

Article

Maritime Conflicts and Diplomacy in Late Medieval Castile: Genoese Consuls, Vessels, and Merchants (14th–15th Centuries)

Raúl González Arévalo *  and Daniel Ríos Toledano

Department of Medieval History and Historiographic Sciences and Techniques, Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, University of Granada, 18071 Granada, Spain; driostoledano@ugr.es

* Correspondence: rgonzalezarevalo@ugr.es

Abstract

The strategic position of the coast of the Kingdom of Seville, along the western route between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, encouraged the presence of numerous fleets and merchant nations in its ports and waters. The proliferation of privateers and armed conflicts, both in Andalusian waters and beyond, had a significant impact on navigation and trade. This article examines the diplomatic strategies developed by the Genoese consuls in Seville to protect the interests of their nation in the maritime conflicts that affected them.

Keywords: Castile; Genoa; maritime conflicts; diplomacy; consul; vessels; merchants

1. Introduction

The study of maritime conflicts in the Crown of Castile has fostered a rich historiographical tradition, thanks to the work of prominent scholars such as Eduardo Aznar (Aznar Vallejo 1997, 2018; Aznar Vallejo and González Zalacaín 2020) and Juan Manuel Bello (Bello León 1996, 2017, 2022). This tradition has culminated—at least to some extent—with the recent monograph by Jesús Hernández on privateering and piracy in the Kingdom of Seville (Hernández Sande 2023). Genoese ships and merchants appear consistently in all of these studies, which is hardly surprising considering that the Ligurians formed the foremost foreign nation in the region, both in demographic terms and in their commercial and financial operations. This is confirmed by an extensive body of historiography (González Arévalo 2013, pp. 177–86), which continues to expand with new quantitative and qualitative findings (Perez 2016; González Arévalo 2016a, 2016b, 2020–2021; Ríos Toledano 2018, 2019; Ríos Toledano and Jiménez López de Eguileta 2024).

The Genoese nation in Andalusia organized its presence and activities through privileges granted by the Castilian monarchs as early as the 13th century. Most of these are compiled in the *Book of Privileges of the Genoese Nation* (González Gallego 1974), although a few additional examples have recently come to light (González Arévalo 2020–2021). These very privileges made it possible to establish a consulate in Seville to oversee the community's affairs and safeguard its interests. The consulate's jurisdiction and functioning are well documented (Petti Balbi 2005; González Arce 2010), although the list of consuls remains incomplete and continues to grow; similarly, further research is needed on the Ligurian consulates in Cádiz and Sanlúcar de Barrameda (González Arévalo 2023; Ríos Toledano and Jiménez López de Eguileta 2024).

It is important to highlight the fact that, as Giovanna Petti Balbi stated, the Genoese community of Seville was the most important among the Ligurian communities, both Christian and Muslim, in the West, a circumstance emphasized by the fact that it is the



Academic Editor: Jesús Ángel Solórzano Telechea

Received: 6 July 2025

Revised: 22 July 2025

Accepted: 1 August 2025

Published: 30 August 2025

Citation: González Arévalo, Raúl, and Daniel Ríos Toledano. 2025. Maritime Conflicts and Diplomacy in Late Medieval Castile: Genoese Consuls, Vessels, and Merchants (14th–15th Centuries). *Histories* 5: 42. <https://doi.org/10.3390/histories5030042>

Copyright: © 2025 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

only place where there were always two consuls functioning the same time, acting together. Furthermore, it is clear that this community received more attention from the motherland than any other in both the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, as proved by the many letters sent to the consuls and the merchants, preserved in the series *Litterarum* of the State Archive of Genoa. Moreover, the Genoese consuls in Seville suffered more pressure from the commune: they not only carried out diplomatic activity before the Castilian authorities and delivered justice among their compatriots, they also had to provide more proof of authority, capacity of decision, expertise, dexterity, and savoir faire than any other consul of the nation (Petti Balbi 2005, pp. 153–66).

As a matter of fact, unlike the Venetian model—which favored the deployment of ambassadors to channel maritime and commercial grievances with Castilian subjects, given that the opening of their consulate in Seville in the early fifteenth century proved unsatisfactory and short-lived (González Arévalo 2024a, 2024b; González Arévalo and Vidal 2021)—the Genoese consuls in the Andalusian capital focused their efforts primarily on resolving disputes arising within their own nation. In fact, Genoese merchants and shipowners, in accordance with the stipulations set out in their privileges, appealed to Castilian justice and the crown itself to resolve conflicts and disagreements with natives of the kingdom. Moreover, a cursory review of the documentation reveals that the number of claims lodged through their consuls was considerably lower in comparison to those pursued through direct action. So much so that, despite being noted in earlier studies, this aspect—of considerable interest—has not, until now, been the focal point of any dedicated investigation. This is precisely the aim of the present study, which draws primarily on Genoese sources. The significance of the Ligurian documentation lies in its capacity to shed greater light on the strategies employed by the community's representatives—more so than Castilian sources—thus offering a more nuanced understanding of their role and activity in Castile, underlying their distinction among the Genoese consulates.

The period under examination (1360–1490) witnessed, no doubt, significant political and commercial transformations both in Genoa and Castile. The so-called “turn to the West” in the 15th century (Pistarino 1992), the shift in trading circuits, and the growing importance of the Iberian Peninsula compared to the 14th century situation, had a direct impact on the role of the consuls, as the increasing number of documents prove. Regarding Castile, the Genoese influence in Andalusian foreign commerce was resized during the 15th century due to the increasing presence, activity, and settlement of other Italian nations, namely Florence and Venice (Otte 1996).

Higher levels of conflict are clearly concentrated in two periods, i.e., during the reigns of the Henry III (1390–1406) and the Catholic Monarchs, Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon (1474–1504). Yet, as will be revealed, many of the actions carried out by the Genoese consuls of Seville were not directly related to the situation of the community in Andalusia, but were associated with the general context of the Western Mediterranean and the Atlantic, which also had an impact in the territory, and as a result, on their activity.

2. From Seville to Ceuta: A Maritime Conflict in the Gulf of Cádiz in the Fourteenth Century

The consolidation of Castilian control over the Strait of Gibraltar in the mid-14th century fostered maritime connections and commercial exchanges between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, as well as between southern Europe and North Africa. The interconnections between the former two economic spheres are better known, thanks to a rich historiographical tradition that has focused on analyzing long-distance maritime trade and navigation (Balard 2017; Blockmans et al. 2017; Nigro 2019; Solórzano Telechea and Martín Pérez 2020). In contrast, commercial contacts between North Africa and southern Castile

have received comparatively less attention from medievalists, whether approached from specific studies or broader perspectives (Rumeu de Armas 1957; Heers 1991; Aznar Vallejo 1993). The primary reason for this gap lies in the scarcity of Castilian documentary sources, which limits the study of these economic interactions up until the early 15th century.

Although Italian sources have proven promising for exploring the maritime world from alternative vantage points, they also present limitations in this regard (González Arévalo 2020, pp. 161–63). Indeed, Genoese notarial records—particularly those of a commercial and nautical nature, such as charter contracts and maritime insurance—do not offer deep insights into these issues, as such documentary evidence is relatively scarce. But does this imply that Genoese merchants had no interests in northwestern Africa? Certainly not. Nonetheless, direct records are rare, likely because many contracts were not drawn up in the metropolis, but rather in Seville, Cádiz, Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Jerez de la Frontera, or El Puerto de Santa María, as confirmed for the final decades of the 15th century (Jiménez López de Eguileta 2023). These agreements were thus made between merchants operating in those ports and Castilian shipmasters specializing in routes to Barbary and were registered by notaries based in those cities. As a result, the loss of most of these sources significantly constrains the study of Castile's commercial relations with North Africa, in general, and the business activities of the Genoese in both regions, in particular.

One of the most intriguing notarial testimonies to have survived is, without a doubt, the petition submitted by Carloto Lomellino to Bartolomeo Guastavillani, vicar of the *podestà* of Genoa, requesting certification of the authenticity of a sworn deposition issued in the city of Seville at the initiative of the Genoese consuls and drawn up by the consulate's notary in 1360. We know of this document thanks to the notary Giovanni Bargone, who worked for the vicar and included it in his private cartulary. The file recounts an incident involving the ship of Ruy Martín Puntos, which had been chartered by Colombo Lomellino and was attacked by an Aragonese galley. Its analysis provides a valuable opportunity to reflect on the diplomatic mechanisms employed to resolve an international maritime conflict that involved three political entities: Genoa and the crowns of Castile and Aragon.

It is worth noting that this notarial record was first brought to light by Léone Liagre de Sturler in her documentary collection on commercial relations between Genoa and Flanders from 1320 to 1400, although it was only partially transcribed, with the deposition from Seville receiving scant attention (Liagre de Sturler 1969, doc. 300). It is particularly striking that she included the document at all, given that it contains no direct information regarding Genoa's economic ties to the North Sea—apart from the origin of the goods loaded at the port of Sanlúcar de Barrameda, chiefly Flemish cloth. This, once again, confirms the function of the capital of the Guzmán dominions as a hub for the storage and redistribution of goods traded by merchants operating out of Seville, the principal market in the south of the Crown of Castile during the 14th century (Ríos Toledano and Jiménez López de Eguileta 2024).

In early June 1359, the Sevillian shipmaster Ruy Martín Puntos chartered his vessel to Colombo Lomellino, a Genoese merchant residing in Seville, for a voyage to Ceuta, with an intermediate stop at the port of Sanlúcar de Barrameda, located at the mouth of the Guadalquivir River. The ship had been loaded at both Castilian ports with a wide variety of goods, predominantly textiles, as indicated in Table 1. However, after departing from the capital of the Guzmán estates and setting course for the North African port, the vessel was attacked off the coast of Conil, in the Gulf of Cádiz, by an Aragonese galley commanded by Pere Bernard de Ibiza in the month of July.

Table 1. The cargo of the ship of Captain Ruy Martín Puntos.

Seville	Sanlúcar de Barrameda
	8 bales of cloth
	10 pieces of blue cloth from Comines
	10 pieces of cloth from Valencia
	5 pieces of blue cloth from Ypres
	2 pieces of vermilion red cloth from Ypres
	5 pieces of cloth from Kortrijk
	1 piece of cloth from Bruges
	10 pieces of colored cloth from Valencia
	2 pounds (<i>pondos</i>) of pepper (17 <i>arrobas</i>)
	2 boxes of lacquer (16 <i>arrobas</i>)
	1 basket of mastic tree (4 <i>arrobas</i> and 14 pounds)
	10 sacks of gallnuts (15 pitchers)
260 jars of oil	
5 pieces of camlet	
2 barrels of brass	
1 box of candles (eight <i>arrobas</i>)	
1 pound (<i>pondo</i>) of spices	
Weapons	

This was by no means an isolated or incidental action, but must instead be understood within the broader context of the War of the Two Peters, in which Genoa had aligned itself with Castile. Tensions with the Crown of Aragon had been escalating since the early 1350s, largely due to its alliance with Venice (Musarra 2017). It is worth recalling that the onset of this conflict between the two Iberian crowns was foreshadowed by the capture of two Placentine merchant ships in the port of Cádiz, carried out by Francesc de Perellós, captain of a fleet of nine galleys belonging to King Peter IV of Aragon (Ferrer i Mallol 2005, pp. 359–60). It is highly likely that this Pere Bernard de Ibiza was the same individual who, in 1358, had chartered his cog to transport salt from the port of Ibiza to Bougie (Valérian 2006, p. 368).

Tracing the course of this maritime conflict proves challenging, as no reference to it has been found in the *Book of Privileges of the Genoese Nation of Seville* (González Gallego 1974, pp. 275–358), nor in the documentary holdings of the Chancery of the Genoese Commune. No records predating 1375 survive in the *Diversorum Communis Janue* section, nor any earlier than 1380 in the *Diversorum* series. As a result, the evolution of the dispute and the mechanisms for its resolution can be discerned only through notarial deeds, which limits our approach, since it prevents us from cross-referencing this data with other Iberian or Italian sources.

Following the theft of the vessel and its cargo, the merchant Colombo Lomellino turned to the Genoese consuls in Seville—at the time, Antonio Imperiale and Ambrogio Bracelli (González Arévalo 2023, pp. 85–99). Their course of action involved seeking the institutional backing of the nation's representatives so that they might act as intermediaries between their compatriot and the local and royal authorities, reporting the incident to the Genoese Commune to ensure it was duly informed.

Possibly in response to the inaction of Seville's judicial authorities, the consuls proposed producing a *probanza*—a sworn statement supported by testimonies from those present at the time of the attack or otherwise involved. Noteworthy is the significant time lapse between 20 July 1359, when the consuls were informed of the incident, and the beginning of the testimonies on 22 May 1360—nearly a full year. This delay might reflect the community's initiative in seeking alternative means of redress in light of municipal and royal indifference.

The cargo in question was particularly valuable, with the merchandise alone estimated at 53,000 maravedís, while the vessel's equipment and provisions were valued at 2300 maravedís, as attested by the witnesses.¹

The *probanza* was conducted between 22 May and 2 June 1360, in the presence of the Genoese consuls in Seville, and was drafted by the consulate's notary, Giannotto de

Rollando. A total of nine witnesses took part in the inquiry: Ruy Martín Puntos, Martín Gracia de Sámano, Sancho Díaz, Nicolino Burgotonus, Guglielmo de Zaliano, Bartolomeo da Castiglio, Delomode Fatinati, Agamelono Lomellino, and Luchino Romeo. Sixteen questions were posed to them, although the text of these is not included in the record. Nonetheless, their responses allow us to infer the nature of the interrogations, most of which focused on clarifying the facts, the value of the cargo, the types of goods involved, and the course of the robbery.

The first to testify was the shipmaster Ruy Martín Puntos, a resident of Seville, on 22 May. Before giving his formal statement, he briefly recounted the events: on 5 June 1359, the Genoese merchant Colombo Lomellino chartered his vessel in the city, as attested by a notarial deed executed before the notary Alvar Pérez near the Royal Alcázar. In this way, the planned voyage to the port of Ceuta was formally recorded. This type of ship was commonly employed to link the Iberian coasts and was notable for its size and rigging—powered by both sail and oars—making it ideal for short- to medium-range navigation in the Atlantic (Ortega Villoslada 2015, pp. 240–41). His initial statements emphasized the nature of the goods loaded at Sanlúcar de Barrameda, beginning with those of greatest economic value: eight bales of cloth, which he indicated bore a distinctive mark. He also noted that the Ligurian merchant had entrusted him with other items, such as two pounds (*pondos*) of pepper and a basket of mastic gum (*almáciga*), which he had successfully recovered. The same could not be said for other goods, such as two boxes of lacquer.²

In response to the eighth question of the interrogation, the shipmaster stated that the 260 jars of oil had been loaded at the port of Sanlúcar de Barrameda, which indicates an error in the record made by the notary Giannotto de Rollando. Similarly, in response to the eleventh question, he asserted that the *pondo* of spices had been taken on board at the mouth of the Guadalquivir River, not in Seville. Throughout his deposition, he also mentioned that other goods had been loaded, including two boxes of brassware and a crate of candles, although he did not specify whether these were taken on at the port of Sanlúcar, which suggests they may have been stowed in the capital.

The answer to the thirteenth question is particularly significant, as he emphasized that the ship was insured by Colombo Lomellino, who even travelled to Sanlúcar de Barrameda to oversee the loading process. The final three questions aimed to clarify the circumstances of the attack. In this regard, the witness stressed that his vessel had been ambushed by the armed galley of the shipmaster Pere Bernard de Ibiza “*in loco ubi dicitur Connin*”, where it was seized by force, against the will of the merchant and the sailors: “*et caput de rogia ubi dictum vassellum erat et ipsum violenter cepit contra voluntate dicti Columbi et dicti patroni et al.liorum marinaiorum*”. Accordingly, the cargo was handed over to the Mallorcan captain out of fear of armed confrontation with the galley.

On the following day, 23 May, the Genoese consuls heard the testimony of Martín Gracia de Sámano, “*marinarius in dicto vaxello*”.³ His opening remarks corroborated what had previously been stated by the shipmaster Ruy Martín Puntos, i.e., that the vessel had been chartered by the Genoese merchant Colombo Lomellino for a voyage from Seville to Ceuta—although in this instance, he made no mention of the notary, as that fell outside his concern. He then detailed the nature of the goods loaded at Sanlúcar de Barrameda, beginning with the eight bales of cloth, the pepper, the boxes of lacquer, the mastic gum (*almáciga*), and the sacks of gallnuts, followed by the jars of oil—although he did not indicate where these were taken on board—along with the barrels of brassware, the box of candles, spices, and weapons. Finally, he offered some details on the seizure of the cargo, which aligned with the account provided by the shipmaster.

On 24 May, the third witness, Sancho Díaz, a resident of Seville and sailor aboard the vessel, appeared before the consuls.⁴ Like his crewmate Martín Gracia de Sámano,

he was well acquainted with the events, having formed part of the crew of Martín Ruy Puntos's ship. As such, his statement closely mirrors the previous sample. He opened his testimony by providing his name, place of residence, and profession; he then outlined the events leading up to the theft, describing the preparations made by the merchant Colombo Lomellino, particularly regarding the chartering contract drawn up in Seville. The following questions concerned the goods loaded in Sanlúcar de Barrameda, as well as the course of the assault, to which his responses were essentially identical to Martín's.

The next witness called was Nicolino Burgotonus, a citizen and merchant from Piacenza, who testified on 26 May.⁵ His deposition followed the general structure of the previous statements but introduced new information from the perspective of a merchant residing in Seville. Like the earlier witnesses, he affirmed that eight bales of cloth had been loaded onto the vessel of shipmaster Martín Ruy Puntos, although in his case, he listed the forty-three pieces individually, detailing their characteristics and origins. His attention to these textiles was no coincidence, as they were the goods he had sold to Colombo Lomellino—alongside fellow merchant Guglielmo de Zaliano—shortly before the cargo was loaded in Sanlúcar de Barrameda. The rest of his statement largely aligned with earlier accounts, although he notably provided an estimated value for the eight bales of cloth: 22,195 maravedís.

It is likely that the merchant Guglielmo de Zaliano testified alongside Nicolino Burgotonus, as their statements were given on the same day, and the two appeared to have maintained a close personal and professional relationship.⁶ We previously encountered him in relation to the business dealings of his compatriot, in which he actively participated. He identified himself as "*civis et mercator Placentie*", with Seville serving as the center of his commercial operations. His testimony mirrored that of his associate. Notably, he informed the consuls that the ship of Ruy Martín had been chartered by Colombo Lomellino in early June. Like Nicolino, he devoted particular attention to describing the characteristics of the eight bales of cloth he had sold to the Genoese merchant, due to their high economic value. He also listed the various goods loaded onto the Sevillian ship, although he gave no indication of where they were embarked—likely because he was not present during that phase. Regarding the seizure of the cargo in Conil, he contributed nothing new apart from confirming the estimated value of the eight bales of cloth.

On 27 May, Bartolomeo da Castiglio gave testimony before the consuls. Nothing is stated regarding his place of residence or occupation, although it is assumed he was a Genoese residing in Seville and was well known to both the consuls and the notary, which would explain the omission of personal identification. He did not contribute any new information about the nature of the cargo; however, his account offered previously unknown details about the robbery. Apparently, following the assault, the Majorcan shipmaster headed for the port of Cádiz, where Colombo Lomellino attempted to recover the goods: "*quam ipsam mercantiam recatar voluit in portu Cadexe per dicto Columbo et avenirse non potuit cum dicto Petro patrono dicte gallee*". Although not all the merchandise could be retrieved, Bartolomeo da Castiglio was able to recover some of it. He estimated the total value of the cargo at approximately 53,000 maravedís.⁷

Two days later, on 29 May, the consuls examined Delomode Fatinati, of whom nothing is known, although he, too, was likely Genoese. His deposition followed the structure of the previous testimonies, although he was the one to provide an estimate of the ship's weaponry, placing its value at around 2300 maravedís.⁸ On 1 June, Agamelono Lomellino was questioned. No details are provided about his residence or occupation, although his surname clearly suggests Ligurian origin, and he was likely a close relative of Colombo. The absence of identifying information supports the earlier hypothesis proposed for Bartolomeo da Castiglio and Delomode Fatinati. His statement began by recalling that the vessel of

shipmaster Ruy Martín had been chartered by the merchant Colombo Lomellino for a voyage to Ceuta. He then proceeded to list the goods loaded on board, although he did not specify their port of embarkation. His account of the robbery aligned exactly with previous testimonies, as did his valuation of the cargo and the armament.⁹

The final witness to testify before the consuls of the Genoese nation was Luchino Romeo, also on June 1. His statement echoed those already provided, and to avoid repetition, it was decided that nothing further would be included.¹⁰ The *probanza* concludes with the *rogatory* of Giannotto de Rollando, “*scriba consulatus ianuensis in civitate Sibilie*”, who noted that he had drawn up the record at the instruction of the consuls.

The *probanza* was sent from Seville to Genoa. On 3 September 1360, Carolo Lomellino appeared before Bartolomeo Guastavillani of Bologna, vicar of the *podestà* of Genoa, in his capacity as father and legal administrator of Colombo, in order to report what had happened to his son during the previous July. The documentary record was read aloud and copied into the cartulary of the notary Giovanni Bargone at the vicar’s request. It is likely that the document had been sent by the consuls of the Genoese nation in response to the inaction of the Castilian authorities and the king himself, with the aim of prompting intervention to resolve the conflict between Colombo and the shipmaster Pere Bernard de Ibiza. For this reason, Carolo Lomellino requested certification of the document’s authenticity in order to proceed with legal action. Bartolomeo Guastavillani granted his approval and instructed the other notaries present to sign the document.¹¹

Although the ultimate outcome of this maritime conflict remains unknown, an analysis of the notarial record allows us to reconstruct the diplomatic mechanisms typically employed in such incidents. Following the theft of cargo at sea, merchants would usually seek recourse by turning to the nearest town or port to request intervention from the relevant authorities. In this case, we know that Colombo Lomellino went to the port of Cádiz in an attempt to recover his goods and prevent their sale. However, due to official inaction—likely a consequence of the state of war between Castile and the Crown of Aragon—he turned to his nation’s representatives in Seville, seeking their intervention. The consuls presumably advocated on his behalf and likely approached the Sevillian officials to press charges against Pere Bernard de Ibiza and demand the restitution of the stolen property, although no specific references have been preserved. Likewise, following common practice, the consulate likely dispatched letters to King Peter I of Castile, which seemingly went unanswered—prompting the consuls, nearly a year later, to gather testimonies with the aim of involving the Genoese Commune in the resolution of the dispute, given the apathy of Castilian authorities. This episode cooled relations with Castile during those years, which is why Peter’s successor, Henry II, in an effort to signal rapprochement and a shift in policy, confirmed the privileges of the Genoese and granted them new prerogatives (González Gallego 1974, pp. 302–5).

3. Strategies of the Genoese Consuls of Seville in the Face of Maritime Conflicts in the Fifteenth Century

The largest volume of documentation concerning the diplomatic actions of the Genoese consuls in Seville to resolve maritime conflicts in Castile is concentrated in the fifteenth century. Precisely because of this greater availability of sources, it is possible to identify three principal lines of action: diplomatic measures aimed at conflict resolution; preventive measures to avoid such incidents; and cooperation with Castilian authorities, particularly in the pursuit of privateers and in providing redress to Castilian subjects.

3.1. Diplomatic Actions to Resolve Maritime Conflicts

As we have just seen, some of the earliest efforts made by the Genoese consuls before Castilian authorities consisted of diplomatic engagements in response to hostile maritime actions—a trend that continued into the reign of Henry III (1390–1406), straddling the two centuries. For example, in the summer of 1397, during the war with Portugal (1396–1402), a conflict with significant naval operations, Ligurian representatives lodged complaints before the Castilian monarch regarding vessels captained by Pietro Dentuto, Salacruz de Negro, and Stefano Grisolve. These ships had been seized by the High Admiral of Castile, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, and were being held in Seville. Although Castilian testimonies are somewhat ambiguous—suggesting that the vessels were Portuguese and had departed from Genoa with goods destined for Portugal—the document included in the *Book of Privileges of the Genoese Nation* more clearly supports their Ligurian ownership. The fleet, composed of seven vessels, had been intercepted in the Strait of Gibraltar, and after engaging in combat, three—possibly four, according to other sources—were captured and sent to the Andalusian capital ([García Isaac 2018](#), pp. 120–22). The consuls reminded the king of the Genoese right to free navigation in Castilian waters and demanded its enforcement, a request to which the monarch acceded in August of that same year ([González Gallego 1974](#), doc. XXXI).

If the wartime context could explain actions such as the one described above, the same cannot be said of those carried out by privateers and pirates. The distinction between the two is not always clear in 15th century Castile, for it sometimes happened that being privateers under the authority of the Castilian crown, they did not follow its orders nor respected the royal protection granted to the victims, acting outside the law, as it has previously been pointed out ([Hernández Sande 2023](#)). Therefore, it is important here to highlight the actions of Castilian seafarers operating outside the authority of the crown. On 7 March 1422, the Genoese consuls lodged a complaint before the Seville city council, stating that two days earlier, privateers Gonzalo Correa and Bartolomé López de San Vicente, commanding a squadron of 700 men, had seized a carrack and other vessels carrying Ligurian goods in the port of Sanlúcar de Barrameda. The council ordered the city steward, Ferrand Martínez de Sevilla, to pay 3000 maravedís to the *veinticuatro* knights Fernán Ruiz Cabeza de Vaca, Pedro Díaz de Sandoval, Diego Ortiz, and Pedro González del Alcázar—at a rate of 100 maravedís per day—to fund the ten-day journey estimated as necessary to travel to Sanlúcar, negotiate with the privateers for the return of the stolen goods, and return, given that the city lacked an armed fleet capable of confronting them.¹²

At other times, the consuls' role was purely auxiliary in the resolution of such disputes. Thus, in June 1434, Oldrado de Lampugnano, governor of Genoa in the name of the Duke of Milan, and the Council of Elders of the Genoese Commune informed the Seville consuls that they had written to Portugal to protest the ongoing damage suffered by Ligurian vessels in Portuguese waters, enclosing copies of the letters addressed to the Portuguese monarch. The role of the consuls in Seville was to forward the enclosed information via trusted agents to ensure its safe delivery.¹³ It is difficult to assess the outcome of the protest or the effectiveness of the consular response, as sources are limited. In July of that same year, Portuguese forces intercepted a ship carrying goods belonging to the Genoese merchant Antonio Calvo from Naples to London, where they were meant to be delivered to his compatriot Gregorio Pinelli. The Portuguese confiscated the cargo, prompting another protest from the governor, who again wrote to the king of Portugal, expressing astonishment at the act of piracy and requesting the return of the seized merchandise. These were to be delivered to two Genoese merchants residing in Lisbon, Tropel Vivaldi and Francesco Marabotto, who would serve as intermediaries. In addition, it was decided that Demetrio Vivaldi—a jurist and lawyer from Genoa—would be sent as an ambassador

to the Portuguese kingdom to submit further complaints on behalf of Genoese residents in Seville and Cádiz—doubtless compiled by the local consuls—since they too had suffered numerous similar attacks in recent years (D’Arienzo 2003, pp. 135–37).

In the waters between the Strait of Gibraltar and Cape St. Vincent, most attacks on Ligurian ships were carried out by Castilian and Catalan forces. However, these incidents sometimes exhibited unforeseen ramifications that further complicated efforts to recover losses. For example, in May 1443, the Genoese consuls Anfreono Centurione and Mosre Adorno appeared before the mayor of Seville, Alvar González de Llerena, with a letter from John II of Castile addressed to the Counts of Niebla and Arcos, two of the most powerful nobles in the Kingdom of Seville; the High Admiral Don Fadrique Enríquez; and other civil authorities. The king instructed them to join forces with the Genoese consuls and the captains of the Ligurian carracks to pursue and capture the Basque pirate Martín de Zalla, who was leading a fleet that had been attacking both Castilian and Genoese vessels in the Gulf of Cádiz. His victims included not only privateers operating under royal commission but also merchant ships, to such an extent that vessels no longer dared to leave the Bay of Cádiz for Seville, and no ships arrived from Barbary to Castile.¹⁴ As Eduardo Aznar has noted, the inclusion of the Genoese fleet in the hunt for the Basque pirate was undoubtedly due to its strength, both in terms of vessel type—namely carracks—and in sheer number, as many Genoese ships sailed Andalusian waters (Aznar Vallejo 2010, pp. 78–79).

A year later, in August 1444, the situation remained unresolved. The Genoese consuls received instructions from the doge, Raffaele Adorno, directing them to lodge a formal complaint with Admiral Don Fadrique, stating that several Basque ships—frequently employed by the community to transport goods—were in fact looting and seizing Genoese vessels. The doge advised that the complaint be submitted in writing, with great care and discretion, undoubtedly, to ensure that the protest was properly recorded in anticipation of future difficulties. Although the flotilla is not named explicitly, it was almost certainly that of Martín de Zalla.¹⁵

No further records of consular activity concerning maritime conflict appear until a decade later. In the autumn of 1454, the Seville consuls lodged a protest alleging that, just days earlier, several Ligurian merchants in the city had loaded goods onto ships duly licensed by the royal tax officials when Diego de Baeza and his men—using the royal galley of Don Martín de Guzmán—seized the goods and imprisoned the Ligurian merchants aboard the galley, holding them against their will and in defiance of the safe-conducts and royal privileges granted to the Genoese nation. The consuls first appealed to the Seville council, urging them as the Genoese community’s “protectors and defenders” to order the return of the stolen goods and the release of the imprisoned merchants. Should they fail to act, the consuls warned, they would be compelled to bring legal action against the king (Aznar Vallejo 2003, p. 326; Hernández Sande 2023, pp. 270–71). Although the city quickly moved to reaffirm the Genoese privileges, the matter remained unresolved as of November.

This final point is noteworthy in that it reveals that the consuls did not systematically turn to the crown to resolve their conflicts. In fact, there are several recorded instances in which they initially appeared before the municipal council of the city of Seville, appealing to the monarch and royal council only in cases where the municipal authorities either dismissed their complaint—of which, to date, no examples are known—or failed to satisfy their claims and provide restitution, as was the case in Cádiz in 1359. Consequently, it is clear that the consular strategy prioritized urban jurisdiction as the first avenue for resolving maritime conflicts, with royal intervention sought only as a secondary recourse. Moreover, typically, harm affecting multiple merchants justified consular intervention, rather than isolated individual incidents, as is consistently documented in Seville’s municipal records and in the *Registro General del Sello* of the General Archive of Simancas.

It would be another two decades, under the reign of the Catholic Monarchs, before the next grievance was recorded by the Genoese consuls in Seville. In October 1477, they brought a complaint before the Royal Council stating that Polo Usodimare and Francesco Marin, Ligurian merchants residing in Seville, had been robbed of four bales of *grana* (dyestuff) by Juan Pérez de Azpeitia in the Bay of Cádiz, in breach of the protection insurance they held. The Basque captain was ordered to return the seized goods, but he refused, claiming that the cargo belonged to “our enemies”. He then proceeded to seize a Genoese vessel carrying merchandise valued at 6000 *doblas*. Upon confirming that the royal safe-conduct and insurance granted to the Genoese had been violated, the monarchs issued orders to the High Admiral of Castile and to the civil authorities of Seville, the Gulf of Cádiz (Jerez de la Frontera, Cádiz, Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Palos, Moguer, El Puerto de Santa María), and the provinces of Gipuzkoa and Biscay—where Azpeitia was suspected to be seeking refuge—directing them to apprehend him and ensure the restitution of the confiscated goods.¹⁶

Although the Genoese consuls are not mentioned by name in the document, two solid indications point to their involvement. The first is the inclusion of a copy of the document in the *Book of Privileges of the Genoese Nation* (González Gallego 1974, doc. XLIV), resulting from a transcription made five days after the original was signed—almost certainly at the consuls’ request. Second, the complaint was not submitted individually by the victims of the *grana* theft, Polo Usodimare and Francesco Marin. As in the earlier case of 1454, consular intervention appears ultimately to have been triggered by the seizure of an entire ship and its cargo, an incident that affected many more members of the community and thus prompted the consular representatives to act on their behalf. Moreover, although the attack may have occurred in a specific, unnamed port, Azpeitia’s mobility—an intrinsic feature of his activity—and the vastness of the Castilian coastline as a refuge from justice would have compelled the consuls to address the Catholic Monarchs, the only authorities capable of ordering local magistrates to pursue the Basque privateer in ports under their jurisdiction. In parallel, they had also written to the High Admiral of Castile, who possessed both the means and the jurisdiction to confront Azpeitia on the open sea.

3.2. Preventive Measures to Avert Maritime Conflicts

The preceding sections have demonstrated the efforts of the Genoese consuls in Seville to defend the rights and assets of the merchants of their nation in Castile, as well as the conditions under which such actions were taken—namely, when the harm was collective rather than individual.

This very jurisdiction over all members of the community also empowered them to assume another equally important function: prevention. As will now be shown, the holders of the Ligurian consulate in Seville also played a significant role in anticipating the highly detrimental consequences of maritime conflicts. However, in these cases, the initiative consistently originated in Genoa, which, when faced with unfavorable conditions for navigation—and thus for commerce—would issue instructions to its consulates in the affected territories. Jesús Hernández has demonstrated compellingly and conclusively that the Castilian Atlantic was a hotspot of maritime conflict in the fifteenth century (Hernández Sande 2023). This helps to explain the large number of references documenting the consuls’ active efforts to prevent attacks.

In some cases, their action was in response to the activities of individual agents—either privateers acting under letters of marque or pirates operating independently of royal authority. For instance, in June 1408, officials from the *Officium Maris* requested that the Genoese consuls and merchants in Seville monitor the armament of passing Genoese ships and ensure they sailed in convoy, in anticipation of an attack by three Catalan ships

allegedly outfitted to target Pedro de Leranda (Ferrer i Mallol 1974, doc. 11). While the Catalan fleet's intended target was Castilian rather than Genoese, the longstanding hostility between Genoa and the Crown of Aragon could easily result in aggression under the pretext of mistaken identity.

A few months later, in February 1409, the *Officium Maris* again wrote to the consuls in Seville after being informed by them that privateers were active in the waters of the Gulf of Cádiz. The officials now asked not only that they monitor the armament of Ligurian ships but also that they inspect their crews to ensure readiness to repel potential attacks. Furthermore, the consuls were charged with collecting a special maritime defense levy to finance the outfitting of two *custodie maris* (naval escort vessels) (Ferrer i Mallol 1974, doc. 26).

On other occasions, the enemy was clearly identified. Thus, four decades later, in September 1449, news reached Genoa that a *nave grossa* of the King of Aragon, accompanied by another vessel that had once belonged to Siren de Vultabio, had attacked the ship of Luchexio Spinola. As a precaution, the consuls were ordered to ensure that vessels departing from Andalusian ports sailed in pairs, in convoy.¹⁷

Naturally, the threat posed by the Crown of Aragon was far greater when it involved not just an isolated vessel but consisted of a full-scale armed conflict. It is worth recalling that, during the first half of the fifteenth century, relations between Genoa and the Catalan–Aragonese crowns were unstable—shifting between war and peace—due to developments such as the definitive incorporation of Sicily into the crown in 1412, as well as the repeated efforts by Catalan monarchs to seize control of Corsica between the beginning of the century and 1434 (Pistarino 1974, p. 115). In the spring of 1436, the doge Tommaso Fregoso, the council of elders, and the *Officium Maris* wrote to the Genoese consuls in Seville as war with Alfonso V the Magnanimous was about to break out, endangering Genoese shipping throughout the Western Mediterranean. The Aragonese monarch had attempted to seize the throne of Naples following the death of Joanna II in 1435, but was decisively defeated at sea in the Battle of Ponza and taken prisoner. Transferred first to Genoa and then to Milan, he secured his release through a pact with Filippo Maria Visconti, agreeing to renounce his rights over Corsica and to relinquish the naval bases at Lerici and Portovenere in the Gulf of La Spezia—both of which the Duke of Milan, who also ruled over Genoa, had granted him in 1426. The Genoese had perceived this handover as a betrayal, given the threat it posed to their control over the Levantine Riviera and their own capital. Yet, they refused to recognize the 1435 agreement between Milan and the Magnanimous because they felt that it did not take full advantage of their victory over the Catalan king. Furthermore, they feared that the Aragonese sovereign would attempt once more the conquest of Naples—a territory the Ligurians considered vital to their maritime and commercial interests. And they were right: Alfonso conquered the Kingdom of Naples in 1442. The result was a state of open war between Genoa and the Crown of Aragon, which lasted until 1444 (Ferrer i Mallol 2005, pp. 162–69).

Given the large number of Ligurian vessels that set sail each year for Flanders and England—many of them stopping in Cádiz after crossing the Western Mediterranean and passing through continental and insular territories of the Crown of Aragon, without necessarily touching Genoese shores—it is understandable that the authorities sought to alert the Castilian community via the consuls in Seville. On this occasion, the consular delegation was ordered to instruct all Genoese ships arriving in Cádiz to return immediately to Genoa, taking the added precaution of recruiting additional crew members if their numbers were insufficient. Moreover, any ships traveling alone were to halt their voyage and await further instructions—presumably to join other Genoese vessels for the homeward passage. It was further specified that this directive also applied to ships expected to arrive from the Levant that did not call at Genoa's Riviera, including those captained by Lamberto

Doria, Francesco Giustiniani, and Battista Tansi, among others unnamed. Importantly, aware that in the past such orders were often ignored without consequence—due to the lack of penalties—the Genoese authorities this time instructed the consuls to send copies of all orders issued to their chancellery, so that Genoa would have formal proof of efforts to implement the directives and could take appropriate action should noncompliance occur.¹⁸

Tensions between Genoa and Alfonso V the Magnanimous, far from subsiding, continued to escalate, particularly following the conquest of the Kingdom of Naples in 1442. The animosity was so intense that the Catalan–Aragonese monarch exploited the rumor that the Genoese had facilitated the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453 to launch a harsh attack against them, as evidenced in letters by the monarch himself and other sources. In 1456, he accused them of arrogance and perfidy, of breaking the peace in Corsica, and of conspiring with the Turks to obstruct his planned expeditions from Naples. The Genoese Commune vehemently denied the accusations (Ferrer i Mallol 2005, pp. 171–73; Fossati Raiteri 2007). For the present study, this information is significant as it underscores the climate of exacerbated hostility between the two maritime powers, explaining in part the fact that the long reign of Alfonso the Magnanimous witnessed the sharpest phase of the century-old conflict between the Crown of Aragon and the Commune of Genoa (Basso 2020). Therefore, this context explains a letter dated February of that year, in which the doge and the council of elders instructed the Genoese consuls in Seville that all Ligurian ships sailing toward Castilian waters must travel in convoy and not individually, under penalty of heavy fines for both sailors and officers.¹⁹ Although, unlike in previous instances, no specific threat is mentioned, there is little doubt that the instructions—intended to ensure the safety of the Genoese fleet—were motivated by mounting tensions with the Catalans.

Even more striking is that the threat may have originated from an internal enemy. A few years earlier, in April 1450, Doge Ludovico Fregoso and the council of elders had written to the consuls to inform them that Galeotto del Carretto had outfitted three ships. They were ordered to alert all Genoese vessels located in Cádiz and other ports of the Crown of Castile of the danger of sailing to England. The consuls were instructed to detain such ships to prevent them from sailing alone and to require the crew to enlist men and armaments for their defense.²⁰

The letter provides too little detail for maritime conflict historians in Castile to identify the nature of the threat with greater precision. Galeotto del Carretto—son-in-law of former Doge Raffaele Adorno through his marriage to Vannina—was the Marquis of Finale, a lordship located along the Ligurian Riviera. In its ambition to politically unify Liguria, the commune had waged war against the marquis and conquered his territory the previous year, in 1449. The Genoese nobleman then fled to France, seeking support from Charles VIII to recover his domain. He devised an ambitious plan: aware that Genoese carracks regularly docked in Southampton to load English merchandise, he aimed to seize a few of them in order to return to Liguria, reconquer his marquisate of Finale, expel the Fregoso—who had usurped his lordship—from Genoa, and deliver the city to France, which had previously imposed its rule under Charles VI between 1396 and 1409. To achieve this, he needed ships and thus sought assistance from the French monarch. The king approved the plan and wrote to Francis I, Duke of Brittany, who in turn addressed his brother Peter—his future successor—to assist del Carretto. After a thorough review of the plan, fourteen ships were outfitted and placed under his command.

The Seville consulate must have been made aware of the situation as it unfolded, since the letter had been written in Genoa in late April. In May, the fleet under the command of Galeotto del Carretto encountered a convoy of German hulks (*urcas*) in the waters of the Bay of Biscay. These ships were returning from Bordeaux, where they had taken on cargoes of salt and iron. It was the same convoy that had previously evaded capture, yet

del Carretto chose to launch a renewed attack. During the skirmish, the nobleman was gravely wounded and taken to Quimper, in the Duchy of Brittany, where he died shortly thereafter (Ronco 2003, pp. 141–54).²¹ As a result, on this occasion, the threat was effectively neutralized before it could fully materialize.

The dangers of the Andalusian waters—due to the proliferation of hostile actions and the presence of agents acting against Genoese interests—did not merely prompt calls for caution, ship inspections, or sailing in convoy. In some cases, the orders issued from Genoa to its consuls went a step further, even in broadly defined contexts. Such was the case in May 1440, when not only was it ordered that Genoese vessels sail in convoy but also that they be placed under the command of experienced captains. Indeed, on that occasion, four ships bound for the coast of the Kingdom of Seville were explicitly identified—namely the *Squarzafrica*, *Ingiberta*, *Vultabia*, and *Cattanea*—with orders to travel together as far as Cape St. Vincent under the command of Tommaso Squarciafico. The consuls were instructed to comply with all directives issued by this commander.²²

In any case, the safety of ships, goods, and merchants in Castile ultimately depended on the protection of Castilian authorities. For this reason, episodes of diplomatic friction proved especially dangerous. In the spring of 1431, the context was as follows: John II of Castile had launched military operations against the Emirate of Granada and suspected that Genoese vessels were supplying the Muslims in their defense. The Commune addressed letters to the monarch and to the high admiral, assuring them that it would issue orders prohibiting its shipmasters from rendering any aid to the Nasrids. These letters coincided with similar instructions sent to the consuls in Seville between May and July of that year (Salicrú i Lluch 1997, pp. 219–21). However, following the Castilian victory at the Battle of La Higuera in July 1431, the Commune continued to correspond with the Seville consuls—first in mid-September and again at the end of November—ordering them to instruct Genoese ships to return immediately to Genoa upon arriving in Cádiz, under penalty of death for the captain and confiscation of the vessel. The names of ships expected imminently in the port of Cádiz were explicitly listed: those of Simone Grillo, Andrea de Mari, Francesco Grimaldi, Galeotto Pinelli, Jacopo Raimbaldo, Alaono Ardimenti, Luca Ardimenti, Simone Cattaneo, and Battista Calvo.²³

Given that John II did not hesitate to demand that the Genoese refrain from interfering with his political interests—even fully aware of the Ligurian community's vital role in Castile's overseas trade—it is hardly surprising that Genoa was eager to avoid appearing ungrateful. This context explains why, in November 1449, Doge Ludovico Fregoso wrote to the Trastámara monarch to express his gratitude for the many benefits received through the benevolence and goodwill of the Castilian kings toward the Genoese nation. In the same letter, he reaffirmed his loyalty, while respectfully requesting the continued protection of Genoese privileges.²⁴

Finally, it is worth highlighting an exceptional case in which the Genoese consuls of Seville operated beyond their territorial jurisdiction. In the spring of 1470, they addressed a letter to their counterparts in Málaga, within the Nasrid Emirate of Granada, instructing them to order the ship of Girolamo di Negrono—anchored in the Bay of Málaga—to return immediately to Genoa, without stopping at the scheduled ports of Cartagena, Valencia, and Majorca, under threat of a severe fine. In Genoa, the shipmaster filed a complaint with the authorities, demanding reimbursement of 300 ducats claimed by Castilian merchants for breach of a freight contract to transport 100 triptychs from Cádiz to Valencia (González Arévalo and Peral Bejarano 2024, pp. 189–90). Although the specific circumstances behind the order remain unclear, it is plausible that it was prompted by the threat posed by the many Catalan privateering expeditions against Genoese interests that marked the reign of John II of Aragon (1458–1479).

3.3. Collaboration: Pursuit of Privateers and Redress for Castilians

A final aspect of the diplomatic activity of the Genoese consuls in Seville regarding maritime conflicts between Genoa and Castile deserves particular attention: their collaboration with Castilian authorities in the pursuit of privateers and the provision of reparations to Castilian victims. As previously noted, in 1443, the Genoese consuls Anfreono Centurione and Mosre Adorno were among the recipients of an order issued by John II to the High Admiral of Castile, the Counts of Niebla and Arcos, and various civil authorities along the Andalusian coast and in the Lordship of Biscay, instructing that Genoese carracks collaborate in the capture of privateers.

It is less commonly known that the Genoese consuls in Seville also collaborated with Castilian authorities in presenting claims against Genoa itself. Nevertheless, we have a few notable examples. On 19 February 1453, a letter sent from the Andalusian capital was received in Genoa by the doge and the council of elders of the commune, informing them of complaints lodged by the Castilian *senatum* against Giovanni Grimaldi for acts of piracy. The matter must have been regarded as serious, since the recipients issued a response in just four days—on February 23—asking the community’s representatives to secure the restitution of the seized goods and the release of the captured individuals as swiftly as possible.²⁵ No further details are available, but the likely aim was to prevent the issuance of new letters of reprisal against Genoese targets.

Finally, in October 1486, under the reign of the Catholic Monarchs, the nao of Juan de Arteaga was seized in the port of Genoa. The Biscayan shipmaster, a resident of Zumaya, witnessed his vessel and its equipment being confiscated, despite him holding valid insurance and despite the peace then prevailing between Castile and Genoa. The loss was valued at 9000 ducats—a considerable sum. A year later, in September 1487, Castilian authorities demanded the return of the ship and its equipment by sending a formal commission to Genoa. Not coincidentally, that delegation included a copy of the lawsuit that Arteaga was pursuing in Seville against Francesco Rivarolo, suggesting that the seizure of Arteaga’s nao and its fittings in Genoa was likely a retaliatory act stemming from the litigation in Seville. The Castilian royal court turned to the Genoese consuls to convey its demands. However, their intervention elicited no reply. As a result, proceedings were initiated against the Genoese merchant. It was shown that Rivarolo was among the elders of the commune at the time the order was issued to seize Arteaga’s ship; he was ultimately condemned to pay for the vessel, its equipment, and the contracted freight fees that were to have been paid in Genoa.²⁶

4. Conclusions

The documentation examined thus far clearly highlights the role played by the Genoese consuls of Seville in the resolution of maritime conflicts with Castile or within Castilian waters. From the mid-fourteenth century onward, various sources reveal three principal lines of action. The first and most evident consisted of diplomatic efforts aimed at conflict resolution. On such occasions, the consuls acted in their capacity as representatives of the nation. Consequently, their involvement was always on behalf of the community, never on behalf of isolated individuals, who—consistent with the privileges granted by the Castilian monarchs since the mid-thirteenth century—pursued their own claims before civil authorities when individually affected.

Their diplomatic strategy was as varied as the circumstances required—from recording facts through formal depositions (*probanza*) to secure reparations via the mediation of the Genoese homeland, to lodging formal complaints before municipal authorities (most often the Seville *concejo*), or ultimately appealing directly to the crown through the king and his royal council.

No less significant than their diplomatic function was their intermediary role between Genoa, the merchants of the Genoese nation in Castile, and the Ligurian fleet operating across the Mediterranean and Atlantic, with Cádiz serving as the principal port of operations and Sanlúcar de Barrameda as a secondary node in its capacity as Seville's outer harbor. The consuls were recipients of directives and instructions from the doge, the council of elders, and the *Officium Maris*, intended to ensure the safety of their vessels in times of peril—from attacks by Basque, Catalan, and Portuguese privateers to open warfare with the Crown of Aragon, or internal threats such as Galeotto del Carretto's final attempt to reclaim the marquisate of Finale seized by the commune. Understanding the context surrounding these actions is essential, since although they did not occur in Castile or result from aggression by Castilian subjects, they had direct implications for the Genoese fleet's navigation to Castilian ports—most notably Cádiz—and thus for the commercial activity of Genoese merchants settled in the Kingdom of Seville. These instances provide undeniable evidence of the interconnectedness of the late medieval world economy, spanning the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, with branches reaching into the Maghreb and the Near East—an economic system in which maritime networks played a vital role in European integration (Nigro 2019).

Finally, it should be noted that the Genoese consuls of Seville occasionally cooperated with Castilian authorities in the pursuit of privateers who harmed the interests of both native subjects and foreign merchants. Likewise, they intervened with Ligurian authorities to seek redress for Castilians aggrieved by hostile acts in the port of Genoa itself. Consequently, the consular diplomatic activity in Seville arising from maritime conflicts emerges as a fundamental dimension of their responsibilities—more significant than previously assumed—although never constituting their principal task, which remained the resolution of disputes within the Genoese mercantile community.

Author Contributions: General conceptualization and methodology, and writing of points 1, 3 and 4, R.G.A. D.R.T. is responsible for analyzing and writing point 2. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: The research by Daniel Ríos Toledano was funded by an FPU contract from the Spanish Ministry of Universities (FPU20/00685) and falls within the scope of the project “BARMED. Del barco al mercado. Actividad económica, relaciones sociales y conflictos armados en las ciudades y villas portuarias de la Europa atlántica bajomedieval” (PID2020-118105GB-I00), funded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy, Industry and competitiveness.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this manuscript:

AGS	Archivo General de Simancas
ASGe	Archivio di Stato di Genova
NA	Notai Antichi
RGS	Registro General del Sello

Notes

¹ ASGe, NA 373, ff. 198v-199r.

² ASGe, NA 373, ff. 199r-200r.

³ ASGe, NA 373, ff. 200r-v.

⁴ ASGe, NA 373, ff. 200v, 236r-v.

⁵ ASGe, NA 373, ff. 236v-237r.

⁶ ASGe, NA 373, ff. 237r-v.

- 7 ASGe, NA 373, ff. 237v-238r.
- 8 ASGe, NA 373, ff. 238r-v.
- 9 ASGe, NA 373, ff. 239r-v.
- 10 ASGe, NA 373, ff. 239v-240r.
- 11 ASGe, NA 373, ff. 240r-v.
- 12 Summarized in [Collantes de Terán \(1980, 1421: doc. 100\)](#). Also discussed in [Hernández Sande \(2023, pp. 222–23\)](#). Document transcribed in [Hernández Sande \(2019, vol. II, Appendix: doc. 14\)](#).
- 13 ASGe, Litterarum, 1783, f. 42v, 14-VI-1434.
- 14 ([González Gallego 1974](#)): doc. XLI, 21-V-1443.
- 15 ASGe, Litterarum, 1788b, f. 174, 31-VIII-1444.
- 16 Archivo General de Simancas, RGS, Octubre 1477, 23-X-1477. Also mentioned in [Hernández Sande \(2023, p. 419\)](#), but without explaining why he attributes the action to the Genoese consuls.
- 17 ASGe, Litterarum, 1793, f. 265, 14-IX-1449.
- 18 ASGe, Litterarum, 1783, ff. 304v–305, 3 May 1436. The most recent analysis of Genoese navigation in the Iberian Peninsula, conducted from the vantage point of Málaga in the Nasrid Emirate of Granada but with continuous references to Cádiz, can be found in [González Arévalo and Peral Bejarano \(2024, pp. 201–36\)](#). For Cádiz in the fifteenth century, see [González Arévalo \(2020, pp. 177–88\)](#).
- 19 ASGe, Litterarum, 1785, f. 373, 26-II-1456.
- 20 ASGe, Litterarum, 1789, f. 515v, 27-IV-1450.
- 21 The course of events had previously been described by [Giovanni Nuti \(1988\)](#), albeit with some inaccuracies. He claimed that the King of France had declined to assist Galeotto del Carretto and confused the Duke of Brittany with the Duke of Burgundy, attributing to the latter the decision to support him. In this respect, Ronco's reconstruction is more thoroughly documented.
- 22 ASGe, Litterarum, 1786, f. 75, 31-V-1440.
- 23 ASGe, Litterarum, 1781, f. 101v, 30-XI-1431.
- 24 ASGe, Litterarum, 1789, 465v, 21-XI-1449.
- 25 ASGe, Litterarum, 1791, f. 387v, 23-II-1453.
- 26 AGS, RGS, Septiembre 1487, fols. 74 (2-IX-1487) and 240 (18-IX-1487); Enero 1488, fol. 267, 26-I-1488.

References

- Aznar Vallejo, Eduardo. 1993. Castilla y la Berbería de Poniente. Expansión comercial y control político. In *Strenae Emmanuelae Marrero Oblatae*. San Cristóbal de La Laguna: Universidad de La Laguna, pp. 89–109.
- Aznar Vallejo, Eduardo. 1997. Corso y piratería en las relaciones entre Castilla y Marruecos en la Baja Edad Media. *En la España Medieval* 20: 407–19.
- Aznar Vallejo, Eduardo. 2003. La organización de la flota real de Castilla en el siglo XV. In *La Península Ibérica entre el Mediterráneo y el Atlántico, Siglos XIII-XV*. Edited by Manuel González Jiménez and Isabel Montes Romero-Camacho. Sevilla and Cádiz: Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, pp. 323–40.
- Aznar Vallejo, Eduardo. 2010. El mar: Fuente de conflictos y exigencia de paz. Edad Media. *Revista de Historia* 11: 63–89.
- Aznar Vallejo, Eduardo. 2018. Norma y conflicto en la navegación castellana bajomedieval. *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Serie III. Historia Medieval* 31: 45–67. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Aznar Vallejo, Eduardo, and Roberto J. González Zalacaín. 2020. Maritime Conflicts and their Resolution in Late Medieval Castile. In *Conflict Management in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, 1000–1800: Actors, Institutions and Strategies of Dispute Settlement*. Edited by Louis Sicking and Alain Wijffels. Leiden: Brill, pp. 109–24.
- Balard, Michel. 2017. *The Sea in History. The Medieval World—Le Mer dans l'Histoire. Le Moyen Âge*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press.
- Basso, Enrico. 2020. Commerciare in tempo di guerra? Mercanti catalani e genovesi nell'età del Magnanimo. In *Mercados y Espacios Económicos en el Siglo XV. El Mundo del Mercader Torralba*. Edited by David Abulafia and M.^a Dolores López Pérez. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona Edicions, pp. 193–209.
- Bello León, Juan Manuel. 1996. Apuntes para el estudio de la influencia del corso y la piratería en la política exterior de los Reyes Católicos. *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos* 23: 63–98. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Bello León, Juan Manuel. 2017. La violencia contra el mercader y los medios para protegerse en la Andalucía atlántica de finales de la Edad Media. *Clío & Crimen. Revista del Centro de Historia del Crimen de Durango* 14: 229–62.
- Bello León, Juan Manuel. 2022. “Con ellos llegó el escándalo”. Unos episodios de violencia protagonizados por mercaderes y marinos vascos en Cádiz a comienzos del siglo XVI. In *Entre la tierra y el mar. Cádiz, frontera atlántica de Castilla en la Baja Edad Media*. Edited by Rafael Sánchez Saus and Daniel Ríos Toledano. Madrid: Sílex, pp. 311–40.
- Blockmans, Wim, Mikhail Krom, and Justyna Wubs-Mrozewicz, eds. 2017. *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade around Europe (1300–1600)*. Londres and Nueva York: Routledge.

- Collantes de Terán, Francisco. 1980. *Inventario de los Papeles del Mayordomazgo del Siglo XV*. Sevilla: Ayuntamiento de Sevilla, vol. 2, pp. 1417–31.
- D’Arienzo, Luisa. 2003. *La Presenza Degli Italiani in Portogallo al Tempo di Colombo*. Roma: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato.
- Ferrer i Mallol, María Teresa. 1974. Dos registres del “Officium Maris” de Gènova (1402–1403, 1408–1410). In *Atti del I Congresso Storico Liguria-Catalogna (Bordighera-Génova, 1969)*. Bordighera: Istituto Internazionale di Studi Liguri, pp. 248–348.
- Ferrer i Mallol, María Teresa. 2005. I Genovesi visti dai Catalani nel medioevo. Da amici a nemici. In *Genova, una “Porta” del Mediterraneo*. Edited by Luciano Gallinari. Cagliari, Genova and Torino: Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche-Istituto di Storia dell’Europa Mediterránea, vol. 1, pp. 137–74.
- Fossati Raiteri, Silvana. 2007. Alfonso d’Aragona e Pietro di Campofregoso: Il confront dialettico del 1456. In *Linguaggi e Pratiche del Potere. Genova e il Regno di Napoli tra Medioevo ed Età moderna*. Edited by Giovanna Petti Balbi and Giovanni Vitolo. Salerno: LavegliaCarlone, pp. 71–90.
- García Isaac, José Marcos. 2018. Notas sobre el papel del almirantazgo y el corso castellano en las costas andaluzas durante la guerra con Portugal en tiempos de Enrique III (1396–1402). *Historia Digital XVIII*/ 31: 116–29.
- González Arce, José Damián. 2010. El consulado genovés de Sevilla (siglos XIII–XV). Aspectos jurisdiccionales, comerciales y fiscales. *Studia Historica. Historia Medieval* 28: 179–206.
- González Arévalo, Raúl. 2013. Presencia diferencial italiana en el sur de la Península Ibérica en la Baja Edad Media. Estado de la cuestión y propuestas de investigación. *Medievalismo. Revista de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales* 23: 175–208.
- González Arévalo, Raúl. 2016a. Integración y movilidad social de las naciones italianas en la Corona de Castilla: Genoveses, florentinos y venecianos en la Andalucía bajomedieval. In *La Mobilità Sociale nel Medioevo Italiano. Competenze, Conoscenze e Saperi tra Professioni e Ruoli Sociali (secc. XII–XV)*. Edited by Lorenzo Tanzini and Sergio Tognetti. Roma: Viella, pp. 375–401.
- González Arévalo, Raúl. 2016b. Vecinos y propietarios: La integración de los italianos en las sociedades portuarias andaluzas (siglos XIII–XV). In *Las Sociedades Portuarias de la Europa Atlántica en la Edad Media*. Edited by Jesús Ángel Solórzano Telechea, Beatriz Arízaga Bolumburu and Michel Bochaca. Nájera: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, pp. 249–84.
- González Arévalo, Raúl. 2020. En el Mediterráneo atlántico: Andalucía y las marinas italianas en la ruta de Poniente (siglo XV). In *Rutas de Comunicación Marítima y Terrestre en los Reinos Hispánicos Durante la Baja Edad Media. Movilidad, Conectividad y Gobernanza*. Edited by Jesús Ángel Solórzano Telechea and Fernando Martín Pérez. Madrid: La Ergástula Ediciones, pp. 161–89.
- González Arévalo, Raúl. 2020–2021. Ad terram regis Castelle. Comercio, navegación y privilegios italianos en Andalucía en tiempos de Alfonso X el Sabio. *Alcanate. Revista de Estudios Alfonsíes* 12: 125–62.
- González Arévalo, Raúl. 2023. Privilegios, franquicias y consulados. Naciones Italianas y diplomacia mercantil en la Castilla bajomedieval. In *Políticas y Estrategias Socioeconómicas en la Ciudad Medieval Atlántica*. Edited by Jesús Ángel Solórzano Telechea, David Ditchburn and María Álvarez Fernández. Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, pp. 83–113.
- González Arévalo, Raúl. 2024a. Cum necessarium sit habere consulem nostrum in Sibia. El consulado veneciano de Sevilla (1402–1407). In *Une mer Pour les Réunir Tous. Études sur la Méditerranée offertes à Bernard Doumerc (IXe–XVIIe siècle)*. Edited by Daniel Baloup and Benoît Joudiou. Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Midi, pp. 57–65.
- González Arévalo, Raúl. 2024b. David contra Goliath. La gestión diplomática de Venecia y Florencia en sus conflictos con Castilla (siglos XIV–XV). *Edad Media. Revista de Historia* 25: 49–88. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- González Arévalo, Raúl, and Carmen Peral Bejarano. 2024. *El Castil de Genoveses de Málaga (Siglos XIV–XV). Un Barrio Comercial Fortificado en el Mediterráneo Islámico*. Jaén: UJA Editorial.
- González Arévalo, Raúl, and Tommaso Vidal. 2021. Et scribatur viro nobili ser Angelo Venerio, consuli nostro Sibilie. Acción consular, comunicación diplomática y estrategia mercantil veneciana en Castilla a principios del siglo XV. *Medievalismo. Revista de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales* 31: 201–34. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- González Gallego, Isidoro. 1974. El Libro de los privilegios de la nación genovesa. *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos* 1: 275–358.
- Heers, Jacques. 1991. Gênes et l’Afrique du Nord vers 1450: Le voyage «per costeriam». *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 21: 233–46. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Hernández Sande, Jesús. 2019. Corso y piratería en el reino de Sevilla a finales de la Edad Media. Ph.D. dissertation, Universidad de Huelva, Huelva, Spain.
- Hernández Sande, Jesús. 2023. *Piratería y Corso en la Andalucía atlántica de Finales de la Edad Media*. Sevilla: US Editorial.
- Jiménez López de Eguileta, Javier E. 2023. El documento marítimo-mercantil en la región durante el siglo XV: Los fletamentos. In *Entre Europa y América. El mar y la Primera Globalización*. Edited by Lilyam Padrón Reyes and María del Mar Barrientos Márquez. Bilbao: Servicio Editorial de la Universidad del País Vasco, pp. 19–34.
- Liagre de Sturler, Léone. 1969. *Les Relations Commerciales Entre Gênes, la Belgique et l’Outremont, D’après les Archives Notariales Génoises, 1320–1400*. 2 vols. Bruxelles: Institut Historique Belge de Rome.
- Musarra, Antonio. 2017. La marina da guerra genovese nel tardo medioevo. In *cerca d’un modello*. *Revista Universitaria de Historia Militar* 6: 79–108.

- Nigro, Giampiero, ed. 2019. *Reti Marittime Come Fattori Dell'integrazione Europea/Maritime Networks as a Factor in European Integration*. Florence: Firenze University Press.
- Nuti, Giovanni. 1988. Del Carretto, Galeotto, marchese del Finale. *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 36. Available online: [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/del-carretto-galeotto-marchese-del-finale_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/?search=DEL%20CARRETTO%2C%20Galeotto%2C%20marchese%20del%20Finale%2F](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/del-carretto-galeotto-marchese-del-finale_(Dizionario-Biografico)/?search=DEL%20CARRETTO%2C%20Galeotto%2C%20marchese%20del%20Finale%2F) (accessed on 24 November 2024).
- Ortega Villoslada, Antonio. 2015. *La Marina Mercante Medieval y la Casa de Mallorca: Entre el Mediterráneo y el Atlántico*. Lleida: Pagès editors.
- Otte, Enrique. 1996. *Sevilla y Sus Mercaderes a Fines de la Edad Media*. Seville: Fundación El Monte.
- Perez, Béatrice. 2016. *Les Marchands de Séville. Une Société Inquiète (XV^e-XVI^e Siècles)*. Paris: Paris-Sorbonne.
- Petti Balbi, Giovanna. 2005. *Negoziare Fuori Patria. Nazioni e Genovesi Fuori Patria*. Bologna: CLUEB.
- Pistarino, Geo. 1974. Genova e Barcellona: Incontro e scontro di due civiltà. In *Atti del I Congresso Storico Liguria-Catalogna*. Bordighera: Istituto Internazionale di Studi Liguri, pp. 81–122.
- Pistarino, Geo. 1992. Dall'Oriente all'Occidente nel tramonto del Medioevo. In *I Signori del Mare*. Edited by Geo Pistarino. Genoa: Civico Istituto Colombiano, pp. 377–464.
- Ríos Toledano, Daniel. 2018. Cádiz y el comercio marítimo genovés en el siglo XIV. *Medievalismo. Revista de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales* 28: 271–93. [CrossRef]
- Ríos Toledano, Daniel. 2019. «Apud Cadesse»: Paisaje marítimo y navegación genovesa en el puerto de Cádiz en el siglo XIII. *Suplemento de Riparia* 2: 81–111. [CrossRef]
- Ríos Toledano, Daniela, and Javier E. Jiménez López de Eguileta. 2024. El puerto de Sanlúcar de Barrameda y la comunidad genovesa en el siglo XV: Un documento de su consulado de 1461. *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Serie III. Historia Medieval* 37: 935–60. [CrossRef]
- Ronco, Antonino. 2003. *Una Guerra del Quattrocento. Il Doge di Genova Contro il Marchese di Finale*. Genoa: De Ferrari.
- Rumeu de Armas, Antonio. 1957. *España en el África Atlántica*. 2 vols. Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Africanos-CSIC.
- Salicrú i Lluch, Roser. 1997. Génova y Castilla, genoveses y Granada. Política y comercio en el Mediterráneo occidental en la primera mitad del siglo XV (1431–1439). In *Le vie del Mediterraneo. Idee, Uomini, Oggetti (Secoli XI–XVI)*. Edited by Gabriella Airaldi. Genoa: Edizioni Culturali Internazionali Genova, pp. 213–57.
- Solórzano Telechea, Jesús Ángel, and Fernando Martín Pérez, eds. 2020. *Rutas de Comunicación Marítima y Terrestre en los Reinos Hispánicos Durante la Baja Edad Media. Movilidad, Conectividad y Gobernanza*. Madrid: La Ergástula Ediciones.
- Valérian, Dominique. 2006. *Bougie, Port Maghrébin, 1067–1510*. Roma: École française de Rome.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.