

# 34 • Cartographic Activities in the Republic of Genoa, Corsica, and Sardinia in the Renaissance

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A summary account of the cartographic activities in the territories of the Republic of Genoa immediately faces the problem of distinguishing between telling the story of how Liguria and Genoa and its island territories were mapped (by whatever agents) and explaining the Renaissance cartographic culture that sprang from those regions (fig. 34.1). The more traditional approach of providing a sequential cartographic history of these areas through many historical periods has been well done in general books such as Roberto Almagià's *Monumenta Italiae cartografica* (1929) or, for Sardinia, Piloni's magnum opus of 1974.<sup>1</sup> Catalogs of exhibitions, replete with detailed information and illustrations of local manuscript maps often gleaned from archives in the regions, have tended to focus on the second approach, trying to reconstruct the local cartographic culture. These include my *Carte e cartografi in Liguria* and Salone and Amalberti's *Corsica: Immagine e cartografia*, both of which list the key bibliographical sources.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter takes the second approach to the extent to which Genoa and its territories developed an independent cartographic culture during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the period before the complex cartographic operation undertaken for Louis XIV, the making of the "Carte de Méditerranée" of 1679–85, which ushered in a new era. Most scholars who have studied the history of the cartographic depiction of Genoa and its territories have described it as revealing that the Republic was "chronically backward" compared to either its neighbors (Piedmont, for example) or comparable states such as Venice and its Veneto. For much of Europe, the early modern period was marked by a gradual emergence of a visual cartography in contrast to that of the Middle Ages, when the depiction and description of places depended less on the visual than on the powerfully persuasive spoken word. This predominance of the word meant that all the empty spaces on a medieval map were filled with long captions that constituted a more encyclopedic and narrative discourse, and these were considered more important and trustworthy than the actual drawing. Hence, the discourse of maps was predominantly rhetorical and metaphorical; the study of the world took the form of a moralized geography.<sup>3</sup>

In explaining this extended privileging of word over image in Liguria, scholars cite the very low level of local interest in visually depicting the landscape or the city.<sup>4</sup> Others cite the difficulties in modernizing the military and bureaucratic structures of the state to focus a sustained effort on the government of its surrounding territory. Whichever examples they choose, however, their discussions seem always to be colored by a traditional commonplace, nurtured first by travelers and then by historians, of depicting Genoa as a purely mercantile city that showed no interest in promoting the arts or sciences.<sup>5</sup>

Although this general picture has been substantially modified in recent years, Genoa remains a place in which neither the figurative arts nor a "state-focused" political culture can be said to have played a predominant role, particularly when compared to Italy as a whole.<sup>6</sup> Given this,

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Abbreviations used in this chapter include: ASG for Archivio di Stato, Genoa, and *Corsica* for Anna Maria Salone and Fausto Amalberti, *Corsica: Immagine e cartografia* (Genoa: Sagep, 1992).

1. Roberto Almagià, *Monumenta Italiae cartografica* (Florence: Istituto Geografico Militare, 1929), and Luigi Piloni, *Carte geografiche della Sardegna*, reprint of the 1974 edition with the addition of "Carte e cartografi della Sardegna" by Isabella Zedda Macciò (pp. 441–57) (Cagliari: Edizioni della Torre, 1997).

2. Massimo Quaini, ed., *Carte e cartografi in Liguria* (Genoa: Sagep, 1986), and *Corsica*.

3. The felicitous expression was coined by Juergen Schulz in his *La cartografia tra scienza e arte: Carte e cartografi nel Rinascimento italiano* (Modena: Panini, 1990). The figure in which one can see the most significant mixture of the commonplaces of medieval geography and the new notions and conjectures fostered by Renaissance culture is the Genoese Christopher Columbus, whose skill as a cartographer is well known; see Massimo Quaini, "L'età dell'evidenza cartografica: Una nuova visione del mondo fra Cinquecento e Seicento," in *Cristoforo Colombo e l'apertura degli spazi: Mostra storico-cartografica*, 2 vols., ed. Guglielmo Cavallo (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, Libreria dello Stato, 1992), 2:781–812.

4. Ennio Poleggi, *Iconografia di Genova e delle riviere* (Genoa: Sagep, 1977), 14.

5. See especially the study of Salvatore Rotta, "Idee di riforma nella Genova settecentesca, e la diffusione del pensiero di Montesquieu," *Movimento Operaio e Socialista in Liguria* 7, no. 3–4 (1961): 205–84.

6. As we will see, the most substantial criticism comes from those studies that apply paradigms of microhistory, particularly from the work of Edoardo Grendi, Diego Moreno, and Osvaldo Raggio, who have adopted a topographic approach to the social history of Liguria. See



FIG. 34.1. REFERENCE MAP OF LIGURIA AND CORSICA.

a focus on cultural history and the patterns of life prevalent in the city seems advisable as a starting point for the historian of Genoese cartography. If we avoid a simple chronology of developments in institutional history, figurative arts, or science and technology (the latter including the very uncertain chronology of developments in cartography itself), we will no longer see cultural and institutional factors specific to Genoa solely in terms of “backwardness” or anachronism. Rather than considering things in relation to some abstract model of technical progress, we will see how the techniques of cartography adapted to the territorial and geopolitical context of the region or the city itself, a context very different from that of any other Italian state.

Poleggi, a scholar with a detailed knowledge of the urban fabric of the city, has pointed out that the Ligurian government’s indifference to the portrayal of its setting resulted in a lack of local artists’ commissions to provide landscapes and city views.<sup>7</sup> This explains why—with the significant exception of one work commissioned by the Genoese *magistratura* in 1481—the earliest known depic-

tions of the city were all commissioned by other princes and rulers. These included Pope Innocent VIII, who in 1484 commissioned Pinturicchio to decorate a loggia in the Palazzo del Belvedere with views of Rome, Milan, Genoa, Florence, Venice, and Naples,<sup>8</sup> and Francesco II Gonzaga (marquis of Mantua), who in 1497 commissioned Giovanni Bellini and Gentile Bellini to paint views of Venice, Genoa, Paris, and Cairo for the “City Chambers” in the no longer extant Palazzo di Marmiolo.

These painted renditions of Genoa, and their engraved successors, were substantially similar. They show the city in its famous “villa landscape” and enclosed in a wide circle of hills (which, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, would be topped by the outermost ring of city walls). However, although these representations were largely by foreigners, their prototype was the single “homemade” depiction of the city produced in Genoa itself. This large anonymous picture now lost, celebrating the departure of the fleet sent in answer to Pope Sixtus IV’s call for the liberation of Otranto from the Turkish invasion (1481), was copied in Genoa by the painter-cartographer Cristoforo de Grassi in 1597 (fig. 34.2).<sup>9</sup>

These perspective views, and other more developed and detailed depictions of the city given in portolan charts, were intended to promote the classic image of the city and its outlying territories as seen from the sea. All served the local taste for views of Genoa as a mere backdrop for images of naval reviews directly outside the port.<sup>10</sup>

This schema persisted in a substantial corpus of topographical works: the *Corographia Xofori de Grassis* (1598), which focused on Corsica but also covered the Eastern Riviera of Liguria and the city of Genoa (see fig. 34.7), and the *Civitas Janue* (1616), both works attributed to Gerolamo Bordoni, the Republic’s *maestro del*

the more general observations made in Edoardo Grendi, “Stato e comunità nel Seicento genovese,” in *Studi in memoria di Giovanni Tarello*, 2 vols. (Milan: Giuffrè, 1990), 1:243–82.

7. Poleggi, *Iconografia di Genova*, 14.

8. The cities were depicted “in the Flemish manner; a thing which, because it had never been seen before, was highly pleasing,” as Giorgio Vasari comments, pointing out the emergence of a fashion (Poleggi, *Iconografia di Genova*, 13). The most recent studies of this fashion and its influence on cartography are in Schulz, *La cartografia tra scienza e arte*.

9. De Grassi, who was also the creator of cartographic representations of territory, is discussed later. On the “pictura antiquae urbis Genve,” which the Padri del Comune wanted to save from total ruin, see Poleggi, *Iconografia di Genova*, 110–12, and also Pierangelo Campodonico, *La marineria genovese dal medioevo all’unità d’Italia* (Milan: Fabbri, 1989), esp. 111–14 and 165–67, which attributes to de Grassi (or Grasso) many of the naval and geographical decorations to be found in the Genoese palazzo of Angelo Giovanni Spinola.

10. A large number of these sixteenth-century paintings and miniatures—some from Turkish sources—are analyzed in Poleggi, *Iconografia di Genova*, which also mentions the nautical map drawn by Battista Beccari in 1435 (p. 40).



FIG. 34.2. VIEW OF GENOA, 1481. Copied by Cristoforo de Grassi, 1597, from a large, locally produced anonymous picture of the city.

Size of the original: 222 × 400 cm. Photograph courtesy of the Galata Museo del Mare, Genoa (NIMN 3486).

*cerimoniale*, responsible for compiling a chorography of the Republic, and finally, the view of Genoa found in the Belvedere Gallery at the Vatican. In this last work, the perspective view is replaced by a ground plan with features in perspective, and more attention is given to the depiction of the geographical surroundings; it is possibly based on a drawing by the painter G. Andrea Ansaldo, who was sent to the city by Pope Urban VIII.<sup>11</sup>

Genoan public authorities showed no interest in the fashion for map galleries popular elsewhere in sixteenth-century Italy. Likewise, private patrons who drew many outside artists into the city (from as far afield as the Netherlands) were generally interested in other subjects.<sup>12</sup> The two exceptions to these tastes are slightly known works of rather different quality. The first is the loggia of city views in what is now the Palazzo Doria-Spinola, commissioned in 1584 by Giovanni Battista Doria.<sup>13</sup> The second is much more difficult to evaluate, given that it consists of a largely uncompleted project for a public collection of images depicting Genoa's colonies (the only extant parts are the anonymous mid-sixteenth-century paintings of the island and city of Chios).<sup>14</sup>

Clearly, the marginal nature of these two projects reveals the absence of a felt need for a public map gallery. In fact, only much later would this limitation be felt, not in the artistic or cultural context but rather in that of developing the political awareness of the Republic's citizens.

Andrea Spinola, an enlightened member of the “republican” ruling classes, criticized the lack of adequate cartographic representations of Liguria in the doge's palace thus: “In the public loggias of the Palazzo della Signoria, the surrounding walls should be painted with frescoes depicting our State in various pictures, with precise and clear accounts of all the borders. In this way, the Citizens, when they are waiting there for hours before the Councils are called, will be able to acquire precise knowledge of these most important things.”<sup>15</sup> However, Spinola's

11. Here again, the theory was originally put forward in Poleggi, *Iconografia di Genova*, 123. The shift from perspective view to ground plan can also be seen in the 1638 painting Domenico Fiasella produced for the Oratorio di San Giorgio dei Genovesi in Palermo (*Iconografia di Genova*, 22).

12. On the history of painting and decoration in Genoa, see Ezia Gavazza, *La grande decorazione a Genova* (Genoa: Sagep, 1974).

13. See Poleggi, *Iconografia di Genova*, 114. Poleggi judges the frescoes of poor quality and says their sources “coincide with the city-view prints to be found anywhere.”

14. The plates are now in Genoa, Museo Navale. See the reproduction in Campodonico, *La marineria genovese*, 121.

15. Andrea Spinola, “Ricordi,” under the section “Confini pubblici” (Public borders); Genoa, Archivio Storico Comune (BS MS. 106 B 8). In the same section, Spinola also urges the creation of a collection of cartographic maps to be used by the Magistratura dei Confini. On Spinola and his writings (which remained in manuscript form), see Bitossi's wide-ranging introduction to Andrea Spinola, *Scritti scelti*, ed. Carlo Bitossi (Genoa: Sagep, 1981), 5–75.

proposal went unheeded, as did his proposal for a naval school to teach geography and nautical cartography.<sup>16</sup>

Poleggi offers a reading of social behavior and a mental outlook linked to the very structure of the city:

There was something specifically medieval about the way the city continued to grow and develop. It was this that lay behind the reluctance of the Genoese to portray their city and the incapacity of others to understand the hidden but revolutionary rhythm within Genoa's spatial distribution. The fact is that one cannot have city views without large public squares, and Genoa does not have large public squares. . . . One cannot use city views to celebrate a space that is exclusively private, and certainly not intended for collective enjoyment and use.<sup>17</sup>

This highly convincing reading can be extended from the organization of Genoa's urban space to include the organization of the Republic's territory as a whole. By the end of the fifteenth century, the process of Genoese territorial expansion was complete, and yet the state itself continued to have a weak political structure with no clear sense of identity. This is amply illustrated by the fact that between 1485 and 1515 a private body, the Banco di San Giorgio, was entrusted with the government of sizeable and strategically important parts of Genoese territory: Corsica, Lerici, Sarzana, Pieve di Teco, Ventimiglia, and Levanto.

The complex territorial organization of the Republic involved a whole host of privileges and immunities granted to various local communities. Numerous feudal enclaves existed, often related to the same aristocratic families that constituted the city's ruling class. These paralleled the factional divisions in the Genoese nobility, who even within the city occupied different *alberghi* (neighborhoods), thus dividing the urban space into spatially distinct areas inhabited by different clans.

Lacking a wholesale restructuring of the territorial administration of the state, along with armed forces worthy of the name, a recognized common interest, fidelity to a particular dynasty, and certainly a solid ethnic or cultural cohesion, the law was almost the sole cement holding the state together.<sup>18</sup> A sort of ad hoc territorial solidarity existed, under which various other forms of association might be at work (for example, families, parishes, confraternities, and "plebs"); internal local cohesion seems to have been guaranteed only by external conflict, either with neighboring communities or with the central government.<sup>19</sup> The result was that, despite numerous (but ineffective) requests to modernize by the more enlightened members of the ruling class throughout the period of the old Republican regime, it was never possible to standardize the administrative map of Genoese territory. According to Grendi, "The political language of the State continued to be based on tradition, recognizing immuni-

ties, privileges, conventions, and local statutes whose prestige rested upon their antiquity."<sup>20</sup>

Such is the complicated context one should bear in mind when trying to understand cartographic developments in the Republic of Genoa. In many parts of Europe, the relationship between the development of cartography and the modernization and strengthening of the state was clear; the shift toward a centralized state was the basis of its modernization. However, the local and heterogeneous social awareness of urban space in Liguria means that a correct analysis of cartographic development must rest on other assumptions. The map served as an instrument for local social bodies to use to assert their identity, and this contrasted with the general models of European cartography, where the map was viewed more as an analytical tool to provide a complete and efficient picture of the layout of territorial structures in the state.<sup>21</sup>

Given the continuing survival of a medieval view of time and space throughout Liguria,<sup>22</sup> and given a political structure that could be defined as "premodern," the development of state cartography there was significantly handicapped. What is more, the situation throughout the region as a whole was far from homogeneous, and the term "medieval" can be applied to some local areas long after the date by which the Middle Ages is considered to have ended. The continuing predominance of text to describe geographical facts underlines this premodern character.

For example, in 1536, the City Council of Savona set about resolving border disputes by calling on the services of Agostino Abate, who had a solid grounding in geometry and architecture. Abate saw no point in attempting to resolve the various disputes by fixing the borders on a map. He did make an on-site survey to reestablish the exact *termini* (boundary stones). But his key sources were

16. Spinola, *Scritti scelti*, 293–94.

17. Poleggi, *Iconografia di Genova*, 15.

18. Giovanni Assereto, "Dall'amministrazione patrizia all'amministrazione moderna: Genova," in *L'amministrazione nella storia moderna*, 2 vols. (Milan: Giuffrè, 1985), 1:95–159, esp. 99–100.

19. Edoardo Grendi, "Il sistema politico di una comunità ligure: Cervo fra Cinquecento e Seicento," *Quaderni Storici* 46 (1981): 92–129.

20. Grendi, "Stato e comunità," 275–76.

21. In particular, see Edoardo Grendi, "Il disegno e la coscienza sociale dello spazio: Dalle carte archivistiche genovesi," in *Studi in memoria di Teofilo Ossian De Negri*, III (Genoa: Stringa, 1986), 14–33, as well as idem, "Cartografia e disegno locale: La coscienza sociale dello spazio," in *Lettere orbe: Anonimato e poteri nel Seicento genovese* (Palermo: Gelka, 1989), 135–62.

22. In the sense in which the term "medieval" is used at the beginning of this chapter, and in which it has often been outlined by Jacques Le Goff (whose work on this proceeds from that of Lucien Febvre), see Massimo Quaini, "Il fantastico nella cartografia fra medioevo ed età moderna," *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria*, n.s. 32, no. 2 (1992): 313–43.

the minds and memories of the older inhabitants, part of an oral tradition handed down from generation to generation. In the future, all such disputes were to be decided on the basis of the *scrittura autentica* (authentic written records) of the city clerk who had accompanied Abate and officially recorded his findings in the form of text, not maps and drawings. Likewise, the annual inspections by the *podestà* (authorities) of the borders of the Genoese state were recorded as a verbal description, not traced out on a map.<sup>23</sup> It was not until 1643 that the Genoese government ruled that its borders “should be drawn and exactly entered word for word for posterity.”<sup>24</sup>

To those aware of the importance of nautical cartography for the mercantile fleets of medieval Genoa and Liguria, who argue that terrestrial cartography was simply a continuation of nautical cartography, this privileging of text over graphic seems improbable.<sup>25</sup> But it was not until the second half of the sixteenth century that Genoa felt the need for an accurate map of its territory, and by then the importance of nautical cartography had become marginal, due in part to the shift of Genoese interests away from maritime trade to international finance in what has been defined as the first “world-economy.”<sup>26</sup> The main figures involved with territorial cartography in the city were painters, architects, military officers, and, to a lesser extent, men of letters and notaries, people with very different training from that found in the family workshops where a *magister chartarum a navigando* (master of navigation charts) produced nautical maps and instruments.<sup>27</sup>

Nautical terms did have an influence on terrestrial maps, but it is not always clear whether these were derived from sailing directions or maps. For example, the various sixteenth-century descriptions of the mountainous borders running through Val Polcevera use expressions taken from sailing directions, such as “a mount known as Tuirano being engulfed between these communities” or “from the coast to Mount Scaglia di Corno there is about a three-mile *gulf* measured by the rod.”<sup>28</sup>

A trace of nautical chart influence can be seen in the adoption of a nautical unit of measure (the *goa*), a scale bar, and a depiction of the wind directions recalling contemporary nautical maps in the surveys drawn up for land maps such as the “Pianta del sito delle marine di Vado” (1569) (fig. 34.3). The connection with nautical sources is even stronger when one learns that the presumed cartographer, Battista Sormano, an architect from Savona, based his map on a compass survey taken from a point at sea.<sup>29</sup>

Similarly, one cannot rule out that nautical maps and sailing directions were also source material for the early regional textual descriptions of Liguria. The “*Descriptio orae ligusticae*” (1442–48) by Giacomo Bracelli is in the form of a periplus that focuses on the coastline from Varo

to Magra, which was influenced by the “description and picture given of Italy by the Ancients.”<sup>30</sup>

The extent to which Agostino Giustiniani used maps for his *Descrittione della Lyguria* (1537), the first full description of Liguria as a whole, is a matter for debate. In his work Giustiniani focused great attention on the account of inland Liguria (including the areas across the Alps and Apennines) and used the river courses as the basic framework of his description. This suggests that, if he used maps at all, it was not official maps structured around political boundaries but land maps that focused on the natural watercourses. However, another explanation might be that Giustiniani made systematic use of direct on-site observations, which was clearly the case from his account of some areas.<sup>31</sup>

23. On the *podestà*, see Massimo Quaini, ed., *La conoscenza del territorio ligure fra medio evo ed età moderna* (Genoa: Sagep, 1981), 28–29. The traditions of “boundary visits” continued into the following century. And in eastern Liguria, even as late as 1656—when the use of maps was already widespread—the local authorities continued the tradition of periodic visits to boundaries in the company of community elders, who were to indicate the position of the *termini*, and youths of fifteen years old, who were to memorize what they were shown and thus perpetuate this form of territorial knowledge.

24. ASG, MS. 712, carte 4r, and p. 862 and note 42 in this chapter.

25. See, for example, Emilio Marengo, *Carte topografiche e corografiche manoscritte della Liguria e delle immediate adiacenze, conservate nel R. Archivio di Stato di Genova*, ed. Paolo Revelli (Genoa, 1931), 3.

26. See Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Times* (London: Verso, 1994), 13 and 109–26.

27. Moreno argues that the supremacy of pictorial representation and the “deeply-rooted persistence of ‘city-views’ as cartographic documents” were such that they “delayed and conditioned the emergence of modern terrestrial cartography”; see Diego Moreno, “Una carta inedita di Battista Carrosio di Voltaggio, pittore-cartografo,” in *Miscellanea di geografia storica e di storia della geografia: Nel primo centenario della nascita di Paolo Revelli* (Genoa: Bozzi, 1971), 103–14, esp. 105.

28. Quaini, *La conoscenza del territorio ligure*, 27–28.

29. On the map and its author, see Massimo Quaini, “Il golfo di Vado nella più antica rappresentazione cartografica,” *Bollettino Ligustico* 23 (1971): 27–44, and Magda Tassinari, “Le origini della cartografia savonese del Cinquecento: Il contributo di Domenico Revello, Battista Sormano e Paolo Gerolamo Marchiano,” *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria*, n.s. 29, no. 1 (1989): 233–79. The technique continued to be practiced in the eighteenth century, as one can see from drawings by Matteo Vinzoni. On the units of measure, see Pietro Rocca, *Pesi e misure antiche di Genova e del Genovesato* (Genoa, 1871), 59.

30. As one can read in the Italian translation of Flavio Biondo’s work *Roma restaurata et Italia illustrata*, trans. Lucio Fauno, new and corrected reprinting (Venice, 1558), 69–74. Bracelli’s work was revised and included in Biondo’s “*Italia illustrata*” completed in Rome in 1453.

31. On the role of on-site observation in the work of Giustiniani, see the discussion of his description of Corsica later in this chapter. For the most recent bibliography, see Aurelio Cevolotto, *Agostino Giustiniani: Un umanista tra Bibbia e Cabala* (Genoa: ECIG, 1992). For a facsimile of the *Descrittione*, see Agostino Giustiniani, [*Castigatissimi*] *Annale con la loro copiosa tavola della eccelsa & illustrissima republi de Genoa* (Bologna: A. Forni, 1981), bk. 1.

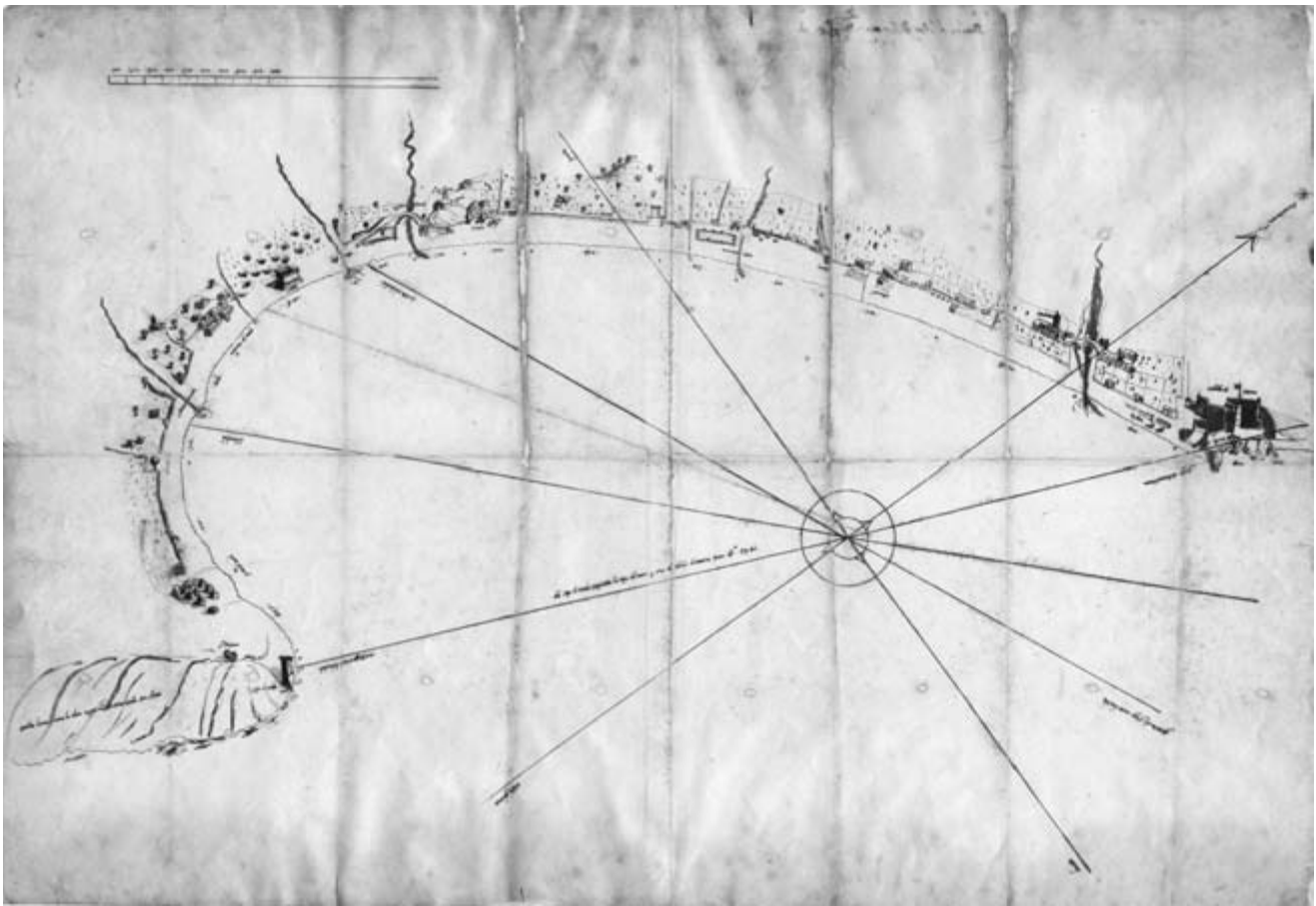


FIG. 34.3. BATTISTA SORMANO, "PIANTA DEL SITO DELLE MARINE DI VADO," 1569.

Size of the original: 60 × 85 cm. Photograph courtesy of the ASG (Raccolta cartografica, b. 19, vado 33).

Whatever the sources, Giustiniani's verbal description clearly anticipates what is to be found in later manuscript maps; it adopts a point of view from within rather than without. It describes not the striking visual appearance of the coast seen from the sea, but the region's specific local features. It focuses on the minute fragmentation of the region into cities, castles, towns, villas, and villages, all forming part of wider social and territorial wholes, but each with its own identity.

Giustiniani's description influenced the cartography and chorography of the region for at least two centuries. An analysis of the place-names in the sixteenth-century printed maps of the region from Giacomo Gastaldi to Giovanni Antonio Magini's *Italia* reveals that they were clearly derived from Giustiniani (even if the wealth of place-names in the *Descrittione* far outnumbers that in even the most detailed printed map). And when, as in the case of Magini, these later cartographers described their working methods, they admitted that they had checked their own maps against Giustiniani's account.<sup>32</sup>

#### DIFFICULTIES IN CONSTRUCTING A MAP OF THE GENOESE STATE

The cartographic equivalent of Giustiniani's *Descrittione* was not produced until Giovanni Tommaso Borgonio created his large map of most of western Liguria (1682) and José (Joseph) Chafrion drew his map of the entire territory of the Genoese Republic (1685), works that I take as the end-markers of my discussion.<sup>33</sup> This delay is further proof of the primacy of verbal description in Liguria. One cannot, however, dismiss the 150 years of Genoese cartography between Giustiniani's text and Chafrion's map as a blank page in the history of Italian cartography. This period saw no production of cartography on a regional scale; instead, maps were local documents, with cartogra-

32. See Roberto Almagià, *L' "Italia" di Giovanni Antonio Magini e la cartografia dell' Italia nei secoli XVI e XVII* (Naples: F. Perrella, 1922), 79–80.

33. In the eighteenth-century edition, Borgonio's map would be extended to cover the whole of Liguria.

phers seeing the region as so many fragments rather than a single whole.

This difficulty is illustrated by the lack of sources available to Magini in compiling his maps of the Western and Eastern Rivas of Genoa (Riviera di Ponente and Riviera di Levante) for his first printed versions of the *Italia* (1597). For the Western Riviera of Genoa, he was able to draw on a good map obtained from the duke of Mantua, while his source for the Eastern Riviera, a drawing by the Genoese Orazio Bracelli, proved totally inadequate. As a result, Magini appealed to various “powerful and suitable persons,” but finally reached the conclusion that “in Genoa there is no one who has a taste for this profession.”<sup>34</sup> However, by 1609 Magini had established more profitable relations with the Genoese government, and the new 1613 maps, particularly that of the Eastern Riviera, are markedly more informative than their predecessors.<sup>35</sup>

For public administrators, the small scale of Magini’s work was inadequate for even the most basic tasks in the military and administrative organization of state territory. Magini’s maps belonged to a genre that was essentially intended as celebratory rather than meeting the requirements of administrative efficiency. The governing classes in Genoa would show themselves indifferent to programs of either celebratory cartography, such as that promoted by Carlo Emanuele II, duke of Savoy, in the *Theatrum Sabaudiae*, or administrative cartography, such as that the Venetian Republic was already promoting in the fifteenth century.<sup>36</sup>

The general lack of interest of public administrators in a map of the region is demonstrated by the fact that the first proposal to draw up a map of the entire territory of the Republic of Genoa was made by a private body, the Banco di San Giorgio, and even that attempt almost immediately came to nothing. The initial proposal for the San Giorgio project came from a native of Sarzana, Ercole Spina, who, before being nominated mayor of his native town in 1587, had taken part in various military campaigns in France, Italy, and elsewhere throughout the Mediterranean. His first known contacts with the Banco di San Giorgio date from 1579, when Paolo Moneglia and Giovanni Battista Spinola commissioned him to “reform the picture . . . wherein was described the whole of Liguria” that was then kept on the bank’s premises. It must have been a fairly old painting (given that it is described as “corroded and spoilt by time”), in which were “painted to scale . . . borders and roads.”<sup>37</sup> However, Spina considered the representation far from adequate, and as a result was willing to go “around all the borders of this Most Serene Dominion, so that having seen them with my own eyes I can describe them more clearly and better draw them” (the information we have regarding Spina is largely taken from a manuscript work of his, which contained maps, for ex-

ample, fig. 34.4).<sup>38</sup> The main purpose of the project must have been to achieve a more precise account of roads and, above all, borders, which were important for trade and, therefore, for the tax duties collected by the bank.

Almost immediately aborted by an outbreak of the plague, the project was taken up again in 1587 by Gerónimo Canevaro at Spina’s suggestion. Rather than redoing the painting, Spina had in mind a kind of atlas of Liguria, with details of the boundaries drawn on the map and described in words in the margin. Such a work would, according to the author, be as useful to the public authorities as it would be “beautiful to leave to posterity.”<sup>39</sup> He undertook to make his observations in two months and draw up the maps in Genoa in six. His proposal was accompanied by a model sheet showing what the maps would look like.

The plan was not followed up, and only in the second half of the seventeenth century would a similar scheme be put into effect by the Giunta dei Confini (Border Authorities) after Andrea Spinola and other enlightened members of the governing classes had argued the need for such maps. However, a comparison of Spina’s model sheet with this later work reveals the full “modernity” of Spina’s project.<sup>40</sup> Its innovative character lies not only in its coverage of large, previously unmapped areas of the mountainous terrain in the Republic. Spina proposed a standardized sheet size of ten miles square divided according to degrees of longitude and latitude, features that

34. Almagià, *L’Italia*, 155.

35. We do not know the author of the new cartographic sources received by Magini; Almagià repeats the unconfirmed traditional attribution to Father Domenico Ceva, “a Dominican friar at the monastery of Santa Maria di Castello and a talented mathematician,” who died in 1612 (*L’Italia*, 29). Further support for the attribution comes from the fact that Ceva, the author of the treatise “De chartis chorographicis conscribendis,” calculated the geographical coordinates of Genoa.

36. Even if, around 1630, the Republic did not hesitate to celebrate its own magnificence (upon the occasion of the proclamation of royal title and dominion over the Ligurian Sea). However, here again, the celebration was more literary and verbal than cartographic; see Claudio Costantini, *La Repubblica di Genova nell’età moderna* (Turin: UTET, 1978). On the *Theatrum Sabaudiae*, see pp. 847–53 in this volume. On the Venetian “model,” see chapter 35 in this volume.

37. Massimo Quaini, “Dalla cartografia del potere al potere della cartografia,” in *Carte e cartografi in Liguria*, ed. Massimo Quaini (Genoa: Sagep, 1986), 7–60, esp. 29. Paolo Moneglia is known to have been one of Ortelius’s Genoese correspondents; see Luigi Volpicella, “Genova nel secolo XV: Note d’iconografia panoramica,” *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria* 52 (1924): 249–88.

38. The manuscript work has two titles: “Libro di piante et altre delectationi,” given by the author, and “Diverse piante,” given by the archivist and written on the front cover of the manuscript (ASG, MS. 423).

39. Quaini, “Dalla cartografia del potere,” 29.

40. The model sheet is “Tavola del fine della Liguria e principio della Etruria che contiene di spacio X miglie per ogni verso quale serve per modelo de la intencione di E. S.,” ASG, Raccolta cartografica, Busta D, 69, illustrated in Quaini, “Dalla cartografia del potere,” 29.



FIG. 34.4. ERCOLE SPINA, "PARTE DELLA LUNIGIANA," 1592. This map is from Spina's manuscript titled "Libro di

piante et altre delectationi" (also known as "Diverse piante"). Photograph courtesy of the ASG (MS. 423).



only much later became the norm in Italian and European cartography.

Compare this approach to that used in some of the maps in the later work commissioned by the Genoese Giunta dei Confini—a work in which the planimetric representation of the borders is given separately from a perspective view of the landscape.<sup>41</sup> A ruling on 27 November 1643 recognized the need for a systematic mapping of the Republic's borders, resulting in the production of two atlases, one covering the fiefdoms of the Western Riviera, known as Atlas A, and one covering the Oltregiogo area (the valleys of Stura, Lemme, and Scrivia), known as Atlas B.<sup>42</sup> The technicians involved in this project were in part architects, in part painters; none of them had the professional competence of Ercole Spina. Atlas A (1650–55), however, is much more coherent and homogeneous than Atlas B because all the illustrations were the work of the painter-cartographer Pier Maria Gropallo (plate 29). The difference between the maps of Spina and those of Gropallo can be explained by reference to the cultural backgrounds of the two cartographers. Spina's training was more scientific, military, and mathematical, drawing on the treatises of Niccolò Tartaglia, Giovanni Francesco Peverone, Giovanni Antonio Magini, Giuseppi Moleti, and Girolamo Cattaneo. Gropallo's work was more in the tradition of a painter and less in the tradition of geometrical representation of terrain and landscape.

Though today we would judge Gropallo's atlas as revealing an insufficient command of mathematical cartography, the work was much appreciated by the authorities in Genoa, who in 1662 were still referring to Gropallo as “a gentleman of great expertise in the drawing of maps” and someone who would be perfectly qualified to make “an exact and conscientious delineation of . . . contested areas,”<sup>43</sup> a statement that reveals their misunderstanding of Gropallo's grasp of quantitative mapping.

Gropallo's standing as a painter, on the other hand, was such that he was included in Soprani-Ratti's *Vite de' pittori*, where the versatility of Gropallo's gifts are emphasized:

With his lively and fervent genius, his passion for the Fine Arts was such that he could not settle for just one of those Arts alone. Thus he also studied Civil Architecture . . . and then passed on to the study of Geometry, working on the measurement of land sites and the delineation of terrain . . . so that whenever the Serenissimi Collegi required some topographical plate for the definition of the State's borders or the strict identification of a particular area, they turned to him, who as well as producing a work of most exact measurement would also embellish and decorate it in the finest taste, so that these works are a delight and marvel to look at.<sup>44</sup>

Gropallo was certainly prolific (the archives of both Genoa and Turin contain various other maps that are

signed by or attributable to him). We also know that he was called on to draw up a precise map of the external borders of eastern Liguria as part of the overall boundary inspection that was planned but never took place.<sup>45</sup> The period of Gropallo's activity, from 1650 to 1670, was also significant because during that time the Genoese authorities were involved in various ambitious road-building projects designed to improve communications both eastward and in the Po Valley area.

There is a lack of homogeneity in Atlas B (1648), which contains a mixture of maps based on site visits made to the Oltregiogo area in 1644–45 by architects including Giacomo Ponsello and Lorenzo Cravenna with others that were the work of painters including Bernardo Carrosio (fig. 34.5).<sup>46</sup> The text in Atlas B gives a precise account of the clear division of labor between the engineer and the artist. The architect was required to measure the compass directions that regularized the outline of the bor-

41. I discuss this separation, which survived as a consolidated tradition right up to the end of the eighteenth century, in Matteo Vinzoni, *Pianta delle due riviere della Serenissima Repubblica di Genova divise ne' Commissariati di Sanità*, ed. Massimo Quaini (Genoa: Sagep, 1983), 36–37. On Gropallo, see Luigi Sartori, “Pier Maria Gropallo, pittore-cartografo del Seicento: I, Il ‘Libro dei Feudi della Riviera Occidua’ palestra dell'arte cartografica del Gropallo,” *Bollettino Ligustico* 23 (1971): 83–106; idem, “Nel capitaneato della Pieve: La visita generale dei confini e l'opera di Pier Maria Gropallo (1653);” and idem, “Pier Maria Gropallo nel contado d'Albenga (1650–1656),” the last two in *Carte e cartografi in Liguria*, ed. Massimo Quaini (Genoa: Sagep, 1986), 92–98 and 137–44.

42. ASG, Raccolta cartografica 1268–1292, Atlante A (MS. 39), titled “Feudorum orae occidentalis cum eorum finibus,” and Atlante B (MS. 712), titled “Visita, descrizione et delineatione de confini del Dominio della Serenissima Repubblica di Genova di là Gogio.”

43. Quoted in Teofilo Ossian De Negri, “Pier Maria Gropallo, pittore-cartografo del Seicento: II, Pagine sparse di Pier M. Gropallo maestro della cartografia genovese,” *Bollettino Ligustico* 23 (1971): 107–19, esp. 110.

44. Raffaele Soprani's original work dates from 1674, and was then added to by Carlo Giuseppe Ratti in 1768. An anastatic reprint was published: *Vite de' pittori, scultori, ed architetti genovesi*, 2 vols. and index (Genoa: Tolozzi, 1965); for the references to Gropallo, see 1: 295–97, quotation on 296.

45. Commissioner Gio. Batta Raggio, who had already worked with Gropallo in western Liguria, called him to Portovenere in October 1656 to undertake a new visit to the boundaries of eastern Liguria. During the May 1656 visit made by Commissioner Carlo Spinola, the draftsman seems to have been a certain Maestro Bartolomeo Quadro, who is not known to have produced any maps. In 1662, Gropallo produced a plate concerned with the controversy between Beverino and Cavanella; see De Negri, “Pier Maria Gropallo,” 109–13.

46. See Gaetano Ferro, “I confini della Repubblica di Genova in due atlanti manoscritti del 1600,” *Annali di Ricerche e Studi di Geografia* 18 (1962): 7–36. On Bernardo Carrosio, see Moreno, “Una carta inedita di Battista Carrosio.” In addition to Ferro, for an overall description of the atlas, see Marengo, *Carte topografiche e corografiche*, 245–46. The description in Caterina Barlettaro and Ofelia Garbarino, *La raccolta cartografica dell'Archivio di Stato di Genova* (Genoa: Tilgher, 1986), 433ff., is totally unreliable, filled with errors and far-fetched readings.

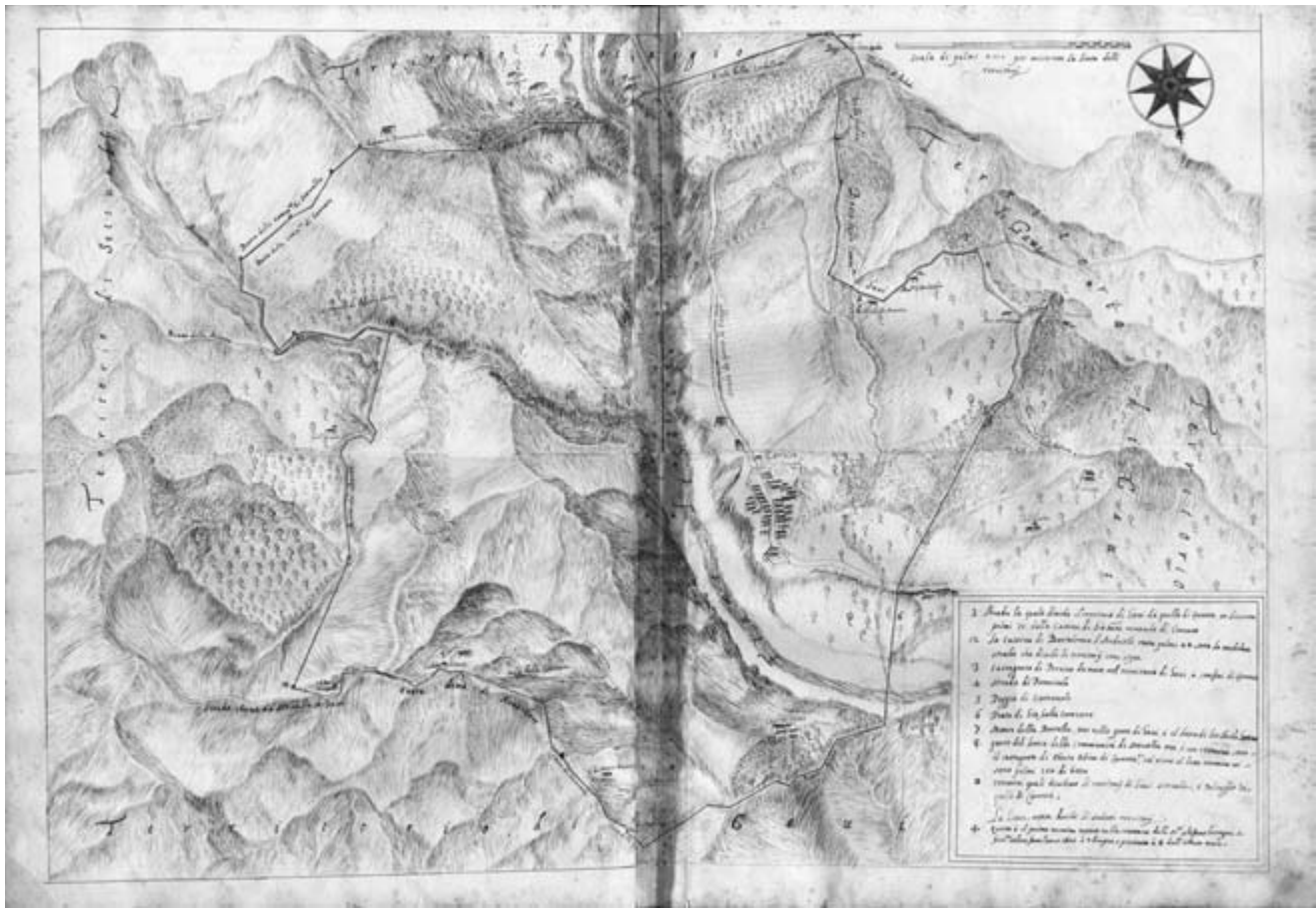


FIG. 34.5. MAP FROM ATLAS B, 1648.

Photograph courtesy of the ASG (Raccolta cartografica 1268–1292, MS. 712).

ders, while the painter was practically a subordinate figure who drew the landscape (fig. 34.6).

Although they stretch the limits of our historical period, two other incidents illuminate the attitude of the Genoese authorities toward accurate maps of the Republic. These authorities actively tried to hinder the publication of the *Carta de la Rivera de Genova con sus verdaderos confines y caminos* (Milan, 1685) by José Chafrión (fig. 34.7), a Catalan military engineer at the service of the governor of Milan, and considered withdrawing the engraved plates before printing to protect the state's military and diplomatic status.<sup>47</sup> The second episode concerned the French cartographer Ludovico della Spina, who in 1696 presented the Genoese authorities with a map of their state, and as “Geographer to the King” offered the Republic his services. Although they judged the map “very diligent, duly adjusted to the facts . . . and worthy of seeing the light of day,” the Genoese government nevertheless asked the author not to print it.<sup>48</sup>

The Republic's wariness of printed maps stemmed from the fear that the publication of a new official map might

spark diplomatic conflict by resurrecting border disputes, particularly with the Republic's more aggressive neighbor, the Duchy of Savoy. The Republic adopted a sort of prudent neutrality, relying more on its system of natural and man-made defenses than on force of arms, while the Duchy of Savoy followed a much bolder and more aggressive foreign policy. As one can see from the Borgonio map (see fig. 33.10) and the *Theatrum Sabaudiae*, Savoy saw cartography as a celebration of its own territorial might and perhaps even as a means of provoking new border disputes with the Republic of Genoa. As one can see from the

47. For a description of the map, see Pietro Barozzi, “La ‘Carta de la Rivera de Genova’ di Joseph Chafrión (1685),” in *La Sardegna nel mondo mediterraneo*, 2 vols. (Sassari: Gallizzi, 1981), 1:143–65, and for further details on the Genoese reaction, see Quaini, “Dalla cartografia del potere,” 15.

48. The episode of the map is discussed in Nilo Calvini, “Ancora sul geografo Ludovico della Spina di Mailly,” *La Berio* 8, no. 3 (1968): 31–37, which takes up the more descriptive study presented in Franca Parodi Levera, “L’ ‘Historia geografica della Repubblica di Genova’ di Ludovico della Spina da Mailly,” *La Berio* 6, no. 3 (1966): 5–27.



FIG. 34.6. DETAIL OF MAP FROM ATLAS B, 1648. Photograph courtesy of the ASG (Raccolta cartografica 1268–1292, MS. 712).

episode of the Chafrion map, the Republic expressed concern not over simple maps but over maps that revealed “knowledge of mountain passes and of the weakness of [military] sites,”<sup>49</sup> works that met the needs of the military campaigner or the territorial administrator. We will now look at the limitations that resulted from this wariness.

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF A LOCAL TOPOGRAPHIC CARTOGRAPHY

The map collection in the Archivio di Stato in Genoa contains many of the maps used by both state and local authorities in the performance of their administrative duties.<sup>50</sup> Only a very small proportion of such material dates from the sixteenth century. Similarly, only very rarely are there written references to the use of maps in extant government documents. The picture, as we have seen, was that of a number of scattered, fragmentary chorographies based not on quantitative surveying by engineers but on landscape paintings made by artists.

This was true for town plans even into the early seventeenth century. Only the Magistratura dei Padri del Co-

mune of the town of Genoa (responsible for town planning and port management) is recorded as having employed a regular *architetto di camera* (resident architect), something that we do not find in records of any of the other magistratures concerned with the civil or military government of the Genoese state. It was the Padri del Comune who, in 1656, commissioned architects to draw up a large planimetric map of the city.<sup>51</sup>

The making of this map was not part of the creation of a cadastral land register, and thus the project was not extended to other areas. In fact, up to the Napoleonic period, cadastral information in ancien régime Liguria was based on the traditional system of descriptive evaluation that had originated in the Middle Ages, did not involve the use of maps, and respected various local styles of land surveying techniques. One can identify interesting cases of continuity in different areas.<sup>52</sup>

In the seventeenth century, specific government measures taken in response to the innumerable territorial disputes reveal interesting discussions of the actual use of maps. An illuminating example can be drawn from a very common form of local government intervention, the adjudication of woodland resources. In 1647, the senate ordered Giovanni Battista Baliani, the Genoese physicist who was a correspondent of Galileo, a conscientious administrator of the provinces of the Genoese state, and governor of Savona, to visit the Bosco delle Tagliate to settle a woodland ownership dispute involving two local communities, Roviasca and Segno. His instructions were precise: “to see the disputed woodland and terrain for yourself and then to review or have redone those measurements or drawings that you think necessary.”<sup>53</sup> The purpose was to assign to the inhabitants of Roviasca a portion of woodland equivalent to that used by the inhabitants of Segno.

This case appears very similar to the dispute in which Agostino Abate from Savona had been involved a century earlier. And here again, the local inspector was left free to decide whether to use maps in registering the new on-site measurements. However, the extant documents in this

49. Quaini, “Dalla cartografia del potere,” 18–19.

50. Barlettaro and Garbarino, *La raccolta cartografica*.

51. The architects were G. B. Garrè, Stefano Scanglia, Pietro Antonio Corradi, Gio. Battista Bianco, Antonio Torriglia, Gio. Battista Ghiso, Gio. Battista Storasio, and Gio. Battista Torriglia; see Ennio Poleggi and Paolo Cevini, *Genova* (Bari: Laterza, 1981), 138–39. Poleggi claims that the map is comparable to the rather more famous map of Milan by Francesco Richini.

52. This is the case, for example, with the “relevaglie,” which were typical of the areas in the Sarzana region subject to periodic flooding by the river Marga; see Massimo Quaini, “Per la storia del paesaggio agrario in Liguria,” *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria*, n.s. 12, no. 2 (1972): 201–360, esp. 230–32. One might see Ercole Spina’s work as dictated by the same requirements and needs, even if that work was carried on by only a few figures after Spina’s death.

53. ASG, Confinium, 56 (25 October 1647).



FIG. 34.7. JOSÉ CHAFRION, MAP OF LIGURIA, 1685. *Carta de la Rivera de Genova con sus verdaderos confines y caminos.*

Size of the original: ca. 88.4 × 196.5 cm. Photograph courtesy of the BL (Maps K. Top. 77.55.2 TAB).

case seem to reveal a greater awareness of the questions involved. In fact, in his reply Baliani discussed the pros and cons of visiting the site himself or sending qualified people to draw up a map of the area:

The way to know a large area of territory is to visit it in person; if, that is, one wants to discover its qualities, to know if it is good or bad land, if it is cultivated and, if so, what crops are grown there. However, if you need to view it as divisible, then I consider it much better to see it on a map, where with a single glance you can make out all the distinct parts; while if you went onto the terrain itself, mountains and hills would block from view areas that were only a short distance away. And this is the case here—I am sure that if I wanted to know the streets of a city, I would perform the task better in two hours of studying a map than two weeks of running around the city. For this reason, I persuaded the parties involved to have a map drawn up that was as accurate as possible.<sup>54</sup>

These thoughts, jotted down in a simple government document, reveal the difficulties that a mountainous region such as Liguria posed for both on-site inspection and cartographic representation. At the same time, Baliani also insisted that a map was a necessary complement to firsthand visual reconnaissance. Although the map offered a geometrical view of an entire homogeneous region conceived in two dimensions, if one wished to appreciate the “qualities” of the territory—the heterogeneous, discontinuous, and three-dimensional landscape—firsthand visual inspection was necessary.

From the middle of the seventeenth century, with the increasing centralization that was becoming a feature of government in Genoa as elsewhere, the Republic made greater use of its own trained technicians, who were sent out to map particular areas. This trend decreased the local community’s ability to “represent” itself; it reversed the tradition of cartographic information flowing from center to periphery to one in which such information flowed from periphery to center. Such a centralized program, however, necessarily required a more efficient state corps of engineers and topographers, something that would become fully established in the Republic only during the first decades of the eighteenth century, due largely to the increasing role of military engineering.<sup>55</sup>

#### CORSICA UNDER GENOESE RULE: AN EARLY CASE OF “COLONIAL” CARTOGRAPHY?

The case of Corsica further illustrates the anomalies in the structure of the Genoese state. The Genoese were undisputed masters of the island of Corsica from 1347 to 1729, with the exception of the brief period of French rule (1553–59). However, the Genoese authorities entrusted

54. Massimo Quaini, “Le forme della Terra,” *Rassegna* 32, no. 4 (1987): 62–73, esp. 63.

55. On the emergence of this corps, see Massimo Quaini, “Per la storia della cartografia a Genova e in Liguria: Formazione e ruolo degli ingegneri-geografi nella vita della Repubblica (1656–1717),” *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria*, n.s. 24, no. 1 (1984): 217–66.

all territorial authority to a private organization, the Maona di San Giorgio (a trading company), later the Banco di San Giorgio.

It is increasingly argued that, far from being an exploitative colonial relationship, the Genoese cartography of Corsica reflects political and economic improvements of both the private and subsequently the public administration of the island—the latter guaranteeing Corsicans 150 years of “social peace and relative prosperity.”<sup>56</sup> Indeed, the evident parallels between the Corsican situation and that on mainland Liguria have led more than one scholar to suggest that the island be considered a third Genoese “riviera.”<sup>57</sup>

As in Liguria, the period under discussion here culminated in more exact cartography to meet the requirements of France as a naval power in the wider geopolitical context of the Mediterranean. In 1679, well-equipped and highly qualified French technicians started their surveys of the coasts of the area and of the Ligurian coast itself.<sup>58</sup> On the whole, however, these surveys remained in secret state archives, which explains why, until well into the eighteenth century, the received commonplace was that the printed maps of Corsica were hopelessly out of date. The anonymous author of the *Histoire des révolutions de l'isle de Corse* (1738) was simply reflecting scholarly opinion when he claimed that “it hasn't been long since Corsica was almost as unknown to us as California and Japan.”<sup>59</sup>

Hence, it is no surprise that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the dominant image of the island was that provided by nautical charts and *isolari*. This was the case with the first known map specifically dedicated to Corsica, which is to be found in some manuscripts of Cristoforo Buondelmonti's “Liber insularum archipelagi.”<sup>60</sup> The map takes the outline of the island given in nautical charts and completes it with information about the interior, including the mountain chain that divides the two regions identified as “di qua do monti” (on this side of the mountains) and “di là da monti” (on the other side of, or beyond, the mountains) and more than seventy-five named rivers and settlements.<sup>61</sup>

All of this leads one to suppose that alongside the nautical charts there were various manuscript land maps of the island long before Agostino Giustiniani created the now-lost map that scholars tend to take as having established the original model for the depiction of the island.<sup>62</sup> Giustiniani, whom we have discussed in the context of his *Descrittione della Lyguria* (1537), drew the map at about the same time as he wrote his “Dialogo nominato Corsica,” where he said: “I have described the Island of Corsica in minute detail, as something useful to my country . . . and then having rendered the description in a clear picture, I presented the work to the magnificent San Giorgio offices.”<sup>63</sup>

As bishop of Nebbio, Giustiniani visited the island periodically between 1522 and 1531. Although far from

frequent, those visits were put to good use in collecting information for his detailed narrative and map. He was clearly aware that his work was innovative not only in its method of firsthand observation but also in the fact that his description of the place was to serve the administrative reform of the island: “The Bishop does not aim to recount the history of Corsica . . . but only to describe the place as it is, to indicate the lie of the land, with place-names and how it is now governed.” This latter point is made even more explicitly in the dedication of the “Dia-

56. Roger Caratini, *Histoire de la Corse* (Paris: Bordas, 1981), 28. The same verdict occurs in more recent studies, from that in Michel Vergé-Franceschi, *Histoire de Corse, Le pays de la grandeur*, 2 vols. (Paris: Editions du Félin, 1996), 1:225–26 (which speaks of a “beautiful 17th century” in which “Corsica is without doubt much happier and better nourished than most of its contemporaries”) to that in Antoine Laurent Serpentine, *La coltivazione: Gènes et la mise en valeur agricole de la Corse au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle: La décennie du plus grand effort, 1637–1647* (Ajaccio: Albiana, 1999). A more complex and nuanced judgment is given in Antoine-Marie Graziani, *La Corse génoise: Économie, société, culture, période moderne, 1453–1768* (Ajaccio: Editions Alain Piazzola, 1997).

57. Gianni De Moro, “L'isola assediata: Difendere, progettare, ‘delineare’ nella Corsica del Cinquecento,” in *Corsica*, 21–26. Graziani also notes that the opinion Genoese governors and commissioners expressed with regard to the Corsicans is not very different from the one Genoese had of the inhabitants of the Ligurian riviera and of the Apennine valleys in particular (*La Corse génoise*, 34).

58. More is said about these operations and their results (works of outstanding artistic beauty) later.

59. Franck Cervoni, *Image de la Corse: 120 cartes de la Corse des origines à 1831* (Ajaccio: Fondation de Corse, La Marge Édition, 1989), 11.

60. Particularly Codex XXXIX, 25, in Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana—which Almagià formerly attributed to Enrico Martello, dating it around the 1470s and considering it preparatory material for Martello's “Insularium illustratum.” Other copies are to be found in the BNF and the BL; on the latter, see the summary description in Ersilio Michel, “I manoscritti del ‘British Museum’ relativi alla storia di Corsica,” *Archivio Storico di Corsica* 6 (1930): 371–88, esp. 372–73. The earliest printed map of Corsica is that in Benedetto Bordone, *Libro di Benedetto Bordone nel quale si ragiona de tutte l'isole del mondo*, an *isolario* first published in Venice in 1528 (see pp. 270–71 in this volume).

61. For a later example of nautical cartography that pays particular attention to Corsica and its interior, see Giuseppe Caraci, “La Corsica in una carta di Vesconte Maggiolo (1511),” *Archivio Storico di Corsica* 11 (1935): 41–75.

62. This is the conclusion that Caraci reaches in “La Corsica”: “It has been shown that, in 1511, there was a fairly large land map that contained a good number of place-names relating to the interior” (p. 74). Caraci also suggests that “before he left for Corsica as bishop, [Giustiniani] provided himself with a map such as that by Maggiolo, who after 1519 was producing maps in Genoa for the Republic” (p. 75).

63. The “Dialogo” was widely read in manuscript form, and there are various extant copies; see Agostino Giustiniani, *Description de la Corse*, intro. and notes Antoine-Marie Graziani (Ajaccio: A. Piazzola, 1993), quotation on 4–5. On the historical and cultural context of Giustiniani's work, see Cevolotto, *Agostino Giustiniani*, and on the fortunes of the “Dialogo” in cartographic circles, see Roberto Almagià, “Carte e descrizioni della Corsica nel secolo XVI,” in *Atti XII Congresso Geografico Italiano* (Cagliari-Sassari, 1934), 289–303.

logo” to Andrea Doria: “I have mentioned all the cities, all the castles, all the parish churches, all the villas, and the quality and business of the inhabitants . . . [because only] the consideration of these things will teach one how useful the Island can be to our country.”<sup>64</sup>

Many details suggest that Giustiniani wrote this descriptive dialog with his sketch map at hand.<sup>65</sup> For example, in describing the city of Bonifacio he used a metaphor that appears to have been inspired by a map image: “This area seems to be attached to Corsica more by Art than by Nature herself; it is almost an island and looks like a round apple that in its minuteness is stuck on to the side of Corsica.”<sup>66</sup> This description might serve as a useful clue in identifying the maps that were based on the lost Giustiniani original.<sup>67</sup> In fact, Giustiniani himself seems to have considered text and image interchangeable. In his dedication, he wrote that the reader “will see the coast of the Island described, practically painted, yard by yard.”<sup>68</sup>

As Giustiniani’s map is lost, our knowledge of the cartographic history of the island during the sixteenth century rests above all on extant printed maps. Two models of development can be identified. One can be traced to nautical charts and drawings by Gastaldi engraved between 1555 and 1560 “to satisfy the curiosity aroused by the French campaigns on the island in the period 1553–1559.”<sup>69</sup> This model gradually evolved into a squat and chubby Corsica (partly as a result of the outsized rendition of the gulfs and bays on the eastern and, above all, western coasts). The ratio of width to length of the island is about 60:100 in nautical maps and 64:100 in Gastaldi’s maps. The printed maps following this model range from that engraved by Fabio Licinio in Venice around 1555 to that attached to the 1567 edition of Leandro Alberti’s *Descriptione di tutta Italia* by the Venetian printer Lodovico Avanzi (a map with a ratio of 54:100, subsequently adopted by Abraham Ortelius in 1573 and then by Gerardus Mercator).<sup>70</sup>

The other model is rather more elongated, with a very slim Capo Corso and an almost straight eastern coast. It may be traced back to the large perspective view titled *Corographia Xofori de Grassis* (1598) (figs. 34.8 and 34.9). As Cristoforo de Grassi was simply the restorer of this painting, the proper attribution should really be to Gerolamo Bordoni, Genoa’s master chamberlain from 1564 to 1588. As Bordoni had no direct knowledge of the island,<sup>71</sup> it is feasible to argue that he used the Giustiniani map, which must still have been in the archives of the Banco di San Giorgio.<sup>72</sup> Its outline corresponds to the ratio of width to length of the island in Giustiniani’s narrative (43.5:100, a ratio that he presumably also preserved in his map). This second model made its first printed appearance in Magini’s *Italia*, having been communicated to Magini by Orazio Bracelli in 1597.<sup>73</sup>

The Genoese requirements for maps of Corsica were thus determined by reforms, heralded by Agostino Giu-

stiniani and the more enlightened Corsicans themselves, that involved the Magistrato di Corsica in undertaking a coherent program of “universal cultivation” to develop coastal areas and properly exploit the interior of the island.<sup>74</sup> However, just as the drive to develop agriculture did not lead to the drawing of a cadastral land registry, so the general desire to better exploit the territorial resources and improve their defenses against raiders who traditionally preyed on the island did not lead to any systematic cartographic projects.

Clues of maps that may have been made do exist. For example, after a series of on-site visits, Francesco Maria Giustiniani, commissioner for agriculture from 1639 to 1645 and the Genoese functionary most fully involved in this project, wrote: “To the best of my ability, I have made drawings on paper of the parishes I have seen in this last

64. The quotes are taken from Graziani’s edition of Giustiniani, *Descriptione de la Corse*, 20–21 and 6–7, which has finally replaced the unreliable edition of Vincent de Caraffa, *Dialogo nominato Corsica del Rmo Monsignor Agostino Justiniano vescovo di Nebbio* (Bastia, 1882), which was used by all previous scholars—often resulting in misleading conclusions.

65. I do not think that Giustiniani’s comment on the drawing of the map should be interpreted in a rigid chronological sense—unless, that is, one argues (as Caraci seems to) that Giustiniani used another map as source material for both his own map and his “Dialogo.”

66. Giustiniani, *Descriptione de la Corse*, 226–27.

67. This small clue again directs us more toward the Bordoni-Magini model than the Gastaldi-Alberti model for which Almagià argues (discussed later).

68. Giustiniani, *Descriptione de la Corse*, 6–7.

69. As Cervoni observes in *Image de la Corse*, 13. As Almagià pointed out, there are two Gastaldi depictions of the island. The first is titled “L’isola di Corsica, coi territorj, città et castelle forti et aperti, monti, laghi, fiumi, golfi, porti et isolette, ecc. . . . Giacomo di Castaldi piemontese; fabius licinius exc.” It is undated, but definitely earlier than the second depiction in the 1561 edition of *Italia*, which is simplified in some ways but also contains some improvements (*Monumenta Italiae cartographica*, 32).

70. It is part of Mercator’s *Italiae Slavoniae et Graeciae tabulae geographicae* (1589).

71. There is no independent confirmation of the visit to Corsica that Paolo Moneglia says that he made in his letter to Ortelius; see Abraham Ortelius, *Abrahami Ortelii (geographi antverpiensis) et virorum eruditiorum ad evndem et ad Jacobum Colium Ortelianum . . . Epistulae . . . (1524–1628)*, ed. Jan Hendrik Hessels, *Ecclesiae Londino-Batavae Archivum*, vol. 1 (1887; reprinted Osnabrück: Otto Zeller, 1969), 687–88.

72. Here I disagree with Almagià, and various other scholars of the day, who saw the map introduced by Avanzi as the sole extant trace of Giustiniani’s lost map. Corsican historians—from André Berthelot and F. Ceccaldi in *Les cartes de la Corse de Ptolémée au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1939), 87–89, to Cervoni in *Image de la Corse*, 13—have indicated that they believe differently.

73. In the same period, it was also made available to Ortelius by Paolo Moneglia, who judged it “more complete and accurate” than the Alberti map that—to the scandal of the Genoese commissioner Francesco Maria Giustiniani—the former opted to use; see Serpentine, *La coltivazione*.

74. On this theme, and those more generally related to questions of territory, see Massimo Quaini, “Ingegneri e cartografi nella Corsica genovese fra Seicento e Settecento,” in *Corsica*, 27–41.

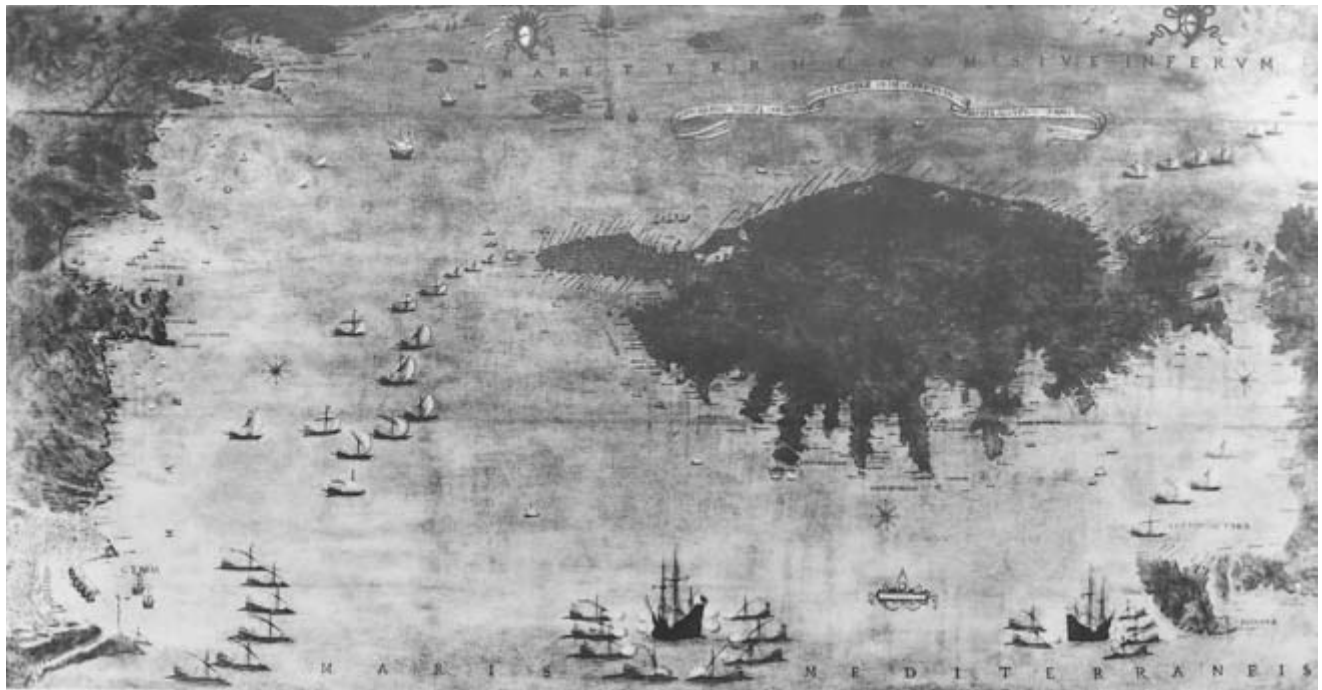


FIG. 34.8. COROGRAFIA XOFORI DE GRASSIS [BORDONI], 1598.

Size of the original: 234 × 440 cm. Photograph courtesy of the Museo Navale di Pegli, Genoa (NIMN 3489).

round of visits, with the position of mountains, rivers and main plains, plus the location of lands, villas and farmhouses together with the proportionate distance between them, so that I can take drawings of the rest and thus form a geographical map of the *Paese di quà da monti*, being ashamed to see in Abraham Ortelius that the map of Corsica is drawn any old how.” It is interesting that Giustiniani also admitted that the maps used by the Genoese authorities were limited to “the main areas only, in the same way as in [maps of] Africa they used to give the Kingdom of the Abicini or other suchlike unknown countries.”<sup>75</sup>

To correct this situation, Giustiniani asked the Genoese senate for an “outline of Corsica” that he could fill in with the information he had gathered. The “Portrait of Corsica” he received was not as exact as he had expected, but he expressed confidence that “with this, the map that is in the Governor’s Hall and the notes I have taken myself” it would be possible “to make a map of the *Regno di quà da monti* more copious in information and perhaps more accurate than the others.”<sup>76</sup> Such a map was probably never completed.

Thus, the need for an overall view of the kingdom was still met by governor’s reports recounting visits to particular sites, often embellished with humanistic flourishes of erudition.<sup>77</sup> The situation here was the same as it was on the mainland: cartographic representations were fragmented and produced in connection with specific projects, primarily those that required the presence of skilled

personnel who knew how to draw plans, as in the case of fortifications or other public works projects.

The dozens of hand-drawn manuscript maps accompanying government documents in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were the work of a number of architects, engineers, and military officers already known to us for their work on the Ligurian mainland (e.g., Domenico Revello, Pier Paolo Rizzio, Domenico Pelo, Bernardino Tensini, and Giovanni Battista Costanzo or families such as the Cantone, Bianco, Ponzello, and Scaniglia families).<sup>78</sup> As an example of the very rare drawings by native Corsicans, one might cite the 1602 plan of Porto Cardo by the *ingegnere del regno* Mario Sisco from Bastia.<sup>79</sup>

Thus, the development of cartographic representations of Corsica parallels that of mainland Liguria. In older

75. Serpentine, *La coltivazione*, 204.

76. Serpentine, *La coltivazione*, 201 and 203.

77. See, for example, “Corsica: Relatione della qualità e stato delle fortezze del Regno e del fiume Tavignano in Aleria,” by Giovanni Bernardo Veneroso, governor from 1649 to 1651. On this *relatione*, see Anna Maria Salone, “La ‘Corsica’ di Gio. Bernardo Veneroso,” in *Studi in memoria di Teofilo Ossian De Negri*, III (Genoa: Stringa, 1986), 34–55.

78. On some of these people and their work, see Jean-Marc Olivesi, “L’architettura barocca in Corsica nei documenti dell’Archivio di Stato di Genova: 1650–1768,” in *Corsica*, 13–19; Quaini, “Per la storia della cartografia”; and idem, “Ingegneri e cartografi nella Corsica,” *passim*.

79. See the description in *Corsica*, 101 (nos. 167 and 168).

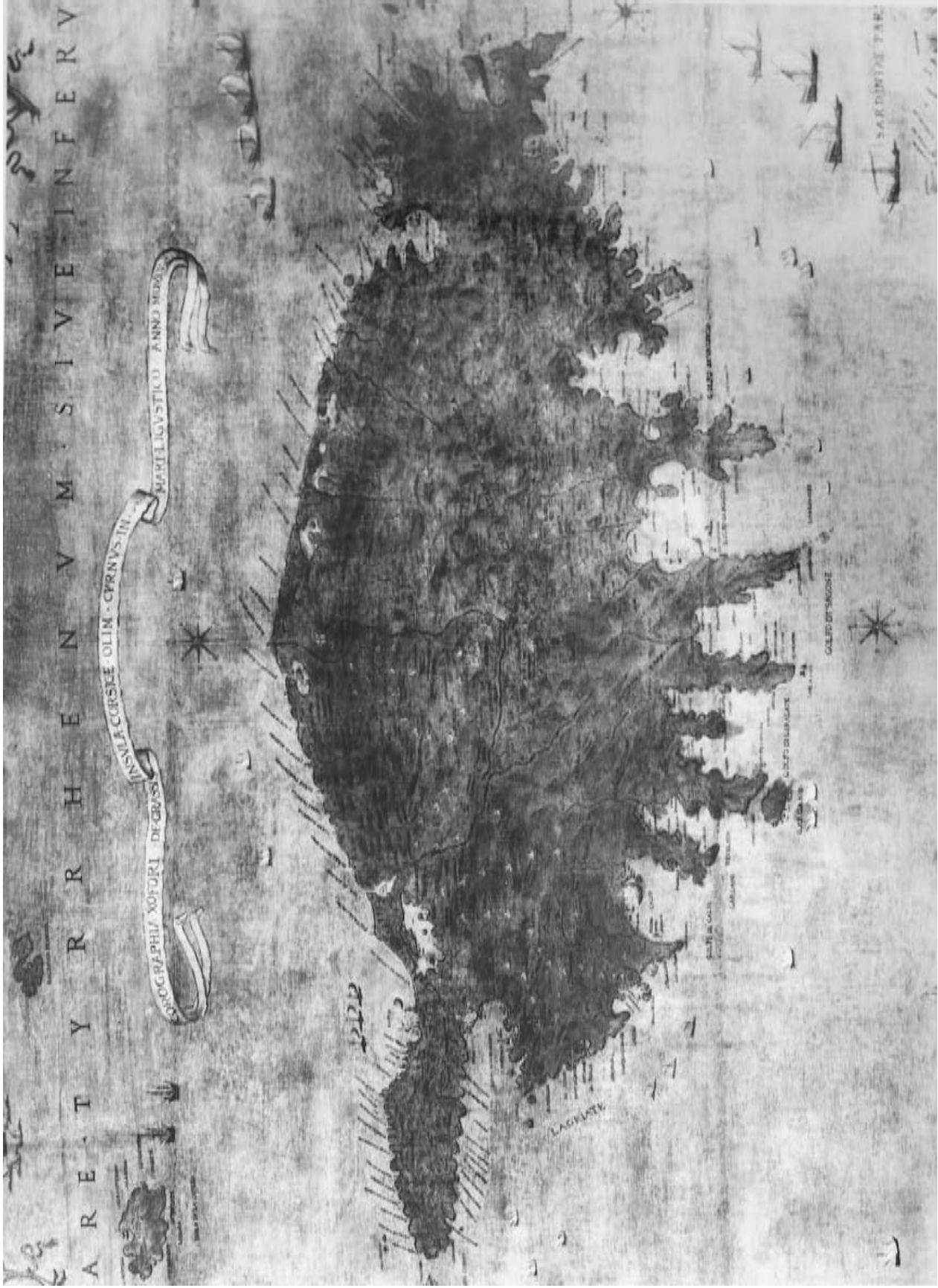


FIG. 34.9. DETAIL OF PART OF CORSICA FROM THE COROGRAPHIA XOFORI DE GRASSO [BORDONI], 1598. Size of the detail: ca. 176 × 245 cm. Photograph courtesy of the Museo Navale di Pegli, Genoa (NIMIN 3489).



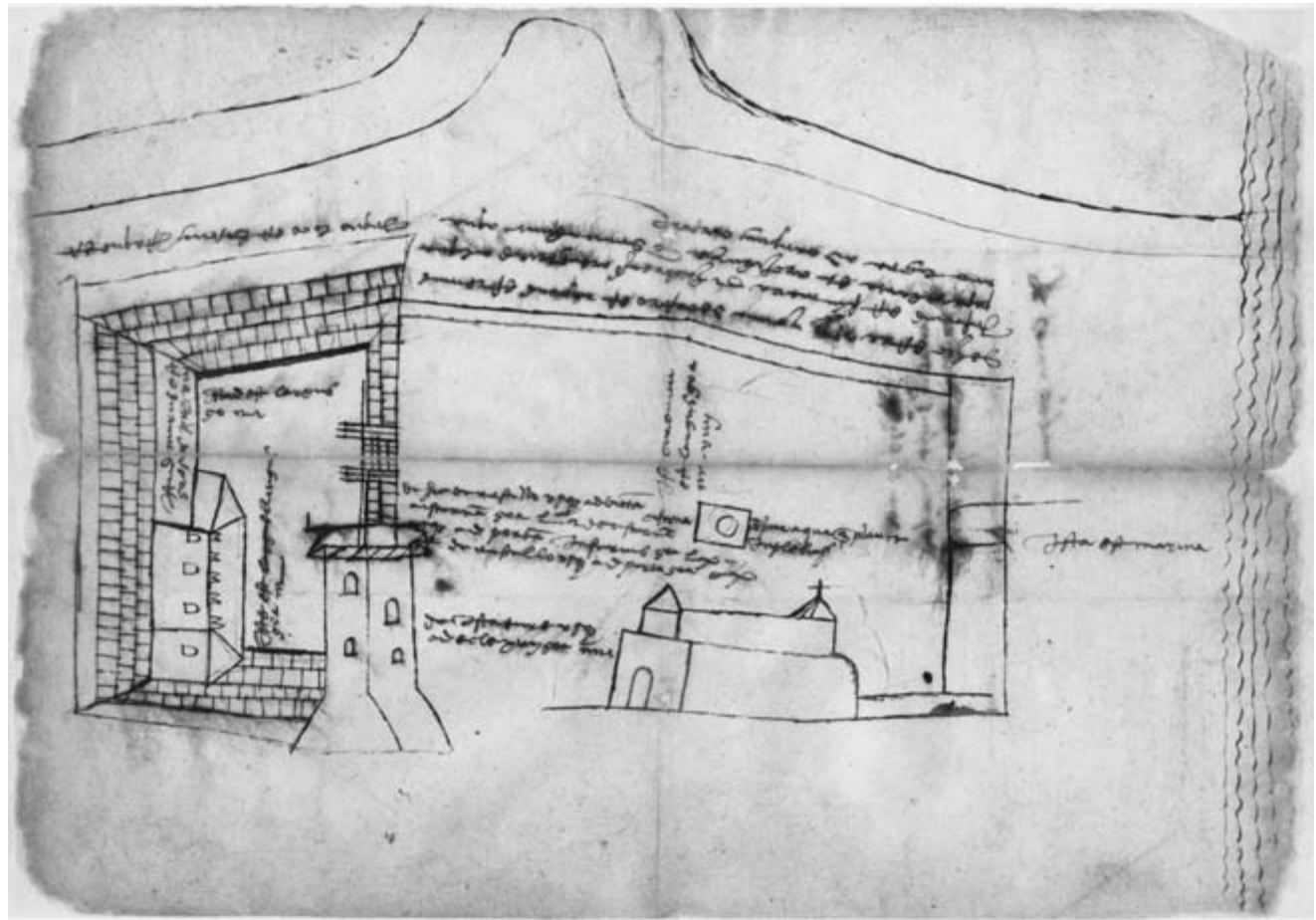


FIG. 34.10. NICOLÒ TODESCO, CITY MAP OF ALERIA, 1484. Pen sketch in brown ink.

Size of the original: 22 × 31.5 cm. Photograph courtesy of the ASG (Fondo Cart. Misc. n. 253).

works, there was a rather geometric style, whose sparse lines were accompanied by ample captions in calligraphy. This gradually gave way to a more mannered painterly style, with greater emphasis on color. This resulted partly from the growing role of painter-cartographers, who considered the more spartan geometric style of military engineers old-fashioned, and partly from the preference for a perspective rather than ground plan rendition of cities and fortifications.

To trace this development, one might start with the two 1484 city maps of Aleria that accompanied a detailed report drawn up by Nicolò Todesco (fig. 34.10)<sup>80</sup> and the similarly small-scale 1613 map of the parishes of Cauro, Ornano, and Telavo (Taravo) and the towns of Istria sent to Genoa by Governor Giorgio Centurione.<sup>81</sup> As significant end-markers one could take the anonymous picturesque view of the promontory of Bonifacio (1626) sent to Genoa by Commissioner Agostino Chiavari or the simplistic perspective map of the Paduli della Padulalta drawn by a certain Gio. Vincenzo Giacomoni, who was sent to the area in 1668 by the Genoese government.<sup>82</sup>

As far as the content and type of maps is concerned, one sees a preference for geographical scale primarily in those government documents dealing with coastal defenses (giving ground plan and perspective renderings of the coast). The mapping of the interior of the island is much more fragmentary and almost exclusively pictorial (with a general tendency toward topographical scale).<sup>83</sup>

#### A COMPARATIVE CASE: SARDINIA

In the most recent historical surveys of the cartography of Sardinia, Sardinian historians have stressed a question that, for all their nationalism, their Corsican counterparts have not posed—a question that arises from the fact that “from

80. Described and reproduced in *Corsica*, 64–67 (nos. 58 and 59).

81. In *Corsica*, 164 and 166 (no. 350).

82. In *Corsica*, 124–25 (no. 235) and 142 (no. 281).

83. As an early example of the use of a painter-cartographer, see the “Modello dela casa di Polidoro” (1541)—an effective perspective representation of the inhabited area of Corte—by a certain Pietro Salvago Della Chiesa, in *Corsica*, 169 and 172 (no. 359).

the very earliest cartographic representations of the island, right up until the end of the eighteenth century, there are only two significant cases of local ‘cartographers’: Sigismondo Arquer (in the sixteenth century) and Giuseppe Cossu (second half of the eighteenth century).<sup>84</sup>

The rigorously “self-centered” approach adopted in the work of Zedda Macciò not only brings out new problems but also raises many doubts as to the effective value of an entire cartographic tradition:

There are an ample number of cartographic works dealing with Sardinia, but such maps were predominately produced by others. As a result, the relation between Sardinians and their own territory was mediated by outsiders, formed within an original juxtaposition of “false” synoptic pictures . . . pictures that were drawn to a small (or very small) scale in places and areas that were substantially unassociated with the island. The ear of the cartographer prevailed over his eye; and the geography of “hearsay,” of explorations in public and private libraries, played a much more important role than direct experience. Consequently, erudition was dominant in creating the image of the island—thus perpetuating and codifying errors in astronomical measurement, geographical inaccuracies, the often negative tales told about a distant land, and all the other commonplaces generated by the geographical literature.<sup>85</sup>

As we have seen, seventeenth-century Liguria and Corsica were the object of state-sponsored surveys that, to a certain extent, involved local cartographers in the creation of detailed, large-scale maps. Such was never the case in Sardinia.<sup>86</sup>

All of this makes the personal history of the most important Sardinian cartographer of the Renaissance not only symbolic but also powerfully moving, for instead of being involved in the state administration of his home island, Sigismondo Arquer, a fiscal lawyer from Cagliari, ended up condemned by the Inquisition. On 4 June 1571, he was burned at the stake in the city square of Toledo for his collaboration with the heretic Sebastian Münster. In the 1550 Latin edition of Münster’s *Cosmography*, there is not only a “Sardinia brevis historia et descriptio”—a work that was subsequently republished by Lodovico Antonio Muratori—but also a map titled *Sardinia insula*, which, although clearly drawing some inspiration from the Ptolemaic representation of the island, locates many contemporary places with their correct names inland (fig. 34.11).<sup>87</sup> Arquer was the author of both.

Even though it was incorporated in Münster’s very successful work, Arquer’s map was soon forgotten and was replaced by the representations of the island in the atlases of Ortelius, Mercator, and, above all, Magini.<sup>88</sup> As a result of their small scale and lack of sources based on detailed surveys, however, they largely failed to improve the carto-

graphic representation of the island, a point stressed by Zedda Macciò.<sup>89</sup> Indeed, even of the Arquer map it has rightly been observed that “though this is important as the first example of a visualization of the island by a Sardinian intellectual, it still remains a schematic sketch, of no practical use for military or navigational purposes.”<sup>90</sup>

It is to military considerations that one must look in order to see how the cartographic representations of Sardinia developed in response to precise demands and requirements—as instruments of defense or, more generally, as a means of exercising territorial control. From the early years of the sixteenth century, the threat posed by the Turks and the Barbary nations of North Africa made coastal defense a priority; to meet this priority, rulers needed exact geographical knowledge of the island; they were no longer able to rely solely on reports and accounts drawn up by Spanish functionaries, no matter how well informed.<sup>91</sup> The first project for a systematic cartographic rendition of the island seems to have been put forward during the reign of Philip II. Conte d’Elda, viceroy of Sardinia (1570–75), entrusted the task to Geronimo Ferra, “Pintor del Cerrio Ribera de Genoa,” who was commissioned to produce a description of the island noting features of interest and the distances between them. Documentary evidence of Ferra’s visit to the island is found in a report to the viceroy in which Ferra mentioned that he had traveled the length and breadth of the island, at great ex-

84. Isabella Zedda Macciò, “La forma: L’astronomo, il geografo, l’ingegnere,” in *Imago Sardiniae: Cartografia storica di un’isola mediterranea* (Cagliari: Consiglio Regionale della Sardegna, 1999), 17–95, esp. 24.

85. Zedda Macciò, “La forma,” 24–25.

86. Zedda Macciò recognizes that this process started only with the reforms in Piedmont (“La forma,” 25); however, the cartographic collection in the Simancas Archives does not seem to have been taken fully into consideration. I limit myself here to repeating Piloni’s amazement at the lack of cartographic works describing Spanish Sardinia (*Carte geografiche della Sardegna*, XII).

87. Piloni, *Carte geografiche della Sardegna*, 51–52: “For the first time a depiction of the interior contains the name of the ‘Giaræ montes’; as for place-names in general, a note in the spirit of Giustini points out that “all these names are new and are currently in use” (referring the reader to the Ptolemaic plate to satisfy his taste for antiquities). Arquer also drew up a topographical plan of Cagliari, which is “full of detailed and previously-unpublished information regarding the urban structure [and] established itself as a model which was accepted until the middle of the eighteenth century”; see Isabella Zedda Macciò, “La conoscenza della Sardegna e del suo ambiente attraverso l’evoluzione delle rappresentazioni cartografiche,” *Biblioteca Franceseana Sarda* 4 (1990): 319–74, esp. 335.

88. Zedda Macciò, “La conoscenza della Sardegna,” 335.

89. Zedda Macciò, “Carte e cartografi della Sardegna,” 450.

90. Antonello Mattone, “La cartografia: Una grafica dell’arretratezza,” in *La Sardegna*, 2 vols., ed. Manlio Brigaglia (Cagliari: Edizioni della Torre, 1982), vol. 1, pt. 1, 5–22, esp. 13.

91. Mattone, “La cartografia,” 16.



FIG. 34.11. SARDINIA INSVLA BY SIGISMONDO ARQUER, 1550. Reproduced in Sebastian Münster's *Cosmographia uniuersalis lib. VI* (Basle: Apud Henrichum Petri, 1550).

Size of the original: ca. 25.4 × 15.5 cm. Photograph courtesy of Special Collections and Rare Books, Wilson Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

pense and risk to himself and his assistants, but the map and written description seem to have been lost.<sup>92</sup>

What have come down to us are the maps drawn by the military engineer Rocco Cappellino of Cremona, who was appointed in 1552 to strengthen the defenses of Cagliari. He stayed on the island for twenty years, and it was during the course of his various fortification projects that, dissatisfied with existing maps, he decided to draw up and publish a new one: "Because it seems to me that the form of this said island has never been drawn as it should be . . . I did not want to fail to portray it in the best possible form, in order that people might know that

this land is not to be held in such low account and esteem as is sometimes the case."<sup>93</sup>

Cappellino's map is known to us in three versions, which are to be found in a manuscript accompanied by ten partial drawings, generally city plans, fortress ground plans, and some stretches of coastline.<sup>94</sup> Although never published, Cappellino's work—together with its inherent errors and those generated in later versions by the lack of clear orientation in the original—proved to be very long-lasting, surviving in printed maps produced not only in Italy (such as the works of Egnazio Danti and Giovanni Antonio Magini) but also by publishers in the Netherlands and France. His work fell into disuse only when superseded by the cartographic surveys of Piedmont engineers.<sup>95</sup>

The *Descripcion dela isla y reyno de Sardenia* has been linked with Francesco de Vico's *Historia general del la isla, y reyno de Sardeña*, published in Barcelona in 1639. While it may well be true that the two are connected, and that both were "Vico's splendid act of homage to his Sovereign," Philip IV, the map itself is to be traced back to Sardinian circles, though one may rule out that it was actually printed in Sardinia or that it was produced by Vico himself, whose role seems to have been that of patron.<sup>96</sup> There is no question that the anonymous cartographer revealed direct knowledge of at least a part of Sardinian territory, and he also gave particular care to the account of cities and settlements, classifying them according to size of population. The question of the source material used is still an open matter. The map illustrates the persistence of traditions other than those having to do with commercial map publishing or the work of military engineers.

## CONCLUSIONS

Cartographic activity in Liguria and Genoa and its territories provides an interesting example of a delay in the supplementation of textual topographic descriptions with graphic maps. This had to do with the persistence of the medieval methods of land administration in the area and a lack of centralization. In the case of Genoa itself, the form and layout of the town, squeezed between the mountains and the sea and possessing few internal vistas

92. See Piloni, *Carte geografiche della Sardegna*, 56.

93. Zedda Macciò, "La forma," 51. The comment was made in 1577.

94. The Cappellino manuscript is in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City, and is published in detail in Sebastiano Deledda, "La carta della Sardegna di Rocco Cappellino (1577)," *Archivio Storico Sardo* 20 (1936): 84–121, and 21 (1939–40): 27–47.

95. Zedda Macciò, "La forma," 57.

96. The one extant copy of the *Descripcion* is in the BNF, Département des Cartes et Plans (Port. 80–2–2). See the reproduction of the map and the ample discussion of it in Piloni, *Carte geografiche della Sardegna*, 87–93, quotation on 89, which is essentially based on studies by Osvaldo Baldacci.

and public squares, may have contributed to the lack of a perceived need for geometrical plan view representations of the city and to the predominance of views of the town as seen from the sea.

The persistence of locally motivated solutions to legal and administrative issues involving maps, such as those involved in boundary delineation and the apportionment of woodland, water, and agricultural resources, gave rise to a large number of manuscript maps and sketches still preserved in local and state archives, particularly the ASG, based on firsthand observation, that now provide useful historical information concerning land use. In the late seventeenth century, the local surveyors, cartographers, and painters responsible for these images were employed to produce systematic regional surveys. The atlas of Pier Maria Gropallo produced in 1650–55 is an excellent case in point. This was true not only for the im-

mediate surroundings of Genoa, but for its territory of Corsica. By contrast, Sardinia, under the Spanish control of the House of Aragon until 1708 and preoccupied with coastal defenses, saw few local surveys made by Sardinians and no systematic state surveys during this period.

These local maps came about as a result of concrete practical needs such as defense, navigation, trade, and economic exploitation of territorial resources. Very little of the information provided in these maps found its way into the large atlas projects that included small-scale regional printed maps published for the general commercial audience of merchants, scholars, politicians, and statesmen. This underlines the importance of the approach taken here—focusing on the locally produced manuscript maps drawn by direct observation rather than the externally produced commercial atlases that often drew on venerated but outdated sources.