

Genoa's Freedom: Entrepreneurship, Republicanism, and the Spanish Atlantic.
Matteo Salonia.

Empires and Entanglements in the Early Modern World. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017. xxvi + 186 pp. \$95.

While there has been a significant uptick in attention paid to the Republic of Genoa, monographs dedicated to the city and its culture continue to be fairly rare in Renaissance historiography. There are a number of reasons for this imbalance. Genoa produced few artists of note and no Vasari to sing their praises. Even most patronage falls outside the chronological frame of the majority of historians of the Renaissance. Likewise, there is a dearth of seminal Genoese authors such as those produced elsewhere in the peninsula. Compounding this situation, Genoa has always been a historical outlier. Its history is complex and most overarching interpretations of the period's history simply do not apply to Genoa.

Those scholars who have taken up the task of understanding Genoa's convoluted history, this reviewer among them, have tended to place more emphasis on crisis and conjuncture than on continuity. The work of Matteo Salonia proposes an alternative approach, seeking out common cultural traits that form a unifying theme in Genoese history from the creation of its medieval commercial networks through Genoese involvement in Spanish colonial expansion in the Americas and the creation of the Spanish Atlantic. As such it is a welcome corrective to much of the current historiography and should encourage a better-rounded understanding of the city's history and culture.

The first part of Salonia's book is divided into three loosely related chapters dedicated to Genoa's medieval colonial expansion and commercial networks, and to Genoa's constitutional structure, self-perception, and periods of foreign rule. The second half of the book, chronologically spanning the latter fifteenth century and the sixteenth century, deals with Genoese involvement with Spain and Spain's growing colonial possessions. Embedded within this discussion is a contrast between a Genoese concept of liberty on the one hand, and the more widely recognized notion of liberty based on the political autonomy of a sovereign state on the other hand.

The central thesis and uniting thread holding these disparate chapters together is that the Genoese developed a distinct mercantile, entrepreneurial culture very early on in their history and that "Genoa preserved for centuries a precise, though relatively unsung, civic philosophy" (xi). Rather than focusing on the myriad factional struggles that racked the city, or the frequent regime changes at the highest level of government, by concentrating on entrepreneurial culture Salonia finds continuity in the Genoese ability to penetrate and adapt to ever-changing markets and market conditions. The aforementioned unsung civic philosophy then stems from this entrepreneurial culture. "Fifteenth-century Genoese citizens understood *libertà* as the absence of a local dynasty and the lack of obstacles in the path to private enterprise and wealth creation" (87). By

extension, Salonia claims, Genoese republicanism consisted in a deliberate strategy of keeping political power fragmented and arms primarily in the hands of private citizens.

This is an intriguing approach that certainly merits further attention, in part because Salonia's work is far from conclusive. For example, no mention is made of the role of force in opening foreign markets and establishing trading colonies. When discussing the Genoese presence in England no mention is made of Genoese involvement in the Hundred Years' War or Genoese naval attacks on Southampton. And finally, in the textual analyses aimed at reconstructing Genoese self-perception and a peculiarly Genoese notion of liberty, only sources representing the views of a single faction are discussed. Depicting the Genoese as a homogeneous group is always a pitfall. Salonia does not delve deeply enough into questions of identity, or the multiple layers of identity within the Genoese polity, all too often referring collectively to the Genoese, or even Ligurians, as a consolidated block.

Matteo Salonia takes on the quest to find the key to Genoa's undeniable success creating a far-flung medieval commercial network and its ability to create an equally impressive commercial and financial network in the early modern period, and he finds it in the city's entrepreneurial culture, a preference for fragmented political power, and a notion of liberty as freedom to carry on business. He has chosen to support his points not through a systematic analysis of the available sources, but through the use of a limited number of examples. Given the vastness of the subject that is a reasonable approach. The result, though, is impressionistic: sweeping conclusions drawn from the experiences and records of a handful of historical actors. The reader is also left with the suspicion that the sources may not be entirely representative, or at least may not faithfully represent the nuances of Genoese culture or the array of sharply contrasting views regarding liberty and republicanism.

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La construction du pouvoir local: Élités municipales, liens sociaux et transactions économiques dans l'espace urbain: Rome, 1550–1650. Eleonora Canepari. Collection de l'École française de Rome 511. Rome: École française de Rome, 2017. xviii + 400 pp. €25.

Adding to the scholarship of Renata Ago and Laurie Nussdorfer, Eleonora Canepari, in this meticulously researched study, examines the political, economic, and social foundations of power of Rome's civic nobility. Canepari demonstrates how both new and old members of this civic elite grounded their authority in the occupation of municipal offices at the Capitol and through the development of social and economic ties with social inferiors as "big men" in neighborhoods and in the larger political quarters. Through