit sibi* [sic] *Donelo*). She also left money to the two sons she had from her former master:

> *Item dicit dicta Elena quod habuit et habet filios duos naturales ex semine suprascripti quondam Petri de Ripalta olim domini dicte Elene unum scilicet vocatum Batistinus et alium Lucianinus quibus legavit et legat ducatos decem monete chii pro singulo ipsorum.*
>
> 'Also the said Elena says that she had and has two natural sons from the seed of the aforementioned late Petrus de Ripalta, once master of the said Elena, one called Batistinus and the other Lucianinus, to whom she left and leaves 10 ducats in coins of Chios for each of them.'

This is the only case found where it is certain that the slave had sexual relations with her master, which resulted in two children. There is, however, no evident connection between having a child from the master and being freed, especially as, according to Genoese laws, getting pregnant with the master's child did not change the slave's juridical status.[87] It is possible that the 'good services' provided by slaves and mentioned as the reason for their manumission included also sexual service, but there is no proof of it. As a result, as McKee recognises in her article dedicated to the topic of slaves women's sexual service in late medieval Italy, 'it is difficult to discuss a subject for which there is very little direct documentation or evidence'.[88]

[87] Gioffrè, *Il mercato*, 97; Tria, 15; LG, 952.
[88] McKee, 'The Implications of Slave Women's Sexual Service', 103.

Previously, documents have shown free women owning, selling, buying and renting, donating and receiving donations, making wills, acting as guardians for their children, making debts, appointing attorneys, paying and giving receipts of payment, presenting complaints and appeals in courts. We only found freedwomen appointing attorneys, receiving gifts and making wills, but according to the manumission deeds, they were granted all the other rights too. Looking at the evidence collected it seems, therefore, that there were no relevant differences between the rights enjoyed by free and freed women, and that the latter were not second-class subjects compared to freeborns, at least from a legal point of view.

Conclusions

This chapter dealt with women who were (or appeared to be) without a husband. Chapter 2 showed how women's involvement in commercial activities was not what would have been expected in a mercantile city like Chios. In the first part of this chapter the only two examples of women whose husband is said to be absent were examined. This low number might depend on the documents considered, but I propose that the existence of the alberghi might have played a role too. A member of an albergo would have had numerous male relatives to entrust power of attorney to, and he might have preferred them rather than appointing his wife. This would explain why Anna Prasinisa was the one acting: her husband had no relatives on the island. This and the fact that her advisers and most of the witnesses seem Greek could indicate that Nicolaus had become integrated in the Greek community, just as Anna was involved with the Latin one. Indeed, both women with the absent husband, despite being Greek and not speaking Latin, went to a Genoese notary. I have suggested earlier that it could have been a way to lend more authority and officialdom to their actions, or to circumvent limitations imposed on Greek women by Greek customs. We cannot, however,

exclude that a woman acting in her husband's absence was such an unusual occurrence – perhaps because they usually had attorneys acting for them – that recourse to a Genoese notary was necessary.

Much more numerous are the women appearing in the documents without the name of a husband attached to theirs. Kittell addresses two interpretations of the absence of marital status indicators: notary's imprecision and presence of unmarried women.[89] I believe that when the husband is not mentioned but existed, which we know from other deeds, is not due to inaccuracy, but rather to the marital relationship not being relevant for the purposes of the act. As contributions to the edited volume 'Singlewomen in the European Past, 1250-1800' point out, this category has been mostly ignored by studies, in part because singlewomen are hard to identify in medieval sources. Indeed, not all the women mentioned without a husband in our documentation were single, with the meaning of adult women who had never been married. Besides those who had actually been married, others were too young to be wed or had plans to do so, and therefore they can be classified as life-cycle singlewomen. None of them had active roles: it can be ascribed to their young age, but there is the possibility that between two young girls equal in age, if one was married, she would have had more freedom of action than an unmarried one.

Eliminating also those women of which there are not enough details to determine their status, the remaining potential singlewomen are few. This low percentage fits with the pattern detected in Mediterranean regions by historical demographers. However, I think it might also be a result of the specific situation in Genoese Chios, in particular immigration patterns, the lack of women, inheritance practices, and cultural and social notions. Moreover, I found no evidence that singlewomen had more agency than married ones: they all acted in the same way, and often with male supervision.

[89] Kittell, 'Patriarchal Imperialism', 48.

A category not considered among the singlewomen, at whatever stage of their lives, was that of slaves: it is never indicated if they were married or not, because it was not relevant. However, slaves could be freed, thus entering the ranks of the singlewomen, whether life-cycle or life-long ones. The last part of the chapter looked at whether freedwomen had the same rights as free-born women.

Freedom often came with conditions, like monetary compensation, maintaining the Catholic faith, or continuing to serve for a certain amount of years. Good service was the most common reason given for freeing a slave – when the reason is mentioned – along with moral and spiritual concerns.[90] These might have had a role in the increase of manumissions after 1453, as the 'Turkish menace' became even more pressing. This is reflected in the increased presence of former slaves in Chios' acts from the second half of the 15th century observed by Origone.[91] There are not enough examples of freedwomen acting to fully see what they could do, but the manumission documents granted them the same rights that freeborns had. Of course, it does not necessarily mean that it was what happened in reality: as seen with the Genoese rule prohibiting manumissions by will, practice did not always follow the law.

[90] Cf. Balletto, 'La schiavitù', 201–09; Balletto, 'Schiavi e manomessi', 671–76. See among others Tria, 27–52; Origo, 352–53.
[91] Origone, 'Chio', 198.

Conclusions

The importance of Chios from a geographical, strategic, and economic point of view has been widely recognised and studied. As observed in the introduction, scholars – mainly Italian and Greek – have explored numerous aspects of Chios during the Genoese period. Studies on its economy and society have been conducted, but the role that women had in them has so far been neglected. Scattered mentions and a few dedicated paragraphs, for example by Origone and Pistarino, offer meagre contributions to the extensive and ever growing literature on women in medieval and early modern Europe.[1] Venetian Crete is often compared to Chios because of the similar setting and situation, Aegean islands under Italian cities' rule with an important notarial tradition, and women living there have been subject of study.[2] This highlights even more the lack of similar works for women in Genoese Chios. This thesis represents a pioneering attempt to fill this knowledge gap by shedding some light on women's involvement in the economy of the island, as well as on how their marital status might have influenced it. By bringing attention to a topic previously overlooked, this thesis adds to the scholarly literature about Genoese Chios.

Following a long-standing tradition that uses cartularies as sources for Genoese history, my study examined Genoese notarial documents produced in Chios in order to better understand women's lives. Taking a gendered approach for the first time in Chios' historiography, I systematically analysed more than one thousand one hundred deeds from the 14th, 15th and the early 16th centuries, identifying and collecting information about the women mentioned in them. Some recurring and interconnecting themes appeared throughout the study, such as laws, marriage, the multi-cultural society of Chios, and agency. In order

[1] Origone, 'Chio'; *CGCC*.
[2] See works by McKee, but also Lambrinos and Lauer.

to place Chios in the wider context of medieval Europe, frequent comparisons have been offered, in particular with Genoa, Crete, and cities in Mediterranean Europe with similar types of evidence, for example Venice, Florence, Valencia, and Montpellier.

The starting point of this thesis outlined why the Genoese were in Chios, with their interest in the island predating the period considered by this study. After considering the literature on the events of 1346, Chapter 1 concluded that Stella's version, which has been almost universally used and rarely challenged, is inaccurate. I believe it was likely, as Pistarino suggested, that some degree of planning had been behind the conquest.[3] However, caution needs to be used when discussing intentionality in the past, as well as in the debate about whether Chios was a colony or not. The chapter suggests that calling the island a Genoese colony might be an over-simplification, but it is not erroneous.

A reflection of Chios' peculiar status as a colony can be observed in its complex legal system, which encompassed Genoese law, Roman law, and local customs. Examples of Genoese laws are the tithe to the port of Genoa, the clause permitting the acceptance of inheritance on behalf of absent siblings, and the one allowing a woman to act if her husband's return was not expected within six months. References to Roman law are usually present in manumission documents and when women renounced the rights of their sex. Discrepancies between law and practice are not the result of Chios' colonial status and its distance from the ruling centre: it happened elsewhere too. Beattie, among others, shows how English common law regarding women's status as *femme sole* or *femme couvert* was applied to varying degrees depending on convenience.[4] As seen in Chapter 3, all over Europe Christians kept Christian slaves despite the practice being forbidden since the 13th century at least. Moreover, often the same exact disregard for a law can be found in Genoa as well

[3] Pistarino, *I signori del mare*, 22; Pistarino, 'Chio dei Genovesi, 25–26.
[4] Cf. Beattie, 'Married Women'; Beattie, '"Living as a Single Person"'.

as in Chios, for example the *antefactum* surpassing the limit set by Genoese law, or manumissions by will still happening after they were banned.

Some attention has been drawn to the norms concerning mastic because of its importance for the economy, for example in works by Balard and Basso.[5] Because mastic was a product exclusive to the island and the Genoese had no previous experience with it, I agree with Pistarino and Balletto that the Genoese adopted the already existing Byzantine dispositions regarding it.[6] It seems extremely unlikely that Genoese Chios did not have any legislation detailing what was legal and what illegal, and how mastic frauds were to be punished, until the podestà's edict in 1392.

Other local customs are much less studied and this thesis provided a deeper insight into two of them, the *aviotichi* and the *argomoniatico*. The first was a Byzantine legacy, an inheritance tax (άβιωτικιον in Greek) that appears in a codicil of a Jewish woman in 1393.[7] Argenti published the Genoese letter on laws of inheritance in Chios as *Iurisditio Amotichi super grecos*, but in the *Codex Berianus Chiensis* I read *Aviotichi*.[8] I argue, therefore, that the tax was not imposed only on Jews as Epstein suggests, but rather it applied to Greeks too.[9] As this tax was paid to the Genoese administration, it is a clear example of a previously existing Byzantine law being maintained by the new government.

Another local duty might have been the *argomoniatico*, not because of its Byzantine origins but rather because of its uniqueness: no other tax on widows who did not want to remarry is known elsewhere. This study is the first since Caes' article in 1966 to suggest that the tax did not have Greek origins.[10] Scholars, including Pistarino, Balletto, and Basso, have ignored Caes' contribution, always referring to the *argomoniatico* as a Byzantine

[5] E.g. Balard, 'Le mastic'; Basso, 'Il mondo egeo', 215–20.
[6] Balletto, 'L'amministrazione della giustizia', 719–22; Pistarino, *I signori del mare*, 221.
[7] Di Chiavari 21 (Villa 1 with some discrepancies).
[8] *Occupation*, vol. 2, 248–49. CBC [SEQ_230]: Pagina: 207.
[9] Epstein, *Purity Lost*, 75.
[10] Caes.

custom. As discussed in Chapter 4, besides literary mentions, I found no proof that the *argomoniatico* actually existed and had ever been paid, but if it did, I argue that it was a Genoese sanction applied to all women on the island. Chios' colonial status would have played an important role in the existence of the tax, as I identified immigration as a plausible cause. Immigrants were mostly male, and often single, and there was not a corresponding influx of women, causing an unbalanced gender ratio. Literature on other colonial experiences found that scarcity of marriageable women and of women from the mother-country was a common circumstance.[11] If the situation in Chios was particularly dire, it would make sense for women to be encouraged to marry and widows to remarry.

While a tax that discouraged widowhood is not known anywhere else, secondary literature has shown that in late medieval and early modern Europe remarriage was common despite its stigma and the wishes of most men, who in their wills tied bequests and advantages to the female recipients remaining widows. Another similarity between Chios and the rest of Europe, at least Mediterranean Europe, can be found in the low number of singlewomen. Following Bennett and Froide's classification, Chapter 5 distinguished between life-cycle singlewomen and life-long ones.[12] The former were single women who might marry in the future, and I included among them underage as well as engaged girls. The latter, women whose single status was a permanent one, amount to the 8% of the women found in the deeds. I did not consider uncertain cases and slaves, nor women who appeared in documents without a husband but were in fact married or widowed, which was revealed by cross-checking data from different acts. I suggest that these omissions were due to the marital status of these women not being relevant to the operations recorded. A low number of singlewomen, together with inheritance practices (i.e. leaving dowries as bequests), the

[11] Powers; Marsh; Zug.
[12] Bennett and Froide, 'A Singular Past', 2; Froide, 9; Beattie, *Medieval Single Women*, 8.

marriage age for girls (usually quite young compared to their older husbands), and the societal importance of marriage, situates Chios into the 'Mediterranean marriage pattern', in which 'few medieval women remained single for long'.[13]

While the situation was not unique to Chios, I believe that the effects on the island were distinctive. I argue that the limited presence of life-long singlewomen and the supposed existence of the *argomoniatico* were connected to each other and to the consequences of a mostly male immigration that caused a shortage of women in the island compared to men. I also suggest that the situation might have played a role in the dowries not being subject to inflationary trends and in the apparent absence of female monastic or religious institutions. The lack of Latin women, in particular, has been seen as having a relevant role in the encouragement of mixed marriages on the government's part.[14] Indeed, most mixed marriages were between Latin men and Greek women, which is significant especially since in Chios, as in many other European societies, endogamy was prevalent.

Marriage was not the only way the different communities living on the island interacted. Jews, Greeks and Latins did business together, selling, buying, and renting from each other. They lived next to each other, sometimes maybe even together, for example if just a portion of a house was rented. They hired and worked for each other: the most evident and common example is that of Genoese notaries being employed by Greeks and Jews, but we have also seen Guiliermus de Ceva being hired to work on Jews' houses and Thedora de Grisopoli working for the Latin Iacobus de Andoria.[15]

Adding to the multi-culturalism of the island were the slaves, mostly coming from the regions surrounding the Black Sea. The documents analysed in Chapter 2 showed that Circassians, Tatars, and Russians were the most numerous, as happened in Venice and

[13] Kowaleski, 'Singlewomen', 50.
[14] Passim Origone, 'Chio', and Balletto, 'Società'.
[15] Piemontesi, docc. 21, 25.

Genoa as well. Other similarities between the slave market in Chios and that in the mother-country are that women were more numerous and more expensive than men, and that there was a preference for young adults. The most common names for slaves were the same both in Chios and in Genoa and with all probability were bestowed by sellers or buyers. Among the findings contributing to knowledge about slavery in Chios and in the Mediterranean Sea, a particularly relevant one is that Greeks were still enslaved in the second half of the 15th century, despite Balard and Pistarino stating that they disappeared from Chios' market after 1381.[16] A change in slavery practices evident in the second half of the 15th century, instead, is the increase of manumissions and, contemporaneously, the fall of slave sales, in particular after 1460. Origone points out the increased presence of ex-slaves in acts from that same period, and I agree that the Ottoman threat played a role in these developments.[17] Freeing a slave was considered an action that pleased God, and indeed spiritual concerns are the most common reason given in manumission documents, together with good service. As the Ottoman conquests advanced, the slave market shrank, or better shifted towards serving Turkish demands rather than Latin ones, which would explain the diminishing sales.

Scouring the documents for women involved in economic activities revealed an unexpected, but not inexplicable, scarcity. Chapter 2 identified some possible reasons, the main one being that women were mostly involved in informal and/or familiar economy, which usually evades official documentation. Indeed, the few working women found in the deeds operated outside their households. Intrinsically tied to this lack of evidence is the fact that low-value transactions were not recorded either. This is true for men as well, and in fact we do not have any information about their work as artisans or traders. We know they existed thanks to occupation titles, something we do not have for women, who were instead

[16] 'Romanie', 18/1, 308; *CGCC*, 436.
[17] Origone, 'Chio', 198.

identified through family relationships (with rare exceptions, such as *domina* Isabella Faracha *obstetrix*).[18]

Women do not appear as independent agents, but they are also not present in documents acting as representatives of their husbands. Unlike in other maritime cities such as Amalfi, Venice, or Ghent, women in Chios were not appointed as procurators during men's absences from the island. Chapter 5 discussed the only two deeds that stated clearly that a woman was acting while the husband was away. However, only one wife, Anna Prasinisa, acted for her husband, but she had not been appointed by him. I suggest that the presence in Chios of the alberghi might have played a role in this situation. An albergo was a Genoese institution that saw the union of multiple families into a single, bigger, 'house': if men had a large number of male family members to choose from, they could have preferred to appoint male relatives rather than their wives. Despite finding only two cases of absent husbands, I think it is unlikely that it was such a rare occurrence. I believe, instead, that there were other instances where it was omitted, perhaps because the women had attorneys acting for them and, therefore, their husbands' absence was not relevant.

One of the more significant findings to emerge from this study is that, as Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrated, it is not true that women in Genoese Chios were not involved in the economy, but rather that their participation was seldom recorded. This diverges from what previous literature stated, while being more in line with what happened in the rest of medieval Europe, where women were employed in a multitude of areas. Even if Pistarino and Balletto had meant 'business' as trade, when saying that female participation in it was almost non-existent, it is still incorrect.[19] The norms regarding the levy on foreign trade

[18] Piemontesi 43.
[19] *CGCC*, 433; Balletto, 'Chio nel tempo di Cristoforo Colombo', 198.

(*comerchium forensium*) proves that Greek women, the majority on the island, took part in commerce, enough to warrant their inclusion in the Genoese tax.

Examining the documentation in chronological order, a larger participation of women in economic transactions in the first fifty years of the Genoese rule was observed. I suggest that it might have been due to the necessities of establishing a new outpost. Once the Genoese settled, however, it seems as if the local society started to resemble that of the mother-country. As Bezzina points out, in fact, since the 14th century women in Genoa had seen their capacity to act autonomously and access properties and inheritances restricted.[20]

Limited occupational opportunities might have influenced women's impact on the economy, but they did not stop it. For example, the prevalence of female sellers compared to female buyers and the predominance of valuable assets coming into their hands through inheritance or dowry could indicate that women often did not have the resources to afford big purchases. Economic transactions, however, registered only a portion of what women could own, mostly high-value items since low-value transactions were not recorded. The prevalence of houses and shares is probably also due to those being low-risk investments. Similar occurrences have been noted in medieval Montpellier and Genoa by Reyerson, Bezzina, and Shaw.[21] Deeds such as dowry-related documents, wills, and donations inform us about other assets women could own, including objects they used in their everyday life, although the picture given is partial.

Dowry-related acts are particularly interesting. While women mostly acquired houses through dowry or inheritance, Chapter 3 showed it was nonetheless rare for real estate to be included in dowries, which usually comprised objects and cash. This has been observed in Venetian Crete, Valencia, and Genoa too, and attributed to the traditional

[20] Cf. Bezzina, 'Married Women'.
[21] Reyerson, 'Women in Business', 137; Bezzina, 'Married Women', 128; Shaw, 'Women', 183.

tendency and desire to preserve the estates intact.[22] The importance of houses as assets can also be seen in the fact that they are the only items, besides slaves, subject to controversies. Unusual, although not unique, is instead the high level of female involvement in dowry-related contracts, seen also in Cyprus.[23] Immigration and lack of male relatives are among the causes, which in both cases came down to the islands' colonial status. I have previously stated how I believe that similar reasons were also involved in two other phenomena in Genoese Chios, both of which relate to marriage and are strictly connected to each other: the low number of life-long singlewomen and the supposed existence of the *argomoniatico*.

Another change that can be traced through the documentation is the absence of women called *domina* in deeds from the first sixty years of the Genoese rule. As with the diminishing female participation in economic transactions after that period, I believe that it was a case of the local society reproducing aspects of the mother-country: Genoese acts contain mentions of women with the title of *domina* since the 14th century.[24] In the documents from Chios a good percentage of women are called *domina* (around 17%), but no will has a husband designating his wife in that way (nor is it said anywhere that the title came from such a designation). In Tuscany and Venice women named *donna et domina* were widows with rights and authority over the deceased husbands' estate. In Chios' deeds such a formula never appears. Moreover, although most *dominae* were widowed, the term does not seem to indicate only widows, which is something that happened in Genoa too, as found by Petti Balbi. In Chapter 4 I suggest that a *domina* in Chios was a married mother or a widow, usually of a certain social status, who exercised agency, either acting for herself or on behalf of somebody else.

[22] Gallina, 266; McKee, 'Households', 42–43; Wessell Lightfoot, *Women, Dowries and Agency*, 74–75; Bezzina, *Artigiani*, 141.
[23] Dincer, 'Wills'.
[24] Cf. Petti Balbi, 'Donna et domina'.

In this thesis agency is interpreted as someone's ability to make decisions about assets – their own or others' – and about their own person. It has been established that possession and management did not always coincide, but this was not necessarily to women's detriment. On one side, women needed male consent, or at least guidance, to have their actions recorded and recognised, and dowries were administered by their husbands, although women maintained property rights over them. On the other side, women were often named testamentary executors and guardians of children, both roles giving them the authority to manage properties that did not belong to them. The complex intersecting issues of female agency, possession, and management can also be seen on those occasions where women could own and manage assets without having complete control over them. This is the case of conditional bequests, for instance slaves who passed to a new owner but only for a limited period of time or if some conditions were fulfilled, the most common being that the new mistress would remain widowed and would not remarry.

For ease of classification this thesis considered women according to their marital status: single, married, and widowed. Chapter 5 did not produce any proof that life-long singlewomen had more freedom or agency than married women. This differs from other areas, for example Venice, where Chojnacka finds that singlewomen and widows enjoyed more independence than married women.[25] In Chios it was only widows who had some advantages, as commonly happened elsewhere too. Discussing widows in 13th-century Perpignan, Winer states that they were the most independent women, 'as they were in any medieval town'.[26] Examining the deeds, both in Chapter 2 and in the others, widows appear as the most active group (for example, only widows were buyers), often acting for

[25] Cf. Bennett and Froide, 'A Singular Past', 14; Chojnacka, 219; in general see *Singlewomen,* ed. by Bennett and Froide.
[26] Winer, *Women*, 40.

themselves. They also enjoyed fewer restrictions, for example not having to renounce their 'female' rights.

This thesis has uncovered plenty of examples demonstrating that women owned and disposed of their capital. Women contracting debts and repaying them, hiring professionals and getting hired themselves, even the simple fact of going to the notary, are other instances of women exercising agency. Chapter 5, in particular, examined two cases that have not received adequate attention, those of two Greek women turning to Genoese notaries in their husbands' absence. Balletto discusses Anna Prasinisa, but the focus is on the slaves mentioned in the documents rather than on her actions.[27] Maria de Lixa has instead been ignored.[28] Anna acted on behalf of her husband, although she had not been appointed by him. Maria, instead, took advantage of her husband's absence to undo his actions and recover a house that belonged to her and that he had sold without her consent. It is a clear example of a woman acting to defend her rights, those that she had on the house, but also the right to operate while her husband was away for a long period. The latter was a possibility specifically contemplated by the *Leges Genuenses*, and I suggest that Maria went to a Latin notary because Genoese law allowed her to act in a way she would otherwise not have been able to. A similar reason could have been Anna's motivation, together with the fact that Genoese notaries might have been held in higher esteem. Regardless, even if they could have turned to Greek notaries, these Greek women turning to Genoese law is a display of female agency, showing them navigating Chios' legal system and using the different laws and customs to their advantage.

All the rights that we saw women enjoying in the documents were, at least in theory, enjoyed also by freedwomen, former slaves who gained their freedom through their

[27] A.S.G., *Notai Antichi*, filza 847, doc. 209. Cf. Balletto, 'La schiavitù', 190–91.
[28] De Canella 10, 16, 37.

manumission. However, there was not enough evidence among the deeds examined to confirm that the legal theory was reflected and applied in real life, something that, as we have seen, did not always happen.

Not having enough data to fully analyse a particular issue is a common limitation when using notarial documents. As explained in the introduction, the acts that have survived are only a part of those originally produced, and they mostly involve the Latin part of the population that lived in the city of Chios. Studying Venetian Crete presents the same problems: as McKee notes, the majority of the surviving notarial material comes from and concern the capital rather than the whole island.[29] It is therefore necessary to always be aware that the deeds provide an incomplete picture. Looking for singlewomen in Chapter 5, for example, proved that just because a woman appeared with no husband in a document, it did not mean she was not married. This observation evidences once more the importance of context because, as seen also in the case study in Chapter 3, it not only allows a better understanding of the actors and their relationships, of the actions undertaken and their possible reasons, and of the deeds themselves, but it might also change it, revealing new or hidden information.

The importance and value of notarial documentation for Genoese history are renowned and have been confirmed by the findings of this thesis, and the proven existence of unpublished deeds holds great promises for future studies on women's lives on the island, as well as on Genoese Chios in general. New familiar or economic connections could emerge. More cases of women acting in their husbands' absence would allow a comparison with other women acting alone and their respective freedom and agency. More data on women's participation in the economy and on the use of the term *domina* could confirm or disprove the hypothesis that the changes through times are due to Chian society reproducing

[29] McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, VII-XIII.

circumstances existing in Genoa. An appraisal of all attorney appointments might reveal if men did have a preference for members of their families, which could explain the scarcity of female representatives.

These are just some of the topics that would benefit from further research. This thesis demonstrated how a different approach can extract new knowledge from known material or yield new conclusions. Careful examination of the deeds, focusing for the first time on the presence and roles of women, allowed me to present a better picture of Chios' complex society, where women's involvement in the economic system was more substantial than previously thought. The result is the first dedicated contribution focusing on women in Genoese Chios, which also adds to the rapidly expanding field of gender studies in medieval Europe.

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